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TERRY FOX DAY COULD REPLACE CIVIC HOLIDAY MONDAY

This coming Sunday, September 20th is very special because it marks the 35 times that the Terry Fox Run has been held in Woodstock. Every year brings out many helpers to the parking lot beside the BDO building on Graham Street. Over 200 runners participate in this highly successful annual event. Let's look at Terry Fox and remember why on September 19, 1980, The Governor General of Canada, Edward Schreyer presented Terry Fox the insignia of a Companion of the Order of Canada marking Terry Fox's appointment to the Order in recognition of his devotion to the fight against cancer.

Terry Fox was born in 1958 at Winnipeg and grew up in British Columbia. Soon after graduating from High School he was diagnosed with cancer in one leg. The doctors determined that his right leg now be amputated. On the night before his surgery, he read about another amputee who ran in the New York Marathon. He decided to run in his own marathon by also running across Canada to raise money for cancer research. He then spent the next two years in training and learning how to run on his artificial leg.

Despite having lost one leg to cancer, Terry Fox started out on April 12, 1980 from St. John's, Newfoundland on his epic run across Canada to raise funds for cancer research. His personal Marathon of Hope was tragically cut short 5342 km. later at Thunder Bay, ON. By now his spirit and determination had already won the admiration of all of Canadians. The Royal Canadian Mint recognized his efforts and in 2005 minted a commemorative Terry Fox dollar. This dollar was produced in a smaller amount than usual, only 13 million were minted and is the first circulating commemorative coin to feature a Canadian hero.

Our Woodstock is unique insofar as the annual Terry Fox run is concerned because each participant is presented with a souvenir Terry Fox dollar in a specially designed souvenir folder. The Woodstock Coin Club and the local Lions Club of Woodstock underwrite the costs required for the Terry Fox dollars and the presentation folders. The souvenir folder was designed by local historian Fred Freeman and the Terry Fox dollars are affixed in the special folders by Betty and Fred Freeman.

It has been suggested that Woodstock name the present August Civic Holiday Monday be now called the Terry Fox day. Manitoba already has plans to rename the first Monday in August as the Terry Fox holiday, instead of the Civic Holiday, in honour of this national hero. On September First, 1980 Terry was forced to abandon his epic journey near Thunder Bay. He had run for 143 days and the cancer had spread to his lungs. His journey was through Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario in all kinds of weather and in spite of his very painful leg stump. If ever there was a Canadian that is worthy of having an annual holiday

named themselves, it is Terry Fox without a doubt. Does our Woodstock has the required gumption to be first in Ontario to rename the Civic Holiday, the Terry Fox Day? Hopefully our progressive Mayor, Trevor Birtch and our new council will look kindly at this suggestion.