

Our mission: Empower all people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families to choose and realize their goals of where and how they live, learn, work and play.

**New A & E Show Highlights
Life for Seven Individuals
With Down Syndrome**

There is a new show on the A&E network called "Born This Way."

It is a reality show, with the added twist that the seven young adults cast members all have Down syndrome (DS). While I don't usually watch reality television, the premise intrigued me, as I have two young adults with Down syndrome.

The show, which premiered in December of 2015, brings to life the activities, interests and dreams of a group of individuals who have diverse interests and backgrounds. Whether the topic is relationships (some cast members are obsessed with the opposite sex), living arrangements, careers, or just hanging out, it is easy to see how much they have in common with their "typical" peers. They all have strengths and challenges. They appear to be very genuine in sharing their feelings and what is important to them.

Their parents also play a role in the show. They too have various perspectives, but support & encourage their offspring, and offer insightful observations and concerns, which are shared with many parents that have children with intellectual disabilities.

The young adults live full lives, despite having DS. All but one are still live at home with their parents. Elena loves to cook, dance and write poetry, and lives in a group home. Jon is working toward a career as a rap artist and volunteers at a pet rescue. Megan attends college, wants to be a filmmaker, & has her own business. Cristina works in a middle school, is in a 5 year relationship, and is engaged to be married. Rachel works in an insurance company mailroom.

Board Members

Molly Engstrom, President
Steven Schmit, Vice President
Rachel Stotts, Secretary
Peter Larson, Treasurer

Members at Large

Chris Kirschenman
Julie Thoemke
Stephen Astrup
Kris Peterson
Janet Olson
1 open position

Steven, a huge movie buff, is a dishwasher at Angel Stadium and works in customer service at a grocery store. Sean, an athlete, gets a job at Home Depot during the course of the show.

Many believe "Born This

Way' can serve as a public awareness campaign to dispel the stigma of disability. Granted the cast is pretty "high functioning", and their experiences and abilities may not reflect all people with disabilities, but it demonstrates that Down syndrome will not limit them to an unproductive life.

As the series has just recently been renewed for another season, Elaine Frontain Bryant, Executive Vice President & Head of Programming at A&E Network states: "We have been overwhelmed and moved by the feedback we've received for *Born This Way* from viewers, as well as people with disabilities and their family members. It's rare to be able to present a show that changes the way we see the world; we believe *Born This Way* is one of those shows."
Donna Atherton

**Every Student Succeeds Act replaces
No Child Left Behind**

President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December. The ESSA reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (or ESEA, also known as No Child Left Behind) through Fiscal Year 2020. The Arc of the U.S. believes that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) will be better served by this legislation than the outdated No Child Left Behind and current ESEA waivers in effect in 43 states.

ESSA includes The Arc's main priority that students with disabilities continue to be included in state accountability systems and have access to the general education curriculum and challenging academic content standards. Fortunately, it also added a number of key provisions for students with disabilities, such as limiting the number of students who take alternate assessments, requiring that parents be informed of potential consequences of taking such exams, intervening in schools were students with disabilities consistently underperform,

Continued on pg 5

"Everyone has inside himself a piece of good news! The good news is that you really don't know how great you can be, how much you can love, what you can accomplish, and what your potential is!" Anne Frank

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Donna Atherton
Program Coordinator
arcwcm@702com.net

Open position
Housing Access
Coordinator
jbarrett@702com.net
218-287-1841

Kathy Brinkmann
Housing Access Assistant
kbrinkman@702com.net
218-287-1481

Support Groups

- FM Autism Support Rachel 701-371-7211
- The Windmill Project Sonja Kuhn, Douglas Co. windmillprojectmn@gmail.com
- Fergus Falls Area "A" OK Autism Support Group Nicole 218-736-6189, Anne 218-998-3258, or Carrie 218-739-3590
- Up With Downs (FM area) upwithdownsfargo.com/



Upcoming Arc Events: for more information & up-to-date events, go to arcwestcentral.org

Dances

Moorhead - 7:15-8:15pm, 2nd & 4th Monday of each month, September 14th - May 9th. Ellen Hopkins Elementary, Moorhead. No dance March 28th.

Valentine Dance February 8th, 7:15-8:30 - National Guard Armory, 1002 15th Ave. N, Moorhead. \$5 fee

Luau - May 9th, 7:15-8:15pm. Ellen Hopkins Elementary, Moorhead

Fergus Fall: Valentine Dance February 12th & Spring Dance April 8th 6-8:30. Kennedy Secondary School. \$3 fee.

Arc Games & More - 3rd Monday of each month, 6:30-8pm, Topics: **January 18th:**

Zumba, February 15th: Fun with Clay, March 21st: Games. See website for updated topics. \$2 for non members.

Sibshop. February 20th & March 19th, 1-3pm. Gigi's Playhouse, 3224 20th St. S, Fargo. For kids who have siblings with disabilities. Games, Activities & Fun! Check website for dates in April & May.

For more information or to register for Arc events: ☎ Call: 218-233-5949 or 1-800-411-0124; or e-mail: arcwcm@702com.net; or mail request to: Arc West Central, 810 4th Ave. S, #134, Moorhead, MN 56560

Other opportunities - check website for more information

February 6th & 20th, 12:10 - 12:55, **Adaptive Dance**; a dance party for all individuals with disabilities. This class includes Xabead, Zumba, or Belly Danc-ing. Adaptive Dance is FREE to both members and non-members. This class continues every 2 weeks on Saturdays. **Courts Plus**, Fargo.

Ongoing events in FM area

S.U.P.E.R. Adventures Thursday, an informal social group for children and young adults with disabilities. Typically 6:30pm-8:30pm, but not always. Mandy (701) 799-6742. fmsuperadventures.weebly.com/

Friday night Activity Center dances, 7-9pm. RDJ Rec Center, 1104 2nd Avenue S, Fargo. \$1.50 fee. 701-235-2444.

Cool Kids Club, September through May, meeting every 3rd Friday of the month from 6:30pm-8:30pm at Journey in Faith, West Fargo. Mandy (701) 799-6742. <http://fmcoolkidsclub.weebly.com/>

Red River Valley Asperger-Autism Network sponsors "Game On" days, 6-9pm, on the first and third Mondays of each month. For teens and adults. Section 9 Cyber Café, Roberts St. N, Suite 101, Fargo. rrvannm@gmail.com



Minnesota Special Olympics

Area 4 competition

Basketball: Feb. 11, Fergus Falls, MN

Aquatics, Feb. 17, Discovery Middle School Alexandria, MN



North Dakota Special Olympics

Basketball Area Games: Sunday, February 21st, 2016 at Agassiz Middle School, Fargo

District Tournament: February 6th, Jamestown, ND

State

Friday and Saturday, March 4 and 5, 2016, Minot, ND

Introduction to Special Olympics for Young Athletes: This program introduces the young athletes (3 years old to 10 years old) in our community with intellectual or developmental disabilities to be active, have fun, learn foundational sports and introduce competition.

Session 2: Apr - May Dates TBA NDSU Track, 1515 15th Ave N, Fargo

For more information on Fargo Special Olympics, contact Laura Lake: 701-730-0926 sondarea6director@yahoo.com

Reel Movies for Real Needs

(Sensory Modified Film) Series - 10:30am, **Marcus Theatres, Fargo**. For families of children with special needs; autism or other challenges; lower volume, lights up.



January 30 - Kung Fu Panda
March 5 - Zootopia
March 26 - Batman vs. Superman
April 16 - Jungle Book
May 7 - Captain America: Civil War
May 21 - Angry Birds



Sibshop has started again! Sibshops give brothers & sisters of siblings with disabilities an opportunity to have fun, meet new friends, & share joys and concerns about having a sibling with special needs, through games, activities, and discussion.

Sibshops are open to typically developing children, ages 7-12 years old, who have a sibling with a disability.

Sibshop Sponsors:



Experience Fun Activities at Arc Games & More

Join us to discover new leisure pursuits and have fun! 6:30-8, 3rd Monday of each month.

Tentative Schedule:

February 15th: **Pottery**

March 21st: **Games**

April 18th: **Mindful Movements**

Check website for updates.



Thanks to the MSUM Student Council for Exceptional Children for the activities at our Halloween Party and Dance



Update on the ABLE Act

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2014 allows individuals with disabilities and their families to save money in tax-preferred accounts in order to pay for qualified disability expenses. Funds in ABLE accounts are disregarded from asset limits used to determine eligibility for certain means-tested federal programs, such as Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income.

*The MN Department of Human Services (DHS) has decided to pursue an interstate collaboration approach to implement Minnesota's ABLE Plan. There are 15 states currently involved in the collaborative implementation effort. The guiding principles in making this decision were keeping beneficiary fees as low as possible, while attracting competitive and attractive vendor bids. Working together, DHS plans to make the Minnesota ABLE Plan available to eligible Minnesotans with disabilities in late 2016.

* The proposed rules required ABLE

programs to establish safeguards to prevent account funds from being spent on items that were not categorized as "qualified disability expenses." Under the proposed rule, a qualified disability expense is broadly defined and specific to each account beneficiary's disability and needs. Establishing safeguards would require ABLE programs to compare each account distribution to an individual's circumstance.

ABLE accounts will be an alternative to the Arc Minnesota's Master Pool Trust, or other Special or Supplemental Needs trusts. Determining which option is the most appropriate will depend upon individual circumstances. One drawback to an ABLE account is anything remaining in the trust after the beneficiary dies goes back to the governments to repay any government benefits that person received. The amount of money put into an ABLE account is also less than other trusts. Costs and other details still are still to be determined.



A Beverage Wholesalers Company

Do you know you can give Arc West Central a donation through your recycling? Each time a member or customer takes their recycling

to the Minnkota locations in Fargo or Moorhead & mentions Arc West Central as their charity of choice, they record the weight and amount, and send us a check quarterly.

IN RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GIFTS September - December 2015

\$1,000-\$5,000

American Crystal Sugar Co.
Johnston Family Foundation
US Bank Foundation

\$500-\$999

Moorhead HS Key Club
Donald Short
Walmart (Dilworth)

\$200 - \$499

Access of the Red River Valley
Betty Boardman
Border State Electric
Hawley Area United Fund
Maring Williams Law Office
Moore Engineering
Otter Tail Corporation
Otter Tail Power Company
Lori & Tim Rustad
Scheels - Moorhead
Shuck Bus Service
Vikingland Kiwanis

\$100-\$199

Donna Atherton
Casey's General Stores
Heartland Industries
Sarah King
Korsmo Funeral Service
Chris Mathison, DDS
Nereson Big Lot
Ramada Plaza Suites
St. John's LWML
Service Foods Market
Stenerson Lumber
Wright Funeral Home

\$50-\$99

Bill Davis
Gene Ecklund
Gerry & Nora Koenig
Teresa & Mark Kuether
North Buffalo Women ELCA
Judith Ozbun
Tanya Smith
Jon Stafsholt
Rachel & Rick Stotts
Stan & Karin Synstelien
Julie & John Thoemke

Up to \$49

Nicole Atherton
Bon Ton
Sharon & Gary Grugel
Mike Gude
Peter Larson
David & Marjo Lysne
Zona Mathison
Kathy Offerdahl
Sandra Swanson
Scarlet & Charles Wiger

Arc West Central is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (#41-0886463). All donations, from which no goods or services are provided, are tax deductible.

In Memory of:

Al Traseth

Charles & Scarlett Wiger

Brandon Kluth

Nicole Atherton
Donna Atherton

Donna Rae Short

Donald Short

Julia Chwialkowski

Gary & Sharon Grugel

Bea Arett

Gerald & Nora Koenig
Zona Mathison
Gary & Sharon Grugel

In Honor of:

Donna Atherton

Nicole Atherton

Nicole Atherton

Wayne Ingersoll

Thanks to our Sponsors for Providing Prizes for Christmas Potluck Party & Annual Meeting

Arbys	Family Fare	Perkins
Bells State Bank	Fry'n Pan	Pizza Hut
Blue Sky, Inc	Gate City Bank	Pizza Ranch
Bottle Barn	Good Shepherd Church	Pladson Chiropractic
Bremer Bank	Great Harvest	Rhombus Guys
CCRI	Great Clips	Sunset Lanes
Cashwise	Holiday Inn	Taco Johns
Casey's General Store	Hornbachers	Texas Roadhouse
China Buffet	Hurley's	West Acres
Clay Your Way	KFC	Sarah King
Clothes Mentor	Melberg's	Rachel Stotts
Courtyard by Marriott	Mexican Village	Molly Engstrom
Culver's	Mom's Diner	Donna Atherton
Dairy Queen	Nichole's Fine Pastry	
Erbert and Gerbert's	Noodles & Co.	



New Name for 5% Campaign Sums Up Goals: Best Life Alliance

If you recall, the alliance of disability organizations in Minnesota that worked to increase the wages of Home & Community-Based Services, previously called the 5% Campaign, was not successful in getting an increase in 2015. The alliance is now called Best Life Alliance, and will need the participation of many voices to bring this issue to the forefront in 2016.

As in 2014, there appears to be wide bipartisan support for the increase. The Alliance states: "Together we must strongly urge Minnesota legislators and Governor Dayton to invest a portion of the \$1.9 billion surplus in Home & Community-Based Services, to ensure the best life for people with disabilities, older adults and their caregivers. After a third of the surplus is moved to the budget reserve as required, distribution of the remaining \$1.2 billion will be up for debate. The surplus is good news for the Best Life Alliance, but many other groups and state needs are vying for these dollars. We need to make sure that community-based services are a priority for policymakers before the session begins on March 8th."

The Best Life Alliance will be posting weekly videos on their social media pages, using the new hashtag #BestLife4All, continuing legislator visits at community-based service sites statewide, and encouraging family members and supporters to contact their legislators. Ask your legislators to sign-on as co-authors of the 2016 bill.

Wages for direct care across the border in North Dakota are higher than they are in Minnesota. Tell legislators how much you value the people you have taking care of someone you know that has a disability. As chief Senate author Senator Kent Eken reminds us "The 5% rate increase is not just about numbers, it's about providing a better quality of life."

Arcwestcentral.org

Every Student Succeeds Act continued from page 1

and requiring states to explain how they will improve conditions for learning, such as reducing bullying and aversive behavioral interventions.

While The Arc advocated for stronger accountability provisions and greater protections for students with disabilities, the bill is a compromise, and will require strong oversight of implementation at the state level. It includes the following provisions that we support:

- Requires regular testing in math, reading, and science.
- Ensures that students with disabilities continue to have access to the general education curriculum with challenging academic content standards.
- Requires states to incorporate concepts of Universal Design for Learning.
- Ensures accommodations for assessments for students with disa-

bilities, including interoperability and assistive technology.

- Limits the number of students in each state who may take the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) to one percent of all students.
- Requires that schools explain to parents how participation in the AA-AAS may impact ability to obtain a regular diploma and prohibits schools from precluding those who take the test from earning a diploma.
- Requires states to develop plans to help the lowest-performing five percent of schools; schools where 1/3 or more of students do not graduate, and schools where any subgroup, such as students with disabilities, underperforms.
- Requires states to develop plans to address how they will improve conditions for learning, by reducing the incidence of bullying, overuse of disciplinary practices, and aversive behavioral interventions (such as restraint and seclusion).

ESSA article from The Arc of the United States

Harlem Ambassadors Comedy Basketball Game and Show High Energy Entertainment

Arc West Central & Moorhead Kiwanis brought the exciting Harlem Ambassadors Basketball Game to Moorhead September 29th. The audience was enthralled with a fast-paced, yet fun-filled game, of slam dunks and comedy routines.

Our team, the Red River Flood, was put to the test, and gamely took the challenge, as well as contributed to the merriment:

- Kevin Feeney - Moorhead High Football Coach
- Jon Ammerman- Moorhead High Boys Hockey Coach,
- Brian Lee - Former Professional Hockey Player
- Mark Empting – Dilworth Fire Chief & Clay County Sheriff Sgt.
- Chad Olson – Dilworth Mayor
- Peyton Mastera - Dilworth City Administrator
- Rich Eggert – Moorhead Fire Assistant Chief
- Nate Hendrickson – TNT Kids Fitness
- Allison Swenson- MSUM Women’s Basketball Coach
- Angie Hasbrouck – Family Wellness
- Steven Dirksen – Fargo Fire Department Chief
- Ryan Bessmer – CrossFit 701 Manager
- Troy Henne – HASH Interactive Co-Founder
- John Satrom – Northwestern Bank
- Del Rae Williams – Moorhead Mayor
- Bill Bergquist – Clay County Sheriff
- Milt Arneson Jr. - Home Depot - Water Boy
- Austin Rund & Casey Bruggamen - Concordia Basketball team - referees

We would also like to thank our **Player Sponsors:**

Blue Sky, Inc., Gate City Bank, Travelodge & Suites of Fargo/Moorhead, Vogel Law Firm, American Crystal Sugar, and Shooting Star Casino, which also donated a casino package for the raffle.



Thanks to our **Quarter Sponsors:** Voxland Electric, Moorhead Public Schools, Northwestern Bank, & Debra Parks.



Longtime Arc Member, Advocate, & Volunteer Bea Arett Dies



The Arc lost a great member and volunteer this past November when Bea passed away. She shared her passion for working for persons with special needs with all who knew her at the many different Arc activities.

As a past Director of the Arc West Central and Arc Clay County I had many opportunities to call Bea and ask if she could help at an upcoming event and

her answer was always YES sign me up, but I need a ride!

Bea did not drive but that did not stop her from attending the many different Board meetings, working the booth at awareness day at West Acres, selling roses at the Arc annual rose sale, assisting at workshops, and her real love working and attending all legislative events.

Bea 's positive attitude and relentless manner in supporting legislation dealing with persons with special needs will be and is missed by the local, regional and state Arc.

Bea who was a lifetime member of the Arc and a good friend will be missed by many.

At every Election Day I will be thinking of Bea, as she would say " Be sure to get out and vote (and Bea would love it if it was for a Democrat)! "

Rest in Peace and thanks Bea for all you did for the Arc.

LaVerne Czichotzki
Former Director of Arc Clay County/ Arc West Central

Arc West Central Rose Sale Monday, March 21st

Supporting The Arc in advocating for individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities for over 60 years.

Would you be willing to go the extra mile to assist in Rose Sale fundraiser?

We are seeking people that could coordinate orders and collecting money at your workplace, your church, your neighborhood, or any other place that you could think of... We also need volunteers to deliver roses on March 21st. Please call or email if you can help, and we will send you a packet of information and publicity.




1 Dozen Red or Lollipop Roses -\$20

1 Dozen Red or Lollipop Roses in Vase - \$23

Pre-paid orders February 22nd - March 7th, 2016. March 21st delivery date. Call or email to find your nearest pick up location. Pickup locations in Moorhead, Fargo, Detroit Lakes, Hawley, & Fergus Falls.

This is one of our main fundraisers for the year. The lollipop (mixture of colors) roses are perfect for Easter, which is the following Sunday! Please consider purchasing roses to support Arc West Central in our efforts to assist people with developmental disabilities and their families.



Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I will pick them up at _____

The 2016 Arc Annual Rose Sale Order Sheet

	# dozen no vase \$20	# dozen with vase \$23	Subtotal
Red			
Lollipop			

Check # _____ Total _____

Arc West Central Membership 2016

To all new and renewing members, we say **"THANK YOU"**. Your loyal support is vital to Arc West Central. This organization would not exist without membership support.

Aaron Atherton	Bill DeSaint	Erling Linde	Lori & Tim Rustad
Donna Atherton	Gene Ecklund	Milton Little Owl	Beverly Schaff
Nicole Atherton	Jon Enderle	David & Marjo Lysne	Corinne Schattschneider
Shirley Bahr	Pam Grugel	Linda Manders	Rick & Rachel Stotts
Kim & Ira Bailey	Tom & Jayne Holtgrewe	Candace Mathiowetz	Synstelein Community Services
Arlene & Arthur Bakker	Bill & Marilyn Hughes	Zona Mathison	Stan & Karen Synsteliem
Pam Ballard	Wayne Ingersoll	Suzanne Michelson	Lynn Tkachuk
Behavioral Health Associates	Jim & Susan Jaroszewski	Anne & Randy Nelson	Gen Tougas
Blue Sky, Inc (Steven Schmit)	Marti and Dale Johnson	Karen Nitzkowski	Carrie Truesdell
Betty Boardman	Pamela Johnson	Kathy Offerdahl	Glen & Karen Urlacher
Dale and Kathleen Braton	Victor & LaVerne Johnson	Wendy Parrott	Rich & Dee Vos
Dan Brendemuhl	Kathy & Stephen Johnston	Steve & Julie Pasche	Nicole & Joe Welsch
Diane & Wayne Brendemuhl	Sarah King	Jon Peterson	Pam White
CCRI, Inc.	Gerald and Nora Koenig	Donna Reed	Ben Yasgar
Mark & Laverne Czichotzki	Teresa & Mark Kuether	Marilyn Rose	

Help us go green and save money! We may not be mailing newsletters unless you make a request. We need to cut expenses. In an effort to conserve resources and postage, we are updating our mailing list. **If you DO wish to receive this newsletter by mail, please call or email Arc West Central at 218-233-5949 or 1-800-411-0124, arcwcm@702com.net.** We will send the newsletter via email to those on our email list, so if you have not sent your email to us, please do so. Newsletters are posted on our website, as well.

Have you renewed your membership or would you join us to become a member for the first time?

The Arc draws its strength from membership support: The larger the membership, the stronger the voice. There has never been a better time to join than right now!

Arc West Central Membership 2016

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

____ Student/Self Advocate @ \$20.00

____ Individual @ \$30.00

____ Family @ \$50.00

____ Organization/ Corporate @ \$150.00 or

____ I want to receive the newsletter via email

____ Please take me off your mailing list

_____ Donation

_____ Interested in email Action Alert

_____ Interested in monthly Fun Sheets

_____ Via Mail _____ via email

_____ name for Fun Sheet

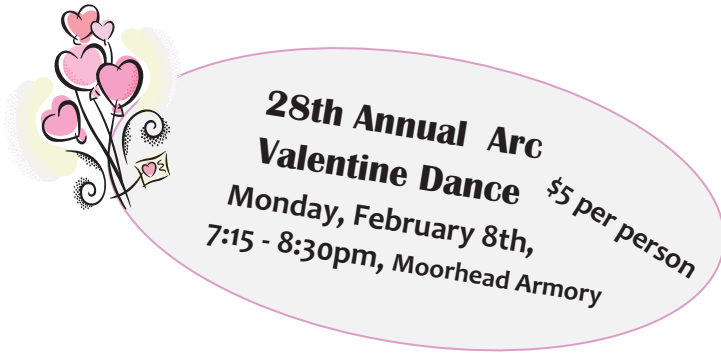
All memberships expire December 31st.



810 4th Avenue S, Suite 134
Moorhead, MN 56560

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We Wish to Thank Our 2016 Corporate Level Donors

\$1,000 - \$2,000 Bronze Level

Johnson Family Foundation



\$450-\$999 Pink Rose Level

Donald Short



Hawley United Fund

Moorhead High School

\$250 - \$350 Yellow Rose Level



Moorhead Noon Kiwanis

