

# GREATER WALTHAM ARC

June 2008

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

# From the Chief Executive Officer, Roz Rubin Dear GWARC Friends,



This newsletter highlights another busy few months at GWARC. We have several new staff members, including a new Director of Employment, Plus and Transitions. GWARC would like to take this opportunity to thank former EPT Director Jim Brandano for many years of wonderful service to our agency, and welcome our new EPT Director and other new staff.

As we end fiscal year 2008, I can report the highlights of the Strategic Plan for our upcoming year, beginning July 1, 2008. The plan, which begins with stakeholder input on our strengths and weakness, threats and opportunities, continues with reviewing the GWARC mission, looking at

our long range goals, and formulating goals to accomplish next year. Below are some of our goals for FY09:

- Ongoing staff training in disabilities and ongoing training in aging/ dementia issues.
- Improved Plus curriculum at EPT, creation of new Young Adult program at Day Education
- Increased employment opportunities through BIS Mail and community employment for EPT consumers
- Family Support speakers of interest for both parents of adult consumers and for parents of school age children
- Increased Adult Recreation events
- Ongoing use of computer technology to enter consumer and personnel data, improve consumer access to computer usage, updated website, and software for fundraising
- Efforts to increase fundraising through Bounce-a-thon, Harvest Breakfast, Annual Appeal, and grants
- Energy audits for both sites

Additionally, Day Education and the Plus Program at EPT will prepare for our bi-annual DMR Survey and Certification. GWARC has always done very well in this survey, and we expect the 2008 survey to be another source of pride for our agency.

Overarching in the 2009 Strategic Plan is our ongoing quest for new and larger space for GWARC programs, a long term goal.

Thanks for reading our newsletter today and your ongoing support of GWARC. Join us for upcoming fall events and come by to say hello at any time.





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# From the President of the Board

#### From the GWARC Board President, Bob Francis



In December, I reported that the GWARC Board of Directors focused its energy on meeting the new challenges of an increase in the number of consumers we serve, the search and planning for new space to accommodate our growth, and an expanded outreach to new friends in the greater Waltham area.

In the first of several board development trainings, we met in January to review our mission to determine what the organization's needs are for the future. We are now focusing our efforts on recruiting new Corporate Members with the areas of expertise that we need to move forward, and have revitalized two critical committees, Nominating and Friends of GWARC.

The Nominating Committee prioritized three key areas for recruiting new Corporate and Board members: strategic planning, capital campaigns, and visionary thinking. We are looking for dedicated community members with experience in these areas to join as Corporate Members and help guide us through this phase of the organization's future. If you have skills and experience in any of these areas, and are willing to donate your time to help guide us as we move forward, please contact Sandra Nall at 781-899-1344, ext. 4147 or e-mail snall@gwarc.org. We would love to add you to our list of dedicated, self-less volunteers who share our interest in providing quality programs and services to over 600 people with developmental disabilities in Waltham, Belmont, and Watertown.

The Friends of GWARC has long been a strong committee of energetic individuals who tirelessly help us to expand our outreach, increase our visibility, hold leadership roles in such extraordinary events such as Harvest Breakfast, and fundraise on our behalf. The Friends of GWARC play a large role in fundraising, but many tasks do not involve "asking." This committee has a variety of ways in which its members can help with GWARC events. If you would like to become a member of the Friends committee, please contact Sandra Nall @ 781-899-1344, est. 4147 or e-mail snall@gwarc.org.

I want to thank our CEO Roz Rubin for her tireless efforts to bring our mission and the work of our staff to the public's attention, while she balances the tasks necessary to keep the organization running smoothly — all with competence and goodwill. Our staff at Woodland Road and Chestnut Street are extraordinary people whose commitment to consumers, their goals, and independence is unwavering. They are the heart of the organization.

Our fiscal year will end on June 30, and transition to the new year will continue to be seamless, as in previous years. While we will celebrate many of our successes, we don't rest on our laurels, and look forward to FY 2009 with new plans and new energy! I hope that we will see you at the Bounce-a-thon on October 4<sup>th</sup> at McDevitt Middle

School, at Harvest Breakfast on October 19<sup>th</sup> at the Double Tree Guest Suites, and at a special Annual Meeting on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Strong and competitive leadership, skilled and experienced staff, and a clear direction are part of the reason for our success. I want to acknowledge our friends and supporters, extending our thanks for their commitment of time, energy, and personal resources on our behalf. We work together to make this good work possible.

Sincerely,



Board Members (I-r) current Board President Bob Francis, Immediate Past President, Tom Coxall, Connie Braceland, former board member Andrea Rizzitano, and Tim Fitzpatrick at a December board meeting.

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# Happenings & Events



Kris Waldman, Waltham Mills Artist Association, in a Day Education art class at Chestnut Street.



Artist Marci Simons, EPT, uses a technique she learned in Kris Waldman's art class at Woodland Road.



Day Education consumers baked delicious cookies and packaged them in beautiful boxes that they decorated. GWARC community friends received their gift boxes on Valentine's Day and again in May.

If you drop by our Woodland Road or Chestnut Street sites, you may hear music, smell cookies baking, see our chefs preparing a St. Patrick's Day dinner, or view a lively drum session. These activities are just a few of the activities that our consumers participate in during a given week.

In February, the Waltham Cultural Council, a local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, awarded GWARC a grant to bring the arts to our consumers. Using a variety of media and techniques, and beautiful music, local artist Kris Waldman (Top left) inspired us all.

In March, we held an exhibit presenting the masterpieces from those art lessons at the Waltham Mill Artists Association, where consumer art was displayed for two weeks.

Mace Miller (Center right) continues his monthly drumming classes, and has all of us tapping to the beat!

And sometimes, we're simply glad to enjoy the day as Day Education consumer Olympia Marciello, below, shows us on an outing in April.





Chris Reardon, Day Education, prepares carrots for GWARC's St Patrick's Day boiled dinner!



Mace Miller makes a joyful noise in his drumming class.



Cindy DeLeo, Day Education, prepares to strike a beat!



#### From the Director of Day Education, Eileen Nee

We would like to welcome three new staff to the Day Education team this year. We are delighted that Jenna Lundquist, Developmental Disabilities Specialist, Nathalie Belfort, Developmental Disabilities Assistant and Delroy Dillon, Developmental Disabilities Assistant joined our Chestnut Street staff. Each brings to our team energy and experience that will contribute to the continued success of our program.

Day Education consumers and staff spent the first few months of 2008 working on various projects for events scheduled for early spring.

We prepared a corned beef and cabbage dinner for St. Patrick's Day, baked cookies and placed then in beautiful boxes that we decorated for Valentine's Day! Our CEO Roz Rubin and Director of Marketing and Development Sandra Nall presented the cookies to some of our longtime friends. Boxes of cookies also went to city officials in May.

We hosted a reception at the Waltham Mills Artist's Association, to display art work created by over 50 GWARC consumers.

May was very busy for the Day Education Program. We welcomed spring with help from UPS and Gann Academy. Each came for a day to volunteer time with our groups. Gann Academy was terrific! Students spent the morning and afternoon cooking, playing music, assisting with arts and crafts projects, and some spent special one-to-one with individuals. The enthusiasm and energy they brought to the day was amazing.

UPS worked with our consumers individually to plant flowers, vegetables and herbs, and refinished the picnic tables on Chestnut Street. Our consumers look forward to their arrival each year, and keep busy maintaining the flower beds and planters throughout the season. We would like to thank Pizzi's Market, in Waltham, Russo's in Watertown, and Wagon Wheel in Lexington for donating flowers and vegetables to help create the beautiful natural masterpieces on the grounds.

We soon will be working on crafts for sale at Harvest Breakfast items that we think will sell out!

#### **Passages**

We are a close-knit group at GWARC, and our relationships are strong and binding.

Two of our longtime consumers died this winter, and we miss their gentle presence.

No baseball season will be quite the same without Jeff Doucette's updates, and his swimming partners on our Special Olympics team have dedicated this swim competition to him.

Our dancer extraordinaire, Mary Ellen Munhall, was known for her smile, engaging personality, and graceful manner. Mary came to GWARC in 1979! She charmed all of us, without even trying!

Our thoughts are with their families and friends.









# Recreation & Volunteers

#### From Recreation Manager & Volunteer Coordinator, Heidi Barberio

The Recreation Program has had a busy past few months. Among our many activities, we enjoyed music therapy, line dancing, walking club, and power lifting. We launched a new preschool program which met every Saturday in May at the Boys & Girls Club where we play games, make a craft project and sing songs each week.



Our Special Olympic Swim team has been practicing really hard to prepare for the Summer Games at Boston University. This year, we opened the program up to children. We will have three children participating at the summer games, and eight adults who qualified for the Special Olympics in June! Sadly one of our swimmers, Jeff Doucette, died this January. Jeff held a special place in our hearts, and we dedicate this year's efforts to his memory.

We are planning our inclusive summer camp programs now! We provide supports for children with special needs at the city's local camp program, the Boys & Girls Club, Waltham YMCA and Waltham Recreation Department. If your child needs support during the summer, please contact Heidi Barberio at 781-899-1344 ext. 4145 to see if your child qualifies for this program.

Please join us in thanking all of our volunteers who make these programs possible: the Waltham Police Department, Marilyn Lefort, and Bernadette Bourque and Waltham Group at Brandeis University. We would also like to thank the Waltham Boys & Girls Club for providing us with space for our preschool program.

Mark in your calendar October  $4^{th}$  for our second annual Bounce-A-Thon to help support GWARC recreation program.

#### Be An Important One...to One

Please consider volunteering your time in meaningful relationships with GWARC consumers. You don't have to be an artist, a chef, a tailor, or have a particular skill to share and enrich the lives of GWARC consumers...and yourself! If you have an hour or two, we invite you to contact one of GWARC's Waltham sites. We will introduce you to our participants and arrange 30-45-minute visits for a one-to-one partnership. You may bring your own activity or get suggestions from GWARC staff. For more information, contact Heidi Barberio at 781-899-4145 or e-mail hbarberio@gwarc.org. Here are some of our suggested activities, but we want to hear from you!

- ■Look at magazines together
- ■Draw or paint
- ■Show off your favorite collection of stamps, travel photos, figurines, figurines, etc.
- ■Make tissue flowers
- ■Read from the newspaper
- ■String Cheerios<sup>™</sup> for bird feeding
- ■Do a simple puzzle
- ■Read a short story
- ■Tell a story
- ■And your ideas...?



#### From the Director of Employment, PLUS &Transitions, Mary Anne O'Brien

I am pleased to join GWARC as the Director of EPT. My previous work experience spanned 13 years of varied responsibilities in another Arc, and included a range of roles in day habilitation, vocational and aging services. Joining GWARC gives me the opportunity to use those ideas to help us reach agency goals. Prior to my arrival, five new staff members joined our program. Please join me in welcoming Cherri Perez, Production and Marketing Coordinator for BIS Mailing Services, Case Manager Jill Davis, and Site Supervisors Kaitlin Welliver, Gianna Carrabino, and Jennifer Norvilus.

Getting oriented to the many parts of the EPT department means visiting our college sites, acquainting myself with BIS Mail production, and getting to know our employees and consumers.

An overarching goal for EPT and BIS is to expand our program to bring in more consumers and employees, increase the number of employment sites both on campuses and in the greater Waltham community. In an early conversations I had with our BIS mail employees, they enthusiastically told me that they wanted more work! What a great way to begin — with people who want to do more, and like what they're doing.



BIS MAIL employee Mark LeBlanc works on a BIS MAIL job.

#### **BIS Mailing Services**

- 30 regular, consistent customers annually
- 2,000-4,000 pieces per mailing
- 20 employees at Woodland Road

#### **EPT**

- 5 job sites at Bentley, Brandeis & Laselle
- 6 independent community employers
- 35 employees

# BIS Mailing Services, a division of GWARC

Watertown, MA 02472

BIS

Mailing Services



Save time and money while giving work to people with disabilities. Call today!

Cherri Perez Production and Marketing Coordinator www.bismailing.com 781-899-2206, ext. 225



# Family Support

#### From the Family Support Manager, Anna Thorpe

Highlighted below are two of many new purchases worth looking at:

A Parent's Guide to Developmental Delays by Laurie LeComer helps parents recognize cognitive, speech/language, physical, sensory integration/processing or social/emotional delays by noting red flags of delayed development. The book contains checklists, real-life examples and advice that helps parents make a swift plan of action.

Legal Planning for Special Needs in Massachusetts by Barbara D. Jackins is an easy-to-read, practical guide that tackles the topics of government benefits, guardianship and estate planning. The book is a perfect starting spot for learning more about these complex but important issues.

#### Children's Literature Now Available-

The Resource Center has books for children, too. We have over twenty-five children's books about developmental disabilities including Down's syndrome and Autism and about being a sibling of an individual with a disability. These books would make a great addition to your children's summer reading lists. Come in to get one today!

#### Tips from Our Speakers-

Amy Young, <u>Managing the Maze</u>, told us that Personal Care Assistance (PCA) is available to MassHealth eligible individuals who require assistance with daily needs. To find the PCA vendor in your area, contact the MassHealth Service Center at 800-841-2900.

Sandra Osborne, <u>Anti-Bullying – Strategies for Parents, Teachers and School-Aged Children with Disabilities</u>, said parents report that 94% of students with disabilities have been bullied. For more information, head to <u>www.PacerKidsAgainstBullying.org</u>, <u>www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov</u> or contact Anna Thorpe at 781-899-4120 or e-mail athorpe@gwarc.org, who has multiple resources for parents and children.

Brian Forsythe, <u>Social Security 101</u>, recommended a user friendly document from the Social Security Administration entitled: <u>2008 Red Book: A Summary Guide to Employment Support for Individuals with Disabilities under the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income Programs. You will find this document at <u>www.socialsecurity.gov</u>.</u>

Anne Lane, <u>Housing Seminar</u>, stated that you must be clear about the individual's goals and needs; therefore, the first step is to complete person centered planning. For more information, read <u>All My Life's A Circle</u> published by Inclusion Press.











# Inside GWARC

#### **Board and Staff Recognition**



Heidi Barberio, GWARC's Recreation Manager/Volunteer Coordinator received the Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers Annual Direct Service Professional Award at ADDP's Annual Conference, March 27 at DCU Center, Worcester. Heidi is pictured here receiving the award from ADDP's President of the Board, Bob Richards.

GWARC Board Member Adam Maher received a Runner Up Award for the Chuck Howard Self Determination Award at the same event.

Roz Rubin, GWARC's CEO, received the Leadership and Collaboration Award by the Arc of Massachusetts at its annual meeting, April 7 at the Newton Marriott Hotel.

GWARC Board Member Connie Braceland received the Woman of the Year award from the Waltham Women's Action Alliance at their annual meeting on April 16 at the American Legion Post 136.

#### **Grant Update**

Crossroads Community Foundation	\$4,300	Board Development & ASD staff training
Waltham Community Foundation	\$500	general needs
Waltham Cultural Council	\$600	Kris Waldman's Arts Enrichment Program
Dreyfus Foundation	\$5,000	School to Work Transitions Program
TJX Foundation	\$5,000	School to Work Transitions Program
Waltham Lion's Club	\$1,000	Adaptive Equipment

#### Save the Dates!

October 4	GWARC's 2nd Annual Bounce-a-thon at McDevitt Middle School
October 19	Our 38th Annual Harvest Breakfast at the DoubleTree Suites
October 27	Annual Meeting at the DoubleTree Suites

#### **GWARC Goes Green**

Did you know that you could get our newsletter online? Click on the Newsletter tab on our Home Page. Once the newsletter icon pops up, click on the current issue, and you can read current and previous newsletters on line.

Once we post the newsletter online, we will send you an e-mail informing you to go directly to the newsletter link to read the most current version. Our goal is to have 150 people sign up to read the newsletter online!

Help us to "Be green" and e-mail Mary Good at mgood@gwarc.org, and ask her to remove your name from our newsletter labels. We will continue sending you other GWARC information, so we will not remove your name from our records. <u>We do not sell, trade, or exchange names in our database!</u>

E-mail us today!

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# Get Know GWARC



#### Get to know GWARC...CORE Training and Staff Development

(This column appears in each newsletter to help our readers learn more about the "inner workings" of our agency.)

A frequently asked question (and a great one!) by our stakeholders and staff candidates is, "What kind of training do GWARC employees receive?"



CEO Roz Rubin and GWARC staff at a strategic planning meeting

New employees have a 10-day checklist of trainings critical to consumer health and safety. Trainings include emergency procedures, pertinent consumer health issues, human rights, HIPPA, and confidentiality, as well as agency overview of our mission, history, programs and governance.

On the job training continues with the specifics of goals, preferences and activities of our consumers. With input from our consultants (OT, PT, Speech/Language, Vision, and Behaviorist), staff continue to learn best practices to provide meaningful and productive programming in their department.

Within six months of their hire date, new employees complete a 16-hour CORE Training. This training consists of components related to Agency (computer and budget overview, state service systems, long range strategic planning and GWARC annual performance analysis), Policy & Procedure (case record review, in-depth emergency procedure, quality assurance, behavioral plans), and Developmental Disabilities (specific disabilities, aging & dementia, autism overview). Under the direction of our Chief Operating Officer, Liam Mansfield, the CORE Training continues to expand and improve so that all GWARC staff learn and grow in their roles. CORE Training is an important part of our staff development and has been recognized by our accrediting agencies, DMR, CARF & the Department of Medicaid Assistance, as a component of excellence at GWARC.

Ongoing department trainings at GWARC continue with annual reviews of human rights, emergency procedures, attitudinal barriers, CPR/First Aid/defibrillator and additional training in curriculum development, diversity, and harassment in the workplace.

Outside conferences, workshops and opportunities for classes in sign language are available to staff. Finally, we are pleased to report that we have increased our tuition reimbursement this year and employees may access this for college courses in degree programs.



GWARC staff in diversity training with consultant Barbara Holland, winter 2007.

GWARC recognizes that staff development leads to increased skills on the job and staff retention. It is a part of our agency that we consider seriously as we budget time and money annually.



# Wrapping Up

#### Welcome

Please join us in welcoming John Wiswall, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, who joined the GWARC staff in December 2007. John has a long and distinguished history of nonprofit experience, including a day care center and Brandeis University. He will become our Chief Financial Officer after we bid farewell to Bob Donoghue, who will retire at the end of this year.



#### Local Arcs Organize Legislative Breakfast Trip

GWARC, in conjunction with the Arc of Greater Boston, the Charles River Arc, the South Norfolk County Arc, and the DMR Boston Area Board, sponsored our annual Legislative Breakfast at the State House on March 31.

Speakers included Representatives Peter Koutoujian and Tom Stanley and Senator Susan Fargo. Critical topics included family support, residency, Turning 22 and Salary Reserve. Approximately 125 people attended to hear perspectives from our legislators, consumers, and family members. The breakfast is an important event for GWARC and its partners because it is our opportunity to be heard at the State House during the spring budget session. We deemed this trip a success, and plan to collaborate with other Arcs annually for this event.



GWARC consumer and Brandeis employee Peter Filosa speaks at the Four Arc Legislative Breakfast as CEO Roz Rubin looks on.

#### **GWARC's Statewide and National Network**

By Judy Zacek, Community Education Associate, Arc of Massachusetts

GWARC is one of 21 affiliates of The Arc of Massachusetts (The Arc) from across the Commonwealth, and a part of The Arc of the U.S. In collaboration with other affiliates in Massachusetts, The Arc develops and implements best practices in local communities, finding innovative and cost-effective ways to deliver services and programs.

One major focus of The ARC is advocacy with legislators and the executive branch of the Commonwealth to help individuals with disabilities get the assistance they need, and remove the barriers in their way. The agency maintains an active presence at the State House, meeting with elected officials, testifying at hearings on pending legislation, and organizing lobbying efforts in cooperation with a broad coalition of human services agencies and community organizations. The Arc also has an ongoing dialogue with state agencies regarding regulations governing the services they provide. In addition, The Arc of the U.S. coordinates legislative and executive branch advocacy on the federal level, assuring that our voices are heard on Capitol Hill as well as Beacon Hill.



The Arc of Massachusetts performs an essential educational function, working to make the general public more aware of the issues confronting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and demonstrating the value of providing adequate resources for this often-neglected segment of the population. The Arc also provides educational programs – workshops, seminars and conferences on specific issues ranging from special education to residential opportunities to legal and financial planning.

GWARC CEO Roz Rubin and Arc Mass CEO Leo Sarkissian at a regional Arc Mass meeting in May.



# Thank You for Your Support!

We extend our appreciation and thanks to the generous individuals and businesses below who supported our programs and services through their contributions to our 2007 Annual Appeal.

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American Legion Post #156

Antico, Anthony

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Waltham Central School

Waltham Firefighters Local

Weagle, Margaret

Welch Optics

Willfong, Don Williams, Charlene

#### HELPFUL GWARC CONTACT INFORMATION

#### **GWARC**

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#### **BIS Mailing Services**

(FAX) 781-736-0714 V/TDD 781-899-0714 www.bismailing.com

#### 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 with developmental disabilities. You can remember a person who is deceased or honor a friend's birthday, anniversary or other special occasion.

#### Please make check 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 check payable to:

GWARC, 56 Chestnut Street, Waltham, MA 02453

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