



ARC Life



APRIL / MAY 2011 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2

ISSUE 2



ONTARIO ARC OPENS NEW AUTISM CENTER

It may have been windy and rainy outside, but it didn't dampen anyone's spirits at the grand opening ceremony of The Autism Center at Ontario ARC on April 16. More than 250 community members took part in this milestone in the agency's history, which began with a special presentation by keynote speaker and renowned autism expert Robert Naseef, Ph.D. "Families of Children with Autism: Caring for Everyone's Needs" focused on understanding
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Ontario ARC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to assisting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. We offer personalized services and supports that promote independence, recognize individual uniqueness and value quality of life.

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On the cover: Mikayla Matteson hugs a new friend, one of Pam Korte's dogs, at The Autism Center at Ontario ARC grand opening.

RENOWNED AUTISM EXPERT SPEAKS TO FATHERS AT ONTARIO ARC

As part of The Autism Center's grand opening, approximately 20 fathers and grandfathers of children with autism attended a special presentation on April 15. Robert Naseef, Ph.D., a nationally renowned autism expert and father to an adult son with autism spectrum disorder, led the program.

Specifically designed with male caregivers in mind, "The Father Factor: Understanding the Special Needs of Fathers" explored the unique perspective that men bring to parenting children with autism spectrum disorders.

Dr. Naseef also presented a slide show of his own son growing up to help illustrate common challenges associated with raising a child who has special needs. The event concluded with an open discussion where attendees were encouraged to share their personal experiences. In addition, the men who took part in the program are planning to establish a support group to continue their talks. ✨



Robert Naseef, Ph.D. is co-founder of Alternative Choices, an independent health clinic in the Philadelphia area, as well as director of its Special Needs Families Resource Center. He has authored numerous articles and books on autism spectrum disorders and gives presentations across the country.

"This presentation provided a wonderful opportunity for fathers and grandfathers of individuals we serve to come together and share their feelings. I don't believe an event of this type has ever taken place in our community – and all of us at Ontario ARC were delighted with the response."

Noreen Quinn
senior associate executive director



HOW ANIMALS CAN HELP PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

On April 14, animal assisted therapy expert Pamela Korte, R.N., M.S. presented “Foundations of Animal Assisted Therapy.” More than 40 people participated in the program, which was held in conjunction with The Autism Center’s grand opening celebration. Attendees learned about the therapeutic benefits of animal assisted activities for people with autism in detail, including the processes that impact this special relationship and how animals can support developmental needs. ✨

Ontario ARC is in the process of developing an animal assisted activities and therapy option for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. This multi-faceted undertaking, which will highlight the mutually beneficial relationships between people and animals, will include:

- A facility-based program that helps people with developmental disabilities improve their social and physical skills, as well as provides an outlet for exercise and acceptance.
- A community-based component in which participants will take animals into schools, child care centers and medical facilities.
- Employment opportunities in the field of animal care such as pet groomers and dog walkers.



Stay tuned for more exciting details, coming soon!



Pamela D. Korte, R.N., M.S. is a professor of nursing and an adjunct professor of psychology at Monroe Community College. She is a leading expert on animal assisted therapy.



“Animal assisted therapy opens an exciting window of opportunity for the people Ontario ARC serves – not only in the form of a new program, but also as a service provided to our friends in the community who can benefit from interacting with animals.”

*Ann Scheetz
associate executive director*

Pam Korte’s dogs – India and Gina – caught the attention of many families attending the grand opening of The Autism Center at Ontario ARC.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE CELEBRATES TENTH ANNIVERSARY

On May 13, Ontario ARC's Wellness Committee hosted a "Wellness Fair" to celebrate its tenth anniversary. Held at the Main Facility, the event featured activities geared toward the mind, body and spirit.

A number of local vendors and presenters, including AcuHealth of the Finger Lakes, Dr. Alicia Barnes from The BodyMind Center, Lawley Benefits Group, MVPSM Health Care, Walmart Vision Center and Wegmans

Nature's Marketplace, were on hand to educate staff members and participants about healthy living habits. Attendees also enjoyed chair massages, line dancing, yoga and more. A good time was had by all!



(Top left) The line dancing demonstration, led by Beverly Cartwright (front right), was a fun exercise for Joanne Aumick (front left), a participant from the Abbey Community Learning Center. (Top right) Instructor Christina Felice (right) shows Amber Drennan (left) how Bokkenkick works in the Pathways area. (Middle right) Wellness Fair attendees take part in a belly dancing demonstration instructed by Sandi Heacock. (Bottom right) Karen Tomasella takes an eye test offered by Walmart Vision Center. (Bottom middle) Lynn Bessell tries a delicious, healthy snack courtesy of Wegmans Nature's Marketplace. (Bottom left, from left to right) Julie Dunn, Donna Mendez and Jody Thomas make their own stress balls during one of the day's fun-filled activities.

CONGRATULATIONS MARGARET F. BONNEY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

Every year, Ontario ARC awards Margaret F. Bonney Memorial Scholarships to eligible employees who wish to further their education in human services or a related field such as nursing, physical therapy or social work.

This year's Margaret F. Bonney Memorial Scholarship recipients are

Amanda Tuttle and Kalisha Havens. Amanda, a skills instructor at the South Pearl Street residence, attends SUNY Brockport where she is majoring in social work. Kalisha, a service coordinator, is currently a community and human services major at Empire State College.

Named in honor of the late Margaret "Peg" Bonney, a past Board Member and longtime friend to Ontario ARC, the scholarships are in the amount of \$500 each. To apply for a scholarship, employees must have worked for Ontario ARC for at least one year. ✨

FIVE ONTARIO ARC EMPLOYEES RECEIVE SAFETY AWARDS

Emily Stohner, Ontario ARC's enclave supervisor at Maco Bag Corporation, was one of five agency employees honored for their heroic deeds at the 48th Annual Ontario County Safety Council Award ceremony. Emily was recognized for helping to save the life of Marty Becker, one of the enclave's crew members, after he suffered a heart attack at work in April 2010.

While they were both at lunch in the company break room, Emily noticed that Marty's skin appeared clammy and he was

having difficulty breathing. When she approached him to ask if he was feeling well, Marty collapsed. Emily performed CPR while a Maco Bag employee called 911.

"We are proud to have Emily on our staff and are grateful for her quick response," says Michele Wistner, director of employment services at Ontario ARC. "We also appreciate Maco Bag's continued commitment to our employees. This true demonstration of teamwork played a huge role in saving Marty's life." ✨



Emily Stohner and Marty Becker

Additional Ontario ARC award nominees include:

Terri Cook

day habilitation assistant at Abbey Day Hab

Laurie Carney

skills instructor at the Mulberry Drive residence

Dianne Mills

skills instructor at the Mulberry Drive residence

Teather Green

day habilitation assistant at the Eberhardt Center



Over 250 guests and staff members enjoyed the new Autism Center's grand opening festivities, including (Above left) Jackie Cryer and Danny Greene; (Bottom right) Maggi Sullivan, autism coordinator at Ontario ARC and Noreen Quinn, senior associate executive director at Ontario ARC. Top right: Casey Moore, who attends NextStep Prep - the agency's innovative social skills group for young adults with autism - cuts the ribbon at The Autism Center at Ontario ARC grand opening ceremony.

Autism Center, Continued from Cover

the challenges mothers, fathers and siblings of children with autism face every day, and how to best cope with these challenges.

"Individuals and families living with autism in our community need services and support, and we want to do our best to meet their needs," says Noreen Quinn, senior associate executive director at Ontario ARC. "People from all walks of life attended our grand opening to learn more about autism spectrum disorders. We were very pleased with this event's overall turnout and success."

Dignitaries in attendance for the ribbon cutting ceremony included: James Smith, representing Congressman Tom Reed; State Senator Michael F. Nozzolio; Annie Chwiecko, representing State Senator Patrick Gallivan; Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb; Assemblyman Sean Hanna; NYSARC President Jack Schuppenhauer and NYSARC Executive Director Marc Brandt.

As part of the festivities, guests were invited to tour the new 5,000-square-foot Autism Center and recently renovated Pathways area, formerly the Abbey Industries Workshop. Staff members from Ontario ARC were also on hand to answer any questions, as well as provide the latest information about programs available for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. ✨

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