



# Timelines



JUNE 2006

## Expansion of Arc Recreation Services

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The Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Program is putting a plan into action to address two under-served populations: individuals with multiple disabilities and residents of the tri-city area of Medford, Malden and Everett.

Funds from the City of Medford Community Development Block Grant program; the Lead for Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities (LOYD) initiative, the Ronald W. Findlay Trust and an appeal led by our Immediate Past President are being pooled to hire an Assistant Director of Recreation to coordinate the new services.

"This is a great collaborative effort to meet needs identified through our Family Survey," said Kerry Mahoney, Director of the Arc's Family Resource Center.

The Assistant Director will work with the Malden YMCA and Suzanne Gottlieb, an inclusion consultant provided to us by LOYD, to develop inclusive programs for school age children with disabilities. While the LOYD funds are intended to support students, we are developing programs for younger children and for adults with disabilities using funds from the City of Medford (for Medford families), Findlay Trust, fees and fund raising dollars. The Assistant Director will develop opportunities for individuals with and without disabilities to participate in Unified Special Olympic Sports such as soccer, basketball, baseball and swimming. Other programs being planned with the Y include fitness classes, an indoor walking club and adaptive sports. Local volunteers will play a key role in supporting the new recreation services.

Barbara Crystal concluded her term as President of our Board of Directors this spring with a special gift to the Arc of East Middlesex. Barbara invited her family, friends and colleagues to join her in raising start-up funds to expand recreation programs for children and adults with challenging medical and physical needs. She met with a committee of staff and



**Hail to the Chief**—Artist Jeff Caturano presented Barbara Crystal with a painting he created of her Melrose home in recognition of her service as President of the Arc of East Middlesex's Board of Directors. Barbara's parting gift to the Arc was a campaign to raise funds for new recreation services for individuals with multiple disabilities.

parents to brainstorm about how the need could be addressed.

Barbara knew the joy that participating in an adaptive ski program had brought to her son David and wanted to see similar opportunities provided through the Arc. As a result, we are planning a range of programs from bowling, swimming and basketball to performing arts and a winter ski and skate program for next year. At press time, Barbara had already raised over \$5,000 for the new services.

"I am excited about the new programs in recreation and wanted to help if I could. My friends and family are very supportive of my

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## The Arc of East Middlesex Board of Directors

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### *Timelines is produced by:*

Jo Ann Simons, MSW  
*Executive Director*

Susan Ring Brown  
*Director of Development*

Paula Vratos  
*Administrative Assistant*

## Four New Residences Opened



The Arc of East Middlesex opened four new residences in May and June in connection with the wrap up of the Boulet settlement. The settlement required the state to move individuals with developmental disabilities off of the Department of Mental Retardation's residential waiting list and into placements by the 30th of this month. As a result, we had a short window of time to utilize available funding to assist 14 adults in achieving their dreams of living more independently. This meant identifying, financing, purchasing, renovating, furnishing and staffing four new programs at once. Most importantly, it meant working with individuals and families to ensure good transitions. Most of the men and women were already well known to us because of their participation in our vocational, family support or recreation programs. We also welcomed a few new faces and are pleased to have them join the Arc family.

We've always been there to help families, and now we are there to assist them through the sometimes difficult process of letting go and to witness the joy of men and women spreading their wings.

"I can't believe it. I deserve it, right?" one of the women said with great excitement about her opportunity to live more independently.

She does deserve it. People with disabilities have the right to live as independently as possible in the community. The Arc of East Middlesex is committed to providing the support needed to exercise that right.

Here are the happy statistics: Two women have moved into a condo on Main Street in Reading. Three young men have moved into a condo on Nahant Street in Wakefield. Four women have moved into a house on Spruce Street in Wakefield and five women are scheduled to move into a house on Water Street in Wakefield this month. We are grateful to the Finlay Trust for providing us with a grant of \$25,000 to make the Water Street home fully accessible to provide for the long-term needs of the new residents. As with all of our residential programs, staffing support varies based on the needs of the residents being supported. Some individuals need just a few hours of support each week and some will have staff with them at all times.

It took the work of a great team to get these homes up and running to meet the June 30th deadline. I'd like to recognize Michael Berardo, our Director of Operations; Tina Claydon, our Director of Residential Services; Annie Tetrault, Assistant Residential Director and Health Care Coordinator; Program Coordinators Kathy Custer, Christine Burke and Tracy Hanson; Mark Mahoney, our Facilities Manager; Bill Doyle, our multi-talented Transportation Manager; and all of the individuals and families who are partnering with us. Special thanks to Dan Lincoln, DMR Metro North Area Director; Mindy Widtfeldt of Century 21 Greers; and Tom Sellers of STA, our General Contractor.



## EMPLOYEE PROFILE

# Brian Gordon, Director of School to Work Transition Services *Making Connections through Comedy*

**B**rian Gordon has a great resume to draw on in coordinating The Arc of East Middlesex's *School to Work Transition* program and in working directly with students. He has teaching experience using visual art as a tool for literacy at the Fuller Museum of Art in his native Brockton and working with at-risk high school kids in Vermont. He's worked as a counselor in a transitional community. As a student at Skidmore College, where he majored in English and Business, he was a teaching assistant for his mentor, Pulitzer Prize winning novelist Steven Millhauser. Brian is also an artist and musician, but perhaps his most surprising asset is that he is a stand up comedian.

"I've found that kids with PDD and Asperger's gravitate towards humor. I help them understand the difference between the literal and the figurative, to learn to know when someone is kidding," said Brian, who appeared on *Last Comic Standing* on NBC and performs regularly at *The Comedy Studio* in Harvard Square.

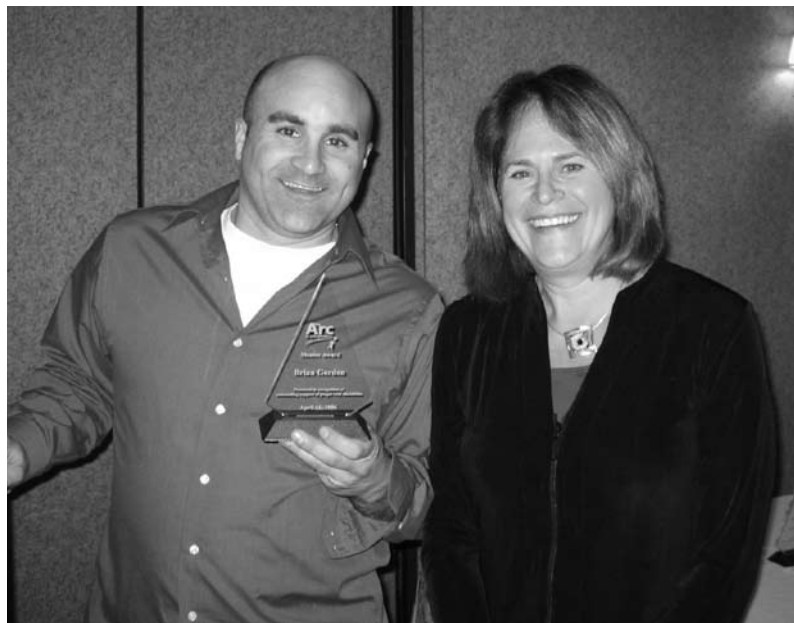
This ability to assist individuals in learning to pick up social cues is important to students with disabilities as they make the transition from high school to the world of work. The Arc's *School to Work* program currently supports 30 students between the ages of 16 to 22 from Everett, Lynn, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, and Stoneham. Brian and the five *School to Work* specialists in the program provide students with anywhere from one to 25 hours of support each week, focusing on mock interviews, job coaching, proper work behavior, phone skills, computer skills, social skills, interpersonal skills, and reading and literacy.

"We're a community based operation. We provide the functional life component that helps them use all of the things they are learning in the classroom," said Brian.

Brian's humor and other skills have made such a difference for one teen that his father nominated Brian for the Arc's *Mentor Award*, which he received in April. This student has progressed from being afraid to leave the house to being able to take public transportation and hold two jobs in the community.

"We have individualized plans for each student we work with and also adapt to the needs of each school system," said Brian. "I believe our approach is both unique and complimentary to what school systems provide the students in our program—and that's the key. Everything is a build and it takes being willing to think outside of the box to make in-roads with each student. We just want students to believe in their potential to achieve any relative goals."

Students have been placed in successful volunteer and paid positions at local libraries, supermarkets and nursing homes. They have also blossomed socially.



**Mentor of the Year**—Brian Gordon accepts The Arc's Mentor of the Year Award from Jo Ann Simons, Executive Director

"When you build their self esteem and their ability to be a social creature, they will succeed in their job. They (each set of skills) aid each other—having a job makes them feel good about themselves and makes them want to reach out socially," added Brian.

Brian got into comedy through improvisation in college theater and from indirect encouragement from his favorite aunt (who felt his life in letters to her had tons of performance value). He believes his ability to adapt to ever-changing audiences, honed while performing, has great value for his students.

"Being able to read a situation and having faith in what you're doing is really important. And, I think it's good for the students to see people doing other things (like comedy), taking a chance on something in the world," said Brian.

Brian himself has certainly remained open to new opportunities and possibilities. He originally applied for an art instructor position with the Arc two years ago, accepted an employment specialist job here and became Director of the *School to Work* Program eight months ago. What he thought might be a temporary position on the road to LA to become a full-time comic turned into a new passion.

"It's helped me as a person and made me a better comedian," Brian said of his work with the Arc.

*For more information regarding The Arc of East Middlesex's School to Work Transition Services, please call Brian Gordon at 781-942-4888, ext. 5028.*

## The Arc of East Middlesex is Pleased to Acknowledge Gifts from the Following Donors...

### Friends—Gifts up to \$100

United Way of Mass Bay  
Patricia A. Cameron

### Director's Circle—Gifts \$2,500–\$4,999

STA Construction, Tom Sellers

### Grants

BOSTnet LOYD Grant: \$7,500 for inclusive recreation in the tri-city area of Everett, Malden and Medford.

Ronald W. Findlay Trust: \$25,000 for accessibility renovations for our new Water Street residence and \$20,400 for expansion of recreation services for the tri-city area of Everett, Malden and Medford.

### Tribute Gifts

Use the pledge form on the fundraising page of our website ([www.themarc.org](http://www.themarc.org)) to remember a loved one or honor a friend or relative for a special occasion. Remember graduations & Father's Day are coming up! We are pleased to acknowledge the following tribute gifts.

### In Honor of David Crystal's 16th Birthday For expansion of Recreation Services for individuals with multiple disabilities:

T F Boyle Transportation, Inc.  
Donna Ponte Pereira, DMD  
Streetwear, Inc., Henry Katz

JoAnn and Joel Anderson  
Christine and Gerry Brophy  
Henry and Anna Cobb  
Elsa Crystal  
Cerise Jalelian  
Helen and Michael Kotulich  
Joe and Ileana Kotulich  
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Amy B. Lyons  
John E. Marston and Martha Smith-Marston  
Jim and Jane Mitchell  
Ernest and Ruth S. Mackley  
John and Teresa O'Brien  
Anonymous  
Jay and M.A. Ricci  
Suzanne M. Rivitz  
Anonymous  
James and Dottie Stawarky  
James and Ann-Marie Stawarky, Jr.  
Dan Sullivan

Andrea and Neal Taffe  
Celina Weglinski  
Ken and Kazia Zawadzki

### Memorials

*In Memory of M. Alice Foye*  
Carol Scully

*In Memory of John J. "Jack" Hickey*  
William and Roberta Campbell

### Inkind Gifts

Janet De Kappy Sanfilippo, household furniture  
Deb Mason McCaffrey, sewing materials for the Center for Emerging Artists  
Kristin Noseworthy, 4 tickets to the Patriots  
All-star Tewksbury Benefit  
Mary Paulsen family, 30 Jazz Cd's

### New Members

*Welcome to:*  
Valerie Aliferis  
Wendy Carlson  
Lisa Thayer

*Gifts received through May 3, 2006*

## Volunteers Make a Difference!

The Arc of East Middlesex has volunteer opportunities in several areas.

Love the outdoors? We are looking for businesses and community groups interested in a **day of service** to help spruce up the yards at some of our residences.

We are seeking volunteers to take a group home resident (s) to **religious services** on a regular basis. We will match volunteers with residents of the same faith and geographical area.

We also need **companions** to visit, have conversation and tea and cookies with some retired women in a group home. Hours are flexible. Companions are also needed to visit, play video games and maybe go to the gym or local sporting events with some men in a group home. Hours are flexible. To apply or for more information, please call Pat Simons at 781-942-4888, ext. 4032 or email [volunteers@themarc.org](mailto:volunteers@themarc.org).

## Expansion of Arc Recreation Services

*Continued from page 1*

son, David, who has multiple handicaps, and I am very grateful to them also for their generous financial support for the Arc," she said.

Although Barbara has completed her term as President, she will remain an active member of the board of Directors

and have the opportunity to closely watch the development of these important new services.

*For more information about the Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Program, watch for their quarterly newsletter or call Chenine Johnson at 781-942-4888, ext. 4036.*

## Pandemic Flu Update

By now, you should be aware of the real threat that an outbreak of the H5N1 flu poses for all of us. Each family should have their own plan on how they are going to respond when the flu breaks out. According the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, there will be a pandemic flu sometime in the next few months to the next few years. For additional information, please go to [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) and [www.mass.gov/hhs/coop](http://www.mass.gov/hhs/coop).

## Upcoming Workshops, Exhibits and Events



**Flight School—Oil on Panel by Christina Preher, 2006**

### Instructor Exhibit

Check out Center for Emerging Artists' Director **Christina's Preher's Paintings & Drawings** exhibit June 1–30th at Gallery 321 at the Washington Street Art Center, 321 Washington Street, Somerville, 02143. **Opening Reception 7 to 9 p.m., June 2nd.** Gallery hours Saturday 12 to 4 p.m. and by appointment 617-623-5315.

### Center for Emerging Artists

Our artists are looking forward to two Tri-City exhibits in June. Look for our show at **Commerce Place**,

350 Main Street, Malden during the **last two weeks of June**. Their hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Channel 3**, at 5 High Street, Medford will be hosting an exhibit for us for the **month of June**. Their hours are Monday through Friday from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 5 p.m.

### Supporting our Siblings...

**You don't have to do it alone**

**Adult Sibling Group – 7 to 9 pm., Wednesday, June 7, 2006**

Resources, Information and Problem-Solving. Special guest speaker is Kerry Mahoney, Director of our Family Resource Center. Held at The Arc of East Middlesex, 20 Gould Street, Reading. RSVP to Michelle Faugno 781-942-4888 ext. 4018 or email fam2fam@theemarc.org

### Teen Social Skills Workshop & Dance

Workshop on social skills, introductions, coping strategies and dancing Friday, June 23, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at The arc of East Middlesex, 20 Gould Street, Reading. Call 781-942-4888, ext. 4036 or email [rec@theemarc.org](mailto:rec@theemarc.org) to register. Summer Sizzler Dance, Friday, June 30 from 7 to 10 p.m. at a Reading school to be announced. \$10 donation suggested. To register call 781-942-4888, ext. 4036 or email [rec@theemarc.org](mailto:rec@theemarc.org).

### A Dads' Celebration!

*Sponsored by The Arc of East Middlesex's Father's Network*

Join other Dads and their kids on **Tuesday, June 27th at 7:05 pm** to see the Lowell Spinners play the Houston Tri-City Valley Cats! Meet at Lelacheur Park in Lowell—we have great seats reserved and they will accommodate wheelchairs. Cost is \$5 per family. Call today to reserve your seats! Please RSVP to Kerry Mahoney (781)942-4888 x 14015# or email [km@theemarc.org](mailto:km@theemarc.org) or mail to: 20 Gould Street Reading, Ma 01867 by June 9th. Please make checks payable to The Arc of East Middlesex. When you RSVP please note your name, address, phone and email, the number of children attending and any special accommodations.

### Save the Date!

The 12th Annual Melrose **Run for the Arc** of East Middlesex will be held **Sunday, September 17, 2006**. Runners & walkers welcome. Check our web site [www.theemarc.org](http://www.theemarc.org) in July for a registration form.

## Visiting Artist Opportunities

The Center for Emerging Artists has volunteer opportunities available and Massachusetts Cultural Council funding for visiting artist instructors from Malden, Melrose, Stoneham and Wakefield. For more information, call Christina Preher at 781-942-4888, ext. 5037 or email her at [cea@theemarc.org](mailto:cea@theemarc.org).

## Attention Red Sox Fans!

**T**he Arc of East Middlesex's Center for Emerging Artists now has Fenway Park inspired items on sale at: The Hitching Post, The Hot Spot and Sense of Wonder in Reading; Green Street Pharmacy in Melrose; Kelly and the Angel in Malden and General Goods in Andover. Fenway prints, note cards, key chains and t-shirts are available online at [www.theemarc.org](http://www.theemarc.org) and at our 20 Gould Street, Reading location. For on-line orders, please allow up to four weeks for delivery of t-shirts.



**Fenway Park by Beth Knipstein**

**The Arc of East Middlesex**

20 Gould Street  
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Return Service Requested

Non-Profit  
Organization  
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Reading MA  
Permit No. 64



## On-line Car Donation Program

To donate a car online, visit our web site at [www.themarc.org](http://www.themarc.org), click on vehicle donation at the bottom of the left hand column of our home page and follow the instructions that pop up. Be sure to designate The Arc of Massachusetts, Waltham as your charity and email us at [info@themarc.org](mailto:info@themarc.org) so that The Arc of East Middlesex is credited for the donation.



## The Arc of East Middlesex Membership Application

Membership includes 10 issues of our *Timelines* newsletter; the Arc US newsletter; the Arc MA newsletter, *The Advocate*; access to our Recreation and Advocacy programs; invitations to Arc of East Middlesex events and an opportunity to nominate honorees for our Annual Spring Awards Ceremony.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply:

Family Member     Professional     Interested Friend

Family Member Served (used to send mailings for age-appropriate events)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive this newsletter by email rather than regular mail?

No     Yes    Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues:** \$40 per year. Please make check payable to **The Arc of East Middlesex.**

