

MS tour hopes to raise \$15 million

Suzanne Couchman, who is quarterbacking the GenereX/Jaymor Victory Tour for MS 2007, believes in setting her sights and her hopes high.

That includes MS Victory Tour 2007, which she hopes will become an annual event and raise at least \$15 million this year alone for MS research and education. The disease afflicts 75,000 Canadians and 450,000 in North America.

“Ambitious? Perhaps.

But the cause is right and certainly something Canadians can relate to – no matter where they live,” she said at the start of the nine-month, 10,500-kilometre MS Victory Tour at a special ceremony in Victoria March 3.

The man at the centre is Robert Bertolas, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1988 at the age of 19. He’s running, rollerblading and biking his way across Canada in this

year’s Victory Tour.

“There’s also a lot of interest in taking the Victory Tour to Europe and the U.S. – but that depends on how this tour unfolds and Robert’s health at the end of it,” said Couchman. The Victory Tour was one of the reasons she and Robert formed Crossing Bridges Inc. in 2004.

At each stop, Robert spoke to select audiences like MS support groups; school sports teams and running teams, etc., offering his own special brand of hope.

His theme is always the same: “Live your life to the fullest ... anything is possible if you put your heart and soul into it ... when it comes time to size up your life, you won’t have to say ‘I would have, I should have.’ You’ll be able to say ‘I did.’”

The tour will have stopped at more than 60 communities across Canada. In B.C., they will be visiting numerous cities in Ontario until the end of August.

Bertolas will reach his hometown of Woodbridge Sunday, July 28. Prior to that, he will be biking past Caesar’s Event Centre in Bolton at roughly 11:30 a.m. that day.

The cost of the tour, including transportation and traveling expenses for a staff of five, is estimated at

\$200,000. Roughly 85% of the funds raised from MS Victory Tour 2007 will go either for research, including the Myelin Project, or MS education and awareness.

Myelin is the protective coating around the nerve. Keeping this protective coating is critical in helping our bodies avoid neurological problems. Understanding how the body does this is crucial in unlocking the secrets of multiple sclerosis and other neurological disorders like Parkinson’s Disease.

The Myelin Project conducts research in five countries on the repair and reproduction of myelin. Research from this research has already yielded a number of “impressive breakthroughs,” Couchman noted.

While the bulk of the money raised from this year’s Victory Tour will go for research, a portion will be used to fund an annual scholarship for one or more students entering university keenly interested in doing research in this field.

Bertolas plans to wrap up this odyssey Nov. 25 with a ceremony at St. John’s, Newfoundland.

The tour has two main sponsors – GenereX Biotechnology Corp. and The Jaymor Group.

For more information, contact Couchman at 519-



Jade, 10, and Ashley, 13, both dance competitively at Vanessa Zullo’s School of Dance in Bolton. Ashley currently dances for the Toronto Blue Jays Aces Jr. Jays Dance Team, while Jade is a dancer on the Toronto Raptors Mini Dance Pak.

Young Bolton dancers are heading for world championships

The first weekend of May, Ashley Parks and Jade DeLaRonde attended auditions and Canadian National Dance Championship Provincials held in Guelph.

It was there that they both successfully qualified for a spot on Team Canada. Similar auditions and competitions had taken place all across Canada with only ten solo dancers in each age category being chosen to represent their country at the World Dance Championships. The prestigious World Cup is being held at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers in New York City July 17 and 18. Dancers from all around the world will compete at this Olympic styled event with over 50 nations worldwide vying for the title of World Champion.

Jade will perform her Jazz Solo *Electric Youth* in the 11 and under category. Ashley is competing in the 12 and over category with her Ballet Solo *Sevilla* and Jazz Solo *Happy Just to Dance*. Jade will also be performing her three solos (Jazz, Open, & Lyrical) at the North America Dance Awards being held in NYC just prior to the World Cup.

While at this spectacular dance festival, the girls will also have the opportunity to attend workshops and master classes offered by some of the best choreographers and dancers in the business. Jade and Ashley are both very proud to represent their country and are very excited about their trip to New York. They look forward to seeing the different dancers perform from all over the world. What an awesome opportunity for these young ladies to celebrate their love of dance. Congratulations and good luck!

Credit River rehabilitation event in Caledon this Saturday

Join Trout Unlimited and CVC for a bank revetment at 16559 McLaughlin Road, north of the Grange Sideroad, Saturday, July 28. Participants are asked to meet at 9 a.m. with a BBQ lunch to follow. It’s a stream rehabilitation project to stabilize an eroding bank on a stretch of the Credit River. Bring your own chest waders or contact Jon Clayton of CVC, 905-670-1615.

What’s Hot on Video

Are We Done Yet?

By Mark Pavilons

Editor

Timely sequel, *Are We Done Yet?* tickles the funny bone of the entire family.

Ice Cube, Nia Long and John C. McGinley (*Scrubs*) lead the cast in this family comedy. The Persons family renovate a dream home in the country, but everything does from bad to worse. From a money pit of a house to various wildlife, the family is plagued with renovation woes. McGinley is outstanding in his oddball role.

An entertaining 92 minutes for the whole family. It’s due out on DVD Aug. 7 and the release will include bonus material that includes behind-the-scenes material, a fun featurette and bloopers.

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