



Touchstone

A PUBLICATION OF THE ARC/MORRIS

WEATHERING THE STORM



Superstorm Sandy made landfall on the south-central New Jersey shore early in the evening of Monday, October 29, 2012. With bands of hurricane strength winds extending out 150 miles in all directions from its center, the storm had all of New Jersey in its path. Wind and rain raged overnight. As dawn broke, those of us in



Morris County looked out at a scene of significant destruction. It very quickly became clear that this had not been just another storm; this was a cataclysm. And we were in the dark!

The Arc/Morris operates 22 residential programs and three day programs across Morris County for people affected by intellectual and related developmental disabilities, and their families. (All our administrative operations are housed in yet another center.) In the immediate aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, only *three* of those facilities had power, heat, and lights. This meant that, unless the situation improved quickly and drastically, more than 130 residents would need relocation, and some 200 consumers would have no productive day activity to attend. The situation, however, improved neither drastically nor quickly. In fact, it got worse.

Not only were trees and power lines down across the county, but across the state as well. Many staff persons found themselves facing the same challenges: no lights and no heat.

Fallen trees and downed power lines blocked roads across the region. Traffic signals didn't operate. Without power, gas stations could not pump fuel. The Governor had already declared a state of emergency. Now, so did The Arc/Morris!

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"This was by far the most challenging two weeks of my tenure at The Arc/Morris. Although incredibly overwhelming at times, the dedication of our staff and the resilience of our consumers, filled me with amazement. I never doubted we would make it through!"

GAIL PARADISE / ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

IN THIS ISSUE

Weathering the Storm	1
From the Executive Director	2
Drew Women Win Award	3
Email Program	3
Massey Quick Outing	3
Giving to The Arc/Morris	3
2012 Annual Appeal	3
2012 Wine Tasting	3
Foundation Focus	4

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



For the past decade, the preferred policy direction for the care of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities has been toward service provision in natural environments, e.g. homes, schools, the workplace. Facilities in the community dedicated to the care of people with ID/DD, once seen as a means to liberation from institutional care, are increasingly being viewed as isolative, if not segregationist. The ideal, we are now being told, is for independent agents to bring to the individual with ID/DD whatever array of services may be wanted and/or needed in the settings in which they already live, work, and play. Which is fine, I guess, as far as it goes, for certain individuals, in certain circumstances. But I shudder to think what would have happened to those hundreds or thousands of individuals with ID/DD if that type of service system had been in place a couple of weeks ago, when Hurricane Sandy roared into New Jersey.

It is generally accepted that, in order to live a full life in the community, people with ID/DD require supports, which of course will be of varying intensity dependent on the abilities/requirements of the individual. Within this framework, it is considered adequate that each person in service will be assisted by another person. What the devastation of Hurricane Sandy showed me, however is that there needs to be not only individuals providing supports, but an actual functioning system of supports capable of mustering its collective resources in the event of disaster.

When Hurricane Sandy swept into our state, The Arc/Morris, like all other private and corporate entities in the community, was initially profoundly affected. Power was out to more than 80% of our facilities. Our emergency response plans were activated immediately. Sandy may have packed a heck of a punch, but it was not the first time we have suffered systems breakdowns; institutional memory is a handy thing in a time like this. We also had the resources of the entire agency to draw on, so materiel and personnel could be, and were, deployed and diverted as necessary. And as a result, not a single one of the individuals in our care experienced a single day without access to food, power, heat, needed medical care, or even companionship. The Arc/Morris served as a literal lifeline for the individuals we serve, among the most vulnerable people in Morris County.

I have lately heard it argued that organizations like The Arc/Morris are out of step with the tenor of the times in the ID/DD community, that we are paternalistic, even oppressive. Some others claim to dream of a day when entities like The Arc/Morris will no longer exist. Maybe... But I, for one, shudder to think what would have happened to those consumers we served throughout the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy had our organization not existed, with the experience and resources to bring to bear on the hardship and devastation that this storm left in its path.

Finally, I cannot express how proud I continue to be of both the staff and consumers as so many sacrificed their own comfort and well being to care for the many people we serve 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you or a loved one was supported by The Arc/Morris through this tough period, please thank those on the front line who made a real difference at a time when they were truly needed the most.

B I L L T E S T A

All of the programs that The Arc/Morris operates have operational policies and procedures, including plans for emergency situations such as the one we were facing. Those staff who were on duty when the storm hit were aware that they would have to stay in place until such time as relief could be brought in. During and after the storm, administrative and managerial staffs in our Residential Department were busy assessing each group home, monitoring the power situations, and making plans for relocating consumers to homes and centers that did have power. Staff from the closed Adult Training Centers was redeployed to areas where needed as we awaited the return of power. Members of our Property staff

*“It is said that the worst circumstances often bring out the best in people, and this was certainly exemplified by our staff during our Hurricane Sandy experience. I cannot begin to thank them enough for their **support, endless energy, and dedication** during a very challenging time.”*

GLORIA SKARZYNSKI-BURT / DIRECTOR OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICES



went house-to-house, checking for damages and clearing away fallen trees and branches. Spoiled food was removed from refrigerators. Emergency petty cash was made available for homes that could not access their accounts; banks too were without power throughout much of the county. With gas shortages and eventually rationing, many sat in long lines for long hours to make sure we got enough fuel for our fleet of 90 vehicles.

We are very fortunate that no one was injured and all our properties remained intact. The determination and perseverance of our employees during this period was exceptional — the care and support of those in our charge first and foremost to all.

Superstorm Sandy and her aftermath tested the strength of the agency, the adequacy of our preparedness plans, the resolve of our employees, and the resilience of our consumers. Sandy gave it her best shot and then some, but in the end — we won.

Giving to The Arc/Morris

CAR DONATION PROGRAM

We are pleased to remind members and friends of The Arc/Morris that we have partnered with the Charity Car Donation Center to operate and manage our car donation program. Since the program started, we received many generous donations of vehicles to support our programs and services. We are happy to accept donation of your used cars, vans or trucks, all of which are tax deductible.

Call 1-877-ARC-CAR0

MATCHING GIFTS

Your donation to The Arc/Morris can be matched if your company participates in a Matching Gift Program. Check with your Human Resources Department to see if your donation qualifies for a matching gift.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Honor the memory of a loved one with a donation to The Arc/Morris. Please remember us in your wills and trusts.

ONLINE DONATIONS

You can make online donations now through PayPal or Firstgiving on our website. Just click the Donate Now tab under the How to Help section.

UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTORS

If your company participates in the United Way, please designate your gift for The Arc/Morris. Our agency identified number of 003864 must be included as well as our address of P.O. Box 123, Morris Plains, NJ 07950. Thanks to our many supporters for their continued participation.

For more information, please contact the Development Department at (973) 326-9750, Ext. 211.

2012 Annual Appeal

The Arc/Morris' Annual Appeal will be in the mail soon. We hope you will consider a donation in support of the programs and services we provide to individuals and families with intellectual and related developmental disabilities.



Drew Women's Basketball Program

to be Honored With The Arc of New Jersey's Distinguished Community Service Award

The Arc of New Jersey has chosen the Drew University Women's Basketball Team to receive the 2012 Distinguished Community Service Award. The presentation of the award is scheduled for Monday, December 10, 2012 at The Arc of New Jersey's Annual Awards Dinner. The Drew team continued the program they started in January throughout the Spring with the participants from our Hanover Adult Training Center, and it is now a credit course offered to all students at Drew University. We congratulate The Arc/Morris' Best Friends for 2012 on this well deserved honor and look forward to our continued partnership.



Email Program

In order to keep you informed in a more timely fashion, we are collecting e-mail addresses of our members and readers. To be added to our list, please send an e-mail to development@arcmorris.org. Send as many e-mails as you have addresses that you want recorded. Be assured that The Arc/Morris does not sell the names or addresses of any of its members or readers to any outside party.

Massey Quick Outing a Tremendous Success

The Massey Quick 2nd Annual Charity Golf Outing benefiting The Arc/Morris' new respite group home was held on Wednesday, September 19, 2012. The Somerset Hills Country Club was the perfect setting for friends and associates of the firm to join in the efforts to support The Arc/Morris and raised over \$65,000. On behalf of everyone at The Arc/Morris, much thanks to Bob Ward, Mark DeLotto, and Kylee Brown for their determination and cooperation in making the outing a success!

Stewart Massey (left) and Bill Testa.



2012 Wine Tasting

The 8th Annual Wine Tasting and Fine Art Exhibit was held on Thursday, October 11 at the Birchwood Manor. The evening, co-hosted with the Randolph Lions Club and the Wayne Marino Scholarship Fund, succeeded in raising funds to support programs and services of the three. Plan on joining us next year!



Stepping Up / Walk 2012

The 9th annual Arc/Morris Foundation Walk was held on Sunday, September 23, 2012 at Central Park of Morris County with the kick off at The Arc/Morris' F.M. Kirby Administrative Center. With over 300 walkers and volunteers this year, \$25,000 was raised to support the programs and services The Arc/Morris provides. Thanks to all our participants and especially this year's sponsors:

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Touchstone

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The Arc/Morris,

please write us at:
P.O. Box 123,
Morris Plains, NJ 07950,
call us at (973) 540-8500,
or find us on the web at
www.arcmorris.org

MARK YOUR CALENDAR for the 25th Annual Arc/Morris Foundation Golf Outing to be held on Thursday, June 13, 2013 at Great Gorge Country Club! Check the website in early 2013 for more information: WWW.ARCMORRIS.ORG



GOLF

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