

Headwaters Hike to Fight Cancer returns for third year with funds raised supporting cancer care

By Joshua Drakes, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Headwaters Hike to Fight Cancer returns to the Caledon Ski Club on Oct. 8, bringing the community together for an evening of hiking, fundraising, and supporting local cancer care.

Now in its third year, the event is designed as an accessible fundraising opportunity for people of all ages and abilities.

Shauna Santarossa of the Headwaters Health Care Foundation, who also handles marketing for the organization, said that this year, participants can choose between one-kilometre and three-kilometre routes, following feedback that some of last year's routes were more challenging than expected.

“The one-kilometre and three-kilometre options will be a little bit easier than what was hiked last year because we heard some feedback that the hike was a bit challenging,” she said. “The five-kilometre [route] wasn't very popular, so this year we're doing a one-kilometre and a three-kilometre.”

Registration opens at 4 p.m., with the hike beginning at 5 p.m. Participants can register individually or as part of a team, with registration costing \$35 per person. The fee includes the hike, a T-shirt and dinner following the event.

After completing the route, participants will gather at the Caledon Ski Club's Main Lodge for dinner, with salad, lasagna and a cookie for dessert.

Games, a raffle table and silent auction will provide additional opportunities for participants to take part, while coffee and apple cider will be available following the hike.

“The registration fee is \$35 a person, and you sign up online,” Santarossa said. “You can create an online page where you can solicit friends, family, co-workers to donate to you directly. You can also sign up as a team, so you can do it with your co-workers or maybe your family, your siblings, your neighbours. We have a hockey team that's signed up already to participate this year.”

The event also features a peer-to-peer fundraising component. Participants who register can create an online fundraising page and ask friends, family members and co-workers to support their efforts. Prizes will be awarded to the individual and team that raise the most money.

Funds raised through the event remain local and support cancer care at Headwaters Health Care Centre. The foundation directs the money toward equipment and programs supporting cancer services, including oncology clinics and diagnostic imaging.

Previous fundraising efforts have supported equipment such as oncology treatment chairs and the hospital's MRI and diagnostic imaging capabilities, with this year's funds going toward the highest-priority needs related to cancer care.

The Hike to Fight Cancer was created to complement the Headwaters Health Care Foundation's other signature fundraising events, including its annual golf tournament and gala, while providing a lower-cost way for the broader community to participate and fundraise.

Santarossa said the event is also intended to provide a way for people to support local health care while enjoying the outdoors and spending time together as a community.

“I personally think that the hike itself is actually beautiful,” she said. “It's a great way to get outside, enjoy the fresh air, enjoy the

beauty that nature in our region has to offer at this time of year, while making a huge difference to your local hospital.?

Organizers are encouraging families, friends, co-workers and community groups to take part. All ages are welcome, with hockey teams and other groups already registered.

Registration remains open for those looking to participate, fundraise or support someone taking part in the Oct. 8 event. The evening offers an opportunity to enjoy the fall scenery at the Caledon Ski Club while helping support cancer care close to home.

Go to hhcfoundation.akaraisin.com/ui/hike2026 to register.