

Union Station Clubhouse

# Newsletter



## Member Participates in Autism Speaks Walk

- By Dustin M.

In September 2017, Clubhouse member Dustin M. and his family participated in the Autism Speaks Laurel Highlands Walk at Idlewild & Soak Zone, near Ligonier. Dustin, a strong advocate in many Mental Health Issues, decided to raise funds for the walk on his own, including one corporate sponsorship.

Autism is becoming a more-recognized disorder, primarily in boys, as 1 in 68 children have some form of the disorder. Autism, or autism spectrum disorder, refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication, as well as by unique strengths and differences. We now know that there is not one autism but many types, caused by a combination of genetic and environmental influences.

The walk had many teams in attendance, both public and private. Countrywide, over a million dollars has been raised through walks for Autism research and supports for individuals and their families. The walk went through a portion of Hootin' Holler, an old western themed re-enactment area, and the entire pathway of Story Book Forest, a 61-year old portion of Idlewild that features many elements of old nursery rhymes. Along the walk, water and Gatorade stations were provided as the morning was rather oppressive in heat.

During the announcements, pom-poms were used instead of clapping hands due to the sensitivity of those with Autism as they have hypersensitive hearing and cannot withstand loud noises. At the end of the walk, we arrived at our starting point, where a picnic lunch was served along

with a resource fair on the basketball court featuring many mental health providers from the area. It was a good walk for a good cause.



*Dustin M. at the Autism Speaks Walk*

## Upcoming Events:

**November 3:**  
Pizza and Movie Night

**November 8:**  
Eat Out Night

**November 10:**  
Walmart Shopping

**November 15:**  
Employment and Education Dinner

**November 18**  
Saturday Outing TBA

**November 21:**  
Thanksgiving Luncheon

**November 23:**  
Thanksgiving Social Day

**November 24:**  
Black Friday Social Day

**November 27:**  
Partners for Recovery Meeting

## Eat-Out Night at Valley Dairy

- By April B.

Every month the Clubhouse members pick a place to go out to eat. On September 6, we chose to take a trip to Valley Dairy in Connellsville, PA. I have never been to that restaurant before and was excited to see what they had to offer. When we arrived, the restaurant was very nice and attractive. It reminded me of times that I had spent with my Grandpa. The colors of the walls were beautiful and the pictures on display were of individuals who had opened the restaurant. There were so many different food options. I chose a chicken parmesan dinner with a salad. The service was excellent, and the restaurant manager and waitress were very warm and friendly. I had a great time with the other members and staff! Hopefully we will visit Valley Dairy again in the near future.

## Member Spotlight: Amy

Amy L. has been a member of the Clubhouse since May 1, 2017. What she enjoys about the program is that she feels accomplished at the end of each work-ordered day. She has been able to become more involved with some of the more technical portions of the program, including billing procedures. Her new skills have helped motivate her toward being more independent, and she has a goal of living on her own or with a roommate. Recently, she took a huge first step toward that goal by beginning a food service job training program at Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania. All of the Clubhouse members and staff wish Amy the best of luck in her endeavors!

## Fall Festival

- By Krysta C.

On September 23, 2017, Clubhouse members took a trip to the Fall Festival at Friendship Hill. Members had the opportunity to walk around and explore the arts and crafts tables, listen to a band, and enjoy the beautiful fall leaves. Members also visited a museum where they saw old portraits and statues. Finally, members stopped at the food tents to enjoy all kinds of delicious food. Member Krysta C. stated that she had a really good time on the trip and hopes to visit again next year!



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