

Barber Spirit

OCTOBER 2017
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BARBER
NATIONAL
INSTITUTE



Very Merry Christmas Ball



President's Message



Making dreams come true.

Dear Friends,

What does it cost to make a house a home? Most of us have some idea of the expenses that are routinely required to maintain upkeep and make repairs to our homes. We make it a priority to show similar care and concern for the 84 group homes that we operate throughout Pennsylvania that are home to our adult residents.

It is essential that we continue investing in new and updated properties, as well as needed repairs and renovations, especially as our population of residents ages and requires more accommodations to meet increasing physical challenges. In just the past two years, here is an idea of the expenditures we have made to keep pace with growing needs:

- \$1.1 million for six new group homes.
- \$373,000 in capital purchases that include adaptations in kitchens and bathrooms, entry ways, driveways, etc.
- \$395,000 for eight new vans, including four lift vans.
- \$1.26 million for supplies and labor for needed repairs.

= \$3,128,000 in total investments in homes for residents.

More than 300 adults are currently residing in our community group homes throughout Erie County and the suburban Pittsburgh and Philadelphia areas. We have made a commitment to them—and their families—to provide the highest quality care, opportunities for inclusion and a nurturing environment where they can reach and maintain their potential for independence. We thank you, our friends and donors, for supporting us as we meet our mission.

We are getting ready for the busiest time of our year with preparations for the holiday season, the Ladies Only Luncheon and the Christmas Ball. We look forward to seeing so many of our friends during these events, and extend our wishes for a happy holiday and good health and prosperity in the New Year.

Sincerely,

John J. Barber
President & Chief Executive Officer



Shillelagh Man of the Year Honored

Bridget and John Barber, right, presented the 2017 Shillelagh Man of the Year Award to Peter Russo, left, pictured with his wife, Flo. The honor was presented at the Shillelagh Tournament held at Riverside Golf Course in June. Russo is a former basketball player and official who went on to serve as an administrator in Erie City and County governments, as well as the athletic director for Mercyhurst College, and was recognized for his efforts to raise funds on behalf of the Barber National Institute.

Mission Statement

We "Make dreams come true." We provide children and adults with autism, intellectual disabilities and behavioral health challenges 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.

On the cover: Joe and Rhonda Sember, chair couple for the 2017 Christmas Ball, get in a merry spirit with students.



Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, Aquatics Coordinator Mary Kaliszak and John Barber present a gift of appreciation to board members of the Employees Community Service Fund of GE.

New Artwork Makes a Splash

Colorful fish, friendly dolphins and a child snorkeling in vibrant blue water are greeting students, adults and patrons of the Barber National Institute pool, thanks to a collaborative artwork funded by a donation from the Employees Community Service Fund of GE.

"Tranquility," a painted mural measuring 32 by 8 feet, was created under the direction of Lee Steadman, artistic director at Bloom Collaborative, a division of Stairways Behavioral Health, and painted by nearly 80 artists from four community organizations.

"The artwork is a beautiful addition to our pool that will be very calming and soothing for all of our visitors," said Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, executive vice president of the Barber National Institute. "Swimming is a great exercise for everyone, and is particularly well suited for children and adults with autism who often enjoy the repetitive movements of swimming. We believe that this artwork will really enhance the experience for everyone, especially those who may be anxious around the water."

The idea was suggested by aquatics coordinator Mary Kaliszak and her staff, and is one of many projects at the pool that has been funded by the Employees Community Service Fund of GE.

Artists from Stairways, the Regional Cancer Center, the Veterans Administration and Erie Homes for Children and Adults were all enthusiastic about being part of the project. "As soon as I told people where this was going, their interest was even greater," said Steadman. "This has been the biggest cross section of the community to ever work on such a project."

"In a sense, we are all on a journey of recovery," said Steadman. "We all carry something every day. We use the arts to make that journey a positive one."

The Barber National Institute aquatic center is used by students and adults at the Barber National Institute, and is open to the community for swim lessons, exercise classes, open family swims and pool parties. The next session of American Red Cross certified swimming lessons begins Oct. 23.

More information about pool classes and services is available at BarberInstitute.org/pool or by calling 814-878-4071.



2017 Christmas Ball



Barber National Institute



Christmas Ball Makes Erie Merry

The laughter of excited children, strains of melodious carols in the distance, strands of welcoming lights adorning storefronts and homes. There's no question that Christmas is a time unparalleled for its warmth, wonder and spirit of giving.

All that is special and wonderful about this festive season will be celebrated with "Very Merry Erie," the 2017 Christmas Ball benefiting the Barber National Institute. The gala is Saturday, Dec. 9, at the Bayfront Convention Center.

This year's chair couple is Joe and Rhonda Sember, long-time volunteers at the Barber National Institute, who are returning to the post after chairing one of the largest and most successful Balls in 2008. (See accompanying story.)

"We are honored to have Joe and Rhonda leading our efforts because they have a very deep appreciation for our mission and understanding about the vital services we provide," said John Barber, president and CEO of the Barber National Institute. "As a member of our board of directors and the finance committee, Joe's expertise has been invaluable in negotiating the many challenging budget issues we face. And Rhonda has done everything - from serving as president of our school's parent group to chairing the Ladies Only Luncheon. Of course, they are most familiar to our children as Santa and Mrs. Claus, roles they fulfill every Christmas when they distribute gifts to our more than 240 students."

Two sponsorship opportunities are available to offer businesses or organizations an opportunity to support the Barber mission. Both levels include promotional activities to recognize the donation while the \$5,000 Gold level includes a table of 10 and the \$2,500 Emerald level offers four reservations.

Make this the very merriest holiday ever by joining your friends, neighbors and coworkers at the 2017 Christmas Ball.

Very Merry Erie

2017 Christmas Ball

Saturday, Dec. 9

Bayfront Convention Center

Doors open at 8 p.m.

Dancing 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Music by The Company's Best

Includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, desserts, soft drinks and two cocktails per person. Cash bar also available.

Complimentary valet parking

\$95 per reservation

Specially priced overnight packages include bayview room, free parking and breakfast buffet. Call Bayfront Erie Sheraton Hotel at 814-454-2005 or Courtyard Erie Bayfront at 814-636-1005.

Information and reservations are available online at BarberInstitute.org/ball. Or, contact 814-878-4096 or NicholeMiller@BarberInstitute.org





Santa & Mrs. Claus, better known as Joe and Rhonda Schember, visit every classroom at Christmas.

The day their twins were born, Joe Schember went to the library before heading home to tell his parents. He wanted to be prepared for any questions and he knew little about his daughter's diagnosis. Jodi was born with Down syndrome; her brother, Joe, was not.

As Joe signed out three woefully outdated and discouraging books, he discovered that Maureen Barber was standing in line behind him at the library. The books were of little help, but a simple phone call to the Barber Center changed everything.

Within weeks, Joe and Rhonda met Dr. Gertrude A. Barber and Maureen when Jodi was enrolled in Early Intervention. As their infant daughter began receiving physical therapy a family bond developed. Everyone, including her twin brother and two-year old sister, was involved in the process and took great pride in Jodi's accomplishments. Even when she was later diagnosed with Autism and lost her speech, the support and encouragement continued.

Not surprisingly, a lifetime of service to the Barber National Institute developed. During the last three decades, there is scarcely an event or cause that did not actively involve the Schembers.

Joe is a long-time member of the Board of Directors, where his years of banking experience play a key role on the Finance Committee. Rhonda was president of the school parent group and a member of the Learning Center Advisory Group while Jodi was a student here. She also chaired the Ladies Only Luncheon and continues to serve on the planning committee for the event.

Schembers Bring Spirit of Santa Year Round

The couple is probably best known, though, for transforming into Santa and Mrs. Claus every Christmas. They have visited each of the 240 students in the Elizabeth Lee Black School for 30 years. Their other two children, Jaime and Joe, have served as Santa's elves, as well as volunteering in other ways.

In 2008, Rhonda and Joe chaired one of the largest and most successful Christmas Balls ever. This year they'll be doing it again on Saturday, December 9, 2017. They invite you to take part in their vision of a "Very Merry Erie."

Joe and Rhonda with daughters Jaime and Jodi, front, and son Joe.





BEAST IN BRIEF...

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

"I love this race, and I love the cause it supports."

"The whole event is awesome. I never thought I'd ever do something like this at my age, but after the first year, I am hooked."

"Best experience of my life!!" *

(* Comments from 2017 Participant Survey)

Crossing 10 miles of sand, trails and muddy swamps. Climbing, crawling and struggling through 30 obstacles. Supporting a cause that changes the lives of children and adults in our communities every day.

This is what Barber Beast on the Bay is about. The fifth annual event, held Sept. 9 at Presque Isle State Park, set new records:

- 1,320 participants from 20 states and Canada
- Nearly 130 adults with physical or intellectual disabilities on the adapted course
- More than 230 volunteers
- 138 teams
- Proceeds supporting services for more than 5,370 individuals with intellectual disabilities, autism or behavioral health challenges.

More than 250 participants are already signed up for the 2018 Beast. Make sure you're one of them! Visit BarberBeast.org for registration and information.



More than 130 teams participated, including groups from area businesses such as Wegmans.



Super Friends, the largest Beast team with more than 130 members, donated \$540 in funds raised from training sessions held over the summer.



Ten mile and adapted course participants shared an obstacle before going on to cross the finish line together.



John Barber, third from left, congratulates Beast winners during an awards presentation. Joining him, from left, are first-place female finisher KoreyAnne Smith of Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania; first-place male finisher Andrew Hellman from Erie; Patrick Eller and his daughter, Braelynn; Jim Dobrich; Emily Smeltz; and Colleen Schaffer from PNC Bank, the fundraising awards sponsor.



WHY I VOLUNTEER

Early on event day, while it is still dark outside, Nancy Zill is already at her post. She's waiting for Barber Beast on the Bay participants to arrive at Waldameer Park and is all set to hand over their packets that will get them on their way.

Even on years that it has been cold and raining, Nancy has been there. While many people volunteer to have fun and be part of an exciting event, Nancy has another reason.

"This is my way of honoring the memory of my son, Michael," the Fairview resident says.

Michael attended the day program on the Girard campus for many years, enjoying bowling, arts and crafts, and working on math and reading skills.

Michael's family have been dedicated benefactors to the Girard campus and Nancy believes that supporting the Beast on the Bay is a way to express her appreciation for the services that enriched his life.

"Michael really enjoyed everything that he did in the Girard program, and I am very grateful to the Barber National Institute."



Adapted Course Brings Smiles





BEAST FUNDRAISERS SET RECORD

2017 was a record-breaking year for Beast on the Bay fundraisers – participants who sign up to raise donations to benefit the Barber National Institute. Collectively, the group raised more than \$13,000, the largest amount raised in the five-year history of the event.

The top fundraiser for the fifth consecutive year, Patrick Eller, also set a personal record by raising \$7,500. The Erie native, who is on active duty with the U.S. Army in Virginia, has raised a total of nearly \$20,000 in support of the Barber National Institute.

The second-place fundraiser, for the second year in a row, is Emily Smeltz from Indiana, Pennsylvania, with \$1,500 in donations, followed by Jim Dobrich of Erie, who raised \$1,000.

Any participant can become a fundraiser, and receive a free registration by raising \$500 in donations. More information is available at BarberBeast.org/fundraise

THANK YOU SPONSORS!



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Getting in the Beat



A group of lucky students and adults followed the beat of their own drummer—with some help from a renowned percussionist and inspirational teacher. Jim Donovan, right, a founding member of Rusted Root who now leads the Sun King Warriors, held a drumming circle at the Barber National Institute for adults in the ESO camp and students in this summer's extended school year program. The visit was organized by Band Together Pittsburgh, a non-profit that uses music to engage, inspire and enrich the lives of youth on the autism spectrum and their families.



Summer of Fun



Connections Camp embarked on many outings this summer, including a trip to the ANNA Shelter, a local shelter that cares for abused and neglected pets. One young camper especially loved her visit with a friendly kitten.



The highlight of the ESO camp for adults is a talent show, which features singing, dancing, joke telling and much more. These three ESO Campers proudly take their kudos after their performance. To see more from the show, visit <https://youtu.be/cFIUCPFuvQ4>



Our Camp Shamrock made sure to stay active! For Patrick, that meant plenty of time for his favorite sport—basketball.

Pittsburgh Group Home Life: *Just Like Family*

In August, Michael Massof celebrated a very special anniversary. It has been 18 years since he moved into a Barber National Institute suburban Pittsburgh group home after living most of his life at Western Center in nearby Canonsburg.

Michael's sister, Eileen Barney, remembers how much her parents worried about moving their son away from the life they all knew at the institution into a new one in the community. "But from day one, we were welcomed and included in every facet of Michael's care," she said. "We were fortunate to have been embraced as a family by the Barber National Institute."

Before her parents passed away a few years ago, Eileen promised them that she would always be there for Michael, now age 62. She did not fully understand what that would mean until Michael became critically ill in November 2016. "Here I was, with the world of decision-making for him on my shoulders," Eileen said. "Very fortunately for me, I was never alone, nor was Michael."

Michael, who has atrial fibrillation, or an irregular heartbeat, had developed a serious case of pneumonia. Eileen said that staff from the Barber Institute group home, administration and nursing all provided support, beginning with the team that met her in the emergency room. "I immediately felt a sense of relief," she said. "His extended family was with him."

Eileen recounted how the staff knew him so well that they provided complete information to the medical team. For the next four and a half months, she said that they rode the "roller coaster of ups and downs" as Michael experienced progress and setbacks on the road to recovery.

"Times when I felt so low about Michael's situation, the staff was always at my rescue, with kind words and positive thoughts," said Eileen.

Eileen said that Michael enjoys residing in the group home, where he loves "interacting with the staff that he and I have come to know as family."

Eileen has a long list of people that she thanks by name for all that they did for her brother. And, she is thankful to the organization that became a part of her family's life 18 years ago. "The care has been wonderful, and everyone has been so good to Michael," said Eileen. "It's clear that they love him like an extended member of their families. Words can't express my appreciation to everyone at the Barber National Institute."



“Difference Maker” Achieves Goal

Everyone has goals in life, whether it’s traveling to a special place or learning a new skill. For Dustin Nesbit, the goal was swimming the one-mile trek across Presque Isle Bay.

Achieving this dream took months of hard work. But when the Bay Swim was held on June 24, Dustin and his team were there to make it a reality.

Dustin is a participant in the Barber National Institute Lifesharing program, which enables an individual with an intellectual disability to join a provider family or a companion in their private home as a fully participating member of that family.

Dustin, who has autism, loves to swim and jokingly refers to himself as having “fish-like” skills. When he expressed his desire to participate in the Bay Swim, his provider family contacted Mary Kaliszak, the aquatics coordinator at the Barber National Institute, to help with training.

Last October, Dustin and Mary began training at the YMCA four days a week, swimming anywhere from 36 to 72 laps a day. To test swimming in open water, Dustin and Mary had a practice run in Edinboro Lake, where the water temperature was 53 degrees.

The swimsuit and goggles that Dustin typically uses would not be adequate for bay swimming, so Divers World and the Erie Sports Store provided a wetsuit and goggles for the event.

But Dustin wanted the Bay Swim to be more than just a personal achievement. So, he set up an online GoFundMe

page and raised more than \$4,000 for the Autism Society of NW Pennsylvania, 106.3 WCTL and his church.

Dustin said that since joining his provider family six years ago, he has been encouraged to give back. His Lifesharing mother, Stephanie Fabian, often tells him to “be a difference maker.” Out of the water, Dustin spends much of his week volunteering with

organizations such as Meals on Wheels, the Salvation Army, Because You Care, Goodell Gardens, the Maritime Museum and House of Hope.

Mary and six other swimmers, known as Team Dustin, joined him in the Bay Swim. At the finish line, a group of friends were waiting to celebrate his accomplishment. One of their signs, “Best Day Ever,” summed up what Dustin was feeling. Now, having reached his goal, he hopes that everyone can learn to “be a difference maker and achieve their dreams like I achieved mine.”



Dustin Nesbitt celebrates at the Bay Swim finish line with Stephanie Fabian, his Lifesharing provider, and Mary Kaliszak, aquatics director at the Barber National Institute and Dustin's trainer.

Erie Siebenbuerger Club Has a Home Run with Baseball Clinics

What kid—or adult—wouldn’t want to shag balls with the Erie SeaWolves? Take batting practice with SeaWolves coaches? Run the bases at UPMC Park?

That’s just what campers, students and adults at the Barber National Institute experienced this summer, thanks to a \$6,200 donation from the Erie Siebenbuerger Club. This marked the fourth year that the club sponsored the day-long clinics which were held for youngsters in Connections Camp as well as students and adults at the Barber National Institute.



An adult camper gets in the swing of batting practice at camp with the Erie SeaWolves.



High five! Our Erie SeaWolves baseball clinic was a huge success thanks to the players and coaches and the Erie Siebenbuerger Club.



Connections campers Jvyn Maldonado and Andrea Hecker, front row, thank the Erie Siebenbuerger Club for funding the baseball clinic. Joining them, from left, are Greg Coleman, president of the Erie SeaWolves; Demetrius Coe, Barber National Institute community integration coordinator; Executive Vice President Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey; Intellectual Disabilities Department Manager Paul Causgrove; Siebenbuerger board members Steve Curcio and Matt Gustafson; Advancement Associate Peter Russo; club board member Tom Skarupski; and Mark Pirello, assistant general manager of the Erie SeaWolves.

Affiliation Enhances Services for Adults

The Barber National Institute and Bollinger Enterprises, Inc., a provider serving Warren and Forest counties, have announced an affiliation that is expected to take place in spring 2018, reflecting similar values and history shared by the two organizations.

"Throughout our exchange over the past several months, it has become clear that both Barber and Bollinger believe in providing the highest quality consumer-driven services, and in the importance of community inclusion for adults with disabilities and their families," said John Barber, president and CEO. "Bringing together the resources of both organizations will enable us to continue to achieve these goals as well as expand choices and opportunities to meet the needs and preferences of each individual.

"As we move forward, our shared priority is to maintain the culture and mission of Bollinger Enterprises as it has been shaped by the citizens of the Warren community," Barber said.

Since 2007, the Barber National Institute has been providing services to Warren-Forest counties for children with autism and mental health needs from offices at 1003 Pennsylvania Avenue West in Warren.

"We have been welcomed into the Warren region over the past decade and now look forward to working with those in the Warren community to meet the needs of adults with disabilities and their families," Barber said.

Employment First!

October is Supported Employment Awareness Month. Pennsylvania is an Employment First state, making community employment the goal for every adult. In 2017, 19 individuals have been hired in the Erie region. Learn more about employment at BarberInstitute.org.



Adults Vacation in Nation's Capital

Summer vacation meant a trip to our nation's capital when Philadelphia Job Coach Gale Williams took two adults on a day trip to Washington, D.C. Shirley and Charnese enjoyed seeing the monuments and many other historic sites, and especially liked visiting the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Calendar of Events

"Social Safety" Presentation for Adults
Oct. 18
Barber National Institute Forum

Ladies Only Luncheon
Nov. 18
The Kahkwa Club

Disability Employment Awareness Month Presentation
Oct. 20
Forum

"Sensory-Friendly Santa"
Dec. 3
Millcreek Mall

Very Merry Erie

Christmas Ball
Dec. 9
Bayfront Convention Center



Barber National Institute

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
Pre Employment Transition Services for Youth

THERAPIES

Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic
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
Parent Child Interactive Therapies

LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

Respite Care
Lifesharing through Family Living
Supported Living in homes and apartments
Residential Group Homes
Community Habilitation

DAYTIME COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Club Erie
Community Endeavors
Prevocational Services
Transitional Work Services
Supported Employment
Adult Training Facilities
Older Adult Daily Living Centers

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

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

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Connections Summer Camp for children with high functioning Autism/Asperger Syndrome
ESO Dances and Summer Camp (Expanding Social Opportunities)
Camp Shamrock Summer Program
Time for Me

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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

**For more information, call the
Barber National Institute
at 814-453-7661 or visit
www.BarberInstitute.org.**



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Erie Gives Sets Record

Thanks to gifts from 131 generous donors, the Barber National Institute set a new record this year for Erie Gives. With the pro-rated match from the Erie Community Foundation and its sponsors, \$16,543 was raised to help fund services for our children and adults. Bridget Barber, second from right, director of External Affairs at the Barber National Institute, accepted the donation from Erie Community Foundation board members Maryann Yochim Flaherty, Deborah Murphy and President Michael Batchelor.