



## 34th Annual Bids for Kids Benefit Auction Raises \$110,000



It was truly Naperville's 'biggest night' as nearly 350 supporters helped Little Friends, Inc. raise more than \$110,000 at its 34th Annual Bids for Kids Benefit Auction on Saturday, March 6, at the Hilton Lisle-Naperville. Proceeds from the annual event benefit children and adults served by Little Friends, Inc.

One of the longest running auctions in the area, the 34th Annual Bids for Kids Benefit Auction paid homage to the glitz and glamour of Tinseltown. Guests strolled along the red carpet and posed for photographs with life-size Oscar statuettes while admiring the stars along the Hollywood Walk of Fame.



A star-lit backdrop set the stage for the evening's festivities, which included cocktails, dinner and a rousing live auction led by Auctioneer Greg Dellinger and emcee, 95.9 The River's Danielle Tufano. This year's live auction netted more than \$73,000 as event-goers bid on vacation destinations, several fine dining packages and tickets for some of the summer's hottest concerts.

The top-grossing item from this year's live auction was an exciting dinner package for 25 guests from Zaidi's Steak Seafood Sushi. Other top-sellers included a vacation package to Orlando, a dinner party for 20 from Sullivan's Steakhouse, Oprah tickets and two tickets behind home plate to a 2010 regular season game at



**Shining Moments: Congratulations to our 2010 Bids for Kids Co-Chairpersons (L-R) Sue Johanson and Kelly Eagan and this year's volunteer committee for planning such a memorable fundraiser.**

Yankee Stadium. Auction guests also generously supported the evening's Fund-A-Need live auction item by raising their paddles and donating more than \$22,000 for the agency's Community Living Services program.

"This was truly an amazing year for our Bids for Kids Benefit Auction," said Vice President for Development Kathleen Malecki. "Our dedicated committee of volunteers continues to raise the bar, ensuring that this event is a success year after year. And the generosity of our sponsors and our donors is truly remarkable," added Malecki. *Cont. on Page 4*

## Step Up for Autism Walk Slated for June 27

Lace up your walking shoes and join Little Friends, Inc. for the second annual Step Up for Autism walk and fun run on Sunday, June 27, in downtown Naperville. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the walk and fun run will step off at 10 a.m. Team and individual registrations for this year's walk are now being accepted online at [www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org](http://www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org).

Designed to raise awareness about autism, a complex developmental disability that affects an estimated 1.5 million Americans, the Step Up for Autism walk was the first of its kind to be held in Naperville. More than 1,600

participants helped to raise more than \$145,000 in donations, making the 2009 walk and fun run one of the most successful fundraising events in Little Friends history. Funds raised from the annual event will benefit children and adults with autism served by Little Friends, Inc. and the Little Friends Center for Autism.

This family-friendly event promises to be a morning of fun for walkers and runners of all ages. Festivities will include a 2.5-mile walk and fun run and a one-mile kid-friendly route. This year's event will also feature a Resource Fair and a fun-filled Kids Area, complete with

interactive displays, face painting, moon jumps and entertainment provided by The School of the Performing Arts and ScribbleMonster. New to this year's event is a hospitality tent for our favorite four-legged, furry friends, courtesy of Two Boston's Pet Boutique. *Cont. on Page 2*

### In this issue...


LF Family Council .....	2
Autism Awareness Month .....	3
Support Tix4Cause .....	4

## Little Friends Family Council Seeking New Members

Since its inception in 1997, the Little Friends Family Council has worked to raise awareness and provide support through Little Friends educational, social and fundraising events. Family Council members serve as volunteers and spearhead a number of events throughout the year, including the annual Family Council Picnic, Bowling Extravaganza and numerous educational information sessions.

More importantly, the Family Council is a great way for Little Friends families to connect. There is no structured requirement to be a part of this group, and it is open to families from across the agency. The Council meets monthly to discuss upcoming educational and social events. Whether you can attend one meeting or all of them, any participation is welcome. If you would like to attend a meeting or learn more about the group, please contact Manager of Special Events & Volunteers Cally Edwards via phone at (630) 281-1882 or via e-mail at [credwards@lilfriends.com](mailto:credwards@lilfriends.com).

### JOIN US

The Little Friends Family Council meets monthly at the Administrative Building, located at 140 N. Wright Street in Naperville. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. and dinner is provided. All meetings are open to parents, family members and guardians. Upcoming meeting dates: May 4, June 8, July 13, August 3, September 7, and October 5. 

## Facebook- Log-on Today

**facebook**

BECOME A  
FAN TODAY!

Little Friends is now posting updates about agency programs, services and fundraising events on Facebook. Log on today- invite your friends - and become a fan of Little Friends, Inc., the Step Up for Autism walk, the Bids for Kids Benefit Auction, the Little Friends Center for Autism and ColorBurst Screen Printing.

## Of Note...

## Thank You for Your Continued Support FROM THE DESK OF JACK RYAN

As we began this fiscal year last July 1, the future looked pretty dark. The State of Illinois had announced it was cutting our funding by almost a million dollars. The economic climate threatened the well-being of many of our supporters and along with that, their ability to help us through this crisis.

Like everyone at the time was doing, we sat down and reviewed our priorities and made hard decisions about what we had to do to survive. Our first decision was to minimize the impact of these cuts on the students and adults we serve. To accomplish this, we took some steps, while necessary, were painful. Staff were laid off, benefits were eliminated or reduced, and salary increases were eliminated. Non-essential spending was pared to the bone.

As these gloomy days progressed, however, some sunlight began to break through. Some of the cuts were lessened or delayed. Most surprising though was the continued support of our friends. The golf outing was full, the Phonathon generated a generous response, the auction returned to its historic levels of support, and the Step Up for Autism Walk is expected to draw almost 2,000 participants this June.

With the sacrifices we have made and the response of our friends, we succeeded in meeting the challenge of not taking programming away from the students and adults we serve. That's fantastic and we thank you for helping to make it possible!



## Step Up for Autism 2010




Visual picture schedules will be available again this year, courtesy of the Little Friends Center for Autism and Minuteman Press. Schedules will be available for pick-up at Little Friends beginning in early June.


There is still plenty of time to get involved with this fun-filled event. Interested walkers and runners can register online now by visiting [www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org](http://www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org). A large number of community volunteers are also needed to assist in a variety of

roles at the event. Before the walk steps off, volunteers are needed to assist with set-up, registration, t-shirt distribution and to serve as route marshals. Volunteers can also assist in the Kids Area or Community Resource Fair or help with clean-up duties at the conclusion of the walk festivities. If you are interested in volunteering, please sign up today on the official walk Web site, [www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org](http://www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org).

Premiere sponsors of the 2010 Step Up for Autism walk include 95.9 The River, 98.3 WCCQ, the *Daily Herald*, Hard Hat Services, *Naperville Magazine* and Star 96.7.

For more information or to register for the 2010 Step Up for Autism walk, visit [www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org](http://www.stepupforautism2010.kintera.org) or contact Little Friends at (630) 355-6533. 

## Oman Delegation Visits Little Friends Schools

In celebration of Autism Awareness Month, a delegation from Oman, an Arab country located on the southeast coast of the Arabian Peninsula, visited two of the agency's autism schools in April. Organized through the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program and the International Visitors Center of Chicago, the delegation was comprised of four special needs education professionals from Oman's Ministry of Education. The delegation toured Krejci Academy and the Bridge High School and met with agency representatives to learn about Little Friends' wide range of autism services. 



**International Awareness:** *While visiting the Chicagoland area, the Oman Delegation toured Krejci Academy and the Bridge High School to learn about the agency's autism services.*

## Little Friends Celebrates Autism Awareness Month by Introducing New Puzzle Piece Initiative




**Wall of Fame:** *Tony Ledesma and Tina Marie Buonauro McConnaughey pose near a wall of colorful puzzle pieces at Café Buonaro's.*

In an effort to create awareness about autism, Little Friends, Inc. teamed up

with a number of area businesses during the month of April to sell puzzle pieces at their registers and check-out areas.

As part of this Autism Awareness Month initiative, patrons purchased puzzle pieces for \$1 at participating locations. Puzzle pieces were then personalized and proudly displayed throughout the month of April. Proceeds from this exciting initiative benefit the autism programs of Little Friends, Inc.

Thank you to our 2010 participating locations:

- ◆ Café Buonaro's
- ◆ Casey's Foods
- ◆ Studio Luxe
- ◆ Two Bostons Pet Boutique 

## It's Spring Cleaning Time- Serendipity Shop Seeking Donations

Please remember the Serendipity Resale Shop this spring when you are cleaning out your closets and tidying up your home. Proceeds from the volunteer-run shop benefit programs and services provided by Little Friends, Inc.

The Serendipity Resale Shop, which is located at 12 W. Jefferson Avenue in downtown Naperville, is currently seeking donations of clothing, linens, household items and collectibles. The shop is also

seeking donations of home decorating items, such as lamps, dishes and clocks. Donations may be dropped off anytime during the store's regular hours. Serendipity is open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. To learn more about Serendipity, please call (630) 357-3610 or visit [www.littlefriendsinc.org](http://www.littlefriendsinc.org). 

## Egg Harbor Café Pays It Forward



Egg Harbor Café featured Little Friends, Inc. as its 'Pay it Forward' charitable cause during the month of March. As part of the month-long promotion, the popular downtown Naperville restaurant collected more than \$100 in donations by placing a jar near its register.

Hats off to Egg Harbor Café! 

## WISHES GRANTED...



Thank you to the following organizations for their generous support:

- ◆ *Rotary 4:44 Club-* \$2,500 to purchase augmentative communication systems for Krejci Academy
- ◆ *St. Raphael Church-* \$500 to support the development of visual systems and the training of personnel in the Community Living Services program
- ◆ *Naperville Evening Kiwanis-* \$650 to purchase sensory equipment for the Life Skills Training Center for Children with Autism
- ◆ *City of Naperville SECA Funds-* \$8,000 to begin a theatre program at Krejci Academy, and \$584 to support the cost of city services associated with the 2010 Step up for Autism Walk

## Save the Date

**Little Friends Golf Classic**  
Monday, September 20, 2010  
Naperville Country Club

## Little Friends Teams Up with Tix4Cause




In an effort to capitalize on unique and exciting new fundraising

opportunities, Little Friends has teamed up with Tix4Cause. Tix4Cause is a ticket exchange Web site founded on an innovative, yet simple concept. Ticket holders sell their unwanted sporting, theater and music tickets, and can donate **100% of the proceeds** to Little Friends!!

Tix4Cause is a novel way to donate, where:

- ♦ Ticket holders turn their unwanted seats over to Little Friends, and qualify for a tax deduction.
- ♦ Ticket purchasers choose from great seats, and receive reasonable pricing.
- ♦ 100% of ticket proceeds benefit Little Friends.

To learn more about this unique opportunity or if you are interested in donating tickets to benefit Little Friends, please visit [www.tix4cause.com](http://www.tix4cause.com). 

## Little Friends, Inc.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald Biegun	John T. Miller
William Cordes	Steve Monteith
Mary Esser	John F. Slade
Matt Johanson	Clark Smith
Mike Krol	Kathleen West
Mark Lee	Zaidi Syed

PRESIDENT & CEO - Jack Ryan

*Focus* is published every two months. It is designed to keep our families, volunteers and donors informed about Little Friends programs and events.

*Editor* - Carolyn Hamilton  
Address All Correspondence To:  
Newsletter Editor, Little Friends  
140 N. Wright Street  
Naperville, Illinois 60540  
[chamilton@lilfriends.com](mailto:chamilton@lilfriends.com)

## ColorBurst Offers Custom SUFA Team T-Shirts

Custom t-shirts are a great way to build morale within your fundraising team, and they are sure to make your walk experience more fun! If you are looking for t-shirt ideas or great fundraising designs for the 2010 Step Up for Autism Walk, consider contacting ColorBurst Screen Printing.


Owned and operated by Little Friends, Inc., ColorBurst provides unique employment opportunities for adult clients, while also generating revenue for the agency. ColorBurst produces custom wearables, including t-shirts, sweatshirts, aprons, sports uniforms, polo shirts, jackets and much more.

Teams looking to create custom apparel are encouraged to take advantage of special pricing for this year's walk. T-shirts are available in youth and adult sizes and walkers can choose from more than 50 colors when designing their custom team shirts. Prices range from \$5-\$7 per shirt,



**Order your team shirts today!**


based on quantity and ink selection.

In order to ensure delivery, orders must be placed by June 14. To learn more about ColorBurst or to get an estimate for your team's custom t-shirts, please contact Kim Bus by phone at (630) 852-6824, ext. 1 or via e-mail at [kim@cburst.com](mailto:kim@cburst.com). To view ColorBurst's full product catalog, please visit [www.cburst.com](http://www.cburst.com). 

## Bids for Kids Benefit Auction

This year's Bids for Kids Benefit Auction was co-chaired by Kelly Eagan (Naperville) and Sue Johanson (Glen Ellyn). Committee members included: Jeff Cohen (Aurora), Kathleen Guterrez (Orland Park), Kurt Jankowski (Glen Ellyn), Jeannie Koepke (Wheaton), Howard Larkin (Oak Park), Matt Liethen (Aurora), Bill McElroy (Naperville), Heidi Pawelczyk (Darien), Candace Rodriguez (Naperville), Paula Sellergren (Wheaton), Clark Smith (Oswego) and Ruth Tyson (Glen Ellyn).

Premiere sponsors for this year's auction included 95.9 The River, Casey's Foods, Classic Party Rental, GE Capital, *Glancer* Magazine, Matsock Insurance & Financial Services and the Naperville Jaycees.

Mark your calendars and plan to join us on March 5, 2011 for the agency's 35th Annual Bids for Kids Benefit Auction. 

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Naperville, IL  
60540  
Permit # 241

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Little Friends, Inc.  
140 N. Wright Street  
Naperville, Illinois 60540  
(630) 355-6533

