

## **Dukes up against cancer**

Charity boxing bouts will raise funds for Wellspring Survivorship Centre

By WALTER ROBINSON, Ottawa Sun

The countdown is on to Fight for the Cure 2010 at the Hampton Inn and Conference Centre on March 27.

Just 10 more sleeps until almost 450 folks dine on a succulent four-course meal, bid on amazing sports memorabilia, and watch four top-flight amateur bouts and three “white collar” bouts, where some 30-something (or in my case 43-something) fighters duke it out.

Proceeds from this year’s Fight for the Cure ([fightfortheure.ca](http://fightfortheure.ca)) will support the Wellspring Survivorship Centre that the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation is building close to the Cancer Survivors Park at the corner of Riverside Dr. and Industrial Ave.

This facility will augment the great care that local hospitals provide to cancer patients by offering services such as nutrition counselling, physical rehabilitation and other psycho-social supports during and after treatment.

By way of full disclosure I am a past-chairman of the foundation and will be fighting in the event for a third consecutive year.

But as I’ve often found in charitable pursuits, where there is no conflict, there is no interest. And boxing is highly addictive given its great fitness benefits and primal dimension of strategy in human combat.

In 2008, this scribe duked it out with CTV sports anchor Terry Marcotte and more than held my own. Then last year, local entrepreneur and good guy to boot Randy Woods got the better of me in Round 3. So this year it’s redemption time as I take on George Boszormeny, president of Castor Heating and Cooling.

The other “white collar” fights feature Wayne Shimoon from UpsideWave taking on Marwan Abdalla, owner of several Subway restaurants, and Shawn Mountain from the Mergis Group battling Jim Donnelly, editor of the Ottawa Business Journal.

Each of these local business leaders has their own story to tell how cancer has touched their lives or families and I salute and thank them for their dedication and commitment to this year’s event.

We have all spilled a little blood over the past few months, dropped some pounds and have been humbled during sparring sessions against each other or, more often than not, by kids half our age who showed us what elite amateur boxing really is.

But this humility in the ring is nothing compared to the struggle that 16 new people each day must face in our community when they receive a cancer diagnosis.

In this sense, our brief trials and tribulations over three rounds next Saturday are merely symbolic of the greater battle that cancer patients must endure and fight.

For boxing purists, the card will also include local Final Round boxing club fighters such as Henry “Lightning Quick” Lopez (2007 provincial champ), Samer “Slugger” Barakat (2009 provincial silver medallist) and Tyler “Tough, Tough, Tough” Asselstine (2009 Canadian champion); these guys can box.

Of course, Fight for the Cure would not be possible without the great support of sponsors like the Heart & Crown, 10Count consulting and, of course, Final Round Boxing.

And kudos to event organizers Rob Imbeault, Eric Belanger and our trainer, Matt Whitteker.

With young leaders like this — all under 40 and Matt, the heart and soul of this event, at 26 — the future of charitable leadership in the fight against cancer is bright indeed.

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