



# CanTeen benefits from hair raising experience

By SAMANTHA McPHERSON

Most 17-year-old girls would love the flowing locks Neelam Hari had before Friday.

And even though the Pukekohe Christian School student was nervous, she got rid of 30cm of her hair in support for CanTeen.

She had been growing her hair long since Pukekohe CanTeen Bike Bash, which was held in October last year.

"I thought it was a good cause and a good experience. I didn't want to shave it all off. I just wanted to cut it."

Ex-student Janel Smal did the honours and the lost locks will be made into a wig.

And after five weeks of fundraising, Neelam raised \$1015 for the charity.

"I didn't think I would get that much money. I was only expecting a little bit."

Principal Willem van Rensburg, who had never grown a beard before, had mixed feelings about getting his shaved off but the CanTeen cause made it worthwhile.

"For the past 18 months, I had grown this beard. I had mixed feelings about it but it gave me the chance to show my support



**NERVOUS:** Pukekohe Christian School principal Willem van Rensburg was nervous getting his beard cut off for CanTeen on Friday.



**SUPPORT:** CanTeen membership liaison co-ordinator Kent Christensen, Pukekohe Christian School student Neelam Hari with her new look and principal, Willem van Rensburg without his beard.

for CanTeen." The facial hair was shaved off by his daughter-in-law, Tracey van Rensburg.

CanTeen membership liaison

co-ordinator Kent Christensen thought the idea was awesome and valued the support shown by the school toward CanTeen.



# 'We're so humbled and proud'

## Jason Richard's parents show support for racing fundraiser

Andrew Board

Jason Richards doesn't play a very good victim. But the amount of support the Aussie V8 supercar driver has attracted – from every top Formula One driver to three local mates – has humbled him and the entire family, say his parents.

Thirty five year-old Jason, a born and bred Nelsonian, is fighting an extremely rare and aggressive form of cancer that "gets worse every day". His medical expenses are skyrocketing as

he scrambles to find a cure amongst a list of experimental drugs, one injection he had cost \$2000 alone.

Fundraisers are being held around the globe, including donations from Formula One and V8 Supercar drivers, to this Saturday's fundraiser held at ProKarts in Tahunanui. The fundraiser is being organised by Jason's childhood friend Tony Dyer, along with mates Brendan Gridley and Nick Fowler and includes a Bathurst style race on the ProKarts track, with live commentary. The day will also feature



**RARING TO GO:** Dave and Pauline Richards say they are "so happy" the local community is getting in behind their son, cancer-stricken V8 supercar driver Jason Richards. Taking part in this weekend's fundraiser is at back from left; Henry Ford, Becky Morgan, Shaun Campbell and Liam Campbell. *Photo: Andrew Board.*



a car show and various other activities including a never-before seen video of Jason, thanks to Channel Seven in Australia, bouncy castles for kids and a sausage sizzle.

Jason grew up in Nelson and comes back often to visit his parents who live in Richmond. Dave and Pauline Richards say they are humbled that locals would put so much into helping their son. "It's just something we never expected; there are

no words for it. To me it's just amazing. I think the fortunate thing for us is that Jason doesn't have enemies and people like him so want to help him," says Pauline.

Dave says his son, a husband and father of two young girls, is somewhat embarrassed by the attention after being more used to spending time and money giving to charities, including a role as an ambassador for Canteen, a youth cancer charity, but is grateful for the support.

The three organisers of the Nelson fundraiser say they have been blown away with

the feedback they have received since announcing it last month. Dave says he won't be able to make the fundraiser because he will be in Darwin, working as part of the pit crew for Jason as he prepares to race this weekend, an incredible achievement with his illness.

"He wants to race, when he does his head is off cancer, he is just doing something he loves and has fun."

There has also been some good

news for the Richards family this week. Jason's cells only grew by 10 per cent over the last four week period, compared to the 50 to 60 per cent growth they have been getting. Dave says it is news like that that keeps them hoping for a miracle, and they are not alone. Money has come from all corners of the globe, but one donation was very special, he says.

"There was this one guy at a race over there that really sticks with me. He asked if I was Jason's dad and he gave me an envelope he wanted me to give to Jason. He was obviously a fan and was a bit unkempt so I took the envelope to Jason and inside was a \$10 note. It was obviously a lot of money to him and meant a lot to Jason."

The fundraiser starts at 9.30am this Saturday at ProKarts in Tahunanui, next to the bumper boats, and will run most of the morning.

If wet, it will be held on Sunday at the same time. To donate money to Jason's fight visit NBS branches and ask to donate to the Race4Jace fund or bid on auctions on TradeMe under Race4Jace.