



Organization of Special Needs Families
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Cupertino, CA 95014

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OSF News

Organization of Special Needs Families (OSF) Newsletter ~ October 2009

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7th Annual OSF Fundraiser Dinner

Our 7th Annual Fundraiser Dinner takes place on Sunday, November 22nd, from 5:30pm until 8:30pm. **This year's event is at St. Jude's Church Parish Hall, located at 20920 McClellan Road in Cupertino.**

For over seven years, OSF has provided valuable resources, support, and services to the special-needs community. Our annual Special Conference brings together a panel of special-needs experts and speakers to update parents and professionals in areas such as medical research, legislation, legal, health and education. Our regularly scheduled workshops train parents, caregivers, teachers, and other special-needs service providers on a wide range of subjects such as feeding, physical and occupational therapy, and behavior management. Our large repertoire of quality programs – most are offered year-round – directly serves our special-needs children and their families.

OSF is a non-profit and public-support organization. We rely heavily on your charitable contributions to operate and grow our excellent and vital set of programs and services. We need your help. **Please join us in this fundraiser event and support OSF by returning the enclosed fundraiser envelope with your generous donation.**

We wish to thank St. Jude the Apostle Episcopal Church in Cupertino for kindly allowing OSF to use its facilities for the fundraiser event, and BJ's Restaurant and Outback Steakhouse for supplying the delectable food fare for the dinner. We also wish to express gratitude to the following list of businesses, for donating their products and services toward raffle prizes and auction items for the fundraiser. Their generosity help make our fundraiser event possible. From the bottom of our heart – thank you!

Our fundraiser in-kind sponsors are:

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| Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad | Lassen Tour & Travel Inc. |
| Blackberry Farm Golf Course | Jewels in Style |
| Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park | Linden Tree Children's Records & Books |
| Boulder Creek Golf & Country Club | Malibu Grand Prix |
| Byington Vineyard & Winery | Mission Cliffs |
| The Cheesecake Factory | California's Great America |
| Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose | Park Place |
| Chuck E. Cheese's | Planet Granite |
| City of San Jose – Happy Hollow Park and Zoo | Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum |
| Classic Car Wash | S. B. Restaurant CO. – Elephant Bar Restaurant (Cupertino) |
| Cupertino Inn | Savannah-Chanelle Vineyards |
| Cypress Hotel | See's Candies |
| Disneyland Resort | Sheng Kee Bakery |
| Fulfillment Systems Inc. | Theatre Works |
| GoKart Racer | Traders Joe's (San Jose – Bollinger) |
| Golfland | Vardy's Jewelers |
| Habitot Children's Museum | Whole Foods (Cupertino) |
| Hilton Garden Inn Cupertino | Willow Stree |
| Homestead Lanes | Winchester Mystery House |
| In-N-Out Burger | Winter Lodge |
| Jake's Restaurant Group | Yamagami's Nursery |
| Laser Quest | Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad |

7th Annual OSF Fundraiser Dinner



November 22, 2008, Sunday
5:30pm to 8:30pm

St. Jude's Church
Parish Hall
20920 McClellan Road, Cupertino

Wine Social Dinner Performances Auction

Generous Food Sponsors



Generous Facility Sponsor



**St. Jude the Apostle
Episcopal Church
(Cupertino)**

OSF ~ Bringing Families and Community Together

Another Happy Camper!

In 2009, OSF is the proud recipient of several recognitions, including those from the City of Cupertino, Congressman Mike Honda, State Senator Abel Maldonado, and State Senator Joe Simitian. We were cited for our dedication to and efforts with special-needs individuals and their families. We love and truly appreciate these acknowledgements from our public officials. But hearing from the people we serve – our children and their families – that we’re doing good work, is especially treasured.

Our staff recently received this note from one of our families:

Thank you for your wonderful summer program for our child. It was great to hear his enthusiasm when he talked about what he did at camp each day. It was just what he needed. Thank goodness there are people like you to provide this care.

The Wild Family – In Their Own Words

Our 6 year old son Joshua is tall and strong, so tall that sometimes I tell him he will be grow up to be as big as a tree. His original diagnosis was inaccurate, partly because he was completely nonverbal at 3 years old, so it took some time to get him into the most appropriate educational program. He is currently in a specialized classroom in the San Jose public schools, and most of the time he seems to enjoy going there.

While the classroom is meeting some of his development needs, that environment is not really challenging him in other areas. Specifically, the social interactions between kids seemed to be missing, as was recognition of his particular developmental gaps or areas needing special encouragement. In addition, at times the staff seemed governed more by bureaucracy than by the specific needs of the child as they grow and change.

We found OSF through our SARC caseworker when we were looking for an after school program to help fill the socialization gaps. Joshua has been attending the after school program since February 2009 and attending the day long summer program and camp.

That Joshua loves this program is evident every day when he runs into the classroom, delighted and excited to be at OSF. Not so obvious are the leaps and bounds he has made in the areas of social interactions with other children and with adults. He is more verbal than ever, is more comfortable in new situations, and more trusting that exciting adventures await him around every corner. He has worked at learning how to verbalize his frustration rather than expressing them physically, and has gained more skills in that oh-so-important developmental landmark of childhood, scribbling. We especially appreciate the effort that OSF staff members make to initially notice areas where they can help Joshua and how they follow through to help him improve that particular skill level. The summer program was extremely memorable for Joshua, and we continue to have conversations about his trips to Rancho San Antonio. He still remembers that he should not throw his backpack down the hill...

With Joshua in this stimulating, supportive and varied environment, our family has experienced a new level of relaxation. Not only are we sure that Joshua is being well cared for, we find Joshua is more confident about going to new and different places. He is more comfortable around other people and when staying home with a babysitter for an afternoon or an evening. He continues to become more verbal, expressing more and more of his thoughts, needs and feelings with appropriate language and full sentences. He has even become more comfortable with telephone conversations, which our far-flung family appreciates.

OSF has been a wonderful compliment to Joshua’s education and we are blessed with their assistance and grateful for their support.

Volunteer Ellie Kong – In Her Own Words

I have done many volunteer projects in my life, but honestly none of them could hold a candle to OSF. Here, you are directly helping people who need it most to acquire communication skills and freedom. On my first day volunteering, I was paired to work with a little boy, he was very hyper and had a hard time effectively explaining his wants. A few weeks ago, I worked with him again and he listened to directions and calmly led me to the play apparatus on which he wanted to play. In the span of a few months, this wonderful place has given this boy a serious chance of independent living in the future.

People often write the children who attend OSF off as stupid, especially if they are non verbal, but one of the things that you hear everyday that you are at OSF is that, “he can’t speak, but he understands everything, he really is very smart.” Because those at OSF understand this, it is a great place for the kids to pursue their talents. For example, there is a girl who I worked with who is phenomenal with puzzles, and OSF has a very difficult puzzle for her so that she can challenge herself. The one-on-one way that OSF has the volunteers work with the kids is great because it lets us know interesting things about these kids as individuals. For example, the other day, I was singing the alphabet song with the girl I was working with; I noticed that she was doing the sign language along with the letters. This is just one of the hidden talents that I have observed here.

The staff at OSF are very good at encouraging and expecting appropriate behavior from the children, but they don’t simply take away the children’s independence. For example, I worked with a little boy who adamantly did not want to go to the music class, so we just took the P.E. class again. The staff understood that he was a person and was entitled to make his own decisions.

To end, I would just like to say that my friend Madeleine has always talked about ballet as being her passion, and I couldn’t believe that anyone could care so much about anything, but then I found OSF and now I understand. OSF is my passion because I feel that I am giving back to the community in a very important and worthwhile way.

~ OSF Program Fun ~



♥ Thank You, Cupertino Rotary Club! ♥

~ Generous Sponsor ~

Annual Jack-O-Lantern Carving & Ice Cream Treat

