

The Articulate



October is..... Awareness Month



I bet you answered Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and you would be right, but did you know what other cause uses October as awareness month? Some of you may know it is also Down Syndrome Awareness Month, and like me, you probably didn't know that until you were affected by Down Syndrome. Like most of you, I didn't know about this until October 2, 2011 when my beautiful baby girl was born. The big attention is given to Breast Cancer Awareness, and I don't want to take away from that. It is a great cause worthy of attention. I also want to get the word out of this lesser publicized cause in hopes that one day Down Syndrome Awareness gets the attention that all other causes do. I am doing my part to get the word out, here is my story:

My wife and I had 2 boys, ages 6 and 4 at the time, when we decided to try for that baby girl. We hoped for a baby girl, but like most parents we prayed for a

healthy baby. After all that is what any parent really wants, a child born healthy and to stay healthy, unfortunately that is not always in our control. We were lucky enough to get pregnant, I say we but it was really my wife doing all the heavy lifting on that one, and we went through the standard pregnancy stuff. We had tests and appointments every month or so, I was an old pro at this, or so I thought, after all it was my third child and the other 2 pregnancies were relatively uneventful. With my first child I went to every appointment and test with my wife. For my second child I went to just the appointments I deemed important. With this pregnancy I went to none of the appointments. There were never any problems so why not save my time off from work? I was away on business when my wife went to her 12 week screening that changed our lives. The doctor told her there was a chance our baby would have Down Syndrome. They gave her some ratio of a 1 in something chance, I don't remember, it was all a blur. I got the tearful call and felt helpless to comfort my wife while I was away. I wanted to kick myself for not taking these tests seriously and letting her go all by herself to get this news. There were more tests the doctors wanted to do, and dates you had to do them by, that related to terminating the pregnancy. All the tests had risks of miscarriage involved, although the doctors said a small risk, it was still a risk we felt wasn't worth taking. We decided to roll the dice and hope for the best. My limited Christianity at the time was tested and I said I would put my faith in God, that whatever He wanted to happen would happen. We continued the pregnancy, and I accepted that we

would have a baby with Down Syndrome; at least that is what I told myself.

I tried being the strong man telling my wife it would be alright, doctors are wrong a lot, it was just a screening (which is why they wanted us to do further tests). All the time I was internally freaking out on how our lives would forever be changed by Down Syndrome and I didn't know if I could handle it. I prayed a lot, which at the time was new for me. I prayed morning, noon and night for strength, guidance, and understanding. I wanted to understand why the princess I dreamed about would be less than perfect, why God would do that to me.

The day had finally come. October 2, 2011 we were driving to the hospital and hoping we wouldn't have to deliver on the side of the road. The elephant in the car and delivery room was "Is she going to have Down Syndrome?" but neither of us mentioned it. After a quick labor, and I can say that but my wife would probably describe it differently, our daughter was born. She was taken away to be

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The Arc™

Northeastern Pennsylvania

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President's Message



I am honored to serve as the President of the Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania. I extend a special thank you to the Board of Directors and the membership for your confidence in my ability to serve.

My sincerest thank you goes to Alexandra Yantorn, The Arc's outgoing Board President, for her leadership and dedication to our organization, to Steve Seitchik, The Arc's outgoing Foundation Board President, for his commitment and tireless efforts and Don Broderick, Executive Director, for his focus on quality of care of the consumers served by The Arc and the fine group of staff under his guidance.

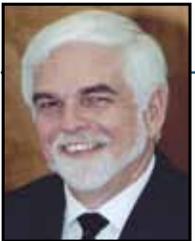
For the past several years, I have developed a strong relationship with The Arc in several capacities and look forward to continuing to be a resource. I enjoy being an

integral part of the organization and helping wherever I am needed.

These are challenging times we are facing. However, I am thankful knowing that our organization has caring and committed staff who are dedicated to the consumers served by The Arc. Every day is a new challenge and they continue to face the challenge with respect and diligence.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the many groups and community members who give so generously to The Arc such as The Arc Auxiliary, PODS, PPODS, Knights of Columbus and Kiwanis. We welcome you to come and see for yourselves what The Arc does. We are very proud of the wonderful accomplishments happening every day at The Arc.

Respectfully,
Carol Chisdak, President



Exec's Corner

And we're off! The new fiscal year has begun and it's September already! Where did that summer go? and what a great summer it was. We had a wonderful and very successful golf tournament in June at Glen Oak Country Club. Both annual

meetings were held (The Arc of NEPA and The Arc of NEPA Foundation). At The Arc of NEPA annual meeting we thanked our outgoing board members, Atty. Sid Prejean, Bob Durkin and Alan Hughes congratulated outgoing board president Sandy Yantorn for her dynamic leadership through some tough times, welcomed our new board president Carol Chisdak, and returning board member, Sara Wolff and distributed a number of well deserved "Consumer of the Year" awards.

At The Arc of NEPA Foundation annual meeting we thanked Steve Seitchik for his many years directing the efforts of the Foundation, the past seven years as President, welcomed Alan Hughes as incoming president and presented awards of gratitude to Jeanne Bovard from the Scranton Area Foundation and Bill Calpin from the Briggs Foundation for their generous support.

Community contact and support is so very critical at this most challenging of times. There is less \$s to go around, while regulatory demands have increased. The United Way, Friends of The Arc Auxiliary, the Knights of Columbus, and the Kiwanis Club have consistently been there for us, and to all of them we are truly grateful.

Our summer camp program is a sterling example of positive community support. Our summer camp program

in Lackawanna county runs for six weeks and serves 50 children and young adults up to age 21, many who are on the autism spectrum. That program was funded under base allocation money and cut by 10%. Also, funding for children with an autism-only diagnosis was eliminated. We were facing a \$20,000 loss in this program alone.

We made a community appeal to help us fund this program, and with fantastic community response. I am delighted to report that we have been able to recover almost all of the deficit. What a fabulous community we live in and I wish to publicly thank all who helped us "dodge the bullet".

Please note Eileen Rempe's report to see some upcoming fun events to help us generate additional funds to support our program and services.

We encourage all of you to help support The Arc and "Achieve With Us".

On the political front, we want to encourage all to get out and vote. If you are not registered you only have until October 6th to sign up. Also, please note the change in law that requires voter identification.

Even though this new rule is being challenged at the PA Supreme court level, as of this date the law is the law and it stands in PA regardless of the political motives. There are many websites out there, explaining the process and requirements.

That is all for now.

Respectfully Yours,
Don Broderick

Awareness Month

(Continued from page 1)

examined and I closely followed while my wife waited for the news. Does she have 10 fingers, 10 toes, Down Syndrome? Yes, yes and yes were the answers. I have a one minute old baby girl with Down Syndrome. I worried what would this mean for us? What would life be like now and what about our boys? Would my life as I know it be over? The answer to those questions came quickly. In fact it came as quickly as they handed that baby girl all wrapped up to my wife. She was just a little baby at that point nothing more or less and the love in my heart immediately overcame the fear and questions. So the answers were simple, having children in general changes your life, having a daughter with Down Syndrome is no exception. And my life was not over; in fact it had only just begun!

Almost a year later, we are planning her first birthday. She will turn 1 this October, and it will be our second October knowing it is Down Syndrome Awareness Month. In the past year our family has grown leaps and bounds, friends have become like family and family has become stronger. My daughter is the light of my life. I would not change one thing about her, even her Down Syndrome. She is who she is and made how God wanted her made. She is the happiest baby I have ever met and makes everyone in the room smile with her beautiful smile. The birth of my daughter has opened me up to a world of wonderful, kind and caring people both with and without Down Syndrome. Because of my daughter, my wife started a special needs support group in our area, brought me closer to God and made me a better man and father. Our lives have a new meaning and I am truly blessed to have a daughter with Down Syndrome. My daughter is my princess just like most fathers would agree; she has wrapped me right around her little pinky from the first moment I held her. I often get scolded for hogging her because she is always in my arms.

Life with a child with Down Syndrome is very rewarding. Her milestones are more meaningful than a typical child's because she had to work 10 times harder to get there. She can get there though and that is the important lesson, it may take a little

longer, but she isn't helpless. In fact she is just the opposite, working extra hard and earning every achievement. Nothing comes easy for her, except her infectious smile.

People have said to us "How do you do it? I couldn't have a child with Down Syndrome." I say if you are lucky enough to have a child born healthy, what guarantee do you have that they will stay that way? What if your typical child should get cancer and you begin a life of doctors, hospitals and chemotherapy? Would your feelings about your child change? Would you give up and walk away because you "can't do it?" I would hope the answer is I will do whatever I have to do for my child. Families can face challenges at anytime, we just happen to be a family facing a challenge from birth. We have worries and concerns for our daughter. Some are the same as our worries for our sons, some because she is our little girl, and some are due to Down Syndrome. Most of the concerns are related to society's perception about individuals with Down Syndrome.

Now that you know my story, I hope you can understand what Down Syndrome Awareness means to me. Down Syndrome is not the end of the world; it is the beginning of a new and exciting world. Yes there will be challenges, but life is challenging, and it makes the accomplishments all the more celebrated. Individuals with Down Syndrome can do so much these days including work, play sports, go to college, and recently I saw a documentary where a couple with Down Syndrome got married! They have hopes and dreams like everyone else, and just want acceptance.

Another important reason for raising awareness is to clear up misconceptions so people won't be so quick to terminate a pregnancy based on a prenatal diagnosis. Before you make such an important decision, reach out to someone who can give you a realistic and accurate picture of life with Down Syndrome. I promise you, you will be pleasantly surprised and glad you did. There are groups like NDSS, or local parent groups that can help you. Parents of children with Down Syndrome love to

talk about it!

Finally, stop using the "R" word as a punch line to describe someone who chooses to act foolishly. When we got the blood work results with our official diagnosis one sentence stands out on the page: "your child will most likely have some form of mental retardation." That word "retardation" jumps out and takes on a whole new meaning. It dropped to the pit of my stomach and even now as I type it makes me nauseous. To be honest, I was a jerk in the past and used that word freely, joking around, never intending to be harmful. It was just a word to describe someone stupid. I know now that it is hurtful to those who have a medical diagnosis, by no fault of their own, and we are comparing them to those who make stupid choices by using that word. We have all seen movies like *There is Something about Mary* with the often repeated phrase "Have you seen my baseball?", and had a good laugh. But the reality is, it is hurtful whether you mean it or not, the sting is just the same. To laugh at someone who can't help how they were born, but works so hard to do the same daily things that comes easy for you and I is just not right. When you use the "R" word you are being derogatory to a group of people who did nothing to you. You don't make jokes about cancer, why would you make a joke about an intellectual disability? My hope is that the "R" word becomes as incorrect as the "N" word. Spread the word to end the word! Challenge yourself to make a donation to The National Down Syndrome Society every time you use the "R" word or make a derogatory comment about someone with an intellectual disability.

So in this month of October, I still want everyone to be aware of how important your breast cancer screenings are, but I would also like for you to be aware that there are people with Down Syndrome in your community asking for respect, acceptance, inclusion and love. Let's give it to them! Today and every day I proudly wear my awareness bracelet of yellow and blue, and I show off my beautiful daughter and the amazing person that she is. I wouldn't change her for the world, but I would like to change the world for her!

Summer Camp

Summer, there is one word that comes to mind when you think of summer, fun. When you think of summer a certain calm and sense of excitement comes to mind. Some things you think of in reference to summer are BBQ's, sunshine, swimming pools, beaches, sun dresses, shorts, flip-flops and warm weather. We in The Recreation Department think of one thing, summer camp. Excitement and nervousness roll around inside us as we prepare to create unforgettable memories for the campers as well as the staff at camp. This summer was very trying for us in preparing for camp with NO swimming pool. The campers loved swimming and playing in the pool in the hot afternoons. It was tough to break the news to them that the pool was closed for the summer. We were faced with budget cuts and no swimming pool and our camp counselors pulled through and made this summer memorable for our campers. We vowed not to let our difficult situation affect us and we followed through. We had sprinklers, water balloons, water buckets, hoses and the king of all water games, the Slip N' Slide. We tied four Slip N' Slides together to make one giant fun ride. We had our Friday trips to Merli-Sarnoski Park in Carbondale which our campers loved. There was a cook-out at Merli and the weekly plot of which counselor they could soak with all the buckets. We went to McDade Park to swim on a very hot beautiful day. The best memory of the summer was our trip to Nay Aug Park. The 'fun-feeling' was felt through everyone that day. The day is a no holds bar day to soak every staff member and all the campers enjoy trying to get the staff as wet as possible, it was a great success for all campers because all staff was soaked by 2pm. We had lots of days full of memories with kickball, baseball, basketball and dodge ball games. We had a Christmas in July party with Santa arriving on a fire-truck thanks to the Scranton Fire Department. Santa brought each camper a gift



from The North Pole. Officer Robert Stelmack of the Scranton Police Department and his K-9 Officer Yogi showed us a demonstration on how Officer Yogi sniffs out drugs and contraband from 'the bad guys'. The campers loved the K-9 presentation and learning how the police car works. Big thanks to the Scranton Fire Department and Scranton Police Department for donating their time, especially in difficult financial times. Halloween was another holiday we celebrated at camp. We had lots of faces painted(see attached photo) and different disguises on Halloween, a favorite holiday for most campers. A special day of tie-dying t-shirts was fun for the campers. They were able to design their own t-shirts and chose their own colors. Special Olympics was in August, relay races and obstacle courses were built and the campers had a blast completing them. On the last day of camp the campers were presented with their camp t-shirts, a picture frame with their photo in it and the medals from The Olympics. The campers sang The Farmer in the Dell and BINGO everyday to practice for their award ceremony on the last day. Family and friends enjoyed the ceremony, pizza, salad and soda on the last day.

Every day was a challenge to come up with different ideas and activities for our campers. Everyday our counselors pulled through and helped build the special memories that the campers will have forever. Being new to The Recreation Department and experiencing my first summer camp I will never forget the memories and the fun I experienced. If I have such fond memories, I could only imagine the memories these adorable campers have. This was one of the best summers I have had in my life. It was an honor to work with the campers and I look forward to many more summers of fun and memories. It was a joy to watch the campers improve their social skills and build friendships and bonds with each other. We are already coming up with ideas and plans for summer 2013, I am already excited for next year!

We at The Arc Recreation department would like to thank all of our donators who made this camp happen this year. We are so thankful for your sponsorship, without you camp may not have happened. THANK YOU!

Kathleen Gilhooley
Assistant Recreation Program Coordinator

The Arc's Participant Driven Service Panel

In January 2012, the Adult Day Services began its twelve month journey through the County Driven- Quality Management Plan, in developing outcomes which promotes a high level of quality within the Meadow Avenue and Robinson Park locations. The goal was to create a panel of program participants who would ultimately drive services specific to larger monthly activities, with the guidance and support from direct care staff and program specialists. The panel would meet on the first Tuesday of each month to review the previous month's minutes and begin talks on what it is they (the consumers) would like to experience in the current month they were in.

On January 3rd 2012, the Journey began and it has been nothing but wonderful and fulfilling since. On this day, the panel of participants and staff were identified and an overview of the purpose of the panel was discussed. The

participants' response was easily viewed as ecstatic and anxious to get underway. After being orientated on what it was we wanted to accomplish as a group, February started the official planning of the activities. Much like every meeting to date, it was filled with good laughs, creative ideas, and of course "the plan of action." The adventure has been such an eye opening experience in seeing how creative and driven our folks really are, while it has also given light to some untapped gifts the direct care workers and program specialists have as well. As we reflect on the panels accomplishments to date, much thanks has to be given to all those who work in both locations for their support and dedication in ensuring our folks desire were met.

Since the creation of the Participant Driven Service Panel, many great things have occurred. There has been the Sweet Heart Dance, A St. Patrick's Day



celebration, Brunch with the Bunny, Memorial Day Cookouts and activities, Ice Cream/Movies Social, Luau/Island Party, Carnival, Cinco de Mayo celebration, and a Grease party theme. All of these wonderful events were individually filled with so many activities that would require pages to print, so let me just say that everyone was exhausted by the day's end, but very happy.

As we move forward in the final stretch of this wonderful opportunity, I again would like to express by sincere gratitude and appreciation to all those who have assisted in making it a success. This has definitely been one of those things that we have gotten right.

Enjoy your fall.

Kelly Peters
Manager of Adult Day Services

***The Friends of The Arc Auxiliary
invites you to be our guest for:***

**A Membership Mixer!
Wednesday, October 17, 2012**

**La Buona Vita
200 Reilly Street, Dunmore
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

"Mashed Potato Martinis" will be featured
Cash Bar Available

Entertainment: Irish Step Dancers and Agnes Cummings

**Auxiliary Members: Complimentary
Guests: \$10.00
(includes one-year Auxiliary membership)**

RSVP by Friday, October 12, 2012, by calling The Arc - 346-4010.
Please bring a friend. Thank you.

To Those Who Care For Me

I never want you to leave me
Not Ever... No Way... No How...
I want you to stay here with me
Forever and for good.
I will not let you go
Not Ever... No Way... No How...
Thank you for caring for me
For always.

By, Nancy Yankelitis

Cards for Charity Card Party/Luncheon

Cards for Charity sponsored a card party/luncheon for The Arc-NEPA Auxiliary. We are pleased to report \$3,000 was raised! A Huge thank you to the ladies of the Cards for Charity club. They were a wonderful group to work with and hopefully will again in the future.



Above: 1st Row: Mary Ann Hazzouri; Claire Maldonato; Maureen Pesavento; Betty May. 2nd Row: Jeanne Palumbo; Mary Ann Ferrario; Ruth Sweet; Alice Micone; Rose Baas; Joan Hrycow; Ruth Marmo; Joan Kennedy; Rose Martin; Mary Lynn Sciacca; Eileen Williams; Barbara Whitford; Don Broderick



Left: Don Broderick; Eileen Williams; Betty May; Barbara Whitford

United Way Day of Caring 2012

On Thursday, September 6th, the Arc once again proudly participated in the United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties "Day of Caring", during which hundreds of individuals from various companies and businesses in our community come together to work side by side with United Way partner agency staff to accomplish all sorts of tasks and to learn more about how their dollars benefit the agencies funded by the United Way.

This year's projects at the Arc included landscaping at Weston Park, and the homes located at Farr Street, Chesterfield Lane, Theodore Street, and Court Street. The largest project of the day was the painting of the entire outside of the Robinson Park

chalet and pavilion, home to the Arc's Seniors program.

Volunteers from Site 2, Cigna, Quadrant EPP, Tobyhanna Army Depot, and First National Community Bank spent the day at our various locations, "Living United", as the theme goes, and helping to make some terrific improvements to our properties that would be difficult- and expensive- for us to otherwise tackle. Also, volunteers from UGI performed free furnace inspections for those Arc homes with gas boilers.

The Arc of NEPA has been a participant in "Day of Caring" since its inception, and we are proud of the many friendships made over the years through this special community day.



Happenings....

October

• **Buddy Walks**

PPODS - 6th

The Pocono Parents of Down Syndrome (PPODS) Buddy Walk is a Family Fun Day at Dansbury Park, Stroudsburg on Saturday October 6th, from 11:00 am-3:00 pm. They have the entire park reserved, including the huge covered pavilion. The event is scheduled rain or shine. It is a day filled with children's activities, crafts, games, face painting, sports, cheerleading expos, character appearances, playgrounds, skate park, ball fields, food, music, drinks, 50/50, over 150 raffle baskets ranging from \$25-\$350 values and much more...

PODS - 14th

The Parents of Down Syndrome of Northeastern PA (PODS) is celebrating Down Syndrome Awareness month (October) with their 11th annual Buddy Walk on Sunday, October 14th at Mellow Park in Peckville. Registration begins at 11:00 a.m. and the walk will begin at 12:00 noon.

Board Retreat – Cooper's Seafood Restaurant - 16th

• **Auxiliary Membership Mixer - 17th**

The Friends of The Arc Auxiliary are inviting you to a Membership Mixer! It will be on Wednesday, October 17, 2012 at La Buona Vita, Reilly Street, Dunmore from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres will be served and the entertainment will be the Irish Step Dancers and Agnes Cummings will perform a reading. Hope you could join us and please invite interested parties to attend.

November

• **Family Fun Bowling Event – November 4th**

• **"Arc-Tracks" Bus Trip to Lancaster – November 11th**

• **A Night at the Races –Lackawanna College (6:00 – 11:00 p.m.) - 17th**

A Night at the Races event will

be held on November 17th at Lackawanna College beginning at 6:00 p.m. The committee has met several times and plans are progressing along. Information and tickets are in your packets.

December

- **Poinsettia Sale**
- **Auxiliary Cookie Walk**
- **Holiday Show at Arc**
- **Holiday Party - Recreation**

For more information on any of the events listed here, please visit our website - www.thearcnepa.org and The Arc-NEPA has a Facebook page to keep in touch with consumers, families, Board members and friends of The Arc. Visit www.facebook.com/thearcnortheasternpennsylvania to view the page and click the "like" button to keep in touch. The page is a work in progress but gives you information about upcoming events, trainings, ideas and more.

The Friends of The Arc-NEPA Auxiliary
Presents
"A Night at the Races"
November 17, 2012

Lackawanna College, 501 Vine Street, Scranton

Doors open at 6:00p.m. Post Time: 6:30p.m.
Door prizes • Basket Raffle • 50/50 • Food/Soft Drinks - Free
Beer/Wine - Cash Bar till 10:00p.m. • No BYOB
Donation: \$10.00



Please enter main entrance of Lackawanna College, turn right, elevator on left side and Student Center is on 3R - please follow signs :)

Residential Services Heroism

On 9/1/2012, Four residential staff—Jack Hubbard, Tyler Hess, Lisa Jezorwski and David Pratt-- became heroes in the eyes of a consumer who lives in an Arc residential home. During lunch, a consumer, began choking on a piece of bread. When staff realized that he was choking and experiencing difficulty breathing, they immediately responded and began performing upper back thrusts. They also called 911 and then the home supervisor, Lisa Jezorwski. Lisa stayed on the phone and provided them with support and encouragement throughout the entire incident. As a result of their efforts, the bread dislodged and the consumer began breathing and smiling again.

Once again, Arc staff has demonstrated



their dedication to the consumers and their determination to ensure quality services. On behalf of everyone at The Arc, Thank You, Jack, Tyler, David and Lisa.

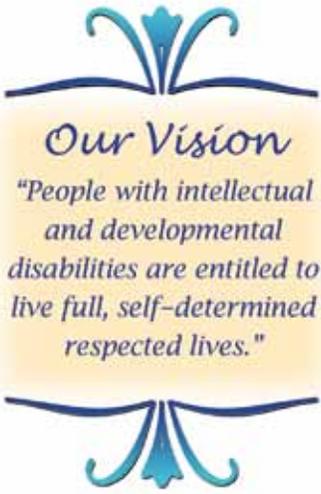
In appreciation, Don Broderick met with the four staff and presented them with an award and The Arc's heartfelt thanks.



Northeastern Pennsylvania

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Our Vision
"People with intellectual
and developmental
disabilities are entitled to
live full, self-determined
respected lives."

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Affiliated with the , The Arc of PA and The Arc of US.

DESIGNED BY: BILL PILLING GRAPHICS

Sign Up!

Membership is the key...

You can help. Become a member of The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania today. Benefits include:

- National, state, and local newsletters with current information on intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- The opportunity to participate in The Arc affairs at a local, state, and national level.
- Attend conferences, conventions, and seminars at a reduced cost.
- Discount prices on publications.
- Insurances services, credit card program, and free one year subscription to ABILITY digital magazine.

Stay Informed!

Membership Registration	
New Member	Renewal
Name: _____	
Address: _____	
Phone: _____	
Type of Membership	Please remit to:
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 - \$49.99 Friend	 The Arc Northeastern Pennsylvania 115 Meadow Avenue Scranton, PA 18505
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00 - \$99.99 Sponsor	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 - \$499.99 Supporter	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$500.00 - \$999.99 Benefactor	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000.00 + Partner	