



# Matheny *Matters*

Spring/Summer 2012 • [www.matheny.org](http://www.matheny.org) • 908-234-0011

## Things Are Great When You're **Downtown**

"I've been there in years past when it was rainy, and there's almost a camaraderie in being able to brave those elements." That comment by WCBS-TV news anchor Don Dahler on his Saturday morning newscast the day before Miles for Matheny would prove to be prophetic. It did rain on Sunday, April 22, but, as Bedminster, NJ, resident Trish Mannion pointed out, "The whole community came out and supported this wonderful cause."



Above, From left, Courtney Smith, Reagan Thomson and Jordan Smith of Bedminster and Jamie Moschetto of Peapack in the gym with adult patient Rasheedah Mahali.



Matheny student Bryan Desatnick with his father Lloyd and mother Edana sharing a laugh with WCBS-TV sports anchor Otis Livingston and his son Marquis.



Chuck Matheny and friends in the Lu Huggins Wheelchair Walk.

Thank you for letting our family be part of such a wonderful day!"

And thanks to Peapack-Gladstone for inviting Matheny to use the gymnasium in the municipal building as a gathering place for all the wheelchair participants, who, otherwise, would have had to be outside. In fact, there was a party atmosphere in the

gymnasium as many volunteers, Matheny staff members and families joined the Matheny students and patients to wait for the start of the Lu Huggins Wheelchair Walk, which returned to downtown Peapack after a two-year hiatus in Natirar Park.

**More on Miles for Matheny,  
pages 2, 10-11**

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# Thank You, Peapack-Gladstone

**M**iles for Matheny, according to Steve Proctor, Matheny president, is a day that, “our patients, students and their families look forward to with great anticipation, and it was particularly meaningful this year because we returned to downtown Peapack. We could not have had such a successful event without the help and cooperation of the Borough of Peapack-Gladstone. The police and fire departments, public works department and mayor’s office all went the extra mile, so to speak, to make sure we had a safe and inspiring day. I’d also like to thank all the volunteers, Matheny staff

members and other participants from the community for coming out on a less than perfect day to support us.”

Miles activities included the Lu Huggins Wheelchair Walk, a 5K run, five different cycling routes and a kids fun run, all followed by a rain-shortened picnic. CBS 2 sports anchor Otis Livingston kicked off the Wheelchair Walk and

## Thanks to our Sponsors, pages 10-11

WCBS Newsradio 880’s Wayne Cabot sent the 5K runners on their way.

All funds raised at Miles for Matheny help support the Matheny Center of

Medicine and Dentistry, which provides medical, dental and therapy care to Matheny inpatients and to people with disabilities in the community. Approximately \$230,000 was collected from donations, sponsorships and in-kind gifts.

Major Miles sponsors are: The Poses Family Foundation; Affinity Federal Credit Union Foundation; Archer & Greiner, P.C.; BP Fueling Communities; WCBS-TV and WCBS Newsradio 880; Partlow Insurance Agency; Peapack-Gladstone Bank; and Porzio Bromberg & Newman, P.C. 

WCBS Newsradio 880 anchor Wayne Cabot and his daughter Amanda try to keep dry.

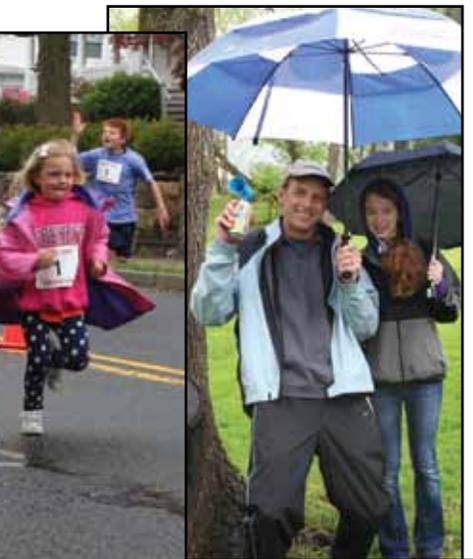


Student Katherine Gaudio and friends.

Home stretch for the kids fun run.



Volunteers, from left, Kelly O’Neill and Leigha Banks of Bernardsville and Lauren Crane of Peapack.



5K runners take off.



Cyclists rest before heading out for 50 miles.

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# 'He's Become a Very Happy and Mellow Kid'

**T**welve-year-old Scott Gordon communicates by grabbing a symbol. “We give him two choices,” explains Jaclyne Dietrich, speech-language pathologist at the Matheny School, “and he will grab one of the symbols. For example, in art class, he will select a color. If it's just before lunch, he will select food over a picture of a beanbag.”

Scott has been a student at Matheny since last summer, transferring from the Horizon School in Livingston, NJ, because his parents wanted to put him on the waiting list for residency. “As Scott began getting bigger,” his mother Julie explains, “we began to think about residential. Nobody wishes that for their child, but, given his size and his needs, we realized this was the best thing.”

“I’ve been amazed at the things Matheny does,” Gordon continues. “The therapists work really hard creating strategies.”

As an example, Dietrich has created a communications book that Scott can take home with him so that he can make choices by selecting picture symbols when he isn't in school. This is designed to reduce frustration at home. “I’ve seen tremendous improvement in his communication skills,” Gordon says. “He’s making real progress; we feel like we’re moving

toward something.”

When Scott was born, Julie and her husband Andrew had no idea anything

preschool at Childrens Specialized Hospital until he was seven when he transferred to Horizon.

According to his mother, Scott “has adjusted beautifully at Matheny. We feel so comfortable. The therapists have been wonderful, and there’s something else that’s really neat about the curriculum. They don’t baby him. Right now, for example, they’re learning about the Civil War, the music and the stories. He’s happy. He never gets off the bus hysterical. He has a big smile, and he’s happy to see me.” Since Scott has been at Matheny, adds his father Andrew, “he’s clearly become a very happy and mellow kid. We’ve noticed a pretty substantial change since he’s been here.”

The Gordons, who live in New Providence, NJ, with Scott’s twin siblings, 8½-year-old James and Whitney, formed a team, That’s How Scott Rolls, to raise money for Miles for Matheny, the annual fundraiser and community event that was held Sunday, April 22, at Liberty Park in downtown Peapack. Total raised by That’s How Scott Rolls was \$3,663. “We’re very fortunate,” says Julie Gordon, “to have friends and family who support us. We’re excited; our kids are excited. We’re very touched.” Adds Andrew: “We’ve even received donations from people we don’t even know.”



Above: Scott enjoys a happy moment with teaching assistant Vira Sossa.  
Below: Scott communicates by choosing a symbol held by speech-language pathologist Jaclyne Dietrich.



was wrong. “At five months,” she recalls, “he would be in a playgroup, and the other babies would be happy, and he was crying. Our pediatrician just said he was colic.” By the time Scott was 2½ years old, he had been diagnosed as having a neuro-developmental disorder, which means he needed help with mobility and other activities of daily living. He attended

# Return to Nursing Has Been Rewarding For Matheny's 'Transitional' Alternate

In June 2005, Judy Hahn, RN, returned to nursing after a hiatus of 12 years, working as a per diem nurse at Matheny. At first, the Long Valley, NJ, resident admits, “I didn’t know if I could do it.” Her previous nursing experience had been as a pediatric nurse in a Bridgewater doctor’s office before she pursued careers as a personal trainer and partner in a New York City-based multimedia company.

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**“Once a patient is admitted, the hospital staffs are very appreciative of our presence.”**

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But, about three weeks into the new job, she realized, “how much this population has to offer. I came to feel a certain responsibility toward the students and patients here.” As she became more comfortable at Matheny, “it would ‘make my day’ to know that I could get through to them.” For about six years, in her per diem role, Hahn worked in whatever part of the hospital she was needed. Then, in April 2011, the adult medical day nurse retired, and Hahn moved into that role. Along the way she also received certification as a substitute school nurse, so she sometimes fills that role in the Matheny School. And recently she agreed to be the alternate for Matheny’s transitional nurse, Jeanne Lavelle, RN, who accompanies Matheny patients when it is necessary to transport them to an acute care hospital.

Last year, Matheny received a \$300,000 grant from the Robert Wood

Johnson Foundation through its New Jersey Health Initiatives program to develop, implement and test a model for improving the quality of transitional care for persons with chronic health issues and medical complexities associated with developmental disabilities. The

Center in Morristown and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick. These two acute care hospitals were selected for this project because they treat the majority of Matheny patients who require acute care hospitalization.



Judy Hahn, RN, with adult medical day patient John Edwards.

transitional nurse position, made possible by this grant, also involves

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**“I’m constantly amazed at what we are able to do as a team here, and all the love that is given to this population.”**

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following patients throughout their hospitalization to facilitate discharge planning and to foster development of resources needed for appropriate inpatient care and effective post-hospital transition. Matheny’s partners in this project are Morristown Medical

“While it’s always hard to get your points across in an emergency room setting,” Hahn says, “once a patient is admitted, the hospital staffs are very appreciative of our presence. They thank us over and over because they don’t know our population. We’re seeing more continuity of care. It’s not just a current situation; it’s the patient’s whole history that has to be dealt with.”

Since joining the nursing staff at Matheny, Hahn has never looked back. “I’m constantly amazed at what we are able to do as a team here,” she says, “and all the love that is given to this population. All the employees here pull together for each other.”



# Friends of Matheny Presidency Natural Evolution for Grateful Matheny Mom

Liz Geraghty clearly remembers a conversation she had about seven years ago with her then-18-year-old son, Larry. “We were in the car,” she recalls, “and he said, ‘Now, that I’m 18, if something happens to you and Dad, what happens to Bo?’”

Bozena Geraghty, the daughter of Liz and her husband Michael, was born with Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS), a genetic disorder present from birth that causes a range of physical, cognitive and medical challenges. She had been living at home in Cranford, NJ, at the time of that pivotal conversation, but, at that point, Liz and her husband decided they need to develop a plan that included residency for Bo at a facility that specialized in caring for people with developmental disabilities. “We looked at other places,” Geraghty says, “but we put her name on the waiting list at Matheny. We particularly liked the fact her school would be on the premises of the place that she lived.”

Bo was eventually accepted for residency in June 2009. She had been at Matheny previously for respite visits, but this move represented a major milestone. “We decided we would just follow her lead,” says Geraghty. And very soon it became apparent that the Geraghtys had made the right decision. “She was laughing, crying, being stubborn, giggling – all of her normal emotions,” Geraghty remembers. “That, to us, meant she was relaxed. My biggest surprise,” she says, “is how much the recreation therapy department looked at my daughter as a teenager, who just happened to have

this syndrome. They said, ‘We want to take her camping – three days, two nights.’ I said, ‘You’re kidding!’”

Because of the security and peace of mind that Matheny has given her and her family, Geraghty has become very involved in many of Matheny’s activities. She began attending meetings of the

board meetings, joined the board. She is now the incoming president of The Friends, Matheny’s auxiliary group.

“It all kind of exploded,” she says, when she learned of the origins of The Friends of Matheny. “I really, really wanted to help when I learned that the group was started by a small group of women who had no family connection to Matheny. The time, effort and energy they spent totally impressed me. And they not only raise funds,” she continues, “but they tell Matheny how to spend those funds.” The Friends of Matheny, which has raised more than \$3 million since its inception in 1983, asks Matheny program directors to submit a wish list of items that could not be acquired via the normal operating budget. And then an allocations committee decides which ones of those projects The Friends will fund.

As she prepares to take office, Geraghty is looking forward to recruiting new members to The Friends as well as working more closely with Matheny’s development department and its Board of Trustees. She has become so involved in Matheny, she says, because of what it has meant to her family. When Bo comes home for a family visit, Geraghty says, “she’s bored in two days. When we return to Matheny, she recognizes the bottom of the hill and starts laughing and waving her arms. My youngest child,” Geraghty continues, “has left home, and her future is secure. Now, I don’t worry about Bo, and my sons don’t have to either.”



Liz Geraghty and her daughter, Bo.



Bo, on a camping trip, with recreation therapist Saori Cheth.

parents advisory board, participated in her daughter’s classroom and, after attending some Friends of Matheny

# Fourth Graders Have an ‘Awesome’ Experience

“I thought this was awesome!” That’s how one fourth grader at the Far Hills Country Day School, described a recent visit by Matheny School students and staff to the phys ed class at the independent day school in Far Hills, NJ. The students played adapted basketball, rode in both manual and power wheelchairs and tried out special scooters. It was part of a gym class that included seven students from Matheny along with therapists and teachers. Objective of the program is to encourage interaction between the two groups of students, enabling them to compete in sports as peers.

During a question-and-answer session following the

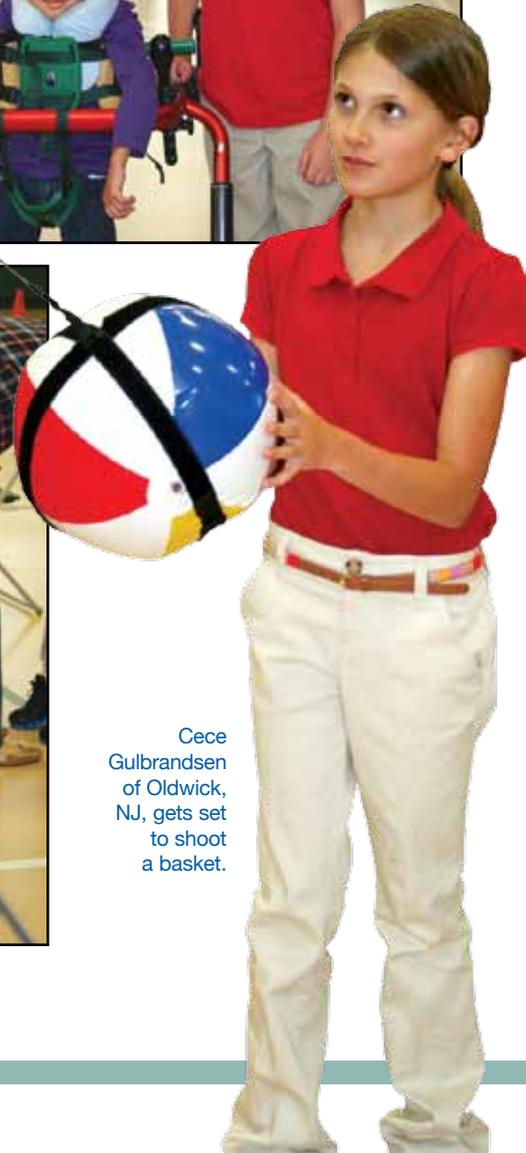
Ivan Scotto of Mendham, NJ, left, and Peter Gajewski of Warren, NJ, with Matheny student Niara Holmes.

Erin Fay of Bernardville, NJ, tries out a power wheelchair.

class, the FHCDS students disagreed about which activity was most difficult. One student said, “The electric [power]

“I couldn't figure out how to use the joystick.”

wheelchair was hardest for me because I couldn’t figure out how to use the joystick.” But other students felt the adapted version of basketball was trickier.



Andrew Reale of Warren, NJ, plays adapted basketball.

Cece Gulbrandsen of Oldwick, NJ, gets set to shoot a basket.

# Arts Access Artists Exhibit at Morristown Café

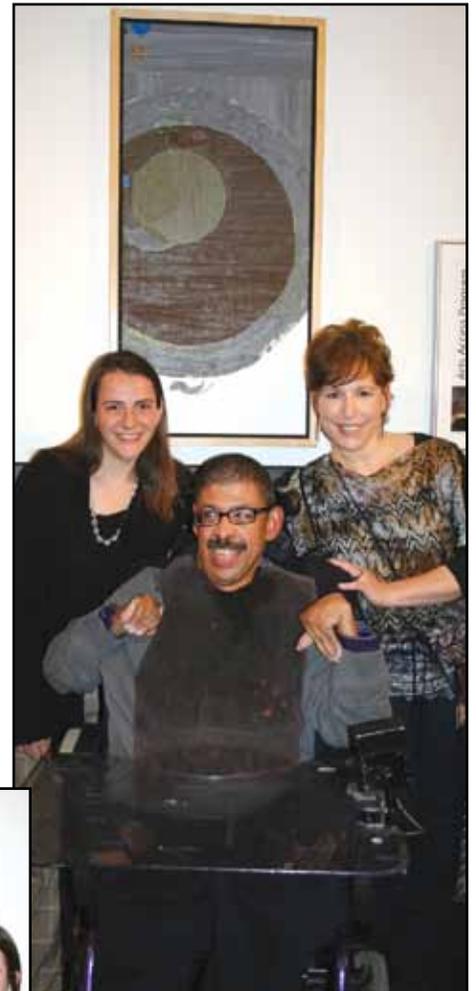
“The walls are so stark without art,” explained Bill Oliver, owner of ZEBU Forno, a restaurant/café in Morristown, NJ, “and this art is fantastic.” Oliver was talking with guests at the opening reception on April 1 for “Lane & Kane” a special exhibition of art by James Lane and Ellen Kane, both artists in Matheny’s Arts Access Program. Arts Access

enables artists with disabilities to create fine art, assisted by professional artist-facilitators.

Lane and Kane were present at the opening of the exhibition, which was on display for the entire month of April. Both are abstract artists with distinct signature styles that have developed and matured through the years. Through the unique Arts

Access methodology, they and many other artists are able to pursue their creative passions, no longer feeling defined by their disabilities but rather defining themselves by their achievements. *Me*

From left, ZEBU arts coordinator Danielle Merzatta, James Lane and Arts Access director Eileen Murray in front of Lane's untitled painting.



From left, Elizabeth Revels, Katie Jackette and ZEBU arts coordinator Danielle Merzatta in front of an untitled painting by James Lane.



Ellen Kane in front of her painting, "Half Circle".



Ellen Kane and Bill Oliver.

## Matheny Prom: 'Fire and Ice'

Tim McLoone, leader of Holiday Express, the all-volunteer band that plays every year at the annual Matheny Prom, invited three members of Matheny's choir to join in

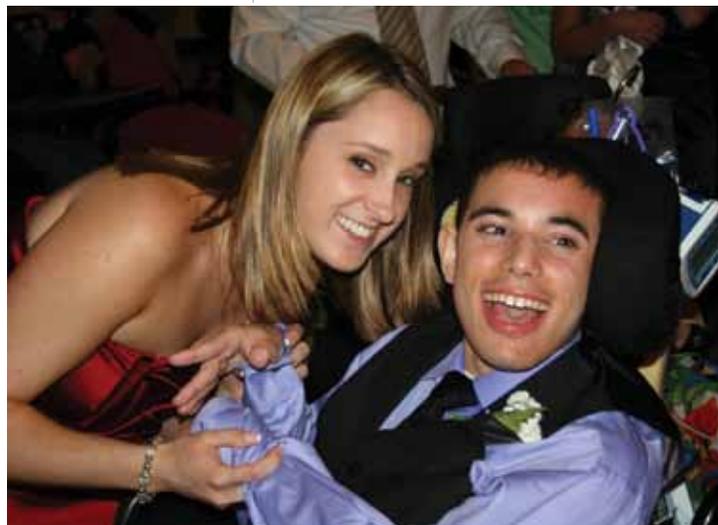
the singing early on; and no one stopped dancing until it was time for dessert. The theme of this year's prom, held May 17 at The Skylands in Randolph, NJ, was "Fire and Ice", but the fire quickly

melted the ice as Matheny students, adult patients, staff members, families and friends from the community all joined in to turn up

the heat at this very special event. Student volunteers from the Junior Friends of Matheny (Bernards High in Bernardsville, NJ, and Ridge High in Basking Ridge, NJ), Morris Hills High in Rockaway, NJ, and the Trinity United Church Youth Group in Dover, NJ, contributed to the spirit and enthusiasm of the evening, which included a special ice sculpture and the crowning of this year's prom king and queen, Jamie Formisano and Dina Conturso. 



Adult patient Taty Manousakis with recreation therapist Meghan Walsh.



Prom King Jamie Formisano with teaching assistant Erin Brown.



Morris Hills High student Jill Gonzalez with Matheny student Yasin Reddick. Gonzalez was part of a group of volunteers from the Trinity United Church Youth Group in Dover, NJ.



Matheny choir members Ara Shamamian and Missy Barrett.

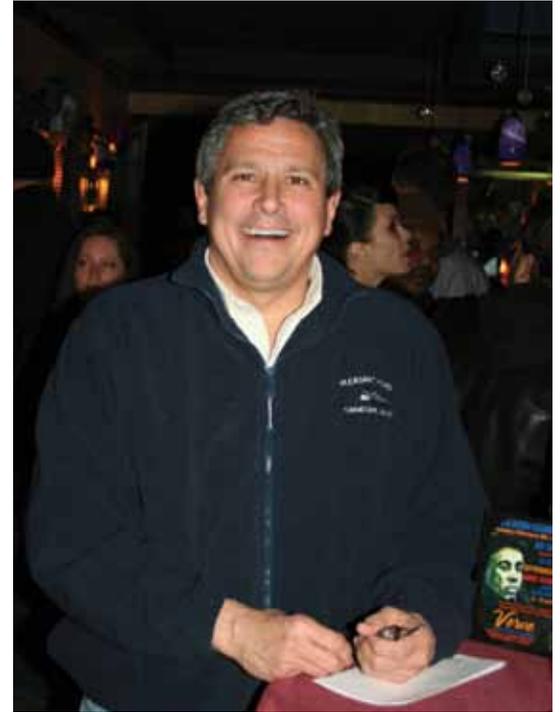
## Mardi Gras for Matheny

Matheny received \$2,000 from a Mardi Gras celebration and mask silent auction held in February by the Verve Bistro Bar Lounge in Somerville, NJ. On Fat Tuesday, February 21, 10% of all proceeds at Verve were donated to Matheny as well as a portion of the money collected from a silent auction of Mardi Gras masks, many of which were created and donated by Matheny staff members.

In presenting the donation, Rick St. Pierre, Verve owner, said: "It was a pleasure working with the Matheny family to ensure a wonderful Mardi Gras event. I look forward to continuing our efforts with you for next year."

*Me*

Below: Verve owner Rick St. Pierre, right, at the Mardi Gras celebration, with David Christiansen and Nancy Allegar of Stockton, NJ.



Above: State Senator Christopher 'Kip' Bateman, who purchased one of the Mardi Gras masks created and donated by Matheny staff members.



## A Message to Our Supporters



Dear Friends,

Many thanks to everyone who has supported the Matheny Medical and Educational Center this year with your donations, in-kind gifts, and countless hours of volunteer time.

We are so fortunate to have a loyal group of friends and family members who make such a meaningful impact on the lives of the children and adults who are served through our hospital, school, group homes, community outreach and Arts Access programs.

A special thank you goes out to all of those who supported this year's *Miles for Matheny*, which was held on April 22 at Liberty Park in downtown Peapack. Despite the rain and wet conditions, hundreds of supporters from Matheny and the community turned out to walk, run, cycle, volunteer and cheer.

We were very grateful to return to downtown Peapack, where Miles originally started 15 years ago, and are looking forward to another successful event next year. As soon as a date is confirmed for next April we will post that information on our website and other social media outlets so that you can mark your calendar!

A listing of this year's sponsors and in-kind donors can be found on the accompanying pages, and all of the individuals and teams who made contributions in support of the event will be listed on the Miles for Matheny website as well. We truly appreciate the support we received from so many individuals, corporations, civic organizations and foundations.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support of the Matheny Medical and Educational Center and best wishes for a safe and enjoyable summer.

Kevin Ralph  
Chief Development Officer

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The Friends of Matheny  
NJ Devils' Mascot  
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**Full Circle 2012**  
Unexpected Art

Presented by the Arts Access program at Matheny

**Saturday, November 3, 3-6 p.m.**  
**The Robert Schonhorn Arts Center**

65 Highland Avenue, Peapack, NJ

Tickets: \$25

**To order tickets, call (908) 234-0011, ext. 260, or email [pcats@matheny.org](mailto:pcats@matheny.org)**



# Matheny *Matters*

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## ICS Dance-A-Thon Raises \$10,000 To Benefit Matheny

**T**he Immaculate Conception School in Annandale, NJ, designated Matheny as the beneficiary of its Dance-A-Thon held April 20 and 21 and raised \$10,000. Nine-year-old Ryan O Connor, son of John and Debbie O Connor of Annandale, is a student at the Matheny School. His mother is the Social Concerns

Chair at ICS's Home and School Association, and she suggested Matheny as this year's Dance-A-Thon recipient. "Matheny," she says, "tries to provide these children with every opportunity to experience life at the highest quality possible. They set no boundaries for any of these children but allow them to thrive in a safe medical environment."

Sharing her own experience, O Connor recalls being told, "there was no chance Ryan would ever walk. On Christmas Day 2008, at the age of almost six, Ryan stood up and walked, completely unassisted for an extended period of time. This would never have been possible if he were not in the hands of the staff at Matheny."

The Dance-A-Thon lasted 24 hours, starting at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 20, and lasting until 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 21. From 10 a.m. to noon on the 21st, some of the Matheny students and patients participated in a 'meet & greet.'



Matheny adult patients Cindy Shanks and Dion Alston take a turn on the dance floor.