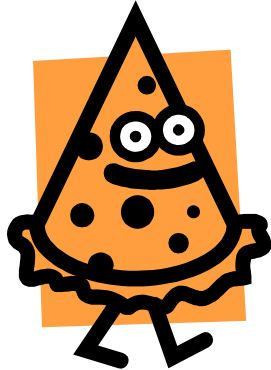
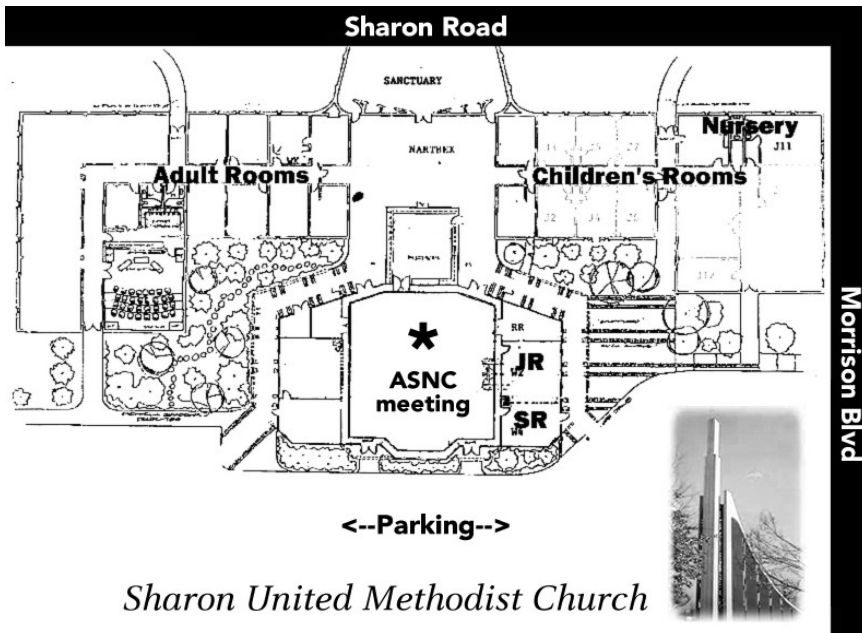


## Mark your calendar for our end of the year party- Thursday, June 5th!!



*We have the food, we have the games, and we have the prizes!! All we need is you. It was such a big hit last year, we are gearing up for another round of Jeopardy on the Spectrum!*

*Doors open at 7:00; announcements 7:15; party 7:25- 9:00*



Sharon United Methodist Church

**Meeting Location:** -4411 Sharon at Morrison Blvd, Charlotte 28211. (Across from South Park Mall – Cheesecake Factory side) Use Morrison Blvd. Entrance to park around back. Our room is near the middle of the building. Enter via the doors near the portico. **Handicap access outside on the right hand side entrance.**

### IMPORTANT CHILDCARE NOTICE:

**Childcare is available for the first 12 children registered.**

Those not registered will be turned away. We must insure the safety of all children under our care during the meeting, so we must know how many will be in attendance before each meeting. It will be important to Contact Kathy Snyder by **Mon. June 2nd.** 704-904-0456or [kos101@bellsouth.net](mailto:kos101@bellsouth.net)

### Inside this issue:

President's note	2
Calendar	3
Transition tips– Kathy Fallin	4
ASNC-MCC Offerings	5
Upcoming Local Events	6
Aware Fare Update	7
Autism's Touch	8
Teacher Appreciation	9-13
Membership Form	Last pg.



Autism Society  
 of NORTH CAROLINA  
 Mecklenburg County Chapter

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
[www.asncmeck.org](http://www.asncmeck.org)

---

### President's Note:

It is time to pack up the newsletter file for another year. This is a joyous time of year at our house, realizing Mom has two months off from writing assignments, newsletter deliveries, and all the processing that goes into bringing you some news each month— helpful I hope. Joe Nestor can see the reality of a clean house, neatly pruned yard, and the good home cookin he has missed since Christmas. Paul Nestor is counting the days til Mom is no longer distracted by other things and more time for gentle guidance!

I have to admit this should be one of the easiest newsletters to put together because I actually write only a little over half of this issue— parent appreciation notes take up 3 pages. However, it is definitely the hardest issue to work on. Parents send beautiful, sincere messages, filled with strong, heartfelt thanks. I have the dirty assignment of paring the entries down so that they fit in the designated space. Please know that I feel horrible about this— having to chop off details of all the fine work done by teachers and all the heartfelt gratitude felt by you. We have so many wonderful people who are truly gifted at their craft. It is disrespectful to delete those perfect phrases and sentences. One board member suggested I just print them as is and if it takes more paper, so be it. Unfortunately with 10 pages, we are already at the maximum weight for a 42 cent stamp. I don't mind a good bout of disagreement, but not with the U S Postal Service! Mike Snyder, our treasurer is a not one to fiddle with either, should I elect to go over budget. So like last year, we will be posting a different version on line, one with uncensored parent appreciation notes. It will also have more information on the new After School pilot being offered by the Siskey YMCA which was developed by the Autism Society of North Carolina and the Autism Foundation of the Carolinas; as well as, information on a new summer camp partnership between Parker Autism and Autism Services. This camp, Camp Dakota, has openings for this summer if you are still in need of a placement. Please feel free to go online and read the real un-tampered masterpieces at our website: [www.asncmeck.org](http://www.asncmeck.org) .

With summer gearing up, some of us are looking forward to reviving the Summer Fun group. Last year we met once a week at various cheap and or free autism friendly sites around Charlotte. This year we are planning to have a North County group and a Charlotte group too. With the price of gas, we don't want to put anyone out, and we also want to continue to offer fellowship to everyone in our group. At some point during the week, adult conversation becomes necessary for one's survival! Again this year, we will try to offer events for a variety of needs: museums for older kids or those with Asperger and more sensory based events (spray parks, swimming, etc) for those who are more wide-open with their autism— such as Paul Nestor. Look on the calendar to see many of the events we have planned so far. Some of you signed up at the February meeting to be notified of the summer schedule. If you would like to join the group, please contact Susan Wild, our recreation director. She will add you to the Recreation E-mail blast for the summer. Susan has planned some unique experiences for us, such as a story time cruise on the Catawba Queen River Boat on Lake Norman. Let us know if you are up for some fun!

Also, the coffee groups have asked that we extend coffee time to year round. If you are interested in joining for coffee in June, July, or August, contact Betsy Gustafson ([BetsyGustafson@carolina.rr.com](mailto:BetsyGustafson@carolina.rr.com)) for South Coffee and Susan Wild ([Susan\\_Wild@msn.com](mailto:Susan_Wild@msn.com)) for North Coffee. In the meantime, have a great summer!! Gotta go, I think my vacuum cleaner is calling me!

Nancy Nestor, ASNC-MCC President



: 704-545-1902



: [nnestor@carolina.rr.com](mailto:nnestor@carolina.rr.com)

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
[www.asncmeck.org](http://www.asncmeck.org)

### June Events:



**June 1st (S): SHINE** -Church for people with ASD; Huntersville United Methodist; NEW LOCATION- 14005 Stumptown Road; 2:30 – 2:50 pm contact: Rev. Monica Humpal at 704-875-1156; [monica@huntersvilleumc.org](mailto:monica@huntersvilleumc.org).

**June 5th (Th) ASNC-MCC Monthly Support Mtg. End of the Year Party-** Food, Fun, Games and Door Prizes! 7:00-9:00 Sharon United Methodist, 4411 Sharon Rd. Charlotte, 28211

**June 5th (Th) ASNC Professional Development Conference: Early Intervention: Addressing Core Deficits–** Connie Kasari from UCLA's Center on Autism Research will address issues and strategies for early intervention. Go to: [www.autismsociety-nc.org](http://www.autismsociety-nc.org) for more information.

**June 10th (T)– through August 19th Bowling for Special Needs Children and their Families– 10:00 –noon;** Carolina Lanes, 11210 Brigmon Ln, Matthews, NC 28105; cost \$5.00 for shoes and two games

**June 10th (T) Go-Carting under the Stars-** Extreme Toys Speed Park- 20310 Sefton Park Drive, Cornelius, NC 28031. ( Beside Monkey Joe's) Private Party for families facing disabilities – 6:30-8:30 PM.



**June 16th-20th Lose the Wheels Bicycle Camp for those with Special Needs** Cricket Arena, Special bikes for special kids who need specific interventions to learn to ride. Camp slots for various times available; call Claire Jordan 704.759.0307; [clairejordan@mac.com](mailto:clairejordan@mac.com)



**June 21st (S) Starlight Skate Party** 9:30-11:30; 8830 WT. Harris Blvd., Charlotte 28227; contact Susan\_Wild@msn.com or (704-601-6938) . Cost: \$4.00 per person includes skate rental

**June 21st (S) Swim Party** 3-7 pm, Stone water Clubhouse, Mt Holly, for 13 years and up. Contact Susan Wild; (704-601-6938) Susan\_Wild@msn.com for details

**June 23rd– 24th (M-T) Inclusion and Autism;** Dr. Paula Kluth presents training for regular educators on effective work with our children; contact Kathy Fallin: 980-343-6960 for more info.

**June 23rd– Inclusion and Autism;** with Dr. Paula Kluth presents training for parents on effective inclusion practices with our children; 6:30-8:30; Sharon United Methodist Church, 4411 Sharon Rd. Charlotte, 28211 Cost– **Free**; if you would like to attend, please RSVP by June 22nd to Nancy Nestor: 704-545-1902 or [nnestor@carolina.rr.com](mailto:nnestor@carolina.rr.com).

### June Continued:

**June 23rd-27th Autreat 2008;** an event for those with autism presented by those with autism; self-advocacy, programs on the positives of living with autism; go to: [ani.autistics.org/aut08](http://ani.autistics.org/aut08)



**June 25th (W) \$1.00 Movie @ 10am** NorthLake Mall / Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium; movies sound will be lowered for sensitivity; for reservations call Susan Wild- (704-601-6938) or Susan\_Wild@msn.com.

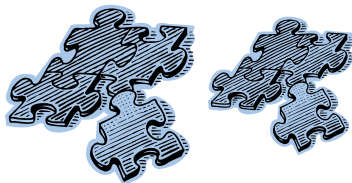
**June 28th (S) Autism, AD(H)D, Aspergers, PDD\*, and Behavior Disorders Treatments and Therapies Make a Difference!** Queens University, Sykes Auditorium, 1900 Selwyn Ave, Charlotte 28274; Speakers include: Lori Knowles, Christopher Jenny, Dr. Myra Preston, Shula Edelkind, and Lisa Jillani; Topics will focus on Biomedical approaches, diets, ABA paired with Quantitative EEG with Neurotherapy, and NC Statute on Immunization Exemptions. Cost: **\$49.00 if you register before June 8th;** \$79.00 if you register after. Cost includes, conference, lunch, and materials. Registration: call- 800-288-0383 or go to: [www.greatplainslaboratory.com](http://www.greatplainslaboratory.com)

### July Events:

**July 14th– 18th;** Music/Dance Camp; 9:30 am.– 12 pm. Music Therapist, Anna-Catherine Fowler, and Dance Instructor, Jenny Griffes will lead singing and dancing activities. Ages: 5-16; Location: Davidson Elementary; cost- \$35.00; Deadline: June 16

**Recreation Events for July/August:** Dates/times TBA contact Susan\_Wild@msn.com if you are interested in joining the ASNC-MCC Summer Fun Group North and [nnestor@carolina.rr.com](mailto:nnestor@carolina.rr.com) for the South Group. Activities will include:

- Blue Line Train ride to Imaginon and Jillian's
- Bowling in Huntersville, Matthews
- Catawba Queen Cruise/ lunch Midtown Sundries
- Spray parks
- Monkey Joes/ Pump it Up
- Discovery Place/ Nature Museum
- \$1.00 movies North County and Charlotte
- Skating Parties
- Secured Park Playgroups for younger kids
- Museum of the New South
- Racing World/ Lowes Motor Speedway Tour
- Carolina's Aviation Museum



## Parent Suggestions for Transitioning Students with ASD

By Kathy Fallin– CMS Program Specialist for Autism

Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder often experience trouble changing activities and settings. Beginning a new school year and transitioning to a new school are especially stressful for students, families and schools. These transitions are multi-layered in that they involve issues with socialization, communication and behavior. The following are suggestions for parents to consider. Please keep in mind that you know the abilities of your child best. We greatly appreciate the honor of working with you to educate your child.

1. Pre-visit the school prior to the first day. Consider taking photos of the cafeteria, gym/ multi-purpose room, playground or other key school areas. Make a book or social stories with the photos. Review several times prior to school starting.
2. If you know the new teacher's name and/ or the teacher assistant write a social story about them. Photos may be helpful, if available. For information on writing social stories visit the website: <http://www.thegraycenter.org/socialstories.cfm>
3. Prime (tell the student in advance) of any known changes, such as new bus driver, etc.  
If your child utilizes visual/written daily schedules, then practice during the summer, a way to indicate a change in the schedule, such as a red X through the event and a new event written in its place.
4. If your child utilizes visual/written daily schedules, then practice during the summer, a way to indicate a change in the schedule, such as a red X through the event and a new event written in its place.
5. If your child has space issues, practice and role play developing an awareness of proximity to others. Creating the visual for appropriate hallway spacing from peers, such as creating a "bubble" around your body, or use length of arm.
6. If possible get the school schedule for secondary in advance. Review with student and place in notebook or school agenda.
7. If you received the secondary schedule, getting a school map and reviewing the map with the schedule would be helpful.
8. Visit the CMS school web page.
9. Think in terms of age-appropriateness for language and attire. What are the key buzz words for middle school students? Practice the use of the "in words", if appropriate. Move toward an age-appropriate visual schedule, such as picture symbols in the school agenda.
10. If your child has difficulty getting on/ off the bus, consider videotaping him on a good day when he is getting on the bus. Repeatedly show him the tape prior to school starting.
11. Practice/ encourage the use of self-monitoring and self-advocacy skills. Could your child draw type or fill in a pre-made template of his feelings? Could he use a drawing of a thermometer or "5 Point Incredible Scale" to indicate when his frustration is increasing?
12. Make the new teacher aware of reinforcers and preferred activities.
13. Prior to school starting, begin to adjust the getting up time, especially if the new school has an early starting time.
14. Be patient with your child, and the school. Allow for adjustment time.

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
[www.asncmeck.org](http://www.asncmeck.org)



Autism Society  
of NORTH CAROLINA



### **Three Programs working together**

In partnership with the Autism Society of North Carolina and the Autism Foundation of the Carolinas, the Siskey YMCA will open a new pilot afterschool programs at its Hemby Center Campus off Kuykendall Road in South Charlotte. The program will provide services for K-5 students with mild to moderate autism from schools in the area served by the Siskey Y (Southern Mecklenburg and Northwest Union) with transportation being provided by the Y or by CMS. It has been designed by highly skilled personnel from the Autism Society, TEACCH, the Cyzner Institute, and the South Carolina Early Autism Project. The program will be staffed with a 1:3 ratio and will be open from 2-6:00 each afternoon. Applications are now available through June 15th. To learn more about this wonderful opportunity, contact Liz Defrietas at 704-716-4338 or [Liz.DeFreitas@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:Liz.DeFreitas@YMCACharlotte.org)

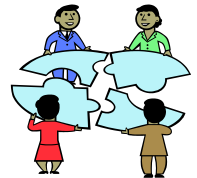
### **AMF Like to Bowl? Want some Summer Fun?**

Carolina Lanes, 11210 Brigmon Ln, Matthews, 28105 has agreed to host a Summer Bowling Series for children with disabilities and typical siblings and family members. The series will begin on Tuesday, June 10th and run through August 19th, from 10am to noon. The cost is \$5 per person and includes shoes and two games. This is a huge savings over the posted rates! Families who have children with special diets may bring a small snack and drink. The staff request that those individuals who are not on special diets refrain from bringing outside food as this is against their policy. There is a snack bar available to purchase food and drinks. They will have lanes open with and without bumpers. This is a great opportunity to get your child/children active for the summer and thanks to Carolina Lanes for making it affordable and open to typical siblings and family members so our kids will have some typical models! You are required to supervise all children you bring with you; no drop offs! You do not have to commit to the entire summer, but they would like to have an idea of the number interested. Please state whether you would want bumpers or no bumpers. Anyone with questions may contact Marla O'Neil at : [marlao@carolina.rr.com](mailto:marlao@carolina.rr.com).

Thanks to Harris Teeter and to all of those who bought point of purchase tickets to support ASNC during the recent Autism Awareness Fundraiser. Because of your efforts, our chapter was able to raise over for ASNC. We would like to thank the following teachers who were kind enough to spend a Sunday afternoon sharing a display table with parents: Tiffany Hogue, Bernice Clark, and Lora Caudill. We are also thankful to the parents who helped with the campaign: Susan Wild, Charlene James, Lois Stickell, Matt Rice, Michael Cox, Cindy Cavanaugh, John Cavanaugh, Annette Mastrogiani, Kathy Snyder, Kim Adkinson, Marlena Smeraldo, Christy Koury, and Nancy Nestor. Thanks to everyone who made a donation!

### **ATTENCION!!**

Estimados padres de familia: la división del Condado de Mecklenburg en la Sociedad de Autismo se complace en ofrecerles oportunidades para aprender más sobre Autismo y programas en nuestro condado que pueden ser de ayuda. Si ustedes estuvieran interesados en ayudarnos para traducir, o si estuvieran interesados en atender a alguna reunión en la que la presentación sea traducida al español, porfavor contacte a Nancy Nestor al teléfono: 704-545-1902, o escriba por email: [nnestor@carolina.rr.com](mailto:nnestor@carolina.rr.com).



### **Many Thanks...**

Our last meeting was both informative and inspiring as we took time to honor some of the young people in our community and their families who have taken the cause of Autism to heart. We presented a certificate of achievement to Hannah Haas for her design of bubble wrap wallpaper for children with autism. Miss Haas won a national award earlier this year for her work. Anne Palmer presented trophies to Vignesh and Suman Sivasubramaniam for their Mini Dance Marathon, which raised over \$3,000.00 for our chapter. Following these awards, Maureen Morrell and Bob D'Amelio spoke about the ASNC- Autism Speaks plan for working with your legislative members to address the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We sincerely appreciate the dedication they have shown in helping our families and look forward to working with them on a regular basis.

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
[www.asncmeck.org](http://www.asncmeck.org)




### Free Inclusion workshop for Parents

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools will be hosting Paula Kluth again this year as part of their efforts to increase teacher proficiency with autism. Ms. Kluth is the author of six highly recommended books and nationally known educational consultant in the area of inclusion and autism. During the day on June 23rd and 24th, CMS will offer a workshop for their teaching staff; however, on the evening of June 23rd, ASNC-MCC has partnered with CMS to provide parents with a free workshop with Ms. Kluth. If your child is involved in inclusion or mainstreaming in any form, this is a valuable workshop for you. Books will be offered for purchase. The workshop information is as follows:

**An Evening with Paula Kluth  
Monday, June 23rd ~ 6:30-8:30**

**Sharon United Methodist Church  
4411 Sharon Rd. Charlotte, 28211**

Please RSVP [nnestor@carolina.rr.com](mailto:nnestor@carolina.rr.com) by 6-22. Go to [www.paulakluth.com](http://www.paulakluth.com) to learn more.



**Autism, AD(H)D, Aspergers, PDD\*, and Behavior Disorders**  
*Treatments and Therapies That Make a Difference!*  
**Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Charlotte, NC** MINI-CONFERENCE  
Queens University, Sykes Auditorium 1900 Selwyn Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28274

**EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT - \$49 – IF YOU  
REGISTER BEFORE JUNE 8, 2008!!**

**AFTER JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup> – CONFERENCE FEE: \$79**

*Conference Fee includes buffet lunch, refreshments & handouts*  
**8am – 5pm (Registration begins at 8am)**

Speaker	Talk Title
Lori Knowles	"A Mother's Success Story: Daniel's Journey Out of Autism"
Christ Jenny	"Biomedical Treatments: The Basics"
Lori Knowles	"Navigating the Maze of Nutritional Supplements"
Dr. Myra Preston	"ABA, Quantitative EEG and Neurotherapy as a Multidisciplinary Approach to Diagnosis and Treatment"
Shula Edelkind	"Behavior, Learning and Health: Is there a Dietary Connection?"
Lisa Jillani	"NC Statute on Immunization Exemptions: What Every Parent Needs to Know."

**Saturday, June 28th, 8:00-5:00**  
**Queens University, Sykes Auditorium**  
**1900 Selwyn Avenue, Charlotte, 28274**

#### HOW TO REGISTER

1. Online at [www.greatplainslaboratory.com](http://www.greatplainslaboratory.com)
2. By phone: 800-288-0383 at The Great Plains Laboratory with Rory Butler or Chasity Robinson or Fax: 913-341-6207

**ASNC-MCC does not promote any activity or event. We simply offer information. Please note it is your responsibility to decide what works best for your family's specific needs.**

Thanks to ASNC-MCC Members who supported Autism Aware Fare!!!



Jocie Cremisi

John and Cindy Cavanaugh  
Nancy and Joe Nestor  
John and Mary Brooks Brown  
David and Lindsay Kluttz  
Mike and Kathy Snyder



Susan Wild

Christy Koury  
Lora Caudill  
Bill Farnsworth  
Kelly Langston  
Maria Hernandez  
Jennifer Robelo  
Charlotte Henson  
Pam McCarthy  
Elizabeth Phillippi  
John and Trina Roeder  
Cindy O'Day  
Christine Devoe  
Carrie Nichols  
Hayley Harris  
Michael Cox

Sandy and Reid Smith  
Nancy Popkin and Gray Stanbach  
Lisa and Jonathan Richardson  
Melicia and Barbara McCain  
Louise Silverstein  
Terri and Joy McCarver  
Caren Bistany and Bo Kissinger  
Kevin Kasper  
Karla Newman  
Paul and Jenny Hicks  
Jarleth Nurkin  
Donna Abernethy  
Dave and Heather Hardman  
Annette Mastrogianni  
Matt Rice

Lori Ellsworth  
Lois Layer  
Julie Tipton  
Sharon Roberts  
Stanley Harris  
Brian Cooler  
Kathy Hibbits  
Rebecca Via  
Yolanda Fox  
Lori Schleicher  
Dave Belk  
Marcia Price  
Yvonne Freeman  
Ann Waters  
Julie Martin

## Teachers and Staff

A.G. Middle, Ardrey Kell High, Beverly Woods Elementary, Blythe Elementary, Carmel Middle, Cyzner, Davidson Elementary, J.M. Robinson Middle, Lebanon Road Elementary, Lincoln Heights Elementary, McAlpine Elementary, McKee Road Elementary, Mint Hill Middle, Myers Park High, Oakdale Elementary, Selwyn Elementary, and Winget Park Elementary

We also appreciate our restaurants and sponsors! Please patronize them all year!

We apologize for any names we inadvertently left off! Please tell us if you dined out, invited a group, or advertised the event and we'll post your name at [www.AutismAwareFare.org](http://www.AutismAwareFare.org)  
Please send any photos you took, as well, to [BetsyGustafson@carolina.rr.com](mailto:BetsyGustafson@carolina.rr.com)

## Autism's Touch

Myers Park High School recently recognized two students - J.T. Mehari and Sam Williams because of their work with students with autism as part of the school's Mustang Manners award program for the month of April.

The nomination for JT Mehari was submitted by parent, Betsy Gustafson. She writes, "J.T. Mehari worked with a student who has autism so he could participate on the school's track team. He coached the student on his form and advocated for him to be able to run in a meet. If he hadn't, I am doubtful the coaches would have let the student in a meet. The student got to run in two meets and was VERY excited. The team was great about cheering him on. We are blessed in the Myers Park family to have such caring students!

There were two nominations for Sam Williams. Teacher Mary Zalecki writes: Sam Williams was assigned to my classroom to assist my students with their art elective. Most of my students have been diagnosed with Autism and are in a self-contained setting for most of the day. Like any teenager, peer relationships are an important aspect of high school life, and my students are no exception.

Sam came into our classroom with an enthusiasm that has not been matched by any previous student assistant. Sam treats my students with respect and dignity. Sam sees my students as individuals, not as students with a disability. Sam sees my students for what they can do, not what they can not do. My students consider Sam a friend. They wait anxiously for 4<sup>th</sup> period "A" days for Sam to come through the door. Some of my students ask me if it is an "A" day. It really should be an "S" day because they are really inquiring if it is Sam's day to come.

Sam is an old soul; wise beyond his young years. I'm so excited to see what Sam does in the future. It gives me hope that there are students like Sam who will change the world with his wisdom, compassion and unbridled optimism.

In addition, Wanda Sowell writes: Sam was assigned to work with our class this semester as a peer tutor. Sam immediately bonded with the students and has proven to be an excellent role model. He is sensitive to the students' needs and recognizes their potential. But most importantly, he treats each student with respect. Sam has also assisted in planning and implementing lessons for the class. He has a natural teaching ability. I feel privileged to have worked with Sam this semester and know the students will miss him. We wish him the very best in all his endeavors.

Both JT and Sam were awarded Visa gift cards sponsored by the Autism Society of Mecklenburg County in recognition of their efforts to help students with disabilities be successful at Myers Park. Congratulations to our students and thank you to ASNC-MCC for sponsoring the award. - Jennifer Fox; Aspergers Chat Group Moderator



*J.T. Mehari with Anders Gustafson, fellow Myers Park track teammate*



*Myers Park Assistant Principal, Carlos Grant, with Sam Williams*



## ***Teacher Appreciation Notes:***

*Each year, ASNC-MCC helps parents honor those who have shown so much dedication to our children throughout the year, by publishing notes of appreciation. The following are sentiments sent in by parents, students, and a teacher.*

**Ms. Latanya Shingler– Starmount Pre-K** It is the hope of every parent of a special needs child to find a teacher who will really work to understand the special qualities and personality of their child. Ms. Latanya Shingler is one of those teachers. Ms. Shingler has a "can-do" attitude in successfully including our son, Jonathan, into her typical pre-k classroom. She provides an environment that is conducive for learning and motivates our son to learn. Because of her perseverance, time and professional commitment, our son has excelled (academically, following directions, toileting, less meltdowns and biting), beyond what we could have ever imagined. Thank-you!!! Lisa & Jonathan Richardson

**Selwyn Elementary- Kim Eley and Amelia Worley** are our son Hunter's wonderful and loving teachers at Selwyn Elementary. They have been true "Angels" to all six of the special boys in their class. Each day that I drop Hunter off in the carpool line, I know that he will have fun, throw a few tantrums, learn something new, take his shoes off twenty times, get some hugs, run down the hallway, practice writing his name, and be loved and well taken care of throughout the whole day. Ms. Eley and Ms. Worley have done a wonderful job with Hunter this year - we truly appreciate all that they do for him. The rest of the "A-Team" at Selwyn - Lora Caudill, Bethany Nettles, Bernice Clark, Carolyn Jones, and Gwen Robinson - also deserve thanks. They work so well as a team. Each child is special to them. Their patience and love for all these children as they grow is amazing. Thank you, thank you! Amy and Jimmy Emmanuel

**Garr Christian~ Mrs. Adams, Miss Angie, Miss Cassandra** The Sullivan family expresses our appreciation to all the staff at Garr Christian Academy. We are amazed at how the ABA Program is so well run and how great you all are with Shaun and the other children in the Program. You all do such worthwhile and wonderful work with those who need the most help! Specifically, we want to acknowledge the wonderful work of Mrs. Adams, Shaun's 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, Miss Angie who shadows Shaun during the school day and Miss Cassandra who works with Shaun after school. You all do a great job with Shaun! The Sullivans

**Garr Christian Academy~ Mrs. Ritterskamp**, the 5th grade teacher at Garr Christian Academy is an incredible teacher. From day one, hour one, she "got" Brandon and began the process of earning his trust, challenging him to do his best, curbing his behaviors and lending him support. She has been understanding, creative, supportive, incredibly communicative and most of all a teacher who believes in our kids BEST. I have been delighted, honored and amazed to watch the way she has balanced her teaching, adopted her style, found creative ways to include and involve our kids fully in her classroom. I have never seen a teacher like her. I will forever be thankful for the ways she has got above and beyond to help Brandon learn, and, be all he can possibly be. Melissa Myers

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
www.asncmeck.org



### **TEACHER APPRECIATION CONTINUED...**

**Mrs. Ritterskamp, Garr Christian**, is the best teacher I ever had. Even though sometimes she punishes me, I still like her. She's taught me well, helped me well, and loved me well. She always gives me tips on how to finish my work. She likes me very much as much as I love her. My shadow, Ms. Sherae, is trying to help me lose her, you see, there is an autism program at school where kids are trying to lose their shadows. I am a 5th grader and I haven't lost her yet. I always thought she was a great boss. She suggests, that I make good progress just like with Ms Felecia, my second shadow, (mainly I love Ms F) to lose Mrs Sherae like my buddies Dakota and Ryan. Brandon Myers

**Crystal, Nikki, and Manny, Early Learner Team, Garr Christian** ~ *Our family would like to thank the Early Learner Team at Garr for this great year. We were able to see great progress with our son Valentin. He loves going to school everyday and this is a great clue. Working and playing in a loving environment really helps him. We are still surprised by all progress he made thanks to you and your work. Now we are more confident for future. Thanks to Crystal, Nikki, and Manny for this year. Best Regards, ,Laurent, Aline, Baptiste, Mathilde and Valentin for sure.*

**Lora Caudill, Selwyn Elementary** ~ *When Kevin Michael and I moved here, from Florida, I had hoped to obtain at least the same quality of education and schooling that we'd received in Florida. When I met Ms. Caudill I knew right away that he would have so much better here. She understood Kevin Michael and knew how he'd react. We are thankful everyday that Ms. Caudill, thru fate, has come into our lives. Thanks you, Kevin Kasper*

**Kylie Cirioli, Winget Park Elementary** ~ Kind, compassionate, patient, understanding, caring, and loving: these are some of the words that describe Kylie Cirioli, an AU teacher at Winget Park Elementary. She will go above and beyond the call of duty to make sure the individual needs of each child in her class are met. She understands that each child is a special and unique individual. Ms. Cirioli has a special place in her heart for all of her children. She is constantly emailing and sending home all kind of helpful literature that is helpful in finding resources and activities to help my son. Ms. Cirioli was just out of school recently for an unexpected surgery and she was still sending emails and communicating with parents during her recovery. Anyone can be a teacher, but you have to have a special appreciation and understanding when it comes to working with children on the Autism Spectrum. Thank you for all that you have done this past school year Ms. Cirioli.

**Lora Caudill, Selwyn Elementary** ~ *I am pleased to have the opportunity to write a few words about what an amazing educator my son has found in Lora Caudill. 75 words is too brief to detail all of the ways in which she has helped my son this year, I'm sure I could wax rhapsodic for 1500 or more. She has an uncanny ability to identify stressors for my son, discuss them with him and make them evaporate. She has gotten my child to find fun in standardized testing and to try new foods. My son has made more than an academic year of growth in less than an academic year in her classroom. I can only hope he finds more such amazingly gifted teachers as he progresses through his academic career. She intuitively understands children with autism, and has a real gift for cheerful encouragement of both students and parents. She is an excellent communicator and builds strong home school bridges. Her group and their parents will sorely miss her when she moves up to the big school at AG next year. Matt Rice*

**Kathy Jarrell, Teacher Assistant; Kevin Binkley, Assistant Principal in charge of EC; North Mecklenburg High School** - In appreciation for a successful transition to high school. These two staff set the tone for the best that inclusion can be for a student with autism. Their support made it possible for Gray to be respected, safe, and an integral part of every one of his classes this year. We are forever grateful. Nancy Popkin and Mark Stanback

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
www.asncmeck.org



### Teacher Appreciation continued...

Just when life seems to get easy, the teenage years can pose new, unexpected challenges! The staff of **Myers Park High School** must be commended for their patience, support, problem-solving abilities, and extra time tutoring -- not to mention the direction and reassurance they provide parents. The Gustafson family would like to thank case manager, Wanda Sowell, for her time and effort in helping Anders navigate the turbulent waters of adolescence. We also owe a debt of gratitude to the rest of the support staff: **Kathy Bender, Mary Zalecki, Phyllis Alston, and Phylis Hampson**. His teachers have shown phenomenal compassion: **Ms. Eagle, Mr. Jenkins, Ms. Lalwani, Mr. Mirando, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Morrow, Ms. Starnes, and Mr. Walton**. **Thanks to the track team coaches: Bryan Brown, Coach Hayes, and Anna Parker.** Betsy Gustafson

**The Staff of Cyzner Institute Day School** –At the CI Day School, they exemplify the old saying “it takes a village”. While **Alison Preslipsky** is his primary teacher, every staff member there has touched Robert’s life this year. They pool their respective talents to meet the needs of the students, regardless of which class the child is in. On any given occasion, they play the different roles of teacher, disciplinarian, playmate, and surrogate mother to the children. Each brings a great gift to the school and students. **The Staff of Cyzner Institute Day School** exemplify the old saying “it takes a village”. While Alison Preslipsky is his primary teacher, every staff member there has touched Robert’s life this year. They pool their respective talents to meet the needs of the students, regardless of which class the child is in. On any given occasion, they play the different roles of teacher, disciplinarian, playmate, and surrogate mother to the children. Each brings a great gift to the school and students. Lori Schleicher

*My 5 year-old son, Hank Soule, is a student at the **Cyzner Institute** in Charlotte. I am enclosing the following testimonial from Hank about his teacher, **Kasey Blackwelder**. “My favorite part of school is puzzles and Ms. Kasey. ” He especially likes it when they are combined, apparently there is nothing better on earth than Ms. Kasey helping Hank with a puzzle! Kari Soule*

**Rosa Babylon** is Bryson's teach at **Cyzner Institute**. She has been a blessing in our lives and we are so grateful for our time with her. She has introduced Bryson to challenging academics and concepts and also nurtured him with loving arms. She has worked with us to problem-solve various challenges and proved to Bryson that teachers can be fun. She is the top of the list in Bryson's prayers every night as he thanks God for his blessings. We love Ms. Rosa. Karen Byrnes

*Michelle Tucker, CMS Homebound Instructor, came to us claiming she has no prior experience with autism, but to see her work with William you would never believe it! She plans creative, magnetic activities for him that push him and yet still manages to meet him wherever he's at that particular day. Michelle never gets discouraged even though she often must try several different paths to reach the same goal. She extends topics and activities that are familiar to him and gets him engaged before he even realizes what's happening. We know she really cares about William and wants the best for him, us. Lindsay B. Kluttz*

We have been so fortunate to be blessed with two great teachers for Evan: **Dory Swicegood** and **Nancy Ross**(*Winding Springs Elem.*). Both of them go above and beyond to accommodate Evan's needs while challenging him to grow his strengths and break through some of his barriers. They have always cared about Evan's social needs as well as his academic needs. Awesome teachers make all the difference in whether children with special needs progress to their potential. We are grateful.

Meliea Holbrook; mom to Evan Barber, 10

# Autism Matters

IN CHARLOTTE

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
www.asncmeck.org



The saying for Autism goes " Once you've met a child with Autism, you've met a child with Autism". I have been very fortunate to meet 13 kids with autism in the past two years at Winget Park. My job is not always easy but it is the most rewarding job I have ever had. I get to interact with kids who teach me to never take anything for granted. To other educators a small success is a stepping stone to another success to me it is a celebration. So although it is Teacher appreciation I am very appreciative of the parents who have allowed me to be a part of their child's life and in turn they have taught me more than I ever learned in my 17 years of school. Thank you to all my wonderful parents for sharing their children with me.  
**Kylie Cirioli~ Winget Park Elementary EC Teacher**

Our family is so fortunate and blessed to have **Miss Rosa, at Cyzner Institute** in our lives. Bryson loves her, and has made great progress. **Miss Ruth, Miss Candace,** and everyone has been so professional and so sweet. Steve Byrnes

## **Kim Starke and Jenn Hayes – McAlpine Elementary**

For telling Ryan to put his shoes back on for the 100<sup>th</sup> time! (not to mention his shirt, pants, etc.)... For all the times he tried to run away, yet you were 2 steps ahead and for giving him the freedom and choice to not run away... For keeping a sense of humor during his peek-a-boo belly button phase... For being firm during his "will not" behaviors and compassionate during his "can not" behaviors and for instinctively knowing the difference... For believing in him! and recognizing his true potential... For sustaining an outstanding parent/teacher relationship... For sitting on the floor with him in your lap so he'd feel more secure (and not run away) during literacy lessons and for all the other brilliant tactics you used to get/keep him motivated and to stay on task... For the (hopefully) occasional biting, pinching, head butting, throwing, and eating crayons (while singing Susan's "don't eat crayons" song), paper and books – AGAIN, I'm sorry!... And oh, you really didn't need to keep the classroom lights on anyway, right?... For keeping up with all his favored transitional toys/books that you so graciously encouraged us to bring and snuck into his backpack so he'd have them for the next day... For listening to him singing (I'm guessing) Sesame Street songs (and an impromptu "Limbo Rock" during an awards assembly)... THANK YOU! And somehow, through all of this, you managed to teach and maintain a structured classroom and you made it all look effortless! It does take an exceptional teacher to work with exceptional kids and you certainly don't receive the recognition that you deserve! We couldn't be more pleased with all the progress that we've seen in Ryan in the past two years. He is truly going to miss you next year, but I have a strong suspicion that he'll be popping in for a visit when you least expect it! **Susan Hutaff, Kelly Crouch and Traci Langton (Speech & OT)** – you are, without a doubt, McAlpine's Best Kept Secret! Thank you for giving Ryan many outlets for self-expression. He has made so much progress in receptive/expressive language and writing, fine motor, and self-help skills but the most precious milestone to me is giving him the ability to say for the first time, "I nub you" – priceless! And Traci, once I got over the initial devastation of him cutting his hair (before picture day), I realized, Wow!, he CAN cut his hair! (and write his name and so much more!). So I proudly display his photo (bald spot and all) and each time I look at it, I'm reminded of just how far he has come. Thank you McAlpine EC team – you are truly a blessing! Sincerely, Lori Ellsworth

*I would like to say a special thank you to **Heather Kelly at Community House Middle School.** She is Douglas' 6<sup>th</sup> grade Homeroom and Language Arts teacher. Heather has done so much for Douglas this year, and for me personally, as his mom. I don't know a better way to say it, except to say that she "gets" Douglas. She has embraced his uniqueness and encouraged him in his strengths. She has advocated for him in classroom placements and discipline issues. She has worked to help educate and inform her fellow teachers about Autism. She has worked to protect Douglas from classroom bullying and has helped him navigate the difficult social scene of Middle School. She has even shared some "Five Guys fries" with him! J Heather, we love you and are eternally grateful for you! Thanks so much! Sandy Smith~ Mom to Douglas (HFA, age 12, 6th grade); Allison (age 9), and Natalie (age 8).*

# Autism Matters

IN CHARLOTTE

June 2008

The Newsletter of the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Mecklenburg County Chapter  
[www.asncmeck.org](http://www.asncmeck.org)



**SUSAN FLYNN, KATHY EDWARDS, CHERYL PORTER – MCKEE RD ELEMENTARY**

*What a terrific trio of ladies you are! Bewlay has really enjoyed her time with you this year, and we have been pleased with all that you did with her. Thank you so much for your care for Bewlay and for all that you have taught her. And thank you, especially, for being so diligent to keep her healthy. We all think the world of you! – Love, the Kourys*

**JENNI STEWART AND MEA KLEINSCHRODT – MCKEE RD ELEMENTARY:** *Bewlay went from two-word utterances to six-word sentences and from barely holding a pencil to writing her name (with a little help). We are proud of all that she has done and very grateful to both of you for all of your work in helping to get her there. Thank you so much! We hope to see you next year! – Love, the Kourys*

**KRYSTA FRIEDRICH – MCKEE RD ELEMENTARY:** *We would never have guessed that this was your first experience with an autistic student. Bewlay adored you and all of the children in your class. Happy trails! We hope you find a wonderful new niche (with other autistic students to enjoy)! – Love, the Kourys*

*This is an incredibly busy time of year and unfortunately, despite all the wonderful sentiments that were shared by so many parents, a greater number were unable to share their thanks. Teachers, please know that parents are always grateful for all you do to help our children grow. You keep them safe and love them as unconditionally as we do, and you push them to be their best. For many, the time you spend with our children is invaluable.*

*Parents, during this school year several teachers went above and beyond the call of duty to keep our children moving forward by covering for a fellow teacher while s/he was absent due to illness, pregnancy, or personal issues. Teacher assistants kept things moving along, sometimes with the help of a substitute who knew only the basics on autism. These situations are unavoidable and are very taxing on our teachers. There is no extra pay for the increase in work they have experienced. Having lived with autism over the past 10 years, I am not sure any amount of money would be enough on some days! If you know a teacher who has soldiered on through this type of scenario, please let them know how much you appreciate their work. All teachers deserve a relaxing vacation for all the long hours they have put in during the school year; but these dedicated employees should have a good rest and all of our adoration as well. Nancy Nestor*

# *We Need Your Help - Become a Member!*

Join the Autism Society of North Carolina  
Membership Form

**ASNC Membership** (circle level)

Individual/Family - \$40  
Contributor - \$75  
Supporter - \$150  
Agency/Service Provider - \$200  
Life - \$1,250  
Student - \$25

\*indicate ASNC Chapter name below and ASNC will give back \$10 to your local chapter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

ASNC Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership(s) (e.g. asnc-family) \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail all memberships to ASNC to:  
Autism Society of North Carolina  
505 Oberlin Road, Suite 230, Raleigh, NC 27605-1345  
To charge memberships call 1-800-442-2762**

ASNC – Mecklenburg County Chapter  
c/o Nancy Nestor  
3846 Lipton Ln  
Mint Hill, NC 28227

If you would like to receive *Autism Matters* via email, send a request to  
**nnestor@carolina.rr.com**

Thank you!