

Folsom Author



Folsom author David A. Seaton watches his autistic son Jackson play the piano in their home.

Folsom author David A. Seaton is bringing light to April's Autism Awareness Month through his book, "The Mystery of Jack."

"The current rate of autism is 1 out of 68 children according to the Center of Disease Control," Seaton said. "Needless to say, many families within our community are impacted."

Seaton, 48, wrote the book after dealing with the reality that his own son Jackson, now 14, was diagnosed with autism.

"The Mystery of Jack' is a book of hope and excitement while coping with life's new reality. The book's primary focus is the parents as viewed through the eyes of a father and their adaptation to their newly defined world," Seaton said. "The stories of the child (Jackson) are used to illustrate joy and happiness in areas of life often taken for granted. There are areas of sadness which is an unfortunate reality. But, the reader will experience an open and honest reflection of life's new direction and how the joy and sadness is ultimately within their own control."

Seaton said the inspiration for the book came as he spent a week with his wife Alicia participating in her daily routines.

"Although I live a family life of autism, I have the escape of my professional life," he said. "My wife however was forced to close her successful business after Jackson's diagnosis and puts 100 percent of her efforts towards him. As a result, she has no escape. During this time I was amazed at how judgmental much of society was due to their lack of knowledge of autism. In addition, I was saddened by other families at various therapy sessions who believed that autism ruined their lives and believed there could never be any happiness."

Seaton said the biggest challenge for parents of autistic children is the unknown.

"With our oldest son, we know the natural evolution of his life. He will graduate high school and go to college. He will graduate college and get a job. He will fall in love, get married, have children and live a happy and healthy life," he said. "With Jackson, we have no idea what the future holds. The one thing that

is known is that every day will be different and every day will be a challenge. That being said, there is at least one thing every day that can bring us joy. Sometimes you just have to look real hard.”

Seaton said he hopes this helps both parents with and without autistic children better understand autism.

“Autism does not ruin your life but merely redefines your life. My wife and I take great pleasure in milestones with Jackson that we just took for granted with his older brother,” Seaton said. “Jackson has brought out the best in us as parents and individuals. We are now more patient and understanding. Although as a parent you may feel alone at times, realize that you aren’t.”

When asked what he hopes parents without autistic children take away from this book, Seaton said he hopes people simply stop placing assumptions and judgments on the situation.

“Don’t automatically assume when a child behaves differently that it is the result of bad parenting. Don’t be judgmental but sympathetic and understanding,” he said. “Realize that families with autism are required to work through unimaginable challenges and shouldn’t be compared to your own personal experiences.”

Seaton has worked in the banking industry for 25 years and is currently the Vice President of the Wholesale/Correspondent Lending Division of Provident Bank.

For more information on “The Mystery of Jack,” visit themysteryofjack.com.