



MARCH IS EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH - EPILEPSY DURHAM REGION ... ON THE CUSP OF CHANGE, TOGETHER WE ARE ON OUR WAY!

Once again, March has been proclaimed as Epilepsy Awareness Month. Volunteers and staff will be educating our community about epilepsy by hosting public information displays, distributing posters, and more. This promises to be a very exciting month. Activities that you can be involved in include:

- **Champions for Epilepsy** – We are looking for champions to help us heighten the awareness of epilepsy. Why not take an Awareness Kit to school, your workplace, neighbourhood community centre, doctor's office or any other place you can think of.
- **Lavender Bracelets** – There will be scores of bracelets and ribbons available at different activities throughout March. They are \$2.00 each and are great for raising awareness about epilepsy. They are also available in our office.
- **Out of the Shadows Lecture Series** - If your group (school, daycare, employer, recreation group etc.) could benefit from a workshop on epilepsy, seizure

recognition, and first aid, please contact Melissa in our office to request a session. It's a small time investment that can make a huge difference in the life of someone living with epilepsy.

- **Toronto Marlies Game** – Saturday, March 14th, 2008. Be sure to join us for all of the action while supporting your local Epilepsy agency. For more information please visit our website. www.epilepsydurham.com
- **Lora the Lavender Labrador** - Don't forget to add Lora to your Easter Baskets. Lora has been very popular. She has found homes as far away as North Carolina, Newfoundland and most recently British Columbia. A donation of \$15.00 will find Lora a new home in yours. If you have a student in your home requiring community service hours, we have a program in place for them which will assist Lora finding new homes.

Please visit <http://www.epilepsydurham.com/awareness.html> for more information.

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COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS:

Enclosed with your newsletter is your pledge form for our annual Walk of Courage. This year the **Walk/Run will take place on Sunday, April 20th, 2008** at the Ice Sports Centre at 1401 Phillip Murray Avenue, Oshawa. Please consider joining us this year. Your donations directly impact our ability to continue community programming. Pledges may also be made on-line at <http://www.epilepsydurham.com/donations.html>

If you are unable to attend, please consider sponsoring Melissa. She is our office athlete and her goal is to raise \$1000.00. Can you help her? She will be running the 5km for her son Jacob. When making a donation on-line to support Melissa, just click on Jacob's Fund and 100% of your funds will be directed to Epilepsy Durham Region .

When you make a donation on-line you'll receive an income tax receipt immediately and your information is kept strictly confidential. Cheques can be made payable to Epilepsy Durham Region. Cash or cheque donations of \$20.00 or more will be issued an income tax receipt from our office. Your help is really needed. We extend our appreciation to the Oshawa Kicks Soccer Club for once again including those living with epilepsy in their event and providing us with an opportunity to help so many.

Let's Talk About Volunteering!



Volunteers are in many ways the heart of Canadian Charitable and not-for-profit organizations. "Volunteering is a significant aspect of Canadian life" - Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participation 2004 (CSGVP).

Did you know that according to this most recent national survey almost twelve million Canadians volunteered during the one-year period preceding the CSGVP Survey? That's 45% of the population aged 15 years and up. All this volunteering amounts to an unbelievable two billion hours, or the equivalent of one million full-time jobs!

On a provincial level, 50% of the Ontario population volunteered and the average annual number of volunteer hours was 162! A truly heart-warming statistic.

When asked why they volunteered, almost all surveyed (92%) agreed that making a contribution to their community was an important reason. The survey went on to say that 96% actually increase the number of their volunteer hours based on the importance of contributing to the community. That in itself speaks volumes ... don't you think? I believe we all want to make our community a better, more accepting place.

We all know how much the internet has changed our lives. Now it seems to be having a strong impact on the volunteering community too. Again, this

survey stated that 20% of volunteers used the internet in some way during their volunteering activities. Over 8% used the internet to seek out volunteer opportunities. This is very much the case for high school students needing to accumulate their Community Service Hours. Epilepsy Durham Region lists many of our volunteer opportunities on MyVolunteerPages.ca, volunteerenergy.ca, charityvillage.com as well as our website www.epilepsydurham.com

Over the last 12 months, our small team of loyal volunteers contributed over 800 hours on our behalf, way above the national average annual volunteer hours for health organizations (55 hours). That represents more than 22 weeks of time to your agency. Thank you!

This fall we initiated a new volunteer training module; five volunteers have formed our Educational Outreach Team, consisting of Miriam Beach, Jim Coleman, Irene Rosseau, Dorothy Castel and Laura Thompson. Dorothy is also our Volunteer Co-ordinator. She will connect with our volunteers to co-ordinate schedules of volunteer opportunities. If you would like to join, please give us a call.

All indications point to 2008 being very busy year with our March Awareness month activities, Walk of Courage in April, Golf Tournament in June, Charity BBQ, and Annual Gladioli Flower Campaign in August.

Have you considered sharing your expertise and talents?

It would be great if we could have more volunteers from our membership. We all want a more accepting community for those touched by epilepsy. We want our voice to be heard. However, this is only possible if we unite our efforts and become involved!

One way to do that is to take the message into your workplace. In fact, according to a recent press release from Imagine Canada, a national registered charity that was involved in the compilation of the CSGVP, "Workplace support is key in encouraging volunteering. Fully 57% of employed volunteers received some form of non-monetary support from their employer for volunteering; on average, volunteers who benefit from employer support also contribute about one-third more hours than other volunteers."

If you're not sure how to get involved, call us ... we'll find a way.

Here's to a great 2008!

The Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participation is conducted by Statistics Canada and was developed through a unique partnership of federal government departments and voluntary organizations. For more information visit <http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca/home.asp>

Can Your Life Be A Healthier One?

Submitted by Cara McCarron

What does it really mean to LIVE HEALTHY? It means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. It means, to some, a painstaking amount of thought and effort. To others, it means a longer and more enjoyable life, and therefore worth some effort, and to others still, it's just a way of life they are not willing to compromise.

Living Healthy really isn't complicated. We need to eat right and move our bodies. We need to be aware of what we put in and on our bodies and use some common sense.

When we over think anything, it becomes so huge we can't even begin to think about how we are going to accomplish it. If you break it down to some simple rules, the task at hand becomes manageable!

1. Move your body, whatever that means to you, do it for at least 45 minutes a day. This can be a walk or yoga or weights, just do something that increases your heart rate.

2. Eat foods from the perimeter of the grocery store or a local farmers market. The junk is in the interior of the store, stick to the outside aisles, that's where the fruit and veggies are!

3. Read labels...if you can't say it, put it down! (I do this with my girls and if they can't say it, we don't buy it) This applies to personal care products too.

4. Get some sun. Vitamin D makes us happy!! We need the sun; we just have to be educated about safety.

We all want healthier and happier lives and hopefully I have given you some easy ways to start! Stay well.

Cara McCarron

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www.giveorganic.ca



****Be sure to check with your physician before starting any physical activity or changing your daily nutrition diets.**

The Lions Foundation of Canada: Guide Dogs

Epilepsy Durham Region has received many requests for information and assistance to purchase Assistive Dogs. While EDR cannot financially assist families with this purchase, we are happy to provide some background information on an organization that can help.

The Lions Foundation of Canada provides guide dogs for those who are physically disabled and who qualify for the program based on an assessment by the Acceptance Committee. The cost of training the dog and owner is borne by the Foundation for successful applicants. Dogs have many skills depending upon the needs of the owner including:

- Open and close doors (interior, exterior)
- Operating light switches
- Open fridge door, dryer door, drawers
- Retrieve items on floor
- Assist with client transfers from chair to bed
- Assist with roll-over in bed
- Go for, or bark for help and/or activate an alert system (Life Line).

These skills can be extremely valuable to those experiencing seizures. In order to receive one of these remarkable dogs, applicants must complete the appropriate forms and have their

physician complete a medical report. Then the application will go through the screening process in order to determine eligibility. This assessment may even include having a trainer visit for an in home assessment to determine unique needs. If accepted, an individual would be required to complete a nineteen-day stay to meet the dog and learn all aspects of dog handling. Many individuals call in asking if the dogs they already own can be trained to provide these skills. Unfortunately the Lions Foundation of Canada is unable to provide training for these animals.

The Lions Foundation of Canada offers their services at no cost to the candidates, using money raised in the community. At this time there is a waiting list of one and a half to two years. Congratulations to the Lions Club, their volunteers and dogs for their work in helping people with epilepsy retain their independence!

If you would like more information on the Lions Foundation services, application forms and activities, you can also write to:

Special Skills Dogs of Canada – Dog Guide Program
Lions Foundation of Canada
PO Box 907
Oakville, Ontario L6J 5E3
1-800-768-3030



Words of Thanks and Acknowledgements

We are deeply grateful for the continuing generosity of our donors who graciously assist us in our efforts. Their support and that of our caring volunteers enable us to provide a full range of high quality services and programs to people affected by epilepsy and their families. In 2007 we received funding from the following individuals

Patrons (\$1,500 +)

- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Human Resources Skills Development Canada
- Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- The Co-operators
- CIBC
- Durham Community Foundation

Benefactors (\$1,000 +)

- Benefit People
- BMO Fountain of Hope
- Great Blue Heron Charity Casino
- HBC Birthday Celebration
- William F. Hayball Foundation

Donors (\$500.00)

- Main Family Chiropractic
- M & M Meats – Charity BBQ
- Oshawa West Lions Club
- Ontario Power Generation
- Parkway Honda
- RBC
- Wal-Mart – Charity BBQ
- CustomPrinting,Whitby

Epilepsy Durham Region...On the cusp of change, together we are on our way!



We extend a very special thank you to Dr. Andrew Springer his staff and clients for their very generous donation. Their office collected toys and a Christmas Hamper for a member of Epilepsy Durham Region, which was very much appreciated by their entire family. *Three Cheers for Dr. Springer and his team!*

Dr. D. Andrew Springer, BSc., D.Ch., FRSH, -- Chiropracist – Foot Specialist

Epilepsy Ontario Direct Mail Campaign

Epilepsy Ontario has begun their direct mail campaign across the province. If you have supported the campaign thank you very much. If you have not received your income tax receipt, please contact Epilepsy Ontario directly at 1-800-463-1119. Currently these funds do not support programming in Durham Region and Epilepsy Durham Region cannot provide income tax receipts.

Disclaimer: The content herein is in no way intended to provide medical care or other professional advice, nor is it intended to be used to diagnose or assess health conditions or to be substituted for professional guidance in treatment. Epilepsy Durham Region, its representatives, service agents, and solicitors are neither liable nor responsible for any outcome or damages resulting from information in either a direct or indirect form, arising from this material herein contained.



Things to claim at tax time...

- Childcare expenses
- Amount for an eligible dependant
- Caregiver amount
- Tuition, education and textbooks amounts
- Disability amount transferred from a dependant
- Amounts transferred from your spouse or common-law partner
- Allowable amounts of medical expenses for other dependants
- Amount for infirm dependants age 18 or older
- Refundable medical expense supplement
- Disability supports deduction
- Medical expenses for self, spouse or common-law partner and your dependant children born in 1989 or later
- Bus pass receipts

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Every Person Matters!

At our agency, every single person with epilepsy who comes through the door, makes a phone call or sends an email receives personal services from our professional staff. That is the core of our work and the reason why we are considered one of the top epilepsy service agencies in the country.

We're now into the New Year and want to thank all of you who have donated to our annual campaign thus far. Every person we serve matters, and every dollar matters. Our campaign is still in progress and any donation of any size you wish to make supports our direct service delivery. Thank you for supporting our efforts.

Your annual membership donation of \$10, \$35, \$50, \$100 or whatever you can afford at this time will help ensure that we can continue our educational programs and advocacy services where they're needed most.



YES! I would like to renew my membership

\$10 \$35 \$50 \$100 Other: _____

Cheque, payable to Epilepsy Durham Region Cash

Please acknowledge my donation with a charitable receipt

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Email: _____

I would like to volunteer: Yes No

Return to: Epilepsy Durham Region, 119 Ash Street, Whitby, ON L1N 4B1
On-line donations [www. http://www.epilepsydurham.com/donations.html](http://www.epilepsydurham.com/donations.html)