

THE ASSOCIATION CONNECTION

NEWS from the Director's Desk

By Barbara T. Pilarcik, RN
Executive Director



The Caring Force

The Caring Force is a new initiative capturing the commitment, energy and compassion of individuals who share a vision for the human services sector and are engaged toward its realization. The mission of The Caring Force is to empower those who care about human services to advance a progressive agenda so that Massachusetts protects our most vulnerable neighbors and creates a stronger economy with the pay, recognition and respect that our workers deserve. It is a coalition for individuals affiliated with human services who care about creating a stronger, more powerful and unified sector. The Caring Force will allow volunteers, human service workers, board members and the families and friends of the people we serve to come together and advocate for the people we care about. It will communicate with our policy makers for the best possible care to the one in ten vulnerable people in Massachusetts who need assistance and for better pay for those who care for them.

How will we make a difference? We will do that through a new initiative created by The Providers' Council. We will make extensive use of social media and coalition building. We will have a unifying logo and a symbol that represents our common interests for fairness, and use common messages and themes to speak truth about the essential nature of our sector. A web presence has just been launched to engage our supporters and we will make use of social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, etc to get our message out as widely as possible.

The Caring Force will also meet with policy makers to help shape policy that is focused on improving the lives of the people being served and on the people who help them. One example of the effectiveness of our sector is the recent victory we achieved with the inclusion of salary reserve money in the supplemental budget. In the fall the Governor proposed a supplemental budget for FY'12 (our current



budget year) and did not include any money for raises for those earning under \$40,000/year, called Salary Reserve. A call went out to everyone from our advocacy groups to ask legislators to include Salary Reserve in their deliberations. Although it is very difficult to get additional funds once the budget year is underway, the outpouring of response from all over the state resulted in the legislature including \$10 million dollars for a one-time Salary Reserve fund in this year. If state revenues meet expectations, as they appear to be doing, there will be a one-time bonus in the spring. This would not have been possible without the strong advocacy of everyone who called, wrote or emailed the legislature and Governor. This is an example of The Caring Force in action.

What can you to help? It is easy! Join The Caring Force by going onto the website at www.thecaringforce.org and sign up for action. Invite everyone you know to join. Advocate for legislation promoted by The Caring Force. Follow up on initiatives that The Caring Force asks of you. Educate yourself, and other members of the community about the important work done by the human service sector in Massachusetts. In western Massachusetts the Human, Social, and Health Service (HSBS) organizations employed more than 1 in 5 workers in the region and paid \$1.6 billion in wages. The Association For Community Living employs nearly 600 people and serves over 1000 individuals and families.

I have joined The Caring Force and I hope you will too! We cannot expect others to support our work unless we first show our own commitment. Please join today!

<http://www.thecaringforce.org/sign-the-petition>

Barbara Pilarcik



**2011 United Way Campaign
LIVE UNITED**

THANK YOU to all who participated in this year's United Way Campaign. Below are the winners of the raffle prizes.

Deb Montanari	\$50 Gift Card
James Chartier	\$50 Gift Card
Althea Smith	\$50 Gift Card
Noel Lang	\$50 Gift Card
Jeanette Gilmartin	\$100 Gift Card
Catherine Flower	\$100 Gift Card
April Callahan	RAVE Motion Pictures - 4 Movie Passes
Marilyn Lysobey	Norman Rockwell Museum - 2 Passes
Suzanne Laba	AMF Fairlane Family Pass
Sheryl Sutcliffe	Springfield Museum - Family 4 Pack
Dennis LaFleche	\$50 Sixteen Acre Garden Center Gift Certificate

PRIDE

Promoting Relationships, Independence, Development & Empowerment

PRIDE enjoyed their annual Holiday Party on December 8th at the John Boyle O'Reilly Club.

Everyone enjoyed the music, dancing, food, and visit from Santa Clause.



PRIDE

Promoting Relationships, Independence, Development & Empowerment

The PRIDE group's first annual toy drive raised 510 toys, far exceeding their goal of 400!

The PRIDE group would like to thank everyone who participated in their 1st annual toy drive! It was a huge success!!

Dennis LaFleche, Kelli Davenport and Bill Bradgon delivered toys to Baystate Children's Hospital and Shiners' Hospital for Children. Both hospitals were extremely grateful and thrilled with the number of toys they received.

A special thanks to WHYN 560 for inviting PRIDE representatives to come on their morning show to help spread the word about the toy drive and WGGB News 40 for broadcasting the kick-off party and toy drop off at Baystate.

Congratulations to our raffle winners:

Connie Topor	2 Red Sox tickets and bus transportation
Judy Luddy	\$25 Lowe's gift card
Valley Dwight	\$25 PRIDE gas card
Tanya Draper	Tangles Salon gift card
Chelsea Gilbert	Planet Fitness gift bag
Linda Hatch	PRIDE t-shirt
Art Marti9n	PRIDE t-shirt
Michael Cooley	PRIDE t-shirt

Thank you to the business that contributed prizes for the raffle:

Tangles Salon, Westfield
Planet Fitness

This was not only a success for the children that received toys for the holiday, but also for all PRIDE participants. Everyone is excited for next year and hope to raise 750 toys! Look for information on the 2012 toy drive beginning in September.

The PRIDE group will be organizing an Easter food drive for the Springfield Rescue Mission, look for information in upcoming issues of *The Association Connection*.



PRIDE

Promoting Relationships, Independence, Development & Empowerment

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Baystate Children's Hospital



Bill Bragdon and Dennis LaFleche



Shriners Hospitals
for Children®
Springfield, Massachusetts





Dear Association for
Community Living,

Thanks so much for your
donation to Baystate
Children's Hospital! **Your
generosity enabled Santa
to bring an amazing visit to
our inpatient kids this year!!**
Without question, you have
made a huge difference in
each child's hospital and
holiday experience!

THANK YOU AND HAVE THE HAPPIEST OF
NEW YEARS!

Sincerely,
The Child Life Team
Baystate Children's Hospital





Joyful Chorus Sings Songs of the Season

Joyful Chorus Triumphs!!!

Whole Children's Joyful Chorus performed in two community shows in December. The first show was as the annual performance of the Florence Community Band on December 12th. The packed house was treated to an array of songs of the season from the group, which is made up of kids (ages 8 - 16) with and without disabilities.

The next day, the Chorus hit the road, singing to an enraptured audience at Overlook in Northampton.

Since then, the Chorus has been invited to sing at to more events - February 2nd (which will double as a fund raiser for Whole Children and Best Buddies) and March 10th. (Look for information about these



Some members of the Joyful Chorus

event in future issues of *The Association Connection*.) With all the interest in the Chorus, it will surely become a regular part of the Whole Children roster.

If you know anyone who would like to sing in the chorus (ages 8 and up), please visit our website (www.wholechildren.org) for more information. The more the merrier!



Did you hear? The Association Is on Facebook!

The Association For Community Living now has a Facebook page. You can find our page by searching for "The Association For Community Living" in the search bar, or you can go to our homepage and click on the "like" button.

This is an exciting way to reach our audience, and we look forward to posting photos, events and our latest news in order to engage all of us in The Caring Force.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Beverly Herbert, herbertb@theassnn.org, or Maria Gisolfi, gisolfi@theassnn.org.

Thank you for your support!



WINTER CLASSES ARE FILLING UP!

Whole Children is offering a varied and exciting bunch of classes this winter (classes start on January 17th). We have two new programs we are particularly excited about: *The Whole Children Adventure Club* and *Safety First!*

The Adventure Club offers kids the opportunity to learn some seriously cool skill. From rock climbing to community service, to basic gardening and woodworking, each class will be exciting, challenging, practical, valuable, and just plain fun! Three skills are taught each session and kids earn a WC Adventures badge for each! Each class begins with teambuilding activities and games. This session we kick off the program with badges in fitness, woodworking, and space exploration. There are two sections on Saturdays, one for ages 6 to 9, and another for ages 10 to 13.

Safety First teaches fundamental safety skills, helping kids (ages 9 to 13) learn how to stay safe when they are home alone, in school, in the Internet, and out in the community. Knowing how to stay safe is an important part of growing up and being independent, so come learn the basics and remember that being safe is cool!



For adults, Milestones is launching an exciting new day program. The program offers a good balance between skill building, social interaction, physical exercise, and enrichment through the arts.

The skill building activities rotate among self-advocacy, cooking, computer, and community skills. Physical activities include dance, sports, reading and writing, and fitness. Other activities include drama, music, woodworking and art. Social activities include opportunities to play a board game with a friend, shoot some hoops, jam on musical instruments, play Wii, ping pong or air hockey, or just chat with friends.

Other exciting classes for adults include the New Worlds Book Club, Exploring Music, Zuma, and Boundaries and Relationships. Check out the full roster at www.milestones-program.org, or call 413-585-8010.

Calendar of Events

"WHAT'S HAPPENING AT
THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING"

"What's Up" in January

Friday, January 20 - Human Service Forum Legislative Reception, 8:30 am - 10:00 am at the Knights of Columbus in Chicopee. For information, contact Tracy Romeo at 413-732-0531.

Saturday, January 28 - UConn Huskies' Women's Basketball, 1:00 pm at the XL Center in Hartford, CT. For information, contact Steve Berube at USP@comcast.net.

"What's Up" in February

Thursday, February 2 - Asperger's 101, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm at Holyoke Community College. For information, call Community Resources at 413-529-2428.

Sunday, February 5 - Ultimate Sports Program's Annual Celtics Experience at TD BankNorth Garden. For information, contact Steve Berube at USP@comcast.net.

Tuesday, February 28 - Let's Put the Motivation in IEP, 6:00 pm - 8:30 p m, at Community Resources in Easthampton. For information, call Community Resources at 413-529-2428.

Whole Children / Milestones Winter Classes Scheduled to Start January 17

The winter session of Whole Children (for preschoolers through teens) and Milestones (for older teens and adults) classes are scheduled to start on Tuesday, January 17 and will run for 8 weeks.

Classes include drama, music, gymnastics, dance, and kung fu (and lots more!). The new class catalogs should be going in the mail by the beginning of December. If you'd like to join the Whole Children or Milestones mailing list, please send an email with all the pertinent information to info@wholechildren.org.

New Employees

Mark Soukup III
Courtney Clifford
Amy Holden
Lissette Ramos
Tracy Songer
John Naylor
Lisa Atkinson
Janet Doody

Winston Harvey
Lillian Pippas
Amanda Shero
Julia McGillicuddy
Tara Bartak
Clara Nkuzi
Katherine Bailey



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One Carando Drive, Suite 2
Springfield, MA 01104
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Fax: 413-732-1168
www.theassn.org

Residential Supports
One Carando Drive, Suite 2
Springfield, MA 01104
Phone: 413-732-0531
Fax: 413-732-1168

Residential Supports - North
101 Munson Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
Phone: 413-774-3495
Fax: 413-772-6122

Employment Supports
Greenfield Center
143 Munson Street
Greenfield, MA 01301

Valley Tees
28 Federal Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
Phone: 413-772-8626

Specialized Home Care
One Carando Drive, Suite 2
Springfield, MA 01104
Phone: 413-732-0531
Fax: 413-732-1168

100 North Street, Suite 322
Pittsfield, MA 01201
Phone: 413-443-4780
Fax: 413-443-6581

Intensive Residential Services
One Carando Drive, Suite 2
Springfield, MA 01104
Phone: 413-732-0531
Fax: 413-732-1168

Community Resources for People with Autism
116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366
Easthampton, MA 01027
www.communityresourcesforautism.org

Ultimate Sports Program
360 North Westfield Street
Feeding Hills, MA 01030
www.uspkids.com

Whole Children / Milestones
41 Russell Street
Hadley, MA 01035
Phone: 413-585-8010
Fax: 413-585-0800
www.wholechildren.org

Family Empowerment
41 Russell Street
Hadley, MA 01035
Phone: 413-585-8010
Fax: 413-585-0800

The Down Syndrome Resource Group of Western Massachusetts
One Carando Drive, Suite 2
Springfield, MA 01104
Phone: 413-562-7395
www.dssupport.org

THE ASSOCIATION

FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

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A HAPPY
NEW YEAR



Creating Opportunities, Building Relationships, Improving Lives For Children And Adults With Developmental Disabilities Since 1952

www.theassn.org

The Association Connection

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JANUARY CALENDAR

Birthstone - Garnet

- 1 New Year's Day
- 2 Rose Bowl Game
- 6 Twelfth Night
- 14 Dress Up Your Pet Day
- 16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day -
The Association's Administrative
Offices are closed
- Appreciate a Dragon Day
- 18 Winnie the Pooh Day
- 23 Lunar New Year
Chinese New Year - Year of the Dragon
- 30 Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day



Quote for the Month:

If you would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail
or have anything you'd like to share,
please contact the newsletter editor at romeot@theassn.org.

The Legacy Society Members

Securing the Future

individuals and couples who have designated a planned gift

Sidney and Pudsie Cooley*
Nancy F. and Kenneth Robbins*
Paul A. Tardif*
Crawford and Ann G. Lincoln*
Oscar⁺ and Ruth Seldin*
Mr. and Mrs. William B. Martin*
Reverend Beverly L. Herbert*
Donald J. and Merka Fletcher*
David K. and Kathleen Scott*
Cynthia R. St. George, CFRE*
Richard M. Nidel*
Dr. and Mrs. Stephen J. Levine*
Paul E. and Charlotte C. Bureau*
James and Regina Shriver*
André and Karin Fafard*
Robert and Wanda Fafard*
Therese Fafard*
Meyer Schoenberg**
Michael J. Cooley
Debra Cooley
John Moody

* Deceased
**Charter Members



Editor: Tracy Romeo