

Newsletter

October 2004



The National
Autistic Society
South Lanarkshire

www.slnas.org.uk

It's Pantomime Time Again!

Last year's outing to the panto was a great success, so we're going to go again. Our friends at KYBO Theatre Group are performing *Treasure Island* during December at the East Kilbride Arts Centre. We have booked a private performance on Sunday 12th December at 7:30pm.

If you'd like to come along, please contact Ross (07941 252485 or mail@slnas.org.uk) and let us know ASAP how many tickets you'd like. As the Arts Centre theatre only holds 90 people, you'll need to be quick: **MAX OF 6 TICKETS PER FAMILY WILL BE ALLOCATED ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS.**

Candle Party

On Friday 19th November, Margaret Agnew will be holding a Candle Party with profits to be donated to the group. This promises to be a fun night (probably better suited to the womenfolk, but no discrimination!)

Please contact Margaret on 01698 207456 for more details.

Can I squeeze in here a Merry Christmas and Peaceful New Year to one and all? Yes I can!

Health Care and the Autism Spectrum by Alison Morton-Cooper

We have supplied 80 GP surgeries and A&E departments in South Lanarkshire with a copy of this book. Lesley negotiated an impressive 40% discount from the publishers. We hope that in reading the book, our GPs will be better able to deal with patients on the spectrum.

The author, Alison Morton-Cooper has many years of experience in the field of health care, in health services journalism, as a health educator and latterly as a senior nurse and lecturer in continuing professional education. She is also the mother of a teenage son with autism and is an experienced advocate for families affected by autism.

The book covers practical topics such as developing autism-friendly practice in health care; health awareness in people with autism; key strategies for effective consultation and assessment; and dealing with any potential "meltdown". There are also very good chapters on hospital visits and nursing care.

SLC Autism Scoping Exercise

Avril Scott, a former Speech & Language Therapist, has been tasked to produce a report into autism services in South Lanarkshire which will be finished in January 2005. As part of the project, Avril has spoken to all stakeholders, including SLC Education, Social Work departments and Lanarkshire Health Board. She has made contact with many service providers from all over Scotland and the UK and has met with Ross as a representative of SLNAS and is also meeting with Robert Moffat of The National Autistic Society for Scotland charity.

The main thrust of the project is whether to have a centre for autism in South Lanarkshire and what this should provide. Some suggestions put forward were: the reinstatement of the diagnostic team; a range of pre- and post-diagnosis support for parents, perhaps including a Yorkhill type support programme that would lead up to a diagnosis; the creation of a "link worker" post that would assist families through the services maze and provide information and help on such things as the DLA. Ross and Avril also spoke about autism training for staff and "non-evidence based" issues such as hair and blood tests, dietary techniques and music therapy.

A Trip to the Cinema?

The **Vue** cinema in Hamilton is willing to hire out a cinema to us for a private viewing.

The day would have to be mid-week, but the film could be of our choice (as long as they can get a print). There would have to be a small charge to cover the hire of the film.

If you would be interested in coming to the cinema, please contact Lesley (07766 630824 or mail@slnas.org.uk) with a suggestion of a film/type of film your child would like. This will be a difficult choice, given the spread of ages of the children in the group, but we will try to pick a movie that will suit most.

Mock Auction

I believe you'd all agree that last year's Mock Auction was a grand event, both in terms of the money raised and the fun of the night. We would like to repeat the night in March 2005. However, we require volunteers to help with the organisation. This will include canvassing local businesses for items to sell and helping out on the night.

Last year the following companies kindly donated items for the auction: *Yours Faithfully, CaperHouse, McDonalds, The Body Shop, Burger King, UCG Cinema, Sainsbury's, Esporta, Littlewood & Beaton, Click Flooring, Roseby's, Crutherland Hotel, Homebase, MFI* and many others. Many companies we contacted last year seemed happy to help us simply because they themselves knew of someone with autism. Please get in touch if you can help out.

Further, we need to sell 150-200 tickets to make it a good night. We really need everyone to sell tickets to their family, friends, neighbours and anyone they think will come along and spend some money.

Future Meetings

Our Meetings are normally held in the District Court Suite, Civic Centre, Andrew Street, East Kilbride. **Note the change for December 8th**, below.

November 10: Speaker: **Jennifer Kirk**, who is the Project Officer for Post Diagnostic Information for the NAS. Jennifer's remit is to collate and publish localised post-diagnosis information packs for people with an ASD and their parents/carers and is looking for input from parents/carers. Please come along and have your voice heard!

December 8: Speaker: **Dr Gordon Bell** will be taking about Essential Fatty Acids (Eye-Q to you and me) and heavy metals to tie in with our recent hair tests. We are expecting turnout to be high for this speaker, so have moved this meeting as a one off to **the Corporate Dining Room in Council Headquarters, County Buildings, Almada Street, Hamilton, NOT** the Civic Centre in East Kilbride. Start time of 7:30pm. We'll be back at East Kilbride for January!

January 12: A nice quiet chit-chat in the glorious January weather. Tea, coffee and left over mince pies available!

Christmas is Coming!

The National Autistic Society's Christmas Catalogue is available and has some very nice cards and wrapping paper in it. To get a copy, phone 020 7903 3559 or go to www.nas.org.uk and click on Christmas Cards. The Scottish Society for Autism has a special offer on last year's cards at <http://www.workwithus.org/buy/shoppingmall/default.asp?catid=6&shop=524#catalogue>.

Donations

At our August meeting we were given a very generous donation of £1000, which was raised at a party night in Hamilton Rugby Club. The Body Shop in Regent Centre, Hamilton donated £60 from the raffle they held in Awareness Week. Private donations from members have amounted to nearly £100 in the last few months. Thank you all very much.

Contact Us:

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If you have an email address, please let us know as it is much cheaper and less time consuming to email the newsletter than to envelope stuff it! Please send an email to mail@slnas.org.uk and I'll add you to the list. If we have your email, we can get updates to you as they happen! Many thanks.