

Two years of hair care leaves lasting legacy at Regency Acres P.S.



By Brock Weir

Some people mock the amount of time it takes for people these days to get their hair just right before setting out for the day.

Gel, mousse, pomades, straighteners, and any variety of curling devices are regular pieces in the hair care arsenal, but for many Grade 8 students at Regency Acres Public School, their two years of careful primping has not just been about looking their personal best ? others have a very important stake in their manes.

Students will gather at Regency Acres next Wednesday, June 25, as the Grade 8 girls, along with students from other grades, and some students from Aurora High School, line up to get their waist-length hair cut in a threefold event designed to raise money and awareness for cancer research, and to provide hair that will be put towards wigs for people undergoing cancer treatment.

It was an initiative spearheaded in the school by Alice Sandiford when she was in Grade One. Now on the cusp of graduating from Grade 8 to attend Unionville's Bill Carruthers Secondary School in September, this event will be one to remember.

“The last two years have been all about growing my hair and taking very good care of it,” says Alice. “It is actually harder than it seems. For starters, you can't straighten it a lot, or curl it a lot, or heat it a lot, because it kills your hair and you have to do lots of treatments on it, including oil.”

She will be joined at the event by fellow Grade 8 student Carly Blaser, who first got involved in the initiative as a Grade 6 student. As they prepare to leave Regency, although they hope the event continues, they view this as something of a grand finale, laying the groundwork on what hopefully will be a legacy for the school.

“I hope it continues,” says Alice. “But we're coming back to cut our hair again!”

For Carly, her first time cutting her hair was about wanting to be a part of the program. Two years on, a family friend is now fighting cancer, so this year's cut hits very close to home.

“It is a good feeling,” says Carly, thinking about where their long-tended hair is ultimately going to end up.

Adds Alice: “I think about who I am going to make smile because of this.”

This year's event will be extra special as CHFI personality Erin Davis will be on hand to lend her voice to the cause. Knowing how active Davis has been to advocate for cancer-related causes in the past, Judy Sandiford, who works in administration at Regency in addition to being Alice's mother, approached her for the 2012 event. Although Davis had to send her regrets for that outing, the stars

aligned for June 25.

?She is such a huge advocate for cancer and is who I hope Alice takes after,? says Judy. ?She is just so selfless. When she said she would try to come, I knew we had to make the effort to make it bigger. We had to get kids aware of why they cut their hair, where it goes, and how it is treated. This year, we have students from Grade 3 to Grade 11 and I couldn't ask for anything more.?

If you have eight inches of hair you would like to get rid of for a good cause, all are welcome for next Wednesday's group haircut, which gets underway at 11.15 a.m. For more information, contact Judy Sandiford at Judy.Sandiford@yrdsb.ca.