

The Articulate

The Articulate is a publication
for employees and friends of
The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania



For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities

March - Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month As The Arc Launches a Dynamic New LOGO

Thanks to the advocacy efforts of The Arc in the 1980's, President Ronald Reagan officially declared March to be Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. A lot has changed since then: more people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are living and thriving in their communities rather than institutions, there are more opportunities in education and employment, more protections in health care, the legal system and other areas of human rights. There are more positive and accurate portrayals of people with I/DD in the arts, and the list goes on. But we must remember that many of these advancements were hard won. Self advocacy and advocacy on behalf of those with I/DD was the impetus for many of the positive changes in our society.

In celebration of the many self-advocates, family members and friends that will band to-

gether during the month of March to commemorate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, The Arc of the United States launched a dynamic new logo! "Our new identity will take us forward as a movement and [will] command the kind of respect and recognition on a national basis that our organization deserves. That respect and

recognition, in turn, will allow us to continue to achieve our goals for people with I/DD. We invite you to Achieve With Us," notes Peter V. Berns, CEO of The Arc of US.

The Arc of NEPA continued the tradition of celebrating Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month with a Mass held

(Continued on page 7)



MaryCarol and Peter Kanton; Carol and Bill Burke; Rosemary Broderick; Donald Burke; Sister Mary Beth Makuch, SS.C.M.; Most Reverend James C. Timlin, D.D.; Claire Maldonato; Donald Broderick; Sister Maryalice Jacquinet, IHM; and Eileen Rempé



115 Meadow Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505

Tel: 570-346-4010 Fax: 570-346-8436

www.thearcnepa.org

Email: frontdesk@thearcnepa.org

Exec's Corner



Hello to all. The big news of the day is the proposed Governor's Budget that was released on March 8th. Governor Tom Corbett vowed to provide the necessary support and assistance that PA's most vulnerable citizens need and deserve. The Governor has been true to his word. The Arc applauds the Governor's actions.

Thanks go out to everyone who wrote a letter pleading with the Governor to protect and defend people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. We understand that over 1,000 letters were received by the Governor asking him to be true to his word. Our message was loud and clear and truly recognized. Now some more specific:

The Good News

- The budget proposed by the Governor contains no across the board cuts for autism, intellectual disabilities or early intervention services.
- Home and community based services would be provided for 35 persons with dual diagnosis of mental illness and intellectual disabilities currently residing in state hospitals and 50 individuals with intellectual disabilities currently residing in state centers.
- Federal stimulus money that would be lost after July 1st has been back filled with state dollars and annualized.

The Bad News

- There are no new funds for the 20,000 people with IDD on the waiting list (of which 3,000 are emergencies).
- There is no cost of living increase and no rate adjustment increases.
- The HSDF (Human Service Development Fund) has been zeroed out (a loss of \$23.4 million)

All in all, we dodged a bullet. Basic Education has taken the biggest hit, a 52% reduction in funds that is hard to imagine. Please keep in mind that this is just the Governor's "Proposed" budget. Media reports suggest that state related universities and school board / teacher groups will fight to take money from the "welfare budget" to replace the cuts impacting them. We will need to advocate to retain proposed ODP funding levels and fight to get additional funds to help those on the emergency waiting lists.

That's all on the budget for now but I would like to share with you a few other items of interest. Sara and Connie Wolff and I recently participated in The Arc National Conference on Disability in Washington D.C. Everyone is very nervous about what may happen to federal dollars that may affect self advocates with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism. We discussed Education, Employment, Medicaid, Autism Spectrum Disorder, the Federal Budget and appropriators, Social Security and many other related topics. We met with Senator Casey, and the staff of new Senator Pat Toomey, and the staffs of new Representatives Barletta and Marino.

Let us hope that we are as successful with our Federal Legislators in continuing appropriate funding as we have been with our Governor.

We recently had a two hour visit by our newly elected state senator John Blake. Senator Blake is bright, very personable and very interested in learning our "business." Thanks to Pat Quinn, Sara Wolff and Ann Hoffman for spending time with Senator Blake and

me to provide education and insight.

Annually, The Arc of PA and most local chapters hold a seminar in Harrisburg to visit our state legislators on the Hill, and advocate for our constituents. This year that session will be held on April 12th at the Holiday Inn East Harrisburg. We will be meeting with our legislators to encourage their support of this year's budget. The timing will be just right, since rumor has it that the Governor wants his budget

passed by Memorial Day.

Soon you will be seeing a new logo of "The Arc". A national rebranding effort has been underway for the past 2 years, and it is ready to be rolled out. It will take us a while to make the appropriate changes, but we hope to be on board soon.

That's all for now. Happy Spring!

Respectfully yours,
Don Broderick



**The Arc Nor'Easters
Article on Page 4**

Kneeling:
Laura Franceski;
TJ Lininger;
Chris Minich;
Pat Quinn;
Karl Sussman.

Standing:
Lacy Standefer;
Jason Koelsch;
Joe Sepe;
Greg Kenyon;
Kyle Juice;
Jessica Sepe;
Zoe Walden;
Corey Gilroy.

Friends of the Arc Auxiliary

The Friends of The Arc Auxiliary has met and several events are planned for the Spring. They will be selling flowers for Spring and Mums for Mother's Day. A card/game party honoring Claire Maldonato and UNICO will be held on Sunday, May 15 at the Country Club of Scranton. Their Annual Board Meeting is in May and a membership mixer featuring a cabaret with Agnes Cummings will be in June. Another bus trip to Mt. Airy will be scheduled for June. Besides all those interesting goodies, they are planning a Community Tribute to honor Sara Wolff on October 1st. More details to follow. The Education Committee is discussing where to have more readings in April and May for Autism Awareness Month. The ladies like to keep busy as well as pursue their mission which is to promote and support The Arc.



*Pictured left to right (seated):
Jeanne Gardier; Maron Bielovitz;
Eileen Williams, President; Corolla
Sawka; Eileen Rempe. Left to right
(standing): MaryCarol Kanton; Ma-
rie Maddi; Michele McDade; Carol
Burke; Betsy Youngblood.*



*Seated: Garrett Brown, Aktion Club President; Dawn Morgan, Treasurer;
Richard Haynos, Vice-President. Standing: Suzanne Brudnicki, Kiwanis
Club President; Nancy Frank, Aktion Club Coordinator; Maria Hastie, Debo-
rah Moran Peterson; Sara Drob; Don Broderick, Arc Executive Director; Bill
Nellis, Kiwanis Secretary.*

Aktion Club Members Join Shamrocks

Aktion Club members joined "shamrocks" with their Kiwanis sponsors on Wednesday, March 16, 2011 in the Weinberg Adult Day Annex for a full course ham loaf dinner. They enjoyed the friendship as well as some Irish songs and bell choir music. The Kiwanians presented Aktion Club with a generous donation to help the members continue with their many service projects and programs.

Great Employees!

Submitted by: Mari Pizur, Recreation Department

As we stroll through our day to day activities at work, we often take things for granted such as our loyal employees. Dedicated loyal employees are the lifeline of every business and hard to find. It is critical that our employees are happy and feel that they are the heart and soul of the business.

The Recreation department has been blessed with very loyal and dedicated employees in both Carbon and Lackawanna Counties.

I would like to take the time to say "Thank You"!

I would like to thank the Carbon and Lackawanna employees for being self sufficient and trust worthy employees. They are empowered to make decisions and due so consciously. They are an extremely strong team and work well together. They keep the lines of communication open with each other, our participants and with administration. They all are

truly great people and an asset to The Arc of NEPA! The recreation department is a success because of all of you! Bob, Sheila, Shalmar, Deb, Margaret Ann and Karl you are the best!

As Jim Collins quoted in his Good to Great Audio, "Putting the right people in the right seats". I feel the recreation department has all the right people in the right seat!

Kudos and Thanks to all of you!

Nor'easters vs. Scranton Police Department

The Arc Nor'easters versus the Scranton Police Department Basketball Game was held on March 24th at West Scranton High School. The proceeds from the game benefitted Arc Responds. The Arc Responds project is a special discretionary fund that has been created to assist individuals and families affiliated with The Arc. These people may be experiencing difficulty and have no other means available to them. This project was created as another way The Arc can and will be there for those who have nowhere else to turn. This event is one way the Arc employees are fundraising and seeking support to build The Arc Responds. A BIG thanks goes out to the Scranton School District, West Scranton High School, Scranton Police Department, Coach Quinn and Coach Fallon and all the players and cheerleaders.



Pictured are: R to L: (seated) Zoe Walden; Arc Executive Director Don Broderick; Captain Carl Graziano; Police Chief Dan Duffy; Andy Warner. (standing) Desiree Vojta; Chris Minich; Greg Kenyon; Jamie Allen; Joe Sepe, Jr.; T.J. Lininger; Jeannie Lally; Eileen Rempé.

Karl Sussman, Assistant Recreation Service Coordinator



Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Karl Sussman and I am the Assistant Recreation Service Coordinator at The Arc of Nepa. I grew up in a little place called Springville, Pennsylvania as a little country boy. I stretched my limits when I decided to go to Keystone College where I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Sport and Recreation Management. My experiences with The Arc of Nepa have been nothing less than life changing. I have met and worked with a lot of people, but never worked with anyone with intellectual and developmental disabilities which made me nervous. My father always told me to never back down from a challenge and to always give it your all even if you don't understand it because you can always learn it. I came to the Recreation Department

November 15, 2010 and I speak now a changed man because of it. I have never felt so good about my job than I do when I come here everyday and see everyone's smiling face. It really moves me every time I see the joy that our participants bring not only to my workplace, but to the world and our very own lives. I wake up everyday thinking what can I do today to put a smile on someone's face and this wouldn't have been possible if it wasn't for my boss and Recreation Department Manager Mari Pizur along with our other very important Recreation employee Margaratte Ann Esgro. I am so thankful to be able to work with such wonderful and caring people. So now I want to take the chance to personally thank each and every employee, participant and anyone involved with The Arc of Nepa because if it wasn't for this place and these people I would not be the same person I am today. Thank you to The Arc of NEPA.

Aktion Club

The Scranton Aktion Club became aware of The Scranton Rescue Mission about a year ago. One of the members brought it to the attention of the club having heard about the organization at a Bible study. This member told us that the mission helps to meet the physical needs of those in poverty or those who were homeless; it also tries to teach people about making good choices, getting jobs, an education and being successful in life.

Everyone wanted to get involved because this sounded so much like the purpose of Aktion Club. Contact was made with the director and the tie was made. We began by first tossing around lots of ideas, then sorting out which ones would be right for us. The members decided that they would first like to organize a drive to collect personal supplies and clothing. Flyers were made and sent home; the response was excellent! Staff and members brought in toiletries as well as slightly used and new clothing. Within a few weeks we were able to deliver many boxes of these items. After actually seeing the mission itself, the members decided that they wanted to continue their involvement with the mission. They thought that making a meal would be the next part of the plan. In order to fund the project, the members decided to have a take-out spaghetti supper. Staff members helped with the preparation and arrangements, but members supported it by selling and buying the meals. Since one of our favorite dishes is pasta and sauce, that seemed like a great choice for the meal to prepare for the mission. So, we shopped for the pasta, sauce and added salad, rolls and pies for dessert. Assembly line production and a few hours later a meal was ready. At that time meals were only served on the weekends, so the members decided to make it during program time, refrigerate it and deliver and serve it Saturday night. Since that time, Scranton Aktion Club has served three dinners to the Scranton Rescue mission. The most recent meal was served on a Monday evening - this time it was a Mexi-

can theme with chili and Mexican lasagna.

The impact of this project had results far greater than anyone ever expected. Both members and staff became aware - first hand - of the pain of poverty and the suffering right in our own community. The small picture meant that because of what we did, forty people were not hungry on those nights, but the bigger picture meant that the mission is growing, more men are getting on their feet and being successful, the word is spreading, more money is coming in, more food and supplies are being donated and little by little the cycle of addiction and poverty is being weakened.

Everyone involved agreed that this project was such a meaningful experience. Club members were emotionally touched by the first hand experience of seeing real poverty, real hunger and the gratitude of the folks receiving a plate of hot food. It seemed as though we heard "thank you so much" a hundred time as we served the meal. The impact seems greater each time we are there. Members noticed that each time we are there more people are in need and being helped. Some homeless and drug addicted people now have jobs, are doing well and even helping others. The members voted to make regular monetary donations as well as meal and clothing donation. During the holiday season, the mission invited us to join them at their Christmas luncheon. It was an extremely special and meaningful time for everyone - a time to be grateful, feel appreciated and a part of a most worthwhile organization.



Erica Francis; Andy Warner; Mary Parrant; Garrett Brown; Carl Hallock; Richard Haynos; Tanya Morancy.



Ed Chorba; David Foster; Susan Murphy; JoAnn Bogdanski; Sandy August; Vivian Dudeck; Agnes Keller; Nancy Frank.

**The Arc of
Northeastern Pennsylvania
announces**

Upcoming Events

Please mark your calendars

April 19 - 21
Easter Flowers

April 25
Celebrity Bartending
at Kilcoynes

May 5 - 6
Mums for Mom

May 15
Auxiliary Card/Game
Party at CCS

May 20
Arc-Knight - Mohegan Sun
at Pocono Downs

September 18
Arc in the Park - Waldorf

September 19
Golf Tournament at Glen Oak

October 1
Community Tribute for Sara
Wolff

October 2
PODS Buddy Walk
North Pocono HS
10th Anniversary

October 8
PPODS Buddy Walk
Danbury Park
East Stroudsburg

The Arc of NEPA Advocacy Services: Jeannie Lally

On Tuesday, March 8th, the Local Right to Education Task Force met in the Mid Valley School District's Library. We were so very fortunate to have Linda Mesavage, from UCP's Assistive Technology Resource Center, provide our group with a very informative and 'hand's on' opportunity to learn more about Assistive technology. In particular, to explore the new and versatile IPAD and IPOD technology as usefull for special education services.

Although the IPADS are not currently part of PA's Assistive Technology Lending Library (PA's ATLL) Linda spoke about the extensive available inventory, for any individual with a disability, to borrow free of charge. In order

to borrow an item, the eligible individual simply fills out a 'device loan request form". These devices can be used as trials, professional development, work accommodation, or as replacement while a device is repaired/replaced - any device that helps a person achieve more independence and productive life is assistive technology.

Linda explained to the group that "AT is any piece of equipment that is used to communicate, work, play, learn, or do any activity their disability hinders or prevents" Her services include evaluations and individual training. UCP is one of 10 PA Assistive Technology Resource Centers for PA's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT) PIAT is PA's program that assures access to Assistive Tech to all PA's aging citizens and individuals with disabilities. PIAT's website: disabilities.temple.edu.

The session was very informative. Although, the IPADS have great potential for use in school, at home, and community, they are not covered by Health Insurance and are expensive. Using a power point, as well as direct



IPOD and IPAD experimentation, we were able to learn much about accessibility features, applications, restrictions, voice over's, captioning and how to access aps through an iTunes account. We were particularly interested in 'communication' features. Linda was able to compare/contrast some of the more popular, for example 'Prolquo2go', Voice4u, TapSpeak and MyTalk. There appears to be almost endless possibilities for language acquisition, translation, organizing, prompting, and homework. There are a number of free aps available including: timers, reading, writing, math, ABC Speller, dictionary.com, FreeSaurus and more. Linda let us know that device trials are a great way to identify appropriate technology that lending programs may have available or though local school districts, IU's, PaTTAN and more. She also suggested that we keep up with current technology so we know what is available. As you

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March- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

(Continued from page 1)

at Saint Peter's Cathedral on March 6, 2011. A continental breakfast, sponsored by Gerrity's Market and catered by Cooper's Seafood Restaurant was provided at the former Holy Cross High School immediately following the mass.

In addition to this community celebration, another mass was held in Carbon County at St. Joseph's Parish in Jim Thorpe on March 26.

Remember it is up to you to continue to advocate for respect, access and inclusion for children

and adults with I/DD. Learn more about the issues concerning people with I/DD and The Arc's position on those issues at www.thearc.org. Together- we make a difference.

by Maryclaire Kretsch

Senator John Blake Tours The Arc



Pictured left-right (seated): Carl Hallock; John Hulse; Sara Wolff; Ann Hoffman.

Left-right (standing): Don Broderick, Arc Executive Director; Senator John Blake; Jerry Madesky; Patrick Quinn; Kelly Peters.

Senator John Blake recently visited The Arc of NEPA. He met with consumers who are served by The Arc, Board Members and Staff to discuss matters important to the people we serve. Senator Blake

toured the Adult Day Program and was warmly welcomed by the folks who attend the program. We were very pleased with his interest, his excellent questions and the considerable time he spent with us.

Thank you!

Polar Plunge 2011

The Polar Plunge was a splashing success! We can't thank the Grabowski Family and the Hubbard Bike Club enough for all their effort they put into the event. In excess of \$10,000 was raised to help benefit the Arc Recreation program. A few hundred people attended and nearly 200 people plunged. We were so pleased and thankful for all the wonderful media we received. Every year is growing and we look forward to next year!

The Arc of NEPA *(continued from page 6)*



know, technology is a moving target and hard to know when/what to buy! Linda is an excellent resource and would be happy to assist. She may be reached at 5703473357 or ucptech@yahoo.com.

On behalf of the Local Right to Education #19 Leadership Team I would like to thank Linda Mesavage and Rose Skodachek and the Mid Valley District, for hosting this special event. The Fat Tuesday donuts were also Fabulous - unneeded but, fabulous!

The next LTF meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12th in the Western Wayne School District, and the topic will be Autistic Educational Support. For any additional information feel free to contact me through



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

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The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania
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Scranton, PA 18505
Tel: 570-346-4010
Fax: 570-346-8436

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