



Allegheny Valley School PERSPECTIVES

Vol. 23 No. 2
Fall/Winter 2009

Providing community residential environments and therapeutic programs throughout Pennsylvania for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

ALLEGHENY VALLEY SCHOOL NEWS

The Terrible Towel® Benefits AVS Clients Throughout Pennsylvania

The Terrible Towel® is an essential component of any Pittsburgh Steelers fan's game-time gear. When the Steelers play, a sea of yellow towels constantly waves, helping to cheer on the team. That sea of towels not only helps to rally the Steelers, but also supports Allegheny Valley School (AVS).



Ricky shows off his Terrible Towel®.

In 1996, Myron Cope gave The Terrible Towel® trademark to AVS. Since then, a portion of the proceeds from the sale of any officially licensed product benefits the children and adults in AVS' care. During the past 13 years, The Terrible Towel® royalties have totaled more than \$3 million and have been used to support important projects throughout Pennsylvania. "Naturally, when the Steelers win, more Terrible Towel® products are sold," comments President and CEO **Regis Champ**. "The Steelers success on the field and their 6th Super Bowl win in 2009 has done so much to improve the quality of life for the more than 900 individuals in our care."

Proceeds from The Terrible Towel® are contributed to the Capital Development Fund and are used to enhance AVS' services. Recent projects supported by the Towel funds include:

- New furnishings for 17 community group homes, 2 campuses and a training room
- New driveways, ramps, sidewalks and patios at 9 locations
- Equipment to train staff to perform CPR
- A wheelchair scale
- Equipment to safely transfer clients to and from their wheelchairs
- New carpeting and flooring at 7 community group homes and 3 campuses
- New roofs at 4 community group homes and a campus
- Kitchen improvements at 2 community homes
- Automatic doors at a campus
- Electrical upgrades to accommodate life support equipment at a campus
- Therapeutic mats, wedges and standers
- A new fire alarm and smoke detector system for a campus
- New windows for a campus and community home

See "Terrible Towel" continued on page 6.

AVS Celebrates its

50th Anniversary in 2010

Allegheny Valley School will celebrate 50 years of service in 2010. Since opening its doors in 1960, AVS has grown from a single site agency serving 10 children into a multi-faceted organization with programs and facilities serving more than 900 children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) across Pennsylvania.

Through its 125+ programs and facilities in nine PA counties, AVS provides a continuum of care and offers life-long opportunities for some of society's most vulnerable citizens.

Look for more information in the Spring/Summer issue of *Perspectives* and online at www.avs.net to learn about how we will be celebrating our golden anniversary.

New AVS Website

In 2010, AVS will be launching a new website. The web address will remain www.avs.net. On the new site, which will have a "look and feel" similar to the NHS Human Services site, you will be able to make a donation, apply for a job and download a copy of AVS' *Perspectives* newsletter. The new website will feature updated pictures of residents and staff, and AVS videos. Please continue to visit www.avs.net for the most current AVS information. If you would like to receive an email when the new website has been launched, please send your request to kgremba@avs.net.

Myron Cope Special Equipment Fund

The Myron Cope Special Equipment Fund was established in 2008 to raise funds to help purchase specialized equipment that aids in the clients' therapies, enhances their independence, fosters their interaction with others and so much more. AVS is grateful that the community has contributed more than \$11,000 to this effort during the past year. To make a donation to the Fund, visit www.avs.net (specify that your gift is for the fund) or send your contribution to 1996 Ewings Mill Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108, attn: Development Department. Checks can be made payable to Allegheny Valley School - Myron Cope Special Equipment Fund.

Myron Cope's Legacy Lives on at Terrible Towel® Terrace

On June 4, a group of 4th and 5th grade students from McMurray Elementary presented a check to benefit Allegheny Valley School. The check was presented to **Elizabeth Cope**, daughter of legendary Pittsburgher **Myron Cope**.

Each year, groups of classrooms at McMurray Elementary are divided into "neighborhoods" and it has become a tradition for the students to name their neighborhood after a hero. This year the students chose "Myron Cope's Terrible Towel® Terrace" as a neighborhood of two 5th grade classrooms and three 4th grade classrooms.

As a school of character, each McMurray neighborhood completes service projects throughout the year. Last Christmas The Terrible Towel® Terrace donated and wrapped packages of coloring books, crayons and other items for the residents at AVS. And in the spring they raised \$380.50 through the 4th grade Economics Fair and the 5th grade Minutes Read where the students collected pledges for the amount of time they read during Read Across America Month.

Thank you to the students, families and teachers of McMurray Elementary for their support of Allegheny Valley School.



Elizabeth Cope accepts a check for AVS from teachers at McMurray Elementary School.

Pittsburgh Campus Activities

Fun in the Sun

Fun in the Sun is a new activity that was created by Greenhouse Coordinator **Debra Dolan**. The activity gives the clients of the Pittsburgh Campus classrooms the chance to participate in activities in the LHAS sensory garden. Activities included helping to plant, making flower boxes and watering the plants. The activities provide olfactory (smell) and tactile stimulation. The coordinator also helped develop learning games for individuals by having them locate plants around the garden and greenhouse.

Special Olympics

The Allegheny County Track and Field Games were held at Baldwin High School on May 9. Twenty-six athletes from the Pittsburgh Campus participated. Residents visited with friends while competing in events such as wheelchair races, softball throw, independent walks and more.



AVS resident Mark with Coach Lori.

Day Camp

The Pittsburgh Campus had a week-long Day Camp in June for 18 residents. Activities throughout the week included building and launching water bottle rockets, building and flying kites and a day of water games. The group also took trips to the National Aviary and Deer Lakes County Park where they went fishing and had a picnic.



Ellen launches a water bottle rocket during Day Camp.

Art Camp

This year, Art Camp gave 25 residents the chance to create a variety of costumes and backdrops for the Fall Festival which

celebrated Pittsburgh's 250 years. The biggest project was making five pierogie costumes to help cheer on the Pittsburgh Pirates. Residents also celebrated the city by painting self portraits similar to Andy Warhol's famous Marilyn Monroe painting.



Pierogie costumes created by residents during Art Camp.

Fall Festival

Pittsburgh Campus held its annual Fall Festival on September 24. The day included a picnic style lunch, bake sale, petting zoo, climbing wall, dunking booth and other activity booths. The AVS resident choir performed some of their favorite songs for the crowd in the afternoon, followed by the annual parade through the campus. This year's theme was *Pittsburgh 250* and celebrated the city's history through costumes and banners. The festival ended in the evening with the band *American Pie* performing for residents and staff.

Remembering Lesli Staats



On August 30, AVS lost a dedicated and long-term employee. **Lesli Staats**, House Manager for Wildwood, passed away suddenly and her death has deeply affected many who were lucky enough to have worked with her over her 20+ years at AVS. Lesli gave of herself in so many ways. She brought passion to the job of caring for the individuals at Wildwood. Along with her family, she created an extraordinary atmosphere that was not only conducive for individualized growth, but also provided a true sense of family for all of those who worked or lived in her home. Lesli understood and was committed to the mission of Allegheny

Valley School. AVS has lost a dedicated employee, a strong and dependable leader and role model who approached her livelihood with a smile and enthusiasm. Lesli was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister, supervisor and friend, and is deeply missed by many.

Sunset Riders Motorcycle Run

On June 20, the Sunset Riders Motorcycle Club, Inc. held its 15th annual Charity Poker Run to benefit the more than 100 AVS clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Butler and Mercer counties. Fifty riders revved-up their engines at Zanotti Motor Company for the 54-mile ride that concluded at the Slippery Rock Program Center. Thank you to Miller Auto Parts & Paint Company Inc. for being the Key Sponsor of this year's event!

Music was provided by the live band *16 Eyes* who entertained the crowd throughout the afternoon activities that included lunch, field events, door prizes and raffles.

Thank you also to the 22 families and friends who supported the event with monetary donations.

Proceeds from past rides have helped AVS to purchase much needed equipment such as touch screens for computers, physical and occupational therapy equipment, a wheelchair swing, communication devices, sensory equipment and more.

AVS is most appreciative to the Sunset Riders Motorcycle Club, sponsors, participants, donors and volunteers who helped to make this annual event a success.



AVS resident Brian takes a ride.

Western PA Red Hat Society Gala

On September 30, the Western PA chapter of the Red Hat Society *Allegheny Valley School Divas* hosted its first gala. The event was held at the Edward J. Zapp Program Center and 68 members attended from the Pittsburgh Campus and Kennedy, Zapp and Slippery Rock Program Centers. The event started with a grand march where each resident's name was called out and they walked through a red and purple archway; each participant was awarded a certificate from the chapter Queen, Social Services Director **Rita Christner**. The red hatters also enjoyed lunch, Red Hat BINGO and dancing throughout the event. The ladies left the gala with Red Hat purses filled with goodies. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this a wonderful event.



Cynthia walks through the decorated archway during the grand march.

PHMC Activities

Highmark Volunteers Visit PHMC

A group of ten employees from Highmark volunteered their time at PHMC in June to work on outdoor projects. Maintenance Supervisor **John Weber**, along with **Jim Phillips**, guided **Sandie Gaffney** and her group as they stained the pavilion, shed, picnic tables and fence. They also repainted the lines in the parking lot and the railing leading to the group home. Many thanks to the volunteers from Highmark.



Highmark Volunteers at PHMC.

Residents Attend the Prom

Jeffrey, Chad, Tommy, Karyn and **Princesa** got dressed up and headed out to their prom in May. They each posed for pictures and danced the night away with staff and friends. Princesa was named Queen of the Prom, capping off her final year at Western Pennsylvania School for The Blind.

Carnival

PHMC celebrated the summer with its annual carnival in August. This year's theme was *Caribbean Cabana Bash* and the weather was perfect—sunny with a light breeze. Activities included carnival games, making rhythmical instruments, digging for buried treasure and more. During the picnic lunch, everyone relaxed and enjoyed steel drum music from *Island Sound*. The afternoon included a live band, dunking booth and snow cones.



Chad doing the limbo at the carnival.

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central Pennsylvania Supports AVS

Many thanks are due to Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central Pennsylvania for its grant award to AVS' Hummelstown Campus. The grant was used to purchase a Hoyer® Scale for the Campus. The scale is being used with a Hoyer® Lift and allows the staff to simply, efficiently, and accurately obtain a resident's weight. Measuring an individual's weight loss or gain is important to determining his or her dietary needs.



We are most appreciative to Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central Pennsylvania for its support of our services.

NAFL Minor League Football Event Benefits AVS

On July 11, the North American Football League (NAFL) kicked off its 2009 minor league football season in Harrisburg. The League chose AVS as its charity this year and donated a portion of the proceeds from this event to the Hummelstown Campus. During a presentation between games, the NAFL announced that \$500 would be donated to AVS for use at the Campus. We would like to thank the NAFL for their support of AVS in Central PA.

For more information about the NAFL, visit www.nafl.org.

Ronald at Camp

Ronald from Church had an exciting new experience this summer. He spent a week at Eagle Springs Camp which specializes in providing camping experiences for individuals with disabilities. Ron attended camp in August where he participated in crafts, swimming, camp fires and theme nights. One of the night's themes was *Aladdin*, in honor of Ron's love of the movie. Ronald is looking forward to returning for a spring weekend of camping and another week at camp next summer.



Ronald with a volunteer from Eagle Springs Camp.

Central PA Activities

Cedar Crest and Wilshire



Pamela, Jamie and Ricky at Harrah's Luau.

Pamela and Jamie from Cedar Crest and Ricky from Wilshire took a trip to Atlantic City this past summer. They stayed at Trump Plaza where they saw the magic show *Carnival of Wonders*. They also attended a Luau at Harrah's, strolled along the boardwalk and had dinner at the Rainforest Café. They are hoping to visit Atlantic City again in the future.

Hummelstown Campus

Each summer, AVS' school-aged individuals in Central PA are offered a program at the Hummelstown Campus. The program offers a variety of theme weeks. This summer during safety week in August, six gentlemen visited The Northwest EMS building in Elizabethtown, PA. They had a great learning experience and were able to see a lot of equipment used for emergencies. Eugene was very excited about having his picture taken in the ambulance. The men at the EMS building were generous with their time as they explained and demonstrated the equipment.



Eugene gets a tour of an ambulance.

South Hills

Wayne, Steven, Susan and Cindy had a busy summer. They attended the circus at the Giant Center, went bowling, attended the Elizabethtown Fair and enjoyed going to Root's Farmers Market. They celebrated July 4th by listening to the U.S. Army Band and watching fireworks.

Woodbine

The residents from Woodbine celebrated the 4th of July by having a big picnic which included friends from Seemore and Spring Garden. They also attended concerts: Wauntia went to see *Beyoncé* and Lester saw *Rascal Flatts*. When at home, everyone enjoyed being able to sit outside on the screened porch and take in the summer weather.

Mail Call...



If you receive duplicate copies of this newsletter, would like someone to be added to the mailing list or would like your name removed from it, please call the Development Department at (412) 299-7777.

Philadelphia's 20th Anniversary Celebration

Allegheny Valley School is celebrating 20 years of providing services in Southeastern PA. Today, 301 individuals reside in and receive services through 42 AVS programs in Bucks, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties. Most receive their day services at our Philadelphia Program Center in Treves or at the Philadelphia Campus. Throughout the region, AVS provides jobs to more than 600 people.

On October 8, AVS held an event to celebrate this special anniversary. The celebration brought together 200 staff, clients and friends for a retrospective look at AVS in the region. Guests gathered at the Philadelphia Campus and enjoyed dinner, prizes, a short program and dancing into the evening.

AVS employees at the 20th Anniversary Celebration.



AVS residents Lesley and Gary help Eastern Region Director Jennifer Szopo to celebrate.



Eastern PA Activities

Byberry

The residents at Byberry had a busy summer. They took their third boat excursion on the *Spirit of Friendship*, cruising down the river while listening to a live band. They are already looking forward to returning for a fourth time next summer. The gentlemen spent many nights dining out at their favorite restaurants such as Red Lobster, Old Country Buffet, Pizza Hut and Golden Corral. They also played games at Dave & Buster's, attended movie nights at the Carousel House and local movie theaters, and went to church services.

Clearfield and Elmwood

The residents and staff from Clearfield and Elmwood took a cruise on the *Spirit of Philadelphia* this past August. They spent the day dancing, sight-seeing and having a delicious lunch. Everyone had a great time and is excited to return for another cruise in the future.



Residents and staff from Elmwood at the Spirit of Philadelphia.

Way to Go Phillies!



One hundred residents and staff took part in special non-profit days at Citizens Bank Ball Park and cheered on the 2008 World Series Champions and 2009 National League Champion Philadelphia Phillies. The games were held in April, July and September and four out of the five games attended were victorious. Games were attended by groups from Byberry, Girard, Gorgas, Lindbergh, Manheim, North 51st, Valley and Woodhaven. The Phillies were able to provide needed wheelchair seating, helping to make this opportunity available to more clients at AVS.

AVS congratulates the Philadelphia Phillies on another outstanding season!

North Crescent and Yardley

The ladies from North Crescent and Yardley enjoyed many outings over the summer. They visited The Philadelphia Zoo, The New Jersey Adventure Aquarium, The Philadelphia Police & Fire Heroes Thrill Show, Please Touch Museum and dances at the Philadelphia Developmental Disabilities Corporation and the Carousel House. The ladies also dined out at local restaurants including Olive Garden, IHOP, Red Lobster, TGI Friday's and Boston Market.

Happy Birthday Betty



Betty, a resident of the Philadelphia Campus, celebrated her 80th birthday in June. Betty has been a resident at AVS for more than 20 years and celebrated this milestone birthday with staff and friends at her home. Betty wore a pretty pink dress with a matching hat for the special occasion. Her party included a beautiful cake, balloons, activities and dancing.

Betty celebrates her 80th Birthday.

View employment opportunities and apply online at www.avs.net.

Other Ways to Help Allegheny Valley School

GoodSearch/GoodShop

Support AVS while searching and shopping on the Internet with GoodSearch.com. The money raised will be contributed to the Capital Development Fund. Use www.GoodSearch.com like any other search engine – the site is powered by Yahoo! Designate Allegheny Valley School as your charity of choice and click “Verify.” From then on, each time you use GoodSearch, \$.01 will be contributed to AVS.

GoodSearch.com also includes GoodShop, an online shopping mall. Each purchase made via the GoodShop mall results in a donation to the user’s designated charity – averaging 3% of the sale, but going up to 20% or more. Be sure to designate Allegheny Valley School as your designated charity!

From November 2006 to October 2009, AVS has received \$329.36 from GoodSearch/GoodShop. The more people who search the internet using GoodSearch or shop with GoodShop, the larger that number will be!

Gordon Food Service



Support AVS while shopping at Gordon Food Service (GFS) stores. AVS has signed up for GFS’ *Partnership and Savings Program*. There is no membership fee or card to join. Simply shop and indicate to the cashier that you are shopping to support Allegheny Valley School. GFS will track your purchases and each purchase made will result in a contribution to AVS. The money raised will be contributed to the Capital Development Fund. Since joining this program in May 2008, AVS has earned \$131.28.

Recycling cell phones and ink cartridges



Please send your used printer, fax and copier cartridges, as well as old cell phones, to Kelly Gremba at the Corporate Center. AVS earns money for the Capital Development Fund simply by recycling these used cartridges and cell phones that were destined for the trash. (Please note that we cannot accept Epson cartridges or cartridges that have already been recycled.) Since 2003, AVS has received \$3,232.18 from recycling these products!

Please forward used ink cartridges and cell phones to Kelly Gremba, Allegheny Valley School, Corporate Center, 1996 Ewings Mill Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108.

Shopping at Target



Use your REDcard (Target® VISA® Credit Card, Target Credit Card and Target Check Card) to shop at Target, Target.com and elsewhere and Target will donate a portion of the purchases to Allegheny Valley School. To apply for a REDcard, please visit your nearest Target store or apply online at www.target.com/redcard. Designate AVS’ school ID # 126464 by calling 1-800-316-6142, using the store kiosk or visiting www.target.com/tcoe. This program helps to raise money for AVS’ Capital Development Fund. A total of 7 people have signed up for this program which has raised \$326.12 for AVS to date.

“Terrible Towel” from page 1.

AVS is very fortunate to benefit from The Terrible Towel® and takes great care to make sure the proceeds received are put to good use. Support of the Capital Development Fund from The Terrible Towel®, as well as from foundations, corporations, community groups and individuals, helps AVS to maintain and improve its programs and facilities and to better serve its clients.

Most of The Terrible Towel® products are created, manufactured, marketed and distributed through an arrangement with the Pittsburgh Steelers. In addition to the many products arranged by the Steelers, including a variety of towels, gloves, hats, bibs, aprons, magnets and so much more (news.steelers.com/catalog/TerribleStuff), the trademark has been licensed for use on several other products listed below:

- The Terrible Towel® cookies, Bethel Bakery, Inc. (bethelbakery.com)
- The Terrible Towel® box car, MTH Electric Trains (mth-railking.com)
- The Terrible Tote™, Steel City Totes (terribletote.com)
- The Terrible Towel® candy bar, Trello Cioccolato (trellochocolate.com)

Products current as of 11/2/09

Please ensure that your purchase benefits AVS by buying only officially licensed products.

All officially licensed products contain a tag that identifies that a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the item will benefit Allegheny Valley School. If you see a Terrible Towel® product for sale and it does not include this tag, it may be unlicensed. If you spot a product without the tag, please contact Dorothy Gordon (dgordon@avs.net) with the details.

Contract with AVS

By engaging the clients of Allegheny Valley School to complete your projects, you can avoid hiring temporary help or adding to your existing workloads. We have a work force that is ready and eager to meet your business needs. All of our contracts are completed under the careful supervision of our staff in the workshop and according to your specifications. Our clients can complete many types of jobs including, but not limited to, clerical work, mailing services, packaging, product assembly and shredding services. By hiring AVS clients, you also help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to experience a sense of accomplishment, gain self-worth and earn a valuable paycheck. If you are interested in discussing how AVS can help your company or organization continue to succeed, please call:

Western PA (412) 262-1553

Central PA (717) 566-3267

Eastern PA (215) 364-1750

**Visit our photo gallery,
view employment
opportunities and apply
online at www.avs.net.**

Sensory News

Sensory Garden at SRPC

A large expanse of grass located behind the Slippery Rock Program Center (SRPC) has been transformed into a sensory garden. A tremendous amount of work has gone into making this garden a reality. It is providing an interactive experience with nature that is a new experience for many clients. This beautiful garden provides a space for exploration, relaxation, and gatherings with clients, family, friends and peers.

The idea of developing a sensory garden became a reality when Program Director **Vicki Doverspike** assigned the project to Slippery Rock University intern **Rebecca Elsing** as a part of her educational program. A sensory garden committee, consisting of nine SRPC staff, spent hours discussing and developing plans to undertake the project. The plans began in May with the ground breaking taking place in June. The garden was completed by the end of September and a grand opening party was held in October.

A variety of surfaces have been included in the 34' X 55' garden including brick, gravel, stones, Trex decking, mulch, outdoor carpet and grass. The different surfaces provide a variety of sensory input. All pathways lead to a central seating area that includes a number of seating options and is covered by colorful sails that provide shade. Surrounding the central seating area are smaller stations focusing on the senses.

The olfactory (smell) area features highly scented plants with smells that are easily experienced by everyone including those who cannot bend or move to sniff a flower. Pots hung at staggered heights on picket fences are filled with herbs that provide scents for those walking or seated in a wheelchair. The vertical display allows easy access for touching and feeling the plants. This area also features a brick surface and a kitchen garden where vegetables, fruits and herbs are accessible to the individuals involved in the food preparation program. Future plans include adding blueberry bushes, thornless blackberries, cranberry bushes, carrots, tomatoes, potatoes, rhubarb, strawberries, lettuce, radishes, cucumber and more.

A mulch-surfaced area includes a variety of visually-enticing objects in addition to plants. There is a butterfly bush which blooms in bursts of purple and attracts butterflies and birds. Many decorative garden objects are located in the area such as bird feeders, a



bird bath, an outdoor clock and a pond with fountains supplying sights and sounds of flowing water.

The touch area is where everyone can get their hands dirty. Raised wooden tables decorated with painted flowers contain dirt for potting plants and allow all, including those in wheelchairs, to comfortably experience planting seeds and digging in the dirt. The touch area also provides an opportunity for tactile exploration with a tactile board and bins with a variety of objects.

The sound area features large instruments such as a gong and PVC pipe organ that can be activated by striking the openings with a large foam paddle. These objects encourage stretching, reaching and swinging in order to activate and deliver a multitude of sounds. Large rain sticks are mounted in the area and can be rotated to produce the soothing sound of rain. Also in this area are wind chimes, a xylophone and a variety of hand held instruments.

The final area includes adaptive swings, a bench and a place for lawn activities. All of the areas in the garden are very inviting and easily accessible.

The individuals at SRPC have enjoyed participating in the development of the garden and have had the opportunity to experience its benefits while building it.

Funding for the sensory garden came from staff, families, friends and local businesses. Bricks engraved with messages by donors have become a sturdy pathway through the garden. Clients and staff at SRPC thank everyone who helped to make the sensory garden possible.

Quarterly Meeting

The Quarterly Sensory Discussion Group held a meeting on October 5 at AVS' Patricia Hillman Miller Campus (PHMC). Occupational Therapist **Lori Zulka** discussed therapeutic listening and provided case examples of the program. Lori also discussed new pieces of sensory equipment at PHMC including a sand and water table on wheels, portable sensory tunnels, and scooter boards with platforms. The new pieces can be stored easily and are portable to meet the goal of creating a variety of sensory experiences for individuals.

The meeting came to a close with an opportunity to discuss and exchange suggestions. After the meeting, participants toured the multisensory pool environment and sensory room at PHMC.

The next sensory discussion meeting will be held on Monday, January 11, 2010, at 9:30 a.m. at Community Living Care in New Florence, PA. This meeting will mark the 4th anniversary of the discussion group. For more information contact Cindy Potter at (724) 312-7813 or cpotter@avs.net.

*Above, from top:
Alice using one of the adaptive swings.
Jeff potting a plant.
Megan filling a bucket with sand.
Darrell waters the flowers.*

Success On and Off the Links in 2009

On a hot and steamy Monday, August 10, golfers teed off for the 18th annual **Friends of AVS Golf Open** presented by Heritage Agency, Inc.

In its new location at Churchill Valley Country Club, 107 people gathered to support Allegheny Valley School and to honor the life of **Guy A. Squillante, Jr.**, a longtime friend, Board member and benefactor. As golfers gathered at their carts, AVS' President and CEO **Regis Champ** honored Guy and led a round of applause, rather than a moment of silence, to celebrate Guy's life.

Throughout the day, participants enjoyed a golf scramble and challenges on the course including competitions for closest to the pin, longest drive and longest putt. A \$10,000 putting contest drew 11 finalists with the winner just missing the grand prize.

After enjoying a brief rain shower late in the day, golfers and other guests gathered for a dinner program. The program included a moving tribute to Guy by his son-in-law **David Keefer**, and presentations by NHS' Chairman and CEO **Senator M. Joseph Rocks** and AVS Foundation President **Patricia Miller Duggan**. Winners from the course were announced and received prizes. Throughout the evening, people generously participated in the Chinese and Silent Auctions that added more than \$9,000 to the event proceeds.

The event grossed more than \$133,000. Net proceeds have been contributed to the Capital Development Fund to support expenses that are not reimbursable by Medicaid including new program development, facility improvements, property and equipment.

Thank you to all our sponsors, underwriters, donors, golfers, volunteers and other participants who helped to make the day a huge success for the 900 children and adults who are served by Allegheny Valley School throughout Pennsylvania.

For a list of our sponsors, underwriters, donors and program book advertisers, please see below.

**Save the date for the 19th Annual Friends of AVS Golf Open:
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Churchill Valley Country Club**



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Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix

The 27th Annual Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix (PVGP) was a success in many ways. From new events to our traditional venues, this summer's Grand Prix was grand in both scale and presentation.

Race weekend took place July 18-19 at Schenley Park. While the weather was cooler than usual for most of the weekend, thousands of spectators cruised the car shows, enjoyed the festivities and watched the vintage car races.

For the fourth year, **Brandon Fisher** of AVS and **Anita Iyengar** of the Autism Society of Pittsburgh (ASP) were the PVGP event ambassadors. They were extremely busy making appearances throughout the week. They attended and rode in cars at the BeaveRun Historic races on July 12 and also participated in the Opening Ceremony Parade on July 19.

A special thank you to SHOP'n SAVE, the PVGP's presenting sponsor, for its continued commitment to this grand event. SHOP'n SAVE's generous support,

along with the support of many other sponsors, enables the PVGP to continue providing 10 days of activities that are open to the public.

Thank you also to the many volunteers who generously gave their time to support the event. We are most appreciative of the parents, friends and family members of AVS and the ASP who volunteer to sell merchandise during race weekend. So many contribute to the success of this important event and we are grateful to each and every sponsor, driver, volunteer, donor and participant.

On October 21, a check presentation was held at AVS to deliver the proceeds from the 2009 event to AVS and the ASP. This year, \$110,000 was shared between the two charities, bringing the 27-year total to \$2.5 million. We are grateful to the PVGP for helping children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism.



Merchandise booth volunteers during Race Weekend.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA NEWS

Regina Goes Camping

Kathy, Lynn and **Tom** from Regina had a busy summer that included two special trips. In August, along with staff from the house, they rented a pontoon boat and enjoyed a day in Moraine State Park. Everyone swam, fished and had a cookout on the boat. In September, they took a vacation to Lakeside Lodge at Raccoon Creek State Park. They spent their time roasting marshmallows by the fire, playing games and enjoying the luxury cabin. They even dressed-up in Steelers gear and listened to the opening game on the radio.



Kathy and Tom on a pontoon boat at Moraine State Park.

Giant Eagle Apples for the Students Program



Allegheny Valley School participates in the *Apples for the Students* program. If you or your family/friends shop at Giant Eagle, please register using our school **ID #0017**. The registration process is simple and only takes a few minutes.

Once you register, you will not need to do it again in the future. Each time your card is scanned, your purchases will count toward free equipment for Allegheny Valley School! The program began September 27 and runs through March 17, 2010.

How to Register:

If you have not previously registered, have your Giant Eagle Advantage Card® ready and call 1-800-474-4777 or visit www.gianteagle.com. If registering online, click on the Saving tab (near the top of the page) and then select *Apples for the Students*.

Boat Cruise

On September 15, 149 clients and staff from western PA attended the Italian American War Veterans Annual Majestic Boat Cruise through the Gateway Clipper Fleet. The event included a three hour boat cruise, lunch and dancing. AVS has been a part of this event since 1998, and each year interest and participation grows. Thank you to the Italian American War Veterans for including AVS in this wonderful event.

AVS Seeks Ticket Donations

Allegheny Valley School is seeking ticket donations to sporting and arts & cultural events, animal shows, family entertainment and more! Your ticket donation will be used by AVS' clients and their accompanying staff. Please send your ticket donations to Amy Harvilla at Allegheny Valley School's Corporate Center.



I Do Foundation

Getting married? Now you can support Allegheny Valley School by registering with the I Do Foundation. From honeymoons to invitations to wedding gifts to charitable wedding favors, the I Do Foundation allows couples and their guests to make wedding-related purchases that generate donations for charity. The I Do Foundation's Charity Registry service also makes it easy for guests to make donations in lieu of gifts. All of the services are available free of cost at www.IDoFoundation.org. To date, AVS has received \$275 through the I Do Foundation.

Memorial and Honorary Giving

The Memorial and Honorary Giving Program offers you a meaningful way to extend condolences or congratulations to friends and family members and also help Allegheny Valley School.

If you would like to receive one of AVS' Memorial and Honorary Giving Program packets, please contact the Development Department at (412) 299-7777.

Matching Gifts Program

You may be able to double or even triple your donation to Allegheny Valley School through a Matching Gifts Program. Many corporations offer such programs to their employees and retirees. Check with your employer to find out if it offers a Matching Gifts Program that will enable you to greatly increase your support of AVS.

Did you know?

The Pension Protection Act provides an exclusion from gross income for otherwise taxable IRA distributions of up to \$100,000 a year. In order to qualify for tax-free treatment, the distribution must be made from traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs to a qualified charity such as Allegheny Valley School. Owners of ineligible plans may consider rolling plan assets into an IRA in order to avail themselves of this provision. The IRA distribution can be made by a plan owner aged 70 ½ or older on the date of the distribution. As of this writing, this opportunity has been extended through **December 31, 2009**. For more information, call the Development Department at (412) 299-7777.

Make AVS Your Favorite Charity

By remembering AVS in your will you can help assure our continued financial strength and our ability to provide superior care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To ensure proper application of your planned gift, please designate it for AVS' Capital Development Fund. For more information on how to designate AVS in your will, please call the Development Department at (412) 299-7777. Also, please let us know that you've named AVS in your will so we can acknowledge your donation.

Campbell's Labels for Education Program



Help AVS acquire classroom equipment and accessories by saving and sending in your Campbell's labels. The equipment received through the program helps to enhance the programming we provide to the individuals at AVS. Simply save your Campbell's proofs of purchase with the *Labels for Education* logo and send them to Kelly Gremba at the Corporate Center.

More Ways to Donate

Your gift to the United Way, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) or through the State Employee Combined Appeal (SECA) can be directed to Allegheny Valley School. Unless donors specifically indicate AVS, no funds will come to us.

To designate AVS, simply locate the section on the pledge form that allows you to name a specific agency to receive your contribution. Write in Allegheny Valley School's name and agency code in the space provided.

Allegheny Valley School's Agency Codes

United Way of Allegheny County (Southwestern PA) 373	Central Pennsylvania Combined Federal Campaign 15451
United Way of Southeastern PA 9076	3 Rivers Combined Federal Campaign, Pittsburgh 15451
United Way of the Capital Region 3026	Combined Federal Campaign, Philadelphia 15451
	State Employee Combined Appeal (SECA). 4601-0045

We ask that you authorize the release of your name to us so we can acknowledge your generosity. Please spread the word about this opportunity to your co-workers, family and friends.

Your contribution will be applied to our Capital Development Fund to help cover important expenditures including much needed equipment, program expansions, and renovations and improvements to our more than 125 facilities.

The mission of Allegheny Valley School is to provide quality programs and facilities to help the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities entrusted to our care to live with purpose and dignity, and to provide opportunities and choices for our clients to grow and function at their full potential as independently as possible.

Zapp and Kennedy Activities

Kennedy Program Center

1950's Day

On May 29, the Kennedy Program Center had a 1950's themed day. The men wore jeans and white t-shirts, while the ladies wore poodle skirts or their red hat outfits. The hallways and classrooms were decorated in a retro theme and there was a photo station set up to get pictures in a classic 50's car. The classrooms watched musicals and participated in group activities throughout the day, and Elvis even made an appearance.



James in the classic 50's car.

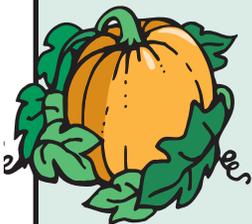
Zoo Trip

In July, a group of 12 clients along with staff from Kennedy spent a sunny day enjoying the wildlife at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium. Some of their favorite animals were the lions, monkeys and sea otters. They packed their lunches and had a big picnic after visiting the zoo.



Individuals from Kennedy take a trip to the zoo.

Harvest Trolley Ride



On October 14, a group of residents and staff from the Kennedy Program Center took a festive trolley ride through Washington, PA. The changing leaves provided beautiful scenery as they rode through a pumpkin patch. At the end of the ride, everyone was able to pick a pumpkin to take home. A picnic lunch concluded the day. The

accessibility of the Pennsylvania Trolley made it possible for clients who use wheelchairs for mobility to enjoy a wonderful autumn afternoon.

Summer Celebration

On July 30, Kennedy Program Center hosted its annual Summer Celebration. The theme this year was *Pirates* and everyone came ready to celebrate. Activities included activating a prize wheel and remote control Pirate Ship with a switch, shooting cannonballs at floating ships by pulling a string, and digging for gold. The outside ramp was turned into a giant Pirate Ship where residents had their picture taken.



Kathy uses the remote control Pirate Ship with help from staff members Jo and Michelle.

Zapp Program Center Activities

Summer Celebration

On June 30, Zapp had its annual summer celebration which included a Luau theme. The parking lot was turned into a tropical paradise with Luau music playing in the background. Activities included coconut bowling, making Hawaiian trail mix, decorating photo frames and making frozen Hawaiian drinks. Participants also had the opportunity to have their picture taken as a surfer. During the afternoon, clients and staff danced to music provided by DJ Joe and won prizes playing Luau bingo.

Zapp Contract Work

Residents at Zapp were recently contacted by a sponsor of the Carnegie Arts & Heritage Festival. The job included placing advertising labels around bottles of water to be sold at the September festival. They completed 4,800 bottles! Committee member **Bernadette Kazmarski** commented, "The AVS clients provided a great service at a great price!" To learn more about AVS' contracting services see *Contract with AVS* on page 6 or call (412) 262-1553.

Pittsburgh Region Day of Giving

The Pittsburgh region's first-ever official Day of Giving was held on Wednesday, October 28.

On that day, The Pittsburgh Foundation provided a 50% match to donations of \$50 - \$2,500 made through its PittsburghGives website. Because of the overwhelming response, The Pittsburgh Foundation's \$300,000 in matching funds ran out within the first 23 minutes.

The Pittsburgh Foundation announced that donations made through their site during the match time on October 28, totaled more than \$1 million for local charities.

If you are still interested in making a gift to Allegheny Valley School's Capital Development Fund, you may do so through The Pittsburgh Foundation's PittsburghGives site, or you can visit Allegheny Valley School's donation page at www.avs.net to contribute directly (please note that donations made through the PittsburghGives site incur a 4.75% fee, reducing the total received by Allegheny Valley School). If you prefer to mail your donation, please direct it to the Development Department at the Corporate Center (see address below).

Grant News

We are most grateful for each and every contribution AVS receives. All gifts are put to good use to help improve the quality of life of the individuals in our care. Since May 1, we have received numerous grants and contributions to our Capital Development Fund that are supporting efforts to enhance our programs and facilities to better meet the needs of our clients. Thank you to the following trusts, foundations, companies and organizations for their support of Allegheny Valley School's Capital Development Fund:

- Allegheny Valley School Parents Association
- Anonymous (2)
- AVS Foundation
- Dominion Foundation
- The Giant Eagle Foundation
- The Graham Company
- Heritage Agency, Inc.
- Highmark Foundation
- NHS Foundation
- Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix

Grants and contributions of \$5,000 or more received May 1 - October 31, 2009.

The Curse of The Terrible Towel®

After the Tennessee Titans defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers on December 21, 2008, players **LenDale White** and **Keith Bulluck** stomped on The Terrible Towel®. The Titans lost their next 8 games. Was it coincidence or the curse of The Terrible Towel®?

The Terrible Towel® was created by the late Steelers broadcaster Myron Cope in 1975, to inspire fan involvement in a playoff game against the then-Baltimore Colts. Thirty-four years later, The Terrible Towel® remains a Steelers fan essential. And since 1996, the sale of any The Terrible Towel® product benefits the children and adults at AVS (see story on page 1).

On October 29, in a goodwill gesture arranged by Nashville's WNSR-AM sports radio host **Thom Abraham**, White and Bulluck signed a Terrible Towel® that was shipped overnight to AVS.

Ricky, a resident of AVS for 31 years and a devoted Pittsburgh Steelers fan, received the towel on October 30. Indicating that he had the power to lift the curse, Ricky stated, "But I don't think it's going to happen this year." Whether by coincidence or due to AVS' receipt of the signed towel to "lift the curse," just two days later, the Titans won their first game of the season, beating the Jacksonville Jaguars 30-13.

To raise funds for the Myron Cope Special Equipment Fund of its Capital Development Fund, AVS auctioned on eBay the original signed towel that was received on October 30—the towel that many believe helped to "lift the curse" for the Titans.



Life-long opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities



ALLEGHENY VALLEY SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES is published by Allegheny Valley School, a private, non-profit organization providing residential and therapeutic programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, most who also have multiple physical disabilities, extensive medical complications and some who have behavioral management needs. Allegheny Valley School is a member of NHS Human Services family of companies. Please send comments and suggestions to:

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315 West Prospect Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15205-1924
(412) 921-7755

Philadelphia Campus
9990 Verree Road
Philadelphia, PA 19115-1397
(215) 677-9500

Philadelphia Administrative Offices
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Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-6451
(215) 947-4189

Pittsburgh Campus
1992 Ewings Mill Road
Coraopolis, PA 15108-3399
(412) 262-3500

Slippery Rock Program Center
125 Rebecca Lane
Slippery Rock, PA 16057-8519
(724) 794-1362

Edward J. Zapp Program Center
140 Coketown Road
Coraopolis, PA 15108-3316
(412) 262-1553

Kennedy Program Center
1806 Pine Hollow Road
McKees Rocks, PA 15136-1538
(412) 778-2540

Philadelphia Program Center
3190 Tremont Avenue
Trevose, PA 19053-6644
(215) 364-1750

Central Pennsylvania Community Group Homes/ Family Living Programs/
c/o 1291 Middletown Road
Hummelstown, PA 17036-8929
(717) 566-3267

Eastern Pennsylvania Community Group Homes/ Family Living Programs/
c/o 380 Red Lion Road, Suite 201
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-6451
(215) 947-4189

Western Pennsylvania Community Group Homes/ Supported Living/Apartments/ Home Based Support Services
c/o 1996 Ewings Mill Road
Coraopolis, PA 15108-3380
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