

MARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



RESPIRE CARE – A GROWING NEED IN THE COMMUNITY!

by Fathima Nisar

Mary Centre's Respite Care Program is offered to individuals 18 years or older with a developmental disability that live at home with their families or in the community with a caregiver. This program is designed to provide support, guidance, care and supervision to individuals according to their individual needs.

Mary Centre's program offers "short term relief to caregivers" in the following ways:

- **In House Support:** This allows individuals to stay home with a respite care worker and gives relief to the caregiver. The Respite care worker provides the individual an opportunity to improve their social and life skills and involvement in the community by participating in social and recreational activities.
- **Host Family Support:** The individuals are matched with Host families who provide short-term relief in a home like environment. This helps them to meet new people and also develop new friendships.
- **Group Home Support:** Individuals are placed in one of the two established Residential Care programs for seniors located in Scarborough to provide short term relief.

Our Respite Care program is a developing program in the Peel region. Funded by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children Services and Catholic Charities, "the special services at home" fund is renewable every year to help individuals and their families to pay for the Respite Care cost.

Our program started with one part time Respite worker who was supporting one individual in the Peel region. In June, 2003 a full time Respite Care Coordinator for the Peel region was hired

and is based in Brampton. On staff we have a full-time coordinator and 9 part-time respite care workers. The individuals and their families who have been waiting for a long time for a respite worker are relieved that Mary Centre has come to their aid with staff who are highly competent and reliable. Our Respite support workers provide quality care and try to meet the expectations of the individuals they serve and their families and work round the clock to provide the quality services.

We are presently supporting 12 individuals and the list is growing day by day. We have also built a support team around 2 individuals who have complex needs. They are both autistic; one requires workers during evenings to take him out to programs and on weekends for recreational activities. Occasionally, when his mother is required to cover a night shift at her place of employment we send in a member of our staff to care for her son. The other individual needs workers throughout the week during different time slots. Our workers take him out to day programs, walking, swimming and also other social & recreational activities. We have a team of workers matched up with both the individuals.

There is one individual from Peel region who is at present using our Respite bed at the group home facility in Scarborough. He is also supported by a competent team of workers who provides relief to his caregivers

Our service has brought a sigh of relief to caregivers who have been desperately looking for respite. Thanks to the team effort we are making it a reality in the Peel Region and are confident that we can grow faster with more support and funding.

MANY THANKS!!!!

Once again this year Mary Centre's Bar-B-Q was held outside the Victoria Park Loblaws store. The smokies and the hamburgers were delicious, even though the weather wasn't the greatest!

Oh, the smell of those sizzling sausages and burgers really drew the customers, especially the little kids; they didn't have to be asked twice. This year, the firemen were nowhere to be found. We missed them! *Maybe they were busy fighting fires!*

Many thanks to our leader, Dominic who helped set up, get the cooking started and for the great Timbits; they filled the spot first thing in the morning.

We can always count on Janet who pitched in again this year and was invaluable; she helped set up, and took on the responsibility of the afternoon session and closing up. She also recruited Paul, her husband & her mother, Irene, again this year.

Angela's cooking skills were next to none and a special thanks to Doug who was lasted all day.

Thanks to all who helped, jostling those crowds into action. We couldn't do it with out you. What a Team!

Is it too early to ask, "Let's do it again next year?" (smile).

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Celia Watson is a unique, caring and energetic volunteer!! When you get to know Celia, she is the type of person you will never forget. A retired school teacher, she is now a dedicated volunteer, not only for Mary Centre but also for her church and other centre(s).

It was a blessed day when Honey met Celia. Celia is part of the Bridlewood Presbyterian Church, a wonderful faith community which has taken Honey into their fold. Honey regards Celia in a very special way. Celia is a caring and dedicated person, one who takes commitment seriously; last year Celia was honoured by the Province with an award for 5 years of service with Mary Centre, and still continues.

She is always enthusiastic about everything she is involved in, and this is transferred to those around her. Celia is held in high esteem by all who know her. She has encouraged many members of

her faith community to become involved with Honey. She is a great organizer, especially in her church. Celia is always willing to fill in for or switch with others who may temporarily be unable to give Honey a ride to church or to her day program.

A truly hospitable person, Celia is attentive to those who are single/lonely in her community and would plan a potluck supper to bring cheer, caring and involvement to them. Every year for Honey's birthday, Celia, along with Honey's other volunteers from the church, would have a little celebration at one of their homes for her. Honey looks forward to this special time when she is esteemed and feted.

Where does she get her energy from?!! We at Mary Centre are truly honoured and fortunate to have such a dedicated person on board. Thank you, Celia, for your continued efforts.

Mark Your Calendar!

November 13 & 14, 2003 7th Annual Gala
Famous People Players Dinner Theatre

June 8, 2004 5th Annual Golf Tournament
Silver Lakes Golf & Country Club

For information regarding these events contact Marion Patterson at (416) 630-5533 or mpatterson@marycentre.com

JOHN'S STORY

John was raised with a strong Catholic faith. When his parents decided that it was time for John to have some independence, John moved to a residence which was occupied by 15 other people who have a developmental disability. This was a temporary fix as it was a crowded situation. John's family longed for the day when he could move into one of Mary Centre's residences. Their dream came true about 3 years ago and John moved to one of our Brampton homes. As a result, his parents sold their home in Toronto, and relocated in Brampton, so they could be close to John, and their daughter, who also lives in Brampton. John spends each weekend with his parents, except for when they're away on holidays.

From the time John was a boy growing up he was an altar-server; he always did and loved doing it; he especially takes pride in carrying the cross heading the procession to the altar. John longed for the day when he would altar-serve again. The pastor of St. Anthony of Padua (John's parish) fully supported the concept and welcomed John into the altar-serving fold,

even gave him his own gown, which John's mom had altered to fit him. John serves every Saturday afternoon at the 5:00 p.m. mass. Needless to say how happy John and his family are with this involvement.

When the WYD Cross came to St. Anthony's John helped carry it part of the way, along with his mom; he carried it with pride. For WYD John registered as a pilgrim and attended the Catechesis Sessions at St. Anthony's. He thoroughly enjoyed the singing and the inclusion with all the young people, as well as altar-serving at the masses. John was a representative of Mary Centre at one of the Service Projects, spreading cheer with his wonderful smile, greeting the young people of the world.

John is well known and loved at St. Anthony's, and needless to say how happy his family as well as all of us at Mary Centre are about the success of this connection. His life is enhanced and he is much more fulfilled by his involvement with his parish.

We Salute OLIVE!

Olive Gyebi came to work with Mary Centre as a full time counselor eleven years ago when Whitecap was officially opened. She continued to work at Whitecap until 2003, when her skills were needed at Leyton. Olive supports the residents' needs and will go out of her way to support staff. She is constantly educating herself to ensure the residents' quality of life and is a very large asset to Mary Centre. She juggles her family life with work and school. It is amazing how she is able to keep all the balls up in the air.

Olive is a dedicated, committed worker. She cares for the residents and definitely upholds Mary Centre's philosophy that the residents come first. She is a good listener, is very upfront, and is not afraid to give her opinion on issues she feels strongly about. She is loyal and supportive to residents and staff. Olive has established a very good relationship with the residents at the group home and they are comfortable in confiding their concerns and issues with her. Finally, Olive is great at advocating for the residents and believes in the fairness of residents and staff and strives to ensure fairness is followed.

CHARLES' JOURNEY!

Charles Carpenter started his stay with Mary Centre through the respite program and eventually became a full time resident at Whitecap in 2002. This gentleman is a joy to work with. He can entertain with his singing and dancing and he plays the mouth organ very well. He is very spiritual, likes to read the Bible everyday, attends church every Sunday, and loves to bless everyone.

Charles attends the Alzheimer Program at Providence Centre three days a week. Charles loves to visit the zoo and loves petting animals. He also adores spending time with his family and loves to go for ice cream with his volunteer. Mary Centre is lucky to have Charles as a resident.



Mary Centre Newsletter

Published by

Newsletter Committee

- Julie Antal
- Carol Chung
- Lorna Fryer
- Olive Gyebi
- Karen Kirk

Shawn Michael Kernaghan

Marion Patterson

Manu Verma

Desktop Publisher

Marion Patterson

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Mary Centre of the Archdiocese of Toronto
 530 Wilson Avenue, Suite 210, Toronto, ON M3H 5Y9
 Phone (416) 630-5533, Fax (416) 630-5702
www.marycentre.com

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