UPDATE

Fall 2002

South Carolina Autism Society

Together We Can Solve The Puzzle

Vince Carbone Workshop June 23-25: Useful for Parents and Professionals

Vincent J. Carbone, Ed.D., one of the most sought after presenters in the autism field, will conduct a three-day workshop in Columbia June 23-25 on teaching communication skills to children with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Dr. Carbone's workshops are designed for parents, teachers, behavior analysts, speech language pathologists, in-home program supervisors, tutors and others who want to improve their instructional skills. The S.C. Autism Society is applying for certification renewal hours for teachers, as well as credits for speech and occupational therapists.

Dr. Carbone is a board certified behavior analyst who relies on the literature of applied behavior analysis to guide his treatment and instructional recommendations for children with autism.

"Vince Carbone is published in the journals and is inspiring, charming and funny," says Denise Oxford, a parent and SCAS board member from Anderson. "The parents, autism professionals and classroom teachers who have attended his presentations at my suggestion have all come back with rave reviews and are eager to implement the techniques they learned — and to learn more."

Ashley Collins, an educational therapist at the CARE (Carolina Autism Resource and Evaluation) Center in Columbia, said Dr. Carbone "presents the science of behavior analysis and its application to children with autism that can be respected and understood by professionals and parents."

She said Dr. Carbone's use of video clips of actual work sessions "brings to life the procedures and concepts he describes." She added, "Dr. Carbone emphasizes the motivational variables that affect teaching, which is one thing that sets his workshops apart from others."

The cost for the three days will be $195. Early registration is encouraged because spaces will be limited. Dorm rooms at the University of South Carolina will be available to participants at the cost of $35 for single rooms and $45 for doubles.

cont. on p. 9 — see Carbone

Thank You, Silent Auction Donors

The S.C. Autism Society's 2002 silent auction brought in twice the revenues as last year's, thanks to the artistry and generosity of 37 contributors. The auction also helped its featured artist to understand the meaning of "thinking of others."

Painter Jessy Park donated six copies of her paintings, which her mother, keynote speaker Clara Claiborne Park, brought to the auction. The copies netted $445 for SCAS.

Mrs. Park wrote later to say that she was "thrilled" by the auction results and promised to contribute copies of Jessy's paintings again in 2003 (including the popular Noah's Ark). Jessy too was happy with the outcome of the fundraiser, her mother said.

"She was 'thinking of others,' a phrase she

cont. on p. 9 — see Silent Auction

From the Desk of the President

Dear Friends:

I feel inspired by Spring Slagle's article on page 6. I believe she has brought up a very important point in her story about celebrating her young son's successes. Throughout life we tend to only celebrate major milestones and fail to see all of the progress we have made in small steps. It's easy to push aside the small accomplishments as being small and unimportant, but taken as a whole they can get us where we want to go.

Not only do I push aside small accomplishments in my personal life, but also as the president of the South Carolina Autism Society. I feel I may have failed to celebrate some of our accomplishments. Or perhaps I have not been as vocal about our accomplishments as I should have been.

So let me start by telling you about some of the great things SCAS has been doing this year and who has had an instrumental role in making them happen. All of the numbers below are as of September 30, 2002, so I am really only reflecting on three fourths of the year:

- Under the direction of Carol Niederhauser, SCAS has created an absolutely wonderful video, which is being used in conjunction with our disability awareness training at the Department of Social Services. The video (which can be viewed on DVD) features parents sharing their stories about raising children with developmental disabilities and professionals providing tips for other professionals about serving families. Carol began training DSS employees in October.
- A little over a year ago, SCAS hired Lynn Ragsdale to head up the information and referral operations in the office. So far this year we have had 480 requests for information. Additionally, Lynn has started to maintain a file of information for parents on many topics. Another grand improvement this year is our updated information booklet on autism spectrum disorders.
- SCAS has worked with 525 different families since January 1 through our Parent-School Partnership Program. Melanie Marquis took the reins of that program this fall. She and the other six parent mentors cover the state. SCAS Parent Mentors are Anjeanette Cheshire, Kim McHugh, Sarah Pascarella, Spring Slagle, Lissa Waring and Dandrea Woolridge. As the mentors work with the families, schools and community groups they have had contact with 4,200 people in South Carolina. I am amazed at the numbers from this program, considering there are only seven part-time people doing the work. On top of that, our quality evaluation surveys confirm that we are doing a great job, with an overall average score of 4.3 on a scale of five.
- The number of SCAS members over the past five years has increased from 150 to 230, a trend I hope will continue. To help make it affordable for all families to join, last year SCAS lowered the basic membership fee and added additional membership categories.
- SCAS held its first bowling event that raised over $3,000. SCAS held its annual golf tournament, raising over $12,000 this year. The 2003 tournament will be held April 26.
- We have maintained and expanded our website, tasks that could not have happened without the exalted "web master" Denise Chastain. Denise took time to learn how to set up and maintain a web page just to help SCAS out. As a volunteer she has continued to keep our site up to date and expand its uses, like adding on-line conference registration.
- We had 208 participants at our conference in October. Overall, the comments were excellent. A special treat this year was the Rev. William Bishop's account of our chapter's history as told through the story of raising his son. Bill's presentation was a celebration of 30 years of accomplishments in recognition of our 30th Anniversary.

SCAS has had some great successes, but we have had and will continue to have one particular struggle. That struggle is meeting our budget. Several events have had an effect on our funding this year, as they have for all nonprofit organizations.

One of these events is that interest rates have dropped as the economy has slowed down. Our 2002 interest revenues are down by nearly $5,000 from two years ago. Another effect of the "slow" economy is that our general contributions are down by nearly 70 percent this year. The major surprise to SCAS this year was reductions in our various contracts in anticipation of state budget cuts. These reductions total nearly $20,000. The net result has been that we have had to do more with fewer dollars. This has not been an easy task, but so far we have been able to manage without laying off any staff or limiting any programs.

But for SCAS to continue to have such great accomplishments, we are going to need your help. Before the end of the year we will kick off the annual campaign to raise funds to make sure we end the year without being "in the red."

SCAS has been as self-conscious as a nonprofit can be about direct solicitations. We have only asked for contributions when we had a true need. Unfortunately, this is one of those years. A contribution made before January 1 will be tax deductible for the 2002 tax year.

Thank you for helping us to make this a better world for children and adults with autism, as well as their families. I send my best wishes to you and your family for a happy holiday season.

Craig C. Stoxen
President and CEO

New Officers, Members Elected to SCAS Board

Cheryl Bauerle of Myrtle Beach was elected Chair of the S.C. Autism Society Board of Directors at the SCAS 2002 annual meeting.

"Cheryl has great organizational skills," Craig Stoxen, SCAS president and CEO, said. "She has really put those skills to work in helping to make our spring golf tournament bigger and better each year."

Aixa Rodriguez-Mariana was elected Vice Chair and Becky Hughes Secretary. Mitch Yell was re-elected Treasurer.

Craig said that Aixa brings a "unique perspective" to the board because she is both a parent and a physician.

Becky replaces Ann Bishop, who served as secretary for five years and is retiring from the board. Also retiring is John Edwards.

Parents Roy Williams and Susan DuRant are joining the board for the first time. Susan is Director of the Office of Exceptional Children, S.C. Department of Education.

Former President Amy Weeks will remain on the board as Immediate Past Chair.

The annual meeting was held in October in conjunction with the 2002 SCAS conference.

The board will meet in 2003 on Feb. 1, May 17, August 2, and Nov. 1.

The Update

The *Update* is published four times a year by the South Carolina Autism Society, one of more than 200 nonprofit chapters of the Autism Society of America (ASA) and the only ASA chapter in South Carolina. Guest articles are welcome for possible publication. Information or points of view contained in the *Update* are not necessarily endorsed or held by SCAS, its directors or staff, but may be presented simply to keep readers informed about options. SCAS maintains offices in the Palmetto Office Building at 652 Bush River Road, Suite 203, Columbia, SC 29210. Call us at 803-750-6988 or 800-438-4790; fax us at 803-750-8121; or e-mail us at either scas@scautism.org or www.scautism.org.

Volume 30, Issue Four
December 2002

Read about our new 'look' on page 16.

12 Diverse Individuals Receive Awards

What do the sister of a boy with autism, a retiring state legislator, and the owner of a Low Country island all have in common? Answer: They are three of the 12 SCAS award recipients for 2002, and it may have been the most diverse group of awardees yet.

The awards were presented at the S.C. Autism Society's 2002 annual conference in October. It was a great way to mark the 30th Anniversary of the Society in our state, because all kinds of South Carolinians have been uniting for 30 years now to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families.

So, if you missed the conference, here are the winners of the 2002 awards. The descriptions are in the words of the individuals who made the nominations (although some editing was necessary for space). The nominators presented a plaque to the individuals they nominated, which made for a touching and uniquely personalized awards presentation program.

Sibling Advocate of the Year: Destyne'i Tiller (Nominated by Rodonna Hodges Tiller)

Destyne'i Tiller is a true sibling advocate for her older autistic brother, Breo'n Tiller, in that she takes an active role in the daily care of Breo'n. Destyne'i shows her unconditional love for Breo'n by assisting him with speech lessons, homework and ensuring his full participation in activities. She encourages his independence but allows no mistreatment or taunting by others. Destyne'i does all of this with a smile and love in her eyes for Breo'n. She displays her love for Breo'n by helping their peers and other children who might not understand that he is no different from them and that he is capable of interacting with them if given the chance. She tells them that she and Breo'n are a team and that she is his voice. Destyne'i has never questioned why her brother is different or frowned at any time when she is helping him. Destyne'i tells Breo'n daily that she loves him and gets a big hug and kiss in return.
–RHT (Mother of Destyne'i and Breo'n)

Service Coordinator of the Year: Christina Nash (Nominated by Wanda Yates)

Christina, who works for the York County Disabilities and Special Needs Board, has been our service coordinator for less than a year. Not long after meeting her, I was diagnosed with cancer. Jordan is 15 and he is an aggressive autistic. It is an understatement to say that he is not an easy child to take care of and, now that I am sick with frequent hospital stays, it is even harder. Christina is aware of my need for my son's safety and planning for his future if the cancer wins. She never tries to talk me into anything I am not comfortable with, and if she does not know the answers to my questions, she will find out and get back to me in a most timely manner. Immediately, she applied for the Medicaid waiver for Jordan so that I could have extra respite to help care for Jordan when I am not doing so well. Christina also carefully reviewed and sought out a worker for me that Jordan really likes. For Jordan, finding an appropriate worker is not easy. To sum up, Christina Nash is professional and she goes beyond what is required of her. I appreciate her and feel she is a true advocate for my autistic son. –WY

Legislator of the Year: State Rep. Marion P. Carnell (Nominated by Craig Stoxen)

Growing up, I heard my father say many times how all politicians are crooks. Well, he never met Marion Carnell. Rep. Carnell has be a long time friend of people with disabilities. He has been a strong supporter of DDSN and has worked year after year to help ensure that funds were made available to help people with disabilities in his work on the Ways and Means Committee. Rep. Carnell may have been elected as the representative form Greenwood-Laurens, but he truly served the entire state in his advocacy and voting record. Unfortunately for us, he decided not to run for re-election and will retire from politics at the end of this year. He leaves large shoes to be filled. We will miss him and his watchful eye for the betterment of people with disabilities, and wish him the best in his retirement. –CS

Shadow of the Year: Darryl Latimer (Nominated by Anjeanette Cheshire)

Darryl is in her fourth year at Palmetto Middle School (Anderson School District 1) as my son Ryan's "shadow." She has played an important role in and has been a tremendous asset to Ryan's education. She has developed ingenious ways to present concepts to Ryan so that he understands them better. Darryl's caring, support, and compassion has shaped Ryan. Ryan has flourished and matured under her watchful eye. Her diligence and hard work has had great benefit for Ryan academically, personally, and socially. Darryl has demonstrated a commitment to my son's future that will be forever remembered and appreciated. –AJ Cheshire

Bridge Builders of the Year: Tammy Ruiz and Kathy Durbin (Nominated by Melanie Marquis)

Picture this: A school district and family embracing the ideas of each other to create a free and appropriate public education for a child with autism. Think it's impossible? Well, think again! Let me introduce you to a parent and a school district Special Services Director who give new meaning to the word "team": Lancaster County parent Tammy Ruiz, parent of Ray Thomas, 4 years old, and Kathy Durbin of the Lancaster County School District. Better programming could not have happened without the help of Kathy, who really listened to Tammy and embraced many of the ideas Tammy brought to the table as a parent and a beneficiary of SCAS's Parent-School Partnership. In fact, the district recognized Tammy's abilities to such an extent that they brought her on board as their parent representative to work with other families. –MM

Russell Lee Extra Mile Award: Robert Barber (Nominated by Beth and Andrew "Smoky" Weiner)

Robert donates the use of basically an entire island for the semi-annual Rock For Kids benefit which raises money for Camp Good Times, a day camp for children with autism. As a former legislator and school board member, Mr. Barber has always championed the rights of handicapped children, including those with autism. He has been instrumental in the production of this benefit in many different ways over the years. We are having our seventh Rock For Kids this year. It has raised over $16,000 for the camp in three years so far. It would not have happened without Mr. Barber's help and generosity. –BW, AW

Professional of the Year: Kendra Chaplin (Nominated by Phil Blevins)

Kendra serves as Director of Training and Programs for Carolina Autism Supported Living Services after leaving employment with the state. She also puts in time as a therapist, secretary, grocery shopper and community liaison on a daily basis. Her ability to make friends with school personnel, pharmacists, physicians and potential employers has created relationships that have opened up opportunities, secured medicine for children with no money and no Medicaid, staved off some crises and resolved others. She takes pride in the clients she serves and finds satisfaction in improving their lives. Kendra continues to dedicate her career to understanding and serving people with autism. –PB

Therapist of the Year: Leslie Wannamaker (Nominated by Chris Heeringa)

Two years ago, Leslie Wannamaker came into my home and began working with my son. Even though she had never worked with a child with autism before, she fit into therapy like a hand in a glove. She and Matthew had some tough sessions in the beginning, but I soon realized that this girl is as stubborn as he is! She will not let Matthew give up nor will she give up on him. She comes up with creative ways to teach various skills to Matthew—great reinforcement, encouragement, and even trickery. They quickly developed a love for each other. Leslie is a sophomore at Winthrop University where she is majoring in special education, and her intentions are to continue her work with autistic children after graduating. Needless to say, my entire family loves Leslie. Many times I have said that if the only reason God has given us a child with special needs is to bring all of the wonderful people into our lives that we have met over the years, that would be reason enough. We named our son Matthew because it means "Gift of the Lord," and Leslie is truly a gift to our family. –CH

cont. on p. 10 — see Awards

Baby Steps are Steps All the Same

by Spring Slagle
Parent Mentor, Midlands Region
SCAS Parent-School Partnership

My son Isaac was diagnosed with autism two months after he turned two. The next few months were packed full of trips to speech, occupational, and physical therapy appointments as well as countless hours of home-based ABA therapy, meetings with therapists, and more evaluations than my husband or I could count. So many people invaded our lives so quickly that we put a list of names on our refrigerator listing who was who and where they were from. Though most of these professionals were very kind, it felt like they were all telling us more and more that was wrong with our child. We worked very hard with Isaac and he began to learn and master many goals. We were amazed though that all too often goals were not met with celebration but with a cursory checkmark and a quick reassessment and move to the next goal.

It did not seem right. Isaac was two years old and was working as hard as he could 40-plus hours a week. No one was taking the time to celebrate his accomplishments. As I thought about this with my husband, we began to realize it was our job to celebrate our children and their progress. The anniversary of Isaac's diagnosis was fast approaching and we had a wonderful idea. We would throw a party – a huge party – to celebrate Isaac's hard work.

We quickly got to work. We got a list of all the many, many people who had helped Isaac over the past year. Friends and family were invited. We invited David Steele from the BabyNet office, Don Fender from DDSN, Dr. Don Wuori from the developmental pediatrics clinic, the folks from the Midlands office of the Autism Division, the Autism Society, Family Connection, and every therapist we could think of. We invited everyone who had contributed to the well being of our son.

After the invitations were sent, we got started on the party itself. We racked our brains and interviewed everyone we could think of to remember everything Isaac had learned in the last year. We made each accomplishment into its own separate poster with a picture of Isaac doing that particular thing. We put the brightly colored posters all over the walls at Bright Start, which provides Isaac's early intervention and had graciously agreed to let us have Isaac's party at their facility.

We videotaped Isaac at some of his therapies and had the video playing on a small television for those friends who had never seen Isaac's work. We brought in many brightly colored balloons, enough food for an army, lots of kid's music and a variety of party favors. Guests were given a thank you letter, a photo of Isaac, and an autism awareness ribbon. Therapists were given a rose and a special gift. Everyone was encouraged to sign a registry and to take one of several paper hearts and write a special message to Isaac. We even had someone give temporary tattoos to the children who came to the party.

I have never felt like I did the night of the party. So many people who had loved and helped Isaac throughout the past year surrounded us. It was a time of revitalizing and reconnecting with our real purpose – helping Isaac to reach his potential. It was a time of accepting and realizing how much this now three-year-old little boy had touched so many lives. It was like a pep rally. Our guests stepped back with us and realized how much Isaac had accomplished over the past year and how much he had grown. We remembered that baby steps are steps all the same. That night Isaac became more than just a job or a client and became an individual deserving of a great amount of celebration. We were all reminded that Isaac has a great future and that we were all privileged to be a part of it.

Parties are not usually my thing. It takes a lot of work to plan a party that large but every year at the anniversary of Isaac's diagnosis we will have this celebration party. Every year we will come together and let Isaac remind us of how much he has accomplished, how hard he has worked and how much he has influenced all of us. My husband and I will always celebrate Isaac because the second we stop celebrating him, so will everyone else. He is too important for us to forget just how important he is.

Sleep Problems Studied; Progress Made in Grouping Children with ASDs

by Ruth K. Abramson, Ph.D.
Department of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science, USC School of Medicine

Editor's note: Ruth is a Fellow of the American College of Medical Genetics and a regular contributor to the Update*. She is part of the University of S.C.-Duke University team that is researching the genetics of autism spectrum disorders.*

Recently I attended the International Meeting for Autism Research in Orlando. This is an outstanding meeting for those who do research because fellow researchers from all over the world attend, and you have the opportunity to discuss multiple areas of research with the people who do the work. I will report here on research that has been presented in two areas: sleep problems in children with autism and using clinical clues to group families who are alike to increase the chances of more quickly identifying genes that may increase susceptibility to develop autism or Asperger disorder.

Other interesting information was presented on the CHAT (Checklist for Autism in Toddlers, a quick diagnostic tool designed for medical professionals) and the M-CHAT (a modified version of CHAT). I won't go into these studies here because they may be of limited interest to most readers. But if you are interested in them, you can contact me at the number given at the end of this article and I will share it with you. Carol Niederhauser also has information about the studies. She can be reached at SCAS.

Sleep problems in children with autism

Two studies on sleep were presented at the meeting. Many parents of young children with autism (from 44 percent to 83 percent) report that their children have sleep problems. P.G. Williams (Parent Report of Effective Sleep Interventions for Children with Autism) surveyed 700 parents of children with autism, and 210 responded.

The most common sleep disorders are those associated with the sleep/wake cycle, including long sleep latency (taking a long time to get to sleep), night waking, early morning waking, shortened night sleep, and daytime napping. Parents reported using a variety of techniques, including both behavioral and medical interventions to try to enhance sleep. Over 90 percent had tried one or both approaches. Establishing a regular bedtime routine was said to be helpful by 78 percent of the parents and was reported by the parents to be the most effective sleep intervention strategy.

Parents used medications for sleep less frequently than behavioral interventions. They reported the most frequent perceived benefit with Benadryl (48 percent of parents who tried Benadryl reported a benefit). Beneficial sleep interventions were related to the characteristics of the child. Some interventions were less effective for children with significant cognitive delay. Thus, regular bedtime routine appeared to be the strategy that parents found to work best.

A second study, by S. Jacquemont and others (The Efficacy of Melatonin on Sleep Problems in Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and Fragile X) is a careful study that evaluated whether melatonin would improve sleep problems in children with Fragile X and autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). Parents completed a Sleep Habits Questionnaire for their children. Those children who had long sleep latency (it took more than 30 minutes for them to fall asleep) and/or frequent middle-of-the-night wakening were included in the study. The study was a double-blind crossover study carried out over a period of five weeks of the study.

cont. on p. 8 — see Research

Research

cont. from p. 7

During the first week, baseline data was collected on how the child slept. During the second and third weeks children took a capsule containing either melatonin or a placebo. During the fourth and fifth weeks, the children who took a placebo were given melatonin and the children who took melatonin were given the placebo. Parents completed a sleep diary and the children wore an "actiwatch" on their ankle, which monitors activity. They wore the actiwatch for 24 hours a day for the five weeks of the study.

Initially, 10 subjects were studied. There was significant improvement for all children on two outcome measures: sleep latency and time of sleep onset. Only two of the 10 children had improvements in sleep duration. There were no significant sides effects from the melatonin. Further research is necessary to describe what kind of sleep problem is best treated by this medication in children with autism spectrum disorders or fragile X syndrome.

Clinical measures in genetic studies

One study by S. Donnelly and others from the Duke/University of S.C. group (Chromosomes 2 & 7 in Autism: Phenotypic Subtypes) initially sub-grouped families on the basis of whether the child had phrase speech delay (PSD or phrase speech onset at greater than 36 months). Using PSD, 29 families were identified with linkage to Chromosome 2 and Chromosome 7.

All Chromosome 7 families also had strong linkage on Chromosome 2 (n=17). A subset of families only had linkage on Chromosome 2 (n=12). The Chromosome 2/7 and the Chromosome 2 families were compared using the Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R), the Aberrant Behavior Checklist (ABC) and the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (VABS).

There were no differences between the two groups of families in ADI-R social or repetitive behaviors, or on the ABC lethargy factor. However, the children in the Chromosome 2 families had significantly higher scores than the Chromosome 2/7 families on the VABS social, communication and daily living skills domains and overall adaptive functioning.

The children in the Chromosome 2 families had significantly lower scores on the ADI-R measures of gestures and social imitative behaviors. Thus, the Chromosome 2 and Chromosome 2/7 families appear to be clinically different in communication function. The children in Chromosome 2/7 families are more impaired than the children in Chromosome 2 families. Children in Chromosome 2 families may show different development of language and communication than children in Chromosome 2/7 families.

The Duke/USC group was actively involved in this meeting. We presented 11 research reports and will provide titles upon request. **We want you to know that what you do really makes a difference.** With your continued help, we will be successful. Thanks to all of the families who work with us on a continuing basis to help find the causes and eventually the treatments for autism and Asperger disorder. We look forward to working with you and with new families.

We would also like to report, on a personal note, that Karen Decena is now Karen Charles. She and her new husband are now living in Orlando. Karen is no longer working with us, but has taken a job as a genetic counselor. We miss her and wish her well. We would like to introduce Dr. Alicia Hall, who will be with us for the next six months and will be taking on Karen's job. Welcome, Alicia! Sarah Ravan continues with us.

Reach us as always at 803-898-2343. Together we will make a difference!

Silent Auction

cont. from p. 1

was taught 25 years ago and is learning, gradually," Mrs. Park wrote. "Thinking of others" appears in the handout distributed for Mrs. Park's talk on Oct. 12. The handout, which contains entries from Jessy's journals, lists "Will think of other people before myself" and "I think to myself how people feel." under "thinking of others."

Altogether the auction raised $2,039 from top bids on 69 items. Other highlighted items were NASCAR tickets, a handcrafted chest made by parent Sam Slagle, paintings by parent Steve Chastain and a football signed by University of S.C. football coach Lou Holtz.

The contributors are listed below. Thank you one and all!

Silent Auction Donors

Ami Babick
Clarion Townhouse
Sheraton Columbia
Gilligans
Cracker Barrel
The Melting Pot
Riverbanks Zoo
Anthony Filippone
Betsy Roebuck Filippone
Sam/Spring Slagle
Carolina Panthers
Bev McCarty
Charleston Ghost Walk
Craig Stoxen
Lynn Ragsdale
Embassy Suites
Steve Chastain
Alex Holbert
Adam's Mark Hotel-Cola
Roy Williams
S.C. Aquarium
Maid Brigade
Gore and Gore
Joe/Barbara Park
Clemson University
University of South Carolina
Columbia Inferno
Vi Hendley
Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation
Middleton Place
The Preservation Society of Charleston

Carbone

cont. from p. 1

To register, call SCAS at 750-6988 or 800-438-4790, or online at www.scautism.org. The website has more information on Dr. Carbone and the workshop content, as well as dorm registration.

SCAS, the Autism Division of the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, and University Centers for Excellence (formerly UAP) are sponsoring the workshop. Seats will be limited.

The workshop is titled "Introduction to Verbal Behavior: Teaching Communication Skills to Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities." The approach is based on B.F. Skinner's analysis of verbal behavior and the research of Michael, Sundberg, Partington and others.

Participants learn to (1) conduct a behavioral language assessment, (2) select the most appropriate form of communication for a child (vocal, signing, pointing to or exchanging pictures, or activating an augmentative device), and (3) select the communication responses and supporting skills that should be taught first.

The workshop includes the recommended teaching procedures for children who have no formal communication skills to those who are near conversational speakers. Described and demonstrated will be errorless teaching, specific quick-transfer (prompting and fading) procedures, and the use of both discrete trial training in the natural environment and during intensive teaching.

Video tape demonstrations will show how to increase spontaneous language and develop conversational skills.

SCAS Seeking Articles

The S.C. Autism Society is keeping a file of articles and other information that parents and professionals have found to be helpful. The possible topics are wide ranging, including autism spectrum disorder treatment/intervention options, education, medications, diet, family stress, and advice for extended family members and friends.

The file will be available to others for information purposes only and will not be endorsed by SCAS. Send articles to Lynn Ragsdale at SCAS, 652 Bush River Road, Suite 203, Columbia SC 29210. Lynn's e-mail address is iandr@scautism.org.

Awards

cont. from p. 5

Teacher of the Year: Aleta DeFrenn (Nominated by Spring Slagle)

Aleta DeFrenn has pioneered one of the best classrooms for children with autism in the state. Her classroom at Burton Pack in Richland School District One is alive with activity. She is creative and energetic. In her third year of teaching, Aleta's class has become the district's lead program for pre-school children with disabilities. She takes initiative by planning four field trips with typically developing kids and overseeing a school beautification program. She asked to teach in extended school year classes and a new after-school program. This August, Aleta earned her Masters in Special Education. She opens her room to siblings and volunteers with Family Connection. No challenge is too great for her; no child is too delayed. She falls in love with our children. She continually works to create opportunities for our children. She councils everyone to share her high goals and expectations. She exudes competence and expectation. Our children reward her by giving her their best- by accomplishing and blossoming under her love and care. —SS

Presidential Citation: Marie Aimone (Nominated by Carol Niederhauser)

Marie is the director of Camp Burnt Gin, operated by Children's Rehabilitative Services under DHEC. One of the most important functions of the Sumter County camp is respite for the children's families. Marie enthusiastically allowed a video crew to tape footage of children at the camp (with permission from their families) that is now being used to train Department of Social Services caseworkers about developmental disabilities (a SCAS program). When Marie learned that parent interviews were needed, she helped to identify parents who would be willing to answer questions on camera. The video footage has brought important issues "to life" for the DSS trainees and is a great example of how different organizations can work together to educate other agencies. –CN

Anne Kemp Service Award: Don Fender (Nominated by Craig Stoxen)

Don Fender has dedicated the majority of his professional life to serving individuals with autism. He retired last spring from state government work as Director of the Autism Division of DDSN. Earlier in his career Don directed essentially the same program for the Department of Mental Health until reorganization brought the services under DDSN. On a personal note, Don was extremely helpful to me as I became the director of the S.C. Autism Society. He helped me to learn about autism and the service delivery system in our state. He also helped me to understand the history of SCAS and was a sounding board for this organization. Don included families in all aspects of program planning and implementation. For these reasons and many more, the S.C. Autism Society is proud to present the Ann Kemp Service Award to Don Fender. We wish him great success in his future. –CS

Award Nominations Are Accepted Year Round

Nominations for annual awards from the S.C. Autism Society are accepted year round. So it is never too soon to fill out a nomination form for someone you would like to recognize. You can find a form on the SCAS website at www.scautism.org or call the office at 800-438-4790 or 750-6988 and one will be mailed to you.

Nominations received before September 1, 2003 will be considered for presentation at the 2003 conference, to be held October 9-11 in Columbia. Presentations are made each year at the annual meeting and awards luncheon held on Saturday just before the close of the three-day event.

Generally the award categories follow those that were awarded in 2002, as shown on pages 4,5 and 10. But those who submit nominations are welcome to name a new category for consideration, especially if the existing categories do not seem to "fit."

SCAS Offers Variety of Support / Membership Levels

Become a member today by choosing a level from the left column and filling out the right column. Mail to SCAS at 652 Bush River Rd., Suite 203, Columbia, SC 29210. Or join online at www.scautism.org.

BASIC:
☐ **Individual $30** ☐ **Family $45**

- ASA National Newsletter
- State conference discount including invitation to VIP Membership reception
- Receive the *Update*, state chapter quarterly newsletter
- Free shipment of SCAS products purchased by phone
- Personalized membership card
- SCAS membership decal
- Voting privileges during annual meeting (Family level gets two votes)

SUPPORTING:
☐ **Individual $50** ☐ **Family $75**

- Basic benefits ***plus***
- 10% discount on all SCAS promotional items (travel mugs, t-shirts, etc.)
- Exclusive limited edition member coffee mug (Family level receives two mugs)

BENEFACTOR:
☐ **Individual $100** ☐ **Family $125**

- Basic and Supporting benefits ***plus***
- Exclusive "Solving the Puzzle" ribbon lapel pin (Family level receives two pins)
- Personal invitation to special events

FULL-TIME STUDENT:
☐ **Individual $20**

- Basic benefits

With your support, SCAS can continue offering programs like those listed on page 14.

Member Information

Name _____

Address _____

County _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Telephone _____

Work Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

Please indicate which best describes you:
☐ Parent
☐ Medical Professional
☐ Service Provider
☐ Family Member
☐ Educator
☐ Individual with Autism
☐ Other: _____

Payment type:

☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Credit Card #_____

Card Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Total: Membership Fee $_____

*Donation $_____

Amount Enclosed $_____

*All contributions are tax deductible in accordance with federal regulations. Receipts issued on request.

Mark Your 2003 Calendar

January

10	Introduction to Autism* - Midlands
14	Autism Parent Training (Special Topic)* - Midlands
14-16	Supporting Adults with Autism* - Pee Dee / Coastal
15-17	Autism Basic Treatment Strategies* - Midlands
16, 23 & 30	Autism: Basic Treatment Strategies* - Piedmont

February

1	SCAS Board of Directors Meeting
11	Autism Parent Training* - Piedmont
11-13	Autism Basic Treatment Strategies* - Pee Dee
13	Introduction to Autism* `- Coastal
22	Reed Martin, Special Education Law, Greenville sponsored by SCAS and PRO-Parents

March

1	SCAS Board of Directors Retreat
6, 13 & 20	Autism Basic Treatment Strategies* - Piedmont
21	Autism Parent Training* - Midlands
27-29	International Conference on Positive Behavior Support, Orlando, Fla., www.pware.com/1303

April — **April is Autism Awareness Month**

5	Annual Motorcycle Run, North Augusta to Columbia, SCAS fundraiser
7-9	Autism Basic Treatment Strategies* - Pee Dee
8	Autism Early Interventionist Training* - Piedmont
12	2nd Bowling Tournament, a SCAS fundraiser, Columbia
25	Autism Parent Training (Special Topic)* - Midlands
26	5th Annual Golf Tournament, a SCAS fundraiser, Myrtle Beach

May

2-4	Autism One Conference, Loyola University, Chicago http://AutismOne.org
17	SCAS Board of Directors Meeting

June

23-25	Vince Carbone workshop, Introduction to Verbal Behavior: Teaching Communication Skills to Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, SCAS taking registration (*see article on p. 1*)

* Denotes training by Autism Division of DDSN. Call designated regional office to register.
Midlands - 803-935-5090 Coastal - 843-852-4120 Pee Dee - 843-664-2720
Piedmont - 864-594-4907

Have a possible item for the calendar? Call 803-750-6988 or 800-438-4790, ext. 102; fax the details to Carol at 803-750-8121; or e-mail them to carol@scautism.org.

Parent Support Groups

On-Line Information and Support

Sign up through SCAS website:
www.scautism.org

Aiken

When: Quarterly
Time: 7 p.m.
Place: Aiken Regional Hospital
Contact: Denise Stout - 803-649-5425

Barnwell County

When: 3rd Monday
Place: Barnwell Elementary School
Contact: Faye Mitchell - 803-259-1599

Beaufort / Bluffton / Hilton Head Online Support Group

HiltonHeadChildrenWithAutism-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Coastal Region

When: 2nd Monday
Contact: Bev McCarty - 843-763-6877

Columbia

When: 3rd Monday
Place: Family Connection
Contact: Spring Slagle - 754-0769

Orangeburg

Contact: Theresa Jameson - 803-536-4832

Florence

Contact: Laurie Gonce - 843-673-0475

Autism Support of Greenville

When: 2nd Thursday at 7 p.m.
Where: Perkins Restaurant
Contact: Cathy Larson - 864-879-3149

Horry County

When: Will meet as requested
Contact: Cheryl Bauerle - 843-449-8646
Sarah Pascarella- 800-438-4790 ext. 305

Kershaw County

When: Will meet as requested
Contact: Margo Cook - 803-438-8877

Manning

When: Each Wednesday at 10 a.m.
Contact: Saundra Wallace - 435-4007

CSRA (North Augusta)

When: 4th Thursday
Contact: Lisa Bryant - 803-279-4242

Sumter

When: 2nd Thursday
Contact: Shirley Ballard - 803-481-0342

Inquire about Kids/Sibling Nights Out

Interested in a Lunchtime Support Group in Columbia?

If enough families show interest, a support group will be started during lunchtime at the S.C. Autism Society offices off Bush River Road in Columbia.

Please call Mary Bennett at ext. 105 if you are interested, or e-mail her: mary@scautism.org. Be sure to provide contact information as well as what day of the week, time and with what frequency you would like to meet.

Please support your local United Way.

The South Carolina Autism Society is a participant in the United Way.

Allocations and designations are an important part of the SCAS budget.

Thank you from SCAS and United Way.

SCAS Programs

- **Information and Referral:** Information for parents and professionals about autism spectrum disorders and available services.
- **Advocacy:** Advocacy on many levels, from individual to systems change.
- **Autism and Informed Response:** Training for emergency responders (law enforcement, EMS, firefighters) on autism and risk factors.
- **Awareness Training for Dept. of Social Services Caseworkers:** Training on autism and other developmental disabilities, their effects on families, and what professionals can do to help. Funded by the S.C. Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC).
- **Palmetto Housing Options:** SCAS administers program for Partnership of Disability Organizations. Goal is to increase housing options for adults with developmental disabilities. Funded by a grant from the DDC.
- **Parent-School Partnership:** Assists families and schools by building relationships between the two. Goal is the best education possible for children with autism spectrum disorders.

Partners in Policymaking is Seeking Applications

Partners in Policymaking teaches parents and self-advocates to be community leaders and obtain the best available services for themselves and others. Two-day training sessions are held once a month in Columbia for eight months.

Administered by Arc of the Midlands, PIP is a project of the Partnership of Disability Organizations, of which SCAS is a member. There is no cost to participate. For more information, call Arc at 803-935-5266 or toll-free at 866-300-9331.

New Memberships, Renewals July - September 2002

New Members

Wendyl Brown
Sui Sun
Aleta DeFrenn
John Tripp
JoAnne Pike
Janet Bible
Frances Burnett

Renewing Members

Don Fender
William Gettys
Lisa Hyman Lane
Joan Mott
Gloria Jean Sloan
Harry Wright
Douglas Reynolds
Kelley Shaw
David Anderson
Denise Chastain
Harvey Evans
R. Carlisle Reames
Amy Weeks

Contributions and Donations July - September 2002

Roy Williams
Sui Sun

In Memory of

James Scott by Alice Morris, James and Ivy Rice, and Allen and Loren Deriemacker
Sara Galloway Ackerman by Dorothy Reames

Mission Statement
South Carolina Autism Society

The Purpose of the South Carolina Autism Society is to enable all individuals with autism spectrum disorders in South Carolina to reach their maximum potential.

SCAS is a chapter of the Autism Society of America and a member of the United Way.

2003 Board of Directors

Chair
Cheryl Bauerle
Myrtle Beach

Vice Chair
Aixa Rodriguez-Mariana
Georgetown

Secretary
Becky Hughes
Batesburg

Treasurer
Mitchell Yell, Ph.D.
West Columbia

Directors
Amy Weeks
Aiken

Ute Anderson
Columbia

Drea Kithianis
Myrtle Beach

Joyce Nielsen
Summerville

Alex Holbert
Conway

Denise Chastain
Goose Creek

Mary Pate
Duncan

Michael Filippone
Mt. Pleasant

Maria Delgado
Seneca

Roy Williams
Lexington

Shirley Ballard
Sumter

Erik Drasgow, Ph.D.
Columbia

Margaret Moore
Columbia

Denise Long
Williston

Denise Oxford
Anderson

Beverly McCarty
Charleston

Susan DuRant
Columbia

S.C. Autism Society Staff

Reach us at 803-750-6988 or 800-438-4790. Extensions are listed below. Our fax number is 803-750-8121. Our website is www.scautism.org. E-mail us at scas@scautism.org.

President and Chief Executive Officer	Craig C. Stoxen (ext. 106)
Administrative Assistant	Vickie Stowe (100)
Program Administrative Assistant	Sheila Raulerson (109)
Bookkeeper, Coordinator for Palmetto Housing Options	Mary Bennett* (105)
Development Director	Johanna Nwanagu (104)
Training Coordinator, *Update* Editor	Carol Niederhauser* (102)
Office Clerk	Paula DeVan (108)
Information and Referral Specialist	Lynn Ragsdale (108)
Parent-School Partnership Coordinator	Melanie Marquis* (101)
Parent Mentor, Coastal	Dandrea Woolridge* (304)
Parent Mentor, Horry	Sarah Pascarella* (305)
Parent Mentor, Midlands	Kim McHugh* (103)
Parent Mentor, Midlands	Spring Slagle* (303)
Parent Mentor, Pee Dee	Lissa Waring* (302)
Parent Mentor, Piedmont	A.J. Cheshire* (301)

** parent of child with an autism spectrum disorder*

Honor Someone Special with a Gift to SCAS

As you no doubt have already read in this newsletter (or a separate appeal letter), the S.C. Autism Society is seeking your support in an especially tough fiscal year.

There are different ways you can support SCAS, but here's another that can have extra meaning in the holiday season: A contribution to SCAS in honor of someone special to you.

It's a wonderful way to help SCAS and send a message to that special person that they are important in your — or your child's — life. If made by Dec. 31, the donation will be tax deductible for 2002.

You could honor a teacher, aide, job coach, therapist. or anyone else to whom you would like to say "thank you." Not to mention a relative, friend or someone else who is important to you in any way. He or she will receive a card from SCAS.

30th Year Calls for a New Look to the *Update*

The S.C. Autism Society has a new logo — and the *Update* has a new look.

The logo was unveiled at the 2002 conference. Compatible with the Autism Society of America's puzzle piece theme, the new logo has a clean and uncomplicated look and a simple but powerful message.

Craig Stoxen, SCAS president and CEO, said he likes the way the message, "Together We Can Solve The Puzzle," is more prominent in the redesigned logo than it was in the previous design.

"We think the changes will be well received," Craig said. "SCAS would like to thank Will Salley for doing a great job on the design and for giving us technical assistance on its use."

South Carolina Autism Society

Together We Can Solve The Puzzle

652 Bush River Road, Suite 203
Columbia, SC 29210

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 884
COLUMBIA, S.C.

1972 SOUTH CAROLINA AUTISM SOCIETY 30th ANNIVERSARY 2002 COLUMBIA, SC

UPDATE

Fall 2002