



RAPPORT

June 2010

Spring Edition

NORTHERN ONTARIO FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH CANCER (NOFCC)

Life... According 'To Me

Abby passed away the other day. Two months ago, Cookie took a quick turn for the worst and she too passed on. We buried them under our daughter's memorial tree in the front yard. By now, I hope you realize I'm writing about the kids' pets - a guinea pig and a hamster.

Our two oldest were clearly upset and our 3 year old looked on with apparent bewilderment. Performing the role of Funeral Director and Priest I prepared everything, even opting to say a quick eulogy. "Francis" I began (purposely forgetting the rodent's name) to which all three mourners corrected me by affirming that the stiff mass of fur in the Moen bathroom taps box went by the name of Abby. "Abby", I continued undaunted "You were a fine pet, pooping where you were supposed to but peeing on those who held you...yadda, yadda, yadda... we will never forget you. Amen."

'We will never forget you.' Strange how those words stayed with me. Even stranger was how a recent somewhat innocent conversation and a reference from a novel I am currently reading alluded to the same subject matter. In the book, the main character was asked "What do people fear most about death?" "Being forgotten," he whispered.

Inside This Issue

NOFCC Alive & Well	2
Pike Derby	2
Bursary Program	3
Reminiscing	3
Summer Camps	4
Walking for a Friend	4
Nice to meet you	5
Acknowledgements	5
Program Information	6

February marked 6 years since Reniessa left us. Losing Reniessa left me with a scar, a huge grotesque mark that is seen only by me, 'The Bearer', never knowing what situation will cause it to reopen and having to live with that heaviness every day. True, as time goes on my scar may not be as raw or predominant as it first was but it's there--still very tender at times. Tender to insensitive words from those who seem to have forgotten her. To this thin-skinned scar bearer, I know these actions are not intended to be hurtful but they are, especially when it comes from an unlikely source...a loved one.

I do accept the fact that (hopefully many years from now) I too will be leaving my loved ones behind, but the thought of them one day forgetting about me will never make me want to leave at all.

Ernie Boeswald – President NOFCC

Beauty is in the Eye of the NOFCC

Northern Ontario Families of Children with Cancer would like to congratulate Cheryl Kozera, President of the Miss North Regional Canada Pageant (MNORCP), for yet another great pageant. NOFCC is grateful to be the pageant's official charity and to have the opportunity to raise awareness about the organization and to increase financial support across northern Ontario.

We are also very grateful to northern communities who have so generously supported the fundraising efforts of the thirty-three (33) MNORCP delegates with their local fundraising activities. A remarkable **\$14,000.00** was donated to the NOFCC. All of the delegates' hard work is greatly appreciated.

Congratulations to Shelby Gobbo of Nickel Centre who raised \$2200 for the NOFCC and received the Northern Ontario Families of Children with Cancer Ambassador Award. Our congratulations as well to Runner-Up, Valerie Sawyer (Kirkland Lake) and to the Finalists - Jessica Lynn Brazeau (Sturgeon Falls), and Tegin-Lee Popowich (Thunder Bay).

Thank you to the Fish Bowl and Boston Pizza® restaurants for hosting the "Meet and Greet the Delegates" on April 29th and for their donations of \$250.00 and \$100.00 respectively.

Dude, Where's My NOFCC?

"The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated"
Mark Twain

Okay. So there haven't been any grandiose rumours of our death; however, we have been asked by devout NOFCC newsletter readers when our next edition will be in circulation. For those three loyal supporters out there, we dare not disappoint.

Since our last newsletter in 2008, the NOFCC has added a couple of new programs and services to aid our children. With backing from Vale, the NOFCC will be making available a Bursary Program designed to provide survivors of childhood cancer, their siblings and the siblings of children who have succumbed to cancer, the opportunity to attend post-secondary education.

We have added a Tutoring Program, made changes to our Palliative Support Program, and increased the monetary services of a few of our existing programs. We have been able to purchase new laptops with built in cameras to lend out to our children while they are away from home, in order to continue with their studies and stay in touch with family and friends.

With financial help from the Trillium Foundation last year, we were able to hire Micheline Ferguson (past president) part-time as a Volunteer and Fund Development Coordinator. This much needed position has not only allowed the NOFCC to increase our services and expand our profile within the community, but it has given the board members a much-needed break from spreading ourselves too thin with writing policy and procedures, bylaws...you know "Board stuff" or "Bored stuff" (depending on who you ask) to putting on fundraising events and attending other functions.

From the days of car washes and teddy bear raffles to black tie galas, fishing derbies, and numerous school fundraising activities, the NOFCC members should be very proud of all our progression and accomplishments.

So what next great event is planned for the NOFCC? Well, if it were our wish, we would like to see the NOFCC disbanded -- gone forever. No NOFCC would mean the end of all childhood cancer as we know it. Therefore, any future reports of the NOFCC's timely demise would be greatly welcomed.

And that would be just fine by us.

Fishing for Pike and a Cause

We wish to invite you once again to our annual pike derby on Whitewater Lake in Azilda on Saturday, July 3rd 2010. Needless to say, we are looking forward to seeing you at the orientation meeting on Friday July 2nd - 7 pm at the Club Accueil Âge d'Or Azilda (opposite the Caisse Populaire in Azilda). You'll be pleased to know that last year, thanks to the participation of people like you and local sponsors; the NOFCC Pike Derby raised \$19,000.00.

As usual, we are guaranteeing a \$5000.00 first prize and several more cash and gift prizes. So please...talk it up! Let friends and family know about our derby so that we can, in turn, offer even more prizes to the fishermen/fisherwomen. And of course the money raised will allow us to continue providing support to all northern Ontario families dealing with childhood cancer.

Should you require any more information, please feel free to contact Louise Gosselin at 969-8664 or at gosselinl@hotmail.com. See you in July!!

Shine Bright Bursary Program



It is with much excitement that the NOFCC and Vale announce the inception of 'The Shine Bright Bursary' program devised to offer some financial assistance to all northern Ontario children dealing with childhood cancer and their siblings enrolled in a post-secondary institution.

Since childhood cancer affects the whole family, emotionally, socially, and financially, the NOFCC along with Vale is making available to survivors of childhood cancer, their siblings and the siblings of children who have succumbed to cancer the opportunity to apply to this innovative program.

Starting in the fall of 2010, young adults who are enrolled full-time in a post-secondary program and who have applied for The Shine Bright Bursary may receive some financial help to offset the cost of: tuition fees, books & supplies, or any other education-related expenses incurred by students throughout the school year.

We are also pleased to inform you that although there are some scholarships and bursaries available in Canada for survivors of childhood cancer the Shine Bright Bursary is the only one available to the *siblings* of children diagnosed.

The NOFCC is extremely grateful to Vale for their generous donations toward The Shine Bright Bursary and our KeepConnected Program, thus helping the NOFCC accomplish an objective set years ago to offer as much support as possible to our northern families.

Applications to The Shine Bright Bursary must be submitted no later than August 31, 2010.

The Shine Bright Criteria and Application forms can be found online on our website @ www.nofcc.ca

For further information regarding the bursary or any one of our programs and services, please contact the NOFCC.

Closing Windows – Opening Doors

Life sometimes has a way of taking you places you never thought you would go and of making you do things you never thought you could accomplish. Who would have thought our 5 ½ yr old daughter would be diagnosed with high risk ALL (1994) and that years later I would become one of the founding members of a great organization such as the NOFCC?

I've learned a lot throughout the years. Mainly that I could come out of my shell (much to the board's chagrin because now they can't keep me quiet. They have even accused me of working them too hard). I've also spoken to crowds of 150 plus (even though I still shake and sometimes shed a tear or two) and I have met wonderful people along the way.

But all good things must come to an end and in 2007 I decided it was time to "Fundraise for the little Fergusons". In April of 2008 I started a career in Real Estate. Later that spring the NOFCC applied to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a grant to have a paid position within the organization in order to continue all the good work.

Resigning as President was a very difficult decision for me (that's why I kept postponing my resignation) but I had to build my new career and devote my time to it. Much to my surprise I also accepted the part-time Volunteer and Fund Development Coordinator position a few months later. Currently I am meeting the demands of my new position with the NOFCC and working as a Real Estate Agent.

I would like to welcome Ernie Boeswald as our new President. He has done a wonderful job so far and is truly committed to the charity. Ernie and his family benefited from the NOFCC's programs when their daughter Reniessa was diagnosed with a rare form of Leukemia in 2003. A year after Reniessa lost her battle to cancer Ernie joined the Board of Directors and the cause in order to '**Pay it Forward**'. Ernie is the past editor of the **Rapport** newsletter and will continue to write his inspirational articles. He is also the coordinator of the NOFCC's Fishing Derby Committee.

**Micheline Ferguson – Volunteer and Fund Development Coordinator
Past President NOFCC**

Send a Kid to Camp

For those families who haven't met me, my name is Vicky Wilton; I am the Paediatric Interlink in Sudbury. With spring almost here, I thought I would talk about summer camps. There are a number of summer camp experiences available for cancer patients, siblings, and their families.

Camp Quality (www.campquality.com) is an international not-for-profit organization that provides a week-long overnight camp for patients. Each child is matched with a companion for the entire week; they can experience helicopter rides, ATV rides, hot air ballooning, swimming, crafts, campfires, and activity nights. There are registered nurses on site and patients have access to the POGO paediatric satellite oncology in Sudbury if needed.

Camp Oocchigeas (www.ooch.org) is a summer camp that is administered from The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, and therefore is available to children who are patients of Sick Kids. This camp is located in the Muskoka's with its own private beach, beautiful log buildings, a huge recreation hall, as well as climbing walls/ropes. There are doctors and nurses on site to give chemotherapy treatments as well as administer any medications. This camp is for patients only and is an overnight camp.

Camp Trillium (www.camptrillium.com) is a Canadian-based camp program administered out of Toronto. There are two locations in Ontario, one in Kingston (Garrett Island) and one in Hamilton (Rainbow Lake). They offer a variety of camping experiences for patients, siblings, and families as well as provide a companion for each camper. They offer a traditional summer camp experience of swimming, canoeing, crafts, campfires and building friendships. There are nurses on staff at each site and physicians are available in neighbouring communities.

Cottage Dreams (www.cottagedreams.ca) is a non-profit organization that arranges for cancer survivors and their families to spend a week at a private donated cottage in Ontario. This program is based on the premise that families need time alone after treatment to reconnect. Please check out the website, this can be an amazing experience!

If you do not have access to the Internet you can call the camps directly for information. I have registration forms for all the camp programs; if you are interested please contact me at (705) 522-6237 or at vwilton@hrsrh.on.ca

Summer camps offer great opportunities that most children never get; they are wonderful places to make new friends, rekindle old friendships, and try new activities all in a safe and supervised environment.

Thank you and have a great summer and camp!

Vicky Wilton – Interlink Nurse

Fundraising for a Fallen Student

The sun was shining as over 300 students, staff, family and friends walked around the school grounds of St. Charles Catholic School in Chelmsford on June 11th. The walk, now in its 6th year, is a family and community event in memory of Jonathan Hetu, and an effort to continue to support other northern Ontario families during their journeys with childhood cancer. Along with Jonathan's parents, grandmother, uncle and family friends, graduates from St. Charles Catholic School who are currently in high school or university participated in the walk this year, making it extra special.

This year Patrick Bryce was the recipient of the Jonathan Hetu Award; an award presented each year at the end of the walk to a student who participates in sports and who has a positive attitude. Jonathan, who lost his battle to cancer in September of 2004, actively participated with his parents in the fundraising efforts of the NOFCC.

This year the **Jonathan Hetu Walk for Cancer** raised **\$4888** for NOFCC, bringing the grand total to **\$27,063** since the walk began in June 2005. Keeping Jonathan's memory alive is important to Jonathan's teacher Dave Nicholls who taught him for 2 years and to everyone who knew this courageous boy. Jonathan's parents, John and Cindy, look forward to presenting the award every year and to supporting the organization.

Allow me to Introduce Myself

I'm so honored to take this opportunity to introduce myself to everyone who is reading the latest edition of the **Rapport**. Since the last published issue was a few years ago – this is my first attempt (so please be gentle!). My name is Dominique and I was born and raised in Northern Ontario (Val Caron). I attended high school and University in Sudbury and I am thrilled to be selected into comprising the newsletter.

Although childhood cancer hasn't directly affected my life, my grandmother was a breast cancer survivor. She endured radiation and chemotherapy and won her battle. I was a child when she was diagnosed and through her treatments, our family became closer and we discovered just how strong we all were during that ordeal.

The **Rapport** will continue to have the traditional elements to it, such as upcoming events, highlights of past activities, letters of acknowledgments and contact information.

If there is anything you think is missing from the newsletter, please let the NOFCC office know and they will pass along the information to me. I am honoured to take on this position of Editor and will do my best to keep all you readers informed.

To all the readers – if you wish to submit drawings, poems, quotes that you find inspirational, or just plain funny – anything creative please send it to the NOFCC office and we will be sure to include it in the next issue under “Kids Korner”

Thanks to all who made this newsletter possible!

Dominique Boyd – Acting Editor

Acknowledgement of Support

Thanking you for your recent and continuous support....

- ☺ The Kinsmen Club of Sudbury for \$13,600.00 from the Home Sweepstakes. We are grateful to be a recipient charity. We are anxious to see this year's home at 18 Landreville and to assist at the grand opening on August 28th & 29th.
- ☺ Betty Dean – Professor @ Cambrian College and her students from the Community and Justice Services Program for their collection of used laptops & desktop computers that were refurbished by inmates from the Central North Correctional Centre in Penetanguishene and given to our families in need.
- ☺ Ten Rainbows Foundation, Megan's Wings Foundation, area Lions' Clubs and Pizza Hut for their contributions towards NOFCC's annual Family Christmas Party.
- ☺ Sudbury Catholic District Schools for their participation in the annual Hat Day for Cancer.
- ☺ Bonic Tower Coffee Girls-for their weekly coffee & dessert sales with proceeds to the NOFCC.
- ☺ Impact Martial Arts Academy for raising awareness about the NOFCC during the Art of One's Self event. The Extreme Martial Arts Troop and the H.I.T. Action Team gave a great performance and Vancouver's Capoeira Ache Brasil certainly dazzled the audience.
- ☺ Schools across northern Ontario who held a fundraising activity and raised awareness in their community about us.
- ☺ North Bay Lions for listening to our presentation and for listening to a North Bay family's appreciation of the support received from the NOFCC and the need for financial support across northern Ontario.
- ☺ All donations in memory of loved ones.
- ☺ Everyone not mentioned here. Your support means a lot. You know who you are.

Special thanks to all the volunteers! We couldn't do it without you.

***Did You Know..... You can donate to the NOFCC through the United Way Donor Choice Program? Thank you to those who already do!
Ask your employer or your United Way representative for details.***

**Northern Ontario Families of
Children with Cancer ~ NOFCC**

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*Striving to improve the lives of
families dealing with childhood
cancer.*

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.nofcc.ca

What Do We Do.....

Established in Sudbury in 1998 by a group of parents of children with cancer, the Northern Ontario Families of Children with Cancer (NOFCC) is a volunteer based registered charity that is not government funded and relies solely on public donations and fundraising events. Being parents themselves, they recognize the particular difficulties involved in caring for a child with cancer and the geographic challenges of living in the north.

The NOFCC serves all families who have been touched by childhood cancer—families with a child on active treatment, those off treatment, or receiving follow up care, and bereaved families.

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PEDIATRIC INTERLINK NURSE— VICKY WILTON, PHBE, RN

VOLUNTEER AND FUND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR----MICHELINE ALLARD-FERGUSON

What does the NOFCC do with my donations?

Shine Bright Post Secondary Bursaries: for childhood cancer survivors, their siblings and siblings of children who have succumbed to cancer are available.

Communication Program: A newsletter is mailed to members and supporters several times a year. NOFCC also supports a website at www.nofcc.ca

Emergency Program: Funds are available for miscellaneous emergency needs. Requests are assessed on an individual basis.

Food Voucher Program: Gift certificates are available to families receiving treatment at children's hospitals in Toronto and Ottawa. Certificates may be for grocery stores or hospital food courts/cafeterias.

Gas Coupons: are available in situations when children are in hospital away from home for weeks and months at a time and trips are not covered by Northern Health Travel Grants. This allows the parent staying home with siblings to visit.

KeepConnected Program: Laptop lending program allows children to keep up with their school work, as well as keeping in touch with friends and staying occupied during long hours of treatment.

Palliative Support Program: Assistance with special support during the end-of-life period in a patient's illness, on the advice of the Interlink nurse, to include the bereavement period.

Parking Program: Assistance with parking costs while receiving treatment at the Hospital for Sick Children. Tokens or parking passes are also available for parking at HRSRH.

Special Events: The NOFCC organizes and hosts events to support children, teens, and parents throughout the year, including an annual Christmas party.

Taxi Fares: from the hotel to the Hospital for Sick Children are reimbursed to the families.

Telephone Program: Long distance prepaid calling cards are available to all families while they are away from home with their child for treatment.

Tutoring Program: An annual fund to provide assistance with qualified tutoring for children in need, on the advice of the Interlink nurse.

The NOFCC **does not** receive any government funding and is not financially supported by any hospital.

