

The Arc NEWS

New London County

www.thearcnlc.org



A Message from The President of The Board of Directors

An update!

Our vision for the future comes together

A new strategic plan and Board development are keys to success

How does an agency grow from \$6 million to \$10 million and remain strong? Guiding that process is the most important work a Board can do, and we've rolled up our sleeves.

Beginning with a comprehensive Strategic Plan, Board Committees tackle critical initiatives from technology to staff training to emergency preparedness to quality programs and services. Since Board development is the key to continuity, several community leaders have been invited to join our Committees and consider growing their involvement with The Arc New London County as future Board members.

Investments in technology already are paying off as savings realized from The Arc/Seacorp merger fund software for time-keeping, gifting and transportation management. While



John Fournier

70% of agencies serving people with intellectual disabilities find themselves in deficit situations, technology and teamwork keep The Arc New London County fiscally stable.

This is great news for the people we serve and for families. The Arc has expanded Community Life & Advocacy programs with help from The United Way and community sponsors. Employees also benefit from good planning and programming: Two safety incentives and CDS¹ Certification permit modest gains for pocketbooks. With a strong and committed Board driving a strong strategic plan for the future, our success will continue.

¹ College of Direct Support, an online training resource

A Message from The Chief Executive Officer of The Arc

Ahoy Matey...

Climb aboard for the Pirate Party!

Discover fine food, spirits and scallywags galore in Mystic

Write April 28th on your calendar today and join us from 7 to 10 pm at the Mystic Arts Center for our 5th annual Pirate Party. This special Board event supporting our Community Life & Advocacy programs has steadily grown to become a sold-out event – so buy tickets now!

Your help is especially important as we launch two new programs for survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse in partnership with The Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut and United Community & Family Services.

A special treat will be a meet-and-greet with WNBA star and ESPN presenter Kara Lawson of the Connecticut Sun, along with Sun mascot, Blaze. Enjoy Chantey Songs, Pirate talk, the Tony and Denise Band and a Silent Auction. Delicious food will be provided by A Thyme to Cook.



Kathleen Stauffer

Good neighbors sponsoring the Party include Dominion, Chelsea Groton Bank, Pyrat Rum, E & J Gallo Wines, KOOL-101, The Mystic Aquarium, Green Ink, SAVA Insurance and The Kluepfel Trust.

Special guests include Master of Ceremonies Tricia Cunningham of The Mystic Chamber of Commerce and Senator Andrew Maynard of the 18th District.

Please visit the website, www.thearcnlc.org or contact Barbra Domijan at **860-889-4435 x 116** for ticket information.

Be seein' ye thar!

Janine Theve Art Fund created for The Arc New London County



THE CALL OF SERVICE, that need to reach out to help others less fortunate than we are, doesn't touch everyone's soul, but it most surely touched Janine Rene Theve's soul.

Born in the early Spring of 1991, Janine attended school in Preston, then Norwich Free Academy. Janine loved music, was a guitarist, loved animals and loved Block Island, and her energy and enthusiasm was infectious.

Though it was always there within her, it was at NFA that the Call of Service touched Janine: she loved art, and in the Art Co-op classes she enjoyed working with students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, helping them with their artistic endeavors while also creating her own works of art.

It didn't stop there. Janine would spend her own time coming to the classes to lend an extra hand and provide encouraging words for her friends in Art Co-op. Her friendship, compassion for others and the unconditional love she brought was limitless.

"It's not that successful people are givers," award winning Keynote Speaker Patti Thor reminds us, *"It is that givers are successful people."* Janine Theve was a giver. She was a former cheerleader, an actor in NFA's Drama Club, and as a senior she was named the winner of the Better Prom Sweepstakes from WFSB channel 3 television station. She won a gown of her choosing, an incredible makeover and even a limousine for Prom Night. Her video-taped gown-shopping experience was shown to the public on Scot Haney's Better Connecticut

show in April. When she graduated from Norwich Free Academy in 2009 and became a student at Three Rivers Community College that fall, her goal was to work in the healthcare industry in service to others.

Janine left us on September 8, 2011, but will always be remembered for the joy and enthusiasm she brought to whatever she attempted.

In honor of her service to students with disabilities The Arc New London County, with the support of Janine's family and friends, is creating the *Janine Theve Art Gallery*, a unified art gallery celebrating all abilities and featuring art from participants of The Arc New London County, Norwich Free Academy and artist-residents of New London County. 🍌

Ahoy There, Mates!

Get your costumes ready! The Arc New London's **5th annual Pirate Party** will be held on **Saturday, April 28th, 2012** at the **Mystic Arts Center from 7:00PM through 10:00PM.**

This fund-raiser has grown each year and features live music, plenty of grub and grog, a huge silent auction, sea chanteys and other entertainment provided by the Men o' the Sea — and you could walk the plank to get your own picture taken!

Dress for the occasion and join us as we have some fun while raising money to support men and women with

intellectual and developmental disabilities. For more information call Barbra at: 860-889-4435 x116. 🍌



The Arc Launches Sibling Project with New Partnership

EARLIER THIS MONTH The Arc announced a new partnership with the national **Sibling Leadership Network (SLN)** and formed **The Arc's National Sibling Council** to foster the active involvement of siblings of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The sibling relationship is unique and siblings are critical to ensuring the full inclusion and participation of their loved ones in all aspects of life. The partnership with SLN and the National Sibling Council will connect siblings with each other and offer them opportunities to impact policy, service delivery and the quality of life for millions of Americans with I/DD through specialized programming, events and opportunities to connect.

"Families, including siblings, built The Arc into what it is today, and these initiatives build upon their decades-long work in the disability movement. Siblings don't always recognize their own unique ability to impact their loved one's life, and the lives of millions of other siblings just like them across the country, just by banding together, supporting each other, and speaking up," said Peter V. Berns, Chief Executive Officer of The Arc National. "There is a tremendous opportunity in communities throughout the country to harness the power of siblings as advocates, working hand-in-hand with their brothers and sisters with I/DD, as a force for change. Siblings are a critical part of the movement to protect the rights of people with I/DD to be included in society."

Be a part of the new Council by joining online today. Those interested in becoming **Contributors to the Council**, by donating additional funds, will ensure the establishment and sustainability of this essential new program. Go to www.thearc.org and visit the **"I Am A Sibling" page** to learn more, join or contribute and be sure to tell other siblings you know about this unique new opportunity.

"BEING A SIBLING of a person with I/DD is interesting, funny, frustrating, proud, challenging, loving and respectful. Growing up with my sister Martha, I could usually convince my parents to let her try something they were worried that she could not do by telling them that I would do it with her. How amazing it would have been to hear another sibling's stories - to learn how to manage something differently, to share anger, to boast of an achievement that to my friends might seem trivial, but another sibling 'knows' the triumph. The Sibling Leadership Network and The Arc's National Sibling Council are welcoming networks that identify with siblings, help them connect with information and with other siblings, and learn how to partner and to advocate."

- Nancy Webster, Vice President
of the National Board of The Arc



Give to the Best!

The Arc was named one of the top nonprofits working for people with disabilities by **Philanthropedia**, a subsidiary of **GuideStar**, a nonprofit organization working to make you aware of the highest impact organizations.

The Arc was selected by a group of 79 experts, including foundation professionals, academics, and researchers. **Philanthropedia** evaluated each organization based on ability to carry out their mission, organizational strengths and evidence of impact, demonstrating that resources given to The Arc truly make a difference.

Please join The Arc or donate today. Visit our website, www.thearcnrc.org and click Donate Now to give online.



“Hide, Junie, Hide!”



Junie at age 4

THE STORY OF A MOTHER'S FIGHT TO KEEP HER DAUGHTER OUT OF AN INSTITUTION

There was real fear in her mother's voice as Josephine Walenda ran into a back room and hid behind a bureau there. In her mind, Junie's mother had reason to fear the Visiting Nurse knocking at the door. Junie was born at home in 1933 with what

we now call Down Syndrome. In those days, doctors called baby Junie a Mongoloid. They told her mother that Junie would never make it to twenty. She'd be better off in an institution “with her own kind.”

“She's *mine*,” Katie Walenda would insist, soundly rejecting the advice of medical professionals. And so she kept her daughter at home and under the radar of those who might put Junie “away.” Still, the fear that they would come and take Junie colored Katie Walenda's thinking during the Great Depression.

The “institution” the doctors were speaking of was The Mansfield Training School for the Feeble Minded (previously known as the School for Imbeciles), and by 1932 its numbers had swelled from about four hundred to well over a thousand with at least that many more on the waiting list. Commitments to institutionalization were common back then. By the 1970s, Connecticut had the second highest rate in the nation.

So Junie lived in the shadows of society, in a mostly silent world. She wore her sisters' hand-me-downs and lived in a home that isolated her from much of the world.

“Mama hid Junie away for fear that she'd be taken,” says Gladys King, Junie's eldest sister. “Though she was

very sheltered, she was always included in family events and did go out to play with us sometimes.”

“Children can be very cruel,” Genevieve Sucholet, Junie's older sister adds, “They would tease her mercilessly. ‘Hey, Chinky, hey, Chinky.’ I would get so mad I would just grab her and bring her in the house so she wouldn't have to put up with it.”

That part of Junie's story is not unlike thousands of others with intellectual disabilities whose parents wanted to shield them from the harsh realities of an unkind world. Better to be safe from the insults, from the meanness out there.

“The neighbors weren't much better than their kids,” Genevieve continues, “‘Where is *the crazy one*?’ they would say, and laugh, knowing that Junie could hear. ‘Where is *the crazy one*?’ ”

As Katie Walenda grew older and frailer, the Linkiewicz sisters began taking care of their mother and Junie, and they became Junie's guardians. While Junie's mother insisted that her daughter continue to live at home, as she became ill things began changing for Junie. A friend named Marge

helped the sisters to understand that

Junie had other options. For Junie, that meant the world was about to open.

The woman who had spent her days sitting quietly or watching TV with her mother now had opportunities to see the world. And one of the first places she saw was Camp Sea Haven on Plum Island in Massachusetts.

Though the Camp served individuals

*She blossomed
at The Arc...
She spoke
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Her whole
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Junie at Plum Island in 1984

with cerebral palsy, Gladys arranged to have Junie attend. She was given a role opening and closing the curtains for talent skits, but quickly became known as “Nurse Junie” for the care she showed for each camper. Daily, Junie greeted campers with a hug. By Camp’s end, Junie was voted Miss Social.

Junie’s progress that summer prompted her sisters to explore other options. Through the Connecticut Department of Education, and after lots of paperwork



Junie in a dress and purse she bought with her own money

and hours and hours of waiting for doctors to sign off, Junie Walenda joined *The Arc New London County* at its sheltered workshop in Preston, Connecticut.

State of the art at the time, sheltered workshops brought in work from area businesses and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities assembled items and earned small amounts of money for the work

they did.

“She blossomed at The Arc,” Genevieve says, “The Arc loved her, and she loved going there, taking a lunch, taking the bus, making friends, having a job to do!”

“She began to talk more, and she developed a sense of herself,” Gladys adds. “Junie became Josephine at The Arc. She bought her own clothes — she would hold up the money she earned and say ‘I got dollars!’ Her whole sense of herself was changing.”

Though The Arc closed its sheltered workshop in the early 90s in favor of jobs programs that pay minimum wage or higher with real employers in South-eastern Connecticut, for many years such programs were the only option for people like Junie who have intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Junie moved in with Genevieve’s family after her mother died. “It was wonderful! She was part of the

family. She was one of us. When my husband walked through the door at the end of his day Junie would greet him with a smile and ask ‘You want a beer?’ “

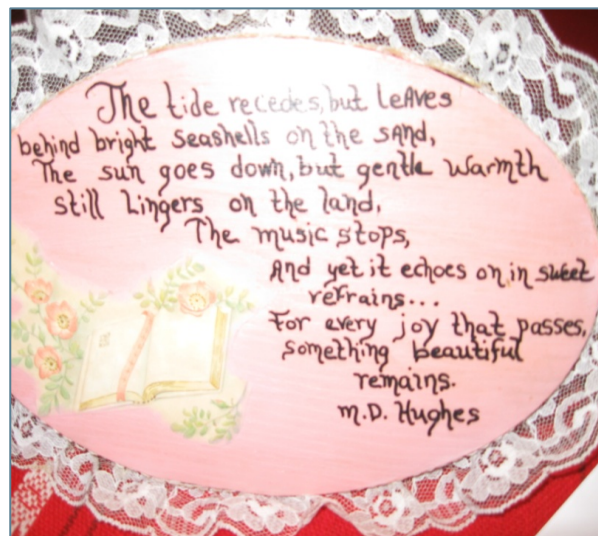


Josephine Walenda

May 26 1933

February 20, 1991

Below: A memento created by The Arc participants when Junie passed. The back is signed by everyone she worked with.



Reflections

Quiet Soul

a column by
Jocelyn LaMarsh

In our last newsletter, we introduced Jocelyn LaMarsh, a participant at the Employment Transition Center and our newest contributor for The Arc News. In this edition, Jocelyn chose to interview Julia Burst, a 23 year old woman who works in the culinary program at ETC. Julia graduated from Griswold High School and has attended The Arc for the past two years.



Julia Burst at work

Can you tell us something about yourself?

I was born in New York State. I live in Jewett City. I love going to New York to visit my family. I spend time there shopping, buying CDs with my cousins. I also have a favorite restaurant there - Kings Buffet.

What are some of your hobbies and interests?

I like to cook, go shopping and I like pets.

Do you like your job at The Arc?

Yes, it's my dream come true because I love to cook.

What do you do at The Arc?

I work in the kitchen and I also work with Jennell (life skills coach.) We go to coffee houses, out to see lla-

mas, play games, and learn life skills. I love Jennell because she has a great personality.

Any final thoughts?

I like all the staff that work with me here and I really look forward to coming here every day to see my friends.

Watch for Jocelyn's column in next quarter's newsletter!

Elements of Ellen

Elements of Ellen is a simple idea that encourages professional retailers, beauticians and others to share their knowledge of and experience with the elements of style – fashion, hair and skin care, make up and more. Ellen's family would like everyone to carry themselves with the confidence Ellen exemplified.

This effort honors Ellen Lassonde, a life-long resident of New London County, and encourages men and women with intellectual disabilities to explore self-expression through style. Particularly important is the vocational component of Ellen, which supports workplace self-presentation and professional success.

This valuable program thrives because of generous donations from Ellen's family and local vendors.

Are you a retailer with a product offer? Would you like support this amazing program? The Arc is in need of donations including makeup, skin care products, and gift cards to clothing stores. In addition, The Arc is always looking for talented professionals to educate participants about personal care and self-presentation skills. Contact Denise Tift, 860-889-4435 or visit the website, www.thearcnlc.org to learn more about how you can help change a life.

The Arc NEWS


The Arc[™]
New London County
125 Sachem Street, Norwich, CT 06360



PIRATE PARTY

Mystic Arts Center
Saturday, April 28, 2012
7 pm to 10 pm

Questions? call 860.889.4435 x116
email info@thearcncl.org
click www.thearcncl.org

Donate Items to the Auction!

Item Name:

Full Description and Restrictions:

Approximate Value : \$ _____

Please attach any advertising information you wish to include if the value of your gift is greater than \$500

Contact info:

Name

Address

Organization

City

State

Zip

Telephone

email

Reserve your tickets:

**Order
Now!**

Save \$10
Advanced Tickets \$65
At the Door \$75



Number of tickets: x \$65.00 = _____

Can't attend, but want to help anyway?

Add to The Arc's Treasure Chest!

☐ Please accept my donation of \$ _____
to support empowerment opportunities for people with
intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Thank you for your generous support!

The Arc New London County is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization that has been providing services and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Southeastern Connecticut since 1952. Donations are tax deductible as allowable under IRS regulations.



New London County

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Norwich, CT 06360
860-889-4435



Achieve with us.

The Arc NEWS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

SAVE THE DATE!



REGISTER ONLINE!

AHOY!

Our 5th Annual

PIRATE PARTY!

Saturday, April 28, 2012
at The Mystic Arts Center



**THE TREASURE
AWAITS, MATES!**

