



# Reason2Smile Gazette

SEPTEMBER 2011

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## Letter From the Director

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Hello Friends!

We have an exciting newsletter for you!! There are so many new things happening with Reason2Smile right now! We had a wonderful board of director's meeting last weekend at Heaven Hill Farm in Lake Placid (A gorgeous venue! Thank you to Heidi Roland and her staff!) during which we were able to Skype chat with Christine, the director of Jambo Jipya School, and the whole project started to come full circle! But as you'll see, that is only one of the many exciting things happening right now.

Photographer: Jessica Scranton – <http://www.jessicascranton.com>

There are a couple of great events coming up this month – the 3rd Annual Reason2Smile Trail Run/Walk and the Fall Festival – where we hope to see your smiling faces! Fall is such a wonderful time to experience life. Something about this time of year just makes me appreciate the outdoors more... maybe it's the crispness in the air, the changing of the leaves, or the warmth felt when I hold a cup of hot cider in my cold hands. Whatever it is, I love it and I look forward to sharing it with you! September is also back to school time so we thought this would be a good opportunity to start talking about our new writing contest! If you're a student, teacher, or parent, check out page five of the newsletter for details. We look forward to reading lots of wonderful pieces and sharing them with you in the spring! And finally, on the organizational front, we're hiring!! (as you will see in the article on page 3) This is especially exciting for me because I'm really looking forward to working on a daily basis with another passionate, intelligent, hardworking individual who truly wants to make a difference. There are so many of you out there who I interact with once a month or once a year (one of these people is Jessica Scranton whose amazing photography is shown throughout this newsletter), but I must admit that sometimes my office gets a little lonely and I'm really looking forward to having another body to bounce the positive energy off of! So, if you're interested or know someone who is, please let me know!

Last but not least, on page two and three of this newsletter you will find an article that our board chairman posted on his blog a few days ago. Reading the piece gave me goose bumps and brought me to tears. That's usually a pretty good indication that some of you may like reading it as well. I hope that, much like an article I included in the June edition, you will read it, think about it, and share your thoughts. It would be great to have a "conversation" which continues into next month's newsletter.

So, why don't grab a cup of something cold (or something hot, the weather really is so sporadic this time of the year) and enjoy this month's gazette. I think you'll be glad you did. Breathe deeply and know that you can make a difference, and you are.

Smiles,  
Keela Dates  
Executive Director, Reason2Smile Inc.

# Thoughts on the Story of Rachel B...



<http://www.jessicascranton.com>

Nicholas Kristoff has posted a story in the NY Times that jostles your heartstrings, brings a tear to your eyes, inspires generosity ... and then ... what? Rachel Beckwith is responsible for raising (to date) over \$1 Million for drilling wells to provide drinking water to people in developing countries. There are two things about the story that are notable. Rachel is 9 years old. And she is no more. She died as a result of an accident involving a collision of two trucks and thirteen cars.

*“What does it take to move us from good intentions to meaningful action?”  
– Mark Demers*

Mr. Kristoff contrasts Rachel with adults “whose talent for self-absorption and political paralysis makes it difficult to solve big problems.” He makes no attempt to veil his disgust with the current political atmosphere in this country. And he lays the blame at the feet of his generation. I am making the assumption that he and I are in the same chronological pool.

One comment on his article reads: “I am not happy with the people who call “Baby Boomers” selfish. Ninety percent of the ones I know are very generous people who definitely care for others and can prove it by their good works.” The tone of the comment smacks of exactly the kind of whining Kristoff is talking about.

We don’t need to get into a debate as to which generation has done the most damage – Rachel’s, or mine. Baby Boomers can’t win that one! I’m more concerned with the staying power of the story about

Rachel. Her goal was to raise \$300. Over 26 thousand people have donated an average of \$38.25. Rachel suggested a donation of \$9.



<http://www.jessicascranton.com>

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What would happen if everyone's taxes went up by \$38.25? I guess what I'm wondering is this: What does it take to bring us to our senses?

Another comment to Kristoff's article focused on child safety in automobiles. Well ... OK ... I guess ... but will you spend an extra \$38.25 to improve the safety in your car, or to provide excellent mass transportation so fewer people have to use cars?

Rachel's story has stirred up generosity in people – it's not that the spirit wasn't there and willing. It's that the flesh is often so weak! What does it take to move us from good intentions to meaningful action? What does it take to cut us loose from the moorings of fear and selfishness that govern our pocketbooks? If only the emotion aroused in this article could be given some kind of permanent shape. If only we could package it for use in service to humankind! It's not that we all have to become foolishly generous; if only we could become reasonably grateful for blessings received and respond to others out of that gratitude – that might be enough to turn the tide from political bickering over debt ceilings to dealing meaningfully with capitalism's built-in inequities.

For whatever it's worth – Rachel had donated her hair to Locks of Love – her first donation was when she was 5. Is this little child an anomaly in our society? Is her generosity and compassion something she and a few other very special people possess? Or is it present in most of us ... maybe even all of us ... just waiting for something to trip the switch!

Rachel Beckwith .... thank you.

Article by Mark Demers found at <http://markdemers.wordpress.com/author/markdemers/>

## Reason2Smile is Hiring!



Are you looking to be a part of an exciting grass roots non-profit organization?! Our work environment is fun, the hours are flexible, and everyday is new and exciting! There may even be a trip to Kenya in your near future!! If you're a passionate, hardworking individual who likes to know your work makes a real impact on others, this is the job for you! Reason2Smile is looking to hire an Executive Assistant! This is a part-time position for an individual who has excellent administrative skills and knowledge/experience regarding grant writing and research, social media networks, marketing, and non-profit development. Salary will be negotiable and based on experience. If you're interested, please submit a cover letter, resume, and three references to [keela@reason2smile.org](mailto:keela@reason2smile.org). Also contact Keela if you have any questions.

<http://www.jessicascranton.com>

## 3rd Annual Reason2Smile Trail Run



One of the many posters created for last year's trail run. Do you have a Reason 2 Run?

September is right around the corner, which means it's time to hit the trails! This year's Reason2Smile Trail Run will be at Paul Smiths College VIC (Visitor's Interpretive Center) located on Route 30 in Paul Smiths. It will be a 10K loop (yes, that's only 6.4 miles!) and participants can run it, walk it, hike it, crawl it, or a mixture of all of the above! It's a "do at your own pace" kind of event. We're asking that all who plan to participate arrive at the VIC some time between 8am and 10am to sign in and start their run/walk/hike/crawl. General registration is \$25, which includes a Reason2Smile Trail Run t-shirt, a pre-run pasta dinner (6pm on Friday Sept. 16th at the Adirondack Community Church), and participation in the event. Each participant is strongly encouraged to fundraise a minimum of \$50, which will directly benefit the children at

Jambo Jipya School! Our fundraising goal for this event is \$5,000. I look forward to sharing good news about the event with you in the next newsletter but in the meantime, check out the link below for more information about how to register, donate, etc. We're looking forward to enjoying the Adirondacks with you! <http://reason2smile.givezooks.com/events/reason2smile-trail-run-2a>

## Fall Festival

For the third straight year, Rita Griffin (a passionate member of the Reason2Smile board of directors) will team up with folks from the Friends of Marcellus Park and Marcellus Optimist Club to pull together a wonderful Fall Festival in Marcellus Park! This year's event will take place on Sunday September 25th from 12 – 4pm. Come on out if you're interested in games for young kids, locally made crafts, homemade donuts, apple cider, BBQ, and live music. We'll also have a golf ball drop from the top of a fire truck ladder (buy a ball with a number on it and the ball closest to the pin wins), an Irish Road Bowling contest (teams of four people, young and old, try to roll a hard metal ball down a designated route with the least amount of rolls possible – if the ball goes off the path or stops, you must roll it from where it left off), and a kickball tournament. The entry fee for each Irish bowling team is \$50, as is the entry fee for a kickball team (8-10 players). If you'd like to register for a team you can contact Rita Griffin at [rglil@aol.com](mailto:rglil@aol.com) or check out our Fall Festival page at the link below. We're looking forward to seeing you at the park! <http://reason2smile.givezooks.com/events/reason2smile-trail-run>



Come see the fire truck for it's annual Fall Festival appearance!

## 2012 Reason2Smile Writing Contest



<http://www.jessicascranton.com>

Love to smile?! Love to write?! We are starting a new annual contest for students in grades two through six. The contest offers students the opportunity to showcase their talent in response to a specific theme. This year's (2012) theme is "What is Your Reason 2 Smile?" Competition categories include prose and poetry. Students are not permitted to submit work independently so kids and parents, tell your teachers about this contest! Entries must be submitted by March 2nd 2012 (don't worry, we'll give you a couple more reminders before then) and winners will be notified by April 27th 2012. Winning entries will be displayed on the Reason2Smile website

as well as right here in the newsletter! The award categories include First and Second Place at each grade level. The First Place category recipient receives a Reason2Smile prize pack (t-shirt, cd, sticker, bracelet, etc) and a school visit from Executive Director Keela Dates (either in person or via Skype, sorry... she's not going to fly across the country). The second place recipient receives a Reason2Smile prize pack. To download the contest details and submission release form please visit the "Teachers and Students" portion of the website found on the "How to Help" page or by clicking the link below. We look forward to having you participate and reading all about why you smile! <http://reason2smile.publishpath.com/teachers-and-students>

## Give Them a Reason 2 Smile!



<http://www.jessicascranton.com>

Tax deductible donations can be made by giving online via the website [www.reason2smile.org](http://www.reason2smile.org) or by making a check payable to "Reason2Smile Inc." and mailing it to:

Reason2Smile Inc.  
151 Hillcrest Ave.  
Lake Placid, NY 12946

For any questions or further information please contact Keela at: [keela@reason2smile.org](mailto:keela@reason2smile.org)

Thank you for your continued support for the wonderful children at Jambo Jipya School! They are certainly smiling because of you!