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Garden raises awareness about organ donation

By RACHEL PUNCH THE SUDBURY STAR
Posted 1 year ago

The Northern Ontario Railroad Museum and Heritage Centre is using a new gardening project to raise awareness about organ donation.

The ground was broken at the Garden of Life at the centre Tuesday night.

"We thought that this would be an excellent opportunity to meld beautifying the museum with a very worthy cause, which is to get the word out that people need to register themselves to be organ donors," said Wendy Paul, a board member at the railroad museum.

"We are hoping with the support of local businesses and donations or grants that we can complete the work next spring for June," Paul said. "When completed, the garden will incorporate all five senses – sight, sound, touch, smell and taste."

Paul said board members Fran Michelutti and Romaine Chappell came up with the idea for the garden. Michelutti is involved with a lot of the museum's gardens. Chappell has a close friend, Ottawa resident Sue Diotte, who has a personal connection with the importance of organ donation.

Diotte's daughter died about 10 years ago.

"Her daughter had registered her donor intentions with Trillium Gift of Life Network and ended up being able to impact other people's lives," Paul said.

Diotte has become a strong advocate for organ donation.

"Romaine is very much involved in trying to get the word out, as well," Paul said.

A letter from Diotte was to be read at the groundbreaking ceremony.

Ward 7 Coun. Russ Thompson has also been involved in raising awareness about the garden. Thompson is the recipient of a donor kidney.

The Sudbury Master Gardeners will be setting up a plant registry, which will list all the plants they have recommended for the garden.

"People can donate a tree in the memory of a loved one or purchase a plant, bush or something that would incorporate into the garden," Paul said. "We can place plaques in memory of loved ones who've lost their lives or loved ones who have been saved thanks to the generosity and legacy of someone who has passed."

More information about the plant registry will be posted on the centre's website at www.northernontariorailroadmuseum.ca.

For more about Trillium Gift of Life Network, visit www.giftoflife.on.ca.

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Organ donation in Ontario

(705) 673-8400

MOLLY MAID



by Gino Donato Greater Sudbury Mayor John Rodriguez, committee member Romaine Chappell, and Councillor and Kidney recipient Russ Thompson turn the ceremonial sod for the garden which will be ready next June.

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