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Maine

Autism



Connections

Winter 2022

Ride for Autism 2022

by Susan J. Vincent

It was a GREAT day for our 16th Annual "Ride for Autism" that was held on October 15th in Kennebunkport. The weather was fantastic with sunny skies and temperatures in the mid 60's, perfect riding weather! How fortunate we were, considering the day before was a complete wash-out with very high winds that left many Mainers without of power. This event raised donations of \$22,500!! We give a special THANK YOU to the riders and families that came out, for those who made a donation, to our amazing volunteers and sponsors.

I also want to take a minute to thank and acknowledge what Nathan Poore and his family have done for the Autism Society of Maine towards this event. Sixteen years ago, Nathan brought the idea to our Board of Directors of adding a Ride for Autism to our Fundraising schedule.

We already had an established Walk for Autism, but with Nathan having avid bike riders in his family, wanted ASM to branch out to having a Ride for Autism. From that very first ride I knew this event given time was going to be very successful. It went from being held in Saco to Kennebunkport, from 12 riders up to 150 riders including families who ride with their children or adults. This event has brought us together to celebrate each other's success and work towards a better world for our children.



The Connection is you.

Story continued on Page 6



Maine Autism Connections
A publication of the
Autism Society of Maine

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72B Main Street Winthrop, ME
 04364 Phone: 1-800-273-5200

Graphic Designer: Susan Vincent
 Proofreader: Cathy Dionne
 Contributing writers: As bylined

Send article ideas and suggestions
 for our newsletter to:
info@asmonline.org

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President's Message

Hello, my name is Christina Nason, and I am the new president of the board for the Autism Society of Maine. I have been on the board for a few years. I came to the Society when my oldest son Elijah was just diagnosed. Elijah is now 20 years old. My other son Aaron is 18. Both of my boys have been diagnosed with autism but are on different ends of the spectrum. We have experienced what a lot of you are experiencing.



Christina Nason ASM President

Waiting for service, being put on the long wait list, and fighting with the school systems to get them what they needed just to name a few. Because of all this, I chose to home-school both my sons through the elementary years. When Elijah was entering his freshman year, I chose to send them back to public school to transition them to the adult world.

I am happy to say both my boys graduated high school. Now we are fighting the adult service end of service. It is one battle at a time, and we keep fighting as most of you are doing.

I have done the guardianship fight and won for Elijah; I am Elijah's shared living provider, and happy to say Elijah works 4 hours a week. I have helped Aaron be full-time employed when the vocational service system let him down. I am also an ed tech 3 in our local high school. I see both sides of the special education system which I believe is a blessing for me to help others.

I love the society; it has given me a resource and provided a great summer camp that Elijah still talks about to this day. Remember the autism society is here for you and your child no matter the age. From leading the library to support during an IEP meeting or just a friendly ear to listen. Please reach out, don't struggle alone.

As this is the last newsletter before the end of the year, I hope you all have a peaceful holiday season, whatever you and your family celebrate. Remember that your holiday might look very different from others, but it is still special. This is a stressful time for you and your kids. I hope you find a few blessings this year.

Happy end of 2022 and an even happier 2023.

Christina Nason

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.

Annual Meeting

ASM held its Annual Meeting virtually on September 30th for our membership and the community. We shared what we have been working this past year along with program highlights and visions for the future of ASM.

Our Guest Speaker was Jillian Nelson, Community Resource Policy Advocate for the Autism Society of Minnesota.

New board members were welcomed, and the gavel was passed from immediate Past President, Tiffany Rooney to newly elect President, Christina Nason.



It is with heartfelt thanks that we mark the end of Tiffany Rooney's service to the Board of over eight years, from 2014 – 2022. Tiffany has put in many hours of steadfast dedication and guidance, and she will truly be missed.

Re-elected Board Members: Christina Nason, President, Bobbi-Jo Doucette, Secretary, Current Board Members: Malarie Clark, J. Richardson Collins, Jenna Cyr, Isabel Douglas, Shannon Landry, Lisa Morgan, Jon Youde and Brigid Rankowski.

New Board Members: David Sharp, Kathryn Dobos, Melissa Ponce, Kristen King.

Learn more about our board members [here](#).

ASM Service Awards

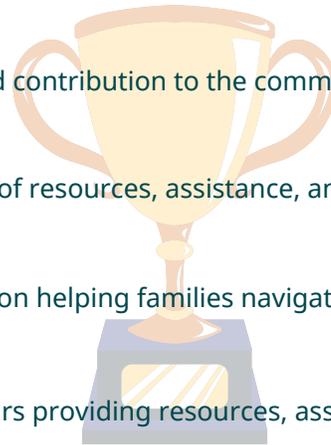
ASM Service Awards were given to those who made an exceptional difference in the lives of individuals with Autism

Connor Archer, for his continued contribution to the community to enhance the lives of all individuals with Autism.

Jane Bell, for providing 18 years of resources, assistance, and experience to families to with Autism.

Whitney Brown, for her dedication helping families navigate the journey into adult services.

Kendra Campbell, for her 16 years providing resources, assistance, and education to families with Autism.



Connor Archer

Trina, Andy, and Ajay Beaudoin, for giving selflessly of their time providing resource, assistance, and friendship to other families.



Beaudoin Family

To make a difference in someone's life, you don't have to be brilliant, beautiful or perfect. You just have to care. *Mandy Hale*

HOLIDAYS!

Traveling by plane for the holiday?

Navigating unfamiliar airports, the security screening process and flying in general can be very stressful! Preparation and planning ahead provides a better understanding of what to expect if you are traveling during the holidays with someone with Autism Spectrum Disorder. [Click here for traveling by plane guidance.](#)

ASM has a [holiday resource page](#) that includes traveling tips whether by plane or car. In addition, see preparation, tips & strategies, visual supports, crafts and gift ideas!



Holiday Themed SLIME!

A great learning and sensory activity!



SLIME INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup of Elmer's Clear Glue
- 1/2 cup of water
- Food Coloring and Glitter
- 1/4-1/2 Cup of Liquid Starch
- Glitter, beads and fun stuff!

Get even more creative by Decorating a slime Christmas Tree! Add a foam cone that the slime can ooze down.



Snowman Rice Krispie treats

Make with store bought rice krispy treats!



See the slime recipe at "[Little Bins for Little Hands](#)" with a video to watch how it is made and the science behind slime!

Fun and Easy Recipe can be found at "[A Sparkle of Genius](#)"

End of Year Giving!

ASM is here to connect you and your loved ones to education, advocacy, supports, and services. We are proud to serve you as we start a new year with a bright vision for the future: A world where Autistic individuals are connected to the resources needed to live full, vibrant, and self-actualized lives. Please consider supporting our work today.

Looking for that perfect gift this holiday season? Consider a tax-deductible donation on behalf of a loved one to the Autism Society of Maine so we can continue to connect even more people to locally-based resources, supports, and services that will provide empowerment in every aspect of life.

[Make a Donation to ASM](#)



Happy Holidays!

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

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.

We are HIRING!

(More employment information [here](#))

Autism Information Specialist Coordinator

Are you looking to work in an office full time? Come join us to help families, Autistic adults/youth or professionals understand how services work in Maine. The job would provide oversight, technical assistance, and training to Information Specialists currently in the field. Help to bring in new AIS to our family across the state. The position assist with ASM office work, all AIS across Maine, work with the Board of Director's and the Executive Director. Position is in office.

Office Assistance

Do you need a job where you could work around your children's schedule, look no further. The job consists of answering the phone, logging in donations, sending out thank you letters/note cards, ordering supplies, entering information in database (we will train for the database), and packing for events. Work closely with Executive Director and Autism Information Specialist Coordinator. Position is part time and in office.

Community Outreach Liaison

The Autism Society of Maine (ASM) is looking for a knowledgeable candidate for the Community Outreach Liaison position. Job will include attending legislative hearings, following rule and policy changes, assist BOD in drafting written testimony, representing ASM in stakeholder meetings, and media inquiries. The position requires a demonstrated understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder, excellent verbal and written communication skills. Seasonal and part time. Position is a work from home and by zoom.

**Please Send your cover letter and resume to: Executive Director
asm@asmonline.org**

Ride for Autism

[See more photos - Online gallery](#)

(Continued from cover)



MOST RAISED BY AN INDIVIDUAL:

First Place: Michael McDade raised \$3,163

Second Place: Kristi McKenna raised \$2,366

Third Place: Tammy Fennessy raised \$631



OUR SPONSORS!

Platinum Sponsors: Tyler Industries, Conservation Trust Building and Flagship Cinemas

Silver Sponsor: Marston's Marina

Bronze Sponsors: Kennebunk Savings Bank and Bullrun Striping

Upcoming Events



Annual Walk for Autism

Two Walk for Autism events will be happening in Bangor and Westbrook again this year. Please stay tuned for dates and registration coming very soon! We are busy in the planning stage!



Annual Family Retreat

This date will also be announced soon so be on the lookout for this fun family event typically held in late June. It will be announced on the ASM Website.

Autism Fall Conference



On November 5th, ASM held its Annual Autism Fall Conference at the Bangor Cross Insurance Center. Keynote Presentation **"Isn't Everyone a Little Autistic?" Autistic Adults Talk About Autism and Neurodiversity** with panelists: Lisa Morgan, M.Ed. CAS, Brigid Rankowski, and Robert Lagos was well attended with conversation about this misconception. Other topics covered at the conference were: Empower the Learner Program, Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports, Autism & Trauma, Maine DOJ Findings Letter and Strategies for Advocacy, and focus a group for Youth and Adult. ASM would like to thank our two Platinum sponsors: Spurwink and Penobscot Foundation for Developmental Services as well as all our sponsors and vendors that helped to make this event happen.

Jennifer Rooks of **Maine Calling** invited ASM to an interview about the Keynote Presentation "What neurodiversity means, and how being neurodiverse presents challenges and opportunities."

[Listen to the conversation here](#)



Email - Social Media



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!

Donations

Donations/Sponsorships Employee Matches/Grants

Hannaford, Whitten Road, Augusta
Mary Herman
Tyler Industries
Bangor Savings Bank
Town Fair Tire Foundation
Derek Blackburn
Peter Robbins
Maine Development Disabilities Council
Heartleaf ABA
Nautilus Solar Energy, LLC
Help Me Grow Maine
Spurwink
UCP of Maine
Penobscot Foundation for
Developmental Services



In Memory of:

Sanford Earl Chesley, JR.

By:
Mia Forbes
John & Kathy Woodland
Kathie Rounds

Iris Curley

By:
Joan Wing

Kathleen Woodman

By:
Judy Lewis

Membership Renewals

Chioma Ibeneme
Tiffany Rooney
Bobbi-Jo Doucette
Franklin Freeman
Susan Marston
Amanda Karpowitz
Isabel Douglas
Jeanne Ott

New Memberships

Jill Langdon
Kristen King
Mitchell Boucher
Jennifer Pare
Katie Hartley
Tyne Anzelc

Facebook Fundraisers

A special thank you for the thoughtful people that created a Facebook fundraiser to raise donations for ASM. We appreciate you sharing your special day with us! Facebook covers all fees for donations made to charitable organizations.



This means 100% of your donation comes directly to ASM! Thank You! Your donation will have a lasting impact for those to receive guidance, resources, and experiences with ASM.

Mid-August thru October facebook fundraisers

Didi Decker, Amanda Alley, Laurie Carver, Carrie Gendron, and Jamie Young