

ucpn Volunteer Honored by Bank of America as a "Local Hero"

By Patrick Berlinquette

There is an energy that you feel in Leroy Florant's workshop. It's hidden between the soft light and the faint scent of sawdust and oil. You get the feeling that you are standing in a sanctuary.

This is where Leroy has volunteered for the last twenty-four years, selflessly designing and inventing to improve the lives of **ucpn's** consumers. It is here that Leroy has lent the Department of Rehab Technology his expertise, his brilliant imagination, and his warm spirit. In this workshop, Leroy has accumulated close to 30,000 volunteer hours.

It's no wonder that in November 2008, Leroy was selected to receive Bank of America's prestigious "Local Heroes" award. According to Bank of America, individuals from the community are eligible for the award if they "make a special and significant impact on individuals, families, or the community at large, inspire others to volunteer for community service, and have been a catalyst for new visions, understanding, and change in a community."



Rosemarie Nuzzi, Director of Rehab Technology at **ucpn** with star volunteer, Leroy Florant

Bank of America's "Local Heroes Award" is the latest addition to the number of honors Leroy has received over the years in recognition of his dedication to volunteer services. Leroy has garnered both the "United Cerebral Palsy National Volunteer Award" and the "Cerebral Palsy State Award."

In the early 1990's, Leroy received 7-11's "Beacon of Light Volunteer Award" and to

compliment his achievement, every 7-11 store in Nassau County displayed a copy of the announcement. Each display featured a short passage from Leroy: "The most memorable moment volunteering was finding out that one of our consumers had doubled his productivity in the workshop because of a specially-adapted tool I designed. It made me realize that my skills could make a real difference in someone else's life."

Engineering and design are passions that Leroy has pursued with ardency throughout his life. After receiving his B.S. in mechanical engineering from Howard University in Washington D.C., Leroy moved to New York to pursue his graduate work at Columbia University. When Leroy moved to New York, World War II was in full force. But, rather than worry about getting drafted, Leroy decided to focus on pursuing his career.

Leroy's determination led him to a chance encounter with a Physics Professor in Columbia University's Physics Department, who made it
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Children's Learning Center Teacher Named "Dowling College/News 12 Educator of the Month"

Kelly Dickey was recently named the "Dowling College/News 12 Educator of the Month." The Educator of the Month program has been highly praised for the focus it places on the best of the many outstanding Long Island teachers. Kelly is a special education teacher on the faculty of the Children's Learning Center (CLC) at the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc. (**ucpn**) and was nominated by school principal, Diane Berger. "As principal, I can only describe Ms. Dickey as a very special teacher and a shining star who has made her students and our entire school program brighter and better by her daily efforts and by the enthusiasm and thoughtfulness she brings to everything she does."

Clyde I. Payne, Ed. D., Dean of the School of Education at Dowling College visited with Kelly in her classroom and presented her with her award surrounded by her loving students, family members and staff and administrators from CLC and **ucpn**. Dr. Payne expressed



Dr. Clyde Payne from Dowling College; Robert McGuire, **ucpn** Executive Director; Diane Berger, CLC Principal; Kelly Dickey, with her husband Chris and mom, Ann Ahrens.

how pleased he is to have partnered with News 12 in this program that recognizes outstanding teachers from Long Island, stating, "Ms. Dickey's accomplishments place her in a most distinguished group of excellent educators who have received this award."

Robert McGuire, **ucpn** Executive Director, attended the ceremony and praised Ms. Dickey for her achievements and her vital con-

tributions towards carrying out the mission of the agency.

The Children's Learning Center provides a 12-month program that serves approximately 250 students from age 2 to 21. The students have special needs that range from mild to severe and have diagnoses that include mental retardation, speech/language delays, cerebral palsy and/or other orthopedic/health impairments. The students enjoy a wonderful school program and can receive physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, psychology and social work support. In addition, each student participates in art therapy, music therapy and adapted physical education. The CLC also affords students with the opportunity to participate in extracurricular clubs that include: Cheerleading, Chorus, Ballet, Fashion, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. During the year, there are also about 40 special events that provide students with many
(continued on page 9)

ucpn Starts Its Second Year of Financial Seminars

Last year **ucpn** partnered with Northwestern Mutual, CitiSmith-Barney, Prudential and others to host seminars open to the general public on a number of topics regarding estate planning, trusts and charitable giving. This year, **ucpn** is expanding the scope of topics to other financial issues in response to these challenging economic times.

We all agree that times are tough now. Stock prices are scary and who knows where oil prices will be next week. Now, more than ever, you need to watch your money, spend carefully, invest wisely and make sure you have plans for those rainy days. One of the best actions you can take is to attend the free seminars being offered by **ucpn**.

The seminar series for 2009 kicked off on February 24th with the topic "How Best to Invest in Turbulent Times" given by Whitney Bullard, a Certified Financial Planner with CitiSmithBarney. Whitney outlined how to make lemonade in a stock market of lemons... if you missed it and would be interested in attending an encore of it, please let us know.

The speakers are all professionals from the financial and legal industries with particular expertise in their topics.

All of the seminars will be held in the auditorium at **ucpn's** headquarters at 380 Washington Avenue in Roosevelt, just off the Southern State Parkway at Exit 23 south. The seminars will commence at 3:30 p.m. Although the seminars are free, you will need to register to be assured of a seat. For more information you can email EstatePlan@ucpn.org or call 516-378-2000 ext 226.

Attend these free seminars and go home with valuable information and solid strategies that will prove invaluable in these difficult times and in planning a secure future for your loved ones.

Make sure to mark your calendar for the rest of the 2009 series. The schedule is:

| | |
|------------|---|
| April 28th | Basic Estate Planning |
| May 14th | How to Review Your Financial Health |
| June 2nd | Basics of Special Needs Trusts |
| July 14th | How to Best Utilize a Special Needs Trust |
| Sept 22nd | IRA's and Roth IRA's |
| Oct 20th | Social Security Maximization Techniques |

Please Donate!

I would like to help **ucpn** continue its mission of helping individuals with disabilities.

Here is my donation of \$ _____

Please charge to my credit card

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State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

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Signature: _____

Please clip and mail to: **ucpn**, 380 Washington Avenue, Roosevelt, NY 11575
Attn: Development Dept

Spring-09

Mark Your Calendar for These Events:

All to Benefit the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc. (**ucpn**)
Call 516-378-2000 ext. 651 to register or for information

Brunch, Browse & Buy – Council of Auxiliaries

April 23 – Woodbury Country Club

7th Annual **ucpn** Dignitary Awards Luncheon

April 24 – The Carlton, East Meadow

27th Annual **ucpn** Golf Tournament

August 6 – North Hills Country Club

6th Annual **ucpn** "Toast of the Town"

Food, Wine & Spirits Tasting

September 16 – Chateau Briand, Carle Place

Fashion Fantasy – Council of Auxiliaries

October 7 – Carlton, East Meadow

6th Annual Nassau Pops Symphony Orchestra Concert

October 11 – Tilles Center, Brookville

57th Annual **ucpn** Forget-Me-Not Ball

November 7 – The Inn at New Hyde Park

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc.
cordially invites you to

The 7th Annual Dignitary Awards Luncheon

~ Honoring ~

Anthony Piscitelli
Citizen's Choice Award

William Levine
Corporate Leadership Recognition Award

Serge Alahverdian
Excellence in Community Service Award

Lenny Ferraro
The Shining Star Award-Posthumously

Jack Sullivan
The Shining Star Award

Friday, April 24, 2009

12 noon to 2:00 pm

(Registration begins at 11:30 am)

The Carlton, East Meadow

VIP Table \$1,500 • Table \$1,200 • Individual \$125

Ninety cents of every dollar donated will go directly to our Endowment to provide for the future of **ucpn**.

For information or reservations, call 516-378-2000 x 651



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The **ucpn** meets all the
BBB's standards for
Charitable Accountability

Bob Masterson
President, Board of Directors

Robert McGuire
Executive Director

Annamaria Impagliazzo
President, Council of Auxiliaries

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There are a variety of
opportunities
for employment and volunteers at **ucpn**.

Please contact us at
Human Resources - 516-377-2100
Coordinator of Volunteers - 516-377-2062

or visit our website at
www.ucpn.org

The 56th ucpn Forget-Me-Not-Ball

A chance to dance, dine and celebrate

The 56th Forget-Me-Not-Ball allowed us a chance to once again honor those who touch the lives of individuals with disabilities at **ucpn**. On November 8th, nearly 300 guests came together at the beautiful Chateau Briand in Carle Place to dance, dine and celebrate.

The festivities included a moving performance by **ucpn**'s singing group Creation. David Tindal, Chris Wawzronek, Riva Zinno and Melissa Herrera shared their talent and performed a selection of songs that stirred the hearts of all in attendance. Following Creation's powerful set, many guests took time to individually thank and congratulate them throughout the night.

After an official welcome from the Ball Chairmen, Tony Galano and Joe Koch, it was time to present awards to the distinguished honorees; Michael Johnston, General Manager of the Long Island Marriott, was presented with *The Harold J. Greenberg Torch of Leadership Award*. Marc Abbott, Mark R. Reiss & Guy M. Allen, of Abbott, Reiss & Allen, P.C., were presented with the *Dr. Jack & Kelly McElwain Humanitarian Award*.

Mike Johnston has been with the Marriott organization for over 30 years. He is a two-time recipient of the "Six Person Award" in recognition of his excellence in sales and marketing and was also part of the group that was named the Eastern Region – Sales and Revenue Management Team of the Year.

As President of the Long Island Hotel & Lodging Association, Mike started a fundraiser for hospitality students at Long Island colleges, raising over \$1,000,000 for scholarships. He is currently on the Community Relations committee at the Long Island Marriott Hotel & Conference Center.

In thanking Mr. Johnson for his support, Bob McGuire said, "The **ucpn** is very grateful to Mr. Johnston for his support in providing a wonderful venue for our annual holiday fundraising event, the Long Island Festival of Trees and related events including the Teddy Bear Tea, Breakfast with Santa, A Knight to Remember and the Sugar Plum Ball. The warm and welcoming environment at the Marriott in combination with the hard-working and caring staff members there, help to make all of our events a success. We consider Mr. Johnston and the Marriott employees a key component of the **ucpn** team."

The firm of Abbott, Reiss and Allen P.C. was founded in 1975. Since 1977, they have been the labor counsel for the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County.

Marc Abbott received his law degree from Hofstra University. In July 1997, the New York State Senate confirmed Governor Pataki's nomination of Marc as a member of the Public Employment Relations Board. Marc is a long term member of the **ucpn** Human Resources Committee where he provides legal counsel on a wide variety of issues affecting our workforce.

Mark Reiss also received his law degree from Hofstra University, where he served as an editor of the Hofstra Labor Law Journal. Mark is primarily responsible for providing advice and guidance to the management of **ucpn** on labor and employment issues.

Guy Allen is another Hofstra University School of Law graduate. Guy is a litigator, whose experience in federal and state courtrooms rounds out the legal expertise and services provided by the firm.

With offices on Long Island and in New York City, Abbott, Reiss and Allen represents clients throughout the United States, including the New England Patriots, Konica Minolta Business Solutions, and the



ucpn's Bob McGuire and Charles Evdos surround honorees Mike Johnston, Mark Reiss, Guy Allen and Marc Abbott



Ball Co-Chair Joe Koch with Elliot Passo



Creation's Chris Wawzronek, David Tindale, Riva Zinno and Melissa Herrera



Larry Davies, Director of HR and IT at **ucpn**, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Allen and **ucpn** Board President, Bob Masterson



Lauren and John Fitzpatrick and Ball Journal Chairman, Joel Meltzer and Doreen Baker



(Seated l to r) Karen Kiefel, Eunice Montouri, Ruth Wilson, Julian and Iris Alessi. (Standing l to r) Alex Kiefel, Tiffany Kiefel, Rachel and Bob Gaudiosi, Annie and Serge Alahverdian, and the Ball Coordinator, Mary Brosky



Mr. & Mrs. Tom Gunderson, Mr. & Mrs. Mike Johnston and Bob McGuire



Mr. & Mrs. Tony Galano and Mr. & Mrs. Charles Evdos



Virginia Bavaro, Larry and Fran Pierce

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County.

Bob McGuire commended the firm and said, "we are grateful for the sound legal counsel they have provided **ucpn** over the past 30 years and we cannot think of a more deserving nominee for the Dr. Jack & Kelly McElwain Humanitarian Award than Marc Abbott, Mark Reiss, Guy Allen and the firm of Abbott, Reiss and Allen P.C."

The **ucpn** is grateful to all the honorees, to Tony Galano and Joe Koch, the Committee chairs, the guests, the people who participated in the journal and all who contributed to the success and enjoyment of this annual event. The 2009 Ball will be held on November 7th at the Inn in New Hyde Park, and will have an "African Safari" theme!

The Festival of Trees – Brings Long Islanders Together to Celebrate with ucpn

The 2008 Festival of Trees took place over the Thanksgiving weekend at the Long Island Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Uniondale and was proudly sponsored by APS, LLC.

The designer trees were once again spectacular and the gingerbread creations were unique as well as delicious. The Dept. 56 Shoppe was bigger than ever and found a new home in the Skylight Room at the hotel. Collectors from near and far were thrilled with the selection and the shop was busy all weekend with buyers finding hard-to-find pieces and collectibles!

The Festival entertainment coordinator,

Joan Mac Naughton of Leggz Ltd. Dance in Rockville Centre put together a fabulous selection of entertainment. The Leggz Ltd. Dance Ensemble shared their talents on Friday and Saturday. Kevin Covais and Amanda Coluccio from American Idol, "Kids Performing Who Kare," and the sixth grade chorus from the Latin School at Kellenberg Memorial were among many other talented dance and musical groups who delighted the audience. The Festival Toy Shop was a favorite stop for kids as well as parents and grandparents who found many great items at

terrific prices. The ucpn expresses thanks to the Shepherd Distributors for their support of this popular shop at the Festival.

The Festival of Trees is very grateful to the hundreds of caring volunteers who do everything from decorate trees, make ornaments, help at the Festival and to all the visitors from towns all over the island who make this annual event so fun and successful. Our thanks to all the designers, bakers, entertainers, and others who lend their time and talent to this event!



The Terris Family



Radio Disney emceed at the Festival



Members of the Rockville Centre Lions Club by the tree they designed with Leggz Ltd.



Leggz Ltd. Dance of Rockville Centre provided great entertainment all weekend!



Some of our wonderful volunteer dancers



Smiles abound at the Festival



Charles Evdos with Mike Butkewicz from Nassau County's Chelsea Mansion



Arndrea Lopatin, a CLC parent (in red) brought friends to enjoy the Festival



Rose Nuzzi and Mary Jean Dyzcko from ucpn volunteered



Girl Scouts from Baldwin ran the Stuff-A-Bear table and raised funds for ucpn



The Connolly Family



Ann Russo from ucpn joins the Venettes Cultural Workshop Dance group



Mr. & Mrs. Ray Murphy volunteered along with the scouts at "Stuff-A-Bear"



Joan McNaughton, Entertainment Chairperson of the Festival (next to Edward Evergreen) and other dancers from Leggz Ltd. Join Ken Grimboll of News 12



One of the unique gingerbread creations on display.



Mrs. Sheila Zider and Brother Daniel Griffin from the Brother Fox Latin School at Kellenberg with members of the sixth grade chorus



Auxiliary board member, Mary Lou Zizzo and her granddaughters volunteered at the Festival.



Cousins Caroline and Joe enjoyed their Festival visit.



Cinderella visits with consumers from ucpn at the Festival



Volunteers in the Clothe-A-Cookie area with Lois Boyle from ucpn



Lou Panacciulli of the Nassau Pops Symphony Orchestra volunteered at the Festival Toy Shop



The Melluzzo family visits with Santa



ucpn's Elizabeth Katz with volunteers Norma Lerner and Harriet Rand



The Nolan Family



ucpn's Karen Kiefel, and Loretta and Annamaria Impagliazzo at the Dept 56 Shoppe



Children loved visiting the Festival Toy Shoppe!



Doreen Baker, Joel Meltzer, ucpn's Charles Evdos and Mary Brosky and Lauren Fitzpatrick



Festival Emcee, Joe Mandaro with American Idol's Kevin Covais



The Fava Family enjoys the Festival



ucpn Executive Director, Bob McGuire with ucpn staff members and volunteers, Richard and Michelle Mondello



ucpn staffers who volunteered at the Festival, Jane Osokowich, Cathy Serpico and Maria Maringelli



Fran Murphy, from ucpn's Life Options program and some ucpn staff members



Cathy Lupo from the Nassau County Homemakers and Pat Quinn from ucpn help Ken Grimball from News 12 adjust a tree for his News 12 report on Festival.



Festival volunteer Kathy Wilson and her nephew



Performers from the group, "Kids Performing who Kare"



Karen Kiefel and her son Chris and friend, Mary at the Dept 56 shop



One of our most wonderful volunteers, Stella Hayla also has the distinction of being the oldest! Doesn't she look terrific?



The Festival entertainment was enjoyed by a full house of family and friends!



Amanda Coluccio from American Idol joins Santa on the Festival stage



ucpn's own CREATION sings holiday songs



"The Turn" from Rockville Centre



Mary's Christmas Ramblers delighted the audience.



The "Brush 'Em Up Revue" by Leggz Ltd. Dance



Brother Fox Latin School Chorus from Kellenberg



Leggz Ltd. Dance Ensemble from Rockville Centre

Sugar Plum Ball



The Sugar Plum Fairies greet guests.



The Ruggiero family all enjoyed the Ball.

Breakfast with Santa



Testing Santa's beard!



Some of our wonderful volunteers!



The week after the ball, this dad was shipping off to the Mideast with the National Guard.



The Leggz Dance Ensemble delights everyone!

Teddy Bear Tea



Marsha Seader with her grandkids and son-in-law



Grandpa Bruno and granddaughter enjoy a Santa cookie donated by Silverlake



Katelynn Sinnott and her Dad, Mike



Colleen Williamsen and her Dad, Gerard



Our fantastic volunteers with ucpn's Elizabeth Katz (seated right) help us make magic at the Tea!

Rehab Solutions, Inc. Receives Accreditation

Illustrating Its Commitment To Excellence in Customer Service and Care

Rehab Solutions, Inc., a durable medical homecare equipment company, has achieved the Award of Accreditation from the Healthcare Quality Association on Accreditation, based in Waterloo, Iowa. This award is achieved only when home medical equipment companies demonstrate a high level of quality practices in their business operations and customer service techniques. Rehab Solutions, Inc., earned the three-year accreditation after completing a comprehensive application and a 2 day onsite survey that focuses on customer care/service, financial stability, and a commitment to quality operational practices and procedures. Accreditation by the Healthcare Quality Association on Accreditation assures Medicare and other payers that the highest levels of quality are practiced within all areas of the company.

"We sought accreditation by the Healthcare Quality Association on Accreditation to demonstrate that our company is committed to providing excellent customer care and safety in a financially solvent envi-

ronment," says Rosemarie Nuzzi, Director of Rehab Solutions. "This award also reinforces that our commitment to quality is ongoing."

Founded in 2005, the Healthcare Quality Association on Accreditation seeks to continuously set standards of the highest quality on behalf of the durable medical equipment industry and business owners. Its interactive, Web-based design is specifically aimed at the durable medical equipment industry, providing a targeted approach to accreditation and quality improvement.

Rehab Solutions, Inc. achieved its three year accreditation within these specialized areas: Rehab (Assistive) Technology Supplier, Custom Orthotics and Mail Order for its Internet Sales.



Contact Rehab Solutions, Inc. at 888-363-3678

The Nassau Thunderbolts Celebrate 20th Anniversary

A ceremony was held on October 27, 2008 in the auditorium at **ucpn** to celebrate a great milestone in the history of the agency's accomplished sports team, The Nassau Thunderbolts. The gathering started off with great enthusiasm and excitement as the athletes entered the room to the sounds of the Children's Learning Center cheerleading team, setting the stage for the official welcome from **ucpn** Executive Director, Bob McGuire.

Mary C. Hodge, Head Coach of the team, then addressed the audience and expressed her pride in all that the team has accomplished over the past 20 years. Mary and Bob then presented plaques of appreciation to Hezikiah Brown, former Deputy Nassau County Executive, and to Jason Lipset from the Nassau County Long Island Marathon. Senator Charles Fuschillo and Val and Mike Kruter were not able to attend the ceremony; however, they have been great supporters of

the team, and their plaques were delivered to them at a later date.

Mary C. Hodge was recognized for all her hard work and dedication to the team and to the agency, with a special "You Make a Difference Everyday" award presented by Bob McGuire and Assistant Executive Director, Karen Geller-Hittleman.

Gary Brown, a former NFL football player and Superbowl winner, was the guest speaker. He was invited by his uncle, Hezikiah Brown, and immediately welcomed the opportunity to meet the Thunderbolts and offer his congratulations in person. His words were heartfelt and his presence truly inspiring to the athletes, coaches and everyone in the audience. We were fortunate to have News 12 Sports reporter, Michael Coleman, on hand to capture the atmosphere of celebration. Mr. Coleman did extensive interviews and produced a terrific segment that aired on News 12 that evening.

- Charlie Fleisch Team Captain
- Howie Cohen Athlete
- Daniel Dalton Athlete
- Keith Haarmann Athlete
- Mark Paramadani Athlete
- Michael Salerno Athlete
- Bert Sandstrom Athlete
- Mary C. Hodge Head Coach
- Milton McPherson Assistant Head Coach
- Will Lowry Coach
- Kathy Murphy Coach
- Ken Siderine Coach
- James Thomson Coach

Volunteers:

- Mike Solomon, Jeffrey Dean, Margaret Ippolito, Mary Merritt, Elvis Trenchfield



The Thunderbolts Sports Team and Coaches with Bob McGuire, Karen Hittleman and Gary Brown



Coaches Troy McPherson, Will Lowry, Kathy Murphy and Ken Siderine



Gary Brown autographs a photo for Thunderbolts Athlete, Howie Cohen



ucpn's Mary C. Hodge and Mary Merritt with award recipient, Jason Lipset



The CLC Cheerleaders did a wonderful job getting the ceremony started with an enthusiastic, original cheer for the Thunderbolts!



Award recipient, Hezikiah Brown joins Mary C. Hodge and Bob McGuire.



News 12 Sports reporter Michael Coleman interviews Head Coach, Mary C. Hodge and ucpn Executive Director, Bob McGuire for a segment that aired the evening of October 27th.



Bob McGuire and Karen Hittleman present Mary C. Hodge with a special award for her great dedication and in celebration of the difference she makes at ucpn.

Children's Learning Center



Teen students at the CLC organized a food drive called the SOUPER BOWL and collected items for the Mary Brennan Inn Soup Kitchen in Hempstead.



Students from Ms. Kate O'Hara's class loaded up their wagon and made flower deliveries in the ucpn building during the Cupid Connection event. This Valentine's event raises funds for the Children's Learning Center.



CLC students sport some of the terrific hats hand knitted and donated by Wendy Strumwasser.

Wendy Strumwasser



Professor Heather Cottin, from Queens College, mom of CLC receptionist Nora Gervasi, graciously took time to visit with CLC students as part of the Black History month celebration. Prof. Cottin shared folk songs and history lessons with teen students and participated in the assembly for students of all ages and staff on February 27th.

Trivia Challenge Helps Raise Funds

for United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc.



The East Rockaway Enterprise Program - 3rd/4th Grade Champions, Michelle Gevirtz, Trivia Challenge Coordinator, Michelle Healy – Teacher, Fourth Grade Team: Alex Sharkey, James Tierney, Declan Louw, Peter Liotta and Ellen Smiley, Educational Services Specialist from NEFCU.



St. Agnes Cathedral, Rockville Centre – 7th/8th Grade Champions, Eighth Grade Team: Tom Murphy, Kathryn Graham, Mike O'Brien, Carol Gerard – Teacher, and Thomas Palazzolo.



St. Agnes Cathedral School, Rockville Centre - 5th/6th Grade Champions, Michelle Gevirtz, Trivia Challenge Coordinator, Sixth Grade Team: Ryan Sumberac, Sean Davis, Jonathan Hall, and Robert Aromiskis. Carol Gerard – Teacher.



Manhasset High School – High School Champions, (From left to right) Michelle Gevirtz, Trivia Challenge Coordinator, Twelfth Grade Team: Tom Vouzakis, Chris Smilios, Kelly Reddington, and Devon Lawrence. Mrs. Kussman – Teacher and Lisette Molinares, Membership Development Specialist from NEFCU.

Schools from all over Nassau County participated in the year round Trivia Challenge event and raised significant funds for the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc. (ucpn). Now in its 24th year, the Trivia Challenge event brings students with great minds and good hearts together to help raise funds to benefit the programs and services ucpn provides for over 1,800 children and adults challenged by disabilities.

The Trivia Challenge finals were held during the week of February 23rd at ucpn in Roosevelt. The winning team from each school came to compete in the championship round.

The winners were as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 3rd & 4th Grade Champions | The East Rockaway Enterprise Program |
| 5th & 6th Grade Champions | St. Agnes Cathedral School, Rockville Centre |
| Middle School Champions | St. Agnes Cathedral School, Rockville Centre |
| High School Champions | Manhasset High School |

The Nassau Educators Federal Credit Union (NEFCU) was a sponsor of the event this year. Ms. Andrea Lawrence from NEFCU stated that the organization was very pleased to be part of an event that brought students, teachers and families together to help a worthy organization.

Mr. Charles Evdos, Development Director at ucpn expressed his gratitude to NEFCU for their sponsorship and thanked all the students, teachers and family members for their generosity and support.

For information about next year's Trivia Challenge please contact ucpn's Development Associate and Trivia Challenge Coordinator, Michelle Gevirtz at 516-378-2000 ext. 651 or via email: mgevirtz@ucpn.org.



Principal, Dr. Jean Kendall with the Munsey Park School team in the 3rd & 4th grade category. They were the reigning champions and were involved in a tie-breaker for this year's championship.



Students from the LARC program in Long Beach made a visit to ucpn to learn more about what we do in preparation for their participation in Trivia Challenge. Teachers Ms. Caitlin Fuentes & Ms. Beverlee Bertinetti pictured with their students and Faiz Fadra from The Children's Learning Center at ucpn.

“Local Hero” *(continued from page 1)*

clear that there were no job openings available. Driven, Leroy stuck around and spoke at length with the professor about design and engineering. By the end of their conversation, Leroy was hired as an engineer.

Only a few months into his new job, Leroy got the call he knew was coming; he was requested to serve in the Army.

“When I got the call, I told my manager that I had to leave. He told me he would ‘take care of it’. Days went by, I didn’t hear anything. Before long, I found out that I didn’t have to leave for the Army after all. It turned out that all of my co-workers were exempt from service. I didn’t understand.”

Leroy’s fiery co-worker refused to be told he couldn’t fight for his country, so he went on leave to join the fight. Within three months, he was back at Columbia’s Physics Department in uniform. The Army had released him to return to Columbia.

Years later, Leroy would find out that he had been working on the Manhattan Project (the United States’ top-secret program to develop the first Atomic Bomb) in that Columbia Physics lab. Leroy and his co-workers had been exempt to serve in the Army because of the invaluable information they held.

Leroy’s success at Columbia led him to open a business in Brooklyn, where he designed and built analytical instruments for hospitals. At the age of 65, Leroy retired.

“When you run a business, you don’t have the time to design. You have time for paperwork. After a few months with no work, I needed to do things. I needed to build. A friend of mine told me about **ucpn** and mentioned that they needed someone to design new wheelchairs. I

decided to become a volunteer at **ucpn** because I wanted the freedom to do what I wanted to do: design.”

As Leroy walks over to a rugged looking cylindrical mechanism he comments, “We use this to bend a wheelchair’s metal frame. When I started here there were only wooden chairs for the children. I saw the wooden design as inefficient. I remember thinking, “There should be a new kind of chair... that can fit *any* child.”

And so Leroy began work on his first project at **ucpn**: “The Stylizer,” an entirely new wheelchair design, with a rugged metal frame, available in four different sizes. “The Stylizer” became a huge success at **ucpn** and is still the most durable and comfortable wheelchair for consumers to use today.

In the next two and a half decades, there would be countless other inventions designed and built by Leroy that would change the lives of consumers at **ucpn** and beyond, including the “Power Mobility” device, which allows more involved consumers to experience the feeling of using a power wheelchair, and the “Neater Eater,” a self-feeding mechanism for the more involved consumer.

Leroy also designed the layout and content for the “Natalie Paymer Innovative Technology Center,” which features his latest creation: an elevating computer desk that can be raised or lowered to accommodate consumers of all sizes.

“Leroy is a blessing,” says Rosemarie Nuzzi, Director of Rehab Solutions. “His patience, his interest, his creativity and his concern for the consumers shows in everything that he does. He has truly enriched all of our lives.”

Educator of the Month *(continued from page 1)*

exciting, educational experiences.

Principal Berger goes on to say, “Clearly, we have a very full day. We are so fortunate to also have a wonderful faculty who are dedicated and work extremely hard to provide the best educational services possible. When discussion started concerning the nomination of a teacher for this award, the CLC administrative team was unanimous in naming Kelly Dickey.”

Mrs. Joanne Shadood, a CLC parent remarked that, “I am honored to say that Ms. Dickey is one of the most dedicated individuals I have ever met. She gives more than 100% and she unlocks barriers for children in a very caring and compassionate way.”

Assistant Principal, Sally Moradoff, thought back to a time when she observed Kelly as a new teacher and immediately knew she was “a natural.” Kelly’s students have significant physical and cognitive delays but each year they make progress and wonderful gains. The classroom is an ungraded K-2 class, bustling with students that have fun while they learn.

Unlike public schools, teachers at the CLC are not paid for the time they devote to committee work and extra-curricular activities. It is volunteer service by the faculty that makes it possible to maintain over 30 committees that organize the forty special events and six clubs for the students. Kelly has been very generous with her volunteer hours and has been instrumental over the years with our school prom, developing and creating the elaborate decorations that transform our gym into a magical space.

She also played a key role in creating the school’s soft gym, a place that provides for a safe and fun physical education experience for all the



Kelly Dickey with just a few of her wonderful students.

CLC students. The new reading and math curriculum now available at the CLC, resulted from work initiated by Ms. Dickey. In addition, Kelly runs the Book Fair, helps coach Team CLC at the Empire State Games for the Physically Challenged, and makes Graduation special with a wonderful Power Point presentation she creates each year featuring all the graduates. Kelly also assists with the activities that take place during American Education Week each year. As if all this were not enough, Kelly works with young people studying to become teachers and supervises them as they work toward their certification in Special Education and Elementary education. Many of these prospective teachers have expressed their admiration and gratitude for the great example and inspiration that Ms. Dickey has provided.

Kelly Dickey has proven to be an extremely dedicated and effective teacher. She has spent the past seven years working with children who benefit tremendously as a result of her efforts. Her time and talent have positively impacted the entire school and the **ucpn**.

Look for a News 12 spot about Kelly Dickey and her selection as the “Long Island Educator of the Month” in the spring.

Would you like to receive Center Square and other info from ucpn via email?

Send your email information to: info@ucpn.org

Please include your full name, regular address and home number for cross-reference purposes.

DONATE YOUR POINTS TO ucpn

Times are tough but you still want to help our agency? Donate your points from American Express and other credit cards to us. If everyone contributes points it would help our agency buy items that we can utilize in programs and other services. For details contact Charles Evdos at (516) 378-2000 on extension 648 or at cevdos@ucpn.org

Thanks again for all you do!

ucpn participates in LI Children's Museum program "Raising Caring Kids"



Kurt Murgo is pictured writing on board as Ann Russo looks on.

Monique van Puiten, LI Children's Museum

Kurt Murgo, Assistant Principal of the Children's Learning Center and Ann Russo recently participated at a special program called, "Raising Caring Kids," organized and hosted by the Long Island Children's Museum. This participation was arranged through the **ucpn** Speaker's Bureau. Members of the **ucpn** staff are willing to visit community groups and schools to talk about developmental disabilities and disability awareness. The Speaker's Bureau wants to visit you! Please contact Elizabeth Katz at 516-378-2000 ext 352 for more information.

Special Visitors Help Make St. Patrick's Day GRAND



Jack Sullivan, Tatum Muirhead, Mairead Manning, Ciaran O'Brien, Mikayla O'Brien and Trinity Rose Manning and ucpn Executive Director, Bob McGuire and Megan Manning

Jack Sullivan took time out to visit **ucpn** before he headed into the New York City parade and played the bagpipes to the delight of all at **ucpn**. Jack was joined by students from the Long Beach Catholic Regional School who shared their Irish stepdancing talents. The group paraded through the halls of **ucpn** and brought lots of smiles to the staff and the children and adults who participate in programs.

Thank you - for volunteering at **ucpn** or at a fundraiser to help **ucpn**. In these times of uncertainty, when stores are closing and houses are sitting vacant - when jobs are at risk and college funds and retirement funds have dwindled if not yet exhausted, we have special and generous volunteers who continue to give energy, time, and dedication so that a child can have a better learning experience, so that an adult can have more choices in their lives, and so that **ucpn** can continue to provide stellar services and programs for all we serve.

Thank you for saying "yes" when asked to help with a mailing, when asked to transport participants to their next classroom, when asked to help sell raffles on a beautiful but possibly frigid day in Oyster Bay, and for being wherever you're needed because others need your help. Stand proud, because you're part of a larger mission, one that cares and knows the importance of each person's worth and the impact that one has on another.

Volunteer's Corner

By Elizabeth Katz
Coordinator of
Volunteers

Council President's Message



Annamaria Impagliazzo
Council of Auxiliaries
President

In this first message of the new year I would like to start by wishing everyone a healthy and happy 2009! Hopefully you have not been affected too badly by the downturn in the country's economics and the unemployment caused by the closing or downsizing of many companies. The United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc. (**ucpn**) has been feeling the money crunch as well. The attendance at and profit from many of our fundraisers has decreased. While we are happy that we were able to turn \$150,000 into the Center from events run by Council and the Auxiliaries in 2008, that amount is also down from last year.

If you currently belong to an auxiliary, I urge you to keep up your membership and support its fundraising efforts as well as those run by **ucpn**, Council and your fellow auxiliaries. If not, consider joining an Auxiliary in your area. Information on becoming a member and on upcoming fundraising events is available in the Council newsletter Action Dispatch, by calling the Council Office at 516-378-2000, ext. 220, and on line at www.ucpn.org. By acting together we can continue to maintain the programs and services offered to the consumers at **ucpn** and have fun at the same time.

ucpn Wish List



| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Building Campaign to Expand Classrooms |\$ 625,000 |
| Leisure Services Program |\$ 225,000 |
| Fiber Optic Evaluation Equipment |\$ 41,000 |
| 1 Wheelchair Accessible Van for Children |\$ 36,000 |
| Pet Therapy |\$ 26,000 |
| 20 New Computers with Printers |\$ 20,000 |
| Body Pressure Mapping System |\$ 12,000 |
| Math Curriculum |\$ 9,000 |
| OT Ice-Pack Machines, Fluid Therapy, Ultrasound |\$ 5,000 |
| Augmentative Communication Device |\$ 5,000 |
| Electric Combination Tilt Table |\$ 4,100 |
| Tablet Computer with infra-red joystick |\$ 3,000 |
| Assorted Trees & Shrubs |\$ 1,500 |
| Computer Software & Printer - Com. Based Day Hab |\$ 1,500 |
| Word Plus w/ Destalk Synthesizer |\$ 1,500 |
| Automatic Page Turner |\$ 1,100 |
| Special Education Learning Software |\$ 1,000 |
| Therapeutic Toys |\$ 1,000 |
| Pocket Viewer Magnifier |\$ 1,000 |
| Sponsor Athlete for National Competition |\$ 1,000 |
| Self Feeding Device |\$ 900 |
| Zoom Text and Screen Reader for Windows XP |\$ 700 |
| Missing Link Block Set |\$ 700 |
| Communication for Visually Impaired |\$ 600 |
| One Augmentative Communication Device |\$ 500 |
| 4 Patio Sets (each) |\$ 500 |
| Sponsor a Leisure Services Trip for 10 Individuals |\$ 500 |
| Sponsor 1 Individual for One Year of Bowling |\$ 450 |
| 2 Snow Blowers (each) |\$ 400 |
| Boccia Balls Set |\$ 375 |
| Activity Supplies for Two Events for our Children and Adults |\$ 300 |
| 2 Lawn Mowers (each) |\$ 300 |
| Purchase New Set of Books for our Classrooms |\$ 200 |
| Craft Supplies |\$ 100 |
| 8 Food Processors (each) |\$ 100 |

If you want to make a wish come true, please contact Charles Evdos, **ucpn** Development Director at (516) 378-2000 ext. 648

Thank you to all who made the
ucpn Polar Bear swim a success!

POLAR BEAR PLUNGE EVENT

Held March 1, 2009 • Roosevelt Park in Oyster Bay



Jack Sullivan announces the start of the swim.

The 5th Annual Polar Bear Plunge to benefit the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, Inc. (ucpn) was held on March 1st at Theodore Roosevelt Park in Oyster Bay. We are very grateful to Honorary Co-Chairs John Venditto, Supervisor of the Town of Oyster Bay, Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg from Long Beach and Chairperson Jack Sullivan.

The very cold day began with snow but a large crowd of swimmers and fans showed up and a great day was had by all! To keep everyone warm there was hot soup donated by H.R. Singleton's restaurant, hot chocolate donated by Lackmann Culinary Services and coffee donated by Dunkin' Donuts! Volunteers from the Atlantic Steamer Fire Company served complimentary hot dogs to everyone's delight! The Showmobile was on hand with DJ Danny Sullivan keeping things fun and moving. Bank of America, Dave and Buster's, Bridge Marine Sales & Marina and Zap-A-Dee-Doo-Dah Balloons added to the fun and excitement.

The event was dedicated in honor and memory of a great man, Lenny Ferraro, who was one of the founders of the ucpn Plunge and had been a dedicated volunteer and ucpn Board Member for over 25 years. Many of Lenny's family were on hand for the event and some even took the plunge for the very first time in his honor.

The ucpn is grateful to the Town of Oyster Bay for hosting the swim and to all the swimmers, sponsors, volunteers and supporters of the Plunge. Please contact us if you are interested in participating next year at 516-378-2000 ext 353.



Swimmers take the plunge for ucpn!



Swimmers feel the chill!



The Long Beach Polar Bears presented a donation of \$2,000.



Mary Brosky (left) with members of the Atlantic Steamer Fire Company.



Frank Ozol smiles as his daughter Sara gets a lift from his fellow firefighters!



News 12 talks to Bob McGuire at the event.



Lenny Ferraro in 2008



The Oyster Bay Chamber of Commerce presented ucpn with a \$1,000 donation.



Fran Ferraro with Jack and Pat Sullivan



Councilwoman Rosemarie Walker and Supervisor John Venditto with t-shirts made in honor of Lenny Ferraro



Lenny Ferraro's daughter Lisa and son Jeff took the plunge in their Dad's memory and honor.



DJ Danny Sullivan joins some of Lenny Ferraro's grandkids.



Director's Message



Robert McGuire
Executive Director

There are many great accomplishments to celebrate and applaud with regard to our organization's history. The progress that's been made over 60 years and the achievements of so many are testament to human will power and the ultimate sense of fairness. This periodical reflects the most recent successes and activities that highlight and confirm that the organization continues to meet the mission of our Agency: to provide the highest quality services to our children and our adults. All of our accomplishments have required a team effort. Of course we start with the participants in our programs, both the children and adults, our Board of Directors, the Council of Auxiliaries, our parents and volunteers, and our staff, along with the community, corporations and local, state and national leaders who recognize that individuals with disabilities deserve a chance at the "American Dream" and protection of their civil rights. All are responsible for the progress over these past 60 years.

Today, however, we can look at the economy and see fingers pointing and pencils slashing budgets that are not merely budgets, they're people. All of us should be concerned about the current status of programs that serve individuals with disabilities. In our last Center Square, I suggested that readers send the Center Square to their representatives on every level so that we provide them continued education and evidence of their good decisions of the past. Today, more than ever, your voice needs to be heard. I have often stated, that a real and present danger exists and it is never so clear as today.

We must prevent a roll back of the progress begun 60 years ago and accelerated in the past 25 years. We must ensure that individuals with disabilities have meaningful day programs. We must make certain that parents and individuals with disabilities have options in the residential environment so that when a family is no longer able to care for their family member, a welcoming home in the community exists. We must make sure that our representatives know our concerns. We must have the Governor hear your voice. Today, more than ever, you must speak up. You



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must let your representatives be aware that you have an interest in the continued progress and in the continued protection of the civil rights of individuals with disabilities.

To help me communicate with you, I would like to ask each of you who wish to be kept up-to-date with issues that affect our mission to send me your email address. Upon receipt, I will use today's technology to expedite the communication process, enabling you to have up-to-the minute information and opportunities to respond in a timely manner.

Thank you for your support.

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