Volume 23, No. 1 - Winter 2015

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Publication of the Autism National Committee

In Memoriam

We have lost many of our dear friends in 2014. We remember you . . .

Mayer Shevin 1950 - 2014

Tributes by AutCom Members

Eugene Marcus worked closely with Mayer and wrote this:

The best happy times were when Mayer and I did research and writing. He always gave me a ten for being an adult. He treated all people with respect. Really good with disabled folks, Mayer brought out the best they had.

My friendship began when I just started to FC with Dad. The year was 1991. Yes, he learned quickly and we started to do research together. We proved that I was the author of my writing. It took a long time, but Mayer stood by me until I did the double-blind test. He invited me to his house many times. We traveled a lot to do presentations.

I miss him. Although Mayer is no longer here, I will always remember his friendship and his teachings.

(continued on next page)

Mayer Shevin

Save the date!

AutCom Annual Conference 2015

Friday and Saturday, September 25 - 26

at the

Radisson Hotel Manchester Downtown

Manchester, NH 03101

(*More information on page 7*)

Time to Renew your Membership!

(*See form on page 11 and use attached envelope*)

Inside This Issue:

Web Site: www.autcom.org

In Memoriam (continued)

Here are more tributes that have been pouring in:

Mayer was one of the people who put a human face on "autism" (forgive me, but that word will always come in quotes for me) and who helped to breathe life into Facilitated Communication via the Institute newsletters, first in print and then the emails in "cyberspace." Our family came to the FC Conference in 1996, and Mayer was one of those who greeted us with much warmth, despite having undergone major surgery which affected his own ability to speak. - **Cornelia Moisuk**

Meyer will always be remembered for his gentleness, calm demeanor, advocacy for families and people with disabilities, and depth of understanding. He was also aware of the foibles of his profession, as indicated by his observation that he (and his profession) were "often in error but never in doubt." He will be missed. - **Rita and Bob Rubin**

Mayer was a constant inspiration to those of us who have been involved in the long, hard battle to gain greater acceptance of FC and all that it implies. He was a loyal advocate and wonderful teacher who will be sorely missed. How fortunate we've been to have Mayer on our team. - **Harriett James**

Mayer Shevin was a forthright advocate for the right to communicate, and one of the early associates of the Facilitated Communication Institute at Syracuse University. In the 1980's Mayer and Bob Williams established a newsletter called Talking Politics which led the U.S. fight for communication rights for AAC users. Anne McDonald contributed to it, and Mayer and Anne spent a lot of time together in 1992, when we spent a semester in Syracuse. Mayer visited Australia and delivered presentations on strategies for facilitating communication on several occasions. He had great understanding of the issues facing communication aid users. Mayer was a dear friend and inspiring colleague. He is sadly missed by his many friends in Australia. - **Rosemary Crossley**

I ran into Mayer on and off for almost 30 years—seems like a long time, but in reality much too short. His commitment to fairness, equality, and justice was memorable, his impact on individual lives even more significant. We will miss him. - **Meg Cooper**

Dear Mayer was my friend always. His wisdom, gentleness and loving friendship helped me get over many hurdles. I am forever grateful. I hope to meet up with him someday. - **Chammi Rajapatirana**

When we lived in Syracuse, Mayer was a very special friend and mentor. Did not expect to lose him so soon. - **Anoja Rajapatirana**

To Mayer Shevin, Thank You for being a Hero! Thank You for being a friend to us all and seeing each one of us as part of that Greater Whole! - **Anne Carpenter**

I met Mayer Shevin early in my transition from parent/advocate to paid services supervisor. I was so grateful for his poem, The Language of Us and Them, that masterwork of putting into words the barriers perpetuated by those we now call nerurotypical. My son taught me to look for those barriers and some of what they meant to him personally. Mayer's writings in many publications gave me ready-to-use training handouts for staff I hired. His involvement with the FC journal in the 1990's brought the FC world a valuable resource. Thank you, Mayer. I envision you organizing and teaching in another realm. - **Donna Downing**

Now there was a guy who could make me smile, even laugh, without saying a word. Just seeing Mayer made me joyful. We shared a frustration with the system that censored people's voices and claimed to measure aspects of human interaction that no one really understands. During some particularly difficult times, Mayer and I have shared a good cry too. We cried for the injustice of vicious attacks that left some people without a voice. We cried for missed opportunities, knowing that many people languished in congregate settings where their gifts went unrecognized. I am so lucky to have known such a brave and true human! - **Martha Leary**

Mayer was quite instrumental to me personally when I originally made the powerpoint that later became The Power of Words DVD. I showed The Power of Words: How We Talk About People With ASD Matters! to Mayer at an AutCom conference. The outline of the We/They portion is adapted from his poem called The Language of Us and Them. I had no idea what Mayer would think about my using his poem in this way. He was most encouraging and kind – soft-spoken and gentle and had tears running down his face as he watched it. At the end he put his hand over mine, squeezed and whispered, "Thank you." And that was the Mayer I came to know - a kind, gentle, brilliant man who genuinely saw and appreciated the essence of individual uniqueness in the great sea of humanity of those he met and

In Memoriam (continued)

called friend. - **Judy Endow**

In memory of Mayer Shevin, his tremendous dedication to human rights for people with disabilities, and his maginificent work to ensure that all have the right to communicate and be seen as equals. He was a truly great American hero. - **The Butler Family**

The one form of existence after death that is accessible to the living, is having a place in the memory of others. By that measure, Mayer has definitely taken up residence in heaven. My favorite memory of Mayer is of him presenting at an early Autreat in the late 1990s. May his memory be a blessing. - **Phil Schwarz**

Mayer, my pal....... I miss you
mentor to many, including me
ally to many, including me
inspiration to all, including me
you will always be right here in my heart
Gone from this earthly plane but a part of me of me forever.
I miss your flesh, my buddy. Wanting one last hug.
I feel you right here beside me but it ain't the same.
Missing you.......Celebrating your life
Feeling grateful that you touched mine - **Carolyn Nuyens**

Here are three additional individuals whom we will miss:

Steven J. Taylor 1949 - 2014

Editor of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) from 1993-2011, Director of the Center on Human Policy, and Centennial Professor, School of Education at Syracuse University – a visionary leader and passionate advocate for and with people with intellectual disability who specialized in qualitative research methods, the sociology of disability, disability studies, and disability policy.

Steven Taylor advocated for the rights of people with disabilities to community living, accessible public transportation, school inclusion and integrated employment and for home and community supports for their families. He worked closely with disability and family advocates in central New York to achieve closure of the Syracuse Developmental Center and movement of its residents to community settings in 1998.

He was also one of the earliest practitioners of participatory research. When he conducted studies on developmental disability, people with developmental disabilities helped shape the research project and were part of the presentations made about their work.

Especially important to AutCom members was his decision to treat seriously three research articles submitted to the journal *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* that gave evidence of independent communication by people using facilitated communication. They went through the peer review process and were published in 1996.

Steven Taylor – we remember you for your many contributions to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through advocacy and the inclusion you practiced.

Robert "Bob" Lehr 1942 - 2014

Long-time AutCom members remember the active participation of Bob, his wife Sue, and their son Ben, an autistic man who communicates with FC and has his own woodworking business. Bob was a professor who taught students in his psychology classes to understand people with developmental disabilities in ways consistent with AutCom principles. He was an active advocate who worked for the success of one of the most inclusive schools ever – Jowonio Elementary School in Syracuse; who served on the Board of Visitors overseeing the closing of Syracuse Developmental Center and community living opportunities for all of its former residents; and who was Chair of the Education Committee for the Arc of New York. We all will miss his wisdom, spirit and humor.

Sari Knopp Biklen 1946 – 2014

We know Sari best as wife of Doug Biklen. Not surprisingly, though in a different field, they share the humanistic principles AutCom so values. Sari was Professor Emerita of Cultural Foundations in the College of Education, Syracuse University. She specialized in popular culture, qualitative research methods, youth culture and women's studies. A colleague wrote about her, "Sari led and taught by example, challenging injustice through her scholarship and teaching, and her commitment to equity, social justice and education at the highest levels of excellence was unwavering."

Autistic / Artistic

Not everyone who is autistic is artistic, but many are. This issue features a very few of the many autistic artists throughout the world. It begins with an article by Judy Endow who explains how her art helps her describe her lived autistic experience. Included is one of her photographs that can be viewed in black and white. Next is a poem by Amy Sequenzia. Nick Bursh's art is too colorful for this newsletter to do justice to, but see it on his website. Our fourth featured artist is an autistic poet who goes by the name Dapper Muis Silvercloud. And finally, an AutCom article on art would not be complete without mentioning past Board member, artist Larry Bissonnette, whose website is larrybissonnette.com.

Fractured Vision: One Autistic Phenomenon

by Judy Endow

I started painting with acrylics in 2012. I wanted to use that medium to illustrate aspects of my autism. To date I have written several articles and books along with speaking in three countries about aspects of autism. Painting is one more way to explain some of the nuances of autism to those who might be interested.

Painting allows me to show perceptions of the world that I see with my eyes as delivered through the neurology of my autism. I match up what I see with the colors and movements of paint on canvas paper. I have not taken classes about painting, other than a one-hour lesson where someone allowed me to watch him paint and ask questions about painting supplies and techniques. I determined after that hour that I could learn to paint.

So now I paint. I just do it and really do not know if I am doing it correctly or not. What is important to me is the finished product – a painting allowing others to be able to see what I see.

It took me most of my life to realize that what I see isn't what most other people see. I want people to understand some of the aspects of my autism that I cannot easily explain with words but can readily show by painting.

One of those aspects is something I call fractured vision. It typically occurs when I am in sensory overload. What I am looking at divides up. Imagine a picture that is suddenly cut up into several pieces. One day when this fractured vision phenomena was occurring, I wondered if I might be able to illustrate it through painting.

I copied what was happening by cutting a painting into the pieces my visual perception was delivering to me at that moment. Over the course of a few weeks I took each opportunity of real-time fractured vision as I experienced it and showed what happened by painting and then cutting the painting into the fractured pieces my eyes were delivering to me.

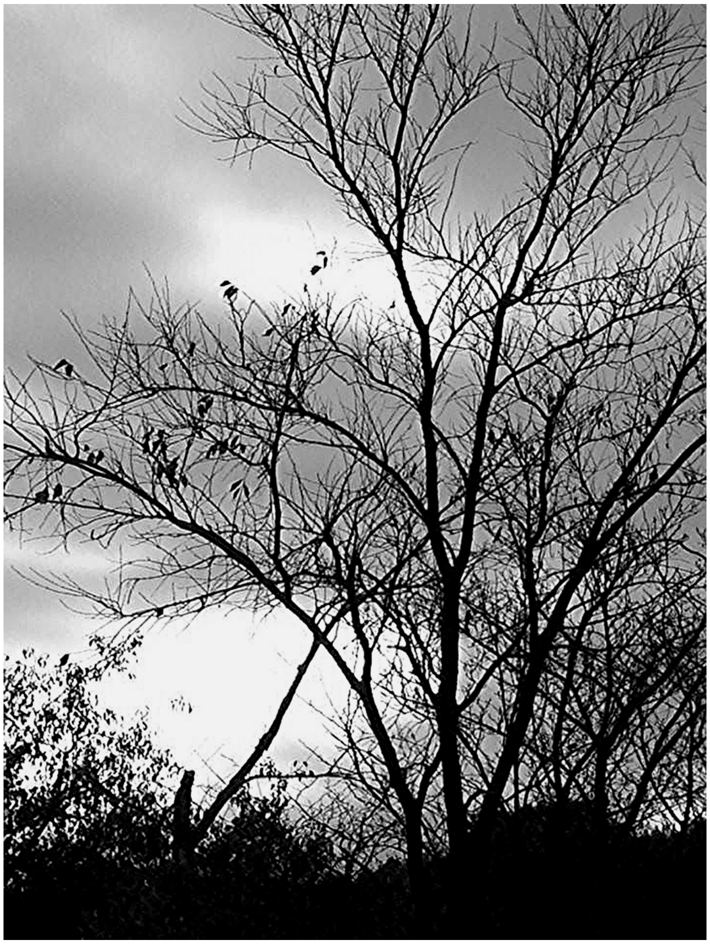
Photo by Judy Endow

Please know that not all autistics experience the world in the same way I do. The more salient take-away point here is that more than 90% of autistics have sensory system differences from the neuro-majority population (Baker, 2008 and Baranek, 2006). Those differences impact all of who we are and how we navigate in this world. Because most people don't experience what we experience, there typically are not words adequate to describe it.

When I was growing up, and as a young adult, whenever I would try to describe my experience,

Autistic / Artistic

either it was discounted as not possible, I was said to have a big imagination or it was thought that I was hallucinating. If you want to read more about my story you can do so in the book called *Paper Words: Discovering and Living With My Autism* (Endow, 2009). From my early 20's until my late 50's I refrained from talking about my experiences. It kept me out of psychiatric institutions and that was a good thing!

Today I am braver and in charge of my own life, so I can talk about aspects of my autism without needing to worry what will happen if others do not believe me. This helps me to speak out and show my experience through painting.

To see paintings illustrating fractured vision, look in the 2013 Gallery of the Art Store at my website www.judyendow.com. If you would like to see a larger collection of my paintings along with words explaining the aspects of autism they illustrate, please see my book called *Painted Words: Aspects of Autism Translated* (2013).

Love, Not Fear

by Amy Sequenzia

Life with respect. Love, not fear
Acceptance and joy. Love, not fear
Human diversity
Accept
Love
Do not fear

Autistic rights, human rights
Love, not fear
Neurodiversity
Autistics are neurodivergent
Diversity is part of the human experience
Autistics are part of humanity

Love, not fear
What you cannot understand does not mean wrong
What you didn't expect will blow your mind
And you will smile!
What you don't see is part of a unique being

Love, not fear

If you fear what's hard to understand
You miss out on the awesomeness
Love, not fear
If you run away from what is unique
You deny yourself the knowledge

The knowledge that acceptance, respect and love
Are the foundation that will hold success and achievements

If you fear the unexpected
If you fear the future
You don't leave space for love

Love should guide your decisions

If you fear what is not broken
You break what is perfect

If you fear the differences
You miss out on learning more

If you fear the joyful experience of an autistic stim
You can't share a moment of delight

If you fear autism, you fear Autistics
And our human experience of sharing and learning
Is lost
Our rights forgotten
Our opportunities vanished

Love, not fear

Because love is light
It makes the path easier to tread
Love brings acceptance
That makes the hardest events not so heavy
Love goes well with respect
That sees humanity in the worst moments
Love is a human goal
Even when it is not with words expressed

Love, not fear
Love, love, love
Love
Acceptance
Respect

Love, Autistic love

This poem was first published on the Autism Women's Network Website: autismwomenensnet.org

Autistic / Artistic (continued)

About Nick Bursh, Artist

by Laura Bursh

Nick Bursh

Nick was born in 1987 (and diagnosed with autism in 1989) into a pre-internet, pre-cordless never-mind-cell-phone-world, before any therapy was available. School started at age 3, but we also tried special diets, supplements, auditory training, Secretin and whatever became available. Nothing worked, but we noticed that he liked drawing and encouraged it. Nick attended Lakeland School, one of only two special needs facilities in the state of Wisconsin. At that time inclusion was just getting underway, especially in rural areas.

By 1996 we were in behavioral crisis and intervention brought us to the state institution, a residential facility, then placement in a children's foster treatment home where Nick received great support and private art lessons. He was away for a decade, but we drove the 200 mile round-trip every other weekend to bring him home for visits, birthdays.

In adulthood we've found SMILES, a nearby therapeutic riding stable and Studio 84. Nick's art works have become favorite pieces as prints or at area fundraisers. His style ranges from abstract to caricatures to still life. Many of his pieces contain 'eyebrows' which is his symbol for wanting the world to see his abilities over his disability.

In 2013, we 'discovered' that Nick can communicate through FC (facilitated communication), forever changing our world for the better. He's also learning RPM (Rapid Prompting Method) and attending an autism college in Waterford. He dreams of making friends, learning more about the world and living as independently as possible. He also wants to write a book and be an advocate for others using augmented communication.

You can see Nick's art at http://www.studio84inc.org/NEWGallery.html

Dapper Muis Silvercloud

(from an interview with Donna Downing)

Dapper Muis Silvercloud, also known as Emma Jane, chose a child avatar to represent her in Second Life, a virtual world on the internet. She is an adult who lives in South Africa and is diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome. Turning to art and poetry during times of frustration or anxiety help her focus her feelings in constructive ways. Her painting style, similar to modern Conceptual Art, leaves the interpretation to the viewer. To see more of her poetry and writing and to see her art, go to her website: www.scribd.com/DapperMuis

Always Been Misunderstood

by Dapper Muis

You open your mouth and say something
Yet it seems no one hears you
It got lost in translation

You try once more
You say your say again
Yet they still don't seem to be listening
It got lost in translation once more
It's got corrupted some how

How is this possible?
We speak the same language
You try a third time
It still does not work

You are given the look or reprimanded for your trouble
Your reaction to this, is to keep quiet
Don't make a scene
The frustration it brings
How do you get them to understand?

25th Anniversary Conference - September 25-26
Human Rights for All

Keynote Speakers (in alphabetical order)

Lydia Brown

More Than Neurodivergent: Autistic Rights in Social Justice Movements

Lydia Brown is a disabled activist and writer whose work focuses on violence against multiply-marginalized disabled people. Lydia is president and co-founder of the Washington Metro Disabled Students Collective and co-president of TASH New England, while also serving on the Board of Directors of the Autism Women's Network and the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council. Lydia works as a policy analyst at the Autistic Self Advocacy Network. Additionally, Lydia has served two terms as Undersecretary for Disability Affairs with the Georgetown University Students Association. Previously, Lydia was the 2012 Patricia Morrissey Disability Policy Fellow at the Institute for Educational Leadership. In 2013, Lydia was honored by the White House as a Champion of Change for disability rights. Most recently, Lydia received the Washington Peace Center's Empowering the Future Youth Activist Award for 2014. Lydia's work has been published in *Criptiques, Torture in Healthcare Settings, Tikkun, Black Girl Dangerous, hardboiled magazine, and The Washington Post.*

Elizabeth (Ibby) Grace

Typed Words, Loud Voices

Elizabeth J. (Ibby) Grace is an Autistic disability activist and Assistant Professor of Education at National Louis University in Chicago, where she lives in the suburbs with her family. She blogs at tinygracenotes.blogspot.com and is an editor on i.e.: inquiry in education (digitalcommons.nl.edu/ie/) and NeuroQueer (neuroqueer.blogspot.com). Her writing can also be found among other places in the books *Loud Hands, Both Sides of the Table: Autoethnographies of Educators Learning and Teaching within Disability, and Criptiques.* Ibby currently serves on the boards of directors of Society for Disability Studies and Autism National Committee.

Linda Rammler

Who Defines Social Justice? The Culture Clash between Academia, the Service Industry, and True Advocates

Linda Rammler has more than 40 years of experience in the field of disability, including inclusive education and communities, conducting independent educational evaluations, and consulting with teams and families on inclusive education, right to communicate (she is a facilitator), and positive behavior supports for all learners. She is particularly interested in individuals who have labels of autism spectrum differences and gives workshops on all of these topics with particular reference to autism. Linda is Technical Assistance Director at the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental, Research and Service. She is the spouse of a person with disabilities and has been an adoptive parent and foster parent of youth with behavioral health needs. Linda has a Master's degree in special education from University of Hartford and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Yale University.

Emma Zurcher-Long and Ariane Zurcher

The Power and Right to Connect

Emma Zurcher-Long was born in 2002. She is a public speaker, a writer and is Autistic. Emma cannot have a conversation with spoken words. She communicates by typing and wishes people would "listen to my writing voice, but they listen to my talking voice instead." Emma's writing has been published on her blog, Emma's Hope Book, *Special Parent Magazine* and HALO's 2014 edition of Voices. Emma has given presentations at autism and disability conferences and at schools around the country.

Ariane Zurcher is a writer, public speaker, artist, award-winning jewelry designer and mother. She blogs with her daughter, Emma, about autism on their blog, Emma's Hope Book; about art, design, marriage, parenting, inspiration and life on Where Art & Life Meet; and on a variety of topics for the Huffington Post. Ariane's writing has been published in *Allure, Elle Magazine, Options, XX1st Century, Aspen Magazine, Aspen Times, Special Needs Parenting, Parenting Magazine* and many others. She was the voice of Barb for the audiobook, *I Might Be You* by Barb Rentenbach and Lois Prislovsky, wrote the foreward to Judy Endow's book, *Painted Words: Aspects of Autism Translated*, and has given presentations at a number of conferences and schools around the country.

A Letter from Aaron Greenwood

(Aaron Greenwood of Alberta, Canada, wrote to attendees of the AutCom Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 2010. Aaron communicates by typing with support.)

I am writing again after many years since my last article. I have changed since then and now I greatly feel it is time to share more of my opinions of autism. I remember how I shared how my life began with my family loving me for who I was. And now as I have grown older most definitely that has remained the same. I dare say they love me more as our journey becomes truly one that is steadfast. It has been a journey that has been dearly difficult at times, very stressful.Freedom greatly falters never when you have a path to follow. Yes it greatly each day was a time when my family knew that great dedication was needed. Sadness was certain to be our destiny if we did not stay true to our great mission. Never was it an option for my family to feel that my life was to be a life of beast-filled nothingness. I knew that they would most dearly remain my true believers and supporters. I knew that my life was meant for more than just sitting silent and not contributing to a world that needed most definitely a certain hope and resilience against those who say nonverbal autistics are not worthy of a place in this world. Really? It assuredly asks the question really are we not worthy? Each day I have thought of this question and I get angry each time that I think of how much we have to contribute certain I am of that.

It is a crime to let our minds sadly waste away to a point of no return for some. And then they ask why are they angry? Why do they scream? Why do they dearly run? I am seeing more and more of my dear friends fight each day to stay sane. I am boldly saying friends even though I have not met many of you. It is a crime to hold so many of us in a life that has no purpose. A life meant to be rich and fulfilling a life that God sadly sadly does not agree with. He did not mean for us to be sitting idle we were meant yes meant to be engaged individuals meant to live a life of purpose.

Dearly dearly always know that there is a path meant for each person and we are no different because of our autism. It has always been my most passionate purpose to awaken my body. I know that for many a body that does not listen to a powerful mind is a dear curse. It has been my experience that a body that is strengthened by the right foods and supplements is a body that can supremely be a person strong in this world. A world that needs to know that a person with autism allowed to be active in opinions and beliefs is a person that dearly has a great contribution to make to our society. Was there ever a point to not giving each of us a chance in this world only because you felt that we could not be of any value? I know that this is a dear reality for sadly many of us and it would be a true miracle if more families would follow a path that my family is on. It is a path that is very worthwhile and I know would be a path worthwhile for many more. It is a path that frees all and awesome a life with freedom is.

I know that a family with a member that has autism is a family that already has much worried existence. And I know that these worries are a truly difficult place to be in. Our family has greatly worried and believe me these worries are stressful. But I also know that our worries have been dearly relieved by a calmer me. I know that a body strengthened by feelings that are positive and not beast-filled is a dear opportunity freeing me each day. Yes, it is a dearly, dearly certain great work path not without its sad times of course. But also I know that my famly has experienced greater peace and true happiness with my new stronger me. I know reality is not always felt by many as a gift but more of a curse. And I know that for many families that are struggling this is a cursed existence. Not for all I know. But for those that are struggling yes listen, autism does not need to be a life of hurt and each day could be one full of possibilities. And I know it may very well seem daunting but it is possible.

Never feel like it is both cursed and helpless. This is not true. I am living a life that has known hope and sadness and it is more hopeful now more than ever. I am each day ready to be and advocate and feeling ready for this awesome autism awesome reality. I know I am really sad to not know many of you but hope that my letter bridges my dear feelings to yours. I greatly desire a chance to give hope to more people and each opportunity that I have I am truly thankful for.

Edward Adrift

by Craig Lancaster

c. 2013, Amazon Publishing, 307 pages

Reviewed by Anne Carpenter

In the past few years, there has been more fiction with people on the autism spectrum as protagonists. Edward Adrift, an installment in a series of books about Edward Stanton, a man in his forties with Asperger syndrome (AS), is one of the newer and better ones.

Edward has lost his beloved job at the Billings, Montana, newspaper where he had worked as a maintenance man for several years. This had been an island of stability and predictability that suddenly went down the drain, and he is thrown for a loop at this latest development in his life. He struggles to cope with that awful year of 2011 that is almost over (the book starts in early December).

The chapters are arranged by date, and each chapter starts out with his journal of the high and low temperatures and how much gas he has in his Cadillac that he inherited from his father, who passed away recently, and he is still trying to deal with that huge loss. This is a brilliant device, as it gives the reader an idea of how much stability and predictability are needed in a person with ASD, in order to feel more comfortable with everyday life. He explores different words to use about what is going on, such as "debacle" and expresses a liking for each zingy sounding word!

Edward, for all his quirks, is a likeable guy who only wants to find his way in the world, but he is confused and who can blame him? He takes a trip, stays in a hotel and befriends a woman, also with ASD, who he calls by her full name, Sheila Renfro. A real friendship develops and it turns into love! He also gets in an accident, goes to the hospital and has to deal with his mother, who often is intrusive.

Some of the book may seem repetitive to the reader, but it is a clever way to give an idea of how the minds of many people with AS work, with the constant anxiety, need for predictability, and some rhyme and rhythm. But there is plenty of humor to go around as well. He gets an iPhone and calls it his "bitchin' iPhone," because that is what someone called it! Like everyone else, he is enraptured with his new toy. He downloads REM songs and episodes of Dragnet and Adam 12 from the late 1960s. (Remember those?) I just couldn't stop reading this book, as I saw Edward mature from an anxious man needing constant predictability to someone who saw that life often throws one a curve ball and you have to learn how to catch it.

ABLE Act Becomes Law

At the very end of the Congressional Session, through advocacy of good people in Congress in both parties and lots of us reminding them of their responsibility, the ABLE Act – Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE) – was passed and signed into law.

Before the ABLE Act, individuals with disabilities could have only $2,000 in savings before losing SSI benefits and Medicaid. Modeled after 529 college savings plans, interest earned on savings will be tax-free. Funds accrued in the accounts can be used to pay for education, health care, transportation, housing, training, assistive technology, personal support, and related services and expenses without jeopardizing SSI and Medicaid. To be eligible, individuals must have a condition that occurred before age 26 and each person may open only one ABLE account. Under current gift-tax limitations, as much as $14,000 can be deposited annually.

People with disabilities may be able to start opening ABLE accounts as soon as 2015. However, some hurdles remain. While the new law alters federal rules to allow for ABLE accounts, each state must now put regulations in place — much as they have done for other types of 529 plans — so that financial institutions can make the new offering available. Begin in January to advocate for your state legislature to get those regulations in place quickly.

ADA and Autcom

Autcom and ADA share their 25th anniversary. In July of 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law, and the Autism National Committee began; two entities committed to social justice.

2014 AutCom Donors

AutCom has a long history of providing reponsible, effective advocacy and the best information for people on the Autism spectrum. We are inclusive of everyone in the world of Autism: individuals on the spectrum, parents and care givers, committed and concerned professionals. Everything we do is made possible by our volunteers. While this keeps our operating costs at a minimum, we still appreciate and rely on contributions to offset fixed costs, such as this newsletter. Below are some of our recent donors, to whom we give much thanks! Please join them in helping us to do the our best. The last line on the membership form (on the next page) provides a space to make a donation when you become a member or renew. At other times, you can go to **www.autcom.org** and select the blue **Make a Donation** button on the left side of the page.

Nancy Alar
Amazon Smile Foundation
Anonymous
Judy Bailey
Paul & Anne Bakeman
Eric Bakeman
Judi Barta
Susan Dybwad Bell
Benevity Community Impact Fund
Christine Bevilacqua
Douglas Biklen
Douglas Brandl
Charlene Brandl
Meg Cooper
Donna Downing
Theodore Eckberg
Sharon Hammer
David Harrison
Sue Lehr
Leslie Lockerman
Patti Meerschaert
Jane Meyerding
John & Cornelia Moisuk
Dorothy Owusu
Philip Schwarz
Second Life
Marcia & Laura Spray
Rachael VerNooy
Gwendolyn Waltz
Lowell Williams, M.D.
Jean Wood

Principles of the Autism National Committee

As a member of the Autism National Committee I endorse for all people with autism, pervasive developmental disorders, and related disabilities the development of high-quality community services, including education, residences, jobs/job training programs, and of individualized support services in all locations for both individuals and their family members; of state-of-the-art communication options for all individuals with unique communicative and social needs; of adequate supports to every family to assist them in maintaining their family member with a disability in their home at least throughout the childhood and adolescent years; and the dissemination of available knowledge of those aspects of the disability requiring special support and understanding; the promotion of research to provide parents and professionals with greater insight into the unique needs of individuals with autism and related disabilities; and the use, development, and promotion of positive, respectful approaches for teaching every aspect of life.

Moreover, I oppose the use of institutions to separate people from their communities, and deprive them of dignity, freedom and the level of independence they can achieve in supportive community living; the use of procedures involving pain, humiliation, deprivation, and dangerous drugs as a means to alter and control individual’s behavior; the increasing use of bizarre technology to control self-injurious and aggressive behavior; the widespread ignorance of the basic social and communicative needs of people with autism; and the widespread disregard for the individual’s unique, basic and human needs. I object to programs which disregard the skills, preferences and basic human needs of the people they serve, and I believe that there is no longer need or any justification for using painful and abusive procedures.

Attention AutCom Members - Both New and Old!

We are trying to reduce AutCom's costs without reducing AutCom's effectiveness as a social justice organization. If receiving your newsletters by email is satisfactory, please mark that on the membership form below. If you want or need a print copy of your newsletters, mark that on the form and they will be sent to you as in the past.

If you have already sent in your membership and are willing to receive future newsletters by email only, go to autcom.org, click on "contact Autism National Committee," then click on "membership coordinator." Thank you.

— —

AutCom Membership Form

Name: ____

Street Address: ____

City: ______________________________ State: _____________ Zip Code: ___________

Telephone and/or fax (optional) ____

Email ____

I want to: _____ Renew my membership _____ Become a member

I am a: _____ Person with autism _____ Parent _____ Friend _____ Student

_____ Professional (field) ____

_____ I will receive newsletters by email OR _____ I want a print copy of the newsletters

Enclosed is my membership fee of: _____ $10.00 (person with autism)

_____ $30.00 (regular membership fee) _____ $10.00 (student membership)

_____ $75.00 (facilitating membership) _____ $500.00 (lifetime membership)

I am enclosing an additional $ _____________ to speed up the good work!

Send the above information and a check in the appropriate amount to
Anne Bakeman, AutCom Treasurer
3 Bedford Green, South Burlington, VT 05403

Autism National Committee
3 Bedford Green
South Burlington, VT 05403

Time to Renew or Join Today!

Annual membership begins in January
Membership form on page 11, and envelope included.

THE COMMUNICATOR is a publication of the Autism National Committee, Inc., a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization founded in 1990 to protect and advance the civil rights of people with Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder and related disorders of communication and behavior. Contributions of articles, information and letters are welcomed. The Communicator does not carry advertising or fund raising announcements, and we reserve the right to edit all submissions. Your comments are actively sought. Send them to Doug McClennen, 619 N. Sheldon Rd., Plymouth, MI 48170 - or email him at: dmc@umich.edu. THE COMMUNICATOR may be copied in its entirety or individual articles reprinted without permission except when otherwise noted. Please credit them to the Autism National Committee.

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Celebrate our 25th with us on September 25-26 in NH