



Meta Centre  
Quarterly Newsletter  
PEOPLE Series Spring 2017

# Insight

In this issue:

## Joseph

My Love

My Life

## MAY ROSE

70 Years Young

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Meta Centre  
Community Based  
Inclusive Services

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Holiday Inn Express  
Car Wash

**meta foundation**  
*Special People. Special Needs.*

Walk, Relay &  
Gran Fondo

SAVE THE DATE

Motown Gala  
October 29, 2017



*Joseph*

*A mother's plight and fight for  
her son's normal way of life.*





## JOSEPH MY LOVE MY LIFE

You realize the full power of your strength and the depth of unconditional love when life brings you to your knees.

Jane is a petite, soft-spoken woman with a pronounced British accent and an Italian last name. She tells her story, reliving every micro-minute - as if it were yesterday; describing the joy and the one moment that defined her life.

Her story begins with her first born son, Joseph. Born on December 10, 1987, he was named after his "Nonno" (*grandfather*) with whom he grew especially close, and was equally a joy to his Nonna (*grandmother*) both of whom were close at hand, as well as his other grandparents who lived aboard.

When Joseph was 3 months old, the *Veccharellis* moved into a new home. A spacious suburban home that was filled with dreams of a growing family, and grand enough for countless gatherings.

In 1989, Joseph's younger brother James was born. Joseph was growing into your typical healthy, 2 year old; rambunctious, curious and playful. It was an exciting time for the family until the night when their home turned into their worst nightmare.

Built at the height of the construction boom in the 80's, their home had an 18' spiral staircase that extended from the second story to the basement-divided only by a main floor landing. On this particular night

while Jane was bathing James, and her husband was tending to Joseph, everyone's life changed. Joseph was somewhere on the stairs and suddenly fell through the faulty make-shift construction of the railing, which was later found not built to code. Jane tells her husband's recollection of how "it seemed like a pillow falling". Never thinking for a moment that it was Joseph, falling and hitting the curved handrails before landing on the basement floor where he lay-not breathing.





## JOSEPH CONTINUED

Paramedics resuscitated Joseph three times on the way to the hospital where doctors gave them the worst news any parent could receive. Joseph's injuries were so severe that there was little hope he would survive through the night.

It was a pivotal time for Jane as she took charge of her son's destiny. Although still at the mercy of doctors and a series of life and death episodes, it was clear that Joseph was fighting for his life, and as he fought—Jane became his voice. Having survived that fateful night, Joseph was induced into a coma. He could not speak, see or hear, and again his parents were given little hope that he would breathe on his own. Still again, he defied the odds and he began breathing on his own. Surgeons then proceeded to address his injuries. They immediately needed to implant a Frontal Lobe Shunt to protect Joseph's brain,

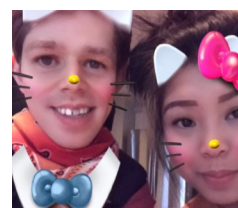
and as Joseph kept fighting, so did Jane. A year after his accident, Joseph required rehabilitation that was not available in Canada, and he was transferred to Visitors Hospital in Southbend Indiana—a rehab hospital that would provide him with constant therapy to help stimulate the brain. For the next 9 months, Jane and her husband took turns travelling back and forth to be by Joseph's side. Through it all, Joseph never lost his sense of spirit. He was processing everything, communicating with gestures, sounds and movements, and never lost a reason to smile. Jane pushed and pursued to get the support and therapies her son needed to live a meaningful life.



Never using his accident as an excuse to keep him from experiencing life, she made certain that Joseph was a part of all things that young boys do. He went through the school system and was moved from a segregated school *(for individuals with developmental*

*disabilities)* to a public school where his abilities were better-suited. Jane also made sure that he took part in sports and recreational games alongside his brother - cheering him on! "Experiencing every minute", as his mother so heartwarmingly tells it, "Joseph hasn't missed a thing"!

Today at 29 years young, Joseph can see, hear and communicate. He doesn't see himself as someone with a disability – for Joseph, his way of life is "normal". He lives everyday to the fullest! He has



interests and desires, loves music and comedies; he enjoys family

gatherings and being with friends as well as the company of "girls". Those close to him love and adore him. Those who don't know him are immediately drawn to a smile that lights up a room and pulls you in. Joseph is not only a miracle to his family; he is a gift to each of us.







When Val joined Meta Centre in 2015, she was excited to join the Vaughan Day Program team. She was prepared to use all of Meta Centre's program strategies to encourage participants to experience life changing opportunities. What she didn't expect was for the opposite to happen. "I can't explain the instant bond I felt when meeting Jo-Jo and his mother" explains Val. It was a feeling that grew stronger for each of them over the next two years.

Val told how her fear of not being able to meet Joseph's needs dissipated as she became acquainted with his unique intellectual ability to communicate his feelings, likes, dislikes and interests. "Working with Jo-Jo became so enlightening" Val continues; "From the warmth of his smile, to his sense of humour.

I feel a calmness, just by touching his hand", she adds. "He has influenced my life in so many ways and it has been life-altering for me". From working with Jo-Jo, to talking about him at home, Val has also influenced her own family. So much so, that when her 7 year old son's teacher recently commented on how he is an example to the other children, Val was not surprised. As she told of the manner in which her son does not differentiate himself from children with special needs in his class, and how he constantly includes them to take part in playing games or just being together, she understood why and how, and was moved on learning of the difference he is making.

Amy, who has assisted in working Joseph, tells of Joseph's captivating personality; "he simply lights up

the room with that smile of his" she says. "Not only is he popular with the other participants who attend the program, he loves the attention he gets from us too" (referring to the younger female staff members).

Whether its finding a calming stimuli from the sensory board, enjoying the rhythm of a percussion instrument, taking part in a therapeutic session in the pool, or bowling (yes, bowling with a special ramp placed in front of his chair), Joseph is always an active participant. Always smiling, and often caught admiring himself in a mirror!

"I love every minute of working with him", says Val. "I leave work with an unexplainable sense of fulfillment" adds Amy, and I'm always looking forward to the next day".

**Joseph has been attending Meta Centre's Day Program for 10 years.**

**His worker before Val, was Stella who was with him for 8 years.**

**Through the dedicated efforts of Meta Centre's staff, over 500 people with developmental disabilities are making as much of a difference in our lives as we are in theirs; and the possibility of an inclusive society is a reality!**



# May Rose

## 70 YEARS YOUNG

At 70 years young, May Rose is the youngest of nine siblings. Losing both her parents at the age of 5, she grew up quickly. She learned the values of household chores and meal planning early, and developed nurturing qualities that allowed her to make friends easily.

Immigrating to Canada from Trinidad while in her early twenties, she lived with her sister Eulan and family, adored her nieces and nephews, and became instrumental in helping her sister raise them.

May Rose loves living in Canada, and was proud to receive her Canadian Citizenship status in 2005 as someone who was gainfully employed and involved in volunteering in her community.

A participant in Meta Centre's Day Program for over 20 years, May Rose has been encouraged to explore her

creative interests that include singing and drama. As the eldest resident in a Meta Centre home, May Rose finds comfort in tending to her chores.

She takes great pride in learning new skills and making good choices when grocery shopping, as well as enjoying the camaraderie that comes with being a part of the household. When asked what she enjoys most? There is little hesitation, as she describes her room and the comfort she finds in how its decorated. What she loves most about being in her room besides the solitude and peace of mind it brings, is the enjoyment she gets from reading. Whether it's a book or magazine she says, "I like reading about other people's lives" she says, and inspirational books that make you feel good about life, and help you to think of how precious it is", quoting from a few she remembered. One that she

personally enjoyed was, **"Life is like salt, lemon and tequila"**. Well that quote prompted us to engage in a number of comparisons and interpretations—but I'll leave its meaning to your own.

Family, whether near or far, has always been important to May Rose as she names each of her brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews. Its quite obvious that she treasures every moment and the many memories she has made through the years. She also speaks fondly of her long-time companion, Howard, whom she met while she was working. "It's really all about respect and common interests" she explains.

In May of this year, May Rose celebrated her 70th birthday surrounded by friends and family.







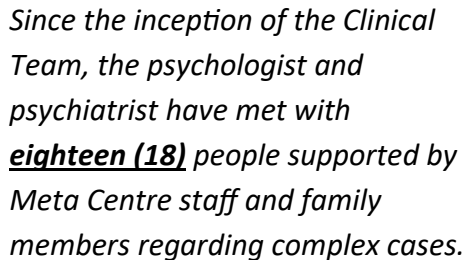
VAUGHAN CHAMBER  
BUSINESS  
ACHIEVEMENT  
AWARD WINNER



## Meta Centre & The Vaughan Chamber of Commerce 2017 Business Awards

On Thursday, April 6th Vaughan's best in the class of businesses, entrepreneurial and not for profit, came together for the 28th Annual Business Achievement Awards. With a record number of nearly 300 award nominations this year, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce proudly recognized all nominees and bestowed the highest recognition to 12 outstanding organizations and business people.

The evening welcomed the comic host of the Eat Street™ TV series, James Cunningham, as emcee and feature entertainer. A finalist in the category of Non-Profit/Charity, **Meta Centre** proudly accepted recognition as this year's winner of the VAUGHAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Business Award sponsored by TD Commercial Banking.



Consultation with external health care providers and professionals continues to take place in order to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to supports.

With consultation taking place on a monthly basis, the clinical team travels to various Meta Centre locations and meets with people supported by Meta Centre staff and family members.

The Social Worker, Behaviour Consultant, Speech Language Pathologist and Holistic Therapist (meeting bi-monthly) are also

involved to assist with counselling/therapy, data tracking, behaviour support plans, protocols, holistic therapy, speech therapy and swallowing evaluations.

A holistic and person-centered approach is taken with each and every case, ensuring that the person supported has access to any of the required clinical services available.

**Gaps identified** – Trauma counselling and nursing support consultations assist to address needed supports and waiting times experienced by the person supported. Suggestions and recommendations by external health care practitioners often involves monitoring/consultation by a nurse and psychiatrist.

Studies and data indicate that individuals with developmental disabilities experience some form of trauma in their lives. In most cases, the trauma has never been treated and contributes to other complications. Trauma includes sexual abuse, loss, past life experiences, etc.

Psychotherapy and/or trauma therapy helps to address unresolved trauma/issues for clients.

**Next issue:**

*How Meta Centre's Clinical Team handles a complex case to change a destructive behaviour.*



With DJ Lukey D





**META KNEX**



TORONTO ○ SCARBOROUGH ○ RICHMOND HILL

## TORONTO



### **JUNE 8TH—JULY 27TH** **COME RIDE THE BETTER** **WAY TTC TRAINING**

8 Week Program • Thursdays  
10 a.m. to 12:00 Noon



### **JUNE 5TH—AUGUST 25TH** **PRE-EMPLOYMENT** **WORKSHOP**

12 Week Program • Monday to  
Friday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



### **JULY 10TH—AUGUST 21ST** **COOKING CLASSES**

6 Week Program • Mondays  
10 a.m. to 12:00 Noon

**CONTACT:** Rob Passaro 416-736-0199 ext 334



### **SEPTEMBER 2017** **4CATS Art Studio—Classes** Wednesdays from September, 2017 Dates and Times forthcoming

**CONTACT:** Lana Cianfrini 416-736-0199 ext 337



**Community Based Inclusive Services**

Details, and/or more information for these programs  
also available online at: [www.metacentre.ca](http://www.metacentre.ca)

## SCARBOROUGH



### **MAY 3RD-JUNE 21ST** **CREATIVE MINDS**

8 Week Program  
Wednesdays  
10 a.m. to 12:00 Noon



### **MAY 2ND-JUNE 27TH** **WALK-FIT**

8 Week Program  
Tuesdays  
9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

**CONTACT:** Kimmoni Bailey-Griffiths 416-286-3634  
Email: [kbailey-griffiths@metacentre.ca](mailto:kbailey-griffiths@metacentre.ca)

## RICHMOND HILL



### **JUNE 16TH- AUGUST 18TH**

### **THE JOY OF BOCCE**

10 Week Program • Tuesdays  
10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

## VAUGHAN **JULY 5TH-AUG 31ST**



### **AIRBORNE TRAMPOLINE**

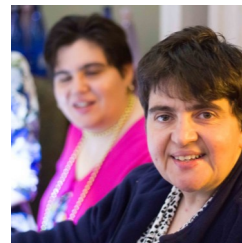
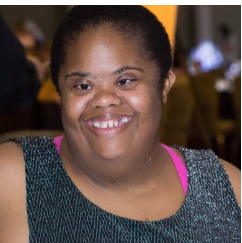
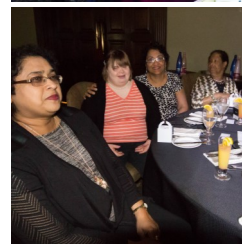
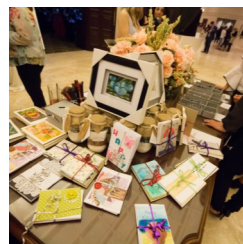
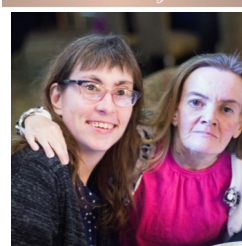
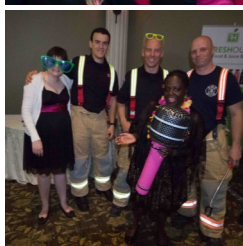
9 Week Program • Wednesdays  
11 a.m. to 12 Noon

**CONTACT:** Jacqueline Adams  
905-771-6843 ext. 504;  
Email: [jadams@metacentre.ca](mailto:jadams@metacentre.ca)





KUDOS to Rita Ristucci, Lee Simone and their amazing team! Over 500 guests attended the 6th Annual LADIES' MARTINI NIGHT supporting Meta Centre on April 7, 2017. More photos available online at: [www.metacentre.ca/EVENTS Martini Night](http://www.metacentre.ca/EVENTS%20Martini%20Night). Left Photograph: Winner of City Line tickets, Teresa Di Franco with Special Guest, Radio and TV Host, Adam Wylde from KISS92.5 & Breakfast Television.





# Upcoming Events



## Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup>

### 11am to 2pm

Back by popular demand, **Team Holiday Inn Express and Elements Vaughan Southwest** will pamper your CAR!

This year's goal is to raise **\$2,000** with proceeds to benefit Meta Foundation.

**John Caneco General Manager Holiday Inn Express & Suites**

**Vaughan-Southwest** 6100 Highway 7, Vaughan, Ontario, Canada L4H 0R2



## Sunday June 25<sup>th</sup>

### 7 a.m.—2 pm

### WALK, RELAY & GRAN FONDO

Brochure & Information online:

**www.metacentre.ca**



### meta foundation

16<sup>th</sup> Annual

Family Walk, Relay & Gran Fondo

### Sunday, June 25, 2017

Location:

**Vaughan West Business Park  
100 Zenway Blvd., Woodbridge  
From 7:00 a.m.**

Whether participating, spectating, or, enjoying the activities, your **REGISTRATION FEE** includes breakfast, food pavilion, kids zone and entertainment!

More information available at: 416-736-0199 ext 329 or, [info@metacentre.ca](mailto:info@metacentre.ca); Brochure available online at: [www.metacentre.ca](http://www.metacentre.ca)



Download Brochure online at: [www.metacentre.ca](http://www.metacentre.ca)

## www.metacentre.ca

## Motown Uptown Gala

(previously The Harvest Moon Gala)

### Sunday, October 29, 2017



**Special Guest Host**

**Media Personality**

**Kevin Frankish**

**Co-host, Breakfast Television**

Online Registration

forthcoming.

Visit: [www.metacentre.ca](http://www.metacentre.ca)



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**Ruth Sandland, Carla Aveiro,**

**Carla Torbidone, Heather Drakes,**

**Lana Cianfrini, Nancy Settino.**

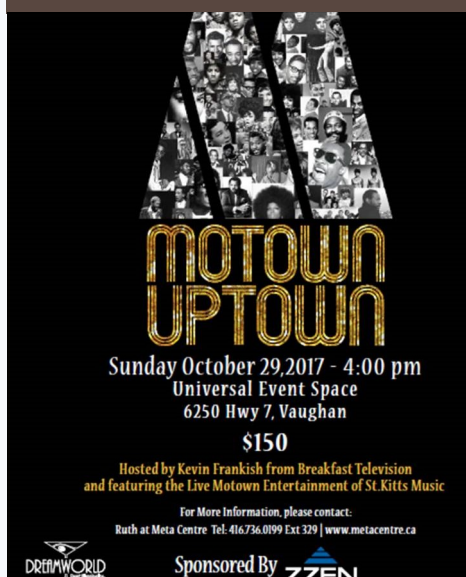
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INSIGHT

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