



# GREATER WALTHAM ARC NEWS

April 2006

*Published by the Greater Waltham Arc, an affiliate of the Arc of the United States and Arc Massachusetts*

## From the Executive Director:



NEW SIGN OUTSIDE REFLECTS CHANGES INSIDE

### Dear GWARC Families and Friends,

Blue title pages at the top of this newsletter herald changes to GWARC publications and the celebration of our fiftieth anniversary this year. New program description folders, brochures, stationary, and signs at our buildings bring the news that GWARC is making fresh changes to how we look. We have plans to re-landscape the front of Chestnut Street and do additional landscaping at Woodland Road. Inside of the buildings, we are working on end of fiscal year documents already, as spring, a short season in New England anyway, goes by quickly and with many tasks. Some highlights of the past few months:

- Day Education program has added staffing to continue to accommodate and improve the programming. Additionally, we are cleaning, sorting, and ordering materials and replacing staff office and consumer program furniture to make a safer and more accessible building for all.
- EPT at Woodland Road is planning some interior changes to make the large spaces there more useful to small group learning and a better kitchen area.
- Like all school programs, Assabet Transitions is in the final few weeks of our first school year, with plans to revise and refine curriculum over the summer.
- CFSS is ready for summer, too, with our new schedule of spring recreation programs and the Supported Summer Camp staff getting ready for June.
- Marketing and Development has scheduled a wonderful fall and winter of community events for GWARC's celebrations. If you think this means just Harvest Breakfast (our 36<sup>th</sup>!), think again...see inside for the calendar of events.

All of this requires careful planning, balancing the day to day operations with our thoughts about the future, and of course, a balanced budget. The Strategic Plan is ready, too, as our guide to growth of programs and continued outreach to new consumers, customers, volunteers and sponsors.

I hope everyone reading this newsletter will know I am available to greet you, answer questions about our programs, and hear ideas for our agency and its goals. I hope it is a wonderful season for all and look to the future to bring a newsletter with continued news of GWARC.

Regards,

Roslynn Rubin, Ed. D



### Inside This Issue

- 2 Happenings & Events
- 3 Day Education News
- 4 Family Support News
- 5 In Other News
- 6 EPT News
- 7 Inside GWARC





# Happenings & Events

## Legislative Breakfast

Close to 100 people attended a Legislative Breakfast at the Boston Statehouse on March 13, 2006 to discuss the political issues that concern people with intellectual disabilities, their families, and their communities.

### Comings...

GWARC welcomes Karen Landis, Director of Marketing & Development and Kerri Corbett as Case Manager for EPT. We also welcome Michelle Rosa as Program Supervisor for Day Education and Jean St. Fleur as Development Disabilities Assistant.

### ...and Goings

Unfortunately, we must say goodbye to Amy Cosgrove, Developmental Disabilities/Case Manager for the Day Education Program and Angle Fitzgerald, Site Supervisor for the EPT Program.

We wish all new staff a warm welcome, and wish former staff the best of luck in the future!

The event was co-hosted by Greater Waltham Arc (GWARC), South Norfolk County Arc (SNARC), Greater Boston Arc (GBARC), and Charles River Arc (CRARC). The four Arcs banded together in order to provide people with a chance they don't usually get—a chance to speak with their legislators.

Consumers, family members, and staff held the floor as they spoke out about their top-priority issues—salary reserve, Turning 22, family support, and day habilitation. GWARC Board of Directors member Donald McManus spoke to family perspective. The group also participated in an open floor question and answer period.



GWARC PARTICIPATES IN LOCAL ARC'S LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST AT THE STATE HOUSE ON MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup>

Following the breakfast, Senator Susan Fargo invited the 27 GWARC attendees to visit the Senate Chambers and learn more about how legislation is debated and passed. GWARC's consumers, families, and staff enjoyed this "insider's opportunity."

Overall, the attendees of the breakfast felt very good about getting their message across as well as getting a chance to see that many of their legislators were concerned with the same issues they were. "We are very fortunate to have legislators who care so much about the issues that we are fighting for," said Janice Russell, Director of

Community and Family Support Services at GWARC.

The four Arcs plan to band together to hold the event again next year.

## New Director of Marketing & Development



GWARC welcomes Karen Landis as Director of Marketing & Development. Karen joins us in a very busy year with many events and opportunities ahead of the agency. Karen is a graduate of Wesleyan College, Connecticut and has a Master's Degree in Technical Writing from Northeastern University, as well as a communications certificate from Harvard. Previously, she worked as a marketing coordinator for a tech company in Waltham. Karen has already made enormous efforts to plan the events of the coming year while learning more about our agency, consumers, and programs. We are fortunate to have her energy, creativity and or-

ganizational skills on our staff. Please contact Karen with comments, suggestions, and ideas to enhance our outreach to the community, donors, and sponsors. Her phone number at Chestnut St. is 781-899-1344 X4147



# Day Education News

## GWARC Consultants

GWARC welcomes Brian Maggio as Speech Language Pathologist, Kim Freeman as Occupational Therapist, and Jen Medeiros as Physical Therapist. They have joined our team through the Easter Seals Disabilities Services. Each discipline is licensed by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Allied Health Professions.

Since their arrival in early March, each has been oriented at our Chestnut St. programs and the PLUS program at Woodland Rd. The consultants assess each individual and make recommendations for services. Recommendations are based on consumers needs and goals are established to maximize independence. The PT and OT use exercise, therapy and assistive devices to encourage independence. The Speech Therapy focuses on enhancing communicative skills or swallowing capabilities.

In a short period of time each consultant has quickly adapted to GWARC's goals and mission. Their suggestions for new equipment and materials are flowing in and soon these new ideas will contribute to the quality of our programming.

Eileen Nee  
Director of Day Education

growing trays. They selected sunflowers, daisies, and butterfly weed flowers. They were most excited to try to grow vegetables. They picked broccoli, peppers, and pumpkins. The consumers have planted the seeds and are misting them. They check on their growth during our plants groups. Consumers cannot wait to have a taste of the harvest later this summer.

## Cultural Day: Republic of Turkey

By Claire Schlichting, case manager and Can Kantarelli, volunteer

One of the goals for the Pathways program is to help individuals learn about other cultures. March was the cultural month for learning about the country of Turkey.



PATHWAYS D.D. SPECIALIST MARIE CAFFERTY HELPING CONSUMERS PREPARE "KAZANDIBI," A TRADITIONAL TURKISH DESSERT.

With the help of Can (pronounced John) Kantarelli, a senior at Brandeis University and a volunteer here at GWARC, we were able to learn a little about their history, food, money, music, and people. Can along with the GWARC staff provided the individuals with the opportunity to make a traditional snack pudding, "kazandibi," which means "bottom of the pan" in Turkish. They also

learned about the music by gathering information from their trip to the library and listening to the traditional music of Boris Monco and Sezer Aksu. Can also gave a presentation providing more information on the history of his country. One of the activities we did was coloring traditional mosaic pieces from Turkey called "Akbars Field." Flags of Turkey were also colored and hung for display. Both the staff and consumers enjoyed themselves and learned about another country.

## News From the Garden

By Marie Cafferty

The Pathways consumers have ambitious plans for the garden this summer. Consumers Margaret Bourque, Nick Chandler and William Booth went to Home Depot to purchase seed packets and



KEVIN SLATTERY MISTS THE DAISY SEEDLINGS



# Family Support and Recreation News

## Reflection of our Winter Programs

GWARC held a great number of new and exciting recreation programs this winter. In our adult programs we did things like bingo and pizza, dinner on the town, movie of the month, an overnight and more. We hosted both a Valentines Day and a St. Patrick's Day dance. Our biggest adventure was our trip into Boston to see Disney's Incredibles on Ice. Well it was one marvelous winter, but don't forget to keep an eye out for what GWARC and Rec Plus will do next!



DANCING UP A STORM ON VALENTINES DAY! BRIAN DELANEY, JOAN BERGIN AND EVAN TAYLOR DANCE TO THE BEAT !

## Spring Updates

Spring has sprung ahead and sign-up has moved along smoothly. This spring we have on our calendar cooking classes, movies, dinners, music and so much more. This Spring Rec PLUS is teaming up with our friends over at Waltham Recreation Department to do some Friday night children's programs, some fun Saturday Spring Programs, and our children's April Vacation Program. It's looking like a great spring is on the way and we are all excited to welcome the warm weather.

## Summers on the Horizon

Registration for summer camp is in full swing and we are getting phone calls everyday from families interested in supports. But there have been a few changes for us here at Rec Plus. We are only supporting 7 weeks of summer camp. So we ask that all our families really plan and plan soon for all of our adventurous campers' summertime fun! Weeks will fill up fast so please give us a call, NOW! If you have any questions or just need to sign up please call: 781-899-1344 Debra Sims ext. 4710 or Janice Russell ext. 4120. Have a wonderful spring and we will see you all soon!

## Transitions Training Series

The transition series "School Dayz Turning 22," co-hosted with CRARC and held on April 1, 2006, was extremely successful. We had 21 people attend.

We also co-hosted a transition program with The Greater Boston ARC on April 26<sup>th</sup> in the Flashner Room at Children's Hospital Boston at Waltham.

For more information on Transitions Series, please contact Heidi Barberio at 781-899-1344 ext. 4145 or at [familysupport@gwarc.org](mailto:familysupport@gwarc.org)

## —Thank You Thank You—

We would like to thank the following individuals for all their help: Bob Clement, of the Park Lodge Hotel Group for all his assistance and generosity to our Overnight programs, Waltham Group and Circle K for supporting our recreation programs, Beth Schneider for her ongoing support of GWARC's ski programs, Chris Sullivan for all his support to adult recreation programs, Waltham Police Department for their ongoing support of our Power-Lifting program, Marilyn LaForte and Bernadette Bourque for their ongoing energy supporting our Line Dancing program, Tom Goodale and the staff at the Moose for their generous donations to our Valentines Day dance and St. Patrick's Day dance and finally a heartfelt thanks to David Sims, Margie Sims and Danielle Sims who volunteered their time to decorate and provide the music for the Valentines Day and St. Patrick's Day dances. Thank you all so much !!!



## In Other News...

### Autism Spectrum Awareness Day



(LEFT TO RIGHT) HEIDI BARBERIO, BETH RUTLEDGE, JANICE RUSSELL, LEO SARKISSIAN AND SUSAN SUTHERLAND SPEND A DAY AT THE STATE HOUSE SUPPORTING AUTISM AWARENESS DAY.

Tuesday April 11, 2006 was Autism Spectrum Awareness Day at the State House. The Grand Staircase was packed with family members, staff from local provider agencies, Arc Ma staff, Representatives, Senators, and amongst the crowd was Doug Flutie and his wife who had come to support this day of Autism awareness.

Gerry Morrissey, Commissioner of the Department of Mental Retardation gave the welcome address and opening remarks, followed by Susan Senator, both author and parent, who told her son's story. Ann Guay from Advocates for Autism Massachusetts (AFAM) presented information on Legislative and budget priorities, and encouraged families and providers to visit their legislators after the event.

Awards were presented to Norfolk County District Attorney William Keating and the ALEC program. Legislator awards were presented to Representative Robert A. Deleo and Senator Therese Murray.

Awards were presented to Norfolk County District Attorney William Keating and the ALEC program. Legislator awards were presented to Representative Robert A. Deleo and Senator Therese Murray.

### ————Donor Spotlight————

#### Harvest Breakfast 2006

Doubletree Guest Suites will be our Platinum Sponsor

New Balance, Carol and Richard DeVincent, and Watertown Savings Bank will be Gold Sponsors

Central Bank will be a Silver Sponsor

Banknorth, Boston Bank, and Village Bank will be Bronze Sponsors

#### Consumer and Family Reception 2006

Watertown Savings Bank will be a co-sponsor

#### Golden Gala 2007

Children's Hospital at Waltham will be the primary sponsor

Newton-Wellesley Hospital will be an additional sponsor

We continue to seek corporate and private sponsorships for these events. Please contact Karen Landis at 781-899-1344 x4147 or at [klandis@gwarc.org](mailto:klandis@gwarc.org) for more information.



# Employment, PLUS, and Transitions News

## First Year at Assabet Comes to a Close

The first year of the GWARC Assabet Transitions Program is nearing its end this June.

It was a great first year with GWARC providing vocational supports to nine students from the Assabet area. We are proud to say that besides a great curriculum being taught everyday in our classroom, all the students were able to be involved in some sort of work experience; performing part time and full time work independently in the community, volunteering at local hospitals and libraries and paid mailings/ light assembly in our classroom. Bob Clement the CEO of the Park Lodge Hotel Group was just one of the guest speakers who attended our class and spoke to the students about what companies are looking for during interviews and in their employees.

## Field Trip to the Day Hab Rate Hearing

By Marcia Kavonian, consumer



(LEFT TO RIGHT) MARCIA KAVONIAN, BILL MARSHALL, JANICE NOWLAN, KELLY O'NEIL, PAT CORRIGAN ON TRIP TO RATE HEARING

Janice Nowlan, Bill Marshall, Pat Corrigan, Kelly O'Neil and I went to a field trip where we got to hear stories about other consumers and how they aren't able to get enough

money to be put into programs like our program. I heard a story about this guy's son and the workshop his son was in. The people [DMR and his parents] worked so hard getting his son into the workshop. If his son didn't get the funds, he wouldn't be able to work with other consumers. Some of the stories were sad and I felt bad for them. I think they should give the consumers the money they need so they can be happy in their day programs. I don't know what I would do if they told me that I could not be in the PLUS program because I didn't have enough money.

## —Interview with Courtney Woolard, BIS mailing new staff— By Stephen Scaparotti, consumer

**SS:** Please state your name and where you are from.



STEPHEN SCAPAROTTI INTERVIEWS NEW STAFF MEMBER, COURTNEY WOOLDARD

**CW:** My name is Courtney Woolard and I am from Woburn, MA.

**SS:** How did you first start here?

**CW:** When I finished school, I still wasn't sure what type of work I wanted to get

into. During my job search I came across GWARC. After my interview I really felt like this was the job for me. The BISmail consumers made me feel right at home from the moment I walked through the door and they still have the ability to make me laugh no matter what mood I am in.

**SS:** How do you like working with me personally?

**CW:** You are a pleasure to work with, Stephen.

You try so hard with every task I give you and you never give up. You are truly an inspiration to me along with all the other consumers I have had the privilege to work with.

**SS:** How do you like working with Kathy?

**CW:** I have a blast working with Kathy! I am her Batman and she is my Robin! But that is only because of the size difference. The truth is she has been my number one teacher and friend since I have been here and I feel very lucky.



# Inside GWARC

## —Get to Know GWARC—

By Roz Rubin

(Editor's note: "GET TO KNOW GWARC" is a new column in the GWARC Newsletter which is intended to inform our readers about different parts of the agency and what we do)

### **GWARC's Strategic Plan:**

All agencies, whether non-profit or private sector, have certain common documents that tie the organization together. One of the most important of these is the strategic plan. The strategic plan is a kind of road map to the future, while keeping us grounded in the goals we hope to reach in the next six months, one year, and five years. It is very important for the strategic plan to be tied to current budget and budget projections, so our plans are attainable.

GWARC's strategic plan is a straightforward report that includes the following:

**Introduction:** A summary of the highlights of the plan

**Demographics:** number of staff, consumers, financial information, quality assurance information

**Goals:** (Ours are divided in 3 areas)

#1 – Facility, Safety and Administration

#2 – Consumer/Program Goals

#3 – Workforce Development

**Tasks and timelines :** A breakdown of the parts of the goal and when we hope to complete them.

The Strategic Plan is written in the spring and voted in by the Board of Directors in June for the coming fiscal year. There is a mid-year and final evaluation of the strategic plan so we can monitor our goals and accomplish what we set out to do.

In the next newsletter, a summary of Strategic Plan 07 will be presented.

## Managing Stress

By Amy Hendrick, MS, RN

Stress is a response that occurs in the mind and body in reaction to life events. It is a very individual response based on our life experiences and coping skills. Two people can face the same situation (i.e. being stuck in traffic), one feel extremely "stressed" and the other not "stressed out" at all.

Built into each of us is a primitive survival mechanism called the "Fight or Flight" response. This was very helpful to our ancestors. It mobilized body resources to respond to the very real dangers they faced in their lives. Today, most of us don't routinely face "life or death" situations, but this fight or flight survival mechanism is built into our genetic code and may become part of our response to day to day life situations rather than life threatening events.

At this point, you may be asking, so what? Why is this a problem? The "Fight or Flight" response involves a number of specific body reactions. These reactions can cause short term health problems and we now know that over time they can result in serious illness. Learning how to control your response to stressful situations is the goal. Awareness is half the battle. Be aware of how your body responds when you feel "stressed". Some of the ways the "Fight or Flight" response occurs in the body includes an increased heart rate and more rapid breathing.

The key to coping effectively with stress is to develop an awareness of your stress response. Pay attention to your body. What symptoms do you experience when feeling "stressed"? Be aware of the events, situations and people that make you feel "stressed out." These are the triggers that evoke the body's stress response. Be aware of how you typically cope with stressful situations. What is your coping style? Is it effective? If so, the symptoms of stress will be minimized. The way we deal with life's pressures directly affects our mental, emotional and physical health and our relationships.

### Save the Date

Consumer and Family Reception	Sept 16, 2006
36th Annual Harvest Breakfast	Oct 15, 2006
GWARC Annual Meeting	Oct 25, 2006
Consumer Holiday Party	Dec 8, 2006
Golden Gala	Jan 19, 2007

### Memorial/Honor Giving Program

Your contribution to our Memorial/Honor Program will be used specifically for recreation and leisure programs for children, adolescents and adults who are developmentally disabled. You can remember a person who is deceased or honor a friend's birthday, anniversary or other special occasion.

#### Please make checks payable to:

GWARC, 56 Chestnut Street, Waltham, MA 02453

### GWARC Needs Your Help!

Yes! I want to help GWARC to make a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities. My contribution will play an important role in supporting the quality programs and services provided by GWARC.

- Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- I would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities at GWARC.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please make checks payable to:

GWARC, 56 Chestnut Street, Waltham,  
MA 02453

GWARC is a private, non-profit, tax-exempt agency organized under 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Boston, MA  
Permit No. 56454

GWARC, Inc.  
56 Chestnut Street  
Waltham, MA 02453  
www.gwarc.org

