


## Save the Date

## “Celebrating Abilities”

March 2, 2013  
Farmer’s Market  
at Imperial

## Inside this Issue

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## “Retirement Roast” Honoring Sheriff Milton Wright

December 29, 2012, was a night to remember – a night to remember the long career of Sheriff Milton Wright – a night to thank him for this service to Texas and Fort Bend County. The “House” was packed with well-wishers from Fort Bend County and the entire state of Texas! Safari Texas Ranch hosted the “Retirement Roast”, which began at 6:00 pm with the pledge, presentation of the colors, hors d’oeuvres and buffet. After dinner, Master of Ceremonies, Jack Molho, introduced the “roasters”, all close friends and relatives of Milton’s. They each shared funny and endearing stories about him –evidence of their respect and admiration for a job well done both personally and professionally.

Marian and Milton Wright have supported The Arc for many years, working quietly behind the scenes and volunteering at events and in the office. Why The Arc? Because at The Arc, family matters. Monica, their daughter, has been excited about her dad’s retirement plans for over a year. Monica enjoys The Arc’s “Sharks” Special Olympics swim team, The Arc’s Saturday bowling league, and 2 or 3 of The Arc’s Social Recreation program activities each month. Milton and Marian realize how much these programs mean to Monica.

One of the evening’s speakers, Laura LaVigne stated that Milton and Marian generously support many charities throughout Fort Bend County. However, she believes they hold The Arc closest to their hearts and because of this, they chose The Arc as the event’s beneficiary. Over \$38,000 was donated to The Arc! This donation will fund all our programs and services, increasing “Quality of Life for All”. Thank you, Marian and Milton – enjoy your retirement! (see pages 4 & 5 for pictures and donors)



The Wright Family

**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.

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*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 shall advocate for appropriate individualized educational programs/opportunities for people with I/DD in all stages of life.
- II. The Arc shall advocate for a variety of vocational/employment options for people with I/DD.
- III. The Arc shall advocate for public and private community institutions to become more responsive to the individual needs of people with I/DD, thereby promoting quality of life for all.
- IV. The Arc shall advocate for and promote a variety of appropriate and inclusive social, cultural and fitness/wellness opportunities in the community.
- V. The Arc shall continue to invest in properties that are self-sustaining and provide facilities for our constituents.
- VI. The Arc shall provide effective leadership and fundraising efforts to accomplish our mission.

**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

# Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope "PATH" Training

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The Arc of Fort Bend partnered with Texana Center Authority to sponsor PATH Facilitator's Training for all of the service coordinators in Fort Bend and surrounding five counties. Staff from The Arc of Texas conducted two, full-day trainings for the approximately 45 service coordinators. The service coordinators were chosen to be trained because they meet with families once a month to review services received from Medicaid waiver programs. The PATH process is a tool used to identify dreams/goals for the required person-directed plan. Activities planned to accomplish the identified goals must be both measurable and action oriented. In addition, the PATH plan identifies

existing and natural supports for the individual so that the activities are accomplished. At the end of the training, the service coordinators, now certified PATH facilitators, were asked to complete at least one PATH with a current client. Laura LaVigne and Margo Pasko also completed the training and are now certified PATH facilitators. They have offered to provide assistance to service coordinators who will be conducting PATH planning sessions with clients.

The Arc agreed to split the cost of this training with Texana Center Authority because the PATH process concentrates on the dreams of the client – choosing goals that are both positive and possible. Now, all service coordinators will have another tool to develop true, person-directed plans for their clients. This is a great way to "improve the quality of life for all"!



*Pictured left to right: Sheri Talbot, Director of I/DD, Texana Center Authority Services, Laura LaVigne, Executive Director, The Arc of Fort Bend, Amy Stabeno, MA ICS, Statewide Microboard Coordinator, The Arc of Texas, and Christie Ogle, Waco Regional Microboard Coordinator.*

# Thank You, Fort Bend Junior Service League

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The Arc was one of the "Event Beneficiaries" of the Fort Bend Junior Service League's 2012 Sugar Plum Market. We received \$15,000 to benefit our Special Olympics program!



# More on Sherriff Wright's

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Thank you to the following donors who helped make Milton Wright's Retirement Roast a success!

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ZZ Top

# Retirement Roast



# The Arc Assists Fort Bend Seniors

*Margo Pasko*

Fort Bend Seniors and The Arc of Fort Bend County Special Olympics members got the balls rolling on Friday, January 18. Bocce balls, to be more precise! The day was bright, clear and crisp – perfect bocce weather! The opening session of the Fort Bend Seniors Bocce League was coached jointly by Fort Bend Seniors/The Arc of Fort Bend County volunteers Robert and Janet Pourciau and demonstrated and refereed by The Arc’s Special Olympics gold medal-winning athlete, Tom Martin. The Pourciau’s are coaches of The Arc’s Special Olympics Bocce Team and bring a great deal of wisdom and experience in ‘adaptive’ play. Tom recently retired and will become a participant of Fort Bend Seniors programs.

An intense training session was held indoors, followed by a very spirited outdoor competition, on Fort Bend Seniors’ very own, regulation-sized grass court. All players received a prize and the three Grand Champions of the day: Olivia Herrera, Irma Ramirez and Marge Rojas were awarded Walmart shopping cards!

They all are looking forward to the next meeting of the Bocce League. Fort Bend Seniors plans to expand the program to other congregate sites in the spring, and hold competitions throughout the year. Their Bocce League has already received invitations to play on the courts at Sweetgrass Del Webb and to play with The Arc of Fort Bend County’s Special Olympics Team. Robert and Janet Pourciau are great people to introduce bocce not only to The Arc’s program, but to Fort Bend Seniors, as well. What a great opportunity for inclusive recreation!



# TwentySomethings begin Legislative Advocacy

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*Margo Pasko*

On Sunday, December 9, the TwentySomethings legislative advocacy team met at Spring Creek Barbecue to write letters to elected officials regarding Medicaid, to discuss the implications of the fiscal cliff, the debt ceiling and sequestration and to have a great barbecue lunch. State and national senators and representatives were invited to participate in the luncheon meeting. After listening to the presentation and participating in the discussions, several people wrote letters to their state representatives.

Congress Pete Olson was unable to attend, but his aide, Brock Gillespie, came to listen to concerns. Not only did he show up, but he stayed for two hours, listening to the concerns of the families. The members really appreciated Brock's participation. He also brought a letter from Congressman Olson applauding The Arc's work and our community of families.

State Representative Ron Reynolds also attended. We really appreciate his participation! He has been a long time supporter of The Arc and issues affecting our community. If you live in his district, please call him or email him to let him know you appreciate his attendance. You can go to [www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us) to find out if you live in his district.

Kevin Barker from Texana Center attended and explained implications of various funding scenarios on your lives. Some of the major concerns are the waiting for services, the freeze on general revenue funding, despite the massive need, and the need for a salary increase for the direct care staff in order to retain and attract the best people to work with the clients.

Phillip Pan of "Generation" ran the bingo game and expressed interest in joining the advocacy efforts (the next generation of leaders!). What would we do without the help of "Generation"?!

Where do we go from here? We will continue to reach out to our local representatives concerning the upcoming Texas legislative session. The December event was just the beginning of efforts to keep your concerns in the forefront. It will up to The Arc members to let their elected officials know their thoughts on the budget proposals. Contact Margo Pasko at The Arc if you would like a copy of the materials that were used and if you would like to be included on our distribution list for updates on the legislative process.



# The Arc Family Matters

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Tom Martin retired from Southwest Calibration Services, Inc. on January 7, 2013. He had been employed there since October, 2009. During Tom's tenure, Southwest Calibration was recognized as one of The Arc's employers of the year, and Tom was recognized as an employee of the year.

Congratulations to The Arc's Board Member, Stewart Jacobson, as he assumes the position of Chairman of the Board of the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce. We know he will serve the Chamber well.

\*\*\*\*\*

Nobey Varughese, one of The Arc's members, passed away on October 26, 2012. She is survived by her sister, Mini Varughese, PH.D.

Bob Ewing's mother (Rodney Ewing's grandmother) passed away on December 19, 2012. Cecilia Magana passed away on January 3, 2013. Her daughters, Barbara Magana-Robertson and Sharon Magana-Rembert, are both active volunteers for The Arc.

Please keep all of these families in your prayers.

## "Singing" in Christmas at Skeeters!

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*Cheryl Sewell*



The Arc's Youth Group celebrated the season with an evening of karaoke at the Skeeter's restaurant on Lexington Avenue in Sugar Land. My Christmas present to everyone was the choice of a santa hat or an elf hat (with pointy ears). Amazingly, most people wore their hats all evening long! Volunteers from Fulshear Ranch Academy joined in as backup singers and dancers. We sang Christmas carols and popular songs and had the whole place clapping and swaying to the grove while we "played that funky music". We loaded the place up with songs and laughter and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Ysidro Merlos DJs karaoke at Skeeter's every Thursday night from 7 pm to 9 pm.

## The Arc of Texas

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Laura LaVigne, the executive director of The Arc of Fort Bend County, has been appointed to serve on the 2013 board of directors of The Arc of Texas, a statewide advocacy organization. The Arc of Texas represents, supports and acts on behalf of 1.2 million Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families regardless of level of disability or membership. Intellectual and developmental disabilities include diagnoses of Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorders. The Arc supports the belief that all people have the fundamental moral, civil and constitutional rights to live, learn, work, play and worship in safe and healthy communities of their choosing.



# Apple of His Eyes Learning Center

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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 concerns and needs and perform "due diligence" when seeking a service provider.*

A new childcare facility opened recently in the Sugar Land area specializing in providing care to children with disabilities and their siblings, ages 2 to 22 years old. Joy Fisher and her husband Tunde are the owners of "Apple of His Eyes Learning Center for special needs children & their siblings." Joy was a Special Education Teacher in Aldine ISD when she felt she could make a bigger difference. She began formulating her idea of a childcare facility and scouting for locations. Since Joy and her husband live in Stafford, they wanted to create a comfortable daycare close to home. Tunde Fisher is the pastor of Redeemed Christian Church of God, near Westheimer.

Joy believed there was too much paperwork and not enough teaching in special education to make a difference in the lives of her students. She wanted to focus on academics and social skills, making her students as independent as possible, with creative teaching and hands-on learning experiences. She felt that her students needed more OT/PT/Music/Dance and ABA therapies than the school district provided. She decided that she wanted to open a childcare center to focus on fun education and activities that would enhance learning.

Apple of His Eyes has the capacity to serve 24 students. It is certified as a Licensed Daycare through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The ideal student: teacher ratio, according to Joy, will be 1 teacher to 5, students, depending on the individual's mental age and needs. Joy indicated that there may be a mixture of ages in the classrooms. Parents may enroll their child for 2, 3 or 5 days per week, but Apple of His Eyes does not accept "drop-in" childcare. Meals are catered by Nuksy's Catering in Stafford. There is a microwave available in the kitchen for snacks and microwavable breakfasts. Van service is not currently available but will be considered as enrollment grows.

The facility is located in a house that was a daycare center prior to Apple of His Eyes. There is a toddler room, closest to the restroom for children with toilet training, a pre-school room and an after-school program room. There is also a kitchen, dining room and a very large backyard with lots of potential.

Apple of His Eye will not be able to accommodate children using wheelchairs for mobility, as the doors to the restrooms are too narrow. However, Joy indicated that if the child can transfer and if the wheelchair can fit through the restroom door, she would consider enrollment. They do not have on-site nursing care so cannot accommodate medically fragile children.

For additional information about Apple of His Eyes Learning Center for special needs children & their siblings, contact Joy Fisher at 281-969-5973, 832-453-4010 or [info@appleofhiseyesn.com](mailto:info@appleofhiseyesn.com), [joy@appleofhiseyesn.com](mailto:joy@appleofhiseyesn.com). You can view their website: <http://sugarlandspecialneedschildcare.com>. Apple of His Eyes is located at 339 Dulles Avenue, Sugar Land, TX 77477. The house is across the street from Mamie George Library and Dulles Middle School. The construction along Dulles Avenue makes finding the entrance a bit difficult right now, but it will improve!

**"When you have a disability, knowing that you are not defined by it is the sweetest feeling."**

- *"In My Dreams I Dance"*, Autobiography by Anne Wafula Strike

# February 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Bowling SR - Monster Jam SO - Winter Games
3 SO - Winter Games	4 SO basketball (Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills)	5	6	7 SO basketball (Doves, Angels)	8	9 Bowling
10 SR - Mardi Gras Ball	11 SO basketball (Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills)	12	13	14 SO basketball (Doves, Angels)	15	16 Bowling
17 SR - Valentine's Dance in Needville	18 SO basketball (Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills)	19	20	21 SO basketball (Doves, Angels)	22	23 Bowling
24	25 The Arc Board of Directors Meeting SO basketball (Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills)	26	27	28 SO basketball (Doves, Angels)		

2	Bowling SR – Monster Jam SO Winter Games (Jan. 31 through Feb. 3)	2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. TBA TBA	Stafford Lanes Reliant Stadium TBA
4	SO basketball, Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church
7	SO basketball, Doves, Angels	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church
9	Bowling	2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Stafford Lanes
10	SR - Mardi Gras Ball	12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Galveston
11	SO basketball, Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church
14	SO basketball, Doves, Angels	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church
16	Bowling	2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Stafford Lanes
17	SR – Valentine's Dance in Needville	TBA	K of C Hall
18	SO basketball, Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church
21	SO basketball, Doves, Angels	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church
23	Bowling	2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Stafford Lanes
25	The Arc Board of Directors Meeting SO basketball, Sharks, Wolverines, Ind. Skills	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	The Arc office New Hope Lutheran Church
28	SO basketball, Doves, Angels	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	New Hope Lutheran Church



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: \_\_\_\_\_ HCS Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

**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+

**Membership Levels:**

**Individual with Disability** \$20.00  
-reserved for those not living at home and not included in a family membership  
-receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Single** \$25.00  
-receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Single Lifetime** \$500.00  
-receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Family** \$50.00  
**\*Names of all family members:** \_\_\_\_\_  
-includes all immediate members of the family living in the home  
-includes a family member with a disability living outside of the home  
-receives two votes at meetings of the membership

**Corporate** \$100.00  
-receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Corporate Lifetime** \$2000.00  
-receives once vote at meetings of the membership

**VIP**  
-given yearly to chairs of Best in the West and Golf Classic  
-given yearly to Head Coaches of Special Olympic Sports

**Additional Tax Deductible Donation:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish, you may donate to a specific program:

- Bowling  Education/Employment  Self-Advocacy  
 Social Recreation  Special Olympics  Transportation

**Total Amount Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form and payment to: **OR** Join online at [www.arcoffortbend.org](http://www.arcoffortbend.org)  
The Arc of Fort Bend County  
123 Brooks Street  
Sugar Land, Texas 77478

The Arc of Fort Bend County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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## ***Thank You to Our Donors***

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### **Programs**

Thomas Wilson for Special Olympics  
Alicia McLaren for Special Olympics

### **In Honor/Memory**

WJ Interests, LLC in honor of Dave and Karen Johnston  
James Xavier in memory of Nobey Varughese