

# Arc E-Friend News

## Calendar of Events

### January

- 11 Building Committee Meeting 1:00
- 12 Ladies Luncheon Committee 9:30
- 17 Arc Offices Closed MLK Day
- 19 Lunch Bunch 11:30
- 20 ACT Meeting 11:30
- 22 Arc Learning Series: Understanding Soc. Sec. 1:00-3:00
- 24 Arc Board Meeting
- 25 YESS Committee Meeting 4:00
- 27 Arc Advisory 6:00P
- 29 YAC Overnighter
- 29 Discovery Day 10-3:00

### February

- 3 ACT Meeting 11:30
- 5 Discovery Day 10-3:00
- 12 Downs Parent Support
- 16 Lunch Bunch
- 17 ACT Meeting 11:30
- 24 Arc Advisory 11:30
- 26 Learning Series CDDO
- 28 Arc Board 6:00
- 28 Arc Membership 7:00

## Lights 2004 Brighten the Year

### Thank You!

Thank you to the countless volunteers for the hundreds of hours needed to make The Lights on St. Paul possible. The planning and designing started months ago and the building process began in early October as numerous new displays were built and old displays were refurbished with rope lights. Subcommittees worked for months focusing on areas like media, design, and special events. Hundreds stood night after night



directing traffic and taking donations and they wished families a Merry Christmas. We had beautiful 50 degree nights and cold and windy 20 degree nights, but the cars kept coming.

This year we had over 14,000 cars, up nearly 4,000 from 2003. The donations left in the buckets came to nearly \$30,000, up nearly \$8,000 over last year. The finals numbers are not in yet. Expenses with events like these are great, but it will once again be the biggest fund raiser of the year.

We received a lot of very positive comments on the look of this year's event. It was our best over all display to date. The revamped route adding De-

Voure Volunteer Lane between The Arc and ILRC allowed for better traffic flow and moving the tunnel to the center of



the route allowed a better all around view of one of our most unique and exciting displays. Several of our new displays were created by Arc volunteers and were wonderful additions to the Lights on St. Paul.

Thanks again to all that helped make this event possible and to all that came to visit the 2004 Lights on St. Paul.

## 2004 Endowment Goal Reached

The Arc endowment has been established with \$200,000!

The Arc board set a lofty goal for 2004, to raise \$150,000. The goal was established based on a matching grant The Arc received from the Wichita Community Foundation. They would match \$1 for every \$3 we raised. The Arc was able to make this happen by establishing 3 new fund raising events , writing grants, appealing

to donor/members ,and from a portion of the proceeds received through the selling of property donated to The Arc. With the \$50,000 from WCF we are starting 2005 with \$200,000 and the board has an additional \$70,000 from endowed funds that did not qualify for the match to be added.

What this means to The Arc: If we do nothing more with the endowment, in just over 12

years it will grow to a million dollars, with nearly \$100,000 in available income a year. The board has already voted to continue the newly established events and to seek new monies to help strengthen the endowment. The funds generated through the endowment will help to start new programs, protect old programs, and assist in the continued growth and needs at The Arc.

## Membership Meeting

Attention Arc members and friends our next Membership meeting will be Monday, February 28th at 7:00 PM following the 6:00PM Board Meeting.

We will once again overview some of the happenings at The Arc. We will look back at 2004 and forward to what's to come in 2005.

The Membership will be asked to select and vote on members to make up the 2005 nominating committee.

The nominating committee will be responsible for finding nominations to fill positions on The Arc's Board of Directors. These nominees will be brought to the membership in May for the election of officers.

The membership meeting is also a social opportunity to get with friends and families to catch up on what's been happening and to celebrate all that we have done.

As always, you are welcome to at-

tend the Board meeting at 6:00PM prior to the Membership Meeting. We will try to keep our business short, so that we can start the Membership Meeting promptly at 7:00PM

Monday,  
February 28th  
7:00 PM at  
The Arc

## Leave Your Mark

You can not help but notice the Gallery of Honor down the main Hall at The Arc. Daily we have people pausing in the hall to see the smiling faces and many ask "how do you get on the wall?"

The Gallery of Honor is made up of Arc clients who have had a donation made to The Arc in their honor. Most of the faces you see were added to the wall during the building of our Arc offices in 1999. A donation was made to the building project in honor of these individuals. Several have been added since then, but we have not advertised the Gallery since '99.

During this same time people were asked to 'buy a brick', again supporting the building of The Arc. You can see the hundred of names on our patio West of the building. You will also notice the large stepping stones surrounding the area as well. Arc clients, volunteers, families, and friends can be found. A chance to leave your mark. A lasting tribute for generations to see.

We are inviting you now to "leave your mark". We will be taking orders for new bricks to be engraved on our patio, new stepping stones to be added on the grounds, and new faces on our walls in the Gallery of

Honor.

A Brick may be Purchased for \$40.00 and can be engraved with up to 2 lines with 12 characters on each.

The Large Stepping Stones may be purchased for \$500, and can be engraved in large lettering 2 lines with 12 characters on each.

Someone can be added to The Gallery of Honor for a donation of \$1800 or more.

For more information please contact Kristen at The Arc at 943-1191.

## Volunteers in the New Millennium

The more things change the more they stay the same. There have been lots of changes in the 51 year history of The Arc, but the one thing that has not changed is the fantastic volunteers who make things happen. The Arc is known for it's exceptional programs, but when we plan events, schedules, and budgets we often start with our greatest resource, our volunteers.

You won't find many of the original volunteers working events anymore, but new volunteers have stepped up to take on the responsibility to help make each event special for those

we serve. You can not replace these volunteers— they're irreplaceable, but it is important to prepare the next generation.

Volunteering has changed in America. The Baby Boomers generation became involved and they arranged their lives to make time to get involved. They tended to be loyal to one or two causes and put their time and energy towards that cause. As these volunteers began to retire The Arc reaped the rewards with devoted workaholics looking to make a difference.

Generation X volunteers are found

to be involved in numerous activities and do not tend to tie into one volunteer opportunity. They work volunteering in around their busy schedules .

What does this mean to The Arc? Our greatest resource is changing. We have many who are willing, but how they approach volunteering is different. Planning our future starts again with our volunteers. Will the next generation step up to the challenge? Are they ready and willing for the responsibility? It is up to them to make the difference. ***Will you make the difference?***

## Circle of Friends

### What is the 'Circle of Friends'

The "Circle of Friends" friendship club is a mentoring program matching 'typical' teens from area high schools with teens in special education classrooms. The program would offer education and supports to help in developing a relationship between those matched in the program.

### What is The Arc's Role

The Arc would serve as the catalyst for this program expanding awareness and understanding while helping to establish programs in High schools throughout Sedgwick county.

Beyond establishing groups in the various high schools The Arc will

provide monthly social opportunities away from the school setting to promote socialization in a free non-threatening environment. The Arc would also act as a resource for those involved in the program as well as for education staff assisting within the schools.

### What are the Benefits

The development of a friendship which can change the lives of both of those involved in the program. Decreases in inappropriate behavior i.e. drug use, criminal activity, teenage pregnancy; have been attributed directly to the development of a positive relationship in mentoring programs. Increases in grades and graduation rates are also linked to such programming.

The "Circle of Friends" could have the same benefits for a group of students too often over-looked. Having strong peer role models will help build self-esteem, help develop positive social skills, and create a support network outside of the family.

The benefits to the 'typical teen' mentor are also numerous. We have seen increased maturity, self-confidence, and have seen students gain a greater respect for individuals with disabilities. We have documented these traits in our teen volunteers and have found 85% have found a calling to work with people with disabilities.

For more information or to get involved, contact Marty at The Arc 943-1191.

## The Arc Learning Series

The Arc is continuing to offer educational opportunities to families. We have two great Arc Learning Series events coming soon—"Understanding Social Security Benefits" and "What is the SCCDDO anyway?"

"Understanding Social Security Benefits" will be led by Margaret Mertes, Benefits Specialist & Program Coordinator at Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF). This presentation will be Saturday Janu-

ary 22nd at 1:00 PM. Margaret will help families better understand who should apply, when to apply, and how to apply for Social Security Benefits like SSI.

Michelle Griffith, Community Education Liaison, and Tara Cunningham, Single Point of Entry Coordinator, with the Sedgwick County CDDO, will present "What is the SCCDDO anyway?" Saturday February 26th at 1:00PM. Michelle will share how the CDDO works

with families and agencies to provide needed services and how the process works to qualify for services.

The Arc Learning Series offers informative educational presentations on issues and topics important to you. All series events come from topics suggested by parents. If you have an idea or interest please contact Kristen or Kevin at The Arc 943-1191

## ACT: Advocates in Community Team

ACT stands for Advocates in Communities Team of South Central Kansas. The ACT team is striving to work with Kansas Legislators to work towards improving the lives of those with developmental disabilities.

ACT members act as a communication link offering a voice and an ear for both families and legislators. We strive to make heard the concerns of

those we serve... those we care about... those we love who have disabilities.

ACT has sponsored a legislative breakfast, a Candidate Mixer Forum, and have several events in the works for '05. We are also looking at working with Legislators on creating a bill focusing on funding shortages. Check out the ACT site at [www.ACT4Disabilities.com](http://www.ACT4Disabilities.com).

If you are interested in getting involved with ACT please contact Kristen at The Arc to find out when our next meeting will be held.

*ACT is a Multi-County team comprised of Community Developmental Disability Organizations (CDDO's), Community Service Providers, Families, Legal Guardians, Advocates, and other interested parties. We represent a total of 2,031 individuals who have developmental disabilities.*

## THE ARC OF SEDGWICK COUNTY

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*We're on the Web!*  
Look for our New Look  
February 1st, 2005  
[www.arc-sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.arc-sedgwickcounty.org)

### **Attention:** **Parents, Guardians, & Concerned Family Members**

***Thurs. January 27th 6:00PM***  
***At The Arc of Sedgwick County***

If you are a parent, guardian, sibling, grandparent, or loved one who wants to make a difference you need to get involved with this group. Join us as we discuss your wants, concerns, and needs for your loved one. "Where can I get help?", "What will happen after graduation?", "How will he get to work?", "Will she ever make friends?", "What happens when I'm gone?"... fairly common questions, maybe you have asked them. Maybe you know someone who has questions like these and you want to help. We do not have all the answers, but together we can work to support each other and help to work through these issues and others. We will meet together each month and form small groups during each meeting where you can discuss issues relevant to your specific concerns. Please plan to take part and take action as we set a course for our future.

We are currently meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month. We will alternate meeting times from lunch to evening to accommodate families not free during the day. Our next meeting will be at 11:30AM on Thursday February 24th at The Arc. Bring a sack lunch if you wish. All meetings are currently scheduled at The Arc. Please invite others that you think might be interested and make plans now to attend.

*To RSVP or for more information call The Arc office 943-1191.*

## The Arc's Mission

What is the Mission of The Arc? You have probably seen it hundreds of times. Do you remember it? What does it say? What does it mean? Does it clearly portray who The Arc is and what The Arc does? Is our mission being lived out in our programs and activities?

The Arc board for years have debated over what our Mission says. At a retreat in 2003 Nancy McCarthy-Snyder, from WSU, as the facilitator challenged the board again to look at our Mission. The question is not "are we striving to achieve our mission?" The question is "is this the mission we should be striving to achieve?"

"The Arc of Sedgwick County believes that opportunities should be provided to all citizens so they can achieve the highest educational and social level of which they are capable."- Did you remember it? What do you think?

The 'Tag Line' on Arc letter head and information is "Serving Persons with Developmental Disabilities", but our Mission never mentions who specifically we serve. In fact it does not mention disabilities at all. "...To All Citizens" is who it says we serve. That statement is fairly accurate in that we serve families, professionals, and the community, but our agency was created by parents focusing on the needs of their children with mental retardation. Today, our services go beyond serving individuals with mental retardation. Education and Awareness programming serves thousands in the general public each year. 85% of the calls to the Epilepsy Resource Center office are from those with no other disabilities besides a seizures disorder. So, is our mission one that represents what The Arc is about.

When potential funders look at an

agency they want to know the Mission. Donors will tell you that they are supporting the Mission of the agency. As competition for funds gets tougher it is important not to confuse the issue of who we serve.

This is an important issue. It is not about changing the focus of The Arc, but rather clarifying, so that the community can see who we are. When we evaluate our programs we should be able to say "are these programs striving to meet our mission and if so how"?

The Mission is what we strive for. It should be short enough you can recite it and clear enough to demonstrate what the agency is all about.

Feel free to share any ideas or suggestions you might have with us at The Arc or with any of our board members.