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Fundraising effort gets boost with help from Sun and XL103

By **KELLY DOODY**

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The Calgary Sun and XL103 teamed up with an outstanding local charity organization yesterday for their biggest two-day fundraising event of the year -- the Children's Cottage Radiothon.

Former Flames captain Jim Peplinski was lighting up the phone lines bright and early, calling from Toronto to give two enormous thumbs up to the cause.

"In my view this organization deals with really root cause issues," said Peplinski.

"When you can help a child and give them a footing that hopefully helps them in the long term, in my mind there's no better way to invest your money."

Page Six stopped in at Market Mall's radiothon central to find dozens of volunteers accepting pledges and a continuous string of on-air XL DJs trying to keep the calls coming in. Executive director Patty Kilgallon could not say enough about how paramount public support is to their efforts.

"We really appreciate the support of Calgarians," said Kilgallon.

"Without it, families wouldn't have a place to bring their kids when they are in a time of crisis. We truly are a better city for having somewhere for them to turn."

Whether a family becomes homeless, they don't have enough food or a parent declares themselves suicidal, the Children's Cottage Society provides an immediate safe place for the kids to go before getting that parent or family the help they need. And considering the Children's Cottage is one of only three organizations like it in the country, it's not hard to see that we are a very city lucky indeed.

"Everything we do is about keeping families together," said Kilgallon. "Because of Calgarians we get to have a service like that for Calgarians."

You've got one more day to pick up the phone and help make this year's goal of raising \$150,000 a reality. Because operating costs are covered by government funding, every nickel of your donation goes towards caring for a child.

Call 403-517-KIDS (5437) or learn more at www.childrencottage.ab.ca.

SNOWBOARD SEASON STARTER

For those jumping for joy over the freaky white flakes falling a month too soon, you may also be stoked to know the new Burton movie The B is premiering downtown tonight, and tonight only, at The Uptown.

Special screening and autograph events with the cast have taken place in some very cool places so far ... Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Denver, Seattle and now Calgary.

The Uptown doors open at 7 p.m. in advance of the 8 to 9 p.m. autograph session with professional Burton riders Keegan Valaika, Mikey Rencz, Mikkel Bang, Mark Sollars, Natasza Zurek and Spencer O'Brien, before the snowy mountain movie that looks really friggin' awesome starts at 9.

The way Entourage makes you wish you were heading up a foursome of handsome male moneybags in Hollywood, The B makes you want to get back on the bandwagon and pretend to be a pro snowboarder at Lake Louise all winter.

Tickets are just a toonie at the door, and entry to the sure-to-be-hoppin' Hi-Fi Club after-party is free with your movie pass, or \$7 without.

To get your pre-snowboard season adrenaline racing, head to Burton.com/TheB. See you tomorrow, and don't forget to wear your toque.

BACKWARDS PARKING POLICE

An homage, if I may, to the good ol' Calgary Parking Authority.

If it weren't enough that they write us up a tickets for leaving our car a wee bit too far off the curb one day, and then for parking a hint too close to the manhole the next, now they refuse to do it from anything other than the comfort of their car.

Not that you can blame them, given how long some people's cars are these days.

It can take an entire 20 seconds to get out and physically walk all the way to the back of someone's car to manually check their licence plate -- if for some reason it's not visible to the 92 cameras plastered all over the outside of their ridiculous pretend looking cop car.

By now you've heard of the new trend for Calgary's private team of parking police.

It's fair game to issue tickets to people who park facing the wrong way in their Park and Ride stall at the C-Train station.

No more backing in to that spot, folks. We live in the one city on the planet where that's against the parking rules.

Which means Calgary's latest group of bylaw-breaking criminals are the same people who are now forced to pay to park their car in some suburban lot all day long, before paying again to ride the train downtown to work.

The same citizens who are creating less pollution, reducing gridlock in the core and willingly leaving their beloved car back in the burbs like Mr. Mayor wants them to.

Just when you thought the Calgary Parking Authority couldn't be any more annoying with their newfangled Park Plus meter system, their Big Brother cars taking pictures of every object in sight and the 600% increase in parking tickets you've got in the mail, they go and fine people for making them get out of the car and walk a few steps.

It's like ticketing the kid in the wheelchair for being too slow when helping the little old lady cross the street.

Makes perfect sense, if you're a lazy, power-crazed parking cop.

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