

# SHARE Notes

SEPTEMBER 2004

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## Fun Walk, Auto Show and Flea Market Forecast A Full Day of Fun and Festivities to Benefit SHARE

**O**n Sunday, October 17, SHARE supporters can enjoy three times the usual fun on the UMass Dartmouth campus, when Fun Walk 2004, the 10th Annual SHARE Auto Show, and a giant flea market will run simultaneously in a fundraising extravaganza to benefit children and adults with disabilities. Funds raised through these three events will help support the work of the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering and provide adaptive computer equipment and related services to the growing list of individuals awaiting SHARE's help.

True to tradition, Fun Walk 2004 is guaranteed to offer plenty of games, entertainment and prizes for the entire family. This year, the walk will begin at UMass Dartmouth's Dion Building, with parking available in Lots 16 and 17. The walk's official start time is 9 a.m., but come early and fuel up with coffee and donuts



Photo by Bill Thorn

starting at 8:30 a.m. Walkers may begin the walk any time between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, and may choose from several different routes cover-

**READY TO ROLL**—If you can't join us for Fun Walk this year, please consider sponsoring Paul Remy (left) or Linda Texceira, who will be covering the walk-a-thon route via wheelchair. See the enclosed flier to make your pledge... your support is much appreciated!

ing distances between 2 and 10 kilometers.

Walkers who turn in \$50 or more will receive their choice of a free mug or T-shirt courtesy of Lafayette Federal Savings Bank, along with a prize from our Treasure Chest. For the first time this year, walkers who turn in \$250 or more will receive a beautiful nylon SHARE Foundation jacket from National Embroidery Services in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Top fundraising individuals and teams will also earn valuable prizes donated by local merchants.

*Continued on page 2*

## SHARE Client Enjoys the Internet with the Aid of Center-Built Device

Many people would probably say that the power of the Internet is that you can access worlds of information in the blink of an eye. So can SHARE client Dick Maitland, thanks to an innovative device designed by Rehabilitation Engineering Center engineer Mark Whittaker.

Because Maitland's motor

abilities are severely limited by ALS, he was controlling his computer by using a blink switch, a device that allows him to select on-screen commands by blinking his eye. But his involuntary eye blinks were triggering the switch unintentionally and preventing him from using

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## Center-Built Device *Continued from page 1*

his computer effectively.

To remedy the problem, Whittaker built an adaptive device—a variable event filter switch—that works as an interface between the blink switch mounted on Maitland's eyeglasses and his computer. The filter switch is programmed to recognize a prespecified length of time that Maitland's eye is closed as an intentional blink. When Maitland holds his eye closed for the designated amount of time, the switch is triggered, allowing him to make a selection from an on-screen menu of commands on his laptop.

With the device in place, Maitland is now able to enjoy using his laptop to correspond by e-mail, send and receive photos, and search the Web. "This equipment allows me to have the ability to communicate with my family and friends throughout the country," says Maitland. "Without this equipment, my life



*Dick Maitland's blink switch (above) interfaces with a Center-built device that can distinguish between voluntary and involuntary eye blinks.*

would be very boring."

For Maitland, the Internet also has helped him track down the unique resources and equipment he needs to lead a productive life.

"Before I became totally paralyzed, I surfed the Web looking for adaptive equipment that might be helpful for my needs," says Maitland. "I came across SHARE in my travels through cyberspace. Thanks to the Internet, I [have been] able to prepare for the challenges that lay ahead." ■

## Fun Walk 2004 *Continued from page 1*

New this year, walkers can play Scrabble, with a prize to be awarded for the "best word." And participants will take home dozens of gift certificates from local sponsors to be given away during a special drawing.

Back on campus, enjoy sand art, pumpkin painting, and the last cookout of the season from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.! Recruit a team or come as you are, but please sign up for Fun Walk 2004—we truly need your help to make this fundraiser a success!

While you're on campus that day, don't miss the 10th Annual SHARE Foundation Auto Show & Fun Day, which will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sponsored by the Bristol County Street Rod Association, the show will feature over 100 classic and antique autos and trucks, with a special guest appearance by three-time NASCAR Modified Champion Bugs Stevens. Johnny Angel, a popular MC and disc jockey, will also keep the crowds entertained. And check out our gigantic flea market, where you'll find an incredible array of items and great buys offered by more than 40 vendors.

For 23 years, your support has made it possible for SHARE to provide the gifts of communication and greater independence to more than 2,300 children and adults with disabilities. Now more than ever, your help can make a real difference in the lives of others.

*If you are interested in being a Fun Walk team captain or walker, or would like to reserve flea market space (\$10 per space), please call SHARE at 508-999-8482. For Auto Show information or to preregister your vehicle (\$10 registration fee), please call Dave Martin at 508-947-4447 or Dan Westgate at 508-822-4640. ■*

## FILENE'S Charity Event to Benefit SHARE

This November, SHARE will be participating in **Dartmouth Charity Day**, a special fundraising event at the new Filene's department store located at the Dartmouth Mall. For the purchase of a \$5 ticket, shoppers can enjoy an all-day, private Charity Shopping Day and Celebration at Filene's on Monday, November 8 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with all ticket sale proceeds to benefit SHARE.

In return, ticket holders will receive an All-Day 25% Off Shopping Pass, good on all regular- and sale-priced apparel, shoes, accessories, and jewelry. In addition, they will be eligible to win a \$1,000 shopping spree and other prizes.

The day will include entertainment, food, and the opportunity to shop at Filene's prior to its "official" opening. At the same time, you will be helping SHARE to raise much-needed funds.

Most people will receive far more in discounts than the \$5 cost of these tickets. In fact, SHARE supporters have been buying a few extra passes to hand out to family and friends. This exciting event is a win-win situation, especially for SHARE!

For more information or to purchase tickets, please call the SHARE office at 508-999-8482 as soon as possible. Don't miss out on this spectacular sales event!!

# Ronald McDonald House Charities Grant to Fund Chat Room for Kids with Disabilities

The SHARE Foundation has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from Ronald McDonald House Charities to establish an Internet chat room for children with disabilities.

"The objective of the chat room is to provide a place where youngsters who are disabled will be able to socialize online at a pace that is slower and more comfortable for them," says Professor Les Cory, SHARE president.

Grant funds will cover the expenses of setting up the chat room, as well as provide the adaptive computer equipment children may need to participate in the program. SHARE plans to operate the chat room during afternoon and early evening hours to better accommo-

date students' schedules. SHARE will also hire a moderator to oversee the chat room's online activities.

"This program will engage kids to gain some computer skills they otherwise might not gain," says Cory. "And quite simply, it's a great chance for them to enjoy some independence and build new friendships all on their own."

*Anyone interested in applying for the position of chat room moderator for the program is invited to call SHARE at 508-999-8482 for more information. ■*

## State Legislators Help Renew State Contract for Center

As a result of legislation introduced by State Senator Mark Montigny and State Representative Patricia Haddad and supported by legislators from across the region, the UMD Center for Rehabilitation Engineering has renewed a contract with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) to provide adaptive technology equipment, training and related services to improve independent living opportunities for adults with disabilities across Massachusetts.

Under the terms of the agreement, the MRC will provide funding for the Center to serve those MRC clients who require adaptive technology to meet their independent living goals.

"We remain especially grateful for the dedicated efforts of our local legislators on behalf of SHARE and the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering," said Center director Les Cory. ■

## Ben Boyle Golf Classic Benefits SHARE Foundation

SHARE would like to extend its gratitude to SHARE Board member emeritus Ron Kostyla, the Sunday Morning Golfers and the Pawtuxet Valley Rotary Club for sponsoring the 21st Annual Ben Boyle Golf Classic this past July.

Held at the Richmond Country Club in Hope Valley, Rhode Island, the tournament raised more than \$2,500 to benefit SHARE. The funds will be used to provide adaptive equipment and related services to children and adults with disabilities.

Our thanks also go out to the many players, businesses and organizations that participated in the benefit again this year—as always, your support is greatly appreciated. ■

### DESPERATELY SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!!!

**HELP!!** With three separate fundraising events occurring the day of Fun Walk 2004, SHARE needs extra help behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly. Here are just some of the ways you can help:

- Provide assistance to participants visiting Fun Walk registration tables
- Help solicit additional prizes for Fun Walkers
- Staff a walk station along the walk-a-thon route
- Pass out event information, tickets and materials

If you can lend a hand for a few hours and would like to help us on October 17, please contact SHARE at 508-999-8482. And thanks a million for contributing to our fundraising success!

## HELP WANTED

The UMass Dartmouth Center for Rehabilitation Engineering is seeking applicants for two staff positions currently open at the Center:

- A **Computer Technologist** to provide equipment set-up and training for our clients.
- A **Rehabilitation Technician** to build and service computer systems and provide technical support for our users.

For application information, please call the Rehab Engineering Center office at 508-999-8214.

**Thank You.** We extend our heartfelt thanks to the many supporters who have donated to SHARE over the past few months. Your generous gifts are making it possible for us to provide the opportunity for independent communication to more children and adults with disabilities.

*The following donations were received from March 22, 2004 through September 15, 2004.*

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