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Maine

Autism



Summer 2023

Connections

Two Walk for Autism Events Equals TWO days of FUN!

by Susan J. Vincent

The Westbrook 'Walk for Autism' was held on April 23rd at Riverbank Park. With a forecast of rain, we donned our raincoats, packed up tables & tents, and braced ourselves for a wet day and hoped for the best.

With luck on our side, we got through the day dry! It was no doubt cold a day with an overcast sky, but we were ever so grateful the rain held off! JOY! The park is spacious and even has a playground for the kids, we had music, snacks and games that were enjoyed before the Walk began at noon.

We are heartened by the commitment & dedication of our community that show up to support this important event **Rain or Shine!**

The Bangor Walk for Autism was held on April 30th at the Waterfront Park.

Again, a forecast of rain for the day prompted us to pack up the tents again and be prepared for a soggy event. Miraculously, the wet weather heading our way held off long enough for us enjoy the festivities!

Excitement was in the air, children were playing games, popcorn was popping, and our vendors pulled out all the stops to make their tables fun and interactive. Everyone was in high spirits and proud to be part of a wonderful event that support Autism acceptance and inclusion.



The Connection is you.

Story continued on Page 3



Maine Autism Connections
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Autism Society of Maine

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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 www.asmonline.org, where we have a great deal of information available about autism, programs, resources, news, a calendar of events, legislation and more.

President's Message

Hello Fellow Members,

Welcome to summer and the end of another school year. As this time can be exciting for many, we understand this can be a challenging time for our families. I understand the challenges as I was always excited about the summertime off, but my children with ASD always struggled.



To help lessen the dysregulation, it was important to start transitioning into the new routine as much as we could before school came to an end. This is a time for patience, for both your child and you. It can be hard to put in a lot of time and planning to do a fun activity that your child just can't do that day.

I would like to thank everyone who joined or donated to our annual Walk for Autism in Westbrook and Bangor. It was nice to have a good turnout for both walks even with the weather not being the best. The support that was felt by many was great to see and hear about. The money raised will help the Society to continue our efforts to support the autism community. Our next fundraiser is the Ride for Autism which will be held on October 7th in Kennebunkport.

Here at the Society, we are starting to work on the upcoming Autism Fall Conference in November, which is being held in Bangor. Keep a look out for more information and hope to see many there again this year. I hope you all have a safe and fun summer. Keep a look out for free activities in your community. In my local community, the library always had fun things for my children to attend. Talk with you all again in the fall. Enjoy your summer.

Christina Nason, Board President

ASM Membership

Join the growing number of families, professionals and community members that make up the Autism Society Maine. Together we can bring meaningful resources in our community. The connection is you. [ASM Membership](#)

ASM's Mission Statement

The Autism Society of Maine creates connections, empowering everyone in the Autism community with the resources to live fully.

Walk for Autism

Continued from page 1



A Huge Thank You!

To all who registered, formed teams & fundraising pages and to all who made a donation! **Together, we raised \$50,007!!** (This includes sponsorship contributions.)

Behind every successfully organized event there is an extraordinary volunteer team. A heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you for generously sharing your time and energy with us. We couldn't have done it without you!

We give sincere appreciation to our sponsors who supported this event, your contribution has enabled us to have this important community event and we are extremely thankful.



Bangor Walk \$16,357

405 Participants at event
Top Individual: Jesse Bell
Top Team: Team Kennedy



Westbrook Walk \$15,999

334 Participants at event
Top Individual: Jackson Clifford
Top Team: Foothills Flooring and Tile



Please visit our [Walk for Autism photo gallery](#) to see more pictures and we are very excited to show you our very first drone video of the Bangor Walk on our website homepage and [can also be seen here!](#) Drone footage by Nick Godfrey, Media Services Producer, Maine Public Television.

Our Walk for Autism Sponsors!

**MATTRESS
FIRM**



DIAMOND Sponsors



Foothills Flooring & Tile
Home of the crawling craftsmen



SPURWINK



**BOUCHARD
ENTERTAINMENT**

 **Maine Behavioral
Healthcare**
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**Bangor
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You matter more.®

GOLD Sponsors

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Savings Bank




Creative Options
"Where it's all about CHOICE!"

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"You Deserve The Best"
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SILVER Sponsor

Webster Lodge 164 AF & AM

Autism Information Specialist Program

Employee Spotlight on Our Autism Information Specialists

by Jennifer Frey

Our Autism Information Specialists (AIS) have been all over Maine spreading the word on what the society has to offer and helping families. Here's just a little of what they've been up to lately:

- Hosting support and social groups.
- Collaborating with the Doug Flutie Jr Foundation for Autism on Jersey Mike's Day of Giving to meet with representatives from the foundation and eat some delicious subs!
- Giving advice and sitting in on IEP's to be there to support families.
- Bringing Kits for Kids to 3 different schools reaching around 150 kids!
- Hosting tables at the Top 'O' Maine Tradeshow, a Sea Dogs game, and the Homeschoolers of Maine Convention to spread the word on ASM and Autism resources.
- Attending fundraising events including a Kick-A-Thon hosted by I CAN Marshall Arts in Warren where the kids raised around \$1,200 kicking for a cause!
- Talking to multiple families needing guidance. We have parents calling in after their child is diagnosed, as well as adults getting diagnosed later in life, wondering what to do next. Our AIS help them navigate these moments and everything in-between.

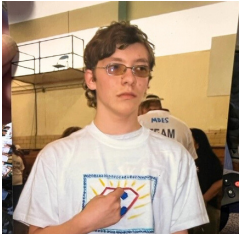


Our AIS are very important to us. They go out and connect with people in their communities and allow us to reach out and help people throughout the State of Maine. They are very passionate about their work and come to us with many backgrounds and experience including: ed tech, teacher, physical therapist, case worker, farmer, librarian, law enforcement, business owner, Autistic individuals, and parents and grandparents of children and adults with Autism. Keep an eye out for future newsletters where we'll spotlight an Autism information Specialist and the work they've done for ASM.

Paid AIS Training on June 9th & 15th

If this sounds like something you'd like to do, it's not too late to join our paid training happening on June 9th and 15th. Call ASM at: 1-800-273-5200 or email: infospec@asmonline.org for more info.

Sea of Blue - Chris Heel



Sea of Blue's Walk of Northeast Harbor Beginnings

The idea for the event came from an ASM walk in Bangor on May 3, 2009 when staff and students from Christopher's school filled a bus, customized "Team Chris" tee shirts and came to Bangor to walk in support with Chris. From that show of support, for his Senior Exhibition project in 2014, Chris chose the theme "My autism and my community's support" and with the support of his teachers, decided to organize a walk to raise awareness. The event, now going into its 9th year features the 2 mile walk, 5k run (Chris finishes the walk and then runs the 5k), raffles and an auction and continues to grow. *by Susan Heel*

Sea of Blue Walk -2023
Chris Heel giving donation check of \$7,500 to ASM with Susan Vincent

United Bikers of Maine



Androscoggin County - Second Annual Ride Raises \$1000 in Donations

"For the LOVE of Lemonade Autism Awareness ride"
"You build, We will come"

Walmart Distribution Center



Walmart Distribution Center, Lewiston #7014

sold Autism Awareness t-shirts to show their support for the families and individuals in their company and in the community and raised \$700 of donations in support of ASM.

Cathy Dionne, ASM accepts check with Walmart Employees Sarah and Cathy

Take Me Out to the Ball Game!



We would like to thank **Portland Sea Dogs, Gifford's Ice Cream Pavilion, Nautilus Solar, and Mast Construction** for generously providing free tickets to 4 different Sea Dogs games this season! Because of them we were able to give out 63 tickets and send 15 families and an Autism Information Specialist to a game.

Slugger was a fan favorite and we were delighted to receive some pictures from some of the families posing with him. Even our own Autism Information Specialist, Kendra, got in on the fun. She also hosted a table and got to meet some families and handout information about the Autism Society of Maine to fans at the game.

Many entered for a chance to win and we wish we could send everyone. Stay tuned for more chances to win next season and thank you to everyone who went out to cheer on the Sea Dogs! If you want to be first to know about opportunities like this make sure you are subscribed to our [newsletter!](#)



ASM Social / Support Groups

ASM support group page listings can be found [here](#)

Youth Social Group (Online)

If you have a teen (11-18) that may benefit and enjoy joining this virtual group that meets on the last Friday of the month from 6:00pm to 7:00pm, send an email: asm@asmonline.org or call ASM at 800-273-5200.

Young Adult Group (In Person)

A Social group for young adults (17-26) meets in Fryeburg on the second Monday of each month from 6:00pm to 7:30pm Kendra Campbell. If you are interested in learning more about this group, please email: Kendra Campbell bridgtonais@gmail.com.



Adult Social Group (Online)

Our Adult Social Function Group is also meeting each month on the second Thursday from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. If you are an adult who would like more information about this group, I please email asm@asmonline.org or call ASM at 800-273-5200.

Parent Support Group (Online)

An online Parent Support Group in Aroostook County that meets the second Friday of the month from 6:00pm to 7:00pm to discuss different topics and learn and support each other. For more information, please contact Jenna at jennacyrdsp@gmail.com

Teen Support Group for Autism (ages 13-17)

For youth ages 13 to 17 years old. 28 Yarmouth Crossing Dr., Yarmouth, Whilde, LLC meets on the third Friday of the month at 3:30pm to 4:30pm: Contact: Jessica Molloy, jessica@whilde.org

Parent Support Group (Online) *Ask Cathy!*

Just a reminder that our Executive Director, Cathy Dionne also facilitates an online parent group each month. If you have specific questions, concerns, or would just like to meet others who are going the same things then this group is just what you are looking for. For more information send an email to asm@asmonline.org or call ASM at 800-273-5200. Meets the last Friday of the month from 6:00 to 7:00pm.

Autism Society Water Safety Program



Did you know?

49% of individuals with Autism wander which can lead to incidents of drowning.

The Autism Society of America seeks to develop an adaptive aquatics curriculum that aims to support instructors and the Autism community nationwide.

[Learn more here](#)

Resources for water safety and preparing your child with Autism for swimming lessons:

- [Water Safety Checklist](#)
- [Water Social Story](#)

Benefit Golf Tournament

[Benefit Golf Tournament Registration Page](#)



BENEFIT GOLF TOURNAMENT 4-PERSON SCRAMBLE

All Proceeds go to the Autism Society of Maine



Lunch Provided
50/50 Raffle
Top 2 Gross/Net
Closest to Pin
Long Drive
Putting Contest
Mulligans to Purchase

495 Huntington Hill Road Litchfield, ME

25 Team Max \$400/Team Register by 7/10/23

SATURDAY
22nd JULY 2023

Registration
8AM

Shot Gun
9AM

tinyurl.com/ASMGOLF23

ASM: 1-800-273-5200

Save Dates!

RIDE FOR AUTISM

October 7, 2023
Kennebunkport
Conservation Trust
Kennebunkport, ME



AUTISM FALL CONFERENCE

"All About Transitions"
November 4, 2023
Bangor Cross Ins. Ctr.
Bangor, ME



Empower the Learner



Maine Parent Federation, The Autism Society of Maine, Empower the Learner, and Maine Developmental Disabilities Council have partnered to offer to parent and caregivers of children with special healthcare needs and disabilities opportunity to develop a multi-media self-advocacy tool to share with the teachers/professionals in your loved ones lives.

Call to learn more about the tool and how you can use it with your loved one to raise expectations for their community and school environments. In addition, we will be looking for you to provide us with feedback about this tool to make this accessible for everybody in the disability community.

Cathy Dionne, asm@asmonline.org, 800-273-5200 or Carrie Woodcock, cwoodcock@mpf.org, 207-588-1933

We give sincere gratitude to those who have hosted a Facebook fundraiser to benefit ASM and to everyone who makes a donation. These donations have a meaningful impact in the lives of families, children and adults with Autism. Our programs are made possible by dedicated and caring individuals like you and your donation will have a lasting impact in the Autism community to receive guidance, resources and experiences with ASM.



Mid-March through Mid-May Facebook Fundraisers hosted by:
Bobbi Gammon, Jenna Woods, Shilo Biggs and Amanda Welch

Facebook covers all fees for donations that are made to charitable organizations



Sign up to get interesting Autism 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.



The Autism Society has a vibrant facebook community including parents, professionals, and anyone interested in Autism.



Follow us on Twitter as we 'tweet' about all things Autism.



If you are not already a following our Instagram page, welcome you!



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

Join the Board of Directors



Have you ever wanted to be part of something that changes lives?

The Autism Society has openings on our Board of Directors, and we would love you to join us. The BOD meets remotely monthly and consists of parents, Autistic adults, professionals, who come together to discuss policies, laws, trends, and committee work etc. A lot happens in our state and keeping up with laws and policies takes a village.

The board has 4 committees that meet outside of a regular board meeting who then report back to the board. Each board member must serve on one committee. We would like to hear from you. Reach out to Cathy Dionne at asm@asmonline.org or fill out the BOD application and we will be in touch with you. [Board Application Form](#)

ASM Award Nominations

Do you know someone who is deserving of recognition?

Let the Autism Society of Maine recognize them with an award. The following are the categories that we honor:

- Professionals (not in the field of autism, but contributing to it)
- Any professional within their own field of expertise who contributes.
- in any manner relative to individuals and/or families affected by ASD

Deadline for submissions no later than September 1, 2023. More information and [Nomination form here](#)



ASM is Hiring!

JOIN OUR TEAM!

Office Assistant:
Part Time Winthrop Office

Community Outreach Liaison:
Part time / Seasonal / Remote



www.asmonline.org

Office Assistant- Part time / Winthrop Office

Do you need a job where you could work around your children's schedule? Check out the flexibility we have to offer!

Community Outreach Liaison

Part time, Seasonal Remote (Legislation)

[Learn more here.](#) Please send your cover letter and resume to asm@asmonline.org

We Our Hearts Campaign Participants!

A BIG THANK YOU to the following businesses for participating in our 3rd annual Hearts Campaign!

They showed us how big their hearts and the hearts of their patrons are by raising **\$1,726.00** during the month of April; Autism Acceptance Month! We appreciate them displaying these hearts in their businesses to show support for the Autism Society of Maine and those with Autism in their communities.

Businesses can participate in a Heart's Campaign anytime of the year! Contact infospec@asmonline.org for more info on how you can get involved.

- Howie's Pub - Portland
- Samuel's Bar and Grill - Portland
- Portland Pie Company - Bangor
- Tiller and Rye - Brewer
- Mason's Brewing Company - Brewer
- Ellen M Leach Memorial Home - Hermon
- Messology Maine - Bangor
- Generation's Boutique & Art Studio - Brewer
- Dogs on Center - Orrington



- Docks Sea Food - Portland
- Amigo's Mexican Restaurant - Portland
- Sprint Point Tavern - South Portland
- Timeout Sports Pub - Westbrook
- Ruski's Tavern - Portland
- Pizza Villa - Portland
- Evie's Ferry Village Watering Hole - S. Portland
- More Than Just Engraving - Bangor
- Side by Each Brewing Company - Auburn



A Special Thank You to Amanda Kenneson for her efforts to deliver "hearts" to various businesses.



Donations

Donations / Sponsorships / Employee Matches / Grants

Charities Aid Foundation America
Creative Options, LLC
Franklin Savings Bank
John F. Murphy Homes, Inc.
Mattress Firm
UCP Maine
Joe Kelliher III
BroGue Insurance & Financial Services
Atlantic FCU Foundation
Christine Hoyt
Arbutus Chapter 19 O.E.S
First National Bank – Sea of Blue
Little Angels Service Dogs
City of Biddeford
Allen Farm Fence Co., Inc.
Town & Country Comm. CTR. ASSN.

Amigos
Docks Seafood
United Way Kennebec Valley
United Bikers of Maine-
Androscoggin County
Side by Each Brewing Co.
Evie's Tavern
Ruski's Tavern
Howie's Pub
Springpoint Tavern
Dead River Company, Ellsworth
Company
Dead River Company, Farmington
Employees' Community Action
Council
Community Care

Hannaford, Union St. Bangor
Thompson Equipment
Oceanside High School
Bark Harbor
Acadia Woods Kennel
Ellsworth Chainsaw Inc
L.E. Norwood & Sons
SJG Island Inc
Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society
John & Brenda Veilleux
Darling's
Reny's
Global Beverage
Katahdin Elementary School
Hannaford (Waterville Store)
Time Out Sports Pub
Hannaford , Winthrop



In Memory of:

Jon Duguay

Mike and Betty Lamoreau
Gayle Ham
Dana & Maryanne Ham
Ray & Cindy Gelinias
Carmela Braun
Joseph & Gail Purington
Eileen Messier
Robert Lagos
Gay Martin
Joel & Stephanie Balano-Scot
Ronald & Judy Felix
Bruce & Patricia York
Shirley Bruno
Linda Young
David & Julie Duguay
Lynn and Dennis Duguay
Wendy McDermott
Patricia Kosowicz Rev. Trust
Pamela Felker



John Dobos

Mary Ann Sisley
Shriners International - Kora

New Memberships

Megan Weber
Peter Haggarty
Lindsey Bridges
Julia Ross Poso
Caren Laplante
Anne Larsen
Derrick Ouellette

In Kind Donation

Meghan Wilson Duff
Lowes, North Windham
Windham Tattoo & Body Piercing

Membership Renewals

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