

Saturday Night Bash helps fund research

By Mark Pavilons

The community is coming together to help fund vital research.

The Saturday Night Bash Sept. 15 is in aid of ground-breaking research conducted through The University Health Network in Toronto. King resident Chris Kenalty, has been part of a study/research group that's looking into the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases, including issues that can arise from a stroke.

Kenalty suffered a stroke in September 2014 while dining out with his partner Miriam in Port Credit. He was rushed to Toronto Western.

Scans showed a blockage in a blood vessel in his brain and physicians administered the standard tPA treatment to open up the artery. That didn't work, and doctors decided to remove the blockage using a new clot retrieval method called endovascular treatment.

Dr. Robert Willinsky inserted a thin tube into the artery in Kenalty's groin, threading through the body and into the brain. The clot was then enclosed in a retrievable stent and pulled out, restoring blood flow to the part of the brain that was being damaged.

Kenalty remained awake during the surgery and became the test subject for what is now a life-saving procedure used worldwide. He left the hospital four days later.

He said he's one of the lucky ones and he's back to full health.

"My recovery has been so complete that people think I'm joking when I tell them I suffered a major stroke," he said.

The hospital approached Kenalty about participating in a study that looked into stroke, Alzheimers and Parkinsons and he readily offered to help. A ministry-funded study was launched but funding fell roughly \$200,000 short.

That's where Kenalty and his team of friends and supporters stepped in, offering to raise the money.

The Saturday Night Bash was born and it promises to be a fun-filled event. It involves five-star food from some major caterers; a steel band, and great entertainment.

Friend and neighbour, renowned jazz artist Michele Mele didn't think twice about participating in the fundraiser. She'll be enchanting guests with her performance.

Mele said Chris and Miriam are wonderful kind hearted people who believe in love! Mele said it's so very important to help spread peace, love and joy to make the world a better place and this event does just that. As well, Mele admits "I do love to make parties with lots of music!"

All proceeds from Saturday Night Bash will go towards Dr. Leanne Casaubon's Stroke research program at the Toronto Western Hospital, UHN. The Ontario Neurodegenerative Disease Research Initiative (ONDRI) is a provincial collaboration studying dementia and how to improve the diagnosis and treatment of neurodegenerative diseases, including issues that can arise from a stroke. Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Canada and the leading cause of adult neurological disability. Dr. Casaubon is a neurologist and director of the TAMS unit at TWH/University Health Network, which is also the regional stroke centre for the Toronto West Region.

The Bash will be held this Saturday night at Country Lane Farms Equestrian Farm in King, starting at 6 p.m. with dinner at 7. Visitors are encouraged to dance until midnight.

People who wish to support/attend should contact Janice Allen at 416-201-9451 or