



The Arc of Butler County Newsletter

August 2008

The Arc of Butler County is a non –profit human rights organization of family members and friends committed to improving opportunities for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. The Arc believes that all persons should have the opportunity to choose and realize their goals of where and how they learn, live, work and play.

September



Annual Arc Picnic

Date: September 14
Time: 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Where: Camp Campbell Gard
 Augspurger Rd.
 Hamilton 45011

It's that time of year again! Come and join us for friends, food and fun. Meet with old friends and make some new ones. A local DJ will provide music. Please bring a covered dish to share. The Arc will provide meat and drinks.

This year we are inviting all candidates for legislative and county commissioners to attend so they may get acquainted with us and better understand our needs.

In order to make sure we have enough food for everyone, registration is required. For more information or to register call:

- Clara 896-9379
- Betty 779-4691
- Susan 393-5937

Please plan to join us for a great time!

Mark Your Calendars! The Arc Holiday Dinner Dance will be Dec. 7 at the Meadowbrook in Ross.

Even The Score Golf Outing

Help raise money so individuals with developmental disabilities can have an opportunity to take part in recreational activities in their community. Sponsored by The Arc of Butler County in conjunction with Butler County MRDD.

When: Monday, September 29, 2008

Where: Weatherwax Golf Course
 5041 Mosiman Rd. Middletown

- Registration is at 10 a.m.
- Driving Range opens 10 a.m.
- Putt and Chip contest for Special Olympians at 10:30 a.m.
- Lunch is at 11 a.m.
- Shotgun start at 12:30 p.m.
- Dinner after golf, approximately 5:30 p.m.

Entry fees (includes gold, lunch, dinner):

- \$125 per person
- \$500 per team of four
- \$25 for dinner only

Don't golf? For \$25 plan to join us for a relaxing dinner. What a great way to have fun and support our local friends and families with disabilities.



An entry form and dinner reservations is available by calling Sharon Sheets at 513-867-5962, ext. 27 or email sharons@butlermrdd.org

Arc News

The Arc Board

The Arc of Butler County Board of Directors for 2008-2009 include:

Clara Broshear	d.broshear@worldnet.att.net
Mike Cox	mikecox@zoomtown.com
Jack Dostie	mrgrease10@hotmail.com
Doris Hall	doris.froglover@gmail.com
Susan Mayberry	SUEBEME@msn.com
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Jack Pealer	Jackjrl58@earthlink.com
Jean Sparks	
Darlene Vincent	gegum@cinci.rr.com
Rebecca Schroeder	cookie@fuse.net



The recent “work” we have supported or completed in the past few months includes:

- We financially supported some teenagers with disabilities to experience summer camp with the Young Life group in West Virginia. Summer camp was open to all students including students with disabilities.
- The Arc has collaborated with Miami University and Butler County MRDD to complete a satisfaction survey of waiver users and their family. Hopefully, this will give families valuable information to use when they choose service providers. Survey results will be posted on the Arc web page when available.
- Advocacy support and court proceedings through Butler County courts (see below).
- Updated web page (www.butlercountyar.org)

The Arc of Butler County is an ALL VOLUNTEER group unlike other county Arc’s. Our only limitation is manpower! If you would like to volunteer to help Arc please contact one of the above board members or call us at 867-5960, ext.272.

The Arc in Court

Many families of people with developmental disabilities were surprised and dismayed last year when a large service provider (Connex, Inc.) in Butler County suddenly went out of business. Ohio laws and rules that had been carefully thought out years earlier were supposed to prevent that sort of shock. Butler County MRDD personnel went to work right away to see to it (with success, thankfully) that people found new providers for services they needed. The Arc’s government affairs liaison, Robert Neubert, also went to court in Butler County, trying to find out why the provider-bankruptcy happened, to call service systems to account for this kind of disruption, and to prevent such a thing from happening again.

The petition authorized by The Arc was denied by the local court. As part of the denial the court said that The Arc had no “standing” as a party to the case. The Arc believes that it does have “standing”—that the importance of its advocacy role ought to be recognized by courts. That is why The Arc appealed the local court’s decision. Recently, the appeal to the 12th District Court of Appeals was also denied. The Arc plans to file a notice that we want to appeal that decision to the Ohio Supreme Court but retain the option of stopping an appeal at any time that further court action looks fruitless. We will keep you up-to-date with what happens next.



“Person-Centered Planning: What’s That?”

Most people have a picture in their heads about what a “good life” would be like for them. Most families hold some sort of vision—often unspoken—for bright futures for their children. Lots of people have learned that making these pictures or visions clear and letting others know about and share in them often moves the visions toward reality.

That is the intention behind “person-centered planning”—first to help individuals and families be clear about their ideas about their futures and, second, to help organize pathways toward those dreams. Person-centered planning gatherings are occasions when an individual or family works with a skilled listener (this person is called a “facilitator”) and other people **chosen by the individual or family** to describe the vision and specify ways to move toward its achievement.

At the MRDD Program we have skilled facilitators ready to work with people who want to use person-centered planning. For the person or family this would mean:

1. Identifying and inviting other family members and friends or allies to join the planning effort.
2. Being an enthusiastic and active contributor in a 2 to 3 hour initial planning meeting led by a facilitator. During that meeting people will try to share their hopes and dreams for the “focus person” as clearly as possible.
3. Helping to find the best possible place for the person-centered planning meeting to occur—a place that’s comfortable for everyone.

The facilitators will guide the conversation during a person-centered planning meeting and will keep a careful (and colorful) record of what is being said. The meeting will end with a set of “next steps,” agreed to by the group, that can set everyone on the path toward supporting the individual’s or family’s vision.

Does this always “work?” Not always. But a plan helps someone move from the hope of a better life into a set of personal commitments or promises that increase the chances that a vision will become real. There are no guarantees, but the plan can move people to act. Action is what realizes dreams.

We want to make person-centered planning available for anyone who wants to try it. Contact your MRDD Support Coordinator or Jack Pealer, MRDD Ombudsman (513-867-5924 or jackp@butlerrdd.org) for more information or to get started.

The ARC newsletter will be published three times a year in August, November and March. If you have information that you would like included please contact Linda McDowell at 422-3885. We are also looking for volunteers to help mail and distribute the newsletter. Current information will also be available via the web page at www.butlercountyarc.org

Save the Dates

Free Dual Diagnosis (DD/MH) Training

A free training with national expert Dr. Joan Beasley to learn about a comprehensive, evidence-based practice model for dual diagnosed (DD/MH) person will be held on Wednesday August 27th from 8:30-4:30 at Receptions Conference Center, 5975 Boymel Drive, Fairfield. This model helps assure that supports and services are in place to promote individual and family success within the community. The training will serve as a demonstration program to assist county DD/MH stakeholders in developing their own model. Family members and stakeholders are encouraged to attend. For more information please contact the Butler County Mental Health Board.

Ohio Sibs Conference

Adult sisters and brothers of people with developmental disabilities will gather in Columbus (Marriott Inn, Airport) on November 7-8, 2008. There they will learn about various forms of assistance available to their families, they will share information and ideas with each other, and they will have opportunities to learn from each other about their family experiences. The conference planners say: "Join us in a safe, supportive environment that provides an honest look at our family roles as caregivers, advocates and siblings. Our hope is to enhance your knowledge base so that you may enhance the lives of your siblings and other family members." For more information, check the web site at: www.ohiosibs.com or call Tom Fish (Nisonger Center, Ohio State Univ.) at 614-292-7550.

Community Employment Conference

The Arc of Ohio presents "Community Employment: A Priority of First Consideration" on September 11- 12 at the Holiday Inn, 7007 N. High St. in Worthington. Family members attend free. For a complete list of speakers and training sessions please visit www.thearcofohio.org

Autism Conference with Dr. Temple Grandin

A super conference on Autism and Asperger's Syndrome will be held at the Mets Center, 3861 Olympic Blvd. in Erlanger, KY. on October 10th. Featured speakers include Dr. Temple Grandin, Sean Barron and De. James Ball. Family members may attend for \$120.00 For more information call or visit www.FHautism.com or 1-800-489-0727

School to Adult Transition Series

The School to Adult Transition Series is a free informational series that meets on a regular basis. It brings families and students together to learn about such issues and topics as employment, recreation, leisure, transportation, social security, legal aid, guardianship and much more. The meetings are held on various Wednesdays at Janet Clemmons Center located at 282 N. Fair Ave. in Hamilton from 6 -7:30 p.m. Next meeting dates include: Sept. 10 & 24th, October 8 & 22nd and November 12 & 26th. To register or for more information call Patty at 513-738-5332 or email patty039@aol.com

Recreation Activities



Special Olympics fall schedule will be beginning soon. For activities, dates and times please contact Susan Mayberry at 513-393-5937 or email smayberry@cincigoodwill.org or Mary Swagler at 513-417-4765 or mswagler@cinci.rr.com



If you would like more information about activities in our area subscribe to the Therapeutic Newsletter. For an email subscription please email your address to sstropes@fuse.net or call Sandy at 474-2488.

IMPORTANT: If you would like to receive the Arc newsletter electronically (and save our mailing costs) please send your email address to lmcdowell9@cinci.rr.com

State and Local Information

Ohio Medical Dental Provider Update

Adult Medicaid dental benefits were restored effective July 1, 2008. The following benefits are now available to Medicaid eligible adults (age 21 and older):

- Two annual routine exams and cleanings;
- X-rays;
- Fillings;
- Extractions and oral surgery services (including removal of impacted teeth);
- Crowns, posts and related services;
- Full and partial dentures and related services
- Surgical incisions;
- Endodontic (including root canals); and
- General anesthesia

More information on the restoration of adult dental benefits is available on the Web at jfs.ohio.gov/OHP

After being closed for 2 years, the Middletown Dental Center has reopened and will be serving uninsured and Medicaid recipients. The center is located at Middletown Community Health Center at 930 Ninth Ave. Dr. Robert Merkel will be operating the facility. New patients are welcome!

Ohio's New "Capital Improvements" Budget

Recently, Governor Strickland signed a bill that provides about \$1.3 billion in "capital improvements" (buildings and building repairs, etc.) money for Ohio's state agencies. Of that total, about \$21.5 million went to the Ohio Department of MRDD. A share of the funds that come to ODMRDD will be distributed to county boards of MRDD to be used to help purchase houses where people with developmental disabilities can live. The Butler County MRDD Board has been using money like this to arrange home-purchases for many years. The local Board works through RHC Corporation of Cincinnati. More than 40 houses have been purchased locally over the years.

The new budget bill sends to Butler County two amounts for home-purchases: \$141,000.00 to acquire houses for people who use the so-called "Martin waiver," which is for people covered under a recently-settled lawsuit; and another \$141,000.00 for houses for anyone who uses Medicaid waiver supports. Butler County MRDD officials hope that similar amounts will come to the County Board in upcoming years.

National Boycott of New Movie

We wanted to make you aware of a call to action for a national boycott of the movie "Tropic Thunder" which will be released in theaters Wednesday, August 13, 2008. While intended to be a satire on Hollywood actors and producers, the film contains scenes, which are offensive and demean people with intellectual disabilities. Specifically, one of the film's characters, Tugg Speedman (Ben Stiller) plays a role as a farm boy with a mental impairment in a movie trailer called "Simple Jack...Once Upon a Time There Was A Retard." Throughout the movie, this character is played for laughs in a poor attempt at humor. Please help us be a fan of dignity and join the campaign to stop the use of the "R-word." We encourage you to contact all of your families, coaches, families and donors and educate them about the content of "Tropic Thunder." In addition, everyone can support the movement by visiting and encouraging people to visit www.r-word.org.

A Circle: It's Simple, Really

Loving, caring relationships are the key to a good life. A person's well-being is intertwined with the relationships he or she creates. Most of us cannot imagine a life without someone with whom to share our closest thoughts, dreams, and fears. Yet the truth is that many people—including many with disabilities—are often lonely, and the most significant disabling condition they face is their isolation.

*Adapted from "Weaving the Ties that Bind"
PLAN Institute for Caring Citizenship*

Loneliness is the only real disability.

David Pitonyak

Most of us know that isolation is both uncomfortable and dangerous. Bad things are more likely to happen to someone who's disconnected from other people. And, anyway, most people long for community—for the richness of connection with others. Most of the stories we tell each other and most of the celebrations in which we take part are about the vibrancy of our relationships with other people.

So, we need to act against the isolation that people with disabilities experience. We need to invest our whole selves in building lives-of-connection with and for them. We need to do this on purpose.

Luckily, others have taught us about a simple and familiar image that helps us try to build relationship-networks for others. That image is the CIRCLE. Circles join things together. They include. All right, they can exclude too, but we're not going to use them that way.

When we build a circle for someone who's been isolated or who hasn't had enough connections in his or her life, we do four related things:

1. We try to get to know the person as well as we can—what interests or excites this person? What makes or might make life rich for her? Who is already likely to have some sort of connection with him?
2. We look in communities for places and, more important, people whose excitements and interests match those of the person with whom we're circle-building.
3. We ask. We invite others to join in the effort to bring the person out of isolation—to make her or his own space with the rest of us. We do this intentionally, consciously. The experience of others is that many people say, "Yes" to this kind of invitation.
4. We work to keep circles (also called "social networks") active and sustained over time.

A few local citizens have joined together to learn more about how social networks/circles can be created, to spread the word about how important such circles are, and perhaps to create a way for circle-building to become a part of our communities' lives. If you're interested in learning more or in joining this effort, please contact Cathy Howell at 867-5962, ext. 22 or Jack Pealer at 867-5924 or jackp@butlermrdd.org