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AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Maine

Let ME
spread the
word on
AUTISM

Maine Autism Connections

Wings for All

By Tara Perry

On Saturday February 1, 2020 thirty nine individuals and their families/caregivers gathered at the Bangor International Airport for a “rehearsal”. This was not for a play or any other type of performance, it was an airport rehearsal designed for individuals with autism or other disabilities, their families and airport personnel. This program is designed to alleviate some of the stress that families may experience when attempting to travel on a plane. During this event families had the opportunity to come to the airport and experience everything they would as if they were going on a real flight, except for actually taking off- the plane did not leave the ground at any time during this event.

After registering at the front door, individuals and their families waited in line for their boarding passes, found their gate, went through TSA security and actually boarded a plane. On the plane they were encouraged to look around, turn on the lights, flush the toilet, explore and ask questions. Much to the delight of the children and adults, the cockpit was open and the pilot and co-pilot invited everyone to enter, look around and ask questions, this was definitely a highpoint for some!

By allowing families access to the airport and plane, they are better equipped at helping their child in the event that they would like to travel. This answered so many questions and eased a lot of anxieties for children and their families as well as airport staff. Some families have never attempted to travel not knowing if it would be too much for their loved one, some have attempted and failed. Wings For All gave everyone the opportunity to see what might happen and a better sense of what they can concentrate on to help their child feel more at ease and be successful at taking a trip.

Spring 2020

So many people had a part in making this a successful event. We would like to thank The Arc for creating such a wonderful program, Bangor International Airport for hosting, Allegiant Air for donating the plane and flight personnel, TSA for participating and learning about these individuals and families to ease the anxiety and all of the agencies who joined together to make this possible; Autism Society of Maine, Courageous Steps, Maine Parent Federation, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Gear Parent Network and NAMI Maine.

If you are planning to travel and have concerns, please call the airport near you, they can provide tours so families can become acquainted with the environment and can answer all your questions. TSA also has the TSA Cares program, an employee can assist families through the



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Maine Autism Connections
A publication of the
Autism Society of Maine

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Maine
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

I am happy to share that this is the second year that ASM is partnering with the LEND program at UMO. Dr. Alan Kurtz kindly provided the LEND program description which is included below. Our LEND trainees have taken on the task of working with the ASM education committee to formalize our training curriculum: ASM A Friend for Life. Al French started the project and Deborah Tardif is helping move us forward by creating power point presentations to be used by staff and autism information specialists. We very much appreciate the efforts of the LEND trainees and Dr. Kurtz.



Also thanks to our education committee: Jennifer Brooking, Sherry Pike, Brigid Rankowski, Tiffany Rooney, and staff: Cathy Dionne and Tena Hinds, for many hours of work on this project. It is a privilege to work with all of you.

LEND is an important resource for advancing the understanding of autism for providers and ASM has the collective experiences of individuals, families, teachers and therapists to share so it is a natural partnership for all of us.

The University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies is partnering with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, in the New Hampshire-Maine Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (NH-ME LEND) Program. NH-ME LEND provides graduate level interdisciplinary training for students and professionals from diverse disciplines, including developmental pediatrics, early childhood education, social work, psychology, occupational therapy, health management and policy, and speech language pathology.

Program activities include leadership development, clinical training, continuing education/technical assistance, research, and cultural competency field work. University of Maine trainees participate remotely in the weekly NH-ME LEND seminar through the use of eLearning and videoconferencing technology.

This rigorous 9-month curriculum follows the academic calendar and includes coursework and hands-on experiences with faculty, families, community partners, and legislators that support trainees' abilities to:

Develop leadership skills that address the needs of children who have neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families, and allow trainees to move into leadership roles in their communities.

Develop an understanding of public policy and evidence-based care.

Participate in clinical training at hospital and community-based clinical settings in Maine.

To learn more about NH-ME LEND Program, visit <https://ccids.umaine.edu/interedu/nh-me-lead/>

I hope that if you are not yet a member of ASM you will consider joining now because your contributions help us meet our goals of service across the lifespan.

Sincerely, Nancy Ponzetti-Dyer

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.

18th Annual Walk for Autism



18th Annual Walk for Autism
April 26, 2020
11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon: Registration
12:00 noon: Walk for Autism (Rain or shine!)
JOIN OUR ANNUAL WALK..

This year there are 4 WALKS around the state. Our NEW site in CAPE ELIZABETH replaces Biddeford and Portland.

Enlist your friends, coworkers, and neighbors. Build a team to support Maine families!

- BANGOR - University of Maine, 67 Taft St.
- CAPE ELIZABETH - Cape Elizabeth High School, 345 Ocean House Rd.
- FARMINGTON - Farmington Fairgrounds, 292 High St.
- FRYEBURG - Fryeburg Fairgrounds, 1154 Main St.

As half of our annual budget is raised through fundraising, these walks have become an important piece towards sustaining a lot of what we do. The proceeds from this event help fund programs we offer throughout the state such as: the Autism Society of Maine's Summer Camp for children with ASD, our Information Specialist Program, the Family Retreat Weekend and our Fall Conference. Vendors are welcome on each site as well. Come and help us raise awareness about autism! Visit <https://www.asmonline.org/get-involved/walk-for-autism.aspx> for more information.

Social Groups

by Tara Perry

Teen Group

It seems like winter is never going to end! The weather lately has been crazy! I am so glad we have our group to break up this long season. We had a great time celebrating the holidays. We created some great ornaments for our trees and also welcomed some new faces to the group. Our January meeting was a blast, we created shimmering icicles with aluminum foil and glitter as well as some pretty amazing paintings on foil. This group really likes to get in touch with their inner Bob Ross! February meant a Valentine's Day party, complete with homemade Valentines and of course Bingo! The group had a great time creating Fizzy Hearts and made plenty of Valentine's for their loved ones. We are hoping for some warmer weather soon so we might be able to enjoy some outside activities. We will see what March brings! If you are interested in learning more about the teen group, or our Adult Social Group you can find more info at www.asmonline.org or by calling the office at 800-273-5200.



Wings for All (continued from cover)

whole process from obtaining boarding passes, checking luggage, passing through security and boarding the plane. More info can be found at the following link; <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/passenger-support>



April is Autism Awareness Month!



AUTISM SOCIETY

NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

For April, National Autism Awareness Month, ASM is proud to Celebrate Differences by providing educational resources, autism facts and statistics, and providing opportunity for community engagement.

Stay in touch with what is going on by visiting ASM online! There will be autism awareness events, resources and information listed on ASM's online channels:

[Email listing](#)
[Facebook Page](#)
[Autism Awareness Page](#)
[Calendar of Events Page](#)

SPREAD AWARENESS, PROMOTE ACCEPTANCE, IGNITE CHANGE!

AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Maine



The Autism Society of Maine (ASM) is offering businesses or agencies the opportunity to sell puzzle piece paper hearts for \$1 each to your customers or clients. They would put their name on the heart and your agency would display them. You have seen a variety of stores/businesses sell them to show support for a cause. This is a great way for you to support the Autism Society of Maine. ASM would supply you with the hearts and you would provide a check at the end of the campaign for the total amount of hearts sold. It's that simple.

Call ASM if you want to participate at 1-800-273-5200. We will provide a shout out on Facebook to all businesses or agencies that participate. Share your pictures with us.

Kits for Kids



Educators, would you like to have a presentation for your students around differences? Teaching kids about autism will help them better understand their classmates who might appear odd, or different. The Autism Society of Maine is offering to send an Autism Information Specialist to your school and present to your class, second grade through eighth grade.

There will be a short video, activities for the students and time for discussion. Depending on the grade level the presentation can be anywhere from 30 minutes to 45 minutes.

ASM will provide all the materials: How We Fit Together Activity with a box of crayons for each student, interactive activities, What's Up with Nick book, Activity Booklet for students, Certificate of Friendship and fidget toys.

Reach out to ASM infospec@asmonline.org or call 1-800-273-5200 and ask for "Kits for Kids".

Upcoming Events

FREE SENSORY FRIENDLY MOVIE "Onward"
April 18, 2020



The movie will closed to the general public and will start at 10:00 am; you may arrive by 9:30am. Each child will receive popcorn and a drink, the lights will be low and the sound turned down. This is a FREE EVENT!!
Flagship Cinema- 730 Center St. Auburn, ME. Contact ASM: 800-273-5200 to reserve your seat.

7th Annual Sea of Blue Walk/5K Saturday April 25th 2020 Northeast Harbor, Maine

Chris Heel organizes an Autism Awareness Walk in his hometown of Northeast Harbor. It is an event that has become very popular and brought runners in from nearby communities. Thank You Chris!

Visit www.seaofblueautism.com for more information.



18th ANNUAL WALK FOR AUTISM April 26, 2020

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon: Registration
12:00 noon: Walk for Autism
4 Locations (Rain or shine!)
See page 3 for more details

ASM Night @ Portland Sea Dogs May 15, 2020



Join ASM on May 15th, 2020 @ 6:00PM on Hadlock Field in Portland as the Sea Dogs take on the "Reading Fightin Phils". For ticket info go to <https://www.milb.com/portland>. We hope to see you there!

2020 ASM Family Retreat July 24-26th St. Josephs College in Standish



Applications will be available April 1st

Space is limited! Call ASM to have your application sent to you. ASM 1-800-273-5200

Ride for Autism September 19, 2020

Kennebunkport Conservation Trust Building
Gravelly Brook Road, Kennebunkport



This bike ride covers several miles along the coastline in Kennebunkport, including up to five beaches and world renowned scenic view areas.
Call or email ASM for more information

Fall Conference on Autism October 31, 2020 Black Bear Inn Orono, Maine



Keynote speaker: Kerry Magro
Award Winning and Breakthrough Advocate Kerry Magro knew early on that he wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. Kerry was diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) a form of autism, at age 4.

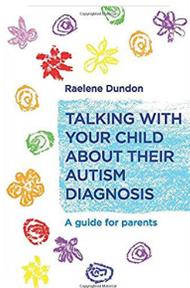
Welcome to the Autism Society of Maine Library!

[Visit the ASM Library Online!](http://www.asmonline.org/library.asp)
www.asmonline.org/library.asp

The ASM Lending Library is a valuable resource for anyone

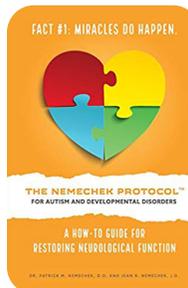
working or living with children or adults on the autism spectrum. The Lending Library is a Free resource for Maine Residents.

Email: library@asmonline.org or call: 1-800-273-5200



Talking with Your Child about their Autism Diagnosis, A Guide for Parents
by: Raelene Dundon

Telling your child about their autism diagnosis can be daunting. Will they be better off for knowing? What's the right way to tell them? Should you inform anyone else too?



The Nemechek Protocol for Autism and Developmental Disorders by: Dr. Patrick M. Nemechek D.O. & Jean R. Nemechek J.D.

The Nemechek Protocol for Autism and Developmental Delay is a scientific and refined approach to reversing the effects of autism, ADD, ADHD, SPD and the myriad of other developmental disorders.

Donations

IN MEMORY OF:

Betty Paradis

By: Patricia Fichtner
Shirley & William Landmesser
Roki Associates, INC.
William Sullivan
Lisa Vaillancourt
Nora A. Linkletter
Paul Blackstone
Michael & Anne Marie Lajoie

Dolores Barbara Gower

By: Donna and Craig VanMetre
Kent & Jeanette Rice
Tom Backiel & Joe Gower

James Collier, Sr

By: Bar Harbor Teacher's Association

Donations/Sponsorships/Employee Matches/Grants

Bangor Fire Fighters Association
Biddeford Career Firefighters
Jon Youde
Kim Humphrey
Creative Options
Maine Community Foundation
Scott Bedell (Bottomline Technologies)
Dina Jellison

Zoe Pringle
Mount Pleasant Dental Care
Susan Kamin
Peter Wilkins
Glenn Dunne
Betsy Mahoney
Robert Bouthot
Michael Crowley
Joyce & Jeff Welt
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Sheree Bushaw
Daniel Rodriguez
Erin Lake
Keith Holmes
Sean Ames
Kristi Daggett
Karen Pendergast
Debra Martin
Webster Lodge 164 AF & AM
United Way of Central & NE Connecticut
CADD
United Way of Massachusetts Bay
Merrimack Valley
Bangor Savings Bank, Bangor location
MSECCA

Fox Family Dental
Blue Rock Industries
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Richard & Wendy Humphrey
Marc Landry

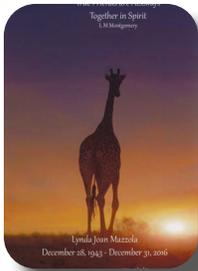
Membership Renewals

Carol Sullivan
Carla Small
Sheila Crocker
Alice Haines MD
Debra Thibodeau
Franklin Freeman
Susan Marston
David Johnson
Joyce & Jeffrey Welt
Lise & Norman Tancrede
Helen Murray
Len Dorman
Carol Jewett
Anthony & Terri Dostanko
Tom Hansen
Gigi McAllister
Joella Michaud
Linda Chamberlain
Kathy Wingard
Susan Morton
Karen MacDonald
Iris Silverstein
Maureen Zemrak
Christina Jordan
Peter & Gerri Bridgeman

New Memberships

Rebecca Hoosier

Lynda J. Mazzola Memorial Scholarship Award



Each year one \$2,500 scholarship is awarded in memory of Lynda Mazzola, MA, CCC-SLP, founding member of the Autism Society of Maine. This scholarship will be awarded to a Maine student with a completed a bachelor's degree, or is soon to graduate and has been accepted to a master's or doctoral degree program in speech and language pathology or occupational therapy. The award application form can be found on the ASM website: www.asmonline.org/about/lynda-mazzola-scholarship.aspx

Due by April 30, 2019. Call ASM with questions you may have or to have a form sent to you: 1-800-273-5200.

EMAIL - SOCIAL MEDIA - ONLINE GROUPS



ASM is has a vibrant 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!



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



Sign up to get interesting news and updates delivered to your email inbox from ASM!



Searching for autism information on the web can be overwhelming. The ASM website has relevant autism information and resources for Maine Residents.



Follow us on Twitter as we 'tweet' about autism!



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



Silicone Chew Necklaces
Animals & Shapes- **\$9.00**
Raindrops & Circles- **\$8.00**

Items can be seen and ordered from [ASM's online store](#) or by calling 1-800-273-5200.



Folding Puzzle Tote
\$16.00



Ceramic Mugs
\$6.00



Silver Ribbon
\$10.00

Keychain
\$6.00

Stretchy
\$4.00

Wristband
\$3.00

Charm Bracelet
1 Charm
\$8.00



Lanyard
\$6.00

Glass Earrings
\$15.00



Spacers
\$1.00



Glass Pendant
Sm. **\$10.00**
Lg. **\$12.00**



Keychain
\$5.00



Large \$5.00

Magnets

Puzzle-Magnet
\$6.00



Window Cling
\$3.00



Lapel Pin
\$5.00



Legislative Update

by Betsy Mahone

The Autism Society Community outreach staff has been busy with bills from second regular session of the 129th legislature as well the Governor's Supplemental Budget and working with the leadership of the Office of Aging and Disability Services. Among the highlights:

Wait lists for Section 21 and 29 MaineCare home- and community –based services;

ASM testified at the hearing on LD 1984, a bill to reduce the wait lists for Sec. 21 and 29, and at the hearing on the Governor's Supplemental Budget. We applauded the budget's including funds to partially fund the wait list for Sec. 29 (community supports) services, but recommended that it include funds for addressing the Sec. 21 waitlist (comprehensive services). No funds were provided for Section 21.

Addressing direct service provider workforce shortages through wage increases

Maine's Long-term Care Workforce Commission issued its final report and recommended, among other things, that the State: Increase wages for starting direct care workers to no less than 125% of the minimum wage. ASM staff testified in favor of this at the budget hearing.

Meeting with House and Senate Leadership

ASM staff, along with other parents of adults with developmental Disabilities, met with House and Senate Democratic and Republican leadership to discuss the Sec. 21 and 29 wait lists and the service provider shortage in mid-February.

Working with OADS

In an effort to help shape DHHS policies regarding people with autism, Executive Director Cathy Dionne, Board member Dick Farnsworth and Community Outreach Liaison Betsy Mahoney met with Office of Aging and Disability Services director Paul Saucier and other DHHS staff.

They discussed crisis services in Maine, Sec. 21 and 29 wait lists, DHHS's plans to reform Sec. 21 services, needs assessments and MaineCare rate setting. DHHS is looking to deemphasize group homes and to offer more services in the community so that people can live at home. They expect that the transformation will take 3-5 years.

To contact Betsy Mahoney email betsy@asmonline.org



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

The Autism Society of Maine is a statewide nonprofit organization that for over 40 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/get-involved/donations.aspx>
- 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/get-involved/donations-united-way.aspx>
- Join or host a fundraiser with proceeds to benefit ASM! Fun ideas can be found on our fundraising page: <http://www.asmonline.org/get-involved/fundraising.aspx>

ASM Mission Statement

The Autism Society of Maine provides education and resources to support the valued lives of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

Become a Member!

Join our membership online:
<http://www.asmonline.org/join/>
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