

Push for Change Effort Rolls Through Parry Sound This Friday

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A shopping cart that's fast becoming an anti-youth homelessness icon will be pushed into Parry Sound this Friday.

On January 6th, a former homeless youth and current entrepreneur, Joe Roberts (above) will be pushing a shopping cart, (a symbol of chronic homelessness) through Parry Sound.

The Push for Change is a 9000 km, 517 day trek across Canada to raise awareness and funds for ending youth homelessness. The Parry Sound Team has organized several events that will take place.

On Friday, the West Parry Sound Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) in partnership with the Parry Sound Fire Department will be hosting "Heroes in the Sky for The Push For Change".

Members of both organizations will be sleeping out overnight on the roof of the Fire Hall to raise awareness for youth homelessness.

The public is invited to the Parry Sound Fire Department Headquarters at 4 Church Street, Parry Sound between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to lend their support.

Members of the Parry Sound Fire Department will be accepting donations.

Members of the West Parry Sound OPP will be accepting toiletries such as: socks, underwear, towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, canned food items, deodorant, razors and chocolate bars.

Then on January 11th, Joe will be attending Parry Sound as part of his cross country trek. During the morning he will be conducting a 24km walk through the area, he will be joined by local dignitaries as well as the OPP Northeast Region Command Staff. The walk will come to a completion at the West Parry Sound OPP Detachment at 7 Bay Street.

At the completion of his walk, Joe will attend a local school to give an inspirational talk to youth about his journey and youth homelessness.

Later the same day, at the completion of the talk at the school, Joe will attend the *District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board Building* at 1 Beechwood Drive in Parry Sound where he will deliver a speech.

The public is invited to attend the event from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. to take part in the event and experience Joe as guest speaker.

The Salvation Army will be present to provide warm beverages to those in attendance. The event is free of charge; however the public is invited to bring toiletries as well as canned food items. Donations will stay local and will further the cause to end youth homelessness. The event is being hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association in partnership with numerous other local agencies.

Those seeking to learn more or to donate can do so at www.thepushforchange.com.

Funds raised by the Push for Change Foundation will go to the Upstream Project to help implement an evidence-based partnership with schools utilizing a model of early intervention for young people who are at risk of disengaging from school, becoming homeless and entering the justice system.

(Photo via thepushforchange.com)