

e-Beat

**January
2003**

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Dear Friend,

Happy New Year!

Like so many others, the beginning of a new year prompts me to clear out the clutter in my life. Daunting at first, the task gets easier as I go. Once finished, I find that orderly closets and drawers lend a calmness to my life.

At e-Buddies, we'll be spending the beginning weeks of the year reviewing our records and updating matches. Have you moved? Changed your e-mail address? Use our online community at www.ebuddies.org to update your contact information.

How about your e-Buddy – are you still in touch? Are you still able to maintain an e-Buddies friendship? Need support from us to get back on track? Just e-mail me and let me know.

All of us on the e-Buddies team are ready to help.

Best,

Lisa Derx
e-Buddies Director

The e-Beat is published online monthly at www.ebuddies.org.
We welcome your contributions.
Please send them to eBuddiesNews@aol.com.

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Ask Emerson

All of your e-Buddies questions answered here!

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “The only way to have a friend is to be one.” In the spirit of those inspiring words, Ask Emerson is a feature designed to help you be the best friend you can be. Each month, we will select a question or two for responses. Send your questions to eBuddiesComments@bestbuddies.org.

Dear Emerson,

I really like writing to my e-Buddy, but I’d like to get to know more people who are involved with e-Buddies. Is there any way I can do that?

Signed,
Bob in Boise

Dear Bob,

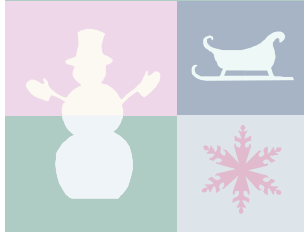
There is a way you can get to know more e-Buddies! We’ve created the e-Buddies Online Community just for e-Buddies members. All e-Buddies who are approved can access this community. You need your user name and password, which we send to everyone when they are approved. If you need your user name and password, e-mail eBuddiesComments@bestbuddies.org and we will send you that information.

To get to the community, visit www.ebuddies.org, and scroll to the bottom of the page. Click on the button that says “e-Buddies Only”, and enter your user name and password. Once logged on, you will have access to message boards and a directory of other e-Buddies sorted by interests. You can also to update your contact information and check out the latest edition of the e-Beat!

Signing off,

Emerson

Conversation Starters



Well, another year has come and gone. The beginning of the New Year is a good time for all of us to reflect on the past year, and to think about what we want to accomplish in the coming year.

Many of us have made New Year's resolutions that we would really like to stick to, but may not be entirely realistic. Likewise, we all have hopes and dreams for our future. Will this be the year that we achieve our lifelong goals?

Whether or not you have made any resolutions for the coming year, the New Year signals a new beginning for us all. What does the New Year hold in store for you and your e-Buddy?

You could ask:

Did you enjoy the holidays? What was the best thing that happened to you last year? Did you do anything for New Year's Eve? Did you watch the Ball drop? Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are they? How long do you think you can stick with them? What do you want to accomplish this year?

Have you had a great conversation with your e-Buddy about something? Have some ideas for questions that get the talk going? Send you ideas for Conversation Starters to Bill Maurer at BillMaurer@bestbuddies.org

Online with...



This month the e-Beat interviews Jessica from Las Vegas who has been an active e-Buddy since November of 2000.

e-Beat: How long have you been an e-Buddy?

Jessica: I have been an e-Buddy since 11-14-2000.

e-Beat: Why did you want to be an e-Buddy?

Jessica: I was lonely and I thought it was a great idea.

e-Beat: How do you think e-Buddies makes a difference in the lives of others?

Jessica: It helps e-Buddies with disabilities know that there is someone out there who will talk to them. A lot of people with disabilities, including me, get made fun of and we tend to feel lonely at times.

e-Beat: Do you have any New Years resolutions?

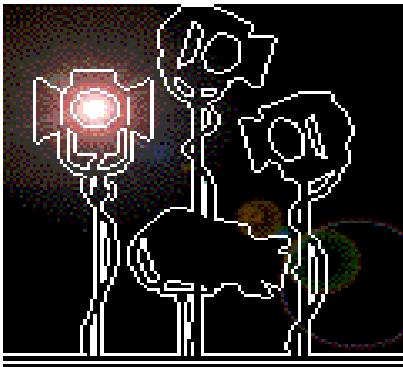
Jessica: I want to try to lose weight.

e-Beat: How often do you get on-line?

Jessica: I go online every day – sometimes a lot during the day when I am off work. When I have to work I go online before and after work.

e-Beat: What three words would you use to describe e-Buddies?

Jessica: Unique, Educational, and Fun.



Best Buddies Spotlight

STAFF HEADS SOUTH FOR THE WINTER!

By Lauren Taintor,

e-Buddies Program Manager, Pennsylvania

The Best Buddies Staff are ringing in the New Year with a bang by heading to Miami, Florida for the Annual Program Staff Conference. This year's conference, *Foundations of Friendship*, spans from Wednesday, January 8 until Sunday, January 12, 2003. Supervisors are required to travel to Miami on Monday, several days earlier than program staff. As we begin a new year, it is important for Best Buddies staff to gain a renewed sense of dedication and excitement for the upcoming year. "Whenever the entire Best Buddies staff is together there is a positive atmosphere. You walk away from a conference motivated and empowered to make a difference in someone's life," says Amber Rardin, Executive Assistant to Director of Programs.

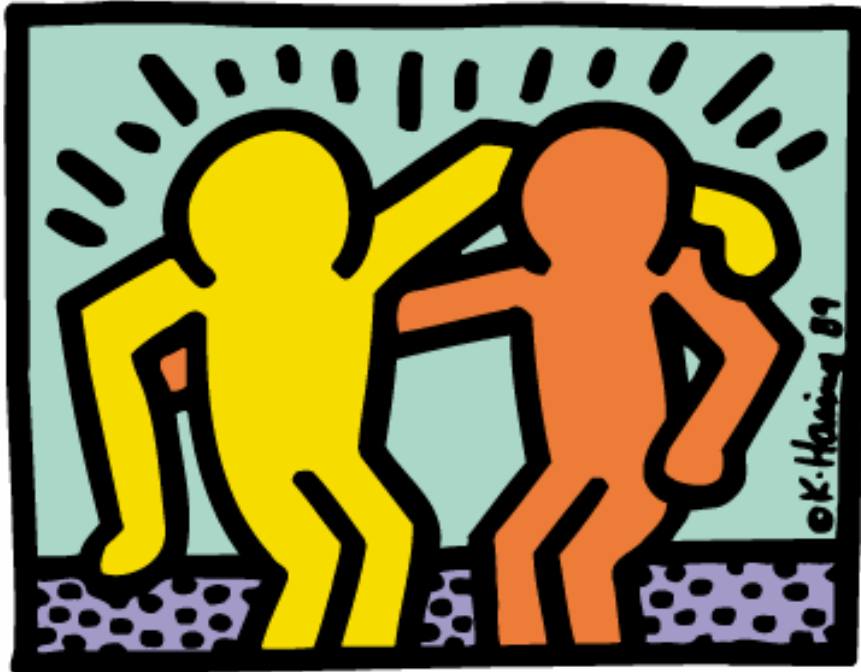
Although the conference will be a time for fun and enjoyment, it is also a time to work hard and to discover new ways to further the mission of Best Buddies. This year, sessions include Hands on Program Management, Professionalism, Commitment, Knowledge, Organization, and e-Buddies. In addition to the sessions, staff have the choice to spend part of an evening either touring Best Buddies Headquarters, attending an information session on intellectual disabilities, or learning about grant writing. Each state also creates an exhibit that displays highlights from their programs.

One of the highlights of the conference is a theme party at the home of Best Buddies founder, Anthony K. Shriver. This year's theme is "East Meets West," and staff will be decked out in Asian attire. Break out the kimonos! The theme party also doubles as a pool party and dinner.

The 2003 Program Staff Conference, *Foundations of Friendship*, is a wonderful opportunity for staff from all over the country to come together, share ideas, learn from each other, get to know each other, and to discover new ways to make Best Buddies programs run smoothly and successfully. Carlos Ciruelos, Pennsylvania Colleges Program Manager states, "With the new year in full swing, the Best Buddies Program Staff Conference is the ideal way to refocus our efforts to promote social opportunities with individuals with intellectual disabilities. Bring staff together from across the country ignites a renewed team spirit and dedication to all of our volunteers." Miami, here we come!

If you have any questions or ideas for future articles, please contact Lauren Taintor at LaurenTaintor@bestbuddies.org

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