



*Helping the physically handicapped live independent and self directed lives*

2220 Hall Road, Elma, NY 14059 716-685-3976

## Winter Newsletter

**It's Official! We are now a 501c3!**

Hello All,

December, 2005

**Marc Swiatkowski** – It is with extreme sadness that we say good-bye to Marc. Marc was a founding member and Board Member of The Independence Foundation. He produced the video clip on our website for wheelchair soccer, he helped develop the College Scholarship application, helped to plan the Bike for Ben and he was a vital contributor to the Independence House project right from the start. Marc was a vibrant man, who was attending Edinboro University when he became ill. Marc had Duchene Muscular Dystrophy, and lost his life to the disease November 15, 2005. Marc's family designated The Independence Foundation for Memorials and has also auctioned off Marc's x-box (you may have seen Jackie and this story on Channel 2 news!) on e-bay with proceeds going to our Foundation. Marc's spirit will be in all that we do! Our deepest condolences and love to Jackie & Don, and their family.



**Power Wheelchair Soccer** - WOW! We had a full house on Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup>! The stands were full, we had 8 players, even with 5 in the hospital or absent. And we had a very competitive game! This game was played In Loving Memory of Marc Swiatkowski. Come and watch, Sunday, December 18, 4 – 6 PM at the Elma Boys & Girls Club. The new power w/c soccer schedule is posted on the website. We will play once a month until May. The College crowd will be home in December – so we should have a full house then. Always open to new players, just come to any game. Welcome Jerod!

**E-MAIL** – If you have e-mail make sure I have your address. I send out information and updates all the time. Some recent information:

- A new program looking for parent support for boating and fishing for handicapped individuals.
- A workshop on Housing Options
- **Recreation Expo March 4<sup>th</sup>** – we will be playing w/c soccer here – **I'll need volunteers and players!**
- **Equipment** – w/c van, scooter, hoier lift, etc **for sale**
- Next house task
- Looking for input on clinics
- Power wheelchair soccer schedule for Jan – May
- Updates on who is in the hospital, birthdays, etc (with permission)

If you are not on my e-mail list and want this info – call me at 685-3976.

**HOLIDAY CARDS** – Would you like to enclose an Independence Foundation gift envelope with your Holiday cards? This is an easy way to help the Foundation and a great way to give loved ones a chance to show their support. For envelopes or information – call Chris.

**Social Gatherings:**

**SABRES GAME** – Friday, December 30<sup>th</sup> 8:00 PM  
Seats \$24 each the whole group can stay together – wheelchairs and all!  
Call Chris at 685-3976 to reserve your tickets.

Winter tip: Carry a snow shovel in your van!
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**Mom's only Dinner:**

Calling all mom's – we will gather for dinner at **The Olive Garden, Galleria Mall on Sunday night, January 29, at 6PM.** Pay your own way. This will give us an opportunity to get to know each other and chat. RSVP please to Chris at 685-3976 or [missblubug@yahoo.com](mailto:missblubug@yahoo.com).

**COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:**

**The recipients were chosen on Friday, October 14, 2005**

**CONGRATULATIONS to** Elliott Golach, Kelly Warren, Greg Willard, and Amber Koehane. The new application is posted on the website for the 06 – 07 College year, with a deadline in March 06.

**CORN MAIZE UPDATE:** The Corn Maze check was for \$732 and then Traci & Pat Garland, owners of The Corn Maize generously donated another \$500 to our Foundation – for a total of **over \$1200!** Thank you to The Garlands for their willingness to help and their generosity.

**INDEPENDENCE HOUSE: (important dates coming up!)**

The Opts proposal was sent to the state on June 13. We completed the interview stage on August 10. **State and DDSO Team Review took place on October 13, 2005.** Questions received & answered **Replies sent back to the state week of November 14.**

**\*\*\*\*\*Brainstorming Meeting** – letters went out asking for input on the design and environmental aspects of the house – this meeting will be **Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 10AM – Noon** at 3131 Sheridan Drive (North town Plaza)

**\*\*\*\*\*Grant Writing Party!!!**

If you are able to fill out forms, have some skill in writing, and would be interested in helping us to apply for grants – **We Need YOU! Monday, January 23 at 7PM at 2220 Hall Road, Elma** – we are going to begin the process of getting funding for the many things that will be included in the house.

There are 8 individuals in the first proposed house – with a current wait list of 3.

There are 5 on the list for the proposed Phase two house ( in a few years) - current ages of these individuals is middle school. You can get on either list if you are interested in this type of housing – now or in the future, by calling me.

**Family Directory** – We have a Family Directory for information sharing purposes between families. If you do not already have one – call Chris to get on the list and get your copy.

**Check out our website:** [www.TheIndependenceFoundation.org](http://www.TheIndependenceFoundation.org)

**We also now have a brochure!**

Looking forward to seeing you –

*Chris Muller 685-3976*

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