

WHAT'S NEW

Salinas Circle for Children

Meeting Date

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

6:30pm to 8:00pm

Location: 1368 S. Main St.
Set A (JG Parker Office,
located behind
Portobellos)

Become a Member in 2015!!

**Membership Dues have been
extended until February 20th**

Fill out a form and mail it in OR
you can sign up to renew your
dues at salinascircle.org and
press *Become a Member* link

A Chalk in the Park Working Meeting

Interested in helping with A
Chalk in the Park, there will be
working meetings held the 3rd
Tuesday of every month until
the event, May 3rd

Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday, February 17th

Begins at 5:30pm, but
arrive when you can

22317 Berry Drive, Salinas

Snacks will be provided

President's Message

Happy February! I hope everyone is staying healthy, I know a couple of our members have battled their way back to health from a flu bug and I really hope it doesn't find the rest of us.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, well I know it definitely takes all the members of Salinas Circle for Children to raise the funds to be able to help all the children that we serve in the county. Our first fundraising project, the 4th Annual Chalk in the Park, is off and running. Please make sure you sign up to help on a committee. Kathy and Kelli Hemenway will have more to report at our February meeting but the most important things are to start selling Sponsor Squares and procure artists for the event.

We also are looking for one or two members to head up our Annual Event to be held in the fall. This is our main fundraiser of the year so the sooner we get started planning the better. I've heard a couple of ideas that were floating around so let's start putting this project in motion.

The California Rodeo this year is July 16th to 19th, so make sure you put those dates on your calendar, because we will once again be volunteering to help in the Bull Crossing area.

This month is Valentine's Day so don't forget to be sweet to your Secret Pal!

See you at the meeting on February 3rd,

Vickie Casacca

happy Birthday to you!!

Vanessa Madrid

Katrina Halcon





Recipe of the Month

Yukon Gold and Sweet Potato
Gratin submitted by Alethea
Leandro-Farr

Ingredients:

- * 6 tablespoons butter, divided
- * 2 1/4 lb Yukon Gold Potato
- * 1 1/2 lbs Sweet Potatoes (yams) peeled
- * 2 cups whole milk
- * 1 garlic clove, pressed
- * 1 tbsp of kosher salt
- * 2 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- * 1 tsp ground black pepper
- * 1/8 tsp ground nutmeg

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 & coat 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish with 2 tbsp of butter
2. Take thinly sliced potatoes and place them in the dish
3. Bring milk & tiger 5 ingredients to a boil and pour over potatoes
4. Dot with 2 tbsp of butter and cover with foil
5. Bake until potatoes are tender and milk is almost absorbed (about 50 minutes)
6. Bring cream to a boil and pour cream over potatoes and dot the last of the butter.
7. Bake uncovered until top is golden brown (about 25 min)

15 Things I Know Being The Parent of a Child with Autism
By Allie Smith, Published by Scary Mommy Blog
To find more articles and read this full article, visit www.scarymommy.com and click on 'Kids by Issues'

I'm the parent of a child with autism, and I'm aware that autism, like most permanent medical conditions, is life-changing. So far, hearing the words "your son has autism" was the single worst moment of my life (and there have been some bad ones). When we received our diagnosis, I didn't know where to turn, what to do or what to think. My only reference point was *Rain Man*. It was a very hopeless time in my life.

Let me acknowledge — I know there's some really bad stuff that goes along with having a child with autism. There's much grief, sadness, exhaustion, anger, hopelessness, anxiety and fear that go hand and hand with the condition. It sucks. But I also know that there's an abundance of gratitude, support, grace, hope, happiness, acceptance and love in our life thanks, in part, to autism. Here are some things I know...

3. I know that laughter can get us through anything.

If I couldn't laugh at our crazy uniqueness, I'd probably cry. For as little as he says, our Bear is one of the funniest people I've ever met. Life with him has given us a reservoir of material for stories at parties. He also has the sweetest, most contagious laugh in the world. The humor that he finds in us is just as precious.

4. I know that I'm a better person because of autism.

I've learned humbling lessons on our journey. It doesn't matter who you are, your race, what you do, where you live, where (or if) you go to church, whether you're rich or poor — autism does not care. I admit that I sometimes judged people in my former life, especially people with out-of-control children. Oh, you better believe I sized them up immediately. Shame, shame, shame on me. Karma, baby! I'm raising my children to be aware and to never let someone who's different get picked on. They know to stand up for those who need it, because they'd want the same for their brother. My mantra is that we live in the biggest glass house on the block, so don't ever throw stones.

15 Things I Know Being The Parent Of A Child With Autism Continued

6. I know that slow and steady wins the race. Even with baby steps, we've come a long way. Barrett's a work in progress, but that's OK — we're still making progress. We have good days and bad days, but the good far outweigh the bad.

7. I know that time heals all wounds. Ten years ago, I was frozen. I was overcome with fear. I felt like our lives were over. There were no little voices in the house. There was no laughter. There were no adventures. There was no hope — whatsoever! Present day, we've got a loud, rambunctious, chaotic house that's full of voices, laughter, joy and hope, and I wouldn't want it any other way.

8. I know about the power of miracles. We experience little miracles every day. A prolonged period of eye contact. Appropriate laughter at a joke. A hug that is truly reciprocated. An unprompted request that's verbalized. A full night's sleep. Spontaneous declarations. A non-echolalic expression of love. Directions followed — the first time. A clean trip to the bathroom. A new food tasted. It really is the little things that mean so much. Nothing goes uncelebrated.

10. I know that there are angels among us. I honestly don't know where we'd be today without the skills, kindness and patience of the teachers, paraprofessionals, therapists and respite providers who've worked with our family. Angels, pure and simple. There's a special place in heaven for those who work with and care for the special needs community.

12. I know what it means to be truly grateful, because I am. I'm so grateful for all my children, and Bear is a special piece of my puzzle. He is the yin to my yang. We balance each other. When he is happy or has reached a milestone, I feel it deep down in my soul. I know, so corny, but it's so true. He grounds me. When I'm having a tough day, I think about how tough each day is for him. There are no pity parties in our house. I also know that he's one of the lucky ones. I know it and I am humbly grateful.

15. I know that kindness and acceptance are all around us. In the beginning, I shied away from people and gatherings. I didn't want to inflict our circumstances on others. I literally went into hiding. I really underestimated family, friends and strangers; I know this because I've been overwhelmed by the support we've received over the years. There are so many good people who have embraced our family and treated us in a manner that has made me feel like we belong — anywhere. No awkwardness and no explanations needed. They accept our boy the way he is, and they're raising the next generation to do the same. They are changing the world.