

**Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa**

By Suzanne Noël, BSc. KIN, CFC, PCP

**T**hanks to all the sunshine, it has been another awesome summer in Ottawa! We'll do our best to let you know what the paramedic association has been up to in our part of the country.

**Clyde Flinn Memorial Golf Tournament**

**P**aramedics who worked in the Ottawa area about 20 years ago all remember the late Clyde Flinn. Clyde was diagnosed with throat cancer back in the late 1980s and unfortunately lost his battle a short time afterwards. In his honour, Paramedic Gerry Lyon started

an annual golf tournament with proceeds going to the Children's Wish Foundation.

Last year, golf enthusiast Rodney Hamberger took on the enormous task of running the Clyde Flinn Memorial Golf Tournament and he made sure it was bigger and better than ever! Rodney previously played the tourna-

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ment when he was just beginning to golf and since then he has taken on the responsibility of making sure the tournament is an enormous success every year. At the same time, medics raise a little money for a worthwhile cause in honour of a former colleague

The annual hockey tournament donates its proceeds to Roger's House (a pediatric palliative care centre) so Rodney hoped Ottawa paramedics could become recognized for continued Roger's House support through all of our sporting events.

A tremendous amount of work goes into organizing the golf tournament each year. Rodney spends many hours coordinating sponsors, volunteers, securing prize donations, promoting the tournament and inviting players. Several volunteers assist at the tournament by selling raffle tickets, manning the prize holes and coordinating the teams.

This year's tournament was held Monday August 21 at the Greensmere Golf and Country Club near Carp at a cost of \$80 per person (price includes dinner and cart). Greensmere was chosen because it is a fairly forgiving course for any beginners and was more central to surrounding paramedic services. It was a 9:00am shotgun start and we even had Nissan provide us with an Infinity as the grand prize for a hole in one!

Rodney did an incredible job of balancing the field with a number of local players who were able to pit their skills against many paramedics from outlying regions. The Ottawa Hospital Civic and General Campus

emergency nurses also submitted a few teams in an attempt to make the paramedics look bad (no news on how that turned out) and Rodney did his best to secure the Ottawa Senators Alumni team, as they are another proud supporter of the Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa and Roger's House.

At the end of the day, we capped everything off with an outing to Marshy's Bar and Grill on Centrepointe Drive.

If you are interested in sending a team to the 2007 Clyde Flinn Memorial Golf Tournament, please contact Rodney Hamberger at [golf@ottawaparamedics.ca](mailto:golf@ottawaparamedics.ca).

**A Hair Raising Event**

**A**nyone who has seen Ottawa Paramedic Annik Lagasse knows she has a great head of hair—very long and naturally blond. On Monday March 5th, 2007 Annik has plans to put that hair to good use by helping kids who have lost their hair while battling serious medical conditions such as cancer and burns.

According to the Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation, 46 children are diagnosed with cancer each day, with one in 330 kids developing the disease prior to age 20. In Canada, this year alone, 10,000 children will lose their hair due to the ravages of cancer treatments, severe burns or Alopecia.

Being in regular contact with cancer patients at work, Annik wanted to find something that she could do to help those battling the disease. That's when she discovered Angel Hair for Kids.

Angel Hair for Kids is an organization that provides human hair wigs for children who have lost their hair due to injury or disease. To make a single wig, 12 braids of hair are required at a cost of \$1,200.

On March 5, 2007 Ricciolo Hair Salon (372B Rideau Street, 613-789-5504) will be hosting a hair donation day. Three stylists have volunteered their time to collect the long hair and provide those who donate with a stylish new hair style at a discounted rate. Third Avenue Spa (784 Bank Street, 613-235-7722) has also generously

donated gift certificates which will be drawn among those who participate in this event.

So far, five people have signed up and Annik is looking for others with "virgin hair" to also donate to this great cause. This means your hair must be free of any colour or other chemical treatment (perms, straightening, etc) and be at least ten inches long. If your hair is six inches long now, you will be able to donate, as the average human hair growth is about a half inch per month.

If you are unable to donate hair, you can also submit a cash donation, which will help cover the costs to fabricate the actual wigs.

Please come out to support this worthwhile cause!

**How One Clinically Dead Patient Came Back To Touch So Many Lives**

**O**n November 26, 2004, a young Ottawa resident by the name of Marianne Cuhaci was driving her 10-year-old daughter, Anna McCorriston, into town. Without warning, the normally healthy Marianne went into sudden cardiac arrest and the van began swerving several times across four lanes of traffic. Anna, who was in the back seat, managed to get the van stopped and summon bystanders over to help her mother. The bystanders performed CPR on Ms. Cuhaci while waiting for paramedics to arrive. When medics Martin Marion, Mathieu Gagnon, Jenny Campbell and Peter Perryman arrived they found Ms. Cuhaci in ventricular fibrillation and were able to get a pulse back after defibrillating her heart and providing ACLS medications. After quickly resuscitating Ms. Cuhaci, the paramedics took her to the Ottawa Hospital General Campus where she was made a complete and deficit free recovery. A short time later, she was implanted with an internal cardiac defibrillator and has since continued to live a healthy life.

So what happens after all these people act together to save a life and keep a family together? For Anna and Marianne, life has gone on as it did





before the incident, doing things any typical, happy family would do. They have consistently expressed they are extremely grateful to the bystanders, medics and the Ottawa Hospital for saving Marianne's life.

In this case, it is the paramedics and the Ottawa Hospital who have gained, as both Anna and Marianne have been great advocates for each service since the incident, helping out through continued generous donations and fundraising efforts. Anna and Marianne were also special guests at last year's Ontario Paramedic Association Paramedicine 2005 conference and presented Ottawa Hospital Physician Justin Maloney with the Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa's 10-year Chain of Survival Award.

Anna is a competitive ice dancer and along with her skating partner became the Pre-Juvenile Sectionals Champions of 2006 and the Junior Bronze dance champions of Ontario. She puts in up to 20 hours a week training at the Minto Skating Club. Anna enjoys skating because as she says, "figure skating keeps me strong, healthy, helps me express myself and teaches me a lot about discipline."

On May 27, 2006 Anna participated

in the Ottawa Race Weekend to raise funds for both the Ottawa Hospital and Minto Skating Club.

It was a total coincidence that two charities that mean a lot to Anna became associated in one fundraising event. Marianne is Vice President of the club and thought it would be a great idea when she was presented with the option to have the club participate in the race. "I think it's good for skaters to be linked with and work with their communities. I think working together to make a difference in the community helps develop club spirit and a healthy attitude in general," says Anna. She continues, "A healthy attitude means a healthy mind and better skating ... I mean it when I say that. The Minto Skating Club promotes recreational and competitive skating but competitive skating tends to be an individualistic sport so thinking outside the box is a good thing."

Anna was eager to support both causes and signed up to run the five km marathon despite the fact that she is not a regular runner. "What happened to my mother can happen to anyone. The hospital needs more staff, more space and more equipment to help more people ... I didn't realize how big a deal the race was until I started hearing it on the

radio and when I also started hearing that some of my friends were doing it as well. Everybody was really supportive around me in the days coming up to the race. I also think it's good to allow skaters to do it too because it encourages them not only to help others but to support other people they don't know." The strength Anna gained through the long hours spent skating came through for her and allowed her to complete the race in a time she was quite happy about.

In the end, Anna raised an impressive \$7,500 and the Minto Skating Club raised over \$12,000, which was split equally between the Minto Skating Club and the Ottawa Hospital.

Marianne, a social worker, says that any kind of publicity promoting paramedics and the hospital is almost "therapeutic" for Anna as it enables her to turn a past trauma into a positive situation to help others and feel good about doing it. Currently 12 years old, Anna is quite a humanitarian. This past March, on her 12th birthday, Anna also collected money for World Vision in lieu of gifts. Talk about one impressive kid!

The fundraising, though, doesn't end there. Marianne and Anna have also been invited to give a testimonial at a hospital fundraising breakfast in the fall and take part in a promotional video. In the fall, Anna will be competing in a skate-a-thon for the Minto Skating Club, with 10 per cent of the money likely going to a charity.

As you can see, both the Ottawa Hospital and the Ottawa Paramedics have had a positive effect in the lives of these two outstanding members of our community.

Anna has made a point of saying on more than one occasion that she would do whatever she could do to promote the work that the paramedics do, since they are close to her heart.

Marianne and Anna, the Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa is proud to have you as honorary members and would like to thank you for the great work you do!

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