



# Reaching Out Reaching In

Celebrating 22 years    Volume 22 Issue 3 October 2019

## Letter From the New President

### Upcoming Events

#### **Oct. 14 Monday**

##### **Awareness of Adult Autism**

LCC Continuing Education is offering a five week course Oct. 14 to Nov. 11. The class is geared to adults with ASD and neuro typicals. It will cover history, misconceptions and behavior of ASD. Learn how to cope with anxiety and develop social skills. The instructor is on the spectrum. To learn more or register go to [ce.lanecc.edu](http://ce.lanecc.edu) cost \$120 Downtown campus.

#### **Oct. 27 Sunday**

##### **Halloween Disco Dance Benefit**

Whirled Pies, 8th and Charnelton 6-8 pm. \$15/adults \$5-15 16 and under.

#### **Nov. 16 Saturday**

##### **On the road to adulthood**

The Autism Society of Oregon will be presenting a panel describing the perils and triumphs to independent living. 1-3 pm at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St. Free of charge. Refreshments.

#### **Sept. 30 Monday**

STiLE fall term begins, register at [kindtree.org](http://kindtree.org), 541 780 6950.



*Omo at camp. Photo by Steve Hansen*

**Greetings**, wonderful folk on the spectrum, friends, family and supporters,

I am Omo, and I am pleased to serve you as the new KindTree/Autism Rocks Board President. As a father of a child experiencing autism for the last thirty years, I have a personal stake in seeing KindTree succeed.

We have grown from an idea birthed by three concerned service providers wanting to move beyond caregiving to fun giving through camping to sponsoring support groups, advocacy groups, life skill

development and social events while maintaining the fun focus.

Some twenty years ago I was asked to help cook at the summer camp and was embraced by the KindTree family. And I was instantly hooked on the feeling of being involved. After several years sweating over hot stoves to produce great food for guests and volunteers, I started hosting a parent group at camp. Each year a parent will say, "I am so thankful my child has a place they can be themselves and are accepted."

This same joy can be felt from folks of all ages on the spectrum at camp and where ever KindTree offers services like sensory appropriate Santa Claus, karaoke night, jewelry classes or group outings.

However you look at it, KindTree is a rocker chair that helps autism rock!!! Rock on!

Michael "Omo" Omogrosso  
*President, KindTree/Autism Rocks*

## Letter from the Editor

Greetings, KindTree family,

I would like to welcome some fresh new faces to our board: Michael Omogrosso (President), Susan Regnerus (Treasurer), Leslie Gilbert (co-leader of STiLE), Luca Kline, and Corey Coloma. Tim Mueller is back, as Secretary—and jack of all trades. Maggie Pecora is our new STiLE coordinator. Where would we be without our board members? And where would we be without you—and you! and you!—our stalwart volunteers and friends?

We clean out our nests (and our storage unit). Some lucky dogs will be flying (or driving) south for the winter. We take a moment to breathe in the fresh autumn air and put this year's camp to bed. Like camps past, this was our best yet. New friendships emerge and old friendships deepen. More and more music happens every year. Our new activity this year was Brian Rand's Sound Lab Jam. Come February, we will get the Camp magic flowing again. We welcome suggestions and new volunteers. Photos for Camp are going up on our website. Reminisce with us.

Don't think for a second, though, that we're done for the year. We invite you to shake, shake, shake your booty with us at our Halloween Disco Dance on October 27 at Whirled Pies, and help us raise money for Camp and other programs in the upcoming year.

Our art program is embarking on a new collaboration with Columbia University's Business School. We are looking for new art. Read all about it on page 4.

Keep a vigilant eye on our website for any updates and occurrences.

*In autismo veritas,*

Mary-Minn

## Thank You, Thank you, Thank you!!

KindTree "Autism Rocks" would like to extend our hearty thanks to our generous Camp donors. Please support these generous businesses by shopping at their establishments.

Organically Grown Company \* Sno  
Temp Cold Storage \* Lochmead  
Dairy \* Springfield Creamery \*  
Camp Baker \* Café Mam \* Toby's  
Family Foods \* The Bread Stop \*  
Market of Choice 29<sup>th</sup> Street \* UO  
Duck Store \* Capella Market \*  
Costco \* Bi-Mart



*"Cloud Mobile" By Chris Garza*

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[admin@kindtree.org](mailto: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.*

### Contributors wanted!!

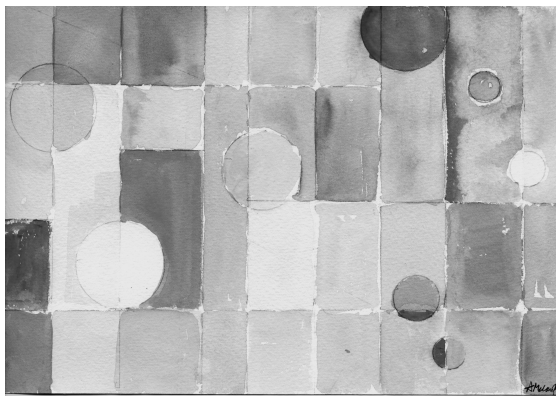
*Reaching In, Reaching Out* is looking for submissions to the "I am Autism" column. Tell us what it means to be on the spectrum. Article must be a thousand words or less, include a photo and short bio. Send submission to the editor at: [sirag@mindspring.com](mailto:sirag@mindspring.com)

## “The Gift” Art Program

KindTree – Autism Rocks is excited to announce a new art program in partnership with “THE GIFT”, a for-profit company started by graduate students in the Columbia University Business School. Our partnership with THE GIFT is in the beginning stages and we are excited about its potential to provide income opportunities to our artists.

We have been contacted by graduate student, Tian Zhang, at the University of Columbia Business School and her partner, Meichun, at Harvard Graduate School of Design about **an exciting new opportunity for you and KindTree** called “THE GIFT” program. This offer has been accepted by KindTree, and we are inviting all of you to participate.

**Our Plan** includes developing themed gallery shows for the Cloud Gallery in Manhattan, which does framing as well as displaying original and reproductions, near the World Trade Center. A designer on their team will develop graphic designs from your art to imprint on value-added products such as t-shirts, cell phone cases, note cards and other products for marketing online.



*“Yellow/Orange” by Alisa McLaughlin*

**Benefit:** THE GIFT will select art from our digital archives that we have shared with them, submitted over the years for our Autism Artism shows, **as well as new submissions by anyone on the Autism Spectrum.** THE GIFT will market original pieces and reproductions.

If your art is selected for redesign and publication, THE GIFT will produce 1) products based on your selected art, 2) a themed exhibition of original art in New York or Eugene, 3) a gift box with the derivative products, 4) at

least 25% profit from the sales of products by KindTree and THE GIFT.

**How to participate:** You will be asked to sign a licensing agreement contract with KindTree, and to provide an artist statement similar to the one we asked you to submit for our Autism Artism shows and cards. We will provide guidelines for new submissions, suggest themes for the images, share information about planned gallery shows and merchandise items, and other information when these are finalized. You will also be expected to fill out an artist bio form (fun survey) with questions about your fun facts, hobbies and interests that will help us develop themed shows and marketing targets. **The new submission and art bio form link is provided here:** <https://forms.gle/G8UpsaeBuPjm3UAg8>

We will be scheduling a meeting in late October for artists to learn more about this program. Meantime, keep your eyes glued to our website for updates about THE GIFT.

If you have any questions, please contact us via email: [art@kindtree.org](mailto:art@kindtree.org) or phone: (541) 780-6950.

## On the Road to Adulthood

**The Autism Society of Oregon** will be presenting a panel of local autists, who will describe the perils and triumphs in their journeys to living independently. We will cover the gamut from life skills to employment. There will be plenty of time for Q&A. On the panel will be David Olson, Mary-Minn Sirag, Alisa McLaughlin, Corey Coloma, and Amber Perry. Tobi Rates, the Executive Director of the ASO, will be facilitating. November 16 (Saturday) from 1-3 pm at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St. in Eugene. Free of charge. Refreshments.

# I Am Autism

by Mary-Minn Sirag

## Lost in Space

*I'm*

*Lost in space*

*Blind in plain sight*

*Late for eternity*

*Too small for infinity*

*Washed up for sorrow*

*Here's to no morrow.*

*Several times a day*, I weep dry tears over things misplaced and lost. Four feet, from the bed to the hook by the bedroom door, and they vanish into the quantum vacuum of vast possibilities. I am frozen in despair that I will ever move forward with my day.

My gentle husband leads me through transitions away from my mothership. I ask him frantically if he's seen my purse; it's not on its hook. He reminds me that I just thanked him for putting it in the car. But I remember none of that. Apparently, my awareness was parked on another micro-detail of wormhole attention.

My crucial stuff gets swallowed up, or I vaporize it, depending on my cynicism that day. The tapestry of intricate pattern and brilliant colors that is our house renders it difficult to recognize my purse and phone for what they truly are. I need to organize my things and my space, but where are there places for the seeming infinity of objects essential to propelling myself forward with my peregrinations and tasks? And is it even possible to hold this map of

places in my head? There are GPS tiles, but they'd also need a "room of their own". And which tile and ringtone would go with what object?

I forget faces, names, plots of movies and books, even people's stories. You might think I am indifferent, but, as a reader and writer of stories, I am fascinated by people and narratives, and I do care. My capricious brain, not I, chooses what dandelion floaties to blow off.

I remember the names of my teachers from elementary school through college, and those denizens of my friends' lives, especially lovers and those who have done them wrong. I don't necessarily remember the context. I remember dozens of bygone phone numbers, even my randomly generated Earthlink password. Spellings of names, even alphabets, stick better than the faces and facts they accompany. My memory is a point particle occupying only one dimension. Sometimes it materializes in other dimensions but often in a peekaboo way.

The house I visited on a brilliant fall day is rendered unrecognizable by today's bleary overcast and unpunctuated light. When I come to a "T" in the road and I follow my intuition, I generally end up somewhere else. Is this psi-missing?

I don't recognize a recent acquaintance, whom I talked to for hours at my friend's party. She's wearing a different outfit and has a new haircut. I did warn her that I likely won't recognize her the next time we meet. At my request, she gives me her full name, spelled out. I visualize it on a page, which I hope will help.

My dreams follow an Ariadne thread through a maze of cement tunnels, staircases into the depths of subway stations, and bleary windows. In my dream memory is an aerial map of where to go next. The presence of people (Them) is implied but invisible. The color scheme and atmospheric quality are the real characters.



*Birth of Inspiration*  
by Ashley Munkres

## Black Sheep

by Josh Erickson

*I'm a black sheep*

*And you'll want to pass me by*

*Because I'm a black sheep*

*And I'll electrify*

*I'm a black sheep*

*And I'll send you sky high.*

*Always the weird one in the corner*

*Never could find my way*

*'Til I found my way*

*To the light of day.*



## **CALENDAR OF GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES THROUGH APRIL 2020**

*All activities free of charge unless otherwise indicated*

***Subject to change:*** Check our website for updates.

[www.kindtree.org](http://www.kindtree.org)

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

**Eugene Support Group:** 2nd Monday of the month 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, 4:30 to 6:30 pm at Reality Kitchen, 645 River Rd., Eugene. Hosted by Sheila Thomas and Mary-Minn Sirag. 541-689-2228. **Please note new time.**

**Eugene Social Skills class:** 3rd Monday of odd-numbered months 6:30 to 8 pm at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1300 Pearl St.. (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 4:30 to 6 pm at LILA Peer Support Club, 990 Oak St. (NW corner of 10th & Oak, next to Crumbs Together, beneath the Overpark). Facilitated by David Olson. 541 636-9179.

### **Calendar of groups, events and activities through April, 2020**

**Oct 7 (Monday),** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Oct 11 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Oct 14 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group.

**Oct 18 (Friday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.

**Oct 27 (Sunday):** Halloween Disco Extravaganza benefit, 6-10 pm at Whirled Pies, 8th and Charnelton. \$15/adult, \$5/kids 16 and under.

**Nov 4 (Monday),** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Nov 8 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Nov 11 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group.

**Nov 15 (Friday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.

**Nov. 16 (Sat):** Autism Society of Oregon panel presentation about transition to independent living with autism. 1:00-3:00 pm at Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St.

**Nov 18 (Monday):** Eugene Social Skills class.

**Dec 2 (Monday):** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Dec 9 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group. Holiday pizza party.

**Dec 13 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Dec 20 (Friday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.

**Jan 6 (Monday)** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Jan 10 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Jan 13 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group.

**Jan 17 (Friday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.

**Jan 20 (Monday):** Eugene Social Skills class.

**Feb 3 (Monday):** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Feb 10 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group.

**Feb 14 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Feb 21 (Friday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.

**Mar 2 (Monday):** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Mar 9 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group.

**Mar 13 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Mar 16 (Monday):** Eugene Social Skills class.

**Mar 20 (Friday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.

**Apr 6 (Monday):** Cottage Grove Support Group.

**Apr 10 (Friday):** Second Friday Social.

**Apr 13 (Monday):** Eugene Support Group.

**Apr 17 (Monday):** Eugene A.V.O.I.C.E Advocacy Group.



## **KindTree-Autism Rocks STiLE (Skills Training for an Independently Living Experience) Fall 2019**

STiLE was established in 2012 as an educational program for youth and adults on the autism spectrum and others with developmental disabilities.

Instruction occurs in small group settings with individualized support. Individuals must be eligible for DD services with the State of Oregon, have an Individual Service Plan (ISP) and an agency PA or Service Coordinator to receive funding for these trainings, or enroll using private funds. Visit our website for additional information and registration forms at [www.kindtree.org](http://www.kindtree.org)

### **Jewelry Expressions**

Mon, 10:15 am to 12:15 pm, Sept 30 to Dec 16 at Ebbert Memorial Methodist Church, 532 C St., Springfield. Create unique beaded jewelry and have opportunities to sell your art. Supplies included. Cost: \$205 per session based on 12 trainings with 24 hours of instruction or the agency hour contract rate.

### **Music Writing and Performance**

Mon, 4:00 to 5:30 pm, Oct. 7 to Dec 16 at Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St., Eugene. Designed for individuals interested in learning to play music instruments, writing and/or performing music. Cost \$140 per session based on 11 trainings totaling 16.5 hours or the agency hourly contract rate.

### **Make it Tasty Cooking**

Fri 10:15 am to 12:30 pm, Oct 4 to Dec 20, (No training Nov 28) at Catholic Community Services of Lane County, 1025 "G" Street, Springfield. Learn how to

cook, store leftovers, and portion size. Cost: \$235 per session based on attendance for 12 trainings with 27 hours of instruction or the agency hourly contract rate.

### **Community Outings and Adventures**

Tue, 2:00 to 6 pm and Sat 10 am to 5 pm. Tues Oct 1 to Dec 17 & Sat, Oct 5 to Dec 21. These trainings are for older teens and young adults interested in discovering more about their community and providing an opportunity to learn and practice life skills. Please contact KindTree-Autism Rocks at 541-780-6950 or [autism@kindtree.org](mailto:autism@kindtree.org) to inquire if space is available.

### **STiLE instructors' contact information**

Molly Elliott, Jewelry Expressions:  
[melliott@kindtree.org](mailto:melliott@kindtree.org) 541-747-6938

David Helfand, Music Writing and Performance:  
[helfand2@mindspring.com](mailto:helfand2@mindspring.com) 541-345-3131

Mary Jane Schrum, Make it Tasty Cooking:  
[soleapioswarp@juno.com](mailto:soleapioswarp@juno.com) 541-844-0611

Sheila Thomas, Community Outings and Adventures: [actionlearningoutings@gmail.com](mailto:actionlearningoutings@gmail.com)  
541-359-5670

### **STiLE Services are authorized through Oregon Department of Human Services, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Licensing Unit and Regulatory Oversight**

OR526: Attendant Care Support  
OR542, W1: DSA, non-work, Community Skill Training and Attendant Care  
OR542, WJ or W2: DSA, non-work; Community Skills Training

[www.kindtree.org/stile](http://www.kindtree.org/stile); [autism@kindtree.org](mailto:autism@kindtree.org),  
541-780-6950

*Celebrating autism, changing perceptions  
and creating community.*

## The Spotlight is on ...Omo

Tim Mueller nabbed Omo almost 20 years in the Community Village at Country Fair. From OCF, Omo brings a joyful and playful presence that, coincidentally, is the essence of KindTree-Autism Rocks.

Ever since Tim nabbed him, Omo has been volunteering with us, especially, but not only, at our annual Autism Rocks Friends and Family Camp at Camp Baker in Florence. He started out making hash browns with me, and went on to our Vibe Crew, and now Grand Quartermaster of Supplies Aplenty. He has been facilitating the Eugene support group for the past several years and is on our Advisory Council.

Some Omo-gosh facts:

He has 6 children, 45 to 23, including one who is on our ever-rocking spectrum.

He built an earth-lodge in the high mountains of northeast Washington where heat came from wood, and water from the creek. There was no electricity.

He has worked as carpenter, aircraft assembler, radio announcer and building maintenance worker.

He is a community mediator. He has been a union steward for last 6 years.

He writes songs. He plays mountain dulcimer, guitar and ukulele.

He loves doing photojournalism and portraiture.

Omo is the cat's pajamas, and more so!!



*Nel Applegate and Ivy at this year's camp. Photo by Tim Mueller.*

## Meet a Board Member



### Corey Colma

by Melissa Alvarez

Corey Coloma serves on the KindTree Board of Directors and the Communications Committee, where his responsibilities include scheduling posts for our Facebook and Twitter accounts. He is also the Director of Operations and a Board Member of Twainbow.

Within the community, many different identities coexist and intersect. The term “double rainbow” has come to signify the intersection of identities between the LGBTQI+ and ASD communities. Twainbow is a non-profit organization that brings awareness to this double rainbow, both for people under it and on the outside. The organization offers resources for individuals under the double rainbow and creates a sense of community for queer people on the autism spectrum.

## 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](mailto:admin@kindtree.org) **Mail to:** PO Box 40847, Eugene, OR 97404



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**Disco Halloween Extravaganza**

**A Benefit for KindTree - Autism Rocks**  
**Sunday Oct 27, 6-10pm**

**Whirled Pies Downtown**  
**\$15 adults - \$5 Kids 16 and under**

**Your chance to meet the Great Pumpkin**

**Costume Contests**  
**Dance Contests**  
**So many Prizes!**  
**Family Friendly**  
**Fortune Teller**  
**Face Painting**

*Dance like Everybody's Watching*