



GWARC NEWS

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January 2006 Edition

Dear GWARC Families and Friends:

Greetings and Happy New Year....

I am pleased to announce that the GWARC Board of Directors appointed me Executive Director on November 28, 2005. In my previous position as Director of Operations at GWARC I was able to view very directly the programs GWARC provides, meet many community contacts and lead several major events for the agency, including Harvest Breakfast, Annual Meeting, the Wheels of Happiness donation arrangements and the opening of Assabet Transitions. Now I have further opportunities to lead the agency in growth of new programs and maintaining the excellence of current services. I look forward to many years at GWARC, working with staff and community to continue into the next 50 years of our agency.



As we enter the new year our Board of Directors said farewell to two dedicated Board member, Mary Beth Augustine and Brenda Capello. Each of them had ten years of association with GWARC and must now "take a break" from the Board as our by-laws dictate. We also say goodbye to Rick Pizzi who served on our Board for two years and as a Corporate Member prior to 2003. We welcome Mary "Mush" McManama and Tim Fitzpatrick as new Board members. Our Board of Directors for the coming year are as follows:

- Tom Coxall – President
- Jim Silva – Vice-President
- Don McManus – Treasurer
- Connie Braceland – Secretary
- Rich Brenner – Immediate Past President
- Mary "Mush" McNanama
- Tim Fitzpatrick
- Renee Allain
- John Carrig
- Carol DeVincent
- Bob Francis
- Kathy Horrigan
- Debbie Sawin
- Stewart Woodward

Going forward, we look toward a year of exciting events to mark our 50th Anniversary. We want to have special events that will entertain consumers, families and guardians, include the community in our celebration and salute many years of good service by our staff, volunteers and friends of GWARC.

It is never too late in a new year to wish you all a happy and healthy 2006. I hope you will be in contact with us to share your ideas and comments about GWARC. Here we go into the NEXT 50 YEARS

Regards,

Roslynn Rubin, Ed.D
Executive Director



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Happenings & Events

Comings . . .

We welcome many new staff members to GWARC:

- Christina Reed, Site Supervisor/EPT
- Courtney Woolard, Case Manager/EPT
- Maureen Cathcart, Program Coordinator/Assabet Transitions Program
- Heather Owens, Site Supervisor/ Assabet Transitions Program
- Eileen Nee, Director of Day Education

. . . and Goings

Unfortunately, we must say goodbye to the following GWARC staff members:

- Christy Bourinot, Developmental Disabilities/Case Manager for the Day Education Program
- Peter Cohn, Developmental Disabilities/ Senior Case Manager for the Day Education Program
- Amy Jo Marcolini, Program Coordinator /Assabet Transitions Program
- Cory LeBlanc, Site Supervisor for /Assabet Transitions Program
- Linda Curran, Case Manager /PLUS program

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

New Day Education Director

GWARC welcomes Eileen Nee to our Chestnut Street site as Director of Day Education. Eileen comes from ten years of experience in day habilitation and residential programs at Charles River Arc. During her time there, she was instrumental in re-designing the Day Hab program with new structure, staffing and materials that reflected consumer choice and increased independence through new skills



learned. Her extensive experience with seniors will also be useful as we integrate the challenges of our own population. Eileen has a Bachelor's degree from Framingham State College.

We look forward to Eileen's presence and the ideas she will bring to the Day Education program. Her collaboration with our current staff will continue to move Day Education forward and maintain our quality programs.

WATCH CITY Welcomes Lisa Franklin!!

Watch City, the self-advocacy group which is comprised of GWARC consumers and meets monthly at GWARC's Chestnut Street site, has a new Advisor, Lisa Franklin. Lisa is a driving force behind many programs and committees supporting disability rights. Lisa has worked for over eight years with Mass Self-Advocates Standing Strong and functions as the town accessibility consultant for Acton, MA and serves on several volunteer programs in schools and religious organizations. Her ongoing work as an Independent Consumer Consultant for Mass Rehab Commission, offers individuals specialized attention for accommodations.

Lisa brings to Watch City energy and enthusiasm for our consumers and their abilities to speak for themselves and all consumers. She has already developed new goals and initiatives for the group and it is expected that Watch City Self Advocates will flourish under her advisement. Welcome, Lisa!



Lisa Franklin with WATCH CITY consumer Ken McCoy



Roslynn Rubin receives the "Wheels of Happiness" Adult Recreation Program donation of \$224,000 from Fran Paolini, Wheels Board Member.

Day Education News



The Day Education Staff - Front (L-R) Betty Kingsbury, Pam Yung, Sara Morle; Back (L-R) Marie Cafferty, Eileen Nee, Mary Leo, Rhonda Fleming, Amy Cosgrove, Claire Schlichting. Missing: Marie Abelard, Quetline Theodore



GANN Academy volunteers participate in holiday card making with Mary Melanson.



Betty Kingsbury in a rush to complete holiday preparations while Cindy DeLeo looks on.



Cindy Davis takes a break from training work.



The exercise room at Chestnut Street

Family Support and Recreation News

Fall Recreation Programs

GWARC held a great number of recreation programs this fall. Our many children's programs were filled with sports, arts and crafts, games and special events. Our trip to the movies and out for pizza was a blast and a day I am sure none of us will ever forget. GWARC's adult recreation was never at a loss for fun. We passed the time with pizza parties, craft nights, movies and even a few dinners out! Everyone had a great time and can't wait to get a start on winter!

Winter Recreation Update

Registration for Winter Recreation is in full effect for 2006, for both children and adult programs! Our children's sports program and February vacation camp at South School in Waltham, co-sponsored by Waltham Recreation Department, is open and waiting for more kids to sign up. Be sure to call Kim Herbert of Waltham Parks and Recreation at (781) 314-3475 to sign up TODAY!!

Our adult recreation programs are filling up fast so be sure to send your forms in NOW and look for fun recreation flyers to come. Winter is our time for adding and this is the year we plan to do it!! So look out and be sure to call in and reserve your place now! If you have any questions about programs please contact Debra Sims at 781-899-1344 ext. 4710.



The Overnight Program, held in November, included dinner at The Rainforest Cafe for David Letellier and Brian Horrigan.

Friday Night Fever held in conjunction with Waltham Recreation Department gave Ryan Williams (r) and his pal a chance to build a marble tower.



Many Thanks to our Fall Volunteers!!!

The Community and Family Support department would like to thank all of our fall recreation volunteers for their assistance. We could not run our programs without your help! So an enormous thank you to Marilyn LaForte and Bernadette Bourque for running our Line Dancing program, Circle K from Bentley for supporting line dancing, Waltham Group for supporting craft nights, Active Minds for supporting Fall Fun Fest, Kathy Keating for supporting our Halloween party, Andrea MacDonald for supporting Saturday Recreation and Chris Sullivan for supporting Bingo and Pizza and Winter Wonderland.

I NEED YOUR HELP!!!

GWARC would like to start a Sib Shop. What is a Sib Shop? A Sib Shop is where people who have brothers and sisters with special needs address the challenges and rewards of being the sibling. Sib Shops are a lively mixture of new games, discussion and activities. Participants should dress comfortably and be ready for action!

- Have fun
- Talk about their brothers and sisters with others who really know what it's like to have a sibling with a disability.
- Make new friends
- Learn more about disabilities and the services that people with disabilities receive
- Have some more FUN!!
- Engage in activities to allow for some time to express themselves

I would like to know if families are interested. Our target age group are children ages 12 to 16. If your child doesn't fit into this age group I still would like to hear from you. Please contact Heidi Barberio at 781-899-1344 ext.4145 or email me at familysupport@gwarc.org

Respite Workers Needed in Greater Waltham Area

Families with children age 16 through adult are looking for workers on varied schedules. Pay \$10 - \$15 per hour. For more information please call Heidi Barberio 781-899-1344 ext 4145.

GWARC Family Support now has an E-bulletin which will be sent out every other month. If you would like to be added to the distribution list please contact Heidi Barberio at familysupport@gwarc.org.

Winter Health & Safety

Once again, winter is upon us. New Englanders seem to have a love/hate relationship with this season. We revel in its beauty yet complain about it incessantly to anyone who will listen. There's nothing like the pristine beauty of newly fallen snow, unless you have to shovel two feet of it! Winter presents us with unique challenges. Knowing how to prepare and take care of ourselves will keep us healthy and safe.

Respiratory illnesses occur most commonly in the winter months. Colds and the flu are caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat and lungs. These illnesses are usually spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes, sending germs into the air on water droplets. There are some simple steps you can take to stop the spread of germs. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands. Clean your hands often with soap and water or if not available, use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when someone touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches these body areas. Germs can live for a long time (some for more than 2 hrs) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks and phones. (Another good reason for frequent hand washing.) Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay home when you are sick. Practicing good health habits will help you stay healthy during cold and flu season and all year long: Get plenty of sleep, exercise regularly, manage stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat a healthy diet.

Exposure to cold temperatures can lead to serious health problems including hypothermia and frostbite. Infants, the elderly and people with disabilities are particularly at risk, but anyone can be affected. Be aware of the temperature and the Wind Chill index. The Wind Chill is the temperature your body feels when the air temperature is combined with the wind speed. It is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin. As the speed of wind increases, it carries heat away from your body much more quickly, causing skin temperature to drop. Hypothermia (abnormally low body temperature) occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can be produced. It is most likely when the temperature is very cold, but can even occur at "cool" temperatures (above 40 degrees) if a person is chilled from rain or sweat. Warning signs of hypothermia include shivering, exhaustion, confusion, memory loss, slurred speech and drowsiness. People with these symptoms should get into a warm environment while help is called. Hypothermia is a serious medical condition and requires emergency medical assistance. Frostbite is an injury to the body caused by freezing. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in affected areas. It most often occurs on the nose, ears, chin, cheeks, fingers or toes. Frostbite can permanently damage the body and in severe cases lead to amputation. Risk of frostbite is increased in people with poor circulation and among those who are not dressed properly for cold temperatures. Any of the following may indicate frostbite: white or grayish-yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, numbness. Because of numbness, a person may be unaware that frostbite has occurred. People with symptoms of frostbite should get into a warm area as soon as possible and seek medical care.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) offers the following tips for outdoor safety in the winter. Stay indoors when it is very cold and especially if it is windy. Any trips outdoors should be brief. Be sure to dress warmly and stay dry. Cover exposed skin. Clothing should include several layers of loose fitting clothing, a hat, a scarf or mask to cover face and mouth, sleeves that are snug at the wrist, a water and wind-resistant coat and boots. Do not ignore shivering. It is an early sign that the body is losing heat and a cue to go indoors.

For more information on winter health and safety, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov. You will find that it offers a wealth of information on many health issues with links to other credible sites.

Amy Hendrick, MS,RN
Coordinator of Health Services



BIS MAIL

Great Waltham Arc's Owned Business (BIS)

Did you know — GWARC operates its own business? Business & Industrial Services (BIS) provides mailing services to customers throughout the greater Waltham area. BIS also provides employment opportunities to individuals served by Greater Waltham Arc, also known as GWARC. This represents one way GWARC has dedicated itself to improving the lives of people with development disabilities in the last 50 years.

BIS has been in operation since 1994 and has served hundreds of customers from our local community to customers as far away as Florida. During the first years in operation, BIS concentrated mostly on mailing services and has now expanded its services to printing and assembly. With our top of the line production control, quick turnaround and our aggressive pricing, we provide a competitive source for placement of your mailing, printing and assembly services.

You can rely on our knowledgeable staff to ensure your satisfaction with the quality of our services. The combination of quality service and price has resulted in a tremendous growth in the first six months of the fiscal year and we expect this expansion to continue throughout the remainder of the fiscal year and into 2007. BIS MAIL has invested in technology which has allowed us to better communicate with our current and prospective customers

Thirty percent of our new customers learn about our services and prices via our website www.bismailing.com. Additionally, our web site enables our customers to view testimonials, request a quotation for their requirements or email us at bismail@gwarc.org. We also obtain new customers through our affiliation with the local chamber of commerce, local businesses, business owners and through referrals from existing customers.

The dedication of our customers and our employees has enabled our organization to expand our area to include Assabet Valley. This new site serves towns in the Metro West area and is located at 43 Broad Street, Suite 103, Hudson, MA 01749.

Information regarding this location or to request a quotation please contact Sophie Jones at 978-567-9711 or email her at sjones@gwarc.org.

If you would like a tour of our sites, a question answered or a quotation please feel free to contact John Kimani, Production & Marketing Coordinator at 781-891-1904 or via e-mail bismail@gwarc.org. John is located at 31 Woodland Road, Waltham, MA.

We are appreciative and would like to thank all businesses and individuals who continue to support our organization.



Employment Plus Transitions News (EPT)

Consumers Take Field Trip to Day Hab Rate Hearing

On December 20, 2005, five Plus Program consumers, Kelly O'Neill, Pat Corrigan, Marcia Kavonian, Bill Marshall, Janice Nowlan and two Plus Program staff, Kate Lucek and Beth Cunningham attended the Day Hab Rate Hearing in Shrewsbury, MA.

We learned about statewide day programs and the effects that a rate freeze would have on all programs. We also heard personal stories from parents and siblings of consumers who attend Day Hab Programs. In addition, agency executive directors and staff testified about the effect of rates on consumer services. It was clear at the conclusion of these testimonies that day program rates are insufficient. Considering that the cost of living continues to rise, a freeze of the current rates could be detrimental to day programs.

Attendance at the hearing was invaluable and a rewarding experience for all of us. Marcia Kavonian, a consumer with the PLUS Program states: "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."

All of the consumers in attendance learned how they are able to attend their programs and the funding they get from the state. Many are afraid to think that if the funding is no longer available they may not be able to attend programs with their peers.

Update from Assabet

Students at Assabet Valley Transitions program have made a great start on the path to employment. As part of their curriculum, the students have visited our existing group sites in Waltham; they (accompanied by staff) have made job enquiring trips to local businesses, have visited a local hotel for job shadowing and are preparing to volunteer within the community.

The transitions program is designed to accommodate each student's readiness for supported employment at a group site or at an individual placement. Chanteau graduated from Keefe Technical High School in June 2005. When Chanteau joined us in September her goal was to work in a restaurant. In October, with help from our Job Developer, she applied for a job at Holiday Inn and Suites in Marlborough and was successful in securing a full time position. Congratulations, Chanteau!

One of the challenges facing all high school graduates is how to gain experience in their chosen field. Volunteering can often be the first step in a job search. It exposes students to various types of employment while at the same time enabling them to gain the experience and skills required to secure and be successful at a job. Beginning in January, two of our students will be volunteering once a week in the cafeteria at Marlborough Hospital. This is a great opportunity for our students to contribute to their community.

The search is still on for a group site in the Assabet Valley region. Visits have been made to industrial and manufacturing businesses, hotels and conference centers, hospitals, colleges and retail organizations. Being new to the region, we are working on building contacts and networking within the business community. We are also looking to expand BIS Mailings Services to the region, to provide work both for Assabet students and for Waltham consumers.

The Interview - By: Chanteau Entzminger

When Sophie took me to the Holiday Inn to meet the manager Mr. Girard, he told me about the job. After we talked I met one of his staff. Her name was Andrea. For the interview I wore black pants, a white blouse and black shoes. I smiled at the manager when I shook his hand. He told me about the job. I would clean and set tables, do tray runs, roll cutlery, polish the bar, vacuum and help the restaurant staff. The interview went great. I got the job.

The people I work with are Andrea, Franco, Bill, Tara and Lesley. I like the people I work with. They know that I do a great job at the Holiday Inn. We help each other in the restaurant.



Remember GWARC in your estate planning!

- ___ I intend to include GWARC in my will; please send me information about making a request.
- ___ I would like more information on how to make a life income gift to GWARC.
- ___ I have already remembered GWARC in my estate and wish to become a member of the GWARC Society.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ ST _____ Zip _____
 Telephone (____) _____

Please fill out this form and mail to:
 GWARC, 56 Chestnut St. Waltham, MA 02453

**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

SAVE THE DATE!

Legislative Breakfast
 March 13, 2006
 10:00am - 12:00pm
 State House

For information contact Janice Russell at 781-899-1344 ext. 4120 or email: jrussell@gwarc.org.

GWARC is committed to the inclusion of all people with disabilities. For information and assistance, please call the main office at 781-899-1344
 FAX: 899-2197, TDD; 899-8555.
www.gwarc.org
 email: gwarc@gwarc.org

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 \$_____

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, ZIP: _____

Please make check payable to:
 GWARC, 56 Chestnut Street, Waltham, MA 02453

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

