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AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Maine



Maine Autism

Connections

Meet Matt Chase; Winner of the Maine State Geography Bee

Summer 2015

by Sophia and Matthew Chase



On March 27, 2015, at the University of Maine Farmington, our son, Matt, won the 27th Annual Maine National Geographic Bee. National Geographic Society, Plum Creek and Google generously support this event nationwide. Matt is a 13 year old 8th grader at Wells Junior High School.

Any parent would be proud of such an accomplishment, however, Matt's win was particularly meaningful to us. At age two, Matt was diagnosed with autism. Matt exhibited classic signs: speech delay, lack of engagement, self-regulation via hand-flapping and jumping, sensitivity to sound, limited diet (hot dogs and chicken nuggets), safety issues, and so on.

Over the years, Matt has made incredible progress, thanks to the patient and knowledgeable professionals with whom we have partnered over the years. Early Intervention at Spurwink Therapeutic Preschool was crucial, and the educational staff at the Wells-Ogunquit School District, coupled with Dr. Courtney Hale, have immensely fostered his growth.

Along the way and despite his challenges, Matt has exhibited amazing strengths. Each child, regardless of autism, has strengths. Matt has impressive focus and memory. He hyper-focused on numerous topics (dinosaurs, the solar system, pokemon, etc.), but maps have remained consistent since age four, when he was given a puzzle of the United States. By sixth grade, his interest in maps expanded beyond labels of land and sea boundaries to a more comprehensive interest in history, languages and cultures - an actual curiosity for the

people who inhabit various parts of our world. Today Matt studies French in school and is learning Spanish on his own. Matt also loves music. At age six, he started piano lessons (he has perfect pitch). He plays trombone in the school band and is learning to play the saxophone.

Shortly after Matt's state geography bee win, Matt won first place for 8th Grade in our School District's Annual Literary Achievement Award, with a poem entitled, "Winter is Not Always Strenuous." Matt provides a positive perspective to life, which we cherish. In early May, we learned that Matt had won second place for his 10-13 age category in the Bagaduce Music Lending Library's Young Composers' Competition in Maine, with the first piece he ever composed, "Jazz Hands." He is wrapping up his junior high school career on an incredibly high note!

Earning the honor to represent Maine at the National Geographic Bee in Washington, D.C. is beyond anything we would have imagined for Matt.



Story continues on page 10; above, Matt Chase, Maine State Geography Bee champion

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Visit us online at:
<http://www.asmonline.org>

Stay up-to-date for Legislation issues, fund-raising events, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming happenings.



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Autism-Society-Of-Maine/107781499258293>



President's Message

Over the past few months, the Autism Society of Maine (ASM) has been active on many fronts---the Support Intensity Scale (SIS) process in adult developmental services, multiple legislative bills and work sessions, the Walk For Autism and honoring April Autism month, to name just a few. We have also been working with our national organization, the Autism Society of America (ASA) to understand their strategic process and plan. The Autism Society of Maine is an affiliate of the Autism Society of America, so we are involved in giving feedback to ASA on important issues, working collaboratively with them and represent our membership at national meetings. This issue will be devoted to the strategic plan work,--sharing the process, current status and identifying next steps.



ASA embarked on the process of creating their 5 year strategic plan in the summer of 2014, with the first step outlining the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles---the "why are we here?" question. ASA's mission is to "improve the lives of all affected by autism." ASA "envision[s] individuals and families living with autism are able to maximize their quality of life, are treated with the highest level of dignity, and live in a society in which their talents and skills are appreciated and valued."

Involving over 75 people from across the United States, ASA brought together individuals, families, providers, advocates, and other stakeholders to work on the plan. The second phase of the plan focused on "what are we about/what will we do?". The third phase, which is currently wrapping up, is about the "who/where will we do it?" and the fourth and final phase is the "how/when will we do it?" At each step, affiliates ---like the Autism Society of Maine---were invited to give feedback and ask questions. Although ASA establishes national priorities, individual state affiliates, like the Autism Society of Maine, then takes these and decides how to implement them in our own state, taking into account our unique state's needs.

Goal areas for the strategic plan will include:

1. Advancing an individual's and their family's quality of life at each state of life with targeted services and programs;
2. Advocating at local, state and national levels to improve services and strengthen protection, enabling individuals living with autism to improve their quality of life;
3. High quality, comprehensive training and educational opportunities on critical autism-related topics are available for professionals, employers, families and individuals;
4. Providing outreach, information and referral connecting those in need with the best local, state and national resources regardless of program affiliation or source.

Cathy Dionne, ASM's Director of Programs, and I will attend our national conference in July, 2015. During that conference we will attend a session on national's final strategic plan, bringing it back to Maine so our Board and membership can create our own strategic plan which will guide our work for the next several years!

In closing, I will remind folks to stay up to date on the changes in Adult Developmental Services through: www.maineparentcoalition.org and www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/ as our state moves toward the July 1, 2015 roll-out of the Support Intensity Scale determining the level of funding individuals receive.

As always, please reach out if you have any questions or comments. Enjoy the beautiful weather!

Best, Laurie

Editorial Notes: Maine Autism Connections and Autism Society of Maine programs and services are made possible by donations from people like you and funding from the Maine Department of Health & Human Services. We hope you will also visit us online at <http://www.asmonline.org>, where we have a great deal of information available about autism, programs, resources, news, a calendar of events, legislation and more.

13th Annual Walk for Autism



On Sunday, April 26th, the Walk for Autism was held in four locations across the state: The University of Maine, Bangor, the University of New England, Biddeford, the Farmington Fairgrounds, and Belfast Area High School. Each location had slightly different weather as clouds passed through with some showers in Farmington. Overall, everyone came out wearing their sneakers and ready to walk rain or shine!



We are so pleased to announce that the total

amount raised is over \$60,000! This is truly amazing and it shows what we can do when we work together!

This will help ASM to continue to provide programs, events, education, and autism awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Maine.

THANK YOU!!

We give a heartfelt "Thank You!" to our numerous teams & participants, first responders, media, and vendors. Your presence made all the difference!

There were many volunteers from the community that devoted their time. Each one of you has our full appreciation: Mason Family, Michaud Family, Kohl's Associates in Action of Bangor & Biddeford, Pre OT Students – UNE, Stillwater Academy, Frank Spinney, Lisa Magoon & Group, UM Farmington Students, and Sarah Tacket-Nelson. **ASM Board of Directors:** Marla DiBiase, Terry Valcourt, Laurie Raymond, Tiffany Rooney, Melody Altshuler, and Richard Farnsworth.

Thank you to our Team Leaders: Cathy Dionne & Justine Bickford (Bangor), Susan Vincent (Biddeford), Jean Mason & Tena Hinds (Farmington) and Allison Pooler & Karen Gorris Hicock (Belfast).

Also, a very special "THANK YOU" to volunteer Jeannie Jarry, owner of Party Castles who has decorated the Biddeford Walk location with beautiful balloons. She has donated her time and effort since our very first walk 13 years ago. Jeannie made sure to bring extra balloons for the children! This was all done as a donation and we thank her dearly. We also want to acknowledge those that helped her to set up including her husband Don Jarry. Jeannie is retiring and this was her last year with us. We will do our best to decorate but it won't be the same without her special touch!

Top Fundraising Team!

TD Bank had teams formed in Bangor, Biddeford, and Farmington that together raised \$4,785!

Our Corporate Sponsors:

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General Dynamics, ECAC
Volk Packaging Corporation

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Bull Run Striping
Children's Odyssey
Community Health and Counseling
Franklin Savings Bank
Living Innovations
Kohl's – Bangor
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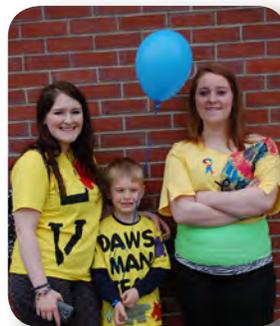
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Maine Autism Institute & Education
Party Castles
Bangor Symphony Orchestra
Darlings
Poland Springs

BRONZE

Bangor Fire Fighters Local 772
Southern Maine Medical & Education

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Camp Summit Registration is Open!



It's that time of year again; Camp Summit registration is now open. Please call ASM for an application to our free summer camp designed for children with autism. This unique summer day camp is located in Farmington. Camp runs 4 weeks long, 2 weeks for kids 5 – 10 year olds and 2 weeks for 10 – 15 year olds. There is availability for 12 campers each session. Each individual will have a one on one from the University of Maine Farmington. The college students sign up for this as a class and earn credit toward their degree.



Autism Awareness Night with the Portland Pirates



The Portland Pirates and the Autism Society of Maine teamed up for Autism Awareness with a special game on April 11th. The Pirates' team wore special jerseys with puzzle pieces on them (these shirts will be auctioned off with proceeds coming to ASM.) The opposing (and winning) team was Wilkes – Barre/ Scranton Penguins.

ASM was given 12 tickets to give to families with children with autism for special box seating with a complimentary pizza, snacks and drinks. A drawing for the tickets was made and the winners were: the Roberts family of Gardiner & the Lydon family of Windham. Kendra Campbell, ASM Autism Information Specialist was available for the families and represented ASM in a news story of the event.

Unexpectedly, but most welcome was a generous donation of 80 tickets to the “Autism Awareness Night” game to be given to families and individuals. We had only a few days to distribute these tickets and chose social media to get the word out! This worked wonderfully and all of the tickets were given away to some very happy fans!

A Special “Thank You” to Phyllis Smith for the very generous donation of tickets on behalf of all the families and individuals that were able to attend the game.



Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Sensory Friendly Movie Event Success!

On April 18th at the Flagship Cinema in Auburn 123 families came together to watch a sensory friendly movie “SpongeBob the Movie”. The event is sponsored by the Lewiston Auburn Rotary and many of the Rotarians were on hand to help families with popcorn and soda and show them to their seats. This event is always a family favorite. Going to a movie with a child on the autism spectrum can be a difficult and costly family activity, but having an event free where a family can see how the child does and gets the child use to a movie theater really can pay off. Thank you to the Lewiston Auburn Rotary for sponsoring this event. We will see all the families next year.



Sea of Blue Walk and 5k for Autism

Chris Heel decided to organize an Autism Awareness Walk in his hometown of Northeast Harbor in 2014. The Walk event raised over \$3,000 to benefit the Autism Society of Maine. On May 2nd, Chris organized another 2 mile Walk and added a 5K Run that together raised a whopping \$5,500! Chris, who has autism, with the support of his family, has worked very hard to make this autism awareness/fundraising event a success. Mission accomplished! Thank you Chris!

The top two runners finished in a veritable dead heat Saturday during the second annual Autism Awareness Walk and 5K in Northeast Harbor.

Brandon O'Keefe, 33, of Seal Cove and Tony Daliso, 32, of Waterville crossed the finish line side by side.



April Autism Awareness Month "Round Up"

A Joint Resolution by the House of Representatives Recognizing April 2015 as Autism Awareness Month in Maine in the House of Representatives was adopted on April 1, 2015.

Sponsored by Representative Richard Farnsworth and Senator Amy Volk, Representative Richard Farnsworth presented a motion to the House of Representatives; a Joint Resolution to recognize April 2015 as Autism Awareness Month. The motion highlighted the many struggles and needs of families and individuals with autism that can be helped with a support system. Representatives were given an autism fact sheet and an autism awareness ribbon to wear on their lapel for the day.

Autism Awareness Packets containing autism informational flyers, brochures and a poster were sent out by request to anyone wishing to create a bulletin board or promote autism awareness.

Autism Awareness Displays were created in schools, libraries and workplaces. We thank everyone who made an autism awareness display and for sending in pictures!

Educators were given an autism awareness packet that also included games & craft ideas for positive ways to introduce autism awareness and acceptance into the classroom.

There were many celebrations, events and fundraisers that took place. We would like to give a special "THANK YOU" to those of you that hosted an event or participated!



Above: ASM Staff and Board Members "kicked off" Autism Awareness Month on April 1st by being present at the State Capital. Pictured left to right: Laurie Raymond, Justine Bickford, Dennise Whitley, Tiffany Rooney, Rep. Richard Farnsworth, Cathy Dionne, Rep. Craig Hickman, Tena Hinds, and Susan Vincent.
Left: Autism Awareness bulletin board displays at Kennebec Behavioral Health (top), The Seton School(right), and Katahdin Middle and High School (left).

Softball Tournament for Autism - Save the Date!

4th Annual Softball Tournament for Autism
June 20, 2015
Union Street Athletic Complex, Bangor, ME

Entry Fee is \$250



This is a Co-Ed Softball Tournament. Each team needs a minimum of 10 players with a maximum of 13 players. Teams need to have a captain with contact information for the captain and each member.

If you think you're interested in participating/volunteering in this tournament, please contact Cathy at ASM. See contact information below.

Plenty of room to have kids play on soccer field or just watch the games and cheer your team on.

For more information please contact: asm@asmonline.org or softballforautism@gmail.com
or call ASM: 1-800-273-5200

2015 Family Retreat Weekend

Family Retreat Weekend
July 17-19, 2015

Registration is open!

Please join us for this annual event. Families from all over the state come together to learn, laugh, and meet other families. The location will be St. Joseph's College in Standish. This facility has everything we need. If you can't join us for the weekend, there is a Saturday only option.

Families will have the opportunity to learn something new or

just hang out with other families while their children are being cared for by respite providers. The children will swim, rock climb, create a craft, and make new friends.

Each family will have a dorm room for 4 people. Two beds are provided, but there is room for blow up mattresses. All meals are provided with the weekend.

Entertainment will be Juggling Show by Jason Tardy. This year's theme: Camping!

Please call ASM for an application: 1-800-273-5200.



Gagne Motorcycle Ride for Autism

June 14, 2015

Ride for Autism - Motorcycle Ride 10:00
(Registration starts at 9:00am)

This event is organized by Bill & Bonnie Gagne

Come help us help them, enjoy the day, and help make a difference. All donations welcome.

An 82 mile ride starting from Central Maine Harley, Hermon and then come back for food and entertainment!

Food prepared by Tony & Lisa Brothers
Music by the band R.E.O.
All Public & Bikers Welcome!

Proceeds from this event to benefit the Autism Society of Maine and programs that support Maine families.

Event Location: Central Maine Harley Hermon, ME

For more information contact: Bill Gagne 207-745-158

"Not Painting the Town, Just my House."

by Deb Lipsky

Being autistic I am convinced that hell on earth is best experienced by transitions, and the Freddy Krueger of transitions is moving! This year my husband and I put our 50 acre working farm in Northern Maine up for sale and bought a 32 acre retirement hobby farm in the woods of Southwestern Maine. Going from a 9 room farmhouse to a modest 4 room dwelling alone brought a lot of challenges. We decided to buy a place before selling our farm so that I could transition slowly by taking all summer long to haul our belongings down and to paint the entire interior of the "new place" while it was still empty. I have to admit that this was very stressful. What was more stressful however was trying to pick out the color paint for each room. When I arrived at the hardware store I was taken aback by the numerous shades each basic color offered. The names for the different shades were "colorful" (no pun intended) with such bizarre titles such as "midnight blue". I don't know about you but I have been up and outside many times at midnight and all I could see is pitch black nothing! No shade of blue just black with white specs if the stars were out. Also I really was amused by "afternoon nap green" which is what my husband's bedroom was painted. How does one know exactly what color a nap looks like anyway? Don't try to bring that fact up to the salesperson as I did because they don't have a logical response, only a dumbfounded look as to the why someone would even question such standardized (generally accepted by all non-autistic people) paint color variations. Anyway I settled on a "bees wax yellow" for the kitchen, "morning glory pink" for the bathroom, and "cool summer green" for my bedroom and set out on my way to my new home.

Getting home was even a bigger challenge. The hardware store in Cornish Maine is only 7 miles from my new home so theoretically I should be back within 15 minutes. It took better than 45 minutes all summer long because I kept whizzing by

the unmarked road I was supposed to turn onto. In Houlton all the streets are marked thanks to the enhanced 911 system put in place a few years back. I never missed a turn up there. I guess they don't mark the side roads down here because people who live in this area know these roads by rote memory and don't need road signs. Forget relying on "Emily" my GPS navigational device. She kept insisting my new home address was not even in the same zip code. She spent most of the summer "re-calculating" even when I turned on to my driveway. The irony is that she would always intersperse "a better route is available" in between her "re-calculating" renditions as I drove into the driveway but when I needed her to tell me to turn onto the unmarked side road she became as silent as a mime. To this day I still can't tell if she has been programmed with a sadistic streak in her or she suffers from sort of technological navigational intermittent psychosis.

Once back home I began my marathon painting spree. I had grabbed my husband's old worn out white t-shirts as painting rags. I cleaned up the brush with the rag after painting the kitchen. My "beeswax yellow" looked more like "baby poop yellow" diaper smear amidst the pristine white background of the t-shirt. As it turned out my "Morning glory pink" matched perfectly to the bottle of Pepto Bismal sitting on top of the vanity; I painted my entire bathroom the color of a popular time honored antacid!! It wasn't any better for my bedroom. The walls look like an oversized mint julep taffy candy. No wonder at bedtime I get these unexplained cravings for taffy candy. I just don't understand why the non autistic paint world has to come up with flowery "cute-see" obscure names for very obvious color shades. I guess however I could see it from their point of view...how many people would actually purchase a paint color that resembles the fecal matter of a human infant.

ASM Annual Awards

ASM is now accepting award nominations

Do you know someone who deserves some recognition? Maybe a teacher, in home worker, or someone who has touched the lives of many individuals with autism. ASM wants to celebrate these people at our Annual Meeting held in October. (Date and location to be announced.)

Criteria to nominate someone for an award:

- Professionals (not in the field of autism, but contributing to it)
- Family Members or Persons with Autism
- Professionals Providing Service

Please note that each category has specific criteria, and that information is available by contacting ASM. The nominations committee and final decisions will be made prior to the ASM Annual Meeting. Awards will be given out at the ASM Annual Meeting.

If you would like to nominate someone, contact: info@asmonline.org or call 1-800-273-5200.



Motorcycle Ride for Autism - Save the Date!



The 10th Annual Ride for Autism will take place on

August 30, 2015

L-A Harley

Round trip ride will be approximately 110 miles leaving from LA Harley to Mt. Blue State Park. Upon your return there will be lunch and entertainment provided.

4th Annual Car Show for Autism

September 13, 2015 – 9:00am to 2:00pm

Registration starts at 7:30am
92 Mudgett Rd., Parsonfield, ME

Hosted by Wendy and Richard Humphrey

Bring what you run and come on down to celebrate with us!
Great food and Raffles!

All proceeds to go directly to the Autism Society of Maine!



Ride for Autism - Save the Date!

The 9th Annual Ride for Autism will take place on

October 3, 2015

Kennebunkport Conservation Trust
Gravelly Brook Road
Kennebunkport, ME



Join us for a ride to remember with several miles along the coastline including up to five beaches and world renowned scenic view areas. Staggered starting times for the 50, 25, and 10 mile well marked routes offer an opportunity for everyone to finish together and enjoy a spectacular lunch.

Each route is relatively flat offering an opportunity to enjoy a casual ride or crank it up for an individual challenge. Short rides of ten miles or less are very family friendly. Or, you can choose the Trail Ride at the Smith Preserve. Several trail heads are located within one mile of the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust building.

Each rider will have the opportunity to be registered to win a new bike valued at \$600 by raising at least \$200 for the Autism Society of Maine.

ASM on Social Media!

The Autism Society of Maine has a wonderful Facebook Community including parents, professionals, individuals and anyone interested in autism. If you are not already a friend of our Facebook page, we welcome you to join us!

By “liking” ASM’s Facebook page you can help us spread the word to hundreds of new supporters!



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Autism-Society-Of-Maine/107781499258293>

We have a great collection of videos and will be adding more throughout the year!

<https://www.youtube.com/user/AutismSocietyofME>



Follow us on Twitter as we ‘tweet’ about autism!
<https://twitter.com/autismsocietyme>



My Autism Team logo A reputable and friendly place to connect with other parents in Maine.

<http://www.myautismteam.com/>



A young man from Maine has designed a blog to provide personal insight into overcoming the challenges of living with a disability. Here you will find helpful disability resources and tips on: social issues, improving oneself, and technology. <http://zachfly.com/>

Legislative Update

The work of the first session of the 127th Legislature is in the 5th month of a scheduled 6 month session and it is intense. By the time bill titles had to be filed, it was expected that there would be approximately 1500 bills submitted. To date there have been 1400 bills printed. ASM has reviewed every bill for applicability to the autism community through the work of the Legislative Liaison, the Legislative Leadership Group comprised of the Legislative Co-Chairs, Lynda Mazzola and Chris Osgood, Laurie Raymond, Board Chair and Cathy Dionne, the Director of Programs and Administration, the Legislation Committee and ultimately the Board of Directors. To date we are tracking 36 bills which range from LD 44 Resolve To Direct the Department of Education to Train School Personnel to Implement Dyslexia Awareness And Student Accommodation Polices to LD384 Resolve To study The Design And Implementation of Options for a Universal Health Care Plan In The State That Is In Compliance With the Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The exciting news is that ASM's list of bills that we are supporting or opposing with in-person testimony at the public hearing or the submission of a letter of support numbers 27! Each one of these bills, if passed, could have a significant impact on children, adults with autism and their families. An example of a positive impact from the passage of a bill is LD1061 Resolve To Create the Commission to Study a Stable Continuum of Care for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism. The ASM testimony strongly urged Health and Human Services Committee to unanimously pass LD1061 with this statement in the testimony: "For the individuals and families of people on the Autism Spectrum this Commission would be the ultimate recognition that there is an extreme need to examine the best way for different state systems, the Department of Health and Human Services, the department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education and the Department of Labor, to provide a stable continuum of care without duplication of efforts and programs. This would ensure seamless transitions between these Departments that are involved in the lifelong care of persons with intellectual disabilities and autism.....The Autism Society of Maine and its families and professionals would hope to have a representative from this organization serve on the Commission and would do so with pride."

Please take a look at the [Legislative Tracking Sheet](#) that is periodically updated on posted on our website. You can view the complete list of bills we are tracking and the titles and summaries of the bills we are actively supporting or opposing, along with the dates for Hearing and Work Sessions. The Legislative Tracing Sheet also notes the current status in the committee of jurisdiction and notes the final disposition of the bill in the House and Senate.

Advocacy Tips

Listen to Joint Committee Hearings and Work sessions.

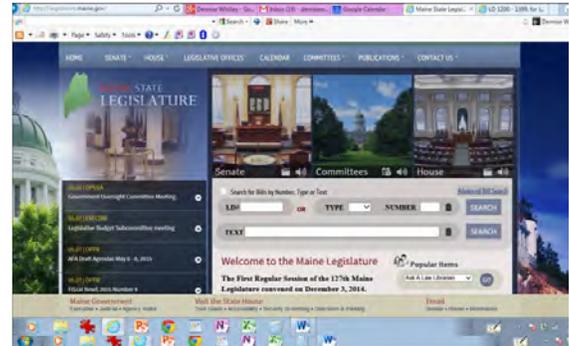
As I write this, I am sitting and actually listening to the Health and Human Services Committee as it holds hearings on 10 bills which started at 1:00pm and was expected end around 5PM. The hardworking Health and Human Services Committee actually adjourned at 6:37 PM.

Here is how to listen to any one of the Joint Standing

By Dennise Whitley, ASM's Legislative Liaison

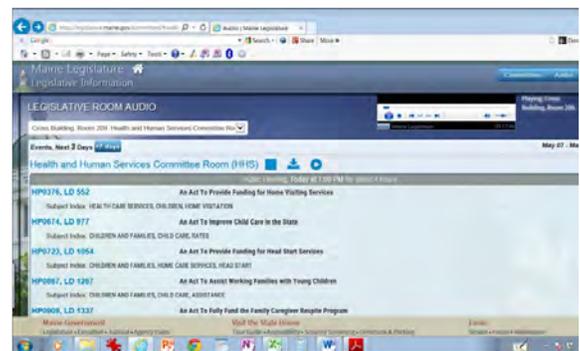
Committees as they conduct Hearings and Work Sessions. Give it a try, it will be worth your time and will give you a good sense of how Maine's Legislature functions.

On the ASM website, go to Legislation then click on State of Maine Legislature website. It will take you to this website:



Be sure that your volume is turned up on your computer or iPad.

Click on the picture of the State Capitol, 127th Legislature Committee Information will come up, click on the drop-down box and scroll down to Health and Human Service and click on Audio in the upper right side of your screen, when you click on it, a small oblong box will appear that indicates that you are hooked into the Audio system, click on it and it will connect you to the HHS Committee room. Click on the Blue Square beside the Health and Human Services Committee Room.



The schedule of Bill Hearings and Work sessions up to 7 days will be listed with their assigned LD numbers. If you click on the LD number it will bring up copies of the bill along with:

- Text and Disposition
- Amendments
- Status in Committee
- Divided Reports
- Titles, Sections Affected

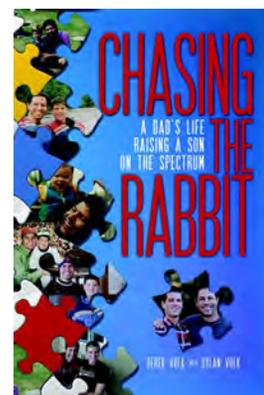
Thank your Legislators!

Reach out to your local Legislators and thank them for their commitment and dedication. Taking the time to send an email or call them to say "thank you" goes a long way, If you aren't sure how to find your Legislator's contact information visit our website. Click on Legislation, and then Get Involved, and click on Find your Representative and Senator.

Welcome to the Autism Society of Maine Library!



‘The true story of Derek Volk’s experiences raising his son, Dylan, who has Asperger’s Syndrome. When Derek’s oldest child - his only son - was two years old when his wife suggested, “Something is not quite right with Dylan.” They struggled for the next several years as they were bounced from one “expert” to another, each offering a unique perspective on Dylan’s challenging behaviors. Finally, at eight years old, Dylan was diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome and the Volk family was able to start making sense of Dylan’s differences. In *Chasing the Rabbit*, Derek Volk shares his experiences raising a son on the Autism spectrum. Both Dylan and Derek write about the challenges, triumphs and coping strategies from the early days to the adolescent years to life in the “real world” as a young adult. It is a story of how a dad learned to love the son he never expected he would have and how his son learned to accept himself as well. Throughout the book Dylan shares his perspectives on what Derek was experiencing. This book showcases the unique relationship between a father and his son, voices rarely heard in the autism community. It tells the story of a young man who has spent his entire life “chasing the rabbit.” The title *Chasing the Rabbit* derives from Derek’s analogy that Dylan is similar to a greyhound dog running around a track. The rabbit is normal. Dylan can see what normal looks like, and he can almost get to it, but no matter how fast he runs he never catches it. It is also a success story and a testimony to faith as Derek and his wife, Amy, never stopped praying and never gave up on their son.’



Author, Derek Volk will be a Guest Speaker at the ASM Family Retreat.

Meet Matt Chase (continued from front)

As a parent of a child with autism, it is common to have the never ending feeling of worry. What will the future hold? What happens when I am not here to care for my child? The culmination of all of Matt’s recent accomplishments are truly a testament to our son’s hard work and to all the individuals who have supported him and believed in him. After Matt won the bee, the President of UMF offered Matt admission to her School (upon completion of high school), which provided us with overwhelming hope. At just 13 years of age, our son has demonstrated to us that his future has no limits. We want to share that exciting prospect with every parent with a child on the Spectrum. While his social awkwardness continues and concerns about Matt’s eventual level of independence remain, with each forward stride, the future appears brighter. Excitement and curiosity about Matt’s future are beginning to displace anxiety. The reality is that our son is such a unique, brilliant, happy, caring and upbeat individual. He is truly a gift to us.

Photos: Matt Chase and his parents, Matthew and Sophia; Matt Chase at the National Geography Bee in Washington, D.C.



Donations

In Memory of:

Harold Moulton, Jr.

Susan Gambon
 Salvatore & Kim Fararo
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 Jeanne Wetzel
 Richard Couillard & Celine Bourgoin
 Lois Brown

Employee Pledges & Donations

Carol Sullivan // Maine State Employees
 Combined Charitable Appeal
 Robert Leach // Saunders Manufacturing
 Courtney Simpson // Bottomline
 Technologies

Donations / Fundraisers

Cheryl Thompson
 Margaret Shaver
 Jackie Federico
 Susan Morton
 Lise & Norm Tancrede
 Linda Grant
 Paradis Shop'n'Save Employees
 Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society
 Connectivity Point Design & Installation,
 LLC
 Saco & Biddeford Savings Charitable
 Foundation
 Bank of Maine Winthrop Branch Staff
 donation

Employee's Community Action Council
 Employee Donation
 Waterville Empire Beauty School Students &
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 Zachary Johnson Smartpen Raffle to Benefit
 Autism
 Scarborough Texas Roadhouse Employees
 & Shannon Timoney Blue Shirt Autism
 Awareness

Thank you for your generosity!

ASM Store

You may purchase these and more
 items on the ASM website at:
[https://www.asmonline.org:4441/
 productcart/pc/home.asp](https://www.asmonline.org:4441/productcart/pc/home.asp)
 or call 1-800-273-5200.



Puzzle Piece Car Magnet
 4" x 8"
 \$6.00



**Autism Touches Us All
 Hanging Charm**
 1" x 1" and Sterling Silver plated
 \$3.00



**Multicolored Puzzle Piece
 Heart Hanging Charm**
 1" x 1" and Sterling Silver plated
 \$3.00



**Big Heart Autism Ribbon
 Key Chain**
 1.5" x 1.5" and comes in embossed gift
 box. Sterling Silver plated
 \$6.00



**Hand crafted Dichroic
 Glass Pendant**
 with Sterling Silver Plated bail
 (includes black silk cord)
 5/8" x 7/8" random design and
 color
 \$8.00



Baseball Cap
 Black/Red Wave Cap with red font
 Black/Yellow Wave Cap with yellow
 font (not shown)
 \$15.00



**Autism Awareness
 Lapel Pin**
 \$5.00



Autism Stretch Bracelet
 Sterling Silver plated
 \$4.00



Autism Ribbon Earrings
 Sterling Silver plated
 Includes Embossed Gift Box
 \$8.00



**Autism Awareness
 Lanyard \$6.00**



**Gel Autism Awareness
 Bracelet
 \$3.00**



Autism Ribbon Keychain
 Price \$5.00



Autism Awareness Mug
 \$10.00



Mini Magnet
 2" x 4"
 \$3.00



**Autism Awareness
 Magnet**
 8" x 3.5" \$5.00



Silver Bracelet
 Sterling Silver plated
 Includes Embossed Gift Box
 \$10.00



Support our Services: Give to the Autism Society of Maine!

The Autism Society of Maine is a statewide nonprofit organization that for over 36 years has served Maine individuals with autism and their families, professionals, and communities by providing education, advocacy, referrals, and resource development. We rely on donations and fund-raisers to help cover the cost of our programs and activities that bring awareness and community to individuals and families affected by ASD. Here's how you can help:

- General donations may also be made anytime of the year online using our secure donation forms (or you can download and print our PDF forms) at: http://www.asmonline.org/involved_donations.asp
- Memorial donations to the Society in memory of a friend or loved-one may also be made at: http://www.asmonline.org/involved_donations.asp
- Donations through Network For Good may be made at: <https://www.networkforgood.org/donation/ExpressDonation.aspx?ORGID2=010407346>
- Donations through United Way can be directed to the Autism Society of Maine. For more information, visit: http://www.asmonline.org/involved_donations_united_way.asp
- Host a fund-raiser with proceeds going to ASM. Some of the past and current fund-raisers have included: Avon, Pampered Chef parties, Mary Kay parties, bake sales at events, selling autism awareness items at conferences or craft events, selling holiday wreaths, selling T-shirts. If any of these fund-raisers interest you, please call us for more information.

Become a Member!

The Autism Society of Maine invites you to join families and professionals in the pursuit of knowledge about autism spectrum disorders, treatments and support for Maine children and adults with autism.

You may register online at:

www.asmonline.org/involved_joinasm.asp

or call ASM at 1-800-273-5200

For other ways to contribute, contact us at asm@asmonline.org. Thank you for supporting our mission!

Call us at: 1-800-273-5200 or visit us online at www.asmonline.org