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Your Local Journal



Seeing green
in St. Lazare...

Vol. 15 | November 21, 2013 Via Canada Post to Hudson, St. Lazare, Vaudreuil. Also available in Rigaud, Pincourt and the West Island.

The weekend begins with *Your Local Journal*



A Canadian Legend in the making

Former St. Lazare resident and Silhouette Stable owner, Monica Grundmann, proudly posed for *Your Local Journal* yesterday with her Morab stallion, *Excalibur Legend*, all set to represent Canada in the gruelling North American Team Challenge 160-km over 24 hours Endurance Race in Florida competing against Western Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. See story on page 12.

PHOTO BY CARMEN MARIE FABIO

"Will is to grace as the horse is to the rider." - Saint Augustine

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Former St. Lazare stable owner Monica Grundmann and Legend to represent Canada in 160-km endurance race in Florida

Battling a rare form of cancer but determined to live each day as if it was her last

James Parry

Your Local Journal

Health-wise, these past two years have been a rough ride for Monica Grundmann, a former resident of St. Lazare whose Silhouette Stables on Chemin St. Louis was a mecca for dressage, eventers, jumpers, Western riders, and even happy hackers.

For following surgery for what she thought was just a painful case of appendicitis and haemorrhaging, she learned that she was, in fact, suffering from an extremely rare form of cancer - *Goblet Cell Carcoid* - that affects about only one per cent of the population.

"I was totally devastated and felt like the rug had been pulled out from under me," Grundmann - a competitive rider who sold Silhouette five years ago and who now owns a stable just over the border in Bainsville, Ontario - told *Your Local Journal* in an exclusive interview this week. "I felt really great after the operations and was looking forward to the 2012 competitive season.

"I went for all the testing and so forth, blood work, and scanning in Ottawa, only to find out that they could not at this point see any cancer cells. I was told, though, that with this cancer and its nature it is best to go in and have the ovaries removed, 38 lymph nodes, and have a right hemicolectomy."

Undaunted, Grundmann asked to wait so she could represent Canada in her first international 80-km provincially-run competition with her Morab stallion, Excalibur Legend, in June in Stormont, Ontario. And despite all odds, they came in just two seconds behind the winner, the United States. In September this year, they rode to-



Monica Grundmann and her Morab stallion Excalibur Legend go through their paces in preparation for the upcoming North American Team Challenge endurance race in Florida.

PHOTO BY CARMEN MARIE FABIO

gether in their second international 120-km competition in Stormont. In both, they placed third against very impressive competition.

Said Grundmann, "I was thrilled beyond what words could describe and so grateful to be alive. I underwent the recommended surgery in October last year. Have recovered from it and - even though I will still have to go for follow-up three times a year for the next five - I have been training and competing ever since."

Next month, Grundmann will again

be representing Eastern Canada in the North American Team Challenge 160-km over 24 hours Endurance Race in Florida competing against Western Canada, the U.S., and Mexico.

And while she and Legend are right on track with their conditioning training - involving riding in sand, mud, over rocks, and at night time in all kinds of weather to better deal with all elements during the race - they do need help.

Explained Grundmann, "While this is a big honour and achievement to even qualify for such an event, the government is not providing any financial support and the riders have to come up with the money themselves in order to participate."

This includes, she added, paying not only for their horse's transport first to Toronto and then to and from Florida and its food and accommodation there, entry fees and animal vaccines, but also airfare, food and accommodation for the rider.

Said Grundmann, who works part time at Tim Horton's near her home to help cover costs of her horses and Legend's competitions, "From Toronto, we will be travelling with other team members in a much bigger trailer than mine to save costs on fuel to travel to Florida and back. Then when arriving back in Toronto I will transport him

back home to Bainsville myself. Proud to have represented Canada in this very demanding and gruelling endurance race."

If you would like to help support Grundmann in the race and all that it entails, she can be reached by e-mail at silhouette@explornet.com or go to her website <http://silhouettestables.webs.com>. Donations may also be given to Lin Month at her St. Lazare JerriLin Tack Shop (450) 424-9459 and Grundmann is offering a signed, professionally-taken photograph of her and her Morab stallion for all donations of over \$50 to be delivered early next year.

Said Grundmann, "I have always and will continue to live each day as if it is my last - saying and doing the maximum. Obviously my personal goals regarding my beloved stallion, his competitions and his legacy, are paramount for me. Together, he and I have achieved much more than I ever could have dreamed and I am extremely grateful for being blessed to have him.

"I do believe that I am healed and cured and continue on my life's path with my family, husband, and horses. I am blessed, as well, to have a husband who allows me to live my life and go ahead with the horse plans too!"

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