



# The Arc NEWS

New London County

[TheArcNLC.org](http://TheArcNLC.org)



## A Message from The President of The Board of Directors

**Roll up your sleeves with us!**  
Committees tackle preparedness, finance & more  
New meeting format leads to fresh insights

Our new Board meeting format is successful! All Committees meet regularly, and results are evident: Stability and responsible growth are attainable even in tough economic times.

The Finance Committee reviewed our investment strate-

mittee works on a Capital Improvement Plan. The Programming and Personnel Committee looks to reinforce employee retention ... always with an eye toward vision-driven services for families and the people we serve.

In January, we shook things up when the Board met for a Physical Management Techniques class taught by The Arc's Director of Residential Services, Val Malone, L.P.N.

Our Board, as community leaders, received insights into what our employees and the people we serve experience every day. Board members can take this knowledge into the community.

As we move toward our Annual Meeting, I encourage each of you to support our Annual Appeal. Consider, too, the possibility of joining us every fourth Tuesday. Your talents can contribute to our bolder vision of inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities here in New London County.



John Fournier

## A Message from The Chief Executive Officer of The Arc

**Avast ye scallywags...**  
Don't miss this seafarin' party!  
Special guests, The Argia promise night to remember

Folks attend the Pirate Party to support The Arc. But they return to display their swashbucklin' style!

Our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Pirate Party, from 7 to 10 p.m. on April 27 at The Mystic Arts Center, promises spirited fun – and that's a plank-walkin' promise. Special guests include Lynn Malerba, Chief of the Mohegan Tribe, Jim Reed of Hall Communications, Inc., Rep. Betsy Ritter of the 38<sup>th</sup> District ... and, of course, WNBA stars Kara Lawson and Blaze.

Enjoy chantey songs, the Tony and Denise Band, a silent auction and a visit from *The Argia*. Sponsors include Chelsea Groton, Pyrat Rums, Mystic Aquarium, Reid & Riege, Gales Ferry Vision, Connecticut Sun, Kluepfel Charitable Fund and A Thyme to Cook.

To participate, call Meghan Horan at 860.889.4435 ext.116 or visit [thearcncl.org](http://thearcncl.org). Proceeds benefit Community Life & Advocacy, whose unfunded services would not exist without your donations and United Way!

Special guests include Lynn Malerba, Chief of the Mohegan Tribal Nation, Jim Reed of Hall Communications, Inc., Rep. Betsy Ritter of the 38<sup>th</sup> District ... and, of course, WNBA stars Kara Lawson and Blaze.

PS – Special thanks to employees and campaign leader Christine Pemberton. **The Arc raised more than \$16,000 for United Way this year!**



Kathleen Stauffer

## Meet The Arc's Newest Reporter

### Courtney Meets Courtney To Discuss Politics and Funding

*Courtney Kelleher's interview with the Congressman was scheduled during the height of his re-election campaign. But a busy calendar did not stop Congressman Joe Courtney from carving out time for The Arc's newest reporter. From politics to jobs to family, Courtney learned a lot about how the Congressman is changing the landscape in Connecticut.*



**Courtney Kelleher:** What kind of work do you do as a congressman?

**Congressman Courtney:** Part of my job is going to Washington and working on committees. I sit on the Armed Service committee, which deals with military issues, the Agriculture committee, dealing with food security, nutrition and farm issues, and the Ethics committee, which deals with complaints against congressmen. Another part of the job is voting on bills. We just had a big vote to keep student loan interest rates lower for students going to college. I was at the bill signing with President Barack Obama about a month ago. A lot of the work is also back home though, in terms of helping people you represent. **We have about 700,000 people in our congressional district and a lot of them have problems with the government, whether it is veterans getting their benefits or social security issues, or helping towns with different grants they're looking for.** The City of Norwich just got a grant for a half-million dollars to hire four more police officers for the department. The nice thing about the grant is that they have

to hire veterans, which the police department is very happy about because those are the kind of people they would like to hire. It is a pretty transferrable skill.

**Courtney Kelleher:** How are you helping young people with intellectual disabilities in school?

**Congressman Courtney:** Right now, the federal government is getting a little more involved in education. Going back about 10 years, the No Child Left Behind Act was passed which started to put more rules in place on testing students and setting national requirements. We need to update that law; hopefully in the next Congress we can change that law to make it smarter and better. There is a rising number of kids with autism that we need to understand and figure out better strategies [to help them]. Frankly, when people vote they need to be thinking about the question you just asked. **These children have a lot to contribute but our educational system isn't working to maximize potential.** We need more flexibility in the federal law so good teachers aren't locked in to testing, testing, testing, as opposed to trying to work with and accommodate individual students.

**Courtney Kelleher:** My friend Louie is a member of The Arc staff. He also works for Electric Boat. He builds radiation shields for submarines. What are you doing to keep Louie's job?

**Congressman Courtney:** That is about as important a job as I can think of. There were almost 30,000 people working [at Electric Boat] in the '70s and '80s, but it has changed a lot because the number of ships has changed. In the last couple of years, I have worked on the Armed Services committee to boost the ship building rate. For about 17 years, our country was only building one submarine a year and now we are up to two. They also are starting design work on a whole new class of submarines so the number of employees at Electric Boat, which was hovering around 6,000 or 7,000, is now over 8,000 just in Groton. I think Louie is in a really good place right now because of the orders the Navy has already put in for new ships. He is going to be a busy guy. We are lucky to have him. When you see Louie, tell him I said hi and thank you!



#### 5 things you didn't know about Joe Courtney

1. Favorite baseball team: the Red Sox
2. Most unusual trip: navigating the icy Artic waters via submarine
3. Family: Joe and Audrey have been married for 23 years and have a son and daughter
4. Who he admires: President Harry S. Truman
5. College major: History

**Want to read more?**

**See full interview & video online at [TheArcNLC.org](http://TheArcNLC.org)**

### Connecticut's Financial Crisis Continues to Loom

#### *Struggling families and providers stand up to cuts in Safety Net*

*Four years of flat funding amid escalating costs proves more than nonprofits can bear*

When Governor Dannel Malloy announced \$170 million in rescissions in November, with \$21 million coming from the Department of Developmental Services alone, a chill ran through the community of families and providers statewide who desperately need supports. After four years of flat funding amid escalating

costs, the cuts would have a devastating impact on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

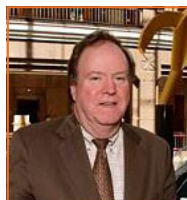
**In one week, the Governor's office alone received more than 2,700 phone calls from concerned residents begging Governor Malloy to "Save the Safety Net!"**

In response, The Connecticut Community Providers Association, CT Nonprofits, The Connecticut Family Support Network, The Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress, The Council of United Way Agency Executives, The Arc Connecticut and unaffiliated agencies such as The Lighthouse launched efforts to roll back cuts. The Arc New London County's CEO Kathleen Stauffer and Child & Family Agency's CEO Tom Gullotta were named co-captains of the region's mobilization and hosted, along with United Community & Family Services and The Lighthouse, a legislative breakfast where parents vocally opposed the cuts.

A phone and email campaign across the state targeted Hartford. In one week, the Governor's office alone received more than 2,700 phone calls from concerned residents begging Governor Malloy to "Save the Safety Net!" More than 60 families, clients and providers, along with State Representative Kevin Ryan, Representative Tim Bowles, and a delegate from U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney's office, attended the Legislative Breakfast.



State Rep. Tim Bowles, D-Ledyard



State Rep. Kevin Ryan, D-Montville

From the half-dozen family members speaking out against cuts at the breakfast arose a unified message: State supports allow parents to hold down jobs. State services ultimately lead to greater independence. **A dollar spent today saves many more in the long run.**

One parent said her son is learning critical skills that will allow him to live independently, and she "fears what will happen to him when I am no longer here." Several parents voiced fears that service cuts will interfere with their own ability to maintain full-time employment, jeopardizing the rest of their families; further, they are untrained to provide services themselves.

In the end, a unified voice begging for relief against a fraying Safety Net proved too powerful to be ignored. DDS cuts were rolled back substantially with savings being found elsewhere in the State's budget. Voting makes a difference! Let Hartford know that you vote and that you support The Safety Net. 🗳️

### Here's what you can do:

**Call Governor Malloy** at 860.566.4840 or 1.800.406.1527. Give your name, phone number and address and urge the Governor to protect the Safety Net. Let the Governor's office know that you vote.

**Contact Your Legislators.** Your voices at the Capitol need to understand how these cuts affect you as a voter along with your family. Information on how to communicate with your legislator can be found at <http://www.ccpa-inc.org/apps/LegislativeSearch.aspx>

**Be Heard.** Contact Leslie Simoes, Executive Director of The Arc Connecticut, to join the *Families for Families* movement and to learn more about critical public meetings in your area.

**Become a Self-Advocate.** Contact Denise Tift at 860.889.4435 ext.110 to learn how to become part of The Arc's Self-Advocacy group and to use your voice as a tool for change.



THE LIGHT HOUSE





## Weigh to Go, Joe!

*Joe's health was at risk.  
Could he change his lifestyle?*

**B**orn and raised in Springfield Massachusetts, Joe is the third of four children. He's always been heavy set but remained active in sports.

When Joe was 31, he moved to Connecticut and into his own apartment. That's when his weight really began to spiral out of control. Ice cream, pizza and potato chips — these were Joe's downfall, as they are for many of us. Because he is a diabetic, Joe's heart and liver greatly concerned his doctors.

At 384 pounds, Joe needed to lose weight if he wanted to live. So, he attended nutrition classes, diabetes classes and sought out information on weight loss surgery. Joe's father warned that he would have to move back home so they could monitor Joe's diet, but even the threat of losing his independence did not prompt Joe to change. It wasn't until Joe's softball coach, Pete Wagner, gave him an ultimatum that Joe finally decided to take action.



Joe before losing  
150 pounds

**"I told him his health was scaring me. I couldn't live with myself as a coach and as a friend if I didn't step in and say something."**

Pete sat Joe down. "I told him his health was scaring me. I couldn't live with myself as a coach and as a friend if I didn't step in and say something." Pete told Joe that unless he lost some weight, he would lose his spot as catcher on the softball team. "It was emotional for both of us. I assured Joe there would always be a place for him as a coach's aid, but I couldn't let him play." Pete was gravely concerned that Joe's weight would kill him if he kept playing without making a change.

Knowing it was finally time, Joe began the weight loss journey. Since Joe was not a candidate for gastric bypass, he would have to lose weight through diet and exercise. Coach Pete continued to be an integral part in Joe's decision to change his habits. "Joe and I made a deal that if he lost weight, then I would too."

Joe joined the gym. He began to meet with a personal trainer three times a week. "He works me hard!" Joe started on the treadmill, slowly working up to the elliptical and stair machines. He stayed motivated by rewarding himself with small treats after a good workout.

There were times when Joe wanted to give up. "I love to play sports and I wanted to keep playing with Coach Pete." Knowing he had to get healthy to play on the team, Joe kept going.

Joe began to work on laying off the junk food and learning about portion control. Joe and his support staff, Elaine, began making a week's worth of meals on Sundays, then portioning and freezing them to help Joe learn how much he should be eating. He learned more about his diabetes. *When should I eat snacks to control my blood sugar? What foods would cause a spike?* Advice from his diabetic nurse helped Joe add more fiber, whole grains, fruits and vegetables to his diet.

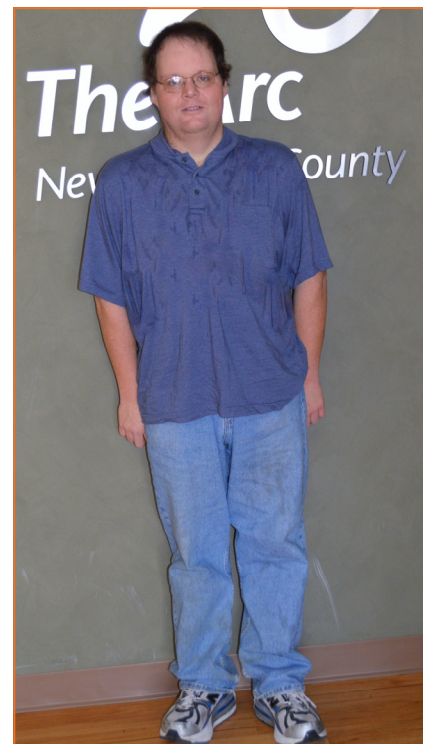
Joe got a big treat after he lost 100 pounds. His father bought him an iPad as a reward for his hard work. The first thing Joe did was download Skype. Now, he talks to his family weekly to catch up and share his progress.

Joe's love of cooking "comfort foods" also had to change. To maintain a healthy weight, he had to learn how to make his

favorite recipes in new ways. Joe began substituting Splenda for sugar

and ground turkey for hamburger. He experimented with healthy ingredients like whole wheat pastas and sweet potatoes. He quickly discovered new tastes and flavors to make the new recipes better than the old.

Today, Joe has slimmed down to 230 pounds. "I feel great! My teammates



Joe today at 230 pounds

didn't even recognize me on the first day of softball practice. Last year I couldn't even run the bases and this year I was leading the team around the field." Joe is also proud of his ability to walk three laps around Mohegan Park, which he and Elaine do regularly.

Coach Pete notices the change as well. He is rewarding Joe by teaching him to play a new position. Joe is now the starting first baseman on the unified softball team. "He runs better and hits better. He owns the position now."



*Joe's inspiration helped Coach Pete (right) stay motivated to lose 75 pounds.*

Most important for Joe is the difference weight loss has made in his health. He no longer takes medication to control his diabetes. He sees half as many doctors as he used to and has been medically cleared to work on The Arc Landscaping Crew and play all sports. In addition to softball and volleyball, Joe and Coach Pete hope to start a unified soccer team.

Joe has many goals for the future. He wants to learn to drive and is working toward independent employment on a landscaping crew in the community. He hopes to lose a few more pounds as well and loves to share his advice with anyone embarking on a weight loss journey. "Find a motivator, talk to your doctors, and drink green tea."

***Want to eat healthy like Joe?  
Check out his recipe for  
stuffed peppers on page 7...***

## **Congratulations to The Arc New London County's Newest Stars** *Team members earn recognition*

**Laurie Herring**, Chief Operations and Quality Officer, was named Staff Member of the Year by the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce.



Board member **Diane Aubin** was recently honored at The Arc Connecticut's 60th annual meeting for her many years of dedication and service to The Arc, most recently as President of the Board of Directors. Diane offers a lifetime of experience in special education and is a tireless supporter of both The Arc New London County and The Arc Connecticut.



Two members of The Arc team were recognized as "40 under Forty" stars by several local Chambers of Commerce. Congratulations go out to **Meghan Horan**, Executive Assistant at The Arc, and Board member **Dawn DeCristofaro**.



*Meghan Horan*



*Dawn DeCristofaro*

## **Community Partners Make Dreams Come True**

### ***In The Spirit of the Holidays***

A very gracious thank you goes out to everyone who donated gifts to The Arc during the holiday season. Your generosity helped to make it a special time for many of our residents and families.

### ***Local Bank helps fund gardening project***

**Dime Bank** granted The Arc \$2,500 to support the Aquaponics project at the Employment Transition Center.

### ***Panera Bread partners with The Arc during National Soup Month***

**Panera Bread** in Groton hosted a Soup drive to benefit The Arc on January 16th. The community donated cans of soup to be distributed among The Arc New London County's 13 residential homes.

### ***Knights of Columbus gives again and again***

A local council of the **Knights of Columbus** generously donated \$628, raised through the annual Tootsie Roll Drive.

## Quiet Soul

a column by  
Jocelyn LaMarsh



Jocelyn LaMarsh is 27 years old and has been with The Arc New London County for six years. This edition, Jocelyn chose to interview Jeremy (JT) Picazio.

### **Can you tell us something about yourself?**

I live in Waterford and graduated from Waterford High. I have family in Minnesota; I visit my family there a couple times a year. Christmas is my favorite holiday.

### **What are some of your hobbies and interests?**

I like photography, watching movies, riding my bike to town, camping, going on vacation with family, riding horses at High Hopes and cooking pasta, my favorite food.



### **Do you like your job at The Arc?**

I like working with Chef Tom and researching and coming up with new recipes. I eventually want a cooking job in a restaurant. I love to cook.

### **What do you do at The Arc?**

I work in the kitchen cooking, practice my photography, and spend time with staff.



*JT's love of photography has turned into quite a profitable venture. His prints were on sale at the DDS craft fair in December and can be purchased at The Arc General Store & Bakery in Groton.*

## Our Wish List

### **Pirate Party Donations**

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Pirate Party is quickly approaching. This spectacular fundraiser keeps getting bigger and better each year!

Donations from businesses and individuals are a key part of this event's success. Donations are auctioned or raffled off, with all proceeds going to support The Arc's Community Life & Advocacy program.

If you are interested in donating products, services and/or gift certificates for the Pirate Party silent auction and raffle, please contact Meghan Horan at 860.889.4435 ext.116 or visit [TheArcNLC.org](http://TheArcNLC.org) for more information and donation forms.



### **Special Volunteers for Special Olympics**

#### **Would you like to volunteer?**

The Arc Special Olympics swim team is looking for a volunteer on Wednesday nights. Practices run through June and are held at the Waterford High School pool.

The Special Olympics Track and Field team is also looking for volunteers. Practice starts in late March and will require a commitment of two hours per week.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of the above positions, please contact Denise Tift at 860.889.4435 ext.110 or email at [dtift@thearcnlc.org](mailto:dtift@thearcnlc.org)





## From Our Kitchen to Yours

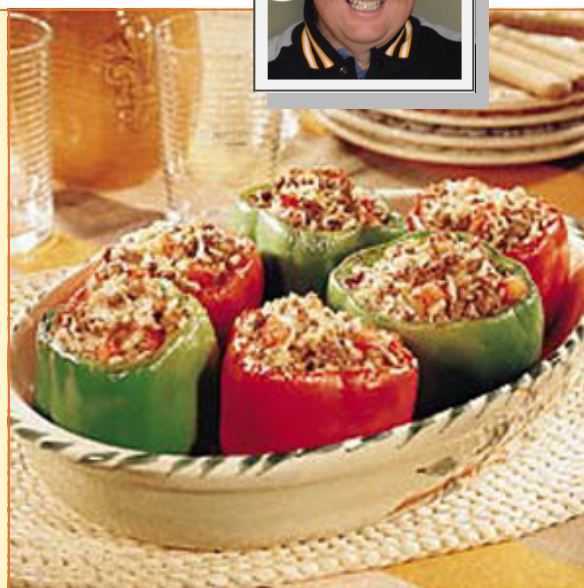
Losing weight can be tasty! Joe's recipe for stuffed peppers is both healthy and delicious. Paired with a fresh tossed salad, these stuffed peppers will shrink your waistline without depriving your taste buds.

### Ingredients:

- ◆ 6 medium green (or favorite color) peppers
- ◆ 1 pound ground turkey
- ◆ 1 bag brown rice
- ◆ 1 can of diced tomatoes
- ◆ 1/2 cup barbeque sauce

### Preparation:

Cut the top off peppers and take out the seeds. Slightly boil the peppers. Fry up the ground turkey. Cook brown rice according to instructions. Mix turkey, rice, can of tomatoes and barbeque sauce. Stuff peppers with mixture. Add a 1/2 to 1 inch of water to bottom of pan and place peppers in. Cook at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.



## Residents Rally to Save the Safety Net!

### *Community fights to protect funds for people with disabilities in Connecticut, fair wages for direct care workers*

The north side of the Capital building was a sea of yellow shirts as over 1,000 people gathered on January 30<sup>th</sup>, urging Legislators to Save the Safety Net from budget cuts. Though the skies were gray and the air was drizzly, employees, families and consumers carried signs and chanted "Save Our Safety Net." Governor Dannel Malloy came out unannounced to address the crowd, and unveiled his plan for a new state bond pool for non-profit, community-based providers. The Governor did not, however, address the underfunding of private providers for 20 years or cuts that have already devastated supports for people with disabilities. To learn more about Gov. Malloy's plan, visit <http://www.governor.ct.gov>.





**The Arc**  
New London County

125 Sachem Street  
Norwich, CT 06360  
860.889.4435



*Achieve with us.*

## The Arc NEWS

### Save the Date PIRATE PARTY!

Saturday, April 27, 2013  
7 - 10 pm  
Mystic Arts Center



**The Arc**  
New London County



**Meet Kara Lawson  
of the  
Connecticut Sun!**

**Ahoy, Scallywags!**

**ANNOUNCIN'**

A night o' spirits, tasty vittles,  
chanter songs & a fine Silent Auction  
*included* with purchase of ticket  
or sponsorship!

**Mark yer Calendars Now!**

**Proceeds Benefit The Arc New London County**

**Our Sponsors**

**Chelsea Groton**  
Feel good about your bank

**R&R**  
REID AND RIEGE, P.C.  
COUNSELLORS AT LAW

**PYRAT**  
RUMS



**For more info**  
860.889.4435x116  
**TheArcNLC.org**

