

Terry Fox Run brings community together

By Tony Pearson

Ron Speck is a cancer survivor of six years standing; he feels he owes his life to recent research on cancer. So he determined that he wanted to get the Terry Fox run back up and running ? and walking, and cycling ? in Bancroft, where it has been dormant for four years. After months of organizing work, Speck's efforts paid off last Sunday, as nearly one hundred participants took to the five and ten kilometre routes along the Heritage Trail and raised over \$6,750 for cancer research.

One group that really showed its support was the staff at North Hastings High School, who turned out in strength with their families, over two dozen strong, to support the run. Later this month, students at area schools will take part in National School Run Day as their recognition of Fox's contribution.

On hand to send off the runners was Carol Ann Stapley, a Bancroft native whose career as a cardiac nurse took her to Toronto General Hospital. In 1980, she took part in a Heart and Stroke event in Parry Sound, where she met Terry Fox himself on his Marathon of Hope; he was on his way to Sudbury when she met him, and he left a lasting impression. ?He was a role model,? she told participants, ?by showing that every day can contain a challenge to be met.?

Terry Fox's original goal was to raise \$1 million. When the run began to acquire momentum (after his Canada Day appearance in Ottawa), he began to hope that he could ultimately generate a dollar for each Canadian ? about 24 million people at that time. As it has developed, the runs have raised over \$600 million, of which 84 per cent, a fundraising industry leading portion, goes directly into cancer research. They now take place in over 200 Ontario communities, and over 800 in Canada as a whole, as well as in more than three dozen foreign countries. Interestingly, the highest percentage of national participation came in Cuba; in 2007, over two million of the country's 11 million people took part.

In terms of the impact of the runs, it is of note that the cancer, osteosarcoma, which cost Terry Fox his leg and then his life, now has an 80 per cent survival rate thanks to new medication and treatment. Most victims now do not even require limb amputation.

The organizers also thanked their corporate sponsors, including the Apsley and Bancroft Foodlands, Bancroft No-Frills and Jug City, the Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Bancroft, the Knights of Columbus, Eastern Ontario Trails Association, River's Edge Golf Course, Jude's Signs and Hannah Lithographers, Bancroft and St. John's Ambulance, the Bancroft Lions, Vance Motors, and the Maynooth General Store, as well as media outlets Bancroft This Week, Bancroft Times, Apsley Voice, and Moose FM.

