

Cottage at Carolina Farms Available for Stays

GHA Autism Supports was thrilled to have so many families and donors present for The Cottage at Carolina Farms Open House on November 2nd. This project has been in the planning and construction process for some time after an early spring storm in 2020 destroyed the existing home that sat adjacent to the swimming pool at Carolina Farms. Long-time GHA parents Rob and Maureen Morrell shared the idea of constructing a tiny house that could be made available to GHA families to stay during visits to the Stanly County area to see their loved ones. The leadership at GHA has always seen the importance of natural supports and how that adds to the quality of life in the lives of the individuals that we serve. The Morrell Family has been involved with this project since its inception as they chose GHA as a recipient for memorials that were made to honor the legacy of long-time parent and board member Dr. Rob Morrell who passed away in 2020. Since Dr. Morrell's passing, the Morrell Family has earmarked many gifts from event fundraising and annual family giving efforts to also support the development of the cottage. In addition to the generous donations made by the Morrell Family, we were thrilled to receive a very generous gift from the Bayne Family to help push the fundraising efforts to the finish line. Shirley and her late husband Jimmy became friends of GHA many years ago prior to Jimmy's unexpected passing earlier this year. The Cottage at Carolina Farms was named in memory of Jimmy Bayne

and in honor of their grandson Caleb McElreath. In addition to the Morrell and Bayne families, a number of special guests were on hand for the celebration on November 2nd including Eileen Herbst on
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"Our leadership has always seen the importance of natural supports and how that adds to the quality of life in the lives of the individuals that we serve."

Dawn Allen, CEO
GHA Autism Supports



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IMPORTANT

For families interested in renting the cottage for a stay, please contact Executive Assistant Denise Drye at 704-982-9600, ext. 110 or by email at denisedrye@ghainc.org.

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behalf of The Jack Fanning Memorial Foundation, along with other special donors Kathy O'Brien and Ann and Al Sadowsky. All donors present, along with support from the Graves Enrichment Fund, helped to invest in the expenses tied to the construction and outfitting of this home. Our organization is extremely excited to have this opportunity available for families to utilize for many years to come.



Home Sweet Home



Tidal Wave Charity Day Creates Big Splash

Once again, GHA Autism Supports was pleased to partner with Tidal Wave Auto Spa for their Annual Charity Day on September 20th! The Development Department Staff manned both locations in Albemarle and Wilmington for a fun day of washing dirty cars and raising money for GHA. Our organization received 50% of all car washes without a monthly membership and collected coins and dollars from customers. We are thankful for our continued partnership with Tidal Wave Auto Spa, and we were thrilled to add the second location in Wilmington this year.



Board members Granseur Dick (above) and Lisa Ewers (below) were all smiles while supporting the event in both Wilmington and Albemarle!



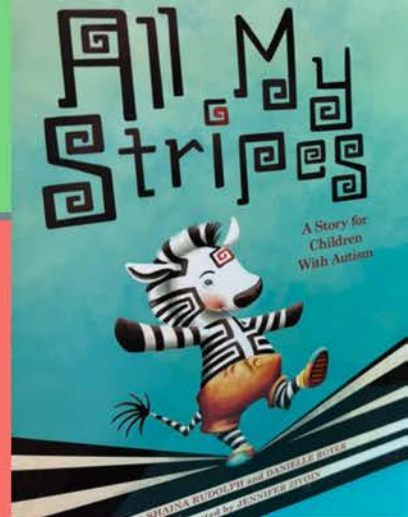
Autism and the Holidays

Helpful Tips from GHA Autism Supports Psychologist Janet Banks

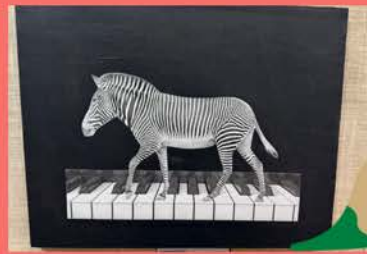
The holidays are a time for family and fun, but can also bring stress for individuals with autism. There often are changes in routines, extra people, transitions, noises, smells, etc. Some planning and preparation tips can help ease the tension:

- **Maintain typical routines when possible such as morning and bedtime schedules;**
- **Ensure favored items and sensory supports are readily available and have backups;**
- **Make plans to accommodate food preferences amongst the special holiday meal;**
- **If unlimited access to all the special food is an issue, plan for ways to limit access such as setting up in the opposite end of the house, being outside versus inside if weather permits, or placing the food in a contained area;**
- **Have chargers, backup batteries, wifi access, downloads, etc. for electronics;**
- **Find a quiet space away from people and festivities to reduce overstimulation;**
- **Keep holiday expectations realistic for the individual with autism even if that includes shorter visits or fewer activities;**
- **Have a quick escape plan in case things become chaotic or overwhelming;**
- **Look at your holiday plans through the eyes of your loved one with autism and incorporate what's meaningful to them to make it a happy holiday for everyone!**

Artists' Works Inspired by *All My Stripes* Featured at Annual Art Show



Dr. Stephen Shore, an autism advocate who happens to be on the autism spectrum said, "If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism." The annual art show, in partnership with First Presbyterian Church of Albemarle, offers an extraordinary opportunity to celebrate the uniqueness of every individual that GHA Autism Supports serves, while recognizing the contributions that different thinkers bring to the world! Most recently, GHA Autism Supports team members placed copies of the book *All My Stripes* in local libraries and even had the opportunity to read the book aloud to several elementary classrooms. *All My Stripes* is a helpful story for children on the autism spectrum as they follow a young zebra who learns to understand how he is different from the rest of his classmates. Zane the zebra teaches us to embrace not only who we are, but also to embrace the people around us who are brilliantly different thanks to their own amazing, colorful stripes. Shortly thereafter, *All My Stripes* became the inspiration for many of the works featured in this year's show where each individual was given the opportunity to celebrate something unique about themselves in their own zebra creations or other pieces showcasing an area of interest. Following a special reception on September 19th, the show was on display at the First Presbyterian Church Gallery for two months and was enjoyed by many in our GHA extended family as well as a number of visitors in our community.



GHA Autism Supports gratefully acknowledges the following individuals who made memorials and honorary gifts between September 1, 2024 and November 30, 2024. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you feel an error has been made, please contact the Development Department at 704-982-9600, x 125.

In Honor of Dawn Allen
Philip & Susan Hinely

In Memory of Ellen Brooks
Shawnee Sundquist

In Honor of Carolina Farms #2
Steve & Judy Smithmyer

**In Honor of the
Family of Jason Cory**
Steve Cory

In Honor of Cannon Cowles
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Norwood, Jr

In Honor of Scott Denton
Griff & Christie Garner

**In Memory of
Lynn Janine Durrett**
Gerald Durrett

**In Honor of the
Durrett Home Staff**
Larry & Thea Gardner

In Honor of Emily
Amy Whichello
Robert & Colleen Whichello

In Memory of Michael Forrest
Rick & Penny Brown

**In Honor of Mark Gladstone &
Starr Apartments Staff**
Betty Gladstone

**In Honor of
GHA Autism Supports Staff**
Mike & Carla Shinn

In Honor of Drew Julian
Paul & Vicki Boileau

In Memory of Jo Linker
Ellen Story

In Honor of Zach Lowder
Tony & Martha Lowder

In Memory of Jack Macon
Boyd Jordan

In Honor of Caleb McElreath
Shirley Bayne

In Honor of Samantha Messer
Allison Crotty

In Honor of Justin Morrell
Marisa Aull
Hal & Kathleen Baumann
Tom & Patricia FitzGerald
Mike & Linda Riley

In Honor of Beth Olivieri
John Olivieri

In Honor of Braden Poplin
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Norwood, Jr.

**In Memory of
Mary Ann Ponder**
Phil Ponder

**In Honor of Thomas C.
Southerland**
Thomas & Marie Southerland

**In Memory of T.C. & Viola
Southerland**
Thomas & Marie Southerland

In Honor of Kathryn Stittgen
David & Virginia Porras

In Honor of Robbie Stevenson
Bill & Diane Stevenson

In Honor of Denise Smith
Sherrill Smith

**In Honor of Marsena Williams
& Staff at Tanglewood Home**
Dr. Linda Lawrence

WILMINGTON RESIDENT SERVES AS A DIFFERENCE MAKER IN HIS COMMUNITY



Being an active part of the communities in which we reside continues to be of utmost importance in the provision of services at GHA Autism Supports. In many cases, the individuals we support have opportunities to volunteer and give back to assist in meeting a variety of needs in their home communities. For over 35 years, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is a non-profit organization that has been providing emergency food to those in need in New Hanover, Brunswick and Pender counties, operating under the premise that no person and no family should go home hungry. As an "all volunteer" organization, they rely solely on the hundreds of volunteers who donate their time every day to help collect, sort, package and distribute food to those requesting assistance. With no paid staff, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard operates with a working Board of Directors, whose members personally supervise the daily activities of the Cupboard. GHA Autism Supports resident Jon has been an active volunteer at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard for 2 years at the Red Cross Street location in Wilmington. Jon works one day per week with GHA Support Advocate Trainer Rex Purificato making "no stove" bags filled with non-perishable foods. "Jon's focus on the task at hand is second to none", shared GHA Staff Support Team Lead Jackie Poist. "Jon's involvement in Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is a win-win for everyone as it provides a wonderful opportunity to maximize his skill set, all while helping his neighbors in need." To date in 2024, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard has served 16,535 households and 61,656 individuals who may have otherwise gone hungry in the Cape Fear region. Way to go Jon and Rex for making an impact in your home community!



NEIGHBORS
NEIGHBORS
NEIGHBORS





Sharing of Knowledge with International Visitors

Several former interns and long-time friends of GHA Autism Supports from Japan toured some of our sites in October. They were so impressed with the progress they have observed over the years and how GHA has developed new programs and initiatives to meet the changing needs of our individuals and their families. Visiting The Cottage at Carolina Farms was one of the highlights of the trip and they were excited about this concept facilitating family visitations. Always happy to see familiar faces, GHA was happy to host the group and share in a cultural exchange.



Searching for that perfect gift? The Shoppe at Sundries is filled with handcrafted items made by individuals with autism. These one-of-a-kind pieces have a beautiful story and will brighten any holiday decor!



Make your holiday meal prep a cinch by purchasing catering trays at Second Street Sundries! Place your orders by December 18th for pick-up by 2 pm on December 23rd by calling 704-983-CAFE.

Fall = Fun for All!



Our staff in both Stanly and New Hanover Counties sure know how to pack our schedules full of fall fun. From dressing up in our favorite costumes, pumpkin decorating contests to enjoying our favorite Thanksgiving foods and participating in lots of games, being together as a GHA family is the best! A special thank you to all of the staff that were involved in the planning of such meaningful activities.



Staff Celebrated at Appreciation Events

We had so much fun celebrating the employees of GHA Autism Supports during the 2024 Staff Appreciation Days in both Albemarle and Wilmington! We are proud to honor so many who impact the lives of the people we support every day. Staff were treated to food, a GHA sweatshirt, games & prizes. It's always fun to gather as staff and celebrate the hard work of our employees! A big THANK YOU to all who helped plan and carry out such fun events. Without question, our staff members continue to go above and beyond!



Reiki--Calming Treatment Enjoyed by Many

GHA Autism Supports continues to provide alternative treatments through the Duke Endowment Grant that was received nearly two years ago. Reiki allows practitioners to channel energy by means of touch or hovering in order to allow the body to heal naturally. Corey-Beth Travaglini, Reiki Practitioner, continues to be a favorite for so many! While residents at Morrow Valley Farmstead have enjoyed reiki since April, residents at Carolina Farms began participating in November. We are excited to continue offering reiki and other alternative treatments to improve the physical and emotional well-being for individuals we serve at GHA Autism Supports.



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The GHAzette Newsletter is released quarterly. For feedback or to share story ideas, contact:



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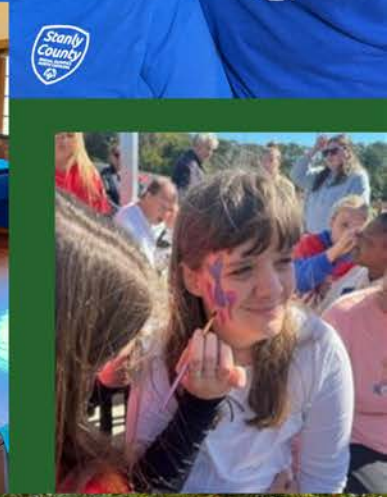
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'TIS THE SEASON

to be jolly



*From our family at
GHA Autism Supports to yours,
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!*

