



# STREET FITE

## National Autism Awareness Month

Autism, as some of us may know, “is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person’s ability to communicate and interact with others” (autism-society.org). It is also a “spectrum disorder,” meaning that autism has different ranges of severity and can manifest itself in various ways in each person.

The fact that I have a younger brother with a mild form of autism has more than likely been a motivation for me to work for a disability advocacy organization.

To obtain a deeper picture of the life of someone with autism – and the people that care for him or her – I decided to ask my mom a few questions about her experiences raising an child with autism in particular and with autism in general. At a young age he was diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Delay (PDD) and Global Developmental Delay (GDD), two spectrum disorders.

Ben: What do you want people to know about your experience with autism?

Deb: *I want for people to know that autism is not a disease, it's a disorder, frequently affecting the social issues in a child. I would like people's awareness to be raised and their sensitivity heightened so that they'll be more understanding of people with autism and not jump to conclusions or presume that they're just badly behaved children or adults.*

Have you faced any difficulties or challenges with integrating your son into society – like school, neighborhood, community?

*Yes, especially in the spiritual area with church because the majority of churches don't have any sort of programs for kids wit autism.*

What concerns do you have for Brett’s future?

*Mainly my concerns are what kind of quality of life will he be able to lead. Will he be able to live independently? Function on his own? Perhaps hold down a job? Take care of himself? Cook for himself?...Clean for himself? Will public transportation be available for him to use? Will employers be willing to hire someone who has some social and mental challenges or shortcomings? Will he have adequate medical care and a social network that he will be plugged into when dad and I are gone? Will there be funds available for someone like this in case he needs to live in a group home or require special medical attention?*

How could the above concerns best be addressed?

*The district itself (U-46) could be much more willing to hear parents' concerns and to address them appropriately just to show that they care and that this is an issue that they care about. I mean in this area there are actually pretty many advocates – a good group in Geneva that advocates and they're very much on the ball with things. But especially for when autistic children finish with high school, when they reach the age of 21: more group homes, more Center Houses, which teach independent living skills and things like that. I'd just like to see a willingness on the part of the state to hear the concerns of the parents in a way that the parents don't need to fear for their child's future.*

To finish, please consider the following statistics which point to the prevalence of autism in our world and then reflect on the autism acrostic in the picture clip next to the stats.

### DID YOU KNOW...?

\* According to the Center for Disease Control, 1 in 150 children are diagnosed with some form of autism.

\* Boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed than girls.

\* More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than AIDS, diabetes, and cancer combined.

(statistics can be found at, among other places, autismspeaks.org)



## **SPRING IS HERE! MAKE SURE YOU GET YOUR CIRCUIT BREAKER DONE SOON!**

It's time to file those circuit breakers. Don't be afraid! We are here to help you. Come on! If you file, you can get back some of the money you have put out for your household bills. Through the IL cares RX program you can also get assistance with prescription drugs.



All you have to do is call and make an appointment. Be sure you have your 2007 proof of income and proof of 2007 rent or property taxes,

If you do not have a lease, you will need a notarized letter from your landlord stating how much you paid monthly in 2007. A picture id is also required.

Remember! To call 847-695-5818 to make an appointment.

## **Sarcoidosis Disability Awareness Month**

Sarcoidosis is an inflammatory disease that can affect almost any organ in the body. It can cause heightened immunity, which means that a person's immune system, which normally protects the body from infection and disease, overreacts, resulting in damage to the body's own tissues. Sarcoidosis produces tiny lumps of cells in your body. The lumps are so small in size that they could be of the size of a granule of sugar or salt. When too many of these clumps form in an organ they can interfere with how that organ functions.

In the United States, sarcoidosis most commonly targets the lungs and lymph nodes, but the disease can and usually does affect other organs, too, including (but not limited to) the skin, eyes, liver, salivary glands, sinuses, kidneys, heart, the muscles and bones, and the brain and nervous system.

No one knows exactly what causes sarcoidosis, but it is probably due to a combination of factors. Some research suggests that bacteria, viruses or chemicals might trigger the disease. Although such triggers might not bother most people, it is possible that in someone with the right genetic predisposition they provoke the immune system to develop the inflammation associated with sarcoidosis.

Different treatments will work better for different people, and sometimes more than one drug is used. In some cases, no treatment is needed. But, for some patients, intense treatment is required, especially if organs like the lungs, eyes, heart or central nervous system are affected. Treatment is generally done to control symptoms or to improve the function of organs affected by the disease.

For more information please go to [www.stopsarcoidosis.org](http://www.stopsarcoidosis.org)

## **Personal Assistant Peer Group**



Attention all consumers and personal assistants I would like to start a peer group. This peer support group will help personal assistants with managing hours, work schedules, and any issues with your consumer. Consumers this will help you in hiring, firing, and managing your personal assistant. This support group will help both personal assistants and consumers get an understanding of each other as well as understanding the importance of both roles. This is your group. All topics are open for discussion. Contact me if interested at 847-695-5818 ext 24. Can't wait to hear from you.

Thanks, Tammy Hare, P.A. Coordinator

# ¡Viva México! Viva el 5 de mayo!



The 5th of May is celebrated in the United States among the Mexican-American population, especially in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Various Mexican-American societies use the celebrations to commemorate the overthrow of the Mexican Imperial Monarchy headed by Maximilian of Austria. The Imperial Monarchy was imposed from 1864 to 1867 on Mexico by Napoleon III, Emperor of France (nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte) and the Mexican conservatives "Club de Notables". The Mexican-American societies were formed after the Mexican-American war (1846-1848) in response to atrocities committed by US. Troops occupying the lands annexed by the US. following the war. The war was settled by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo with fifteen million dollars in payment for the annexed lands. The societies originally consisted of home guard units but evolved into social societies as stability returned to the US Southwest. These societies contributed large amounts of material and money to the Mexican Constitutional Government in its fight against the Mexican Imperial Monarchy. In 1858, Benito Juárez was elected President of the United States of Mexico to defend the Mexican Constitution established on February 5th, 1857. After much internal struggle, Juárez was re-elected in 1861. Because of financial instability, mainly due to the Mexican-American war, the Mexican Congress suspended foreign debt repayment for two years. The creditors in Europe (England, Spain and France) decided intervention was needed to collect the debts. Unbeknownst to the other two, France had its own agenda. France wanted to dispose of the Mexican Constitutional Government and set up a monarchy favorable to France. Napoleon III, Emperor of the Second French Empire had grandiose plans to impose a monarchical government upon the nations of Central and South America. This was to provide raw materials and trade for the European nations as well as check the growing power of the US Republic following the annexation of California, Arizona and New Mexico. France's designs were fermented and abetted by the plutocratic and conservative land owners of Mexico who feared loss of land and political power to the newly elected constitutional government of Benito Juárez. On December 8th, 1861 the European powers landed and occupied Veracruz, Spain arrived first. By April 11, 1862 after realizing France's intent, England and Spain withdrew their support. Meanwhile, in Mexico City, President Juárez (a full blooded Zapotec Indian, and a lawyer who had studied to become a priest), was taking countermeasures: "There is no help but in defense but I can assure you... the Imperial Government will not succeed in subduing the Mexicans, and its armies will not have a single day of peace... we must stop them, not only for our country but for the respect of the sovereignty of the nations"(1). Juárez declared martial law and declared all areas occupied by the French in a state of siege. After reinforcements arrived, a French force of (7,000) seven thousand set out on the (225) two hundred twenty five mile route to Mexico City in early April under the illusion that the Mexican people would welcome them. This illusion was fostered by Juan N. Almont, a Mexican reactionary, and by Count Dubois du Saligny appointed French Ambassador to Mexico by Napoleon. President Juárez commanded General Ignacio Zaragoza to block the advance of the French Army with 2,000 soldiers at the fortified hills of Loreto and Guadalupe by the city of Puebla. On May 5th, 1862, cannons boomed and rifle shots rang out as the French soldiers attacked the two forts. Before the day was over, one fort was in ruins and more than a thousand French soldiers were dead. The Mexicans had won the battle, but not the war. Yet, this date was established as symbolic of the Mexicans' courage against a formidable army. In June 1864, Maximilian of Habsburg and his wife Charlotte arrived in Mexico City as the crowned Emperor of the newly formed Mexican Empire. Although Maximilian organized the administration, liberated the Indians from servitude, and developed the natural resources of the country, he was unable to avoid the opposition of the Mexican patriots. The republicans, led by Benito Juárez, did not accept the foreign intervention. They went north and requested assistance from the Californians and other Mexican-American societies to help them with volunteers and financial support. Finally, Maximilian was overthrown and captured on May 15, 1867, tried by court martial, and executed by firing squad on June 19 at the Cerro de las Campanas along with his generals Miguel Miramón and Tomás Mejía. The 5 de Mayo is a Mexican national holiday. The battlefield is now a park in Puebla with a statue of General Zaragoza riding horse back. One of the forts is a war museum with a display of hundreds of toy soldiers set up to show what had happened that day. But it is in the United States of America where the celebration is more festive consisting of parades, music, folklore, dances and food. These festivities are mainly fund raising events and for solidarity among the Mexican-Americans.



## COMMUNITY CRISIS CENTER ANNOUNCES USED CELL PHONE COLLECTION DRIVE "IN THE NAME OF FUNDRAISING"



Proceeds from collection can raise thousands of dollars for much needed programs and services.

The Community Crisis Center has partnered with Shelter Alliance ([www.shelteralliance.net](http://www.shelteralliance.net)), a Miramar , Florida firm that specializes in the logistics and underwriting of fundraising programs through the collection and responsible recycling of used cellular phones. Shelter Alliance currently works with over 2000 social service organizations in 50 states and has contributed over \$4,000,000 to participating organizations.

Cell phone collection "drop boxes" are currently established at the following locations in the community:

Community Crisis Center	37 S. Geneva St. Elgin
FITECIL	730 W. Chicago St. Elgin
Streamwood Police Dept.	401 Irving Park Rd. , Streamwood
Hoffman Estates Police Dept.	1200 Gannon Dr. , Hoffman Estates
Piece of Cake Bakery	304 N. River Rd., E. Dundee
Rep. Ruth Munson	1146 Dundee Ave. , Elgin
Kane County Recycling Center	540 S. Randall Rd., St. Charles- 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat. of the month

The Community Crisis Center requests and appreciates that the public bring their used, unwanted cell phones and battery to these locations during working hours.

The Community Crisis Center is additionally soliciting local businesses to initiate collection campaigns with its employees, customers and vendors. We encourage businesses of all types to participate in this program. Please contact us at the number below.

### **About The Community Crisis Center :**

Since 1975 the Community Crisis Center , a not-for-profit social service agency, has provided comprehensive emergency services to individuals and families in northern Kane and northwest suburban Cook Counties . Services include a 24-hour hotline; information & referral; shelter for 40 women and children; individual and group counseling; legal, medical and welfare advocacy; transitional living program; financial assistance; emergency food; partner abuse intervention program; and community education. Last year our 72 employees provided 44,742 hours of services to 6,560 women, men and children. Services are available to victims at no cost.

Contact: Jeri Hodal 847-697-2380 or [jhodal@crisiscenter.org](mailto:jhodal@crisiscenter.org)

## FITE CIL

ELGIN OFFICE  
730 W. CHICAGO ST  
ELGIN, IL 60123

AURORA OFFICE  
105 E. GALENA BLVD  
AURORA, IL 60505

ELGIN OFFICE  
Phone: 847-695-5818  
Fax: 847-695-5892  
TTY: 847-695-5868

AURORA OFFICE  
Phone: 630-264-4349  
Fax: 630-264-7490  
TTY: 630-264-4349

E-mail: [INFO@FITECIL.ORG](mailto:INFO@FITECIL.ORG)



## MEET OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS!

### MEL'S PIZZA

LOCATED AT 728 W. CHICAGO ST.  
ELGIN, IL 60123



## Connie's Corner

our monthly editorial by coordinator **Connie Duffin**

The month of April is alcohol awareness month. I recently spoke with a substance abuse counselor, Scott, from the Renz Center of Elgin, to discuss alcoholism, mental health, and counseling. Renz Center services Northern Kane and Western Cook County from Batavia to Elgin, to Schaumburg and to Algonquin. About 25% of the Renz clients are dually diagnosed with substance abuse/mental health disorders such as clinical depression, bipolar depression, and schizophrenia. The center's primary focus is treating substance abuse. Typically, after a person has been diagnosed with a dual diagnosis, they usually have six months to complete the program successfully. A program may consist of education, support groups, individual and group therapy, stress management, case management, medication, and psychiatry. Sadly, less than half of the clients from all populations listed in the area complete their program. Some people drop out of the program, while others may be referred to inpatient programs with higher intensity. The keys to successfully completing the program are: accepting their condition, cognitive behavior/thinking patterns, coping skills, interacting with people, having a psychiatrist, and outside support for their substance abuse/alcoholism issues. For the ones who don't do as well, they may be put under a treatment contract for issues like attendance. If the individual's attendance doesn't improve, then the client/counselor relationship is terminated and/or is referred to another clinic. Their treatment program may become more intense. Many people come to Renz by way of referrals from other agencies, their employer, school, family, or by walking in on their own.

How to prevent alcoholism

Abstinence abstinence, abstinence!

Avoid over consumption of alcohol

If you have a mental health disorder, it is best to seek help from places such as the Ecker Center or Larkin Center of Elgin. Remember, Renz Center primarily treats people with substance abuse issues.