

The Arcticulate

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



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Local Baseball history was made....

Submitted by Bob Durkin

On August 29th, 2009 when the Lackawanna County Challenger Division Little League played their counterparts from Springfield Virginia in the first ever national Challenger Division championship game in Williamsport.

Organized and coordinated locally by Betty and Mike Bellantoni, the Challenger team is made up of some 50 children and young adults from throughout the region, with physical and cognitive disabilities. The team plays a regular season of inter-squad games at South Scranton Little League's Harmon Field.

With the invitation to play in the World Series a 15 member All-Star squad was selected. In addition, a number of long time regulars and family members were asked to serve as "Buddies" on the field with the team.

The Lackawanna team included: Mike Christ, Norah Carey, Daniel O'Brien, Michael Hales, Kelly Flanagan, Kevin Durkin, Jamie McCormack, Nathan Cecchini, Jimmy Mangan, Ben Gregorowicz, Cody Calvert, Mike Perry, Kayla Morgan, Matthew Rossi, and Courtney Collins. Buddies were: Carol Hamersly, Bill Hamersly, Tom Lynch, Mike Hales Sr., Patrick McCor-



mack, Joe Hamersly, Kyle Mangan, Leo Gentile, Adam Phillips, and Earl Buchler. Coaches were: Bob Durkin, Mike Christ Sr., Pat McCormack Sr., Ed Mangan, Jerry Phillips, and Bert Morgan.

On game day, early morning rain gave way to clear skies as the teams arrived at the historic Little League complex in South Williamsport. The site of Volunteer Field was indeed something to behold - with flags and bunting adorning the stadium, and stands filling up with hundreds of friends, family members- and, as an added bonus, the players from the Canadian and Japanese LL teams.

The Lackawanna squad managed 15 hits and 15 runs - which were matched in kind by their equally valiant opponents from Springfield. Every hit produced bursts of joy; every base advanced with determination; and every crossing of home plate a signature slide, dance, or cheer. Words alone can not truly capture the

unbridled joy that accompanied each at bat.

A little over an hour later, with one full inning of the exhibition completed, the teams lined up to shake hands, offer the traditional post game greeting of "Good Game" and this first of its kind, one-of-a-kind event was in the books.

Players, "buddies", coaches and organizers milled about the grounds shaking hands, taking pictures - and basking in the moment. A picnic lunch followed, and then many of the entourage took in all or parts of the International and North American Championship games.

Truly the real winners were the players from both teams, as well as their on field "buddies." But you would have a hard time convincing the coaches and fans - whose faces were alight with ear to ear grins, and whose eyes were moistened with tears of joy - that it wasn't also their finest hour.



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The Arc Mourns the Loss of Eunice Kennedy Shriver

August 11, 2009

It is with profound sadness that we learned of the passing of Eunice Kennedy Shriver. There is no other single individual in the United States or around the world who has redefined the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through her personal actions and public initiatives Mrs. Shriver was a pioneer in the fight to empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She was indefatigable in pressing this cause throughout her life.

It was she who compelled her brother, President John F. Kennedy, to form a Panel on Mental Retardation in 1961; and it was as executive vice president of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation that she helped

bring dozens of leaders in the disability field to work in Congress to advance federal public policy.

Over the course of her remarkable career, Ms. Shriver led many successful efforts to improve national civil rights, housing, and employment policies. She knew how to reach across the aisle in Congress and persuade Democratic and Republican presidents alike to develop policies that would help people with intellectual disabilities lead more independent, meaningful lives.

Mrs. Shriver's extraordinary dedication is reflected in one of her greatest visions - the Special Olympics. At a time when others set limitations on persons with intellectual disabilities, she had the vision and the spirit to embrace what people can do and not what others thought they could not.

While we have lost one of our most venerable champions for the rights of people with intellectual disabilities, her absence is a reminder that we must work harder. The finest tribute to her is for The Arc and other advocacy organizations to carry on her work with greater resolve - to realize her vision of full inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities in every phase of society.

To read remembrances of others and share your own at a website recently established to honor Mrs. Shriver's legacy, go to www.EuniceKennedyShriver.org

Peter V. Berns
Executive Director
The Arc of the United States
August 11, 2009



Thursday September 10 marked The United Way's Annual Day of Caring. Employees from many local companies including First Liberty Bank, Loveshaw, Diversified, Moses Taylor Hospital, Mid Valley Hospital, DPW, Lackawanna County Assistance Office and UGI spent the day volunteering at The Arc's various sites. Some of the invaluable work that was done included driveway sealing, deck staining, painting, weeding and mulching. Without these volunteers, The Arc would have to find the funds to complete these tasks.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



Carbon County Camp

Submitted by Mari Pizur
Camp Coordinator



Our Carbon Camp moved to a new location for the 2009 season. Phifer's Dam in Lehighton is a beautiful park equipped

with a great jungle gym, a basketball court, a baseball field, hiking trails, ponds and tons of opportunities for summer camp fun! Our attendance doubled from last year, offering more children three weeks of summer camp experiences!

Each day began with a flag ceremony followed by story time. We spent a day or two at Camp Apple-tree and went swimming at Mauch Chunk Lake. The summer was warm and rainy, but we managed to do many fun things. This year's theme was "Wilderness" so we had scavenger hunts, made raccoon magnets and key chains around that theme. We also planted flowers; toured Noble's Blacksmith Museum and had our very own "Arc Idol Contest"! We went for walks; played basketball, table games, bingo and had art projects almost everyday. Our other excursions included Blue Mountain Butterfly Sanctuary, Eckley's Miner Village and Miniature Golfing.

Camp ended on Friday, July 31st with music and dancing. We had a farewell party and an awards ceremony. Happy camping until we meet again next year!



Recreation Summer Camp

Submitted by Mari Pizur
and Kerry Fallon

It's hard to believe that our 2009 Summer Camp program has come to an end!

We had a lot fun; we went to various State Parks and we had a special visit from Santa Claus as he arrived on a Fire Truck. We did obstacle courses and kick ball when the weather was right, and musical chairs and duck-duck goose when the weather was not. We did several art projects, especially face painting which was a huge hit this year at camp. Swimming, water balloon games and Ice Pops were daily events this year just trying to beat the heat!

The last day of camp we invited the campers' family and friends to a

luncheon to end our summer of fun. This year's camp was blessed with a great group of counselors and we would like to commend them on a great job! Each counselor contributed his or her own special talents, which helped camp run smoothly. Paul Shoemaker was our Head Counselor and he did a remarkable job with scheduling our seven one-on-one campers' daily schedules and scheduling our camp's off ground trips. Hats off to a job well done and making this year's camp a success.

The Arc Recreation bowling began on September 8th and 11th and all other recreation programs will resume on September 10th.

Vera Pannacci's Story

Vera has been attending The Arc's day program since 1987. She resides in South Scranton in the family home with her brother, Bill. Vera is 88 years young! Although never receiving any formal education, she became a master housekeeper under the tutelage of her mom. Vera immediately darts for the broom if she sees some litter on the floor or dries the dishes the minute she spots them in the drainer.

The quality people most admire in Vera is her generosity. Whenever a birthday is mentioned, Vera immediately rushes to her purse for a dollar. She is the first to respond to drives for donations; she may even bring in her own clothing to help a cause. She frequently treats the staff and friends with delicious bakery goodies.

Vera still has the energy and ambition to do her favorite thing - go out to eat and shop. Every morning Vera

asks, "Am I going out today?" She is the first to get her coat and stand by the door as she awaits a fun day in the community, always hoping that lunch will be Old Country Buffet. Whenever the outing is local, Vera always sees someone she knows!

Vera is known for her tender, loving, gentle manner. This tiny little lady is a Robinson Park Icon. She is popular among her friends for her good nature and pleasant spirit.

The Arc Mourns the Loss of its Greatest Legislative Champion

Wednesday, August 26, 2009
4:16:00 PM

The Arc Mourns the Loss of its Greatest Legislative Champion
The Arc of the United States and all children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families lost its all time legislative champion with the death last night of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA). His legislative achievements in the field of disability were many and far reaching. Civil rights, education and health care were the cornerstones of his efforts to help all Americans live decent and productive lives.

In the rights arena, his most notable achievement was the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. He played an instrumental role in the passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975 (now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) which gave every student with a disability the right to a free appropriate public education. Senator Kennedy was one of four Members of Congress who, along with former President George W. Bush, crafted the No Child Left Behind Act. He was instrumental in assuring that all students with disabilities would be part of the student achievement assessments under this law. Last year, he co-authored the Higher Education Opportunity Act which, for the first time in Federal law, will afford higher education opportunities for students

with intellectual disabilities. Other major civil rights accomplishments that helped people with disabilities enter the mainstream of our society include the Fair Housing Act and the Voting Rights Act.

As a steady voice for comprehensive, quality and affordable health care reform, Senator Kennedy pushed hard over his decades of Senate service to expand the National Institutes of Health, created programs to protect pregnant women and children, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act and the recently enacted Medicare prescription drug expansion. As many have observed, his absence from the Senate this year has significantly hindered the passage of health care reform.

In his role as a member, Ranking Minority Member, and Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, he authored the Developmental Disabilities Act, established Protection and Advocacy Systems in every state, and oversaw several extensions of the Rehabilitation Act, including the addition of Supported Employment and steady increases in the minimum wage.

Senator Kennedy was first elected in 1962 and served six terms. He ranks third in total service in the U. S. Senate. He was often referred to as the "Lion of the Senate". A consummate deal maker, many of his legislative successes were due to his ability

to reach across the aisle and secure bipartisan support, sometimes with the most conservative of Senators. He was an electrifying orator, his booming voice resounding off the walls of the Senate chamber. Senator Kennedy did his homework, always exceptionally well prepared for his Committee hearings, bill markups and floor speeches. He was often noted as having the best and most loyal staff on Capitol Hill.

Senator Kennedy often described his interest in disability policy due to his family history. Late in life, his father suffered from a serious stroke. His sister Rosemary was born with an intellectual disability and was sheltered during her adulthood in a private institution. His sister Eunice, who died only two weeks ago, headed up the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation and created the Special Olympics. The Senator's two sons also experience disability. Ted Jr. lost a leg to cancer as a child. Patrick, a U. S. Congressman from Rhode Island, has a mental illness.

Senator Kennedy spoke at several events sponsored by The Arc, most notably the Disability Policy Seminar. In 2001, he was the recipient of The Arc's John H. Chafee Leadership in Public Policy Award. Last month, The Arc's President, Lynne Cleveland, announced that Senator Kennedy would be this year's President's Award recipient. This award will now be given posthumously at an event in the near future.

**Come and Join Us for a Softball Game
The Arc vs. The Scranton Firefighters**

Wednesday, October 14th - Rain date - Thursday, October 15th

6:00p.m. - South Side Complex

For More Information Please Call The Arc - 346-4010

There will be food, baked goods & raffles.

Proceeds benefit The Arc Responds and The Jim Robeson Memorial Fund

Public Relations and Development

Submitted by Eileen Rempe

Auxiliary News



The NESDC dance was very successful. What a fun group of people. A big thank you goes to the North East Social Dance Club members and Pulman Interiors for sponsoring us.

The education committee has planned several readings of the book "Our Friend Mikayla" to take place in the Fall. The outreach program will begin in the North Pocono and Scranton school districts. The focus of the program is to promote awareness, acceptance and reduce the high incidence of bullying. Sara Wolff, Marywood students and Auxiliary members will be performing the readings. A reading is scheduled for Jefferson School in NP on October 16th (4 classrooms). The ladies are getting their clearances now so they can enter the schools by the mentioned date. The books are in and the company gave us a significant discount. I can see many good things coming out of this program.

A bus trip to Peddler's Village is planned for Wednesday, October 21st. We are leaving Scranton at 9:00 a.m. from the Clarion parking lot and returning around 8:00 p.m. The ladies are very excited about all the beautiful shops that are available and look forward to getting a jump start on their holiday shopping.

There will be a recognition luncheon for Carol Burke on Wednesday, November 4th at 12:00 noon at the Radisson. The registration is \$20.00. We hope you be able to join us.

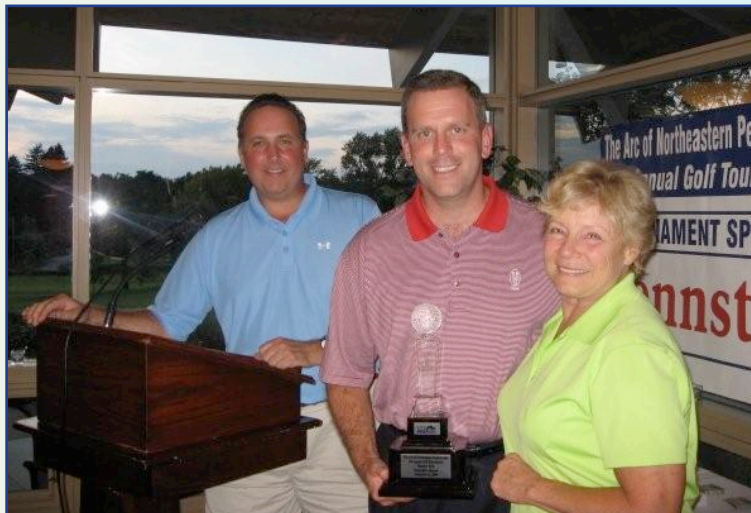
The ladies are beyond exceptional to work with and I admire each and everyone of them for their strength and talent.

Arc Update

The Knights of Columbus Appreciation dinner is scheduled for Monday, November 16th at the Parish Center in Dunmore beginning at 6:00 p.m. Invitations will be in the mail.

Plans are underway for The Arc Parent Group Holiday Party. We are looking at the Parish Center in Dunmore for Sunday, December 6th. As soon as we have all the details to share, we will forward them to you. Santa will be there as well as dancing and merriment!

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.

Foundation Overview

GOLF was on Monday, September 21st! We had 82 golfers, 14 major sponsors, 33 hole sponsors and 20 cart sponsors. Many donated door prizes and Brucelli was especially generous.

We continue to build the Foundation through very generous donations. Whether someone named The Arc as a beneficiary in a will or has made memorial or honorarium gifts for a loved one, we are so thrilled to be remembered.



Arc Responds

Recently we helped a little girl with Down syndrome celebrate her 6th birthday. Her Mom has been having some financial issues and couldn't afford some of her utilities, birthday gifts and fall clothes for her little girl. With a few phone calls, we had a cake, candles, balloons, clothes, etc. and some cash donations to help with the bills. As an employee I am so proud to be able to offer this kind of

assistance and I so very grateful for your continued support. You are always there for us!

A softball game against the Scranton Fire Department is scheduled for Wednesday, October 14th at the South Side Complex at 6:00 p.m.

Aktion Club

Submitted by Nancy Frank, Advisor



The excursions to Altoona for the state convention continue and never seem to lose their fervor and excitement. This year, five members made the trip with staff and, again, had an amazingly wonderful weekend. The scenery at Laurel Lodge is breathtaking – a magnificent structure carved high in the Allegheny Mountains housing the laughter, energy and high spirits of one hundred Aktion Club members and their advisors. This is a journey one has to experience personally to fully appreciate “the moment of the weekend”.

The program focus of the weekend was a project known as Caitlin’s Smiles – a non-profit organization dedicated to putting smiles on the faces of children with chronic or life-threatening illnesses by encouraging them to focus on creative art activities. A presentation about Caitlin and her life was followed by an afternoon of making craft kits which will be distributed to hospitals around the country. (Since returning to Scranton, our club is in the process of completing 50 kits as well as a sample box of kits for the Ronald McDonald House.) Aktion Clubs will now partner with Caitlin’s Smiles as an ongoing partnership association.

The lighter side of our time in Altoona was making friends with other members across the state, eating some super-delicious meals, swim time in that lovely pool and new hot tub and of course, the dance. Sandy was high-stepping until the very end, closely followed by Vivian, Ed, Agnes and, yes, even Lois!



Saturday night’s formal dinner featured the award winners for the various contests conducted during the past year. The Scranton Aktion Club received the Distinguished Club Award as well as second place for a Service Project. Lois T. worked diligently to prepare and deliver a speech to the Kiwanis Club; she was overwhelmed with excitement as she ran to the speaker’s table to accept her third place award. “Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you,” she kept saying. This was definitely a Kodak moment! Another second place was awarded to Nancy Y. for her poster depicting what one person can do to make a difference. This award is especially significant because shortly after completing her poster, Nancy lost most of her eyesight. These awards are important and give each one an extra sense of accomplishment, but the more important reward is experiencing the sense of togetherness, identification with the Aktion Club mission and true spirit of caring for one another.

The journey home was a combination of reminiscing, laughter, silly singing and a little napping. Since we missed the exit for our intended side trip, we stopped instead at Bill’s Bike Barn Museum in Bloomsburg – a fun and most interesting venture for all of us. It’s amazing – the most awesome sights right in our backyard!



President's Message



The more things change the more they stay the same. At least that refrain applies now as it did in the July newsletter. Regrettably, as this message is written, the state budget continues to be in limbo. Fortunately, thanks to our conscientious and creative staff our consumers have not been adversely affected. There is, however, a great deal of uncertainty concerning eventual funding.

Nonetheless, many noteworthy events have occurred during the past few months and many others are on the horizon. Mari Pizur, Recreation Supports Coordinator, gave an interesting report at the September 29th Board meeting. She discussed the six week summer camp program as well as the many other enriching recreation programs. September 20th the Sixth Annual Fall Festival was held at Waldorf Park to benefit the The Arc of NEPA Recreation.

Members of The Arc of NEPA attended the United Way kickoff celebration September 9th and a large contingent was involved in the Day of Caring September 10th. The campaign is off to a good start under the leadership of Patti and George Lynett.

The Arc Auxiliary participated in a very successful Dancing Like the Stars on September 26th sponsored by the Northeast Social Dance Club and Pulman Interiors of Scranton. The Auxiliary has also planned a series of readings to reduce bullying in area schools beginning in October.

Board member (and Secretary of The Arc of PA Board) Sara Wolff attended the recent Pennsylvania Board meeting in Harrisburg. She will represent The Arc of NEPA at the Arc-US Convention in Pittsburgh November 12-14. In addition, she participated in the New York Buddy Walk September 26th.

The Parents of Down Syndrome sponsored the local Buddy Walk September 27th at Scranton Memorial Stadium. Prior to the walk the large crowd enjoyed a karate demonstration and heartfelt remarks by Sara Wolff. During the Little League World Series our Challenger All-Star team played a game against a team from Virginia. This was the initial such game and was a highlight of World Series week in Williamsport. Board member Bob Durkin managed our team.

The Arc of NEPA Foundation held its annual golf tournament September 20th at Glen Oak on a beautiful late summer day. Nearly 100 golfers enjoyed a day of golf and dinner. Many thanks to co-chairs Carol Chisdak and Mark Lynn and their committee for a job well done. Once again the tournament was a great success.

Upcoming activities include the Pocono Parents of Down Syndrome Buddy Walk October 3rd at Dansbury Park, Stroudsburg and The Arc vs Scranton Firefighters softball game October 14th at the South Side Complex at 6 P.M.

This report gives you a flavor of a lively and active organization. It is indeed an honor to represent The Arc of NEPA and to be associated with a fine group of caring professionals.

Respectfully,
Alan Hughes

Adult Protective Services



Did you realize that there is no law in PA that protects vulnerable adults between the ages of 19 and 59? PA is one of only 5 states in the nation without an adult-protection law that gives county or regional agencies the authority to investigate and record incidents of alleged abuse or neglect of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Children up to 18 are protected by Children

and Youth Services (CYS), a state-mandated agency that investigates child abuse. For seniors over 60 there is the Area Agency on Aging.

If a statewide Adult Protective Services system were created, cases of alleged abuse or neglect would be recorded and investigated, providing necessary protection to our state's most vulnerable citizens between 19 and 59 with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Adult-protective-services bills have been introduced in the state House and Senate, but both are stuck in committee. While there appears to be broad support for the legislation, the state has been unable to find the estimated \$6 million a year that it would cost to run the new system.

Steve Suroviec, The Arc of PA Executive Director, and

many of us think that Pennsylvania's priorities are seriously "out of whack". Mr. Suroviec recently said that "animal-cruelty laws seem to get passed at the snap of a finger." What about the consumers we serve? Last month Gov. Rendell signed a bill that set new penalties for people who steal dogs for fighting and for dog owners who crop ears and perform other illegal surgical procedures.

So the question is if we have laws that protect animals, why don't we have laws that protect humans? It is pathetic and so demeaning... to even think this way! Lawmakers have known about this issue for years and have determined that there was a need for legislation to cover adults with cognitive impairments.

There have been hundreds of cases of abuse and neglect both locally and statewide that go unheeded. We need to continue our statewide advocacy efforts to push for appropriate legislation. The time has come for action.

In the next newsletter, I will discuss another statewide priority of The Arc, which is the closure of state institutions for people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities.

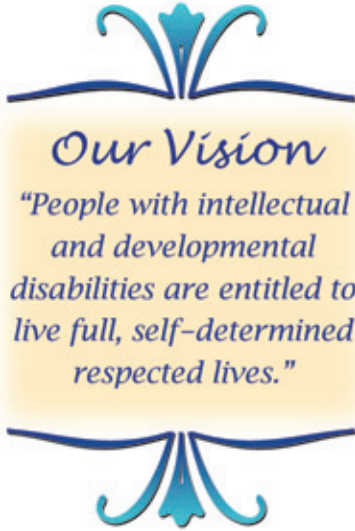
That's all for now, God bless.

Respectfully,
Don Broderick



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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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DESIGNED BY: BILL PILLING GRAPHICS PRINTED BY: GLOBAL PRINT AND DESIGN
EDITED BY: MARGE KEARNEY

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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