



In Memory of Matthew Froese



Photo courtesy of Revival Arts

Matthew was born in October 2000. During his birth he suffered from oxygen deprivation that severely damaged his brain and left him completely dependent. His parents adored being involved in his life but struggled to find the balance of all of Matthew's physical needs with the rest of their family's needs. This battle inspired the dream of Matthew's House.

Matthew suffered a great deal. He endured many appointments with countless doctors. His parents tried many therapies, both conventional and otherwise, in hopes of making his life easier. As a baby, feeding was a constant battle. It often would take Matthew over an hour just to finish one cup of food. At three and a half years it became very apparent that Matthew was unable to thrive eating the regular way and he was given a feeding tube. He ate this way for the rest of his life. Matthew was a spastic quadriplegic with an uncontrollable seizure disorder. He was cortically blind and suffered from chronic respiratory issues. His comfort was very difficult to maintain as his body twisted and pulled leaving him with painful scoliosis and contractures of his limbs. He was unable to communicate verbally. Despite all of these extremely challenging limitations Matthew had a way of lighting up a room and showing those that gave him the chance what really mattered most in life. He was a joy to know and his smile and giggle delighted all who had the privilege to witness it.

Matthew went to Mountain Elementary school where he was very loved by his teacher and all of his aids. He was able to spend 5 inspiring years there, gifting the other students with life lessons of compassion and understanding. He also spent time with a respite family that helped care for Matthew for 7 years, giving his parents a much needed break from all of his physical needs. He was adored by his sister and brother and many relatives and friends.

On August 14th 2010, just two months shy of his tenth birthday, Matthew unexpectedly passed away. His fight was over. He was an inspiration to many, leaving a legacy far greater than most could hope to in a lifetime. For a boy who never walked he left a huge footprint on this earth and in all the hearts of those who knew him.

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MATTHEW'S HOUSE MOMENTS



Matthew's House Shine & Dine

The very first Matthew's House Shine and Dine was held on Saturday, September 11th, 2010 at the Voth Farm in Abbotsford. The event was completely sold out with 250 people in attendance. The event got started in the late afternoon with a car show featuring 20 of the Fraser Valley's most prestigious cars. Guests mingled amongst the cars to the music of Nate Bosch while enjoying appetizers and specialty espresso drinks. The silent auction featured over 70 amazing items. A tool chest with a built-in TV, DVD player, & MP3 player, donated by Seattle Tools, gathered a lot of attention and bids. A set of Foose custom wheels and a Tony Dorcett signed helmet were also bidding favourites! The silent auction alone brought in over \$40,000.

A five course dinner was served under tents overlooking the lake. Dan Murphy, the Canucks reporter from Sportsnet, was the Master of Ceremonies for the evening. Mary Simon entertained guests during dinner and performed a number she wrote especially to honour the life of Matthew Froese (http://www.marysimon.com/fr_mattshouse). Guests heard from people and businesses in the community that are supporting Matthew's House, in particular Gord Holloway from KMPG and Rudy Loewen from Palcor, who is donating the construction management fees.

A video was played outlining the story of Matthew Froese's life, explaining why Doug and Andrea Froese feel compelled to create a respite home for disabled children. Following the video, Doug and Andrea each gave a personal message, explaining their journey with Matthew, the loss of their amazing son and their drive to build this home in Matthew's honour. There was not a dry eye amongst the guests. Matthew's story is truly remarkable and inspirational.

The guests were sent off with a bang, literally, as fireworks lit up the sky. Thank you to all the guests who attended the inaugural Matthew's House Shine and Dine and for making it such a big success. Also, thank you to all the donors for the silent auction items, to all of the vendors and chefs who donated food, beverages, ingredients and labour for the meal, as well as the small army of volunteers for their hard work. The event was successful on many levels, raising over \$400,000.00 in cash and pledges. It also raised awareness in the community for the need for a respite home for these special kids. Matthew's House will be something that the people of Abbotsford will be proud to be a part of.

Pam Ratzlaff

For a photo slideshow of the Shine & Dine please visit the Revival Arts blog at www.rablog.ca/2010/10/20/matthews-house-shine-dine-fundraiser-event/

Downtown Abbotsford Car Show

The 5th Annual Downtown Abbotsford Car show was another measurable success in raising funds for Matthew's House. Over 300 cars attended the annual show this year while the rains held off into the evening making it perfect weather to get out and admire the collection of vintage, collector and muscle cars in attendance. The organizers this year, as in 2009, determined that 100% of proceeds would go to their charity of choice, being Matthew's House. During last year's show there was \$5000.00 raised to be donated to the charity and this year's show raised another commendable donation of \$6000.00. This total was accomplished through vehicle admission fees, t-shirt sales, and on site donations. One local family even donated a Vintage Truck to be sold with 100% of proceeds going towards Matthew's House. This car show is an annual event that has pledged ongoing support to Matthew's House in the coming years. The community can look forward to next year's show and mark your calendars.



Tammy McLachlan

Mya Froese, Matthew's sister, and Eugene Klassen, from Communitas, accepted the cheque from the Abbotsford Car Show on behalf of Matthew's House.



Upcoming Events:

"Matthew in Motion" - May 7th, 2011

Walk and/or Run to raise funds and awareness for Matthew's House.

Dinner & Dance - February 12th, 2011

Come for live music, great food, dancing, and to raise some money for Matthew's House!

Please email us at info@mattshouse.ca if you have any question regarding these events or if you would like more information about Matthew's House!

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