April is Autism Awareness month - the perfect time to get involved with the Autism Society! Consider supporting individuals and families living with autism by attending Autism Society events listed on page 3, making a meaningful donation to the Autism Society, or by doing your part to raise awareness, understanding and acceptance of autism in our communities. While many are aware of the existence of autism, it's time for communities to develop a true understanding of autism. Through understanding and acceptance, communities can provide welcoming, supportive environments for those on the spectrum and their families.

Please note that registration for our Annual Conference ends April 10th. We don't want you to miss our great line up this year. See more details on pages 4 & 5 and get your registrations in!

We're also co-hosting a Family Event in Superior on May 13th with UW-Superior. We're so thankful to UW-Superior for this opportunity to partner to bring support and education to the northwest part of the state. Please look for more information on this event on page 6.

I encourage you to browse through the rest of the newsletter and check out what is happening with your local affiliate. You'll find great events listed from the affiliates. Mark your calendars and plan on getting involved! Our community includes you and we'd love to see you!

As my term as your president draws to an end, I would like to personally thank each and every member of the society, for giving me the honor of representing such a wonderful organization and community of people that bring their best every day! THANK YOU!

Respectfully,
Michael Riemer
President, ASW
The Autism Society, the nation’s leading grassroots autism organization since 1965, celebrates National Autism Awareness Month in April. Launched as Autism Awareness Week in 1972, the Autism Society adopted the official observance of National Autism Awareness Month in 1984 as a critical step forward to increasing understanding about autism spectrum disorder.

Awareness is only a first step on our journey to improve the lives of those affected by autism; we really want people on the spectrum to be appreciated and respected as individuals. Awareness and understanding should lead to action, acceptance, inclusion and appreciation for all individuals living with autism.

How to get involved this April:

- Find and connect with your local affiliate. There are many great events happening throughout Wisconsin during April! Attend an event to connect with others in your local autism community. Visit www.asw4autism.org/local_chapter_support.html to find your local affiliate.

- Volunteer for the Autism Society! Autism Society affiliates are always looking for help. Whether you’re interested in volunteering at a special event or take on an ongoing volunteer leadership role, we’d love to hear from you. Follow the link above to find the contact information for your local Autism Society.

- Share information to promote understanding, inclusion and acceptance. Connect with us to receive informational sheets or resources to share in your schools and elsewhere in your community. Consider joining our Change for Autism campaign—more information on page 7.

- Register for the Autism Society of Wisconsin’s 28th Annual Conference. There’s no better place to connect with other individuals with autism, parents, families and professionals in the autism community from across the state. Registration ends April 10th, 2017.

- Consider making a donation to support the services and programs offered by the Autism Society of Wisconsin. The Autism Society of Wisconsin is proud to offer support, information and referral, education and advocacy to our 53 county service area. We rely on the generosity of our communities to support our programs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 6, 2017</td>
<td>6:15 –8:30 pm</td>
<td>Did You Know? Now You Know! Training—Autism Society of Central Wisconsin</td>
<td>St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 600 Stevens Dr., Wausau WI 54401</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This training, provided by Family Voices of Wisconsin, will explain resources and services for children with disabilities from birth through young adulthood. Learn about health insurance and how to best use your benefits, Medicaid and long-term supports.</td>
<td>St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 600 Stevens Dr., Wausau WI 54401</td>
<td>To Register: Contact Julia Stavran at the Northern Regional Center 715-261-1933 or by email <a href="mailto:Julia.Stavran@co.marathon.wi.us">Julia.Stavran@co.marathon.wi.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9, 2017</td>
<td>5:00—7:00 pm</td>
<td>6th Annual Autism Family Bowling Event—Autism Society of the Northeast</td>
<td>Ashwaubenon Bowling Alley</td>
<td>$12/person: Includes 2 games and shoes, unlimited soda and pizza from 5:30—6:00. For more information or to RSVP contact: <a href="mailto:administrator@asnew.org">administrator@asnew.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 9, 2017</td>
<td>5:00—7:00 pm</td>
<td>Support Group Meeting—Autism Society of the Lakeshore</td>
<td>702 State Street, Manitowoc</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 20, 2017</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>Support Group Meeting—Autism Society of the Lakeshore</td>
<td>702 State Street, Manitowoc</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 22, 2017</td>
<td>9:00—noon</td>
<td>Hanging Out Social Group (Kids 7—13): Pinewood Derby Event—Autism Society of the Fox Valley</td>
<td>St. Gabriel's in Neenah</td>
<td>RSVP Contact: <a href="mailto:jeffberzowski@hotmail.com">jeffberzowski@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 22, 2017</td>
<td>Time is TBD</td>
<td>Teen Social Group—Autism Society of the Fox Valley</td>
<td>Movie/Tom's Drive In, Appleton</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 23, 2017</td>
<td>1:00—3:00 pm</td>
<td>Bowling—Autism Society of the Lakeshore</td>
<td>Rudy's Lanes, Two Rivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 23, 2017</td>
<td>11:00—1:00</td>
<td>Family Jump Event—Autism Society of the Fox Valley</td>
<td>Sky Zone in Appleton</td>
<td>For more information and to complete the waiver: <a href="https://www.skyzone.com/appleton">https://www.skyzone.com/appleton</a> RSVP contact: <a href="mailto:asfvevents@autismfoxvalley.org">asfvevents@autismfoxvalley.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23, 2017</td>
<td>1:00—5:00 pm</td>
<td>13th Annual Bowl for Autism—Autism Society of Central Wisconsin</td>
<td>Days Bowl a Dome, 1715 Stewart Avenue – Wausau</td>
<td>For more information call 715-301-3278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 13, 2017</td>
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<td>Wings for Autism</td>
<td></td>
<td>More Details on page 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 13, 2017</td>
<td>9:00—noon</td>
<td>Family Event—Autism Society of the Wisconsin and UW– Superior</td>
<td></td>
<td>More Details on page 6</td>
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The 28th Annual Conference exists to provide a range of strategies, tools, and resources to those affected by autism in Wisconsin with the goal of ensuring individuals and families living with autism are able to maximize their quality of life, are treated with the highest level of dignity, and live in a society in which their talents and skills are appreciated and valued.

Conference Contact:
Melissa Vande Velden
mvandevelden@asw4autism.org or 920-973-6636
www.asw4autism.org

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?
- Individuals with Autism
- Parents or Caregivers
- Other Family Members (Grandparents, Siblings, etc.)
  - Educators
- Health and Human Services Professionals
  - Childcare Providers
  - Therapy Providers
- Related Service Providers
  - Job Coaches
- Other Interested Professionals & Community Members

DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS APRIL 10, 2017

If you miss the April 10th registration deadline, onsite registration will be an additional $25 for each registration. Handouts are not guaranteed for onsite registrations.
FRIDAY, APRIL 28
KEYNOTE ADDRESS: TEMPLE GRANDIN
8:30—10:00 am

In this special presentation backed by personal experience and evidence-based research, Dr. Temple Grandin will provide a look into her personal experiences; intervention, problems with sensory and over-sensitivity. She will also discuss the thinking process, the importance of developing strengths as well as the importance of work skills. Take away practical tips for parenting, teaching and learning from the individuals with autism in your life.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29
KEYNOTE ADDRESS: PANEL OF EXPERTS
8:00—9:30 am

Panelists: Roy Bedward, Judy Endow, Sara Martin

Saturday's keynote session will be a panel of individuals on the autism spectrum, who will each share about their experience living life on the autism spectrum. Each panelist will have time to give an introduction and share about how autism affects their day to day life. A range of topics will be covered including, but not limited to, visual thinking, self-stimulatory behaviors, and the experiences as an individual with autism who types to communicate. There will be time for audience questions at the end.

SPECIAL CONFERENCE EVENTS

Updates from the Department of Public Instruction: Friday, 12:05—12:45 pm
Affiliate Networking Session: Friday, 5:00—6:00 pm
Spectrum Social Hour: Friday, 4:45—5:45 pm
Teen Sibling Social Hour: Friday, 4:45—5:45 pm
Family Reception: Friday, 6:00—7:00 pm
Essay Contest Award Ceremony: Friday, 6:30—7:00 pm
Talent Show: Friday, 7:00—8:00 pm
Dance: Friday, 8:00—9:30 pm
Sibshop: Saturday, 8:00—11:00 am

FOR MORE DETAILS: www.asw4autism.org/conferences_workshops.html
AUTISM FAMILY DAY
A Three-in-One Event for the Whole Family!

May 13, 2017, 9 am – noon
Superior, WI

The Autism Society of Wisconsin is proud to co-host this 3 in 1 event with UW-Superior.

Adult Training
Zones of Regulation - A Concept to Foster Self-Regulation and Emotional Control
Presenter/Creator: Leah Kuypers, M.A., Ed., OTRL
This workshop will give adults tools for working with children with Autism who struggle with managing their emotions and sensory needs, addressing self-regulation, vocabulary of emotional terms, skills in reading facial expressions, perspective on how others see and react to behavior, insight on events that trigger their behavior, calming and alerting strategies, and problem solving skills.

Adventures with Autism – Social time for any youth or adult with ASD
While in the adult training, your child can be part of the Youth Program, hosted by the Challenge Center. The program will allow any youth or young adult on the autism spectrum the opportunity to engage in fun activities in an environment where they “fit in” with their peers. There will be games and crafts for active and quiet engagement, supervised by staff from the Challenge Center with extensive experience in working with youth and young adults with disabilities.

Sibshop
The Sibshop is for children ages 6-12 who are brothers and sisters of children with autism. This lively, but relaxed event will combine recreation, information, discussion, and give siblings the opportunity to celebrate the contributions and the challenges of their brothers and sisters with others their age who "get it".

For more information and/or to register, please visit UW-Superior’s website at http://www.event.com/events/autism-family-day-a-3-in-1-event/event-summary-7633a92cf0a64705afebc65539a44518.aspx
Wings for Autism® returns to Appleton International Airport on Saturday, May 13!

Wings for Autism® is an airport "rehearsal" specially designed for individuals with autism spectrum disorders and individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. The program is designed to alleviate the stress that families who have a child with autism or intellectual/developmental disabilities experience when flying. It provides families the opportunity to practice entering the airport, obtaining boarding passes, going through security and boarding a plane (no actual flight).

The Appleton “flight” will feature an Allegiant Airbus 319 with 156 seats, allowing 78 families to participate. For information and to register, go to https://fs30.formsite.com/wingsforautism/form265/index.html
Space is limited, so please RSVP as soon as possible!

The Autism Society of Wisconsin and the Autism Society of the Fox Valley are proud to be part of the planning process for this exciting event hosted by the Appleton International Airport and created by The Arc of the United States. We hope to see you there!

Help us Create Change for Autism by joining our 3rd Annual Change Campaign

With 1 in 68 children identified with autism, it's critical that our communities understand autism in order to provide meaningful support for individuals with autism and their families. This April, we're asking schools, businesses and other interested community partners to host a Change for Autism coin drive to help raise awareness and support Autism Society of Wisconsin programs and services. Together, we can create change for individuals and families affected by autism by increasing community understanding and support.

How can you raise awareness?

Get creative! There are a number of different ways you can help others understand autism. In the past, schools have shared information about autism over morning announcements or by making posters for hallways and classrooms. Inviting students with autism to help with a campaign is a great idea! What do they want their peers to know? In past campaigns, schools have had great success inviting students with autism to speak to their classmates about autism. Not a school? How about sending a daily/weekly email with information about autism? We have resources, fact sheets, and other ideas to help get you started!

It's not too late to participate!
Inside the Head of a Student with Autism
By Isabella Wartzenluft
11th grade

A student sits down during seventh hour of the day, beyond ecstatic to finally be away from the noise in his previous classes. His casual dress of jeans and a blue t-shirt matches the couch that he sinks into. Brick, a therapy dog, takes a seat next to him. The student begins to read, attempting to jot down notes. While he sounds like any other normal eighth grade student, Joseph has one quality that sets him apart: he has been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), is a name for a group of developmental disorders which are placed on a spectrum of severity. While some people fall in the range of high functioning, others are affected more critically, and ASD takes a toll on their daily functioning. People with ASD often struggle to interact socially, as their communication skills are not as developed. Social cues can be difficult to understand. People with ASD tend to have repetitive behaviors, which become noticeable the more you spend time with them. Along with this, they often have specific interests and certain topics intrigue them more than others, such as Joseph's love for video games and dinosaurs. And, as I told him, these qualities don't make people with ASD any less wonderful.

The day before I spoke with Joseph, I went to his school to chat with his teachers and peers in the hope of gaining insight into his personality. I was told Joseph struggled with social skills in the past, but has recently become much more adept in communicating with others. Joseph's teachers spoke highly of him. They said his interests varied throughout many subjects and that he would not shy away from telling me about his autism. They said he would actually make sure I knew about it.

The moment I walked in the classroom where I was interviewing Joseph, I knew we would connect. He was open about his disorder and ready to talk to me for as long as I was willing to sit. In fact, the first question I asked...
him was whether or not he knew the topic I was interviewing him about. His response was simply, “Yes, my autism.”

I was eager to find out more about him, so I began asking questions. When speaking of whether or not he enjoyed school, Joseph told me, “It depends on the subject. My all time favorite subject is science, second is math, and third is literacy. The only reason is, I don't like how Beth [his literacy teacher] makes us jot our notes. I start reading and I cannot stop reading just to write down a note.”

This became a common theme with Joseph– his inability to put his thoughts down on paper. He said, “I am good at coming up with ideas. Like in literacy, I can come up with a bunch of ideas, just when I start to get them to paper, from here [he points to head], I just can't. Should I write about that subject? Should I write about this? No. Should I write this? Or this? Or this? And it just gets complicated.”

While he considers coming up with ideas his biggest strength, he said acting on those ideas is difficult. The more he talked, the more I saw ideas flying in his head. He spoke of a computer desk he wanted to build for his room and a YouTube channel he hoped to start. Without a doubt, Joseph has no trouble being creative.

However, different environments affect Joseph’s creativity and ability to learn. He explained that noise is something he struggles with. While he enjoys the end of the day (due to the quiet atmosphere), mornings are a different story. He said, “I don’t like personal finance. I liked it to begin with, until everybody in the class pretty much started to scream at the top of their lungs the intro to Biz Kids [a series that teaches students about personal finance].”

Despite this, Joseph says he has come to enjoy school, especially because of the school’s therapy dog, Brick.

Brick walked in when Joseph and I were talking, and Joseph explained that having a dog helps calm him near the end of the day. In terms of school work itself, Joseph says that one things helps him: “Having a choice to do something... I think if I were to get a topic given to me, it would have been a lot harder to do.”

After getting the chance to speak with Joseph, I thought about what it would be like to attend my school, Arrowhead Union High School, while being diagnosed with ASD. Josephs’ brain works in a different way. While most of us are able to get thoughts from our brains onto paper, he cannot. While most of us can handle noisy environments, even if just for a small amount of time, he cannot. However, we are all human, and we are here to support each other.

The first step, I believe, in making sure schools create a supportive environment for students with autism is to become more individualized. Getting to know each other and every student as well as their strengths, weaknesses, interests, and disorders would allow for a more supportive and comforting environment for students with ASD. Once teachers know everything they can, they will be able to move forward in education for both students with ASD and those without.

The experience of meeting and speaking with Joseph is one that I will forever carry with me. He truly allowed me to see another side of autism– one I could not get without speaking directly to someone who has it. People with autism spectrum disorder are no different from you and me, and Joseph taught me that better than anyone could.
Sesame Street first introduced Julia, a character with autism, in 2015 through a digital storybook. After developing a robust suite of autism-related resources available on their website, they’re expanding their Autism: See Amazing in All Children initiative and bringing Julia to life. Julia, an adorable, 4 year old Muppet, will make her Sesame Street debut in a historic episode premiering on April 10th. The special episode welcomes Julia to Sesame Street with her friends Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird, and Allen. The Autism Society was proud to have been one of the organizations that contributed to the development of Julia.

The Autism Society of Wisconsin has a limited number of Sesame Street’s printed “We're Amazing, 1,2,3” books available. Please contact us at asw@asw4autism.org to request a copy. All elementary schools participating in our Change for Autism campaign will receive complimentary copies of the books.

To see all of Sesame Street’s resources visit http://autism.sesamestreet.org/ and don’t forget to tune in on April 10, 2017 to meet Julia!
49th Annual Autism Society National Conference
July 12–15, 2017 in Milwaukee
Your Quality of Life Conference

Plans for the 49th Annual Autism Society National Conference and Exposition, July 12-15, 2017 are nearing completion. Keynotes will include the following panel conversations led by several well-known authors who have written many books on autism:


2. Panel of parents, moderated by Judy Endow, author of PAINTED WORDS: Aspects of Autism Translated

3. Panel of autism professionals, moderated by Stephen Shore, author of Beyond the Wall: Personal Experiences with Autism and Asperger Syndrome, as well as being a long-time member of the Autism Society Panel of Professional Advisors.

The lineup of sessions is nearly complete. The entire conference will provide all attendees with a rich panoply of speakers and resources covering the entire lifespan, including practical applications focused on Autism Society quality of life outcomes. Check back at the Autism Society website for session details.

Please join us in Milwaukee to network, greet old friends and learn about new and exciting topics. And stay tuned for more surprises!

Early Bird Registration ends April 30, 2017.
Visit the Autism Society’s conference website for more information:
http://www.autism-society.org/get-involved/conference/
Help us fulfill our mission!

Support the Autism Society of Wisconsin by making a tax deductible gift! All donations are appreciated.

$25  $50  $75  $100  $200  $ Other

Donations may be sent to:
Autism Society of Wisconsin
1477 Kenwood Drive
Menasha, WI  54952

We also accept donations online. Click the Donate Now button on our homepage: www.asw4autism.org

Thank you for your support!

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ASW Board Meeting
April 27, 2017