

“Community Connections” gets a makeover

A new year is prime time for transformations, from changing your appearance, your home, your relationships, your life... or your organization’s newsletter. With that in mind, we introduce to you *The Arc Independent*, featuring a new look, more focused content, and coming your way more often.

The Independent will now be published six times a year, which means you’ll get more frequent

updates on important events and happenings in our world.

Each issue will highlight one of our consumers and their experiences, as well as columns from each of our advocates. We will have columns from our executive and assistant executive directors; a list of critical agency resources for families new to the developmental disability arena; and an array of news and calendar items. We are also develop-

ing feature pages for parents and self-advocates, so if you have a story you would like to contribute for future editions, please email them to info@arcjc.org or mail a copy to our office.

Another important feature of the transformation is that we will now be accepting advertising. After perusing excruciating and long articles from the United States Postal Service about bulk

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2005 SPARC Award winners announced at annual meeting

The Arc in Jefferson County recently held its annual membership meeting at White Fence Farms, where the winners of the 2005 SPARC awards were announced.

Nearly 200 people enjoyed dinner and an evening program that also included the election of board members and officers, as well as a special tribute to assistant executive director Jo Lynn Osborne in recognition of her 25th year with The ArcJC.

Since 1981, The Arc in Jefferson County has given awards to honor individuals who have contributed to the well-being of or enriched the lives of persons with development disabilities.

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Benchmark Arcs

Self-advocate Joan Jurann just wanted to teach someone to crochet. She was a willing instructor in search of a student, and The Arc’s own Louise Todd-Stoll knew just the right person for the job.

Nursing students at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center are required to complete a service-learning project prior to graduation. Over time, several students have joined up with The Arc to assist families and mentor individuals with developmental disabilities. Conveniently enough, nursing student Tasha Mansfield was looking for volunteer work through The Arc, and she had always wanted to learn to crochet.

Call it fate. Over the course of several weeks, Joan and Tasha met regularly for lessons and shared their experiences while Joan taught Tasha to crochet. As their project drew near completion, Joan and Tasha consid-



Joan Jurann (right) and Tasha Mansfield at The Children’s Hospital.

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The Arc in Jefferson County

8725 W. 14th Ave., Ste. 100

Lakewood, CO 80215

(303) 232-1338 phone

(303) 232-9370 fax

www.arcjc.org • info@arcjc.org

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Help with winter heating costs

Has the high cost of heating left you struggling to make ends meet? LEAP may be able to help.

LEAP is a federally funded program administered by the Colorado Department of Human Services and is designed to help with your winter heating costs. LEAP is not intended to pay the entire cost of home heating. If you are applying for LEAP assistance, you should continue to pay on your heating bill.

Eligibility requirements: US citizen or a legal alien and a resident of Colorado; you pay a heating bill to an energy provider or

your heat is included in your rent; your gross monthly household income falls within the guidelines set annually and posted November 1st of each year.

Applications for assistance will be accepted through April 30, 2006. If you are in need of assistance with your energy bill, please contact the HEAT-HELP line at 1-866-HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435).

Crisis intervention is also available through the county LEAP offices. This program provides assistance with furnace repair and replacement or replace-



ment of broken windows. You must be eligible for LEAP assistance to qualify for the Crisis Intervention Program.

Clear Creek Family Clinic now open in Idaho Springs

Red Rocks Community College and Clear Creek County Nursing Service are now operating the Clear Creek Family Clinic. The clinic will meet all of your family's health needs with services by physicians, physician

assistants, and medical assistants. The clinic accepts Medicaid, CHP+, Medicare and private insurance. A sliding fee scale is available. Transportation assistance is available by calling 303-567-3131.

Services are offered at the Clear Creek Community Resource Center located at 1531 Colorado Boulevard in Idaho Springs. Please call 303-567-3149 for hours of operation or for more information.

Getting Connected

Below is an abbreviated list of agencies and community resources in the Jefferson County area. For additional resources, please visit our web page at www.arcjc.org.

Access-A-Ride (303) 299-2960: Provides curb-to-curb transportation to passengers who are unable to use RTD buses and qualify for certification under the guidelines established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADD) of 1990.

Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (303) 233-3363: Service provider for people with developmental disabilities in Jefferson, Clear Creek, Gilpin and Summit counties.

Disability Center for Independent Living (303) 320-1345

Empower Colorado (866) 213-4631: Support, education and advocacy for families of children with mental or emotional health issues, also referred to as brain disorders.

Family First (303) 914-6307

Family Voices (303) 973-5780: National grassroots organization composed of families and friends who care for and about children with special health care needs.

Jeffco Action Center (303) 237-7704: Serving homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless.

Jefferson County Department of Health (303) 232-6301

Jeffco First Steps (303) 273-1550: To enhance opportunities and support for families of young children with special needs as an integral and valued part of their chosen communities.

The Legal Center for Persons with Disabilities and Older People (303) 722-0300: Protecting the human, civil and legal rights of people with mental and physical disabilities, people with HIV, and older people throughout Colorado.

Mental Health Ombudsman Program of Colorado (303) 813-1173: Serves residents enrolled in and receiving mental health services through Medicaid managed care.

Parent to Parent of Colorado (877) 472-7201: Connecting families of sons and daughters with disabilities or special health care needs in communities across Colorado.

CROCHET

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ered what to do with the blanket Tasha had made. Ultimately, they decided to donate it to The Children's Hospital, and Joan chose to donate several more blankets in the donation.

Joan was ecstatic about her new role as a crochet instructor. Caught up in her enthusiasm, members of The ArcJC staff went along to witness the donation of the blanket and photograph the occasion.

By the time the group met in the lobby of the hospital, Joan could hardly stand still. She quickly said her hellos and then cut right to the chase, urging everyone toward the Volunteer Services office which would be receiving the donation.

After a few photos by the fish tank, Joan and Tasha stayed to walk around the hospital. As they were leaving the hospital, Joan told Tasha, "I feel warm in my heart," words which have stayed with Tasha since that day.

As with most lessons, there are both direct and indirect outcomes. Joan set out to teach Tasha how to crochet, but she also showed her student about the power of giving back to your community.

ABOUT US

The Arc Independent is a publication of The Arc in Jefferson County, a local unit of The Arc of the United States and The Arc of Colorado.

Todd Lowther
Executive Director

Jo Lynn Osborne
Assistant Executive Director

Jeanne Weis
Director of Adult Advocacy

Louise Todd-Stoll
Director of Individual & Family Supports

Ian Watlington
Director of Educational Advocacy

Genni Williams
Director of Development

Ann Moulton
Administrative Manager

Carole Turre
Secretary

Planning for your child's financial future

by Hal Wright
Independent Financial Advisor

As baby-boomers move toward retirement, children with developmental disabilities are moving into or through adulthood. Life expectancies for these young adults are longer than for any previous generation. Expectations for "quality of life" and participation in the community are higher. With these expanded horizons, a generation of families is facing a challenge not faced by their predecessors: long-range financial planning to take care of their loved-ones.

One of the biggest fears of a parent of a "special needs" child is "What will happen to my child when I'm gone?" Few families, have met this question with a plan of action. A financial plan is a family's roadmap from where they are today to a desired future. A basic plan will examine goals and needs, financial condition, cash flow, insurance, and savings and investments. More complex plans will include business, retirement and/or estate planning. A plan should not only look at the current family situation but also the implications from loss of in-

A study of 1,718 families done by NOP World of New York found:

- 29% had "taken no action," toward financial planning.
- 66% said they didn't know where to go for information.
- 63% expressed frustration that information is hard to find and fit together.
- 68% percent do not have will.
- 53% have not identified a guardian after they die.
- 72% do not have a trustee for their child's finances.
- 84% have not outlined their wishes for their child's long-term well-being.
- 88% have not set up a "special needs" or other trust.

come due to the serious illness, injury or death of a parent.

A financial strategy for a person with a developmental disability generally will address accessing services; health care needs and insurability; trust funding;

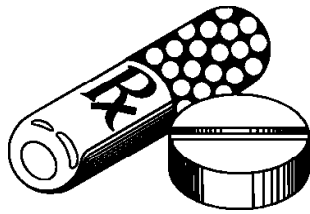
appointment of guardians, conservators and trustees; estimating the child's earning potential and the family's resources for support; and legal documentation in-

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About the Partnership for Prescription Assistance

PPARxCO is a program that connects qualified, low-income people with discount prescription drugs, direct from the pharmaceutical manufacturer.

The mission of PPARxCO is to increase awareness of and enrollment in existing patient assistance programs for those who may be eligible. PPARxCO offers a single point of access to public and private patient assistance programs, including more than 150 programs



offered by pharmaceutical companies.

PPARxCO works to provide access to free or nearly-free medicines for qualified individuals. Patients will be directed to the public or private programs most likely to

meet their needs. PPARxCO helps low-income, uninsured patients enroll in more than 150 company patient assistance programs; access more than 1,200 medicines for free or at a low cost; and learn how to contact government programs for which they may qualify, such as Medicaid, Medicare, or the State Children's Health Insurance Program

Visit www.pparxco.org or call 1-888-4PPA-NOW for more information

Fight the Fight What to do when your insurance claim is rejected

Dissatisfied patients can tap several resources for advice in disputing a rejected medical claim:

● **KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION AND CONSUMERS UNION** (www.kff.org/consumerguide) – A handy guide from two nonprofit groups that explains how to navigate internal and external dispute processes, from start to finish.

● **MEDICARE RIGHTS CENTER** (www.medicarerights.org) – This watchdog group steers Medicare recipients through the appeals process; it also runs a toll-free national hotline (888-466-9050) to answer consumer questions.

● **CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES** (www.cms.hss.gov) – The government's site contains extensive information on the ins and outs of the Medicare system as well as Medicaid and other federal health programs.

Tell us what you think!

We've got a new look, new columns and we'll be coming to you more often. Let us know what you think of the changes by emailing info@arcjc.org. If you would like to submit an article or news idea, please email us at info@arcjc.org or call us at 303-232-1338 for more information.

Respite care for caregivers of seniors

Caregivers of low-income seniors who are frail, disabled or unable to live alone without care in Adams, Arapahoe, Jefferson and Denver counties can apply for respite care from The Homecoming, Inc. Assistance includes personal care and homemaking. Call Pamela Dombrowski-Wilson or Trini Martinez at 303-526-2318 for an application and information.

Your future...don't leave home without it

by **Todd Lowther**
Executive Director

Remember those Karl Malden commercials for American Express? This is a commercial for an idea called Future Planning.

Does it seem to you that children don't move out as fast as they did in prior generations? The stats don't lie; children are hanging around their parents' home much longer than they did 20 or 30 years ago.

Does it seem to you that children with developmental disabilities never move out?

Well, that's just about as true as the last statistic, but the reasons for this one are more complicated. Are they prepared? Is the community prepared for them?

What if you asked those probing questions in front of ten or twelve family members, friends and others who know and like your child? What if that process of listing hopes, dreams, fears and realities produced a plan that would make it possible to take that one important first step—stepping or rolling out the door?

The Arc is helping many individuals and

families take that important first step. We can help. But like the old Karl Malden commercials—you're not protected if you don't have the "card." Apply for your Future Planning "card" by calling The Arc and asking for Louise. She'll help guide you where you need to start.

Has my daughter with developmental disabilities moved out yet, you may ask? Nope. Has my daughter had a Future Plan done yet? Nope. But the answers to these two questions will be different before you read my next column. Just wait and see.

MAKEOVER

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mail regulations for nonprofits, we are now equipped to accept advertising in our bimonthly newsletter.

Rates start at \$25 for a one-time only business card size ad and vary according to the size of the ad and the number of times the ad runs in a calendar year. Discounted rates are available for non-profit organizations. Due to USPS regulations, we cannot accept advertising for travel, insurance or financial services. If you are interested in advertising with us, please contact Genni Williams at genni@arcjc.org for additional information.

Finally, to keep our costs down, we will now be producing the newsletter in our offices, so we welcome volunteers to help us with the copying and bundling—check the giving page in the back of this issue for more information.

We believe these are important changes and will make our newsletter more useful to all of our readers. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please email them to info@arcjc.org.

Building your community connections

by **Jo Lynn Osborne**
Assistant Executive Director

Through my work here at The Arc in Jefferson County, I have encountered many families who have children with disabilities. Most of the time, these families are seeking assistance in working with services in various systems. In this fast-moving and constantly changing society, it seems just about the time you think you understand a system all the rules change.

Or funding gets cut.

Or there's a new computer system no one knows how to work that lists your age as 135.

And so the learning process starts all over again. The paperwork never ends. Year after year, form after form, and no guarantee that the programs you have in place today will be there for you ten years from now, or even next year.

What's a person to do? On the one hand, you need to be knowledgeable about current services and supports and you need to keep good records. Making copies and keeping thorough documen-

tation are essential. On the other hand, just as it is important to stay on top of the various services and program requirements, it's also important to cut through the busy-work of life and remember to stay connected to your community. Building community relationships requires just as much diligence as managing services — after all, aren't the people in our lives what make life worthwhile?

One way to strengthen your community connections is to begin by building relationships around interests. With this approach, you simply start connecting with others around an interest and see where this takes you — and you never really know where these connections will lead.

Take my son, David, for example. David has cerebral palsy. About ten years ago, David had foot surgery and wore a cast for a period of time. His surgeon suggested he go swimming in a warm water pool to strengthen his mobility once his cast was removed. Soon David began to ask people he knew if they enjoyed swimming. If they said they did like swimming, David would in-

vide them to swim with him. This started out with one or two individuals, but has since grown to such numbers that David schedules his swimming dates a month at a time.

Through this process, David has amassed a large circle of friends who enjoy swimming; and he taught me the importance of inviting others into your circle of support. If he had not made the effort to connect with his community, David could still be going to the pool with his mother — now that sounds like great fun for a young man, doesn't it!

With this in mind, I want to invite each of you to make a connection, too. Send us an email or a letter sharing how you have built community for yourself. We'll print these stories in our next newsletter, which will in turn help other families learn from your experiences.

I know we live in a busy world, but just drop us a quick note, or email jolynn@arcjc.org, or call me at 303-232-1338 and we'll write it up for you!

New Year's resolutions for special education

by Ian Watlington
Director of Educational Support

It's a time of year where one reflects and makes resolutions for a new year. For me, it is a time to start a diet and to rarely use my new gym pass. I promise *this* year, dear reader, I am resolved to become svelte. All I ask is to have a stalwart educational system to match my physique-in-progress. Ideally, this system should have the following resolutions:

Special Education shall be resolved to look at the whole person. IEPs are painful educational autopsies where the professionals focus on what is "wrong" or "diseased." The beauty that surrounds the deficits is now ignored. Perhaps 2006 will be the year of change.

Special Education shall be resolved to abolish the IQ test. After all, studies show it is not an indicator of future happiness or success. What it *does* do is create an unnecessary hierarchy of disability. It puts a numeric value on human worth, leading to a systematic lowering of expectations. This is a big step, so I call for the establishment of Intelligent Quotient Believers Anonymous (IQBA, pronounced *IK-buh*), complete with a meeting for parents and professionals to help with weaning from this all too powerful instrument. I assure you IQBA uses 12 standardized steps so it can be documented on a bell curve. Changing from believer to non-believer with the IQ has got to be harder than quitting smoking.

Special Education shall be resolved to making itself not so "special" at all. The notion that learners benefit from individualization and accommodation should not be reserved for those with labels. All learners have needs, strengths and different styles of learning. Society would have a powerful educational system if it would internalize the truth that one size fits none. This is not "crazy" or "radical," it is common sense and downright democratic.

Is this too much to ask? Maybe we'll have to give them a one-year extension.

The saga continues: Aging and related issues

by Jeanne Weis
Director of Adult Advocacy

The Arc in Jefferson County has recently become involved in some very interesting opportunities around the topic of "aging and related issues."

There is a lot of planning to be in done in this area since all of us are a little closer to facing "aging" with each day, and — as near as I can tell — this is a trend that will hopefully continue!

The ArcJC would like to extend an invitation to self-advocates, family members (including parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles or cousins) or anyone who would be interested to help us identify and discuss the issues that are important to you, so that we can *all* be prepared for the future.

The ArcJC will be holding a "round-table" discussion — or a focus group — on **Monday, January 23, 2006 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.** at our office, and would love to get your ideas, questions, and input. And, because we understand that it is often difficult to squeeze in the time for an evening meeting, we'd like to offer you some **FREE pizza and beverages.** All we ask is that you RSVP to our office, (303) 232-1338 by Friday, Jan. 20 so that we can be sure to have enough food.

This is an incredible opportunity to take a closer look at the multi-layered issues that are looming on the horizon, and to begin to build the network of support to be truly prepared! I sincerely look forward to hearing from you soon — please RSVP!

Join us for a
**Round-Table
Discussion
on Aging &
Related Issues**

Jan. 23, 2006
6-8 PM

.....
Pizza and refreshments
will be provided.

More info on Medicare's new drug plan

by Louise Todd-Stoll
Director of Individual & Family Supports

In November 2005 the Medicare enrollment period began. Sign-ups run through May 15, 2006. Be sure to explore a range of plans from several insurers and ask an insurance counseling program to double check plan benefits. A Medicare counselor can be reached at 1-800-Medicare. You can also compare plans and costs at www.medicare.gov. Finally, you can obtain the booklet from SSA, call the Colorado Division of Insurance, or ask your pharmacist.

Timing is critical as the new coverage started January 1. Enrollment ends May 15, 2006. After that, Medicare eligible individuals will be able to sign up only during certain times and may face penalties. Part D enrollees can change their minds and choose another plan once a year during Nov 15-Dec 31 of each year.

If you have drug coverage you may be enticed to tune this all out. *Don't.*

You may not end up swapping plans, but you could verify that your current coverage is at least as good as the new Medicare benefit. You might even find a better plan. *Under no circumstances should you sign up for a plan "just in case."* Enrolling in a Part D plan will automatically boot you off your existing plan, and depending on that plan, you might not be able to get back in.

If you have Medicaid, you are considered dual eligible and were funneled into the new Medicare benefit Dec. 31, 2005. Medicare will be the primary coverage and Medicaid and other assistance programs will be secondary.

Peak Parent Center mentor for Jefferson County

The mentors at Peak Parent Center work as liaisons between PEAK and their local communities to realize PEAK's mission of ensuring that individuals with disabilities lead rich, active lives and participate as full members of their schools and communities. The mentor for the Jefferson County region is Molly Balmes. She can be reached by email at mbalmes@comcast.net or through the PEAK offices at (800) 284-0251.

Mobilizing Families to begin in March

It's almost like entering a new world when your child is identified as having special needs. There is so much to learn and do, and it is difficult to know where to start. Our award-winning family training *Mobilizing Families* is specifically designed to provide resources to families learning to navigate the world of developmental disabilities.

Generously funded by the McDonnell Family Foundation for another year, *Mobilizing Families* is founded on the belief that information is power—when parents have access to the vital information, resources and supports available, they are better able to maintain their dignity and take control of their lives.

If you are a parent of a child who has been diagnosed with a developmental disability and you are wondering where to start, *Mobilizing Families* is for you. Parents receive books and materials that would take years to find trudging through the system on their own. In addition, presenters model collaboration between agencies, service systems, parents and professionals. By the time families have completed the training they are not only informed, they have met many of the people working in the field of developmental disabilities, and have developed new friends in the community as well.

A typical eight-week session includes



Ian Watlington, director of educational advocacy at The Arc in Jefferson County, presents information on navigating the educational system to families and professionals attending the fall session of our award-winning Mobilizing Families program. The next session begins Thursday, March 2, 2006 and is free to the public.

topics such as: identifying the dream; recognizing, accessing, and developing resources in the community; review of important legislation and how it affects you, such as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA); how to impact legislation that affects you and your family; accessing insurance and Medicaid benefits; becoming an effective communicator; and much more.

There is no charge for participation, but

reservations are required for planning purposes. Classes are held on Thursday nights from 6-9P at The Arc in Jefferson County offices. The next session begins Thursday, March 2, 2006. The session runs weekly through April 27. No class will be held March 23rd. Childcare and dinner will be available free of charge. For additional information or to register, please contact Jo Lynn Osborne at 303-232-1338.

Training for Transition 2006 dates announced

Puzzled by the maze of information and regulations regarding transition into adult life for students with disabilities? Wondering what will happen when your child leaves the school system?

Training for Transition (T4T), in partnership with Easter Seals Colorado and funded by the Colorado Department of Education, provides an important and unique opportunity to learn about the issues families face when students in special educa-

tion begin the process of leaving school for adult life.

Participants learn that while a “free and appropriate public education” is mandated by federal and state law for children with special needs, there is no such “guarantee” for services in the adult system. In fact, many people describe the adult system as a “maze”—confusing and complex, where no one really knows what the other is doing.

Now in its 5th year, T4T in-

cludes weekend sessions for parents, educators, and self-advocates. Topics include “the adult system oxymoron,” the Transition IEP, employment options in the community, understanding social security, building community resources, and developing a positive plan for the future.

For sessions including programming specific to self-advocates, attendees learn about their connection to other “civil

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T4T Spring 2006

February 3-6
Mental Health Emphasis
Rocky Mountain Village
Empire, CO

February 10-12
Rocky Mountain Village
Empire, CO

February 24-26
Fort Collins, CO

March 31-April 2
Rocky Mountain Village
Empire, CO

April 28-30
Rocky Mountain Village
Empire, CO

ArcJC schedules Winter/Spring 2006 IEP trainings

Most students with developmental disabilities are eligible for special education and an Individualized Education Program (IEPs) administered through their schools. These plans outline the goals and objectives identified by parents, educators and school therapists. As with many

other things, the IEP process can be complicated and confusing for families.

The Arc in Jefferson County offers special courses to help families navigate the IEP process. IEP 102 covers specific information about what is covered on an IEP. This session is ideal for families already

familiar with the basics of the IEP process. This class is designed for families with children aged three to thirteen. IEP 103 is designed for transition-aged students (14-21) and their families and focuses specifically on the transition IEP.

The next courses are scheduled for January 24 and February

9. Please RSVP if you would like to attend. Training sessions are offered regularly during the fall and winter of the school year. Please check our online calendar and the calendar in this newsletter for future dates and times, or contact us at 303-232-1338 for more information.

SPARC

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Nominations from board members, ArcJC staff and ArcJC members are accepted year-round. Winners are selected by the awards committee and are presented at our annual meeting held in November.

2005 SPARC WINNERS

Debbie Corthell was awarded a SPARC for the role she played in opening a whole new world to many in the mountain communities. Her creative solution to the needs of one family has been transformed into an independent transportation program for people with disabilities living in mountain communities. Her ability to find a way to make things work has truly changed lives.

Rosemary "Romie" Tobin was awarded a SPARC for her dedication to the ideals of self-determination – as evidenced through her contributions to several programs for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Romie has proven to be



2005 SPARC Award winners. Back row from left: Ben Tobin and mother Romie Tobin, Jaime Janikowski, Gary Haslell, Lori Sarine, Scott Lewis and brother Rob Lewis, Debbie Corthell. Middle row from left: Tasha Mansfield (UCHSC Intern) and program founder Sue Hagedorn, Jaquie Cupich, Peggy Pedersen, Norma Ligato. Front row, Joan Jurann, a consumer who partnered with Tasha Mansfield.

one of the pioneers of the self-determination movement.

K. Stanton Lewis was awarded a SPARC for his foresight in identifying the need for self-determination in the lives of people with developmental disabilities and setting up a fund that encouraged self advocates to be integrally involved in their own communi-

ties. His award was accepted by his sons Rob and Scott Lewis.

Sue Hagedorn and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing were awarded a SPARC for providing a unique service-learning opportunity for nursing students through their Capstone program. Interns in this program explore issues of ethics, so-

cial inequity and justice, while spending time supporting individuals with developmental disabilities.

The Shaffer Elementary School Challenge Program Team was awarded a SPARC for their commitment to creating inclusive classrooms for children with developmental disabilities. The team has fostered an environment of

acceptance, kindness and friendship in their classrooms that all schools should strive to achieve.

Jaime Janikowski was awarded a SPARC in honor of her creative and unique approach to speech therapy. She has been a great support and friend to many families, and is deeply dedicated and committed to our community of kids.

Aktion Club wins Philanthropy Day award

The Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club, a Kiwanis group for adults with developmental disabilities, were recently honored as the Outstanding Philanthropic Organization at the annual Colorado National Philanthropy Day luncheon.

Aktion Club was formed as a result of efforts by six Kiwanis clubs that recognized the many challenges facing the world of people with life-long disabilities and desired to make a powerful organization to enhance the lives of its members. The clubs of Alameda West, Arvada, Arvada Jefferson, Columbine, Lakeside, and Lakewood chartered the Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club in 2001 as the first club in the Rocky Mountain District and only the



Members of the Rocky Mountain Aktion Club. Back row from left: Scott Sedjo, George Giles, Heidi Shinn, Joe Chadwick, Jon Austin. Middle row from left: Donna Gunnison, Louise Weech, David Eaton. Front row from left: David Osborne, Jennifer Osborne, Erin Bargman, Joey Toland.

20th internationally. Ten members chartered the club, elected officers, chose the name Rocky Mountain Partners, and adopted the motto "We are Able."

Aktion club meets on the first and

third Wednesday from 4 to 5 p.m. at The ArcJC office in Lakewood. For additional information about the club and their activities, please contact Jo Lynn Osborne at 303-232-1338.

T4T CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

rights" movements, and practice both decision making and making their choices known. A "parents" panel and a "self advocates" panel give parents and students the chance to hear from those who have already transitioned from school to adult life.

In addition, information is provided on an array of services each weekend: Community-Centered Boards (CCBs), Family

Voices, Colorado Assistive Technology Project, Parent to Parent of Colorado, Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, wills and trusts, Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older Adults, Medicaid, transition programs (18-21), Social Security Administration (SSA/SSI/SSDI), The Arc, and Visions for Independent Living.

The next session of T4T will meet February 3-5 at Rocky Mountain Village in Empire, CO. This session—conducted inde-

pendently by Easter Seals—will feature a special emphasis on mental health disabilities. Our next jointly coordinated session will be February 10-12, also at Rocky Mountain Village.

Sessions run from 5 p.m. on Friday through noon on Sunday. All sessions held in Empire include a programming track for self-advocates. Professionals and educators are welcome to attend and continuing education credits are available.

Lodging and meals are pro-

vided free of charge to participants. A refundable deposit of \$15 per person is requested for all attendees. Deposits are used to hold rooms and ensure accurate attendance counts for planning purposes. Scholarships for the deposits are available.

Another session will be held February 24-26 in Fort Collins. Childcare is not available for these sessions.

For additional information please contact Easter Seals at 303-233-1666 x237.

Future plans show no man is an island

This last June, self-advocate Jan Beckett invited roughly 20 people to participate in her Future Plan session—a life-planning tool that provides an opportunity for someone to map out their personal goals and aspirations with the support of those identified as their connectors and cheerleaders in life. Future Planning is a creative process that engages a person to focus on his or her dreams while capturing the energy, connections and enthusiasm of those lives that have been touched by the person involved.

Over a couple of hours, Jan's "circle" munched on goodies and listened intently as Jan and her supporters worked to identify Jan's talents, interests, and dreams. With the support of her friends, a large "map" was created—complete with pictures and timelines—as to possible and positive steps toward achieving her dreams. The group identified potential relationships and resources Jan could connect with to begin moving in the direction she wanted to go.

During the Future Planning process, the individual identifies many short-term and long-term goals in addition to defining his

or her "North Star"— which is essentially the person's highest dream or aspiration. The goal of the planning session is to help people articulate and achieve their life dreams, and to connect the individual with people committed to supporting these goals.

As we all know, we often have more than one dream, and Jan was no exception. Jan successfully identified several North Stars: to record or write her autobiography, study genealogy, build her social contacts and community activism, and to meet Senator Ted Kennedy.

While many of the attendees shared a laugh about the last North Star, they quickly put their heads together to come up with a plan to connect Jan with Senator Kennedy. One of the attendees knew that a DDRC employee was a cousin of Colorado Senator Ken Salazar, which would be a possible way to connect with Senator Kennedy. Someone else suggested that Jan could represent Colorado at a national self-advocacy conference to be held in Washington D.C. Everyone in the room pooled their resources to support Jan's dreams.

The result? Jan attended the



Self-advocate Jan Beckett with Senator Ted Kennedy

self-advocacy conference in September, with a plan in mind to connect with Senator Kennedy. As fate would have it—and as testament to the power of identifying your dreams—Jan ran into Senator Kennedy in the hallway of the Capitol. WOW! While Jan is still working on her other dreams, she achieved two of her North Stars within an amazing three months. Good work Jan!

If you are interested in having

a Future Plan, call us. While a Future Plan is a great tool at any time in your life, a Future Plan is an especially useful tool during times of transition such as attending a new school, transition to adult life, or another transition in adult life. No matter who you are, no matter what your age, a Future Plan is a great way to capture and achieve dreams. Just ask Jan!

Planning tips: Items to have on hand in case of emergency

Although it may seem improbable, those of us in the Denver area only need to consider the disasters that struck in New York City, New Orleans and Los Angeles to know that both natural and man-made disasters do strike. Knowing we aren't immune to potential disaster, it behooves us to take steps to be prepared for all emergencies. Below is a list of important information and items to keep at hand in case of emergency.

GRAB-AND-GO-CASE

- Will and/or trust documents
- Powers of attorney
- Insurance policies
- Contact list
- Recent investment statements
- Recent tax return
- Copies of birth/marriage certificates
- Social Security cards
- Passports and other identity documents
- List of prescriptions you take
- Emergency cash
- Safe combination
- Safe-deposit box keys
- Copy of driver's license
- Computer user names and passwords

- List of checking/savings account numbers
- List of credit card numbers and company information

SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX

- Copies of will and/or trust
- Copies of powers of attorney
- List of insurance policies
- List of financial account numbers
- Family, birth, marriage, and death certificates
- Adoption papers
- Citizenship papers
- Military service records
- Loan agreements
- Certificates of deposit
- Real estate deeds
- Vehicle titles

- Mortgage paperwork
- Stock and bond certificates
- Inventory of home contents (photo/list)
- Jewelry/precious metals
- Employment contracts/business agreements

FRIEND, RELATIVE OR ADVISOR

- Paper of digital copies of documents in your grab-and-go case
- Your emergency contact information (including email and cell phone)
- Contact list for heirs and advisors should something happen to you.

Want to know more? Getting involved starts here!

Welcome to *The Arc Independent's* involvement pages. Much like the "Get Involved" page on our

web site (www.arcjc.org), this area will always contain information about volunteer opportunities,

giving opportunities, and other ways you can become more involved with our organization.

If you have any suggestions on content or opportunities, or are interested in any of the volun-

teer opportunities, please email Genni Williams at genni@arcjc.org or call her at (303) 232-1338.

FINANCIAL PLANS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

cluding wills, trust agreements, powers-of-attorney and medical directives. Financial and legal planning are parts of "life planning" which envisions the future quality-of-life for the child. The desired life situation defines the financial resources required.

You should engage an estate attorney or a family attorney specializing in wills and trusts, with current knowledge of Social Security laws and regulations, to draft the legal documents to protect your child. A financial advisor can recommend how to fund a trust and the value of assets necessary for a lifetime income. The two professionals should work together.

Financial planning is not something you do all at once. In fact, you shouldn't. Like taking a car trip, it involves finding a good route, planning time and distance, considering scenic bypasses, watching for warning signs, avoiding construction and navigating detours. For a long trip, it's important to know when to set out to arrive in time. You should begin planning for your child's adult future no later than the middle school years (at age 12-14) because of the long waiting lists for Colorado social services.

The good news is my daughter with special needs has an opportunity for a long, meaningful and happy life. My wife and I intend to be here to support her. But if we're not given that time, we've taken financial care of her for when we're gone.

Hal Wright is an independent financial advisor affiliated with Waddell & Reed Financial Services. He and his wife have three children, including a daughter with Down Syndrome. He may be contacted at (303) 770-5511.

Tax benefits of charitable donations

Editor's Note: Portions of this article were excerpted from "Maximize your charitable tax deduction" by Kay Bell on Bankrate.com and from "Effective Fundraising for Nonprofits" by Illona Bray, J.D.

As a nonprofit organization, The Arc in Jefferson County is authorized to offer tax deductions to those who donate cash or certain kinds of gifts.

Although certain gifts may be tax-deductible, this benefit is only applicable for donors who itemize their deductions using Schedule A, which is only used when the taxpayer's total of itemized items is higher than the standard deduction amount. For taxpayers who itemize, the benefits of charitable deductions can be substantial, as taxpayers can deduct the full amount of their contributions up to 50% of their adjusted gross income.

The Internal Revenue Service allows several ways to reduce your taxes through charitable activity.

Driving home deductions: Volunteer work itself does not produce a tax deduction. However, your travel expenses getting to and from the volunteer location are deductible. If you use your car to help out once you get there, that counts, too.

You can take a standard deduction of 14 cents per mile on your tax return. Or, if it's more advantageous and you kept track, you can deduct the actual cost of your gas for your philanthropic driving. With either choice, you also can include any parking fees or tolls paid.

Out-of-pocket expenses: Similarly, if you pay for some of our expenses and aren't reimbursed, these costs can count as charitable deductions. This might be buying stamps for our mailings or purchasing office supplies.

Gifts of appreciated property: You also can give appreciated assets, enabling you to avoid paying capital gains taxes while simultaneously getting an income tax deduction. This

tax move is most beneficial if you donate stock you've owned for more than a year and its value has increased substantially.

If you sell the appreciated stock, you'll have to pay taxes at the 15% long-term capital gains rate on your profit, even if you donate the proceeds of the sale to The Arc. However, if you sell the stock directly to us, you can deduct the full asset price at the time you donate and avoid the capital gains bill.

This all makes much more sense if we do an example. Let's say you bought 100 shares of several years ago for \$2 a share (\$200) and it has since appreciated to \$50 a share (\$5000). If you sold the stock yourself, you would have to pay a 15% tax on the total profit (\$4800), amount-

ing to \$720 in taxes. However, if you donate the stock directly to The Arc, you can deduct the full \$5,000 market value of the contribution, without paying any taxes on the gains.

In addition to the income tax deduction and potential capital gains tax savings, charitable stock donations can minimize estate taxes. For those donors of greater wealth, estates are only exempt up to \$1.5 million. This means any amount in excess of the exemption is subject to an estate tax rate that could be as much as 46% of the excess. If you had \$25,000 worth of stocks in excess of the \$1.5 million exemption, you could have to pay estate taxes up to \$11,500. Simply selling your stock and paying the capital gains tax doesn't solve your problem, as the proceeds from the sale would still be included in your estate. However, if you donated the stock to us, the money would be moved out of your estate and you could avoid the capital gains tax.

To find out more about donations of stock, please contact your tax advisor. To donate to The ArcJC, please contact Genni Williams at 303-232-1338.

1. NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION: *The Arc Independent* is copied and distributed from The ArcJC office in Lakewood. Each issue takes one person 4-8 hours to copy and fold and an additional 2-3 hours to label and sort. Speed it up by making it a group event! Bring in a few of your friends and make it a social event while helping us get the word out on all the happenings at The ArcJC! Upcoming distribution dates are February 23-24, April 27-28, and June 29-30.

2. DATA ENTRY: We recently conducted a survey of our membership base. A volunteer is needed to compile, enter, and analyze survey results. Also, we will be upgrading our database and will need assistance with data entry in the upcoming year.

3. GRAPHIC DESIGN: Use state-of-the-art Adobe design software to update existing and create new informational pieces.

4. CHILDCARE: Sign up to assist with childcare during our next Mobilizing Families classes (March 2 – April 27). Sessions are held weekly on Thursday nights from 6-9 p.m. Dinner will be provided to volunteers.

5. EVENT PLANNING: The Arc in Jefferson County hosts several events throughout the year. Work with our staff to coordinate the details of our annual picnic, annual membership dinner, and holiday party.

6. EDITORIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE: *The Arc Independent* is proofed by several community members to catch grammatical errors and ensure the clarity of our content. If

you have strong editing skills and would like to join the team, contact Genni.

7. CONTRIBUTING WRITER: If there is an event or topic specific to the developmental disability community that you would like to share with our membership, email your story to genni@arcjc.org. We reserve the right to edit all contributions.

8. REFERRAL SUPPORT: If you have experienced the advocacy work conducted by The Arc staff, then you can appreciate the importance of helping individuals and their families learn about their rights and connect with community resources. Help us extend our reach and impact more lives by responding to information requests from families and individuals. Training is required.

To learn more about these and other opportunities, please contact Genni Williams at (303) 232-1338 or genni@arcjc.org

Memberships & Giving

New members (as of 12/20/05)

- Brian & Terry Burbank
- Jeffrey & Toni Burns
- Robert & Ana Chavez
- Mary Curtin
- Tamara Goff & Adam Bishop
- Carol-Ann DeMaio Goheen
- Cynthia Gladden
- John & Lisa Howes
- Arnold & Silvia Karklitz
- Angela Langowski
- Rob Lewis
- James & Lisa Martinez
- Kari Mayberry
- Kathy McAdoo
- Peter & Theresa Menard
- Glenda Miller
- Sharlotte Nigh
- Dale Overturf
- Larry & Sue Ellen Reichert
- Carol Smith
- Peggy Thomas
- Shane & Sandi Williams
- Gary Wittman
- Hal Wright

Platinum Contribution (\$250+)

Kimberly Knox

Gold Contribution (\$100-249)

- Richard Billings
- Ann Cornick
- Todd Lowther
- Doug & Sherri Potter
- Kathy Stortz
- Craig Trindle

Silver Contribution (\$50-99)

- Kari Mayberry
- David Pemberton
- Lynn Robinson

- Carol Smith
- Marcia Hughes & James Terrell
- James & Audrey Wilson

Other Contributions

- Hugh & Beatrice Adams
- Rachel Baldon
- Denise & Regie Batdorf
- Jack & Marilyn Broughton
- Jim & Diana Carpenter
- Charles & Cherie Fisk
- Tamara Goff & Adam Bishop
- Tim & Linda Goymerac
- Susan Haas
- Sarah Hartway
- Diane Jurann
- Joan Jurann
- Ron & Pat Jurann
- Aileen McGinley
- Al & Patricia Mosch
- Jack O'Dell
- Dar & Elaine Vriesman
- Jeanne Weis
- Salome Wiloth
- Hal Wright

Michael Ratz Memorial

- Dorothy & Dale Alter
- James Biggs
- John & Nancy Biggs
- Brighton School District 27J
- Virginia & Wesley Broderius
- Jack & Marilyn Broughton
- Lynn & Mary Carpenter
- Madeleine Cave
- Bill Conklin
- Mary Jo & William Egan
- Exceptional Student Services, Administration Staff
- Judi Fernquist

- High Plains Pediatric Therapy, PC
- Ann Lacks
- Constance & Lawrence Lane
- Veronica & Michael Kenkel
- Patrick & Lana Miles
- Roger & Barbara Mooberry
- Al & Bobbie Morrison
- Ann & Angie Nice
- Carolyn & John Nicola
- Northeast Elementary PTO
- Doug & Sherri Potter
- Lawrence & Jeanne Rathz
- Andy Roob
- Wilma Rose
- Lena Samora
- Maureen Shearer
- Joseph & Margaret Stevens
- TLC Speech Therapy, Inc.
- Mary Ann Tavery
- Jeanne Weis

Louise Reichert Memorial

- Enhanced Performance Solutions, Inc.
- Jack & Barbara Reichert
- Larry & Sue Ellen Reichert
- Troy & Christie Reichert

Bill Harrington Memorial

Ellen Koser

Gary Buckley Memorial

D. Shannon Smith

Danny Trujillo Memorial

- Jack & Marilyn Broughton
- Gerri Frohne
- Doug & Sherri Potter
- John & Kathy Ratz
- Reajeane Stotler
- Jerry & Louise Stoll

The ArcJC now accepts credit cards

One more way to pay! At long last, The Arc in Jefferson County is now able to accept donations by credit or debit card. Simply fill out the form below and mail it in, or visit our secure online donation page (www.arcjc.org > Give > Online Donations), or call us with your information. Donations can be made on a one-time-only basis or can be scheduled for monthly installments.

Support our cause!

Full Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

Annual membership rates: Individual \$15, Family \$19, Individual with developmental disability \$5, couple with developmental disability \$7

- Yes! I want to become a member of The Arc. My dues of _____ are inclosed.
 - Yes! I want to make a tax-deductible contribution:
 - by check Amt \$ _____
 - by credit card Amt \$ _____
- Check one: VISA MC AMEX DISC
- Number: _____
- Exp.: _____ Signature _____
- Please contact me about stock donations.

Please send your completed form to:

The Arc in Jefferson County
 8725 W. 14th Ave, Ste. 100
 Lakewood, CO 80215

Calendar

January 2006

Wednesday, January 4

Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club. 4 to 5 p.m.

People First. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Monday, January 16

ArcJC closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Tuesday, January 17

Board of Directors Meeting. 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 18

Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club. 4 to 5 p.m.

Thursday, January 19

People First Coffee House. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Atlanta Bread Company, Alameda & Wadsworth, Lakewood.

Monday, January 23

Round-table Discussion on Aging & Related Issues. 6 to 8 p.m. See page 5 for more information.

Tuesday, January 24

IEP 103 Training. 1 to 2:30 p.m.

IEP 102 Training. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

February 2006

Wednesday, February 1

Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club. 4 to 5 p.m.

People First. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Friday, February 3

Training for Transition with Mental Health Focus. Starts 5 p.m., ends Sunday, February 6, noon. Rocky Mountain Village, Empire, CO.

Thursday, February 9

IEP Trainings. 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Friday, February 10

Training for Transition. Starts 5 p.m., ends Sunday, February 12, noon. Rocky Mountain Village, Empire, CO. See story page 6 for more information.

Wednesday, February 15

Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club. 4 to 5 p.m.

Thursday, February 16

People First Coffee House. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Atlanta Bread Company, Alameda & Wadsworth, Lakewood.

Monday, February 20

ArcJC closed in observance of President's Day

Tuesday, February 21

Board of Directors Meeting. 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Friday, February 24

Training for Transition. Starts 5 p.m., ends Sunday, February 26, noon. Fort Collins, CO. See story page 6.

March 2006

Wednesday, March 1

Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club. 4 to 5 p.m.

People First. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Thursday, March 2

Mobilizing Families, session 1, 6 to 9 p.m. Attendees must be pre-registered. See story page 6 for more information.

Thursday, March 9

Mobilizing Families, session 2, 6 to 9 p.m. Attendees must be pre-registered.

Wednesday, March 15

Rocky Mountain Partners Aktion Club. 4 to 5 p.m.

Thursday, March 16

Mobilizing Families, session 3, 6 to 9 p.m. Attendees must be pre-registered.

People First Coffee House. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Atlanta Bread Company, Alameda & Wadsworth, Lakewood.

Thursday, March 30

Mobilizing Families, session 4, 6 to 9 p.m. Attendees must be pre-registered.

Friday, March 31

Training for Transition. Starts 5 p.m., ends Sunday, April 2, noon. Rocky Mountain Village, Empire, CO. See story page 6 for more information.



The Arc in Jefferson County
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www.arcjc.org

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