

MEDIA ADVISORY

October 21, 2017

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We Are Pump(kin)ed!

Local Celebrities Celebrate Halloween by “Carving for the Cause” October 26-29, 2017

Children at Risk, Ottawa presents their **22nd Annual Celebrity-Carved Pumpkin Contest!!** This popular seasonal fundraising event is being held from **Thursday, October 26 to Sunday, October 29**. For over 38 years, **Children at Risk** (a local charity) has been providing supports to **Autistic children** & their families in the Ottawa Region – filling in “the gaps” in services available through government agencies.

2017 marks an incredible **22 YEARS** that enthusiastic and talented local Celebrities, Politicians, Media Personalities and Businesses have been helping to recognize **October as Autism Awareness Month** by carving orange orbs into gorgeous gourds! Veteran Carvers will be challenged by first-timers, with over **100 pumpkins** being transformed in the name of charity!! Participants include **City of Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson and Councillors, the West Ottawa Board of Trade & Orleans Chamber of Commerce, Ottawa Champions, Ottawa Senators, Ottawa 67’s, RedBlacks and Fury** as well as **MPP’s Lisa MacLeod, Bob Chiarelli, John Fraser, Marie-France Lalonde, Yasir Naqvi, Nathalie Des Rosiers, MP’s David McGuinty, Karen McCrimmon, Catherine McKenna, Andrew Leslie, Mona Fortier & Chandra Arya** to name just a few - plus many other local businesses, radio, television and newspaper personalities. Participants compete for the lucky “Top Thirteen” list of carvers for 2017 and a Trophy for the Top Carver!

The pumpkin creations will be on display at **Merivale Mall** after our **Reception at 10 AM on Thursday, October 26** – then additionally at **Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Place d’Orléans and (NEW!) Billings Bridge Shopping Centre** from **Friday, October 27 to Sunday, October 29**. Visitors to the Malls can vote for their favourite pumpkin or celebrity by donating spare change. ****ONCE AGAIN**** this year will be Ballots for 3 Grand Prize Draws from all 4 Malls! **ALSO** Celebrities have donated “Prize Packages” for silent auction bidding (on-site & on-line www.childrenatrisk.ca) Our Auction Site this year is with:

VONALITY ONLINE CHARITY AUCTIONS

With the support of the Celebrity Carvers and generous donations from our community, funds raised in the previous 21 years total over **\$139,612!** All proceeds will help Children at Risk “fill in the gaps” in publicly-funded Autism services with their Community-Based Special Projects, which include **Camp Kaleidoscope** – our All-Day Summer Camp, Family Support Groups, Information Seminars and Educational Training Workshops. Children at Risk recognizes the importance of supporting the whole family as they cope with the daily challenges of raising an Autistic child. With the funds raised through events like the Celebrity-Carved Pumpkin Contest, these children can be provided with the best opportunities to achieve their maximum potential!

Not being able to speak is not the same as having nothing to say!

Other Participating Celebrities Include:

Carter & Sandra (KISS FM)

Bruce Garrioch (Ottawa Sun)

Tappa Hair Salon & Beauty Bar

Ottawa New Year's Charity Ball

Metroland Media

Dean Brown (TSN 1200 AM)

YMCA-YWCA National Capital Region

Stuntman Stu & Angie Poirier (Majic 100 FM)

Tim Morgan, Heather Ray & Dylan Black – (boom 99.7 FM)

Codi & Nida (Jewel 98.5 FM Morning Show) Steve & Brian (Jewel 98.5 FM Afternoon Drive)

Kornicky, Carlee Quinn, Darryl Spring, Christian Dinish & Todd Bernard - Rebel 101.7 FM

City of Ottawa Councillors - Jeff Leiper, Keith Egli, Mark Taylor, Bob Monette, Jody Mitic, George

Darouze, Diane Deans, Shad Qadri Jean Clouthier, Allan Hubley, Tobi Nussbaum, Jan Harder,

Tim Tierney, Marianne Wilkinson & Michael Qaqish, **Ottawa Police** Deputy Chief Jill Skinner

Surgenor Barrhaven Chevrolet, Buick, GMC, Fatboys Smokehouse, Success In Steps, Cora's

Carol Kassis's Pampered Chef, Jim Durrell Capital Dodge, Wine Racks - Merivale Mall & Carlingwood

Tiny Hoppers Barrhaven, Orleans, Kanata North & Bridlewood, CIBC Merivale Mall, Vivah Jewellery Billings

Lisa Zanon-Speech Therapy, CM Photography, Pixelcraft Studio, Planet Fitness Merivale Mall

Family Harmonies Familiales, Hilton Garden Inn, Creatrix Design Group, Vanier & Associates

Jennifer Chamberlain-Royal LePage Team Realty, Sky High Snow Removal & Roofing, Giggles & Hearts

ASNY Productions, Algonquin & Prince of Wales Animal Hospitals, Orleans Family Dentistry

House of Targ, Hair by Janice, Lauren Kerkhoff's Scentsy, Capital Chordettes, BeaverTails, Lindsey Mills

Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School, Jays's Barber Shop, Printwell St. Laurent, Giggles & Pie

Vito Pilioci, Wayne Scanlan & Joanne Laucius (Ottawa Citizen)

1310 AM NEWS & Doc & Woody and Eric the Intern (CHEZ 106.1 FM)

JJ Clarke, Megan Shaw & Annie Bergeron-Oliver (CTV Ottawa News)

Sports Alumni Shaun Van Allen (Ottawa Senators Alumni) & Jock Climie (CFL Alumni & TSN Analyst)

Photo Opportunity

Celebrities have been invited, to deliver their pumpkin creations to Merivale Mall (Centre Court) at **10:00 AM on Thursday, October 26th**. Pumpkins will then be divided and transferred to Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Place d'Orléans and Billings Bridge for Friday, October 27th with voting continuing until 3:30 PM on Sunday, October 29th.

Background -Autism is a lifelong neurological, developmental disorder that now affects **1 in every 68 North American children, with 1 in 54 boys** (boys more than 4 times more likely than girls to have Autism). With a **new case every 20 minutes**, these numbers reflect more children being diagnosed with Autism than with AIDS, Diabetes and Cancer combined! Autism impacts the typical development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Children diagnosed within the Autism Spectrum Disorders are often, without help, unable to speak, relate to others, be aware of dangerous situations and even play appropriately with toys. **Children at Risk** continues to help Autistic children and their families in the Ottawa area - solely supported on fundraising and donations. **Children at Risk** strives to address the gaps in government services for Autism, providing representation and community supports. Responding to the need, we piloted our **1st All-Day Summer Camp in 2011 and increased our spots yet again in 2017, 375% from 2011!** Our Friendship Social Skill Therapy Support Groups help to provide the children with the tools to function in this complex world of communication and social interaction. Saturday Fun Club & Family Fun Nights offer Respite for Families – and recreational FUN for the children! Our Seminars explore existing and new interventions to provide information for parents, caregivers and professionals. Information and Knowledge can lead to Understanding and Support, assisting children with Autism so as to improve the quality of life for both the child and their family!

Kids – Autism....Let's Help!