Celebrating Gifts

Gifts of love, gifts of time...
They say change is good and that may be, but it sure makes waves, doesn’t it? Somehow, when I celebrated my ninetieth birthday this May, I felt the upheaval caused by each year as it passed and thought, my, this was quite enough. But change keeps coming.

If some of you were at Melmark’s Spring Festival in the auditorium when a “standing-room only crowd” sang Happy Birthday to me, you wouldn’t have known that changes with me weren’t over yet. What a day! And then at the very end, Melissa popped out from behind the drawn curtain with a mischievous “Yoo hoo, Mommy!”, holding a huge bunch of incredible flowers which she carried off the platform and placed in my arms. My heart was as filled with Melmark memories as my eyes were filled with happy tears. My arms grew heavy from all the hugging.

But I still reflected on the change that was mine in spite of all the happy celebration. Assisted Living. Smaller apartment - big enough for me, plenty of room for my Bible Study - the perfect solution. But then the age old question from folks kept haunting me, “How did Melissa take it?” For you see this “perfect” place has only one bedroom. No more Melissa’s bedroom for those special weekend visits. Another change. Adding to this, was the fact that my little angel was now prone to wander away, looking for her favorite Coke machine, pocketbook ready, with me hobbling along way behind her trying to keep up. Our weekend visits quickly evolved into a “once a week” visit for just a few hours.

Oh yes, I am the one who minds, believe me! But Melissa? Let me tell you. Each week she enters the apartment with familiar boisterous glee and love and proceeds to make herself right at home as if this was her normal weekend stay. The hour always speeds steadily along and before I know it, it is time for our good-byes. And how does my Melissa respond? Well you can guess it. She skips off merrily with her Melmark staff, and I swallow the lump in my throat as I watch her depart. Back to Melmark, the home that love built, a place that fully encompasses her every need and keeps her smiling in spite of life’s ups and downs! A perfect picture to me.

Think of Melmark right now; what a gift it is to us parents! Perhaps you can remember the unmet financial needs of this organization as it so passionately loves and cares for our children. Be part of a change that yields many joyful returns to our loved ones who live so happily there. What more could a ninety year old Mom want?

From Melissa’s mom,

Miggy Krentel
Co-Founder
Dear Families and Friends,

What a special gift we have in the children and adults served at Melmark. Each person entrusted to our care shares with us a unique quality reminding us what is truly important in life. Whether it is their unwavering smile or their infectious laughter, we are blessed with an absolutely wonderful community filled with love.

I am especially grateful for the support Melmark receives throughout the year. Whether you give your time and expertise as a volunteer or if you offer financial support, your gifts are treasures to the individuals supported by Melmark. Thank you for caring about the men, women, boys and girls who are part of the Melmark family.

In the pages that follow, you will read about the many ways people and organizations are investing in Melmark. You’ll see how a generous gift from a parent of a young man who lived at Melmark for so many years will provide for renovations to the Meadows kitchen. You’ll meet siblings making a difference, not only for their loved one, but for other people with special needs, both today and in the future. You’ll also read about the successes of our students and adults. One of those success stories comes from a Melmark parent, who talks about his daughter’s accomplishments.

We are also proud to share details surrounding Melmark’s Professional Speaker Series. Melmark is truly blessed to employ such talented individuals, many of whom give back to the ABA community on their own time, by speaking at various events, conferences and workshops. We are especially excited to announce that Dr. Chris Perrin, Senior Clinician, joins several other Melmark senior staff with a first-author study in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis.

You’ll also read about new projects at Melmark; you’ll see photos from our community events; and you will learn how you can get involved.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Melmark Messenger, and I thank each of you for your gift of love and support.

My warmest personal regards,

Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Ph. D.
President and CEO
Jeffrey Morrison finds fulfillment serving on The Melmark Charitable Foundation Board

Jeffrey Morrison finds fulfillment in helping others. For that and other reasons, he believes his role as a board member of the Melmark Charitable Foundation (MCF) is a perfect fit.

Jeff is a Managing Partner and financial advisor at Kistler-Tiffany Advisors, a comprehensive wealth management services company in Berwyn, PA. He was introduced to Melmark through his work on the board of the Kistler-Tiffany Foundation, which has supported Melmark for many years.

About three years ago, Jeff’s longtime friend, Eric Zee, Melmark Board Member, suggested he meet with Ellen Donohoe, Melmark's VP for Advancement. At that time, Ellen and the board were exploring new opportunities in marketing planned giving. Eric felt Jeff’s experience as Planned Giving Director at Episcopal Academy made him a good contact. Jeff met with Dr. Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Melmark's President and CEO, to discuss joining the Melmark Charitable Foundation Board. He was voted on as a member in 2010.

“Melmark is fortunate to have Jeff in service on the MCF Board,” said Dr. Donovan. “He brings a positive and highly professional attitude to the Board and is clearly committed to the long-term goals and the overriding mission of the organization. Jeff’s expertise in financial matters and familiarity in non-profit fundraising make him a highly valued team member.”

Jeff is an ambassador for people with disabilities, bringing in valuable relationships and supporting the good of the organization.

Jeff is an ambassador for people with disabilities, bringing in valuable relationships and supporting the good of the organization through his business and financial background. While Jeff is proud of what he brings to Melmark, he feels he receives so much more. “I get satisfaction in helping Melmark make life better for others,” he said. Jeff’s commitment is also personal. He has a teenage nephew with profound cerebral palsy, which gives him an understanding of the deep challenges affecting individuals with disabilities and their families.

“Of all the organizations I have worked with, Melmark is at the top in terms of quality and professionalism,” he says. “Everyone brings leadership, empathy and overall excellence to their work. Each person working with Melmark looks at their position as a calling and not just a job.”

Jeff has provided multi-generational financial planning services to his clients since 1987. He is a member of the Society of Financial Services Professionals, Philadelphia Estate Planning Council, and National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors. He earned both his Master’s degree in Financial Services (MSFS) and his CHARTERED FINANCIAL CONSULTANT (ChFC) designation from the American College. Jeff also holds the ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER (AEP) designation from the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils. He earned his Bachelor’s degree from the University of Virginia.

Jeff serves as Committee Chair for Young Life, an urban Philadelphia high school ministry, and is a member of the Gift Planning Advisory Council for The Philadelphia Zoo. At Melmark, he is a charter member of the Paul and Mildred Krentel Legacy Society.

Jeff and his wife, Meg have four children and one grandson and live in Berwyn, PA. His youngest daughter, Alli, carries on her father’s love of service to others by volunteering at Melmark.
On April 14th, Melmark held a reception for brothers and sisters of the children and adults served by Melmark. The event was held at the beautiful and historic Union League in Center City, Philadelphia. Dozens of siblings attended the event, which Melmark hosted as a way to bring families together. The evening prompted many new relationships, as the guests mingled and shared their stories of close bonds with loved ones.
Melmark has been blessed over the years by the generous provision of support to its programs and facilities made through the will of faithful friends and family members. This year, Melmark is formalizing the process of promoting and accepting gifts made through one’s life estate.

In order to recognize our donors, in their lifetime, for making such provision for Melmark, we have created the Paul and Mildred Krentel Legacy Society. At this time, we have 21 living members of the Society. In Melmark’s 2010 Donor Report, you will find the list of donors who have named Melmark in their will or made a gift of life insurance, a charitable trust or a charitable gift annuity. Through this society, Melmark will be able to provide recognition to our donors and inspiration to others.

The advantages of naming Melmark in one’s will are significant:

• It is made in the future, so there is no impact on your finances today. Often a bequest is the most significant gift one will make to the organization.

• A bequest is fully revocable and not payable until the death of the donor. This means that if one changes their mind, or their circumstances change, they can change their will.

• A donor will be acknowledged for their gift while they are alive through the Paul and Mildred Krentel Legacy Society.

• Bequest gifts will provide a significant financial foundation to Melmark well into the future.

Bequests take various forms. Following are some samples of bequests for your consideration as you prepare your will:

**Unrestricted Bequests**

Unrestricted gifts, current or planned, are vital to Melmark as they allow the organization to use the funds where needed most.

**Specific Bequests**

A popular form of bequest is where one can designate the Melmark Charitable Foundation to receive a specific dollar amount or piece of property. These can be restricted to meet a need at Melmark as specified by the donor. Common restrictions include, but are not limited to scholarship, endowment, staff development or to the capital fund.

**Bequest of Residual Estate**

Bequests of a residual estate are used to give Melmark all (or a portion thereof) of an estate after all debts, taxes, expenses and all other bequests have been paid.

Creating a legacy at Melmark ensures it will be able to provide its services well into the future.

If you have an interest in making future provision for Melmark through a will or estate gift, please call John Schlesinger, Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving, in the Advancement Office at 610-325-4792 or jschlesinger@melmark.org.
Patti was 11 when her younger brother, Johnny, came to live at Melmark. He was nine. Looking back, she doesn’t recollect her feelings, but distinctly remembers it was traumatic for her parents who were going through the uncertainty and sense of loss that every parent feels when they realize they need the help of an organization like Melmark. That was back in 1968.

Of course, Patti did not lose contact with her younger brother, as she volunteered at Melmark and eventually became a Melmark employee. She always remembered Johnny coming home for a visit, and all he would talk about was going back to Melmark. She realized then that her brother was in the best place he could be—a home away from home. “We always knew he loved Melmark, his friends and the staff.”

Johnny, or Mitch as most of Melmark knows him, is now 52 and big sister, Sister Pat Mitchell, SFCC, is the executive director of Silicon Valley Faces, a nonprofit organization based in San Jose, California with a mission to build a community without bias and bigotry.

Looking back, Patti appreciates how much Melmark has grown and has amplified its core competencies to help people with intellectual disabilities reach their full potential.

“I’ve seen Melmark grow and expand in a great way,” she said. “Its origins as the ‘home that love built’ were a wonderful foundation to create what has become an organization that stands as an authority in the field of care for people with disabilities. Melmark has brought the heart and expertise together.”

This year, Patti became a charter member of the Paul and Mildred Krentel Legacy Society by creating a living trust that will leave Melmark with a gift after her death.

“I am really grateful for Melmark’s love and care for my brother who I love more than life itself...”

Left: Mitch enjoys swimming in Melmark’s outdoor pool

Above: Sister Pat Mitchell spends an evening out with her brother at a local restaurant
By Tom Reinke, Father

Mary Beth, like everyone else, was born with gifts that make her a unique, valuable and successful individual. She has a positive ‘can do’ attitude and a strong will to do her best. She loves music and knows all the songs from her favorite musicals like The Sound of Music and Annie. The challenge we all face for our children is to maximize the potential of these gifts, and I am grateful for the help Melmark has given us.

Mary Beth’s greatest gift is that she is a true “people” person. In contrast to me, she has an incredible memory for everyone’s name. When I stumble and forget someone’s name, I cover up by pretending to see if Mary Beth remembers the person. “What’s her name?” I ask. And Mary Beth responds instantly. It works every time.

Mary Beth is genuinely interested in the well-being of others. You can see the concern on her face when someone in our family is ill. The other morning, I told her I had a doctor’s appointment – “a routine check-up,” – something she knows well. Later that day, when her bus dropped her off, the instant she saw me she asked, “How was the doctor, daddy?”

Mary Beth’s interest in others is not unique. I think people with disabilities want to reach out to others. They may be shy or pull away when they meet someone new, but underneath I think they want to connect. And Melmark helps them make those connections.

Mary Beth had a brain injury at birth that affected her gross and fine motor skills, and significantly limited her intellectual abilities. She can walk with assistance, but her hand and finger movements are limited, and she needs help with most daily activities like dressing and eating. Her long-term potential is tied to her interpersonal skills, but one of the things she lacks is the ability to initiate activities. She will always respond to others, but she has difficulty taking the lead.

One day, I was talking to a behavior analyst in Mary Beth’s classroom about ways to improve Mary Beth’s spontaneity in initiating communication. The behavior analyst quickly came up with the idea of using “scripts” – a specific set of opening and follow-up questions my daughter would use at the start of the day when she sees other students and staff for the first time. The idea was to get Mary Beth into the habit of saying “good morning” and then asking the person how they were doing. It was a simple idea, where success was tied to getting into the routine of doing this every day.

And it has worked phenomenally. Recently, when we walked into our favorite pizza restaurant, where Mary Beth feels at home, one of the customers at a nearby table looked up at her, and Mary Beth jumped at the chance to say, “What’s your name?” It was a wonderful moment, for our family but especially for Mary Beth.
2011 Prom
Egyptian Enchantment

On Friday, June 3rd, students at The Melmark School enjoyed refreshments and dancing at the 2011 Prom. This year’s prom theme was Egyptian Enchantment.

Many family members attended the prom with their loved ones.

13 Students Graduate from The Melmark School

On June 10th, we celebrated the dedication and accomplishments of 13 students. Family members, friends, teachers and Melmark staff gathered to recognize the hard work of these young men and women as they graduated from The Melmark School.

During graduation ceremonies, teachers shared stories of each student’s accomplishments. Sean, Brian and Tom shared moving musical performances. After each graduate received a certificate of completion, family and friends enjoyed a lunch, hosted by Melmark.

Congratulations to the Class of 2011.

Video of Melmark’s 2011 Graduation aired on NBC10, 6ABC and FOX29. You can see this coverage on Melmark’s Facebook and YouTube pages. Just search for Melmark PA.
A very special boy came to Melmark in March of 1975; his name was Christopher Robertson Brown.

Chris was such a wonderful little boy who faced many challenges. He was diagnosed with Cornelia de Lange Syndrome, a genetic disorder present at birth which resulted in a wide range of physical, cognitive and medical difficulties. Although Chris struggled with communication, mobility, learning and developing relationships, he was full of life and determination. A beloved member of the Melmark family for 25 years, the entire Melmark Community was very saddened by his passing in December 2010. Chris was 35 years old.

Chris made great strides at Melmark. His communications skills improved significantly; he graduated from The Melmark School and entered the Meadows Program where he worked in the woodworking and horticultural divisions of the Country Garden Guild. He developed many friendships, especially with staff, through the years. Chris also gained the necessary daily living skills to move into a community-based apartment and enjoy a level of independence not thought possible at one time.

Chris’ mother, Diane, recalls when she was searching for a program to meet Chris’ needs. “After traveling far and wide and evaluating many programs, we found Melmark and Paul Krentel, Melmark’s founder, who greeted us and personally provided a tour of Melmark’s programs. Following our visit to Melmark we looked at a few other programs, and all the while Chris would keeping saying – Where’s the man? He was talking about Mr. Krentel. Paul Krentel and Melmark left quite an impression on us both. Chris really chose Melmark for himself, and what a difference it made in his life.”

There are so many wonderful memories of Chris that will remain with us forever, his great fondness for riding around campus in the golf cart or on his bicycle, how much he liked his apartment and the Meadows Program, his enjoyment on trips to the beach, his tremendous love for his family and his sweet disposition.

To honor Chris’ memory, Diane Brown has made a very generous gift to support the complete renovation of the Meadows Kitchen, an integral part of the Meadows Program. The kitchen serves many purposes: culinary vocational training, meal preparation, development of activities of daily living, and a venue for special events such as holiday celebrations and post performance cast parties for the Melmark Players and their families.

Melmark is very pleased and privileged to name the new facility...

The Christopher Robertson Brown Kitchen

This is a very special gift. Our many thanks to Diane and the Brown family for sharing Chris with the Melmark family; he was a very special man, and he, too, was a special gift.
As a nationally recognized leader in the field of educational, vocational and residential programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Melmark is continually striving to provide exceptional services for those we serve and always looking for opportunities to improve service delivery.

In 2009, Melmark conducted a pilot project that implemented a new electronic data management program known as CareTracker® Resource Systems in two of our adult residences. CareTracker is a centralized data management software system designed to facilitate and increase tracking of each individual’s programmatic goals and medical care. The system guides staff through required data collection every shift to ensure it is documented according to plan. Data collection is made very easy using wall-mounted touch screens (kiosks). In addition to increasing accuracy and reliability of information, CareTracker helps staff retrieve information in seconds, creates reports in minutes instead of hours, and allows managers to access the system remotely from laptops and PCs, which maximizes opportunities for supervision and feedback.

The pilot project was extremely successful and met with great enthusiasm by all our staff; direct care, supervisors, and medical staff. Our state licensing agency applauded our initiative in implementing this data management tool, which has resulted in increased program efficiencies in time allocation, data management and analysis, and supervision. This has been noted during annual and semi-annual audits by state licensing and funding agencies. As a result of these efficiencies, staff is able to increase time spent directly with residents, which is the greatest benefit of all.

Through a generous grant of $40,000 from the Connelly Foundation, Melmark is able to implement this vital data management system in eight residences, and a gift of $27,000 from an anonymous donor will allow for installation in all remaining adult homes. We are most grateful to our generous donors for their support in our efforts to continually improve service delivery.

Melmark nurse, Sunday Adebayo, uses CareTracker to record vital information about client care.

A Beautiful Partnership

The Melmark Charitable Foundation has joined with eScrip, the original and largest “electronic scrip” fundraising program rewarding customer loyalty.

Each time your family makes a purchase using a registered card, participating merchants contribute to Melmark. There are no receipts to collect, no vouchers or certificates to buy, no hassles for you…and every purchase counts.

It’s easy! It’s Free! And it’s Powerful!

1. Go to www.escrip.com
2. Click on “sign up”
3. Follow the instructions to register your grocery cards and your existing credit/debit cards.

There are several opportunities for you to contribute to The Melmark Charitable Foundation while visiting your favorite websites and restaurants through eScrip Dining and eScrip Online Mall. Enjoy shopping, and our thanks for helping us support the children and adults we serve.
In June, Melmark dedicated Jami’s Garden, a new garden patio adjacent to Schoemaker House. The area provides opportunities for outdoor recreational activities including gardening, family visits and special occasions. The garden is named in memory of Jami Fiel, a beloved member of the Melmark community who was a resident for many years before her passing. The garden patio was made possible through gifts from many of Jami’s family and friends as well as local foundation grants and Melmark staff.

This year, Melmark once again expanded the services offered to children and adults by adding the COLLAGE Program. Founded in 1987, COLLAGE provides activity-based therapy to enhance social skills in children, adolescents and adults. The program enhances individuals’ social skills to improve day-to-day interactions in work, school, family and leisure.

COLLAGE has three locations:
- Stratford Friends School in Newtown Square
- Birmingham Friends Meeting House in West Chester
- Bethlehem Baptist Church in Spring House

For more information about COLLAGE, email collageotp@aol.com.
On Saturday, June 11th, Melmark hosted the 2011 Spring Festival. Moore Outdoor Rejuvenation (MOR) was the event’s Presenting Sponsor, and Pilot Freight Services supported both financially and through volunteer support. The event brought together families and friends of Melmark, and provided a fun environment for residents as well as day program participants.

At the festival, the Melmark Players performed West Side Story for hundreds of audience members. The Players acted out scenes from the musical in Melmark’s Multi-Purpose Center. The festival also featured live 50s and 60s rock and roll favorites by The Fabulous Greaseband, old-fashioned root beer floats, burgers, fries and funnel cakes. Everyone enjoyed the huge, inflatable slides and horse drawn carriage rides through the Melmark community.

Also at the festival, Melmark celebrated the 90th birthday of Melmark’s co-founder, Mildred Krentel. Mrs. Krentel, or “Miggy” as we know her, was surprised with a photographic slide show, towering cake, a rendition of “Happy Birthday” by the Melmark Players and a giant bouquet of flowers. It was a fitting tribute for a woman so dear to our hearts. We are very thankful to have had the opportunity to celebrate this milestone with our co-founder.

Melmark recently dedicated a newly restored, state-of-the-art sports court. The Melmark Sports Court is a multi-recreational area providing opportunities for children and adults to play tennis, basketball, kickball and participate in many other sports and therapeutic activities. The recreational area was restored with a lead gift from Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Philadelphia Region, Inc. as well as support from Melmark families.

Thanking Our Sponsors

2011 Schoemaker Classic V.I.P. Reception

In May, Melmark hosted a V.I.P. reception for sponsors of the 2011 Hubert J.P. Schoemaker Classic. At the event, the Melmark Players performed vignettes of West Side Story. After the show, the actors and actresses held a meet and greet session with sponsors of the Classic.
6th Annual

Hubert J.P. Schoemaker Classic

On September 19th, more than 300 of the area’s leading business and life sciences professionals gathered for the 6th Annual Hubert J.P. Schoemaker Classic. The event honored the memory of two legends in the region’s biotechnology field: Hubert J.P. Schoemaker, Ph.D. and Frank Baldino, Jr., Ph.D.

Hubert Schoemaker founded Centocor. His eldest daughter, Maureen, lived at Melmark for 28 years before her passing. Frank Baldino was founder and CEO of Cephalon. He passed away in December 2010. In addition to their business success, Schoemaker and Baldino shared the same dedication to helping others.

Cephalon was Title Sponsor of the 2011 Classic, with Accenture and Oracle Health Sciences serving as Presenting Co-Sponsors. This year’s event raised $366,000 net, bringing the six-year total to nearly $2,500,000.

The Classic was held on three premier golf courses: The ACE Club, St. Davids Golf Club and Waynesborough Country Club. Tournament play was followed by a cocktail reception, dinner, silent auction and live auction.

Through the years, the Classic proceeds have resulted in many benefits for the Melmark Community, including new classrooms in The Melmark School, a new greenhouse for the Meadows Program, expansion of the Anne and Brutus Kenan Center for Adult Services and support for other children’s and adult programs.
The 6th Annual fore Melmark New England golf benefit was held on Monday, July 25, 2011 at the Andover Country Club. Chaired by parents Jim and Angela Alex, this annual event has become a signature fundraiser to benefit Melmark New England and has raised nearly $200,000 in its six years to support local programs and services.

This year’s event experienced such growth that a double-shootgun start was introduced to accommodate the interest and demand. This allowed two separate groups of four-somes to compete for the 1st place prize. Not even mother nature could dampen the spirits of this crowd despite the heavy rains that came for the last hour of tournament play. As the last of the golf carts came racing back in to the clubhouse, scores were tabulated, with the Conway Office Solutions team emerging as the winner.

As tournament play wrapped up, participants made their way into the dining room for the cocktail hour and silent auction. They were greeted with a specially prepared video featuring the faces and smiles of the children we serve, warming the hearts of all who watched. At the dinner, Dr. Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Melmark President and CEO, spoke, thanking guests for their generosity and support. During the live auction, emcee Mark Menery encouraged bidders, as they vied for amazing packages, including the Red Sox home game experience with Dennis Drinkwater (Giant Glass CEO) in his seats right behind home plate; an Old Head Golf Course (Ireland) golf trip; and an 18-person suite at the TD Garden for a Celtics or Bruins home game.

Special thanks go out to Larry Cancro and the Boston Red Sox for sponsoring this special dinner event and their generous contributions of auction items. Melmark New England thanks all sponsors, supporters, participants and volunteers who donate their time and resources to making this annual event a success.
The 2010 – 2011 Expert Speaker Series marked the fifth year Melmark has invited both local and national experts on autism and applied behavior analysis to present pertinent information for our staff, other professionals and family members. This professional opportunity provides our staff with an intimate forum to learn about state-of-the-art practices from influential professionals within our field.

The agenda for this year’s Expert Speaker Series at Melmark New England included Melmark New England’s Jessica Doucette (Curriculum Coordinator), Dr. Jim Ellis (Director of Consultation) and Dr. Barbara Cannon and Dr. Jessica Everett (Senior Consultants). Their talks on academic programming, ethical challenges and parent training represented diverse topics and were well received by the record setting audience and demonstrated the level of expertise we have present within our organization.

The year’s Expert Speaker Series also included Dr. Phil Levendusky from McLean Hospital and Harvard Medical School, Dr. Greg Hanley from Western New England College, Dr. Mark Durand from the University of South Florida and Dr. Mark Sundberg, a renowned expert on verbal behavior. Over 550 professionals and family members attended these talks, and more than 125 people attended a two-day workshop, led by Dr. Sundberg. With over 500 presentations throughout the world, Dr. Sundberg commented that his experience with Melmark New England was “personally rewarding based on the audience’s level of expertise”.

We are also excited to announce the speakers who have agreed to participate in the 2011-2012 Expert Speaker Series. Our agenda will include Dr. Mary Jane Weiss, Melmark’s Executive Director of Research. Dr. Weiss is also a professor at Endicott College, where she directs the Master’s Program in ABA and Autism. She has worked in the field of ABA and Autism for over 25 years.

Also participating in the upcoming speaker series are: Dr. James Chok, Dr. Bridget Taylor (Alpine Learning Center), Dr. Thomas Zane (Endicott College), Dr. Greg Hanley, Dr. Keith Williams (Penn State Hershey Medical Center) and Dr. Sundberg.

Mary Jane Weiss, Ph.D., BCBA-D is the new Executive Director of Research at Melmark

Melmark’s Senior Clinician, Dr. Chris Perrin first-authors in JABA

Melmark is proud to recognize Senior Clinician, Chris Perrin, Ph.D., BCBA-D, for first-authoring a study in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. Dr. Perrin’s work is featured in Volume 44 of the Fall, 2011 Journal, and examines college students’ procrastination when studying for quizzes. Dr. Perrin’s research shows the difference in outcomes when students were given non-contingent study materials versus contingent materials. The findings can be directly related to students at all ability levels. The Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis is a psychology journal that publishes research focusing on behavior analysis and its impact on behavior. It is a highly respected publication and is read by ABA professionals around the world.
Melmark New England
Special Events Review

2nd Annual Trivia Night
The 2nd Annual Trivia Night fundraiser to benefit Melmark New England on March 5, 2011 offered food, fun and a trivia contest. Parents, families, friends and staff raised more than $6,000 for Melmark New England! Special thanks to Cambridge Savings Bank, Stump! Trivia, McAloon’s Liquor Store, Boston Red Sox, DR Fabricators, KBK Sports, Pampered Chef independent sales consultant, Dot Maloney, and event organizers, Bob and Rosemarie Hubbard, for making this year such an enjoyable and successful evening!

3rd Annual Comedy Night
How do you say belly-laugh? We say the Melmark New England Annual Comedy Night!
Organized and presented by MNE parents, Joseph & Tara Beaulieu, Brian Farrell, and James & Jill Fitzpatrick, this event was hosted at the Claddagh Pub in Lawrence, MA on May 13th. Our 3rd Annual Comedy Night raised more than $15,000 for Melmark New England’s programs and services!
With a mix of local and classic humor, these comedians had the audience of over 200 guests rolling over with laughter.

MUSIC FOR AUTISM PARTNERSHIP
Melmark New England is proud to partner with Music for Autism and the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) to present a series of highly acclaimed, interactive concerts designed for individuals with autism and their families.
Selected ensembles from the BSO offer enriching musical experiences in an environment where individual differences are celebrated.
Hosted at Melmark New England, the 60-minute interactive concerts are divided into three portions to include ‘concert time,’ ‘conducting time’ and ‘percussion time.’ During percussion time, participants are provided instruments and are invited to join the experience with their movement.

“The performing arts are often inaccessible to families and their children with autism. That’s why we’re so grateful to Music for Autism for establishing this bridge to the arts. The concert events are moving experiences for staff, guests and their families as well as many community guests,” said Rita Gardner, Melmark New England Executive Director. “We are looking forward to offering additional opportunities to experience the power of music for all.”

Robert Accordino, U.S. Founder of Music for Autism said, “We are so lucky to have the perfect collaborators to bring our programs to serve those with autism and their families in the greater Boston area — Melmark New England and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.”

Above: Melmark students and visitors enjoy the music.
Melmark New England

Success Story

In 2001, Parker entered Melmark New England’s program as a day school and residential student. He was nine years old at the time, and doctors had diagnosed him with Pervasive Developmental Disorder - NOS. Upon admission, he presented with a range of challenging behaviors, including aggression, property destruction and negative statements. In summary, he was having a difficult time navigating through each day and was a real challenge to his family as well as his teachers. He easily became frustrated which resulted in challenging behaviors. He had very limited community safety skills and would engage in conversation with strangers with little understanding of what to do in a crisis situation.

Over the past ten years, clinical programming and interventions have been in place to teach Parker appropriate ways to identify and regulate his emotions. Additionally, various reinforcement programs have been implemented to address these challenging behaviors, and relaxation strategies have been implemented as a means to provide an alternative to demonstrating challenging behaviors during times when he is upset or frustrated. Parker has significantly decreased the frequency and intensity of such challenging behaviors. The low rates of these behaviors have allowed Parker to increase his opportunities for independence in his residence and in the community.

Parker has worked on a wide range of academic skills. He has completed a nutrition plan and, as a result, has grown to enjoy cooking. He has advanced from making simple foods, such as muffins or brownies, to making entire meals for his housemates.

As the result of his hard work, Parker has increased his overall independence by being further away from staff in small increments. Parker has maintained two community jobs; one at a convenience store and the other at a local historical society. He maintains the ability to be dropped off at a store, navigate the location, purchase needed items, utilize a cell phone to call staff for help if needed, and meet staff at a pre-determined location after accessing public transportation.

Today, Parker is a humorous, engaging and intelligent twenty-year old adult who enjoys interacting with peers his age and adults, both in conversation and in physical activities. He has been busy preparing for his transition into adulthood and independent living and has recently moved into an apartment of his own. He attends classes in a public high school with peers his age and functioning level.

The greatest aspect of this transformation and transition is that Parker will tell you he could not be happier.

LEGACY BRICK CAMPAIGN

Melmark New England began to build its legacy walkway just over a year ago. Inspired by our students, we wanted a place where all families, friends, community partners and companies could pay tribute to these special students. Our first group of engraved bricks was installed toward the end of summer, and now features over 89 bricks!

To participate in this special project, please contact Erin McNamee at 978-654-4342 or emcnamee@melmarkne.org.
Melmark New England introduced its first ever After School Program, which opened on March 1, 2011. This program has proven to be a tremendous help to those families whose children attend our education program on a “day only” basis, which operates 12 months per year for 237 school days, from 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

This program has proven to be a tremendous help to those families whose children attend our education program on a “day only” basis, which operates 12 months per year for 237 school days, from 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. After working closely with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) and following a thorough regulatory review, we were able to move forward with the opening of the program.

The children enrolled in this program have enjoyed several outings to local parks and recreational centers, walking trails, shopping adventure, and even a visit from the local animal education specialists at Curious Creatures!

The feedback from the families involved has been tremendously positive. Not only do their children love the After School Program, but they are so thankful their learning is able to continue with the benefit of well trained Melmark New England staff.

Remembering Dr. Stephen Luce

RECEPTION AT ABAI

In November 2010, our friend and colleague Dr. Stephen Luce, died after bravely battling cancer for several years. Steve was a respected author, researcher and educator in the field of autism and developmental disabilities. He spent much of his career as a teacher and psychologist working with children with developmental disabilities and related behavioral disorders. While at Melmark, Steve served as Vice-President of Clinical Programming, Training and Research.

With his passing during the holiday season, many colleagues were unable to attend his funeral services. As a tribute, Melmark hosted the “Remembrance of the Life of Stephen Luce” at the Association for Applied Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) conference in Denver this past May. Over one hundred of Steve's colleagues came to the event in his honor. Peter Troy, Vice President of Melmark, New England served as host. Steve's major professor and advisor at the University of Kansas, was R. Vance Hall, Ph.D.; both Dr. Hall and his wife, Marilyn, spoke at the event. Another former colleague, Dr. Stephen Anderson, Executive Director of Summit Educational Resources, referenced Steve's contributions to the field of developmental disabilities. Additional speakers included Dr. Eric Larsson of the Lovaas Institute in Minnesota; Jill McGrane, Executive Director of Crossroads School in Natick, MA; Dr. Gina Green, San Diego State and Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies; and Dr. Judith Favell, Executive Director of AdvoServe in Mount Dora, Florida. The highlight of the evening was Dr. Kristen Villone's (a Melmark behavior analyst) introduction of Steve's wife, Claire, who was very moved by the high regard and esteem in which Steve was held by his peers.

We will always remember Steve for his vision, compassion and leadership.
SAVE THE DATE!

May 5, 2012

The Melmark
Dream Maker's Ball

Hotel du Pont, Wilmington, DE