

KiDS CAN CHRONiCLES

www.kidswithautismcan.org

What's Happening?

It's All Fun and... Bidding

Sunday, September 18th, 2011- Please save the date!

It's All Fun and...Bidding! Using the theme of our social events "It's All Fun and ..." we would like you to hold the date for our silent auction; Please join us and show your support. We know everyone is busy so we have tried to minimize the number of times each year we ask for your time and donations. This is our big event! Some of you will receive invitations by mail, but so much is done by email, we won't get to all of you. You are all welcome! Whether or not you receive an invitation by mail you can go to our website after August 12 and RSVP. Watch for details in a future email.

If you can't attend, raffle tickets will also be available; you need not be present to win. The auction will have a variety of items available including autographed sports items, signed books, hand crafted items, beautiful gift baskets and gift certificates. Sweets will be provided. We are still hoping for some live music but haven't been able to firm that up, if you have ideas please get in touch with us. We are also still taking donations for the auction, if you have anything you would like to contribute.

Please join us and support a great cause, we have been able to bring a lot of smiles and support to families this year!

Skating, Swimming and More...

Once again, we thank the Cardinals Charities for their support of our events through a grant. We have been able to skate, swim, go to musical event and bowling! We have been able to do each of these events in calm, well planned environments, with small groups that have allow for plenty of fun and a relaxed environment for families. Thank you Ice Den and Hubbard Swim!



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**CARDINALS
CHARITIES**

Events planned! It's all Fun and...

Bidding – September 18th
(our silent auction)

Horses – November 5th
(Tentative)

A Gift for Our Community: SEEDs for Autism

We have had a great opportunity to work with different organizations this summer, mostly through our children (each with different needs) and their extra activities.

We would like to introduce you to a place called SEEDs. They are an organization focused on art and its impact. As I write this and try to describe them to you, the best words come from two sources, the first from the director: “While we offer classes to younger teens, we are primarily focused on transitional training, and job skills, to those whose choices may seem limited after graduation, so they know, there is another option out there for them, one that teaches the importance of job training, how to do tasks that are asked of them, how to focus, work together in teams, have a social aspect, work on hand/eye coordination, and gain confidence in themselves by learning in an atmosphere that is tailored for them. We want to see SEEDs be here for a long, long time, in a manner that will serve our community of adults to find their voice, to assist in steering them through the path of adulthood, responsibility, confidence, and accountability. Our goal is not only to provide training in vocational diversity, but to also help them realize their potential abilities in day to day problem solving, teamwork, and decision making”. She describes the program as “One that recognizes the intricate needs of a person on the spectrum, who is not only providing a safe, designated place for those who’s behaviors are unique… and whose minds are extremely active, brilliant, and diverse----a place that is trying to tap into those talents.”

The second quote comes from my son, “I like it, other people there like what I like.” As a mom looking for social experiences for her teenage son, finding a place your child feels they “fit” is really important.

SEEDs works with teens and young adults starting at age 15, already making them special because so many organizations work with younger kids. Kids with Autism Can was able to make a small donation to help support them but they need so much more, not just financial. We found it to be a great place for our son and would encourage you to check it out! We also hope if you have skills that might help to support them you will consider giving of your time.

Please check them out on Facebook (SEEDs for Autism) or the web (www.seedsforautism.org)!



Meet Jeff

Multiple interests keep Jeff Wolcott quite busy these days. He is an extremely diverse young man who is actively exploring a variety of new skills in the community. Jeff's interests include reading, listening to a variety of music, and drawing.



Most recently he even tried acting through SARRC (Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center) and the Arizona School for the Arts, in the play called, "Like Everyone Else." The story centered around what it was like to have autism and it's challenges for families, but mainly gave the audience a glimpse of how it felt for someone on the spectrum and the challenges they face. When asked about his debut and the experience Jeff commented, "it was at times frustrating trying to remember my lines," but he conquered this by improvising on the spot. He was also nervous about being in front of an audience, "but knew the show must go on, so I went with it." Jeff said the director was nice, and they played silly games to help everyone feel more loose and relaxed. Jeff also enjoyed helping create the scenery and painting some of the backgrounds. He was particularly pleased with his ability to draw the brains on the left (creative side) as a prop for one scene.

Jeff also keeps busy working part time at a neighborhood CVS. His duties include stocking, checking expiration dates, parking lot checks, and bringing in the shopping carts. While he is grateful to be working and having a paycheck, he wishes he could find a way to make money from doing artwork, "his favorite passion."

It is at SEEDs for Autism that Jeff has found a weekly part time outlet to learning different skills centered around his artistic abilities. When asked about being in the program there, Jeff's comment was, "I just wish this was my real job. My parents think this might be the best thing that has happened to me, and I agree with them." While at SEEDs Jeff has had the opportunity to create a variety of different items, and learn many skills, but he would still like, "to learn to cut stones and work with more experimental materials."

Last year Jeff was asked to create a piece of jewelry for Lin Sue Cooney as a thank you gift for doing a story about the SEEDs program. When Lin Sue was asked how the item could find its way to her, she quickly responded that she would love to meet the artist personally, and even invited Jeff and a few friends to come and be her guest and watch the live airing of that days 5:00 newscast. Jeff said, "I was privileged that you chose me to make it for her," and "I hope Lin Sue will continue to support SEEDs in the future."

There is no doubt that Jeff is an asset to our community and to all who know him. His playful nature, creativity, and expressiveness are a true gift to seeing just a glimpse of who Jeff is.

"Feelings of worth can flourish only in an atmosphere where individual differences are appreciated, mistakes are tolerated, communication is open, and rules are flexible -- the kind of atmosphere that is found in a nurturing family."

-Virginia Satir

Pasta Salad-Create your Own

OK! We usually put in a very specific recipe but this time we are going to stretch your limits. Create your own favorite recipe! I know some of our kiddos like structure and rules. Who am I kidding, I like structure and rules. So we are all taking a step out of our comfort zone. You can make this a little more or less healthy depending on how you serve it and your ingredient choices. Of course, be aware of allergies!



Pasta (Pick one)

- 1 Box Regular or Whole Wheat Pasta, (gluten free pasta is also available)
- Cook according to package directions, do not overcook, let cool.

Beans (Pick one/or none) (My kids don't do beans yet)

- Canned Black, White or Garbanzo Beans
- Of course you can soak and cook beans from scratch but that's sort of a big deal.

Veggies (pick several)

- You can cut the veggies small so they almost blend together, or they may be larger if you let your kids do the cutting. It might be difficult for them to cut small pieces, but this is about letting them try.
- Spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, multi colored peppers (green peppers tend to be less sweet and more bitter so they might not be the best place to start), carrots (we like to grate them or they don't mix in very well), green beans, broccoli, celery, asparagus, cauliflower, any other vegetable they like.

Meat/Fish/Tofu (Pick one)

- Cooked Chicken, Cooked Steak, Grilled Tuna, Shrimp or Tofu

Cheese (Pick one)

- Feta, Fresh Mozzarella, Swiss or other shredded or cubed cheese.

Dressing (Toss with a small amount, you can always add more!)

- Balsamic Vinaigrette (big in our house, a little goes a long way on pasta salad, potato salad (instead of mayo), cooked veggies, meat before grilling).
- Greek - Homemade vinegar and oil or lemon juice and oil. Use your favorite recipe.
- Southwest - Salsa mixed with ranch, about $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$, if you add a little plain yogurt you can use less ranch.
- Italian - Mayo, plain yogurt and pesto. Caesar dressing is also an option.
- Asian - Rice Wine Vinegar, oil and a couple of drops of sesame oil.

Other Adds

- Artichoke, roasted peppers, sun dried tomatoes, herbs (fresh are best but dry will work), bean sprouts, cabbage, nuts, fresh or dried fruits, anything you can get off those cool olive bars in the grocery store!

You are just trying to get a blend of colors and flavors your family finds appealing. It can be done sort of like a "salad bar" individual servings or a big bowl with everyone helping to pick what goes in. In our house individual serving work better with the rule you have to pick something new to taste. These salads can also be made with no pasta but a different grain or just your favorite greens.

What's Next...

Suns

We have started to talk with the Phoenix Suns about a possible event. No promises yet but keep checking the website and be sure to get on our event mailing list by emailing us at info@kidswithautismcan.org so you can get the details if we plan an event.

Fitness Propelled

Here is another thing we are thrilled about! Three years ago I started looking for someone to work with Nicholas to help him gain a love and respect for exercise. He watched sports on TV but was not very willing to participate. We called several places with either no response or no returned call after we explained our needs were not typical. In spring through the HFA website we found a gift. We have started work with Geoff Rubin, Owner of Fitness Propelled LLC. He is offering something that I think is absolutely wonderful for our teenage and young adult boys! He does personalized fitness and sports training for typical kids and more importantly specializes in working with kids on the spectrum. This fall Nicholas is starting on the Bella Vista High School basketball team, so we have specific goals. Geoff listened to what we wanted for our son and then added his knowledge and communication skills to make it an outstanding experience for Nicholas. I had the pleasure of watching today. Nicholas really doesn't like physical work but Geoff is inspiring, supportive, kind and has high expectations that he works toward in a respectful and professional way. Nicholas always asks when he is going next. In Geoff's words "Fitness Propelled seeks to develop and awaken each individual's passion for physical fitness by reducing barriers, changing mindsets and developing life-long self enhancing healthy habits". We feel like we have found a great role model and wanted to share this with others. If you are interested in meeting him we are looking to put together an open house in late Fall. Feel free to contact him before that, as training sessions are filling up quickly.

www.fitnesspropelled.com, Geoff's Mobile – 480-522-7874



Linked In...

Check out these sites. We have had some positive social experiences. We know everyone has different needs, but these might be great places to start.

www.seedsforautism.org
www.fitnesspropelled.com
www.autism-products.com

www.macdonaldsranch.com
www.azpowerpaws.org
www.hubbardswim.com

Kids with Autism Can regularly updates their website. Please check back frequently for events and new information. Take time to dive into the stories and perhaps share some of yours.

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