



Connecting the Pieces



Serving Escambia and Santa Rosa Florida

Thanks to Dr. Renfroe ASP celebrates 5th anniversary



J. Ben Renfroe, M.D.

The Autism Society of the Panhandle marks 5 years as an ASA Chapter! Since 2002, ASP has been serving the Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties of Northwest Florida, as a nonprofit, tax-exempt association of parents, professionals and other concerned community members dedicated to the education and welfare of children and adults with autism and related disorders of communication and behavior.

We would like to salute our

founding friend, Dr. Ben Renfroe for his faith in ASP from the beginning. In the Spring of 2002, when Jacqui O'Connell asked, Dr. Renfroe responded by generously covering the cost of our charter fee to become an ASA Chapter.

J. Ben Renfroe, M.D. is a native of Pensacola. He graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and had his medical training at the University of South Alabama, the University of Minnesota, and Baylor College of Medicine. He has been practicing in Pensacola since 1993 with Child Neurology Center of Northwest Florida. His wife, Robin Renfroe, M.D. is a local pediatrician practicing in Gulf Breeze. Dr. Renfroe has two children. In his spare time, he enjoys riding horses and spending time with his family.

Dr. Renfroe has been a faithful supporter over the past five years, and we are so very grateful. You made a difference, Dr. Renfroe, when you believed in us -- and we thank you!

Fundraising dinner sells out; unique auction items acquired

Committee volunteers are celebrating the early sell-out of the 4th annual fundraising dinner to be held March 30th at the Hilton Garden Inn. Dinner guests will bid on auction items which the committee has compiled -- a wonderful and exciting selection donated by individuals and area businesses.

"A very special THANK YOU to those of you who have taken time out of your busy lives to gather or make items for our silent auction," said Jenny Doyle.

"We have had many wonderful donations of baskets and handmade items that will make our auction both unique, and I'm sure, very profitable," she added.

"My husband Kevin and I are very excited about this event and tremendously grateful to this community for their generosity toward this worthwhile cause," Ms. Doyle said. "We hope to meet many of you at the dinner on March 30th."

Any questions regarding the auction, please contact Jenny Doyle, at 607-6951 or Jdoyle53@aol.com.



Santa visits GASP party

The first ever GASP (Grandparents of Autism Society of the Panhandle) Christmas Kids' Party was a wonderful success with over 40 children treated to food, fun and best of all, Santa himself!

A huge THANK YOU goes to GASP for organizing this event and to Gayfer's Retirees for their financial support. We are so grateful! How blessed we are to have a supportive group of "Grands" assisting us in so many ways!

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From the director's desk

Celebrating 5 years of ASP

I can hardly believe how far we have come! From the initial meeting which included many of our first board -- Jacqui O'Connell, Marilyn Irby and myself -- to our amazing community board elected last Fall. What an incredible journey of vision and hard work.

There are so many who were a part of making it happen -- from Ann Smith, who encouraged the CARD support group to become an ASA chapter, to Dr. Renfro paying our charter fee to Logan Fink sharing the story of autism all over the country and launching us into major fundraising efforts mostly organized by our (and his) dear Sharon!

Many accomplish much

Then there is our visionary Judy Burns whose determination to make a real difference birthed the "Kids for Camp" program and gave us a tangible "product" which makes a difference. Julian Irby and Ben Gordon caught the vision hosting our Golf Tournament and funded our Teen Camps at Sacred Heart Miracle Camp. Other community support has been there all along the way from the Gulf Breeze Rotary Club, Gulf Breeze Presbyterian Church and our supporters at CARD, FIN & FLDRS and FormSystems, as well as many of the businesses represented by our current board. Just last summer, I met for the first time, Kevin and Jenny Doyle,

who were determined to improve things for those with autism in their new community, and look where we are now!

Our president, Quint Studer likes the phrase, "Make a Difference." ASP has been doing just that for 5 years now. And as a result our future looks brighter all the time!

Kids camp expansion

"Kids for Camp" is working on a major expansion just in time for the 12-week summer ahead, and we are organizing 4 major events in celebration of Autism Awareness Month. There is room for everyone to join in this exciting journey to help make a difference. You will find what is gained far outweighs what you give -- friendship, support and, most importantly, a real difference in the lives of those you love who live with autism.

Special Thanks

At press time, Ryan's Tennis Tournament is upon us! Over 60 players are signed up and we are sure it will be a great success! Much thanks goes to Keri Langlais for all her amazing work to make this happen and to Jim Scoggins and his team for their generous sponsorship. More details in our next newsletter.

Newsletter update

Bonnie Wooton of FormSystems, has agreed to assist Sharon Fink produce our newsletter! We are so grateful for this amazing gift of time and talent. Owner Joe Webb previously committed to print the newsletter, and now we thank you for the additional help. You are making a huge difference!

While autism is a devastating condition to face, with so much awareness and hope from so many incredible people working together, I feel it is totally appropriate to say, "Happy Autism Awareness Month!"

Susan Byram



Second Annual

WALK 4 AUTISM AWARENESS
Saturday, April 28th 2007
10am – 2pm

Betty J. Pullum Family YMCA
2379 Pawnee Drive, Navarre

Funds raised will benefit the Emerald Coast Autism Society and the Autism Society of the Panhandle.
We need sponsors, walkers and volunteers!

For more details, contact David Triana at 515-0203, or Myra Fowler at 939-8741 or visit www.walk4autism07.com

Email newsletter information and photos:
sharonjfink@yahoo.com
Deadline for copy: May 1

Getting to know you



At the wedding of Tina's son, Ryan Sullivan to Candice, parents of Ethan and Connor, pictured on the front cover with Santa.



Tina Foley

Fun facts on Tina Foley

One year ago I relocated to Pensacola from Port St. Lucie. I like pilates, art, music, travel, gourmet food and theater. I raised three children, two are models. Sean (lower right) is an actor who appeared on Dawson's Creek and a soap opera which was aired in Sweden called, "Ocean Ave." My daughter Shannon (upper right) just made a commercial for a clothing store which aired in West Palm Beach. I am a National Sales Professional, and a grandma ("Oma") to Ethan and Connor. Anything else you want to know?



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR: In this new feature, we'll include your stories, poems, favorites, fun facts, or a picture. A member of ASP will be featured in each Newsletter. We want to get to know you more personally. Send your items to: sharonjink@yahoo.com

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Kevin and Jenny Doyle
 *Lan and David Duke
 Greg and Tiffany Geri
 *Stephanie and Bill Hunter
 Jacqueline Johnson
 Keri and Richard Langlinais
 Angela and Cliff Lewis
 David and Ann Richard
 Ron and Laura Scott
 Carmela and Ernest Slaybaugh
 David and Sofia Triana
 Jamie & Michele Vorrasi
 Shad and Melissa Watts
 Chris and Leslie Wells
 Gerald and Anne Woolard
 *Michelle Johnson
 Tonda & Mike Daniels
 Ronald & Kendra Maynard-Weeks
 William & Kim West
 Beverly Smith

**apologies - omitted in last newsletter*

Many thanks for work on our website, logo design and our annual banquet to:

bpm

birdwell photography and multimedia

890 S. Palafox Suite 109 • Pensacola, Florida 32502

850-432-2761

SOCIAL GROUP

Looking for an opportunity to get your son or daughter out to meet others on the spectrum? ASP Social Group meets about once a month for various activities. Call Rebecca Aman at 1-850-937-2650 or e-mail waman@panhandle.rr.com to see what is planned this month or to volunteer as organizer.

Watch e-mail for announcements.

Coming in March: Skating!

ASP Girls' night out

The recent ASP Girl Power Sleepover at Kelly Aman's house was attended by 12 girls and 7 moms. Friday night the girls enjoyed pizza, made bead jewelry and watched the movie, "How to Eat Fried Worms."

After breakfast Saturday, they painted each other's nails, did sticker books and received Mary Kay makeovers (Moms and Girls). The girls enjoyed a night of fun and fellowship.



CARD calendar of events

FSU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities CARD SPRING 2007 TRAINING SERIES

CARD will offer the following trainings in collaboration with the Autism Society of the Panhandle (ASP) during March, April and May. These will take place at the ASP monthly meetings (3rd Tuesday evening of the month) at the ARC building on 10th Avenue and Fairfield.

Registration with the CARD office is required, 484-5040 ext 1282 or email tgeri@mailers.fsu.edu
Sitter Service is available if reserved contact Susan at 995-0003.

Visiting Mickey and Other Vacation Destinations -- March 20th at 6:30 pm: Making plans for a fun-filled vacation? Wondering if different theme parks and other destinations will accommodate your child's special needs? Then this presentation is for you, discussing different types of travel, hotel rooms and themed destinations. The training will offer creative ways to make this one of your family's best vacations ever!

Autism Awareness Month Community Service Fair -- April 17th at 6:30 pm: The perfect opportunity to learn what is offered by and sign up for varied community services. CARD and groups like Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Pensacola Police "Take Me Home Program," Metlife Special Needs Planning, FIN, UCP and many more will offer tons of information and materials for all ages. Join us!

The Perfect Target -- May 15th at 6:30 pm: Is your child the perfect target for bullies? This training will address the many challenges that children with ASD have making and keeping friends.

CONVERSATIONS and SHARINGS

A mid-morning training series on various topics related to Autism Spectrum Disorders held in the

CMS Building • 5192 Bayou Blvd. Pensacola • 10:30am-12:30pm

April 19th -- 10 Things Every Child With Autism Wishes You Knew

A conversation and information sharing session based on the popular book by Ellen Notbohm, Ten Things Every Child With Autism Wishes You Knew.

April 26th -- Combining Traditional Medicine with Integrative Medicine

Dr. Kim Rushing will discuss how combining traditional medicine and integrative medicine (nutrition, homeopathy and herbs) is affecting the world of autism. Email your questions (with CARD in the subject line) on this topic to Kim at 341LIVE@cox.net Your questions will be answered following her presentation.

March 27th - Pensacola CARD - Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting - 4:30 p.m.

As new members of the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, we will take part in a congratulatory ribbon cutting ceremony. This event will be held at the Chamber office on 117 W. Garden Street at 4:30pm. We would like to invite all CARD families and constituents to join us for this event.

CARD/DOE REGIONAL TRAININGS

**Major Research Findings in Emergent and Early Literacy Impacts
on Early Childhood Special Education**

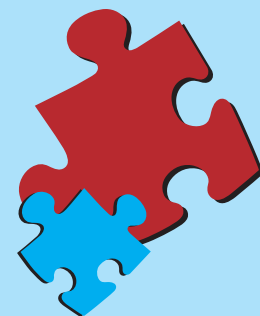
presented by Laura Justice Ph.D.

March 8, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm (Registration begins at 8:30 am)

Panhandle Area Educational Consortium, 753 West Boulevard., Chipley, Florida 32428

This workshop describes key aspects of emergent and early literacy development, including print awareness and phonological awareness, and identifies current evidence-based strategies that facilitate children's earliest achievements in literacy. Strategies described include shared storybook reading, environmental modification, and published curricula, and approaches to designing multi-tiered collaborative classroom-based programs are presented.

For more information contact: Karen Robins 850-488-4072, 800-769-7926 or krobins@mailers.fsu.edu



For more information about Florida State University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities, visit <http://autism.fsu.edu>

ASP Calendar of events

THE ASP PRESENTS SPECIAL WORKSHOPS:

Mr. Vincent Strully, Executive Director
New England Center for Children

“Educational Interventions for Children with ASD”

Friday, March 30, 2007 -- 10am-12noon
JE Hall Center, Room 160

Seating is limited! Call 450-0656 or e-mail
autismpensacola@bellsouth.net to reserve.

Mr. Strully will lead Grand Rounds at Sacred Heart Hospital at 7am, speak to teachers, school administrators and parents at 10 am at the Hall Center and end his day as speaker at our 4th Annual “Connecting the Pieces” Gala. Mark your calendar now to take advantage of this incredible opportunity. Much thanks to Quint and Rishy Studer for bringing Mr. Strully to Pensacola!



Referred to as “The Harvard for kids with autism,” NECC is located 20 miles west of Boston, and maintains a steadfast dedication to: helping individuals reach their potential and live productively; to minimizing dependence and maximizing independence; and to eliminate isolation and increasing social, educational and employment opportunities through integration into all aspects of community life.

The New England Center for Children provides a full range of educational, residential and treatment programs designed to help children with autism and other developmental disabilities reach their full potential. Their overriding goal is to provide state-of-the-art Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) when teaching children with autism, thereby increasing their abilities to function and communicate successfully with as much independence as possible. Each program has been developed to address varying skills and multiple levels of functioning.

Programs range from early intervention to adult programs and include model ABA classrooms in public school systems. NECC has been recognized by the Kresge Foundation, The Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis and the US Dept. of Education.

As Founder and President of The New England Center for Children, Strully directs all aspects of clinical and financial administration, program development, fundraising, facility design, and strategic planning. He has 36 years of experience working with children with autism and related disorders.



LOCAL SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

ASP Pace Chat is held at 9:30 am on the 2nd Monday of the month. Village Inn Hwy 90 in Pace.

March 12th only meet at Benny Russell Park.

ASP Pensacola Chat is held at 9:30 am on the 4th Tuesday each month. 9th Ave. Village Inn at Cordova Mall.

GASP (Grandparents of the Autism Society of the Panhandle) meets at ARC Gateway, Administration Building at 9:30 a.m. It meets on the 3rd Friday of each month. Call Jenny Doyle 607-6951 for details. *March only -- 2nd Friday.*

Biomedical Interventions Group (BIG) An informal discussion and support group for caregivers implementing or interested in the biomedical approach to address the nutritional status, gastrointestinal health, immune competence and related behavioral issues of children with ASD and/or ADD/ADHD, developed by the Autism Research Institute. This group meets primarily on-line at:

<http://aspbiomedicalgroup.blogspot.com>

Log on to share ideas and information.

PLAY DAY FORMING -- MARCH 7TH AT 9:30 A.M.

Lan Duke is offering to start up a playgroup for the little ones. The idea is to meet on some days when kids are in school so the parents can talk, and on other dates when children are out of school so the kids can play. Lan will host the first day at her home -- 6554 Rambler Dr., Pensacola, 32505. For info email vtnl@hotmail.com or call Susan at 850-450-0656.

Ryan's Tennis Tournament proceeds presents: “The DAN Protocol” with Dr. Julie Buckley

Wednesday, May 2nd, 2007 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Rm. 250 next to Hagler Aud., PJC Main Campus

Julie A. Buckley, MD, FAAP, a pediatrician in private practice at Pediatric Partners of Ponte Verde in Jacksonville became interested in autism when her own daughter regressed into autism at age 4.

In an effort to help her daughter, Dr. Buckley became interested in the DAN protocol and is now a DAN practitioner who treats thousands of children on the spectrum as well as neurotypical children. Dr. Buckley will be discussing the DAN protocol and supporting related research on such treatments as the gluten free/casein free diet, gastrointestinal issues, mild hyperbaric oxygen treatment and other approaches for treating autism.

Thanks to the supporters of Ryan's Tennis Tournament, ASP is hosting this very special event. Remaining proceeds will purchase books on the DAN Protocol for the CARD library.

Upcoming events

Legislative Day at the Capital

Hosted By: ARC/Florida
Date: Thursday, March 8th
Time: 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 pm.
Location: Capital Courtyard (Between the Old Capital & the New Capital)

It's time for ARC/Florida's Annual Legislative Day at the Capital. All disability groups have been invited to join together. Lunch will be provided for all ARC/Florida Members attending the event.

SCHEDULE

9 - 10:45 am Meet with Local Legislators
11 - 1:30 pm Legislator of the Year Awards & Lunch
1:45 - 4 pm Meet with Local Legislators

BUS TRIP!! Will leave the Pollak Training Center Parking Lot at 7 a.m. and return at 6 pm or before. Cost \$26 per person. Reservations were due March 3, but please email: cbeedearc@aol.com or call 434-2638 for seat availability.

If you would like to make a donation for someone else to attend, please send in your donation to:

ARC Gateway
 3932 N. Tenth Ave.,
 Pensacola, FL 32503
 Attn: BUS TRIP



Autism Awareness March 27th in Tallahassee

Autism Awareness Day, sponsored by the Autism Society of Florida, will be held Tuesday, March 27 at the Capitol in Tallahassee from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to coincide with the 12th Annual Florida Children's Week. A press conference will be held at 11a.m. on the 4th floor Rotunda.

Bring your kids and plan to visit our representatives! This is a great chance to let our lawmakers know we need CARD (FSU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities) and CARD needs more funding!

Plan to make your voice heard for our children!

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EASTER EGG HUNT AND FARM VISIT

Sponsored by GASP (Grandparents of the Autism Society of the Panhandle)

- WHAT:** Feed and pet farm animals including baby pigs and baby goats, horses, cows, sheep and chickens **PLUS** an exciting Easter egg hunt
- WHEN:** March 10, 2007 AT 10 AM **WHERE:** The Kid's Farm, 3480 Molino Rd., Molino
(Call 450-0656 for directions or if gate is locked.)
- COST:** FREE (\$1 donation per family to cover cost of animal food would be appreciated.)

All children on the autism spectrum AND their siblings are welcome. This is a FREE event but please RSVP to Jenny Doyle at 607-6951 or Jdoyle53@aol.com so we know how many goodies to have on hand. Baskets or bags will be provided.

HAVE PHOTOS TAKEN WITH THE EASTER BUNNY



Upcoming Fundraiser

All Bikers
Welcome!

April Nicole's Second Annual Ride for Autism Saturday April 14, 2007 • Sign-up 9am

Gulf Breeze Football Stadium

Ride ends: American Legion Post 340 • Ashland Avenue

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** ★

★ **50/50 RAFFLE** ★

LIVE MUSIC
BY:
**SADDLE
ROCK**

For ride info contact

Steve "Killer" Grant 850-324-0295

Terrill "MIAMI" Lutzi 251-359-0399

Duane Sterzing e-mail: sterzingd@aol.com

Downloadable donor form at
www.aprilsautismride.org

Autism Society of Pensacola

ASP COUNCIL

ASP Council is our hard working group of volunteers who deal with the nuts and bolts of our day-to-day operations. We meet the 4th Thursday each month at 9:30 in the Administration Building of ARC Gateway.

Everyone is welcome and needed!

A big thanks to our

COUNCIL:

Rebecca Aman, Social Groups
 Nicole Brown, Camp
 Jenny Doyle, GASP and Dinner
 Sharon Fink, Newsletter
 Tiffany Geri, Programs
 Marilyn Irby, Membership
 Jeanie Lundy, Council Secretary

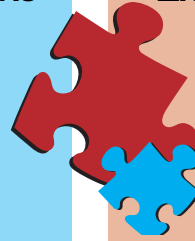
Members at Large:

Sherry Ewy • Joan Harbuck
 Linda Sorrell • Cynthia Williams
 Regina Williams

Together, we make a BIG difference!
 We have several opportunities available for you to make a difference! From organizing to mentoring parents, you can change lives by doing your part!
 Call Susan Byram to see where your talents and time can be used.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Fred Donovan
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 Ben Gordon
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 Mike Hill
 Julian Irby
 Phillip Morris
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 Logan Fink
 Sue Straughn
 Sandra Cesaretti Ray
 Don Salter

ASP has new contact information

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

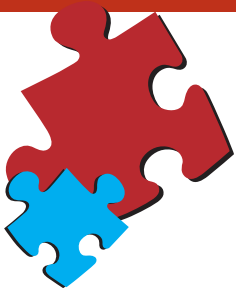
The Autism Society of the Panhandle
 PO Box 30213, Pensacola, FL 32503-1213

Phone 850-450-0656

Check our updated website:

www.autismpensacola.org

Email: autismpensacola@bellsouth.net



Connecting the Pieces

Autism Society of the Panhandle
 P. O. Box 30213
 Pensacola, Florida 32503-1213