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STROKE RECOVERY GROUP TAKING IT ALL IN STRIDE

BY MONIQUE TAMMINGA - LANGLEY TIMES

Like so many non-profit organizations, Langley's only stroke recovery group is struggling to find funding and will have to reduce its days of therapy from three to two a week.

Funding from the Langley Good Times Cruise-In was a huge boost to the tiny organization but B.C.'s largest car show won't be held this year.

Recently, Playtime Gaming Centre provided the Stroke Recovery Group with a cheque for \$900. All of it helps, said Langley Stroke Recovery founder Marilyn Piticco.

The group, made up of more than 20 Langley stroke survivors, have become a tight-knit group are looking at a new, lofty goal.

“We really need \$10,000, but that is a big goal for my stroke survivors and families to do alone,” said Piticco.

She is talking about the Strides for Strokes walk taking place on Saturday, June 12 at Peace Arch Park. Meteorologist Mark Madryga will emcee the event that brings together families and stroke survivors.

“We could really use the community to come out and walk or pledge us. They can go online to www.strokerecoverybc.ca.”



Pitocco has run the program on a shoe-string budget out of the Walnut Grove Community Centre for 10 years. Last year, her daughter Michelle Sparrow came on board to work with the young stroke survivors.

Participants work on motor skills, speech, do exercises and play games like bocci.

Some stroke survivors are in wheelchairs, many can't speak or are learning how to again.

While others, like 36-year-old Ernie Kasper, look unscathed on the outside, but still suffer difficulties with noises and interaction with others and can't function they way they used to.

Kasper has been training for Strides For Strokes and had a goal of running 24 km.

He's reached 32 km.

"He has been a great example of someone fighting to get his life back and along the way finding new ways to feel a sense of accomplishment and purpose," said Pittico.



Playtime Gaming's Jarrod Osborne, right, presents Michelle Sparrow with a cheque for \$900 to help Langley Stroke Recovery carry out its work.

