

Walkolution News

Issue 8

September 2008

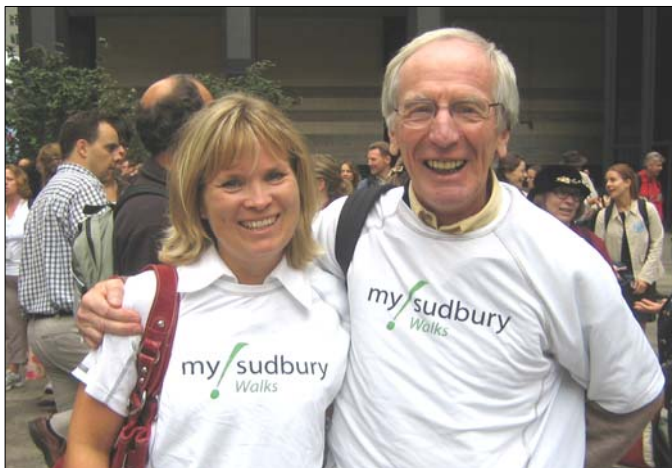
OWN - Ontarians Walking NOW!

Following on the heels of 2007's successful World Record Walk, Walk21 Toronto 2007 Conference, and the Canadian Walkability Roadshow, Green Communities Canada has formed a collaborative partnership with Walk & Bike for Life, StepsCount, and Urban Poling to continue the



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My Sudbury Walks! Bob Rogers, Chair of the City's Healthy Community Cabinet and Carol Coffyn, from the Sudbury District Health Unit, at Walk 21-Toronto.

active2010.asp.

OWN will bring together through a series of regional workshops, teams of municipal leaders, planners, transportation demand management professionals, parks, health, fitness and recreation professionals to work synergistically on creating walkable communities and the promotion of walking for all community members.

Bringing together professionals who have rarely, if ever, worked collaboratively on projects provided some powerful synergy in some of the communities that were involved in the Walkability Roadshow. OWN will share the top case studies and ongoing successes of key Roadshow communities.

(Continued on page 4)

momentum of the *Walkolution* with OWN!

OWN, Ontarians Walking Now, is a two year project with the goal of assisting communities to put pedestrians first in their planning processes to create sustainable, healthy, active communities. It will also provide exciting, interesting walking

resources and activities to meet the urgent need to get Ontarians walking, today.

OWN is a provincial Communities in Action Fund project, with financial support from the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion's Active 2010 initiative www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/sportandrec/



Strategic Alliance between Green Communities Canada, Walk & Bike for Life and walkON



Gil (Guillermo) Penalosa, Executive Director of Walk & Bike for Life, is a well known international speaker and consultant. In his presentations and workshops on creating better communities, he develops strong linkages between walking, bicycling, parks, and trails, with improving personal and public health, enhancing transportation systems, and providing recreation for all. While working as Director of Recreation for the city of Bogota, Columbia, Gil's team was responsible for creating 91 km of car-free roads on Sundays and engaging over 1.5 million residents weekly to run, walk, cycle, and skate in an event known as the Ciclovía. You can learn more about Walk & Bike for Life by visiting the website and be sure to sign up for Gil's informative and inspiring newsletter.

<http://walkandbikeforlife.org/>

Green Communities Canada, Walk & Bike for Life and walkON have formed a strategic alliance to promote and encourage active transportation in communities in Ontario and across Canada.

After a close collaboration between Green Communities Canada and Walk & Bike for Life on the Walkability Roadshow and Walk21 Toronto 2007 we realized both organizations have a similar vision and mission when it comes to walking initiatives.

walkON, a program developed by a collaborative of six Heart Health projects from Central West Ontario: Halton Region, Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk, Niagara Region, Waterloo, and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph, works to support the development of walkable communities. walkON has developed a menu of resource supports to engage and

mobilize communities at the local level to affect changes to the built environment that will ultimately support walking.



These resource supports include an informative web site (www.walkon.ca), Walkability Toolkit, Walkability Checklist, information sessions, workshops, and the iCANwalk social marketing campaign.



These resources can be applied to communities that are in different stages of readiness without dictating what specific approaches or activities should be completed.

This strategic alliance will reduce duplication of effort, marshal resources and accomplish some great projects together. Walk & Bike for Life will be working with Green Communities Canada on Ontarians Walking Now (OWN), while Green Communities Canada will be assisting on Walk & Bike for Life's Trails for Active Transportation (TFAT) project.

Green Communities Canada, Walk & Bike for Life and walkON are working to expand the successful walkON model across Ontario and we are currently seeking funding for this exciting initiative.

World Record Walk on Display at Guinness World of Records Museum, Niagara Falls

The WRW Guinness Certificate, along with a collection of newspaper clippings and photos from the October 3, 2007 event, is now on display at the Guinness World of Records Museum, in Niagara Falls, Ontario (<http://www.guinnessniagarafalls.com/>)

Discover the tallest, shortest, heaviest, fastest, loudest, and richest plus thousands of other amazing facts and feats at this popular Niagara Falls attraction.

If you present a copy of the coupon below upon admission, a 50% discount will apply. School group rates are available. For information call toll free: 1-866-656-0310.



Get 50% off
regular admission price at
Guinness World of Records Museum
Niagara Falls, Ontario

Coupon expires August 31, 2009



The Rivalry Intensifies - Australia Out to Beat Our Record on Sept 1, 2008!

- > On May 26, 2005, Albertans, led by SHAPE (Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere), set the world record for the largest simultaneous World Record Walk when 79,815 people across the province walked 1 kilometre at the same time.
- > In 2006, the state of Western Australia topped that record when 100,915 participants walked at 570 venues across the state.
- > On October 3rd, 2007 led by the province of Ontario, with over 160,000 participants, Canada convincingly claimed the World Record for the largest simultaneous 1 km walk, more than doubling the Western Australia total, when 231,635 people at 1,011 venues across Canada walked.



Troy Cook with colourful walkers Harry Sawchuk, World Record

The 2007 Canadian World Record Walk was the launch of the *Walkolution*. When questioned by a media representative if it was not a little unfair for the country of Canada to contest a record held by a state of Australia, Green Communities Canada replied: "Not at all. There is an urgent need to promote walking and create walkable communities to impact staggering obesity rates and the juggernaut of climate change. These are truly global issues. It is time to put walking on national agendas and if the country of Australia, or other countries with much larger populations than Canada want to challenge our world record, then we welcome that for the greater good of society!"

On September 1, 2008, an Australia wide effort, led by the Western Australian Premier's Physical Activity Task Force will take place. In the official media launch for "The Giant Walk," Perth Football Captain and Active WA Ambassador Troy Cook spoke of the "pesky Canadians" who broke their record and implored school children and adults alike to reclaim the record for Australia. Troy went on to say, "We are always keen for a challenge and I

For more information go to:
<http://thegiantwalk.com.au/about.php>.

am confident, with the help of our interstate friends, we can reclaim it for Australia and walk away with a new world record. Our national pride is on the line, and while this is not a call to arms - it certainly is a call to legs!"

Although Green Communities Canada is not organizing a WRW event this year, we are seeking funding to hold one in 2009, engaging all provinces and territories in a truly colossal event. To support this plan, please contact both your MP and MPP to let them know this is a worthwhile project. Consider making October "Walking Month" in your community and hold a series of walking promotions throughout the month to keep the momentum of the *Walkolution* going.



Perth Football Captain and Active Western Australia Ambassador Troy Cook

The City of Toronto is holding a month-long walking festival: www.toronto.ca/transportation/walking/events/index.htm. Schools should start the school year off on the right foot by participating in International Walk to School Month; visit <http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca> to learn more and register; visit <http://www.iwalktoschool.org> to see the scope of this truly international event.

OWN - Ontarians Walking NOW! (Continued from page 1)

Workshop participants will be introduced to the innovative programs of StepsCount (<http://stepscount.com/>), including Get W.I.T.H. It! - a program that brings together various community service providers and businesses with schools to offer a low-cost, highly active, and social walking program for all community members.



This program has been piloted with an outstanding degree of success in the small northern community of Deep River, Ontario.



We will introduce the newest fitness trend, Nordic walking, that is spreading rapidly throughout Ontario this year. Immensely popular in Europe, it is walking with the assistance of especially designed urban poles that transform Canada's most popular physical activity into a total body workout that uses an impressive 90% of the body's muscles. Vancouver based Urban Poling (<http://www.urbanpoling.com/>) will show us just how easy, effective, and fun this activity is.



Urban Poling has donated three class sets consisting of 10 pairs of Urban Poles (total value of \$3,357). These will be awarded to one community that has done the most work overall to implement the community plan at each of the three, six, and nine month consultations.

Starting the development of a customized community action plan will be an important component of the full day workshop. And, when the workshop is over, OWN team members will follow up with the communities involved in the project at the three, six, and nine month intervals, to ensure implementation of the action steps and provide ongoing support and expertise.

StepsCount will award five pedometer kits (total value of \$2,268.90) to one community from each of the five regional workshops that has made the most progress by the end of the project. Communities interested in participating in an OWN Regional Workshop in the spring of 2009 should contact Mandy Johnson, Program Consultant with Green Communities Canada at mjohnson@greencommunitiescanada.org or by phoning 1-877-533-4098 on or before September 30, 2008.

The registration fee is \$50 per participant, or a group rate of \$150 for up to five members from the same community. Each individual will leave with a StepsCount SC-01 pedometer, while each community will take back a community pedometer kit containing 36 SC-01 pedometers, valued at \$396.

Green Communities is looking for four host communities for each of the regional workshops.

If your community would like to host a regional workshop, please contact Mandy at mjohnson@greencommunitiescanada.org or 1-877-533-4098.



iCANwalk

Visit www.icanwalk.ca/home.html for details of the iCANwalk campaign. This web site provides tips and tools on how to make communities more walkable. Check it out - together we can make a difference!

Trails for Active Transportation (TFAT)

With the issues of obesity, rising oil prices, global warming, pollution/ environmental degradation, population growth, traffic congestion and associated public health issues, citizens and politicians alike need to think about serious change, NOW. "It is not about taking baby steps. We need to take major leaps. Over the last 80 years we've been building cities for cars ... and not for people. We need a major shift. Creating infrastructure for active, cheap, and environmentally-friendly transportation is one way we can help address all of these important problems at once," stresses Gil Penalosa, executive director of Walk & Bike for Life.

Walk & Bike for Life, with assistance from Green Communities Canada, has launched a new project: Trails for Active Transportation (TFAT). TFAT's goal is to transform Ontario's extensive network of recreation trails into active commuting trails that support bicycling, walking, and skating to work, school, and play, as a healthy and sustainable alternative to driving everywhere.

For the most part, the infrastructure is largely in place. Thus, the TFAT workshops will cover issues such as trail connectivity, trail accessibility and integration; and international best practices in trail development and planning.

TFAT will involve 10 regional workshops engaging citizen groups and representatives of all levels of government, from various sectors

(health, environment, transportation, planning, parks, etc) culminating in a Trails for Active Transportation summit. The key focus for the project is the forty communities located along Ontario's Waterfront Trail from Niagara-on-the-Lake to the Quebec border.

"The fact that the Waterfront trail passes directly through the Golden Horseshoe (home to 80% of the Ontario population) presents us with an opportunity to make this trail the top commuter trail in Canada," notes Walk & Bike for Life project manager Sarah Rotz.

Regional workshops can be requested by other communities that have a well developed recreational trail system and show an interest. Communities in northern Ontario are actively being sought. The workshops will be held throughout the fall of 2008 and the spring of 2009.

All community groups and interested partners are encouraged to contact Sarah Rotz at Walk & Bike for Life if they are interested in collaborating to organize a workshop and develop an action plan for their community or with any inquiries about trails, green spaces and sustainable community development. Phone: 905-990-0198; Email: srotz@walkandbikeforlife.org.



The Federation of Canadian Municipalities
has released an excellent new resource:

Communities in Motion: Bringing active transportation to life.

Learn how your municipal government can take action
to integrate active transportation into your planning:

sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca/announcement/announcement08130801.asp

The Brantford VS Brandon Challenge

The Canada vs. Australia rivalry that is growing as a result of last year's World Record Walk is not the only one brewing! In preparation for last October's WRW event, officials from both Brantford, Ontario and Brandon, Manitoba declared their communities to be the "Walking Capital of Canada."

Brantford, Ontario's *Walkability Task Force* will defend its self-proclaimed title as "The Walking Capital of Canada" against Brandon, Manitoba's *in motion* identical claim this fall. The two cities will go "foot to foot" in early October in a program to get the most people out for a walk. Details will be reported in the next edition of the *Walkolution News*.

The Walkolution News is made possible through a grant from the Ministry of Health Promotion's Communities in Action Fund.



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www.toronto.ca/walk21