



# TONS of ATTENTION

Pink paving truck helps firm raise thousands for charity

**A** business going “green” is one thing. But going pink? Gazzola Paving Ltd. did exactly that when it had a tri-axle dump truck painted pink to raise money to fight breast cancer.

“It got a lot of attention,” said Virgil Gazzola, operations manager of the company, with headquarters in Etobicoke, Ont.—near Toronto. The stares came from both inside and outside the company. “When the guys first saw it, everybody was shocked,” Virgil said. “Then it was positive. Everybody loved it.”

The colorful fund-raising effort started a few years ago, when Pam Gazzola, the wife of vice president Vern, and their daughter Virginia walked to raise funds as part of “The Weekend to End Breast Cancer.” During the walk, Pam and Virginia talked about ways to get others involved. By the time the ideas had been bounced around, an attention-grabbing plan emerged.

“They wanted to paint a truck pink,” Virgil said. “We thought it was a great idea.”

The walkers thought a salt truck would be a nice touch, but Vern had a bigger target in mind and gave orders that the tri-axle undergo the paint job.

“He just put his foot down,” Virgil said of Vern. “He’s a pretty demanding guy. He sent it to the body shop and painted it pink.”

The truck returned to the company, and at first “nobody could figure it out,” Virgil said.

Eventually they learned of the plan, as did those who do business with Gazzola Paving. Company officials asked business associates to donate \$2,000 to “The Weekend to End Breast Cancer” cause. Companies that made the donation were

rewarded by having their logo placed on the pink truck—a most visible site as it traveled from one job to another.

It wasn’t long before the truck was doing most of the heavy lifting for the fund-raising. “Everybody started calling me and asking about it,” Virgil said. “Everybody wanted to know what it was.”

Those inquiring were told how they could help the cause—and many did. By the time the fund-raising was over, Gazzola Paving was able to send a check for \$64,000 to the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation in Toronto—the organization charged with turning “The Weekend’s” proceeds into results.

The efforts were fun and helped a good cause, but Virgil said the company wouldn’t make a habit of it—though it continues to donate to many other charities. “It was a one-off thing,” he said. “We don’t want to keep asking for contributions every year. It was sort of a novelty, doing it that once, and it got a lot of attention.

“The response was great, and we appreciated the participation by the other companies who paid to have their logos on the truck. While we won’t be asking them for more contributions, we’ll continue to support a variety of charitable organizations—even if you don’t see a pink truck driving around town.” @



GAZZOLA PAVING LTD. PLANT IN ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO