

Angel Guardians

15687 Spaulding Street
Omaha, NE 68116

(402) 334-5232
angelguardians.org



"Like" our
Facebook Page!

A NEW FACE AT THE VSP CLUB!



Angel Guardians would like to welcome Carol Salber to the VSP Club. Carol will be helping the VSP Club with Friday and Saturday events. Carol is a licensed

therapist who works at BehavenKids where she works with 2-9 year olds who have difficulty in daycare and school settings. Carol works with the families to help get their child back on track.

Carol's experience also includes working with the Autism Society of Nebraska where she was a member of their board and planned events for families that have been impacted by Autism. Carol has a personal connection and experience with individuals with autism. She has a 14 year old son who is on the autism spectrum.

We welcome Carol to the Angel Guardians family. Please feel free to introduce yourself to Carol at the next VSP event!

NEED A FUND RAISER?



Please consider utilizing Angel Guardians, Inc. as a fundraising vehicle for youth groups, sports teams, school trips and summer camps! Angel Guardians will return 50% of all proceeds back to the organization raising funds! This NEW program just takes a few minutes to get started. Contact Angel Guardians today to learn more about this exciting opportunity! Call 402.342.5232

SUPER-HEROS TO THE RESCUE!



VSP Club members tapped into their inner super powers at Super-Hero night! Members donned their favorite super-hero costume, made capes in preparation for the silly string fight!

ANGEL GUARDIANS

The Voice



... for those who cannot always speak for themselves.



"vsp club"

VERY SPECIAL PERSON

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Friday, February 3rd

Pottery Night. 6-9 pm \$15

Saturday, February 4th

Valentine Boxes. 6-9 pm \$15

Friday, February 10th

Move to the Music. 6-9 pm \$15

Saturday, February 11th

Valentine Party. 6-9 pm \$15

Friday, February 17th

Karaoke Night. 6-9 pm \$15

Saturday, February 18th

High School Event. 6-9 pm \$15

Friday, February 24th

Sewing/Craft Project. 6-9 pm \$15

Saturday, February 25th

Pajama Party. 6-9 pm \$15

***Please make a reservation by Wednesday of each week.

***Meet at the VSP Club for all events unless noted.

Our event calendars are online at www.angelguardians.org. When there is an event you would like to attend you can make a reservation by calling the VSP phone at (402) 594-6747. Each week the phone message gives you the event details for the upcoming weekend events. For some of the events there are a few extra details you might need to know. You can call the VSP phone to make a reservation or to get the event details. You may also email Trisha Kuiper at trisha@angelguardians.org with your reservation or any questions you might have about the VSP Club or upcoming events. Come and join in the fun – we look forward to seeing you at future events!



ANGEL GUARDIANS
DASH FOR
DIAMONDS
everyone is precious

"Angel Guardians announced the 1st Annual *Dash for Diamonds*! This 5k race for the public and 1 mile walk for the friends and family of Angel Guardians will be held on March 10th in the Old Market. This first time event will be held just prior to the annual Irish Hibernian Society St. Patrick's Day parade! The Diamond Dash promotes awareness and inclusion of children and young adults with developmental disabilities. Through this race, they are expressing voices that are often unheard. It is their goal as race directors to establish an event such as the *Dash for Diamonds* to bring awareness and understanding that each individual with special needs is unique and deserves to be heard. One in six children, in the United States, is born with a developmental disability. With your support we will raise awareness and much needed funding. Remember, like diamonds, *everyone is precious*. The Omaha Community is strongly encouraged to show their support of these amazing young adults. Runners will experience a unique course that starts at the Dubliner Tavern on 12th Harney. The out and back *Dash for Diamonds* course will head East towards the Heartland of America Park, then Northeast towards the Lewis and Clark Landing. Racers will enjoy the scenic views while running over the Kerry Pedestrian Bridge before their turn around. Runners and Leprechauns alike will sprint back in a dash for the diamonds where the TOP male and female athletes will each take home a diamond valued at \$750. Beginners need not worry! The luck of the Irish may be on your side as several names will be drawn for additional prizes! The *Dash for Diamonds* is a primary fundraiser for Angel Guardians. Friends and family members of a developmentally disabled child can show their support by signing up for the 1 mile walk! Participants of the *Dash for Diamonds* walk are encouraged to set up a fundraising page for their special needs friend or child. Some participants will

be unable to finish the 1 mile; they can cheer on the others!

The race committee is hopeful of attracting 300 runners and 200 walkers dressed in green for this festive experience! They are appreciative of your support in spreading the word about this new event in the heart of downtown Omaha!

How do you get involved?

Runners can register for the 5k, set up a fundraising page and donate using this link:

<http://www.active.com/donate/dashfordiamonds>

Walkers can register for the 1 mile, set up a fundraising page and donate using this link:

<http://www.active.com/donate/diamonddash1mile>

We need volunteers to help with race! Please consider putting your talents to good work as a race volunteer. We will need approximately 50 volunteers to help before, during and after the race. We will need a strong volunteer group to make this a successful event. We welcome church groups, athletic clubs, youth groups, etc. Please help us get the word out! Anyone interested in volunteering should call Joseph Kenney at 402.415.9842

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UPDATE . . .

ANGELWORKS ART CENTER

Last month Angel Guardians announced the renovation of a 2,600 square-foot bay for the Angelwork's Art Center. Angel Guardians is proud to announce the renovation has started on the vacant bay located next to Hand Me-Ups Thrift Store. Chris Hession, head maintenance technician, has removed several walls to bring in more natural light to this creative space. A wash sink has been installed, drawing desks have been built and painting is underway! Joseph Kenney, Development Director, is thankful for the recent donations that have allowed Angel Guardians to make this dream come true. They are still looking to the community for support as they continue with improvements and equipment purchased. Online donations can be made at www.angelguardians.org. Donations can be mailed to 15687 Spaulding Street, Omaha, NE. 68116 Thank you to the following donors for helping the Arts Center become a reality!

- Mr. & Mrs. Chris Kreigler
- Mr. & Mrs. William Helget
- Dr. & Mrs. Patrick Kenney
- Mrs. Kathleen Maloney
- Walz Masonry
- Mr. Thomas Slater
- Dr. & Mrs. Mark Emig
- Dr. Susan Swindells
- Mr. & Mrs. Scott Wells
- Mr. & Mrs. RonKirkendahl
- Ms. Karrie Potter
- Mr. & Mrs. Brad Barks
- Mr. & Mrs. Soyer
- Mr. & Mrs. Gary Hannibal
- Mr. & Mrs. Michael Lawler
- Mr. & Mrs. Robert Lewis



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND GETTING THE

WORD OUT



by Keri Pittenger

Busy....Busy....Busy! Our AngelWorks adults are very busy making one of kind items that they are extremely proud of. I continue to be amazed when I step into AngelWorks and see that each individual is accelerating in one area or another.

The sewing center is working on Tee-Wraps, Valentine Dog Bandanas and Dog Toys. The kitchen is baking Heart Shaped Dog Treats, the Artisan Center is making Rosaries, Noodle Bracelets and Angel Guardians signature Halo Bracelets.

A big part of AngelWorks success will be establishing Community Partnerships within the Omaha area. Distributing our merchandise to retailers for the general

public to purchase is a key component in the day to day operations at AngelWorks. Community Partners will benefit from AngelWorks in the following areas:

- Networking Opportunities
- Monthly Newsletter
- Website
- Facebook
- Promotional Opportunities at Angel Guardians events

If you have a friend or family member that has a retail business that would be a good fit for AngelWorks, such as a Salon / Pet Store / Boutique / Grocery store etc., please have them contact Keri Pittenger at 334-5232- Ext. 14.



GETTING READY TO SPRING CLEAN?

Soon, we will all start getting the "Spring cleaning" bug and want to get rid of items we are tired of! This is the perfect opportunity to call our Hand Me-Ups Furniture Store on 90th & Maple and have our drivers take it off your hands.

Hand Me-Ups is looking for clean and gently used furniture such as:

- Two Drawer Night Stands
- Appliances in good condition
- Clean Mattresses
- Bookshelves
- Recliners
- Coffee Tables etc.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight on Tiffany

- Favorite color:** Red
- Favorite music:** Country
- Favorite sports team:** South Carolina
- Enjoys:** Playing sports
- Favorite station:** Beading-Rosaries & bracelets
- Favorite movie:** 'Free Willy'

I like coming to AngelWorks because there is more variety for me to do, it is fun and I like to ride the bus.

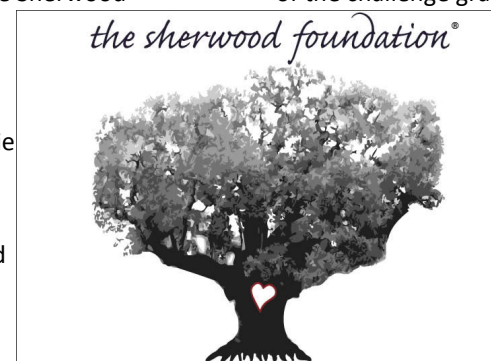


by Tish Johnson

Our son, Matthew is a 20 year old young man who is on the Autism Spectrum. One of the characteristics of autism is that it can affect the expressive language. Although Matt's receptive skills are much higher than the expressive he has no problem communicating his likes and dislikes. As parents we have learned to communicate with our son in most by observing his body and facial expressions. His limited speech does allow him the ability to state yes or no to most questions asked of him. So in July when something (perhaps an angel) prompted me to stop by Angel Guardians to check it out I was amazed at what I witnessed. As I toured the vocational section I was told about the VSP club for special needs young adults. It is a recreational hangout for young adults with special needs. It is a social club in which activities are planned on a weekly basis which can include community outings as well as activities at the VSP center. At first Matt was very hesitant at the idea of attending solo. Matt's social scene normally is limited to the family due to separation anxiety. When I mentioned my concern about Matt maybe not feeling comfortable to attend solo the staff

ANGEL GUARDIANS AWARDED \$30,000

It is our pleasure to inform you that Angel Guardians, Inc. has been awarded a \$30,000 challenge grant from the Sherwood Foundation. This great news was the result of months of corresponding with Susie Buffett's team at the Sherwood Foundation. Angel Guardians applied for the grant for the expressed purpose of finishing purchasing the necessary equipment to open a restaurant and launch a mobile cafeteria! The Foundation's Board reviewed the business plan and sent a representative from the Sherwood Foundation to tour the AngelWorks Career Center and meet with the board president, Dan Malone



and executive director, Christopher Slater. Angel Guardians was informed on January 6th of the challenge grant specifics. Angel Guardians, Inc. is required to raise \$20,000.00 from new donors, rather than existing donors to meet this challenge. Angel Guardians, will notify the Sherwood Foundation when the \$20,000 has been raised. This is a great opportunity for the Angel Guardian family! The completion of the kitchen, the opening of the restaurant and the mobile cafeteria launch will truly impact our community!

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

recommended that perhaps his older brother, Eric, or I attend with Matt until he felt comfortable. We spoke to Matt about his options and although he was quite nervous we decided to give it a go.

On his very first night of attending in July I can happily report it was me with the separation anxiety. I was worried that the staff might not be able to understand him or they would allow him to sit in the corner alone. I was a very nervous mother who sat for three hours watching the clock, (maybe even calling once to check on Matt J).

The staff member told me that Matt was laughing and talking about the wind and lightning (two of his favorite subjects) and having a great time! It was then that I knew that perhaps we had found something Very Special indeed! You see I know in my heart that the staff did indeed make a special effort in welcoming our son as anyone who knows him, knows he loves to talk about the weather. Matt now attends weekly events on Friday and Saturday evenings. This is something that amazes us because we know that a year ago Matthew would not have been open to going anywhere alone. We often joke

about him now having a better social life than us. We love to watch him beam as he is expressing his joy and love for his new found club! He may not be able to communicate all of his thoughts about the VSP club but his smile and enthusiasm says it all when asked if he loves going. Very Special People! Yes they are! Not only the clients but the staff who lovingly devotes their weekend time to provide a safe, loving, and fun environment for our special young adults!



Matt & Tish Johnson