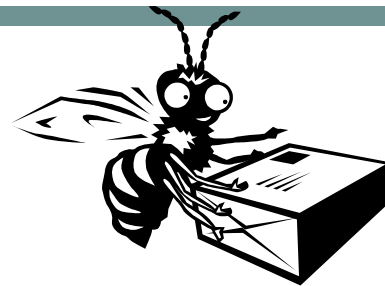


Newsletter Date: August 14th,  
2009

# THE BUZZ



Issue # 2 Volume 1

Joke of the Quarter:

By: Lori Shapiro

What is Beethoven's  
favorite fruit?



BAH NAH NAH NAHS

## Advocacy in Action: By Mr. James Burney



One of the things people are talking about lately is the use of the term "retarded" or what I like to call the "R" word. I decided to find out how this term makes people feel and chose to interview several Hope House residents including Joseph and Rachel from 48<sup>th</sup> Street and Hollywood from Hope House Ten. I also spoke with several staff members to get their views.

Everyone I talked with had some experience with the "R" word. One individual spoke of how young children would call him names. Because of his disability he couldn't explain to them that it made him feel sad. The whole experience left him frustrated.

Another told of being labeled by her own family. This proves that even loved ones can be insensitive to disabled peoples' feelings. This experience made her feel like maybe she was not as good as everyone else if her own family would talk down to her.

One staff member told of an incident in the grocery store where a cashier became impatient with someone she was supporting. She told us it made her mad and she spoke up for the person because he didn't have verbal skills. She told the cashier that he deserved to be treated with respect, just like everyone else.

The clearest example of how the "R" word can make someone feel came from a story told to me. One person said the "R" word made her feel like someone had actually slapped her in

the face. She left a job that she liked because of this rude treatment. I was aware of how much this meant by the tears she cried while telling the story.

I have listened to the stories about how the "R" word makes people with disabilities feel. We are people too and do not deserve to be called names. I hope we can stand up for ourselves and let people know how a simple word can make people feel so bad.

I would like to invite you to send me any questions or stories regarding advocacy. Have you had a success that would be good to share? Please feel free to contact me via email [jamesburney20@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesburney20@yahoo.com) or through the Hope House Foundation Administrative Office at 625-6161.

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If you have any comments, opinions, or just want to contribute contact the Hope House Foundation Administrative Offices at 625-6161.



## Fins, Feathers, and Paws: By Jeremy Norman

Over the past two months I have received numerous phone calls and e-mails with questions regarding pets. One particular conversation was so important that I thought I would share with all my readers.

A young lady calls me one afternoon and is noticing some strange behavior from her cat. Below are the questions she asked. I decided to write them out for everyone because they are pretty common occurrences with animals, especially cats.

**Question 1:** Is it natural for cats to eat grass?

**Response 1:** Cats usually eat grass for numerous reasons. The most common are: water or dew on the grass that the cat enjoys, or it has an upset belly. Grass to cats and dogs is like an antacid to humans. Grass is kitty Roloids. They usually eat this when they are feeling ill or are having trouble using the bathroom.

**Question 2:** What can I do to keep my cat healthy?

**Response 2:** To maintain a healthy lifestyle for your cat it is important for the cat to eat right. One simple guideline for my fellow cat owners is to make sure you are feeding the cat high quality food.

The main ingredient should not be wheat but rather meat. Cat foods like Meow Mix and Whiskers may be easy on the wallet but can be harmful to your cat. Go with something like Pedigree, Purina, or Nutro. They usually cost more but are worth it in the long run. When changing food it is important to mix the old and the new as to avoid the use of kitty Roloids.



Another good practice for your cat is to maintain its flea and tick medicine. I purchase an eight-month supply from 1800pet-meds.com for only \$54.00. Also, taking your cat to the vet once a year and making sure all the shots are up to date is a responsible pet owner's job. Some other healthy remedies are to give your cat hairball medicine as to avoid massive ones. Vitamins are also available for your pet.

A healthy cat can be expen-

sive and relying on Wal-Mart brand remedies and medicines is no way to go.

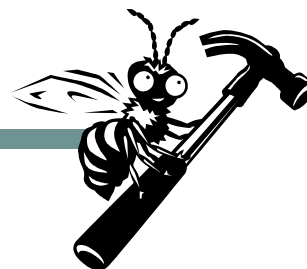
If you find you are strapped for cash there are some great deals out there, you just have to look. I usually go to Midway Veterinarian for all of my pets' medical needs. They are reasonable and seem to care.

On a brighter note I would like to welcome Theodore, my brand new baby guinea pig, to my world. I also am proud to have a new gecko named Charmandor. They are great company and make me so happy.

Thank you for all your questions and comments. Please keep them coming. If you have questions, concerns, or even a cool experience you want to share please e-mail me at

[snowball0758@yahoo.com](mailto:snowball0758@yahoo.com).





## Dealing with Staff: By Sarah Askew



My name is Sarah and I live in my own apartment where staff are available 24 hours a day. I've been here about two years. I live with a roommate now, and I think I'd like to live in an apartment by myself someday, but not yet. My roommate is a good lady and we really get along. It helps a lot with the money to have a roommate too.

I've lived and received services from different places.

I really didn't like the last place I was. Staff there made me feel like they didn't trust me, they treated me like a child and told me what to do. I had to do things when they wanted me to.

I like the staff who currently work with me. Some of the things that I like are that they help me with my medicines and getting them on time. The staff help me with cleaning and cooking, but they also help me to be independent. One of the best

things is that I have so many opportunities to go places. I go the grocery store every Monday and I can pick out the things that I want to buy, that's not something I've always gotten to do. I really like to be able to look through my cabinets and refrigerator and make a list, then go to the store and pick those things out myself. Staff help me stay within my budget, but I make the choices. I really like that staff help me with managing my own money and I can pay my bills on my own.

One thing that was hard for me was when staff would come as soon as I got home from work and want to start cooking dinner. I need a little free time after I get home from work before I get started on cooking or other chores I have to do at home. I talked to the staff about it and that worked great. I would encourage people to talk to staff about what they need and want, it helps.

It can also be hard sharing resources, you can't always do what you want right away, you have to plan ahead. Planning ahead gets easier after a while and it can really help you get to do the things that you want to do. I have taken ceramics classes and was working on

getting my GED but I got nervous about it and quit. The staff who work with me think I can do it, and I do too, so I need to go back and try again.

One of the hardest things is when a staff person that I really care about leaves. A couple of the staff I really liked a lot have left recently. One of them was someone who really made me feel special. I trusted her because she did not let me down; she always did what she said she was going to do. She invited me to her house for the holidays and I got to know her family and she just always treated me with respect and trust. We liked some of the same things, she encouraged me to do more, she could pick me up when I was down and she was honest. I think that's what a good staff person does.





## My Story: By Jessica Owens

Jessica Owens describes herself as an active person. She likes to do things. That is why she loves being a part of Special Olympics.

Jessica joined Special Olympics in 2003, after her mother told her about it. Becoming a part of Special Olympics was easy.

“You fill out the form for the year you want to participate, and then you are in,” she says. “And you stay in until you decide you don’t want to do it anymore.”

Jessica likes Special Olympics because of all the different activities she gets to do. She gets to swim, play basketball, and play soccer. “Right now, we are starting softball, bowling, and tennis,” she says.

She also participated in the Polar Plunge earlier this year, an event that raises money for the

Special Olympics. For the Polar Plunge, people dress in costumes and bathing suits and jump into the freezing cold ocean!

Of all the activities, swimming is her favorite. Outside of Special Olympics, she and one of her neighbors are part of a swim team and a bowling team. Jessica also likes Special Olympics because she is able to go to Richmond and other different areas, where she meets new people and volunteers.

It is not only through Special Olympics that Jessica stays active. Jessica remains active through her participation with Hope House’s Relay for Life team. She will be doing the Walk for a Cure in October. Her training for that starts soon.

Jessica also likes the Relay for Life team because they sometimes

are sponsored by the Norfolk Admirals, and she enjoys going on the ice every year when her team sells the most tickets to the games.

Jessica’s favorite thing about Hope House is the Annual Dinner. She works for Eggleston Services where her favorite task is delivering magazines to the Naval Base.





## Worker Bees : An Interview with Larry Guynn

Do you work, participate in a day program, volunteer, or want to work? Are there issues relating to your employment or job search that you would like to share with *Buzz* readers? If so, I'd love to have the opportunity to meet with you and listen to what you have to say. Contact Christie Sumner at the Hope House Administrative Office at 625-6161 ext. 10 or [csumner@hope-house.org](mailto:csumner@hope-house.org).

Larry Guynn works at the Downtown Norfolk YMCA Monday through Friday with his job duties being collecting, laundering and folding towels. He highlights what makes him a good worker and offers some advice to job-seekers.

### Was it hard for you to find work?



A friend told me about the job at the YMCA. I went there and filled out the application and interviewed for the position. Before the interview, I practiced answering questions with a friend, something I would recommend others do to help prepare and keep from being too nervous.

### How do you get to work?

I take Logisticare. They have had trouble picking me up in the past and sometimes I get to work late. When that happens and my boss asks if I got to work on time I tell the truth and say that I was late. It's important for people to tell their boss why and when they are late and to be honest.

### What is your favorite part of your job?

I like to work out when I get off of work and I like that I live close to where I work. My coworkers are friendly. Overall, it's a good job and I like the money I make there.

### What is your least favorite part of your job?

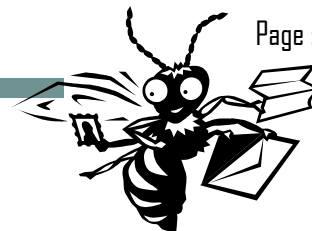
I like everything.

### What makes you a good employee?

I like what I do and stay on task. I get the job done on time. If I'm told that the towels need to be done by 1:30, I have them done right on time. I also set goals for myself. I always give plenty of notice if I am going to take a day off.

### What advice do you have for people looking for work?

Talk with people you know to see if they have heard of any place that is hiring. Practice for the interview and be on time. Have good attendance. Be a good group worker and get along with others.



## Statewide Elections on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 By Lori Shapiro and Josh Harris Our Voices Committee



It feels like yesterday we voted in a new president, but 2009 statewide elections are rapidly approaching. On Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> you will have the opportunity to elect a new Governor and executive team, Delegate, and depending on where you live, various local officers.

There are many ways to educate oneself on the issues and where each candidate stands. A few sources include the candidates' websites, our local newspapers and the upcoming televised debates. This should provide background on the candidates' views and prior voting records on important social programs directly affecting Virginians with disabilities such as State Funding and Waivers.

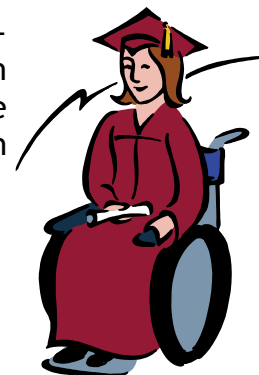
If you are not sure whether or not you are registered to vote, contact your local Registrar's office or Dana Lloyd in the Hope House Administrative Office at 625-6161 ext. 26.

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## Something to Share

California's Department of Developmental Services recently released Leadership Through Personal Change: Think - Plan - Do. A guide to help people with developmental disabilities have self-determined lives. Below is the link to the website that features numerous videos and perspectives of people living with disabilities.

<http://www.dds.ca.gov/ConsumerCorner/ThinkPlanDo.cfm>



## HEART TO HART

...AN ADVICE COLUMN ON RELATIONSHIPS



Dr. Hart,

My name is Josh Turner and this is how I keep a good man in my life. One day we plan to get married and start a family of our own. We plan on getting better paying jobs so we can pay for our own place to live and for our own cars. We want to go on a vacation together all by ourselves. After the wedding we also want to go to Hawaii for our honeymoon. Right after the wedding it is straight to the airport.

Thanks for your advice and support.

- Josh

Once again, if you have question's about love, life, and relationships, send them to me at the Hope House Foundation Administrative Office.

Always on Call,  
Dr. Hart



Dear Josh,

I was reading your letter and you sound really happy about getting married and starting a family. You have a lot of goals you want to accomplish in your life and that is fantastic! I think you should act on how you feel and follow your heart. Think hard about what you want to do so you don't feel like you've made mistakes in the long run. I just want to give you this advice to follow: Always follow your heart. I wish you all the luck with your goals. I really hope you both are happy and make it to Hawaii together! Stay in touch. It was good hearing from you.

## Events/ Classifieds

Have any events coming up you want to share? Do you have items you just don't need and want to sell? E-mail [buzz.connections@yahoo.com](mailto:buzz.connections@yahoo.com) .



The Afton Team in Portsmouth is looking for items to decorate its new back yard and deck. They plan on planting a garden and making the space more enjoyable. Planters, tools, and garden ornaments welcome. If you have any items please contact Kim at 757-558-2005.

**RETRACTION:** James Burney's e-mail address is actually [jamesburney20@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesburney20@yahoo.com)



John Waff is looking for someone to learn to Ballroom Dance with. He is a beginner who has only taken classes a few times, but would like to keep learning. If interested please contact him at 757-622-8595.

Stockley Gardens Fall Art Festival  
 October 17th and 18th  
 Sat- 10:00 am- 5:00 pm  
 Sun- 12:00pm-5:00 pm  
 FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
 Volunteer Opportunities Available

“VA Beach Polo Benefit”  
 September 12th,  
 Gates open at 2:00 pm  
 Match Begins at 3:30  
 Alpha Omega Farms  
 For more information contact Stephanie Kaplan at 757-625-6161 ext. 19

“ Hope, Love, Change”  
 August 15th  
 6:00-9:30 pm  
 Granby Theatre  
 An unforgettable evening of hair, fashion and music.

If you have any comments, opinions, or just want to contribute contact the Hope House Foundation Administrative Offices at 625-6161.