



THE VOICE

Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Autism Society of America

June/July 2008

Volume 12, Issue 11

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Co-Presidents' Message

Thanks to everyone who joined us at our May meeting, which featured a presentation about **animal-assisted interventions for individuals with autism spectrum disorders**, led by **Merope Pavlides**. She is a Certified Pet Dog Trainer and Certified Dog Behavior Consultant and the author of a new book about animal-assisted interventions. To contact Ms. Pavlides for further information about this topic, please go to her website at <http://merope1.tripod.com>.

At our May chapter meeting we also held **elections** for our Executive Board and At-Large Board Members. We are very pleased to welcome all of our new board members, including our new **secretary, Cindy Shay**, and **at-large board members Denice Rulo, Christine Ambrose and Cheryl Antlitz**. We held an orientation and transition board meeting on June 8th, and discussed plans for many exciting projects, initiatives, and events in the coming year. We also want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to departing board member **Roxanne Sporrer** for her many years of dedicated support, guidance, and assistance to our chapter.

Our next meeting will be held on **August 26th**. Look for information about the topic and presenters in our August newsletter.

Be sure to mark you calendar for our annual **summer beach party** which will be held on **Saturday August 16th** from **1:00 – 5:00 pm**. A flyer is included with this newsletter.

In closing, we want to offer our thanks for the recent contributions made to our chapter by **Trish Groh** through her Pampered Chef sales, and to **Penny Parker Reisler** through her work with the Ferndale community and their annual Ferndale Day event.

Rebecca Kohler, a school psychologist who has experience working with students on the autism spectrum, is interested in providing respite services to families. She would like to be available to parents during afternoons and weekends when they'd like to go out to dinner or get work done around the house without having to worry about their child with autism/Aspergers. For further information or to contact Ms. Kohler, please send her an email at rlkohler@gmail.com.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday
August 26th
7:00 pm

The **ERIC Fund** offers cash awards in the amount of \$ 10,000 to assist persons with disabilities living in the Washington DC area, who demonstrate a need for help in purchasing assistive technology or equipment to help them lead independent, inclusive lives. For further information or to obtain an application, please contact the ERIC Fund at (301) 654-1547 or ericfund@aol.com. The application deadline is **Friday August 1st**.

Contact us:

By phone: (410) 923-8800

On the web: www.aaccasa.org



Chapter news and notes

Our **meetings** are held on the last Tuesday evening of each month (August - November and January - May) at the Ruth Parker Eason School, 648 Old Mill Road, Millersville. Meetings begin at 7:00 pm with introductions and general announcements, along with time for open discussion. A refreshment break is followed by a discussion led by the guest presenter. Ample time is allowed for questions and follow-up discussion, as well as further opportunity for group support and socialization. New members and new ideas are always welcome!!

Our **on-line calendar of events** provides updated information about the many autism-related and disability-related activities and events in our local area. It can be accessed at <http://www.aaccasa.org/calundur.htm>.

Subscribe to our **e-mail action alert** by sending a message through <http://www.aaccasa.org>. It is an easy way to learn the latest information about Federal, State, and local legislative initiatives, lobbying efforts, or other action items related to autism and disabilities.

Our **lending library** is located at the Partners for Success Resource Center, Oakwood Elementary School, Portable "B", 330 Oak Manor Drive, Glen Burnie. To see a full listing of the items available from our lending library, as well as related items available from the Partners for Success library, please go to <http://www.aaccasa.org>. To request an item, please contact Partners for Success at (410) 222-3805 or partnersforsuccess@aaccps.org. They will provide information about the various ways in which library materials can be obtained.

Our **chapter networking/support/resource guide**, available at http://www.aaccasa.org/images/Net_workingGuide11-07.pdf, consists of a list of chapter member volunteers who are available to provide information and assistance to family members, friends, professionals, and service providers. If you are a paid member and have experience with any of the topics and would like to provide information and assistance, please contact **Alison Hamilton** at (410) 451-8015 or hamiltonal@verizon.net.

Our **"Where to Start" brochure** provides local resource information for families of children newly diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder or families who are new to our area. It is available on our website at <http://www.aaccasa.org> or by calling our chapter phone line at (410) 923-8800.

Our **web masters** are Barry Conner and Claudine Intner.

2008-2009 Board

Co -Presidents: Alison Hamilton
Linda Carter-Ferrier
Vice President: Jill Zaukus
Treasurer: Mindy Wise
Secretary: Cindy Shay

Board Members: Jean Dunaway
Doug Shade
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Nancy Snyder
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Christine Ambrose
Denice Rulo

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Therapy services

Augmenting Ability will hold social skills groups and adaptive music lessons (piano, voice, and guitar) during the summer. For further information, please go to <http://www.augmentingability.com> or contact them at musictherapy@augmentingability.com.

OT Ventures will hold sessions for the following groups during the summer:

- * Munch Bunch, an oral motor feeding group for children ages 3 - 10.
- * Socialites, a group that addresses socialization, gross motor and fine motor development, sensory processing, pre-writing and/or writing skills, and oral motor skills.
- * Write-On, a handwriting group utilizing the Handwriting Without Tears multi-sensory approach to writing.

For further information, please contact Jamie Levine at (443) 812-6396 or ot_ventures@hotmail.com or go to <http://www.ot-ventures.com>.



Support groups

Autism Spectrum Disorder support group of Southern Maryland; contact Terri at (301) 862-7235 or griestbears@verizon.net or Jennifer at (301) 997-0794 or johnjenb@md.metrocast.net or go to <http://www.orgsites.com/md/asd/supportgroupofsomd>.

Arc of Baltimore support group for parents and caregivers of children with developmental disabilities; contact Katrina Clemons at (410) 296-2272 ext 5353 or kclemons@arcofbaltimore.org.

Adult Autism Resource Group; contact Linda Pearl at (410) 769-9500.

Autism-Asperger Association of Calvert County support group; contact (410) 326-5050 or AAACC@asdcalvert.org.

Autistic Self Advocacy Network - Baltimore chapter; go to <http://aspengers.meetup.com/256/calendar/7207155> or <http://www.autisticadvocacy.org> or contact Ari Ne'eman at (732) 763-5530 or info@autisticadvocacy.org.

Anne Arundel County Asperger Syndrome support group; contact Sue Hayward at (410) 544-6661 or go to <http://www.aacaps.org>.

Aspergers Syndrome and autism spectrum disorders support group; go to <http://aspengers.meetup.com/243>.

Army Exceptional Family Member Program support group; contact Caraline Someck or Valerie Stanislaus at (301) 677-5590.

Abilities Network epilepsy support group; contact Danielle Wright at (301) 392-3554 ext. 210.

Baltimore Chesapeake Chapter of the Autism Society support group; go to <http://www.bcc-asa.org> or call (410) 655-7933.

Calvert County special needs support group; call Therapeutic Recreation office at (410) 535-1600 ext 2542 or go to <http://www.co.cal.md.us/residents/parks/therapeutic>.

Holistic Moms Network; go to <http://www.holisticmoms.org> or contact Cassandra Alls at cbsunshine@mac.com or (443) 995-2622.

Howard County Asperger's support group; contact Elaine McAuliffe at (410) 730-0068.

Howard County Autism Society support group; go to <http://www.howard-autism.org> or call (410) 290-3466.

Parent support group for children with disabilities and developmental disorders; call Frankly Communicating Speech Language Therapy at (410) 871-2990.

Southern Anne Arundel County autism support group; contact Tammy LeBow at (410) 336-6104.

Sensory Processing Disorder parent support group; contact OT Ventures at (443) 812-6396 or ot_ventures@hotmail.com.

Support group for parents of students with disabilities; contact Bob Brown at (443) 881-2034 or rbrown@hannahmore.org.

Family events, social events and fundraising events

On **Saturday June 14th** the **Howard County Autism Society** and **AMC Columbia 14** will host a sensory-friendly showing of "Kung Fu Panda" at AMC Theatres Columbia Mall for children with special needs. Doors open at 8:45 am and the movie starts at 9:30 am with no trailers. They will also host a showing of "Wall-E" on **Saturday July 12th**. For further information, please contact **Marianne Ross** at ross-fda@hotmail.com.

On **Saturday June 14th** from **2:00 to 5:00 pm**, **Pathfinders for Autism** and **Chesapeake Regional Accessible Boating (CRAB)** will hold a family picnic and sailing event at Sandy Point State Park. Pathfinders staff and volunteers will be on hand with fun "camp" inspired games and prizes. A limited number of guests will also enjoy the opportunity to sail free courtesy of CRAB. All park entrance fees still apply. Registration is required to participate in the sailing trip. Space is very limited, and individuals with autism will be given seating priority. Please bring your own food and refreshments; concessions are available. For further information and to register, please contact **Glenn Carr** at **(410) 269-1237** or glennccarr@aol.com.

On **Tuesday June 16th** and **Tuesday July 15th** from **5:00 – 10:00 pm**, the **Rockfish restaurant** on Sixth Street in Annapolis will hold a special evening for families living with an autism spectrum disorder. Special gluten and/or casein-free menu items are available, background music is turned down, and a quiet room is available. Reservations are encouraged. For further information or to make reservations, please call **(410) 267-1800**. A portion of the proceeds is donated to Pathfinders for Autism.



On **Wednesday June 18th** and **Wednesday July 16th**, **Bounce Around** on Airport Park Road in Glen Burnie will hold four sessions at **1:00 pm, 2:00 pm, 5:30 pm, and 6:30 pm** for children with autism spectrum disorders and their siblings. A quiet room is available. Reservations are required. For further information or to make a reservation, please call **(410) 768-8288**.

On **Thursday June 19th** and **Thursday July 17th** from **6:30 – 8:00 pm**, **Book Friends** will hold their meeting at the public library on McKinsey Road in Severna Park. For further information or to reserve a seat, please contact **Chrystal Irving** at **(443) 867-7032** or **Rebecca Raggio** at **(410) 923-5751**.

On **Sunday June 22nd** from **12:00 - 5:00 pm**, **Pathfinders for Autism** will host a visit to the **Port Discovery children's museum** on Market Place in Baltimore for children with autism and their families. For further information or to register, please go to **<http://www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevoid=159972>** or contact **Rebecca Rienzi** at Pathfinders for Autism at **(410) 769-8221**.

On **Friday July 4th** at **8:00 am**, **Autism Speaks** will hold their 8th annual Potomac 5K Run/1 mile walk. For further information or to obtain registration materials, please go to **<http://www.autismspeaks.org/potomac5k>**.

On **Friday August 8th**, the **Bowie Baysox** will hold their 2nd annual **Autism Awareness night** at their evening game against the New Britain Rock Cats. The game begins at 7:05 pm. For further information, please go to **<http://www.baysox.com>** or call **Lindsay Johnson**, Marketing Assistant, at **(301) 464-4853**.

A group of moms with children in Anne Arundel County Infants and Toddlers and ECI programs gets together to meet other moms, share common experiences and resources, and have some food and fun. For further information, please contact **Dawn Dixon** at **dawn1477@comcast.net** or **(410) 721-1748**.

A new Autism Play Group Network for families on the Eastern Shore is being started for families of children with autism and/or sensory issues, ages 0 – 6 years, who are too young (because of age/disability/maturity) for local activities/camps. It is also designed to help parents network. For further information, please go to **<http://www.DisabilitiesNetworkEasternShoreMaryland>** or contact **Ann** at **mommieonamissioninmd@yahoo.com**.

*Be sure to mark you calendar -
annual summer beach party on Saturday August 16th!*

Presentations, workshops, seminars, conferences, forums, and public meetings

On **Sunday June 15th** at **7:00 pm**, the **Sensory Processing Disorder Parent Support group** will host a free presentation about Executive Function and ADHD. It will be held at OT Ventures and led by Dr. Linda Spencer, Speech-Language Pathologist. For further information, please contact **Jamie Levine** at **(443) 812-6396** or **ot_ventures@hotmail.com**.

On **Thursday June 19th** from **7:00—8:30 pm**, the **Feingold Association** will host a free presentation about the role of food additives in learning, behavior and/or health effects for sensitive people. The presentation will be held at the Marriott SpringHill Suites on Elkridge Landing Road in Linthicum. For further information, please contact the Feingold Association at **(631) 369-9340** or **<http://www.ADHDdiet.org>**.

On **Wednesday June 25th** from **7:00—9:00 pm**, the **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)** will host a presentation entitled “**Children with behavioral problems: What parents need to know**”. It will be held at the Johns Hopkins University—Montgomery County campus on Medical Center Drive in Rockville, and will cover a variety of topics, including common signs and symptoms of serious behavioral problems, understanding treatment options, and current research being conducted at NIMH. For further information or to register, please contact NIMH at **(301) 594-8705** or **kidsbehavior@mail.nih.gov**.

On **Thursday June 26th** and **Friday June 27th**, **Pyramid Group Management** will host a training on the **Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)** in Alexandria, Virginia. For further information or to obtain registration materials, please contact **Stephanie Levendis** at **(302) 994-2690** or **slevendis@pecs.com**.

On **Monday June 30th** from **6:00—8:30 pm**, **Abilities Network's Family Empowerment Network** will host a presentation entitled “**Autism 101**”. It will be led by **Rae Ann Brodie Kaylie** of My Building Blocks and held at the public library in Elkridge. The presentation will include information about the ‘red flags’ of autism, how autism is diagnosed, the effects of autism, treatment of autism, and teaching a child with autism. For further information or to RSVP, please contact **Kelly Dunning** at **(443)562-4772** or **kdunning@abilitiesnetwork.org**.



On **Saturday June 28th** from **10:00 am— 12:00 noon**, **Georgetown University's Center for Child and Human Development** will host a workshop entitled "**Practical solutions for challenging behaviors**" at their office on Whitehaven Street NW in Washington, DC. The workshop will be led by Jane Barbin, PhD, BCBA, and will provide parents with an understanding of the reasons challenging behaviors occur and potential intervention strategies that can be incorporated into daily routines and activities. She will discuss strategies to increase positive behaviors, derived from the field of applied behavior analysis, and provide some practical applications of providing reinforcement. For further information and to obtain registration materials, please contact **Toby Long** at longt@georgetown.edu.

On **Thursday July 17th** and **Friday July 18th**, **Future Horizons** will host an online conference featuring Dr. Temple Grandin sharing insights from her new book, Dr. Tony Attwood presenting on cognitive understanding, and Maria Wheeler presenting on behavior and toilet training. For further information or to register, please call **(800) 489-0727** or go to <http://www.FHautism.com>.

From **Sunday August 10th** to **Tuesday August 12th**, the national **Reinventing Quality conference** will be held in Baltimore. The conference features leading edge programs and practices in quality services for persons with developmental disabilities. For further information or to obtain registration materials, please go to <http://www.reinventingquality.org>.

Research studies

Victoria Miller, a doctorate of clinical psychology student at Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia, is seeking participants for a research study investigating the possibility that some girls and boys with High Functioning Autism or Asperger's Syndrome are not being diagnosed because they just seem 'different' in some way but people don't understand why. She is seeking parents and teachers of adolescent males and females with High Functioning Autism or Aspergers Syndrome to complete a questionnaire about their child or student in order to better understand the ways in which males and females with HFA are similar and different in areas such as appearance, communication, peer relationships and behavior at home and school. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact **Ms. Miller** at vcm@deakin.edu.au.

Nakia Taylor, a nursing student in graduate school at DePaul University in Chicago, is seeking African-American parents raising a child with autism to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to help nurses, educators, and other healthcare providers gain insight about stressors that are encountered by African-American parents who are raising a child with autism, and the coping strategies that they utilize in response to this stress. Participants will be asked to complete three questionnaires, and will receive a \$10 stipend. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact **Ms. Taylor** at **(773) 715-8778** or nakialynise@yahoo.com.


Elizabeth O'Hanlon, a doctoral student and the parent of a child with a disability, is seeking participants for a research study designed to identify experiences that families of children with disabilities have within their spiritual community. Her goal is to use the results to help spiritual organizations provide positive supports for families of children with disabilities. Participants will be asked to complete an on-line survey. If you are interested in participating or would like further information, please contact **Ms. O'Hanlon** at chasliz@verizon.net.

Resources

If you or a family member are visiting Washington DC and are unable to use public transportation because of a disability, Metro Access, WMATA's paratransit service, will be implementing Door to Door services in June. A new Metro Access Customer Guide, which help riders learn about Metro Access and the new Door to Door services and guidelines, is available at http://www.wmata.com/metroaccess/MetroAccessCustomerGuide_new.pdf. Information is also available at http://www.wmata.com/MetroAccess/access_form.cfm.

The **Organization for Autism Research** has released "**Understanding Asperger Syndrome: A Professor's Guide**", a 12-minute video for use by college students with Asperger Syndrome as a tool to educate their professors, teaching assistants, and others about the disorder. The video is available for viewing and download at no cost at <http://www.researchautism.org/resources/AspergerDVDSeries.asp>.

Parents of a child with autism in Prince Georges County are encouraged to join other parents in developing and participating in the new **One World Center for Autism**. The goal of this new organization is to identified challenges that can be addressed at a community-wide level, as well as identifying needed services. For further information, please go to <http://www.worldforautism.info> or call **(301) 957-1400**.



Anne Arundel County Chapter
Autism Society of America
P.O. Box 1304
Millersville, MD 21108

Postage
here

We have available **autism awareness merchandise**, including puzzle ribbon lapel pins and car magnets, autism puzzle piece bracelets and wristbands, as well as many other wonderful items. They can be purchased at our meetings or by using the order forms at <http://www.aaccasa.org>.

We participate in **Affiliate Programs** with **Future Horizons** and **Autism Asperger Publishing Company**. Through these programs, when you follow the link at <http://www.aaccasa.org> to their web sites to make purchases, our chapter receives a portion of the purchase price.

The **Garyworld** online store (<http://www.cafépress.com/garyworld>) promotes the original artwork of chapter member Gary Schmedes Jr., including such characters as Monster Chicken and his girlfriend, Monstrous Hen. Gary and his family are generously donating a portion of the profit from the sale of these items to our chapter.

Donation commitment

Beth Strasnick, one of our chapter members and the parent of a child with autism, has initiated a fund-raising effort to help our chapter's awareness, education, support, and advocacy efforts.

Beth has committed to donate \$250 to AACC-ASA for every referral through our group that results in a sale, and to increase the donation to \$500 if she sells your home and helps you buy a new home.

Beth Strasnick

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