

Local author helping Canadian athletes with book proceeds



Priscilla Lopes-Schliep, Canadian Olympian bronze medalist in the 100 metre hurdles (left) is seen here with local author Linda Wagar (right) who wrote *Canadian Marathon Stories*. Ten dollars from each book sold goes into the Canadian Athletes Now Fund to help athletes, including Ms. Lopes-Schliep, to achieve their goals.

BY SHEENA BOLTON
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It has been a very busy year for Linda Wagar, editor and publisher of *Canadian Marathon Stories*, a collection of inspiring marathon stories.

In the last year she has sold 1,500 books and was a bronze finalist at the Independent Publishers Book Awards.

Half of the proceeds from the sale of her book go to the Canadian Athletes Now (CAN) Fund that supports Canadian athletes, including those vying to compete at the Olympics.

"[M]y book so far has supported a couple of Olympic athletes including (local athlete) Kristen Gauthier who is amazing with her kayak," said Ms. Wagar, an Alta Vista resident. "She was a competitor in Beijing representing our country. My very first cheque, which was over \$4,000, went to her."

Proceeds from the book's sales also helped Olympic bronze medalist Priscilla Lopes-Schliep, who competed in the hurdles.

"The whole premise of my book was always about giving back to the running community and giving back to a charity," said Ms. Wagar. "Our Olympic athletes, they are everyday people who have the talent to represent our country."

She hopes that along with some money the book will also bring awareness that a lot of these athletes have no money and are in desperate

need of support to help fulfill their dreams.

"They need the money now so they can pay for training, coaching, and nutrition," said Ms. Wagar. "The Vancouver Olympics are only a year away."

From now on the proceeds will be going towards the winter Olympic athletes.

CANFund supports all Canadian athletes, able-bodied and Paralympics to help them get ready for summer and winter games. Twice a year athletes are eligible to apply for funding and can receive up to \$12,000 a year. CAN Fund has raised more than \$4 million since its inception in 1997.

Another accomplishment for Ms. Wagar was becoming a finalist in the Independent Publisher Book Award. The award is open to any independently published book around the world that's available in the North American market. There are 65 categories.

"I listened to my intuition and I entered this award," said Ms. Wagar. "There were 3,100 books submitted and I applied for two different categories: inspiration and region."

"It didn't win in inspiration, but in the region category I became a finalist," she added. "I was ecstatic. You don't expect to win, it's a lot of like running a marathon."

She was notified through an e-mail, which she almost deleted thinking it was junk mail.

"I had kind of forgotten I had done this," said Ms. Wagar.

Even though it has been a very busy year for both the book and Ms. Wagar there is no end in site.

She is currently working on a sequel to her book, as well as continuing to promote *Canadian Marathon Stories* and is also looking into doing some motivational speaking.

"I like to speak and I'm a good motivational speaker," she said. "I've done quite a bit of local speaking but I would like to do more."

She hopes to travel around the city talking to students, authors, and athletes. If she raises any money from this, half of it will go into the CAN Fund. Her talks are meant to inspire youth to be the best they can be and she does this by talking about her friends who made amazing accomplishments.

"There are so many youth who go beyond their limits in a negative way and negative feeds more negative," said Ms. Wagar. "We don't all have to be academics in school but we do have to be respectful and take control of our health, fitness and what we put in our mouth and try to limit the vices."

Ms. Wagar has also been invited to China to talk about her book.

Copies of *Canadian Marathon Stories* can be purchased through www.runningroom.com, www.linda@lindawagar.com, www.canadianmarathon-stories.com or at Chapters.



Information
ottawa.ca
City services **3-1-1**
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Open House / Notice of Study Commencement

Area Traffic Management Study: Alta Vista Drive

A Public Open House is scheduled:

Wednesday December 10, 2008

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Rideau Park United Church, 2203 Alta Vista Drive

The City of Ottawa has hired the firm of Morrison Hershfield Limited to undertake an Area Traffic Management Study aimed at addressing traffic related concerns on the section of Alta Vista Drive between Bank Street and Smyth Road. The initial community concerns have been focussed on traffic volume, traffic speeds, heavy vehicle volumes, and aggressive driving practices.

Public and Agency involvement will occur throughout the study process. Interested members of the public are invited to drop in between the hours of 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., to learn more about the existing conditions, and the study process. This will be the public's first opportunity to meet the members of the study team as well as to provide comments on local traffic issues. Input from the perspective of pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, motorists, area residents and businesses will be used to help develop measures to minimize the negative impact of traffic on local residents. If you cannot attend this meeting, comments/questions can be mailed or e-mailed to the contact provided below.

Your comments are welcome and encouraged at any time during the course of the study. Comments should be directed to:

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Time has come for pedestrian countdown signals

SUBMITTED BY
THE CITY OF OTTAWA

Residents of Ottawa will soon know exactly how much time they have to cross the street.

Council approved a new 10-year program to install countdown signals at all intersections across the city, with the first one being installed at Festival Plaza and Laurier Ave. outside of City Hall.

"Pedestrian safety is extremely important to us," said Coun. Maria McRae, chair of the transportation committee "We often hear that when the 'Don't Walk' hand appears, some pedestrians within the crossing become uneasy as they are not sure how much time is left to safely cross. These new countdown signals solve this problem, providing pedestrians with more information on how much time they have to safely cross the intersection."

Once the 'Do Not Walk' sign flashes, a countdown

clock will appear alerting pedestrians to exactly how many seconds they have left to cross the street before the solid 'Do Not Walk' sign is displayed.

The installation of the pedestrian countdown signal will be done when a new traffic control signal or pedestrian signal is being installed, when an existing traffic control signal or pedestrian signal is being rebuilt as part of a road construction project or through the Pedestrian Countdown Signal Installation Program.

The program will recommend locations where countdown signals should be a priority. These include intersections currently experiencing an above average number of pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and those that count a large percentage of seniors, children or mobility-challenged pedestrians as users. Intersections over four traffic lanes wide and crosswalks



FILE PHOTO

The city has installed its first pedestrian countdown signal, which is meant to be safer than the traditional flashing signal (above).

that generate heavy use will also have a higher priority.

For more information on transportation in the City of Ottawa, visit us at ottawa.ca/onthemove or call 3-1-1.