

LOCAL NEWS



At the Staten Island Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (SICASA) annual Walk and Picnic at Midland Beach are, seated from left: John Solazzo, assistant to state Sen. Diane Savino; Karel Angel, co-chair, SICASA, and Tom Aiello, Gov. Paterson's representative on the Island. Standing are Ginny Neumuller, assistant co-chair, SICASA; co-chair Michael McBrearty, and Angela Antanasio, assistant co-chair.



At Staten Island's 12th annual Multiple Sclerosis Walk, sponsored by the New York City Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society at Historic Richmond Town, are, from left: Justin Bowden, Dawn Bowden pushing Kara Bowden, Amanda Bowden, Nicole Waters pushing Ryan Waters and Matthew Waters.



At the third annual Elizabeth A. Connelly Memorial Conference on Autism & Related Conditions at the Hilton Garden Inn, Bloomfield, are, from left: Bob Connelly; Diana Jones Ritter, commissioner of the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities; Bob Connelly Jr., and Dr. W. Ted Brown, director of OMRDD's Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities, Willowbrook.

INSIDE OUT / *The story behind Staten Island's stories*

# IBR conference pays tribute to Betty Connelly

The third annual **Elizabeth A. Connelly Memorial Conference on Autism & Related Conditions** on Thursday at the Hilton Garden Inn brought together administrators, staff, researchers, physicians, speech pathologists and nurses who work for agencies that provide services to the developmentally disabled.

FYI: The conference, established in 2007 — and inaugurated by the Institute for Basic Research as a memorial to Assemblywoman Connelly — is an education program that addresses research advances in the field of developmental disabilities, including autism.

Mrs. Connelly served in the state Assembly from 1973 through 2000. She was the first woman elected to public office on Staten Island and a champion for the rights of individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities

and/or alcohol and substance addictions.

She served as chairwoman of the Assembly Committee on Mental Health, Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities, Alcoholism and Substance Abuse from 1977 to 1993 and was instrumental in the closing of the Willowbrook State School, as well as the establishment of an extensive network of residences, support and services in the community for citizens of New York state with disabilities.

Mrs. Connelly passed away in 2006 at the age of 77.

"Betty was a dynamic and compassionate leader, advocate and neighbor to us on Staten Island," said Dr. **Ted Brown**, director of IBR, at the start of the conference. "And her influence reached far beyond the Island, as she was instrumental in establishing the extensive programs of residences, sup-



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ports and services in the community that citizens of New York state with developmental disabilities enjoy today. We honor her rich legacy today."

**Maureen Marlow** of the NYS Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities recounts that nine members of IBR's advisory board were in attendance, including **Jacqueline Marks**, **Jacqueline Rumolo** and **Jacqueline Tripodi**, and six featured speakers: Drs. **Randi Hagerman**, **Bruce S. McEwen**, **David Patterson**, **Isabelle Rapin**,

**Steven F. Warren** and **Robert K.S. Wong**.

Distinguished guests that day were Mrs. Connelly's husband, **Bob**, and the couple's son, **Bob Jr.**; Dr. **Prashil Govind**, medical director of the Early Intervention Program of the city Department of Health; Dr. **John Pomeroy**, founding director of the Cody Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities at SUNY Stony Brook; Dr. **David Booth**, director of the Staten Island Developmental Disabilities Services Office, and **Carrie Zuckerman**, president of the Manhattan Autism Society.



Assemblywoman Elizabeth A. Connelly