

## President's Report



Diane Aubin

Message to our members:  
I am very pleased to report that there has been a very smooth transition for The Arc with our new Executive Director, Kathleen Stauffer. Kathleen has not only maintained contacts we have in the community, but she has forged relationships with other leaders and businesses new to The Arc. In addition,

Kathleen has used her own long-standing contacts to get our message out. She has written two editorials for The Day, and The Arc of Connecticut has circulated them and has posted Kathleen's tribute to Eunice Kennedy Shriver on their website, [www.arcofct.org](http://www.arcofct.org).

Next week Kathleen and I will be attending The Arc US National Convention in Pittsburg, PA. Personally, I am looking forward to attending workshops that will help us reach families more effectively, increase our visibility in the community and discuss common concerns and our successes with other local chapter leaders. A visit to [www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org) will provide you with a virtual trip to the convention. Read about our keynote speaker, Stedman Graham, the convention program and vendor descriptions.

While you are at the site, I would like to suggest that you check out Arc US Executive Director, Peter Berns' publication: Monday Morning Memo. It is an "easy read" and contains items of interest to our field. We are especially excited about the \$3,000,000 Walmart Foundation Grant to The Arc US for a "nation-wide transition project to support efforts to improve outcomes for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism."

(see **President's Report**, page 4)

## A Note from the Executive Director

Hello everyone,

*It's been wonderful to meet all of you and introduce myself throughout Southeastern Connecticut as the new Executive Director of The Arc of New London County. It's an honor to serve The Arc and carry on the legacy of our founding families as well as the work of Tom Sullivan, whose vision inspires us on a daily basis.*

*As a way of sharing my philosophy with you, we are printing in this edition of ArcNEWS a tribute to Eunice Kennedy that I wrote recently at the request of The Day newspaper. Published on Sunday, September 27, the tribute drew a strong and positive response from the public. And, a couple of members of the Shriver family wrote us here at The Arc to voice their appreciation for remembering their mother's work and for encouraging respect for people with intellectual and related disabilities.*

*I look forward to working with all of you!*

Kathleen



Kathleen Stauffer

## What Eunice Knew

Through her sister Rosemary, Eunice Kennedy Shriver knew that people with intellectual disabilities deserve the same love, respect and full lives that others enjoy.

"If I never met Rosemary, never knew anything about handicapped children, how would I have ever found out?" said Eunice Kennedy Shriver on National Public Radio. "Because nobody accepted them anyplace."

(continued on page 2)

## What Eunice Knew *(continued from page 1)*



*Rare Halo Display: A Portrait of Eunice Kennedy Shriver* Individuals in the portrait from left to right: Airika Straka, Katie Meade, Andy Leonard, Loretta Claiborne, Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Marty Sheets.

*Eunice Kennedy Shriver* by David Lenz; 2009; National Portrait Gallery; Commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery as part of the First Prize, Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2006

When she died in August at age 88, the adventures and deeds of this indomitable Kennedy were internationally celebrated. From founding the Special Olympics to her early days in social work to her love for a good cigar — Shriver navigated life on her terms.

Among pioneering attributes worth taking to heart is Shriver's decision to love her sister Rosemary for exactly who she was. Where others saw limitation, Eunice saw capability. It might be hard today — some 30 years after our country guaranteed the right to a free education for all students — to fathom how different things used to be.

Before passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) in 1975, the first major law guaranteeing children the right to a public education, kids with intellectual or related disabilities were generally unwelcome in America's schools. Goodbye ... and good luck.

Indeed, this reality led a group of local parents to meet in Groton in 1952 and pass a hat to establish a means of educating their children with intellectual and related disabilities. Now, some 57 years later, this grass roots nonprofit institution with national affiliation called The Arc of New London County serves more than 400 people every year.

My own family's identification with the Kennedys

went beyond the fact that there were a lot of them and a lot of us and we were Catholic, too. My mother and Eunice Shriver shared the gut-wrenching knowledge of an eight-letter word that started with R and ended with D, a word that unfairly labeled — and limited — the possibilities available for sisters dearly loved.

Each knew the frustration and stigma of defending her sister amid the taunts of schoolyard bullies whose behavior spoke to the sentiments of the times: Differences aren't welcome here. Each knew the pain of watching her sister mocked even as she demonstrated she was capable of more ... much more. Shriver called Special Olympics coaches on the carpet when they expected less of their athletes. Separate wasn't equal, and she wouldn't settle for it.

My aunt, who had severe epilepsy, made it to third grade as my mother recalls. "She'd have seizures and fall down, and the episodes got much worse as she got older. You just never knew when it was going to happen. And the other children were frightened, so they told us we needed to keep her home."

Did she have an intellectual disability? "I used to help her with her homework, but I never thought of it like that. She was my sister, and I loved her. We'd sit together working and I never noticed if she was different. Maybe she was, but then again — what would I have been looking for?"

My mother wasn't looking for less. She was looking for more.

Much as Franklin D. Roosevelt concealed his wheelchair to preserve his political capital, Joseph Kennedy limited his daughter Rosemary's exposure. But for Joe Kennedy, the "miracle" antidote — removal of the frontal lobe of his daughter's brain — didn't live up to its promise.

***"If I never met Rosemary, never knew anything about handicapped children, how would I have ever found out?" said Eunice Kennedy Shriver on National Public Radio. "Because nobody accepted them anyplace."***

My mother's sister likewise had a mysterious operation to "cure" agitation and escalating epilepsy. I hear of Rosemary sitting in a chair, rocking and mumbling after her lobotomy. I remember my aunt seated on a kitchen chair...

In a family that offered our nation profiles in courage, Shriver was by all accounts eminently courageous. One can imagine Eunice being the only Kennedy with the courage to tell Joe that his grand plan was a grand fiasco.

"Kennedy (the president) did a lot for people with disabilities," the director of a disability studies program at an East Coast university recently said. "But most people don't know that Eunice was right there behind him with her foot on his butt, kicking him, making him do it."

A Special Olympics executive attests that there's spirited competition in the Shriver family, with siblings trying to outdo one another in charitable enterprises. Some of this stems from being one of many. Eunice explained it this way to the Christian Science Monitor in 1975: "When you're in a big family, you have to hustle all the time."

Being in a large family teaches other lessons too. The child who runs fast looks out for the one who's slow. The child who is good at math helps the sibling who is not. There are lots of ways to build character; children from large families subconsciously learn that helping each other is one way to do it. What Rosemary taught Eunice and what my aunt taught my mother is how profoundly strength and disability coexist, how our own deficiencies make us all differently abled in so many ways.

A friend whose daughter had Down Syndrome fought tears as he related how she had been ridiculed in a neighborhood park. I imagine my burly pal struggling as he listened to the playground bullies poking fun at his daughter.

The R word made him see red. He tried to get Mary to go for an ice cream, but she swung happily on. Mary played on the swings until she was good

and ready to go.

When she finished, she hopped off her swing and ran toward her father. Then, as if she'd forgotten something, she stopped. She turned. She looked directly at the children who'd been making fun of her. She smiled.

Mary had a message for the kids on the swings. "I love you."

My friend shakes his head. "Can you imagine what my Mary taught me about forgiveness in that moment?" Mary knew what it takes many of us a lifetime to learn: it's a big mistake to let other people's opinions of our potential limit our lives.

I told my mother recently that it's politically incorrect to use the R word anymore. Mom is old school. Traditional. Conservative.

Her passion surprised me. "I'm so glad to hear that. Oh my goodness. That's a terrible word. That's just such a terrible word to use for a human being."

Four sisters. One father. A daughter. Worlds apart, yet united in knowledge: Human beings are human capital. Why expect less when we can expect more?

Fortunately, for people unfairly labeled everywhere, two sisters had a

brother who became President of the United States. And he knew what Eunice knew.

She never let him forget it. ■

***Did she have an intellectual disability? "I used to help her with her homework, but I never thought of it like that. She was my sister, and I loved her. We'd sit together working and I never noticed if she was different. Maybe she was, but then again — what would I have been looking for?"***



## PIRATE PARTY 2010!

**Saturday, April 24, 2010**

Our 3rd Annual

**PIRATE PARTY!**

at The Mystic Arts Center



## Strides Road Race a Huge Success!

**T**here were old, familiar faces there, and new, bright faces there, and if you looked really closely you couldn't help but notice that some of the runners were practically flying!

Thanks to the hard work of volunteers and staff, a great turnout and absolutely delightful weather, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Jack O'Keefe Memorial Strides Road Race fund-raising event at Camp Harkness was a tremendous success. All of the proceeds from the Race are used to support the Arc of New London County's Recreation, Respite and Camp programs.

### The Arc's MISSION:

**To provide individualized supports, services, and advocacy to persons with intellectual and other related developmental disabilities to help facilitate their full participation and inclusion in the communities of Southeastern Connecticut.**

### President's Report (continued from page 1)

The Arc of New London County, in conjunction with The Arc of Quinebaug Valley, applied for a portion of that grant. Stay tuned.....

Lastly, we are already well into the planning of our 2010 Pirate Party. You will be receiving information in the mail about the event in the near future. In the meantime, our website, [www.thearcnlc.org](http://www.thearcnlc.org) has current information about a wide variety of topics.

Sincerely,  
Diane Aubin,  
President, Board of Directors

## The Arc of New London County's Annual Appeal

Please support our 2009 - 2010 Annual Appeal and make **"25 from 10"** a big success in 2010.

### How it works...

If every person receiving this letter gives a **\$25** donation and passes this message to **10** family members and friends who do the same, we will have one of our best campaigns ever...in spite of this challenging economy!

### It's easy!

Simply give a copy of this letter to 10 friends or family members.

Or, just email it by visiting our Web page at: [www.thearcnlc.org](http://www.thearcnlc.org).

Look for this logo:



and follow the quick steps.

Thanks!

# The Arc's Recreation Program



*Former REC Program  
Director Lori King*

**T**he goal of The Arc of New London County's Recreation Program is more than providing quality recreation and leisure services to individuals with intellectual and other related disabilities. Our goal is to create opportunities for participants to gain independence, learn how to access community resources, and to enhance

their personal relationships.

REC is the longest continuously run program operated by The Arc, providing regularly scheduled recreation, leisure and sports training activities. It also provides door-to-door transportation to 102 participants. Individuals and their families are regularly encouraged to give the agency feedback regarding the activities they enjoy and what they would like to see changed.

Because Arc is the *only* recreation program that provides door-to-door transportation, its service is in great demand. There are only two other recreation programs for people with disabilities in the Region, and both are based in the Groton area and do not provide transportation.

In addition to seasonal events and Special Olympic team training and participation, regular weekly socials, bowling, community events and special activities are held several evenings a week and every Saturday.

Funding for this program comes from The Arc's fundraising activities such as the Annual Appeal, Strides Road Race, Pirate Party, memorial and charitable donations, and nominal program fees. (The United Way of Southeastern Connecticut currently supports a substantial portion of REC's total budget and REC is the only Arc program supported by The United Way.)

Former program Director, Lori King, head of the

REC program for 10 years, has accepted a new position as the Arc's new Director of Quality Assurance. The individuals served by the REC program will miss their friend they have all grown to know over the years.

Although this is a time of transition, the REC program still has the same staff it had 12 years ago with some welcomed additions, the latest 4 years ago, and fortunately the Recreation program has the lowest turnover rate in the agency.

"We'll be celebrating 15 years in the Arc Recreation program this November," Walter Doubleday says. Born and raised locally, Walter is employed at the Eastern Connecticut Transportation Consortium (ECTC) arranging transportation for the elderly, the unemployed and individuals who are unable to access the SEAT bus, and became involved with the Arc after meeting Greg McMahon who was then the Arc's Executive Director and on the Board of Directors of ECTC.

Sandy Purcell adds, "I have worked at the Arc Recreation program for six and one half years. I love working with the clients and have finally found rewarding employment!" Sandy has been married for 42 years, has four children, seven grandchildren and enjoys sewing, quilting and knitting in her spare time!

Sandy and Walt are joined by Greg McMahon and a host of caring, devoted volunteers.

And while it is loaded with activities ranging from Social Activism Programs that promote community participation and good citizenship, to Sports, Leisure and Fitness activities that includes Special Olympic Training and Competitions on local, state and national levels, The Arc of New London County's Recreation Program has always been, at its root, a way for folks to socialize and build relationships.

Belonging, having opportunities for creative expression, becoming health aware and developing strong self-advocacy skills are the cornerstones of living a successful life.

## Donate Your Vehicle to The Arc of New London County!

*New Program Makes It As Easy As Picking Up The Phone!*

The Arc of New London County is always looking for creative ways to raise funds to support its Mission. The annual Strides Road Race and Pirate Party are two examples, and donations remain one of the strengths of our fundraising efforts. Now your generosity can take a new form. In a special program developed by the Arc of the US and Melwood, a specialized non-profit that serves other non-profits, you can donate your old vehicle to the Arc! You just dial the number and have your title with you, they pick up the phone, you say that you would like to donate your used car (or other vehicle) to The Arc of New London County and they will guide you from there. They handle everything to make it easy for you. They then sell the vehicle, take a small percentage of that sale price to sustain their own efforts, and donate the balance — up to 90% of the sale price — to The Arc of New London County!

The Arc Vehicle Donation Program accepts ALL Cars, Trucks, Motor Cycles, RV's, regardless of the condition of the vehicles. Towing is **FREE** to the donor. All vehicles that are donated to the program **MUST** have a clean title. When you call the toll free line at 1-877-ARC-CAR0, (1-877-272-2270), make sure you have the title in hand as the Melwood folks must obtain information from the title while accepting the donation.

A Melwood representative will assign the vehicle to a local auction company. A local towing company will then be in contact with you to arrange pickup of the vehicle. Normally, vehicles are picked up within 1 – 2 business days. You will need to provide the title and keys to the tow driver, but you do not have to be present when the car is picked up, you can simply leave the title and keys in the vehicle. A towing receipt should be left with you. Once the Melwood office receives notification of the pickup, a formal receipt on The ARC letterhead, signed by Peter Berns, Executive Director, of the Arc of the US will then be sent to you.

Once, the vehicle is sold, the auction facility will forward all sales information to Melwood. Their office will then process a letter, along with the IRS 1098C to you indicating the sale amount of the vehicle. **NOTE: The minimum a donor can claim for a donated vehicle is \$500. Once the vehicle sells for \$501 or greater, Melwood is required to indicate the exact sold amount on the IRS form 1098C.** Melwood is required by the IRS to notify you of the sold amount within 30 days from the date of sale of the vehicle. Checks are issued directly to the The Arc of New London County.

You will soon be able to donate online at The Arc website: **www.thearcnlc.org**. Just click on the *Arc Vehicle donation program* car symbol. Thanks!

**Please Donate Your Used Car to the Arc of New London County!**

**Arc Vehicle Donation Program**

**AVDP**

**1-877-ARC-CAR0**  
**(1-877-272-2270)**

The Arc  
of New London County

**Tax Deductions! Free Towing!**  
**Call NOW! Toll-Free! Or Go Online!**



The hope of this feature is to provide a forum for you to share your thoughts about The Arc of New London County, about the important work you do here every day, and about the place the work you are doing has in your life.

Simple Questions can sometimes bring out Answers that touch and enlighten us, and help us all understand why we choose to devote our time to the "human services."

Our first guest is Joseph Melnyk, Supervisor of the Arc's Community Inclusion Program. Joe has been an Arc employee for 18 years.



Joe Melnyk

**Q:** Why do you get up and come to work every day?

**A:** "I love my job. I love this agency. I enjoy working with the staff and clients very much. This place is like my second home."

**Q:** What do we need to make the lives of the people we serve even better?

**A:** More funding, of course, and staff who are dedicated to the agency, the clients and the Mission. Staffing is what the agency is all about.

## Thanks to Our Recent Donors:

Glenise Aiello  
David Bartol  
Harold Chappel  
Paul Downey  
Maureen Gilardi  
Joann Kerr  
Margaret Loughlin  
Eric Motin  
Gary Quinlan  
Lori Royer  
Iris Silva  
Wallace Stepler  
Kathryn Taylor  
All Souls Unitarian Church

Vicki Anderson  
Ralph Bates  
Jane Chrisholm  
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John Moran Assoc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Pilo  
Vincent Roemmele  
Jay Siart  
Steel  
William Sullivan  
Paul Wang

## Arc NEWS

### **COMING EVENTS! MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

The 33rd Annual  
**Strides Road Race**  
**Sunday, October 3, 2010**

At Camp Harkness  
301 Great Neck Road  
Waterford, CT 06385

*All proceeds support  
The Arc of New London County's  
Recreation, Respite and Camp Harkness  
programs for individuals with intellectual  
and related disabilities.*



### **PIRATE PARTY 2010!**

**SET YOUR SAILS, MATES,  
THE TREASURE AWAITS!**

**Saturday, April 24, 2010**



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