

Help, Hope & Answers

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE FAMILY AT A TIME.

www.EasterSeals.com/eseep

A publication of Easter Seals Eastern Pennsylvania

SPRING 2016



Make a Difference for Easter Seals

Sign up for the Highmark Walk

You can participate as an individual ... create a team of your own ... or sponsor a walker. This year's walk will take place Saturday, June 4, at DeSales University in Center Valley. Registration opens at 7:45 and the 5k walk begins at 9:00.

This year we're featuring a Hawaiian theme — wear flower shirts ... grass skirts ... anything Hawaiian — and earn extra prize chances. Routes for the 5K and the 1-mile fun walk are both fully accessible to strollers and wheelchairs.

Check out the website for all the details you need and helpful hints on how to make the most of this experience.

<http://hcf.convio.net/EasterSealsWalk>



47th Annual Mary Ellen GOLF Tournament

2016

Presented by
COMPUTER AID, INC.

Monday, June 6, 2016 | Willow Brook Golf Club

Media Sponsor
SERVICE ELECTRIC CABLE TV & COMMUNICATIONS



WALK FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY



Saturday, June 4, 2016
DeSales University, Center Valley

7:45 am REGISTRATION
9:00 am WALK

PACESETTER SPONSOR
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AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

Who is ready for a summer adventure?

Camp Growing Green is the place to be. Whether you're 8 or 48 (and up!), we have a spot for you at our innovative overnight camp nestled in the beautiful Pocono Mountains on the campus of the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC).



At Growing Green, campers with disabilities and other special needs enjoy nature studies, hiking, growing and enjoying organic fruits and vegetables and learning how independent they can be. Our camp staff knows how to help each person achieve his or her highest level of independence while

providing the support needed for success and safety. Growing Green provides a ratio of 1 counselor per 3 campers and is accredited by the American Camping Association, an important benchmark of safety and quality. And it's inclusive! PEEC and Growing Green campers enjoy many activities together throughout the summer.



We recognize that young adults need a helping hand when it comes to getting ready for life after high school. Many campers enjoy exploring vocational opportunities with the optional transition track that offers job shadowing in areas such as kitchen and dining room, assistant counselor, housekeeping and gift shop.

Once they start, most campers return year after year.

To find out why, ask us! Katelyn Olah can be reached at 610-289-0114 x209 and by email at kolah@esep.org.



More than 24 teams of wing-eaters helped us raise enough money to send 35 kids to camp!

The 24th annual Wings Competition raised \$9700, which provides full camp scholarships to 35 kids. Thanks so much to everyone who participated or supported this event. Special appreciation to our sponsors, and congratulations to the winners.

TOP FUNDRAISING TEAM:

Team 542 Eaters (*representing International Union of Operating Engineers Local 542*) raised \$930, which sends three kids to camp!

SUICIDE CATEGORY

1. The Pink Flamingoes (4th year in a row!) — 78 wings
2. Team Materion (Materion Corporation) — 74 wings

HOT CATEGORY

1. Supportive Concepts team — 187 wings
2. Glass & Sons — 183 wings

MEDIUM CATEGORY

1. PB&J from Glass & Sons Collision — 124 wings
2. Etho Eaters (EthoSource) — 123 wings

A Tribute to William Gasdaska

Recently I saw the movie, "As Good As It Gets." In one of my favorite scenes, a socially awkward Jack Nicholson finally pays a heartfelt compliment to Helen Hunt by saying, "You make me want to be a better man." When I heard that line, I immediately thought of my Dad; and the more I reflect on his life, the more I find myself whispering that same prayer up to him.

One of Dad's many superpowers was his ability to see things not as they were, but as they could be. When he crystallized that vision, he turned it into a reality. He loved a good challenge and when he encountered hardship, he didn't complain or give up. Instead, he cleverly played the cards he was dealt and frequently finished with a winning hand. "That patch of dirt could be a perfect vegetable garden ... that dollar could multiply tenfold if invested the right way ... my daughter could walk, if she only had the right help."

He saw a better future for his infant daughter, who was challenged by both spina bifida and hydrocephalus. He sought out Easter Seals, who willingly



provided my sister, MaryEllen, with the much needed physiotherapy and equipment that supported her rehab. MaryEllen would never have achieved her level of personal success without the aid of Easter Seals. The organization fueled our family's efforts to help Mary achieve her full potential and we felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude towards them.

Dad knew we could never repay Easter Seals for the financial, physical and

emotional support they provided following MaryEllen's countless surgeries; but as I said, he relished a challenge. When he channeled his inner Gasdaska — he saw a path forward that would fuel Easter Seals' future. By championing the MaryEllen Golf Tournament, he developed a means to provide ongoing support to the organization that provided so much assistance to our sister and family.

— written by Jane Gasdaska, April 15, 2016

Meet Althea!



Althea started receiving physical therapy from Easter Seals when she was just 10 months old. Her parents were growing

increasingly concerned that she wasn't strong enough to pick herself up on her hands and knees. They knew that without that strength, she would not be able to crawl, a critical developmental stage that leads to walking.

They were also concerned that Althea did not like "tummy time," also very important for physical development. When her parents helped her change positions, Althea did not like it - and let her parents know! These challenges meant that Althea was very limited in her ability to explore her environment, which was a major concern as this type of exploration is how infants and toddlers learn and develop.

With the introduction of physical and occupational therapy, Althea began to steadily get stronger and became more accepting of changes to her position. Easter Seals helped her parents learn how they could help Althea, incorporating activities into her typical play and other routines to make her strong. For example, we met Althea and her family at the playground, so

that mom and dad could learn how to use playground equipment to work on her sensory challenges, and build strength, balance and coordination. We didn't tell Althea this was therapy — she was just having fun!

Althea has blossomed into a curious, active toddler who loves her gym class, trips to the playground and playing outside at home.

Althea's mom Becky says, "I can't believe the change in Althea over the last year. She has gone from scared and overwhelmed by most situations and new experiences, to a really happy, pleasant, funny child who talks, interacts and plays with other children. The relief we feel at her happiness can't be measured."



1501 Lehigh Street, Suite 201
Allentown, PA 18103

M-Power offers habilitation services

This exciting new program offers habitation and community supports to empower teens and adults to live an independent and rewarding life in their community. Easter Seals staff provide the supports so that individuals can volunteer, explore social and recreational activities specific to their interests, and access the community so that they may live as independently as possible. All services are customized to individual career interests and opportunities to engage in the community and peer networks.

Capital BLUE  presents the

Fire & Ice Prom

The prom is free, and registration is required.

Saturday, May 21st

5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Capital Blue at the Promenade Shops
in Center Valley

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Email: event@esep.org



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Visit our website to view the 2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT

www.easterseals.com/esep/who-we-are/financials/



EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Have fun this summer
with Easter Seals!

SUMMER OPTIONS FOR
YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

CAMP LILY-Berks & Lehigh Valley
Day Camp • July 11-Aug 19

GROWING GREEN
Overnight Camp • July 10-Aug 12

LEAP-Berks & Lehigh Valley
Summer Transition Program • June 20-Aug 12

Scholarships available! Waiver eligible funding through
Office of Developmental programs.

For more information, contact Katelyn Olah at
610-289-0114 x 209 or email kolah@esep.org

www.easterseals.com/esep