

Barber National Institute



December 2014

Vol. 10, No. 3

Barber Spirit



Barber National Institute
50th Anniversary
Christmas Ball

President's Message



Front cover: Marlene and Homer Mosco, along with their daughter and son-in-law, Emily and Robert Merski, co-chairs of the 2014 Barber Ball, decorate a Christmas tree with students of the Barber National Institute.

Dear Friends:

It is hard to believe that the holiday season will soon be upon us and 2014 will be drawing to a close. This has been another year of strong growth and productivity for the Barber National Institute as we served more people with more services in more places. We expanded programs for adults in Philadelphia, nearly doubled our capacity in our Pittsburgh day program, opened a new facility in western Erie county to provide intensive mental health therapies for children, and are delivering unparalleled education for students from 20 different school districts from as far away as Centre County.

All of these achievements are made possible by the 2,200 dedicated and caring professionals who carry out our mission every day, and by the thousands of donors who give so generously of their time and treasure to ensure that our organization is financially stable and able to provide the highest quality staff, services and facilities.

As we prepare for this special season of giving, I want to sincerely thank our donors for their ongoing support. With their help, we will continue to grow in 2015 to meet new challenges and respond to new opportunities.

In the early days of our organization, Dr. Barber told parents, "Your child is welcome here." Our goal, as we continue to carry out this vision, is to provide a place where all children and adults find the acceptance, encouragement and support to make their dreams come true.

Best wishes to you and your family for a blessed holiday and good health in the New Year.

Sincerely,

John J. Barber
President & Chief Executive Officer

Support the Annual Fund

The Annual Fund Campaign is now underway! Will you help us make dreams come true?

Children and adults in our communities are benefitting because of generous donors who support the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundation. These are children such as Destiney and Danny, twins who found new ways to communicate in the hearing impaired classroom at the Barber National Institute. Speech therapists arranged for Destiney to receive her own portable communication device that she is using to express herself in school and at home. Danny, who has a profound hearing loss, received cochlear implants last year and is beginning to understand the sounds he is hearing.

Adults like Ashley fulfilled their dreams this year. After months of working on job skills and practicing for interviews, she got a job on the housekeeping crew for the Erie Insurance Arena. Ashley was one of 26 adults placed in jobs in the community during 2014 with help from the Supported Employment Program at the Barber National Institute.

Dreams like these can continue becoming a reality with your help. Donations to the annual fund campaign can be made in several ways. Through the mail – 100 Barber Place, Erie, Pa. 16507. Online – www.barberinstitute.org/giving or by phone at (814) 874-5640.

Together, we will continue making dreams come true.

Remember—to receive tax benefits for 2014 your gift must be made by Dec. 31.

Mission Statement

We "Make dreams come true." We provide children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families the education, support and resources needed to be self reliant, independent and valued members of their community. In addition, we provide the professionals who serve them with world-class education and training.





Finding a Job: *Making a Dream Come True*

Paul Groom walked to the front of the large, crowded room, and spoke softly, determined to find the right words as he talked about his work experience. Paul explained that he has worked for several employers over the past decade, and now really likes his job at Plastek. His advice to others still looking for employment? "Work hard and be patient and you will be able to obtain your dream job."

Paul was one of more than twenty adults, several of whom were hired this year, to return to the Barber National Institute for a presentation marking National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The audience included adults who are working to develop job skills or looking for employment opportunities, as well as family members, visitors and staff from the Barber National Institute.

Since January, 26 adults have been placed in jobs in the housekeeping, food service and other industries. Their employment brings the number of adults hired to 700 since the Supported Employment program began at the Barber National Institute in 1986.

"Here in Erie there is a lot of opportunity and, if you are hardworking and patient, you can find a job," said Carrie Kontis, director of Intellectual Disabilities Services. "We are very thankful for the more than 500 Erie County businesses that have supported our employment efforts. Without them, we would not be able to hold this celebration today."

During the program more than 30 adults in job training programs were recognized for achievements such as having a positive attitude, willingness to help and showing initiative.

Currently, 25 adults are actively looking for jobs in the community. Businesses interested in discussing opportunities should contact Supported Employment at 814-455-5961 or marycarmenwalker@BarberInstitute.org

More than twenty adults who were recently hired for jobs in the community returned for a program marking National Disability Employment Awareness month. Congratulating the adults were Carrie Kontis, second from left, director of Intellectual Disabilities Services for Adults at the Barber National Institute, with representatives from the Erie County Department of Human Services. At right are Pat Tobey, Intellectual Disabilities program specialist, John DiMattio, director; and Ron Klonicki, Intellectual Disabilities Program coordinator.



Words of Wisdom

Recently employed adults shared their advice about finding success in the workplace:

Anthony Clark – Plastek

"Be respectful to your boss and your coworkers. Be on time and work hard."

Mary Lee - Bob Evans

"You always have to be honest, responsible and loyal. Having a positive attitude makes a huge difference. Doubting yourself does not get you anywhere."

Rebecca Tomczak – working at Wendy's for two years

"It can be hard; sometimes you just have to grin and bear it. When you get upset, take a time out and count to ten."

Katrice Fisher – hired at Erie Insurance Arena in February

"I pat myself on the back every day because I've come a long way and will continue to do my best every day. Don't give up—keep trying."

Students Tackle Marathon One Day at a Time

At 8:30 every morning, student Bradley Dart is in a marathon.

While many people are just walking to their coffee pot at that hour, Bradley and other students in the Elizabeth Lee Black School have the opportunity to participate in a marathon—even if it's just a bit at a time. They are in the Achilles Run-to-Learn Program that was initiated with the start of this school year.

The program, developed in 1995 by Achilles International, consists of a series of physical and educational activities that integrates challenges and games with running, walking, rolling, or other forms of movement. The goal is to encourage and motivate children to participate in regular physical activity.

As part of a year-long gym activity, students complete a number of laps each week. Laps are counted and converted into miles, and then charted as a 26.2 mile route on a map. While working toward a long-term goal of completing the marathon, students also realize short-term achievements based on meeting weekly goals.

Gage Bunker, adapted physical education teacher at the Barber National Institute, said he implemented the program at BNI because it serves as a great opportunity for all of the students.

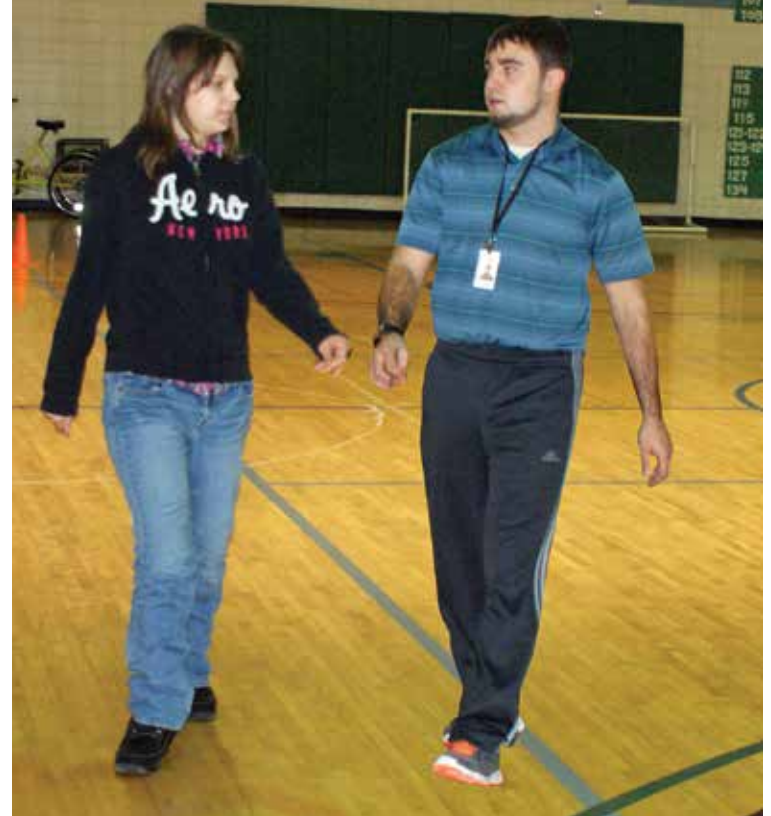
"It's all laid-back, fun, and gives students a sense of accomplishment," he said.

Twenty-four laps in the gym is equivalent to one mile. To reach the 26.2 miles for a marathon, students will complete over 600 laps of the gym in whatever way they can.

For Bradley, it means walking his 30 laps every morning. For students with varying physical disabilities, it may involve circling the gym in their wheelchairs or riding bikes. Regardless, all will eventually complete the equivalent of a marathon by the end of the year.

"It gives students a great sense of self-fulfillment," Bunker said.

Bunker added that they are planning a big ceremony at the end of the school year to celebrate everyone's participation. There, the students will receive different rewards such as t-shirts or a pair of sneakers. That would be the perfect prize, since Bradley and the other students might wear out their current shoes by the time they're done.



Physical education teacher Gage Bunker, right, walks with a student in the Achilles Run-to-Learn Program. Students chart laps around the gym to collectively add up to a completed marathon by the end of the school year.



Attendees at the Open House included, from left, John Barber, president and chief executive officer of the Barber National Institute; Steve Meredith, staff assistant to Sen. Patrick J. Toomey; Thad Jackman, director, Southwest Regional Programs; and Jessica Kerlicker, instructor in the adult day program.

New Location Serves

An open, modern design greeted visitors during an open house for the new adult day program facilities serving the Pittsburgh region. The program recently relocated to 20 Emerson Lane, Suite 905, in Bridgeville, PA.

The new 17,732 square foot facility accommodates programs that focus on providing individual choice to meet the adult's needs and preferences. At the facility, adults can choose from art/music classes, computer skills training, exercise and social groups, educational experiences and basic employment exploration.

Other programs administered through the Emerson Lane facility include Home & Community Habilitation, a one-

Sharing News From Home

Every morning, student Nicholas Kuzmin approaches his teacher, Pam Pfadt, holding a small device.

“Wanna talk,” he’ll say.

Nicholas means he would like to share what he did the night before through his recording device as part of the new News from Home program implemented in classrooms at the Elizabeth Lee Black School. The program enables teachers and parents to interact verbally through recordings while also furthering communication with the student.

“Students can bring information from home but they can’t always bring a message,” Pfadt said. “[He or she] might bring part of a message, but you would have to piece it together.”

With the News from Home program, a teacher is able to record what a student did and include any notes about the daily happenings at school. In turn, the parent is able to tell the teacher what the student did at night and also include any notes or messages that are needed.

The process has been beneficial for all parties involved.

“It helps give us information,” Pfadt said. “It also helps me figure out things the student likes to do.”

For Nick’s mom, it fosters a better parent-teacher relationship.

“It’s a more personal experience than just having something written on a page,” said Chris Kuzmin.

Nicholas, of course, is reaping the benefits of all this as well. Though he first was reluctant to share his recording with others, he now actively seeks out sharing.

“He just beams,” Pfadt said.

And whether it’s his mother talking about new things he’s tried, his sister chatting about their fun at ZooBoo or his father describing their hunting adventures, Nicholas is excited to share them all with his teacher and the rest of the class.



Nicholas Kuzman, right, shares a message on his Talk from Home device with his teacher, Pam Pfadt.

Nicholas’ enthusiasm for the program has also led to improved communication skills. His mom has him repeat what she says on the recording and those who work with him in class say he’s beginning to understand that he is the one making that interaction.

Clearly, the news from the classroom is that the News from Home program is making a difference for Nicholas and other students at the Barber National Institute.

Adults in Pittsburgh

on-one program that allows individuals to explore day activities and become active members of their community. Participants concentrate on a wide array of everyday living skills such as safety, communication, money management, socialization and volunteerism while working to become more independent in their home and gain connections to their neighborhood.

For more information or to request a tour, contact Thad Jackman, director, Southwest Regional Programs, at (412) 220-6030 or visit www.BarberInstitute.org/Pittsburgh.



Thad Jackman, director, Southwest Regional Programs, welcomes Eva T. Blum, PNC Senior Vice President, Director Community Affairs and Chair, PNC Foundation; Sally McCrady, Senior Vice President, Deputy Executive Director, Grow Up Great; and Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, Barber National Institute executive vice president.

CELEBRATE

50th Anniversary Christmas Ball



A celebration like no other. That's how many people describe the annual Barber Christmas Ball that brings together friends, families and neighbors—those you've known for years as well as new acquaintances.

This year's gala promises to be especially festive as the Christmas Ball marks its 50th anniversary. Chair couples Marlene and Homer Mosco, along with their daughter and son-in-law, Atty. Emily and the Honorable Robert Merski, invite the community to join them on Saturday, Dec. 13 at the Bayfront Convention Center.

Here are the details:

- Dancing with Park Place, a dance and show band from Cleveland, Ohio, from 9:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. (doors open at 8:00 p.m.)
- Includes an array of hearty hors d'oeuvres and delicious desserts, soft drinks, coffee and two cocktails per person (cash bar also available)
- Complimentary valet parking
- Dress is black tie optional; Cuff's Formal Wear located in Millcreek Square will donate \$5 to the Barber Foundation for every tuxedo rental.
- Become a celebrity! Get your photo taken at the GoErie photo booth located in the lobby from 8 p.m.-11 p.m.; photos uploaded instantly on GoErie.com
- Reservations are \$90 per person and are available at www.BarberInstitute.org/ball
- For more information call 814-878-4096

Want to turn a night out into a weekend getaway? Erie's Sheraton Hotel offers a special package for Christmas Ball guests that includes a deluxe bay view room, parking and buffet breakfast for \$112. Call 814-454-2005 by December 1 for information or reservations.





Marlene Mosco's mother, Emma DiTullio, left, and her aunt, Lena DeLaura, right, prepared sauce and meatballs for the annual Spaghetti Dinner for many years.

Chair Couples Share Legacy of Support

While the Barber Christmas Ball dates back 50 years, the ties that Marlene Mosco's family has to the Barber National Institute go back nearly as far. That longstanding relationship is now being passed down by Marlene and Homer Mosco to their daughter and son-in-law, Emily and Robert Merski, as together they chair the 50th anniversary Barber Christmas Ball.

The legacy began when Marlene's mother, Emma DiTullio, worked alongside Dr. Gertrude Barber in teaching children with disabilities in the early days of the school. Emma primarily assisted in classes for children who were blind or visually impaired. She taught one little girl to play the piano, and Marlene recalls that the girl called her mother from home nearly every night so that Emma could listen to her practice.

"My mother and Dr. Barber were from a generation that gave from their hearts and set an example for others to serve their community without reservation," said Marlene.

When Dr. Barber wanted to start a Spaghetti Dinner to serve as a fund raiser for the new Center, Emma and her sister, Lena DeLaura, stepped up to prepare food for the large crowds. For many years, they could be found in the kitchen, spending hours tending to gallons of sauce and thousands of meatballs that were served at the event.

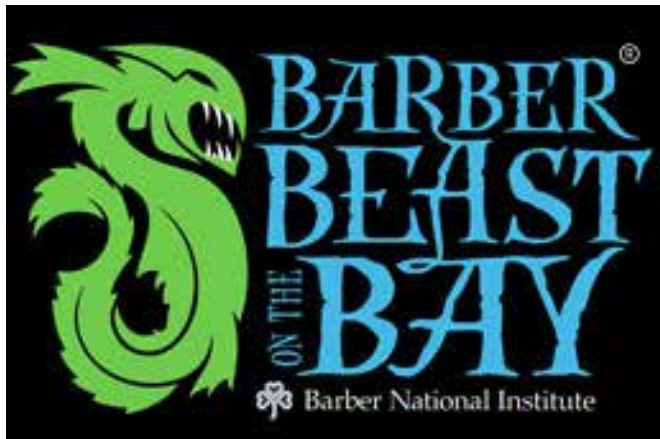
With her mother's spirit in mind, Marlene and her family enthusiastically accepted chairmanship of this year's Ball. Their commitment is the latest example of their support of the mission of the Barber National Institute. PNC Bank, where Marlene serves as regional president, has sponsored many fundraising events at the Barber National Institute, and has also supported preschool scholarships with donations through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program. Miller Travel, where Homer Mosco serves as president, donated a trip for the Ladies Only Luncheon Premier Prize for the second year in a row.

Emily Merski, an attorney with Vendetti and Vendetti law firm, and her husband Bob, a teacher at East High School and an Erie City Councilman, have attended the Christmas Ball with friends for several years.

"We are so fortunate to have such a world class organization right here in our community that has helped so many reach their full potential," said Marlene. "Our family stood with Dr. Barber in the early days of the organization, and we are honored to support the mission today and into the future."

The couples invite the community to join them in marking this milestone event and celebrating the upcoming holiday season.





Beast on the Bay Reports Success, Looks to 2015

One by one, the cards turned over to reveal one large number: \$63,194.

Students in the Barber National Institute Pre-K Counts class were greeted by cheers and applause as they helped unveil the proceeds raised from this year's Barber Beast on the Bay. The total included \$6,534 collected by participants who conducted their own fundraising for the Barber National Institute.

The 2014 event, sponsored by Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and Saint Vincent Hospital, surpassed results from the previous year in all areas. Here are the numbers:

- 1,225 registrations for the 10-mile course
- Nearly 100 participants in the Maureen Riazzi Adapted Course, a 1.2 mile challenge sponsored by the Riazzi and Russo families for adults with disabilities.
- Participants from 17 states ranging from 16-72 years of age
- \$175,000-\$200,000 estimated economic impact on the region
- Nearly 100 teams participating
- More than 30 sponsors

"The results are good news for the Erie region, good news for the Barber National Institute, and, ultimately, good news for the individuals and families we serve," said John Barber, president and chief executive officer.

Barber credits the sponsors for helping to make this year's event so successful. "Because of the generosity of our sponsors, we were able to cover all of the costs including the obstacles, permits, signage, hydration, nutrition, and all of the expenses involved with staging such a large event," said Barber.



Joining Pre-K Counts students in unveiling this year's Beast proceeds were John Barber, standing at left, president and chief executive officer of the Barber National Institute; Neil Parham, manager of community affairs, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield; the Barber Beast; and Scott Whalen, president and chief executive officer of Saint Vincent Hospital. Students, from left, are Jadyn White, Audrina Greco, Erin Dushole, Willie Gonzalez, Andrew Horvath and Zachary Byler.

The success of this year's Barber Beast on the Bay means that the third annual event, set for Saturday, September 12, 2015, will be bigger, badder, and a whole lot beastlier.

A ten-mile course beginning at Beach 11 and ending at Waldameer will feature more challenges, including the return of an obstacle designed by engineers from GE Transportation. "GET Loco" was one of the most popular obstacles among 2014 participants, and the company has committed to sponsorship in 2015 with plans to stage another challenge. In addition to stretches of sand, the course will include trails, mud, water and hard pack surfaces.

To encourage participants to commit to and train for the event, a 50% off discount will be offered through Nov. 30. This will be the lowest discount offered for the 2015 event.

For more information or to register for the event, visit www.barberbeast.org. Follow the Barber Beast on the Bay on Facebook for special information, updates and promotions.





Participants scaled the sides of “GET Loco,” a popular obstacle designed and constructed by Erie’s GE Transportation.



Participants voted the Gannon University Ultimate Frisbee Team as the best Cheer Zone in 2014, with the East High Cheerleaders taking second place and Dance Vibe winning the third place award. Cheer Zones were new this year to give area organizations an opportunity to compete for cash prizes by cheering on and encouraging Beast participants.

Beating the Beast—Together

For Richard Burrows and his son, Logan, Barber Beast on the Bay became a family event.

Their team, Amphibious Assault, was well represented in this year’s Beast. Richard and his nephews headed the 10-mile course, while Logan participated in the Maureen Riazzi Adapted Course.

With an opportunity to bring their family together for a bonding experience, Richard said the day couldn’t have been better.

“Our family is big into sports and physical fitness,” he said, “so to share an experience like this with my son as well as my nephews is fantastic.”

During the inaugural Barber Beast on the Bay, Logan sat on the sidelines watching his dad tackle the course and obstacles. After seeing his dad participate, Logan told his mom, Mary, that he wanted to take part in the event, too.

And so this year Logan, wearing matching t-shirts with the rest of his family, took on the Beast.

“Logan was really looking forward to participating and had a great time,” Richard said.

One of Richard’s favorite moments took place after Logan completed the adapted course. Logan met Richard at the end of the 10-mile course to run the finish together. They both really liked crossing the finish line together, Richard said.

He added that there were other parts of the Beast he really enjoyed, too.

“I really enjoyed the atmosphere and the excitement surrounding the event. I also enjoyed running the obstacle

course with my nephews,” he said. “We rarely get the chance to do something together and this was a great opportunity for that.

“The setting of the beach was great and the cause of the event was great. It seemed at times like it was one big team event and the goal was for everyone to finish.”

Richard and Logan’s finish together prompted Richard to already sign his team up for the 2015 event, and he said they will be looking to add more members to the Amphibious Assault.

“We have a local treasure in Presque Isle and one in the Barber National Institute and to bring them together in an event like this is something special,” Richard said.

“To share it with my son makes it memorable. It really was a great opportunity for people with disabilities to take part in something a lot of us take for granted.”



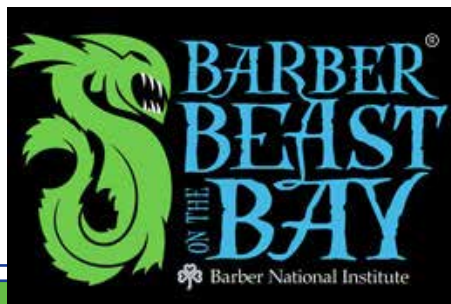
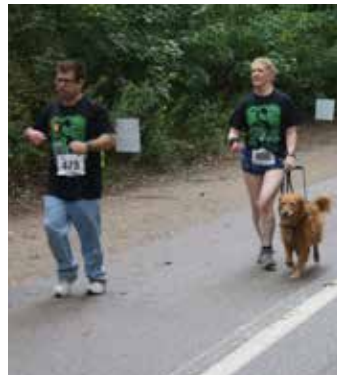
Logan Burrows, second from left, cheered his family at the 10-mile start line before heading to the Maureen Riazzi Adapted Course.



For the first time, the 10-mile course intersected with the Maureen Riazzi Adapted Course, providing an opportunity for participants from both events to complete an obstacle together. All participants had the choice of pulling themselves up a ramp while riding in a wheelchair, or pushing another participant seated in the chair up and down the ramp. Drs. Brian and Kate Stark had the opportunity to meet Kacie Shaffer as they pushed her up the ramp before they returned to the 10-mile course.



Missing the Beast?? Look for him at the Festival of Trees "Breakfast with Santa" on Nov. 29 and at the Barber Christmas Ball on Dec. 13. Both events are at the Bayfront Convention Center.



Thank You 2014 Sponsors!

Presented by



Sponsors of the Barber Beast on the Bay



THE RIAZZI & RUSSO FAMILIES





Adult Cheers Steelers to Win

When Pittsburgh took on the Baltimore Ravens a few weeks ago, the Steelers had a special fan cheering from the sidelines. Will Plant, a participant in our Pittsburgh Day Program, received two tickets and field passes thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor. The tickets went into a raffle that was won by Plant, described as the Steelers' biggest fan, who attended with staff member Patrick Cooksey. Plant's luck continued as he watched quarterback Ben Roethlisberger throw for six touchdowns in the Steelers' 43-23 win.



Taking Sail

What was it like to sail the Great Lakes two hundred years ago? More than 30 adults from the Barber National Institute had a taste of that experience when they sailed on the U. S. Brig Niagara in September. The educational day sail was sponsored by the Erie Federal Credit Union and the Flagship Niagara League (FNL). While aboard, adults saw how cannons were loaded and fired during battle, learned how to raise sails and tie knots, and saw other features of ship life.

Calendar of Events



Ladies Only Luncheon
Nov. 22
The Kahkwa Club



Autism-Friendly Time with Santa
(for all children with special needs)
Dec. 7, 9:30 – 11 a.m.
Millcreek Mall



Student Holiday Program
Dec. 11, 10 a.m.
Gym



50th Anniversary Christmas Ball
Dec. 13, 9 p.m.-1 a.m.
Bayfront Convention Center



Holiday Liturgy with Bishop Lawrence Persico
Dec. 16, 11 a.m.
Forum



Visits with Santa
Dec. 17
Elizabeth Lee Black School



Educational Opportunities

Bright Beginning Early Intervention (birth-age 3)
The Elizabeth Lee Black School
(Approved Private School)
Autism Center
Happy Hearts Day Care & Inclusive Preschool
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Program
Adult Education & Literacy

Therapies

Connections Summer Camp for children with high
functioning Autism / Asperger Syndrome
Traditional & Specialized Family Based Mental Health
Services
Advanced Children's Therapies (ACT) Program
Speech Therapy
Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapy
Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services
Psychiatric & Psychological Services
Nutritional Services
Trauma and Grief Counseling
Health Services Department
Social Skills Training

Living In The Community

Club Erie
Respite Care
Lifesharing through Family Living
Supported Living in homes and apartments
Residential Group Homes

Adult Day Services

Prevocational Services
Transitional Work Services
Supported Employment
Adult Training Facilities
Older Adult Daily Living Centers
Mental Health Partial Hospitalization

Support for Families

Blended Case Management for Children & Adults
Family Support Services
Family and Sibling Support Groups
Agency with Choice, Habilitation Services

Recreational Opportunities

ESO Dances (Expanding Sociability Opportunities)
Camp Shamrock Summer Programs
Keep Connected
Time for Me

Community Resources

Before / After School & Summer Child Care Programs
Consultative services to schools & professionals
Swimming & Water Exercise Lessons
Kids on the Block Puppet Troupe
Gift Shop

For more information about these and other
services, call the Barber National Institute at
814-453-7661 or visit our website at
www.BarberInstitute.org.

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Holiday Shopping at the Gift Shop & Online

Looking for a unique gift for the hard-to-buy-for person on your list? The Gift Shop at Barber Place has a great selection of home décor items, jewelry and accessories, as well as wreaths, greeting cards and other merchandise handmade by adults at the Barber National Institute. "Save Around Erie" books, with nearly 80 pages of coupons for area restaurants, stores and recreational spots, are also available. All proceeds from the coupon books benefit services for adults.

The Gift Shop, located in the north lobby, is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Or, shop anytime in the online store at BarberInstitute.org/giftshop. You can choose from stylish Barber-wear, including dri-fit golf shirts, hoodies and t-shirts, as well as Beast on the Bay "In Training" t-shirts, water bottles and magnets.

