



Connecting the Pieces

Serving families along the gulf coast

Autism Pensacola starts new year with new name

We are excited to announce our new name, **Autism Pensacola, Inc.** The name change took place because we have officially broken away from the Autism Society of America, the national organization under which we originally formed. This change will assure that local funds remain under local control and we continue to fulfill our mission of improving the lives of those living with autism in our area.

Quint Studer, API Executive Committee President, explains, "The national ASA group wanted more control and decision-making. So we elected to go in a new direction with a new name which means the nationally acclaimed Kids for Camp will survive." The six-week summer camp provides educational experiences for children with autism, while they have fun

learning. Camp includes a week-long training session for the many teachers who work with the children during camp. Many of these teachers take what they've learned back to the public schools where they use their training and share their knowledge with other teachers and aides.

Parents are very happy about this transition. They want the money raised in our area stay in this area, especially to support camp. Autism Pensacola has seen many changes since its inception in 2002 and it has many functions other than the camp. Please see Page 7 for some of the activities which API enjoys.



Jessica Lapen

Jessica Lapen, Chairman of API's Council, says "Autism Pensacola has been a life line to our family. It has put us in contact with people with whom we can share our thoughts about Micah (their 8 year old son with autism) or just to say, 'This is what is happening.' It's nice to have some place to go where everyone knows your story and is going through the same thing."

Logan Fink, API Executive Committee member, has received numerous positive comments from the community since the announcement was made. Fink comments, "It is gratifying to know that so many people care about Autism Pensacola, even when they have no connection to it. That says a lot about the reputation of the organization."

Some of the above story is courtesy of Carmen Paige, Journalist for the Pensacola News Journal.

7th Annual Fundraising Gala chaired by Teri Levin and Nina Campbell

Autism Pensacola's Annual Autism Dinner will be held this year at the Sanders Beach-Corinne Jones Community Center on Friday evening, April 16th, with the social hour beginning at 5:30 pm.

We have the honor of having Community Activist Volunteers, Teri Levin and Nina Campbell as this year's chairs. Teri and Nina, along with a wonderful committee of volunteers and Fundraising Chair, Kevin Doyle,

**New date: Friday, April 16th
Sanders Beach-Corinne Jones
Community Center**

have lots of surprises and a great evening planned. The music during the Social Hour will, as usual, be performed by Will Fink. At the dinner, back by popular demand, King Richard will again sing. There will be numerous auction items that will be interesting to all who attend. Live auction items again will be auctioned off by the incomparable Collier Merrill. The dinner itself, will be prepared by the "Great Chefs of Pensacola, including Nancy's Haute Affair (Skopolo's), Jackson's, Classic City Catering, and R and R Catering. It should be spectacular.

Rebecca Buckley, who has worked with children with autism, has volunteered at camp,

and who is in the IB program at Pensacola High School, along with Wendy Levin are preparing a puzzle - "Connecting the Piece of the Puzzle." - that will be showcased as part of the auction.

Robert and Abby Rinke, along with Teri Levin, will host a Sponsor's Party on April 13th at their Beach Club Resort penthouses. Specialty wines and Appetizers will be served as we thank our sponsors.

The Tables of 10 will sell as follows: Platinum - \$10,000, Gold - \$5,000, and Silver - \$2500. Individual tickets, if available, will be sold for \$125 each. The address of Sanders Beach is 913 S. I St.

If you are interested in sponsoring a table and helping Autism Pensacola reach their goal to pay for this summer's six-week summer camp for children with autism, go on our website www.autismpensacola.org for instructions.

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From the director's desk



Welcome to Autism Pensacola



We are so excited as we renew our commitment to serving families living with autism along the Gulf Coast.

This newsletter is packed with information about all the great things coming up -- our 7th annual gala, April Nicole's 5th annual Ride for Autism and more.

We will be spotlighting a few members of API's Board of Directors in the newsletter so that you may appreciate our community leaders who help us make a difference.

There are so many volunteers who make the work we do possible. I am grateful for all of them. This is a great time to get involved and help make a difference for all those living with autism. Please contact me if you can help!

Susan Byram

Honorarium & Memorials

Logan and Sharon Fink in Memory of Daniel Aman, son of Rebecca and William Aman
Daniel was born and died on November 2, 2009
God bless the Aman Family, including Kelly, Hannah, William, and Matthew and keep them in your prayers.

Note: Rebecca has been Autism Pensacola's bookkeeper for many years, even after she moved to Ohio. She has been a loyal volunteer for API.

Elsie Morey and Charles and Karen Wilcox
in memory of :
Daniel Aman, Guy Morey, Ray Puranen
(all part of Aman family)

M Juliann Huyck, James Huyck and Elizabeth Lowe
in memory of Gen. Joseph B. May
(late husband of Gwen Applequist May)

API Board Bios

Autism Pensacola is fortunate to have a diverse and distinguished board of directors. We would like to familiarize our membership with those who help "make it happen" in the API organization.

Let us introduce board member **ADM Gerald L. Hoewing**, a native of Keokuk, Iowa, who was commissioned an ensign from Iowa State University with a Bachelor of Science degree. He flew the A-7E Corsair II light attack aircraft on multiple deployments to the Western Pacific on USS Constellation (CV-64) and USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63), followed by multiple Mediterranean and Indian Ocean deployments on USS Independence (CV-62) and USS Forrestal (CV-59).

Vice Admiral **Hoewing** was the Operational Test Director for the F/A-18 Hornet aircraft during its initial operation evaluation and later commanded VFA-81 embarked in USS Saratoga (CV-60) during Operation Desert Shield. Additional sea duty commands included USS Seattle (AOE-3), USS John F. Kennedy (CV-67) and Commander Carrier Group SEVEN/USS John C. Stennis (CVN-74) Battle Group.

His shore assignments include multiple tours of duty in the personnel domain ranging from Bureau of Naval Personnel to the Office of Secretary of Defense. Vice Admiral Hoewing's final active duty assignment was as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower and Personnel, Training and Education) Chief of Naval Personnel.

Admiral **Hoewing**'s current position is President and Chief Executive Officer, Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, the private fund raising arm of the National Museum of Naval Aviation and the proposed National Flight Academy.

API Board member **Joe Webb** is an owner and the Vice President of Sales and Marketing of Formsystems, Inc., a print and marketing distributorship he founded with his wife Karen Webb in 1995. He is also the Treasurer of the Executive Committee for the board of directors of PSDA a national print association Print Services Distribution

Association, Alexandria, VA. **Webb** is a member of Cokesbury United Methodist Church and serves as its Lay Leader. "My involvement with Autism Pensacola began as a business relationship and was transformed when I experienced the love and passion of many new friends whose lives are impacted daily with the challenges presented by Autism. I then found myself seeking ways to help make a difference in their future one piece at a time," **Webb** said.

Quint Studer, President of Autism Pensacola's Executive Committee, is the CEO & Founder of **Studer** Group, a nationally known healthcare coaching company formed in January of 2000. **Studer** Group is considered by many to be the main impetus for developing tools and techniques for organizations attaining great results.

After ten (10) years teaching special education, **Studer** entered healthcare as the Community Relations Representative with Parkside Medical Services. He then went to Mercy Health System in Janesville, Wisconsin, working his way up to Senior Vice President of Business Development. For the next 6 years, **Studer** was instrumental in taking Mercy Health System from a single location to a large vertically integrated system and was placed in charge of focusing on employee satisfaction.

In 1993, **Studer** served as COO of Holy Cross Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. His focus on patient care helped Holy Cross gain a national reputation in operational excellence by being named *Hospital Magazines 'Great Comeback Winner'* in 1994.

Studer went on to be named President of Baptist Hospital, Inc. in 1996 and using his past experiences, led this organization to unprecedented success. In 1999, Inc. (pronounced Ink) magazine named **Studer** its *March Master of Business*, making him the only healthcare leader to have ever won this award.

Board bios, continued on page 3

Mendiola wins 1st place in Arts Festival

Our very own Michael Mendiola was awarded 1st place in sculpture at the Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival in November 2009, for a book sculpture he created for his art class at Milton High School. He also received awards of merit from both PJC and UWF.



Michael's artistic talents are well-known among those who know him, and were displayed at last year's Art Show and Sale benefiting the Sacred Heart Autism Center.

We are very proud of his latest accomplishment and look forward to more of his artwork in the future!

Kids for Camp 2010 in full swing

Planning for this year's Kids for Camp program is in full swing and promises to provide a high-quality summer educational program for your children with autism.

Applications will be available February 16 and must be completed and mailed no later than March 9 to be considered for acceptance into camp this year.



As an all-volunteer organization, Autism Pensacola is always in need of volunteers to help with Kids for Camp, as well as our other programs. Much work is required to organize and create a high-quality summer program for our children.

If you would like to help make this year's camp a reality, please contact Susan Byram at autismpensacola@bellsouth.net.

Together we can make a difference in the lives of our children

API Board Bios *Continued from page 2*

Quint Studer, continued from page 2

Studer is a nationally recognized speaker and a published author. His first book, *Hardwiring Excellence* was a Business Week best-seller and currently has over 380,000 copies in use nationwide. *Results That Last* is a general leadership book and was published in the fall of 2007. His new book, *Straight A Leadership*, teaches corporations in every industry how to develop standardized leadership practices that ensure success will last longer than individual leaders.

Most importantly, **Studer** stays in the field creating tools and techniques to make organizations better. He is called 'healthcare's fire starter' for igniting the flame in each of us to make a difference.

API's introduction to **Studer** was in the Spring of 2006 at API's 3rd Annual Autism Dinner where he spoke on "Making a Difference" in the autism community. He lit a fire under many of us that night and big things have happened. When asked why he enjoyed serving on Autism Pensacola's Board, he said, "seeing the positive impact on the children and the parents with the education, awareness and services API provides."

Dr. Kevin Welch is cosmetic dermatologist with Medical Center Clinic. He is the immediate past Medical Center's Chairman of the Board Medical Center Clinic. He currently serves as Chairman of the Department of Dermatology. **Welch** and his wife, Capri, have a son, William, and daughter, Vanessa. **Welch** said he is grateful for the chance to serve families who truly need help through API.

Bentina Chisolm Terry currently serves as Vice President of External Affairs and Corporate Services at Gulf Power Company.

Gulf Power is a Southern Company subsidiary headquartered in Pensacola, Florida. In this role, **Terry** is responsible for the company's external efforts including regulatory affairs, governmental relations, environmental affairs, economic development and corporate communications. She is also responsible for the company's ethics

and compliance efforts as well as the security, safety and health, labor relations, facilities and real estate organizations. Most recently she also assumed responsibility for Gulf Power's nuclear development efforts.

Terry is very active outside of Gulf Power and serves on Board of Directors or Trustees for the following: the Florida Chamber of Commerce Foundation Board, Leadership Florida, SunTrust Bank (NW Florida Board), UWF, the Florida Energy Systems Consortium, the Florida Electric Power Coordinating Group (Executive Committee), Florida's Great Northwest, the Community Maritime Park Association for the City of Pensacola, the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra and Autism Pensacola.

Terry began her career with Southern Company in 2001 at Georgia Power Company and progressed through leadership roles in compliance, ethics and power delivery including customer service, external affairs and customer operations. In her most recent position prior to her current one she served as Vice President - External Affairs and General Counsel, Compliance Officer and Corporate Secretary for Southern Nuclear Operating Company, the Southern Company subsidiary that operates Southern's nuclear fleet.

Prior to joining Southern Company, **Terry** served as Associate General Counsel for Progress Energy in Raleigh, NC. She began her career practicing law as an associate with Troutman Sanders law firm in Atlanta, Georgia. A native of Fayetteville, N.C., **Terry** holds a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Michigan Law School and a Bachelor of Arts in English (cum laude) from North Carolina State University. She is a member of the North Carolina State Bar and the Georgia State Bar, Leadership Atlanta, Leadership North Carolina and Leadership Florida, the American Association of Blacks in Energy and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

In 2008, she was selected as one of the "Twelve Young Professionals Under 40" and was selected as a member of the "2009 IN Power List" which recognizes the top 50 most powerful and influential people in greater Pensacola. She is married to Antonio **Terry**.



GAP PARTY

A big thank you to Jenny Doyle and Joan Harbuck (GAP Leaders) and all their members for a memorable Christmas Party. Special thanks to API's faithful Santa Ryan Sullivan and Elf Tina Ivey.





All Bikers
Welcome!

**April Nicole's
Fifth Annual Ride for Autism**
Saturday April 10, 2010 • Sign-up 9am

Gulf Breeze High School

Ride ends: Cocodrie's Restaurant on Navarre Beach

Everyone Welcome to celebrate with us at NOON!!

Pins for
First 400 riders



\$15 per bike
\$5 per rider

ESCORTED RIDE
DEPARTS AT 11:00AM

- ★ **FOOD** ★ **BEVERAGES** ★
- ★ **VENDORS** ★ **LIVE MUSIC** ★
- ★ **50/50 RAFFLE** ★

**Questions
about Autism?**
Call Susan Byram,
API Director
(850) 450-0656 or email
autismpensacola@bellsouth.net

For ride info contact
Steve "Killer" Grant 850-324-0295
Terrill "MIAMI" Iutzi 251-359-0399
Duane Sterzing e-mail: sterzingd@aol.com
www.aprilsautismride.org

RIDE PROCEEDS BENEFIT AUTISM PENSACOLA
Donations to ASP are tax deductible! Thank you!

Upcoming events

Feb. 9 – Pace Chat at 9:30 a.m. at the Village Inn on Hwy 90 in Pace.

Feb. 16 – Autism Pensacola Potluck and Informational Meeting at 6:30 p.m. at ARC Gateway in Pensacola. Representatives will be available to present information about recreational programs available for children with autism in our area. Kids for Camp applications will be available.

THE AMP kicks off session

THE AMP (Autism Music Project) will begin sessions with Darren Johansen and friends promising musical fun!

February 20 from 12-2 in API offices, 3916 N. 10th Ave., Pensacola, Pre-school through elementary children are invited to attend with their parents for music fun. Space is limited so please RSVP to save your spot by emailing reservations@autismpensacola.org with Feb 20 music as the subject line.

March 6 from 12-2 in API offices, 3916 N. 10th Ave Pensacola, Middle schoolers and older are invited to attend with parents and friends for music fun. Again, please RSVP by emailing reservations@autismpensacola.org with March 6 music as the subject line.

Feb. 19 – GAP (Grandparents of Autism Pensacola) meeting at API office at ARC Gateway in Pensacola.

Feb. 23 – Pensacola Chat at 9:30 a.m. at the Village Inn on 9th Ave by Cordova Mall.

Feb. 25 – Autism Pensacola Council Meeting 10:00 a.m. in Susan's office at ARC Gateway in Pensacola.

March 15 – Pace Chat at 9:30 a.m. at the Village Inn on Hwy 90 in Pace. (This chat has been moved from its normal day due to the Autism Pensacola Family Cruise)

March 23 – Pensacola Chat at 9:30 a.m. at the Village Inn on 9th Ave by Cordova Mall.

March 25 – Autism Pensacola Council Meeting 10:00 a.m. in Susan's office at ARC Gateway in Pensacola.

March 29 – April 2 – Spring Break for both Escambia and Santa Rosa County Schools.

April 16 -- Connecting the Pieces 7th Annual Dinner and Auction at Sanders Beach-Corinne Jones Community Center, 913 S. I St.

Jingle Bell 5K benefits autism



Tammy Mendiola, Jessica Lapen, Rebecca, Matthew, and Duane Sterzing, members of API, enjoy the event

In-Line Fitness in Pace has become a new friend to the autism community in our local area. On December 5th, they hosted their first ever Jingle Bell 5K run/walk for autism. Funds raised were donated to Capstone Academy, a preschool program for children with developmental disabilities. In addition to their Pensacola location, Capstone Academy has recently opened a second location in Milton, so they are now serving children in both Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

Spirits were high as several Autism Pensacola members braved the frigid temperatures to participate in the Jingle Bell 5K. Our very own Laura Scott won the female overall runner category, and Matthew Sterzing, the 8 year-old son of Duane and Rebecca Sterzing, walked the course with his parents and was the only child with autism that completed the walk. Despite the cold, everyone had a great time participating in this event for such a worthwhile cause.

Birth Announcement

Congratulations to Kevin and Jenny Doyle on their 6th grandchild. Baby Mattie is all dressed up to cheer on his Dad's employer, Stanford University.

He was born on Dec. 30, 2009, 7 lbs. 14 oz. -- a full 2 lbs. heavier than his father at birth. His name is Matthew Thomas Doyle Jr. His parents Matt and Hillary Doyle, along with 23-month old sister, Catherine, live in Palo Alto, CA.



Check out our website:
www.autismpensacola.org
and click on
An Unforgettable Christmas
by Ann Richard.



**It is very
 inspirational!**

Autism Society of Panhandle

ASP Council

ASP Council is our hard working group of volunteers who deal with the details of day-to-day operations of our organization. See our Calendar on page 7 for details.

Everyone is welcome and needed!!

Together, we make a BIG difference in the lives of families living with Autism. Many committees (from supporting Susan to mentoring parents to helping with various groups to submitting a grant) exist where you may serve and help us continue our successful programs.

Susan Byram, ASP Executive Director

**Jessica Lapen, Chairman of Council
Acting Recording Secretary**

**Sharon Fink, Corresponding Secretary,
Newsletter Editor**

Council Members

Nicole Brown, Chat Groups

Jenny Doyle, Grants & Dinner

Anita McGirt, Chats

Tina Ivey, Support

Joan Harbuck, GAP

Marilyn Irby, Membership

Tammy Mendiola, Camp & Newsletter

Jacqui O'Connell, Webmaster

Natasha Parvey, Programs

Sharon Stebbins, GAP

Rebecca Sterzing, Camp

Regina Williams, Support

Bonnie Wooton, Newsletter/Print Design

**There's a place for you to serve!
Many serve on more than one committee,
e-mail Susan Byram or Sharon Fink
for information on council needs.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Quint Studer, President • Kevin Doyle, Vice President
Judy Burns, Secretary • Mort O'Sullivan, Treasurer

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Sandra Cesaretti-Ray Fred Donovan Logan Fink Bonnie Kanne Sferes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Donatelli	Shirley Cronley	Gerald Hoewing
Ted Kirchharr	Peg Nickelsen	Cate Ware Merrill
Mark Proctor	Debbie Ritchie	Jim Shirley
Rebecca Sterzing	Joe Story	Sue Straughn
Dr. Dave Suhrbier	Bentina Terry	Joe Webb
	Dr. Kevin Welch	

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Welcome New Members

Keith & Seletta Teston
Carolina Omlor
Joy McAfee

Thank you to our Renewals

Melissa & Nick Todd
Logan and Sharon Fink

ASP Contact Information

Mail donation, dues, membership forms
or other correspondence to:

Autism Pensacola

PO Box 30213, Pensacola, FL 32503-1213

Phone 850-450-0656

Check our updated website:

www.autismpensacola.org

Email: info@autismpensacola.net

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