



# Reflections



October/November, 2012

## Another Successful Golf Tournament!

We would like to thank all the men and women who participated in our 7th Golf Tournament and made it a wonderful success! All of our prayers were answered as the rain in the early morning cleared up leading to a fun and safe tournament. Golfers enjoyed a wonderful autumn day at the beautiful Richmond Hill Golf Club. As usual, the day included lots of fun and prizes, including a putting competition tie-breaking 'put-off' over

lunch. An entertaining addition to the program as we enjoyed a well earned steak lunch.

In short, the day was a great success and we are so thankful to everyone who came out, and also to those who couldn't make it but communicated their support of the work at JFJ Hope Centre by contributing financially. This ministry would not be possible without each and every one of you!

With deepest gratitude JFJ Hope Centre would like to acknowledge the sponsors (listed on the next page) and thank them for their generous support!



## Golf Tournament cont'd

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Thousand Islands Playhouse  
Wild Water Kingdom  
Many Anonymous Friends

### ***A huge thanks as well to the planning committee and tournament volunteers!***

Bernice Christo – chair  
Jeff Petch  
Joy Rapley  
Andrew Maclean

Hedy Bauer  
Steve Semple  
Kristen Rapley  
Megan Rapley



**JFJ Hopecentre**  
building families • changing lives

**Margo Semple**  
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## NEEDS CORNER

- Diapers – Sizes 3 – 6 are urgently needed
- Clothing – Boys and Girls sizes 4 and up are needed
- Winter clothing, jackets and snowsuits – sizes 5 - 8
- Wipes, Baby Formula

## Care Cupboard Christmas Party



The annual Care Cupboard Christmas Party is fast approaching and plans are in full swing. This yearly bash, scheduled for Friday December 14th, is not only an opportunity for our Care Cupboard families to relax and have some fun, it's an opportunity for us to share the good news of Christ's birth and why He came.

Here's how you can lend a hand –

### **Donate**

Please note the deadline for donations is Nov 16th unless special arrangements have been made with the office

- new pajamas (sizes 0 to 8)
- new toys (value \$20) for children age 0 – 6 yrs.
- \$10 Wal-mart gift cards for children age 7 – 10 yrs.
- items to treat the moms & dads. Some suggestions: perfume, toiletries, socks, day timers, gloves and toques, coffee mugs, pens, after shave, \$5 Tim Horton's gift cards
- gift wrap, very large and small/medium gift bags

### **Volunteer**

- pre-party prep
- shopping, gift wrapping
- the day of the party (8:30 a.m. to noon), arriving at the office to help bring the gifts to the party, help with set up, serving food, supervising crafts and games, interacting with the guests, and cleaning up

### **Financial support**

- financial donations designated for the party will be used to buy food and gifts.  
(We would be willing to shop for you)

Let us know if you're available and interested in helping out!



## Volunteer Focus

JFJ Hope Centre has been blessed with many excellent, talented, and dedicated volunteers over the many years that we've been in existence. It's almost impossible to mention all of them. But every once in awhile we like to honour those who have made a difference in the lives of those we serve.

### ***Bernice Christo***

Bernice has been putting her organizational, leadership and management skills to good use as she has spearheaded the golf tournament for the second year in a row. Her gracious personality coupled with her get-down-to-the-task drive has made Bernice a pleasure to work with and left us confident that the job would get done. Bernice has been working full force over the summer pulling together all of the pieces of the tournament. While we owe the success of the tournament to many volunteers we are so thankful for Bernice's excellent leadership that kept us all on track and made sure all bases were covered!

### ***Andy & Donna Lodge & their son Tyler***

Andy Lodge has been our "handyman" since 2002. Not only does Andy fix anything and everything around here, he also keeps us laughing! If we had thought that Andy goes above and beyond before – which we did – past help is nothing compared to this fall. When we put out the word that we wanted, and in many areas needed, to paint this place from top to bottom we never expected the response we got from Andy. Andy, along with his wife Donna and son Tyler stepped up to the plate and volunteered to man the project. The Lodge family, with only minimal and occasional help from a couple others, spent a month of evenings and weekends giving us the most amazingly professional paint job we could dare to imagine. We gave Andy the weekend off to come join us for the golf tournament which he has also supported over the years by rounding up foursomes and donating awesome items for our silent auction.



# Adoption Awareness Month

November is Adoption Awareness Month. I could attempt to raise awareness of this worthy life option by writing a rationale on its value; I could discuss how adoption is a means for parents who know that they can't parent themselves, to bring life and hope to their child. But I would prefer to share a story. Because sometimes seeing something in action is the best way to explain its value. Adoption is a wonderful option that, in the right circumstances, can bring hope and a future to birth parents, children and adopting parents.

This is Amanda's story, one of many I could tell that reveal the significance of adoption for those who feel the world is crashing in on them and their child and believe they're without hope or options. Amanda is 24 years old. She has bipolar disorder and possibly schizophrenia. She's also intellectually and socially delayed. She has no family and much of her past is a mystery even to her. Amanda goes back and forth between being homeless and living in a group home for the mentally ill. The only people Amanda has in her life are support workers from a Christian organization. They referred Amanda to us after she was abused and became pregnant.

When we first met Amanda we realized two things pretty quickly. First, she was already in love with this little guy she was carrying and wanted more than anything to be his mommy. The second thing we realized was that, because of her health issues and delays, Children's Aid couldn't allow this little baby to stay in her care and had already made it clear that the baby would be apprehended at birth.

So Amanda came to us for help. She wanted us to help her find a good home to adopt her baby, she wanted Christian parents and she wanted people who wouldn't mind visiting with her on occasion so she could see her baby now and then. It took a lot of time and patience helping Amanda through all the paperwork, making sure she understood everything. We were also concerned about her ability to cope with the grief of letting go of her baby; which we knew would be compounded by

her mental health issues, so we worked closely with the support people in her life.

It took a bit of work finding families who could accept the health issues in our little man's background but in the end Amanda had five wonderful families to choose from and she chose a fine young couple full of faith and compassion. Not only did they fall in love with this little guy but they have so much respect and compassion for Amanda. They understand her and they genuinely like her.

If we thought the preparation for the adoption was work it was nothing compared to the support the Amanda needed through the grief of letting go. Just because Amanda chose this plan doesn't mean she didn't experience the excruciating grief that comes from letting go of a child. Because Amanda had no one in her life she would call us when she was having a bad day or bad moment – occasionally this was at 3 or 4 in the morning. We helped Amanda build a reasonable action plan to take her through these tough moments and a reasonable framework for making phone calls. Amanda gave her written consent for the adoption, and then withdrew it, and then immediately called me dissolved into tears begging me not to take the baby away from his wonderful new parents. She told me she'd made a horrible mistake and wanted to sign the documents again; which she did.

Slowly Amanda has moved through the pain of letting go. What keeps her going is the relationship she has with the family she chose. If you were to ask she would tell you that the most wonderful part of her life right now are the times she visits with her baby and his new parents. They've become her family too in many ways.

Every story is different; every situation is its own unique adventure. The best choice is by no means always adoption. But this year we've seen this option bring hope and a future to many who feared there was none.

*Margo Semple, Executive Director*

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