A “GREAT” DAY

“Geneseo Recognizing Excellence, Achievement & Talent Day” (a.k.a. GREAT Day) is a college-wide symposium celebrating the creative and scholarly endeavors of students.

Several individuals from The Arc attend SUNY Geneseo through the LIVES Program, a four-year college experience program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities that stands for Learning Independence, Educational, and Vocational Skills.

Students in the LIVES Program participated in GREAT Day on April 19th with a program about their interests, challenges, and achievements, which they presented to a packed lecture hall of peers, faculty, and loved ones.

Some LIVES students also created poster presentations that focused on topics meaningful to them, which were displayed as part of a huge exhibit in the college union.

Bill Gee spends his work week lighting the way for emergency response personnel, by assembling light bars used on police and fire vehicles at Star Headlight and Lantern Co’s Avon headquarters.

His free time is spent in the flashing glow of similar lights, making his community a safer place as a decorated volunteer member of the Village of Avon Fire Department.

This spring marks significant work and volunteer anniversaries for Bill, who is celebrating 10 years with his employer and 15 years of fire service.

Diagnosed at an early age with a developmental disability, the Perry-born 43-year old now resides in an Avon group home operated by The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming – but you won’t find him there if neighbors are in need of assistance.

“If I get an emergency call, then everybody better stand back because I am heading straight out the door,” says Bill, who is never without his fire pager.

Assistant Site Supervisor Adam Bodratti, an Arc staff member at the house and fellow firefighter, helped Bill to save for and purchase a 2009 Pontiac that Bill drives to work, and to the fire hall when emergency situations arise.

“Bill very much has a rescue mentality,” Adam says. “If someone asks him for help, very seldom will he say ‘no.’”

“There is a good man right there,” adds Dave Piampiano, who was Avon Fire Chief when Bill joined the department. “I remember that he just showed up one day interested in joining the fire department. I knew who he was. Everybody knew who he was. He wanted to take every class he could take.”

And he did. Despite having difficulty reading, Bill persevered, successfully completing a comprehensive 42-hour basic firefighting course. That was just the beginning............ Cont. on pg. 7
**Message from the President**

Marcy VanZandt, Board President

Have you heard? Membership Madness has taken over The Arc!

Hopefully you received your invitation to become or renew your membership in the largest organization in Livingston and Wyoming counties that provides the most comprehensive services to individuals with intellectual or other developmental disabilities. Residential living, employment and business services, learning, recreation, transportation, and community integration are all services provided at The Arc.

The agency is proud to be the driving force in helping the people we serve lead full lives with a complete array of person-centered programs. With a staff of well over 600 professional employees, The Arc provides individualized services to individuals of all ages and abilities.

How can you help? Renew your membership and reach out to friends and family. Let them know about the great work we do. Share this issue of *Parchment* to help tell some of our inspirational stories.

Every year, The Arc and the individuals we serve face new challenges. Our membership numbers speak volumes. Our local, state, and federal policy makers will listen to our concerns when they know we have support from the individuals we serve, their families, and our many friends in our communities.

Become a member of The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming! Share our stories! Join us at our events! Become a volunteer! We need you to join us! Catch the Membership Madness!

**Congratulations, Ted!**

Ted Hall celebrated 25 years of service with Hilltop Industries at a spectacular party April 15th at the Seniors program in Mount Morris. Among those attending were Ted's daughter, Becky, son-in-law, Adam, and granddaughter, Beta Lee.

Ted has also been selected to receive the Residential program's Eric Byrd Award of Inspiration at The Arc's annual dinner Friday, June 3rd at the Genesee River Restaurant and Reception Center.

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**From the Executive Director**

Martin Miskell, Executive Director

If you read the *Rochester Business Journal*, then you know that The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming recently made their annual list of the region's 75 largest employers.

When the paper arrived, we were thrilled to find our agency listed at number 49, thanks to almost 700 employees that make up our ranks. It is amazing to reflect on our growth over the years.

But even more impressive than the size of our workforce is the quality of the people who work here.

Standout employees in all programs possess incredible thoughtfulness, great ideas, and a strong work ethic that consistently take us to the next level.

For example, two of our key work programs are poised for significant growth, thanks to innovations that are being brought about by Hilltop management and staff. By expanding business, we create job opportunities while increasing discretionary revenue so we rely less on government funding to sustain our mission.

Our first major enhancement is at the Hilltop Printshop, with the addition of a state-of-the-art Heidelberg Linoprint CV printing press. That's a big name – with even bigger capabilities.

Our press team is now able to print on all kinds of materials, from boxes to heat-sensitive plastics. Combine this with the machine's advanced print effects and finishing capabilities, and we are poised to excel in a world of high-end jobs, from elegant office stationery to complex product packaging.

And that's not all. Just doors down from the Printshop, our Bottle & Can redemption center is undergoing an exciting makeover of its own. All capabilities, from customer service to behind-the-scenes sorting and distribution of redeemables, are being consolidated under one roof. This will make for smoother customer service, and a better on-the-job experience for the individuals we serve who work there.

Just two examples why our excellent workforce places us on the top of most any list!
Many outstanding athletes from The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming participated in the Special Olympic games’ Genesee Regional Track & Field competition May 7th at York High School. Congrats to all them all!

Self Advocates were on Capitol Hill this April, meeting with representatives in DC about the issues that matter to all of us. Here, Livingston-Wyoming’s Kara Weitz (center) and Heather Bump pause for a quick picture with Joe Damiano, a Self Advocate from Allegany Arc outside of US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand’s office.

Because of a recent grant from the Wilson Foundation, The Arc was able to install accessible doors at the Peterson Employment Center and Main Street locations in Mount Morris. Here’s a big “thumbs up” from Deb Leach on behalf of the entire workforce!

The four guys at the Layton IRA in Geneseo have long dreamed of having their own “man cave” to chill out and play video games. Their dream came a lot closer to reality when 11 students from Pi Kappa Phi - SUNY Geneseo lent their painting skills to the project to transform an area just off the kitchen into a full-fledged game palace.

March was Developmental Disabilities Awareness month! The Arc celebrated by collecting food donations for KidStart’s backpack program for children in need. Thank you to everyone who supported this effort!

The Arc goes bananas for Syracuse Orange basketball!
**Music to Our Ears**

If you see Hannah Finch from Caledonia, congratulate her on her 1st place finish in the recent Arc Idol competition. The second annual singing contest was held over two nights – April 13th and 20th – at Theatre 101 in Mount Morris.

Second place was earned by Rebecca Streams from Geneseo, and 3rd place went to Beatrice Rhoads from Springwater.

Other participants who earned rave reviews were: Kim Deiter, Miranda Synder, Deb Leach, Correy Cline, John Woods, Robert Maplesden, Maurice Maynard, Lisa Irwin, and Christina Pitman.

“It takes a lot of self-confidence to get up in front of everyone and they all did a great job,” says Coordinator of Day, Community & Intake Services Cathy Sullivan, an organizer of the event.

You be the judge! Highlights from both evenings are available on The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming Facebook page at www.facebook.com/TheArcLivWyo.

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**Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Hits Home**

Each year, March is recognized nationally as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, in an effort to increase understanding about intellectual and other developmental disabilities, and provide new opportunities for people who have them.

Locally, Livingston and Wyoming Counties showed their commitment to people with disabilities by issuing official proclamations recognizing March 2016 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in this area.

The Wyoming County Board of Supervisors made it official at their March 8th meeting in Warsaw, which was proudly attended by Arc Self Advocates Wally Gee and Julia Panipinto, Arc Executive Director Martin Miskell, Public Relations Director Jeff Thomas, and Board Members Linda Leblond and Eric Parker.

The Livingston County proclamation followed on March 14th. Special visitors to the Peterson Employment Center in Mount Morris included Livingston County Administrator Ian Coyle, Livingston County Board of Supervisors Chairman Eric Gott, and Lima Town Supervisor Pete Yendell. The celebration took place on the shop floor, to the cheers of a packed house of disabled and non-disabled workers who work together as part of the Hilltop Industries program.

For the 23rd consecutive year, The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming Foundation has granted two scholarships, valued at up to $2,000 each, to graduating high school seniors from the Livingston-Wyoming County area. Student scholarships are for high school seniors specifically pursuing careers serving persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

In addition to those scholarships, the Foundation has awarded a $2,000 Continuing Education Scholarship for the first time, to a working teacher to assist with her certification in the field of special education.

Livingston County student scholarship winner Jill Pero, who will graduate from Dansville High School, is pursuing a career in Occupational Therapy.

“(Occupational therapists) work with people who have disabilities by having them build muscles to do a task, thus becoming more independent instead of relying on someone all the time,” she says.

Lilia Briggs-McEwen, of Letchworth High School, is the student scholarship winner from Wyoming County. Her chosen career path is Music Therapy, where she plans to work with children with Autism.

“The addition of music therapy for those with Autism proves to be a key factor in their development socially and mentally,” she says. “Their reaction to musical stimuli makes music therapy sessions more common since the Autistic person seems to receive a greater sense of encouragement.”

Marissa Zinone, the inaugural recipient of The Arc Foundation’s Continuing Education Scholarship, most recently worked as the classroom teacher for 11 students in the LIVES Program (see page 1), providing them the opportunity to learn independence, vocational, and educational skills on the SUNY Geneseo campus.

“My students have taught me that there is no normal, and life does not always happen the way we want it to, but we all have to give life a chance and see what we are capable of,” Marissa says. “Being a special education teacher is just that – giving students a chance and seeing where they go.”

Marissa recently accepted a position as high school special education teacher with juniors and seniors in the Letchworth Central School District.

Meet Richard Tanghe, whose photo “Slide” was recognized as best in its category at the Gala Finale of the 7th Annual Arts Experience festival, held this April at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Richard was one of 12 individuals from The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming who participated in the “100 Cameras Project” that uses photography to share the world through the eyes of individuals with disabilities. Their work was displayed at The Arts Experience alongside artwork of all types from all over the region.

Notecards featuring art by Richard and other 100 Cameras Project participants are currently being sold in packs of 5 for $5.00 at The Arc’s Administration Building, 18 Main Street in Mt. Morris. Proceeds benefit The Arc Foundation, which is the fundraising arm of The Arc.

Questions? Contact Marianne Miller, Coordinator of Development and Planned Giving, at (585)658-2828 Ext. 139 or mmiller@lwarc.org.
Because of a $5,000 grant from Wegmans, The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming was able to purchase another vending machine for the Hilltop Vending business venture. Hilltop Vending focuses on providing healthier vending options to customers while creating jobs for people with disabilities.

Working with a job coach, workers with disabilities keep the machines stocked with chips, snack bars, sodas and other food and drink options that meet the National Automatic Merchandising Association’s "FitPick" guidelines for lowered calories, fat, and sugar.

Volunteers Needed!
Volunteers make a difference at The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming!

The Arc is interested and eager to attract qualified volunteers from the community who are looking to help out.

The easiest way to get involved is to become an Event Volunteer. By volunteering at one of our community events, you will work alongside our staff members to raise funds and awareness for The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming.

While garnering community support for The Arc’s programs and services, you can meet like-minded individuals – volunteers, staff, and individuals who receive services – for friendships that could last a lifetime.

Check page 8 for upcoming events. To learn more, contact Public Relations Coordinator Tina Sick at tsick@lwarc.org or (585) 658-2828 ext. 133.

Membership Matters
From our local towns and villages to Capitol Hill, your membership to The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming means advocacy and support for your neighbors with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

Help to strengthen services for individuals and their families, and ensure that their voices are heard by signing up as a new member, or renewing you membership today.

As a member you’ll receive a VIP card with discounts to a dozen great local businesses that also support The Arc. You’ll also get preferred pricing on vehicle repairs and maintenance at our Transportation Center, four issues of The Parchment newsletter, and the latest updates regarding progress in the field of developmental disabilities.

Annual membership starts at just $1.00. Simply visit www.lwarc.org to sign up right now.
All Fired Up!
How Avon’s Bill Gee Serves His Community

Continued from page 1

Bill has since completed training for first aid, CPR, water rescue, aircraft accident investigation, hazardous materials, arson awareness, the Department of Homeland Security’s National Incident Management System (NIMS) approach, and other lifesaving courses.

“If you look at his credentials on paper, he’d be fit to fight a fire,” Dave says. But on the scene, Bill is considered an “external firefighter.”

“He does everything that we do, except flying inside the burning building,” Avon Fire Chief Dan Snyder explains.

When time is of the essence, an exterior firefighter can be charged with ensuring that tankers are filled with water, directing emergency vehicles from one or more responding fire companies, or readying gear for interior fighters, such as life-sustaining air canisters that are used to breathe when battling a blaze.

“There’s just as critical as the guys going into a burning building,” Adam says.

In 2008, Bill received the Keith Farr Memorial Award, named for a department member who died heroically in the line of duty. The award recognizes an Avon firefighter with extraordinary commitment to the department.

“Bill is there almost every time we have something going on at the fire hall,” Dan explains. “Raffle nights, drill nights, meetings – you can set your watch by him. Bill is always the first one there.”

Bill’s employer has also taken notice of his strong work ethic.

Star Headlight Assembly Supervisor Kevin Hacker has worked with Bill for more than 3 years, and says that Bill can do virtually every job in the light bar area. Previous to that, Bill had washed parts, and worked in metal fabrication, where he stamped, bended, and welded parts.

“He has absolutely grown as a worker,” Kevin says. “He has gone from working in the hardware area to actually building lights. That’s the more complicated stuff.”

Bill has also achieved significant goals in his personal life. An avid auto racing fan, he has traveled independently via Covered Wagon bus tours to major NASCAR events. In summer months, he is a counselor at Rotary Camp located at Camp Sam Wood in Pike, where he attended camp in his younger years.

Through friendships forged in his volunteer and social endeavors, Bill has become an unofficial social ambassador for The Arc. Firefighters routinely make friendly visits to Bill’s home, and attend the annual winter holiday party held there.

Bill says that the camaraderie makes his already critical, sometimes life-saving work all the more worthwhile.

“I like it because you get to know a lot of people,” he says.

Doin’ Dog-Gone Good

The Arc Do-Gooders is a service club that meets the second Wednesday evening of every month. “Helping others in the community and enriching awareness of our abilities,” is their motto.

For their April service project, the Do-Gooders collected blankets, towels, sheets, and similar items from Arc peers and staff, and then donated them to Perry Veterinary Clinic. Perry Vet is a veterinary practice that offers companion animal service at four locations – Batavia, Livonia Center, Perry and Chaffee/Yorkshire – as well as farm and equine services.

There are many practical and comfort uses for blankets and towels in the animal care field. According to Day, Community and Intake Services Coordinator Cathy Sullivan, even a small washcloth can be used to hold a newborn puppy.

In total, the Do-Gooders collected four giant boxes of new and gently used items, which they eagerly delivered to their four legged friends in early May.
Has your address changed or is your name spelled incorrectly? If so, please e-mail Tina Sick at tsick@lwarc.org

THE ARC OF LIVINGSTON WYOMING

18 Main Street
Mt. Morris, New York 14510

Upcoming Events

Friday, June 24th
The 22nd annual “Friends Fore Life” Golf Tournament will take place on Friday, June 24, 2016 at Livingston Country Club in Geneseo. A highlight of the golfing season, the tournament features gifts and awards, lunch and dinner, golf carts and greens fees, driving range, putting contest, beverages, snacks, raffles, auctions, and more. To learn more, contact Jeff Thomas at (585) 658-2828 ext. 128, jthomas@lwarc.org, or visit lwarc.org/golf.html

Wednesday, September 21st
The fifth annual Harvest Fest food tasting event promises to be our biggest and best! Save the date to celebrate Wyoming County "from field to table" Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at the American Legion Hall in Warsaw Village Park. To learn more, contact Tina Sick at tsick@lwarc.org or (585) 658-2828 ext. 133.

Harvest Fest organizers look forward to seeing you again.

Saturday, October 22nd
It’s not too early to begin training for the 2016 Ramon Rocha 5K Run/Walk! Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 22, 2016. This healthy event features a 3.1 mile walk or run, along with prizes, food, and t-shirts. Get the latest updates at facebook.com/ramonrocharace.

All smiles at the Friends Fore Life tourney!