



# The Sun

The Voice of Autism in Delaware

Detachable Monthly Calendar

## January 2008

Autism Society of Delaware

(302) 472-2638

[www.delautism.org](http://www.delautism.org)

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

		1 Happy New Year! Office Closed	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Parent's Coffee Hour 9 a.m.	9	10 Teens/w Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	11 Tweens Asperger's Game Night 6:30 p.m.	12
13	14 ASD Board Meeting 7 p.m.	15 Friendly's Family Fun Night 5 p.m.	16	17 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	18 Asperger's Teen Game Night 6:15 p.m.	19 Mom's Night Out, Casablanca's 7 p.m.
20	21	22	23	24 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	25	26
27	28 ASD Chapter Meeting 7 p.m.	29	30	31 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.		



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**February 2008**

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Asperger's Tweens Game Night 6:30 p.m.	2
3	4	5	6	7 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	8	9 N.C.C. Roller Skating Party 5:15 p.m.
10	11 ASD Board Meeting 7 p.m.	12 Parent's Coffee Hour 9 a.m. Dad's Night Out 7 p.m.	13	14 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	15 Teens w/ Asperger's Game Night 6:15 p.m.	16 ASD Roller Skating Party Milford 5:30 p.m.
17	18 President's Day Office Closed	19 N.C.C. Support Group 7 p.m.	20	21 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	22	23
24	25	26 ASD Chapter Meeting 7 p.m.	27	28 Teens w/ Asperger's Social Skills Club 6:30 p.m.	29	



# The Sun

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### Our Mission

*The Autism Society of Delaware is a chapter of the Autism Society of America. We are people with autism, their family members and friends, and professionals who work in the autism field.*

*Our mission is to improve the lives of people with autism and their families. We will educate, advocate and raise public awareness in order to promote lifelong opportunity and acceptance for people with autism in their communities.*

*We serve the entire state of Delaware.*

## Family Support Changes to be the Self Directed Services Program

DDDS recently announced that they are moving forward with a Self Directed Services Program (SDSP) waiver instead of the Family Support waiver. Because advocacy efforts have not been successful in obtaining legislative support needed to get the Family Support Waiver, DDDS will self-fund this new proposed waiver for 35 individuals to start.

### *How will DDDS fund this waiver?*

Every year DDDS gets new funds to cover individuals who are aging out of school into adult services. Some of these funds are devoted to new residential placements each year. To come up with funding for the SDSP, DDDS will divert funding for new group home (or other residential) placements into this proposed waiver. They will set aside 40 slots for emergency placements, and use the rest of the new funds for the SDSP waiver.

### *Why are they doing this?*

DDDS has two reasons to divert residential placements. The first has to do with philosophy. DDDS is moving away from funding group homes and emphasizing other programs such as supported living and family support. In Delaware, individuals who receive residential services also have a day program, transportation, recreation, and

therapies. Individuals who live with their families typically only get a day program. This will give more resources to families to be able to keep their adult loved one at home. It also saves the state money.

Secondly, DDDS reports that more families want to keep their loved one at home, so they have not always been able to fill the residential placements that they have, or they have worked down the registry to folks who are not considered to be "at risk."

### *How many people will receive services through this new waiver?*

In the last quarter of year one which is FY 2009, 35 individuals will be served through this new waiver. An additional 495 individuals should receive full year funding in FY10. By the end of year 10, the SDSP will also serve the 1398 people who are already receiving family support services.

### *What will be different with this new waiver?*

As we read it, individuals served will receive all the same services under this waiver that they would have under the family support waiver, including access to a support coordinator, a fiscal agent, and education and training.

*(Continued on page 3)*

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### The Sun

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# Thoughts From Rob

## A.K.A. Rob's Ramblings

By: Rob Gilsdorf, President, ASD

It is a great honor to serve as the President of the Autism Society of Delaware. Our Society has been blessed with great leadership over the years and I would like to personally thank Artie Kempner for his strong and capable leadership and vision. I will never be able to fill Artie's shoes but I do plan to walk confidently in his footsteps.

ASD has grown to be a highly recognized and formidable organization in the Delaware area. With many leaders amongst us, including a talented and dedicated staff, a committed Board of Directors and countless volunteers, we have taken a dream and made it into a reality. From the basement of the Kempner's house to the offices we are overflowing at Orchard Commons, signs of success are everywhere.

These are going to be challenging years for ASD. The creation and implementation of our adult program, POW&R, has been and will continue to be a huge financial and emotional investment for our organization. I am proud to say it is off to a tremendous start, mostly because of our staff's unending energy to get the program off to a great beginning. Great job team, keep going, never look back!

I would like to leave you with a few personal thoughts and requests as I start my term as president.

- We are truly a "Society" as Webster describes: We are "a group of persons united for the promotion of a common aim... an association of individuals with characteristics in common who recognize each other as associates, friends and acquaintances". We need to recognize the power of our "Society" and avail ourselves of it at every turn to promote a better life for our loved ones.

- We should seek help from each other when we need it and offer help to each other when we can give it. I know the Gilsdorf family has benefited from all your advice and encouragement along the way and we give back to our friends of our "Society" whenever we are able.

- Please consider getting more active in our "Society". Your boundless energy is needed and I would ask you to

*(Continued on page 3)*

# POW&R

Productive Opportunities for Work & Recreation

Katina Demetriou (302) 824-2252 (cell)  
Project Director (302) 472-2638, ext 207

katina.demetriou@delautism.org

A Service of the Autism Society of  
Delaware

Karen Anderson (302) 824-2253 (cell)  
Community Specialist (302) 472-2638, ext 207

karen.anderson@delautism.org



### Thoughts from Rob

*(Continued from page 2)*

direct your energy to our common cause! Call me directly to find out how at 378-3462 or call Theda Ellis, our Executive Director at 472-2638. There is so much to do and we need your help!

■ Have faith. Believe that you can and do make a difference in every effort you put forward for our cause. You really can, have, and do make a difference. Thank you.

You will notice a few areas of focus from me as your president. You will see a drive to increase membership and membership involvement. You will also see me focus my efforts on broadening our role in Delaware. Not only do we need to do a better job of reaching out to constituents in Kent and Sussex counties but we also have to join forces with other disability stakeholders in Delaware to get our common voices heard and listened to by our governor and legislators. If we work on common goals with groups like United Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome Association, Lower Delaware Autism Foundation, Easter Seals and others, we will be more successful getting the supports needed for our loved ones in this great state of Delaware. Lastly, remember that I am here to serve you so please let me know how I may do that better whenever you have a chance.

And now, to close, may I offer from my family to yours a simple wish, we wish you a warm and happy holiday season and the best of health and fortune in the upcoming year.

~ Rob, Judi, Christi and Andrew Gilsdorf

### Support Waiver

*(Continued from Cover)*

Families will also be eligible for the same \$2,500 to spend on their choice of a variety of things such as respite care, special therapies, adaptive devices, and so on.

DDDS also believes that the waiver will address the issue of the proposed change in Medicaid regulations that would prohibit Medicaid dollars from paying for certain services that it currently provides under the *rehabilitation option*, including day programs. There are 546 people funded under the rehab option of Medicaid. Those folks are at risk of losing current day habilitation services if the changes take place.

*Why will this go through if the Family Support Waiver didn't go through?*

The new proposed waiver has already been approved by Secretary Meconi, and JJ Davis, director of the Office Management of and Budget. There has been strong support for the Family Support Waiver from the disability community in general, and this is a way to start that process without requiring additional funding over and above what DDDS already anticipates getting.

*What happens next?*

The DDDS budget must go through the standard budget process. Once funding is in place through the state budget in early summer, DDDS will submit the new waiver to CMS. They anticipate that it will take about six months to be approved; then they can begin to offer the services in April 2009. By the time it is fully implemented, the new waiver will incorporate everyone who was previously under the "Family

Support Waiver along with new placements of individuals that fall under the traditional family support program or the traditional residential placement program.

### ASD New On-Line Support eGroup



This group is for parents, guardians or any family member who has a care-taking role of an individual with autism, Asperger's Syndrome or PDD-NOS living in the State of Delaware. This will be a place to safely share your experiences and concerns. This group is set on private and only members can read and post to the group.

The group is maintained by two parents. Cheryl Frampton is the group manager and will take care of memberships and technical issues. Kathy Hupp, who has a master's in social work, will serve as the moderator for the group. Kathy will be available to help you address your specific needs. If you feel you need more support than the on-line group can provide or feel you need to consult with Kathy privately, you may email her directly with your concerns. You may also contact Kathy about attending one of the live support group meetings.

To join the group send Cheryl your request with your full name, your child's name, age, diagnosis, day time phone number and email address to:

[cheryl.frampton@delautism.org](mailto:cheryl.frampton@delautism.org)



Please welcome the following new members to ASD...

Lucinda K. Bunting  
 Michael and Marilyn Freda  
 Karlye Bailey-Price  
 Susie T. Palmer  
 Irene and Philip Campbell  
 Shakeel Ahmed  
 Lori and Chris Newcomer  
 Debbie Leifheit  
 Joann and Bob Horvath

## ASD Options Policy

All information provided or published by the Autism Society of Delaware (ASD) is for informational purposes only. Reference to any treatment or therapy option or to any program, service or treatment provider is not an endorsement by ASD.

You should investigate alternatives that may be more appropriate for a specific individual. ASD assumes no responsibility for the use made of any information published or provided by ASD.

## Something About Mary...

By: Cheryl Frampton

Over the summer 2007 issue of *The Sun*, our Executive Director, Theda Ellis wrote a very difficult column. Usually it is Theda's job in her column to report to



everyone all of the wonderful things that is going on with ASD. This time was different, this time it hit close to home for all of us here at ASD. Our wonderful office volunteer Mary Kelleher had fallen gravely ill and we were all very worried about her life and the future of her son with autism, Charlie. Mary had gone into a diabetic coma and no one knew what the outcome would be. All we could do was hope, pray, and be there where we could for her and her family.

Well it has been 11 months since the day we got that phone call from Mary's father, and we are VERY pleased to let everyone know that Mary and Charlie are doing great! Mary's progress has been slow, but very steady. She is her old self and she is regaining her ability to use her hands, as well as beginning to participate in activities at the facility where she is living. It is so wonderful to hear her call us on the phone, and she is even back on-line emailing us! Her son Charlie is doing equally well. While they cannot live together anymore because of everyone's special but different needs, he does come to see her two to three days a week and is making a lot of progress at the DAP. I hear he is even e-mailing her from school!

Mary used to come to our office twice a week, making follow-up phone calls. She would talk to parents to make sure they got information from us, and encourage them to come out to ASD's social functions to meet other families. She did this for several years and many of you may remember talking to Mary at one point or another. We dearly miss having her here at the office! If you would like to take a moment out of your day to drop a message to Mary, a person who was so willing to help so many of us, you can email her at [mary41522st@aol.com](mailto:mary41522st@aol.com). We know she would love to hear from anyone in our autism "family."

Next Deadline for Submissions to *The Sun*:

February 1, 2008

Want to share a story? Have an idea for an article? Send it to ASD today!

[delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org). Or mail it to us,

(address on page 2)

Let Your Voice Be Heard!



ASD reserves the right to edit for space and content.



## 9th Annual Autumn Auction for Autism

The 9th Annual Autumn Auction for Autism "Smoke & Mirror's" that was held on October 20, 2007 at the Greenville Country Club in Wilmington. This year ASD raised over \$125,000, a record breaker for this event! ASD could not do this without the hard work of its auction committee, the volunteers and, most important, the generosity of our sponsors, donors and contributors for the evening. We would like to give a special thank you to the following for their participation in this year's event. Also, mark your calendars for November 15, 2008! This will be ASD's 10th Anniversary Autumn Auction for Autism to be held at the DuPont Country Club in Wilmington. This is one event you do not want to miss!

Mr. & Mrs. Vartan Aghazadian	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Goodrich	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Narwold
Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Albany	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Gordon	Mr. & Mrs. Russell Nelson
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Andrews	Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Gordy	Mr. & Mrs. Craig Newschaffer
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Andrews	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Graci	Mr. & Mrs. David Nicoli
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Barker	Mrs. Darlene Graham	The Honorable & Mrs. William A. Oberle
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Bashkow	Mr. & Mrs. David Graham	Mr. Ed Okonowicz
Dr. Maricar Belicena Badillo	Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Gross	Mr. & Mrs. Jon Olson
Mr. Metin Bereketli	Mr. & Mrs. Paul Haldeman	Mr. & Mrs. Brendan O'Neill
The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.	Mr. Thomas Harrigan	Dr. & Mrs. Shane Palmer
Mrs. Beth Bourett	Mr. & Mrs. Harry Hartman	Mr. & Mrs. Mark A. Parsells
Mr. Timothy Brooks	Ms. Judith Hedrick	Mr. & Mrs. Zadoc Pool
Mr. & Mrs. George Burkhardt	Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Hobbs	Ms. Tara Quinn &
Ms. Mireille Caloghiris	Mr. & Mrs. Donald Hobson	Mr. Gregg Galardi
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Carney	Dr. & Mrs. Moses Hochman	Mr. Nathan Reybold
The Honorable Tom Carper	Mr. & Mrs. Shawn Huddleston	Mr. John Reybold &
Mrs. Sara Christian	Ms. Kathy Hupp	Ms. Mary Ann Sorra
Mr. & Mrs. Jan Clark	Dr. James G. Hupp	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Ritter
Mr. & Mrs. John Coleman	Mr. & Mrs. Tim Ireland	Mr. & Mrs. Gary Rollins
Mr. & Mrs. Connolly	Mrs. Judi Jeffers	Mr. Tim Ryan
Mr. Buster Cunningham	Mr. & Mrs. Andy Johnston	Mr. & Mrs. Samick
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Curran	Mr. & Mrs. John Kane	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Scheinberg
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry D'Avanzo	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kelly	Ms. Lorraine Sheldon
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Delaney	Mr. & Mrs. Artie Kempner	Mr. Craig Shumaker
Mr. Matthew Denn	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Kempner	Ms. Kim Siegel
Dr. Peter Doehring	Mr. & Mrs. Bill Kempner	Mr. & Mrs. William Slacum
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Duffy	Dr. Bernard King	Mr. & Mrs. James Smyth
Mr. Bob Dunlap	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Kortanek	Mr. & Mrs. James Stack
Ms. Jamie Eglit	Ms. Sonia Kotliar	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stauffer
Ms. Brandee El-Attar	Mr. & Mrs. George Kranich	Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Sullivan
Mr. & Mrs. Theda Ellis	Mr. & Mrs. David Landon	Mr. & Mrs. John Swanson
Ms. Jennifer Eppes	Mr. & Mrs. Jim Lavelle	Ms. Judith Trefsger
Mr. & Mrs. Hal Erskine	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lee	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Uris
Mr. & Mrs. John Fisher Gray	Mr. & Mrs. Ben LeRoy	Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Van Ogtrop
Dr. Charles Fishman	Ms. Lori Loveland &	Mr. Todd Veal &
Dr. Nancy Mills Fishman	Mr. Kevin Connor	Ms. Andrea Rocanelli
Mr. & Mrs. William Flagg	Ms. Janice Lucas	Ms. Valerie Wells
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Forrest	Ms. Roxia Maars	Mrs. Sally Wemmers
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Frampton	Ms. Erin Maher	Mr. & Mrs. Al Wentz
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gamel-McCormick	Ms. Kathleen Maley	Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Young
Mr. & Mrs. William Garlington	Mr. Michael Mamula	Ms. Janine Zozaya
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Garrett	Ms. Deborah Markwood &	Mr. & Mrs. Alan Zugehar
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Gause	Mr. Tom Pitts	
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gilsdorf	Ms. Elizabeth Martelli	
Dr. & Mrs. Dann Gladnick	Mr. & Mrs. Paul J. McCready	Autumn Auction for Autism Thank
Mr. & Mrs. Leon Golfin	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph McDonough	Yous continued on page 7.
Ms. Donna Gonzon	Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Mendola	
	Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Mockbee	



# Inside

## The



### Social Activities

ASD is made up of many members as well as staff who make things happen. Our increasing number of social opportunities for children and families are a true highlight for our organization. This happens because of the volunteer efforts of a number of people. In Kent County, Kate Stomieroski has hosted a holiday party for the past two years. Aably assisted by her husband Pete, Michele and Breck Smith and Yolanda and Lester Flanigan, a good time was had by all as Santa talked to little ones and Ronald MacDonald juggled his way around the room. Several families drove up from Sussex, so we hope to add a party in Sussex next year.

In New Castle, we continued our tradition of inviting Miss Vickie to entertain the kids. Thanks to Nicole Curran and Robin Delaney for putting this party together. ASD's Margie Rowles is the office person who also supports these types of events, and Cheryl, Kim and I each attend various events each year as well.

In Sussex, Dale Oberender has been organizing skating parties twice each year, and Beth Motti is offering to help put together other parties for our Sussex members.

In the coming months, please look for a spring train ride in New Castle. We are also happy to sponsor additional events in Kent and Sussex, but we need members to put those together for us. If you are interested in helping with social events, please let us know.

### *TWEEN's Anyone?*

Heidi Mizell, our Asperger Resource Specialist, has really been busy over the past year developing opportunities for our kids who are looking for friends and fun. The Teen Night Out has become very successful, with 12-17

teens attending the monthly game night. In fact, it has been so successful that we are starting a second group for "tweens."

This is a night to have fun! Yes, it's okay to practice social skills, but it's not a class—there are no lesson plans or homework. If you have a "tween"—a child between 9 and 13 who is looking for a social network, this may be for you. ASD is scheduling three nights to start, January 11, February 1, and March 7<sup>th</sup>. Neurology Associates is once again generously donating space, and the cost is \$10 to cover staff and light refreshments. It can also be a nice time for parents to have their own time out for dinner or to meet with each other.

### *Looking for Backup Staff*

One of the challenges of providing individualized supports to anyone is to make sure that there is always someone who is prepared to fill in when the support person gets sick, has a school conference to attend, or decides to take a vacation. ASD is currently developing our own back-up plan, and we would like to recruit members of our community to become backup staff.

**What does a "backup" person do?** The backup staff accompanies an individual(s) during their day, providing supports at work, on volunteer jobs, and in the community. The job includes teaching and supporting the person, assisting them to be successful.

We are planning to offer an in-depth training for individuals interested in this type of part time occasional employment. It's a great opportunity to affiliate with POW&R in our early days and prepare for a future career. We like the idea of hiring family members because they know, understand and love our folks, and have experience that is invaluable.

*If you are interested in this type of position, please contact Katina Demetriou at 302-824-2252 or [Katina.demetriou@delautism.org](mailto:Katina.demetriou@delautism.org).*

### *Looking for Social Skills Trainers*

A finding of the Legislative Task Force is that there are few opportunities for children, teens or adults to learn social skills in Delaware. A few programs offer it for young children in North Wilmington and Sussex, but there are few social skills groups in the rest of the state, and there are no groups that address social skills for teens and adults. Why is this? We know that this is the single greatest needs of our members with Asperger syndrome.

To meet this need, ASD will be bringing Dr. Jim Ball to Delaware for three days of training on how to teach social skills. Better yet, the days are dispersed and the training will be offered in all three counties. He will teach one day in April, one day in May, and one day in September. This will give participants the opportunity to learn and practice. Dr. Ball will set up an e-mail group so that participants can get to him and to others for support and technical assistance as they start to teach. The first two days of training, in April and May, will be to build skills for the trainer and introduce them to skill-streaming and other techniques. The September date will be technical assistance.

We will be offering this training to teachers, speech therapists, psychologists, and any and all professionals who are interested in incorporating social skills into their practices or classrooms. ASD is also looking for family members who would like to become a social skills trainer for us. Our goal is to enhance the capacity of professionals to address this need more effectively, but also to increase the number of people around the state who know and understand the need for social skills. We think the autism community has members who could be the best teachers and we would like to find you and ask you to teach groups for ASD.

*If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact Heidi Mizell at 302-472-2638 or email [Heidi.Mizell@delautism.org](mailto:Heidi.Mizell@delautism.org).*





**Last Call for Volunteer Recognition**

**Deadline: January 31, 2008**

*You must be a member of ASD to nominate someone for an award.*

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person/Business you wish to Nominate: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason why you wish to nominate this person/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Volunteer Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Spent: \_\_\_\_\_

Who was impacted? \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Day time phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send nominations to:  
Autism Society of Delaware  
5572 Kirkwood Highway  
Wilmington, DE 19808

**Check Out the ASD Community Bulletin Board**

<http://www.delautism.org/bulletinboard.htm>

The ASD Community Bulletin Board is a place where individuals or groups may post announcements for services available, seeking services, individual fundraisers or social groups/activities for the autism community.

**ASD Options Policy: All information provided or published by the Autism Society of Delaware (ASD) is for informational purposes only. Reference to any treatment or therapy option or to any program, service or treatment provider is not an endorsement by ASD. You should investigate alternatives that may be more appropriate for a specific individual. ASD assumes no responsibility for the use made of any information published or provided by ASD.**

To have your message posted on the ASD Community Bulletin Board, email your requests to [cheryl.frampton@delautism.org](mailto:cheryl.frampton@delautism.org). Messages will stay up on the board for 30 days. If you wish to repost your message after 30 days, you must re-submit your request. ASD reserves the right to edit posts for space and or content or may deny a post if it is deemed inappropriate by ASD.

- Dunbarton Designs
- Dutch Wonderland
- East of the Bay Gallery
- Escape Day Spa
- Everyday Artists
- Everything But the Kitchen Sink
- Festivities Events
- Fulton Financial Advisors
- Gateway Garden Center
- George J. Weiner, Associates, LLP
- Glazar Bros., Inc.
- Grotto Pizza
- Hockessin Day Spa
- Home Grown Café
- Hotel DuPont—DuPont Hospitality
- ING Direct
- Isaacs & Isaacs Family Dentistry
- Jam'n & Java Coffee House
- Klondike Kates
- Leon's Garden World Newark, Inc.
- Limestone Therapeutic Massage
- Magness Construction Company
- Margaret G. Smith Trust
- McGlynns Pub and Deer Park Tavern
- McShea Associates, Inc.
- Mike Donahue Management, LLC
- Mike's Famous Harley Davidson
- Moon Bounce Adventures
- Moore Brothers Wine Company
- New Castle County Government
- NKS Distributors
- Opera Company of Philadelphia
- Perfect Cup Café
- Philadelphia Eagles
- Pittsburgh Steelers-Public Relations
- Please Touch Museum
- Practice Without Pressure, Inc.
- Prompt & Play
- Ridgeway Capital
- Salon 828

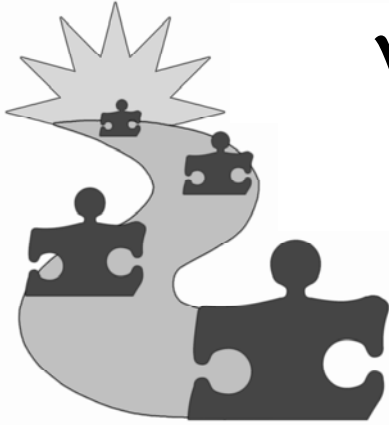
- Sanity
- Santora Baffone CAP Group
- Shaggy's on Main
- Sherif Zaki Salon
- Sherri Ciancutti Portraits
- Shone Lumber
- Silpada Designs
- Strasburg Railroad
- Super Suppers-Christiana
- Sweet & Sassy Cupcakes
- Sweetn Christine's Gluten Free Confections
- TGI Friday's
- The Autism Shoppe
- The Learning Station
- The Silver Buckle
- The Strand
- Thomas F. Pitts, LLC
- Union City Grille
- University of Delaware Ice Arena
- Valley Forge Investment Corporation
- Village Imports
- W.L. Gore Associates, Inc.
- Whiskazz and Pawzz
- Wild Thing 99 Foods
- Wilmington City Council
- Wilmington Savings Fun Society, FSB
- Wilmington Trust Company
- Winterthur Museum and Country Estate

**Autumn Auction for Autism Thank You**

*(Continued from page 5)*

- Aesthetic Plastic Surgery of Delaware
- Alumni Cruises
- Apropos
- Artisan's Bank
- Bassett, Brosius & Dawson, Inc.
- Bellevue State Park
- Bloom Reporting
- Bloom, Inc.
- Blue Hen Promotions, Inc.
- BlueCross BlueShield of Delaware
- Brandywine Zoo
- Caffe Gelato
- CBS Sports
- Chimes Metro, Inc.
- Clair Pruet Photography & Video
- Club Phred
- Connolly Bove Lodge & Hutz LLC
- Cook & Smith Florist
- CORE Fitness Studio
- Corrective Chiropractic
- Country Curtains
- Creations by Michelle
- Cucina Di Napoli
- Delaware Laser & Cosmetic Center
- Delaware Theatre Company
- Delmarva Broadcasting
- Dental Associates of Delaware
- Diana's Distinctive Dining
- Dover International Speedway
- Dukart Management Corporation





# Walk the High Road for Autism

Saturday, April 26, 2008  
 Bellevue State Park—Wilmington  
 Registration: 9:30 a.m.  
 Walk: 11:00 a.m.

## ASD is Now Seeking Corporate Sponsors, Captains, and Walkers for the Second Walk the High Road for Autism!

The first Walk was very popular, and we hope that you will be a part of this year's event! You can participate by becoming a ...

...**Sponsor:** sponsoring the Walk is a great way to bring exposure to your company or organization. There are sponsor levels for every organization budget, and many include opportunities to feature sponsor names on brochures, T-shirts, posters, etc.

...**Captain:** Captains lead and build Teams through recruiting, encouraging Walker fundraising, and serving as a liaison between their Team and ASD.

...**Walker:** Walkers raise money for their participation in the Walk, which gets the word out about autism and ASD with every request for donations. Walkers who raise at least \$100 will be eligible for prizes for their hard work!

...**Volunteer:** there are lots of volunteer opportunities before and on Walk day! Contact our Volunteer Coordinator Judy Hedrick at [judy.hedrick@delautism.org](mailto:judy.hedrick@delautism.org) for more information.

... **Exhibitor:** Setting up a table at the Walk is a great way to gain exposure to the hundreds of families at the Walk. There is a fee of \$25 for nonprofits and \$100 for businesses to exhibit.

Sponsor and exhibitor forms and information are available now on [www.delautism.org/walk.htm](http://www.delautism.org/walk.htm). Team/Walker materials will be available in February. To receive those materials, please call ASD at 302-472-2638 or email [delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org) with your name, Team name if you have one, address, and number of Walkers you are requesting materials for, and we'll add your name to the list.





### Girls Just Wanna Have Fun... Mom's Night Out!!

The next Mom's Night Out will be held on Saturday, January 19, 2008 at Casablanca's Restaurant in Wilmington. Come on out to celebrate the new year! Moroccan food, male and female belly dancers...can it get any better?!?



To RSVP contact Monica McMahan at (302) 235-2101 or email [m.mcmahan28@comcast.net](mailto:m.mcmahan28@comcast.net) by January 17, 2008. The next Mom's Night out will be on March 15.

### Dad's Night Out

February 12, 2008  
Time and Location TBA  
(They always wait till the last minute to plan things!)  
Who can go? Dads, Uncles, Grandfathers or Friends of those living with autism.  
Interested? Of course you are!



Contact:  
Mark Frampton  
[mark@designbycher.com](mailto:mark@designbycher.com)  
(302) 998-1466



### Asperger's HFA Teen & Tween Game Nights Space is Limited!



Dates are set for both Teen and Tween Nights for early 2008. Interested parties should contact ASD's Asperger's Resource Coordinator for additional information and to make RSVP's.

Heidi Mizell

[Heidi.Mizell@delautism.org](mailto:Heidi.Mizell@delautism.org) or (302) 472-2638, ext 205.

See ASD's calendar of events for dates, times and locations or visit [www.delautism.org](http://www.delautism.org)

### PARENT'S COFFEE HOUR

**The Second Tuesday of Every Month**



Crossroads Restaurant,  
Route 7 & Kirkwood Hwy,  
Wilmington.

Moms, Dads, Grandparents or anyone with a connection to autism is welcome to attend. Little ones not in school? No problem, bring them along, too.

**Just Show Up at 9 a.m. and Ask for the Autism Table. Coffee is on US!**

### ASD Rolling Skating Parties



February 9, 2008  
Christiana Skating Center, Newark  
5:15—7:15 p.m.  
Or  
February 16, 2008  
Milford Skating Center, Milford  
5:30—7:30 p.m.

Free admission, no RSVP, invite friends and family, closed to the general public, autism friendly lights and music, snack bar open, \$2-3 skate rentals.



# Parent 2 Parent

written by parents  
for parents

## COPING

By: Melanie Matusheski

I was enjoying one of my favorite coping strategies, hanging out at Borders Book Store, when I decided to look up the definition of “coping” in Webster’s dictionary. It said coping was *to deal with successfully*. Boy, that’s an awfully lofty goal. There doesn’t seem to be any room for “giving it your best shot” or “points for trying.” I tried another dictionary – Merriam’s. It said coping was *to deal with and attempt to overcome problems and difficulties*. That’s a little better. At least it acknowledges that coping is the *attempt* to overcome difficult situations. Nobody’s guaranteeing success here. We’re all just trying to get through the day, hour, minute. The difficult situations I’ve attempted to overcome include:

- ~ not yelling at my son when he insists on using his mashed potatoes as Play-doh at the family holiday dinner
- ~ not telling off the old lady at K-Mart who keeps giving me dirty looks because my son is “behaving badly”
- ~ not punching the side window of my car because I’m really frustrated and for some reason I think it will feel good
- ~ not having a complete meltdown at my nephew’s graduation party as my sister tells me all the great plans he has for his life

Hopefully, we all have as part of our coping strategies a supportive network that includes family, friends, and ASD. But we also need to have individual coping strate-

gies: things we do just for ourselves that make the crazy times a little easier to handle because we’ve taken time out for ourselves. Mine include:

- ~ taking a walk
- ~ reading a newspaper at Starbucks
- ~ watching old TV shows (Bewitched, The Golden Girls, The Nanny)
- ~ listening to the so-called bad music of the 1970’s that always makes you feel good
- ~ shopping for earrings at ICING at the mall: it makes you feel young and pretty and how many things do that for you?
- ~ getting a change of scenery by having lunch at a park I’ve never been to or driving into Philadelphia
- ~ playing some silly game with my kids just so everybody ends up laughing

It’s important to take time out for yourself so that you have something to give to the other people in your life: so that you can *attempt to overcome problems and difficulties*.

Coping doesn’t happen overnight, it develops, changes, adjusts, rebels—you name it. We all learn how to cope and the learning never stops.

Here’s how some other parents cope with their stressful lives, and as a special bonus, Matt Kempner tells us how he copes with having a brother with autism.

### Life-changing news hits everyone different

By: Robin Ireland

I have a friend who spent the

weeks following her son’s diagnosis of autism reviewing home DVDs, looking for signs, trying to pinpoint the exact moment her son “slipped away.” Her words. Another took so many courses at the nearby state college that a professor told her she might as well matriculate. Now she’s got a master’s degree. I know a woman whose husband went out to pick up a pizza and came back a month later.

For me, learning that Luke had autism was the final step in a journey out of childhood and into the adult world. Where scary things sometimes happen. And where you’re forced to knit your own security blanket.

I remember attending Sunday mass during the months after Luke’s diagnosis. It was so hard to endure that I nearly stopped going. Actually, I think I did stop going for a while. The priest would get to the portion of the service where you were asked to pray for your own intentions and I’d just lose it. Where I would normally sit quietly and ask for peace in Darfur or warmth for the homeless, I became an embarrassing, sobbing mess. Every Sunday.

Dear God, it would always start, please cure my son. Lay your healing hands upon his head and reconnect whatever isn’t working. Lead him out of this fog. Do a miracle for us. Make it go away. It didn’t happen that way.

And so, we began doing the things all of you are probably doing – and enjoying varying degrees of success. The school. The supplemental programs. For about a year

(Continued on page 12)



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Childcare is available at all regular ASD chapter meetings. Please contact the office at 302.472.2638 or [delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org) no less than 7 days in advance. Childcare registration is mandatory.

ASD Chapter Meetings

- ▶ **January 28, 2008** — ASD Chapter Meeting, 7 - 9 p.m. Brennen School (DAP), Newark. Coping with Loss and Grief. Special guest speaker Valerie Milaison, Ph.D., F.T. More information on page 14.
- ▶ **February 26, 2008** — ASD Chapter Meeting, 7-9 p.m. Parent to Parent, Our Experiences with the Diet. Guest speakers Deb Sidell & Angie Sipple. Location TBD.
- ▶ **March 13, 2008** — ASD Chapter Meeting, Sussex. Extact time and location TBD. Parent panel of adults with autism.

Social Events, Public Awareness & Fundraisers

- ▶ **January 8, 2008**— Parent's Coffee Hour, Crossroads Restaurant– Route 7 & Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, 9 a.m. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **January 11, 2008** — Asperger's Tween Game Night. 6:30—8:00 p.m. Neurology Associates. For more information on all Asperger's activities contact Heidi Mizell, [heidi.mizell@delautism.org](mailto:heidi.mizell@delautism.org) or (302) 472-2638, ext 205. The next Asperger's Tween Game Night will be held on February 1, 2008.
- ▶ **January 14, 2008** — ASD Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- ▶ **January 15, 2008** — ASD's Friendly's Family Fun Night. 5:00-9:00 p.m. Friendly's Restaurant, Kirkwood Highway. Come have dinner at Friendly's with family and friends. 10% of proceeds from Friendly's that night goes to ASD.
- ▶ **January 18, 2008** — Asperger's Teen Game Night, 6:15-8:15 p.m. Neurology Associates, Newark. See conact informaton for Heidi Mizell above.
- ▶ **January 19, 2008** — Mom's Night Out. Casablanca's Restaurant, 7:00 p.m. RSVP required. For contact information see page 9.
- ▶ **February 9, 2008** — ASD N.C.C. Roller Skating Party, Christiana Skating Center, Newark. 5:15 - 7:15 p.m. No RSVP needed. More information no page 9.
- ▶ **February 11, 2008** — ASD Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- ▶ **February 12, 2008**— Parent Coffee Hour, Crossroads Restaurant– Route 7 & Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, 9 a.m. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 12, 2008** — Dad's Night Out, exact time and location is top secret. Please contact Mark Frampton at (302) 998-1466 or [mark@designbycher.com](mailto:mark@designbycher.com) to RSVP. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 15, 2008**—Asperger's Teen Game Night. 6:30—8:15 p.m.
- ▶ **February 16, 2008** — ASD Sussex Co. Roller Skating Party, Milford Skating Center, Newark. 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. No RSVP needed. More information no page 9.
- ▶ **March 8, 2008** — Wilmington & Western Railroad Spring Train Ride. Look for more information in the next issue of *The Sun*, the ASD website and egroup starting in February.
- ▶ **April 26, 2008** — Walk the High Road for Autism. More information on page 17.

Support Groups

Parents/caregivers of an individual with an autism spectrum disorder are welcome. (Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, PDD-NOS). Support groups cost \$10 per session, payable at the time of the meeting. For more information on ASD's new support groups, visit us on-line: [www.delautism.org](http://www.delautism.org) or call us at (302) 472-2638.

**ASD's N.C.C. Support Group** — Updates for the New Castle Country Support Group will be coming soon.

- ▶ **January 29th, 2007** — Kent County Support Group, Facilitated by Dr. Janet Asay of Perspectives Counseling. Location TBA. 5:30—7:00 p.m. Please contact Kate Stomeiroski at (302) 734-4884 or e-mail at [beazlebeak@juno.com](mailto:beazlebeak@juno.com).

Other Events

- ▶ **April 4-7, 2008** — DAN! 2008 Spring Conference. Crown Plaza Hotel, Cherry Hill, New Jersey. More information coming in January 2008. Visit them on line at: [www.danconference.com](http://www.danconference.com).



## Parent 2 Parent

(Continued from page 10)

we did the gluten-free, casein-free diet. We saw a DAN! Doctor. We pour fish oil in his carrot juice. We trek to Kennedy Krieger three times a year. Luke is making very slow, steady progress. But he still has autism.

And one Sunday as I was sitting in mass, I realized that my prayers were different. They were no longer frantic and pleading but calm and measured. I had stopped asking for a lighter load and started asking for a stronger back. And I got it.

I pray for the patience to survive sleepless nights. I ask for the persistence to assemble a good team of doctors and therapists. I pray that my intelligence will stretch wide enough for me to understand what Luke's team is telling me – and that I might comprehend the myriad medical journals. And I pray that my husband is served a sizable helping of these qualities, too.

When people give us funny looks at the Charcoal Pit, I am able to calmly say, "My son has autism. He really digs venetian blinds." When he poops in the tub, I take a deep breath (through my mouth) and clean it up. When he holds my perfume bottle up to the light and stares at it for a half hour, I use the time productively – to sit on my backside and catch a bit of Oprah.

This is my life. It's not perfect but it's not so terrible either. My child with autism brings me joy – just like his sisters without autism do. Dinner sometimes burns. My home is not going to be featured in a magazine. I once went to Super G for cough syrup wearing my flannel pajamas. And didn't realize it until I was

standing at the checkout counter reading the "National Enquirer." And I did not care. Lord knows I was faring better than Britney Spears.

This newfound patience may not be the miracle I had hoped for. But it will do for right now. And right now is as good a time as any.

### Just Say No

By: Cheryl Frampton

My son was diagnosed back in 1995. Of course, initially it was pretty traumatizing. But after time I settled into a routine with him and his school and started to realize that this was not just a disability brought on to our family, but a new lifestyle. Looking at it in that light, I was able to dive into doing volunteer work meeting and befriending some pretty incredible folks. We still ride the rollercoaster of ups and downs but you learn that the downs don't last forever and you can proceed with life as planned. Oh, and the word "normal" is so over rated.

One of the ways that I have learned to cope with things over the years (specifically with the challenges one brings with autism) is to keep things simple! We live in a world that moves at a constant pace of; fast or faster, large or supersize, all or more, now not tomorrow. It is a pretty confusing and fast paced mess at times, and if I feel that way, I can only imagine how my son with autism must feel.

So to help keep myself and my family grounded, we try hard to simplify things where possible. Do I have to go to every social function we are invited to? No. Do I have to have the "Martha Stewart" house? No. Is it really that important to have the best looking garden in the neighborhood? No. Does my son have to take piano, karate and baseball? No, No and No. One of those fine activities will do. Is there

anything wrong with the family taking a break from the outside world by taking a weekend and staying in, watching some movies and eating some popcorn and just relaxing? NO!

I think the bottom line is that we don't have to do it all. But I believe a lot of us are afraid to say No. No is not always a bad word. No is a way for you and your family to state your boundaries and limitations. I think if we all said No more on things that we really do not need to do, we will get a whole lot more YES in our lives.

### What I do for stress relief

By: Jen Nardo

*Bath time!* – I love to put the kids to bed, forget about folding laundry and draw myself a bath with all the girly stuff. Bubbles, oils, lotions...you name it, it all helps me relax before bed and allows me to really sleep.

*Exercise* – There is nothing like taking out your aggression on some exercise equipment! I have been a member of my local Curves for almost 4 years. It has been a wonderful experience because there's no competition – just women of all ages, shapes and sizes who want to be more healthy. I have even been found jogging on my son's trampoline that we keep in front of the TV. I now see why he likes it so much.

*A Walk with a Friend* – From time to time, I've gotten into walking routines with a girlfriend or two. It feels great to be outside and keep each other motivated.

*A good book* – Again, kids are in bed and I'm not going to fold that laundry, but I will read a good book. A few years ago, I joined an informal book

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### Parent 2 Parent

*(Continued from page 12)*

club with other moms I met through a friend. Because we meet in the early morning, I get a good dose of conversation (not related to autism), caffeine and some girl bonding time before doing all the errands.

*Meditation or Prayer* – I have been trying to learn meditation to clear my mind and as some people say, “hear what God has to say to me.” All those years of catholic school taught me to do all the talking, but sometimes quieting the mind can really bring about the clarity I need in a trying situation.

*A Date with my Husband* – They are too few and far between, but I really appreciate the time we get just being us. We can laugh or even cry at the stressful times. We can reconnect with each other and get on the “same page.” It makes us stronger as a couple and as parents.

*Wine* – Yes, I said it. I like a glass of wine from time to time. I’m not recommending that you overindulge – that’s no good for anyone. I’m just saying that come the weekend, there’s nothing like a good Pinot Noir!

*Find a support system* – It could be friends who are in your same situation. It could be family members who really understand. It could be ASD’s online support group or the in-person group. Whatever works for you to get information and to get the yoke off your shoulders. Ask for help and you will be surprised that you actually get it.

### My Brother with Autism

By: Matt Kempner (Age 14)

Having a brother with autism can be good and bad. It is a pain because he needs to be supervised constantly. It is also good, though, because through having a brother with autism, I have met some of my friends, such as Eli Newschaffer, Nathan Rogatz, and Jonas Newschaffer. Also, I have learned to be more accepting of people and am more patient.

My brother Ethan is always eating, or watching a video, or doing both at the same time. He doesn’t understand many social “rules,” such as—don’t go into other people’s houses uninvited, don’t take things that belong to other people, don’t yell and scream in a public place, and don’t go to the bathroom outside (or in the fountain at the mall—bad experience!) When ever I have to watch or keep track of him, I have to follow him everywhere, make sure he doesn’t bump into people, and make sure he doesn’t eat something that doesn’t belong to him. One of the hardest parts, though, is dealing with the people who don’t know what autism is. I have to take Ethan, go up to the person, tell them he has autism, and then explain to the person what autism is. That can be difficult because at the same time, I have to grab on to the back of Ethan’s shirt and make sure he doesn’t go anywhere.

Another of the hardest parts is when Ethan is freaking out and crying and rocking; he has no way to tell my parents or me what is wrong. Often times, he gets stuck on one topic, such as a movie or a character and just says that over and over again. For example, when Ethan gets angry, he talks about the tiger in Aladdin named Raja. Also, he breaks things a lot of the

time. Recently, he took his favorite DVD and ripped it in half. Also recently, he ran his hands over his keyboard so hard and fast he broke off most of the keys, and cut his fingers in a couple of places.

Those are just examples of when a “freak out” gets really bad, but most of the time he is not like that. He is usually happy, laughing, and watching a video; just having a good time. It really has been good having a brother with autism, and I consider myself blessed to have Ethan in my life.

*You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give.*

-Winston Churchill

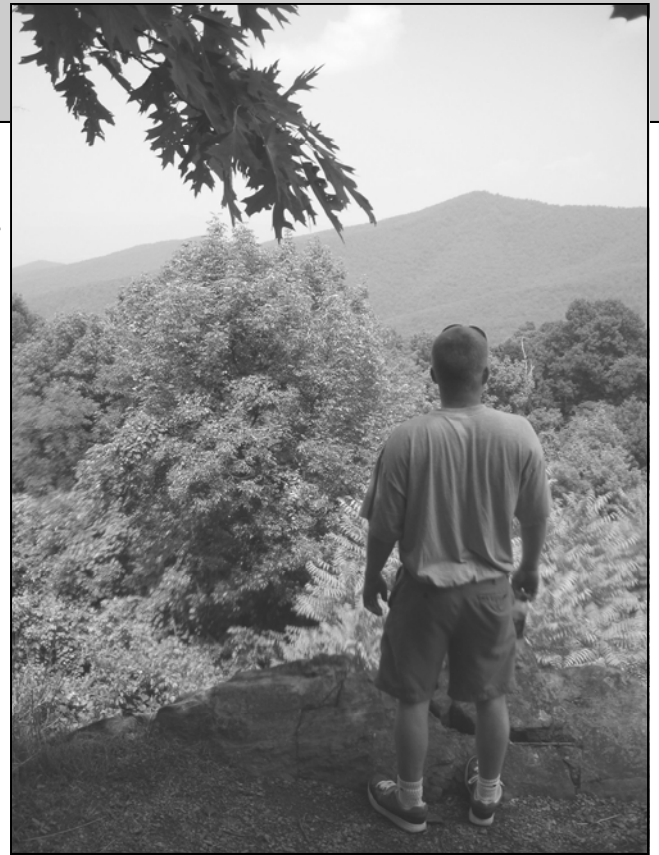
**Thank You to the employees of ACE-INA for raising over \$1,000 to support ASD!**



## Are We Really Grieving?

Grief or Grieving and Loss - those are a few words that make most of us very uncomfortable, but they are a natural part of life. The problem with grief and loss is that sometimes we do not recognize that we are experiencing those feelings. Most people associate grief and loss to the death of a loved one. When someone passes away, the loss is acknowledged, the stages of grief are worked through. Hopefully, in time, lives are rebuilt and one can learn to live a different, but full life that incorporates a loved ones memories into your new normal.

When you have a child with a disability, such as autism, you do grieve, but you don't tell yourself that because your child has not passed away, she/he is just different or has a label. But what happens is that we begin to do what is natural, we grieve and we feel a loss. We lost dreams, a lifestyle and our privacy. Sometimes we lose friends and even family who cannot cope. We need to learn how to recognize our feelings, talk about them, and learn some coping strategies. We have several articles in this issue from parents and even a sibling on coping, and as you will read, everyone has a different game plan. (See page 10.)



For our January 28<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting, we are introducing Dr. Valarie Molaison. Valerie will be at our meeting to talk about grief, loss and coping and how to recognize it. This is an important meeting for all of our members, no matter how old your child is. It is something we should all not be afraid of, but learn more about so we can try to live happier and healthier lives.

### **Valarie Molaison, Ph.D., F.T.**

Dr. Molaison is a licensed psychologist who specializes in working with families who are coping with loss. She is Clinical Director of *Supporting Kids: The Center for Grieving Children and Their Families*.

*Kids* is a non-profit agency in Hockessin, Delaware that provides support groups, educational programs, and psychotherapy for bereaved families, as well as community education and consultation to professionals who work with bereaved children and teens.

Dr. Molaison also has expertise working with families who are coping with the stressors and losses associated with divorce, chronic illness, and developmental disabilities.

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Don't miss this chance to find new ways of tackling and indentifying those little monsters in the closet we all hate to acknowledge. (And no, we don't mean the kids!!) This may also be a good meeting to invite extended family members such as grandparents, aunts and uncles or even really close friends.

Join us on Monday, January 28th, 2008, 7 p.m. at the Brennen School (DAP), Newark. Please call the ASD office at (302) 472-2638 no later than January 21 for childcare.





## A Review of Changes at the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

Marianne Smith, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) reviewed the Division's past, present, and future at the State Council for Persons with Disabilities' (SCPD) annual Legislative Luncheon on November 15th. She underscored 85 years of progress in Delaware's services for people with developmental disabilities, including one of the strongest focuses on services for people with autism in the country.

"We've gone through the custodial, medical, developmental, person-centered, and self determined services models" Smith advised. "Currently, we are working under the self-directed mode, which is where we need to be." She explained that the self-directed service model puts a person receiving services and their families or other personal supports, in the driver's seat of service plan development and implementation. A long-time advocate of personal empowerment, Ms. Smith emphasized that the only constant in her division is change, and that the Division's current focus on self-directed services is one of the most significant changes that she and her team have been managing for the past several years.

Ms. Smith also reported on other DDDS initiatives, including the ICAP-based/published rate system, the Authorized Provider System, and the revised Applicant Services (intake) process, stating that the Division's focus is and will continue to be providing quality services within the framework of a service system that maximizes individual and family input and choice. An important example of

continuing improvement efforts is the Division's revitalized focus on employment as the preferred day service. In fact, Ms. Smith is intent on creating an "Employment 1st" day-service culture in Delaware for people with developmental disabilities.

According to Smith, there is nothing that better exemplifies the DDDS' visionary activities than the Self-Directed Services waiver that she included in her fiscal year 2009 budget request. The proposed new waiver, for which she garnered support from Secretary of Health and social Services Vincent P. Meconi, would be a significant benefit to individuals with developmental disabilities who are eligible for DDDS services and their families. In addition to case management, employment/day services, and certain other financial management services that are required under federal waivers, the proposed SDS waiver would provide each participant with \$2,500.00 per year that could be used to purchase specific waiver-covered services such as respite and therapy services. Ms. Smith is optimistic that Governor Minner will agree with her and Secretary Meconi, and include funding for the waiver in her FY2009 recommended budget that is due to be released next month.

### Check Out ASD's Recreational Resource List on line at:

[www.delautism.org/recreation\\_resources.htm](http://www.delautism.org/recreation_resources.htm)  
For a hard copy of the list, contact the ASD office at (302) 472-2638.

## Proposed Changes in ASD Bylaws

ASD's growth over the past few years has been amazing. This fall the Board reviewed the bylaws and is making recommendations for changes to the membership. These changes will "clean" up practices that were appropriate when there were just a few members, and they will recognize our growth and need for increased governance. There are two critical changes. The first is that the Board wants to expand from the current 11 members to 15 members. That change would also call for one member to be a person with Asperger Syndrome or a family member. The second is that the Board wants the ability to affiliate with various national autism groups on specific issues, so we will be ending our status as an affiliated chapter of the Autism Society of America effective March 30, 2007. We will maintain our name and logo and we will be working with ASA on various issues.

You can find the proposed revised bylaws on our webpage at [www.delautism.org/bylaws/htm](http://www.delautism.org/bylaws/htm). We would love to have your comments and input via e-mail, telephone call, or letter.

### Summary of bylaws changes by Section:

**Section 1**—Membership Association deletes references to the Autism Society of America.

**Section 2**—Purposes adds services to reflect POW&R.

**Section 3**—Membership clarifies eligibility for and admission to membership.

**Section 4**—Meetings of Members updates criteria for meetings, member notification, revises the number of members required for a quorum, and deletes requirements for voting to be via US Mail only.

**Section 5**—Officers updates responsibilities of the secretary and treasurer.

**Section 6**—Board of Directors calls for adding four appointed members to the board, and for one to be a representative of the Asperger community.

**Section 7**—Committees updates standing ASD Committees.

**Section 8**—Operations deletes references to ASA chapter reporting requirements.

**Section 9**—Amendments revises the procedures for making bylaws changes.



## What's Up With Adults

# POW&R

### *Early Start to Employment*

Our POW&R staff is up to their eyeballs because POW&R has taken off. We have added five students in their final year of school who are enrolled in the *Early Start to Employment* project—a joint project of the Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). The agencies are coming together with school districts around the state to increase the opportunities for students to graduate with a job and supports in place. There are several phases to this project. Parents apply for adult services from the two agencies (DVR and DDDS) then choose a community agency to deliver services. With funding from DVR, POW&R provides supports during the student's final year of school. There is an assessment phase in which the students try different jobs to learn what they like and what they are good at. Following assessment is job development, teaching the student to do the job, building in both natural supports and agency supports, and finally, transition to DDDS services seamlessly with employment.

The best part of this process is that it assures that the schools and adult provider agencies work together prior to graduation so that the adult provider really knows and understands the needs of the graduating student. This has sometimes been a problem in the past, particularly for students with autism spectrum disorders who have very different support needs than other graduates with disabilities. It's also important to note that adult agencies don't have the

same level of funding as the school, so it really assists the adult agencies to provide more individualized services for the job development and training phase than they would otherwise be able to do.

Delaware has been developing this program through a model project for about three years, and we are learning that it is a unique effort in the nation. With DDDS emphasizing employment outcomes more than it has historically done, we should look for more employment for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities.

### *Legislative Task Force on Autism Spectrum Disorders*

It has now been 18 months since Rep. Oberle called for this Task Force to take a look at service and support needs for adults with autism spectrum disorders. The Task Force has been meeting regularly and is beginning to write recommendations that will be sent to the Legislature during this legislative season. What we found of course, is what we knew. There are services and supports in place for adults with classic autism. In fact, Delaware is faring better than the rest of the country for these folks, at least in New Castle County. However, if you are an adult with Asperger syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Delay-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) or another neuro-developmental disability, it is likely that you have received no or very few services.

Why is this? It's for two reasons. One has to do with eligibility. These disabilities have not fit traditional criteria for eligibility for

developmental disabilities services. Because these adults have not been eligible for services, there has been no funding for services, thus agencies have not developed the expertise to provide services and support.

There is some very good news however. We do not know if this change is the result of this Task Force, but the Division of Developmental Disabilities has recently changed their eligibility criteria to include individuals with Asperger syndrome. It isn't yet clear what services they will provide, but it should include their full array of case management, supported living, family support, and day and vocational services.

Is this enough? This is a good start! Still, we have many individuals with diagnoses of PDD-NOS or non-verbal learning disability that functionally have the same issues as those with Asperger syndrome. As a society, we have the responsibility to see that all our citizens have the supports they require to live and work in the community. ASD will continue to advocate that all our citizens with autism spectrum disorders receive the services they need.

Stay tuned! We'll report on all the final recommendations once the report is completed and submitted.

*For more information on  
POW&R visit us on line at:  
[www.delautism.org/  
powr.htm](http://www.delautism.org/powr.htm)*



*The Autism Society of Delaware would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year and to thank everyone for their continued support. Here are a few pictures from some of the fun we had this past fall...*



*Thank You for a Great Year!*

# POW&R

## Productive Opportunities for Work & Recreation

A Community-Based Service of the Autism Society of Delaware for  
Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders



### We see the World in a Different Way...

We envision the world where all people with autism live fulfilling lives. To do this, POW&R works with adults and their families and friends to create individualized vocational and recreational supports in the community.

...It's About Life

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