



# ARK ADVOCATES - NEWS & VIEWS

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Web Site: [www.arkadvocates.org](http://www.arkadvocates.org); E-Mail: [info@arkadvocates.org](mailto:info@arkadvocates.org)

## **“COME FILL THE ARK” BUDDY WALK 2009**

*By Julie Jordahl, Fundraising Chair*

Our Buddy Walk was held on Saturday, November 14, 2009 at Loras College Graber Center. This was a great success! Persons with disabilities and abled-bodied persons from the Dubuque community enjoyed games, walking with their buddies, renewing old friendships and beginning new ones. Participants received t-shirts, goody bags and enjoyed snacks and refreshments. This year we added inflatables from L.T. Amusements and they were thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Many volunteers including Loras College Sports Club students helped make this event successful. They organized and supervised the games and teamed up with participants. We could not hold this event without all of their help. A big thank you to Megan Chemin, board member for coordinating the student involvement.

Throughout the event we gave away numerous prizes donated from various Dubuque businesses. The gift prizes culminated with a free one-night stay for a family of four with water park tickets donated by Grand Harbor Resort and Water Park. Everyone enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to the next Buddy Walk.

To date, a total of \$5,690.00 has been raised for the Buddy Walk. The money raised was received from participants, corporate, and family sponsors. The money goes towards funding for guardianships, financial assistance requests, and our Christmas gift program. The Buddy Walk helps to raise awareness for persons with disabilities in our community and to bring persons together for a day of fun and enjoyment.

ARK Advocates Board of Directors wishes to thank all the participants, persons who volunteered their time, and all who donated through pledges and sponsorships. Without all of you, this event would not have been successful. Please read the list of sponsors and patronize them in appreciation for their donations. ARK Board members also wishes to give their thanks to Barb Tubbs, our Executive Secretary. Barb does a tremendous job of mailing letters to corporate sponsors, association members, and keeping track of all donations. Barb, we appreciate your dedication!

Plans are beginning for our next walk, which we hope to make even bigger and better. Watch our newsletters for updates and mark your calendar for November 13, 2010!

Please see list of sponsors and pictures which are included in this newsletter.

***Together we do make a difference.***

**"Come Fill the ARK" Buddy Walk 2009—Continued****Corporate Sponsors are:****Gold ARK Sponsors:**

Dubuque Racing Association/  
Mystique Casino  
Loras College  
Al Urbain Construction Management, Inc.  
L.T. Amusements

**Silver ARK Sponsors:**

American Trust & Savings Bank  
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**Family Sponsors are:**

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**Friends of ARK Sponsors:**

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Kathy Scremin  
Dr. James Snyder  
Les & Gloria Sprague  
Cathy Weber  
Phil White  
Beth & Stephen Young

**Local businesses/individuals donating door prizes or supplies are:**

Albrecht Acres	Domino's Pizza	Miracle Car Wash
Applebees	Econofoods	Monkey Business
Betty Jane's	Grand Harbor Resort & Water Park	Olive Garden
Big Apple Bagel	Ground Round	Panchero's
Blockbuster Video	Houlihans	Papa John's
Brick Town	Hy-Vee	Papa Murphy's
Buffalo Wild Wings	Kentucky Fried Chicken	Perkins
Carlos O'Kelly's	Kennedy Mall Office	Pizza Hut
Cold Stone Cremery	Kerasotec Star 14 Cinema	Red Robin
Court Side	Little Caesars	St. Stephen's Food Bank
Creslanes	Los Aztecas	Telegraph Herald
Culvers	McDonald's	Village Inn
Derby Grange	Mercy Marketing Dept.	Wal-Mart

# Thank you sponsors

## CHRISTMAS WITH ARK ADVOCATES

*By Barbara Tubbs*

ARK Advocates continued its annual tradition this year with gift giving to local Dubuque organizations that support individuals with disabilities. To share the joy at this beautiful time of the year, we obtained a list of individuals with disabilities who would not otherwise receive a Christmas gift. This year Hills and Dales, Sunnycrest and Area Residential Care submitted 46 residents to receive gifts. The students in the Life Skills Program at Hempstead High School shared their time by taking the lists of Christmas wishes and going out into the community to do the shopping. The students then took the gifts back to classroom and wrapped each gift. ARK Advocates board members picked up the wrapped gifts from the students and delivered them to each individual facility. Fund raising efforts by ARK Advocates paid for the Christmas gifts the individuals enjoyed.

We thank all the students, teachers, and associates for all their hard work. They, as always, did a beautiful job helping these individuals have a "merrier" Christmas.

### Membership Renewals

Membership renewal letters were sent out February 7, 2010. If you did not receive your letter, please use the form on the back page of this newsletter to send in your renewal.

In 2009, the Board was able to support persons with disabilities by funding requests of \$5,997.77.00. Your membership and support continues to provide opportunities for camperships, transportation assistance, recognition awards, Christmas gifts, birthday cards, guardianship fees, specialized equipment, medical needs, etc.

Remember, your dues are tax deductible. If you know of anyone who could benefit by being a member or is interested, please give us a call and we will send information to them. Together we do make a difference!

## ANNUAL AWARDS

*By Barbara Tubbs*

Once again, it is time to start thinking about our annual awards. Each year ARK Advocates honors the many persons in our community who give so generously of their time and talents on behalf of individuals with disabilities. This is your opportunity to express your appreciation and to thank someone who you know, or who has touched someone you know, and is so deserving of such an award. The awards will be presented at the Potluck/Awards Picnic in May. Please submit nominations to ARK Advocates, P.O. Box 3024, Dubuque, Iowa 52004-3024 or e-mail tubbs77@mchsi.com (see Nomination form included in this newsletter) by April 12, 2010.

The categories for award nominations are:

**Employer of the Year:** To recognize a company/business that has effectively promoted the employment of individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities or an individual within an organization who has actively assisted in making employment opportunities successful.

**Volunteer of the Year:** To recognize volunteer(s) who have given generously of their time and talents to help benefit individuals with disabilities. Any person or group of persons who has contributed toward accomplishing the mission of ARK Advocates and who has not received compensation for these services is eligible. This may include parents, brothers, sisters, volunteers, etc.

**Advocate of the Year:** To recognize a community volunteer mentor who has helped an individual or a group of individuals with a disability achieve a higher degree of independence. This person must have been an advocate for at least one year and made a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

**Teacher of the Year:** To recognize a classroom teacher who has demonstrated excellence in teaching students with disabilities/ special needs. The nominee must have been actively engaged in teaching during the last school year.

**Para-educator of the Year:** To recognize a classroom educator who has demonstrated excellence in helping students with disabilities/special needs meet their educational goals. The nominee must have been actively engaged in the classroom during the last school year.

**Community Inclusion Award:** To recognize an outstanding citizen or group of people, aside from a teacher, who is having a positive impact on the social, vocational, therapeutic or other aspects of community living for individuals with disabilities.

**Service Provider of the Year:** To recognize a direct care staff who has demonstrated exceptional sensitivity to people with disabilities and who has exhibited quality work within the position held. Must have been a direct care staff for at least one year and made a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

**Super Sibling:** To recognize an individual who has a sibling with a mental and/or physical disability and has contributed to enhancing the life of that sibling and assisting the sibling to achieve more independence.

**Citizenship Award:** To recognize an individual with disabilities who has contributed to or has participated more fully in the community in some outstanding way will be considered. Evaluation and consideration of person's leadership will include the changes of the specific disability.

**Professional of the Year:** To recognize an individual employed in a field of service, aside from teaching, who has demonstrated sensitivity or the ability to promote outstanding quality which results in increased independence or for additional opportunities for people with disabilities.

**Distinguished Community Service:** To recognize a company or an organization that has performed an outstanding service on behalf of persons with disabilities. Nominee must be a business or organization that made significant assistance either financially or through service or leadership.

Please visit our website for a more detailed explanation (purpose, eligibility, and basis for selection) of each award category and the nomination form .

# ARK Advocates NOMINATIONS FOR AWARD RECOGNITION

**Awards Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Individual or Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Biographical Sketch:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Nomination:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Letters of Recommendation—at least 2**

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Submit to: Barbara Tubbs; ARK Advocates; P.O. Box 3024; Dubuque, IA 52004-3024**  
**Phone: 563-556-1785; E-Mail: [tubbs77@mchsi.com](mailto:tubbs77@mchsi.com). Please submit by April 12, 2010.**

## Up With Families

*By Jean Wuertzer*

The next annual *Up With Families* weekend is scheduled to take place on Saturday, March 6, 2010 at the Midway Hotel in Dubuque, Iowa. The day-long event is designed for families with children having mental, emotional, physical, developmental, or other special health care needs.

Families who have a child with a disability know what a joy such a child can provide, but they also have to manage unyielding responsibilities and stress. These families, like others, want to grow, to plan for the future, to work, and have fun together. *Up With Families* is designed to help. Various recreational and educational program and networking for the families and their children is available throughout the day. Additionally, a nurse is on duty all day to attend to any medical needs that may arise throughout the day.

Since 1992, many local businesses and individuals have donated the monies necessary to cover the costs of the various workshops, activities, and meals for these families. Families attending the day-long event pay a \$15.00 registration fee. All other expenses have been paid through donations.

The event runs from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Parent topics for the day include a keynote speaker, adult programs on educational planning, funding issues, community resources, and an opportunity for parent networking. A score of volunteers will be on hand to provide all children with disabilities and their siblings with age-appropriate activities including music, storytelling, arts and crafts, parachute and gross motor activities, games, and videos. The day will end with a dance and pizza party for all.

One primary goal of the *Up With Families* weekend is to provide parents with a safe, worry-free day for themselves and their children, while having the opportunity to learn new information and to network with other families who are experiencing similar events in their lives. Children can have fun, play, be safe, and learn new things as well. It is a great way to have a quality weekend for the whole family.

For more information on how to participate or to receive an application:

[janineckane@gmail.com](mailto:janineckane@gmail.com) or call Sally Frick at 563.590.3198.

**Camp Albrecht Acres**  
**Sherrill, Iowa**  
**2010 Camp Season**

*by Deb Rahe*

Camp Albrecht Acres would love to have your special needs loved one join us at camp this summer. We will have lots of exciting new programs to offer. At this time we are re-visiting and revising all of our current programming in an effort to provide even more and better opportunities for our campers. This year we will be incorporating overnight campouts and field trips for our higher functioning campers to take part in. We will also be developing programs specifically for those who have severe disabilities so that they are able to benefit as much as possible from their camp experience. The days here at camp will be filled with swimming, fishing, newly opened hiking trails and a variety of activities throughout each day. We have arts and crafts, fun n games and outdoor recreation departments which will feature many challenging and fun activities. Every evening we will have a special event such as our weekly dance, talent shows, hay rides, campfires and musical entertainment.

Our camp season begins on June 13 and runs through August 6, 2010. Campers arrive on Sunday afternoons and stay until the following Friday morning. Camp Albrecht Acres also offers four weekend camping options as well throughout those weeks. If you are interested in receiving more information about our camp or would like to apply to attend our camp please call (563) 552-1771 or visit our website at [www.albrechtacres.org](http://www.albrechtacres.org). During our summer camp season we will never turn anyone away for their inability to pay.

Another unique opportunity Camp Albrecht Acres offers is a two week day camp, "Camp Bee A Friend" which will run from August 9 – August 20, 2010. This program is designed for children ages 4 – 12 with autism and their typically developing peers. We will be accepting 40 children on the autism spectrum and 40 typically developing children to attend this camp. If you would like more information please call the camp office at (563) 552-1771.

We are continuing to highlight various board member's each quarter in our newsletter so that you can become familiar with them. And as always we are continuing to look to expand board membership, particularly in the area of parents of persons with mental disabilities.

### **Sharon Welborn, Board Member**

My name is Sharon Welborn. I am a life time resident of Dubuque, Iowa. I graduated from Loras College and work at Woodward Communications, Inc.

I have been married to Rob Welborn for seventeen years and have three children, Emily who is 13 and twin boys Michael and Thomas who are ten. What attracted me to the ARK Advocates organization is as a mother of a child with special needs the organization's mission is important and understandable to me. Also, participating in past Buddy Walks with my family, gave me an appreciation of the fund raising efforts put forth by the board.

## **Social Security Changes**

### **Changes in Social Security Payments effective January 2010:**

- ✓ Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is \$674 single/\$1,010 couple
- ✓ SSDI and SSI cost of living adjustment (COLA) is 0% increase
- ✓ Break Even Point (point where SSI payment becomes \$0) \$1,433
- ✓ Medicare for Part B monthly premium stays the same \$96.40
- ✓ New enrollees after January 1, 2010 will pay \$110.50 monthly

### **Updates and Changes in Social Security Work Incentives effective January 2010:**

- ✓ Substantial Gainful Activity Amount (SGA) is \$1,000
- ✓ Substantial Gainful Activity Amount (SGA) for Blind is \$1,640
- ✓ Trial Work Period (TWP) monthly amount is \$720
- ✓ For self-employed SGA will be \$1,000/month and/or if the individual worked more than 80 hours per month
- ✓ Student Earned Income Exclusion for SSI is \$1,640 per month not to exceed \$6,600 per year

Also resource eligibility for Medicaid, Title 19 assistance, still remains at \$2,000 for a single person and \$3,000 for a family.

# Buddy Walk 2009

Thank you L.T. Amusements



Thank you Greg Ronek & Premier Entertainment



Thank you to our many volunteers:  
Loras College Sports Club students,  
Mystique Casino employees,  
board members and their families.

# Annual Award Form Inside

NONPROFIT ORG.  
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ARK Advocates  
P.O. Box 3024  
Dubuque, IA 52004-3024

Return Service Requested

**Membership Application for 2010**  
Please cut out and mail to:  
ARK Advocates  
P.O. Box 3024, Dubuque, IA 52004-3024

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

1 year membership \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_

ARK Silver Club \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_

ARK Gold Club \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to have your name published in  
our newsletter. \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Please make your check payable to: ARK Advocates

Please indicate below the name, address and birthday of your disabled family member. We will add this person to our birthday list.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_