

# Newslink May 2007

## Community Living

### Autism Workshop

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, a full day workshop – Introduction to ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) - was held at JPC. In order to accommodate as many interested staff as possible, the material was repeated the following day. There were a total of 30 individuals who participated including a parent, support workers and senior staff.

The guest speaker was Ann Kaiser from the Geneva Centre for Autism. Ann's background is in the educational system, however, she was able to relate her experiences working with younger children with autism to the people we support.

The workshop was a starting place for many of us who are not familiar with the many facets of

### Central Administration

Vacation pay for the Part-time employees will be paid out on the pay period ending May 18th, 2007. This is an optional payout. Please notify Central Admin @ 284-1424 Ext. 221 or 241 if you do not want your vacation payout at this time. Otherwise it will be paid out. Due to the holiday on May 21st, timesheets need to be into Central Admin Wednesday, May 6th. Pay

ASD. As BIG as the topic is, Ann was able to give a good foundation and understanding on how a diagnosis is initially made to the different types of sensory issues people with autism experience. This training will better equip us to explore how the people we support experience the world. Latest figures indicate that a staggering 1 in 166 children born will be born with ASD.

For those interested in further information, the Stratford Library now has a number of resources recently purchased by the Huron Perth Chapter of Autism Ontario.

Jan Gerrie

#### Annual General Meeting

Will be held on

Monday June 18th, 2007

See insert for details

roll will be transmitted early morning Thursday, May 17th.

All employees will receive a copy of our newly revised and approved policies and procedures.

Check out our new Employee and Family Assistance Program for full time employees.

#### How to reach us:

Call 519-284-1400 and the extension:

Marg McLean x 225

Nancy Marriott x 221

Vickie Logan x 241

Jennifer Leslie x 228

Kim Monden x 222

Jan Gerrie x 223

Marilyn Haywood x 227

Barb Leavitt x 226

Marg Angus x 242

Brenda Kaiser x 224

Suzanne Simpson x 234

Linda Munro x 243

Wayne Hotson x 233

Jenn Binnendyk x 232

Leave a message for Jessica Rains with Voices x 305



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## Facilitator Training

Facilitator Training, sponsored by the Perth Huron Facilitator's group and with help from our Area office of MCSS, is off to a BIG start- 27 people from Perth and Huron Counties began their training journey together on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Charlotte Dingwall and John Lord from The Facilitation Leadership Group are the leaders and bring so much experience and enthusiasm to the group. Participants range from people with many years of experience in their communities to novices who want to learn different ways to help people move forward in their lives.

Each evening begins with being together in a way that's universally valued, with the sharing of good food and enjoyable conversation.

Charlotte and John use many tools that facilitators can use themselves to stimulate discussions and as

## The Importance of Belonging

The Importance of Belonging  
David Pitonyak PH.D.

In March, Marg Angus, Brenda Kaiser, Laura Cannon, JJ Sayers and Kim Monden headed off to North Bay for a few days for a conference featuring David Pitonyak a much sought after speaker who travels the world presenting at conferences. He also runs a consulting business in his hometown of Blacksburg, Virginia.

"David's practice is based upon a simple idea: *difficult behaviors result from unmet needs*. In a sense, difficult behaviors are messages which can tell us important things about a person and the quality of his or her life."

David spoke eloquently of the loneliness people face every day...He says "Many people who experience disabilities live lives of extreme loneliness and isolation. Many depend almost exclusively on their families for

## Items For Sale

Twin beds with wooden head boards, foot boards and mattresses (good for young children) asking \$100 for the pair Please call Kim

well include periods for self reflection. Lots of handouts, exercises, videos and shared stories keep everyone involved throughout the evening. Even though most participants have worked all day, everyone stays keen and energy is high.

**We have heard that other people in the province are talking about this training. There is no doubt interest as the Opportunities and Action paper clearly outlines the role of Independent Planning in its plan for System Transformation. A quote in that section from a Family group states "A Facilitator would assist families to form support circles, discover community opportunities and assist with finding the right supports". If The Perth Huron Facilitator's Network can be a small part of making this happen then we've facilitated well!**



companionship. Some have lost their connections to family, relying on people who are paid to be with them for their social support. Although paid staff can be friendly and supportive, they frequently change jobs or take on new responsibilities. The resulting instability can be devastating to someone who is fundamentally alone."

If anyone gets the opportunity to hear David speak we would encourage you to hear his words and to deeply listen to the meaning of his message.

For more information about David's work please go to [www.dimage.com](http://www.dimage.com)

Kim Monden

### *Hand Dipped Scented Wax Animals*

A fun and unique way to add fresh fragrance to any room. Wide selection of bears and other animals to choose from.

Custom dipping available.

Prices range from \$10 to \$20

Fresh citrus, lavender, vanilla or clean cotton scents.

8 oz Soy Candles \$8 Call Vickie Logan 519-461-1511

## Robynne Logan Creates her Own Opportunities

Since her graduation from St. Marys DCVI in June 2005, Robynne has explored a number of opportunities in 5 communities. Like most of us when we first enter the workforce, not all positions held her interest but she has maintained her work at a bank, as a music assistant with preschool children and a small mail delivery service.

Robynne's true fondness for young children branched into a position at a local playschool which began simply as helping to clean up at the end of the day but this fall she returned as a junior assistant for the one day a week the playschool runs. After only a couple of months it became apparent Robynne could be supported by her co-workers and paid support was removed. We considered the option carefully but we followed Robynne's lead when she clearly told us "I don't need help. I can do the work myself." She achieved her goal of securing and maintaining a position in which she is naturally supported by those in the situation and she hasn't looked back!

"I would love fresh apples" was a simple statement made in passing but that was all it took for Robynne to establish a successful business and solid support from a local apple grower. He helped her incorporate cider and pies offering advice on selling prices. Regardless how large or small her order was each week it was always treated as important and with enthusiasm. Robynne was asked to sell strawberries for this grower in the summer but his season ended abruptly. Robynne still had many orders coming in so another local grower was found and Robynne was able to add blueberries to her list of fresh produce. More importantly, she secured not one but two highly enthusiastic and supportive connections with local producers. Robynne is starting to prepare for the upcoming strawberry season and already has a business

plan involving pre-orders.

While Robynne enjoys all her current positions, it is her own small businesses that seem to give her the greatest sense of pride and achievement. In December with the help of her family and support workers, Robynne offered gift packages for men, women, children and a generic package that would be suitable for anyone. In just 3 weeks, 47 orders were filled and delivered! It was a bit overwhelming to say the least and we weren't sure we'd ever see the kitchen table again! "I like doing it" Robynne said beaming with pride. Using the skills she had established through her apple and produce business, Robynne made a smooth transition into the more involved gift packages.

It seemed she had stumbled onto a viable business she enjoyed and one that could be sustained all year. **Robynne's Gifts** was born. As successful as the Christmas packages were, the shopping was time consuming and Robynne would be the first to admit she is not the most enthusiastic shopper. To cut down on some of the trips and to create a line of products unique to her packages, Robynne decided to make bubble bath, body wash, moisturizer and bath salts for women, adding glycerin bar soap for men later on. She did her research and enlisted the help of a local business to decide on the scents she would offer and a reasonable selling price. The items rounding out the packages vary as she keeps her eyes open for things that are fun and practical and her line of packages continues to expand. It's a good business but what makes it great is Robynne's pride in her work. We could not have imagined that simple statement "I would love fresh apples" would lead us in so many directions!

With ministry funding, Robynne uses 12 hours of direct support from the association. Right now



### Robynne's Gifts

Wrapped and ready to give packages for Men, women, children Prices range for \$5 to \$20

Perfect for birthdays, bridal or baby showers, Mother's or Father's Day, Valentine's Day, Easter, or Just Because

Custom packages available

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it is enough to enable her to begin establishing her interests and maintain an arm's length use of services. The bulk of her support comes naturally from family and friends but it is clear those 12 hours are filled by workers who believe in Robynne, her goals and the vision that has been created. She likes the variety she has built into her weeks but we are always watching for a new opportunity. Each one builds on the last and every step leads Robynne closer to her goals.

### Everything is Possible

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St. Marys and Area*

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**He's An Award Winner!**

.. **Congratulations to Paul Williams ...**

who was recently honoured for his volunteer service by the Town of St. Marys. Paul received an award at the annual Volunteer Night on April 26, 2007 that recognized his commitment to community services. Many of you may know Paul as an employee of Community Living St. Marys but you may not have known that he has been actively involved with a number of groups in our community for many years. The presentation highlighted Paul's efforts with Citizen Advocacy, local schools, Minor Hockey and also the Community Planning Committee.



*Paul wears many hats!*

**Way to go Paul!!!!**

See you on Monday June 18th at the Dinner and Annual General Meeting! RSVP by June 11, 2007 to Nancy

**Spring Fling.....Foundations & Voices Gathering**

**Gather with us for food (supper is provided) and fellowship. Enjoy a presentation by the Self-Advocates of North Perth!**

Both of these evenings, attendees will have the pleasure of watching a video created last year by the Self Advocates group that speaks about inclusion for everyone in North Perth. They have been asked by numerous groups such as the Avon Maitland District School Board and the University of Western Ontario to give this amazing presentation.

You are in for a real treat!

**Stratford**

**Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5:00-6:30 p.m.**

**Stratford Optimist Hall ~ 72 Water St. S.**

**St. Marys**

**Thursday, May 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-6:30 p.m.**

**Friendship Centre ~ 317 James St. S.**

**RSVP to...**

**St. Marys** ,May 18, to Marilyn Haywood ,519-284-1400 Ext.227 or Jessica Rains Ext. 305

**Stratford** ,May 16, to Tammy Timmermans, 519-271-0440