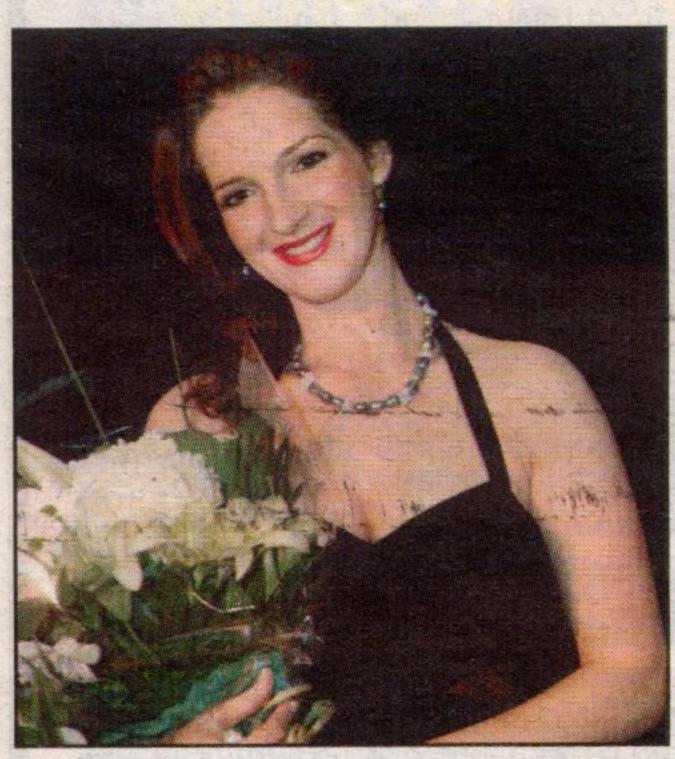
## FioJoy - Oakville's 'Extreme Makeover'

By SARENA COLE

akville's business sector has I brought a popular reality television show to the area, with a positive twist. Spawned from the likes of Extreme Makeover and The Swan, FioJoy is a collective labour of love from several business people across the GTA.

"Two years ago, my wife and I thought it'd be great to do a makeover but to have it different from the TV shows," says FioJoy founder and Dentist, Dr. Steven Thordarson. The difference was that they didn't want a hard luck story. They wanted someone who was happy with themselves just the way they were but needed assistance in certain areas of their life to improve their self esteem.

FioJoy's slogan is "Celebrate Life, Be Joyful" and this is largely the goal of each individual involved with the project. From the professionals, to the candidate chosen for the makeover, a joyful attitude is key.



Susan Martha

The application process for the makeover candidate began in July of 2004, where candidates filled out a lengthy application, which included their makeover "wishlist." Susan Martha, a 27year-old Oakville resident discovered she was selected in March of 2005 during a film screening.

"I was really emotional and really

surprised," says Martha.

Martha's wish list included dental surgery to improve her smile, a breast reduction and general nutrition and fitness. While Dr. Thordarson managed the dental work, he worked with other professionals in the GTA to fulfill the rest of Martha's list.

"We had three criteria for the people [professionals] involved," Thordarson. "Firstly, they had to be the best at what they do. Secondly, they had to be part of a group who provided exceptional customer service. And thirdly, their core values and desires had to be to make a difference."

Steven believes he found those professionals through the various companies he recruited to assist in the FioJoy project.

Martha began her transformation in April with the nutrition and fitness part of her makeover. Bruce Krahn, Co-owner of Bodizone Personal Fitness Studio and ebodi.com worked with Martha on weight training and toning. Her rigid workout schedule required her to workout four times a week at Bodizone and twice on her own.

Nutrition Specialist Janet Hradil, worked with Martha in creating a meal plan that helped her achieve her goals for a balanced diet while still fitting in with her busy schedule.

Krahn admits there were a few swear words and a few tears during the workouts, but Martha successfully lost 35 lbs of body fat and gained 20 lbs of muscle tissue.

"Susan is a reminder to us all that if you commit one hundred percent, great things will happen," says Krahn.

The next stage of Martha's makeover involved her breast reduction surgery. Performed by Dr. Frank Beninger, a Board Certified Cosmetic Plastic Surgeon, Martha says this was the scariest part of her makeover.

"I had never had surgery before and I was scared of the general anesthetic," says Martha. After a consultation with Dr. Beninger and a lot of thought, Martha decided to proceed with the surgery and now has no doubts.

"I would highly recommend it. It was uncomfortable but not painful. I had some bruising and swelling but I'm very happy I decided to go through with it."

The final portion of Martha's transformation was her dental surgery. Since she had been missing teeth from birth and the teeth that she did have were misaligned and chipped, Dr. Thordarson created a full set of porcelain crowns for her. Her new smile lights up her face and it's evident she loves it.

"I look in the rearview mirror while I'm driving to look at my teeth. I smile so much more now," says Martha.

During her surprise reward day, Martha went to Silkeborg in Oakville to get a new dress and following that to WOMAN Oakville to have the team do her hair and makeup.

Benjamin Tkatch, Owner of WOMAN Oakville says, "Susan's transformation

was beautiful to watch." The remainder of Martha's reward day was a reveal party at T'Bones Grille where everyone who had helped her through her journey went to congratulate her.

Martha says the final result and feeling is very surreal. She had concerns that people would think she was pathetic for wanting the makeover and she says that wasn't it at all.

"I was happy before. I still wanted to look like me but an enhanced me. In my mind a better version of me but still look like me," says Martha.

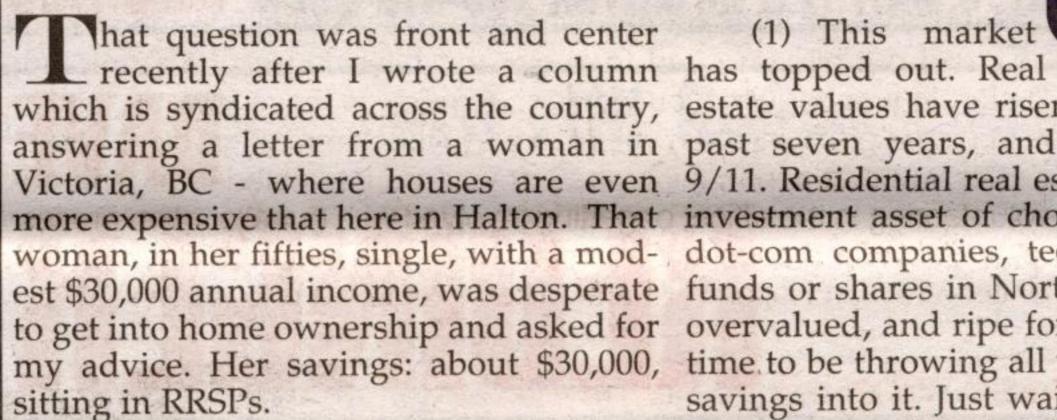
Dr. Thordarson and his wife Kelly plan to embark on another installment of FioJoy right away.

As for Martha, she greatly appreciates the opportunity she was given by Dr. Thordarson and the professionals she worked with.

"I may have embarked on this journey by myself but I never felt alone."

## The Turner Report

## So, should everybody buy a house?



My answer to her was a tad blunt. everything will look different. Blunt enough, in fact, that I found myself while by people who were outraged at Thanks to a jump in inflation, higher my callousness. I told her she was nuts to energy costs and a bit boost in governconsider such a move, taking 100% of her ment spending, the cost of money is going savings to put against a house at a time to continue to increase with the Bank of the cycle.

been doing for the last thirty years?" payments on a \$300,000 home loan Bingo. Let the bags of angry emails pour

this woman. They pointed out, quite people will perceive it's a less opportune rightly, that a middle-aged female could time to buy - which means home listings have been put into reduced circumstances could easily outpace demand, stalling by having a family, suffering a marriage prices and actually bringing the market break-up, or sacrificing her best earning down for as period of time. years to support some dipstick of a husered in an Internet chat room.

fact remains - from a pure point of finan- of them. But definitely for people who cial advice - not everyone is right for have something to lose by taking the understand the arguments for getting market at the peak, and anyone buying into a home regardless of prevailing con- now is forgetting the age-old adage of ditions. I have made the same case myself "buy low and sell high." often - better to build equity with each monthly payment than just to pay rent. despite the drubbing I am taking at the Real estate is a form of forced savings, as hands of the female lobby. Today, given you increase you stake in it over time. the real estate boom and the dampening And, yes, this is the only investment in impact it has had on rents everywhere, it the country you can sell, realize a capital actually makes more sense to be a tenant gain on, and yet pay absolutely no tax.

All good points, but that still does not stop beating on me. mean a middle-aged person should surhouse at this time. I say this for several

which is syndicated across the country, estate values have risen steadily for the answering a letter from a woman in past seven years, and especially since Victoria, BC - where houses are even 9/11. Residential real estate has been the more expensive that here in Halton. That investment asset of choice, and just like woman, in her fifties, single, with a mod- dot-com companies, technology mutual est \$30,000 annual income, was desperate funds or shares in Nortel, it has become to get into home ownership and asked for overvalued, and ripe for a correction. No my advice. Her savings: about \$30,000, time to be throwing all your hard-earned savings into it. Just wait a few months -

(2) Mortgage rates are on the rise, pilloried from all corners of Canada for a and the move higher will continue. when real estate values were at the top of Canada forcing the prime higher four to six more times. As I have stated, that "What are you thinking," I asked, means a below prime, floating mortgage "with such a paltry amount of money taken at 4% a few weeks ago will rise to at saved at your stage in life? What have you least 5.5% soon. So, add \$3,000 a year onto

(3) Real estate is a cyclical commodity, and also one based heavily on the Especially outraged at my uber- human factors of supply and demand. If testosterone-laden insensitivity were a lot the economy weakens a bit (inevitable, of single women who empathized with given energy and interest costs), then

So, there is some risk involved. Not band who took off with a chick discov- for existing homeowners who are not selling. Not for young first-time buyers who Fair enough. I am chastened. But the have years in the housing market ahead home ownership at this time. And, yes, I plunge at the wrong moment. This is a

> So, my advice remains the same than an owner. Strange time, this. Now

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reasons, namely:

