

AUTISM SOCIETY

Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism

Nebraska

MAY 11, 2011

NEWSGRAM



**A journey is best measured
in friends...not miles.**

—Tim Cahill

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE
2011 AUTISM PUZZLE WALK!**

We had over 1000 people statewide rallying behind our local autism community
and we are still receiving donations. To date we have made...

\$45,000!

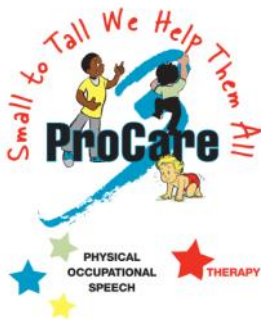
WE HUMBLY THANK YOU!



And we couldn't have done it without our sponsors!



PEAR'S GOURMET



Lorrie E. Bryant, Ph.D., PC
Galaska and Son, Inc
Kids, Inc



Thank you to the corporate sponsors whose support helped make this event a success. They were critical in helping us unite the autism community! The next time you find yourself at one of these businesses please thank them for their support of the Nebraska Autism Community!

Thank you to the donors responsible for our fabulous door prizes!

- ASD Network
- Boulder Creek Mini Golf
- Circle of Love Jewelry
- Durham Museum
- Fontenelle Forest
- Handprints & Footsteps
- Keys to Harmony
- LaNeis Rindone (Puzzle Quilt)
- Mary Kay—Chris Hamilton
- Omaha Children’s Museum
- Papio Fun Park
- PE 101
- Texas Roadhouse
- 501st Garrison

FREE Birthday parties



Puzzle Quilt



FREE lessons

FREE food

Free Registration to the 2012 State Autism Conference

FREE admission

Thank you to the generous contributors who provided information for our resource bags! What a great way to get your information in the hands of our community!



And thank you to the amazing volunteers who helped us assemble the resource bags!



**Thank you to
Mike and Mary from
Omaha's Morning Blend
(KMTV Channel 3) for
emceeing and creating
such a fun morning!**



**The Autism Society is a proud sponsor
of the Rose Theater's ASD Acting Classes
and was thrilled to have some of their
students perform for our crowd.**

**We'd also like to thank the Step by Step ASD Dance class from The
Broadway Connection, John Knapp, CJ Vickers, Jill Hirshfeld, Colleen
Jankovich, and the Jazzercise ladies who all helped make the 2011
Autism Puzzle Walk one to remember!**



We were blown away by our top fundraising individuals!

**Not only did they achieve
AMAZING ADVOCACY
for autism but
our top three fundraisers
themselves raised almost
\$10,000!**



**And all the TEAMS that came out to support the cause showed us that TOGETHER...
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!**





Thank you to the 2011 Omaha Autism Walk Team for all of your hard work. These advocates donated their precious time to make the Autism Walk a success and for that we are all extremely grateful. Their gift allows us to have pool parties, support group meetings, and among many other things—family scholarships.

These amazing advocates are mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, sons and daughters. Their lives are touched by autism. They have jobs, school meetings and therapy appointments yet they came together to make the 4th annual Autism Puzzle Walk a reality—and a success!

When you see one of these amazing advocates please take a moment to thank them for all that they do for our community!

(Because we couldn't do what we do—without them!)

Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.

-Vince Lombardi

Light is the task when many share the toil. —Homer

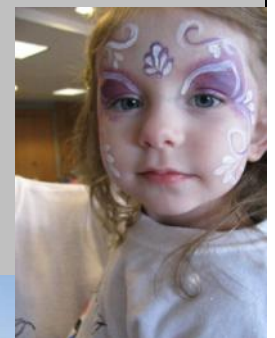


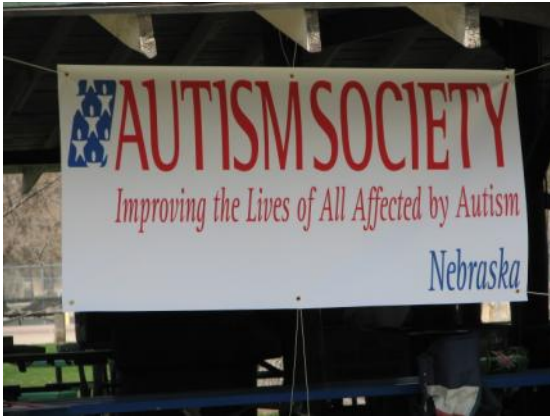
TEAM—Together Everyone Achieves More

**Thank you to all
of our volunteers
—you are all
pieces of the
puzzle to our
success!**



Check out **MANY** more photos in our photo album at
www.autismnebraska.org/our-photo-gallery





And congratulations to the North Platte community who came together for North Platte's first Autism Puzzle Walk. They had a great turnout and took their first steps together as a community!



Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

-Henry Ford

More photos available at www.autismnebraska.org/our-photo-gallery

OMAHA: Post Walk wrap up / Leadership Council Meeting

Please join the Omaha Support Group to discuss the 2011 Autism Puzzle Walk as well as begin plans for the 2012 event. We need your input and your voices!

We will also be discussing the Omaha Leadership Council and finalizing our 2011 Budget and schedule of activities.

Please remember that we are a volunteer organization. While we do have a great group of advocates (who have done amazing things these past several years), the reality is that we still need YOU!

Please plan to attend

Monday, May 16th at 7pm
Autism Center of Nebraska
9012 Q Street

Please contact omahasupportgroup@autismnebraska.org if you have any questions.

Sleeping with the Sharks

Thank you to everyone who joined the Autism Society of Nebraska and the Autism Family Network from Lincoln for our first sleep over at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo.

We are happy to share that there were no shark bites and everyone had a great time!

[Be sure and check out our photos in our photo album!](#)



Here was one of our "nightlights"

We even got to have an early morning tour which proved to be amazing because most of the "locals" were wide awake awaiting their morning feeding. During a normal zoo visit most of the animals are sleeping but not early in the morning!

UNO Hosts an ASD Birthday Party

Once again our Omaha community would like to issue a BIG THANK YOU to Dr. Ritzman and the UNO Autism Spectrum Disorders Graduate Class for being such amazing advocates for our community.

This is the second year the Omaha Support Group has worked with the class to help facilitate a panel discussion of parents, professionals and individuals on the autism spectrum. Thanks to Dr. Ritzman and this class at UNO these students are receiving an amazing education on autism in the real world! And they are making an impact on our community before they even complete their class!

On April 2nd their semester long class project came to life through their ASD friendly birthday party. The amount of planning and preparation was amazing and the children and their families had a wonderful time. This was truly an amazing experience for everyone!

And as you can see from this video produced by the class, the college students had a great time too!
www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAAr7hxwhCQ

OMAHA: Easter Egg Hunt

Thank you to everyone who came out to join us for our Easter egg hunt. The Easter bunny was there and everyone had an Egg-citing time!

Be sure and check out some of our photos in our Photo Gallery on the [Autism Society of Nebraska's web page!](#)



OMAHA: June ~~Support Group~~ Bounce Night

Join us at Pump It Up - The Original Inflatable Party Zone - for a night of bouncing, jumping and climbing! This will be a private event for families with children on the autism spectrum.

WHO: All Autism Families

WHEN: Monday, June 6, 2011

6:00pm - 8:00pm

WHERE: Pump It Up 960 S 72nd (72nd and Pacific)

COST: \$5 per child (\$10 maximum charge per family)

Due to the summer break we will not have extra UNO helpers on site to supervise the bounce rooms. However, the Autism Society will still be hosting an autism-friendly Bounce Night where families can come and play together!

OMAHA: Biomedical Discussion Group

The Biomedical Discussion group meets the third Thursday of each month at 7pm at Whole Foods in the Lifestyle Center room. Whole Foods is located just south of the Westroads mall at Regency and Dodge. This is a discussion forum for those families currently involved in biomedical treatments. Contact Chrissy Cameron chrissycameron@cox.net or Karen Falconer Al-Hindi karen.alhindi@gmail.com for more information.

**Please note, there will be NO meeting in May due to scheduling conflicts. However, the group will continue to meet over the summer.

2011 Autism Society of Nebraska Awards

EXCELLENCE IN AUTISM Award



Every year the Autism Society of Nebraska awards an individual who shows outstanding commitment to the Autism Community. Anyone who touches the lives of individuals with ASD's is eligible. This year's recipient was Chris Monestero. Chris owns and operates Theraplayce and The Barn.

Thank you Chris for your passion and advocacy for our community!

Dan Archwamety Post Secondary Scholarship

Dan Archwamety was an exceptional young man who tragically died in 1997 while a sophomore at the University of Nebraska —Kearney. The day after he died, two letters arrived from UNK, awarding him two different scholarships for his junior year. Dan's family created this scholarship to give hope, affirmation, and some financial help to young people diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who plan to continue their schooling after high school.

The 2011 recipient is CJ Vickers of Omaha. CJ is an exceptional young man who has generously lent his voice to the Autism Society throughout the years. CJ has helped on numerous panels and even recently took on an entire 8th grade class for an open Q & A session about autism.



Here are a few other things that CJ accomplished in his free time...

- Youth Council President for the Heartland Chapter of the Red Cross
- Delegate to the National Young Leaders Conference
- 2010 Youth Volunteer of the Year (Heartland chapter)
- 2011 Presidential Volunteer Service Award
- Eagle Scout—Boy Scouts
- 2010 Mary Jean Eisenhower Partner in Peace Award—People to People International
- 2010 United Way youth volun-TEEN of the year
- 2010 Mission Trip to Haiti
- 2011 DJ's Heroes Award—Salvation Army Young Heroes award

Congratulations CJ!

ASD Network: SE Region's Newsletter

The Nebraska ASD Network is an amazing resource for families and professionals in our state. If you haven't already met your regional coordinator, do it now! Also be sure and check out their statewide web site as well as their regional pages for training opportunities near you!
www.unl.edu/asdnetwork

[HERE](#) is the SE Region's recent Newsletter. This is a great resource to check out. Print them off. Take them to school. Teachers...put them in the teachers lounge!

Munroe Meyer iPad lending library

The Munroe Meyer speech department in partnership with Autism Action Partnership has created an iPad and iPod lending library. The purpose behind this library is to provide families affected by ASD the opportunity to try iPads and iPods as communication devices before they go to the expense of purchasing their own.

If you have a family member or know a family who may benefit from this program, please have them contact Jennifer Brock at 402-559-6460 to set up a screening. During the screen, the family will have the opportunity to try the iPad or iPod as well as several communication applications and accessories. If one of the devices is deemed as a viable option for the child, they will set up a 30 day loan of the device and the appropriate application.

During the 30 days the family will be required for 2 follow up/training sessions. One will be scheduled midway through the trial and the other will be scheduled for the end of the trial period. During the last scheduled session, we will determine if the trial was a success and will begin the process of securing funding (insurance, grants or private pay options).

Munroe Meyer Speech Department
Jennifer Brock
jbrock@unmc.edu
1-402-559-6460

LINCOLN: Homer's Heroes

The Homer's Heroes division is for boys and girls with physical or intellectual disabilities, ages 5 to 17. In 2010, 106 players participated in the program. Six weeks of games are played starting the first Saturday of June running through July 16th. games are played on the Lewis fields at 9:30am on Saturdays.

Volunteer "Buddies" encourage and assist each player during the game. One game is played at Haymarket Park with the Lincoln Saltdogs players. The Optimist Clubs of Lincoln established the program in 1992. Shirts and awards are furnished by the Optimist Clubs. Caps, field rental and equipment are sponsored by the Junior Saltdogs League.

Download a registration form [HERE](#).

Questions or if you would like to become a buddy: Contact Jeanne Cuda at 402-423-7434

LINCOLN: Special Showing of Wretches and Jabberers

100 cities. One Night for Autism.

Thank you to the Lincoln Grand Cinema's and everyone who joined us for a special showing of WRETCHES & JABBERERS! It was a fantastic movie and such an amazing message!

"100 CITIES. ONE NIGHT FOR AUTISM." was a unique, nationwide, theatrical event taking place on Thursday, May 12th when 100 theaters in nearly every major U.S. city, from New York to Honolulu, screen WRETCHES & JABBERERS on the same evening. The event was conceptualized by production company State of the Art, Inc with distribution partners Area23a and Screenvision in response to a surge in public demand for more showings of WRETCHES & JABBERERS after the documentary's successful 40-city tour in partnership with the Autism Society during April, which is Autism Awareness Month. "100 CITIES. ONE NIGHT FOR AUTISM." was sponsored by the John P. Hussman Foundation in partnership with the Autism Society.

The Autism Society of Nebraska wanted to encourage our community to attend this phenomenal showing and offered free admission to the first 50 who registered for this event!

"This one day event was possible because of the commitment by the Autism Society of America to bring the important message of Wretches & Jabberers to your community," Gerardine Wurzburg, Academy Award Winning director.

OMAHA: Step by Step Dance Class

Step By Step is a Movement/Dance Class for Kids with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Come and dance in a fun, safe, class! They'll stretch their bodies, work general coordination and even do fun acting and creative movement to fun music in a sensory safe environment!

Come learn some basics to ballet, tap or even hip hop! The class is designed for ASD students needing extra help with motor skills, or have trouble assimilating with peers in other dance classes, or just want to have fun. And this is open to both BOYS and GIRLS!

The Broadway Connection Dance Center is located at 2329 N. 90th St. (90th & Blondo next to Hobby Lobby)

June 11—July 30
Saturdays 8-9am

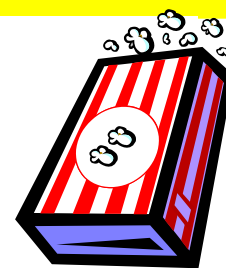
Instructor: Sue Booton plus additional community volunteers
\$35/ month (you may participate in one month or two)

**tuition is the same whether there are 3, 4, or 5 week classes.

For more information call 402-571-4446 or visit www.thebroadwayconnectiondance.com

SENSORY FRIENDLY FILMS

The Autism Society is very thankful to AMC Entertainment for their leadership in bringing families affected by autism and other disabilities a special opportunity to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. We have now had almost two full years of Sensory Friendly Movies here in Omaha and for many of our families this has been an amazing way to overcome some of the isolation we as a community tend to experience.



A movie is something that so many in society take for granted but for those with sensory issues it can be very difficult. For some, walking into a dark theater is terrifying. For others the heart pounding sound system is too much to handle. 2 hours is an awful long time to sit still and for many of our community it is just not possible for them to be totally silent for the entire showing.

So what is a *sensory friendly* movie? This is a movie venue that is accommodating to YOUR needs! The auditorium will have their lights brought up, the sound turned down, and a silence policy will not be enforced. AMC showings do not have previews so plan to arrive on time!

We are thrilled to announce additional sensory friendly opportunities in the area! First of all, AMC has expanded their theaters there are now sensory friendly showings at the AMC –Star 17 theater in Council Bluffs! Also Marcus Theatre has recently developed their own program called **Reel Movies for Real Needs** and there are two Nebraska theatres participating. You can learn more about the Marcus Theatre program [here](#) as some of their accommodations vary.

Kung Fu Panda 2

Saturday, June 4

OMAHA: **10:00 am**
Oakview 24 Theater (AMC Theatre)
 3555 S 140th Plaza

COUNCIL BLUFFS: 10:00 am
Council Bluffs Star 17 Cinema (AMC Theater)
 3220 23rd Avenue

Upcoming Showings:

July 2, 2011–Cars 2

July 23, 2011 - Harry Potter & The Deathly Hallows, Part 2

August, 6, 2011–Smurfs

The Autism Society of Nebraska has developed a toolkit to help you approach your local theater about creating sensory friendly showings in your community! Contact us at autismsociety@autismnebraska.org to find out more information about how to create sensory friendly showings in your community!

Autism Society of America Membership

The Autism Society, the nation's leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. We do this by increasing public awareness about the day-to-day issues faced by people on the spectrum, advocating for appropriate services for individuals across the lifespan, and providing the latest information regarding treatment, education, research and advocacy.

Founded in 1965 by Dr. Bernard Rimland, Dr. Ruth Sullivan and many other parents of children with autism, the Autism Society is the leading source of trusted and reliable information about autism. Through its strong chapter network, the Autism Society has spearheaded numerous pieces of state and local legislation, including the 2006 Combating Autism Act, the first federal autism-specific law. The Autism Society's website is one of the most visited websites on autism in the world and its quarterly journal, [Autism Advocate](#), has a broad national readership. The Autism Society also hosts the most comprehensive [national conference](#) on autism, attended by 2000 people each year. Our [information and referral](#) team, our program staff, and our strong chapter presence serve thousands of families each year who are searching for help in their journey with autism.

When you join the national Autism Society of America you become a member of your local Autism Society chapter here in Nebraska as well. The Autism Society of America is committed to helping the grassroots grow in strength and they recognize that those in the local community have the best understanding of the local needs. The Autism Society of Nebraska has the benefit of being part of a well respected national organization yet we are still able to keep 100% of all of our local fundraising efforts here in Nebraska.

So are you a member yet? It's not too late...you can join online [HERE](#).

Join the Autism Society of Nebraska and help us make a difference here in Nebraska!

ASA's Options Policy:

The Autism Society promotes the active and informed involvement of family members and the individual with autism in the planning of individualized, appropriate services and supports. We believe that each family and individual with autism should have the right to learn about and then select the options that they feel are most appropriate for them.

No single type of program will fill the needs of every individual with autism.

Our goal at the Autism Society is to help YOU be educated and informed about your various options.

[Click here to read the full Options Policy!](#)



Join the Autism Society of Nebraska on Facebook!
Become a Fan...click [HERE!](#)



Help us make this Newsgram relevant to you!

We rely on our community to help us find useful information to share with you through this Newsgram. If you have an event that you would like added to the Autism Society of Nebraska Newsgram please email us at autismsocietynewsgram@autismnebraska.org.

You are our eyes and ears across the state. Please help us help you AND your neighbors by sharing your resources and contacts with us!



To have your event added to the Autism Society Newsgram and calendar please email autismsociety@autismnebraska.org or you can post it directly to our calendar at www.autismnebraska.org. Please be aware that it may take 24 hours for your event to appear on the site.

Autism Society of Nebraska

PO Box 83559
Lincoln, NE 68501-3559

Phone: 1-800-580-9279

E-mail: autismsociety@autismnebraska.org

We appreciate your help including our statewide community events! Please help us help you AND your neighbors!



All information on this Newsgram is also available by visiting our web site at www.autismnebraska.org