



Easter Seals Southwest Florida

Exceptional People. Exceptional Lives.

In This Issue

[Project Rainbow Visits the Bucs](#)

[CEO's Corner](#)

[Appreciation](#)

[A Message from Programs and Services](#)

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Calendar of Events

January 13, 2010

12:00 p.m.

Donor Recognition Luncheon

Luncheon

Sarasota Bay Country Club

December 20, 2010

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Project Rainbow / Children's Therapy

Holiday Party

Easter Seals Braden Ave.

campus

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November 2010

Project Rainbow Visits the Tampa Bay Buccaneers

Susannah Cripe, Director of Project Rainbow

Easter Seals Project Rainbow Children's Respite received 22 tickets to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Sunday, November 14th football game through the generous efforts of one of our wonderful volunteers, Mr. Ed Cauley from MacDill Air Force Base. Ed also volunteers and helps with the Pirate Ship in the Bucs stadium. We were invited as special guests of Mr. Arrelious Benn, #17. We all jumped on the van early Sunday morning and drove up to the stadium. After some tailgating, sandwiches, chips, and soda, Mr. Benn greeted us with t-shirts, Bucs beads, and Bucs dollars for drinks and snacks. Our seats were in the front row and we cheered on the team. Even more exciting was Mr. Benn making the first touchdown just minutes into the game!



After the game, we went to the VIP area to meet Mr. Benn and get autographs and photos. The kids presented him with a plaque from Easter Seals Southwest Florida. The children of Project Rainbow will never forget their special day with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

You've Found Waldo



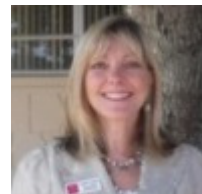
I recently attended the Easter Seals National Convention in Chicago where CEO and Board members of the 75 affiliates met. We learned of the latest initiative in providing services to people with disabilities. National leaders shared the work of our advocacy in the public sphere. Nationally, statewide, and locally, we continue to seek support and understanding for the lives of our clients, but most of all, we heard stories - stories of individual successes in the lives of children, young adults, veterans, and older adults all due to the work of Easter Seals. In this eNewsletter and in the future, you will hear the stories we can share of our mission delivery, the work you so generously support with your leadership on the Board, your time as a volunteer, and your donations of dollars. Thank you on behalf of the difference Easter Seals makes in people's lives.

CEO Ladd Waldo, 941-355-7637; lwaldo@easterseal.org

Appreciation, Part One

Ashley Canesse, Vice President of Philanthropy

Appreciation. Perhaps it is cliché to speak about gratitude and appreciation in the midst of the holidays, but to "not mention it" at the time of this writing would be as if we all sat around a holiday table and no one mentioned the empty chair. *Easter Seals is the embodiment of appreciation*; it is the happiest place that I've ever worked for that very reason. Yes, we are in tough, tough economic times. Yes, many of the people who participate in programs at Easter Seals are facing tough challenges. Yes, our employees are like everyone else in this world - they face challenges and tough times, too, but the spirit of Easter Seals transcends tough challenges and lifts the spirits of everyone who comes through our doors.



Please meet Easter Seals. Come for a tour and see for yourself what it is like to stand in the midst of joyful, appreciative people who are reaching out for their fullest potential. See the effects of volunteers and donors who have dedicated themselves to being the catalyst for momentum that will carry Easter Seals forward.

This spring, an architectural firm, COBROOKE Ideas | Architecture | Design, offered grants to two nonprofits in our community. Easter Seals was the beneficiary of a \$10,000 grant, and that's when we met Robert Vecchione. He's a Pratt Institute graduate - that got my attention, as my father went to that prestigious school as well. He has experience in the design of

hospitals, clinics and facilities for people with developmental disabilities, so we expected him to bring good ideas to the table, but he brought much more in the form of what feels like a continuing avalanche of support.

First was the interesting prospect of "visioning" led by architect Robert Vecchione. What do our participants ultimately need? How can our buildings best meet those needs? What does our management team envision for a future in which we could have everything it takes to provide the best environment and programs possible? For COBROOKE, "green" goes without saying. "Beyond green," they asked, "what does the perfect environment for children and adults with disabilities look like?"

With that process begun, Mr. Vecchione then rallied several of his associates to transform the current property as much as one possibly can with an aging building. "Why wait until a new facility can be built? There are people coming here now who need and deserve the best that you can offer." President and CEO Ladd Waldo agreed.

Part 2 of "Appreciation" to appear in the next eNewsletter.

The Doctor is In: A Message from Programs and Services

Dr. Kameron Partridge, Ph.D.,

Vice President of Programs and Services

Are you caretaking for an individual with disabilities? What do YOU need? Act now! At first glance of this article, you may be thinking that I am asking you to let Easter Seals know what you need. And while that assumption deserves a resounding "Yes! Please do let us know what you need!" I am also here to tell you that **many** other local agencies and entities in our community need to hear from you, caregivers - right now - in regards to how we can make your life run a little smoother, your stressors be a little less overwhelming, and hopefully your family a bit more cohesive and happy. Sound like a good thing? We agree!



The Community Alliance of Sarasota County's Developmental Disabilities Committee is currently conducting an anonymous online Needs Assessment Survey (see link below) so that community-based agencies like Easter Seals, Community Haven, Loveland Center, United Cerebral Palsy, Family Network on disabilities, The Florida Center, Children's Medical Services, Manasota ARC, and many others can design programs and services tailored to our families' needs. Families like yours!

Anecdotally, human service non-profits are inundated with stories from the families we serve about their needs, their stressors, their struggles, and also (my favorite part), their triumphs! But these are just stories; however, they are stories that are vitally important to share with our community and with our funders and supporters. Your life's stories of your challenges, opportunities, and success have never been more important than they are today because of the decreased funding for social services across the state.

Agencies like Easter Seals and our community's other non-profit human service agencies must use YOUR stories and experiences to advocate for the services you and your family need. PLEASE take the 15 minutes that the survey will require of your time. Trust me, *your input truly matters and will make a difference*, as the disability service providers in your community advocate for the services you need and the life you want, both for yourself and your loved ones. Thank you!

Click [HERE](#) to take the 15 minute, anonymous survey. Click [HERE](#) to view the flyer.

Easter Seals Southwest Florida provides education, therapy, advocacy, resources, and support services that improve the lives of children and adults living with disabilities, as well as their families and caregivers, which empower them to enjoy life to the fullest.

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