



AUTISM SOCIETY  
OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

*Shamrock Farm - A Place to Grow*

# The ASNL Communicator

SUMMER 2006



## GRAND OPENING

# ELAINE DOBBIN CENTRE FOR AUTISM

On June 8<sup>th</sup> 2006, the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador celebrated a great milestone. We held the grand opening of the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism. Construction of the main building began in June of 2005 and was completed in November 2005; however the planning and coordination of this project began in the late 1990's. The centre will offer many programs and services to individuals affected by autism, their families and professionals throughout the province.

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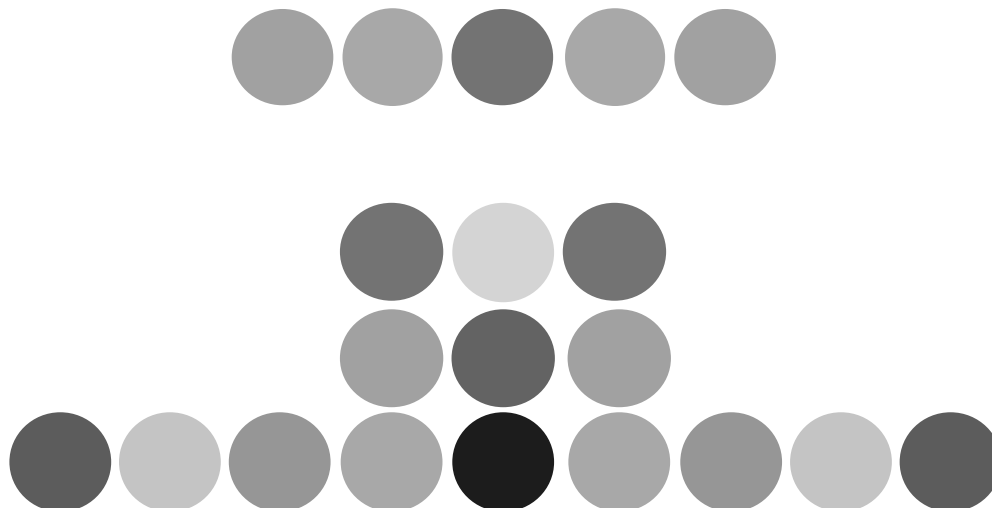
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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, JOYCE CHURCHILL

## *Summer 2006*

June 8, 2006 will remain forever an important date in the history of ASNL. On this day we officially opened and named the provincial centre for autism, its official name, The Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism, in honour and recognition of our Capital Campaign Patron and our friend Elaine Dobbin. Elaine's compassion, dedication and enthusiasm, coupled with the generosity of her husband Craig Dobbin, made this dream possible. Her name on our centre will remind us always of the extent of the contribution she has made to the autism community throughout our province.

Our journey toward this day began in February 1997 at a board retreat. It was our first of many retreats. The years between then and now have seen many ups and downs. In 1998 we made an official request to the Provincial Government for help. With their encouragement, we approached the St. John's Rotary Club to help us in our fundraising efforts, and in 2000 \$60,000.00 was raised and set aside as "seed" money. In September 2001, enter Elaine Dobbin, who knew of the plight of one family living with autism, mine. She hosted a series of fundraising events and raised almost \$300,000.00. In June 2003, having learned more about autism and having met other children and their families, she agreed to serve as Campaign Patron, and chair the fundraising committee. By the fall of 2005 we had almost reached our goal of \$1.5 million. Then just before Christmas, her husband Craig, not new to philanthropy, gave ASNL a cheque for \$500,000.00. Our plan for Shamrock Farm was now a reality. The success of our campaign, our dedication and strategic planning, coupled with the awareness of our cause, resulted in financial assistance from the provincial and federal governments.

Partnering with Pippy Park and Memorial University resulted in the acquisition of the site for our new center, on Shamrock Farm in Pippy Park. With the Health Sciences Center and Memorial University as neighbours, we see education and research as real possibilities.

Our concerns with the "outside the overpass" syndrome were considerably allayed last November, with the resounding success of the South and Central Chapter Telethon under the leadership of Chapter President, Scott Kenny. Scott and his team proved it can be done, giving encouragement to other chapters around our province.

The first and biggest phase of our capital project and capital campaign has ended, and the second phase, that of construction of the recreation/activity centre ("the barn") is about to start in partnership with Aliant Pioneer Volunteers. We now shift our focus to the real reason we are here, that is to provide programs and services to persons with autism and those who care for and work with them, throughout our province. The planning has been done through the Programs and Services Committee and our Program Co-ordinator. The proposal for programs and services submitted to the provincial government for funding will be revisited as a result of receiving less funding than requested. Intake applications have been distributed and will help us provide programming best suited to each applicant. Please get them in and assist us in assuring the best possible services are available to you.

While copious amounts of time have been expended by the Executive, and other dedicated volunteers through the Programs and Services and Facilities and Sites Committees for this project, the work of the society has continued. ASNL has continued to offer educational opportunities under the leadership of Doreen Stryde and her team of parents. During this time the

business of the Society continued, with increased demands from the perspective of fund raising, management and support. The demands on the office were unparalleled. Beginning with the preparation for construction of the centre early in 2005, with sod turning in June, through the building phase until our move in November 2005, the demands on our Executive Director have been enormous. Tara was the first contact throughout the construction, which went extremely well, thanks in large part to her ingenuity and dedication.

Since the beginning of our journey toward the establishment of a provincial centre for autism, many board members have come and gone, all having contributed toward our goal. Some however remained constant. I would like to acknowledge them, the Centre Committee, who is the Executive plus David Vardy, chair of the former Long Range Planning Committee, Janet Vardy, our treasurer, overseeing intake and output of funds not only for ASNL, but the Capital Campaign Fund, Elizabeth Oliver, secretary of ASNL and member of both Programs and Services Committee and Facilities and Sites Committee, Doreen Stryde, Vice President and Chair of the Education Committee and Barbara Hopkins, Past President, Nominations Committee chair and ASNL founder and under whose guidance, our Society and all it stands for, continues to flourish. Barbara continues to bring her experience, knowledge and passion for our cause to the table whether it's in fundraising activities or "one on one" parent support or any other activity or project. These are the people who are involved with activities of the Society, literally, on a daily basis. The many children, youth and adults and those who care for them, throughout this province, are eternally grateful for their dedication, unselfishness and compassion. Their loyalty and support to the role of the president is unflinching.

Before closing my report I would also like to mention those who have given freely of their time and expertise as we sought to establish ourselves provincially with the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism. For her expertise in facilities management, Mary Elizabeth Furlong, Bob Gosse, who gave freely of his engineering skills to oversee the construction and reported to the Facilities and Sites committee. Dan Coffey, Project Manager, CHIMO Construction, our contractor, and his team, for their professionalism and sensitivity and Phillip Pratt for his design and dedication to our project. To other members of the Facilities and Sites Committee, especially Don Brag and Les Matchim who took a "hands on" approach, with knowledge gained not only as engineers, but as former and current members of the Board of Directors of ASNL, respectively and perhaps more importantly as fathers of sons with autism. Special thanks are also offered to Georgina Cook, Eric's mom, who often shared her perspective of the needs of individuals with autism and their families, when called upon to do so, whether in meetings with government officials or with the media.

Summer is upon us again, a time for a little vacation and relaxation, a time when families dealing with autism often face new challenges with changes in routine and the lack of appropriate programming. These too are the challenges of ASNL. Together we must work toward solutions. We now have a venue, in the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism. This is not just a building of bricks and mortar but one of hope and opportunity.

From myself and Stephen and the rest of our family, the Board of Directors, and staff of ASNL, have a safe and happy summer.

# SHAMROCK FARM

Successfully completed in December 2005

Goal: \$1.5 Million - Total Amount Raised: \$1.9 Million

THANK YOU to Mrs. Elaine Dobbin our campaign chair, the members of our Capital Campaign Committee and to all those generous donors and volunteers who have helped us raise these much-needed funds.



*June 8, 2006 Ribbon Cutting Ceremony*

## ***SOUTH AND CENTRAL TELETHON***

*November 15, 2005*



# CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



*\$50,000 presented to ASNL at the South and Central Telethon, Michelle Myrick, VOCM Cares Foundation and Scott Kenny, President - South and Central Chapter*



*On December 14th, 2005 Mr. Craig L. Dobbin presented the Autism Society with a cheque for \$500,000. The largest individual gift to the capital campaign.*



*December 27th 2005, GIFT Atlantic made a \$100,000 donation to the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador's Capital Campaign. The money will sponsor the tearoom café in the centre. Kevin Connors (right) President of GIFT Atlantic was on hand to present the cheque to Trina Sharpe (left), vice-chair of the South and Central Chapter and Scott Kenny (center), chair of the South and Central Chapter.*

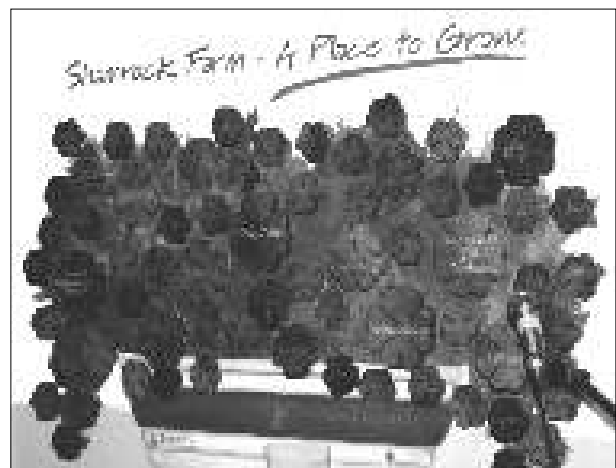


*On June 10th, 2006 RBC Financial Group Regional Vice President Glen Kelsey, presented a cheque for \$25,000*



## **"COOPERATION AT WORK"**

*December 10, 2005,  
Autism Society Campaign reaches \$1.3 Million dollars with \$100,000 gift from Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, Local 779 and Labourers' International Union, Local 1208 and Labrador Catering/East Coast Catering & Friends*



*June 10th, 2006 Donor Wall at Shamrock Farm*

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## BOOK REVIEW

### *My Book Full of feelings: How to Control and React to the Size of Your Emotions*

*By Amy V. Jaffe and Luci Gardner, AAPC 2006*

Reviewed by Yu-Chi Chou, University of Kansas  
and Maureen Bennie, Director of Autism Awareness Centre Inc.

[www.autismawarenesscentre.com](http://www.autismawarenesscentre.com)

In *My Book Full of Feelings*, Luci Gardner, the mother of a child with Asperger Syndrome, and Amy V. Jaffe, a clinical social worker, present an effective and easy-to-use tool for teaching children with Asperger Syndrome (AS) and other autism spectrum disorders (ASD) how to understand and react to their emotions. Children with ASD often express their emotions like an on/off switch. Either they don't express their feelings or they overreact to situations with emotional intensity. The goal of this book is to help the child modulate their feelings and to teach how graduations of expression will work in different situations. They need the tools to learn the emotional clues, recognize their inappropriate responses and master more realistic responses.

The book consists of six color coded sections corresponding to six basic and common emotions: happy, sad, angry, calm, worried and frustrated. Each emotion has a two-page spread with emotional triggers listed on the left-hand page and corresponding responses on the right-hand page. The consistent format combined with effective use of color and graphics makes it easier for adults to use and for children to understand. The dry-erase marker format allows users to change or update materials corresponding to each child's needs.

The book is geared to the difficulties in understanding emotions and expressing feelings common among children with AS and ASD. First, graduated color cues are used to represent the graduation of emotional expression and are illustrated in a pyramid, the little emotion being at the top of the pyramid.

Second, simple cartoon face images help recognize the various emotions. Third, thinking processes are laid out to prompt children with solutions when coping with different emotions. Fourth, interactive examples and appropriate responses are presented in a clear and logical manner, and blank spaces make it easy to individualize the various emotions, for example, by replacing hypothetical situations by events and experiences from the child's own life.

Another unique feature of this simple-to-use book is a set of home-school collaborative worksheets for sharing information between teachers and parents to ensure consistency and generalization.

In *My Book Full of Feelings*, the authors simplify otherwise complex emotions and develop concrete techniques to assist children with AS and ASD in realizing their emotional triggers, recognizing the intensity levels, and responding appropriately. The child works interactively with the adult to develop an emotional toolkit. As a result, these children are equipped to navigate emotional situations more independently. A program like this one is an essential component to any elementary age social skills program.

*Available on-line for \$37.75 at*

[www.autismawarenesscentre.com](http://www.autismawarenesscentre.com) or by calling (403) 640-2710.  
Fax orders to (403) 451-9011. Book catalogues available upon request.



# Shamrock Farm Application

The application packages have been sent to all members of ASNL if you are not a member or have not received your application please contact Julie Kavanagh at 709-722-2803 or visit our website at [www.autism.nf.net](http://www.autism.nf.net) to download the forms.

If you have received the package please complete and return the forms with the \$10 fee to:

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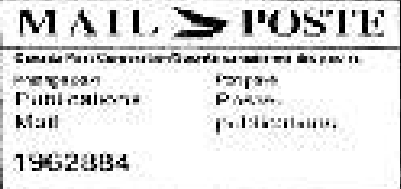
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The Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador

OUR MISSION

*The Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador is a provincial, nonprofit, charitable organization dedicated to fostering lifelong, community-based supports and services and the acceptance, independence, productivity, and opportunities for inclusion in all facets of life for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.*



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