

APPLAUSE
SUSAN SCHWARTZ

Reaching the peak of epilepsy research

Neurosurgeon scales summit for a cause

Alain Bouthillier, a neurosurgeon at Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal, has accomplished a double feat: climbing Mount Aconcagua, the highest peak of the Andes mountains, as part of a three-week expedition, and raising \$65,695 for epilepsy research.

On Jan. 23, Bouthillier reached the summit. In ascending the mountain's 6,692 metres, he joins an elite group of 20 per cent of climbers participating in the annual expedition who make it to the top.

The undertaking was more than just a sporting challenge for Bouthillier: His goal was to raise awareness for epilepsy and to help fund research into the disorder.

Colleagues, patients and the business community joined forces to help make the fundraising campaign, organized with the CHUM foundation, a success.

Bouthillier is part of a team at CHUM working on the treatment of epilepsy. He and fellow neurologist Nguyen Dang Khoa are the principal investigators in a study that headlined the Journal of Neurosurgery last June. The study examined insular surgery as a means of treating epilepsy patients who do not respond to medication. An estimated 70,000 Quebecers have epilepsy

Since the devastating earthquake in Haiti on Jan. 12, Quebecers have rallied in myriad ways to help; particularly heartening has been the remarkable show of support by the province's student communities.

At Lower Canada College, for instance, students, staff and parents raised more than \$17,800 for Haiti relief. The donations were raised through student-driven initiatives, with several parents matching funds raised by their children's classrooms.

Grade 11 students designed a T-shirt, to be sold to raise more money – and students decided to organize a clothing drive for the Welcome Hall Mission, with the idea of helping Haitians who come to Quebec as refugees.

At the two United Talmud Torah elementary schools and their sister Herzliah high schools, the student councils used all kinds of events – from dress-down days and cookie sales to food fairs – to raise more than \$6,200 for the Haiti relief fund of Federation CJA.

At the Snowdon campus of Herzliah, which raised the most money, the top five fundraising teams were eligible to take part in an Iron Chef-style competition. The challenge was to cook, in an hour, the best soup possible from ingredients including grains, broth, vegetables, pasta and spices. Student council judges ranked each soup

based on originality, presentation and taste.

At Herzliah's Beutel campus in St. Laurent, the French department organized a food fair: students bought crêpes, wraps, desserts, pasta and more that were offered for sale. At the elementary level, such events as reading marathons, sales of board games and dress-down days, in which each school came up with an amount of money it cost to come to school out of uniform, were embraced by students and parents.

The sum of \$250,000 was raised for the Cedars Cancer Institute of the McGill University Health Centre at the recent Friends for the Cure dinner dance.

Six hundred guests gathered in support of the Cedars Cancer Institute's CanSupport program as the Friends for the Cure celebrated their 10th anniversary at Buffet Amiens Feb. 20 with dinner, dancing, entertainment and a fundraising raffle that had a trip to Greece as its top prize.

A portion of the money raised will go toward Cedars CanSupport's project to renovate the family room on the 17th floor of the Montreal General Hospital, the oncology floor. The project was spearheaded by Montreal Alouettes quarterback Anthony Calvillo and his wife, Alexia, who was treated for cancer at the MUHC. Calvillo donated a \$10,000 award he re-





CENTRE HOSPITALIER DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

Alain Bouthillier, a neurosurgeon at Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal, and recovery-room nurse Isabelle Tremblay at the summit of Mount Aconcagua.

ceived last year to the Cedars Cancer Institute.

Friends for the Cure have raised about \$1.5 million for the Cedars Cancer Institute over the past decade.

The second annual Blankfest Quebec event, held in cooperation with the Old Brewery Mission, collected more than 640 items of clothing for those in need, including coats, sweaters, shoes and boots, 54 blankets and two pillows. The event, held last month, featured a rock show showcasing local Montreal bands Special Ops, Emery Street, Vinyl Hero and the In n Outs.

Blankfest Quebec organizer Jon Asher, a music publicist, is working on the 2011 event and will be taking submissions from Montreal artists and collaborators interested in participating. Email him at ashermedia@gmail.com or call 514-581-5780.

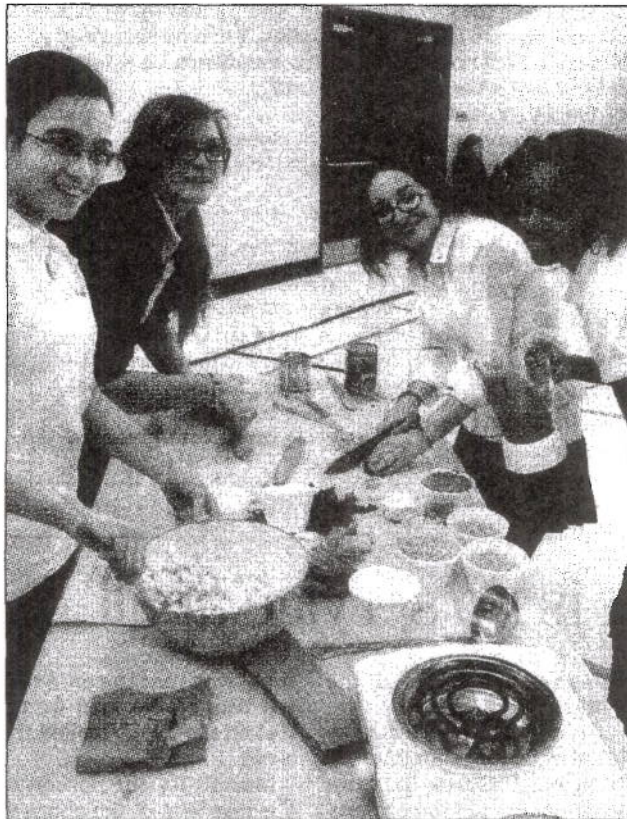
When we're invited to dinner, most of us bring flowers or wine or chocolates for our hosts. The Jewish holiday of Passover is around the corner – it begins at sundown March 29 – and the Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors suggests another way people can show their appreciation to those who invite them to Passover

Seder meals: helping to underwrite the cost of the centre's Meals on Wheels program by sending meals in their honour to a senior in need.

A gift of \$18 pays for two Mitzvah Meals, as they are known; \$36 pays for four meals and \$54 means seven meals on wheels will be delivered. The Cummings centre mails customized cards acknowledging the gift.

Mitzvah Meals can be ordered by calling 514-343-3529, Local 7316, or online at www.cummingscentre.org. The deadline is Friday.

applause@
thegazette.canwest.com



SHELLEY PARIS

Dana Moshaev (left), Ekaterina Rubanov, Caroline Plyas and Haviva Yesgat, Grade 11 students at Herzliah's Snowdon campus, make soup in an Iron Chef-style competition after raising funds for Haiti relief.