



Reaching Out Reaching In

Celebrating 22 years Volume 22 Issue 2 June 2019



KindTree – Autism Rocks Friends & Family Camp Registration Now Open

Coming up this summer August 23-25 is our Friends & Family Camp. This is our 23rd event in the woods, where you and your family and friends and caregivers can be accepted and enjoyed for themselves, not forced into a procrustean neuro-typical mold. Autists and neuro-normal people get to know each other. Magic happens.

We say this every year – “magic happens” – and it is really true. When you feel OK with yourself, when you feel comfortable and safe, you can reach further than you ever have before – like a flower in the sunlight and the rain, you can grow into a beacon of color and life. This happens to guests and volunteers alike in the mess hall, the talent show, the karaoke room, the lake, the forest, the boffing field, the Buck Badley Lounge, and the Chapel Stage. You can’t really know until you are there. Come join us.
Tim Mueller

Letter from the President

Dear Campers, Friends, Volunteers and KindTree Advocates,

2019 is shaping up to be another record year of exciting events for KindTree-Autism Rocks, with a bigger and better Camp schedule than ever before. New opportunities await our eager campers, who look forward all year to connecting with their friends and family at camp. Volunteers are reconnecting, plans are taking shape, and our fundraising events are going full steam.

Amongst all the preparation and excitement, I would like to remind our tireless volunteers, staff and board members to remember to treat themselves as well as they treat others. Our KindTree family is filled with people who serve, and they need to remember to take some time for taking care of themselves. Asking for help is sometimes not so easy to do, but it is often necessary to avoid burnout. So, as we meet up with our friends and make

new connections, be sure to ask for the help you might need. Many newcomers may relish the opportunity to help and be a part of this amazing thing that we create every year. It is truly amazing to see the effort and dedication that our volunteers give our community, and that serves as inspiration to those who become willing to help.

Inclusion is part of what makes our organization great, so I believe we should strive to make sure that all folks who are willing and able to help are included in our activities and our diverse culture. I have been blessed by all the guidance and support I have received from our talented volunteers, and I hope to see happy new faces involved and doors opened to those who want to help this KindTree blossom for another year.

Thanks for all your blessings!

Brian Rands

KindTree President

KindTree Autism-Rocks: kindtree.org

Autism Rocks Arts for All a Big Success!



*Anna Scott-Hinkle at the jewelry table at Art for All show.
Photo by John Keskinen*



*Jeremy Brooks with his work at the Art for All show.
Photo by John Keskinen*

Autism Rocks- Festival of Arts for All

Thanks to grant funding from the Lane Arts Council, KindTree-Autism Rocks was able to offer a one day art festival on May 19th from 1-5p at the Very Little Theater. Over 70 artists were represented. Activities included a gallery show of jewelry, paintings and photographs, movies, music, IMPROV, and a talent show. Over 250 people were there for the fun. Photos of the event can be found on our website.

We want to thank our sponsors: Lane Arts Council, GreyWolf Design, and Banner Bank. Raffle prizes included donated items from Three Rivers Casino and Resort, Ninkasi

Beer, and a handmade quilt made by Gail Smith, Mary Beth Bonte, and Barb Schoonover.

Our partners included Full Access, Allies, OSLP Arts and Culture Program, and Minority Voices Theater. Over 30 volunteers helped, including key members of our planning team: Mike Shugrue, Bill Winkley, Sue Scott and Anna Scott-Hinkle, Tim Mueller, Mija Andrade, Ericka Rhodes, Mary Minn-Sirag, Stephanie Dahl, Melissa Pereida, Andrea Farr, and Susan Klein. We also raised over \$500 in camp scholarships. Thanks to everyone who came and played with us, especially the Raventones, who performed an hour long concert that included dancing and fellowship.

Reaching In, Reaching Out is produced by KindTree-Autism Rocks.

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Proofreader: Saul-Paul Sirag

Contributors: Mary-Minn Sirag, Molly Elliott, Brian Rands, Alex O'Shannon, Tim Mueller.

Contact KindTree 541 780 6950 www.kindtree.org admin@kindtree.org

KindTree-Autism Rocks is a grassroots non-profit located in Eugene since 1997 that enhances and celebrates lives in the autism community. KindTree-Autism Rocks: celebrating autism, changing perceptions and creating community.

News News News

by Molly Elliott

Treasurer Needed

KindTree-Autism Rocks is recruiting nominees for our Treasurer. This is an immediate need for the organization. If you or someone you know has a financial background or experience in bookkeeping, accounting or fiscal management and may be interested in serving on the board of directors either on a temporary basis or a two-year-term of office, please contact Tim Mueller or Stephanie Dahl at volunteer@kindtree.org, call 541-780-6950, or visit our website. The Board Treasurer is responsible for reviewing our bookkeeping records and bank deposits monthly, presenting prepared financial reports at board meetings, and providing budget oversight for the organization. A complete list of duties and responsibilities is available upon request.

The State of Oregon Employer Resource Connection

The State of Oregon offers an Employer Resource Connection Program that is free for individuals who have been approved to receive in-home services through Medicaid or Oregon Project Independence. This service is provided at no cost through the Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Home Care Commission. Their consultants provide a variety of services and can assist you in locating a Personal Support Worker (PSW).

Their consultants may provide, at no cost, a variety of printed materials that

assist in developing goals, managing services, and maintaining a safe environment for employer and employee.

Consultants who work with individuals experiencing intellectual and/or developmental disabilities may be found on the [Employer Resource Connection for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Contacts](#) web page.

Contact the Oregon Home Care Commission Employer Resource Connection (formerly known as STEPS) at 1-877-867-0077 and listen to options, or email OHCC.ERC@state.or.us. Information about this free service for individuals living in Lane County can be found by contacting Creating Opportunities at employ@creatingops.org or calling 503-559-3674.

AbleFind

AbleFind is a searchable database for disability-related services in Oregon. Search categories include: Legal, Finances, Dating, Safety, Social Security, Education, Transportation, Recreation, and Employment.

You can access these resources by visiting <https://ablefind.org/>. AbleFind is a work in progress. They are continuously updating and adding resources to the database, and encourage users to check back periodically to see what's new! If you have any resources you would like to share please email: ablefind@uoregon.edu!

Community Conversations

Planning for a "Community Conversation" in September, 2019, has begun. This event is being designed to bring together a variety of community members to generate both ordinary and unique solutions to a key challenge facing Lane County—the limited opportunities people with disabilities have to share their talents in the workplace. This event will bring together community stakeholders (business owners, members of Employment First teams, individuals experiencing disabilities, chamber of commerce leadership, etc.).

Stakeholders will sit at tables to answer questions. Each person has a different role. (A table might consist of a business employer, a county services coordinator, an individual experiencing a disability, a parent, a public official.)

Each table has a facilitator and a note taker. The facilitator at each table poses a question (e.g. How can we as a community increase employment for all youth? What can I do to increase employment opportunities for all youth?). Tables discuss the topic for 20 min, then move to a new table (with new stakeholders) and have a discussion around the same questions. The large group then comes together to share with the entire group. The event is being planned in conjunction with the University of Oregon and local leaders in the disability community. To learn more or become part of the planning group, please contact Josh Barbour at Josh.Barbour@lblead.k12.or.us.

KindTree Autism-Rocks: kindtree.org

I Am Autism

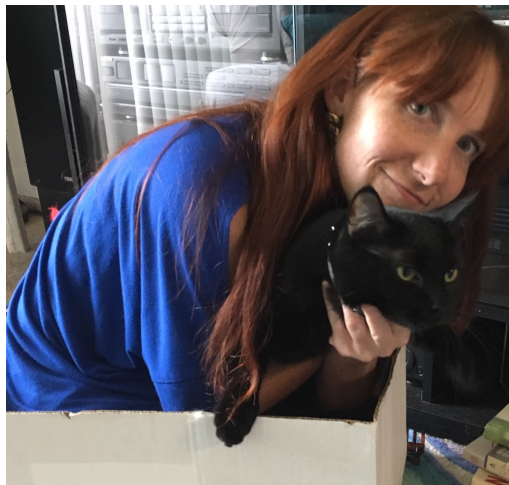
by Alex O'Shannon

I remember drowning in an endless deluge of emotions

as a child – ones that often did not originate from my young ocean of experience. They came from everywhere and everyone all of the time; in different variations, temperatures, color palettes and intensity, emanating from strangers to family and it had absolutely no shut off button. Everywhere I went I experienced what others were feeling without any understanding of those feelings or what they meant. Despite all the dynamic colors and intensity I found in the emotions I absorbed, the words and the latent understanding of their corresponding definitions to describe them were not in my arsenal. I could pick up on someone's loneliness, feel it in my gut and bones to the point I no longer registered it wasn't my own, and still not recognize it as loneliness or understand why it was there. I, too, could be isolated and not be able to recognize it for what it was. For a child who was too invested in helping and understanding others, this facet of life was overwhelming and stressful.

Much research has been done in ASD's supposed lack of Theory of Mind (ToM) and understanding of others' thoughts and emotions. My experience was the opposite of this, replete with what now seems to be an eclectic mix of overwhelming empathic awareness of others emotional states and alexithymia – the inability to recognize or identify those emotions.

The instinctual understanding was there— almost too sharp—but my cognitive and intellectual comprehension of them was extremely lacking. I could not read facial expressions, link someone's tone



Alex and Toothless. Photo by Mary-Minn Sirag

correctly to what I felt was their emotional intention, let alone match their body language to anything that made sense to me and how I personally understood people.

The effect was exhausting growing up. Some feelings were too complicated for me to comprehend –regret, listlessness, dysthymia, contentment—but I felt them regardless, didn't know what to do with that information, or how to help or handle those who were experiencing them.

As I aged, my own emotions and those of my peers grew even more nuanced, complex, and elusive. Question marks seemed to permanently float over my head wherever I wandered, especially in school - which I considered a petri dish of feeling.

Sometimes late at night I would look over an emotional whirlwind of a day, feel exhausted and restless from the onslaught, and not have a single clue what the hell happened, unable to grasp more than a handful of sentiments out of the hundreds that clanged about among all my classmates.

While I didn't know I had ASD at the time, I knew something was off, and fortunately had a latent proclivity to analyze and dissect any points of confusion with academic rigor. So, I

started cataloging each unnamed emotion I had, trying to link language to gut instinct. I'd feel one personally or by proxy, take stock of it, associate it with the closest base emotion I knew and then tried to sift for definitions on the web or the dictionary. I never wrote anything down, but I had a file going on in my head for years. The endeavor was massive and my mind often felt strained, as if it was trying to sequence a full genome of human nuance I was not predisposed to comprehend. I learned what that sick feeling in the pit of my stomach was (shame), that weird emotional drop off I felt in others once they were teased by another (rejection and emotional shutdown as a defense), and that too frequent feeling that occurs whenever I get the smallest things wrong (self-chastisement and embarrassment).

This effort did leave me more equipped to understand myself and others, but like most things it also came with a new, challenging problem. That new ability to assess left me open to taking assessment past the point of sense. It went (and often goes) like this: Someone would be upset. I'd sift through the information I had about the person as well as link the sentiment I was feeling by proxy to definitions I thought fit. I would then try to find a common denominator from what I felt of their feelings and any contextual information I had as a potential causal agent for the emotion. At that point there would be an educated guess of what I felt may be happening.

Let's say the person has a history of familial strife. They're upset, and have recently been staying with that family. This would be a possible causal agent. The problem though is there are infinite potentials when it comes to *why* we feel what we feel.

I always wanted a conclusion, some answer, and this desire is often incongruent with how emotions manifest. They can be free floating and expressed at odd times, can linger far past the events that triggered them, or happen randomly with no real cause, quietly passing through like dark matter. And when I can't find another trigger to associate with an emotion, if what I am feeling off someone is negative, the closest variable I can find is often me. Maybe I am the one who caused that negative thing to be experienced – and as the supposedly socially awkward one in most situations, why not?

This ends up being a dangerous slope of believing myself to be the cause of every negative thing I observe or feel in my environment; the analytics are like a fast car with malfunctioning brakes.

My experience of autism and emotion sometimes doesn't feel like what the books cover. While I can be oblivious to social dynamics, that obliviousness is often ironically triggered by sensing too much, ultimately assigning the wrong trigger due to my own insecurities. Sometimes I feel other people I know on the spectrum do something similar. Ultimately we may have a lot more skill than we realize, perhaps hidden in areas we feel we struggle with.

Learning For Success

KindTree-Autism Rocks has received a \$12,000 grant from Spirit Mountain Community Foundation to explore new services for youth on the autism spectrum. We are currently soliciting ideas from students, parents, and teachers for new programs and services for 2019-2020. If you have ideas, concerns, or know of a service gap in our community and are interested in being part of a community conversation about this, please plan on attending a planning/focus group meeting on Monday, June 17, 2019 at Hilyard Community Center 6-8p. For more information please visit our website.

Keepin' It Current

We don't want you to miss a thing...please let us know if you have any **NEW** changes:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Other: _____

Email admin@kindtree.org **Mail to:** PO Box 40847, Eugene, OR 97404



Improv with (left to right): Kim Allen, Mike Shugrue, Rusty Hawkins, Max Freedom.

Youth IMPROV

The Youth IMPROV group, led by Mike Shugrue, has received grant funding from the Spirit Mountain Community Foundation to expand this training to younger students. A new session begins on June 19, 2019. This activity is designed for youth 11-21 years of age and no acting is needed. Students tell us that they like practicing different emotions that they normally don't feel and also, "I like Improv, because I don't have to memorize anything." All are welcome to come check it out any time! Call or email Mike Shugrue at mdshugrue7@gmail.com, 541-221-0465.

Youth IMPROV: June 19– August 7, 2019 Wed 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm at Reality Kitchen, 645 River Rd., Eugene 97404. \$100 per session (or 8 trainings) and 12 hours of instruction. Scholarships applications are available on-line. To apply please visit our website.

Phone registration only: Contact KindTree Autism Rocks at 541-780-6950 to inquire if space is available.

**For summer STiLE
schedule, visit our website**



KindTree Autism-Rocks: kindtree.org

CALENDAR OF GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

All activities are free of charge unless otherwise indicated

Subject to change: Check our website for updates.

www.kindtree.org

Cottage Grove Support Group: 1st Monday of the month from 4:00 to 5:30 pm at the Healing Matrix, (E. Main St. & S. 7th) in Cottage Grove. Facilitated by Linney Frank and Loren Goodman. 541-335-1776.

Eugene Support Group: 2nd Monday of the month from 4:30 to 6 pm at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1300 Pearl St. (Pearl and 13th.) Facilitated by Michael Omogrosso. 541-689-2228

Second Friday Social in Eugene for adults and transition-aged youth from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Reality Kitchen, 645 River Rd., Eugene. Hosted by Sheila Thomas and Mary-Minn Sirag. 541-689-2228

Eugene Social Skills class: 3rd Monday of odd-numbered months from 6:30 to 8 pm at St. Mary's Church (Social skills class chooses an activity for the following even-numbered month.) Taught by Doris Germain. Sponsored by the Autism Society of Oregon. 541-689-2228.

Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group: 3rd Friday of the month from 4:30 to 6 pm at LILA Peer Support Club, 990 Oak St. (NW corner of 10th and Oak, next to Crumbs Together, beneath the Overpark). Facilitated by David Olson. (541) 636-9179.

For your viewing pleasure:

Take a moment to peruse our videos on kindtree.org. These videos include two autistics talking about being on the KindTree-Autism Rocks board of directors, videos of performances at Camp, news clips and other publicity over the years. Go to Kindtree.org/video-archives/

Schedule of Groups and Events

Jun 14 (Friday): Second Friday Social from 5:30 to 7:30pm at Reality Kitchen.

Jun 21 (Friday): Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group from 4:30 to 6 pm at LILA Peer Support Club.

Jul 1 (Monday): Cottage Grove Support Group from 4:00–5:30pm at the Healing Matrix, Cottage Grove.

Jul 8 (Monday): Eugene Support Group from 4:30 to 6 pm at St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

July 15 (Monday): Eugene Social Skills class from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

July 19 (Friday): Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group from 4:30 to 6 pm at LILA Peer Support Club.

August 23-25: *Autism Rocks Friends and Family Camp at Siltcoos Lake, Florence.*

**NO GROUPS OR SOCIAL SKILLS
OUTINGS IN AUGUST.
NO SECOND FRIDAY SOCIAL
IN JULY OR AUGUST**



Micheal Montgomery at the Art for All show. Photo by John Keskinen.



2019 Registration Form Autism Rocks Friends & Family Camp August 23 - 25, 2019



Friday 3:00pm - Sunday 1:00pm | Deadline to register and be paid in full is Thursday August 1st

REGISTRATION FEES:

		Amount	TOTAL
Camper's Name (Person w/Autism): _____	Age _____	\$150.00	\$ _____
Caregiver's Name: _____	Age _____	\$80.00	\$ _____
Family Member Name: _____	Age _____	\$80.00	\$ _____
Family Member Name: _____	Age _____	\$80.00	\$ _____
Family Member Name: _____	Age _____	\$80.00	\$ _____
Family Member Name: _____	Age _____	\$80.00	\$ _____

OPTIONS:

Thursday 3:00 pm Early Arrival. Limited Activities/Meals - LIMITED TO 25 PEOPLE	Per Person	\$25.00	\$ _____
Saturday Only: 10:00 am - 10:00 pm, 2 Meals, All Activities - PERSON WITH AUTISM	PWA	\$50.00	\$ _____
Saturday Only: 10:00 am - 10:00 pm, 2 Meals, All Activities - CAREGIVER/FAMILY (Each). Caregiver		\$25.00	\$ _____
	Limit = 2		

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Cabins: LIMITED #/SHARED/FIRST COME-FIRST SERVED - Very Rustic!!	Per Person	\$30.00	\$ _____
IF NOT IN CABIN, I (we: how many?) will stay in: A Scout Tent _____ Our Tent _____ Our RV _____		No Fee	

VOLUNTEERING:

Guests and/or Family Members sometimes choose to enhance their experience at Camp by doing some volunteer tasks - helping in the kitchen, at the art tables or campfires or other activities. Check this box if you are interested and we will contact you. ☐

DONATIONS:

Add a donation amount so others may attend (Optional)\$ _____

Deposit: \$100 minimum amount due with application: \$ _____

Paid with Credit Card via PayPal \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

No Refunds after 8/1 Balance Due by 8/1: \$ _____

Hillyard Center has limited transportation to and from camp. Fee based: 541-682-5030. Saturday Only van is available. Limited space. Contact: 541-780-6950.

Camper's Information:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____
Phone(s) _____
Email _____

Send Confirmation & "What to Bring" Letter to:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____
Phone(s) _____
Email _____

Emergency Contact: _____ **Cell:** _____ **Relationship:** _____

If any person registering for camp has been convicted of a felony, please check here. We will contact you for details. ☐

Failure to report such history will result in dismissal from the camp and ALL future KindTree Events. Report all incidents to 541-780-6950

Special Needs? Diet, sleeping arrangements, etc.

Send Completed Registration and Payment to:

Kind Tree - Autism Rocks
PO Box 40847
Eugene, OR 97404

Full Payment is Required by August 1st

Questions?

Phone: 541-780-6950 Email: admin@kindtree.org



KindTree Productions, Inc.
PO Box 40847
Eugene, OR 97404
kindtree.org

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Check it out!
Autism Rocks Art Show
until **June 14th**



"Saraena's First Day" by Sophie Doleman

Reality Kitchen

645 River Rd. Eugene
541-689-2228

