

*Be all you were created to be.*

**REACH OUT**

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# REACH OUT

*Be all you were created to be.*



June 2010 • Volume 24, Issue 2

## A Heartwarming Celebration

It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining, the sky was blue, and the grass and trees were green. What a perfect setting for Reach Springfest 2010 generously underwritten by Sim-Tex. The goal of the event was to raise funds for the Learning Activity Center, and \$42,000 was raised. Even our clients raised money through walkathon sponsors: First Place, Kevin; Second Place, Jonathan, and Third Place, T.J. Emcee Cactus Jack Barnes from 93Q Country Radio entertained the crowd of over 550.



1st Place winner Kevin and his mother Mary Ann.

agency for the last 27 years. She was one of the founding members who built Mueller House and Shady Villa, our first two group homes. Today, we operate 14 group homes. She helped hire our first Executive Director, Julia Kirby. The agency is now 159 people strong and serves over 250 clients. One of those clients is Susie, Marie's daughter, who has lived in a Reach group home for 26 years, and attends the Learning Activity Center every day. An advocate for Susie, and all the other people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Marie's dedication has not wavered. She has served on the Board

This year's theme was *Warm My Heart Not My Planet*. In keeping with the theme, the clients created art from recycled materials. Plastic bottles, bottle tops, scrap lumber, used books, packing materials, chicken wire, pencil sharpener shavings, pop tops, old feather



Executive Director Kathi Schmidt (right) and the Scianna family.



93Q Country's Cactus Jack (right) shown with Mike enjoyed the company of all the clients.

boas, and used picture frames were transformed into one of a kind, whimsical works of folk art. So compelling were they that some sold for as much as \$200. Randi Cleary of Trees for Houston was on hand to give all the participants a tree seedling to plant.

Springfest was also a time to celebrate those who have helped Reach become all that it is today. Marie Maxwell has dedicated herself to this

of Directors since our incorporation. Over the past 27 years, Marie has watched Reach grow from a \$150,000 agency to \$8 million agency. An emotional Marie accepted a plaque made with a beautiful blue client-created art glass heart.

Volunteers enrich the lives of our clients every day. In fact, last year volunteers spent over 6,000 hours at the Learning Activity Center. Four of our volunteers - Lisa Copeland, Holly Hoey, Donna King and Debby Heaton - spoke about the Springfest art projects they helped our clients create. Again this year, volunteers helped with all aspects of Springfest. Thank you

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Or call Colleen Gilbert at 281-213-8132 for a personal shopping experience

*Very Special Gifts Created by Very Special Artists*

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**Calendar of Events**

Table Captain Kickoff ..... July 29, 2010  
 12:00 noon at the Learning Activity Center  
 Reach Idol ..... September 2, 2010  
 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Cypress UMC  
 Reach for the Stars Fundraising Luncheon  
 The Berry Center ..... October 13, 2010

**Reach Out Tours**

Wednesdays..... 12 noon  
 July 14, 28            November 10  
 August 11, 25        December 8  
 September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29  
 October 6, 13, 20, 27

**Private group tours available upon request.**  
 To schedule a tour or to make a reservation,  
 please call Kris at 281.213.8323 ext. 307

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**Kathi's Corner**



"I always look forward to Reach Unlimited's events that feature the client's talented handiwork. It's a win-win situation providing a venue to highlight Reach clients, and it's an opportunity for community members

to support this awesome organization as they bid on and purchase art. The paintings tend to 'talk' to me most. I have bid and 'won' several over the years that now hang in my home, including my most recent piece from this year's Springfest. Nicoleta painted a beautiful nature scene with a bumblebee, caterpillars, flowers and a blue sky with an orange sun smiling and wearing cool sunglasses. I smile every time I see this precious painting, so it's hung in my room where I know I will start and end my day with a smile!"

When I received this email from Kelly Norton, Lone Star College, I was once again reminded of the broad based community support Reach Unlimited is blessed to receive! Among the hundreds of ways the community is involved with Reach, a few include the Houston Marathon, the Houston Shell Open, the Cypress Lodge BBQ, the "noisy offering" of Kinsmen and Celebration Churches, Cypress Woodlands Junior Forum, and Lone Star College.

I am humbled by the breadth and depth of the support from the citizens of the greater Houston area. What this support means in the lives of our clients is a quality of life that they would not otherwise experience. They are enriched beyond measure! In short, this level of caring demonstrates the VALUE our community members place on each of the individuals we serve. I love and appreciate the people who love and respect our clients! Thank you!

**OUR MISSION**

Reach Unlimited, Inc. is dedicated to providing quality support services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**Meet John Hooker, Inspired Volunteer**



*Enterprise Instructor Sandra Chavez and John Hooker in front of the four kilns used to fuse glass.*

Not only does John cut glass so our clients can create gift items in the Enterprise Program, but he and his crew have also built a workbench and shelves in the kiln building. For those of you who have walked the halls of the LAC you know that 250 clients, many in walkers and wheelchairs, can leave their mark on the walls. When John heard that we needed to paint the classrooms, he recruited a friend who specializes in painting commercial properties. What a difference a fresh coat of paint makes.



*The glass John cuts is used by the clients to create a myriad of art glass items. We are grateful for the time and talent John gives to Reach.*

In December 2009, John Hooker walked into the Learning Activity Center and asked if he could volunteer. His successful roofing business left him with time on his hands. He had spent a lot of time and money playing golf. This wasn't fulfilling. His faith in Jesus left him with a strong desire to serve others, and his schedule gave him the flexibility to take on projects.

Passion and opportunity are a winsome combination. Add to that, handyman skills and contacts, and you have a great volunteer.

**We Want to Hear From You**

Saving money and trees is important. Are you ready to receive this newsletter electronically? Please email Susan White at [swhite@reachunlimited.org](mailto:swhite@reachunlimited.org), or call 281-213-8132 ext. 238 to let her know.

To receive news about the Reach Gift Shop, including new products and upcoming sales, contact Colleen Gilbert at [cgilbert@reachunliited.org](mailto:cgilbert@reachunliited.org) or call 281-213-8132 ext. 309.

**Reach On Facebook**



Find Reach on Facebook! Once you have a Facebook account, all you do is search "Reach Unlimited" and click on the "Thumbs Up" to like our page. We will have fun updates and photos on our page, so be sure to become a fan. Please email Kris at [klusebrink@reachunlimited.org](mailto:klusebrink@reachunlimited.org) if you have any questions.

Reach Unlimited, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit agency. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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Texas Pink, Officer Sprawls from Harris County Precinct #4, CFISD PALS, Cy-Fair Rotary, Cy-Ranch HOSA, Cy-Ridge SPARKS, Cy-Fair Volunteer Fire Department, Jersey Village Interact, Jersey Village Key Club, Lone Star Ambassadors, Lone Star College Cy-Fair Dance Team, and NCL Yellow Rose and Cypress Belles Chapters. Singer Casey Gilbert, a Cy-Woods senior, and guitarist Whitney Richardson entertained the audience. The BBQ lunch was donated by Texas Roadhouse, NCL and Russell Tillis. Colorful spring flowers, which encircled the LAC, were donated by Spring Nurseries and Landscapes and the Texas Master Gardeners.

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## Pump It Up Hires Amanda

When you walk in the door at Pump It Up, you can't help but smile. Everything says come in, and have fun. This is a place where children come to play in private indoor arenas filled with gigantic inflatable slides, bounce houses, obstacle courses, and more. It is also the place where Reach client Amanda works. She was hired by owners Cheryl and Luckie Ford to do mailings, wash the windows, and keep everything clean.

It all started when the Fords donated a party for Springfest silent auction. Then they came on a tour and were impressed with how the clients at the Learning Activity Center (LAC) prepared to participate in community life.

Amanda is part of the Center for Vocational Development (CVD) at the LAC. The CVD program is an intensive vocational training program that prepares clients for the job market. Through this program, Amanda was taught job skills and coached on appropriate behavior in the work place. Then Vocational Coordinator, Donna Robinson, matched Amanda's skills with a job. To ensure Amanda has long-term success in her job, she will receive on the job coaching by Employment Specialist, Delois Akins.



With the support of Donna Robinson (left) and Cheryl Ford (right) Amanda has a bright future at Pump It Up.

"I have an uncle with intellectual disabilities. He is older than I am, but age never mattered between us. He taught me how important it is to be given a chance to give back and to be needed. Everybody wants that. There is something for everybody to do. We haven't found anything Amanda can't do," says Cheryl Ford. "She is very diligent and cares about her work."

Amanda loves her job, and likes working with the Pump It Up team. "When I first come in, I punch in at the time clock. I am a good cleaner. I did a mailing all by myself. I also fold towels, clean windows, and do whatever they ask me to do," smiles Amanda. "I get my first paycheck next week."

Way to go, Amanda.



First impression are so important. Amanda keeps the front windows sparkling clean.

### CadiFlower #203

From fender to fender, Reach clients worked with art instructor, Rick Hurt, to affix a field of fantastic flowers to our art car. Entitled Cadiflower, the car was part of the 2010 Art Car Parade on May 8th. Donors, friends, families and clients cheered on the flower clad car as it rolled through the streets of Houston.

