



HERALD

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO and Executive Director



Judy C. Miao

In the next few issues of the *Herald*, we will be sharing our thoughts about the four guiding principles that will drive The Arc of Somerset's new vision for the 21st century. In our Winter issue, I previewed one of the four principles, *Caring*.

The three companion principles are *Education*, *Hope*, and *Opportunity*. They serve as our commitment to creating an inclusive community of caring that is so outstanding that it will be an inspiration within the field of human services for years to come.

The significance we have attributed to each principle entails the following:

- **Education** – lifelong learning for all participants
- **Caring** – heartfelt respect and compassion among all of us
- **Hope** – advocacy and encouragement to improve the quality of someone's day
- **Opportunity** – recognizing and developing the capabilities of each and every participant

Together, ECHO gives shape to our life's work. ECHO may occur in

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Citigroup Brightens Up Valley Park Employment Center

This past November, approximately 80 volunteers from Citigroup's Warren Technology Center came



to refurbish the Valley Park Employment Center in Hillsborough. Thanks to their generous gift of time and talent, consumers who work at the

Employment Center are spending their days in a facility gleaming with fresh paint and cheerful colors.

"The Center was drab and uninteresting," said Katie O'Donnell, Citigroup's Volunteer Coordinator for Central New Jersey, who spearheaded the project. "We painted each room in vibrant colors, and gave the Center a complete makeover. It's now a much more inspiring and stimulating environment for the consumers."

Kathleen Hofer, Director, Development, The Arc of Somerset



County, called Citigroup's work totally transforming. "They did an amazing job," she said. "They painted every wall in the building, painted the concrete floors, added baseboard, tiled floors, and bought a brand new carpet for the front hallway. It looked absolutely gorgeous when they were finished!"

The event was part of Citigroup's Global Community Day, a

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A Message from Bill Mackay, President



Bill Mackay

Dear Friends,

Since our last edition of the *Herald*, our world seems to be even more bogged down in controversy. The effectiveness of celebrities, politicians, and business leaders

has been compromised by bad decisions, bad advice, and bad company, not to mention bad hairstyles. Gee, whatever happened to Harry Truman?

It makes you wish for the good old days!

On the home front, our Arc of Somerset Board of Directors is composed of very interesting people. It's our job to pave an unencumbered path for consumers and their families to receive appropriate services. As Judy Miao has said, "The Arc is a family, and it's part of our mission to serve families."

Someone recently asked me, "Why do you support The Arc? Why not let someone else do it?" That was a good question. Following are three of the main reasons I volunteer my time and efforts.

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The Arc of Somerset Mission

The Arc of Somerset County helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families realize their dreams by providing lifelong advocacy and quality services.* We also promote the prevention of developmental disabilities.

*The word families includes all biological family members, as well as friends, caregivers, guardians, and advocates.

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1. The Arc is made up of very nice people. Everyone I've spoken with at The Arc seems to have a heart of gold and an in-depth understanding of disabilities. And I'm impressed with their academic credentials. Yet Arc professionals never "speak down" to anyone. In fact, they are truly interested in what we, the public, have to say.
2. Anyone can participate in The Arc. Did you know that 50 percent of our Board of Directors is made up of parents? We certainly "walk the walk" and have accumulated considerable working knowledge of people with developmental disabilities and their families. In my 15 years as the parent of a child with disabilities, The Arc has gone out of its way to solicit my opinions and involvement in the organization. As a Board member, I benefit more than anyone, knowing that my efforts are helping others.

3. The Arc is very open to receiving help in a variety of ways. Did you know that you can remember The Arc through a gift of assets in your will? Some charitably inclined individuals simply write a check to The Arc or leave their IRA assets or a cash gift. I have found The Arc's efficiency in directly applying gifts to be among the best in the field of disabilities. Our Development Director, Kathleen Hofer, has an in-depth knowledge of ways of giving far greater than that of most, and would be happy to speak with you.

I invite all of you to get involved. While The Arc is not the Academy Awards, it's rewarding enough, especially for families, when we are compassionate and do the right thing. In today's world, that's quite a concept. Take action and get involved!

Warmest regards,

Bill Mackay

Laura Liebel Is Delighted To Be Director, Childhood Services



Laura Liebel

Laura Liebel assumed her duties as Director, Childhood Services, on November 26. Asked about her new appointment, Laura said, "I'm very excited! We have a great staff and new innovative programs. The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center is going to keep getting bigger and better."

A staff member of The Arc of Somerset County since 2001, Laura previously served as Jerry Davis' Early Intervention Assistant Director. Earlier, she had held positions in human resources with Chemical Bank and the New Jersey Institute of Technology. She also served as Director of the Somerset Handicapped Children's Treatment Center.

In her role as Director, Childhood Services, Laura would like to create new programs that enable the Jerry Davis staff to realize their high-

est potential as caregivers. Children diagnosed with autism, for example, benefit from a variety of treatments. Yet it is rare for schools and agencies to offer more than ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis). "That works for some children," Laura said. However, to benefit even more children, Jerry Davis has received grant funds for advanced training in the Greenspan and Miller Methods.

Laura's dedication is shared by her colleagues. "Our staff genuinely cares," she said. "They always go the extra mile." Laura's husband, Frank, supports her career. "He knows that this is what makes me happy—that we are making a difference in people's lives," Laura said.

The Arc of Somerset County is equally enthusiastic. "Laura brings a heartfelt commitment and a love for children to the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center," said Associate Executive Director Lauren Panarella. "And she has a great sense of humor. I look forward to her continued success."

Congratulations Laura!

*Citigroup, continued
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worldwide effort to demonstrate the company's commitment to improving the communities in which their employees live and work. "Our volunteers appreciated the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those who use

and support the Center," said Katie. "We look forward to partnering with The Arc in the future, and supporting the work they do in this community."

Thank you Citigroup volunteers!



Somerset Commission Honors Fran Maher for Decades of Volunteerism

As part of Women's History Month, the Somerset County Commission on the Status of Women honored Fran Maher for decades of extraordinary volunteerism at a celebratory dinner at the Martinsville Inn on March 9. Fran began serving as a volunteer in 1977, when she became an Officer on the Board of Friends of Weigand Farm in Milton, one of the first group homes for adults with developmental disabilities.

Fran has been a leading advocate for The Arc of Somerset County for the last 25 years. Serving on the Board from 1981 to 1990, and 2003 to the present, she was Board President twice. Since 1985, Fran has chaired The Arc of Somerset County's Program, Planning and Review Committee.

Previously, Fran chaired the Residential Quality of Life Committee for The Arc of New Jersey and served as state representative for The Arc of USA. She was also a Board member of the Parent Education Advocacy Training Center in Alexandria, VA, and the Somerset County Chamber of Commerce Committee for Affordable Housing. Moreover, Fran served as

Trustee of the PeopleCare Center in Bridgewater.

Fran, whose adult son, Roland, lives in the Franklin Group Home, first learned about advocacy for people with developmental disabilities from her father, a hotel owner who made sure that individuals of all abilities had access to jobs. Since 1993, Fran has been self-employed in the field of Chinese healing arts, and is a diplomate of the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.



Fran Maher

The Arc of Somerset County joins the Commission in honoring Fran for her treasured advocacy and support. From calling parents to action for legislative alerts to leading an Arc Walkathon and developing strategies to raise funds, Fran has been a guiding force. Congratulations Fran!

Father of Former Jerry Davis Student Pays Tribute to The Arc

BECOMING POWERFUL ADVOCATES

Moreover, Mike and Mary Kay learned how to become powerful advocates. “You get very confused,” Mike said. “The therapists literally accompanied us to our school district to help with Mikayla’s transition from Jerry Davis. It was very helpful to have knowledgeable people by our side.”

Mike finds dealing with school districts challenging. “I understand that schools have a budget to consider, and the needs of the group,” he said. “But we’ve had to fight for every service my daughter has received.” As a result of their advocacy, Mikayla’s therapies have increased over the years.



Mike and Mikayla Clancy

Speaking with the experience and passion of a motivational speaker, Mike encourages parents to be optimistic and set realistic expectations. Parents sometimes vacillate between having no expectations and chasing miracle cures. “They are setting themselves up for heartache,” Mike warned.

He also warned parents against comparing their children with those who are typically developing. “It took Mikayla 6 ½ years to learn how to wave goodbye and hello,” Mike said. “I’m as excited as a parent whose child hit their first home run!”

Mike fully expects Mikayla to be active in the community. “Some parents want their kids to become doctors,” he said. “I would be content if my daughter became a bagger at the supermarket, because she would be contributing to society and have a positive sense of self worth.”

FEELING PROUD AND GRATEFUL

In October, Mary Kay died of cancer. Thinking ahead, Mike is saving money to secure Mikayla’s future. “I want to make sure that she will be taken care of when I am gone,” he said. “If parents don’t provide for their children, who is going to?”

“Mikayla is an awesome kid!” Mike said. “She just gets better and better. And she is absolutely gorgeous. She is so happy-go-lucky—sneaky, funny, and always laughing.”

Judy Miao, CEO and Executive Director of The Arc of Somerset County, thanked Mike for his generous donations to The Arc. “We are blessed to have donors like you, and your daughter is lucky to have such a devoted father.” Thank you Mike!

Freecycle is a grassroots, nonprofit movement that reduces waste by connecting people who have unwanted items with those who want them. Those making donations can specify that their gifts go to The Arc of Somerset County.



A Father Pulling for His Child

Mike Clancy takes his daughter, Mikayla, on a sleigh ride.

Mike Clancy, whose daughter attended the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center from 2001 to 2003, has donated a new toaster, dishes, furniture, and other items to The Arc of Somerset County through Somerset County Freecycle. Pleased with the services his daughter, Mikayla, received from The Arc, Mike said, “I truly believe in the great services you provide.”

Mikayla participated in the Early Intervention and Daycare programs for 2 ½ years after she was diagnosed with autism at 16 months old. Mike appreciated how therapists tried various techniques, including sign language and the PEC and Greenspan Methods. “Mikayla really progressed with occupational and physical therapy,” Mike said. “She started using her hands to do things she had been doing with her feet, like pick up a ball. And the obstacle course made her more sure-footed. To this day she is agile.”

Mike and his late wife, Mary Kay, benefited from Jerry Davis as much as Mikayla did. They watched the therapists and learned how to apply their care-giving techniques at home. Noted Laura Liebel, Director, Childhood Services, “At most of our sessions with Mikayla, at least one parent was present to participate or observe.”

Pediatric Residents Find Jerry Davis Enlightening and Enjoyable



Dean Bruins enjoys quality playtime with Shaun.

As part of their training, two pediatric residents from the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School spent a month working one day a week with students in the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center. Abigail Alcock Donaldson and Benjamin Dean Bruins (known as Dean) are finding their experiences with Jerry Davis enlightening and enjoyable. “I’ve never worked with people who have developmental disabilities,” said Abigail. “The staff has built such meaningful connections with the children and their families. It’s great to know that places like this exist.”

Abigail and Dean are finding Jerry Davis extraordinarily helpful in understanding the everyday needs of children with

a broad spectrum of developmental issues. Abigail anticipates treating children who have disabilities as part of her future practice in general pediatrics.

“I spent a day at camp and was able to go swimming with the kids,” Abigail said. “It was great to see how much pleasure the kids get out of something as simple as dipping their heads in the water. That created huge excitement. It was so much fun!”

Dean, who is training to work in intensive care, calls it “decompressing” to get down on the floor and play with kids he finds adorable. He is enthusiastic about the opportunity to accompany therapists to students’ homes as part of their outreach programs.

“Normally we don’t get to see patients interact in their home environments,” Dean said. “The time and attention it takes to care for children with developmental disabilities is more than I realized. That exposure was great! It gives me a far better understanding of the issues doctors are not always privy to—and will enable me to be more supportive.”

Abigail and Dean are grateful to the staff and students of Jerry Davis for expanding their horizons beyond a child’s medical needs. Now they have an appreciation of mental and emotional issues as well. The staff and students at Jerry Davis are equally grateful to the pediatric residents for their invaluable contributions. Thank you Abigail and Dean!



Abigail Alcock

Sharon McClellan Is Promoted To Social Worker at Jerry Davis



Sharon McClellan was promoted to Social Worker at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center, effective October 10. In addition to providing social work, Sharon is partnering with Mary Atchey of Family Support Services to launch “Kids’ Night Out,” a monthly respite program for parents of children with disabilities. Sharon is also partnering with Tina Rear of

“Care to Share” to develop services for consumers’ siblings, and a program of information and education for parents. And she is Home Interventionist with the PACT Program (Parents and Children Together).

Previously, Sharon was Facilities Inspector for Connecticut, Quality Assurance Director for a residential provider, Director of The Arc of Plainville, CT, and Program Coordinator for Developmental Disabilities at a community mental health center.

Sharon holds a Master’s Degree in Social Work from the University of Connecticut. Congratulations Sharon!

Entertainment Discount Books Are On Sale

The Arc of Somerset County has only 70 Entertainment Books left. And they’re going fast! For only \$25, you can obtain impressive discounts for a variety of entertainment venues, including restaurants, movie theatres, and sports events. Four editions, covering different parts of central and northern New Jersey, are available.

To purchase your discount books, call Barbara Lutzky at 908-725-8544. Proceeds from the sales will be used to support The Arc of Somerset County.

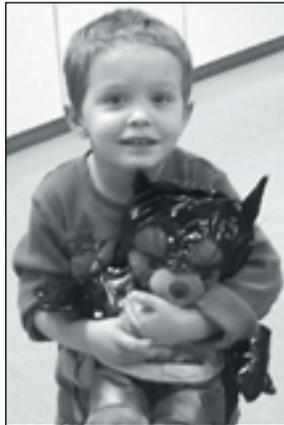
Ho, Ho, Ho! Santa Comes to Jerry Davis Bearing Gifts



To the delight of students, Santa and his merry elves visited the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center and distributed presents. It was an exciting day!



Cuddling with New Furry Friends Honor Society Students Donate Teddy Bears



Teddy bears donated by students from the National Honor Society of Ridge High School in Bernards Township were so gaily attired that children in the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center had difficulty selecting just one. Kathleen Hofer, Director, Development, thanked Sundeep Iyer, president of Ridge High School's

National Honor Society, and all of the honor society students for their generosity and thoughtfulness. "Your beautiful teddy bears have made a lot of people very happy!" she said.



This opportunity was made possible for Jerry Davis by Kapila Seshadri, MD, a member of The Arc of Somerset's Board of Directors.

Jennifer Orlick Is Assistant Director, Early Intervention Program

Director, Childhood Services, Laura Liebel is proud to announce the appointment of Jennifer Orlick, Assistant Director, Early Intervention Program, at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center.

Previously, Jennifer worked with residential and employment programs for several organizations in Virginia, including The Arc of Carroll County. She also served as

manager and trainer for the Fairfax County Park Authority. More recently, Jennifer co-owned an art and antique business in New Jersey.

Welcome Jennifer!



Ardasley Group Home Residents Care for Each Other as Family

Karen Stanchak, Group Home Manager, views the seven residents living at the Ardsley Group Home in Hillsborough as family. “Most of the time we laugh and joke, sing songs, play games, read books, or sit around and talk,” said Karen. Resident Jill Carlson has been known to sing nursery rhymes, often at the top of her lungs. Housemates Tom Ryan and Patricia Gill like to listen to music and dance. “They are always smiling and laughing,” Karen said.

Residents begin their day at 6 a.m. with a shower, breakfast, medications, and a ride to their employment programs by 7:15 a.m. After returning home between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m., someone helps to prepare dinner and lunches for the next day. Helping to cook is a pleasure for resident Latrisher Morant, who enjoys mingling with the staff.

Some evenings, particularly on weekends, residents go dancing or attend support groups or plays and concerts at Raritan Valley Community College. “Once a month, we have a meeting and ask the residents whether they are happy—and what they would like to do, eat, or discuss,” Karen said.

When she can, Joselyn Hodakowski attends sporting events and watches Barney tapes. “She loves children,” Karen said. Evelyn Ramundo, who lives in her own apartment upstairs,



Seated from left to right are Patricia Gill, Jill Carlson, and Group Home Manager Karen Stanchak.



Seated from left to right are Tom Ryan, Elliot Zuckerman, and Latrisher Morant. Standing is Evelyn Ramundo.

enjoys horseback riding and bowling. Elliot Zuckerman also goes horseback riding and is keen to look after his housemates. “The minute Elliot comes home from work,” Karen said, “he goes to each resident and asks about their day.”

“The residents regard one another as brothers and sisters,” she added. “They watch out for and take care of each other. They have a real sense of family life here.”

Also watching out for the residents are two Assistant House Managers, Mariama Mannah and Jadson Nyakeri. Direct Support Professionals include Elizabeth Kinyanjui, Daniel Conte, Angella Apunda, Janet Okore, John Misigh, and Tracey Thomas. Working around the clock, including the 11 p.m. to 9 a.m. shift, the staff coordinates daily activities such as showering, dressing, shopping, preparing meals, and driving residents to and from work. “We have to work together as a cohesive unit or we would never survive,” Karen said.

Karen’s greatest joy is watching the residents venture out into the community and enjoy themselves. And for the staff, seeing the residents happy is its own reward.

Jesica Dominguez Assists Staff with Therap Services

Jesica Dominguez was named Administrative Assistant in support of the ongoing implementation of Therap Services. During an unpaid internship in October and November, Jesica learned how to use the Web-based system and completed a significant amount of data entry. Presently she is assisting direct support professionals (DSPs) who are becoming proficient users of Therap Services.

“We are thrilled to have her return to The Arc of Somerset County,” said Karen Ennis, Director, Continuous Improvement. Welcome Jesica!

To date, 249 staff members of The Arc of Somerset County have completed computer training and have gone live with this system, a state-of-the-art secure Internet application providing integrated online reporting, documentation, and communication technology for organizations working with people who have developmental disabilities.



Students Participate in Service-Learning at Branchburg Employment Center



On January 12, twenty-two students from Bernards High School visited the Branchburg Employment Center. Their visit was part of a Service-Learning Program requiring the students to perform 30 hours a year of community service. The visit also came at the request of students who had gone to the Branchburg Employment Center last year and asked to return. "It was a lot of fun," said

Dawn Malavenda of Employment Services. "We divided the students into teams, and had them perform sensitivity training exercises. The exercises included putting on a shirt and buttoning it while wearing oven mitts, folding a towel without using your hands, and looking into a mirror and writing your name backwards."

The day's activities had students working side-by-side with consumers and watching a video of a teenager with Asperger's Syndrome, a neurobiological disorder in which a person of ordinary intelligence and language development

exhibits autistic-like behaviors and deficiencies in social and communication skills.

"The exercises gave students a small idea of what it would be like to have physical and cognitive challenges," Dawn said. "All

of the students who commented said they had a very positive experience and would like to come back to visit the consumers they bonded with."



Service-Learning is a teaching method that combines community service with program-based learning. Schools and organizations use Service-Learning as a tool to help students strengthen their academic and leadership skills while fostering a sense of civic responsibility.

Thank you Bernards High School students!

Attendance Is Limited. Sign Up Now for Camp Jotoni!

Applications for Camp Jotoni are due by May 15. Attendance is limited to 100 campers a day, so sign up right away for day and/or overnight camp sessions available from June 25 through August 31. Campers ages 5 through adult are welcome.

Also available is Action and Adventure Week from July 15 to 20. Campers can sign up for the entire week or for day trips featuring a cruise around New York Harbor, a Yankees baseball game, swimming at the Jersey shore, frolicking at Camelbeach Waterpark in PA, or camping overnight on the Delaware River.

For those interested in day camp, 10 weekly sessions are available. Day camp runs from June 25 to August 31, Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For an additional fee, extended hours are available from 8 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 5 p.m. Transportation to the day camp is provided at centralized locations within Somerset County.

Those wishing to stay overnight can choose from among five sessions:

- July 1 to 13, ages 5 through adult
- July 15 to 20, ages 5 through 21
- July 15 to 20, Action and Adventure Week, ages 5 through adult
- July 22 to August 3, ages 5 through adult
- August 5 to 10, ages 5 through adult

Summer camp gives children, adolescents, and adults with developmental disabilities an opportunity to develop social and motor skills while basking in the beauty and tranquility of nature. All programs, including arts and crafts, music, games, swimming, physical education, and nature walks are adapted to the needs of each camper.

Camp Jotoni is set on 15.5 acres of woodlands in Somerset County and features a junior Olympic size pool, cabins, a dining hall, playgrounds, open-air pavilions, and wildlife.

For more information, call Karina Alvarado at 908-725-2266.



The Arc of New Jersey Honors Somerset County's Cherished Supporters

At their annual awards dinner in November, The Arc of New Jersey presented three awards to organizations and individuals affiliated with The Arc of Somerset County. Congratulations to the following honorees for representing the best in individual and organizational support for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

TRIMLINE MEDICAL IS EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

TRIMLINE Medical, headquartered in Branchburg, NJ, received the **2006 Employer of the Year Award** for employing 12 adults who spend 20 hours a week assembling a component of medical blood pressure cuffs. TRIMLINE Medical is a privately held manufacturer and supplier of a wide range of blood pressure monitoring products such as sphygmomanometers, reusable and disposable cuffing systems, and accessories, as well as a line of diagnostic stethoscope products. Congratulations TRIMLINE Medical!

KNIGHTS, LIONS, AND ELKS CITED FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE



Three fraternal organizations in Warren—the Knights of Columbus #11049 Father James A. Russell, Lions Club of Warren Township, and Elks B.P.O.E. #2252 of Warren—shared the **2006 Distinguished Community Service Award** for sprucing up Camp Jotoni in time

for its June opening. Thanks to their joint efforts in building ramps, replacing windows, repairing roofs, and scraping and painting cabins, more than 180 children and adults with developmental disabilities enjoyed a summer of fun in the woodlands of Somerset County. Thank you Knights, Lions, and Elks!

CAROL FANNING IS NJ'S TOP WALKATHON FUNDRAISER



Carol Fanning, Board Member and Co-Chair of The Arc of Somerset County's Fundraising Committee, received the **2006 Top Individual Fundraiser Award** for raising \$4,153 for the "Step Up for The Arc" Walkathon on May 20 in Bridgewater. Carol, whose son, John, lives in the Cedar Grove Group Home, praised The Arc for doing so much for so many people with disabilities. "My family and I are grateful to the staff for their dedication and support,"

Carol said. The Arc of Somerset County is equally grateful to Carol. Thank you Carol!



Robert Goedesky Is Appointed Assistant Director, Residential Services

Robert Goedesky has been the new Assistant Director, Residential Services, since December 4. His responsibilities include the Rocky Hill, Branchburg, Cedar Grove, Mobus, and Warren Group Homes, as well as the Commons Apartments in Bridge-

water. Previously, Robert managed apartments for The Arc of Warren County.

"I absolutely love it here," Robert said. "There is never a dull moment -- whether we're managing a staffing issue or a doctor's appointment. And I'm really getting to know the consumers. They are what I love most about this job."

Welcome Robert!

Charlie Adler Is Named Manager of Branchburg Warehouse

Charlie Adler has been appointed Manager of the Branchburg Warehouse, effective January 15. His responsibilities include scheduling production at the Branchburg, Valley Park, Gannett, and Greenbrook Adult Training Centers.

Previously, Charlie spent 30 years in the warehousing industry. "It's rewarding to see the people here working

and having such a good time," Charlie said. "The consumers take great pride in their work, and the way they take care of each other is unbelievable."

Welcome Charlie!



As Venture Scouts, Consumers Feel the Joy of Learning

Consumers learned about static electricity and how to get pencils to stick to their hands like magic. They learned how to fold two pieces of paper so that they hold together. Now consumers are preparing for their own Pinewood Derby, making cars out of blocks of wood for racing. Are consumers becoming magicians?

No, they're participating in Venture Scouting, now available for male and female adult consumers through a grant attained by the Jockey Hollow District Boy Scouts.

Already, nearly 40 adult consumers have become Venture Scouts. The Venture Scouts, who meet once a month on Friday at the Valley Park Employment Center, aim to improve social skills, fitness, good citizenship, and an appreciation for the outdoors. "I thought this would be a great opportunity for adults," said Keith Welge, District Executive of the Patriots' Path Council, Boy Scouts of America (BSA).

Apparently, happy consumers agree. To prepare for their first Pinewood Derby, consumers drew the profiles of cars on

wood. "We went over aerodynamics and gravity, distributing weight, and friction," Keith said. Keith is having the blocks of wood cut into the shapes of cars so that consumers can sand and decorate them. At a subsequent meeting, consumers will install wheels and experience the thrill of racing their newly crafted cars down a 30-foot track.

In the process, consumers experience an atmosphere of teamwork, learning, and accomplishment. Encouraged and complimented for giving their best efforts, the scouts enjoy a sense of value and belonging.

"As the weather improves, BSA will allow us to use their campgrounds," said Chris Gunning, Residential Director. "We'll offer day camping, fishing, cookouts, games, crafts, and nature activities."

"We try to teach people new things every day, but the main thing is to have fun," Chris added. "And Keith really gets people involved." Thank you Keith! And good luck at the race, Venture Scouts!



On March 23, District Executive Keith Welge, Patriots' Path Council, Boy Scouts of America, helped Venture Scouts paint their handcrafted cars in time for their Pinewood Derby.

Kids' Night Out. Mark Your Calendars!

Children ages 3 to 12 are invited to Kids' Night Out at The Arc of Somerset County on 141 South Main Street in Manville, on April 20, May 18, and June 15 from 6 to 9 p.m. Kids' Night Out provides parents with a safe and caring place to bring their children at least once a month so that they too can go out and have a good time.

The fee for the evening is \$35 for children with disabilities and \$15 for their siblings. Light snacks will be provided, but parents are encouraged to give their children dinner beforehand.

To reserve your child's place, call Mary Atchey at 908-735-8544, ext. 624. We look forward to seeing you there!

Joe Finis of Biovail Donates 40 17-inch NEC Monitors

Joseph Finis, the Lead Help Desk Technician at Biovail Pharmaceuticals in Bridgewater, donated 40 17-inch NEC CRT computer monitors to The Arc of Somerset through Somerset County Freecycle. The flat-screen monitors became available through a systems upgrade at Biovail Pharmaceuticals. This donation jump-starts The Arc's IT systems upgrade. "We were

happy that The Arc could make good use of the equipment," said Joe, who is now arranging to donate office furniture as well.

The Arc of Somerset County is grateful to Joseph and Biovail for their kindness and generosity!

Ask the Advocate About Individualized Education Programs on April 17

“Ask the Advocate Day” is scheduled for April 17, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at The Arc of Somerset County on 141 South Main Street in Manville. Parents and guardians of children with disabilities are invited to ask Stephanie Kramer, The Arc of New Jersey’s Coordinator for Education Advocacy, about their child’s IEP (Individualized Education Program). Individual appointments will be scheduled at 30-minute intervals, free of charge.

Stephanie Kramer will discuss your rights under special education laws and how to become an effective educational advocate for your child. Those scheduling private appointments are encouraged to bring their child’s current IEP. Respite care will be provided for those who call in advance. To schedule an appointment, reserve respite care, or obtain more information, call Mary Atchey at 908-725-8544, ext. 624.

Maria Rodriguez Is Appointed Support Specialist

Maria Rodriguez has been named Support Specialist, effective January 22. Maria, who has worked with several agencies that support people with developmental disabilities, is also covering the caseload of Elizabeth Neary during her leave of absence.

Most recently, Maria has served as a Psychologist/Behavior Specialist with the National Institute for People with Dis-

abilities of NJ. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Caldwell College and a Master’s degree in Applied Psychology from Columbia University.

Welcome Maria!



Sparkee Gives Charlie Morgan a Get-Well-Gram on Valentine’s Day

On Valentine’s Day, Charlie Morgan, who lives at the Commons Supervised Apartments and is undergoing chemotherapy, received a visit and Get-Well-Gram from Sparkee, the Patriots’ mascot. Sparkee also gave Charlie a T-shirt, baseball cap, and two free tickets to a Patriots game!

Dale Casey, Commons Assistant Manager, said that “Sparkee’s visit really brightened up Charlie’s spirits,” adding, “he’s doing great.”

Sparkee Gives Residents Furniture and a Smile

In January, Sparkee, the Patriots’ mascot, surprised residents at the Respite Group Home in Hillsborough with a visit and a donation of leather couches, chairs, and chrome end tables. “The residents were enthusiastic,” said Group Home Manager Karen Sutphen. “They kept saying, ‘I like that big dog.’”

“The new furniture looks fantastic,” Karen added. Residents described their common living area as a spiffy hotel lobby. “We now have enough seating for all of the people who come in and out of our adult respite home,” Karen noted. Thank you, Sparkee, for the glamorous seating and smiles.

Sparkee visits with Margaret Rector and Louis Migliore.



many ways, such as a voice, sound, sympathetic response, reminder, friendly wave, repetition, affirmation, or validation.

I welcome you, our many constituencies, to share what each of the guiding principles means to you personally. We will incorporate your thoughts and vision for The Arc as we develop our five-year strategic plan for serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Somerset County.

The management team that I have been building since my arrival at The Arc is awesome. It combines past leadership

with many internal promotions and a number of external hires. This issue of the *Herald* offers snapshots of what has been happening at The Arc on a regular basis. These vignettes reflect management's and the Board's collective vision for the future as we focus on *Education, Caring, Hope, and Opportunity*.

Best wishes for a beautiful Spring!

Judy Miao
Executive Director & CEO

"Step Up for The Arc" on May 20

Rain or shine, this year's "Step Up for The Arc" Walkathon is set for May 20, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Duke Island Park, Old York Road, Bridgewater. Participants are encouraged to register at 9 a.m. for the walk beginning at 10 a.m. Featured will be foot-stomping music by DJ Ben Auletta and refreshments kindly provided by District 12 of the Grand Lodge of New Jersey's Free and Accepted Masons.

To create your own fundraising page, visit www.firstgiving.org/arcnj. Click on Get Started, then The Arc of Somerset County, and make your selections. To make individual donations, visit www.firstgiving.com/TheArcofSomersetCounty, click on Sponsor Me Now, and make your selections. For more information, call Kathleen Hofer, Director, Development, at 908-725-8544, ext. 613.

The Arc of Somerset County is a 501(c)(3) organization.

