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## A thousand hopes (front page)

Meagan's walk  
By ASTRID POEI, 24 HOURS



Seven-year-old Tobin Haas smiles at a large paper crane placed inside a blanket outside The Hospital for Sick Children yesterday. The origami art was part of the ceremonies to kick off Meagan's Walk, which raises awareness of brain tumours in children. (Astrid Poei, 24 hours)

A thousand paper cranes represented a thousand reasons for hope at the Hospital for Sick Children yesterday as the colourful arrangement of origami creations were placed on the front lawn to commemorate this year's Meagan's Walk.

The five-kilometre fundraising trek, which takes place on Mother's Day (May 13), began as an awareness campaign after five-year-old Meagan Bebenek died of a brain tumour in 2001.

"It's amazing," her mother Denise Bebenek said. "This is what the Meagan's Walk message is all about: kids helping kids."

Students from Meagan's school, Our Lady of Sorrows, and St. Raphael Catholic school gathered at the University Avenue health care centre to present Bebenek with 1,000 handmade cranes in varying colours and sizes.

The cranes were chosen because of Japanese belief that if 1,000 paper cranes were folded for a person who was sick, that person would be healthy again. Children also performed the song "Goodnight My Angel."

Grade 4 teacher Adrian Pope, whose 11-year-old son Julian was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2003 but has since made a full recovery, was one of several participants who

found the ceremony touching.

"This has been moving for them," Pope said. "As part of a Catholic school, this week recognizes their faith."

A new addition to this year's walk will be the "Hug in the Sky," where several of the Meagan's Walk emblems will be raised by construction cranes and suspended in different areas above the city until Father's Day.