

◊ *Into the Light* ◊

Volume 22 Issue 3 *Autism Society, Central Virginia* March 2014



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO RAISE AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE DURING NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH IN APRIL?

National Autism Awareness Month (NAAM) is just around the corner in April; it's not too early to think about ways that you can help raise awareness and acceptance of autism. Please let us know your plans; send us pictures of what you do and we may post them on our FB page! Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Donate a children's book about autism to your local or school library
- Tell your story; write an article about how autism has impacted your life; share it:
 - in your PTA, faith community, or community newspaper
 - with your school board representative, delegate, and senator
- Purchase/ make autism awareness ribbons for your child's school staff to wear during NAAM; include a note about Autism Awareness. (The ASCV has lapel pins available for purchase.)
- Create a bulletin board at your school, faith community or place of work; themes could include the warning signs of autism, the strengths of people with autism or famous people with autism.
- Form a team for the 5K Run/Walk for Autism (May 24); invite friends and neighbors to join you! Visit <http://ascv.org/ascv-5k/> to register.
- Share 2 resources from the National Autism Society website to use with typical peers:
 - ***Growing Up Together*** 4-page large-type booklet targeted to elementary-aged school children; uses simple language to talk about what autism is and how to become friends with someone on the autism spectrum. <http://tinyurl.com/elementaryASD>
 - ***Growing Up Together Teens with Autism*** 4-page booklet written for teens; uses basic language to talk about what autism is and how to be friends with someone on the autism spectrum. <http://tinyurl.com/teenASD>
- Host a movie night for friends, family, church members, youth groups or kids to watch a story about autism; great choices might be ***Temple Grandin***, ***Autism Is a World***, ***Autism, the Musical***, or ***Mozart and the Whale***
- Come up with "FACT A DAY" about autism and share with your child's school to be a part of the daily announcements during NAAM
- Consider having your business or school do "dress down days" or "hat days" where participants make a donation and can then dress down or wear a hat to raise donations and awareness for autism
- Make autism puzzle piece cookies or cupcakes; take into your school or local first responders; include a little printed information on autism
- Change your FB profile picture to the autism awareness ribbon for NAAM

See how one family is gearing up for National Autism Awareness Month on Page 3

Mission and Vision

Mission

To improve the lives of all affected by autism by maximizing the self-sufficiency, independence, and quality of life for all living with autism.

Vision

We are the local voice and resource of the autism community in education, advocacy, services, and support, committed to meaningful participation and self-determination in all aspects of life for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Any age. Any stage.

2014 OFFICERS AND BOARD:

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Program Director: Bradford Hulcher

Outreach Coordinator: Tammy Burns

Asperger's Interest Group Facilitator: Brie King

Childcare Supervisor: Deo Smith

KEY VOLUNTEER POSITION:

Newsletter Editor: Elizabeth Selko

From the Executive Director ...

I was honored to travel to Alexandria, VA on Wednesday, February 19th to attend the Annual Autism Society Day on the Hill and the Winter National Autism Society Affiliate Meetings as the VA State Representative. On Thursday, February 20th, over 35 affiliate and state leaders of the Autism Society traveled to Capitol Hill in Washington, DC to discuss legislation and policy impacting individuals with autism. We visited with members of Congress from our states and districts to advocate the need for policies and laws that uphold the dignity of ALL people and that ensure inclusive and equitable treatment and access to services. As a group, we were able to share important information on several specific pieces of pending legislation, including restraint & seclusion, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and reauthorization of the Combating Autism Act. On Friday, February 21st, I worked with other state affiliate representatives to further define our local work and relationship with our parent organization, the national Autism Society. Working together, we are able to offer both "National Strength and Local Resources." I returned with lots of new ideas for the Autism Society Central VA, as well as new friends and contacts, and am now even more excited about the work ahead! I look forward to seeing you soon at one of our many upcoming activities!

All the Best, Becky



This newsletter is a publication of: Autism Society, Central VA □ P.O. Box 29364 □ Richmond, Virginia 23242-0364 (804) 257-0192

We accept for consideration any comments, personal vignettes, book reviews, information, announcements or advertisements for publication in our newsletter. The deadline for submission for the April newsletter is March 15. You may send your contributions to the above address or email contributions to SELKO1@aol.com.

The Autism Society, Central Virginia does not endorse nor promote any program or service provider. The information contained in this newsletter is provided for informational purposes only. The Society is a 501(c)3 organization providing information, support and encouragement to individuals with autism, their families and professionals in the Central VA area.

This edition was edited by Elizabeth Selko and Bradford Hulcher.

ONE FAMILY'S PLAN TO RAISE AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE DURING AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

As most of you know, April is National Autism Awareness Month. Our own Outreach Coordinator, Tammy Burns, shares the following idea to inspire you!

The high school my son Jared attends has a video news program it broadcasts in fifth period classes for the students to be able to keep up with what's happening in and around the school. These news segments are hosted by students and are not only informative, but also very entertaining! Jared loves watching these news programs and even watches archived segments online. When I shared this information with his IEP team a few weeks ago, it was suggested that we check into having Jared be a part of the news team at some point! As we continued talking about that possibility, we came up with what I think is a FANTASTIC plan. Jared, one of his teachers, and myself are going to do a segment of the school video news for April, since April is Autism Awareness month. We are going to share a little about autism and how to "be a friend" to those who have autism. In addition, we will be sharing about the May 24, 2014 5K. Jared is looking forward to having this opportunity to be on the school news program, and I am ecstatic about having this chance to share autism awareness and 5K run information with the entire school. Look for a link to the finished news segment, sometime in April on the Autism Society Central Virginia's Facebook page!



HAVE YOU HEARD? NEWS FROM THE ASCV 5K RUN/WALK

Have you heard registration has begun for the 12th annual 5K?

Have you heard there are already 16 teams registered?

Have you heard there are 33 online fundraisers started, and one team has raised over \$2000?

Have you heard you can register as a "virtual" participant and even have a "virtual team"?

For those who will be out of town and/or unable to attend the 5K you can still register for the 5K. Just register as a virtual participant! We will mail you an awesome ASCV 5K beach towel to enjoy on the Memorial Day weekend. You can even create a team,

which can be at the 5K or virtual, and fundraise right along with all the others

Have you heard you have a choice to be a "chip-timed participant" or a "non-timed participant"?

For those runners and walkers who would like their finish times to be officially recorded by Richmond Road Runners and their finish times to be part of the official results for the 5K, we are offering a Chip Timing option. Just select the "Chip Timed" option when you register. At packet pickup you will be given a bib number that has an electronic chip on the back of it. This will enable your race results to be officially timed and recorded. If you don't choose Chip Timing, you will see your time on the clock at the finish, but your time will not be counted in the medal competition.

Have you heard all funds raised by the Autism Society Central Virginia stay right here in Central Virginia to help support individuals with autism and their families?

Learn more at <http://ascv.org/ascv-5k/>

**SAVE THE DATE! APRIL 13, 2014
AUTISM SOCIETY CENTRAL VA
AUTISM AWARENESS DAY
AT KING'S DOMINION!**

**SPECIAL DISCOUNTED TICKETS
GLUTEN FREE FOOD OPTIONS
QUIET AREAS
SPECIAL BOARDING PASS PROGRAM
FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH AUTISM AND THEIR FAMILIES
AUTISM SOCIETY EXHIBIT RAISING
AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE
VISIT WWW.ASCV.ORG FOR
ADDITIONAL DETAILS**

NEWS FROM THE AUTISM SOCIETY CENTRAL VA BOARD

The Autism Society Central VA worked to fulfill our mission to "improve the lives of all affected by autism" in February in the following ways:

Education

- Sponsored a workshop on *What's APPening?*

Services and Supports

- Sponsored a Preschool Playgroup
- Sponsored an Inclusive Lego Club
- Sponsored an Asperger's Middle School Social Club
- Sponsored 3 bowling events - for children, for teens, and for adults w/ ASD
- Sponsored the Adults with Asperger's Interest Group
- Sponsored the Parents of Adults w/ Asperger's Interest Group

Advocacy

- Attended the annual Autism Society "Day on the Hill" with other Autism Society affiliates from across the nation
- Participated on the Region IV Children's Crisis Work Group
- Participated in a VA Department of Education (VDOE) Special Education Advocacy Meeting
- Advocated at the General Assembly

Awareness

- Exhibited at the Henrico County Public Schools Transition Fair

PARTNERS IN POLICYMAKING ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

More than four hundred Virginia Partners In Policymaking (PIP) alumni, and thousands who have graduated from PIP programs across the country, have learned how to make a difference every day for themselves, their families, and their communities. Individuals participating in PIP attend advoca-

cy training, resource development, and skill building workshops led by state and national experts. Topics covered include the history of the disability rights movement, self-advocacy, independent living, employment, building inclusive communities, natural supports, legislative advocacy, assistive technology, communication, team building, and much more! VBPD covers all expenses for participants' training, lodging, meals, and travel. Program participants attend and actively participate in eight two-day sessions, from Friday afternoon to late Saturday afternoon, in Richmond, Virginia. The VBPD is currently recruiting for the 2014-2015 PIP class which will begin in September 2014 and end in May 2015. In order to be considered, applications must be received by the deadline, April 30, 2014. Further details and application may be found @ <http://www.vaboard.org/policymaking.htm>

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM - APPLICATIONS OPEN!!

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) seeks students from across Virginia to serve as delegates to its Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). Rising high school juniors and seniors with a disability who want to become leaders in their schools and communities are strongly encouraged to apply for the honor of serving as a YLF delegate. Student delegates demonstrate:

- Motivation
- Acceptance of and interest in diversity
- An interest in developing their leadership skills and a plan for their future
- A desire to share their thoughts and opinions

The five day YLF program is held on the campus of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond each July. Twenty-five Virginia high school students with disabilities are selected each spring to receive full scholarships to participate in this leadership development program. Recruitment for the 2014 Youth Leadership Forum is underway!

The Forum will be held at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond from July 28 through August 1, 2014. Twenty-five Virginia high school students with disabilities will be selected to receive full scholarships to participate in this leadership development program. Apply @ <http://www.vaboard.org/y lf.htm>; application deadline is 3/31!

AUTISM SOCIETY MARCH CALENDAR

The Autism Society, Central VA will sponsor the following meetings in March. All meetings take place at River Rd. UMC, 8800 River Rd, Henrico, unless otherwise specified. For information: 257-0192 or info@ascv.org

- | | | |
|------|-----------|--|
| 3/4 | 7 p.m. | Board Meeting |
| 3/7 | 7 p.m. | Society Meeting: <i>7th Annual Recreation Resource Fair</i> details and registration @ http://recreationresourcefair.eventbrite.com |
| 3/7 | | Asperger's Middle School Social Club
Society members, register through eventbrite e-mail |
| 3/8 | 1:30 p.m. | Preschool Play Group details and registration @ http://marpreschool.eventbrite.com |
| 3/8 | 2:30 p.m. | Inclusive Lego Club for children of all abilities in grades K - 8; details & RSVP @ http://marinclusivelego.eventbrite.com |
| 3/23 | | Bowling League for Elementary School Students
Bowling League for Middle/High School Students
Bowling League for Adults on the Spectrum
Free for Autism Society members; see e-mail invitation for time, location and to register |
| 3/24 | 7 p.m. | Adults with Asperger's/HFA Interest Group (open only to adults w/ Asperger's/HFA) |
| 3/24 | 7 p.m. | Family Members of Adults with Asperger's Syndrome |

ReelAbilities: Disabilities Film Festival March 31 - April 6

The Autism Society Central VA is proud to be a Community Partner for ReelAbilities, sponsored by the Weinstein JCC. The film festival is dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories, and artistic expressions of people with different abilities. The festival presents award-winning films, accompanied by discussions and other engaging programs which bring together the community to explore, discuss and celebrate the diversity of our shared human experience.

The opening film for the festival is *Ocean Heaven*, the moving story of a father's tireless love for his autistic son and his attempt to teach his son the life skills necessary to survive on his own. The film is a poignant tribute to parents' infinite love for their children. Visit <http://www.weinsteinjcc.org/cultural-arts/reelabilities/> for additional information about the film festi-

Community Events/ Meetings of Interest

Mar. 3 **Hanover County Special Education Advisory Committee** School Board Office, Ashland; 7 p.m.; topic: Early Intervention; open to the public

Mar. 4 **Special Needs Jump** at Jumpology 5 p - 7 p; fee and reservations required; all ages;
<http://www.jumpology.us/>

Mar. 7 **Special Nights for Special Needs** children with special needs age 10 and under @ the Children' Museum @ Chesterfield; adapted materials, special activities, a cool-down space and reduced number of visitors; free from 5:30 - 7:30

Mar. 12 **Chesterfield County Special Education Advisory Committee** topic: ABCs of IEPs; open to the public; 5 p.m. @ the Fulghum Center

Mar. 18 **Monkey Joe's Special Needs Night** from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.; kids ages 2 - 12 w/ special needs free; closed to the public; siblings welcome \$5; 11304 Midlothian Tnpg, Richmond; 897-5867

Mar. 25 **Henrico County Special Education Advisory Committee** topic: *HCPS Resources and Presentation of the Special Education Annual Plan*; open to the public; 6:30 p. - 8:30 p.; Brookland Middle School

Thank You to the Following Volunteers!

Ryan Blumenschine
Matt Shaver (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Jeffery Ceasar (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Shahrad Daraekia (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Isaac Lee (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Colin Gibson (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Daniel Calabro (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Jonathan Kim (Pi Kappa Alpha)
Jennifer Fjelsted (VCU SPARKS)
Mahreen Azam (VCU SPARKS)
Sidra Alam (VCU SPARKS)
Komal Hasmi (VCU SPARKS)
Opal Patel (VCU SPARKS)
Fallon Regan (Alpha Xi Delta)
Aashna Patel (Alpha Xi Delta)
Taylor Mayfield (Alpha Xi Delta)

Alex Rossi (Alpha Xi Delta)
Troy Burns
Isabel Sullivan
Jessica Adams
Erin Crane
Kathryn Prochnow (Circle K VCU)
Mosharf Hossain (Circle K VCU)
Sandi Wiley
Becky Early
Isabel Sullivan
Tatjana Preisig
Jennifer Davis (Phi Nu Kappa – Delta Chapter)
Gearogia Galanopoulos (VCU SPARKS)
Krystal Woods (BPSA VCU)
Iyanna Draper (BPSA VCU)
Cortez Anderson (BPSA VCU)
Kianna Lumpkins (BPSA VCU)
Alexis Broggins (BPSA VCU)
Brianna Leonard (BPSA VCU)
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Nancy Andelin
Skills Development Center



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when you place your order,
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your organization.**

Offer Good 5:00 – 8:30 p.m.

**Autism Society, Central Virginia
Friday April 11th, 2014**

**Offer good on the date and times specified above
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purchased with the presentation of this card.**

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Conferences, Workshops, and Webcasts

Mar. 11 **My Journey to Self-Determination** free webcast from VCU ACE; register @<http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/training/webcasts/details.cfm?webcastID=268>

Mar. 12/13 **Commonwealth Autism Service Annual Conference** for info and to register: <http://www.autismva.org/2014conference>

Mar. 13 **Transition** sponsored by Hanover Parent Resource Center; details and RSVP @ hanoverprc@hcps.us

Mar. 27 **Exploring Medicaid Waivers** sponsored by Hanover Parent Resource Center; details and RSVP @ hanoverprc@hcps.us

April 8 **Understanding Challenging Behavior and the Need for Social Skills Training** free webcast from VCU ACE; details and registration @ <http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/training/webcasts/details.cfm?webcastID=269>

For additional information on autism conferences and workshops in VA, visit www.autismtrainingva.org

I'M DETERMINED YOUTH SUMMIT - APPLICATIONS OPEN!!

The Virginia Department of Education's I'm Determined project, in conjunction with the Partnership for People with Disabilities, invites applications for sponsorship to the 8th Annual I'm Determined Youth Summit at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Youth with disabilities from across the Commonwealth will meet to identify ways to become better advocates and lead more self-determined lives. The selected individuals and a parent/guardian will receive paid registration, dormitory accommodations, travel expenses and meals for the three-day event. A concurrent Parent Summit for the selected participant's parent/guardian will be held at the university. The Youth Summit will start on Wednesday, June 18, 2014 and will end on Friday, June 20, 2014. Many ASCV members have attended the Youth Summit and found it to be a life changing experience! Information and application @ http://www.imdetermined.org/youth/youth_summit_application/; application deadline is 3/21!

Thank You For The Following Donations

Cezar Fusha
L. Bryan Rowe
Dianne Corsello
Gregory Workman
Phillip Sandino
Paul McNamara
Aja Shenay Wells
Rosemary and Cullen Seltzer
Betty Anne Flynn

The Following Donations were made in memory of Thomas Emmett O'Dea

Kathleen Collins
Patrick Daly
Mary Gentile
Cynthia Deans

Would You Like To Place An Ad in "Into The Light" ?

Our newsletter reaches over 600 families, professionals and educators on a monthly basis. If you would like to place an advertisement, please email it to asacv.org or mail it to the Chapter at P.O. Box 29364, Richmond, VA 23242-0364. Call the Chapter if you have any questions. Deadline for entry is the 15th of each month.

Ad Rates:

- \$25.00 1/8 Page
- \$50.00 1/4 Page
- \$75.00 1/2 Page
- \$100.00 Full Page

Discounts/Non Profits/Long Term Ads (3 months or longer) may have negotiated rates with board approval. The board reserves the right to refuse to place an advertisement

Autism Society, Central Virginia
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Richmond, VA 23242-0364
(804) 257-0192

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7th Annual Recreation Resource Fair

MARCH 7, 2014

6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

RIVER ROAD UMC, 8800 RIVER ROAD, RVA

Join us for our 7th Annual Recreation Resource Fair! Exhibitors that provide social and/or recreational opportunities for children, youth, or adults with autism spectrum disorder will be onsite to share information about their programs and answer any questions you may have! This event is free and open to the community. Please register @ <https://recreationresourcefair.eventbrite.com>

- Aquatots
- River City Buddy Ball
- Sailing 4 All
- Core Kids Academy
- Camp Baker
- Camp Easter Seals
- Camp VA Jaycees
- CampFree2BeMe
- i-Can Bike Camp
- Healing Sounds
- Flying Squirrels' Camp Warrior
- RVACCESS
- Aspie Bible Study
- RICASPIES
- Friendship Circle
- Martial Arts World
- Henrico County Parks and Recreation
- Reach (Peak Experiences)
- Autastic Avenues
- Friendations
- Voices Together
- Dreamers
- Spectrum Transformation
- Special Olympics
- The ASSET Program
- Young Life Capernaum
- Skills Development Center

Family + Autism+ Community+ RCG= Making a Difference



Does your child need help in any of the following areas???

- ✓ Social Skills
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Developing and Maintaining Routines
- ✓ Behavior Management Skills
- ✓ Family Training

Then look no further....

Recognizing Children's Gifts (RCG) Behavioral Health Network is here to help!! We offer individualized One-on-One In-home and Center Based ABA services for your child and family!

For more information contact us as:

www.rcghealthnetwork.com

info@rcghealthnetwork.com

804.897.1753

