

GREATER WALTHAM ARC NEWS

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Dear Readers,

Happy 2010! In this, our winter issue of the GWARC newsletter, you will be reading more about our activities, achievements and plans for the New Year.

We are pleased to report on our CARF accreditation, wonderful "New Year Parties", and the caroling, gifts, and significant donation made by McDevitt Middle School students in December.

GWARC looks forward to African dance and drumming sessions

through a grant from the Waltham Cultural Council from the Mass Cultural Council. We are planning "CIAO Down for GWARC", an all you-can-eat Italian buffet donated by the Doubletree at the hotel on April 8. With our new accessible van, many community trips are being planned for consumers.

Spring will bring state budget talks. The forecast is already dire, but GWARC will join other Arcs and human service providers at the state and local level to advocate for consumers and their families. Last year's efforts conducted statewide included phone calls, emails, and letters and clearly made a difference in the legislators' decisions. Our own Legislative Town Meeting is scheduled for March 16. This is your chance to meet and be

heard by our legislators and continue this important advocacy.

As I enter my fifth year at GWARC, I see clearly that there is never a "slow time" here – we work diligently to maintain quality programming and agency compliance. But we also must keep an eye to our future, in this, our 54th year. I welcome your ideas for continued growth and sustainability of GWARC.

I send my best wishes to all for a happy and healthy new year.

Regards,
Roslynn Rubin, Ed.D

GWARC Achieves Three-Year CARF Accreditation!



We are pleased to announce that our agency has achieved a three year accreditation following the two day extensive CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) survey completed on October 29-30, 2009.

The survey looks at all the aspects of operations of human service agencies—governance and leadership, human resources, fiscal records, rights of persons served, health & safety, and facili-

ties are among the areas looked at by CARF. The standards set by CARF focus on stakeholder input, consumer choice, accessibility and community inclusion. Measurable outcomes in both consumer goals and all business practices are a focal point of the survey. The standards always focus on performance improvement, a value that GWARC embraces as we go forward.

CARF is an international private non-profit organization which surveys over one thousand agencies annually. The CARF standards, spelled out in an extensive

document produced yearly, have evolved over 40 years and are respected among human service providers and funding sources alike. GWARC has been CARF certified for over 15 years.

For us at GWARC, the most important aspect of the CARF survey is the opportunity to share successes and also learn how to improve our programs and practices. While we appreciate the kudos the surveyors give to us, we listen carefully to the recommendations, suggestions and consultative ideas that we hear. For more information about CARF, visit www.carf.org.

GWARC Joins the Bentley Service-Learning Center Program

**By Support Services Manager,
Anna Thorpe**

The Bentley Service-Learning Center (BSLC) places more than 1,000 students to work within the



Bentley Service Learning students with GWARC consumers. Seated: Elizabeth Ketchedian and Louis Frankowski. Standing: Joseph O'Connell, BSLC student Alexis Lawlor, Yolande Nowlan and BSLC student Bashayer Alissa

greater Boston community every year. GWARC became a program site within this well regarded, service-learning program at the start of the fall 2009 semester.

Students complete twenty hours of service as well as complete journaling and other critical-thinking activities for a 4th-credit option in

selected courses. Students may, also, take embedded service-learning courses. In that case, students complete a hands-on experi-

ence similar to a real-world job that becomes a major component of the course grade.

During the first semester of collaboration between BSLC and GWARC, five students selected GWARC as their service-learning site for a 4th credit option. After approximately four hours of training, they were assigned to Chestnut Street and/or Woodland Road Programs to begin working directly with our consumers.

Alexis Lawlor, a BSLC project manager, was quoted as saying - "Working at GWARC has been absolutely perfect - I really could not be happier with my program, and everyone I work with." However, it is hard to tell who has enjoyed the collaboration more - the service-learning students, our consumers or our staff. The students who come once or twice a week

for a two-hour time block have joined right in with ongoing activities be it music, crafts or sensory activities. The staff loves having an extra person or two to support consumer involvement in planned activities. Plus the consumers eagerly await the return of the students from week to week.

And Jeannette MacInnes, Associate Director of The Service-Learning Center couldn't agree more with the positive aspects of this collaboration when she stated: "We could not be happier with the Bentley/GWARC partnership that was formalized this semester. Working with the GWARC staff, and consumers has been an incredible experience for our students."

What else is there to say except we are eager to meet our new BSLC service-learning students for second semester?

From the President of the Board, Bob Clement

***"I hope I can
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GWARC."***



Greetings and Happy 2010. I join the GWARC Board of Directors in wishing you the best for the coming year.

I have been a Corporate Member of GWARC for many years and am proud to have become a Board member in 2008. As a member of the greater Waltham business community, I hope I can continue to bring both a business perspective and compassionate view of the goals of GWARC.

As I assume the leadership role of President of the Board of Directors, I am aware of the challenges

the agency faces, but also the extraordinary quality of services GWARC provides. Known by families, consumers, funding sources and community stakeholders for consistently high programming, GWARC in its 54th year, continues to provide the best we can do to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families/guardians.

This will not be easy in the coming fiscal year and beyond, with deep cuts continuing on the state and federal level budgets. I have confidence that the GWARC staff, from direct service providers to the administrative and support staff will carry out GWARC's mission and maintain our core values. We need from you, the stakeholders of GWARC, feedback about how

we are doing, your ideas to improve the agency, and always, your connections to those who can support the agency with donations, monetary or in-kind. Please be in touch with me, or Roz Rubin, GWARC's CEO with your ideas.

We all hope for an easy winter and early spring and that you and your families will have good health and a happy 2010.

Regards,

Bob Clement
President, Board of Directors
Greater Waltham Arc

Employment, Plus & Transitions News

By Director of Employment, Plus & Transitions, Mary Anne O'Brien

As the year comes to an end, EPT welcomes three new staff to our team. Lindsay Sullivan, RN for the Plus program, and Corey Stoner, Site Supervisor, joined the GWCARC team starting in late October and Daniel Sensale, Site Supervisor, started in earlier December. We are happy to have all three join our programs and look forward to new ideas they may bring to better our programs.

The Fall began with the Plus

program traveling to Honey Pot Hill Orchards where they did some seasonal apple picking. Enough apples were gathered that the group made individual pies to take home, apple crisp, apples brownies and even a fruit dip to go with sliced apples. I think everyone is set with apples until next year.

Every year the consumers and staff of EPT look forward to the annual Thanksgiving Day dinner. This year the dinner was even more special. Steven DeWever, the father of one of

our staff members, donated all of the delicious food for the big day. Two twenty-five pound turkeys followed by mashed potatoes, string beans and squash. Oh, and of course the traditional apples pies to finish off the holiday feast. Nobody went home feeling hungry that day. Everyone enjoyed the day and had many things to be thankful for.

As winter continues to pass by quickly, so do many holiday celebrations. EPT held their first annual Happy New Year

Party. A good time was had by all. The consumers started the celebration by enjoying a terrific lunch with the company of family and friends. After that came the party games and contests. The "dance-off" was a crowd favorite. The finale was the big "count down" to 2010, which included balloons and confetti. It was a great way to ring in 2010.

We are starting the new year with plans for our new van and looking forward to many exciting trips.

Business As Usual At GWCARC's Annual Meeting

GWCARC's Annual Meeting was held from 7:00-9:00 PM on Monday, October 5, 2009 at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Waltham. After a delicious coffee and dessert reception, the meeting was called to order by then Board President Bob Francis who welcomed everyone to the event. Reports were then given by CEO Roz Rubin, Treasurer Connie Braceland, and Nominating Committee Chairman Stewart Woodward.

Community Service Awards were presented to the following individuals

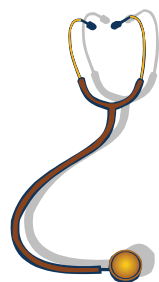
and businesses for their continued support and contributions to GWCARC and the greater Waltham community: Diane McCormack (Volunteer of the Year), Leo Sarkisian & Gary Blumenthal (Advocates of the Year), Waltham Lions Club (Jane Z. Kirsch Community Service Award), Waltham Central Transportation (Business of the Year), Waltham Moose Lodge (Special Recognition), Waltham Community Access Corporation (Outstanding Community Leadership), and the Waltham West Suburban Chamber of Commerce (Community Service

Award). The evening also featured a special performance by *Dances With Wheels*, a wheelchair dance ensemble presented through TILL, Inc. (performance sponsored by the Waltham Lions Club).



GWCARC Advocates of the Year Leo Sarkisian, Executive Director of Arc of Massachusetts and Gary Blumenthal, Executive Director of the Association of Developmental Disability Providers pose with their award certificates.

RN Corner: Winter Safety



By Coordinator of Health Services, Christa Bartkovich, RN

Winter is officially here and with that comes wonderful New England weather! We at GWCARC are

working to keep everyone warm and safe during these months and here are a few ways to do that:

- Encourage consumers (and

residential staff who support them) to dress in layers! It's very important to have layers on to keep out the cold while outside and once inside they can be removed layer by layer until a comfortable body temperature is met.

- Always cover your head, neck and hands! Most of the body's heat escapes from the head so a hat is essential in stopping that loss of heat. If your neck is warm, your chest will thank you, so using a scarf

and keeping your hands warm with gloves will help combat shivering from the cold.

- Where there is melting snow there will be ice, so be sure to put down rock salt or even sand on walkways and stairs.
- When entering a building, find a rug or mat to wipe your feet! Wet shoes can trail water into and around the building which can cause a slip and fall for anyone in that path. Tile floors should be wiped

down as often as possible to avoid any accidents. Some other culprits for leaving water trails are: Wheelchairs (wet wheels), canes and walkers (especially those with tennis balls on the legs). Take wet outerwear off in one central location. Use a common area (preferably with a rug or towels available) to store all jackets and umbrellas.

GWCARC anticipates a healthy and safe winter season!

SAVE THE DATE!

Ciao Down for GWARC

Thursday, April 8, 2010 • 5:00-8:00PM Continuous Buffet!
Doubletree Guest Suites, Waltham

*Family-friendly all you can eat Italian Menu featuring
 a fabulous raffle and strolling musician!*

\$15 Adults • \$9 Children, Seniors & Adults with special needs
Pay at the door or tickets available in advance at GWARC

Thank you to our generous event sponsor



Nothing Says Fall Like Harvest Breakfast

GWARC's 39th Annual Harvest Breakfast was held on Sunday, October 25, 2009 from 8:00 am - 12:00 noon at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Waltham. It was a fabulous day filled with delicious food, GWARC friends, and lots of fun.

We are grateful to all those that helped make the day a success including those who attended, volunteered, purchased ads in our ad book, donated door prizes and silent auction items, and most of all, our generous event sponsors:

Platinum: Doubletree Guest Suites; Gold: The Battaglino Family, Carol & Richard DeVincent, New Balance, and Watertown Savings Bank; Silver Plus: Rotary Club of Waltham; Silver: Boston Bark/Mula Materials, Charlesbank Garden Apartments, and Children's Hospital Boston at Waltham; Bronze: Danversbank, Marcou Jewelers, Mount Auburn Hospital, Newton-Wellesley Hospital, Park Lodge Hotel Group, and Stanton Insurance; and our Media Sponsor: Gatehouse Media New England.

We look forward to this coming October when we will celebrate our 40th Annual Harvest Breakfast! See you there!



Harvest Breakfast Snapshots- Clockwise from top left: GWARC's favorite balloon artist Rami Salami entertains a group of children with his inflatable creations. Board members (l to r) Greg Abel and Stewart Woodward with Ray DeMeo of Sunshine Cleaners sell EPT crafts to event attendees. Patches the Fire Dog with the help of the Waltham Fire Department chat with GWARC CEO Roz Rubin and a consumer. And former GWARC Board member Connie Braceland and her husband Tim volunteered at the check-in table and did a great job welcoming everyone to our signature event.

Day Education News

**By Director of Day Education,
Eileen Nee**

Day Education would like to welcome three new members to the Program, Michelle, Mary Ann and Roberta. The women joined us in the fall from the PLUS Program at Woodland Rd. They are all doing very well adjusting to the program and reuniting with some old friends. Day Education would also like to welcome three new staff members DDA Tanya Brown, DDA Virgine Paul and DDS Hannah Rogers. GWARC's Day Education program is now fully staffed.

In November, Day Education celebrated its third annual Thanksgiving Dinner. The event was hosted by

CEO Roz Rubin and COO Liam Mansfield. Roz and Liam did a wonderful job of preparing the meal and Day Education staff did a flawless job of serving the meal and continuing the day with afternoon celebrations and desserts. A great day was had by all.

The fall months became very fun and exciting when the new GWARC van arrived. After all staff received formal training, the trips began. They have been holiday shopping, out to lunch, on a greenhouse tour, to Jordan's Furniture in Avon for the Enchanted Village display, and to the Emmanuel Church to deliver homemade holiday cookies. The groups are continuing to plan trips through-

out the winter months. One that they are most looking forward to is Plaster Fun Time.

GWARC has been extremely lucky this year to have had a number of volunteers from the Waltham area, Bentley College, and Lesley College. The experiences have been memorable for both the students and GWARC staff. One volunteer from Bentley College wrote a thank you note to DDS Kerri Biela, expressing how grateful she was for the opportunity to bond with everyone. She thanked Kerri for making her time here "fun and easy going". Day Education looks forward to hosting more students in the coming semesters.

Recreation News

**By Recreation Manager and
Volunteer Coordinator,
Heidi Barberio**

We would like to extend a great big thank you to the many volunteers that help to make our recreation programs here at GWARC a success!

Our PALSwim program is going strong and our relationship with Brandeis University continues to grow. The Brandeis Buddies program is a big hit with the individuals that work on the Brandeis campus and the Intercultural Center groups have been

coming to GWARC on a weekly basis to teach us about different cultures and help us make crafts connected to that area.

Our children's program, Friday Night Fever, is very popular and has been helped by volunteers from the Waltham Recreation Department and students from Chapel Hill Chauncey Hall School. And at line dancing, a large group of 7th graders from the Ansin Religious School of Ohabei Shalom in Brookline participated.

Thank you!

Recreation Notes:

-Chapel Hill Chauncey Hall School will be holding a free basketball program for all ages.

-The new recreation brochure listing winter activities is available. Visit the GWARC website to view it now.

Please contact Heidi Barberio at 781-899-1344 x4147 or hbarberio@gwarc.org with any questions.

Farewell Kelly...

Long-time EPT consumer Kelly O'Neill passed away on January 2nd. Kelly was well known for her love of music. She was a positive and enthusiastic member of the Plus program and she will be missed.

We send our condolences to the O'Neill family.



GWARC's Annual Appeal is currently under way. If you haven't donated yet, please consider a gift to help us meet our FY2010 goal of \$30,000 by 6/30/10. A convenient wallet envelope is enclosed. Thank you!

GWARC Celebrates the Holiday Season

Toys for Tots with our new Corporate Friends



Back Row: GWARC staff Kathy Tolwinski and Sarah Bouche with Symantec employee Keith Newstadt. Front Row: GWARC consumers Joel Battaglini, Debra Ravenalle, Yolande Nowlan and Brian Delaney

As an agency, we gathered Toys for Tots at our Chestnut Street and Woodland Road locations this December. We found both a drop-off site and a new corporate friend in Symantec Corporation. Pictured above, staff and consumers from GWARC pose with a Symantec employee while dropping off our collected toys. We also thank Symantec for their very generous \$5,000 donation.



Proceeds of Women's Action Alliance's Holiday Trade & Craft Show donated to GWARC



The Women's Action Alliance Holiday Trade & Craft Show was held on December 3, 2009 at The Chateau Restaurant on School Street in Waltham. In addition to allowing GWARC a table to sell consumer-made crafts, the Women's Action Alliance donated proceeds from the event to the agency. We thank the Women's Action Alliance for their continued support!

McDevitt Middle School Brings Holiday Cheer



On December 22nd, we had a special visit from music students at McDevitt Middle School (shown above in a group shot and singing to consumers). They came wearing matching green holiday sweatshirts, bearing gifts and moved from room to room leading consumers in festive holiday songs! Everyone had a wonderful time and it really got everyone in the holiday spirit! The president of the student council also presented GWARC with a number of checks from parents, and a very generous check making us the recipient of their fundraising efforts. The approximately \$2,000 will go towards program supplies at both sites and Annual Appeal.

Thank you, McDevitt Middle School!

3...2...1... Happy New Year!!



Instead of a combined December party to celebrate the holidays this year, GWARC held two separate Happy New Year parties in January; one at Chestnut Street and one at

Woodland Road.

These special events each included a delicious buffet luncheon, festive New Year decorations, party hats, music, fun and games. A highlight for consumers and staff was ringing in the new year with a countdown led by CEO Roz Rubin, featuring confetti guns and noisemakers! It was a great way to kick off 2010 and we look forward to a wonderful year.



Countdown to 2010 at Woodland Road!

Watch City Self Advocates

By Watch City Elected Advisor & Support Services Manager, Anna Thorpe

Watch City Self Advocates is now twenty-four members strong! Its members have been busy getting organized for 2010 while staying active in state level activities.

Members accompanied GWARC staff and parents to two State House Vigils protesting budget cuts. Also, nine members attended the Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong (M.A.S.S.) Conference hearing Elin Howe, Commissioner of Department of Developmental Services, and others speak.

As for preparing for 2010, members elected the following new officers: President – Jessica Crisafulli; Vice President-Susan Bailey; Treasurer-Brian

Doucette and Secretary-Kristina Smith and gave their sincere thanks to outgoing officers, President Brian Delaney and Vice President Lenny Bardsley who have served in their roles for many years.

Their newly elected advisor, Anna Thorpe, is working with the incoming officers to assist them in setting the agenda for each meeting and taking active control of running each meeting. The members are also looking forward to the first few busy months of 2010 where they will hear a talk on community safety, work on their selected “giving back” goal of writing letters/cards and donating items to Operation American Soldiers, participating in the GWARC Legislative Town Meeting and holding a 50/50 raffle at Ciao Down.



Outgoing President Brian Delaney is thanked by incoming President Jessica Crisafulli



Incoming officers: Susan Bailey, Kristina Smith and Jessica Crisafulli (not pictured: Brian Doucette)

SAVE THE DATE!

“Putting People First”

A Legislative Town Meeting

Our Opportunity to “State Our Case” for Restoring State Funding for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

John W. McDevitt Middle School - Auditorium

75 Church Street, Waltham MA

Tuesday, March 16, 2010 - 6:45PM to 8:30PM

The projections for the FY’11 State Budget are dire with more extensive budget cuts expected as the Commonwealth continues to face severe economic challenges. Join us to let your local legislators know that budget decisions must put people first and must not jeopardize the vital safety net of community-based programs available to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Come and let your voice be heard.

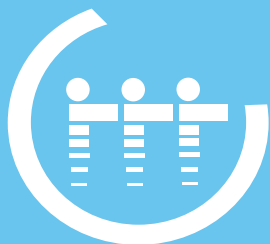
Invited to Appear:

Representatives: William Brownsberger, James Dwyer, Sean Garballey, Jonathan Hecht, Jay Kaufman, Peter Koutoujian, Charles Murphy and Thomas Stanley

Senators: Kenneth Donnelly, Susan Fargo and Steven Tolman

Sponsored by:

Greater Waltham Arc (GWARC), WCI– Work, Community, Independence, Beaverbrook STEP and Eliot Community Human Services



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We're on the web!
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On the Road with our New Agency Van



GWARC became the proud new owner of an agency van in November of 2009. Staff participated in a formal training on van practices and procedures and they are very excited to put the vehicle to good use. The van has already been used by staff

and consumers at both Chestnut Street and Woodland Road for a number of trips throughout the community and will be used for recreation programs. We look forward to many more great outings in the GWARC van!

Watch Your Language!!

GWARC would like to inform all our stakeholders of two changes in our language going forward.

The first is that, like Arc National and all other service providers and trade organizations, we are now stating we serve "persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities". This is a more accurate description of the consumers in all our programs. This change will come

into all GWARC documents, from the Mission Statement to printed materials and in our presentations about the agency.

Secondly, and even more importantly, we will no longer use the word "handicapped", which has an old and negative connotation. For instance, the sign for wheelchair vehicle parking at Woodland Road now reads "Accessible Parking" and that is

sufficient. We have included this language change in GWARC's ADA Accessibility Plan for 2010 and know we can make this change a positive and permanent one.

The English language keeps evolving, and GWARC joins others in making sure the language provides dignity and respect to all.