

Jeff Around Town – December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

**Jeff:** It's time for Jeff Around Town and I'm chatting with Mary Jo Pane. Mary Jo, you grew up in the Our Lady of Lords Hanscom Park area, and you live in New York now. We'll get into that. We first met because you sent me a bracelet.

**Mary Jo:** And that bracelet had St. Gabriel on it and St. Gabriel is the patron saint of radio people and the radio period.

**Jeff:** Yeah, and you, I have to say, you know everybody. You live in, how long have you been in New York now?

**Mary Jo:** I moved to New York in, well I moved out of Omaha in 1989. I went to Baltimore for 18 months and then I went on to New York in March 19th, 1991. Memorable day.

**Jeff:** Yeah. But you're still so connected to Omaha and we'll talk about Borsheim's in a second, but you make these bracelets.

**Mary Jo:** Yeah.

**Jeff:** They're sold at Borsheim's.

**Mary Jo:** Yeah.

**Jeff:** You want to just talk a little bit about what the bracelets are all about?

**Mary Jo:** My bracelets, I have always said that I didn't want them to be looked at as a Catholic Christian kind of deal. I believe that they are for the spiritually evolved. I see nothing different in wearing a saint than wearing a Buddha or a high or a Hindi symbol. One of the very first trunk shows I ever did at Barney's, I was all set up and this lady came by and she was so fascinated by the fact that it was DIY and everything was vintage and she kept going through the medals and she went, but I can't do this, I'm Jewish. And she walked away and she came back like not even five minutes later and she picked out a Virgin Mary medal. And I looked at her and I said, well after all she was Jewish. And I like people to think of this as like a spiritual thing. I mean we're all on some kind of spiritual journey. We're all looking for something to give us peace. And that's how I want my jewelry to be viewed.

**Jeff:** Love it, love it. And so going back to, so you grew up in in the Our Lady of Lourdes neighborhood.

**Mary Jo:** Yes.

**Jeff:** And what's the original connection to Borsheims?

**Mary Jo:** The original Borsheims family lived across the street from us on 35th and Walnut.

**Jeff:** Wow, okay.

**Mary Jo:** We grew up with them. And funny story, they had a daughter named Mary Joan and my name is really Mary Joan.

**Jeff:** Oh.

**Mary Jo:** She became Joni and I became Mary Jo. And that's...

**Jeff:** Really?

**Mary Jo:** And that's how they kept us separate.

**Jeff:** Thanks to the Borsheims.

**Mary Jo:** Yeah.

**Jeff:** Wow, that's really cool. Where do you find your inspiration?

**Mary Jo:** My inspiration actually came, a very good friend of mine on September 10th, 2001, was diagnosed with stage 4 inoperable lung cancer. The next day happened and we had a 55th birthday party for her on November, I believe 9th. And I, of course in our minds, we're all...

**Jeff:** Yeah, yeah.

**Mary Jo:** And I made her a birthday card and I put St. Anthony on it because he's the patron saint of anxiety. And I wrote her a little note. She's Jewish and she loved it. And we were still taking pictures with film. And on Monday morning I took the film to be developed. And Monday night I picked it up on my way home and she said, come over you have to let me see the ones I don't look good in. I went over, we visited for a while. I walked home, it's really cold out. I had picked up her keys. I had to go back. And I could walk you to the place right now on 23rd between 2nd and 3rd right by the School of Visual Arts. I had a vision that I wanted to make jewelry with the Saints. Like what we wore in grade school. They were aluminum and icky and you put them down your shirt because you didn't want anybody to see them.

**Jeff:** Oh I remember. I remember...

**Mary Jo:** And she was my inspiration. 9-11 was my inspiration. She turned, I won't tell you how old she turned last week, but we celebrated her birthday last week.

**Jeff:** Oh, lovely. A couple famous people you want to mention who have these?

**Mary Jo:** Well, you know I grew up in the 70s so you know the cover of the Rolling Stone was kind of the be-all end-all. Bruce Springsteen has worn my jewelry on the cover of Rolling Stone magazine. Hillary Clinton wears my jewelry. Jake Gyllenhaal wears my jewelry. A nice Jewish boy. Matthew McConaughey wears my jewelry. It's, little did I dream growing up in Omaha all those years ago that I would have such a celebrity following.

**Jeff:** Love it, love it. So, if folks want to find it and then go to Borsheim's or your website.

**Mary Jo:** Yeah, [www.miracleicons.com](http://www.miracleicons.com).

**Jeff:** Mary Jo Pane, thank you so very much. Thank you for the bracelet. I wear it each and every morning when I do morning classics.

**Mary Jo:** That makes me happy. Thanks Jeff and thank you for this time. I really appreciate it.

**Jeff:** I appreciate you very much. Thank you.