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### Executive Director

## Morrison Developmental Center Continues to Celebrate the Ability in Disability!

On Saturday, May 17th, the Yarmouth High School Student Senate hosted a benefit concert in the Yarmouth Performing Arts Center for the Morrison Developmental Center.



As a world famous pianist from Randolph, Massachusetts, Tony Deblois has been playing the piano since the age of two; what makes his story, and his performance, so inspiring is the fact that Tony is blind, autistic, and has Savant Syndrome.

The evening began with an inspirational song written specifically for Tony, and the audience quickly learned why he is being noticed internationally. Not only did he "tickle the ivories" to a level not typically seen in a high school auditorium, but he sang the vocals to most of the songs he played! During the first half of the show he delighted young and old alike with such tunes as "Yellow Brick Road", "Take the A Train", and the entire score of "Rhapsody in Blue". After a brief intermission Tony returned to the stage to take requests from the audience. Again, he dazzled the roughly 200 attendees with his entertaining renditions of "American Pie", "Piano Man", and "Bohemian Rhapsody", to name only a few. The evening closed with a standing ovation and another beautiful melody written exclusively for Tony.

Tony was the subject of the 1997 CBS made for TV, Movie of the Week, "Journey of the Heart" and has been featured in several specials of the Learning Channel. Stories about his life and talent have been broadcast on National Public Radio, Voice of America Radio and Talk America. Spots about him have aired in documentaries in Rome, London, Japan and Australia, and he has made appearances on the Today Show, Good Morning America, Access Hollywood, Entertainment Tonight, and the CBS Sunday Morning Show.

The concert was held in honor of Annie White, a member YHS's Class of 2009 who passed away in July 2005. Annie attended the developmental preschool at MDC in the early 1990's, and her mom is MDC's Development Director.

## MDC Current Events

It has been a busy spring at MDC! On April 29th & May 1st, MDC was invited to participate in UNUM's Volunteer Fair at two South Portland campuses. UNUM employees were able to view materials and learn about MDC's mission, its programs, and its vision for the future. Volunteer opportunities were also made available to UNUM staffers.

On Wednesday, May 14th, the preschool staff hosted an Open House for families to learn about its exciting "Friends First Preschool". Visitors were treated to delicious treats while children of all abilities checked out the Center. Parents, there are still slots remaining in the preschool, so if you are considering your child's placement at the Center, please act quickly!

May 15th & 16th saw the annual Seedlings Open House and Sale arrive with beautiful geraniums, hanging baskets and healthy house plants available for sale. The greenhouse bustled with activity as the public purchased a wide variety of plants to fill their flower beds and homes. Remember, our greenhouse is open daily throughout the year, 8:30AM-3:30PM. We still have terrific bargains on healthy, chemical free plants to suit any green thumb!

Also on May 15th MDC was honored with the helping hands made possible by United Way's "Day of Caring". This year 6 employees from Hannaford's Meat & Deli department spent the entire day performing various yard work chores as well as cleaning & disinfecting playground equipment & setting up the marble picnic tables. Everyone at MDC is grateful for their generous donation of time! Thank you!

# From the Directors Desk

Well, spring has come and we can finally say good bye to “old man winter”. However, to say that it has been an interesting spring is an understatement. It has been an eye-opening legislative session and it appears that we have survived the latest round of budget cuts from the state. I think the word “survived” is the optimum word here. As with most non-profit organizations, we receive the majority of our funding through the State, whether it be State grants, Medicaid money for community supports, therapy services and case management, or through local districts.



We still don't know the final impact of all of the cuts, but what we do know is that we will be making some reduction in personnel. However, we believe that these cuts will allow us to take advantage of other opportunities that will enhance Morrison Developmental Center's ability to enter new territory for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. One of the difficult endeavors in the world of social services is to make adjustments to your long term planning process when funding is cut. We are very fortunate that the staff at Morrison Developmental Center is very creative and always looking for different opportunities.

**“We are very fortunate that the staff is very creative and is always looking for different opportunities”**

Some of the changes that have occurred have allowed our staff to look at different ways of supporting people. For example, in our Seedling program we will now be offering more programming that will allow the individuals in that program the opportunity to choose more options. We will be adding a community integration component that allows the individuals in that program to experience the community and teach them how to safely negotiate around Portland. Additionally, we will be engaging these individuals in more entrepreneurial activities that will involve selling the products they make to the community at large. Over the last 20 years one of the primary goals of the Seedling program has been to bring the community to the Center. Now we want to bring the Seedling program to the community!

Our preschool has also added an additional component that will allow some of our therapists to serve children in the community that we do not currently have in our preschool. Obviously, we have a certain level of expertise and are excited about sharing that expertise with the general public. We continue to operate our integrated preschool program and look forward to another year of success in that program. We strongly believe that by integrating this program we have begun the process of reducing discrimination and alienation of individuals with developmental disabilities

As soon as we are able to determine the extent of the cuts we will report them to you.

Until next time.....Jim

# MEET THE NEW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Morrison Developmental Center is pleased to announce that Dorothy White has been appointed the agency’s Development Director. Previously, Dorothy had served as the Center’s Capital Campaign Manager. Dorothy is very familiar with the Center as her daughter Annie attended the Center as a preschooler. According to Executive Director, Jim DeCamillis, “she brings an enthusiasm to the job that is remarkable. Her commitment to people with developmental disabilities is unquestionable”. In accepting her position at the Center, Dorothy said “After Annie passed away in July of 2005, I realized how important it was to continue to be committed to people with developmental disabilities, and when I was offered the position, it was like coming home again”. Dorothy will be directly involved in all fundraising activities, including MDC’s annual golf tournament, the annual Christmas tree and wreath sale and the annual campaign. She will also be responsible for public relations and grant writing. Dorothy lives in Yarmouth with her husband Tim, daughters Beth and Rachel, 3 horses, 5 dogs, 5 cats, & a bunny! She can be reached at 874-1125 or by e-mailing her at [dwhiteMDC@gmail.com](mailto:dwhiteMDC@gmail.com).



# MDC WELCOMES TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Morrison Developmental Center is proud to announce that Scott Wentzell & Lori Coffin have joined the Board of Directors.



Scott is employed by Thos Moser in the public relations department. His son, Scotty, attended MDC’s preschool program for 3 years and has since moved on to public school and has benefited from his experience while he was at the Center. Scott lives in North Yarmouth with his wife, Lisa, and son, Scotty.

Lori is the newest member of our board of directors and is a Speech and Language Pathologist who has her own private practice. Lori lives in Falmouth with her husband Craig and their children, Connor and Ella.

## Save the date for the 16th Annual “Shot in the Dark” Nite Lite Golf Tournament

**Purpooduck Club, Cape Elizabeth**  
**Friday, August 22, 2008 5PM**

**A 9-Hole Event featuring cocktail reception, putting contest, delicious steak dinner & live auction—all to benefit MDC!**

**Team Registration - \$500**  
**Individual Registration - \$125**



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*A learning place for people of all ages who  
have developmental disabilities.*

## MDC and Prudential Partner

Prudential offers ongoing support to people with disabilities, as well as to their friends and families. The insurance company sponsors events and organizations that provide the opportunity for people with and without disabilities to participate in integrated activities. It is with that objective that MDC and Prudential have agreed to partner on projects that will mutually benefit both organizations. On May 20, 2008, Prudential hosted the second MDC/Prudential plant sale at their Portland office. All of the proceeds of

the sale benefited MDC's Seedling Program. The highlight of the event was Prudential's presentation of a \$25,000 "check" for the Capital Campaign. Thank you, partners!



**At left: Craig Gray, VP, "Return to Life" Program, hams it up with MDC consumers Sarah, Tracey & Susie.**



**Right: MDC Executive Director, Jim DeCamillis, accepts the \$25,000 "check" from Prudential's Senior VP, Al Hemond.**

## Schedule of Events and Programs

### June

- 6/14 Giant MDC Yard Sale! 9AM-2PM  
331 Veranda St., Portland
- 6/17 Preschool/School Age  
Summer Vacation Begins
- 6/17 CPR for SAP/PS Staff
- 6/24 MDC Board Meeting
- 6/30 Preschool Summer Program Begins

### July

- 7/4 Independence Day, Center Closed
- 7/29 MDC Board Meeting

### August

- 8/8 Last Day of Summer School
- 8/14 Last Day of Preschool
- 8/15 Preschool Graduation. Congratulations!
- 8/18-19 Mandt Staff Recertification
- 8/22 16th Annual "Shot in the Dark"  
Nite Lite Golf Championship, Purpooduck Club  
Cape Elizabeth 5PM 874-1125 FMI
- 8/26 MDC Board Meeting

### September

- 9/1 Labor Day, Center Closed
- 9/2 Preschool/School Age Program  
08/09 School Year Begins