A night of fun, food and music with friends is planned for Thursday, April 3rd, at the “Night at the Races” derby style party to benefit The Learning Tree. The event will be held at the Ezell House in Mobile beginning at 6:30 p.m. with heavy hors d’oeuvres, complimentary beverages, music and silent auction.

Tickets are $60 per person, with limited seating available. For sponsor information or to reserve tickets please call Paige Norris, Resource Development Assistant at (251) 654-2144.

Honeywell Rebuilding Together Project

For the second year, The Learning Tree was selected for the Honeywell Rebuilding Together project. The big-hearted volunteers replaced the entire roof on the Llama Farm group home, removed overgrowth and debris from the yard, and replaced damaged fencing around the property. Also, we appreciate all of the wonderful volunteers from Honeywell and the Knights of Columbus, with a special thanks to Andy Schmit and Tracy Robinson.

The project value is estimated at $24,000. Also, thank you to Charles and Shelia King and Lisa Ann Spurling for coordinating the roofing donation made by U.S. Steel Fairfield Works; custom cutting provided by Schulte Building Systems; transport and storage by Gadsden Machine Shop.

Congressman Mike Rogers and Andy Schmit

Volunteers help replace a roof on the Llama Farm group home.
The Providence Hospital 3rd Annual “Chip in for Autism” Golf Tournament

The Providence Hospital 3rd Annual “Chip in for Autism” Golf Tournament, benefitting Woody’s Song School, was held in early October. This year’s event raised over $30,000! More than 80 golfers took to the greens at Azalea City Golf Course on a beautiful fall morning. The day ended with a drawing for a custom fishing rod, in autism colors, made by Cast Tech Custom Fishing Rods. Success wouldn’t have been possible without the hard work of mom, Cindy Fulford and all the families that worked on the front lines and behind the scenes. Dinner was provided by Hungry Owl restaurant. Many thanks to Title Sponsor Providence Hospital and other sponsors, including:

**Title Sponsors**
- Providence Hospital
- HPC Specialty Pharmacy

**Gold Sponsors**
- Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic
- Ammon & Blackmon Construction
- Burke-Kapoler, Inc.
- C & K Investments

**Platinum Sponsors**
- Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC
- In Memory of Dr. Roger J. Burkit – The Sykes Family
- Bridgeman-Mountain Fire Apparatus, LLC
- The Cloudalz Family
- HPC Specialty Pharmacy
- HealthSpring
- Federal Protection Systems
- Jones Walker, LLP
- Nicholas Insulation Services
- PNC Bank
- Selma Bank & Co., PC
- The Sykes Family
- The University of South Alabama

**Hole Sponsors**
- Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic
- Ammons & Blackmon Construction
- Burke-Kapoler, Inc.
- C & K Investments
- Caull Communications
- Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Chatham
- Children’s Medical Group – Dr. Lisa McDonough
- Children’s Medical Group – Dr. Raya Roberts
- Cintas Corporation
- Citrin, Rhiner & Gupta Cardiology
- Cottage Hill Civilian
- DreamKnot Flooring
- James B. Donaghey, II, OMD, PC
- Mr. Philip Epstein
- Express Oil Change & Service Center
- The Foreman Family
- Haggin Engineers +
- Harrington Consulting
- Harter Carpenter Group – Merrill Lynch

The Walk for Autism

The Walk for Autism is scheduled for Saturday, April 5th in Mobile. New statistics indicate that some form of autism affects 1 in 88 children. The mission of the Autism Society of Alabama is to improve services for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families through education and advocacy. The events and services provided by ASAA, state-level advocacy and representation, information and referral, support groups, conferences and seminars, family camps, and awareness. For information contact Angela Loewen, Community and Program Coordinator, at angie@autism-alabama.org or 251-219-5553.

Arc State and Local Awards

At the annual Arc meeting and awards banquet, the Sykes Family, Greg, Judy, Andy, and Kevin of Mobile, were recognized as the Family of the Year Award. The award is presented to a family, having a member with a developmental disability and has inspired other families. Jerre Brimer, retired Learning Tree Executive Director, received the Franklin Smith Award for National Distinguished Service. The Smith award recognizes an individual whose contributions have had a major impact on the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families at the local, state, and national levels.

J.D. Jones Group & HPC Specialty Pharmacy Host First Annual Puzzle Piece Dash

The Learning Tree Mobile wrapped up the Thanksgiving holiday weekend with the First Annual Puzzle Piece Dash 5k, benefiting both The Learning Tree and the Autism Society of Alabama. The Title Sponsors for this year’s event was the J.D. Jones Group and HPC Specialty Pharmacy. Over $7,000 was raised. Woody’s Song School mom, Keri Benson, worked tirelessly with Angela Loewen of the Autism Society to help make this event a success. We greatly appreciate all of the volunteers that braved the chilly morning to manage set up and registration. Harley Jones and Jeb Fulford were amazing. Todd Villarreal and Judy Sykes were indispensable at the registration table. A special thank you goes to St. Lukes Key Foundation for providing water stops and registration. Harley Jones and Judy Fulford were amazing. Todd Villarreal and Judy Sykes were indispensable at the registration table. A special thank you goes to St. Lukes Key Foundation for providing water stops and registration.

**Title Sponsors**
- HPC Specialty Pharmacy
- J.D. Jones Group, LLC
- Fun Run Sponsors
- Gulf Coast Surgical Specialties
- The Houston Jones Fan Club
- Water Stop Sponsor
- Mobile Premier Pediatric Dentistry
- University of South Alabama

**Little Tree “Branches”**
- J & K Creations
- The Carroll Family
- Dr. and Mrs. Mark Caldicott
- Express Oil Change and Service Center
- Ms. Monique Moon
- Greg, Judy, Andy and Kevin Sykes
- John Toomey & Company, Inc.

**Hole Sponsors**
- Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic
- Ammons & Blackmon Construction
- Burke-Kapoler, Inc.
- C & K Investments
- Caull Communications
- Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Chatham
- Children’s Medical Group – Dr. Lisa McDonough
- Children’s Medical Group – Dr. Raya Roberts
- Cintas Corporation
- Citrin, Rhiner & Gupta Cardiology
- Cottage Hill Civilian
- DreamKnot Flooring
- James B. Donaghey, II, OMD, PC
- Mr. Philip Epstein
- Express Oil Change & Service Center
- The Foreman Family
- Haggin Engineers +
- Harrington Consulting
- Harter Carpenter Group – Merrill Lynch

The Providence Hospital 3rd Annual “Chip in for Autism” Golf Tournament

The Providence Hospital 3rd Annual “Chip in for Autism” Golf Tournament, benefitting Woody’s Song School was held in early October. This year’s event raised over $30,000! More than 80 golfers took to the greens at Azalea City Golf Course on a beautiful fall morning. The day ended with a drawing for a custom fishing rod, in autism colors, made by Cast Tech Custom Fishing Rods. Success wouldn’t have been possible without the hard work of mom, Cindy Fulford and all the families that worked on the front lines and behind the scenes. Dinner was provided by Hungry Owl restaurant. Many thanks to Title Sponsor Providence Hospital and other sponsors, including:

**Title Sponsors**
- Providence Hospital
- HPC Specialty Pharmacy

**Gold Sponsors**
- Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic
- Ammons & Blackmon Construction
- Burke-Kapoler, Inc.
- C & K Investments
- Caull Communications
- Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Chatham
- Children’s Medical Group – Dr. Lisa McDonough
- Children’s Medical Group – Dr. Raya Roberts
- Cintas Corporation
- Citrin, Rhiner & Gupta Cardiology
- Cottage Hill Civilian
- DreamKnot Flooring
- James B. Donaghey, II, OMD, PC
- Mr. Philip Epstein
- Express Oil Change & Service Center
- The Foreman Family
- Haggin Engineers +
- Harrington Consulting
- Harter Carpenter Group – Merrill Lynch

The Walk for Autism

The Walk for Autism is scheduled for Saturday, April 5th in Mobile. New statistics indicate that some form of autism affects 1 in 88 children. The mission of the Autism Society of Alabama is to improve services for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families through education and advocacy. The events and services provided by ASAA, state-level advocacy and representation, information and referral, support groups, conferences and seminars, family camps, and awareness. For information contact Angela Loewen, Community and Program Coordinator, at angie@autism-alabama.org or 251-219-5553.

Arc State and Local Awards

At the annual Arc meeting and awards banquet, the Sykes Family, Greg, Judy, Andy and Kevin of Mobile, were recognized as the Family of the Year Award. The award is presented to a family, having a member with a developmental disability and has inspired other families. Jerre Brimer, retired Learning Tree Executive Director, received the Franklin Smith Award for National Distinguished Service. The Smith award recognizes an individual whose contributions have had a major impact on the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families at the local, state, and national levels.
ANNISTON/JACKSONVILLE REGION

3rd annual Aces for Autism benefit Gala

The 3rd annual Aces for Autism formal benefit Gala was held on January 25th, 2014 at Classic Ikon on Noble Street in Anniston, AL. They enjoyed an exciting evening of casino-style gaming, silent auction, great food and music. Goodfleas from Birmingham did an amazing job entertaining guests with blackjack, craps, roulette, 3-card poker, Texas Hold ‘Em, and sloto! The grand prize giveaway was a $500 gift certificate from Diamond’s Direct – Cahaba Village in Birmingham. Mr. Steven Charles, from Atlanta GA, provided a nice musical jazz touch.

Silent auction items included an autographed print of Aami Cooper from The University of Alabama, an autographed football by Coach Nick Saban; a Tiffany & Company necklace; a long week-end vacation in Gulf Shores – kindly donated by the President of the Board of Directors, Mr. Mike Marion; an autographed print of Coach Gus Malzahn of the Auburn Tigers; a Disney vacation; and an antique oil painting donated by Timeless Treasures in Oxford, AL given by long-time supporters, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Wigington of Anniston, AL. Also, International Wines & Craft Beer donated several high quality wines to top off the auction in grand style… there were baskets to match every guest’s interest.

PRCA THINK Event

The Mobile Chapter of Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA) award ed Woody’s Song School the proceeds of their annual THINK event. The luncheon and silent auction raised $1,500 to purchase three recreational bicycles for the school. Woody’s Song School parents, Elaine Bader, Cindy Fulford and Nathan Handmacher also attended the event.

AAPI Christmas Party

The Alabama Association of Paralegals, Inc. (AAPi) named The Learning Tree as recipient of a silent auction at their annual Christmas Party. Thank you AAPi for helping to increase awareness of autism for our children and families.

Gulf Distributing Christmas Party

Gulf Distributing played Santa’s helpers for residential children in Mobile. They raised more than $8,000 for gifts for 30 children; backing up a van loaded with electronics, furniture, desks…even Ipads. Employees made sure each child’s wish list was complete. The children opened one gift at their Christmas party the others were saved to open on Christmas day. Gulf Distributing employees made sure each child’s gift wish list was complete.

Donors Make Sure No Child is Forgotten

Three adult residents were blessed with gifts from some very special community support. Many thanks to Christ United Methodist Church, Mr. Abe Harper with Harper Technologies, Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie McCain, Moffett Road Assembly of God Church, Praise Family Church, Regions Bank and Trax Tires for making sure these special guys had gifts and a festive Christmas.

MOBILE REGION

Mark Your Calendar and Get to Newk’s Eatery

On the first Thursday of each month, between the hours of 5:00 to 9:00 pm, Newk’s donates 20% of each sale for anyone that mentions The Learning Tree when they order. Many Thanks to Chasky Johns, Assistant Manager and Newk’s Eatery for their support of the Learning Tree.

AUBURN/TALLASSEE REGION

Auburn City Schools partnership establishes Little H.A.P.I.E. Tree Preschool

Since the new partnership began in August with Auburn City Schools the children and teachers at Little H.A.P.I.E. Tree Preschool in Auburn have been very busy! The Preschool is now located at the Auburn Early Education Center, a beautiful modern building with increased preschool instructional space. Last year, the Little Tree Preschool served 24 children. In August the school year started with 50 children, and is now approaching 75. Preschool teachers have adjusted well to their new surroundings and have worked diligently to maintain the high quality of both programs involved in the new partnership. Most importantly, the children are experiencing new skills and demonstrating significant outcomes. “We appreciate everyone who participated in this successful collaboration,” said Dr. Marc Williams, Executive Director.

A Tallassees Thanksgiving Feast for All!

The Tallassees program is truly thankful for John and Marjorie Caldwell again this year. A huge Thanksgiving feast was delivered to the school for more than 70 children, their families, and employees. The Caldwell’s gift was for the employees in appreciation for the love they demonstrate for the children, their tireless work, and dedication. The Caldweels made it even more special for the staff by having volunteers to help serve the entire Learning Tree family!

Save the Dates!

On Saturday, April 12, plan to run or walk in the 2nd annual “Tiger Trot for Tots 5K” to benefit The Learning Tree and The Little H.A.P.I.E. Tree Preschool. Plans are underway for an even bigger year than last year.

Religious Community Continues Holiday Tradition

For years the First United Methodist Church of Tallassees and Oak Valley Station United Methodist Church have generously given gifts to the 35 children at the Tallassees Residencial School. Members of the Oak Valley Station United Methodist church also beautifully wrapped all of the gifts. Their thoughtfulness and kindness for our students is greatly appreciated.

Tallassees Girl Scouts Volunteer for Library

The Tallassees Girl Scout Troop 9017 spent many hours sprucing up hundreds of books in the Tallassees school library. Kristin Davis, teacher and girl scout mom, coordinated this volunteer event! The Girl Scouts also assembled a special holiday candy gift bag for all of the employees at the Tallassees school for holiday appreciation.

GKF AERO

GKF Aerospace

Community Hospital

Fort McClellan new home to Little Tree Preschool

The Preschool move to the Fort McClellan location was possible due to the hard work of JSU students, community volunteers, parents, and Learning Tree staff. The needed building renovations and classroom arrangements were completed in a very short time frame to ensure that the school would re-open as scheduled. The improvements and new media equipment were made possible by the Anniston Community Commission and the New Hspewell Church.

First Annual Monster Dash Held

More than 75 seniors and numerous volunteers helped show their support for the first ever fall 5K Monster Dash. The October event raised just under $5,000. Sponsors included: Mayer Electric, Comfort Care Hospice, Albert and Wanda Young, Renee Stuckey, Eddy Johnson, McComb Communications, Anniston Medical Center, TCI Communications, Marshall Industrial Supply, and So’l Morses.

Save the Dates!

On Saturday, April 12, plan to run or walk in the 2nd annual “Tiger Trot for Tots 5K” to benefit The Learning Tree and The Little H.A.P.I.E. Tree Preschool. Plans are underway for an even bigger year than last year.

From August to May, visit Niffer’s at Lake Martin and either of the two locations in Auburn for Niffer’s Gives Back.

ASU’s Dr. Marcia Rossi Honored

Dr. Marcia Rossi attended her last meeting in December as a member of the Rights Protection Committee. At that meeting, the Regional Director, Whitney Hester presented her with a recognition plaque for her support and dedication over the years. Dr. Rodney Teague was welcomed as the new Rights Protection Committee Chairperson. Dr. Rossi is a psychology professor at Alabama State University and oversees undergraduate students for the Rights Protection Committee since 2005 and currently serves on the Board of Directors.

Casual for a Cause Event

GKF Aerospace and Community Hospital in Tallassees participated in “Casual for a Cause”. Donations were accepted to wear blue jeans to support children with autism. The money raised will be used to purchase iPads for children at The Learning Tree school. Tallassee employees made sure each child’s gift wish list was complete. The children opened one gift at their Christmas party the others were saved to open on Christmas day. Gulf Distributing employees made sure each child’s gift wish list was complete.

Donors Make Sure No Child is Forgotten

Three adult residents were blessed with gifts from some very special community support. Many thanks to Christ United Methodist Church, Mr. Abe Harper with Harper Technologies, Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie McCain, Moffett Road Assembly of God Church, Praise Family Church, Regions Bank and Trax Tires for making sure these special guys had gifts and a festive Christmas.

MOBILE REGION

Mark Your Calendar and Get to Newk’s Eatery

On the first Thursday of each month, between the hours of 5:00 to 9:00 pm, Newk’s donates 20% of each sale for anyone that mentions The Learning Tree when they order. Many Thanks to Chasky Johns, Assistant Manager and Newk’s Eatery for their support of the Learning Tree.

PRCA THINK Event

The Mobile Chapter of Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA) awarded Woody’s Song School the proceeds of their annual THINK event. The luncheon and silent auction raised $1,500 to purchase three recreational bicycles for the school. Woody’s Song School parents, Elaine Bader, Cindy Fulford and Nathan Handmacher also attended the event.

AAPI Christmas Party

The Alabama Association of Paralegals, Inc. (AAPi) named The Learning Tree as recipient of a silent auction at their annual Christmas Party. Thank you AAPi for helping to increase awareness of autism for our children and families.

Gulf Distributing Christmas Party

Gulf Distributing played Santa’s helpers for residential children in Mobile. They raised more than $8,000 for gifts for 30 children; backing up a van loaded with electronics, furniture, desks…even Ipads. Employees made sure each child’s wish list was complete. The children opened one gift at their Christmas party the others were saved to open on Christmas day. Gulf Distributing employees made sure each child’s gift wish list was complete.

Donors Make Sure No Child is Forgotten

Three adult residents were blessed with gifts from some very special community support. Many thanks to Christ United Methodist Church, Mr. Abe Harper with Harper Technologies, Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie McCain, Moffett Road Assembly of God Church, Praise Family Church, Regions Bank and Trax Tires for making sure these special guys had gifts and a festive Christmas.
MOBILE REGION (continued)

Scouting at Woody’s Song School

Thanks to a partnership with Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama, the children of Woody’s Song School are participating in scouting this year. Ms. Tracy Arend and Ms. Angie Cieutat have adapted a version of scouting tasks and badge opportunities for children on the autism spectrum. The children from each classroom were recented as a group with new leaders in the middle of this academic year.

This program has opened up a whole new world to our students. We’re so grateful for all of our volunteers that work so hard to make it happen!

Additionally, Sean Baxter, the younger brother of Woody’s Song School student, Christopher Baxter recently completed an Eagle Scout project at the school. As part of his project he raised funds and installed a vegetable garden at the back of the campus, as well as a flag pole which stands at the front of the school. When his work was completed he performed a traditional flag-raising ceremony for the children.

Back to School Visits to the Art Museum

One of the many joys of the new school year is the children visiting the Mobile Art Museum every other week. The trips have included holiday themed activities, such as creating ghosts for Halloween, making snowflakes for the Winter Festival, and visiting the children’s favorite...annual electric train display.

Eagle Scout project at the school, so part of his project he raised funds and installed a vegetable garden at the back of the campus, as well as a flag pole which stands at the front of the school. When his work was completed he performed a traditional flag-raising ceremony for the children.

Local Merchants provide Gifts and Holiday Fund

The Gap and Dill Navy organized a very special gift donation for each residential child to make the season bright. Each child received their own tote bag filled with clothes, and a toy that was picked out especially for them. We are grateful for these companies reaching out to our children.

learning Tree Wins at First Annual Charity Run

Last fall staff participated in The Charity Run 5k held at the Mobile Art Museum. The Learning Tree was one of many local nonprofit organizations that benefited from the run. We are especially proud to congratulate Mr. Samson Kipchirchir for winning the race with his blistering 16:15 time! With his help and the help of others, more than $400 was raised!

Brimer Plans Final Miles in “Across America” Ride

Having completed a little more than 1,600 miles, Jim Brimer will finish a 400-mile segment in Florida to complete the 10,000-mile trek. After returning from his cross-country route due to a shoulder injury last July, in January he was diagnosed with pneumonia. Trying to gain strength back he is walking a couple miles every morning and working on plants in his greenhouse at the school. He hopes to be on his bike very soon to finish the 10,000 miles.

His final route will be around Florida, from Evangeline City to Miami Key West, back to Miami and then ending in Fort Pierce. I am looking forward to doing that in early to mid-March, depending on how quickly I get my legs back under me, that will be about 400 miles and put me well over the goal,” said Jim. Pablo on 92ZEW recently interviewed Jim on his Sunday morning talk show.

Please be grateful for these companies reaching out to our children.
Development Team Fulfilled

In 2012, Sheila Sears was hired as the Resource Development Director to coordinate development activities across the state with the support of a local coordinator in each of the 3 program regions; Anniston/Jacksonville, Auburn/Tallassee, and Mobile. With the recent hiring of Stephanie Weldon for the Auburn/Tallassee region in December, the team is now complete. Teresa Atkins manages the Mobile region joined by Page Norris, with Lisa Ann Spurling in Anniston/Jacksonville. The next objective for the Development Office is to establish a volunteer committee in each region to support the schools.

State Conferences Advance Professional Training

The Learning Tree was represented at the Alabama Academic Advisors Conference in Tuscaloosa and the Alabama Applied Behavior Analysis (ALABA) Conference in Birmingham in the fall….among those attending the ALABA conference were Heather Jones, Whitney Hester, Ken Atkins, Haily Owen, William Mauldin, Phillip Whatley, Jennifer Wythe, Jamie Logan, Nicole Dieckow, Hannah LaFollette, Brittany Collier, Jenny Dooley, Kacie Myers, Pat Murphy, Brian Findlay, Courtney Grantham, and Leigh Ann Strain. Lisa Ann Spurling coordinated The Learning Tree exhibit table for both conferences with help from Jenny Dooley at the ALABA conference.

SAVE THE DATES!

**Autism Legislative Day** - Montgomery, AL
Tuesday, March 11th

“A Night at the Races” - Mobile, AL
Thursday, April 3rd

**Autism Walk** - Mobile, AL
Saturday, April 5th

“Tiger Trot” 5K - Auburn, AL
Saturday, April 12th

**Autism: 5K Run for Hope** - Anniston, AL
Saturday, April 26th

**Anniversary Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet**
Date TBD – late April

**4th Annual “Chip in for Autism” Golf Tournament** - Mobile, AL
Saturday, September 27th

Resource Development
251-331-2633