



Family Driven Family Support Services

Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute
100 Barber Place
Erie, Pennsylvania 16507-1899
(814) 878-5905 Fax: (814) 455-1132
E-Mail: JoyceMcDonnell@BarberInstitute.org
Website : www.BarberInstitute.org



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Laughing Jesus

Laughter is a divine gift

To the human who is humble...

Only the truly humble belong

To this kingdom of divine laughter.

-C.S.Lewis

Few are cavalier enough to bypass long-standing rituals for good luck and fortune in the New Year. When dealing with tradition, only fools tempt fate when a particular food or ritual may augur prosperity. Geographic and cultural heritage reflect a culinary potpourri. Linked with good fortune are foods like challah bread, roast pork, black eyed peas, rice cakes, codfish, cabbage, and corn bread. Ritually, we make resolutions, cheer as the ball drops in Times Square, ring bells, blow horns and wear silly hats.

My recipe for good fortune is pork served with sauerkraut, pumpernickel bread, mashed potatoes and applesauce, finished off with homemade lemon meringue pie. As the kitchen fills with those rich aromas, I commence with 'The Laughing Jesus New Year Ritual'. It's a simple rite involving a magazine clipping attached to a calendar hanging behind a kitchen cupboard door. It shows Jesus, eyes a-twinkling, head thrust back in full-throated laughter. For the past year and every year, laughing Jesus is clipped to the new month, and finally, to the new calendar.

While I can't attest that the ritual is providential to improved luck and fortune, Jesus laughing is a reminder that we are the only species gifted with the ability to laugh. Laughing Jesus is testament to a mirthful spirit bubbling to the surface and exploding in gales of laughter. So it is that a joyful spirit uses our senses to express itself. It is the body that rejoices in laughter that is contagious. It is the body that hears the laughter, speaks words of encouragement, and sees the smile. As a sage once said, if we had no body we'd never know the taste of chocolate.

It is the spirit housed within our body that makes hope contagious, opportunity abound. It is the smile of divine glee that visits ESO dances where volunteers embrace a welcoming spirit to dance with guests who might be named David, Alyssa, Melissa, Justin, Amy, Amber, Hannah, Richard or Matthew.

It is the spirit of hope and opportunity that permeates The Barber National Institute. It lights the face of a grandma who chauffeurs her grandson to and from school. It's the morning tumble of kids pushing through the school doors. The spirit is everywhere – the hallways, the classrooms, the workshop, the voices and aromas in the cafeteria. It's displayed in framed artwork showcased on corridor walls. It's the students' seasonal craftwork bringing cheer to the hallways and changing with the season – pilgrim hats, cottonball bunny tails, and yellow headed daffodils. It's bumping into dangling paper spiders swinging from webs attached to the ceiling.

The Irish novelist C.S. Lewis talked about the Kingdom of Divine Laughter. Certainly, the Laughing Jesus of the Barber National Institute comes from that merry place.

Joyce Krahe McDonnell, M.A.

Newsletter Editor

“Celebrating The Possibilities”

“Celebrating The Possibilities” is the third annual Art Show sponsored by the Barber National Institute to bring the entire community together in celebration of the artistic achievements of all persons. The Art Show is held during April in commemoration of Autism Awareness Month.

The Art Show will be held in the North Lobby of the Barber National Institute, 100 Barber Place Friday, April 16, 10a.m.-4p.m.; Sunday, April 18, Noon-3p.m. (refreshments and live entertainment); Monday, April 19, 10a.m.-4p.m.

The Art Show celebrates the artistic achievement of all children and adults, families and staff whose lives are touched by disabilities, as well as professional and amateur artists in the community.

Each artist may submit up to two pieces, although only one piece may be selected for the show.

Entries will be accepted on Saturday, March 27 from 9a.m.-noon, and on Monday and Tuesday, March 29 & March 30, from 8:30a.m.-4:30p.m. at the Barber National Institute, 100 Barber Place, Erie PA 16507 (enter off of East Bay Drive). Find directions @ www.barberinstitute.org.

If you would like a call for entries, please call 814-878-5903 or go to www.barberinstitute.org.

ESO Valentine Dance

The Annual Semi-Formal ESO Valentine Dance is slated for February 5th at Gannon University in the Yehl Ballroom with dancing from 7-9pm. We are going to have LIVE MUSIC by the band Bus 17 along with YOUR FAVORITE CD's.

ESO dances are sponsored by Family Support Services, the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute and hosted on area college campuses. ESO Dances (Expanding Sociability Opportunities) expand sociability opportunities for 18-35 year olds with developmental disabilities and their college age peers in a social setting.

For more details about ESO Dances, please contact Joyce Krahe McDonnell, M.A., FSS Community Organizer @ the Barber National Institute @ 814-878-5905.

To make reservations for the Valentine Dance and/or to place the name of someone who would be interested in attending the dances on the mailing list, please call Diane at the FSS Office @ 814-878-5961.

Adaptive Arts Dance Studio

Adaptive Arts of PA strives to provide dance experience for those with developmental disabilities. Adaptive Arts is located at the Lake Erie Ballet Studios, 701 Holland St. Classes focus on teaching dance/creative movement to those with special needs. The mission of Adaptive Arts is accomplished by outreach to arts, health and educational organizations.

For more information on classes, contact Kristie Reagle-Falkenhagen, Creative Arts Specialist, adaptiveartspa@hotmail.com or 814-520-1522.

Family and Community Support Services Support Groups

Monthly Meetings

Family and Community Support Services offer a variety of support groups for individuals with special needs, and parents and caregivers of children with special needs. Parent/caregiver support groups provide members with opportunities to meet with other parents both of younger children and adult children with special needs in an atmosphere of emotional support, education, and friendship. FSS also facilitates groups specially designed to meet the needs of children and young adults with developmental disabilities.

The 21+ CLUB

- ❖ **The 21+ CLUB is on winter break until Spring 2010.**

THE 21+ CLUB is an advocacy group of parents, caregivers, and other persons who are interested in the needs of adult children (over the age of 21) with developmental disabilities. Membership is open to anyone interested in services for adults with developmental disabilities. Parents of younger children are invited to join now to help ensure that services will be in place for their children as they mature.

The goals of THE 21+ CLUB are threefold: (1) Educate local, state and national legislators to the unmet needs of adults with developmental disabilities. (2) Educate parents/caregivers on issues affecting adults with disabilities. (3) Develop sociability opportunities for adults with disabilities.

For more information about the group, please call Joyce Krahe McDonnell, Family Support Services @ 814-878-5905 or the FSS Office @ 814-878-5961.

Asperger's Support Group

The Erie Chapter of GRASP, the support group for adults with Asperger's Syndrome, meets monthly on the 4th Saturday of each month at the Barber National Institute. GRASP stands for 'Global & Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership'.

The group, facilitated by Mark Haller, will meet January 30th and February 27th in the Emerald Room, located in the back of the cafeteria, from 1-3pm. Guests are asked to enter from the gated lot on East 3rd Street. Please contact Mark Haller to check the most current information for scheduled meeting dates, reservations, and information. You may reach Mark Haller @ 814-864-8770 (between 10am & 1:30pm). You may also email mentatmark@gmail.com.

Autism Support Group

The Autism Society of America Northwest PA Chapter (www.nwpa-asa.org) Support Group meets to discuss issues related to children with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome. Meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

The group will meet in the Emerald Room, Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute, 100 Barber Place, Jan. 19th and Feb. 16th from 7-8:30pm. Sitter services will be available in Room 120. To make reservations for free sitter service, call Diane at FSS office 814-878-5961.

Down Syndrome

The Down Syndrome Support Group of Erie County will meet January 12th for the regular meeting at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 3108 Sterrettania. There will be no regular meeting in February. Information on plans for February will follow.

Regular meetings take place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 3108 Sterrettania. The group meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 6:30pm.

For information about the group and plans for February 2009, please call Jackie Lupo @ 833-2143 or email DownSynErie@yahoo.com

FSS Grandparent Support Group

The FSS Grandparent Support Group for Grandparents of Grandchildren with Developmental Disabilities meets regularly at the Gertrude A. Barber National Institute. The meetings feature professionally presented Educational Topics of Interest. The group also has opportunity to enjoy camaraderie

and sharing personal experiences about their grandchildren.

- **January 14th, 2010: Jennifer Zona, Behavior Specialist @ Elizabeth Lee Black.**
- **February 11th, 2010: For information on this meeting, please call Joyce McDonnell @ FSS, 814-878-5905.**

Meetings will take place in the Breakout Rooms (from 6:00-7:30pm) at The Barber Institute, 100 Barber Place. Entrance is off the Bayfront Parkway – North Lobby Door.

Registrations are requested to Diane Sanfilippo, FSS Office @ 814-878-5961. To learn more about the FSS Grandparent Support Group, please call Joyce Krahe McDonnell @ 814-878-5905.

Family Support Services offers regularly scheduled meetings for grandparents and other caregivers to better understand how a developmental disability affects their grandchild. Grandparents also share personal experiences in an atmosphere of support and friendship. Meetings are scheduled the 2nd Thursday of each month in the Breakout Rooms, Barber National Institute, from 6-7:30pm.

SIBSESSIONS

Family Support Services offers monthly SIBSESSIONS for brothers and sisters of individuals with developmental disabilities. SIBSESSIONS include time for sharing, lunch, and games. The group meets at the Barber National Institute from 10:30am to 1:00pm.

- **January 16th Winter Party in Barber Gymnasium.** For information about the session, please call Jennifer Dennehy @ FSS Office @ 814-878-4117.
- **February 20th Swimming @ Barber Pool.** For information about the session, please call Jennifer Dennehy @ FSS Office @ 814-878-4117.

SibSessions offer a supportive setting for the expression of feelings and concerns and the development of new friendships for siblings ages 5 to 16. Participants share the positive aspects of having an affected sibling. Participants enjoy activities in arts and crafts, recreational events, sharing time, and a free lunch.

Sessions are offered free of charge. Most sessions take place at the Barber National Institute, 100 Barber Place. For more information about Sib-Sessions, please call Jennifer Dennehy, FSS @ 814-878-4117.

Time for Me

“Time for Me” participants will gather January 9th and February 13th at the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute from 1:30 to 4:00pm. “Time For Me” is a unique program offered to children ages 4 to 10 who are developmentally disabled. Participants engage in structured activities including swimming, arts & crafts, and gym.

This program also provides parents with their own “Time For Me” knowing that their children are in a safe environment, having fun and are well supervised by trained staff. TSS are welcome to attend.

Space is limited to 12 children per session and registration is required. Sessions take place the 2nd Saturday of the month. Reservations may be made until the Wednesday prior to the session. For further information regarding dates, fees, and registration, please call Jennifer Dennehy, FSS office @ 878-4117. Guests are asked to please enter through the gated parking lot on E. 3rd St.

Janet's Jokes

Question: Why didn't the lobster share his toys??

Answer: He was too shellfish!!!!!!!!!!!!

Things To Do, Places To Go

FRIENDSHIP MINISTRIES

The Friendship Ministry Groups share God's love with teens and adults with developmental disabilities. Guests may attend any of the meeting locations.

- **FIRST ALLIANCE CHURCH**

First Alliance Church, 2939 Zimmerly Rd., Monday evenings from 7-8:30pm. Contact Alex and Mary @ 734-8553.

- **ST. JOSEPH CHURCH**

St. Joseph Church, 147 W. 24 St., the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month. Contact Diana @ 899-6194.

- **TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Trinity United Methodist Church, 3952 Pine Ave., the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month. Contact Diana @ 899-6194.

January and February 2010

TOM RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Visitors are welcome to the ‘Great Big Films on the Big Green Screen’ to enjoy a wide variety of all day screen productions on topics of interest at the Tom Ridge Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. For details and show times, call the Environmental Center @ 814-838-4123.

January 1

ERIE PLAYHOUSE

The Erie Playhouse presents ‘Irving Berlin’s White Christmas’ this evening thru Jan. 3rd. Showtime @ 7:30pm.

January 6

DONNA GRAMM DANCERCISE CLASSES

Donna Gramm Dancercise Classes has a brand new day and time for 2010! Classes will now be held on Wednesdays from 5:30-6:30pm beginning with the first class on Jan. 6th (5:30-6:30). Classes will once again take place at the SAGA Club, 3828 Washington. For more information, please call Donna @ 833-3419.

January 8

ERIE PLAYHOUSE

Tonight thru Sunday don't miss ‘Disney’s High School Musical 2’ at the Erie Playhouse. Evening and afternoon performances. Also playing Jan. 15th thru Jan 17th.

January 23

WARNER THEATRE

Erie Philharmonic presents ‘Splash’ featuring Handel’s Water Music & Debussy’s LaMer. Ticket info for the 8pm performance @ 814-455-1375. www.eriephil.org.

January 29

ERIE PLAYHOUSE

Evening performance this evening and Jan. 30th of ‘The Wiz’ at the downtown Erie Playhouse Theater.

January 31

ERIE CIVIC MUSIC ASSO CIATION

See ‘The Golden Dragon Acrobats of China’ at 3pm today @ the Warner Theater. Ticket info @ 814-864-5681. www.ericivictimusic.com.

TULLIO ARENA

The Harlem Globetrotters will perform this afternoon at the Tullio Arena beginning @ 2pm. Ticket info @ 814-452-4857/ www.ticketmaster.com.

February 4

ERIE PLAYHOUSE

Don't miss 'The Wiz' at the Erie Playhouse Feb. 4, 5, 6, & 7. More performances Feb. 10th thru Feb. 14th. Performances begin @ 7:30pm.

February 19

ERIE PLAYHOUSE

Erie Playhouse presents 'Peeved' this evening thru Feb. 21st. Performances begin @ 7:30pm.

February 13

WARNER THEATRE

Erie Philharmonic presents 'From Brooklyn to Broadway' at the Warner Theatre this evening @ 8pm. Ticket info @ 814-455-1375. www.eriephil.org.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Center, Inc.
136 East Avenue
Erie, Pennsylvania 16507

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MOVING?
PLEASE NOTIFY FSS @ 814-878-5961.



Come to the Fair!
Saturday, March 27, 2010
Family Support Services
Invites you to the 4th Annual

"FSS RECREATION FAIR"

Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute Gymnasium
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Recreation Information! Door Prizes! Clowns! Demonstrations!

Find out what summertime recreational activities, camps, and programs are available for children, teens, and adults with developmental disabilities.

Presenters from the Erie area will be available to speak to you about their recreational programs and answer any questions you may have.

For more information, please call Joyce Krahe McDonnell @ 814-878-5905 or the FSS Office @ 814-878-5961.

