

HAPPINESS HOUSE HAPPENINGS

Winter 2007

A newsletter for families and friends of Happiness House

Volume 9, Issue 2

A LIFE CHANGED, UNEXPECTEDLY

AUTISM—ONE OF MANY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

By: Jackie Lyttle



When my husband and I were looking at preschools for our first child, David, nothing was too good for our little boy. We loved the people and the atmosphere at Happiness

House. We appreciated that the kids and staff were full of smiles, there was extra support for all kids, and they'd tell us if there was anything that we needed to work on. We also liked that he'd be in a class with kids with physical and mental disabilities to learn to accept differences in his peers and hopefully be oblivious to any disability. We never could have guessed how fortunate we were to have made this decision.

About six months later, David had his first evaluation by Happiness House. The psychologist's report had a sentence in the summary that concerned us: "David demonstrated some behaviors often seen in children who are said to be on the autism spectrum." It wasn't a diagnosis, but it was startling.

David continued to progress but his quirks got worse. He wouldn't look into people's eyes and he'd refer to himself in the third person – still little things, but concerning.

He entered the new Canandaigua school in the autism based classroom and benefited immensely from that structure and environment. We found out that David is autistic. My first thought was, "My child has become disabled overnight. Yesterday he was quirky, now he's autistic."

I'm ashamed to admit that. Our goal was for our son to see through any disability and focus on the individual. I briefly lost sight of that after his evaluation.

On the way home, his teacher went over the many things that could be done for David and reminded me that a diagnosis doesn't change him. It simply is a starting point for giving David the tools he needs.

"What Happens Here Changes Lives Forever." That is unequivocally true. This community, our family and our son are all the better because of this great organization. I shudder to think where we'd be without the benefit of Happiness House.

Two kinds of sweet — grape tarts and David Lyttle, a student at Happiness House's Canandaigua school, raise money for Happiness House.





September 30, 2007

Pear Mrs. Boatfield and my friends at the Happiness House:

I am very happy to tell you what a great weekend I had selling grape tarts to help the Happiness House.

My "Aunt Katie" (Katie Brahm of Arbor Hill Grapery) baked over 75 grape tarts for me to sell. She also gave me grape coffee cakes, some homemade bread and some grape cookies to sell.

My "Pops" (Richard Hawks) helped me set up a stand and a tent so that the food wouldn't get hot from the sun. He made everything extra special for me and stayed with me the whole time.

I had lots of visitors and lots of fun telling people "welcome to my store!" I practiced my math and had a really great time seeing all the different people. Lots of people asked about the Happiness House. I told them it was a great place for everyone!

Enclosed is my contribution to the Happiness House of \$163.00 that will hopefully be used for something special in the Preschool in Canandaigua. And my mom thought you might like these pictures. She took lots and lots of them!

Pavid Roger Lyttle

DMIDROGERLYTT

HAPPINESS HOUSE

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A Message from the Executive Director

By: Mary Walsh Boatfield

hen I think of Happiness House and what it means to the individuals and families we serve, I think of the agency's tagline...

"What Happens Here Changes Lives Forever"

Our cover story is a perfect example of how Happiness House changes the lives of children, adults and the families to whom we provide programs and services to in the Finger Lakes community. Every day we have stories like this that show the tireless dedica-



tion and commitment to the families we serve: from young children like David Lyttle; from our adult consumers and their families; from our extraordinary employees; from our valued business partners, corporate sponsors and contributors; and from our Board of Directors that volunteer their time so generously to our organization.

Being associated with such fine people and a top-quality organization that is supported by a genuinely caring and giving community makes it both an honor and a privilege to lead Happiness House.

This past year has been another successful year for Happiness House, and there are numerous individuals and organizations to thank for that success. I look forward to continuing to provide the guidance and leadership to develop, expand and improve the quality programs and services that you and your families depend upon - for many years to come. All of us at Happiness House wish you and your family a happy and healthy holiday season!



Happiness House Recognizes "Volunteer of the Year" Chuck Meyn

Charles M. ("Chuck") Meyn, director of engineering for Centerra Wine Company, is the first Happiness House "Volunteer of the Year" Award recipient. He began donating his time and talents to Happiness House in 1997 by leading the installation of the playground at our North Street site – while on crutches with a broken ankle! Chuck was the "Clerk of the Works" for our Canandaigua site. He

spent 250 hours overseeing planning, construction and inspection phases. He also has given more than a hundred hours of his time performing special maintenance projects at our Maple Avenue Individualized Residential Alternative. Chuck has improved the quality of life for all of our residents and program participants.



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER, JOSEPH P. ZACCARDO

Joseph P. Zaccardo has been appointed to the Board of Directors at Happiness House for a three-year term. Joe Zaccardo was born and raised in Rochester, N.Y., and resides in Penfield with his three children. His son, Joseph, is a student at SUNY Brockport. His daughter, Diana, and younger son, Steven, are students in the Webster School

District. Joe graduated from Eastridge High School and began work as a sales representative at National Brands Beverage before beginning his career at Paychex, Inc. Joe joined Paychex in 1987 and, over the last 20 years, has held positions in inside and outside sales, sales management and training. His current position is a senior training manager at the Paychex Training and Development Center, which is ranked among the top 125 training organizations worldwide. Joe currently serves on the development committee of the Happiness House Board of Directors.

~ 4TH ANNUAL GALA DINNER & AUCTION ~

he fourth annual Gala Dinner and auction was hosted by founding sponsor Belhurst, in Geneva, NY. Kevin Reeder and his staff once again created a very enjoyable evening for which we extend special thanks. Additionally, keynote speakers Molly Mahoney Thurston, Jacqueline Hawks Lyttle and Connie Ward held everyone's attention with their personal perspectives.

Donations from local businesses, Happiness House staff, Board of Directors, families, and our community generously supported the live and silent auction events and sponsorship dollars, raffle ticket sales and auction bidders helped Happiness House raise, \$39,000.

Distinguished guests included Happiness House board members, community leaders and representatives from our major sponsors: Belhurst; Excellus BlueCross BlueShield; First Niagara Bank, and the Lyons National Bank. The corporate sponsors included: Bonadio & Co., LLP; Community Bank, NA; Five Star Bank; Mr. Mark D. and Mrs. Mary Herlihy Gearan; Guardian Industries; Dr. and Mrs. Bryan and Sonya Henry; Massa Construction, Inc. and Pullano Windows & Doors. The table sponsors included: Constellations Wines US, Lynch Furniture – Geneva and

Frank J. Marianacci, Inc. Frank Pullano and his wife, Donna, were the auctioneers and Patrice Walsh from 13 WHAM-TV was the mistress of ceremonies.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every individual who attended, contributed, donated, volunteered or sponsored our event. It is through your generosity that we can continue to expand and improve services for the individuals and families we serve.



Molly Mahoney Thurston and son Ryan

Save the Date: Friday, February 1, 2008 • 5th Annual Gala Dinner & Auction • Festivities begin at 6 p.m.



4TH ANNUAL

HAPPINESS HOUSE GALA

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CONGRESSMAN MICHAEL ARCURI VISITS HAPPINESS HOUSE

Happiness House – Finger Lakes Cerebral Palsy Association (Geneva) was visited by Congressman Michael Arcuri. Congressman Arcuri represents the 24th Congressional District, which includes Cayuga and Seneca Counties, and the City of Geneva.

Since taking office in January, 2007, Congressman Arcuri has worked hard to ensure that our children have the educational opportunities they need to succeed. During Congressman Arcuri's visit he sat and read a story to the Universal Pre-kindergarten children. Happiness House's Executive Director, Mary Walsh Boatfield, and the Board of Directors were eager to share information about all the programs and services that are offered through Happiness House and the growing needs of the families we serve in the Finger Lakes Region.

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JOHN P. CLARY MEMORIAL AWARD

he Happiness House Adult Structured Day Program recognizes the hard work and perseverance necessary to overcome a serious traumatic brain injury. John Clary was one of those special people. John was a young man who had been diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor. Yet, he exhibited an incredible sense of humor and energy for life. John's willingness to get up each day and make the most of his opportunities was inspirational to everyone who met him.

John passed away several years ago and we proudly honored his memory by bestowing the "John P. Clary Memorial Award".

The "John P. Clary Memorial Award" June, 2007 recipient Connie Ward is pictured at right, with the Clary Family: Left to right, Kevin Clary, Connie Ward, and Rhonda Clary.





Former "John P. Clary Memorial Award" recipient, Carol Jaycox, shares her thoughts on what it means to her to win the award. Among her thoughts were fond memories of John, and what an incredible inspiration he continues to be for her as she faces new challenges each day.



The award is given to the consumer who consistently displays the characteristics that made John such a special person. These characteristics include; demonstrating a good work ethic, having good attendance, possessing a sense of humor, being caring and friendly toward others, and being outgoing. The award is given twice a year in memory of John and in recognition of our consumers' hard work. John set an example for all of us to aspire to. John demonstrated a wonderful sense of humor, genuine concern for others, a curiosity to learn and explore his world, and a fantastic commitment to get the most out of everything he undertook.

At left, the nominees of the "John P. Clary Memorial Award" pictured with Kevin and Rhonda Clary: Front row, left to right: Carol Jaycox, "John P. Clary Memorial Award" recipient Connie Ward, Jim Daley, and James Stoops. Back row, left to right: Jesse Brown, Johnny West, Debi Shaver, Bruce Proper, Carl Beach, and Rhonda and Kevin Clary.

The Happiness House Adult Structured Day Program also recognizes the hard work and perseverance necessary to maintain John's "thumbs up" attitude toward life. In this spirit, previous years' "John P. Clary Memorial Award" recipients who have worked hard and persevered toward achieving personal goals have been awarded the "Continued Success Award".

At right, the "Continued Success Award" recipients, pictured with Rhonda and Kevin Clary: (front row, left to right): Carol Jaycox and Carl Beach. Back row, left to right: Rhonda Clary, Johnny West and Kevin Clary ("Continued Success Award" recipient not pictured, Sylvia Bailey).



Tod Beach, pictured below, was a former recipient of the "John P. Clary Memorial Award".



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The Board of Directors and the staff at Happiness House wish to express their gratitude to the following businesses, individuals and families for their support of our agency between April 1, 2006 and September 30, 2007. The ongoing patronage from our communities enables us to continuously provide the highest quality programs and services that enhance the lives of the children and adults we serve. We thank them for their support of Happiness House.

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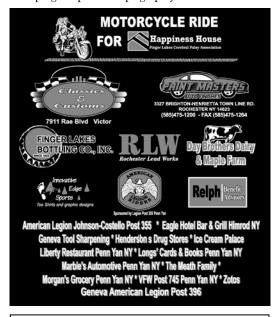
OUR MISSION

appiness House is a health and human service organization that excels in providing the highest quality programs and services

to children and adults with disabilities, to their families and to the Finger Lakes community. Our belief in the principles of equal opportunity, independence and realization of individual potential is the cornerstone of who we are and what we do.

Happiness House's Inaugural Motorcycle Run ~\$5,870 raised!~

Motorcycle Riders and passengers from around the region, and as far away as Connecticut, enjoyed a 125 mile ride along beautiful Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. Happiness House would like to thank all of the major sponsors. Sponsors, bikers, passengers and raffle ticket sales **helped** to raise \$5,870 to benefit Happiness House's "Happiness is Helping" Capital Campaign project.



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2007 ELIZABETH J. AMIDON MEMORIAL AWARD SCHOOL RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

Each year Happiness House accepts nominations for the Elizabeth J. Amidon Memorial Award. Nominees must be high school seniors who have overcome a challenge and who will be graduating from high school at the end of the school year.

Twenty-one schools had students who were recipients of the Amidon Award for the 2006-2007 school year: Bloomfield Central School, Canandaigua Academy, Geneva High School, Honeoye Falls-Lima, Lyons High School, Manchester-Shortsville Central, Marcus Whitman, Marion High School, Mynderse Academy, Naples Central School, Newark High School, Palmyra-Macedon Central, Penn Yan Academy, Phelps-Clifton Springs Central, Romulus Central School, Victor Central School, Waterloo Central School, Wayland Cohocton Central, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES – Williamson, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES – Newark, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES – Stanley.

Each student received a cash award and a certificate in recognition of his or her accomplishments.



2007 CEREBRAL PALSY OF NEW YORK STATE CONFERENCE "CELEBRATE STAFF" AWARD RECIPIENTS

In the fall of 2007, nearly 900 attended the CP of NYS Annual Conference. 58 employees from 20 affiliates and CP of NYS were honored for their outstanding service at the "Celebrate Staff" dinner, held at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany. Pictured at left are Happiness House honorees Anne Battaglia, Susan Dancause and Deborah Rockefeller. Our congratulations to all of them!



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Happiness House plays a vital role in the lives of more than 500 children from 22 school districts in our region and our adult program has seen a 100% growth in services over the last three years alone. To meet those demands, we're building a new \$2.8 million state-of-the-art facility in Canandaigua, and expanding our Pre-Emption Road site in Geneva. And we need your help.

I want to show my support, but don't wish to buy a brick. Please accept the enclosed check for \$

Happiness House provides programs and services for children and adults with and without disabilities, and their families, throughout Ontario, Seneca, Yates and Wayne Counties. They help individuals with neurological impairments, brain injuries, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism and mental retardation, lead fuller, richer lives.

\$100 can buy a brick, and change a life.

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