

Heidi Choice
Editor

Calendar of Events:

- Feb 2 & Mar 1, 9:00am, Newly Diagnosed Workshop at PFC Resource Ctr. Room 414
- Feb 6/20, 6:00pm, Stedman Support Group, Stedman Recreation Ctr.
- Feb 13, 5:45 pm, HFA Support Group at Dorothy Spainhour Ctr.
- Feb 13, 6:30 pm, Parent Education Meeting, Dorothy Spainhour Ctr.
- Feb 14, 11:30 am, ALC Support Group at Cheddar's on McPherson Church Road
- Feb 15, 9:30 am, ABC Support Group at PFC Resource Ctr., Room 414
- Feb 23, 9:30 am, Preschool Support Group, PFC Resource Ctr., Room 414
- Feb 28, 11:00 am, Board of Directors Meeting, PFC Resource Ctr.

Board of Directors:

- Anna Finch, President
- Warren Aronson, Vice President
- Gwen Scott, Treasurer
- Cynthia Billops
- Dr. Debra Gillum
- Brandy Mello
- Chris Leacock
- Dr. Suzanna Fletcher

Staff:

Director of Programs and Outreach:

Heidi Choice

Program and Outreach Assistant:

Alvita Blue

~Monthly Parent Education Program~

Cumberland County Schools Autism Problem Solving Team

Representatives
of the
Autism Problem Solving Team
will present:

Information about how our children most benefit from Cumberland County Schools services and other areas relevant to children with autism in the school system.

- *This will be a friendly discussion. Individual cases will not be discussed during this presentation.*
- *Please note that a brief membership meeting will begin at 6:30 pm. The presentation will follow.*

Join us February 13, 2012,
at 6:30 pm at the
Dorothy Spainhour Center
223 Hull Road, Fayetteville

For your convenience, free respite care is available on site through Community Based Developmental Services. Please contact Cynthia Billops at 488-5820 or 488-4584 to reserve your space at least 24 hours in advance. You may leave a message to reserve your space. Please be aware that you will not receive a return phone call.

~For Your Calendar~

2012 ASNC Annual Conference

March 30-31, 2012, Hilton University Place, Charlotte, NC

For more information, please visit

<http://www.autismsociety-nc.org/>

ASCC 5th Autism Awareness Vera Bradley Bingo

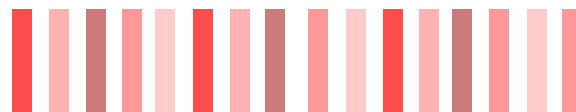
Friday, April 20, 2012

St. Patrick's Church, Village Drive, Fayetteville, NC

ASCC 6th Annual Autism Awareness Golf Tournament

Saturday, June 16, 2012

St. Patrick's Church, Village Drive, Fayetteville, NC



~Camp Sunshine~



Client applications for the ASCC's Camp Sunshine Summer Developmental Day Program are no longer accepted. If you have submitted an application for your child to attend camp this year, please expect information via email or regular mail in the coming weeks, but no later than March 1, 2012, notifying you of acceptance to camp or placement on the waiting list.

Applications for employment at Camp Sunshine will be emailed to all Cumberland County teachers currently working in self-contained autism classrooms. If you are interested in applying for a direct care staff position, please email our office at autismcc@ccpfc.org to receive a copy of the employment application.

Volunteers are also needed to make Camp Sunshine a great success.

~Thank You To Our Donors and Volunteers~

The ASCC greatly depends on the help of volunteers and donors. We are very fortunate to have the support of both. Please accept our sincere appreciation and gratefulness for your continued support.

Hats off to our amazing volunteers who made a tremendous difference in our programs and events during the months of October, November and December 2011. You are truly the Best and we appreciate you so much!

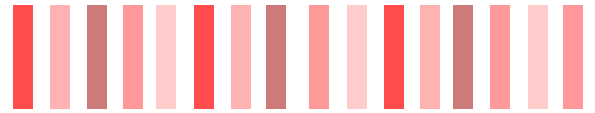
Alexis Nash, Allen Raymos, Angie Smith, Anna Finch, Austin Gillum, Brandon Schlag, Brandy Mello, Cameron Howell, Carol Hills, Catherine Herring, Chris Leacock, Chris Nealy, Christian Rivera, Clarissa Allen, Cloise Washington, Cynthia Billops, Debra Gillum, Erin Gillum, Gail Hughes, Gwendolyn Scott, Helen Frey, Jay Caniel, Jorge Rivera, Juanita Jones, June Mosely, Justin Hughes, Kasey Traum, Kelly Whitte, Kimberly Yard, Lateisha Reid, Lauren Pollard, Lawanda Ray, LeJuan Jones, Lydia Short, Mary Raymos, Misty Surles, Mr. Guzman, Priscilla Parker, Renate Smith-Baker, Robin Harris, Sandra Surles, Ter-rington Mules, Theresa Thomas, Tiffany Scott, Tiffany Whitte, Tiya Caniel, Tony Mello, Warren Aronson, and Zollie Tabb!

We humbly thank our generous donors who supported us financially during the months of October, November, and December 2011. Your donations are making a great difference in our ability to serve families. Thank you!

Cathy Summers, Christine Veno, Dough and Ann Christy, Eric Williams of Coastal Family Services LLC, George and Helen Dais, Grace Roman, Greek Orthodox Ladies of the Saints Constantine and Helen Orthodox Church, Jack Muzquiz, John and Dianne Floyd, Joe's Crab Shack, Lacy Godeck, Robert and Ann Lucero, Saints Constantine and Helen Orthodox Church, and Sandra Surles.

~Did You Know?~

Hanging out with friends after school and on the weekends is a vital part of a teen's social life. But for adolescents with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs), social activity outside of school is a rarity, finds a new study by Paul Shattuck, PhD, autism expert and assistant professor at the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis. "We looked at data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (NLTS2), a group of over 11,000 adolescents enrolled in special education," he says. "Out of this group, teens with an ASD were significantly more likely never to see friends out of school (43.3 percent), never to get called by friends (54.4 percent), and never to be invited to social activities (50.4 percent) when compared with adolescents from all the other groups." To read more, please visit <http://news.wustl.edu/news/Pages/23004.aspx> (NASET, Vol 7, Issue 43, November 2011)



~Autism for a Day~

by Debbie Japzon Gillum, Ph.D.

Recently, I thought about what it might be like to trade places with my son for a day. Austin is 16 years old and has what is often referred to as High Functioning Autism. This means that, while he still has autism, he is intelligent, can function in a regular classroom (with some help), and can take care of himself for the most part. As a parent, however, it doesn't matter how high functioning your child with autism is -- there is still a great deal of heartache and concern involved. And the initial diagnosis is still traumatic.

My first thought was that it would be a great learning experience to trade places with my son for a day. I would understand him better and see the world through his eyes. I would be able to see and feel what autism really is, thinking his thoughts, and experiencing his feelings. Since I already have the insight of what it is like to *not* have autism, trading places with Austin would help me see what's different.

From a purely mechanical standpoint, I thought it would be amazing to hold huge numbers of facts in my brain, something that is not normally my strength, and be able to regurgitate them whenever necessary. I might be able to remember and ponder the 435 animals that he has in his imaginary zoo. I would be able to remember what groceries I need, an impossible task for me without a list. Like Austin, I would be able to recall with relative ease things like all the court cases and amendments to the constitution, or remember word-for-word summaries from the back of books.

Living with autism for a day might help me understand Austin's thought process in social situations. Perhaps it would help me understand why Austin's greetings to other people seem so timid and strained? I would be able to understand better what it's like to be in a room full of people and not really be interested in what is going on around me. I thought that it would help me be a better mom and help me help others to see the great young man that I know and love.

Having autism myself might help me make environmental adjustments that would relieve the discomfort of noises that Austin perceives as loud enough to cover his ears. Maybe I could help decrease sibling rivalry if I could understand why he absolutely cannot ignore his younger sister's taunts and joking. Even though I know that my son feels loved, experiencing autism might allow me to see more clearly the way in which Austin loves others and perceives other people's expressions of love toward him.

But, after more consideration, thinking about trading places with my son for a day made me feel sad. I thought, what if I find out that the world is a very critical and chaotic place when you have autism? What if just a regular day is full of distracting and annoying noises that I couldn't screen out? What if looking someone in the eyes and smiling at them became a difficult task? What if I found myself correcting people because their inaccuracies made me just plain crazy? What if I discovered that the only place that I felt safe and secure was being in my bedroom by myself?

What if I found out that I wouldn't understand half of what people say since people rarely say what they mean and rarely mean what they say? What if I learned that solitary isolation was the consolation prize when communication with other people was too difficult and fraught with too many land mines? What if I found out that I was a square peg trying to fit into a round hole, or that people were really not very compassionate?

Change is difficult for people with autism. Recently, I have been talking with Austin more about the future and how to make your way in the world. It made me sad to think that maybe my foray into these new topics caused him great angst. It is overwhelming for a normal teenager to think about leaving home or going to college. What would it be like to entertain these thoughts, knowing that the world does not accommodate me very well? It makes me sad to think that if I had autism the world would always be trying to turn my "squareness" into "roundness". I would always be "wrong," wouldn't I? I would always be different, wouldn't I?

I would not want to re-live my own high school days, much less those of an autistic 16-year-old young man. Maybe trading places with my son would help; maybe it wouldn't. Some people who have autism say that they like the way they are and wouldn't want to be "normal." Nevertheless, if it would be helpful, I would trade places with my son for a day in a heartbeat. In fact, like most parents, I would trade my life if I could.

Debbie Gillum is a passionate advocate for her son and others with autism. She is a clinical psychologist who specializes in autism spectrum disorders. She has been on the ASCC Board of Directors since 2003.



~Welcome & Announcement~

The members of the 2012 ASCC Board of Directors have been elected. Thank you for serving!

President:	Anna Finch	General members:	Dr. Debbie Gillum
Vice President:	Warren Aronson		Cynthia Billops
Secretary:	Brandy Mello		Dr. Suzanne Fletcher
Treasurer:	Gwendolyn Scott		Chris Leacock

Please welcome our new member of the Board of Directors: Dr. Suzanna Fletcher. Thank you for your willingness to support our cause.

A warm welcome, also, to Alvita Blue, our new ASCC Program and Outreach Assistant. We are happy, Alvita has chosen to be a part of our organization!

~TEACCH Professional Consultation Group~

The Fayetteville TEACCH Center is piloting a professional consultation group for providers who serve individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The group will be facilitated by TEACCH staff and is geared towards psychologists (to include school psychologists), therapists, LCSW's, LPC's and LPA's etc. who provide counseling/psychotherapy for ASD individuals. Challenging cases can be discussed as well as diagnostic tools, criteria, and differential diagnosis. The first group is Wednesday, February 15, 2012 from 12:00-1:00 p.m. and will be held at the local TEACCH Center downtown (200 Mason Street, 2nd Floor). Participants are welcome to bring their own lunch if they wish. There is no fee. Space is limited and those interested will need to call to reserve a slot. The group is contingent upon a minimum amount of participants and is an open group. Contact Laura Savage for more information or to reserve a slot, 910-437-2517 ext. 206 or laura_savage@med.unc.edu.

~Rhythm and Rhyme Sensory Story Time~



The Cumberland County Public Library's Hope Mills Branch will offer a Rhythm and Rhyme Sensory Story Time for exceptional children and their families on Saturday, February 18, 10:30 am – 11:00 am. For more information about this event, please call Vicki Sheeler at 425-8455, ext. 225.

~Membership Drive~

Join the Autism Society of Cumberland County and help us sustain our programs. Your \$10 annual membership fee will ensure your voting privileges in matters discussed during Parent Education nights, priority selection for scholarships, as well as the continuity of all programs offered by the ASCC. You will also receive a free 8"x 4" "Autism Awareness" car magnet as displayed in the picture box. Please mail your \$10 membership fee to the ASCC, 351 Wagoner Drive, Suite 410, Fayetteville, NC 28303 today. **New: Your membership will be valid for one year from the day the payment is received.** Thank you! Questions? Please call (910) 826-3004.



ASCC Support Groups:

Support Groups provide an opportunity to share, learn, and connect. Parents, caregivers, guardians, and professionals are welcome to participate in all of our support groups.

The HFA/Aspergers Support Group will meet on Monday, February 13, 5:45pm, at the Dorothy Spainhour Center. Focus: Families of children, adolescents, and adults diagnosed with HFA or Aspergers.

The Autism Breakfast Club (ABC) Support Group will meet Wednesday, Feb 15 at 9:30 am at the PFC Resource Center, Room 414. Focus: Families of children with ASD up to age 12. Childcare will be provided.

The Autism Lunch Club (ALC) Support Group will meet Tuesday, Feb 14 at 11:30 am Cheddar's on McPherson Church Rd. Focus: Families of adolescents and adults with ASD.

The Preschool Support Group will meet on Thursday, Feb 23 at 9:30 am at the PFC Resource Center, Room 414. Focus: Families of young children with ASD ages 1-5 years. Childcare will be provided.

The Stedman Support Group will meet on Monday, Feb 6 and Feb 20 at 6:00 pm at the Stedman Recreation Center. Focus: Families of children, adolescents, and adults with ASD. For more information, please call JoAnn Bass (910) 705-5360 or Stevan Whitehurst at (910)229-0265.



Find us on
Facebook

... and then





351 Wagoner Drive, Suite 410
Fayetteville, NC 28303

Tel: 910-826-3004/3005
Fax: 910-868-5881
E-mail: autismcc@ccpfc.org
Web: www.autismcc.org

Join us on Facebook 

Winner of the Autism Society of North Carolina affiliate of the Year Award—1996, 2002, & 2003

Return Service Requested

“Supporting Individuals Within The Autism Spectrum”

The Autism Society of Cumberland County is an affiliate of the Autism Society of North Carolina.

Mission Statement:

The Autism Society of Cumberland County is committed to providing support and promoting opportunities which enhance the lives of individuals within the autism spectrum and their families.

Vision Statement:

The Autism Society of Cumberland County strives to create a community where people within the autism spectrum and their families receive respect, services, and supports based on individual differences, needs, and preferences.

Disclaimer:

The Autism Society of Cumberland County does not take any position regarding studies of ASD, nor endorse any particular form of treatment, intervention, or therapy. This newsletter allows us to pass along current information in the field of ASD to our families and organization members.

Funded In Part By:



~Donations~

Please remember the ASCC with your *tax-deductible* charitable contribution.

Make checks payable to:

Autism Society of Cumberland County
351 Wagoner Drive, Suite 410
Fayetteville, NC 28303

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount of Contribution: _____

~Membership~

Autism Society of Cumberland County

351 Wagoner Drive, Suite 410
Fayetteville, NC 28303

Name: _____

Parent/Caregiver Professional

Sibling Individual with ASD

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Membership Categories:

Local ASCC Membership only: \$10.00
(Make your check payable to: *Autism Society of Cumberland County*)

OR

Combined State & Local Membership: \$45.00
(Make your check payable to: *Autism Society of NC*)

Yes, I would like \$10 to be returned to the ASCC for local membership fees.