



Charles River ARC

JULY

- 4 Independence Day (CRArc Closed)
- 20 Therapeutic Day Services Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 6:30pm
- 27 Residential Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 7pm
- 28 Residential Barbeque, Merritt Center, 5pm - 7pm
- 31 ASPIRE Vacation Program Begins, July 31st - August 25th, M-F 9AM-3PM

AUGUST

- 1 ASPIRE Vacation Program Through August 25th, M-F 9am-3pm
- 11 Residential Barbeque, Merritt Center, 5pm -7pm
- 24 Therapeutic Day Services Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 6:30pm
- 31 Residential Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 7pm

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Labor Day (CRArc Closed)
- 19 Board of Directors Meeting – Merritt Center, 7pm
- 21 Therapeutic Day Services Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 6:30pm
- 24 Charles River Arc's 50th Anniversary Open House, Merritt Center, 2pm-4pm
- 28 Residential Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 7pm

OCTOBER

- 9 Columbus Day (CRArc Closed)
- 17 Board of Directors Meeting–Paul Merritt Center, 7pm
- 19 Therapeutic Day Services Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 6:30pm
- 26 Residential Family Meeting, Merritt Center, 7pm

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YOU CAN DIRECT YOUR UNITED WAY DONATION TO SUPPORT CHARLES RIVER ARC!**

Please remember that you can designate your United Way donation to help support Charles River Arc programs and services. Charles River Arc's United Way code is **M358488** and we are listed in the United Way directory. *Thank you for supporting our work.*




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The Lamp

Summer 2006

C H A R L E S R I V E R A R C

The mission of Charles River Arc is to enhance the quality of life for individuals challenged by developmental disabilities.

Building a Dream 2006... another success for Charles River Arc

by Maria McTernan

May 2nd was great cause for celebration as it marked Charles River Arc's 11th annual Building a Dream benefit gala. Held at the elegant Boston Park Plaza Hotel, the Imperial Ballroom was packed with more than 400 families, Board members, business supporters and friends who came to applaud Charles River Arc's achievements and recognize its tremendous impact in the community. Emceed by Bob Lobel, Sports Director of CBS4, almost \$160,000 was raised to help support Charles River Arc's programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

The Sam Gerson Humanitarian Award, named in memory of former Chairman of the Board of Filene's Basement, was presented to NFL quarterback Doug Flutie and his wife, Laurie for their endless efforts in raising awareness of autism and for providing much needed financial assistance to families and organizations through the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism. In their heartwarming remarks, Doug and Laurie spoke of their son and the inspiration that he has given them in their daily efforts to truly make a difference.

Since 1998, the Fluties have helped raise over \$7 million for autism through fund-raisers, individual and corporate donations, endorsement promotions, sales of Flutie Flakes, and other items.



D'Arcy, Patrick, Hugh and Joan Sheridan

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to D'Arcy Sheridan of Needham for demonstrating what an individual can achieve, given the opportunity. A conscientious worker, D'Arcy holds three jobs and recently moved into a new home managed by Charles River Arc. D'Arcy and his family were also recognized for their ongoing advocacy efforts on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities so that all are fully included in their communities.

It was a touching moment when D'Arcy's mother, Joan, presented the Fluties with a cherished photograph of D'Arcy taken with Doug about 20 years ago. As a student at BC, Doug would visit the BC Campus School dressed in his football gear and take individual pictures with all of the students. Who would have known that their paths would cross once again as both were honored this same evening?

Special recognition was also given to Sevrin Nelson by Board member Mel Colman at the gala. Sevrin and Bob Lobel conduct a traditional tie swap each year but few know of Sevrin's extraordinary story and about his success. Although placed at Wrentham State Hospital at the age of three and living there until he was 27, Sevrin always dreamed of living on his own and being financially independent.



Laurie and Doug Flutie accepting their award from Chairman of the Board, Phil Robey

Celebrating 50 years

Save the Date – Open House

Paul Merritt Center

Sunday, September 24, 2006

2PM – 4PM

(continued on page 4)



John Grugan, President

I am pleased to announce the formation of the Charles River Family Council.

We have begun meetings with family members receiving services in our Residential and Vocational

Departments. Soon we will initiate family meetings with our other service divisions: Family Support and Strides Therapeutic Day Services. We find that parents and other family members enjoy the opportunity to get together, share experiences with each other, and give us their ideas and feedback regarding our services. Our staff finds it a helpful means to learn about family concerns that will help shape the direction of our services and improve quality and communication.

Once we expand this effort to all service departments, we will ask each department to identify a few individuals that are interested in taking on a leadership role to help our organization improve programs and to become active in advocacy and public development efforts through ArcMass and the National Arc. This leadership group will meet with our Board of Directors and me periodically to ensure that we

stay focused on our mission and to help us realize our vision as a leader in our field. The Family Leadership Council will also provide assistance to other family members and support Charles River Arc's fund-raising efforts.

We hope that many family members will join our Family Council and actively participate in its activities. The following areas detail some of the ideas people have expressed as being important to the success of this Council:

PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION

- Help develop and evaluate services to ensure relevance and quality.
- Create service satisfaction surveys and organize focus groups.

INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND ARC MEMBERSHIP

- Coordinate informational seminars for families through The Advocacy Resource Center.
- Provide families with information regarding key issues such as special education, transitions to adult services, respite, and planning.
- Maintain a resource library of professional books, journals and articles for use by families.
- Provide families with links to information and resources through the Charles River Arc website.
- Promote Membership in the Arc.

STATE AND NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

- Provide ongoing education to local and state elected officials.
- Work with ArcMass and the National Arc to develop legislative advocacy efforts that will benefit individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Represent Charles River at ArcMass or National Arc committees/board meetings.
- Maintain an up-to-date email tree to disseminate timely and important information and to assist in communicating our needs with political leaders.

DEVELOPMENT/FUNDRAISING

- Support and conduct fund-raising activities and events to help fund programs.

MEETINGS

- Informal meetings will be held periodically throughout the year. The Family Leadership Council will meet formally twice each year.
- Legislative advocacy information will be included at Family Council meetings, as needed, to update all members on important legislative matters.

John Grugan

Opportunities and Visions for Young Adults, 18-22 *by Kathryn Miles and Kerry Kleckner*

The vacation programs run by the Family Support Division began when parents expressed the need for structured activities and social opportunities during the weeks when children were out of school. Several years later, those same children are now 18-22 years old, with different needs. We informally approached parents about programming changes to better address these needs and talked at length about how Charles River could best provide those services. Feedback we received focused primarily on opportunities for vocational training and community integration.

In each of the school vacation programs at Charles River Arc, the staff members of Family Support and Employment Divisions now join forces to host this group of young adults and introduce them to our Opportunities and Visions Program. Created two years ago, Opportunities and Visions is an integrated work and community inclusion program geared

for students graduating from high school and transitioning to adult services. With job development and employment at the forefront, these vacation weeks give many an introduction to job training, work, and meaningful volunteer activities in the community.

Charles River Employment Services contracts with different businesses to do mailings, packaging, and some assembly work. During a typical vacation week, the young adults participate in some of these sub-contract jobs. Although these tasks are utilized as training experiences, the approach is as formal and regulated as any paid sub-contract work would be to provide the most realistic and insightful experiences possible. This time is used to help individuals learn as well as assess and develop new skills. Volunteer work is also included for the young adults at places such as the New England

(continued on page 3)

Horticultural Society in Wellesley and local recycling stations.

Some of the community-based activities include sports at a church gym, hiking, use of the YMCA, trips to libraries, and shopping at the Natick Mall.

Each day, information about the program is sent home with participants so that they can talk with parents about their activities, discuss any challenging issues, and give their reactions to daily experiences. This continuous communication between families and Charles River Arc will help identify additional interests in volunteer work or employment, provide feedback so that activities can be fine-tuned, and help promote greater independence for program participants.

Feedback has been positive; the program continues to grow; and we look forward to working with our next Opportunities and Visions group!

Community Outreach Equals Fun for All

by Jennifer Fagan

On Sunday, May 7th, residents from many of our homes enjoyed a morning of bowling and camaraderie with families from Temple Aliyah. The Temple and its volunteers sponsored this event in hopes of creating a fun and memorable day for all participants at Fairway Bowling in Natick. This event, part of Temple Aliyah's annual Mitzvah Day activities, was the first of its kind between Charles River and Temple Aliyah.

Mitzvah Day is a special day in the Jewish faith which is set aside each year to encourage congregants to go into their wider communities with a spirit of giving and make a difference in the lives of others. Each faith community organizes a program of several outreach activities which enable their congregants to perform the mitzvah of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world.

Charles River Arc has been the beneficiary of many of Temple Aliyah's good works. In addition to providing a morning of bowling fun, Temple members have shared their green thumbs with us by planting flowers at some of our homes for the past few years.

Also on May 7th, a long standing tradition was repeated when Temple Beth Shalom treated all of our residents, including our bowlers and volunteers, to a cookout at the Paul D. Merritt Center from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

Volunteers, residents and staff all agreed that a great time was had by all. We hope to make this an annual "Fun Day" event with plans in the works for a 2007 Field Day followed by a cookout.

Many thanks to both Temple Aliyah and Temple Beth Shalom for sharing loving hands and willing hearts with us.



Temple Aliyah volunteers with Charles River Arc participants at Fairway Bowling in Natick

Ways You Can Help...

by Sarah Richmann

The Charles River Arc Family Support Division relies on special events, grants, individual and corporate gifts, as well as tuition to meet operational costs. Most children with special needs require one-on-one assistance with all daily tasks, making our programs costly. Many high school and college volunteers assist children each day so that they can participate in all activities and community outings.

The standard tuition rate is subsidized for many families and tuition assistance is provided for those families unable to pay the standard rate. Please consider one of the following gifts so that we can continue to offer the very best programs and services for children with special needs and their families.

- \$10,000** One full year of handicap accessible transportation for all community outings during school vacation programs. (December, February, April, June and August)
- \$ 5,000** Sponsors the entire four-week August Vacation program. (Transportation, community outings, arts and crafts, gross motor activities and special shows)
- \$ 2,500** Sponsors the two-week June Vacation Program. (Transportation, community outings, arts and crafts, gross motor activities and special shows)
- \$ 1,500** Sponsors a December, February, or April Vacation Program. (Transportation, community outings, arts and crafts, gross motor activities and special shows)
- \$ 1,500** Provides a one-year full scholarship for a child to attend the recreational Kid's Break Program each Saturday.
- \$ 750** Provides medals for all athletes to participate in the annual Ellie Bloom Olympics.
- \$ 500** Provides bowling, pizza, and transportation for 25 children.
- \$ 250** Provides an end-of-year August Vacation Program party with a moonwalk, face painting, and ice cream for 25 children.
- \$ 200** Provides a DJ and snacks at an adult or teen dance.
- \$ 100** Provides one month of snacks for children in our after-school program.
- \$ 50** Provides arts and crafts supplies for children in our after-school program.
- \$ 50** Provides two or three new books on tape for children.

Thank you to all of our
Building A Dream 2006 Sponsors.
 Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

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Building a Dream 2006...

(continued from page 1)

Thanks to Mel Colman, Sevrin became a resident at Mountain House, Charles River Arc's first group home and began a job at Filene's in 1974. In 1980, he transferred to Filene's Basement and continues to work there today. In 1978, Sevrin and his friend Ronnie Getz purchased their own home in Newton. A valued employee and proud taxpayer, Sevrin will be able to retire with a comfortable pension and benefits..



Chairman of the Board Phil Robey, Jill Mark, Geri Gerson and Dana Gerson-Unger

Present at the gala was Sam Gerson's family—Geri, Sam's wife and their two daughters, Jill Mark and Dana Gerson-Unger. The success of Building a Dream, begun in 1996, was due to the kindness, spirit, and philanthropic generosity of Sam Gerson and his dedicated staff members at Filene's Basement.

Tribute was also paid to all past honorees and community supporters whose contributions and generosity have helped make Charles River Arc what it is today. As Charles River Arc celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, the gala also provided an opportunity for all of us to reflect on our past, celebrate our accomplishments, and look to the future with much optimism and hope for all that we serve.

Thank you to all of the families, Board members, sponsors, community businesses, staff, and many friends who share our vision for excellence, believe in our mission, and are committed to our goals. We are honored by your support.



Jan Penney, Sara and Dan Cullen



Stephen Pfol, Clare Dunsford, Harry Manion, Chris and Maite Cunio



Bill Tedoldi, Neil McKittrick and his wife Karen Hoffman



Emcee Sports Director Bob Lobel and Sevrin Nelson exchanging ties

*another success
for Charles River Arc*

*Charles River Arc salutes all
Building a Dream honorees and friends!*



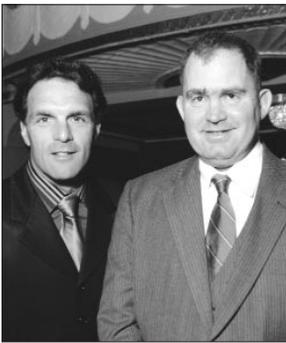
Bill Tilburg, Elizabeth and Moe Handel



*Board member Mel Colman and
Sevrin Nelson*



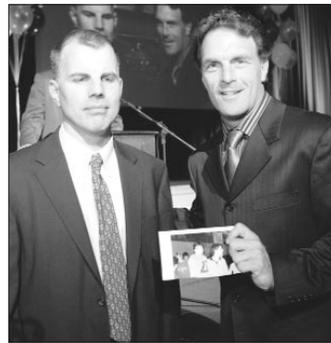
Paul Merritt



Doug Flutie and Billy Leiser



*Board member John Feeley
with his daughter Tara*



*Honorees D'Arcy Sheridan
and Doug Flutie*



Joan Tirrell, Ted and Joan Goodwin



Laurie and Doug Flutie accepting award



*Lu Farina, Gail Nannini and
Barbara Chiappisi*



*President John Grugan chatting with Needham
Police Chief Tom Leary and his wife Pat (center)
and Leo Sarkissian, Executive Director of ArcMass*

2006 HONOREES

Doug and Laurie Flutie
D'Arcy Sheridan

2005 HONOREES

Jack Williams
Michael Feeley

2004 HONOREES

Bob Lobel
Carrie Crowe

2003 HONOREES

Leo Sarkissian
Billy Leiser

2002 HONOREES

David Cohen
Needham Police
Needham Fire
Wellesley Service League
Diane Swanson
Nancy Goodwin

2001 HONOREES

Neil McKittrick
The Needham Exchange Club
Roche Bros./Sudbury Farms
Ricky Tirrell

2000 HONOREES

Paul Merritt
Mitchell Zuckoff
Suzanne Kreiter
The Peters Family
Mel Colman

1999 HONOREES

John Learnard and Family
Babson College
The Mary Hackett Family
Carolyn Axt

1998 HONOREES

Carol Kee
Mark Henrichon

1997 HONOREES

Robert Crowe
Louise Condon
Priscilla Morrison

1996 HONOREES

Sam Gerson
Filene's Basement
Sevrin Nelson
Chet Curtis
Natalie Jacobson
The Colgate-Palmolive Company



A 10-Year Partnership Built on Mutual Respect *by Donna Gagne*

Who would have known ten years ago that a valuable partnership was about to be formed? Founded in 1987 by President and CEO Marcia Stone, Hybrivet Systems, Inc. of Natick, Massachusetts develops and manufactures diagnostic kits to detect contaminants in the environment. These kits test for lead, mercury, nickel, cadmium, and other heavy metals. Just beyond Route 9, Hybrivet Systems is located in the Natick Industrial Park.

In 1992, Hybrivet Systems began to manufacture a test kit called LeadCheck. The LeadCheck swabs in the kit are used to detect lead on surfaces throughout the home. At that time, Hybrivet Systems had a need for assemblers to assist with making the LeadCheck swabs. They were also looking for reliable and committed employees. Production Manager Michelle McClure did some research while looking to hire assemblers and discovered the services of Charles River. Charles River Employment Services had exactly what they were looking for. The partnership that began with two individuals from Charles River's Work Concepts Program has grown over the years to a crew that now consists of eleven individuals. This amazing partnership has exceeded everyone's expectations.

One of the many benefits of hiring individuals from Charles River Employment Services is that the individuals from Charles River are always very accommodating. This flexibility allows for the fluctuations in production that occur based on their orders.

This crew of eleven individuals makes up the production department of Hybrivet Systems. They work an average of 3-4 days a week for 4.5 hours a day. And they love every minute of it! They each have their preferred areas of work and upon their arrival, after their round of "good mornings," they get right down to business.

The partnership that began with two individuals from Charles River's Work Concepts Program has grown over the years to a crew that now consists of eleven individuals.

There are the "fillers" who are responsible for filling the tubes with two ampules. There is a specific order in which this task needs to be completed and with fine precision, they get the job done.

The filled tubes get boxed and passed on to the "tippers." The "tippers" use their remarkable fine motor skills to insert a small cotton swab into the tube, and then the box is passed on to Michelle for the required chemical processes to make the product complete.

The entire production process requires tremendous fine motor skills and it is no easy feat. Hybrivet contacted a local machinist to develop a piece of assistive technology that would make this challenging task more "user friendly." As a result, individuals are able to complete this task with better accuracy and efficiency than ever before. This is just one example of the commitment and dedication that Hybrivet has shown to their employees, in appreciation of the value

they add to their company.

Hybrivet has also been able to rely on Charles River Employment Services to complete work at the Needham facility. As new products are developed, limited space has become a constraint at Hybrivet. They have found that on any given day, Charles River has a workforce of over 100 individuals that are able to complete tasks of all different levels. We have the ability to build and package materials beyond what their current site can offer.

The individuals of Charles River Employment Services have been welcomed and embraced by the employees of Hybrivet Systems. Our employees are making a positive contribution to society by building products that will help to protect our environment. Most importantly they are earning a living, doing something that they love!



Meet Heather Campbell... *by Ruth Griffin*

Have you ever been in the company of someone "who lights up a room" with a smile? Have you ever been greeted by someone at her home when you visit and know that she is happy to see you? If you haven't, then you haven't met Heather Campbell. Heather is a symbol of joy to all who meet her. She enjoys her life, family, friends, and particularly living in her new apartment with her friend, Janice Lee.

Heather lived with four other women at a residence in Needham since September of 2000. When an opportunity presented itself for her to move into an apartment with a friend whom she met at her day program, she was ready for the change. Heather has acquired many new skills and has met new friends in her apartment complex. Heather is always ready for gatherings with friends and has frequently been seen dancing and socializing at parties. Karaoke is a favorite both at home and at local club events.

Heather has worked on her communication skills with staff and has made great advances in verbally communicating her needs. She is proficient in sign language and proudly displays her talents in this area.

Heather has created photo albums that she uses to communicate about her family, friends and activities. She is a creative young woman who spends time doing arts and crafts. She engages in volunteer activities at her day program. Heather is always there to help out when needed and creates a sense of enthusiasm in all of her activities. One of Heather's outstanding attributes is her compassion. She has often assisted individuals with physical disabilities and willingly offers assistance to staff if they need it. Heather has a keen awareness of her environment and the people in it. Ask anyone who lives or works with Heather if he or she enjoys being with her and a smile immediately appears. Her presence is truly appreciated and enjoyed by all who know her.

Last year, Charles River Arc's Community Living Programs provided assistance to more than 100 individuals in group residences and apartments. Every effort is made to help all people live as independently as possible and ensure that all are included in all aspects of community life.

The AJ's — Original Rock n' Roll!

by Roberta Santangelo

On their debut release, Steve Gillis and AJ Turco of the "The AJ's," bring to life eight original, versatile and unique "Rock n' Roll" songs, appealing to all ages.

Singer/songwriter Steve Gillis and guitarist AJ Turco have been dedicated and hard working staff members at Charles River Arc for a combination of seventeen plus years. According to Program Coordinator MaryAnne O'Brien, "Steve and AJ approach every day with such energy and optimism causing a domino effect throughout the Paul Merritt Center, always putting others ahead of themselves." They are truly committed to program participants in the Adult Therapeutic Day Program.

With a passion for music, both have played in bands and continue to play and compose songs as a hobby. Working full time, they still found time to practice after hours and then record their songs at Underground Studio in Needham.

Thanks to their entrepreneurship, creativity, and generosity, all proceeds from the CD sales are being donated to Charles River Arc.

Hurry! The AJ's are going fast. To order your CD(s), please call 781-444-4347 or buy online at www.crac.org! Each CD is \$15 or 2/\$25.



Steve Gillis and AJ Turco

Mother's Day Brunch

by Becky Nichols

Mother's Day 2006 at Charles River Arc was welcomed with bright, smiling faces despite record breaking rainfall throughout the New England area. The Community Living Program hosted its first Mother's Day Brunch on May 13th, inviting all individuals residing in the Charles River Arc residential homes to pay tribute to their mothers and significant women in their lives.

Upon arrival, guests were greeted and presented with corsages. Soon thereafter, everyone sat down to a delicious home-cooked brunch consisting of scrambled eggs, bacon, bagels, fresh fruit, coffee, tea and juice.

The guests also had the pleasure of viewing a video photograph presentation starring many of the individuals as infants and toddlers. This too, was enjoyed by all. As a keepsake, the "Moms" posed for pictures to mark this special day.

The air was filled with excitement this Mother's Day at Charles River; the sound of laughter and conversation was never lacking and a true sense of community was felt throughout the group. Many agreed they would like to see this celebration become an annual tradition.

Thanks to Kelley Emery, Erin O'Meara, Tanvir Khan, Ruth Griffin, and Judy Siggins whose efforts made this day a success.



Irene Marcoux with her daughters Beth and Laura

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