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Plugged In

August 2011 ● Vol. 18 No. 3

Connecting Santa Barbara County with Essential Developmental Disability News



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*Serving the Santa Barbara
Community since 1953.*



**Saturday
October 1, 2011
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Marjorie Luke Theatre**

This event is supported in part by
The Marjorie Luke Theatre's
Dreier Family Rent Subsidy Fund.

721 E. Cota Street
(at Santa Barbara Jr. High)

For more information: contact 805 964-3547
or visit us at: www.alphasb.org

Sale & Silent Auction!

Hand-crafted wood and ceramic items,
and art work. . . and

ALPHA PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS:

ORIGINAL MUSICAL BY GAVIN ROY

DIRECTED BY
SHANNON SHEFFIELD

MUSICAL DIRECTION
BY COLIN MASTHOFF



Curtain at 2:00 p.m.
Admission Free, Donations Welcomed.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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The wait is almost over! The annual Alpha play, craft sale and silent auction is just around the corner. Join us at the Marjorie Luke Theatre on Saturday, Oct 1 for this wonderful event. Start your Christmas shopping early at the craft sale; bid on wonderful items in the silent auction; and experience the magic of the Alpha Performing Arts Troupe in an original production. At the art sale you will find numerous hand-crafted ceramic and wood items as well as original artwork, calendars, note cards, and much more! The silent auction offers an array of items including everything from jewelry and restaurant gift certificates to hotel stays and wine tasting adventures. This year's musical production is titled "Live and Let Dance" and will follow James Bind in his retirement years as he discovers his passion for dance and competes on a reality dance show. But, beware, it's not all smooth Twisting and happy Hand Jives on the dance floor when James must stop an evil villain's plot to blow up the theater!

The actors have been rehearsing diligently and can't wait to perform their masterpiece. Invite your friends and family to join you and come ready to have a good time! You'll leave with a smile on your face and a song in your heart, guaranteed!

*Plugged In is a free
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Plugged In

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Alpha Resource Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

A Chapter of The Arc of the United States.



Plugged In • August 2011

FRONT AND CENTER

The Alpha General Membership recently elected new officers and directors to the Board of Directors. The Board has a lot of responsibilities including ensuring that the organization fulfills its Mission, achieves its stated goals, and has the financial resources to meet its objectives among other things. To help you get to know your new Directors better, we conducted brief interviews with each of them. You'll see why they're passionate about Alpha and what their dreams are for the future as well as find out a few fun facts about each of them. Next time you see them at an event, introduce yourself and welcome them to the Alpha Board!



Name: Heather Bennett

Birth place: At home, on the bathroom floor, at almost midnight (in San Diego, CA)

Favorite food: Buttered popcorn

Family members: Mom, dad, sister, brother in-law, 3 nephews, 1 niece, grandfather (96-yr old!), aunts, uncles, cousins

Profession: Director of Foundation & Corporate Development at Direct Relief International

Dream vacation: Seeing tree frogs in Costa Rica

Best restaurant in town: Saigon Noodle House

How long have you lived in Santa Barbara: 2 years as of November 2011

Interesting fact about you: I collect hippos

How did you get involved with Alpha: Online volunteer post

What are your hopes for Alpha: To continue to share our passion with the rest of Santa Barbara!

Favorite Alpha event: Walk & Roll – granted, it's the only event I've been to...

Committees involved in at Alpha: Development -- starting last week!



Name: Joshua Weitzman

Birth place: Walnut Creek, CA

Favorite food: Baby back ribs

Family members: Jamie (wife), Sarah, Julia, Hannah (daughters)

Profession: Event Services Manager, Westmont College

Hobby: Cycling

Favorite quote: "The best index to a person's character is (a) how he treats people who can't do him any good and (b) how he treats people who can't fight back." - Abigail Van Buren

Best restaurant in town: Corktree Cellars (in Carp)

How did you get involved with Alpha: Following the birth of Hannah, it just slowly happened

What are your hopes for Alpha: I'd like to see Alpha influence the community regarding the value of people with developmental disabilities, gaining the prominence needed to raise all necessary support by influencing charitable giving toward the good of others.

Favorite Alpha event: Climb the Canyons

FRONT AND CENTER



Name: Kathleen Mills

Birth place: Redondo Beach, California

Favorite food: Pizza

Family members: Husband – Tim Milham

Profession: Personal Assistant

Best childhood memory: When I was around 10 my parents surprised me with a puppy!

Favorite quote: “You are what you repeatedly do. Excellence is not an event – it’s a habit.” Aristototle

One interesting fact about yourself: Before moving to Santa Barbara, I spent 8 years living on a beach in Baja California with no electricity or running water.

How did you get involved with Alpha: I was hooked after attending my first Circle of Life Luncheon

What are your hopes for Alpha: Continuing with the excellent programs currently offered and decreasing the waiting list for participants.

Committees involved in at Alpha: Circle of Life Luncheon, Alphatarians



Name: Skip Ware

Birth place: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Favorite food: Pizza

Family members: Jean (mom) Michael (brother) Janice (sister)

Best childhood memory: Going to Disneyland with my mom and sister

Hobby: Collecting cans and plastic bottles and watching train videos

Favorite actor: Clint Eastwood

Best restaurant in town: IHop

How long have you been attending Alpha: For a long time. I love it!

What are your hopes for Alpha: Change the path and the road down to the garden

Favorite Alpha event: Walk & Roll

Anything else you want to share: Save me cans & plastic bottles! Thank you!



Name: Scott Clarkson

Birth place: Sacramento

Favorite food: Steak

Best childhood memory: Going to Disneyland with my whole family.

Hobby: Spending time with my girlfriend Terri

Dream vacation: Going to a dude ranch

Favorite movie: The Three Amigos

Best restaurant in town: Sizzler

One interesting fact about yourself: I like to watch the A-Team. Mr. T is funny!

What are your hopes for Alpha: Start new classes and a harmonica club.

Committees involved in at Alpha: Part of the client council and the Performing Arts group.

MORE TO KNOW

Alpha Triple Play

Smiling faces and joyful laughter were abundant at Alpha's first annual Triple Play event! This was the first year that Alpha combined the annual Walk & Roll, bike ride, and family picnic and it was a HUGE success. Over 300 people joined us throughout the day for one or all of these activities. The day kicked off bright and early at 8:00 AM as our cyclists hit the road on either the 30 or 70 mile course. Overcast skies gave them a cool start, but it quickly burned off so they could enjoy sunshine and beautiful views on their ride. An instant camaraderie between the cyclists was evident as soon as they set out. They were riding for a purpose and were proud to be supporting Alpha. One of Alpha's Adult Program participants, Grant Looker, joined the 30 mile ride this year and has been talking about his accomplishment ever since.

Some of the 30 mile riders returned in time to join the Walk & Roll around Girsh Park. The group was led around the park by the Brawlin' Betties roller derby team. It was truly an inspiring sight to see people of all ages on foot and bikes, in wheelchairs, strollers, and skates make their way around the park. The sense of community among this group was almost tangible as love and support flowed freely. Walkers and rollers finished the course and began enjoying the Alpha family picnic. There were bounce houses, arts & crafts, games, and even a face painter and balloon twister. As the riders finished, they joined the rest of the Alpha family for a delicious BBQ lunch from Santa Barbara Chicken Ranch and were even treated to massages from Santa Barbara Body Therapy Institute!



Alpha staff Amy Buesker with Grant after his ride

The afternoon program began with an awards presentation for local students, as well as Mentor Worldwide LLC and the Brawlin' Betties for their commitment to creating an inclusive community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. After the awards the audience was treated to performances from Everybody Dance Now, the Alpha Band, Kids on the Block, and Christina Apostolopoulos. As the afternoon drew to a close and the crowd thinned out, a group of dedicated volunteers from Circle K stayed to help clean up. They were an immense help and at the end of the day everyone returned home tired, but thrilled that the event was such a success.

Planning is already underway for next year's event and committees are being formed. If you are interested in helping with any aspect of this event please contact Amy at abuesker@alphasb.org or 683-2145. We look forward to an even bigger and better Triple Play in 2012!



My Brother Theo

By: Grace Apostolopoulos; Reprinted from the Santa Barbara High School newspaper **The Forge**:

I wake up, get dressed for school, and hear my little brother babbling in his room. As I walk in, he looks up at me and flashes an angelic little smile. He is absolutely gorgeous. I help my dad change his diaper and get him dressed. I carry him to the kitchen and place him in his highchair. Our food is waiting on the table for us, and I begin to eat my breakfast as I help him eat his. All of this would be pretty normal if my brother was a one year old. But he's not. He's almost nine.

My brother, Theo, has a seizure disorder called Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome. For the first three months of his life, he was perfectly healthy and happy. When he was 3 months old, he received his first round of vaccinations. Within twenty-four hours he started having seizures and, to this day, he continues to have them constantly. On an average day he'll have around 50 seizures. These seizures can be small and indistinct, or so intense that his head drops to the floor with such speed and force that he is caused to somersault and land on his back.

Lately, he's been having seizures where his entire body stiffens and curls up and he stops breathing for about ten seconds. After these large seizures he's completely wiped out and usually takes awhile to get his energy back. He is developmentally delayed because of these seizures.



Theo cannot talk or verbally communicate with us, but he can make vocal sounds and hopefully will learn to talk someday. He learned to walk a few years ago, but he's not very stable and, because of his seizures, has to wear a helmet. He also has what some people call "Swiss Cheese Vision," meaning he only sees "holes" in his surroundings instead of the entire room.

In addition, Theo has poor depth perception which makes it difficult to coordinate between seeing something and being able to reach out and grab it. The face-mask on his helmet makes it even harder for him to see, but it's necessary to avoid yet another trip to Cottage Hospital for stitches.

He is also on five anti-seizure medications and has a Vagus Nerve Stimulator installed in his chest. It is the size of a pacemaker and sends short electronic bursts into the brain to help with seizure control. If we can better control, and hopefully eliminate, his seizures, his developmental skills will start to kick in and he can catch up on what he's missed. Our goal for Theo is to be seizure free.

My brother is not "Mentally Retarded," a term that I find offensive. He is disabled. Disabled in ways that most of us are not, but abled in ways that few of us are. He is always honest; he doesn't worry about what anyone thinks of him, never holds a grudge, and he never takes anything personally.

If you sit next to Theo and give him your attention he will reach for you and be very affectionate and loving to you regardless of who you are, what you look like, or what you've done. You will feel loved by him if you come to him. I wouldn't call that a disability.

Every time I see my brother, if I haven't seen him for a couple hours, I fall in love with him all over again, as if he was just born and I am seeing him for the first time. He has that kind of power over me and anyone else that takes the time to know him. I've met so many kids with special needs who have that same magic about them. They are pure, and they are also funny, smart, and creative.

My mother puts Theo in his bed to sleep and, as I come in to kiss him goodnight, he hugs me and cuddles into my shoulder. Sometime later my mom and I are watching TV when we hear my brother laughing in his sleep. This happens from time to time and should not be missed. We quickly run into his room and watch him devilishly laughing in his sleep. My mom and I both start giggling. I can only imagine how wonderful it must be wherever he is right then.



From left: Grace, Theo, and older sister, Christina

FUN & GAMES

Ice Cream in a Bag!

Summer is here and it's time for a cool treat! This activity is great for kids and adults of all ages! Who doesn't like a refreshing scoop of ice cream on a hot day, especially one you made yourself?? This simple recipe works well and makes a nice individual portion. ENJOY!

What you'll need:

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 cup milk or half & half
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
- 6 tablespoons rock salt
- 1 pint-size plastic food storage bag (e.g., Ziploc)
- 1 gallon-size plastic food storage bag
- Ice cubes

Tips:

- As the ice melts, the bag becomes very wet so be sure to do this activity outside or in an area that is able to get wet.
- Shaking/mixing the bag can make your hands extremely cold. You may want to use gloves or a towel to hold it.
- You can place the bag on a table and rub it back and forth if you get tired of shaking.

How to make it:

1. Fill the large bag half full of ice, and add the rock salt. Seal the bag.
2. Put milk, vanilla, and sugar into the small bag, and seal it.
3. Place the small bag inside the large one, and seal it again carefully.
4. Shake until the mixture is ice cream, which takes about 5 minutes.
5. Wipe off the top of the small bag, then open it carefully. Enjoy!

Recipe and instructions from: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/ice-cream-in-a-bag.html>



Permanent Sand Castle

Tired of your sand castle creations always getting demolished by waves? Try this fun summer activity and build a sand castle at home that you can keep permanently! It's easy and fun!

Ingredients:

- 3 cups of sand
- 1 1/2 cups of cornstarch
- 1 1/2 cups of water
- Newspaper
- Old cooking pot
- Large spoon

Tips:

- A quick spray of Pam or other lubricating spray helps the sand pop right out of the sandcastle molds. A hole poked into the top of the sandcastle mold also seemed to help.
- To make the sandcastles pop out perfectly, the trick seemed to be packing the sand mixture into the molds tightly and leaving an air space at the open end of the mold and slamming the mold down hard onto the plate....the extra air helps pop the sand right out.

How to make it:

1. Mix the ingredients together in the pot.
2. Cook the mixture over low heat, stirring constantly.
3. When it gets thick, take it off of the stove and let cool.
4. Once it is cool, use the spoon to turn it out on the newspaper.
5. Now you can make it into any shape you like, let it dry, and keep your creation forever!

Activity idea from: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/sand-sculpture.html>



UPDATE FROM ALPHA

Steal the Show - Postponed

This event originally scheduled for September 25, 2011 has been postponed.

The new date will be published as soon as it has been set. Please see event details below.



Molly Houston

Molly Houston, performer, designer, and amateur photographer, has traditionally given large themed parties. Now, she is taking all of these elements and is creating the ultimate party for Alpha. "Steal the Show," our new event held at Molly's beautiful home in Montecito, is all about ladies wanting to have fun...the men get to come later! There will be massage therapists, hairstylists, make-up artists, food, wine, music and entertainment flowing throughout the afternoon and into the evening.



Michelle Oliner at Sneak Preview Party

The most exciting part happens under the Big Tent: The opportunity to enter the grand dressing room filled with vintage hats, jewelry, clothing and accessories all for you to be styled, and ultimately photographed. You will then be entered into our photo contest. As the sun sets, the men arrive, and dancing begins, the top five women vying for the grand prize, a weekend in Santa Barbara and a fabulous high-end shopping spree, will be announced. The big question of the night will be, "Which lucky lady will **"Steal the Show?"**"

Sneak Preview Parties:

If you have an interest in assisting with the event we are looking for stylists, make-up artists and other artistic talents to join our fabulous committee. In order to acquaint yourself with the collection and fully understand the event concept we suggest you join us for a sneak peak party. To RSVP contact Cory Woodruff at cwoodruff@alphasb.org or 683-2145 ext 106.

Katie's FUNd Update

The Katie's FUNd group has been busy with lots of wonderful activities the past few months. Two of the highlights were the camping trip and the summer play production. The camping trip in June was an opportunity for 13 teens and young adults as well as 6 staff to spend two nights at El Capitan State Beach. We were joined on Friday night by a group of over 30 cyclists from Push for America. They arrived in time to help set up the last few tents and then spent a few hours playing games and chatting with participants; there was even an impromptu fashion show! Unfortunately



they couldn't spend the night because they had to go back to the hotel and rest before continuing their trek across America the next morning. So, we ended our time with them with a campfire and S'mores. The rest of the weekend was spent at the beach, doing a scavenger hunt, playing games, doing crafts, and just spending quality time together. The site was beautiful and we enjoyed a memorable sunset both nights. We returned home dirty, tired and a little sunburned, but we all had a great time!

As soon as we returned from camping, the six week summer program began. We enjoyed lots of fun activities together including a day at the beach, a trip to Solvang to see Hairspray in the outdoor theater, and of course a trip to see the final Harry Potter movie. However, the highlight of the summer was the musical production of The Wizard of Applause: Dorothy Lands in Hollywood. Participants practiced for six weeks to perfect their lines, songs, and dances and finally performed for a packed house at the end of July. There was no shortage of laughter and applause throughout the wonderful production and they received a standing ovation at the end of the show. Katie's FUNd is now on a short break while we gear up for another exciting year beginning in September. There's no telling what this group will be up to next!



HAPPENINGS

North County Parent Support Group Every first Friday of the month

McDonalds - 835 North H St, Lompoc



10-11:30 AM

Upcoming dates:
9/2; 10/7; 11/4; 12/2



Come share your experiences, meet new people and get resources while your children play.

All are welcome!

Wellspring Playgroups!

With a combination of structured activity and free play facilitated by behavior therapists, we nurture an atmosphere of organized fun and encourage opportunities for social interaction and learning new skills.

NEW! Santa Maria Playgroup
Rotary Centennial Park
2637 S College Dr.
Saturday September 17, 11:00 am-1:00 pm

The playgroups are FREE

RSVP at 800-418-9319 or pvillasenor@wellspring.com

Parents must stay to supervise, but this event is an excellent social opportunity for parents. Connections are made, phone numbers are exchanged, and the theme of the day is definitely community.



2011 Junior's Fall Sports Season is Here!

We are looking forward to a very exciting three months of training and competition. Below you will find information for the **first practice** of each fall sport. Junior's teams are for Athletes ages 6-14 years old and Athletes must complete an Application for Participation in Special Olympics to be eligible.



FLOOR HOCKEY
Sunday
August 14th
1:00pm-2pm
Carrillo Gym



TENNIS
Saturday
August 13th
10:00-11:30am
SB High School



SOCCER
Saturday
September 10th
10:30-11:30am
Girsh Park



BOWLING
Sunday
August 14th
10:00-11:30am
Zodo's Bowling

TO SIGN UP FOR FALL SPORTS
or for more information
Contact Ashley Haug at the Special Olympics office
(805) 884-1516 ahaug@sosc.org



The Special Olympics 2011 Fall Sports Season Is Here!

We are looking forward to a very exciting three months of training and competition. Below you will find information for the **first practice** of each fall sport.

Sports Participation Policy:

Athletes may choose to participate in one sport during the fall season as their primary sport, which they will compete in at Fall Games, if selected. They may also choose a secondary sport to practice and compete in at the Area and Regional level.

Information for the **first practice** of each fall sport:

SOCCER
Saturday, August 13th 10am-11:30am at Ortega Park

SOFTBALL
Team Sluggers: Saturday, August 13th 9am-10:30am at Ortega Park

BOWLING:
Sunday, August 14th 10am-11:30am at Zodo's
The Bowling team can accept up to 50 athletes. Please sign up early to secure your place on the team.

TENNIS
Saturday, August 13th 10am-11:30am; location TBD

FLOOR HOCKEY
Team Dolphins: Sunday, August 14th 9am-11am at Carrillo Gym
Team Penguins: Sunday, August 14th 11am-12:30pm at Carrillo Gym

All schedules for the season, including dates of tournaments, will be distributed at the first practices

TO SIGN UP FOR FALL SPORTS
or for more information
Contact Ashley Haug at the Special Olympics office
(805) 884-1516 or ahaug@sosc.org

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation • Authorized and Accredited by Special Olympics, Inc. for the Benefit of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

HAPPENINGS

You're invited to join our monthly parent group!

For parents of kids with Special Needs

Meeting Dates:
2nd Tuesday of every month

- Share and discuss your unique situation
- Get information on helpful resources
- Have a coffee and meet new people
- Browse the Alpha library

Times: 9:30-11:30 am

Where: Alpha Resource Connections Library
located in the Tri-Counties Regional Center
Building 520 E. Montecito St. Santa Barbara

Refreshments will be served.
Children are welcome *we have toys and videos*

For more information contact
Jennifer at 683-2145x103 or
email jgriffin@alphasb.org

alpha
RESOURCE CENTER
OF SANTA BARBARA

Santa Barbara Special Needs Adaptive Programs - Something for everyone with special needs of all ages!

Check out all of the new and exciting opportunities online at www.sbSNAP.org - including:

Surf lessons and Water Sports, Basketball, Yoga, Community Dances & Disco, Guppy Golf, Swim Lessons, Peer Buddies, Social Skills, Educational Workshops and More!

Your community website for resources, events, information and activities supporting individuals with special needs!

Santa Barbara Special Needs Adaptive Programs

sbSNAP

Your source for...

- Parent & Community Resources
- Summer Camps
- Local Organization Listings
- Special Events
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Afterschool Programs

www.sbSNAP.org
(805) 681-9165 • info@sbsnap.org

Basketball Skills Clinic @ Page Youth Center: Six Tuesdays: 9/13 - 10/18; 3:45 – 5 pm. Boys and girls ages 5 – 22 with physical, developmental or intellectual challenges, grouped by age, size, and skill levels. Register: info@sbsnap.org.

Afterschool Yoga Instruction with Molly Pennette: Six Mondays: 9/12 -10/17; 3:45 – 4:45 pm; location announced soon. Sign up with Retta Slay at info@sbsnap.org.

Family & Community Hoe Down: Saturday, October 1st, 5-9 pm; Enjoy a BBQ Dinner and a boot scootin' fun time at the SB Carriage and Western Arts Museum. Games, Live Band, Carriage Rides, Photos and fun activities. Tickets on sale September 1st @ www.dsasbc.eventbrite.org. Contact Retta Slay at (805) 681-9165 to volunteer or donate an auction item

First Fridays for Parents of Children ages birth – 4 years old with Down syndrome, and siblings of similar age. Visit with other parents on the same journey, volunteers available to help with play time, guest specialists visit to answer questions, activities and refreshments. Meeting at the indoor playground of Calvary Chapel Santa Barbara, 1 N. Calle Cesar Chavez, 9:30 – 11 am on the First Friday of each month. Hosted by Jamie Weitzman – (805) 566-4753 or jamieweitzman@yahoo.com.

MORE TO KNOW

Alpha Legacy Society

There are many ways to make a life changing contribution to a favorite charity and not all of them require a lot of time or effort. One easy, but meaningful, way you can support Alpha in the future is by becoming a part of our Legacy Society. A simple change to an existing retirement or insurance policy can ensure Alpha continues providing life enhancing support for generations to come. Would you consider making arrangements in your Will or Trust to leave all or a portion of your estate to Alpha? Or are you willing to have Alpha listed as a beneficiary on your insurance policy or retirement plan? These are all ways that you can become a part of Alpha's Legacy Society and support the valuable and necessary services that Alpha provides. We invite you to consider making one of these commitments and support Alpha's vision.

To find out more about joining the Alpha Legacy Society contact Cory Woodruff, Director of Finance & Development at 805 683-2145 or cwoodruff@alphasb.org.



Blair is a teenager full of vigor for what is to come. She loves music (especially Michael Jackson, see picture on left), performing on stage, and exploring life with friends. Your legacy will help our youth mature into self reliant and independent adults who have much to offer their community.

Have you already made plans to support Alpha in one of these ways? Contact us and let us know so we can officially make you a part of our Legacy Society!

Pilar loves to shop and mingle with friends. She is a delightful woman full of smiles and a warm heart. Pilar lives in a large care facility but would love to live in a home with a few roommates to share her deepest thoughts. Your legacy will help adults like Pilar live their dreams of independence, outings and friendship.



THE POWER OF SELF ADVOCATES

In mid-January of this year the Governor proposed approximately 1.2 billion dollars in cuts to Developmental Services. Of the 1.2 billion, 750 million were in direct cuts to services. Under the leadership of Jennifer Griffin, Alpha Children and Family Services, self advocates and family members provided public testimony on the impact of the proposed cuts. Hearings and rallies and individual legislative meetings were held in Santa Barbara, Sacramento and Los Angeles. Our self-advocates were heard! After the March Senate and Assembly budget hearings, the original 750 million in cuts had been reduced to 150 million (with bi-partisan support)! Unfortunately the Governor added back in an additional 24 million in cuts; so when the final budget was passed there were 174 million in cuts to direct services. This is on top of close to 6 billion in Health and Human Services cuts that impact children and adults with developmental services. It's sad that again we measure our success with the observation that it "could have been worse!" We were successful thanks to the financial support from Tri-Counties Regional Center, the availability of "Get Out Travel" to provide transportation and the doggedness of our advocates.

Subscribe to these list serves to receive updates on public policy and budget issues that impact children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families: www.cdcan.us and www.thearca.org.

ALPHA SPOTLIGHT

Up, Up and Away



New Directions, a travel organization for people with disabilities, recently held their annual BBQ and raffle. Alpha participant Ricardo Delgadillo was in attendance and waited anxiously to see if his name would be called as a raffle prize winner. He was thrilled when his name was announced as the winner of a helicopter ride over Anacapa Island! With some help from Alpha staff, Martha Murray, his trip was arranged in July. He was picked up from Alpha in the morning and treated to lunch before taking off from Ventura for a trip over the island. He commented that he enjoyed everything about the trip and really liked seeing the ocean. He

even got to speak with the pilot during the flight; although when asked if they let him fly the helicopter, he just chuckled and said no. The pictures that he took on the flight speak volumes about this amazing opportunity that many Santa Barbara locals have never experienced. Ricardo was thankful to be lucky enough to enjoy this experience; and luck must run in his blood because he won a 4 day trip to Disneyland a few years ago at this same event! What does he want to win next year?? "I want to go to Vegas!" Good luck Ricardo, although you probably won't need it!



A world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect...

Since its inception, Alpha's "Imagine a World" award has been appreciated by recipients. Alpha gave out 2 more awards since our last update.



"Cardio Dance for All" taught by **Suzy Kaufer**, an accredited Movement Therapist and long-time dancer, and held at the Bronfman Family Jewish Community Center in downtown Santa Barbara, is a class that truly is for ALL. Alpha participants are warmly embraced by classmates and Suzy. "I am thrilled to receive this acknowledgement and grateful to everyone here who has helped create this inclusive environment... It has been my honor and privilege to include the wonderful participants from Alpha; they are family! Dance is a universal language which crosses all boundaries of age, religion or abilities!"

Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, and Schreck (BHFS, a Law firm with a branch in Santa Barbara) is another deserving award winner. Zach Skaggs, who participates in Alpha's adult programs, has been employed at BHFS for 15 years. He is a pillar at the organization, treated with dignity, respect and inclusion. We are grateful for corporations like BHFS that see the value in including all people in the work environment. His coworkers have many good things to say about working with Zach, "When Zach is not here, we miss him." "He's such a reliable worker, and he always makes me laugh." "He adds something special to my work day." "He's so positive and always talks about the good things in his life. I appreciate that."



Return Service Requested

UP CLOSE - IRENE MOELLER



*Irene (left) and Julie Badella,
Director of Program Services*

Recently we welcomed another member to the Alpha family. Irene Moeller joined the team as the Administrative Assistant for the Adult Services Program in June. Before coming to Alpha, Irene worked as an escrow assistant and sales representative in Title and Escrow. However, when the market collapsed in 2008 she found herself out of a job. While she enjoyed “semi-retirement” for a few years, she recently decided it was time to re-enter the workforce. Seeing an ad in the Newspaper for the job at Alpha, she was intrigued because it required many of the same skills she used at her previous job. She was also familiar with Alpha because her family used to donate to the

thrift stores when she was a child. When she got the job, her brother, a former driver for Easy List and a friend of Alpha, assured her that she would love it here. After only 2 months of work so far, she knows he was right! She began by spending a week joining the different social centers in the adult day program and said that it was a great way for her to experience all the daily activities that Alpha offers as well as helping her to learn everyone’s name! She’s enjoying getting to know all of the participants and commented that a few of them are even helping her practice her Spanish.

In her spare time she enjoys camping, reading and cooking among other things. She has really been inspired by many of the meals cooked in the Alpha kitchen and has been experimenting with the recipes at home. She was born and raised in Santa Barbara and now lives in Lompoc with her husband. She has 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren that live in Santa Maria and Quail Valley. She comes from a large family – 8 brothers and sisters! We welcome her to the staff, but more importantly, into the Alpha family!!