

From the Orleans Star: Serving up love

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Serving up love by Sonia Morin

Taking a coffee break is more than just hot beverages and donuts for the students and staff of Colonel By Secondary School – it also means raising money for a good cause.

On April 8, the entire school welcomed representatives from the Hospice at May Court to accept a donation of \$2,771 to help support their various free care programs.

Gerard Yetman, the hospice's executive director, called Colonel By's contribution "significant."

"They've been supporting us for quite a number of years," he said.

Since 2003, the high school has donated over \$10,000 to the Hospice May Court via regular coffee break fundraisers. In addition to their financial contributions, a group of 30 students also volunteer their time each November by raking leaves on the hospice's one-acre property at Cameron Avenue near Bank Street.

"We like to say we've adopted the hospice," said Michel Bélanger, coordinator of the school's International Baccalaureate (IB) program and organizer of the Coffee Break for Hospice program for the past five years.

For a toonie, students can choose coffee or a hot chocolate and a treat baked by the IB students and teachers. The coffee breaks happen twice a day for a period of 10 minutes and the response to the charity drive has been very positive.

"(The students) love to get involved with it," said Bélanger. "I think it's important that students know that these services exist. It's an experience of learning and the IB students who go on to university continue to volunteer. It's an opportunity to touch somebody and feel it."

The Hospice at May Court is a local, community-based organization committed to providing free support and practical help to people and their families facing life-threatening illnesses.

"It costs us \$200 a day to take care of someone and they normally stay with us for 22 days," said fund development and events coordinator Ashley Brambles. "The money (raised by Colonel By) will help us cover the costs of our programs. It gives almost two weeks of free care."

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