

# The Arcticulate



## Celebration of Abilities - Please Meet Hailey, Mikey and Lamond

Submitted by Mari Pizur

### Hailey's Story

Hailey has navigated the challenges of bilateral hip dysplasia since she was three years old. After two decades of mobility, severe osteoarthritis began to cause debilitating pain. Her case presented a unique hurdle: due to her short stature, standard medical hardware simply would not fit. Her situation was so complex it required a

global collaboration with a team of international specialists.

The solution was a feat of modern engineering. Using advanced computer modeling, a custom hip component was designed and tailored specifically to Hailey's anatomy. The part was precision-manufactured in Switzerland and flown in for the procedure. The surgery was so groundbreaking that

*(Continued on page 7)*



### Mikey's Story

Story Submitted by Holly Lewis on behalf of Mikey's Mom, Faith

Mikey started with The Arc Summer Camp in 2007 at the age of four. Upon learning about summer camp in the Scranton Times, we worked with Mikey's support coordinator and found a way to make it work despite residing in Wayne County. At the time Mikey's brother, Chris, who also had special needs, was ecstatic to attend the same camp as his brother. They both enjoyed summer camp, but Mikey especially loved daily choir practices, Christmas in July, Brookvalley Farm, yoga, karaoke, and the environment that allowed him to be himself amongst his peers. Mikey attended camp until he aged out at 20 years old. He was one of the campers who attended virtual camp in 2020 amidst the pandemic. The Arc's Summer Camp will always hold a special place in our families hearts. In 2018, The Arc Recreation was

able to add a teenage team to the Tuesday Night Bowling League. This allowed Mikey to bowl alongside his teammates consisting of peers from summer camp. This friend group has attended one another's graduations and birthday parties. They also won a bowling championship together in 2020! However, being that this was during the pandemic, the Arc's Recreation team had to pivot away from the traditional bowling banquet. To celebrate all of the bowlers, there was a car parade throughout Nay Aug Park. Now Mikey has made the move to the Friday Night Bowling League where he continues to be with his friends.

Mikey also really looks forward to receiving the monthly recreation schedule in the mail. The themed paper gets him right into the spirit to go participate in Thursday night recreation events. Some of his favorite events include horse racing,

the dances, hayrides, and painting. He also loves the special events like Globetrotters, Disney on Ice, and the New Years Eve Party. He'll never forget about the Railriders game where he was selected to throw the first pitch. Now that Mikey has graduated from high school, he attends three



*(Continued on page 6)*



Northeastern Pennsylvania  
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# President's Message



Over the next couple of months, we will be celebrating Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (March), March 21st as World Down Syndrome Day and Autism Awareness Month (April), however, our attention and focus on inclusion and fairness continues every day throughout the year. More people with intellectual and developmental disabilities/Autism (IDD/A) are living and thriving in their communities. Looking back, we have come a long way since our humble beginning. There are more opportunities in education and employment, more protections in health care, the legal system, and other areas of human rights. Advocacy efforts led to many of the positive changes we are witnessing in our society. Ongoing programming and mission-driven opportunities that have opened up for The Arc-NEPA during these recent months are all significant and positive changes. Together,

we need to protect what has been accomplished and be able to continue with the incredible care and programs being offered. During the many celebrations and organized events, we also experienced a long, cold, and snowy winter season, so I know many of us are anticipating the upcoming months...and...lo and behold...Spring will finally be upon us, and with warmer weather (fingers crossed) comes The Arc-NEPA's Golf Tournament! We have a very exciting day planned for May 18th at Glen Oak Country Club. Please join us and bring all your friends for a great day of fun and golf. Thank you to Michael Christ for being our Celebrity Chairperson; Michele and Jerry Musheno for being our Honorary Chairs and Carol Chisdak for your time, expertise and commitment to the tournament as Committee Chair. Looking forward to all the upcoming events, the Spring season and seeing everyone on the greens!

Sincerely Yours,  
Ken Doolittle  
*Board President*

# Exec's Corner



As we head into 2026, I am feeling incredibly hopeful. This is a transformative year for Pennsylvanians with IDD, and it's clear that when we speak up together, we truly make a difference. Thanks to our shared advocacy, the 2025-2026 State Budget includes a landmark \$154 million increase for services securing vital waiver slots and provider support. We are also celebrating the removal of lifetime limits on Assistive Technology and a shift toward person-first language in state law. While these milestones are historic, I want to thank our Advocacy Department, Roseann, Katie and Mandy, for the work they do every day. Their tireless advocacy efforts ensure that every individual we support is heard, respected, and empowered. Our commitment carries right from the State

Capitol onto the court for our 17th Annual Arc Responds Basketball Game! Join us on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at Scranton High School (5:30 PM) as our Arc Nor'easters take on the Fraternal Order of Police. This lively showdown raises money for The Arc Responds, an employee driven fund that supports our own Arc NEPA community during times of crisis. From the National Anthem to the final buzzer, our players are the stars of the night. Whether they are on the court or cheering with the PRIDE Squad, they are building wonderful friendships with our local law enforcement.

I am so proud of what we're accomplishing together. Thank you for being such a wonderful part of our Arc community, and I'll see you in the stands on the 25th!

Warm regards,  
Marsha Pigga  
*Executive Director*

## Please Meet Andrew Hoppes, the New Director of Program Operations



Prior to taking on the role of Director of Operations, he worked at Service Access and Management, Inc (SAM Inc) for 14 years as a Regional Director of IDD Services within Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Andrew desired to join The Arc to take the experiences and knowledge he learned from the support coordination end and continue to grow the passion for those with disabilities.

Andrew just celebrated 12 years of marriage to his wonderful wife Kaitlyn. The two of them have two children, Benjamin (9) and Vivienne (7). Ben is an avid baseball player aiming to be his teams starting pitcher this year, while Viv is the

dancer and jokester of the family.

If you know hockey, go talk to him! He is a die-hard hockey fan with his favorite team being the Hershey Bears (Go Bears!) where he holds a partial season pass to the club with his dad. He also is a proud member of the Monroe County Beekeepers Club and completes community events throughout the Spring and Summer with them to spread knowledge of the importance of honeybees in today's world and to advocate for their, and other pollinators, protection.

Outside of the world of hockey, he enjoys golfing with friends, going to New York City and wood working.

## All Aboard! A Night of Magic at the Annual Holiday Party

By: Mari Pizur

Our December holiday celebrations took us on a journey to the North Pole, without ever leaving the ballroom. This year, we traded the standard holiday tinsel for the enchanting world of The Polar Express, and it was a night to remember.

The magic started the moment guests arrived. Everyone was greeted by a conductor and presented with their very own Golden Ticket, the essential pass for the evening's festivities. Seeing the excitement as everyone received their golden tickets really set the tone for the night. It wasn't just a party; it was an experience.

After settling into their "dining cars," (tables) guests found beautiful train ornaments at every place setting—a perfect keepsake to remember the journey. The evening's highlights started with a fabulous buffet with a gourmet spread that would make any passenger skip back to the buffet for seconds. The dance floor magic started once the plates were cleared, the music kicked up, and

the dance floor stayed packed. Then special guests arrived from the North Pole's most famous residents, Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, who made a grand entrance! Bearing gifts from the North Pole!

In the spirit of the classic tale, Santa and Mrs. Claus didn't come empty-handed. Everyone lined up for a quick visit with Santa and received a whistle and a silver bell. It was the perfect way to cap off a night centered on the "spirit of the

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*The magic started the moment guests arrived.*

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season" and the joy of believing. The atmosphere was set with the sounds of train whistles and a sense of wonder that lasted all night long. Thank you to everyone who joined us for this magical ride. We're already looking forward to where our next journey takes us!





# 26th Annual Golf Tournament May 18th, 2026

## Glen Oak Country Club

**Honorary Chairs - Michele & Jerry Musheno**  
**Celebrity Chair - Michael Christ**



*This tournament benefits children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)  
and their families.*

*Please Help to Make Our 26th a Success!*



There are several ways to help and participate:

- ✓ Sponsorships Available
- ✓ Golf at a Championship Caliber Golf Course
- ✓ Gift Donation
- ✓ Spread the word

The Arc of Northeastern PA provides services to people with IDD and their families 365 days a year, 24 hours a day

**570-207-0824**



*Your continued support means the world to the folks we serve*

## We Did It – Together!

Post from Facebook on November 21, 2025 by United Way of Lackawanna, Wayne & Pike

We are thrilled to announce that the United Way of Lackawanna, Wayne & Pike has reached our final campaign total of \$3,383,825!

This incredible achievement is a direct reflection of you—our donors, volunteers, workplace

partners, community champions, and everyone who believes in the power of coming together to create lasting change.

Thank you for your generosity, your passion, and your commitment to strengthening our communities. Because of you,

more families will be supported, more programs will thrive, and more lives will be changed.

*The Arc-NEPA was honored to be a part of this momentous celebration, and we are deeply grateful for the overwhelming support of the United Way and the community!*

## Here's to another year of Living United



## Festival of Trees - Red, White and You!

This holiday season, the Festival of Trees returned to Courthouse Square, perfectly paired with the Lackawanna Winter Market. Organized by the Lackawanna County Arts & Culture Department, this festive display showcased over two dozen live trees uniquely decorated by local businesses, schools, and civic groups.

Adhering to the theme "Red, White & You!", which celebrated freedom and diversity in

anticipation of America 250, the trees brought brilliant holiday cheer to the square while raising crucial funds for the Marine Toys for Tots drive.

We were incredibly proud to participate! The Arc-NEPA's tree was decorated with the smiling faces of the individuals in our programs. It was a true crowd favorite, and nothing beat the joy of visitors finding themselves and their friends among the branches.



# Mikey's Story Continued

(Continued from page 1)

day programs, two of which are in Wayne County. He also does small group employment where he works at Wallenpaupack South Elementary. Being surrounded by so many resources at these programs, we also learned about the Arc Angels. In

this program, Mikey participated on stage in his first ever play in 2025. He even had the opportunity to be in radio interviews. He is stoked for this year's play. Mikey looks forward to many more years of being a part of the Arc family!



## Mike Munchak Community Service Scholarship

The United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties has established the **Mike Munchak Community Service Scholarship** program to assist high school students from Lackawanna, Wayne and Pike Counties (PA) who plan to pursue a post-secondary education. The 2026 recipient will receive a one-time award of \$6,300 to commemorate Mike's #63 which he wore throughout his playing days and which was retired by the Houston Oilers in 1996.

To be eligible, candidates must be actively involved in community service activities in programs funded by this United Way, be a full-time resident and/or student of school districts within Lackawanna or Wayne Counties and accepted by an accredited university, college or trade school, in a two or four year degree program track, for the 2026/27 school year.

### PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND HIGHLIGHTS

- The scholarship amount for 2026 is \$6,300.00.
- The scholarship will be awarded for a one (1) year period only.
- Open only to graduating seniors within our school districts.
- Demonstrate commitment through community service activities.
- Demonstrate academic achievement

- Applicants must be graduating seniors from a public, private, parochial or charter school within their counties

**All completed application packets must be submitted or postmarked no later than April 24, 2026.** Any incomplete packets/submissions will not be considered.

#### Send to:

United Way of Lackawanna, Wayne & Pike Counties

Attn: Community Service Scholarship Committee

PO Box 526

Scranton, PA 18501-0526

The scholarship winner will be selected by May 30, 2026. The winner and his/her parents or guardian will be invited to the dinner and auction portion of the Mike Munchak Charity Golf Classic scheduled for June 2026 at the Elmhurst Country Club. The formal presentation of the scholarship will take place at that time when the winner will meet Mike and have photos taken together. Please contact Frank Kincel at the United Way - 570-343-1267 ext 233 or email him at [fkincel@uwlc.net](mailto:fkincel@uwlc.net) with any questions pertaining to the program outline or the application.

*United Way staff, board members and their immediate families, the Scholarship Selection Committee and their immediate families are not eligible to apply.*

## Leave a Legacy

**Remembering...** The Arc's founding parents, concerned community members and friends have passed on a legacy of commitment to a new generation. Today, we seek to sustain this legacy.

**Building...** Looking toward tomorrow may often be intimidating, but at The Arc we continue the mission and grow with the needs of the children and adults we serve.

**Leaving a Legacy...** By giving a gift to The Arc, you are ensuring a bright future for the people served in our programs. Estate giving allows for a variety of ways for individuals to choose the support most appropriate for planning their legacy: Outright cash gifts, designated life insurance policy, bequests, real estate.

# Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Submitted by Mandy Colville

March is Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. To promote this, The Arc of NEPA's advocacy department created a new presentation on how to be an effective self-advocate. The presentation will help individuals with disabilities identify what issues they feel passionately about and how they can help lead change in those

areas. We will review tips on how to effectively advocate and also share resources for continued success.

Many individuals with disabilities come from strong families who often take on the advocacy role, but there is nothing more powerful than hearing directly from the individual themselves. We believe that individuals with disabilities should have the same opportunities as

everyone else to direct their own futures and self-advocacy skills are an essential part of that. We hope to expand self-advocacy trainings by offering more in depth and customized in person presentations in the future.

Please join us on March 31st at 10:00 via zoom for help "Building Self-Advocacy Skills."

## 10 Ways you can celebrate IDD Awareness Month with The Arc of NEPA can help!

1. Partner - Schools, businesses, agencies, non-profits, recreational teams, community groups, scouts...look for a way to utilize whatever affiliations you have and partner with The Arc of NEPA. Plan an event inclusive to our consumers, host a fundraiser, volunteer your time with us, offer your talents, or find creative ways to build a relationship with us. If you are unsure what you can do, simply reach out!

2. Employ - Whether it is full-time or part-time, independent or with job coaching... individuals with intellectual disabilities need more opportunities to learn job-related skills and want to be contributing members of their community with meaningful employment. If you are a business owner, consider collaborating with The Arc of NEPA, offering job placements, an environment for pre-employment skill training to take place, or arranging for a community-based outing.

3. Support - Buy something from one of the many businesses owned or operated by people with IDD. Participate in fundraisers that support individuals with disabilities. Consider financial support of the much-needed funds that are essential to non-profit

agencies to ensure we continue to serve individuals with IDD.

4. Educate - Find the teachable moment to share a positive story, take a stand against derogatory terms, or share facts rather than listen to misconceptions about individuals with IDD. Unsure of your knowledge base? Attend one of the many trainings The Arc of NEPA's advocacy department hosts to learn more so that you are better equipped to inform others.

5. Enjoy - More and more, we are seeing individuals with disabilities in lead roles in movies. Pick one to watch with someone and help change their perception of what individuals with IDD can do. The Arc of NEPA even hosts documentary screenings and would love to have you join us!

6. Spread Awareness - Share positive stories about the accomplishments of individuals with disabilities. There isn't a shortage of impactful stories out there that showcase the talents and achievements of those who continue to defy outdated stereotypes. Follow The Arc of NEPA on Facebook and see how easy it is to "Comment/Like/Share" our

content as you help us spread awareness.

7. Join Us! - Check out all the events on The Arc of NEPA's website and join us. Help us make our activities more inclusive by participating alongside us. We promise you will make new friends!

8. Advocate - Stay informed of current issues impacting individuals with intellectual disabilities and stand beside them to help make needed changes. Contact legislators, sign petitions, and follow The Arc of PA on Facebook to keep on top of calls for action to have your voice be heard.

9. Serve - We may be biased, but there is nothing more rewarding than working for The Arc! Join The Arc of NEPA's workforce and make a difference in the lives of the individuals we serve, and you just may be surprised how much of a difference our consumers will make to you. Visit The Arc of NEPA's website to view current positions.

10. Belong - The Arc of NEPA has different levels of membership for you to stay connected in all that we do. Your membership goes a long way in showing your support for individuals with IDD all year long!

## Celebration of Abilities - Please Meet Hailey, Mikey and Lamond

(Continued from page 1)

the Swiss engineers were present in the operating room to oversee the "perfect fit." In a medical marvel, the flawless procedure was completed in under an hour.

While the surgery was a success, Hailey's spirit has been the true inspiration. Less than 14 days post-op, she arrived at the Halloween Recreation Program at Misericordia University, walking without assistance! She hasn't missed an event since. From bingo to her beloved dances,

Hailey is there with her trademark smile. Even with another surgery on the horizon, she attends physical therapy 2-3 times a week with the heart of a true champion.

### Lamond's Story

Submitted By: Sheila Hartranft

The Arc in Carbon County, strives to ensure that every individual, regardless of medical challenges, has a place to belong. Lamond Frantz is a shining example of why that mission matters.

With the support of dedicated staff, Lamond continues to be a fixture at our dances and movie nights. These activities offer more than just entertainment; they provide a vital social link for Lamond and a sense of peace for his family, knowing he is with friends who truly know his likes, dislikes, and his deep love for Peterbilt trucks.

Through the years, Lamond has taught us that while conditions may change, the need for friendship and a good laugh never does.

# PA Able Accounts Eligibility Expansion



Our Lead Advocate, Roseann Polishan was interviewed along with her son Hunter Polishan in a feature with WVIA on PA Able accounts eligibility expansion. They along with other community members with disabilities were interviewed by WVIA news reporter Isabela Weiss for the segment that aired on February 4, 2026.

An excerpt from the article includes: **"Hunter Polishan's PA ABLE account gives his mom 'peace of mind'**

*Hunter Polishan has autism and lives with his family, including his mom, Roseann Polishan. She joked Hunter*

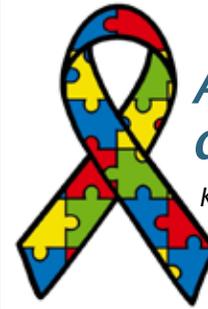
*works part-time at Dino & Francesco's Pizza and Pasta House in Clarks Summit to "maintain his lifestyle" and go out with friends. "He can't maintain a full-time job, but he's able to earn a little bit of spending money. And he's feeling like he's contributing," Roseann Polishan said.*" -

<https://www.wvia.org/news/local/2026-02-04/more-disabled-pennsylvanians-can-save-up-to-19-000-a-year-through-pa-able-eligibility-expansion>

*"PA ABLE is a savings program offering people with qualifying disabilities a way to save that does not affect their means-tested benefits. The PA ABLE Savings Program is administered by the Pennsylvania Treasury Department."* - <https://www.paable.gov/>

Changes for 2026 from the Federal ABLE Age Adjustment Act, include: Expanded age of onset of disability from 26 to 46 years of age and increased contributions to \$20,000.

The Advocacy department can help assist and direct individuals and families with social security, asset management and able account questions.



## Autism Awareness at The Arc

Katie Foley, Advocate

There has been a renewed spotlight on Autism in these past few years, some true and some untrue. Bringing focus to Autism Awareness is a good thing, but highlighting the correct information is essential to supporting People on the Autism Spectrum and their families.

Join us this April, Autism Awareness month, for two informative presentations.

### Autism Truths and

**Misconceptions:** Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10 am - Presented by Peal Center and their advocates as they clear up common myths surrounding Autism.

Then come back later in April for a panel of Self-Advocates from Assert Autism as they spend the morning **Debunking Autism Myths:** Thursday, April 16, 2026, 10 am - Presented by Kathy Hooven and a panel of self-advocates from ASERT-Autism.

Please send us your questions for the panel in advance so we can ensure your questions are answered.



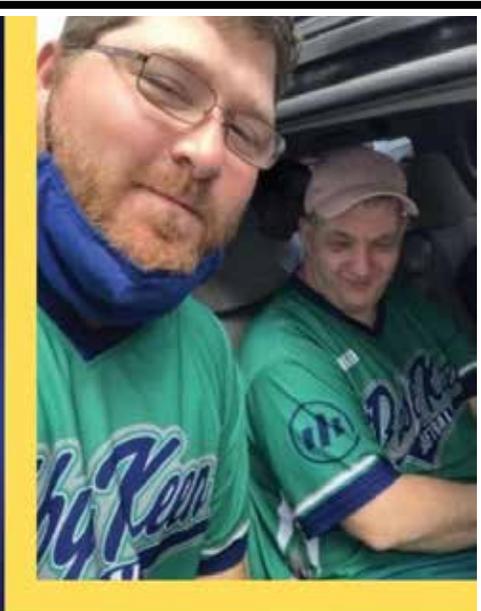
# WE ARE HIRING!

Looking for talented individuals to join our team.

APPLY NOW

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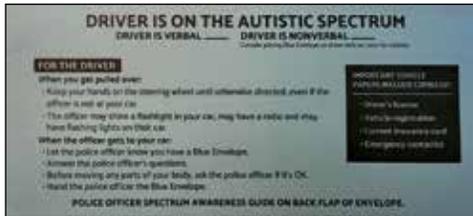
<https://thearcnepa.applicantpro.com/jobs/>



# Importance of Safety in the Community

The Advocacy Department would like to highlight the importance of safety in the community for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities over the coming year. This Spring we are featuring supports that are available related to transportation.

Individuals may come in contact with emergency responders in a number of scenarios through their lifetimes. In order to ease any confusion for both the individual and the person responding there are some tools that have been created.



**Blue Envelope program** - a program through Lehigh Valley Health Network and local police departments throughout PA that include Throop and Dickson City in Lackawanna County, Pocono Township, Pocono Regional and Stroud Township in Monroe and Dallas Township in Luzerne. This program allows drivers with autism or other developmental disabilities that may impact their communication or reactions to utilize a specific Blue Envelope containing their driving documents and an explanation of their disabilities. This can be provided to an officer during a traffic stop or another driving situation involving emergency responders. It includes signs they can watch for and tips on how to handle the complexity of sensory or processing delays the individual may exhibit. The Arc is exploring becoming involved in this initiative to expand to other police forces in NEPA. More information can be found on this link: <https://www.lvhn.org/blueenvelope>



**Pennsylvania State Police Autism Information Card** - The Pennsylvania State Police Office of Community Engagement has a card "I have Autism, my name is \_\_\_\_" available. It includes instructions for the officer to be patient, that loud noises may bother me, that I may not want to be touched, for them use a calm and direct voice, that I may not be verbal and may use pictures to communicate, that I may not respond to verbal commands and to keep instructions simple. This card

*Individuals may come in contact with emergency responders in a number of scenarios through their lifetimes. In order to ease any confusion for both the individual and the person responding there are some tools that have been created.*

can be presented when interactions take place with police and emergency responders. It includes space for the individual's name, address, phone and emergency contacts. It can be downloaded and printed at home, obtained at a local barracks or from The Arc Advocacy department. It is available in English or Spanish.

More information can be found here. <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/psp/resources/safety-resources>



**PA Yellow Dot Program** - This program was designed to utilize a yellow dot sticker on the back window left lower corner to alert responders during traffic incidents that an occupant in the vehicle may have a medical condition and may not be able to respond. The yellow pamphlet would be filled out with all pertinent medical information and kept with the vehicle's other documents. You can sign up online at: <https://www.pa.gov/services/penndot/sign-up-for-the-yellow-dot-safety-program>. Individuals with autism or other disabilities residing in Lackawanna County can register with the 911 center for their address to be flagged for additional support in an emergency situation.

<https://www.lackawannacounty.org/government/departments/911/index.php>  
Please reach out to the Arc with any questions as advocates are available to assist with any questions related to transportation and safety in the community.

# Luzerne County Celebrating "World Down Syndrome Day" 3.21\*

## Let's celebrate with a "Rock Your Socks off" Sock Hop! Poodle Skirts, Bobby Socks and Rolled up Jeans!

Step back in time to 1955 with great entertainers such as Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Frank Sinatra, The Fontaine Sisters, Johnny Cash, Bill Haley and The Comets!

### Entertainment: DJ Mike

We will be playing our favorite songs from the fifties! We are going to "Rock Around the Clock" as we dance to "Tutti Frutti"!

Feel free to wear your favorite poodle skirts, crazy or bobby socks, rolled up jeans, cat eye glasses or a scarf!

*All are welcome - fun for all ages!*

### Happy Days are here again, time to celebrate!

*\*World Down Syndrome Day (also known as WDS) is a global awareness initiative that has been backed by the United Nations since 2012.*

Reservations are required by March 16.

Please call Mari at 570-207-0825.



**Where:** Saints Peter and Paul Church , Bernadine Hall,  
13 Hudson Road, Plains  
*(Enter in Rear of building - Parking lot on left)*

**When:**  
Wednesday ~ March 18, 2026

**Time:** 6:00pm

**Cost:** 10.00  
Price includes entertainment,  
root beer floats, chips, pretzels  
and of course penny candy!  
*(Everyone must pay including parents/  
guardians and caregivers)*



## Spring Flower Sale

Orders Must Be Received by: Friday, March 20, 2026

Pick Ups at The Arc on:  
Tuesday, March 31st, Wednesday, April 1st and Thursday, April 2nd  
between 12noon and 4pm

Please pick up your order by Thursday, April 2nd.  
We cannot guarantee freshness after this date.

\$13.00 each: Lilies (5+ blooms/buds)  
\$12.00 each: Mums (6" pots - assorted colors)  
\$11.00 each: Tulips (6 1/2" pots - assorted colors)  
\$11.00 each - Hyacinths (6" pots - assorted colors)

*Foil wrapped containers  
Delivered fresh from a local greenhouse  
All plants may be transferred to your yard.*

Great gifts for family, friends and co-workers!  
Proceeds benefit Arc Responds!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve the following plants for me:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Lilies (\$13) \_\_\_\_\_ Mums (\$12) \_\_\_\_\_ Hyacinths (\$11) \_\_\_\_\_ Tulips (\$11)

*Make checks payable to The Arc Responds  
Please remit payment and this order form to:  
The Arc of NEPA, 115 Meadow Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505*

## Self Advocacy Series

### Galentines at The Gathering Place with Katie Foley



## Honorariums



Celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, special events are all beautiful moments to be honored and cherished. Remembering your loved ones, friends, neighbors, co-workers is a wonderful way to let them know how much you care and that you are thinking of them. We can help relay those messages for you.

When you send The Arc a donation along with the name of the person(s) being honored, we will send a pre-printed card to the honorees, letting them know that a donation was made in their name and who sent the gift. It's a great way to say, "I Care" and benefit The Arc!

## Memorials

We also have a Memorial Program which sends your sympathy and condolences when a loved one passes away. We are here to assist you in making your wishes known.



## Feed-A-Friend

In 2025, The Aktion Club helped Angel's Attic Food Pantry by donating to WNEP's Annual Feed-A-Friend project.



The Feed-A-Friend campaign in Scranton, organized by the United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania (UNC), benefits thousands of local families in need by providing essential food items during the holiday season. It collects nonperishable goods and monetary donations to support Angel's Attic food pantry, aiming to assist roughly 1,800 families annually, including many working households.

# Luzerne County - April is World Autism Awareness Month!

Let's celebrate by wearing Blue and creating butterflies!

The color blue is often associated with autism. The reason for this is that blue is a calming color that can help individuals with autism to feel more relaxed and comfortable and the butterfly symbol is a newer emblem for Autism, representing change, diversity and continued development. The butterfly symbolizes the beautiful, unique life and continuous growth of individuals on the autism spectrum.

**Where:**

Saints Peter and Paul Church  
Bernadine Hall, 13 Hudson Road, Plains  
(Enter in Rear of building - Parking lot on left)

**When:**  
Wednesday ~ April 1, 2026

**Time:** 6:00pm

**Cost:** \$5.00

- History: Autism Awareness Month was established in April 1970 by Bernard Rimland, Ph.D., to coincide with spring and his son's birthday, promoting acceptance and education.
- April 2: World Autism Awareness Day, recognized by the United Nations.



All are welcome - fun for all ages!  
Time to celebrate!

Reservations are required by March 30, 2026. Please call Mari at 570-207-0825.

## Donate Your Vehicle

An Easy Way to Turn Cars into Cash for Charity



The Arc Vehicle Donation Program accepts all cars, trucks, motorcycles, RVs, regardless of the condition of the vehicles.

Towing is free to the donor. If you want to donate your vehicle, please click on the link on The Arc's website [www.thearcnepa.org](http://www.thearcnepa.org) or call 1-877-272-2270. All you will need to do is provide the year, make and model of a vehicle, the general condition, the vehicle identification number and the title of the vehicle of the must be available for information purposes when calling. All vehicles that are donated to our program must have a clean title. Please indicate The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania as the chapter to receive the proceeds of the sale of the vehicle.

**Donating is easy!**  
**It may be tax-deductible.**

## Come Join Us for a Basketball Game

The Arc Nor'easters  
VS  
Fraternal Order of Police

**Date: Wednesday, March 25th**

**Location:**  
Scranton High School  
63 Munchak Way  
Scranton, Pa 18508

**Time:**  
Doors open at 5:30pm  
Pride Squad Cheerleaders  
at 6:00pm  
Game begins at 6:30pm

**Admission:**  
Adults \$5.00  
Student \$3.00  
Children under 5 -  
FREE



**\*Clear Bags Only**

For More Information:  
Please call The Arc @ 570-346-4010  
There will be food, drinks, tee shirts, and raffles for sale  
Proceeds benefit The Arc Responds

## Spirit of the Season

Spirit of the Season - We have had the best time sleighing into the holidays...visiting each of the homes with yummy sweets and treats, walking down the halls greeted by hugs and high fives, seeing the gorgeous decorations made with care and kindness and just feeling happy and joyful. Everyone was so excited to show off their lively and colorful creations.

Residential - When it came to judging the houses, we want to applaud everyone for their outstanding effort and for their expressions of good tidings and joy. We took judging quite seriously while we looked for the most colorful, creative, magical decorations. Prizes were awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place, but only one CLA (Scott) was presented with the coveted "Spirit of the Season" award! Court Street and Sanders tied for 2nd and Rebecca took 3rd! Judging was very difficult because everyone showed extraordinary pride and we were honored to be welcomed into their homes.

Day Program - What a ball had by all!!! During our annual holiday ADP tour, we saw so many gorgeous decorations and we were in awe

of their originality and cleverness. Everyone really outdid themselves with their warm welcomes and precious smiles. We all felt that each hall and doorway was a winner

*(Continued on page 14)*



**OCT**

**BUDDYWALK**<sup>™</sup>  
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**4**

**BUDDY WALK  
2026!**



## Spirit of the Season

(Continued from page 13)

in our seasonal visit. However, we did have an objective which was to have a first, second and third place and by the way, the results were close...: Team B was this year's "Spirit of the Season" winner, Group 4 took 2nd and Robinson Park was 3rd! Congratulations for celebrating the Spirit of the Season!

It was a festive time of year and we were thrilled to be able to share it with all of you. Thank you for another wonderful experience.



## Welcome to The Arc Family!

Please help us welcome The Arc's new employees! We're glad to have you on the team!

Elizabeth Francisco  
Victoria Maher  
Laura Flood  
Jameisha Campbell  
Donald Brady  
Gabrielle Sedora  
Madison Bannon  
Gabrielle Wiebel  
Danielle Tassej  
Ashley Loss  
Nicholas Vadovsky  
Mercede August  
Georgia Decker  
Dorese Morrison  
Anthony Pedraza  
Andrew Hoppes  
Abramssen Estime  
Melissa Shannon

## Around The Arc

Around The Arc - The holiday season at The Arc is a time of incredible joy and connection. We always have so much to celebrate! Whether we're downtown decorating for the Festival of Trees, ringing the bell for the Salvation Army, or collecting donations for Feed a Friend, our spirit of giving is everywhere. We've been busy singing and dancing in our holiday show, sharing laughter at our annual luncheon, and baking treats for the Auxiliary's Cookie Walk. From wrapping gifts for The Arc Responds Snowflake Tree to brightening homes with beautiful poinsettias, every moment is a chance to make the season a little brighter together.





# The Arc™

Northeastern Pennsylvania

115 Meadow Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18505



## Our Vision

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



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Like us on Facebook

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

DESIGNED BY: BILL PILLING GRAPHICS

*Sign Up!*



## Membership is the key...

- Access to the latest information, including newsletters;
- Up-to-the minute alerts about the latest on Capitol Hill so you know when to take action;
- Discounted registration to our annual national events such as National Convention;
- Access to exclusive insurance coverage rates through our partner Mercer
  - Includes Group Term Life Insurance, Health Insurance such as major medical, Medicare supplement, life line screening, hospital income, and accidental death and dismemberment insurance.
  - Coverage and availability may vary by state.

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New Member

Renewal

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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- \$50.00 - \$99.99 Sponsor
- \$100.00 - \$499.99 Supporter
- \$500.00 - \$999.99 Benefactor
- \$1,000.00 + Partner

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