

Media Release

BRAIN TUMOUR SURVIVOR TO WALK AT FUNDRAISER AFTER BEING PARALYZED

Brampton, Ontario, April 20 2015 – In just over one year, brain tumour survivor Joe Martelli has gone from being unable to talk and walk on his own, to being back at work. And that's one of the reasons Joe and his loved ones are excited to take part in the Brampton Spring Sprint on Sunday, May 3rd. This year marks the first time Joe can do the fundraising walk on his own two feet.

January 2014 started off as an exciting time for the Martelli family. Towards the end of that month, Joe and his wife Melissa welcomed a new addition to their growing family – a little sister for their young son. It was just three short weeks after the happy arrival of their daughter that the Martellis faced another challenge: Joe was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour.

“There were no headaches or seizures,” recalls Melissa, “but looking back there was a bit of slurred speech. We just chalked it up to the stress of a newborn, new home and the recent holidays.” But when Joe began to lose mobility in his right hand, a trip to the family doctor was in order. An MRI scan would eventually reveal the mass causing Joe's increasing lack of mobility and speech and a biopsy of the tumour identified its type, a cancerous anaplastic astrocytoma. Due to its location in Joe's brain, though, removal of the mass was impossible. “The doctors said they were going to give Joe everything they had to beat this,” adds Melissa.

For six weeks after that, Joe faced daily chemotherapy and radiation. Thirty rounds of treatment successfully shrank the brain tumour, but Joe was left with severe side effects from the disease. Paralysis on his right side would force Joe to learn how to talk and walk again, and he spent a good deal of his newborn daughter's first year recovering.

Today, the Martellis are gearing up for the 2015 Brampton Spring Sprint. And best of all, this year, Joe will be able to walk the route with his team, rather than be in a wheelchair. “We were in palliative care last summer and to see Joe's turnaround is just incredible,” says Melissa. “He's my hero, my champion – a true inspiration!”

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About Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada offers hope to those affected through education and a national network of support programs. Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada also funds brain tumour research through annual grants, fellowships and research studentships. All activities are supported solely by the dedication and determination of donors - individuals, corporate sponsors and foundations. Since the organization's founding in 1982, more than \$4 million has been directed to brain tumour research. Learn more at Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's website: www.BrainTumour.ca.

About the Brampton Spring Sprint – Why do we walk?

Every day, 27 Canadians learn they have a brain tumour. Right now, an estimated 55,000 Canadians live with this disease that can impair physical and mental ability and change personality or behaviour. Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada brings hope, education and support to everyone affected. By signing up and fundraising as part of a brain tumour walk, patients, survivors, family and friends join the nationwide movement to end brain tumours. Their efforts support the specialized programs and resources that empower patients to be their own best health care advocates and fund the ground-breaking research that will find a cure for the disease.

For further information or to schedule an interview with the Martelli family, contact:

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