

The Glengarry News

Alexandria Terry Fox Event raises almost \$9,000

September 18 2019 BY TARA MACDONALD News Staff

The annual Terry Fox Event was held at Alexandria Island Park on Sunday bringing in 74 participants and raising more than \$8800 for cancer research programs.

Each year, the volunteer-led event celebrates Canadian athlete and humanitarian Terry Fox. In 1980, with one leg having been amputated due to cancer, Terry Fox embarked on an east to west cross-Canada run to raise money and awareness for cancer research.

“Terry Fox was the greatest Canadian that ever lived,” stated organizer Doug Boeckh who’s been running the event in Alexandria for nearly two decades. “It’s a lot of work but it’s not much of an imposition because I think this is the best charity in the world.”

Now in its 39th year the Terry Fox Run has evolved into the largest fundraising event in support of cancer research in the world, with events taking place in 33 countries across 5 continents annually. Thanks to the efforts of people across Canada and the world to honour Terry Fox’s memory and help continue his journey, the Foundation has been able to invest more than \$21.8 million to its cancer research programs in 2017/18 alone.

The event opened under the Pavilion where participants registered before heading off towards the trails for a morning of walking, running and biking along the two-, five- and ten-kilometer routes. To ensure that the event was as inclusive as possible, there were no entry fees or minimum pledge amounts needed to participate. The event closed with a BBQ lunch where people could gather and share their stories.

“This is an important event for me and the club,” said Cornwall Cycle Club organizer Troy Blackadder who’s wife underwent two bouts of cancer. “It’s such an amazing community event. It’s well run, with a great route and friendly community which makes us want to come back every year.”

One of the main draws of the Alexandria event is the inclusion of bicycle routes. “I don’t know any other Terry Fox event that offers a bike option,” said Cycle Club member Denis Martel from Cornwall. “It’s a great event and close to home, but that’s what drew me here.”

A number of volunteers helped ensure the event ran smoothly including cancer survivor Gary Newman from Alexandria who’s been involved with the event for the past 18 years. “Thinking back to Terry and what he went through, he’s a hero in the true sense,” said Mr. Newman. Other volunteers – such as Bainsville resident Lawrence St Denis – were honouring friends and family who’d been affected by cancer. “In the mid ‘90s, I had five friends who had cancer all at the same time,” said Mr. St Denis. “I used to walk, but these days I volunteer and supply the picnic tables for the barbeque.”

Sadly, Mr. Newman and Mr. St. Denis’ stories are not unique with projections estimating that nearly half of all Canadians are expected to be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime, While investment into cancer research has increased the five year cancer survivor rate from 25% in the 1940s to 60% today, much more needs to be done to help create awareness and support efforts to discover a road map to cure cancer.

For more information on the Terry Fox event or to donate, contact Dough Boeckh at 613-363-1236.