

## Terry Fox Run



By Nate Smelle

PULLING INTO THE PARKING lot of Millennium Park in Bancroft on Sunday morning for the Terry Fox Run, I ran into a friend that I had not seen in a while. Catching up with the usual small talk at first I soon found out the reason why we cannot run into each other around town as usual. To my surprise in the six months that we not crossed paths, she had been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer that demanded immediate attention. Out of the blue her life was turned upside down by the disease as she had to leave town to begin chemotherapy treatment right away. Luckily through an attentive awareness of her personal health she was able to stop the cancer before it had metastasized.

Before I could even snap a single photograph for the photo spread that I was planning for this edition of Bancroft This Week, I found myself in another very intimate conversation with two cancer survivors who I did not know on a personal basis. Like the friend I ran into in the parking lot, these two new friends of mine shared with me their experiences of coping with this horrific disease. Sharing another similarity with my friend's story, both individuals stressed the importance of knowing your own body and being aware of any changes to your personal health.

Walking on towards the Start/Finish Line on the bridge, I began speaking with some of the runners who had set out and returned early. As with my previous discussions, everyone I spoke with had their own close encounter with this consumptive illness to share. Many of the survivors I spoke with had more than just their own story to tell. Most of the individuals had lost loved ones to one form of cancer or another. Something I also heard repeatedly on this day was how many of these loved ones who lost their lives to cancer could have been saved, but they were too scared to go to the doctor until it was too late.

After a tear-filled morning of listening to others tell me about the pain and suffering they had personally experienced or witnessed in someone they care about, I decided to take the long way home to think about the loved ones I have lost. Having watched three grandparents succumb to cancer when I was a child; and then again losing my aunt as a teenager, I am unfortunately no stranger to

the disease. Because of these experiences I do my best to pay attention to my body and health, making sure to go pay a visit to my doctor for regular check-ups and screenings.

Something every individual that I spoke with on Sunday at the Terry Fox run asked me to remind people about here on page 4.