

Today's Arc

The
Arc
of Fort Bend County

August 2010

Volume 9, Issue 8



The Arc Awards “Family of the Year” to the Lobue’s!



Ray Johnson presenting to Larryn, Kathleen, & Larry Lobue.

The Annual Meeting was a great night with a wonderful turnout. Thank you for all who attended and applauded our dedicated volunteers who support The Arc throughout the community. Congratulations to all awardees.

See pages 8-9 for more awards and pictures.

Save the Date

Athletic Banquet

August 14th
11:30- 2:30

*Invitations
have been mailed*

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OUR MISSION

The Arc of Fort Bend County ensures opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to maximize their quality of life within our community.

*The Arc of Fort Bend County
Board of Directors 2009-2010*

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Mike Casey

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Avis Goldy

Jenny Gortney

Paul Harding

Stewart Jacobson

Larryn Lobue

Jack Molho

Mary Stephney Quinby

Executive Director

Laura LaVigne

Education Advocate

Cheryl Sewell

Employment Specialist

Margo Pasko

Program Director

Nancy Dobert

Administrative Assistant

Lindsey Shields

Account Manager

Jenny Schulte

*Committee Assignments and Job Descriptions are
available on our website*

CORE VALUES

1. Awareness: greater awareness about individuals with disabilities increases understanding about the abilities of individuals with disabilities, and greater understanding increases opportunities for individuals with disabilities, so we work to achieve greater awareness to achieve greater understanding to expand opportunities.
2. Diversity: we must serve all individuals with intellectual and related developmental disabilities and their families in this county.
3. Respect: we must be understanding of and sensitive to the concerns of individuals with disabilities about their identity and how we describe them.
4. Ownership: it is important to have community members serve on our committees and board, and support our association, but our association should remain an “individuals with disabilities and their families” organization.
5. Advocacy: with limited resources, if we become primarily or solely a provider organization, our association will never do more than make only a limited impact on the quality of life of a few individuals with disabilities.
6. Cooperation: advocacy and programs that benefit individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families in many cases will also benefit individuals with other disabilities.
7. Good Stewardship: as an association, we must be fiduciaries of the talent and resources that our volunteers and community supporters entrust to us.

OUR GOALS

The Arc’s goals were chosen to be directed toward Mission and Vision and build on our strength and success.

- I. The Arc will maintain an effective leadership team to insure the accomplishment of The Arc’s vision and mission.
- II. The Arc will deploy outreach strategies that will increase community awareness of the needs of all Arc stakeholders.
- III. The Arc will collaborate with existing transportation systems in Ft. Bend County to provide transportation that is reliable, safe and affordable.
- IV. The Arc will collaborate with providers of job training and placement programs to improve quality and quantity of programs.
- V. The Arc will provide programs and services which will directly improve the quality of life for its clients and their families.
- VI. The Arc will implement sound fiduciary strategies that will increase financial stability and growth of the organization.

To Send a Special Tribute

In Memory of or In Honor of

Pay tribute to a friend or family member while also supporting services and programs that benefit the Arc of Fort Bend County with your donation.

Person’s Name

Occasion

Send acknowledgement to:

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Please make checks payable to:
The Arc of Fort Bend County
123 Brooks Street, Sugar Land, Texas 77478

Message From the Executive Director

Laura LaVigne

The June 21st Golf Classic was a success – thank you to all who helped plan and execute the tournament and to all who came out to golf and those who sponsored the event. Fundraising is difficult, at best, these days, but we fared well due to our faithful supporters.

The June 29th Annual Meeting and Awards Program was a great evening to thank many people. Sheriff Milton Wright installed the 2010-11 Board of Directors, and then we recognized numerous businesses, community members and families for their incredible volunteerism and support of our mission!

In July we had our first board meeting with our three new members, Himesh Gandhi, Jenny Gortney & Larry Lobue. We now have a full board of 15 directors!

We strive to expand the programs and services we provide to reach more individuals with intellectual disabilities in our county. Throughout this newsletter you will see articles reflecting the new programs we have initiated. All while maintaining the current level of service – not an easy task.

Enjoy the month of August – fall will be here way too soon!

Special Olympics Starts With a Splash

Margo Pasko

Our Special Olympics Aquatics season started with a splash and a few changes from previous years!

This year, our athletes over age 18 are practicing at the indoor natatorium at Richmond State Supported Living Center, 2100 Preston Street in Richmond.. The LCISD Natatorium will be undergoing renovations for the entire month of August, so we had to move to a different pool. Since we are in a “new” location this summer, we ask that drivers, family members or caregivers escort the athlete to the pool area and make sure they are signed in. No “drop offs”, please!

Volunteers are needed to be in the water with the athletes during practices. We need your help, in the water, or at the poolside, even if you are not a certified coach. Let us know if you can help!

Our practices are on Wednesday evenings, from 7-8:30 P.M. Please don't be late! Athletes participate in warm-ups and stretches before entering the pool. If they miss the warm-ups and stretches, they won't be allowed to get into the pool until they have done them. Since there will be no volunteer available to supervise this for late arrivals, the drivers, family members or caregivers will need to make sure the athletes are warmed up and stretched before they enter the pool.

Another big change this year involves the Fall Classic statewide competition. This year, Special Olympics Texas will hold the statewide aquatics tournament on October 15 and 16 in Pearland. All other Fall Classic sports will be held, as usual, in College Station, October 21-23. The Area 22 Aquatics meet will be in Sugar Land on September 18.

As always, participation at Fall Classic is dependent on there being enough coaches and volunteers able to travel with the team on 10/15 and 10/16 and actively supervise the athletes for the entire trip. Contact Heads of Delegation Debbie Eddlemon or Larry Lobue as soon as possible if you are able to commit to traveling with the team and actively supervising up to 2-4 athletes for the entire time.

The younger athletes are participating with The Dads Club Mavericks team on Voss Road in Houston, with Moon Weiss, a familiar face to The Arc community, as their head coach. Read more on Moon and her program in the next article for details on our younger swimmers.



Special Thanks to Moon Weiss

Margo Pasko

This month, we extend our thanks to Moon Weiss, founder and head of delegation for The Mavericks Special Olympics Aquatics team at The Dad's Club of Houston. Moon has welcomed The Arc's under-18 swimmers with open arms. Our four younger swimmers and two Chevron volunteers, Phillip "Rick" Tucker and Sarah Springer, have begun training on Sunday afternoons at The Dad's Club pool at 1006 Voss Road in Houston. These younger swimmers (all under 18 years old) will now be participating in an age appropriate environment while receiving their instruction.

Moon Weiss has a long and thorough professional and volunteer history of working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Forty years ago, she started an aquatics program for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at the (then named) Richmond State School. She was the assistant director of volunteer services at Richmond State School, and then became the first director of community services. During those years, she also served on the board of The Arc of Texas (then named ARC). She collaborated with Fort Bend County Arc founders to help establish the first group home and workshop. Moon said the Fort Bend Arc people were fabulous to work with, stating that everyone dug deep to get programs started for the Arc community in Fort Bend County. She recounted how her husband organized glazers to donate services to do the glasswork for the "new" Glenn Lakes Arc building. In 1983, Moon was the volunteer of the year for Special Olympics Texas.

Throughout all of this, she continued to teach swim classes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She says, "I floated with the team wherever we could find water." After Richmond State School, they swam at the Y and eventually settled in at The Dad's Club, a nationally recognized, award winning swim club. Because of the team's changing pool locations, she named them The Mavericks. According to the dictionary, one definition of maverick is: an animal that has become separated from the herd and can then belong to whoever finds it and accepts it.

Moon says, "I take such pleasure in watching each swimmer improve." Thank you for taking care of our younger swimmers, Moon!

2009-2010 ARD Season Recap

Cheryl Sewell

It's been a tough ARD year for everyone out there. I am usually only invited to ARDs by parents who are frustrated with the school about something - parents don't generally call me if things are going well! (Although I do so love to hear stories with happy endings!) I occasionally get invited to attend ARDs by schools to explain Medicaid Waiver programs, The Arc's programs and services, transition issues, and resources for persons with developmental disabilities. I'm always delighted to attend ARDs in this capacity.

I attended 59 ARDs during this school year. We were able to get 100% inclusion for some students, increased ESY for others, more appropriate behavior plans and Functional Behavioral Assessments, a few co-teaching situations instead of self-contained classes, etc. I referred several parents to Advocacy, Incorporated for legal advice and assistance, to Region 4 Educational Service Center and to the Texas Education Agency for IDEA clarification on issues such as FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) and LRE (Least Restrictive Environment).

FBISD had an especially difficult year with their reduction-in-force, which targeted many special education teachers and support staff. It will be interesting to see how the new school year unfolds - keep me posted!

LCISD's Special Education Director and several principals retired this year. We wish Carolyn Meeks a happy and fulfilling retirement, whatever her plans may be and look forward to working with the new personnel.

Remember, The Arc of Fort Bend also facilitates an informal support group for parents of school-aged children with developmental disabilities. Our "Arc Parents for Education" group generally meets once a month during the school year at Cindy Villarreal's home. We discuss IDEA/FAPE/LRE, ARD issues, movies, special-needs friendly restaurants and/or parks, upcoming trainings and workshops, medical issues, general resources and all sorts of other things. We laugh, we cry, we learn a lot, we bond and network.

Please contact me at 281-494-5924 to discuss school-related issues or if you would like to join our informal support group. And have a GREAT SUMMER!

Open Letter of Thanks

June 1, 2010

Laura LaVigne
Executive Director
The Arc of Fort Bend County
123 Brooks Street
Sugar Land, TX 77478

Dear Ms. LaVigne,

I am writing to thank The Arc for the services you provide, and specifically to highlight the great work of Cheryl Sewell.

I attended some of the workshops that Cheryl has provided in the Fort Bend community over the last few years. This has allowed me to become educated on issues affecting my child, and has made me much more comfortable with the school ARD (Admission, Review, Dismissal committee) meetings. The workshops have also made me more aware of additional resources and information in the community that can help our family.

Beyond these workshops, and in addition to advising us over the phone, Cheryl has helped us by attending three ARD meetings at our child's school in Fort Bend ISD. In the most recent meeting, the school-based ARD committee changed their mind and decided to allow our child to start Kindergarten with 100% of the time in the general education setting – the very thing we have been advocating for the past two years. We now feel that our child will be receiving a FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education), and the school is now following IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) guidelines. We are very pleased that our child will be allowed the opportunity to spend the full day learning with peers at the start of Kindergarten.

I am enclosing a check to renew my Arc membership.

Again, thank you so much for all that The Arc does.

Best Regards,



Thomas Brooks

**A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion,
not positions.**

-John Maxwell

Trinity Home Health Services, Inc., a CLASS Direct Service Agency

Cheryl Sewell

The Arc does not endorse, promote or recommend any particular person, place, therapy, institution, professional system or service. Our desire is to bring together families and those interested in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities. Please call to discuss your issues, concerns, wants and needs and perform “due diligence” when seeking a service provider.

Bernard Ugwu, the Business Manager for Trinity Home Health Services, was patient enough to explain a lot of the processes that an individual has to go through to get enrolled into the Medicaid Waiver program called CLASS (Community Living Assistance and Support Services). Bernard explained that in 2009 the State of Texas, through the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), allowed licensed Home Health Service agencies to become CLASS Direct Service Agencies (DSA). Before 2009, there were only 2 or 3 Case Management Service agencies or Direct Service Agencies to choose from in any given area.

Bernard and his partner, Frank Mba, founded Trinity Home Health Care as a licensed home health care agency in 2003. Trinity also provides primary home care for the elderly and disabled as well as Pediatric Therapy services. They serve over 70 patients in the Fort Bend, Wharton, Harris, Galveston, and Matagorda Counties. Bernard states that he worked for Meridian Health Care for 13 years but felt that he could provide better services. Trinity currently has 15 full time employees and numerous contract employees.

To review: CLASS is not necessarily for persons with intellectual disabilities/MR because the individual must have a related condition such as Traumatic Brain Injury, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy or Autism w/o MR. Bernard indicated that there are currently over 30,000 people still on the CLASS interest list and that it takes over 8 years for a person’s name to come to the top of the list. He stated that the Federal Stimulus program has helped some people get their funding for HCS and CLASS this year.

So, what does a CLASS Direct Service Agency do? Bernard said that the DSA is involved in developing the individual’s budget and action plan through an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) meeting. The IDT consists of the Individual, their family/guardian, the Case Management Service representative and the Direct Service Agency representative. After the plan is developed, the DSA hires and pays the individual’s service providers. For example, if the individual’s service plan calls for OT/PT/Speech, Hippo therapy and aquatic therapy, then the DSA either supplies in-house therapists or develops a service and payment contract with a therapist or service provider. CLASS does not provide residential services – the individual generally lives in a family member’s home.

Bernard stated that service providers are carefully chosen and must pass a criminal background check in order to be under contract with Trinity. Sometimes the family has already been using a therapist or provider so the DSA negotiates a contract with the same therapist. Continuing with a specific provider often occurs if a child is transitioning from the Medically Dependent Children’s Program (MDCP) to CLASS. If the individual does not already have therapists then Trinity, as the DSA, will try to hire providers and therapists that in close proximity to the individual’s home.

The Direct Service Agency is paid through the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) as a portion of the agreed upon budget developed by the Interdisciplinary Team. The DSA’s revenue is whatever is left over after all of the therapists are paid. Bernard indicated that there are caps and limits as to how much DADS will pay out for therapy services. For example, the current CLASS reimbursement rate for RNs, PTs and OTs is \$57.00/hour. However, most RNs, PTs and OTs charge at least \$70.00/hour. Obviously, this is a loss for the contracting DSA of \$13.00/hour. If the DSA has in-house, directly employed RNs/OTs/PTs, then the DSA might break even or make a little profit.

Bernard said that the DSA could recoup some of the loss realized by contracting therapists by providing “day habilitation” services. The cap on day habilitation services is \$14.00/hour. Day habilitation service generally utilizes a non-degreed labor force, paid less than less than \$10/hour. So, the DSA might earn \$4.00 an hour providing the day habilitation contract.

Bernard stated that being a CLASS case management service or a CLASS Direct Service Agency is not a huge income-generating venture. The CMS or the DSA makes their revenue through volume. Trinity only has 4 CLASS clients at this time. Losses are absorbed in Trinity’s other divisions, however.

The local MHMRAs, such as Texana Center or Harris County MHMRA, are required to provide a “Provider Fair” for HCS consumers

Trinity Home Health Services, Inc. cont'd

every year. There is no requirement for anyone to hold a provider fair for CLASS CMAs or DSAs at this time. Bernard indicated that marketing their services is fairly difficult.

As with HCS, an individual can change their CLASS Case Management Service or their CLASS Direct Service Agency whenever they desire. Trinity and all DSAs are required to log in and investigate all complaints against any contracted provider or themselves, resolve those conflicts and report the process to DADS. The Department of Aging and Disability Services conducts annual audits and reviews at least once a year for all DSAs and CMS. DADS can also visit without notice to conduct an audit.

Bernard stated that Trinity Home Health Care goes the extra mile to meet all of their individual's needs and they have a great record of service. He invites families to call him to discuss Trinity's services.

Reach Bernard at Trinity Home Health Services, Inc. at 713-774-6363. They are located in southwest Houston at 8700 Commerce Park #239 in Houston, TX 77036

Ice Skating Lessons Anyone?



Anita Naik, a figure skater in the Houston area, is offering to teach ice skating lessons to persons with disabilities, any age, with the assistance of Jim O'Neill and STARSkaters. ([Hwww.STARskaters.org](http://www.STARskaters.org))

The 30 minute Ice Skating lessons would be scheduled on Saturdays, sometime after 10:00 am.

The cost of the lessons will depend on the number of individuals enrolled.

Anita is hoping to start ice skating lessons for persons with disabilities in either August or September at the Sugar Land Ice and Sports Center.

Please call or e-mail Cheryl Sewell if you are interested in this activity! Cheryl Sewell: 281-494-5924 or cbsewell@arcoffortbend.org

(Photo: 5/15/2010 Youth event: STARskaters & The Arc of Fort Bend).

Youth Inclusion Event at Chuck E. Cheese Sugar Land!

This event is organized for PPCD and Elementary School aged children that The Arc serves! (ages 4-11 yrs)

Is there anything more FUN for a child than visiting and playing at Chuck E. Cheese? NO!

So bring your child and buddy-up with other children to enjoy the chaos that is Chuck E. Cheese!

Join children and families from Harvest United Methodist Church for an "inclusion" event for families and children associated with The Arc of Fort Bend.

When: Thursday, August 12th
Time: 9:30 am to 11:30 am
Where: Chuck E. Cheese Sugar Land
Cost: **\$5.00 per person** (includes pizza + beverages + \$4.00 in tokens)

RSVP by Friday, August 6th. RSVP appreciated as we have to give a headcount. Family members, siblings, friends, etc are welcome to participate.

Contact Cheryl Sewell: 281-494-5924 or cbsewell@arcoffortbend.org

Awards Night

Congratulations to all of the 2010 Arc Awards Night recipients!

Barbara Penrod Award

Mike Casey

James Patterson

Volunteer of the Year Award

Robert Pourciau

Employee of the Year Award

Jody White

Employee of the Year Award

Monica Wright

Employee of the Year Award

Tony Presson

Employer of the Year Award

Quail Valley Utility

Employer of the Year Award

Angela Hankins

Edible Arrangements

Employer of the Year Award

Kathy Nelson & Phyllis Ducote

Scrapbook Village

Employer of the Year Award

Wendy & Jeff Brooks

Berryhills

Employer of the Year Award

Target

Sugar Land, TX

Employer of the Year Award

Rose & Willie Hinz

Hinz Jewelry

Family of the Year Award

The Lobue Family

Advocacy Award

Kirk Monroe

Brazos Bend Guardianship Services

Community Awareness Award

Barbara Magaña Robertson

Chairman's Award

Ray Johnson

Larry Sharp Service Award

Johnny Tedder

Fairway Golf Carts

Educator of the Year Award

Thomas Svatek

Needville High School

Educator of the Year Award

Hyacinth Pickersgill

Dulles High School

Educator of the Year Award

Anna Carter

Lexington Creek Elementary

Educator of the Year Award

Shae Collins

Lexington Creek Elementary

Educator of the Year Award

Kimberly Zardavets

Lexington Creek Elementary

Annual Meeting



Board Members, Class of 2013



Kirk Monroe, Advocacy Award



Barbara Magaña Robertson, Community Awareness Award



Hyacinth Pickersgill, Educator of the Year Award



Anna Carter, Educator of the Year



Stacy Kratz reading her article about Special Olympics

August 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 SO - Bocce Ball Practice	4 SO - Aquatics Practice	5	6 Texas Advocates Conference	7 Texas Advocates Conference
8 Texas Advocates Conference	9	10 SO - Bocce Ball Practice	11 SO - Aquatics Practice	12 Chuck E Cheese Inclusion Event	13	14 Athletic Banquet
15	16 Arc Board of Directors Meeting	17 SO - Bocce Ball Practice	18 SO - Aquatics Practice	19	20 SR - Dance at St. Theresa's	21
22	23	24 SO - Bocce Ball Practice	25 SO - Aquatics Practice	26	27	28
29 SR - Burgers and Karaoke	30	31 SO - Bocce Ball Practice				

3	SO Softball Practice	TBA	TBA
4	SO Bocce Ball Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	The Arc Office
6	SO Aquatics Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Richmond State Supported Living Center (formerly Richmond State School) Corpus Christi
7	Texas Advocates Conference		Corpus Christi
8	Texas Advocates Conference		Corpus Christi
10	Texas Advocates Conference		Corpus Christi
10	SO Bocce Ball Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	The Arc Office
11	SO Aquatics Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Richmond State Supported Living Center (formerly Richmond State School)
12	Agnes 4-11	9:30 am-11:30 am	Chuck E. Cheese Inclusion event
14	Athletic Banquet	11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Sugar Land Community Center
16	Arc Board of Directors Meeting	6:00 p.m.	The Arc Office
17	SO Bocce Ball Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	The Arc Office
18	SO Aquatics Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Richmond State Supported Living Center (formerly Richmond State School)
20	SR – Dance at St. Theresa's	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	St. Theresa's Catholic Church
24	SO Bocce Ball Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	The Arc Office
25	SO Aquatics Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Richmond State Supported Living Center (formerly Richmond State School)
29	SR – Burgers and Karaoke	12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Safari Texas
31	SO Bocce Ball Practice	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	The Arc Office



The Arc of Fort Bend County ensures opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to maximize their quality of life within our community.

Membership Form **Date:** _____

Please indicate New Member Renewing Member

Member Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) ____ - _____ Cell Phone: (____) ____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

I am a:

- Family Member Person with Disability
- Interested Citizen Professional who works in the Disability Field

Indicate the age of person with a disability: 0-12 13-22 23-54 55+

Optional:

* Solely to help us know if we are serving our entire community, please check below:		
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/ Alaskan Native	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian/ Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Black/ African American
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Preference for Volunteer Opportunities:

- Committee Member Fund Raising Office Support Special Olympics & Bowling

Membership Levels:

Individual with Disability Membership	\$10.00
Individual Membership	\$25.00
Family Membership 2 nd Member Name _____	\$40.00
Corporate Membership	\$100.00
Additional Tax Deductible Donation	\$ _____
If you wish, you may donate to a specific program:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bowling <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Advocacy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Special Olympics <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
Total Amount Enclosed	\$ _____

Mail form and payment to:
The Arc of Fort Bend County
123 Brooks Street
Sugar Land, Texas 77478

OR Join Online at www.arcoffortbend.org.

The Arc of Fort Bend County
123 Brooks Street
Sugar Land, Texas 77478
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Fax: 281-494-5960

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Add us as your friend and
keep in touch with all current
events at The Arc!
[facebook.com/arcoffortbend](https://www.facebook.com/arcoffortbend)



Bocce Ball Fun!



Tony Presson, Zach Johnson, Chante Burton, Tom Martin, Coach Robert Porciau, & Coach Janet Wantuch