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AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Maine

Maine Autism

Connections

In Honor of
Lynda Mazzola, this
Newsletter is Dedicated to Her.

by Cathy Dionne

There are many people you come across every day who leave an impact. There are those you meet and say “what a nice person”, or some you meet and say “I’m going to remember this person”. Each one has left a memorable impression. Then there’s the person who not only impacted you but also your family, your child, and your child’s future. That person accepted your child for who he or she was, gave you hope, inspired change, helped you be an advocate, and provided unconditional love. This describes Lynda Mazzola.

Lynda has provided support to many Maine families for over 40 years. She started as a Special Education Director at Mariah Clark School where she met families whose children had unique needs. She started a parent support group for these families. This group became the Autism Society of Maine. She was one of the founding members of ASM. It wasn’t long before she knew where her true calling was – speech and language. She went back to school, received her Master’s degree, and began a journey that would touch hundreds of lives.

I’ve met many families whose child started as a client of Lynda’s for a short time but stayed with her well into adulthood. For many families it was her understanding of autism and some of the unique qualities these individuals have and how she worked with them. She always met them where they were. She knew when to move them along and when to back off. She was honest about their progress and always optimistic about their future.

As one of those parents whose child was a client of Lynda’s, I can attest to her teaching strategies that motivate a child to

always move forward. My son Benjamin first saw Lynda in January of 95’. She was the first therapist we saw when we received Ben’s diagnosis of autism at 20 months old. She was his therapist until he was 16 years old. I’ll never forget her waiting room; it was filled with toys. Every toy was neatly placed on shelves or tucked away under a shelf. When Ben played with a toy he would pick it up and flip it over; everything was upside down with him.

When we went into her therapy room it was a little overwhelming. My first impression of Lynda was that she really knew her stuff. She explained things about autism that no one had told me, gave me some material to look at, and suggested some good books to read. She spoke with me for a few minutes and then watched to see what item Ben would gravitate toward. He went to a Fisher Price school bus set that had

Spring 2017



Continued on page 3

Maine Autism Connections
A publication of the
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 **AUTISM SOCIETY**
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism

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

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


Constant Contact

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



President's Message

Thank you for reading this President's Message. Our focus in this newsletter is to celebrate the innumerable contributions Lynda Mazzola, a talented Speech and Language Pathologist and one of the founding members of the Autism Society of Maine, made to the field of autism for children, families, our communities, our state and on a national level.

Over 25 years ago, I first met Lynda when my son was referred for Speech and Language Services. Although a social worker, I was a first time mother and new to the world of developmental and related services. It was also 25 years ago, so we did not know nearly as much as we do now about developmental challenges or treatments. We were worried and a bit scared. I am grateful it was Lynda Mazzola that we were referred to. Lynda was strengths-based and family centered. We were in good hands with Lynda and her confidence helped us to know that things were going to be okay.

Fast forward to 2010 when I would join the Autism Society of Maine. Lynda was still a Board Member, having served in every role on our Executive Committee. Her understanding of social policy, appreciation of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families, and commitment to the work was legendary. Every meeting, she taught the newbies (and some of the seasoned members too!) things about our Strategic Plan, Agency By-Laws, State of Maine Legislation and policy. But more importantly, she modeled what it meant to be a committed Board Member, to provide leadership and to remain focused on the mission, vision and values of the work with each decision we made that impacted individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Those of us who attended those many meetings with Lynda over the years know that she appreciated a warm soup and a tasty dessert, remembered every person she ever worked with and took every opportunity to teach. We were all better in our roles because of her.

There is a poem that reminded me of Lynda, that I want to share with all of you.

I dwell in Possibility *By Emily Dickinson*

I dwell in Possibility – A fairer House than Prose –
More numerous of Windows – Superior – for Doors –
Of Chambers as the Cedars – Impregnable of eye –
And for an everlasting Roof The Gambrels of the Sky –
Of Visitors – the fairest – For Occupation – This –
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise

Thank you Lynda for always dwelling in possibility....reminding us to be open to what could be and challenge what some say was not possible. We will honor you by continuing the work you started in Maine.

Farewell for now....Laurie

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



In Memory (continued from cover)

four little people to ride the bus. Once he showed an interest in this item, the therapy began. I was amazed how she would follow his lead, and he would allow her to play next to him. Usually he would get up and leave when anyone came near him.

Of course, in my mind, all I wanted was for my son to speak. He was completely nonverbal. Lynda never allowed me to give up on his speaking but did want to focus on his communicating in other ways. Many doors opened for my son because of these early intervention services. He really came into his own especially when he received his augmentative communication device (DynaVox) at 10 years old. He had many other therapies: occupational therapy, developmental preschool, psychologist, and he attended Margaret Murphy Center for Children. I was fortunate that he was able to have a speech and language pathologist for such a long time who was so knowledgeable about autism.

Today he is 22 years old and works at Paris Farmers Union and attends a day program. He communicates with his iPad and is able to answer questions about his day and let us know what his needs and wants are.

Lynda was a mentor to me and many families that struggled with the autism

diagnosis and getting appropriate services. She helped write the book on what services these children need. She was a pioneer at a time when no one knew what autism was or how to treat it. She worked endless hours advocating for children and helping families find their voice for services.

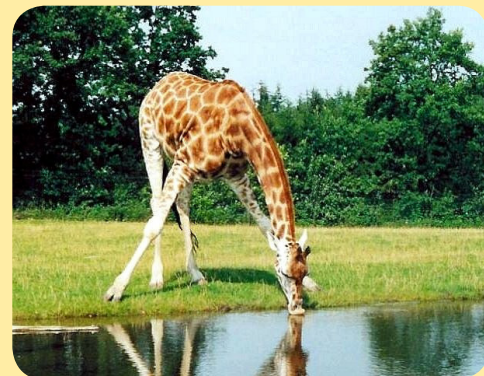
Lynda has been on and off the Board of Directors of the Autism Society of Maine for 40 years. Her guidance, knowledge, and history of services in Maine will truly be missed. Board meetings will never be the same. I can imagine that when it was time for her to leave us she was met by a giraffe who extended his long neck and carried her up to a place without pain and with a giant window to oversee all the lives she has touched.



In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

I am very sorry/sad of hearing of your passing Lynda. I don't know where to begin. I will say Thank you God for introducing your Angel to me. She has taught me so much about understanding Autism. I knew nothing when I was introduced to Aaron. He came into our life going on 9yrs now. We are home providers for a man that is non-verbal and Autistic. Lynda helped us to deal with and understand Autism. Angel Lynda along with Aaron taught me to facilitate communication. Without her I would have walked away. But she continued hours of teaching and helping me to stay for Aaron. I have been so blessed to have Aaron and to have known Lynda. What an awesome person/friend/Angel she was to everyone that had the blessing of knowing her. You will be missed Lynda Mazzola... we love you. Have fun in Heaven!

Jerry Morrell



Help Wanted

We would like to have a 2 or 3 day "Autism Information Specialist" training, during the summer/ fall of 2017. If you live in a town along the coast from Rockland, to Machias, and have an interest in supporting the lives of individuals on the Autism Spectrum, please contact ASM at 1-800-273-5200 or email infospec@asmonline.org.

This is a contractual, per diem position.

For more information regarding the Information Specialist Program, visit our website at:

<http://www.asmonline.org>



Lynda J. Mazzola Memorial Scholarship

The Autism Society of Maine (ASM) has been educating families and professionals for over 40 years across the State of Maine. ASM plays an important role in helping families who are just receiving a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder or are further along in their journey and are looking for services/treatment.

Lynda J. Mazzola Memorial Scholarship Fund

Lynda Mazzola, MA, CCC-SLP was a founding member of the Autism Society of Maine. She served as Board President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and belonged to many committees. Her career included serving as a Special Education Director and school psychological evaluator. She was best known for her far reaching work as a Speech and Language Pathologist. Lynda worked tirelessly as a leader in Maine, advocating for children's services while never giving up on providing direct service. On December 31, 2016 Lynda passed away leaving a legacy of putting children and families first. This scholarship fund is named to honor her years of dedication to children and families and to the Autism Society of Maine.

Scholarship Award

Each year ASM will award one \$2,500 scholarship to a Maine student who has 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. *Awards are based on financial need, commitment to local community, demonstrated academic accomplishment. Priority will be given to applicants who have volunteered or worked in a setting that serves children with autism spectrum disorders.

Criteria for Selection

Applicant must write essay between 500 to 1,000 words on topic specified above*

- 1) Applicant must currently be a student in good standing with evidence of acceptance to a graduate program.
- 2) Applicant must show evidence of community involvement and/or extracurricular activities

Application Packet

Scholarship application can be found on the ASM website page:

<http://www.asmonline.org/about/lynda-mazzola-scholarship.aspx>

- 1) Completed Scholarship Application
- 2) Essay on the topic specified above
- 3) Letter of recommendation from a professor or supervisor

Deadline

Fully completed application packets must be submitted to and received by the Autism Society of Maine no later than April 15, 2017. Incomplete packets will not be considered.

Mail Applications To:

Autism Society of Maine
Scholarship Committee

72B Main Street

Winthrop, ME 04364

Phone: 207.377.9603 or 1.800.273.5200

Fax: 207.377.9434

Email: asm@asmonline.org

Web: www.asmonline.org

Serving the Maine autism community since 1976

Questions? Please contact Cathy

Dionne at 1-800- 273-5200

or asm@asmonline.org

In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

While we ring in the new year, my heart is saddened to learn of the passing of a special woman who truly gave me one of the greatest gifts in the world, the gift of Ostin's voice. Ms. Lynda came into our lives two and a half years ago and worked with Ostin on his apraxia for hours upon hours every week. Ostin would not be where he is today with out her. Thank you Lynda for working with Ostin and giving me the gift of my sons words. Hearing him say mama and I love you can never be heard without thinking of you. Rest In Peace Lynda.

Nykki Stevens



Quilt Raffle

A full size quilt created with 14 years of Walk for Autism t-shirts! Professionally pieced & quilted with edges bound. A beautifully quilted swirl design is featured on a green background. The colorful autism awareness ribbon finishes the edge.

\$10.00 a ticket or two tickets for \$15.00 – there will be only 400 tickets sold!

Tickets can be purchased at the ASM online store, at events where ASM is present (event locations will be posted on ASM website), at the ASM Office, 72 B Main St., Winthrop or call in your ticket request at 1-800-273-5200. ASM Store: www.asmonline.org/asm-storefront.aspx

The winner of the quilt will be announced on April 30, 2017. The winner may pick up the quilt at the ASM location in Winthrop or can be mailed to you.



In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

Lynda Mazzola, your impact on the world was far greater than you know. Those of us who were fortunate to cross your path, learned so many lessons from you! Your spirit will live on in all of the lives you have touched. You are an inspiration to us all. You helped Lauren find her voice, you encouraged me to use my voice to stand up for my daughter, and you taught me to listen to the voice in my heart through this journey. I am so grateful for your friendship. You earned your angels wings Lynda. I know you are flying high. Jessica Gurney



April Autism Awareness Month

Autism Awareness is in the spotlight during the month of April. It is a time for families, employees and the community to participate in activities that support and educate about autism.

There is a lot that you can do to bring **Autism Awareness** to your community! You can host an event or join with others and attend an event like the **Walk for Autism**, create a bulletin board, wear an autism awareness ribbon, make a donation to ASM, join our **Facebook** group, become a member of ASM, purchase an autism awareness item in the ASM store and much more!

Teachers are also taking this opportunity to educate their students about autism and promoting understanding and inclusion for their fellow classmates. We are happy to help in any way we can, by providing autism information, books & DVD's or by offering an autism presentation.

Autism Information Specialists are trained by ASM and can give a presentation to your class about autism on all grade levels.

Autism Awareness Packets are available and can be mailed to you by ASM at no cost. Each packet will contain: Brochures, poster, flyers, and 5 multi-colored autism awareness ribbons. The contents of this packet are for posting on a bulletin board at your school, library, workplace or in your community. (Please send us a photo of your bulletin board!)

To request your Autism Awareness packet call ASM at 1-800-5200 or email: library@asmonline.org

April Autism Awareness events and information will be posted on ASM's online **News** page. Please let us know if you are planning an event, and we will advertise it as well.

ASM Online News Page: <http://www.asmonline.org/news/107/article/5/59>

Here is what will be posted on ASM's online April Awareness page:

- April Awareness events and happenings in the community
- PDF's of resources that are in the April Awareness Packet
- ASM's April Autism Awareness Month Press Release
- Book titles suggested for educators, family and students of all levels about autism
- Toolkits regarding autism issues in the home, community and school
- Class activities/crafts for the classroom

World Autism Awareness Day April 2, 2017

The United Nations General Assembly declared April 2nd World Autism Day. It was first observed in 2007. Across the globe, autism organizations celebrate the day with fundraising, autism awareness-raising events, or showing support by wearing an autism awareness symbol such as the autism ribbon.

As part of a global initiative to help raise awareness for autism, iconic landmarks around the world will "Light It Up Blue" as part of World Autism Awareness Day.



Upcoming Events

15th Annual Walk for Autism April 30, 2017

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon: Registration
12:00 noon: Walk for Autism (Rain or shine!)

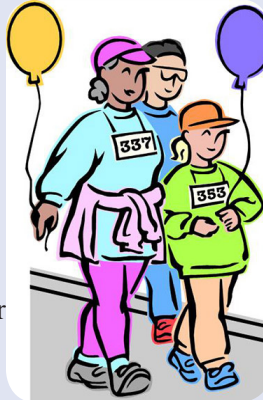
There will be Face Painting, Refreshments, Fire Trucks, Entertainment and more!

- University College of Bangor in Bangor
- University of New England in Biddeford
- Farmington Fairground in Farmington
- Presque Isle Middle School in Presque Isle
- Fryeburg Fairgrounds in Fryeburg

For more information and to register as individual or team:
<http://www.firstgiving.com/ASMMaine/Walk-for-autism-2017/>

The proceeds from this event will help fund the Autism Society of Maine's programs that support families here in Maine. Join our walk and help spread autism awareness and bring hope and support to families affected by autism.

Invite your friends and neighbors to be a part of it, too! Enlist them to join your team or make a donation in support of your participation.



In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

At 18 months old my son was diagnosed with autism, I was so lost and confused, CDS referred me to Lynda.

When we arrived at her office that was in her home. We walked in in it was very inviting and kid friendly, lots of giraffes! She took us both in and showed me what would be going on during the sessions. Lynda had the best smile! She got right down to Sam's level. At the end of each session Sam would get jellybeans! Boy of course he loved that.

Every birthday we would make rainbow cupcakes!

Lynda had even taken my phone calls after I had left just to talk to me when Sam was having one of his days, she would reassure me that things will get better!

Deb Crump and Lynda showed me how to use picture book and that eased some of the frustration.

Lynda was right things got easier and easier! She worked with him until he entered kindergarten along with the children's center! Thank you Lynda for putting a lot of effort into helping my son and teaching me!

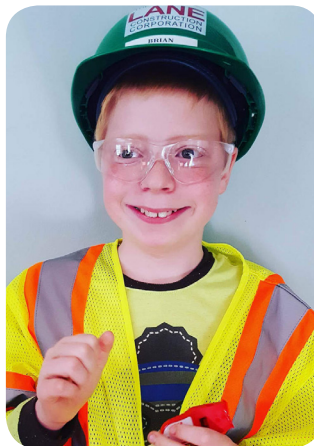
Love, Julie and Samuel Pelletier



Lane Construction

By Tara Perry

We all know and dread the feeling of sitting in the middle of construction, especially in the middle of the summer, but for one family in Thomaston it is the highlight of their day. Brian Farnham, son of Heather Nelson, happens to love the construction and the crew. So much that Heather sent a letter to the gang at Lane Construction letting them know just how much Brian enjoyed the Route 1 Thomaston construction project. The employees were so touched by the story that they made Brian an honorary construction member. But, that wasn't enough; Lane wanted to do more for Brian and his family.



In August 2016 Lane teamed up with Darling's Ice Cream for a Cause Truck. Darling's traveled and stopped at Lane projects all over the state, offering free ice cream in return for a donation with 100% being given to a charity, chosen by Brian's family. Lane Construction also agreed to match the donations up to \$2500. The Autism Society of Maine was the lucky recipient of this wonderful event and received \$3200!

We would like to thank Lane Construction, Darling's Ice Cream for a Cause Truck and especially Brian and his family for being so generous. The donation will help the Society to fund our programs and resources that help children, individuals and families here in the state of Maine whose lives have been affected by autism.

Walk for Autism - April 30, 2017

Sponsor Sheet

ALL 5 WALKS: REGISTRATION 11:00AM - 12:00PM *WALK BEGINS AT 12:00PM* ALL WALKS 2 MILES

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
BIDDEFORD, ME

FARMINGTON FAIRGROUNDS
FARMINGTON, ME

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE at Augusta
BANGOR, ME

BELFAST AREA HIGH SCHOOL
BELFAST, ME

FRYEBURG FAIRGROUNDS
FRYEBURG, ME

Personal Information

To register please fill out form and print off for your records

First Name: _____ Last Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ME Zip: _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____

Email Address _____

Walker Information

I am walking: _____ as an individual/family _____ Bangor
_____ as a team member _____ Biddeford (please choose site)
_____ Belfast
_____ Farmington
_____ Fryeburg

Team Information

Team Name: _____

Team Captain: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Number: _____

Donation Information

_____ I would like to donate now using a credit card - see below

_____ I will donate at the event

Credit Card Information

Donation Amount: _____ Phone: _____

Cardholder's Name _____

Cardholder's Address _____

Credit Card Number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

3 digits on back of card _____

Expiration Date: _____

Walk for Autism - April 30, 2017

Sponsor Sheet

Waiver Form:

I, the undersigned, agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Autism Society of Maine from all cost, expense and liability arising out of my or my child's participation in this event to benefit autism awareness. I do hereby waive all claims for damage or loss to me or my child's person or property which may be caused by any act, or failure to act, by the Autism Society of Maine, its officers, agents or employees arising directly or indirectly from me or my child's loss, damage or other liability from such event. I give permission for ASM to use any videos or pictures taken at the Walk for Autism for their website, newsletter, or other promotions.

Signature

Date

Suggested minimum pledge is \$10. Contributions are tax deductible. PLEASE PRE-PAY. Make checks payable to: ASM

Sponsor's Name	Address/City	Zip	Phone	Amount Collected

Proceeds from the walk go towards our summer camp program, family retreat weekend, autism information specialist program, and 5% will go toward overhead cost.

Arrive at walk between 11:00 am to 11:30 am
Rain or Shine

Please total prior to walk and bring all money to to walk registration table

Total Collected:

\$

Upcoming Events

FREE Sensory Friendly Movie "Beauty and the Beast" April 8, 2017

The Lewiston/Auburn Rotary Club is sponsoring a sensory friendly movie event featuring "Beauty and the Beast" for families whose children with autism live in the Lewiston/Auburn area. 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 a 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.

Autism Fall Conference Managing Behavioral and Social Challenges

Key note speaker, **Dr. Jed Baker**

Dr. Baker is the author of 9 award winning books and director of the Social Skills Training Project. In addition, he lectures, and provides training on the topic of social skills and managing challenging behaviors.

There will be Breakout Sessions in the afternoon.

This is a FREE Conference

NOVEMBER 4, 2017

**Black Bear Inn and Conference
Center
Orono, Maine**

Registration details coming soon

ASM's Camp Summit July 24th- August 17th

Camp Summit is offered FREE to children with autism, ages 5 through 15.

Located in Farmington, Camp Summit offers 2- two week camp sessions that run Monday through Thursday from 10:00-2PM. Each camper has a one on one camp counselor who is a student from the University. This program fosters social communication with fun peer activities along with field trip experiences.

Applications will be available on April 1st. Space is limited! Call ASM to have your child's application sent to you.

4th Annual Sea of Blue Walk and 5K for Autism Saturday April 29th 2017

Chris Heel decided to organize an Autism Awareness Walk in his hometown of Northeast Harbor in 2014. The Walk event raised over \$3,000 to benefit the Autism Society of Maine. Since then, Chris has expanded his walk to include a 5K Run. Last year he presented the Autism Society of Maine with a check for 6,000.

Chris, who has autism, with the support of his family, has worked very hard to make this autism awareness/fundraising event a success. It is an event that has become very popular in his community and brought runners in from nearby communities. Thank You Chris!

Visit www.seaofblueautism.com for more information.



In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

In honor of Lynda Mazzola's birthday I thought I would share a favorite picture of my son Ben at therapy - Lynda would always meet the children where they were at and oh how Ben loved the metal artwork done by Bill Bishop. Therapy would happen around these works of art. Lisa Mazzola and Laura Mazzola your both in my thoughts and all memories I have of your mom. Love, the Dionne's.



5th Annual Softball Tournament for Autism

June 24, 2017

Union Street Athletic Fields, Bangor,
ME

Dust off your cleats and get your bats ready! This is a Co-Ed Softball Tournament. Each team needs a team captain, and a minimum of 10 players with a maximum of 13. There is an entry fee of \$250, but teams are also encouraged to obtain corporate sponsors. Each corporate sponsor, depending on the level they sponsor, will be offered advertisement and the team will get the credit. Two prizes will be awarded: One for the team that wins the tournament, and the other for the team that raises the most money.



For more information please contact:
ASM at 1-800-273-5200 or David
Huffstutler at 207-385-5474 or email:
asm@asmonline.org

Legislative Update

By *Dennise Whitley, ASM's Legislative Liaison*

The First Regular Session of the 128th Maine Legislature convened on December 7, 2016. This promises to be a robust session with many new Senators and Representatives. Because there are 8 year term limits, a number of Legislators retired or, if they held a seat in the House, they could be elected to serve in the Senate. What all of this means for the members of the Autism Society of Maine (ASM) is that we need to educate new candidates and remind returning Legislators about how the quality of life of the individuals on the autism spectrum and their families is impacted by social policy issues that influence service delivery as we strive to improve the quality of life and well-being of our family members and friends who are affected by autism.

One of the best and simplest ways to keep current with the Maine Legislature is to use the Maine legislative website. Maine has one of the best and most accessible legislative websites in the country. The ASM website <http://www.asmonline.org/> has 7 Easy Steps to Accessing and Following the Maine Legislature.

The Autism Society of Maine supported an important piece of legislation to benefit people and families of people on the Autism spectrum which passed in the 127th session and when the law passed, ASM met with the State Treasurer, Terry Hayes to offer support and assistance if needed.

Legislature LD 1421: Resolve, Directing the Treasurer of State To Study the Most Effective Options for Maine Residents To Participate in Tax-advantaged Savings Accounts for Persons with Disabilities. (ABLE ACT)

Sec. 1 Treasurer of State to study options for participation in federal

Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014. Resolved: That the Treasurer of

State shall review federal law under the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 relating to the establishment of tax-advantaged qualified savings programs for the benefit of qualified individuals with disabilities. The Treasurer of State shall research relevant



federal regulations and the experience of other states that have established savings programs pursuant to the federal law and submit a report by January 15, 2017 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over taxation matters containing the results of the Treasurer of State's research and recommendations for the most cost-effective way to ensure that residents of the State are able to obtain the tax advantages of participation in qualified programs. The committee may submit a bill to the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature related to the Treasurer of State's report.

LD1421 relates to the Stephen Beck, Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act which became federal law on December 19, 2014. The ABLE Act creates a new option for some people with disabilities and their families to save for the future, while protecting eligibility for public benefits. The ABLE Act remains one of the most significant pieces of disability legislation and is among the most bipartisan, bicameral bills ever passed any Congress – 85 percent of the entire 113th Congress supported the law. Stuart Spielman, Senior Policy Advisor and Counsel for Autism Speaks said "ABLE accounts will provide a new financial tool for the millions of Americans affected by autism. The collaboration we are announcing will make that tool more precise and efficient for our community and others facing the financial challenges of disability." Before the accounts can become available, however, states must put regulations in place.

With the new accounts, people with disabilities will be able to accrue up to \$100,000 without losing access to Social Security and other government benefits. Medicaid coverage will remain intact no matter how much money is saved in an individual's ABLE account. Modeled after 529 college savings plans, funds in the accounts can be used to pay for education, health care, transportation, housing and other expenses. Interest earned on savings in

In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

Lynda started working with our daughter when Rachael was 6 years old. For 30 years she was a language therapist, teacher, supporter, and friend to Rachael and our family. Her expertise, interest, and concern for Rachael never wavered. She brought her to a greater level of communication through Facilitated Communication.

We are grateful for and will never forget Lynda's big-hearted contribution to our family and to families across the state through her speech therapy practice, The Autism Society of Maine, and autism awareness.

We miss her- always will.

Darlene, Jonathan, Rachael Lepoff



the accounts will be tax-free. Individuals with disabilities that originated before age 26 will be eligible for the new accounts. A comprehensive synopsis of the federal ABLE Act can be found on the ASM website under Legislation . <http://www.asmonline.org/>

Treasurer Hayes and her staff in 2016 conducted extensive research including:

- Participation in bi-monthly telephonic meetings with ABLE national peers
- Participation in ABLE electronic list serve
- Attendance at various national ABLE workshop sessions
- Attended ABLE meeting of New England states in Montpelier, VT
- Telephonic consults with the National Disability Institute, Washington, DC
- Conference calls with the Social Security Administration (SSA)

Legislative Update (continued)

- Meetings with Maine disability advocates and disabled citizens
- Meetings with representatives of several Maine banks and the Maine Bankers Association
- Meeting with the Maine Credit Union League

As required, the “State Treasurer’s Report Resulting from LD 1412 of the 127th Legislature,” a 27 page document was submitted to the Legislature with the following recommendation.

The full report can be viewed on the Legislation section of the ASM website: <http://www.asmonline.org/>

TREASURER’S RECOMMENDATION:

It appears to be most prudent at this point to continue to work with our banking partners to identify

and/or design a retail banking product that would allow for a “transaction” account while still offering

an “assets under management” option through access to the nationally available ABL programs. This

would be a combination of options 4A and 4C from section 5 of this report. This course of action will require legislation. Treasury staff is committed to work with the Legislature’s Office of Policy and Legal Analysis staff to draft the legislation for the Committee’s review. Treasury does not anticipate the need for additional resources in order to fulfill its role on this project.

ASM will continue to support LD1412 and the Treasurer’s recommendation and the ensuing legislation as it progresses through the legislative process.

In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

I feel very fortunate that my son had the privilege of working with Lynda as his Speech Therapist, and I am sad to know that there are many other children that will not have that opportunity. Lynda worked with Justin from preschool age through high school. She was always very sweet and loving toward him and all of her clients, and was genuinely excited for every little breakthrough.

Lynda always remembered Justin’s birthday, and every Christmas they baked and decorated sugar cookies. Even with all of the clients that she worked with, she purchased gifts for each of them and made them all feel very special.

Justin was one of the lucky ones, and I will be forever grateful to have known Lynda. She was one of a kind and will be greatly missed by so many.

Lovingly remembered by Donna Phillips and Family



Fundraising for the Autism Society of Maine

ASM seeks to provide a better future for children and adults with Autism in the state of Maine. To reach our goal we rely on the support from people like you. Although we receive a number of generous contributions, many people have wondered “What else can I do?” In response to this question the Autism Society of Maine has a **Statewide Fundraising Program**. If you would like to help us make brighter futures for our loved ones with Autism, we invite you to participate and play an important role in our mission.

Before you start, please check the guidelines, we want to do all we can to help your fundraising!

In order to ensure that all fundraising projects are in keeping with our organizational guidelines, there is a short and easy form to fill out for the details of your fundraising plan. This form must be filled out and accepted by ASM for you to obtain permission to use the trademarked autism awareness ribbon logo and also for you to collect any money in the name of the Autism Society of Maine.

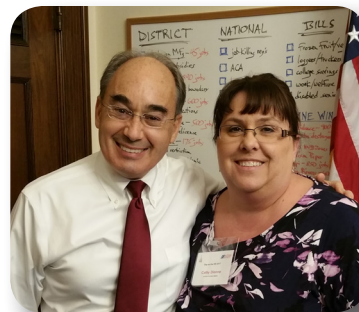
The guidelines form can be found on the ASM website’s **Fundraising Page** or you can request the form by email: <mailto:info@asmonline.org> or call us at 1-800-273-5200.

ASM in Washington DC

My job brings me all over Maine to help families with autism. This week I had the pleasure to travel to Washington DC and advocate for Maine families with our Senators and Representatives. We may not all agree on the topics, in this case I brought information about Federal Block Grant, IDEA, and Medicaid restructuring. But I do feel they all truly care about how these changes will effect families and individuals with ASD. I leave today and will bring information back with me to share with you on our website. We work closely with Autism Society of America and will continue advocating for those who don’t have a voice.

Susan Collins: <https://www.collins.senate.gov/>

Bruce Poliquin: <https://poliquin.house.gov/>



ASM Director Cathy Dionne pictured above with Representative Bruce Poliquin and Senator Susan Collins and ASM Board Member Chris Osgood on video.

The Dentist Visit

by Deb Lipsky

For the last 14 months I had been living with terrible nerve pain in a couple of my teeth. On Christmas Day the pain was so intense no OTC pain reliever worked. What did work wonders however was watching a PBS special that night on midwives assisting third world women who were having complications during childbirth. After an hour of seeing that it's amazing how much better I felt!!!

I had a dentist appointment on the 28th and when I walked in I was given a new patient multi-page form to fill out. It was rather overwhelming so I flipped over to the second page which was the medical history section. Man it read more like a college entrance S.A.T. Exam rather than a patient history form. It had a million questions (more or less). I still don't see how my gynecological history has any pertinence to my teeth. Last time I checked dental chairs didn't come with stirrups. I decided to answer the medical section of that form very succinctly. I put on the top of that page in bold letters, "HEALTHY AS A HORSE!!!!!!!" and left it at that.

I must have attained a new world record in filling out forms because I was done in less than 2 minutes when I handed in my "completed" form to the astonished receptionist. As she read down the first page she came to the line that asked, "Who do you want us to contact in case of an emergency?" I had put down 9-1-1. Bewildered she looked up at me I guess for clarification of the obvious. Being totally serious I told her emphatically that calling an ambulance would be much more beneficial to me than calling my husband who wouldn't know what to do. I mean my husband can't even properly pack away my vintage Christmas decorations. How can I trust him with immediate sudden snap critical medical decisions if I fear for my 1950's Santa figurines in his hands???

Whatever happened to the line on all forms that used to read, "Next of Kin"? I know those under 40 probably won't even recognize what that is asking but that question is more precise than the above for

mentioned one. I didn't circle "male" or "female" either on the first page as it is my dental records and not my sex that a medical examiner would find relevant should I need to be identified post mortem. With a first name of Deborah it is pretty obvious I am female so the sex question was redundant and unnecessary in my eyes. Not wanting to come across as a difficult patient I explained to the receptionist that I always skip dumb questions on any form so it was nothing personal against their office.

Within a few minutes a dental assistant came to escort me to the dental exam room. Dr. Ted Morgan confirmed that I would need a molar root canal on top of replacing and re-doing a poorly set crown on the tooth beside it. Just as I was at the point of tears and hyperventilation sedation dentistry was laid out as an option. The dental assistant would explain everything very detailed for me to ease any "concerns" I might have. Having had a horrific experience with my last root canal done 30 years ago, this was the only option for my mental health sake's and theirs.

As the dental assistant explained what conscious sedation was I was getting hung up on the phrase. When you mull over that phrase in your head, it's kind of an oxymoron isn't it? She went on to say that although I would be wide awake I would be "loopy". Getting nervous I asked for details on what "loopy" meant. In an attempt to clarify she said,



In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

My son had always seemed like he was ahead for his age. Walking at 9 months old was just amazing. But we started to notice he wasn't talking. And so did many other people. I found Lynda right in my town of Winthrop and heard amazing things about her. My son was 2 when he first met with Lynda, and couldn't say anything other than "dada". I loved how we would meet right at her home and she had thousands of amazing toys! My son loved it too. After only 6 months of Lynda working with Chase, he was talking!! I couldn't believe it. I remember he always picked the blue dum dum lollipop to do his mouth exercises. Thank you Lynda for all your hard work to get my boy talking. He still remembers doing the "cheeky-cheeky-cheekies" with you 3 years later.

Lauren Dempsey



"out of it" which is even more vague than "loopy". I would be able to answer questions but all my muscles would be relaxed she assured me, but it didn't make logical sense.

How can you be "out of it" and answer questions at the same time. The only reference my brain could pull up to this conundrum was of the TV show of funniest home videos were people who were coming out of oral surgery were awake and answering questions. I remember one person was convinced she was on the moon and needed to take a bus to Venus. In a flash my brain convinced me that all I would talk about while under sedation was of rainbows and unicorns. In the next flash my brain convinced me that with "relaxed muscles" I would end up peeing my pants

The Dentist Visit (continued)

(your bladder is a muscle too you know). I blurted out and obsessed over these two newly founded profound phobias to the bewildered assistant who now found herself in the role of crisis hot-line counselor. With the patience of a saint she calmly told me that while I would be in the dental chair for 5 hours, if I had to go to the ladies room I could be escorted there. I wanted to be able to go (no pun intended) alone but she emphatically stated that while sedated I couldn't be left unattended. I began to protest that I get "performance anxiety" if I know someone is watching me despite them waiting outside the door. In an attempt to put a positive spin on this quickly spiraling conversation she added that while sedated I wouldn't be aware of time so the 5 hours in the chair will only seem like 5 minutes. Her statement only solidified my fear of not being aware of my surroundings or my body so I blurted out, "Well then the only option I have is to go out and buy adult bladder control pads for this procedure". Rather than living with the fear of wetting myself I wanted to make sure my "bases were covered" (no pun intended). The bewildered office staff did a good job of attempting to curb my fears, but their efforts were as productive as rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

I must admit the time during the procedure did seem like 5 minutes instead of 5 hours. I never did pee my pants so my waddling into the office like a penguin because of my "Poise" pad was extremely unnecessary and uncomfortable. I was amazed how coherent I remained thru-out it all. My imagined interpretations of rainbows and unicorns never came to fruition. Before I left, both I and my "chaperon" were given the stern admonition of going

straight home as it's not possible to go shopping while sedated.

On the drive home my intelligent conversations about world history with my friend lulled the two of us into a false sense of security that the admonition to go straight home was unfounded. Since I wasn't staggering or acting intoxicated I convinced her to stop at the gas station so I could buy my weekly lottery ticket. I ended up buying \$18.00's worth because I couldn't remember buying the first one 9 times just prior. To add insult to injury I had her stop at the grocery store to pick up a few things. By the time we got home which was 15 minutes later, I didn't remember a single item that I bought or how I managed to spend \$50.00 at the grocery store. For the rest of the night I had perfect recall of all things tucked away in long term memory storage but I couldn't even remember that I had just put my hat into the freezer which I mistook as the closet 5 minutes earlier.

The next day when all the sedation wore off, I realized that "pharmaceutically induced temporary dementia" would have been a much more appropriate and less angst provoking description as compared to "loopy". The staff and dentists at Morgan Dental in Gorham (yes I got permission to use their name) got a crash course on adults on the autism spectrum and did such an exemplary job dealing with the likes of me. By the way, before I left the office after my 5 hour dental work, the assistant handed me a beautiful bouquet of fresh flowers complete with a magnet shaped like teeth. It was awarded to me for being considered their "patient of the week". Now that's something to smile about.

In Loving Memory of Lynda J. Mazzola

Another of our "earthly angels" is now looking down from above.

Lynda entered our lives in 1989, providing Heather and Ben with speech therapy. When nobody else believed in Facilitated Communication, Lynda was there... guiding, removing doubt, and instilling confidence. As Ben says, "Ben loving Lynda for giving Ben voice fingertip". Ben never would have been "unlocked" had it not been for her conviction.

Over the years, it became so much more than speech therapy... Holiday gatherings, pizza parties, sharing Bill's gift of art, flying kites so high we could barely see them. Eventually, Lynda brought Heather into her office, helping her to develop her clerical skills, and giving her confidence in the work she performed. Her influence and love permeated our lives in so many ways... we will always be grateful.

And even though she will be missed forever, we take comfort in knowing that she is one of our "guardian angels" that will always be there for us. Loving you forever... The Rossignol's



ASM on Social Media!

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

By "liking" ASM's Facebook page you can help us spread the word to hundreds of new supporters!



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



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

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



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

<https://twitter.com/autismsocietyme>

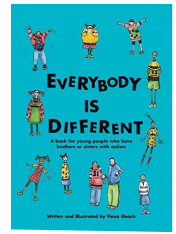
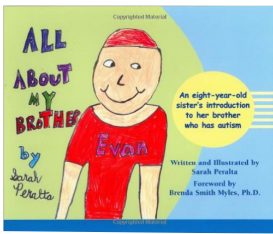


My Autism Team logo A reputable and friendly place to connect with other parents in Maine.

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

Welcome to the Autism Society of Maine Library!

April Autism Awareness Month at the ASM Lending Library!

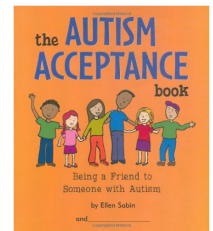
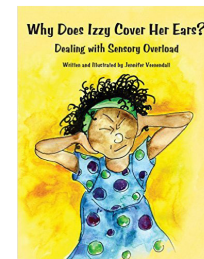
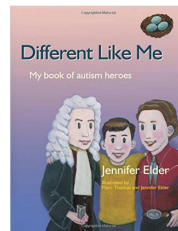
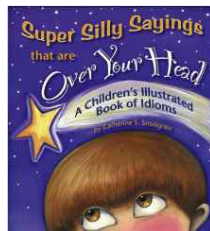
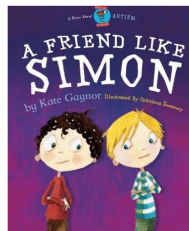
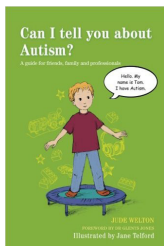
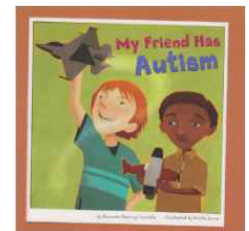
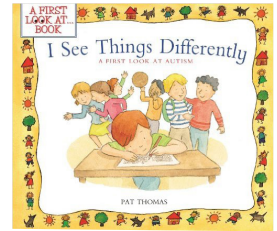
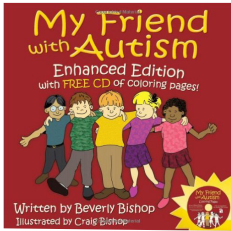


We have books and videos that promote with fellow students, young readers and siblings! Visit ASM's online lending library page and use the dropdown for "time Children's Books" to see book covers and descriptions. **Extended lending time available!**

ASM's Lending Library is a valuable and FREE resource for parents, caregivers, educators, children and professionals working with children and adults on the autism spectrum in Maine.

The collection can be viewed on the ASM website or you may request a printed list to be mailed to you. Stop by the office, or have material sent to you (we will include return shipping label) by calling:

1-800-273-5200 email: library@asmonline.org



Donations

In Memory of:

Bradley Lapointe:

Jody Fein
Douglas, Denham, Buccina & Ernst Law Firm

June Wilkinson

Arlene Pulk

Michelle Libby

Janet Coffman:

O'Connor Motor Company

Marshall Spaulding:

Maine State Prison

Mary Murphy:

Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Vaillancourt

Maisie "Charlie" Knowles

Virginia Belanger

Donna & Daniel Veilleux

Jerome & Elizabeth Allen

Janet L. Coffin

O'Connor Motor Company

Lynda Mazzola:

Laurie Raymond

Sharon Chesley

In Honor Of:

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Desjardins

Patricia Paquette

The Vaillancourt Family

Terri Port & Steve Lishansky

Colonel & Mrs. Michael Port

Brian Farnham and Family

Donations/Fundraisers/Sponsorships

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Toddle Inn Day Care Inc.

Texas Instruments Inc.

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Saco & Biddeford Savings Institute

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Norris, Inc.

Kim Humphrey

Lane Construction Corp.

Darling's Ice Cream Truck for a Cause

First National Bank

Wendy Derzawiec

Harry Bonish

Hunting Dearborn Inc.

You may purchase these and more items on the ASM website at:

<http://www.asmonline.org/asm-storefront.aspx>

or call 1-800-273-5200.



Embracing the Amazing message of support is on the side of this red tote. Features a flat bottom for ease of packing and a full Velcro® top closure insulated foil lining to keep your purchase's temperature stable. Woven polypropylene shell with gloss laminate.

12" H x 14" L x 8.5" D

\$10.00



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

\$10.00



Autism Awareness Mug (red) features words: "Embracing the Amazing" porcelain (do not microwave – hand wash)

\$11.00



Puzzle Piece Car Magnet

4" x 8" \$6.00



\$8.00



\$8.00



\$9.00

NEW

Silicone Chew Necklaces All necklaces are 24" in length and have a break-away clasp and are made of 100% food grade silicone – Assorted Colors : Call ASM to request specific color



\$9.00

ELEPHANT
3" x 2 3/4" Pendant (hole size is 1/8")
ROUND
2" Pendant (hole size is 1/2")
TEAR DROP
2" x 3"
OWL
3" x 3" Pendant



Big Heart Autism Ribbon Key Chain

1.5" x 1.5" and comes in embossed gift box. Sterling Silver plated

\$6.00



Baseball Cap
Black/Yellow Wave Cap with yellow font

\$15.00



Adult Coloring Book (60 pages)

"Color Up the Spectrum" by Heather Down

\$10.00



Silver Cuff Bracelet

Puzzle piece design cuff bracelet Sterling silver plated 7" and flexible for fit (gift box included)

\$10.00



Multicolored Puzzle Piece Heart Hanging Charm

1" x 1" and Sterling Silver plated

\$3.00



Autism Ribbon Earrings

Sterling Silver plated

Includes Embossed Gift Box

\$8.00



Autism Awareness Lanyard

\$6.00



Autism Stretch Bracelet

Sterling Silver plated

\$4.00



Gel Autism Awareness Bracelet

\$3.00



Autism Awareness Lapel Pin

\$5.00



Hand Crafted Dichroic Glass Earrings

Sterling silver plated wire fish hooks; 5/8" x 7/8" random design & color

\$15.00



Autism Ribbon Keychain

\$5.00



Mini Magnet 2" x 4"

\$3.00



Autism Awareness Magnet 8" x 3.5"

\$5.00



Autism Touches Us All Hanging Charm

1" x 1" and Sterling Silver plated

\$3.00



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

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

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

Become a Member!

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

You may register online at:
www.asmonline.org/involved_joinasm.asp
or call ASM at 1-800-273-5200

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

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