



Inspired By The Volunteer Efforts Of REALTORS®

Ann Hannah

TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO SUN

May 31, 2013

Everyday all over our city Greater Toronto REALTORS® are not only guiding people through the home buying and selling process, they're contributing to the quality of life for which our city is internationally known.

Mississauga REALTORS® Lorne and Aneta Andrews have personally contributed to improving the outlook for young people in our city. In recent years, they offered hundreds of volunteer hours annually to support the PACT Urban Peace Program, helping more than 100 youth last year alone, with similar charitable contributions in previous years.

Borne out of an initiative to prevent family violence, the PACT Urban Peace Program is an award-winning Canadian charity that offers life skills community service projects for at-risk youth, including those in conflict with the law.

Powerhouse of Terror was an annual charity haunt that was held in Mimico. Through the PACT Haunted Theatre program, teens helped create sets and costumes, and even operate the attraction.

Although, the Powerhouse of Terror has seen its last haunt, it delivered such successful results that the PACT Urban Peace Program's costume design program will continue this spring as the organization sources opportunities to connect with other haunts.

Pickering/Ajax REALTOR® Norman Jones also has a soft spot for young people. He is part of a group of East-end REALTORS® who have met every Wednesday for the past 25 years to share breakfast and showcase their listings. Through the group, Jones has chaired a committee to support the Sunshine Kids Foundation, which funds trips for children who are battling cancer, offering them the opportunity to connect with other young people facing similar challenges.

One trip, in 2011, took a group of five teens to Las Vegas, all of whom had either already undergone or were currently undergoing extensive chemotherapy. While in Las Vegas their activities included visiting the Hoover Dam and taking in shows featuring Cirque de Soleil and the Blue Man group.

Another trip that year took two teenage girls diagnosed

with Acute Myeloid Leukemia to New York City where they met other Sunshine Kids, visited the Empire State building, went on a cruise to Liberty Island, met the anchors of ABC's Today Show and took in several Broadway shows, meeting various cast members as well.

Jones estimates his Committee has raised thousands of dollars in the past eight years. This year, he has set a goal of raising \$30,000 primarily through an annual dance and silent auction, which takes place at Cedarbrook Community Centre on June 7th.

Newmarket/Aurora area REALTOR® Eric McCartney also works to brighten the lives of those less fortunate. In recent years he has contributed to a door-to-door fundraising campaign in support of the York Region North Heart and Stroke Foundation and served as a team captain for Big Bike, an event in which riders pedal through communities in support of the cause.

He even developed a website to raise awareness of his team's efforts for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, which supports approximately 900 leading researchers and teams in hospitals and universities. Last year, for the fourth consecutive year, his team won the Heart & Stroke Newmarket BIG Bike Team Spirit Award. Throughout the past five years the team has raised thousands of dollars, and would like to raise even more when the team rides through Newmarket June 7th.

Mr. McCartney also supports the community through a number of other activities like visiting seniors' homes with his therapy dog and contributing to neighbourhood clean-up efforts.

The next time you talk with a Greater Toronto REALTOR® ask about the causes they support – you're sure to be inspired.

Ann Hannah is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 36,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.

**Follow TREB on www.twitter.com/TREB_Official,
www.Facebook.com/TorontoRealEstateBoard and
www.youtube.com/TREBChannel**