



September 2013

30301 Northwestern Hwy. | Farmington Hills, MI 48334 | 248.538.6611 | www.jarc.org

SAVE THE DATE

JARC'S 33RD FALL FUNDRAISER

RASCALS
ONCE UPON A DREAM

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 14, 2013

7:30PM FOX THEATRE



www.jarc.org

Watch your mailbox and email for more information for this fun-filled night! Tickets can be purchased at www.jarc.org starting October 4. We welcome your young adult family member (ages 21-40) to attend the Young Adult pre glow (21-40) prior to the show. Admission is included in their ticket.

News about the Harris Children and Family Division Director

After almost 23 years at JARC, Laurel Berger has announced her retirement, effective 11/22/13.

Laurel has been Director of the Merle and Shirley Harris Children and Family Division since its inception in 1998. She initially came to JARC as Director of Residential Services, overseeing the group home programs. She has worked in the field of developmental disabilities for 35 years.

"Starting a program from the ground up was a wonderful opportunity, and something I had never experienced. Families clearly had unmet needs, and they were very generous with their time, telling their stories and helping to determine what the Harris Division would become." Respite care, School Inclusion, advocacy and Club Scene were a direct result of families' feedback.

Earlier in the year, Sheryl Pappas was hired as Respite Coordinator. She joins Randee Black, and Chaya Leah Tinman as the talented and dedicated Harris Division staff along with our wonderful respite/cls workers and school inclusion staff.

Information about a replacement for Laurel will be forthcoming.



Graduation Daze

By Ronelle Grier

Two of my three children graduated in June, and I cannot seem to move past that experience despite the passage of time and distinct change of seasons. One night I watched my son, Ethan, receive his diploma from Frankel Jewish Academy, and the following morning I saw Molly graduate from Visions Unlimited, the post-secondary program she called home for the past eight years.

Never was the contrast between the elusive "normal" world and that of parenting a child with special needs more apparent. Yes, there were similarities: that Sunrise-Sunset-where-did-the-time-go feeling, the happy-sad tears for the young adults who once splashed in wading pools no deeper than a rain puddle.

But the differences were far more numerous. While I felt nostalgic at both occasions, my sadness about my son's milestone was trumped by my enthusiasm about his future. I knew in a few weeks he would be ensconced at Kalamazoo College, embarking on a new and exhilarating adventure. While I had no idea where this next phase of life would lead him, I found the start of his journey exciting rather than scary.

Molly was (and still is) a different story. For her, and for me, school had been a safe and

nurturing cocoon, where she was challenged and cared for by dedicated professionals who knew and loved her. I know we were lucky to have such a positive experience, and I had come to rely on it and on the people who made it possible.

Now I was facing the unknown, and it was like boarding a plane bound for a destination I knew nothing about. Would the climate be hot or cold? What language do they speak? How will they treat visitors like my daughter and me? Will we ever feel at home again?

Three months later, we still have not landed, immersed in what is called the "transition" process. I am working on funding and transportation options with my case worker, researching "skill building" programs, trying to find appropriate social activities to fill the void, all the while wishing there were a guidebook I could read - in English, please, not jargon. I know that eventually we will find our way, and that things will work out as they usually do. I just wish the trip could be a little faster, the ride a little smoother, the maps a little easier to read.

Wishing you all a healthy, happy year and a beautiful fall!

Ronelle

JARC's Merle and Shirley Harris Children and Family Division serves children of any age, with any disability, including those on the autism spectrum, with developmental delays, and with learning disabilities who live with their families. Specially trained professional staff provide a range of services including:

- * Respite care and community living supports
- * Comprehensive school inclusion services
- * Fun social experiences for teens & adults who live at home with their families
- * Advocacy to obtain public services and benefits
- * Preparation to live independently



CLUB SCENE NEWS

Calling all teens.! Are you looking for fun things to do? Do you like to go to the movies, eat out and play video games? If so, JARC's Club Scene program is for you. Club Scene activities are offered several times per month both at JARC and in the community. Programs are in the evenings during the week, and on Sundays. Each activity has a cost based on the actual activity, plus an annual membership fee of \$25.

Some of the clubs offered include:

- * Movie Mania- see first run movies at your local theater
- * Games Night- go to the West Bloomfield JCC Teen Center to play Wii, Playstation, billiards and more. Pizza and drinks are brought in for dinner.
- * International Delights Dining Out- eat at ethnic restaurants in the area
- * Movin' n Groovin'- play miniature golf, go to a sporting event, be active

If you are interested in joining Club Scene, please contact Randee Black at 248.488.7531 or randeeblack@jarc.org to schedule a time to meet with the Club Scene Facilitator, Rob Payne.

Summer Club Scene Hits a Home Run

JARC and JVS partnered once again for the four-week, Monday through Friday Summer Club Scene program. Due to last year's success, an additional session was added allowing twice as many young adults to participate. Summer Club Scene participants enjoyed three days of fun recreational activities including volunteer work and worked at a paid job the other two days. Job sites included Café Clare, Marshalls, Big Lots, B'nai Moshe and Ed Schmidt Ford. Recreational activities were at Kensington, Everyone's Garden, Creative Arts Studio, West Bloomfield Family Aquatic Center, Greenfield Village, CJ Barrymore's and more.

Special thanks goes out to Camp Maas Tikkun Olam Teen Foundation for a generous grant.

Stay tuned for more information on Summer Club Scene 2014 for young adults ages 17-26.



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Resource & Crisis Helpline- 800.231.1127

Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority, through Common Ground, assists people in getting connected to the help they need.

Services include: information on community resources and referrals, crisis intervention, advocacy and support, prevention and consultation, mental health screening and assessment and eligibility determination for public mental health services.

Community Housing Network- Getting My Own Address

248.928.0111- goma@chninc.net

This program provides long-term housing education and planning for persons with disabilities and their families. The program describes the steps, options and choices that are available to plan for housing in the community of one's choice.

Monthly support groups are offered in Troy and Highland, as well as individual counseling, a roommate database and the guide.

Modified Music-ation

Music + Education for Students with Autism and Special Needs

310.720.3558-Jacob Levy, Director

Modified music-ation combines a unique approach to learning the fundamentals of music. Along with music education, this program incorporates music concepts into academics, as it assists with comprehension and ease of memory for students with special needs.

AMC Star Gratiot 21 & Forum 30- Sensory Friendly Films

<http://www.amctheaters.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films>

Sensory Friendly Films where children are encouraged to shout, get up, dance, etc. The lights are left up and the sound is low for those with sensory issues.

October 5- Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2

November 9- Free Birds

December 7- Frozen 2-D

All shows are at 10a on Saturdays. Dates and films are subject to change.

Email addresses needed!

JARC continues to send the Family Connections newsletter and other information via email. Please email Randee Black at randeeblack@jarc.org to give her your current email address so you can continue to receive information on programs



Check out our newly designed website at www.jarc.org

The site introduces a fresh, new look, new colors, easier navigation, interesting photos and stories, and new features such as "one-stop" shopping and a JARC store. Visitors to the site can keep current on JARC news and events, as well as sign up to volunteer and buy tickets to SpringElation and the Fall Fundraiser.