

Rapport

Northern Ontario
Families of Children
With Cancer

Volume IV Issue II

Fall 2002

A Writing By Me

Recently I've been told that
I'm an inspiration
Strong
Amazing
But I'm trying to figure out
Why
You see
I'm a mother
Of a precious 3 year old boy
A very wise child
A child with leukemia
Cancer.
So why does that make me
All these things?
I sit here wondering why
I live each day as I can
Waking to face it
Not as a battle for life
But As a gift Of life
An appreciation
Has grown immensely
Within me
Of all there is to be offered
If only you stop and take the time
Time was stopped for me.
Before the Day
That I was told
Life was in fast gear

Finally, I knew where I wanted to go
And was succeeding in getting there
All was good
Or so I thought

Then came the Day
Stopped.
And a battle for life began
A life so young
So innocent
So very precious
A battle so very unfair

My eyes were opened
Fast.
I could dwell
On each horrible day
That my son was
Poked, prodded, drugged

Or I could gather any strength in me
To be beside my son
To hug him, kiss him, hold his hand
To give him a smile
The only familiar thing
In a small boy's world
That had to be turned so totally
Upside down, inside out, and backwards

Each hour, each day
Cannot be focused on the magnitude of
negativity
We complain about our jobs, about
money, cars, cleaning
About bad drivers, taxes, the weather
Leaving the lid off the toothpaste, taking
out the garbage and doing dishes
Must I go on
Yet we never stop to appreciate them
Because it's part of life
But that's just it
Life
Because along with the hassles of life
Are the gifts we don't stop to see.

When's the last time
You gave your child, parent, sibling,
partner, a hug and told them you loved
them, and meant it?

When's the last time you patted yourself
on the back, smiled at a stranger,
admired trees, a flower, the sun and even
the clouds or played in the rain
When's the last time you said you'd
make the best out of something and did.

I don't think I'm super strong
I've just learned to see these gifts we are
all given
And after I unwrap them
A positivity finds me and strength comes
in leaps and bounds
A strength that keeps me going
Makes it so much easier
Easier to tackle a day of gifts and see
what is offered even behind a battle for
life

*Written by Rachel Toepfner, during her
son, Nathan's, experience with cancer.*

Parent support Connection

This online support group reports that it is still seeing a steady increase of members. Chat Monday nights are now being frequented by a number of members. The group feels much more at ease to email, and ask questions and see suggestions for help. Everyone is working together for healing

and helping each other through difficult times.

It is a true *Healing Circle of Friends*.

Special project:

Parent Support Connection is presently involved with an Angel Pillow project. There are five communities that have jump onboard, including Sudbury, Timmins, Pembroke, Hearst, Toronto and Sault Ste. Marie. People in these communities are making Angel Pillows for children with cancer in North Eastern Ontario. We have also received 33 pillows from the United States, including Texas, Arizona, California, and New Jersey, with promises of more to come. Our hope is to have more than is needed and that on Dec. 23, each community involved in making the pillows will be able to visit children in there area hospitals and give them a pillow on behalf of *Parent Support Connection*.

The Ontario Ronald McDonald Houses will also receive pillows for children unable to go home for Christmas, if the supply allows. And we are all hopeful that Santa will deliver!
If you would like to get involved contact the *Parent Support Connection*.

A CELEBRATION OF LOVE LIFE AND FRIENDSHIP

The Parent Support Connection invites all to enjoy a day of FUN on NOV. 2nd, 2002.

Everyone is welcome to visit the Verdiel residence on this day from 1pm to 5pm for pony rides, hotdogs, face painting and more. Come out to visit the "MOOSE ON A MISSION"??? Call Brenda @ 705-969-1283 for directions.

Greyhound Bus Tickets

The NOFCC has a donation of a few vouchers to purchase bus tickets. They are available for someone who might be in need of them. For more information, call Judy Mayer at 522-6237, ext. 2107.

NOFCC CHRISTMAS PARTY

This first and hopefully annual event will be held on NOV. 30th, 2002 at the Lockerby Legion Hall, Long Lake Rd., Sudbury from 1pm to 4pm.

ALL families are welcome to attend. Please see insert for more details.

Please RSVP to Lorraine Chartier @ 564-9467 or the NOFCC hot line @ 1-877-253-2585.

ERIN McBEAR

The NOFCC is also selling tickets on a large handmade bear, Erin McBear, donated by a Capreol woman, Diane Rancourt, in memory of her niece, Erin. Funds raised will be used to support programs such as the telephone and parking programs, which assist families who are away out of town with their children for treatment.

LUCKY STAR BINGO

Lucky Star Bingo in Chelmsford holds a bingo every Friday night at 7pm with proceeds to the NOFCC. These funds will be used to support the NOFCC programs that help the families directly.

TIMMINS KIWANAS CLUB

The Timmins Kiwanas Club has presented the NOFCC with a donation of

\$1500.00 to help families who have children with cancer in Timmins and the surrounding areas. The support to families comes through the NOFCC's programs, parking, telephone and vouchers.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

The staff and volunteers of LUCKY STAR BINGO held a golf tournament in July with proceeds of \$1338.00 for the NOFCC.

NOFCC CARWASH

The second annual Armoral Car Wash was held in May. It was very successful due to the very hard and dedicated work of the NOFCC's Events Coordinator Brian Latendre.

He would like to acknowledge and thank all the following for their assistance and donations;

Ross Beaton, Vendetti Insurance; Dan McCourt, NHL Official; Bernie Murphy; Bill Gibson, Sudbury Classic Cruisers; Jen Ahola & Sean Barrette, Q92; Sophie Landry; Brent Labre & Krista Kaattari; students from LaSalle Secondary—Notre Dame College—St. Benedicts ; McDonald Restaurants; Aggressive Advertising; Bob's T-Shirts; Walmart; Falconbridge Ltd.; and all who participated from the NOFCC.



NOFCC PROGRAMS a report!!

Parking Program

The NOFCC has assisted 27 families in Northeastern Ontario for the cost of their parking at the Hospital for Sick Children for a total amount of approx. \$5000.00 from April 2000 to October 2002.

Telephone Program

The NOFCC has assisted 35 of families by providing pre-paid long distance telephone cards for a total amount of approx. \$2500.00 from November 2001 to October 2002.

Voucher Program

The NOFCC has assisted 20 families by providing grocery gift certificates for a total amount of approx. \$3000.00 from June 2002 to October 2002.

Emergency Program

The NOFCC has assisted 4 families in the total amount of approx. \$800.00 (in value) Awards to these families were based on crisis and need identified by health care professionals.

TOTAL: \$11,300.00 approx.

**THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
and more THANK YOUUS !!!**

The NOFCC wishes to acknowledge all of the following people for all their help and donations for without them the NOFCC would not be able to help families through the NOFCC's programs!!!!

Diane Rancourt; Greyhound Bus Lines; Kiwanas Club Timmins; Kinsman Club Sudbury; Lucky Star Bingo and volunteers Lillian, Brenda, Gerome & Claire; Ian & Michael Verdiel, Wes Beauchamps, Alex Henry (NOFCC Golf Team); Dinosaur Mini Golf; French River Marine, Allan & Lise Seguin; Pizza Hut; Mr. & Mrs. Gerry Allard; Cadillac Fairview Corp.; St. Benedicts Secondary School; Auxiliaire Colombiettes, Chelmsford; Ron Brunetter; Jean Berthiaume Company Ltd., Chelmsford; Five Seasons Transit Service.

BELL Mobility, gift basket, jackets, pre-paid long distance cards for cell phones and 2 pagers for family use.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR !!!!

Sudbury Kinsman house draw, Corsi Hill. A portion of the proceeds will go to the NOFCC. The NOFCC will be selling tickets at the house on November 2 & 3, 2002.

Midnight Bowl January 25, 2003.

Summer 2003, a MIDWAY, sponsored by The Knights of Columbus in Hanmer.

VERY INTERESTING!!!!

The following is an article from the Hospice Palliative Care Network Project NEWSUPDATE.

THRONE SPEECH ENDORSES COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

In its Throne Speech on September 30, 2002, Prime Minister Jean Chretien's government promised "to ensure that Canadians can provide compassionate care for a gravely ill or dying child, parent, or spouse without putting their jobs or incomes at risk."

Dr. Larry Librach is encouraged by the government's recognition of the difficulties experienced by those who are caring for the dying. "The initiative for this move began at the Temmy Latner Centre for Palliative Care," explains Dr. Librach, the director of both the Centre and the HPCNET Project.

In 1998, Dr. Librach and Bonnie Barry, a counselor with Centre and HPCNET, initiated the call for compassionate leave at the provincial level, with the Ontario Palliative Care Association. OPCA brought the issue forward to the Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association, which lobbied the federal government for the changes.

Dr. Librach points out that federal legislation can only protect the jobs of federal government employees, but that the federal government can make financial support available by providing employment insurance benefits for any Canadian caring for a dying family member. With this initiative the federal government is setting the standard for private corporations, he pointed out.

Dr. Librach has been asked to sit on an advisory committee in Ottawa to help

Human Resources Development Canada develop criteria for the compassionate leave plan.

Well done, Bonnie and Larry!

NOFCC NEEDS HELP!!!!

The NOFCC has assisted many families from Northeastern Ontario and you may be one of them. This small hard working and dedicated group has accomplished much in a short time. Imagine helping families with an incredible amount of over \$11,300.00!!! But they do need help to keep these programs afloat. How can you help??? Here is a list of the areas in which if more give a few hours a month or less the current volunteers will not get burnt out, that's a reality!

- sell tickets
- help to organize the Christmas Party—need gifts, entertainment, setting up, cleaning up, picking up various items etc.
- helping with the newsletter, photocopying, putting together, stuffing envelopes—
CAN anyone tackle laying out the newsletter with a computer program—you will need one.
- collecting money from donation units in Pizza Huts in Sudbury, outlying areas, North Bay, Timmins—would like to get some in Sault Ste Marie.
- Work at the Bingo
- Develop new projects

This is a brief list, we need your talent. Put your name on a volunteer list & offer what you can— 1 hour means a lot.

The NOFCC does need a secretary to attend monthly meetings to take minutes etc.

The NOFCC is also in the need of a book keeper (everything up to date on a computer program)

If you can spare some time call the NOFCC's hot line @ 1-877-253-2585, call Judy Mayer @ 1-800-293-2309, email the NOFCC nofcc@vianet.ca
Thank you.



HOPE IS IN THE HEART

Northern Ontario Families of
Children with Cancer

Striving to improve
The lives of families
Dealing with
Childhood cancer

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