

The Arc Voice

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO EXPERIENCE MORE MEANINGFUL AND SATISFYING LIVES

Arc Angels are Among Us...

From the
Executive
Director,

Lauren

Mullis

Despite the devastating budget cuts that The Arc of Mecklenburg County is facing, many wonderful things are happening to this agency. Over the past four months we have been highlighted on WBTV, WSOC, WCNC and in the print media with The Charlotte Observer. This is helping to build great awareness for our agency during difficult financial times.

We are dedicated to getting our information out to the media and the public at large to make a bigger name for ourselves in the community. The more people that are aware of the services that we provide, the more opportunity we have to make connections in the community that will allow us to advance our mission.

The area Kiwanis Clubs have been wonderful to us and are providing us with some much needed financial support for specific programs. Business Leaders of Charlotte (BLOC) has taken us under their wing by allowing us the opportunity to be a benefactor for an upcoming event that will give us exposure like we have never seen before.

The Arc of Mecklenburg has truly been blessed by our friends in what is surely going to be remembered as The Great Recession. While we are in no way out of the woods yet, or even close, I have to admit I am very hopeful for the future and for what The Arc of Mecklenburg is going to become: *A well known advocacy agency for children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families.*

Below is a list of ways that your donation can help The Arc of Mecklenburg and our over 3,000 clients that we serve every year. Just remember, that it doesn't take much for you to make an impact. In addition, we are always in need of volunteers to help with office tasks and assistance with our programs.

- If you have \$20, it would provide: 10 printed & bound Resource Guides to provide to individuals with disabilities and their families to educate them on the available programs in the area that could benefit them.
- If you have \$25, it would buy: one child's team-building or community service activity and lunch through our K-Kids program. (young chefs \$15 and \$10 for lunch) K-Kids is an inclusive program for children with and without disabilities created to reduce stigmas and build awareness and character of all children.
- If you have \$30, it would provide 6 parents with a child in the neonatal intensive care unit a warm meal and informational notebook to track the medical information and growth of their child through our Noah's Arc program. (\$8 for food \$2 for the notebook)
- If you have \$50, it would buy: the materials for a community service project that adults with developmental disabilities can participate in through our Aktion Club. (materials) Aktion Club is a community service program for adults with disabilities co-sponsored by local Kiwanis Clubs. The Arc has 3 Aktion Clubs in Mecklenburg County.
- If you have \$100, it would provide a full scholarship for an Aktion Club member to attend the Annual Aktion Club state conference this October.

Thank You for your continued support of The Arc. Please feel free to call me with any further ideas you may have to help our organization become more well known in the community.



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The Arc of Mecklenburg County, Inc.
 4108 Park Rd. Suite 200
 Charlotte, NC 28209
 Phone: 704/332-4535
 Fax: 704/332-3148
 www.arcmeck.org

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Fundraising Update:

We have a lot of very exciting fundraisers coming up in an effort to diminish the effects of the devastating budget cut that we received and the economic downturn that has left our agency desperate. We are diligently working on grant applications and collaborating with the business community on fundraisers this year. We hope to provide an array of opportunities that interest you so you can get involved in some capacity. Check out the information below for events and details.

Golf Tournament:



The Pineville/South Mecklenburg Kiwanis Club has generously agreed to donate all of the proceeds from their annual Golf Tournament to our agency. The Kiwanis Clubs work in partnership with our agency to sponsor the three Aktion Clubs that we have throughout Mecklenburg County. This golf tournament is held in late September, a beautiful time of the year to be outside. It provides you with a great chance to enjoy a round of golf, while giving back to our agency. We hope you will consider joining us and the members of the Pineville/South Mecklenburg County Kiwanis Club for a great time on the green! The registration includes the greens fees, carts, range balls, lunch, and dinner.

Date: Monday, September 28, 2009

Time: registration 12pm and shot-gun start 1pm

Place: Raintree Golf Club

Cost: \$100 per player

\$350 per team if registered by September 1, 2009

For more information visit Kiwanis online at:

www.bnrglobal.com/golf/index.html

Car Raffle:

The Arc of NC will be holding a reverse raffle for a brand new car! Tickets will be sold through our agency and will be available in September. Visit our website for updates. The Proceeds from the sales of tickets will go to benefit the local area Arc chapters. Tickets sold in the cities of Charlotte, Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Pineville, Matthews, and Mint Hill will help to support our chapter.



Community Education Update

BLOctoberFest:

BLOC, also known as the Business Leaders of Charlotte has generously named our agency as a benefactor of their annual fall fundraiser, BLOctoberFest. This event will have music, drink specials, food, and more, so come out and party with a purpose while supporting The Arc.

Date: Saturday, October 24th

Time: 5pm to 10pm

Place: Pavilion at EpiCentre

Cost: \$15 general admission or VIP \$30

Festival of Trees:



The Festival of Trees will be held in December and will give businesses and individuals an chance to decorate a tree that will be displayed in uptown Charlotte, then donated to a local charity for the holiday. We need sponsors for trees, food, and printing costs. Please contact Meika if you are able to help in any way.

- **Tree Sponsors \$350**
- **Star Sponsors \$1,000**

For any questions about these fundraisers please contact Meika directly at 332-4535 ext. 104 or meika@arcmeck.org.

Next Arc Education Workshop:

**Newly Diagnosed,
"What Do We Do Next?"**

Saturday, October 3, 2009

9:30 am—11:30 am

St. Matthews Catholic Church

8015 Ballantyne Commons Parkway

RSVP: 704-332-4535 x 102

It's Time To Gear Up For School, But Some Kids Will Be Without This Year.



The Arc is participating with Classroom Central and School Tools in helping kick off the School Tools campaign.

We need your help to collect school supplies for more than 80,000 students in the Charlotte area. Right now N.C. is 8th in the nation for unemployment, which means more kids will be without supplies for school. You can change that by joining us and help DONATE.

This is a month long project that starts Aug.1-Aug.31. With many community partners helping with this venture it should be a successful drive. Every August school supplies are collected throughout the area to help ensure that all students start the new school year with tools they need to be successful in the classroom.

On August 13, 2009 from 1p-3pm The Arc of Mecklenburg's K-Kids Club will be doing their community service project at Classroom Central. They will be stuffing backpacks and cutting and dyeing items for the teachers. This is going to be exciting!!

This is a way for all of the kids to be included in a supportive environment where they can participate in activities that foster the development of leadership skills, increase self confidence, and team building.

68,000 backpacks will be empty this fall. Let's make a difference, and make a change. Items that need to be collected are: backpacks, pencils, paper, crayons, glue, folders, notebooks, markers, rulers, etc. If you would like to make a donation, we will have a barrel here at The Arc office, so that you can drop off your donations and help the many kids that want to be ready for the 1st day of school.

Editorial: New York Times

Fair Pay for Caregivers

Change is too slow coming for the nation's one million home care aides. In 2007, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld a 1975 federal labor regulation that defines home care aides as "companions." That definition exempts home care employers — often for-profit agencies — from having to pay the federal minimum wage or time and a half for overtime.

In explaining their decision, the justices pointed out that the law gives the Labor Department, not the court, the power to change the regulation. Yet, more than two years later, the regulation still stands.

Last month, 15 senators sent a letter to Hilda Solis, President Obama's labor secretary, urging her to eliminate the "companion" exemption. A month earlier, 37 House members sent a similar letter. But beyond a statement from Ms. Solis expressing concern and pledging to look into the matter, there has been no progress.

Not surprisingly, home care aides — who typically help to feed, dress and move their elderly and disabled clients, in addition to keeping house for them — remain among the most underpaid and overworked in the labor force. They usually manage to make above the nationwide minimum wage (\$6.55 an hour now, rising to \$7.25 an hour later this month), in large part because many states impose higher minimums than the feds.

Still, most make below \$10 an hour. And they are routinely denied overtime pay. Federal rules do not demand it, and only 16 states and the District of Columbia require any extra pay for extra work. Lack of overtime pay is especially unjust in the home care field because extra long shifts, including overnight stays, are common.

Taxpayers ultimately make up for the low pay because many home care aides rely on food stamps and other public assistance. The public pays in other ways, too: turnover is high, undermining the quality of care and driving up overall costs.

The Labor Department got off to a slow start when Republican senators held up Ms. Solis's confirmation, in part, to protest her support for unions. But further delay raises the danger that the plight of home care aides will get mired in the broader debate over health care costs.

Another danger is that industry opposition to better pay will gain renewed traction in today's troubled economy. Some home care employers say that having to pay extra for overtime could drive them out of business. In states where varying degrees of wage and overtime protections are in place for home care aides, that has not been the result. And a business model that relies on denying overtime pay to the work force is unacceptable.

When the Labor Department issues a new rule, there is a comment period, generally three months. That should be enough time to deal with legitimate concerns, like how to help states whose Medicaid home care budgets are based on the previous pay practices. Home care aides should not have to wait any longer than that for the fair pay they have been denied for so long.

Gov. Perdue blocks attempt to add N.C. tax surcharge

By Mark Johnson
mjohnson@charlotteobserver.com

Posted: Thursday, Jul. 23, 2009

Gov. Beverly Perdue succeeded today in blocking a tax package deal struck between the House and Senate just 24 hours earlier.

Senate leaders said they would start over on what taxes to raise and how much because of objections Perdue raised to a proposed 2 percent surcharge on all income tax brackets. Perdue also is insisting on no reduction in per pupil spending for public schools, said Sen. David Hoyle, a Gaston County Democrat and co-chair of the Senate Finance Committee.

"What we're going to do is regroup and replan," Hoyle said.

Legislative leaders, already three weeks late in crafting a budget, reached a tax deal yesterday that included the income tax surcharge, a 1-cent hike in the sales tax and a group of alcohol and tobacco tax increases to raise \$982 million.

Perdue, a Democrat, wants another \$200 million, and Hoyle said Democratic leaders don't know where that money will come from.

Republicans criticized the Democratic derailment.

"Either (Perdue) was in on (the tax package) and changed her mind or she wasn't consulted," said Senate Republican Leader Phil Berger, of Eden. "Either way, it's not a good situation."

Berger also questioned why Perdue objects to an income tax increase as penalizing working families but supports raising the sales tax. "Working families pay all those taxes," Berger said.

Sen. Dan Clodfelter, a Democrat from Charlotte and another finance co-chair, said he expects another temporary spending bill extending the budget deadline for a third time past the current date of July 31.

- *The Budget agreement is going to be critical in the effectiveness of the service delivery system for individuals with developmental disabilities in North Carolina. Please stay tuned to The Arc of Mecklenburg County's Twitter Page for up to date information on the budget process and how you can help advocate and get involved. <http://twitter.com/ArcMeck>*
- *Please also check out The Arc of North Carolina's Policy Blog frequently. This is a fantastic source of information regarding all public policy matters affecting those with disabilities and their families. Since things can happen very fast it is important to stay on top of the latest information and this policy blog will help you do that. <http://www.thearcnc.blogspot.com/>*
- *Want access to E-Alerts? Please sign up for The Arc of NC's E-Alert network on The Arc of NC's website www.arcnc.org. When action is needed, you will receive an e-mail that states the problem, presents talking points based on The Arc's position, and ways that you can respond so that your voice is heard.*

Thought You Might Like to Know...

The Arc of Mecklenburg is working in partnership with several area organizations through the Mecklenburg Disability Action Colloborative. MDAC's principal mission and focus is on community inclusion and support of those with disabilities. "Employment First" is MDAC's primary focus because of it's importance and the common interest in employment across most of the MDAC membership organizations. Interested in helping? Contact Lauren at 704-332-4535 x 102

We Are...

- We are a well-established network that connects families and people with developmental disabilities to community resources.
 - We create awareness of developmental disabilities.
- We lobby legislators to ensure all the needs of people with developmental disabilities are met. (i.e. education, housing, services and funding)
- We help people with developmental disabilities access services and the supports they need.
 - We encourage personal empowerment and self-advocacy.
- We educate the community about receiving, embracing, and engaging people with developmental disabilities in all facets of the community.

Membership Application

Renew Your Membership Today!

NOTIFICATION

Your Membership Goes a LONG way to help The Arc of Mecklenburg help those with disabilities and their families! Please become a member today!

It's TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!

Sign up for:	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Advocate	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$30
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate/Sponsor	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Arc Friend	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> President's Club	\$1000

Total: _____

Method of Payment	_____	Name	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check	_____	Address	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard	_____	_____	_____
		Phone	_____

Credit Card #	_____	Exp. date	_____
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Signature _____



The Arc of Mecklenburg
County
4108 Park Rd. #200
Charlotte, NC 28209

Phone: 704-332-4535
Fax: 704-332-3148
generalinfo@arcmeck.org



Aktion Club's of Mecklenburg County

A HUGE Thank You goes out to Arc Board Member, Ryan Platt of A Special Needs Plan, for heading up the Disability Awareness Night at the Charlotte Knights Game held on June 10. Ryan was able to distribute over 700 tickets to individuals with disabilities and their families and professionals in the field with help from Hinrichs Flanigan Financial, Mass Mutual and Exceptional Parent Magazine. Thank You Ryan for spearheading this annual event.



A BIG Thank You goes out to the Mint Hill Kiwanis Club for sponsoring the Aktion Club Talent Show. The Mint Hill Kiwanis did a great job putting everything together from the silent auction to selling raffle tickets. The Arc would also like to thank Philadelphia Presbyterian Church, Kiwanis of Pineville, Kiwanis of Lake Norman, Char-Mecklenburg Kiwanis, Mecklenburg Kiwanis, Matthews Kiwanis, Kiwanis of Union County, Bob-B-Que Restaurant, and all who contributed prizes for the raffle drawings and silent auction. The Arc can not thank you all enough for making the Talent Show very successful.



Talent Show

CONGRATULATIONS!

to all Aktion Club participants who came out to show their stuff in front of over 160 people. There was dancing, singing, poem reading, guitar playing and a auctioneer. There was no stage fright from any of the Aktion Clubbers. They came to show off their talent and they did a GREAT job!

Way to Go Aktion Clubbers!

Congratulations to The Arc's Annual Award Winners!

- Teacher of the Year: Debbie Taylor (East Meck)
- Advocate of the Year: Ron Reeve
- Regina Howard Independence Award: Missy Blackmon
- Distinguished Services: Katherine Trela
- Parent of The Year: Ken & Pat Greenberg
- Aktion Clubber of the Year: Robby Payne
- Business Partner of the Year: Presbyterian Hospital
- Direct Care Provider of the Year; Diane Wright
- Board Member of the Year: Patrick Pruden
- Arc Angel of the Year: Ryan Platt



Aktion Club Calendar of Events

- *August 5 & 19—Aktion Club Char-Meck/Nevins regular meeting 9:00am at Nevins Center*
- *August 14— Aktion Club South Mecklenburg Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at Memorial United Methodist Church*
- *August 21—Lake Norman Aktion Club Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at the Boy Scout Hut at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church*
- *September 2 & 16—Aktion Club Char-Meck/ Nevins regular meeting 9:00am at Nevins Ceter*
- *September 11—Aktion Club South Mecklenburg Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at Memorial United Methodist Church*
- *September 25—Lake Norman Aktion Club Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at the Boy Scout Hut at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church*

Call Steve at 704-332-4535 ext.106 for any questions.

THE Arc

OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY, INC.

4108 Park Rd. Suite 200

Charlotte, NC 28209

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ORGANIZATION

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Arc of Mecklenburg County is dedicated to working with individuals with cognitive and intellectual impairments. We promote dignity, inclusion and choice for individuals and their families through advocacy, education, and support services.

We are on the Web! Check us out at
www.arcmeck.org



Help us save money!! Each returned newsletter costs us 60¢.
Please keep us updated with your address changes.

Announcements

- Help The Arc's K-Kids by donating school supplies so they can stuff bookbags for their community service project in August. We need bookbags, pencils, pens, paper, crayons, glue etc. Let's help get the kids prepared for the new school year with supplies.
- Aug.13, 2009 from 1pm-3pm K-Kids will be at Classroom Central to help out with the School Tools campaign. This is a great community service project for the kids to give back to the community, and do team building skills.
- Noah's Arc is still in need of items to stuff baskets and grab bags. Items include preemie items, socks, bottles, lotion, hand sanitizer, gift certificates, tissues, magazines. Contact Francine at 704-332-4535 ext.101 for more details. We are always looking for volunteers to help with donating dinners as well.

