

INSIDE

Ride for Autism
Page 6



Fall Autism
Conference
Page 7



Let ME
spread the
word on
AUTISM

AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Maine

Maine Autism

Connections

The ABLÉ Act

by Tena Hinds

The Stephen Beck Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience Act, better known as the “ABLE Act” was signed into law on December 19, 2014. The ABLÉ Act amends the Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 to create tax-free savings accounts for individuals with disabilities. The funds in the ABLÉ account do not count toward the \$2,000 cap on assets, that is required, to remain eligible for critical government supports.

What is an ABLÉ account?

Until recently, accumulating as little as \$2,000 in savings, spelled disaster for the millions who rely on federal assistance with medical bills and living costs—because even that modest amount was enough to render them ineligible for disability benefits through Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

That’s now changed. The federal ABLÉ Act, passed in 2014, made way for new state programs—modeled after 529 savings plans—that let those with disabilities, and their families, put aside up to \$15,000 a year to be used for a wide variety of disability-related costs, including living expenses. The most important shift: Money in these accounts won’t count against the \$2,000 asset limit. The first \$100,000 in ABLÉ accounts would be exempted from the SSI \$2,000 individual resource limit. If and when an ABLÉ account exceeds \$100,000, the beneficiary’s SSI cash benefit would be suspended until such

time as the account falls back below \$100,000.

For the first time in public policy, the ABLÉ Act recognizes the extra and significant costs of living with a disability. A “qualified disability expense” means any expense related to the designated beneficiary as a result of living a life with disabilities. These may include education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology, personal support services, health care expenses, financial management and administrative services as well as other expenses which help improve health, independence, and/or quality of life. The ABLÉ Act limits eligibility to individuals with significant disabilities with an age of onset of disability before turning 26 years of age. If you meet this age criteria and are also receiving benefits already under SSI and/or SSDI, you are automatically eligible to establish an ABLÉ account.

As of January 2018 there are over 30 ABLÉ programs nationwide inviting eligible individuals

Summer 2018



continued on 8

Future Newsletter Printings

The Autism Society of Maine will be going paperless for three of the newsletters starting in our next fiscal year. We will still publish 4 quarterly newsletters but only one will be printed for the spring 2019. All other editions will be available online. If you don’t have any way to print or look at newsletter please contact us and we can get you a printed copy.



Maine Autism Connections
A publication of the
Autism Society of Maine

Board of Directors

Laurie Raymond, President
Nancy Ponzetti-Dyer, Vice President
Ken Huhn, Treasurer
Tiffany Rooney, Secretary
Dick Farnsworth
Katie Crowley
Sherry Pike Jon Youde
Chris Osgood Jennifer Brooking
Brigid Rankowski Kim Webber

Staff

Cathy E. Dionne, *Executive Director*
Tena Hinds,
*Autism Information Specialist
Coordinator*
Susan Vincent,
Communications Director
Tara Perry, *Office Assistant*
Dennise Whitley, *Legislative Liaison*

Maine Autism Connections is a
quarterly publication of the
Autism Society of Maine
72B Main Street
Winthrop, ME 04364
Phone: 1-800-273-5200

Graphic Designer: Justine Bickford
Proofreader: Tena Hinds
Contributing writers: As bylined
*Send article ideas and suggestions for
our newsletter to:*
asm@asmonline.org

*Statements made by various authors regarding treat-
ment, products or services represent the views and
opinions of solely those authors, and do not constitute
a recommendation or endorsement by ASM.*



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

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



[https://www.facebook.com/
pages/Autism-Society-Of-
Maine/107781499258293](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Autism-Society-Of-Maine/107781499258293)



President's Message

Greetings! As we head into summer, ASM often gets calls from members across our state expressing concern about life after high school. A couple of areas of most concern to individuals and families are vocational opportunities and meaningful employment. The Autism Society of America notes that in 2014, only 19.3 % of people with disabilities in the United States were participating in the labor force—working or seeking work. Compare this to the 69.3% of people without disabilities in the workforce. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014).

As a parent of an adult with autism, these numbers are not acceptable. In my nearly 30 years of social work practice and the same as a parent, I have met very few people who could not (or did not want to) be a part of the workforce. We know that customized employment is on the rise in the U.S. and that states (including Maine) are committing to "Employment First" policies and practices. Employment First legislation requires that state agencies must provide service and supports to persons with disabilities and include and offer, as the first and preferred service or support option, the opportunity for persons with disabilities to acquire integrated, community based employment or customized employment as a core component of its services and supports.

Yet, we continue to receive calls from individuals with autism and their families expressing frustration about the unemployment or under-employment of individuals impacted by autism (as well as other disabilities) in Maine. Despite incredible strengths and abilities, my adult child has never been employed more than 3 hours a week.

One of the enhancements to the Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) have added the service of Career Planning, which presents an opportunity to many people in Maine who have funding through the Maine Care Sections 21 or 29 Waiver programs.

Career Planning is described by OADS website as "a person centered, comprehensive direct support provided to a member that enables a member to obtain, maintain and advance in competitive employment or self-employment. It assist with identifying a career direction and developing a plan for achieving competitive integrated, individual employment or self-employment at or above the state's minimum wage."

Career planning can be used in preparation to gather information to be used as part of a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation. The service is limited to 60 hours annually and is typically delivered in a 6 month period. Career Planning Services provide: Discovering Personal Genius Process, Employment Staging Record, referral to Technology Assessment, referral to Benefit Counseling, and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation.

This is encouraging for our membership and our state! If you want to learn more, please check out the following:

www.employmentformewds.org

<http://www.employmentfirstmaine.org/Legislation.html>

www.kfmaine.org/services/employment-services

www.pinetreesociety.org/children-and-families/career-development-services/

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/home-support/disability-with-autism/index.html>

www.rootedinrights.org/videos/employment/bottom-dollars/ (a powerful documentary about employment rights/history)

continued on 9



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.

16th Annual Walk for Autism

Autism Society of Maine wrapped up April Awareness Month with our 16th annual Walk for Autism. We added another site this year, bringing our total to 6 sites throughout the state for families and friends to come together and show support and raise awareness for autism. We encountered all kinds of weather this year, Our Portland, Biddeford, Northport and Fryeburg sites were dealt with clouds, wind and rain, our friends in Farmington were lucky enough to make it almost completely through the walk before the skies opened up and Bangor enjoyed a beautiful, sunny 70 degree day. Springtime in Maine is a wonderful thing!

“Thank You So Much!” for your part in making this a wonderful day to celebrate individuals with autism. This event helps to create autism awareness & acceptance and raises important funds for ASM to provide programs in the autism community. Many teams were formed and they worked very hard at reaching their fundraising goals. We saw some great team spirit this year, from custom T-shirts, to full costumes. Bangor even had some team line dancing before the walk started! A great time was had by all! We appreciate everyone who came out and made a donation to support this great cause! Thank you!

A Special **“Thank You”** goes to all of our **Corporate Sponsors and In-Kind donations** who helped to make this event possible; their support is the foundation of this event.

PLATINUM Sponsor:

Katahdin Trust Company

GOLD Sponsors:

Children’s Odyssey, First National Bank, Franklin Savings Bank, Living Innovations, Maine Behavioral Healthcare, Sequel Care, Maine Behavioral Healthcare, Toys “R” Us, Fryeburg Fairgrounds, and Farmington Fairgrounds.

Thank You to First Responders that came out to **“Meet and Greet”** with parents and let children check out, and even sit in their vehicles. Although this is great fun for the children, it’s also a great opportunity for them to learn to associate first responders as friendly and someone to trust when needed.

Thank You to our Team Leaders: Cathy Dionne & Tara Perry (Bangor), Karen Gorris-Hicock (Northport), Susan Vincent (Biddeford), Jean Mason & Tena Hinds (Farmington), Kendra Campbell (Fryeburg) Jennifer Hendren (Portland)

ASM Board Members Present: Richard Farnsworth, Sherry Pike, Nancy Ponzetti-Dyer, Laurie Raymond, Tiffany Rooney, Brigid Rankowski, Kim Webber, Jennifer Brookings, Ken Huhn, Chris Osgood and Jon Youde.

Many volunteers from the community are needed to help make this event successful. We give a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you; we couldn’t have done it without you!

Group volunteers: UNE Special Care Dentistry Association, UNE Pre-OT Club, Kohl’s Associates in Action from the Bangor and Biddeford stores, TD Bank, Stillwater Academy and Louise Magoon’s Group of volunteers.

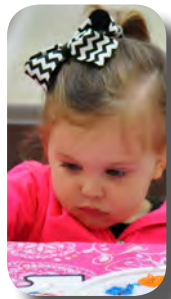
Thank you to all of you who donated and participated in this important event! It is wonderful to know that we have a vibrant autism community that strives for autism awareness and acceptance where we learn, live and play!

2018 Fun Facts!

Teams Registered: 105

Funds Raised: \$58,133

Top Fundraising Team: Team Tommy, Biddeford location raised \$5,570!



April Autism Awareness Month

With a Joint Resolution sponsored by Rep. Richard Farnsworth and cosponsored by the House of Representatives and Senate Chamber, April 2018 was recognized as Autism Awareness Month in the State of Maine.



(FR) Representative Craig Hickman, Senator Shenna Bellows, ASM Board Members: Sherry Pike, Tiffany Rooney, Nancy Ponzietti-Dyer, Vice President, Laurie Raymond, President, (BR) Richard Farnsworth and Jon Youde

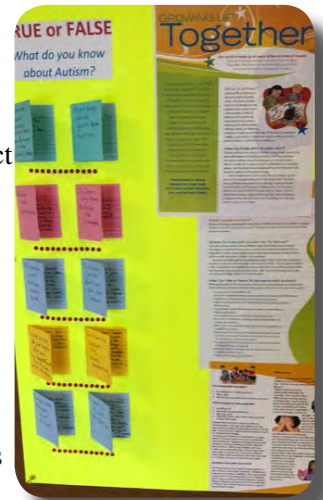
During April Autism Awareness Month, ASM provided over **400 autism awareness packets** and **3,500 autism awareness ribbons** in the community. In addition, many autism presentations were given by ASM to organizations, first responders and schools that included useful resources to help educators support students and to ensure that students understand the disorder and how to be a friend to their fellow

classmates with autism. Radio announcements throughout the month let the community know about ASM's programs and upcoming events, and how to contact us when needed.

"THANK YOU!" for hosting an event, attending an event, creating autism awareness displays, requesting an autism awareness presentation, volunteering and helping to make a difference in the lives of families, children and adults living with autism.

ASM's online calendar of events is updated weekly! Come back often to see what's happening!

Join us as we look forward to programs and special events throughout the year that increase understanding and acceptance of autism.



Autism Incidence Rate Increased to 1 in 59

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated the incidence rate of autism among eight year olds in the United States. This updated report occurs every two years. The incidence rate released in April 2016 showed that 1 out of 68 children were living with an autism diagnosis.

The incidence rate show the rate has increased to 1 out of 59 eight year olds

"For those involved in supporting the needs of individuals living with autism and their families, this increase is not surprising. Providers of services know that they are getting more calls for help than ever before. Unfortunately, the demands for help far exceed the available resources to assist an individual or his/her family." Scott Badesch, Autism Society President

See additional information about the autism incidence rate increase: www.autism-society.org

NEW Social Networking Group for Adults with ASD

Mid Coast Region Path Finders

Trail Hiking and Social Networking group for adults with ASD

Day & Time: Saturday (2x's per month, weather permitting May through Oct.) 10:30am

Walk locations have been: Harbor Walk and the Rail Trail, Belfast

Next walk dates:

June 23rd – Harbor Walk

June 2nd – Moosehead Point State Park, Searsport (just off rt. 1)

Ages: Adults 21 yrs. and up

Contact: Debbie Pennesi (debpennessi58@verizon.net) or phone 774-258-2480

Please send message via email or call to let us know you are joining for the walks on any given Saturday.



Teen Social Group

After moving from their location in Lewiston to the Autism Society of Maine's office in Winthrop, the Teen Social Group has been a great success! Our attendance varies from 4 to 9 teens each month, and what a great time we are having. Things were a little quiet at first as the group got to know each other and adjust to their new location but things have settled down, we have gotten comfortable and are having a blast! The teens have some favorite activities such as Bingo, Jenga and answering "Would you rather" questions among others. The crafts have been a big hit as well, we have some very talented and artistic individuals in this group! As they are involved in an activity, it is so great to hear them talk to each other about what they are doing in school or sports, what happened since the last meeting, what is happening on their favorite show, and my favorite, hearing them congratulate each other on an accomplishment that they have achieved.

They are very supportive and encouraging to one another. In the few months we have been together we have celebrated a driver's permit, acceptance to college, receiving an award for most improved student, taking part in a school play, trying a new food and winning the hardest level of a game. The group is looking forward to a field trip in June, we will be visiting Dr. Maryam Mermay, from the Transformative Arts (www.thetransformativearts.com). She will be helping the group express themselves through art. We cannot wait to see what they all create!

The Social Group will be taking a break for the months of July and August but will begin meeting again in September. If you are interested in learning more about the Teen Social Group, please call the office at 800-273-5200.



Sea of Blue

It was another successful year at the Sea of Blue Walk/5K in Northeast Harbor. Despite competing with many other events in the area, 66 runners and well over 100 walkers were present for the event. Chris Heel led the 2 mile walk and finished just in time to compete in the 5k race! Way to go Chris! A big thank you to all the sponsors and participants who came out to support a great cause.



EMAIL - SOCIAL MEDIA - ONLINE GROUPS

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!



www.facebook.com/pages/Autism-Society-Of-Maine/107781499258293



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

www.youtube.com/user/AutismSocietyofME



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

twitter.com/autismsocietyme



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

www.myautismteam.com/



Sign up to get interesting news and updates delivered to your email inbox from ASM!

www.asmonline.org/signup/

Maine Autism Connections, Autism Society of Maine, Summer 2018

Upcoming Events

2018 ASM Family Retreat Weekend St. Joseph's College, Standish Maine July 13th, 14th and 15th

This is an annual event that brings families from all over the state together to connect with other families and have fun.



The Autism Society of Maine (ASM) holds a family retreat weekend (Fri.-Sun) for families who have a child(ren), adult with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their siblings. The purpose of this weekend is to provide a relaxing, fun weekend for the whole family. This year, the retreat is held on the campus of St. Joes College in Standish, Maine.

Each year ASM chooses a new theme for the weekend. This year our theme is "Down on the farm" with families enjoying activities, crafts and entertainment that revolve around the theme.

*ASM also offers a Saturday only policy for families that are unable to spend the night.

Space is limited! Call ASM 1-800-273-5200 for more information or to have your application sent to you.

Ride for Autism September 15, 2018

**Kennebunkport Conservation Trust
Building
Gravelly Brook Road, Kennebunkport**



Join us for a ride to remember! This bike ride covers several miles along the coastline in Kennebunkport, including up to five beaches and world renowned scenic view areas. Staggered start times for the 50, 25, and 10 mile routes are well marked and offer an opportunity for everyone to finish together and enjoy a spectacular lunch.

Each route is relatively flat, offering opportunities to enjoy a casual ride, or you can "crank it up" for an individual challenge. Short rides of ten miles or less are very family friendly, or you can choose the Trail Ride at the Smith Preserve. Several trail heads are located within one mile of the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust building.

Call ASM at 1-800273-5200, or visit: www.asmonline.org for more information

Registration is \$35

ASM Summer Camp Programs "Finding the Pieces" August 6, 2018- August 17, 2018 Biddeford, Maine

This is the second year that ASM has collaborated with City of Biddeford and University of New England to hold a summer camp in Biddeford. This is offered free to children in kindergarten through grade 5. The program will consist of structured activities supervised by two professionals and 8 – 10 college students participating in a field experience and earning credits towards their degrees and/or professions.

Camp takes place at the Ross Center, 189 Alfred Street, Biddeford and will run August 6 through August 17. This is a two week day program that runs Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Visit www.asmonline.org for more information.

Camp Summit Farmington, Maine

**July 23,2018 - August 3,2018 (11-15 year olds)
August 6,2018- August 17,2018 (5-10 year olds)**

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.

Call ASM at 1-800-273-5200 for more information

ASM's Annual Board Meeting September 28, 2018 at 6 PM Augusta Country Club Manchester, Maine

Please join us for the ASM Annual Board Meeting and Banquet Dinner. We will welcome new board members and honor members finishing their term. A report regarding the programs ASM has managed throughout the year, as well as fundraising activities that support them will be highlighted. Awards will be presented from various categories. There is no cost to attend this meeting, but membership is recommended.

Seating is limited; please call ASM to make your reservations: 1-800-273-5200

Upcoming Events

Fall Conference on Autism
Social Thinking
November 3, 2018 / Orono, Maine

On November 3, 2018, at the Black Bear Inn and Conference Center in Orono, ASM is holding its second "Fall Conference on Autism", with a focus on Michelle Garcia Winner's Social Thinking Methodology.

This conference is designed for parents and family members of children, or adults on the autism spectrum, as well as educators and other service providers. In addition to our keynote speaker, there will be 4 break-out sessions in the afternoon related to topics that assist in supporting the valued lives of individuals on the Autism Spectrum.



There is no cost for attendees and hopefully everyone will leave with practical tools and strategies that can

be implemented immediately in the home, school and/or community.

Nancy Tarshis, Trainer and Speaker for Michelle Garcia Winner's Social Thinking Methodologies will present a morning keynote and stay with us to present a breakout session related to social thinking. She will leave us with a better understanding of how to respond to and support social deficits.

Doors will open at 8AM for registration. The conference will begin at 9:00. Visit our website, www.asmonline.org for more information, or call 1-800-273-5200.

Unfinished Business

By Deb Lipsky

We headed off to Lowe's this week to buy toilets for the house that will be built this spring. At first I was ecstatic because there were many floor models to choose from. I found a toilet that I thought would be perfect and told my husband Jon to go find a cart to transport them. While waiting for him to return, and just as a formality, I lifted the lid and peeped inside. Much to my horror there was a major design change. I don't know the technical term but at the opening at the base of the bowl, the "poop shoot" (as I call it) wasn't round and big as a grapefruit like mine at home, instead it was narrow like a cattle chute. Praying this was a fluke, I lifted the lid of the toilet next to it, and next to that one, and so on until I peeped in every floor model's bowl. ALL WERE NARROW OPENINGS!

My toilets tend to get a mineral build up and some iron discoloration staining which I need to clean every now and then so I reach up into the "shoot" as far as my 4 fingers fit to clean off the mineral stains. To me nothing is worse than having a clean bowl but then seeing rusty discolored porcelain at the entrance of the "exit ramp". Feeling waves of autistic anxiety sweeping over me, I decided to calm myself by seeing if I could still clean these newly designed shoots just like I am used to doing at home.

Picture this.....there I am kneeling at each toilet, my fist shoved deep inside the bowl oblivious to any and all passer-byers, my head resting on the toilet seat, and me saying to myself, "Nope...this doesn't feel right." Now picture the sales associate with his mouth wide open in utter bewilderment watching me repeat this process 12 times for each floor model! The poor guy barely got out a "May I help you with something" before I cut him off and in a panic blurted out that I needed to find a toilet exactly like the ones I have at home. He told me that toilets have been re-designed in the last 7 years for efficiency and work with a new flush concept to conserve water.

I was having great difficulty explaining my concerns to him over this "new and improved" functionality and he was having great difficulty understanding why I was turning this into a world crisis.

How do I initiate a conversation regarding a socially inappropriate taboo topic? So here was my quandary: I need to know if these toilets function as efficiently as what I am used to, but I can't handle the official titles for human waste. "Feces" rhymes with Reesse's Pieces and I break out into hysterical laughter. "Stool" reminds me pigeon and again I break out into uncontrollable laughing, and "BM" leads me to think of a brand of baked beans and again off I go into fits of laughter. "Human waste" wasn't a specific enough term to address my very specific concern. I needed to give him a clear visual of my concerns regarding the minimal water action of the flush in this matter (no pun nintended) which the government mandated can only be 1.28 gallons per flush. I tried to be autistically politically correct.

Trying to be delicate and "polite" I said, "The current action of my toilet at home is this: I pull down the flush handle and the chocolate pony prances around and around in a circular motion in the corral before finally galloping out of the gate into the wild blue yonder. The re-designed flush of these store models forcefully expels a rush of minimal water barely over 1 gallon. Here is my concern: what if you launch the Lusitania and that rush of water hits her broadside with the force of a torpedo, will there be a debris field that covers the entire toilet bowl ocean with no survivors? Or, would it be more like the Titanic who broadsides the porcelain iceberg and leaves hull marks as she sinks to the bottom? The opening leading out of the toilet bowl bottom has narrowed dramatically and is rather small. Will this create log jams or will there be more skid marks on the bowl's sides than after a race at the track of

continued on 9

The ABLE Act (continued)

to open an account, most of which are enrolling individuals regardless of their state of residence. While the original law passed did stipulate that an individual had to open an account in their state of residency, this provision was eliminated by Congress in 2015. This means that regardless of where you might live and whether or not your state has decided to establish an ABLE program, you are free to enroll in any state's program provided that the program is accepting out of state residents.

Maine is currently establishing its own Maine ABLE Program through Bangor Saving Bank. If you want to open an ABLE account before they're available in Maine, you can open one in another state that opens its ABLE accounts to non-residents. Keep in mind however, that each person can only have one ABLE account.

Learn more at the national website for ABLE:

<http://ablenrc.org/>

"What's going on up there?"

by Richard Farnsworth

The closing of the legislative session this spring resulted in a large cloud of dust that allowed for a great deal of finger pointing and accusations as to who was at fault. Regardless of that the result is that several very important funding bills that effect individuals with Autism and other developmental disabilities are hanging in limbo. The most critical of these are L.D. 967 which funds last year's increase to providers of residential services to individuals with developmental disabilities as well as the funding for education.

At a neighborhood association meeting shortly after the session was over, a constituent came up to me and asked: "What's going on up there?" My short answer was: "It's all about the referenda." But the longer answer is more complex.

Over the past two years Maine voters have approved 5 referenda that, I believe, were a result of the failure of our administration to listen to the voters. These referenda were: A surtax to fund education, recreational marijuana, rank choice voting, minimum wage and Medicaid expansion. All of these were strongly opposed by the administration and a block of legislators in the House. The disposition of these are as follows. School funding never saw the light of day in the Appropriations Committee it was so vigorously opposed by the Chamber of Commerce and the administration. Recreational marijuana was vetoed at least twice and finally required an override by the legislature for it to be activated. Rank Choice Voting, RCV, is still in court as a result of Republican opposition. But the two big ones, minimum wage and Medicaid expansion were and are still in play. Minimum wage has been the target of many unsuccessful attempts by the Republicans and the Chamber of Commerce to either kill the referendum or slow its progress considerably. And of course, Medicaid expansion has been vetoed by the Governor 5 times and has been the target of the Governor's harsh attacks on many occasions and now, even though the passage of the referendum makes it the law, he is refusing to take the necessary steps to be in compliance with the law by initiating the implementation of the law.

In the world of horse trading it is not unusual to say it is OK to trade one thing for another. In this case we might say we will agree to slow down the implementation of the minimum wage in exchange for the Medicaid expansion. But the truth of the matter is that these were both passed by significant majorities of the popular vote and are the law. The question we have to ask ourselves as legislators is: "Do we have the right to change or eliminate that which was passed by the voters of this state?" Our feelings on this matter is a resounding NO!!!

So we find ourselves at a stalemate. Because we need to have a 2/3 majority of votes to override a sure veto on funding for Medicaid expansion, the opposition is willing to put all of these other important funding proposals at risk. Unfortunately there does not seem to be any recognition that this places lives at risk. It also places a service network that has been in existence since the Pineland Consent Decree at risk leaving in question what will happen to these individuals as a result of the potential collapse of the service network that supports their lives on a daily basis.

So, while many of us understand the severity of the problem, we also feel that we have a moral obligation to honor the intent of the voters that passed these referenda. How long this will go on is in the hands of those who wish to dishonor the will of the people as has been the case with every one of the recent referenda passed by the voters. So, when you have an opportunity, ask your legislator where they stand on holding a special session so that these important items can be dealt with? Only voter pressure on legislators will make a difference.

Here are some bills of interest that have not been resolved:

LD 1870, which was originally the bill to move Child Development Services (CDS) from the Department to the schools, passed the education committee with a complete repeal/replace of the text. The bill would now create a stakeholder group to assess CDS. It appears that this bill, if enacted, would halt all of the proposed changes regarding CDS, with the exception of communities that applied for grants for pilot projects, the first two years of which are for research and data collection.

LD 1820, the bill which would increase the reimbursement rate for Section 28 services, has passed the House and Senate, and is on the Special Appropriations Table ("the Table") awaiting funding.

LD 967, the bill which would increase the reimbursement rate for wages for DSPs (currently set to sunset 6/30/18), has passed the House and Senate, and is on the Table awaiting funding.

LD 1676, which would create a Death and Serious Injury Review Panel, had a divided report out of the Health and Human Services Committee; and

LD 1709, which would give the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board (MDSOAB) access to reports, to which it is already supposed to have access per existing statute, passed the House and Senate and is currently on the Table.

Unfinished Business (continued)

the Daytona 500 Raceway? What if my neighbors come over and they don't stock the pond with brown small brown trouts but large mouth bass instead.....Will 1 flush get the job done? I personally don't want to find a "gift poo" in my toilet left by someone else."

I can tell you the expression on the salesman's face was as if he had just landed in an episode of the Twilight Zone. He replied, "Mam I am not a mechanical engineer, I only work here part time, I am sure they all work fine." He then went over to a boxed toilet and showed me where it describes the flush action. Expecting some fancy scientific name for the new water propulsion system, I was shocked to see it called literally, "water water action". So how well does the "white water" flush propel those chocolate kayaks down the gorge without capsizing and getting stuck nose first on the porcelain rock?

The salesman once again in true non autistic fashion responded by saying, "Don't worry mam, it will all work out in the end", (I am not sure if he intended that as a pun or not).

Then trying to sweeten the pot (no pun intended) he went on to tout the virtues of the toilets now increasing in height to "chair size". He assured me that as I age it would be better on my knees, and elderly people love the new height.

Already stressed to the max, that revelation hit me like an exploding mortar. My toilets at home aren't chair height. How is that a virtue when it feels like you are sitting on a chair at the kitchen table going potty???. That sensation alone will make me feel "elderly" way before my time and it isn't an appealing thought. Trying to convince me that I would fall in love with the new height he told me to go ahead and sit on one of the floor models to get a feel for it. It didn't feel "natural" or atleast what I am used to so I said rather stressfully, "I don't think I can go on this toilet". Just as I said that a lady shopper strolling past the display toilets heard that statement and looked over to see me sitting on the toilet. It was actually quite impressive to see her peel out with her shopping cart in a near wheelie as she scrambled to put distance between her and me.

Then my husband returns with a cart but is sucked into my vortex of agony as I explain to him the mental anguish we will have to face of redesigned toilets that will take atleast 2 flushes to accomplish what ours at home can do in one. This rendered me completely unable to purchase the toilets as we had planned so we ended up leaving with unfinished buisness.

President's Message (continued)

In Maine we will have more deaths than births this year and is expected to be the case into the future. As people age out of the workforce, Maine will have difficulty replacing them. The Portland Press Herald notes, the state demographics "means Maine needs every available worker in the workforce and then some." The Labor Commissioner in that same article said, "it's an all hands on deck" situation. With so many individuals with disabilities in Maine looking for employment opportunities, this could be a win-win situation. Let's create an inclusive workforce that provides true opportunities for all!

As always, please reach out to ASM if you have further questions or we can assist in any way. Best, Laurie

In Maine we will have more deaths than births this year and is expected to be the case into the future. As people age out of the workforce, Maine will have difficulty replacing them. The Portland Press Herald notes, the state demographics "means Maine needs every available worker in the workforce and then some." The Labor Commissioner in that same article said, "it's an all hands on deck" situation. With so many individuals with disabilities in Maine looking for employment opportunities, this could be a win-win situation. Let's create an inclusive workforce that provides true opportunities for all!

As always, please reach out to ASM if you have further questions or we can assist in any way. Best, Laurie

Donations

IN HONOR OF:

Devin Lutz-
Evelyn Lutz

Allen Bernier-
Nancy Moore

IN MEMORY OF:

Kimberly Jo Mironovas-
Curtis Whitney

William Sullivan & Marilyn Williams

Mr. & Mrs. Jere Melzar

Joseph & Thelma Storer

Stanley & Susan Milton

Barbara Simmons

Ronald & Anne Gerrish

Mr. & Mrs. William Thurston

Lester & Judith Bell

Robert & Nancy Chiacchio

Mr. & Mrs. David Belanger

Heidi Belanger

Mr. & Mrs. David Heintz

Mr. & Mrs. Daren Labbe

Steven Perrault-

Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Vaillancourt

**DONATIONS/
SPONSORSHIPS/EMPLOYEE
MATCHES/GRANTS**

Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

C.E. Bucklin & Sons, INC.

Camden National Bank

Skowhegan Savings Bank

Bob's Discount Furniture

Southern Maine Heath Care

Oakhurst Dairy

Summit Support Services, LLC

Ranor Mechanical

Webster Lodge 164 AF & AM

Nestle Waters North America, INC.

Oceanside High School

Liberty Mutual

United Way of greater Portland

Ed & Wendy Derzawiec

Helen Murray

United Way of Greater Connecticut

Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society

Jessica Crane

Rosemary McGlauffin

Town of Dover Foxcroft

Welcome to the Autism Society of Maine Library!



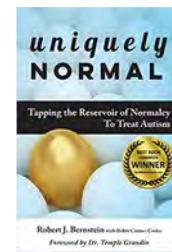
The Stories I tell my Friends by: Anita Lesko

Lesko has created a truly personal, unique look into the mind and life of Temple Grandin. In these pages, witness moments that made her laugh (and cry!), meet those closest to her, and even take a glimpse into her seventieth birthday party. Discover Temple's "big message" and her ideas about what makes the biggest difference for children with autism. This is a story you don't want to miss.



Uniquely Normal by: Robert J. Bernstein

2017 Best Books Award Winner "Uniquely Normal: Tapping The Reservoir of Normalcy To Treat Autism". Author Robert J. Bernstein's goal is for people with ASD to be able to live in the world and connect with the people in it as themselves, to express their unique humanity and engage more fully in the human interactions that give life meaning and make it worth the effort of getting out of bed every day. Author's therapy examples are categorized by age groups of: 2-5 years of age, 6-10 years of age, 11-14 years of age and 19 years of age and up.



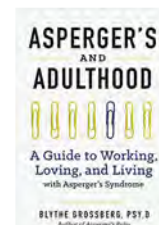
The Girl Who Thought in Pictures by: Julia Finley

K-Gr 2—Diagnosed at an early age with autism, Temple Grandin (b. 1947) grew up at a time when there was generally little care or regard for those like her. However, Grandin's mother was able to secure the therapies and education her daughter needed to thrive. ("She was Different, Not less," they all finally agreed.") Rhyming verse and appealing cartoon illustrations capture Grandin's spirit while providing an exciting, informative look at her remarkable life. Invaluable back page matter contains a letter from Temple, fun facts, a time line accompanied by family photographs, and an insightful biography. Even the bookmaking pays tribute to its subject, with endpapers covered in adorable cartoon cattle.



Aspergers and Adulthood by: Blythe Grossberg

Thinking about moving out on your own? Ready to land your first job? Unsure how to navigate social scenes when you have Asperger's? Designed for the newly launched Aspie adult, Asperger's and Adulthood provides supportive solutions-based strategies for navigating the ins and outs of balancing Asperger's syndrome with career goals, dating, social settings, and more.



Manners Matter by: Veronica Zysk

Temple Grandin steps away from the world of adults and talks directly to kids themselves, sharing her experiences living with and growing up with autism in kid-friendly language and colorfully illustrated stories and characters. This first book in the Temple Talks to Kids series focuses on manners and social niceties. Children will delight in Temple's familiar cowgirl style, straight-shooting language about the importance of manners and adults will appreciate the hard-won wisdom and advice she provides.



Asperger Rules by: Blythe Grossberg

Fitting in to school and social life can be the single most challenging task when you have Asperger's syndrome. "Asperger's Rules" can help. Packed full of information, this book covers common school situations and the uncommon challenges that they can present to a child with Asperger's. Kids will find the how-to for understanding and communicating with peers and teachers, standing up for and taking care of themselves, setting realistic goals, and making friends.



There are lots of simple ways to show good manners, and your friend Temple is here to lead the way. You'll learn a lot, and have fun practicing, too . . . because after all, MANNERS MATTER

Uniquely Wired by: Julia Cook

Zak is obsessed with watches. Before that it was trains. He owns hundreds of watches and is quick to tell everyone everything about them. Zak also has autism, so he sometimes responds to the world around him in unconventional ways. As Zak describes his point of view, young readers gain a better understanding of his behaviors and learn valuable lessons about patience, tolerance and understanding. Grades K-5.





Silicone Chew Necklaces
Animals & Shapes- \$9.00
Raindrops & Circles-\$8.00

Autism Society of Maine
 72 B Main St, Winthrop, ME 04364

Items can be seen and ordered from ASM's
 online store:

www.asmonline.org/asm-storefront.aspx

or by calling 1-800-273-5200.

*Includes gift box

Add 5.5% Sales Tax



Folding Puzzle
Tote
\$16.00



Silver Ribbon
\$10.00



Silver Puzzle
\$10.00



Keychain
\$6.00



Keychain
\$5.00



Keychain
\$5.00



Stretchy
\$4.00



Wristband
\$3.00



Lanyard
\$6.00



Lapel Pin
\$5.00



Ceramic Mug
\$11.00



Charm Bracelet
1 Charm
\$6.00



Glass Pendant
\$10.00



Glass Earrings
\$15.00



Ribbon Earrings
\$8.00



Magnets
 Small \$3.00
 Large \$5.00



\$6.00



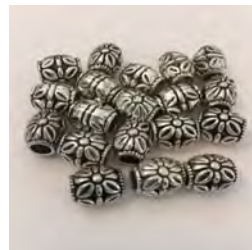
Owl Charm
\$3.00



Autism Charm
\$3.00



Colored Heart Charm
\$3.00



Silver Beads
\$1.00



Colored Beads
\$1.00



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

The Autism Society of Maine is a statewide nonprofit organization that for over 40 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/get-involved/donations.aspx>
- 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/get-involved/donations-united-way.aspx>
- Join or host a fundraiser with proceeds to benefit ASM! Fun ideas can be found on our fundraising page: <http://www.asmonline.org/get-involved/fundraising.aspx>

ASM Mission Statement

The Autism Society of Maine provides education and resources to support the valued lives of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

Become a Member!

Join our membership online:

<http://www.asmonline.org/join/>

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