



# GREATER WALTHAM ARC NEWS

May 2007

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## From the Executive Director:



### Dear GWARC Families and Friends,

It always seems that there is so much to report from the time between newsletter mailings! So much has happened since January's newsletter... here are a few highlights...

- The GWARC Golden Gala was a great success, we were honored to have both Mayor Jeanette McCarthy and State Representative Peter Koutoujian read proclamations and to see a brief film where other friends of GWARC sent their greetings.
- Karen Landis, Director of Marketing and Development, and I have enjoyed our new liaison with Bentley College students, who are reviewing our plans for Harvest Breakfast and other upcoming events.
- GWARC is working on increased outreach to volunteers. Our efforts will include new brochures, contact with schools and other organizations, and careful tracking of how volunteers find us.
- We have welcomed new consumers to both Day Education and EPT and are seeking to increase capacity in these two sites. With all of our hopes for future programming, new and larger space for GWARC would be a dream come true!
- The Satisfaction Surveys will have a new sleeker look this year thanks to our management team work group and a consultant. Our goal is increased input from all of you, so please respond to the survey. (See Get To Know GWARC column for more details).
- A new web designer has been chosen. Look for an attractive new web site in about 3 months, with easy to follow links for programming, resources, employment, donations, and volunteer opportunities.
- EPT had a successful survey by the Department of Medicaid Assistance. Our careful record keeping and documentation of consumer goals resulted in positive feedback from this funding source.
- With Raiser's Edge, a new computer software, in place, we can look for more efficient mailings and tracking of our database.
- Finally, I am pleased to announce that GWARC consumer Mark LeBlanc joined the Arc MA Board of Directors this spring. Congratulations, Mark!

Now, please proceed through this newsletter for updates on new staff, future events, and information about GWARC's services. And, as always, please be in contact with me if you would like to give feedback, have ideas for our agency's visibility and connections, and ways we can meet the needs of consumers, families/guardians, and others.

Best wishes for a great Springtime,

Roslynn Rubin, Ed. D  
Executive Director



### Inside This Issue

- 2 Happenings & Events
- 3 Day Education News
- 4 Family Support News
- 5 Rec/Volunteer News
- 6 EPT News
- 7 Inside GWARC





# Happenings & Events

## Comings...

GWARC welcomes

- Kerrie Biela— Day Education Case Manager
- Geoff Simons – Family Support Manager/Transportation Coordinator
- Christina Baker – Plus Program Case Manager
- Jean Claude Mondesir – Developmental Disabilities Assistant
- Alison Grenier – Day Education Case Manager
- Bethany Holstrom– Day Education Case Manager
- Blandine Pierre—Day Education DD Specialist Assistant
- Tara Burke—Intern from Waltham High School

## ...and Goings

Unfortunately, we must say goodbye to

- Christina Reed – EPT Site Supervisor
- Janice Russell – Director of Community & Family Support
- Quettline Theodore – Developmental Disabilities Assistant
- Stephanie DeWeaver – PLUS DD Specialist

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

## In Memory of...

We note the deaths of two persons who will be remembered as an important part of GWARC's history.

Edward W. Foster, Esq. died on May 2. Mr. Foster had considerable impact on GWARC as it formed and grew and he was counsel to GWARC during the 80's. He was also a member of the Waltham City Council and involved in many other civic and human service agencies in the greater Waltham area. His wife, Jean Poirier Foster, is an honorary trustee of GWARC. We extend our sympathies to his large and extended family and many friends at this time.

GWARC consumer Barbara Becker died on May 7. Barbara was with GWARC from 1982 until her death and worked in BIS mail, the former Clark workshop site, a community employment site and most recently at our Day Education program at Chestnut St. For those who knew Barbara, her upbeat attitude and constant presence will be missed. GWARC sends our sympathies to those who knew and worked with Barbara. She will be missed.

## Legislative Breakfast

On April 9, 2007, GWARC co-hosted a legislative breakfast at the State House with South Norfolk County Arc (SNARC), Greater Boston Arc (GBARC), and Charles River Arc (CRARC).



ROZ RUBIN INTRODUCES (LEFT TO RIGHT) JAIME SILVA, DAISY ANTONINI, SHEILA HERNANDEZ, AND ADAM MAHER.

April is a critical time in the calendar as legislators consider the upcoming budget, so the four area Arcs banded together at the State House to increase the number of consumers, families, and other stakeholders who could attend and show their support for programming

Two of our consumers, Adam Maher and Sheila Hernandez, addressed the audience and did an excellent job of speaking about their experiences in making the transition from school to work. Senator Susan Fargo then spoke on the Turning 22 initiative.

It was a proud day for everyone involved and the four Arcs plan to hold the event again next year.

**GWARC NEWS, May 2007**



# Day Education News

## Papermaking at Pathways



PATTY AND MARGARET ENJOY THE PATHWAYS PAPER-MAKING PROJECT.

The Pathways Program has spent the months of March and April working on a large papermaking project. We started out discussing different kinds of things that we might be able to make in Pathways. As a group, we had been talking about the fact that we wanted to do something new and different with the note cards that we make. Making them out of our own paper seemed like a great idea. Pathways discussed different kinds of paper that we could make and finally settled on two choices—colored paper and recycled paper.

All of the paper for papermaking has to be torn into very tiny pieces. Some consumers worked on tearing paper while others sorted it by color or put it into the blender. The next step was to add water. To add the water to the blender, we used a watering can or a pitcher. The paper also needed a little bit of cotton linter to help it hold together, which we also put in the blender.

After being in the blender, the pulp needed to go on pieces of window screen to dry out. First, we scooped the pulp onto the pieces of screen with our hands, or with forks. Then we needed to press a large sponge against the paper to help draw the water out of the pulp. For a final dry, the paper was placed on pieces of paper towel in the window. Thin paper only needs to dry for a day or so.

The more times we worked on paper making and went through the process, the better we all became at making fine, thin paper. But we ran into a problem. Shortly after we finished the batch of purple paper seen in the photos, the blender broke. Pathways did a little brainstorming, and sent the staff to find out if there was any way to make paper without the blender. As it turned out, recycled paper can be made quite nicely in a large bucket. We recycled all of the left-over paper we could get our hands on by tearing it up and putting it into a large bucket. We added as much water as we could and then stirred it up. We left the bucket overnight, and the next morning we had great paper pulp.

Pathways had no idea what color the paper from the recycled pulp would be, but it turned out to be a beautiful warm gray with papers of all different colors embedded in it. We prepared many things made from this project for the Mothers' Day Sale, which was held in May.

## Bowling Trip

Participants from the Day Education Program continue to keep busy exploring enjoyable activities. They recently spent a morning bowling at the local lanes. Olympia, Kevin and Maureen all had turns at knocking down the pins. Spring has arrived bringing opportunities to enjoy the nice weather and a variety of trips. The groups are planning the annual walking club, a trip to the Rainforest Café and daily walks for coffee, ice cream and lunch.



MAUREEN BOWLS AT LANES AND GAMES IN CAMBRIDGE, MA.



# Family Support News

## New Family Support Manager/ Transportation Coordinator

GWARC welcomes Geoff Simons. Geoff will be taking the position of Family Support Manager/Transportation Coordinator. Geoff has extensive experience with providers in New Hampshire and managed programs with consumers and their families in the areas of service plans, placement and funding, and respite services. He also was a specialized home care provider for an adult consumer for over five years in his home. Geoff has expressed his interest in family support group work and has worked with a variety of ages in providing the most inclusive programming for all. Geoff has a Bachelor's Degree from Castleton State College, VT and a Master's Degree from the University of Exeter, UK. We look forward to his expertise and enthusiasm about this new position.

### From Geoff

My name is Geoff Simons and I am the new Family Support Manager/Transportation Coordinator at Greater Waltham Arc. I have enjoyed meeting many of the families that GWARC serves over the past few months and look forward to working closely with those families and consumers in my new position. Since starting at GWARC, I have attended a two day Autism conference, as well as an Alzheimer's conference. Also, I plan on developing several new support groups that will be based on input from families and hopefully will encompass everyone that GWARC serves. Again, I am pleased to be taking on the challenges that this position presents and look forward to working with all of you in the near future.



## COME JOIN US!

### FAMILY PICNIC

Hosted by GWARC  
Family Support Department

Saturday, June 2nd

GWARC will be having a picnic for the families of school-aged children at Prospect Hill Park (base picnic area) at 314 Totten Pond Rd Waltham. The picnic will be from 11am until 1pm, weather permitting.

Entertainment will be provided by magician/musician Peter O'Malley from 11:30am until 12:30pm. We will be serving chips and cold sandwiches (turkey, ham, and veggie), soda and juice, and cake. You may also bring your own lunch.



RSVP for this event to Geoff Simons-Family Support Manager at 781-899-1344 ext. 4120 or by email at [gsimons@gwarc.org](mailto:gsimons@gwarc.org) (please indicate how many).

P.S. please call the above phone number the morning of the picnic if weather is questionable.





# Rec/Volunteer News

## Spring Fun

Our Spring has finally sprung as well as our recreation programs. We are starting a new middle school age program at McDevitt Middle School within the Mall Mania program.



ROBERT CUTLER AND STEVE AT THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY.

Our Special Olympics' swim team participated in the assessment round on April 15<sup>th</sup> and we are looking to take home lots of gold medals this year at the summer games, which is held June 15<sup>th</sup> weekend at Boston University and Harvard. We would love to have some support at the games so if you would like to come and visit the games, please contact Heidi Barberio @ 781-899-1344 ext 4145 for further information.

Registration for our supported summer camp program is underway and is filling up quickly. If you have any question regarding our inclusive summer camp program please call Heidi Barberio @ 781-899-1344 ext 4145 or email her at [hbarberio@gwarc.org](mailto:hbarberio@gwarc.org).

## Volunteering at GWARC

Over the years GWARC has had many invaluable volunteers, GWARC now has a volunteer coordinator. We are looking for volunteers for our day programs and our recreation programs. Come in and read a book, share your culture, or share another special talent. Whatever you might be interested in doing please call Heidi Barberio at 781-899-1344 ext 4145 or email [hbarberio@gwarc.org](mailto:hbarberio@gwarc.org).

## Supported Summer Camp

Summer Camp registration is underway and is filling up fast. We are providing extra supports for children with special needs at the local area camps, The YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, Waltham Recreation Dept. If your child needs



JUSTIN AND RYAN RELAX WITH TWO OF THEIR FAVORITE CAMP COUNSELORS.

extra supports at camp or you would like to know more about this program please call Heidi Barberio 56 Chestnut St Waltham or email at [hbarberio@gwarc.org](mailto:hbarberio@gwarc.org). 781-8991344 ext 4145

**"Our son has attended the Summer Camp Program for the past 6 years and the staff consistently makes the experience fun and meaningful for him. He learns new skills, makes new friends, and emerges with a better sense of self. We are proud of the accomplishments he makes and appreciate all the support we receive from GWARC to help make our son successful in the community." — Susan Sutherland, Parent**



# Employment, PLUS, and Transitions News

## Dedication of New Plus Kitchen

On December 12, 2006 Joel Battaglino's family came to the Blanche Battaglino Employment Training Center at 31 Woodland Road for a ceremony dedicating the new PLUS kitchen. The new cabinet and granite counter top with a sink were purchased with money donated by the Battaglino family.



JOEL BATTAGLINO AND ROZ RUBIN DEDICATE THE NEW KITCHEN AREA AT WOODLAND ROAD.

This money came from gifts given to Joel at his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party. The white cabinet unit and grey granite counter top gives a very professional and organized look to the kitchen area.

Joel, John (Joel's dad), and Roz Rubin, GWARC's Executive Director, cut a blue ribbon during the dedication ceremony and a plaque was mounted on the wall in the kitchen honoring Joel's contribution. During the ceremony Joel's family announced that they were dedicating the new kitchen to the PLUS Program as a "thank you."

Joel really enjoys helping to prepare some great food products in the PLUS kitchen and we all enjoy tasting them. For the party the consumers in the program made some brownies, M&M cookies, and oatmeal cookies. They also made some coffee to go with the snacks. The snacks were enjoyed by all in attendance.

## BIS Mailing Services Enjoying Record-Breaking Year

BIS, GWARC's agency owned business is enjoying its best year ever. Income is up 20% over last year which was up 24% over the previous year.

This means a welcomed increase in income for GWARC. This also means an increase in both work and income for the consumers in many GWARC program's including; BIS, PLUS, Assabet Transitions, and Pathways. There are a number of reasons for this increase. The most important reason is the great work performed by the consumers and staff at all the programs. Their great production and excellent quality contribute to the high rate of returning customers and to referrals from those satisfied customers.

Another reason is the marketing of the business by John Kimani, EPT's Production & Marketing Coordinator. John has been contacting many businesses over the last few years and his sales approach and dedication to customer service is obviously working.

Some of BIS's customers are MA. Commission for the Blind, N.E. Employee Benefits Co., The Healthy Villi, Espousal Retreat, Integrated Print Services and Advisor Investment.



PLUS CONSUMER LOU FRANKOWSKI WORKS ON A MAILING PROJECT FOR BIS.

John is always looking for new customers so please contact John at 781-736-0714 or email him at [Bismail@gwarc.org](mailto:Bismail@gwarc.org). He knows you will be pleased with our performance and if you mention seeing this story he will give you a 15% discount on your first order.



# Inside GWARC

## Get to Know GWARC

By Roz Rubin

Satisfaction Surveys – Who gets them? What happens to the information? Why are they important?

Annually, GWARC asks for stakeholders to complete Satisfaction Surveys. There are eight separate surveys, each designed to elicit feedback about the programs and seek ideas for future planning. The surveys are:

- Consumer
- Recreation
- Funding Sources
- Family/Guardian
- Family Support
- Staff
- Transportation
- Customers— BIS Mail, college sites, independent employers

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys are completed with the assistance of volunteers, often Board members, to insure non partial reporting. Staff Satisfaction surveys are completed at a staff meeting. All other surveys are mailed out, and many of you reading this newsletter will be receiving one or more of the surveys.

We are pleased this year to present a more streamlined version of the surveys. We have worked closely with a consultant and staff to ask questions that will invite respondents to give suggestions for future programming and honest feedback.

The Survey information is incorporated into our future planning. For instance, last year at Day Education, the consumers stated they wanted more trips and crafts and we have included in our budget additional costs for accessible vans to transport them to more community sites. A family member noted that her adult child was missing personal items (hats, gloves, etc.) from time to time and the staff was able to take more careful

note of her belongings when she arrived and left GWARC each day. Another family member noted that GWARC needed more recreational activities for adolescents, and this has been a focus of our collaboration with the schools and community recreation agencies.

The above states more clearly why this information is important. We invite you to answer fully and honestly to the questionnaires you receive this year. I would also invite you to contact me directly with feedback as well.

A summary of the Satisfaction Surveys will be available in the newsletter, at the GWARC website, and by contacting GWARC directly. Please note that this information will be available after July 15. Thanks for your cooperation and BE IN TOUCH.

## Grant Money

GWARC was happy to receive two grants in the past few months. One is from the



MACE LEADS GWARC CONSUMERS IN A PERCUSSION WORKSHOP.

Waltham Cultural Council and provided a "thank you" check to Mace Miller for volunteering at GWARC once a month and teach percussion to consumers in the

Day Education

and PLUS program. The other is from the Community Health Network Alliance and will provide money for GWARC to better train direct care staff with knowledge, strategies, and techniques for best serving our aging population, and for better understanding the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease.

### Save the Date

37th Annual Harvest Breakfast: October 21, 2007 @ The Doubletree Guest Suites, Waltham

Annual Meeting: October 30th, 2007 @ The Doubletree Guest Suites, Waltham

### 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

Coming soon...we will be accepting credit cards to make donating to GWARC easier.

### 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

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

