

## GOING FURTHER FOR FAMILIES

as Bergen and Sussex," says Gail Paradise, Assistant Executive Director.

But not long after opening, the limitations of the services were soon discovered. Since both homes were converted for their use, physical limitations inherent in their design prevented the *full range* of people with developmental disabilities from being served. Neither home is barrier free and both are limited in size and function due to only having three bedrooms. Despite serving an average of 100 individuals each year, none of those served could have ambulation problems or require any specialized medical support.

That meant that too many families with even greater needs went without for too long. But now, thanks to the construction of the new Rubenstein Respite Group Home in Hanover, more respite needs are being delivered for those with more complex, multiple developmental disabilities.

With complete wheelchair accessibility and six individual bedrooms with accompanying bathrooms, the home has proven to be a state of the art facility for the unique purpose of serving the respite needs of families with loved ones who have multiple developmental disabilities. Since opening the home two years ago, even individuals requiring skilled nursing support were able to be served through careful, pre-planned scheduling. In several instances, families had gone years without any ability to have out of home respite due to the significant needs of their adult children.

With a relaxed atmosphere and a host of recreational activities, visitors to The Arc/Morris Respite Group Homes often feel like they've had a vacation. Residents always attend a day program, but when their work day ends, they can relax and

enjoy the comfortable surroundings with fellow residents—even striking up friendships that are sometimes sustained after their stay.

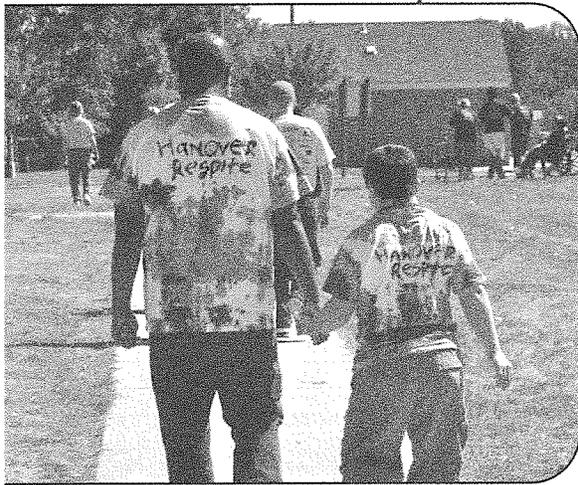
But beyond the direct benefit for the individual, the families and caregivers are the true beneficiaries of these facility based respite services. This is particularly true of families who are waiting for residential services. Such families have often spent thirty, forty or even fifty years caring for their loved one.

And for four such lucky families, the former Chatham Respite Group Home will soon be a permanent home for their adult children. Following extensive renovation, the home that was replaced by the new Hanover Respite Group Home will soon be opening its doors to become the agency's 20th community residence.

Conveying the agency's sentiments perfectly, Residential Director Gloria Skarzynski-Burt says, "We continue to have some amazing stories of families who never accessed any services and are suddenly faced with a crisis. To be there in an emergency, to be truly helpful, is really at the heart of the residential program—both temporarily and permanently." ■

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Abdul Blakewood and Michael Swersky walk in support of the Hanover Respite facility.

**C**aring for the needs of others—whether an elderly parent, a sick child, or an adult with developmental disability is beyond a full time job. In some instances, it can routinely be 16 hours a day—or more. The strain on families has been well documented, and yet with respite care, people can get some relief and continue to support their loved ones in their own homes.

The Arc/Morris recognized this reality over 28 years ago with the opening of the Chatham Respite Group Home, and shortly after, the Chester Respite Group Home. Located on opposite ends of Morris County, the homes have been a tremendous resource for not only Morris County families, but numerous others across the six northern counties of New Jersey, which encompass the boundaries of the state Division of Developmental Disabilities Northern Regional Office. "As two of only five Respite Group Homes across that area, we see consumers and serve families from counties as far east as Hudson and as far north and west

# Marathon Men

**F**ollowing up on a story in the last edition of *Touchstone* (Summer 2015) the unlikely duo of Geoff McGrane and Gary Genovas followed up on their victory in the 2015 Boston Marathon with another FIRST PLACE finish in the New York City Marathon on November 1. This year was the first time that New York City allowed tandem teams to compete, thus making them an integral part of marathon history.

"This was something I had wanted to do for a long time," said McGrane. "I was looking to compete in a marathon while pushing a disabled person in a wheelchair like the now famous Dick Hoyt did for many years with his son, Rick. This was an ideal situation and Gary is a great partner."

Bill Testa, Executive Director of The Arc/Morris states "Having someone like Geoff come forward and work with Gary shows a commitment we wish more people had. Inclusion in events like this help to show that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities can and should be an important part of their community." The two friends were at The Arc/Morris Annual Awards on May 20 where Gary received the Bill Sackter Award, which recognizes an individual with intellectual disabilities who is an achieving, integrated member of his or her community and Geoff received the 2015 Best Friend Award. On November 17, Geoff was honored by The Arc of New Jersey with its 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award.



**Congratulations gentlemen!**



Geoff McGrane and Gary Genovas on race day.

**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

For several years now, planning for changes have been underway in not only how most of our services will be funded, but how they will be delivered. What had started as altering the financing system to secure more federal funds has evolved into utilizing that financing to drive systems change.

While this might not be all bad, it seems to me that what we must strive to do is sustain what is good about what we do now, and ensure that we continue to do it in the future.

And one of the over-arching goals we have always worked to accomplish has been satisfaction on the part of those we serve — whether with the consumer themselves, their families, or both. Consumer satisfaction has been one of the hallmarks of our work. Moving away from anecdotal and process measurements of quality many years ago, we examine outcomes and routinely ask our service recipients how they feel about the supports they receive.

Overwhelmingly, people with Intellectual Disabilities and their families have told us that they have been very satisfied with The Arc/Morris Chapter. In the area highlighted in this Touchstone's cover story alone, the following testimonials were offered in our routine satisfaction surveys:

*"The respite program gives my husband and me a much needed break. I don't know how we would emotionally survive without it."*

*"We are so happy to have found a respite home for our son that is exceptional. After looking and trying other homes, we could not be happier and concern free. Vacations are now worry free."*

*"I thought it was a very organized and positive place. I was amazed to get a suitcase back with clean clothes inside!"*

*"Everyone at the Respite Home is doing a great job and this made my hospital stay worry free."*

These are the results we will make sure never change!

**BILL TESTA**

### She Walked the Walk

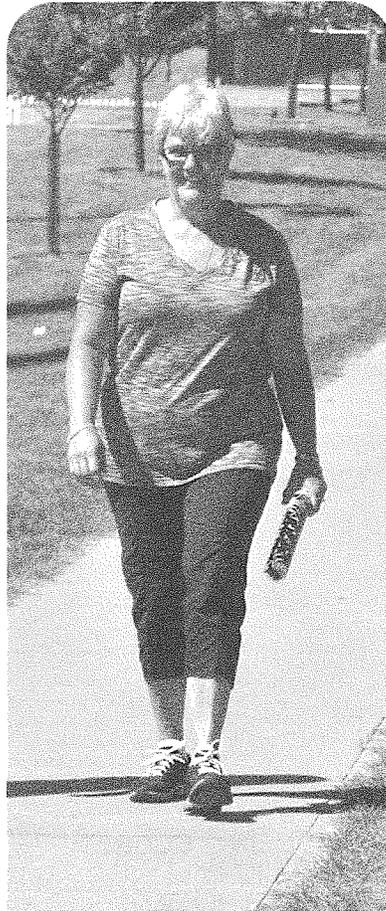
**G**ail Paradise, Assistant Executive Director, has always been an amazing influence on everyone she meets. And her actions this year have been no exception.

In preparation to celebrate her 35th year with the agency, Paradise decided to do something a little different this year in order to support the Annual Walk held on September 20th. Starting early in the morning before walk preparation even began, she walked one lap around the course at Central Park of Morris County for each of her 35 years. To top it off, she dedicated each lap in memory of people we have served in our residential program who have passed away over her years with the organization. Gail also then kicked off the walk start as her last lap along with Gloria Skarzynski-Burt, Director of our Residential Services.

Development Coordinator Marie Bizub-Jurewicz said "Through Gail's

connections, family and friends, she raised over \$4,500...well above the goal she set for herself and was our top individual participant!"

For all she has done and continues to do, we thank Gail and salute her on her years with The Arc/Morris.



Gail Paradise walks the Walk.

### 2015 Annual Appeal

In this season of giving, please consider a donation in support of the programs and services we provide all year through for people with intellectual and related developmental disabilities and their families.

Have a safe and happy holiday, and a prosperous 2016!

#### AmazonSmile Program

What is AmazonSmile? AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support The Arc/Morris every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to The Arc/Morris. On your first visit to AmazonSmile, select The Arc/Morris to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. A simple and easy way to help support the programs and services The Arc/Morris provides throughout Morris County. Go to Smile.Amazon.com and sign up today!

#### 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 have received many generous donations of vehicles to support our programs and services. We are happy to accept donations of your used cars, vans or trucks, all of which are tax deductible.

To donate your car, please 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.

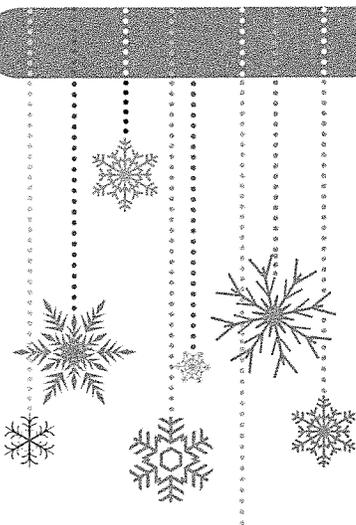
#### Online Donations

You can make online donations now through PayPal on our website ([www.arcmorris.org](http://www.arcmorris.org)). Just click the Donate Now button on the home page 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 Office at (973) 326-9750, Ext. 211.

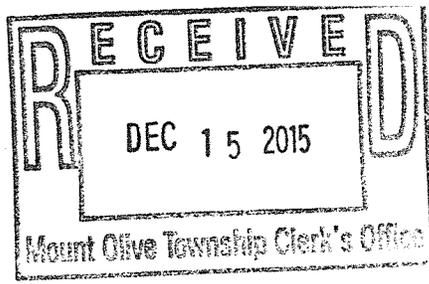


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P.O. Box 123,

please write us at:

The Arc/Morris,

to learn more about

families. If you would like

related disabilities and their

people with intellectual and

an association that serves

of The Arc/Morris,

is a publication

Touchstones



Please mark your calendars for our 28th Annual Golf Outing on June 9, 2016! More information to follow in 2016.

## Golf Outing 2016

## Annual

### THANK YOU!

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A Fore Services  
Mack Call Realty  
Lakeland Charities

The 12th Annual Arc/Morris Foundation Walk was held on Sunday, September 20, 2015. This year's event was the most successful in the past few years and raised over \$37,000 to benefit the programs and services the agency provides for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout Morris County. Over 300 walkers, supporters and volunteers contributed to the event's success and we are most thankful for the following sponsors:

## Walk 2015

# Foundation

Focus