

Shinerama '93 to be biggest ever

by Ryan Stanley

Dalhousie's Shinerama organizers have set the most ambitious target yet for their campaign to raise funds for cystic fibrosis research. And although few people know it, they've been at work throughout the summer raising money and laying the groundwork for the charity blitz which culminates September 9.

"This year our goal is \$27,000, which is about \$2,000 more than the goal of last year," says Gwen Otto, Dalhousie's Shinerama Director. Last year the campaign fell just short of its \$25,000 goal, but Otto is confident the target can be surpassed this year. She says the number of first-year students participating in Shinerama will probably be up this time around.

Dalhousie students have taken part in Shinerama for 27 years. Each year, hundreds of students hit the streets to shine shoes and anything else that needs shining, and receive donations from the shiners. All money raised goes to the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, to support research into treatment for the disease which affects one in 2,000 people born in Canada.

This year Shinerama's geographical boundaries will be considerably expanded. "Last year was the first time we'd been out in Bedford and Sackville," notes Otto, "and this year we'll be as far as Cole Harbour."

Unbeknownst to most, however, numerous events have been held by the Shinerama Blitz Crew over the summer, in an attempt to get a head start on the fundraising goal and to raise public awareness of the campaign. Numerous car washes have been staged throughout Metro, and Your Father's Moustache, Scoundrel's, J.J. Rossi's, the Graduate and Jerry's Pub have donated so-called bar dates, when patrons pay voluntary cover charges to support the campaign.

As well, a benefit concert at All Saint's Cathedral on August 26 raised over \$100.

Meanwhile, Brent Williams has been working hard to get Dalhousie societies involved in the effort. He is Shinerama's On-Campus Co-

ordinator. One of his main projects has been distributing Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Visa credit card applications. For every approved application, CIBC has pledged to donate ten dollars to CF research.

Universities and colleges across Canada co-ordinate their Shinerama

activities every year. In Nova Scotia, Saint Francis Xavier and Acadia Universities, along with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and Teacher's College, participate along with Dalhousie.

At Dal, the university's president has got in on the action in

recent years — traditionally, President Howard Clark has served breakfast in front of the SUB to the shiners before they set out.

In all, Otto estimates that 7% of the annual funding the CF Foundation receives comes from the national Shinerama effort.

She and Williams agree that the preparation work has been long and exhausting, but that they have received welcome support from many quarters.

"I've had a lot of people who aren't actually working on the campaign," says Otto, "who have come forward and said, 'No problem, I'll help.'"

CF a family matter

by Ryan Stanley

For Gwen Otto and Brent Williams, it's a fun and rewarding way to support a good cause. For Ira Redwood, it's much closer to home.

Redwood is also a Dalhousie student, in the second year of a biology degree. His 4-year-old daughter Terra has cystic fibrosis, and he has been working with the Dalhousie Shinerama 1993 Blitz Crew to help increase the public's understanding of the disease. He and Terra appear at fundraising events, and Redwood speaks to the media and other interested people about his family's experience with CF.

About one child in 2,000 born in Canada has cystic fibrosis, a genetic condition which can affect both the lungs and digestive system. Instead of secreting wastes, body tissues become blocked with salt deposits, causing dehydration. The lungs may be unable to expel germs, and instead become clogged with thick mucus. Digestion of food may also be hindered, leading to severe weight loss.

Redwood speaks matter-of-factly about the ways CF has affected his daughter. For one thing, her parents must always keep a close eye on her health. "As soon as she gets signs of a cold, she's on antibiotics," says Redwood. Many CF patients get pneumonia and bronchitis easily because their lungs are not strong enough to repel bacteria and viruses. The drawback is that large quantities of antibiotics weaken her immune system's ability to fight off infection by itself.

Terra also needs lots of vitamins and calories to keep her immune system

strong. "We keep lots of high-calorie snacks around for her to eat," Redwood says. "They [CF patients] get treated quite royally, but it's all necessary."

As well, Terra takes enzymes to help her digest her meals. She needs seven different capsules with each meal; some CF patients take as many as twenty. Finally, Terra and her parents engage in regular therapy exercises. Twice a day they vibrate her chest cavity from all four sides to loosen the mucus in her lungs. She also inhales steroids to open her breathing passageways and increase the activity of the cilia, hairs which help to expel foreign matter from the lungs. About every three months, she must visit a doctor to monitor the state of her health.

And what does Terra think of this routine? "She doesn't like the therapy very much," her father says. "She'd rather be playing. She's really quite energetic and lively."

Redwood is optimistic about the prospects for improved treatment techniques. He notes that in the early 1960s, average life expectancy for CF patients was less than five years. It is now almost 30. The CF gene was identified in 1989, and research is currently being pursued which may eliminate the need for much of the therapy CF patients now receive.

He says he doubts a cure can be found which avoids genetic manipulation of the human embryo, an approach which he says is likely to involve difficult moral questions. However, he says, "You find that CF patients have different priorities [than might be expected]. Terra would rather have them find something so she wouldn't have to take all the enzymes."

Homophobia study launched

by Maura Donovan

The Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) has initiated the first-ever study of homophobic abuse against lesbians and gay men in Nova Scotia. Although studies on hate crime and discrimination have been conducted in the States and other parts of Canada, *Speaking Out!* marks the first time lesbians and gay men in Nova Scotia have been able to speak out, as a group, about the abuses they have experienced.

Approximately 350 lesbians and gay men have completed surveys about their experiences of violence, harassment, threats, intimidation, and discriminatory treatment. The surveys cover abuse in such areas as the school system, institutions, relationships, on the streets, and by 'helping' professionals. Fifteen in-depth interviews have also been conducted with people who have experienced a range of problems due to homophobia and heterosexism. Because *Speaking Out!* is only a three-month project, most of the research was conducted in the Halifax area. However, *Speaking Out!* staff have met with a group of lesbians and gay men from Cape Breton, and

surveys have been returned from across Nova Scotia. All the material is being compiled, analyzed, and written into a report on homophobic abuse in Nova Scotia. The report will be released in October.

The results and the report will be used to raise awareness and urge government and others to take action against homophobic abuse. There has been a great deal of interest in this project from the lesbian and gay communities in Nova Scotia and lesbian and gay anti-violence projects across North America. After the release of the report, workshops will be conducted on anti-gay violence and discrimination. As well, NSPIRG has initiated a working group, Humans Against Homophobia, also known as HAH! The group is made up of people of all sexual preferences who have come together to fight homophobia and heterosexism. The group's mandate includes education, activism, and working with other groups who share its concerns. Its first activity will be participating in the Sexual Orientation Barbecue for new students on September 9.

The *Speaking Out!* project and Humans Against Homophobia aren't

the only PIRG initiatives on the go. PIRG published and distributes Brenda Thompson's *Single Mothers' Survival Guide* and the *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink!* environmental handbook. PIRG also publishes *perspective* magazine, and has a university-community connection program that encourages students to do research on community-related issues. PIRG will soon be publishing the second edition of the *Handy Dandy Guide to Resource Centres and Resource Contacts in Metro* (a must for term papers). This summer, PIRG has had three research projects on the go: a study of environmental racism in Nova Scotia, a study of homeless youth in the Halifax area, and *Speaking Out!*

NS PIRG is part of a North America-wide movement of PIRGs doing work on important environmental and social justice issues. Every Dalhousie student is a member of PIRG, and there are people from the community who are involved as well.

For more information, or to get involved, contact Maura Donovan at PIRG, 494-6662. The PIRG office is located on the third floor of the Dalhousie Student Union Building.

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