

◆ *Into the Light* ◆

Volume 18 Issue 4 *Autism Society, Central Virginia* April 2010



AS-CV Mission & Philosophy

The mission of the Autism Society of America is to promote lifelong access and opportunities for persons within the autism spectrum and their families, to be fully included, participating members of their communities through advocacy, public awareness, education and research related to autism.

Recognizing and respecting the diverse range of opinions, needs and desires of this group, ASA embraces an overall philosophy which chooses to empower individuals with autism, their parents or caregivers, to make choices best suited to the needs of the person with autism. At the very core of the parent choice philosophy is the belief that no single program or treatment will benefit all individuals with autism. Furthermore, the recommendation of what is "best" or "most effective" for a person with autism should be determined by those people directly involved - the individual with autism, to the extent possible, and the parents or family members. Providing information and education to help in decision-making are more highly regarded at ASA than is advocating for one particular theory or philosophy.



April Is National Autism Awareness Month

The Autism Society, Central VA will be involved in the following activities during the month of April to help raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorders in our community:

- Annual Chapter Member Picnic will be held April 17; see article for details
- A booth at the Annual Connections Resource Fair at the Children's Museum on April 24
- Bounce for Autism at Pump It Up of Hanover on April 22
- "Learning, Living, and Working with Persons with Asperger's Syndrome" a 3 hour free workshop on April 27 open to the first 50 people who register
- Autism Risk and Safety Management for First Responders, a full day workshop featuring nationally recognized expert Dennis Debaudt for first responders in the metro Richmond area, sponsored by the ASCV in collaboration with Henrico Fire on April 28
- Autism Risk and Safety Management for Families, Educators, and Community Members, a free 2 hour workshop featuring Dennis Debaudt on April 28: pre-registration required by e-mailing asacv@aol.com

What are you doing to raise awareness in your school, neighborhood, or faith community this month? You might:

- Donate a children's book about autism to your local or school library; we can help you with suggestions
- Write an article about National Autism Awareness month or how autism has impacted your life; share it with your PTA or faith community newsletter or your community newspaper.
- Form a team for the Bounce for Autism (April 22) or the 5K Run/Walk for Autism (May 29) and invite friends and neighbors to join you!
- Send your school board representative, delegate, and

(Continued on page 3)

2009–2010 Officers and Board

President:	Holly Jenkins
Vice-Presidents:	Tiffany Robertson Holly Aldridge
Treasurer:	Todd Domaleski
Meeting Secretary:	Katherine O'Connell
Corresponding Secretary	Cheryl Fisher
Board members:	Jannie Ashburne Chris Cieslarczyk Linda Cunningham Sandi Wiley

Advisory Board

Pasquale Accardo, M.D.
Alan Kirshner
Darrell Tillar Mason, Esq.
Donald Oswald, Ph.D.
Angela Sadler
Carol Schall, Ph.D.
John A. Toscano

There is no regular chapter meeting in April. Instead, please join us for the annual picnic (see below)

ASCV SPONSORS 4TH ANNUAL SPRING PICNIC FOR MEMBERS

Chapter members are invited to join us at the Roslyn Center for the 4th Annual Picnic April 17th from 12:00-3:00 pm. The picnic is a relaxing time for chapter members and their families to enjoy entertainment for the kids and lunch. We will once again have inflatable rides, live entertainment and activities for kids, youth, and adults. Volunteer teens will be present to help out. The ASCV Book Store will be onsite with autism awareness items available for purchase. We will be raffling off door prizes-free registrations for this year's Annual 5K on May 29th.

We will provide lunch from Jersey Mike's; lunches are preorder only. Members must preorder by April 14th; members with special diets are welcome to bring their own lunch and snacks.

This event is weather dependent so stay tuned to chapter voicemail and email notification for details about cancellation. Chapter members should have received an invitation through Eventbrite; if you have not received an invitation or have additional questions, please contact Katherine O'Connell at mrsocconnell@verizon.net. Feel free to bring your picnic chairs and/or blankets and we hope to see you on Saturday April 17th!



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 chapter newsletter. The deadline for submission for the May newsletter is April 15. You may send your contributions to the Chapter at 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 Chapter is a volunteer organization providing information, support and encouragement to parents, family members and professionals in the Central VA area.

This edition was edited by Elizabeth Selko and Bradford Hulcher.

April Is National Autism Awareness Month

(Continued from page 1)

senator information about National Autism Awareness Month and how autism affects your life.

Facts about autism to share with your community:

- 1 in 110 births; 1% of all children in United States
- Fastest-growing developmental disability
- 4 - 8 times more prevalent in males than females
- Annual cost of autism is \$90 billion/ lifetime cost 3.5 to 5 million
- Cost of treatment over the lifespan can be reduced by 2/3 with early diagnosis and appropriate early intervention
- Medical treatment for autism is not covered by most health insurance policies in Virginia

**Join Us for Our Annual
Bounce for Autism
Event!**

Thursday, April 22

The Bounce for Autism is a fundraising event that is sponsored by the Autism Society and Pump It Up of Hanover. The Autism Society, the nation's leading grassroots autism organization, has partnered with PIU, America's #1 Inflatable Party Zone, to create the Bounce for Autism event to raise awareness and funds for autism care, support, treatment and research. Last year, the dedicated customers of Pump It Up of Hanover raised **\$10,000** in one evening!

This event enables children, families and all individuals concerned about autism to "Bounce" at a Pump It Up location

while raising funds to support autism. Participants form a Bounce Team - their team of bouncers commit to raising funds to help improve the lives of all affected by autism, and ask friends, family, community members, or anyone else to support the cause by giving a donation to sponsor them. 100% of the proceeds go to benefit the Autism Society.

The Bounce for Autism is a child friendly event, however participants must be over age 2 and at least 34 inches tall. Children who do not meet the age and height requirements will not be allowed to enter the bouncing arenas. No exceptions can be made to this safety policy. Registration is \$10 per bouncer and includes a fun evening of bouncing and refreshments. Each child who raises \$50 or more will also receive a special Bounce for Autism t-shirt. If you have questions about the Hanover Bounce for Autism, email Holly Jenkins at ericandhollyjenkins@verizon.net

If you are interested in participating in or donating to this event, visit www.bounceforautism.org

SAVE THE DATE!

OCTOBER 14, 2010

**THE HAMPTON PARK MEN'S
CLUB 1ST ANNUAL AUTISM
SOCIETY, CENTRAL VA
GOLF TOURNAMENT**



2010 Legislative Update

Many bills were introduced during the General Assembly to address the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Among the bills introduced:

- mandated health insurance for ASD
- tuition assistance grants for students with ASD
- teacher certification and paraprofessional training in ASD
- the creation of an Autism Advisory Council in the legislative branch of state government to promote coordination of services and resources among agencies involved in the delivery of services to Virginians with autism spectrum disorders and to increase public awareness of such services and resources

Despite the concerted efforts of autism advocacy groups across VA, including the ASCV, and families from across the state, the only bill that appears to have passed in both the House and Senate was the following:

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, in coordination with the Department of Rehabilitative Services and other partner agencies, including local community services boards and behavioral health authorities, shall establish specific goals for programs to assist individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) to obtain and sustain employment. The goals of the program shall include:

1. *Providing skills training for individuals with ASDs in order to help them obtain employment;*
2. *Providing behavioral supports necessary to ensure success in the workplace;*
3. *Providing training to reduce behaviors that interfere with successful employment;*
4. *Offering education and training on ASDs to employers, in order to increase understanding of these disorders and common behaviors associated with them; and*
5. *Ensuring that individuals with ASDs receive the ongoing behavioral and social support needed to retain successful employment status.*

By November 1, 2010, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services shall include in its report to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission a detailed summary outlining the plan for inclusion of specific goals for ASD employment programs.

ARC of VA Update on State Budget and Medicaid Waivers

Restorations of home and community based services in the 2010-2012 budget include:

- 250 new ID Waivers for individuals/families on the ID Waiver waiting list (start date of 7/1/10)*
- Elimination of the proposed cut to respite services. *
- Elimination of the proposed cut to HCBS Waiver provider reimbursement rates *
- Elimination of proposed freeze on HCBS Waiver enrollment *
- Elimination of proposed cuts to Medicaid podiatry and optometry services.*
- Monthly income for HCBS Waiver eligibility would not be reduced from 300% SSI to 250% SSI *
- No cuts to consumer directed services

Cuts/Policies that remain in the 2010-2012 VA Budget include:

- \$23 million to rebuild a 75-bed institution at Southeastern Virginia Training Center in Chesapeake. \$24 million to renovate Central Virginia Training Center, an institution in Lynchburg.
- 750 ID Waivers and 134 DD Waivers eliminated (this would make 4 years of no new DD Waivers).
- Assistive Technology (AT) will be reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000 per year in FY12.*
- Environmental Modifications (EM) will be reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000 per year in FY12.*

***Restorations dependent on FMAP funding.** Like many other items in the budget, these restorations are contingent upon a 6 month extension of the enhanced FMAP (a temporary increase in the federal share of Medicaid spending). The U.S. Senate passed the FMAP extension, which was included in the American Workers, State, and Business Relief Act of 2010 (H.R. 4213), by a vote of 62-36. The U.S. House of Representatives has not yet decided on whether to adopt the Senate bill or develop its own bill, which, after passage would be conferenced with the Senate bill.

What happens next?

The budget bill now goes to Governor McDonnell for his review. The Governor has the ability to propose amendments to the budget before the General Assembly's veto session on April 21st.

Registration Opens March 1 for the Annual 5K Run/Walk for Autism!

Our 5K Run Walk for Autism will be take place on May 29 this year. Please sign up at www.ascv5k.com today! Also, check us out on Facebook! Search for "Autism Society Central Virginia 5K Run/Walk" and become a fan!

Run Committee Chair Holly Aldridge is currently recruiting for Team Leaders who will be in charge of the volunteers who sign up that day; Team Leaders will need to have one or two orientation meetings prior to race day to go over their duties. Contact asacv@aol.com if you are able to volunteer. Team Leaders are needed for the following areas of responsibility:

- Children's Fun Area
- Course Marshals
- Water
- Volunteer Check in
- Packet Pick up Tables
- Clean Up



ASACV APRIL CALENDAR

The Autism Society, Central VA will sponsor the following meetings in April. All meetings are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Meetings take place at River Road United Methodist Church, 8800 River Road unless otherwise noted. For information: 257-0192 or asacv@aol.com

April 12	7:00 p.m.	Parents of Children (Preschool/School Age) w/ Asperger's/High Functioning Autism Interest Group
April 13	7:00 p.m.	Board Meeting
April 14	10:00 a.m.	Parents of Children (Preschool/School Age) w/ Asperger's/High Functioning Autism Interest Group
April 15	all day	Pizza Fusion donates 10% of dine-in sales to Autism Society
April 17		Spring ASCV Member Picnic
April 22	10:00 a.m.	Biomedical Interest Group
April 22	6:00 p.m.	Bounce for Autism (@ Pump It up of Hanover)
April 26	7:00 p.m.	Adults w/ Asperger's/High Functioning Autism Interest Group (<i>open only to adults w/ AS/HFA</i>)
April 26	7:00 p.m.	Family Members of Adults with AS/HFA Interest Group
April 27		Living, Learning and Working with Persons with Asperger's Syndrome (pre-registration required; see flier insert)
April 28	6:30 p.m.	Autism Risk and Safety Management (pre-registration required)

CELEBRATIONS!

When you share your child's successes, no matter how large or small, you offer hope to other families. To share your child's success with others in the newsletter, e-mail us at asaacv@aol.com.

NICHOLAS VEST TRIES AND LOVES TWO BOWLS OF QUAKER OATMEAL TODAY!!! His mother prepares oatmeal for herself, weight control oatmeal no less. She loads it with a cup of raisins. The aroma of maple and brown sugar permeates the air quickly. Nicholas (AKA: BLOODHOUND) smells something new from the room next to the kitchen. I call him over and THINK... " I'm gonna try, but don't get your hopes up again Jennifer. How wonderful it would be for my 12 year boy to eat a healthy breakfast, instead of breadsticks and fries by 10:30 daily. How much better he could feel if he could just get beyond the fear of taste and texture and the routine and fixation for sameness. But don't get your hopes up. He has gripped on to this routine for almost 9 years.... I don't think he's going to change now.. oh well try anyway.. he'll probably gag on it and throw up on kitchen floor...oh well floor is filthy anyway.....never know till you try...."

He EATS the first 3 spoonfuls without protest. Smells the food while his mouth is full. HE LIKES IT! He's laughing and pacing in the kitchen, so happy to have a new taste on his palate. Can you imagine how boring food would be if you only survived off a half dozen things, mostly carbs and junk. Thank goodness he loves his OJ! It's about the only healthy thing in his diet. But not today. .today OATMEAL AND OJ!! HA! I prepared 2 bowls - all in all he ate about 2 packets worth of oatmeal with no raisins. I wasn't brave enough to try raisins today but..... maybe tomorrow?

Jennifer Vest

Robbie Maino, who attends Atlee High School in Hanover County, applied to the Virginia Youth with Disabilities Summit and was selected out of 100+ applications! This 3 day leadership conference takes place in March from the 15-17th at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. Selected youth with disabilities from across the Commonwealth of Virginia that will meet to identify ways to become better advocates and lead more self-determined lives. In addition, Youth Summit participants will have the opportunity to attend Transition Forum workshops specific to their needs and interests. Robbie, was diagnosed at an early age with Asperger's Syndrome, and he has made tremendous strides with his journey. As his parents, we have been so proud of his progress over the past

few years in becoming his own advocate and sharing his insight with others that are on the same Autism journey.

The Mainos

Teachers at Clover Hill High School in Chesterfield County singled out my son Will as the 9th /10th grade STUDENT OF THE YEAR. He was chosen from over 800 students which include roughly 200 who attend a specialty center for exceptional math and science students. This honor is awarded annually to the 9th or 10th grader who "most embodies the traits of responsibility, accountability, respect and honesty." Being his mother, I quite nearly exploded with joy and pride. In 4th grade Will had an Asperger's diagnosis, full-time aide, 5-day-a-week tutor, and 1-on-1 math instruction. Now in 10th grade he is STUDENT OF THE YEAR and on the A/B honor roll with no aide, no tutor, and no remedial classes. We gratefully owe this to the biomedical interventions of Defeat Autism Now! (www.autism.com) which treat underlying or co-existing health problems, typically in the digestive tract, immune system or body chemistry. Interventions for Will included a special diet, vitamin supplements and removal of high levels of heavy metals found in his body. Doing hand springs in Chesterfield...

Sallie Kirchhoff



Thank You for the Following
Donations

Pizza Fusion

Dennis and Karin Sewell

Janice Creamer in honor of
Jayden Matthew Creamer

Community Events Meetings of Interest

April 1 **Parents/Caregivers of Students with Special Needs Social Group** meets the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 am at Ashland Coffee and Tea; meet without an agenda, only for the purpose of friendliness and casual conversation typically focused on caring for students with special needs. For info: Leigh Wear at mlwear@comcast.net or 550-2590

April 8 **Richmond Asperger's Meetup** face-to-face meeting will be on the second Thursday of each month from 7-9pm at the River City Diner on Parham Rd (at Brook and I95); a place where older children (age 11-17) can meet other Aspergers Children and siblings/adults with Aspergers can meet together and/or share information with parents of kids with AS; to RSVP for the face-to-face meetings, sign up at <http://aspergers.meetup.com/397/> The Yahoogroup is at <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/richmondaspergersgroup/>

April 11 **Extraordinary Families** support group for families who are caring for children with special needs; offering educational, social, emotional and spiritual support; normally meets 2nd Sunday from 4:30 - 6 p.m.; for details, contact Jennifer at bitners4@gmail.com <http://www.mvbcnow.org/extraordinaryfamilies>

April 12 **Hanover County Special Education Advisory Committee** at Hanover County School Board Office at 7 p.m. for further info: 365-4596

April 12 **Richmond City Special Education Advisory Committee** 6-8 p.m.; location TBA; contact: 780-6084

April 14 **Chesterfield County Special Education Advisory Committee** Thomas Fulghum Center, 4003 Cogbill Road; 4:30- 6:30 p.m.; open to the public

April 15 **A Journey of Rest and Restoration**; a monthly Christian-based support group designed for couples/caregivers of children with any special needs; meets the third Thursday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m.; Mechanicsville Christian Center; free childcare and sign language interpreter; pre-registration required; contact Joanna Frank @ 746-4303 ext 360 or bfrank096@yahoo.com

April 17 **Buddy Break** a free respite care program for children with special needs ages 3-21 and their siblings ages 3-11; 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.; sponsored by Southside Church of The Nazarene;

see website for additional information at www.nathanielshope.org; questions? contact Amy Morgan @ 804-778-7800 ext. 247 or Buddy-Break@SouthsideChurchVA.org; parents required to attend an hour orientation the first time they attend Buddy Break

April 20 **Living with Autism** Chickahominy Middle School library at 6:30 pm. RSVP to Kelly at 365-4596 or hano-verprc@hcps.us

April 23 **Play Initiative for All**; for children w/ special needs 5:30-7:30 p.m. \$4.00 per person; A quiet 'cool down' room for difficult times and transitions; Special sensory tables/ projects; Open exploration of all exhibits including the Art Studio

April 24 **Connections** A family resource fair for children and youth with special needs; 9:30- 12:30; Children's Museum; free admission to first 500 participants; Special Features: Magician Jonathan Austin; Dental screenings and fluoride varnish; Child-friendly entertainers Arts and crafts; Therapeutic horseback riding; Pet therapy dogs; Free legal and financial consultations; Children's Museum

April 27 **Henrico County Special Education Advisory Committee** at Brookland Middle School library; Dr. Harry Gewanter: "When Worlds Collide: Physicians and Special Ed"; 6:30 p.m.

April 30 **Dinner at Boychik's**; 5 - 7 p.m. for individuals w/ disabilities and their families; for info: Heather at HKE-LIAS@AOL.com

Workshops and Conferences

April 5: **Guardianship – Rights, Risks, and Responsibilities** (free webinar) *Sue Swenson, former Ex. Director, US Arc, and former Commissioner of Administration on Developmental Disabilities* Local school divisions must inform parents of the rights of youth with disabilities a full year before the student with a disability reaches the age of majority. State directives about guardianship, conservatorship, powers of attorney and other information are made available to families. However, families should understand the full responsibilities and risks associated with assuming guardianship of their children; regis-

(Continued on page 8)

Workshops and Conferences

(Continued from page 7)

ter @

<http://www.worksupport.com/training/webcastSeries.cfm/12>

April 11 **Financial Planning for Children with Special Needs** sponsored by Extraordinary Families at Mount Vernon Church; [Desi Wyatt, a Financial Advisor with Morgan Stanley Smith Barney](#), and a fellow parent of children with special needs, will discuss the following topics: Protecting the assets of the individual with special needs; Providing additional income to facilitate a better quality of life; Preventing the loss of government benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Balancing the needs of other family members and beneficiaries; 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.; RSVP: extraordinaryfamilies@gmail.com

April 13 **Supporting Communication with Assistive Technology** come explore the features of high tech AAC devices and learn how to match features to the students' needs. This is a hands-on-exploratory session targeting students of all ages. VCU TTAC; free; 4-6 p.m.; call 827-9989 to register

April 15 **Mythbusters!** learn about parental role in the IEP process, standards of learning and VGLA, behavior intervention plans, placement, restraint & LRE, and ESY; sponsored by the Special Education Advocacy Clinic @ the W & M School of Law; FREE; 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.; for info: (757)221-5735 or pele@wm.edu

April 16 **Autism/Asperger's Conference** w/ Temple Grandin, Sean Barron, and Maria Wheeler; sponsored by Future Horizons; Richmond; to register: <http://fhautism.com/>

April 19: **Parents As Essential Partners in Transition** (free webinar) *Ann Turnbull, The Beach Center, Kansas University* Parents are looking for options for their young adult children with high support needs as they transition from high school to life. As partners with adult service providers parents can be the catalyst to ensure successful employment outcomes. But parents need help from service providers. They do not have access to evidence based practices found in professional journals nor do they have the time to devote to developing employment plans. Prevailing myths about the role parents play in supporting adult children's work opportunities are explored; register @

<http://www.worksupport.com/training/webcastSeries.cfm/12>

April 23 **Understanding Special Education** designed for parents who are new to the system, but anyone can attend. Topics such as the referral process, evaluation and the IEP will be covered; lunch provided; 11:00 - 1:00; call Henrico County Parent Resource Center 804-343-6523 to RSVP

April 27 **Living, Learning, and Working with Asperger's Syndrome** a 3 hour training developed by the VA Autism Council; free for families, educators or providers; pre-registration required; see enclosed flier

April 27 **Ethical Considerations in Behavior Analysis and Autism Intervention** designed to help participants apply existing ethical guidelines for behavior analyst effectively as well as expand their knowledge of B.F. Skinner's philosophy on ethics to help guide current practice; appropriate for both BCBA and BCaBAs looking to increase their knowledge and understanding of ethical behavior in clinical services; sponsored by the Learning Institute of Commonwealth Autism Service; Fredericksburg; \$65; for info: www.autismva.org

April 28 **Autism Risk and Safety Management** a 2 hour training for parents, educators, and community providers; see enclosed flier

May 3: **The New Ticket To Work Program - What's in it for Young People?** (free webinar) *Sallie Rhodes, CESSI Ticket to Work Program Specialist* The Social Security Administration is serious about ensuring young people with disabilities have the option of embarking upon meaningful careers and life long self-sufficiency. The Ticket to Work program is one tool to support new job seekers. Learn how young people with disabilities can access the array of Social Security work incentive programs and how they can take advantage of the resources Ticket to Work employment networks provide. register @ <http://www.worksupport.com/training/webcastSeries.cfm/12>

May 13 **Financial Planning for Families of Children and Adults with Special Needs**; St. Mary's Hospital, room 163; 7 p.m.

June 3 **Autism: Unlocking the Puzzle** speaker: Baylor Rice at South River Compounding Pharmacy; West End - noon; Midlothian - 7 p.m.; register by calling 897-4447

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