

The Articulate

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



Jimmy Holman
Story is on page 5

The Arc Responds 2008 Holiday Project - "Love Inspires"

"What did God say to Mommy?"

That is what Tina asked her 11-year-old adopted son Glenn, during our interview. And Glenn softly replied, "God said, do you want a special boy? A good-looking, smart, baby boy?" And Tina answered God, "Yes, I do want a special baby boy!" And that is how Tina began to explain how the two came together...

We sat in their small, comfortable front room where Tina sleeps on a hospital bed. She has health concerns and requires oxygen. Her prognosis is not favorable and she is making preparations. She is having a DVD produced for Glenn so he will be able to recall their life together. Tina has asked The Arc to participate. Should he need help, he will have recognizable images and contact information.

Ada, their very affectionate Siamese cat, joined us and took



Tina, Glen and their cat Ada

advantage of the extra cuddling. Glenn was in and out, curious about when we were leaving, as he was concerned about his dinner. Glenn has Prater Willie Syndrome and is preoccupied with food. He is also diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Mental Retardation, and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).

The story told was remarkable. Tina, the oldest of 14, found work as a young girl, and a way to survive. Her early years were very difficult and learning how to read and write was never a priority. But she did learn how to get help when needed.

Tina met Glenn when he was but four months old. He and his older brother were abandoned at a nearby tavern. Though Tina recently had back surgery she volunteered to care for baby Glenn. Tina had already raised four girls; the youngest of which was 32! But she gladly sacrificed

what little she had to purchase food, clothing, and all things needed for Glenn's care.

The first night - the crying began - crying and crying. Tina knew something was wrong and later she learned that the crying was a type of withdrawal as a result of the FAS. Tina noted that his development was delayed; not sitting, crawling or thriving. She even gave him water with an eye dropper. As his history unfolded, Tina discovered Glenn's birth mother and tried to talk to her about these concerns.

Tina brought Glenn to her Geisinger doctor and he was found to be developmentally delayed. This medical intervention also brought about Children and Youth Services. Glenn's mother was located and incarcerated. Her five children went into foster care and Tina became Glenn's foster mother. The medical professionals warned Tina about the amount of care that he would require but she was devoted to him.

Eventually, it was time for Glenn to return to his birth mother. Tina was afraid of how things might turn out. But, as things did turn out, Glenn returned home, Mom told Tina that her house was too small and asked if she wanted Glenn. And she did.

At 18 months, Glenn was diagnosed with autism and mental retardation. The doctor advised Tina to contact The Arc and she did. Glenn began receiving early intervention services and attended a local pre-school. This is when Tina began having problems with service delivery. She was very vigilant and noticed that Glenn and another little girl were kept in their chairs, denying them opportunities to play/interact with the other children. Tina was, from the beginning, Glenn's best

(Continued on page 4)



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President's Message



I hope that we all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and holiday season. It truly is a great time of year. I wish everyone a happy new year and hope that your resolutions and dreams for 2009 are fulfilled.

Dr. Dominic Maldonato celebrated his 100th birthday on December 28. We all wish him a very happy birthday. We plan to reschedule a birthday celebration for Claire and Doc as soon as he recuperates from a health setback. When you have a chance, please send him your best wishes.

During the holiday season the Friends of the Arc Auxiliary participated in the Festival of Trees competition at the Electric City Trolley Museum. Their beautifully and imaginatively decorated tree was chosen as the most outstanding. I certainly want to recognize the Board of the Arc Auxiliary for their fine work.

I had the honor of representing the Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania together with Don Broderick at the Arc of the United States annual convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico November 5-8th. We enjoyed numerous informative workshops each day and had the

opportunity to absorb some of the southwestern culture as well. The chili really is hot.

One of the principal highlights was the keynote address by Geraldo Rivera. Rivera talked at length about the most meaningful investigative report of his career some 30 years ago. He exposed the conditions at the Willowbrook School for the mentally ill in 1972 that eventually led to its closure. He interacted freely with the audience for an hour after his remarks. Ultimately he asked individuals to correspond with him about current deplorable conditions. He promised to use these as part of a 37th anniversary update on Willowbrook. The report aired on his Fox program December 27 & 28.

January has just begun and we are all tired of chipping ice and shoveling snow. As a respite, please circle Friday night May 15th on your calendar for Arc Knight at the Races. Shirtsleeves will be in order. Finally, letters will be in the mail soon for new members and renewals.

I thank the staff and officers for their fine work in 2008 and trust that 2009 will be every bit as successful.

Respectfully,
Alan Hughes

The Exec's Corner



Happy New Year to one and all! We at The Arc have just finished up a very exciting year; now on to new opportunities in '09. Our expansion into Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Susquehanna counties has moved along rapidly. We continue to grow and expand our recreational services in Carbon County. Mari and her staff are doing a fantastic job with a super

group of consumers and family members. Our presence in Monroe continues to expand. We have just started an exciting new community options program and are hoping to develop life sharing in Monroe and Pike counties.

Jeannie Lally has been swamped with advocacy cases in all six counties of our coverage area. She has done a magnificent job helping consumers and family members from Lehighton to Honesdale, and from Milford to Montrose in all areas of advocacy. A number of training sessions are planned with the help of staff from our state office in Harrisburg.

As we grow and develop looking to the future, we can't forget from where we have come. Programs and services in the Scranton and Lackawanna areas are as strong as ever. We continue to receive the highest grades when licensed in adult day and residential services. Congratulations to all involved.

And now on to the future and that dirty word - "funding". The Governor will present his budget

proposal for 2009-2010 on February 3rd. Everyone is aware of the difficult economic times the entire country is facing.

The latest projection on the state budget is that we are potentially looking at a \$1.9 billion deficit by the end of June '09. Most state supported entities have already been cut by 4.6% on average and more cuts are expected.

So far most community MH-MR dollars have been spared, our system encountering only a 1% cut at this point. However, the future is very uncertain, and as the Governor has said; no program is safe.

Pat Quinn and I recently attended a forum at Marywood sponsored by Representatives Kevin Murphy, Ken Smith and the chairman of the House appropriations committee, Dwight Evans. Ten local legislators were present. Many in the audience spoke on the need to continue state support for their organizations and programs, but it is very evident that hard times are here. We serve some of the most vulnerable people in our state, and feel that adequate funding is essential for us to continue to provide quality services to consumers. We hope the legislators agree.

With our strong board of directors, our reputation for quality services, and superb staff, we are in an excellent position to attack the challenges ahead.

Respectfully,
Don Broderick

Public Relations & Development Report

Auxiliary News

Sara Wolff started a new program in the North Pocono school district. As part of the Auxiliary's educational component, Sara read a book to two third grade classes and was very well received. The Auxiliary plans on pursuing this program in many of the area schools. They want to raise awareness and educate children on different disabilities.

On Sunday, October 26th, The Auxiliary sponsored a luncheon with a fashion show and card/game party. Everyone (117 ladies) enjoyed themselves. We can't thank everyone enough for their help, donations and time. A special thank you to Claire Maldonato who was our Honorary Chairperson.

Also, a group of Eileen William's friends (Auxiliary V.P.) had a Fall Fling on Saturday, November 1st, at the Elmhurst Country Club. The event was beautifully done and nearly \$1,000 was donated to the Auxiliary. What an awesome group of gals for making this evening so special and having this event benefit the Auxiliary.

The Auxiliary's Noah's Ark holiday tree won first place at the Trolley Museum!

Arc Update

The Knights of Columbus Appreciation dinner was held on Monday, November 10th at Stirnas. Knights from Lackawanna, Monroe and Susquehanna were at the dinner. We had a wonderful turn-out. Mr. Joseph Zadjura, Dunmore Council #3635, presented a \$1,000 check to support The Arc effort. What a great group of Gentlemen!

Please do not forget about membership. If you are unsure as to whether you are a member, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be happy to help you sign up. Your renewals are vital to our organization. As you know, the more members we have the more votes we have when it comes to legislative issues affecting the folks we serve.

Recently, the Abington Journal

interviewed Alan Hughes, Don Broderick, Sara Wolff and myself. Information pertaining to The Arc, who we are, what we do and what exciting things we have going on, were all discussed. Sara's stories could melt your heart. The article was in the Journal on Wednesday, November 26th.

Foundation Overview

The poinsettias were a real success story this year. We had 919 plants sold. We were so thrilled to have this kind of response.

The End of the Year Foundation donations are coming in nicely. Everyone is really generous especially considering the time of year and the economy. Your

kindness really means a lot. This year end "ask" event really helps to benefit our Foundation and also provides the donor with a tax-deductible contribution (if applicable). Please give what you can.

Arc Responds

Several individuals and families were helped this year for the holidays. We provided anything from a Christmas tree to a winter coat and sheets. With times being so difficult for most - we heard several, very sad stories. We will continue to do all we can and we can't thank all of you enough for always being so generous.

Wishing all of you - health, wealth and happiness to you and yours. Thank you for all you do which helps to make our organization and events so wonderful.

Enjoy, Eileen Rempe



A Note from the Down Syndrome Family Support Group of NEPA

*Submitted by Kristen Finnerty,
Support Group Chair:*

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. I wanted to take the time to introduce myself as the new Support Group Chairperson. My husband and I joined the group two years ago when we moved back to the area with our daughter Ryan. During these past two years not only have we taken advantage of the meetings and the many activities of the group, but we've met and have got to know great people who've provided us with information, opinions, friendship and

support along the way. Thank you to all of you who have given such help and guidance over the last two years.

As we begin another year, I am looking forward to working with Jeanne, Cindy, Sherry, Kelly and my husband to help the group achieve its goals. I hope to continue to share ideas and experiences with other group members and as always strive to make our children with Down syndrome successful members of the community.

If you would like to help out, but can't make a meeting, please contact

me at finnertyk@comcast.net or 585-2962 to get more information. The meetings are usually the last Sunday of the month beginning at 6:00 p.m. with Board members arriving by 5:00 at The Arc of NEPA located on 115 Meadow Avenue, Scranton. I look forward to seeing you all!

One quick reminder, the new session of swimming lessons began on 1/8/09 at the Greater Scranton YMCA. If you're interested, please contact me for more information.

Thanks, Kristen Finnerty

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(Continued from page 1)

advocate.

When Glenn was five years old he registered for The Arc's Summer Camp and that is when the camp staff, including me, understood how Tina could love him so very much. Blonde, brown-eyed, and beautiful; he charmed us. His laughter was delightful and he was a joy to work with. Glenn's insistence on creating and wearing novel headwear kept us laughing and him easy to spot!

The Arc's Advocacy Services began shortly thereafter when Tina began the adoption process and had difficulty with benefit information. This process was long, expensive and emotional but there wasn't anything Tina would not do for the love of Glenn.

Tina and Glenn continue their now six-year involvement with The Arc's services. Tina continues to struggle with Glenn's Special Education Services. Even though often

exhausted, she still fights along the way for appropriate therapies, programs, technologies, whatever he needs that will lead Glenn to maximize his independence and develop as a person. With assistance from The Arc's Advocacy Service, Tina is trying to secure waiver funding for therapeutic horseback riding. Since Pocono Equestrian's sessions, Glenn's motor skills have improved dramatically. Tina also has our guidance with the IEP process to ensure that Glenn receives an appropriate education. Currently, we are looking to the school district for a behavior assessment and a computer. We are also trying to find a family-aide worker so that Glenn can access the community, get some exercise and have some fun.

As part of The Arc Responds 2008 Holiday Project, we were able to help 10 individuals and families, including Tina and Glenn. Beyond The Arc

Responds Fund we received a very generous donation from Mr. and Mrs. Ken Polino. We also received gifts from Arc staff, family and friends. On behalf of the many people experiencing hardship that we were able to help, The Arc Responds would like to thank everyone for their generosity. We were able to provide clothing, winter coats, toys, grocery gift certificates, Wal-Mart certificates, bedding, and even six Therapeutic Riding lessons!

If you ever wonder if we make a difference, know that we do. Ask Tina! Tina and Glenn reminded us that, thanks to The Arc of NEPA, they enjoyed a WONDERFUL holiday! They remind me of the power of love and the determination that love inspires. I am wishing everyone a happy and healthy New Year.

*Jeannie Lally, Director,
Advocacy Services*

VISIT OUR
NEW
WEBSITE!

Take a look!
www.thearcnepa.org



Residential/Adult Day Services

Submitted by Patrick Quinn

The Arc has enjoyed an extremely successful year in licensing inspections in the Meadow Avenue Adult Day Program, Lifesharing Program, and Community Residential (Group Home) Programs.

Representatives from The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) visited all three of these licensed programs in November and December for our annual reviews. In each program, a thorough review of licensing requirements including staff records, client records, physical site, fire safety, medications administration, financial logs, recreation, and behavior support plans were reviewed.

I am very proud to report that all programs received a perfect score of 100%. It is well known that achieving

this score is difficult in and of itself in any one program. To achieve a perfect score in all three is a magnificent feat, and a testament to the hard work of our department managers, Kelly Peters and Sheila Nealon, and Program Specialists Barb Slocum, Jill Padfield, and Barbara Day (Adult Day), and Darcy Congdon (Residential) and Amber Dougherty (Residential/Lifesharing), as well as the entire staff from both services.

The seniors program at Robinson Park is scheduled for both ODP and Department of Aging inspections as well in the coming days.

It is noteworthy that our quality of service was apparent to each of the licensing representatives, in addition to high marks in program requirements. Congratulations to the entire team, and heartfelt thanks for all you do.

Jimmy's Story



Jimmy Holman resides at home with his parents James and Eileen and has been a participant of the Arc's Adult Day Program, since 1995. He is well

liked by others because of his enthusiasm for life. Jimmy has a tremendous love of music and has a collection of records, tapes, and CD's to prove it. He especially likes Polkas and music by a group called the Lolliwinks. Jimmy also loves Care Bears, working with computers, exercising, dancing, and helping out. He enjoys being a leader for others. Jimmy has a great relationship with his family members. He is a wonderful son, brother, and is also a fabulous uncle to his niece and nephew. Jimmy was the recipient of the Consumer of The Year Award in 2006 and has been one of the many shining stars in our Annual Christmas Program. He has an infectious spirit, and a great sense of empathy toward those around him. Should you have a desire to meet up with Jimmy, you can find him on any Friday night at Kilcoynes, Disc Jockeying with his uncle Tony.

Recreational Service Department

Submitted by: Mari and Carrie

Tis the Season!

The weather outside was frightful, but inside quite cheerful on December 12th. Picture this, the chill of a winter evening with fine snow falling to the ground as friends gathered for The Arc's 19th Holiday party. This year the gala event was held at Fiorelli's where the Halls were filled with the finest holiday decorations and a waterfall softly trickled in the background. The tables were adorned with large vases of poinsettias and a holiday ornament was at each place setting for our guests. The food was fabulous and the warmth of the smiles on all 170 guests was priceless.

We had a special guest appearance from Santa. (Jason Scarnato) The man in his red suit was escorted by recreational reindeers with their noses a glow! Santa danced the night away and passed out treats to our guests. Thanks Jason for adding your special touch!

After all the Santa excitement, everyone put on their dancing shoes and rocked around the Christmas tree until the party came to an end. It could not have been a better night!

On December 14th, the American Legion Post 314 hosted a fabulous Holiday Party for 70 of our family and friends in Carbon County! The hall was decorated with Holiday Cheer; lights from the balcony filled

the air. The tables were decked with holiday sleighs! The food was a plenty and was served with care. Smiles glowed as we were entertained by Party Time DJs Chris and Trudy. We had a special guest appearance by Santa who was escorted by recreational reindeers too! Kudos to our Carbon County Recreation employees for their dedication, support and successfully meeting the needs of our consumers throughout the year!

We hope everyone enjoyed the Holiday parties as much as we did! On behalf of The Arc Recreation, we would like wish everyone a very Safe and Prosperous New Year!



Marge Kearney

Director of Human Resources

Marge Kearney has been with The Arc for 13 plus years. She brought with her a wealth of experience and education, (not to mention her baking skills). A graduate of Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio with a Bachelor of Science in Personnel Management in 1985, Marge joined The Arc in August of 1995 as a Group Leader in the Adult Day Program. Two years later Marge became a Program Specialist in September of 1997 and in June of 2004 Marge joined the administrative team as the Manager of Human Resources.

Marge continued to work diligently adding to her education and her experience. She completed her Masters Degree in Business Administration in December of 2005. Today, Marge is a proven resource for you and an asset to administration.

Effective January 1, 2009, Marge has a new, well deserved title; Marge Kearney, Director of Human Resources. Congratulations to Marge!

A New Year

A cold snowy January- Sunday in northeastern Pennsylvania found my family doing what many families were doing, filling the soup pot on the stove with something aromatic and hearty, flipping the channels on the TV between sports and the pre-inaugural events in Washington DC. With the holiday decorations back in the box for another year, there is something welcome in the quiet time of January that balances the rush of December. Yet, as the family huddled together under one roof watching the snow fall and complaining about the wind chill, history unfolded before us as super bowl contenders were determined and our new president honored and swore to protect this one nation of liberty and justice for all. Already the first month of the New Year behind us, 2009 marches forward, 2008, a page in a book.

History will bring its own telling of 2008 and years from now children's eyes will widen when they learn YOU were around way back when Obama became president and the stock market took a ride. Their questions

will remind us that this was a time when we dug into the webs of our own memories to recall stories of the Great Depression, stories we were told as kids. We listened just well enough to learn something in the event we were faced with the challenge that turned our grandmothers into wonderful cooks. Depression or not, who could argue with the down home, carb filled, tasty casserole of mac and cheese, (created in a 1930's kitchen), or the wisdom that family and health was much more important than material goods? Just the same, we kept our fingers crossed that nothing like that would ever happen to the generation who brought the world rock and roll.

Here we are, January 2009, keeping one eye on gas prices and the other on political events. No matter what is reported in the headlines, some things remain true. Let this New Year bring you good health, good humor, and true appreciation for the best things in life. They're free....

Maryclaire Kretsch



Andy Warner crooning Blue Christmas at the annual Arc Angels Holiday Extravaganza.



The Arc Adult Day Parent Group enjoying festivities with Santa at their annual Holiday Party.

Spotlight on Quality



Submitted by Sheila Nelson

During the recent holiday season, two of our Scott Township staff demonstrated incomparable heroic efforts, while others showed their dedication to quality services by showing off their harmonious, melodious voices Christmas caroling in the community.

Lindsay Gerber and Michael Guzenski's prompt and professional actions saved one of our consumers from serious harm. Mike and Lindsay had to do back blows and abdominal thrusts in order to save an individual from choking. Moreover, they immediately contacted 911 to further ensure the consumer's well-being. Thanks again Mike & Lindsay--we appreciate your unparalleled response and dedication to the consumers.

Not only did the Scott staff potentially save someone's life--they also created a warm and caring atmosphere of merriment and music! On Christmas Eve, Lisa Jezowski, Site Supervisor, and her band of Crooning Carolers (consumers and staff) ventured out into the community and sang Christmas Carols! From all accounts, the consumers and staff had a wonderful time despite the often off key drone of Lisa's voice!

All kidding aside, all of you continue to demonstrate just how much you care about the consumers and your overall commitment to Arc's vision and mission. Thank you for the "quality in each of you."

Pocono Parents of Down Syndrome (PPODS)

The Pocono Parents of Down Syndrome children group is restructuring. The group also welcomes parents of children with other disabilities. The proposed meeting schedule for this year is going to be the 4th Thursday of every month at the Developmental Education Services (DES) building that is located behind Bender's Florist on Phillips Street, Stroudsburg, PA, from 7:00 -8:30 p.m. For more information, please email Susan Armitage at seaa@ptd.net.

A note from Susan:

Hi, I have been working hard on getting PPODS back on its feet because of some young parents my family has had the good fortunate of meeting with before the holidays. There is a need out there. Remember how we laughed, cried and listened to each other way back when??? Well, now is the time to help out a younger generation and pass the "torch" of PPODS. It will bring tears to your eyes to see and hold these little DS babies and talk with their parents. Hope to hear from you soon.

Thanks all, Susan



John Wolyniak, an Arc participant for many years, recently celebrated his 90th birthday. A party was held in December at Robinson Park for John and all of his friends. Happy Birthday John - and many more!



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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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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 programs and long distance telephone services.

Stay Informed!

Membership Registration

New Member

Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Type of Membership

\$25.00 - \$49.00 Friend

\$100.00 - \$499.99 Supporter

\$1,000.000 + Partner

\$50.00 - \$99.99 Sponsor

\$500.00 - \$999.99 Benefactor

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