



achieve *Empowering People*

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Roberta Middagh - Woman About Town

As an experienced self advocate who has lived independently in the community for over 45 years, Roberta Middagh brings her unique perspective to The Arc, Upper Valley's board of directors, which she joined in 2017.

Along with her twin brother, Roberta was placed at the Life Skills & Transition Center in

Grafton, ND (formerly called the Grafton State School) when she was just three years old. At the age of 19, she left the institution and moved to Grand Forks. Her twin remained at Grafton for another 13 years until he, too, was moved to Grand Forks.

"I didn't get to see him much after I left Grafton, but when he moved to Grand Forks, I visited him every day at his group home. I still see him almost every day."

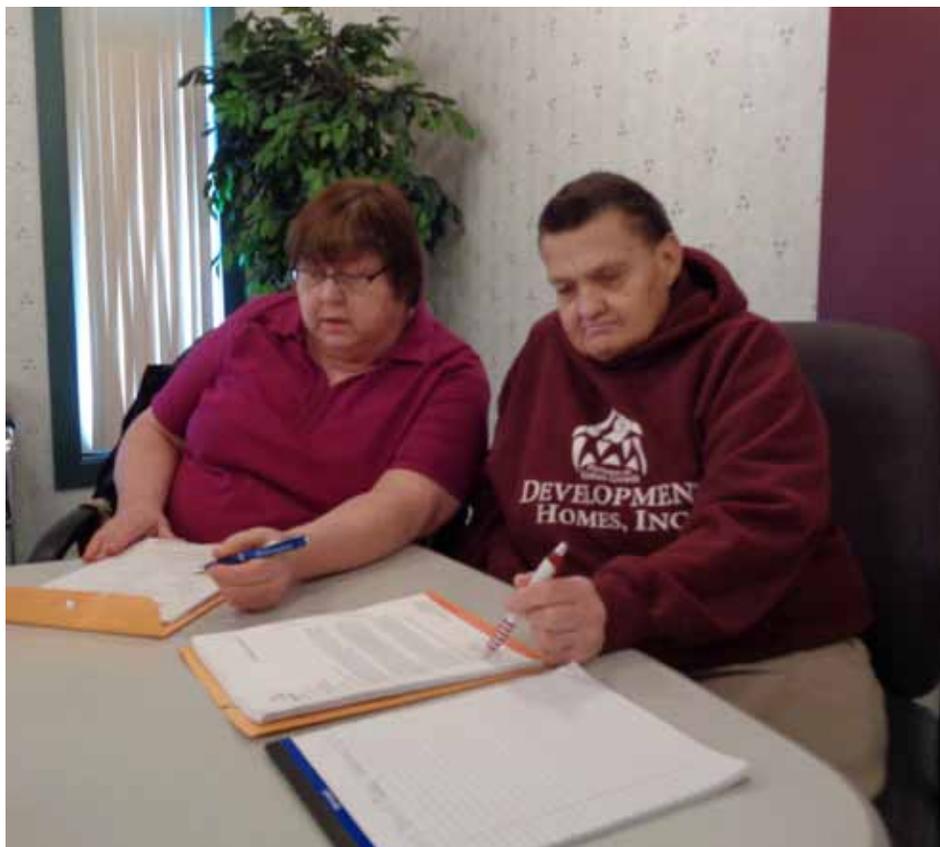
They remain close and keep in touch with their many siblings and nieces and nephews who live all across the United States.

She enjoys a full social life, dining out regularly with friends and taking vacations to Nashville, TN and Branson, MO, among other places.

"Nashville was okay," she said, "but I liked Branson better."

Her choice of destinations is no surprise - she is a big fan of country music, particularly Hank Williams Sr. "I like all country music, but mostly the older songs from the 50's & 60's."

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L to R: Board Members Peggy Johnson & Roberta Middagh study the agenda at the February 2017 Board of Directors meeting.



Rachel Hafner
Executive Director

Most of us have chosen the place that we call home. We chose that place because it fits our personality or it is a nice dwelling. Or maybe we chose our home because we like the neighborhood, community, or we like living near family. There are so many factors that play into what place we call home.

But what if we did not have a choice? What if someone chose our home for us and said, you have to live here. For many people with disabilities, this is the reality of their lives. Someone else chooses their home for them.

Today, you are going to read about Roberta, who grew up at the Life Skills and Transition Center (formerly called The Grafton State School). This institution was her home, and it continues to be home for many children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. For people who have lived and continue to live at the Life Skills and Transition Center, they generally do not have a choice about where they live. They are placed there because that is where their needs can best be met.

Roberta moved out of The Grafton State School 45 years ago and now proudly lives in her own apartment. This is what we want for every person with a disability - to live in the community and dwelling of their choice.

We hope that as you read this newsletter you are inspired to help more people, like Roberta, live in the home of their choice.

You can help empower people to make their own choices by partnering with The Arc, Upper Valley. Staff at The Arc work as individual and systems advocates to ensure home is a choice for everyone. Your donation is vital to helping people live life fully in the community. Because home is EVERYTHING!

Warmly,

Dear Partners:

The place that we call home is very important to each of us. When we think about what going home means to each of us, we often conjure up images of a meaningful place where we go to find comfort and peace as well as safety and security. Home is a place to relax and spend time by ourselves as well as with family and friends. It is the place where we invest our time, live out our talents, and fulfill our hopes and dreams. Home means something different to everyone, but to everyone home is EVERYTHING!

achieve

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Mission Statement:

The Arc, Upper Valley promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

The Arc, Upper Valley 701.772.6191

thearcuppervalley.org

SPREAD THE WORD TO END THE WORD.

Spread the Word to End the Word is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics and Best Buddies International, to raise the consciousness of society about the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the “R” word and to encourage people to pledge to stop using it

The campaign, created by youth, is intended to engage schools, organizations and communities to rally and pledge their support.

Many years ago, The Arc was also defined by the “R” word - once known by the acronym ARC.

Out of respect, we have since re-branded to discontinue the use of the “R” word in our name.

The Arc is not an acronym. Please refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.

Thank you for the support of the proper usage of our name and your respect for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities - not just during March (Intellectual Disabilities Awareness Month) but all year long.

Follow us on Social Media!

The Arc, Upper Valley, The Arc Thrift Store and True Colors can all be found on Facebook and Instagram. Follow us to stay up to date on all the happenings!



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Roberta has always been actively involved in the community as a volunteer and advocate. She helps serve the meal every year at the Inter-Agency Picnic, is part of Development Homes Speakers Bureau and worked on Self Advocacy Solutions' Spread the Word to End the “R” Word Campaign. She helps prepare newsletter mailings for the L.I.S.T.E.N. Center and helps out with other tasks whenever she can.

She worked as a dishwasher at UND Dining Services in the Memorial Union, retiring in April 2016 after 29 years, and although she once had a roommate long ago, she has lived in her own apartment for most of her life in Grand Forks.

“I like my privacy,” she said.

Since retiring, she keeps busy playing cards with her friends at the L.I.S.T.E.N. Center and league bowling on the Development Homes team at Red Ray Lanes. She likes UND sports, but doesn't attend the games, as she'd rather watch them on TV from the comfort of her home. She also does plastic canvas crafts.

Roberta had knee replacement surgery in 2015, and it barely slowed her down. However, it did prevent her from bowling in the last part of the league season that year, much to her dismay.

During her recuperation, she learned that her close friend, Beverly, whom she had known since childhood, had passed away.

“I knew her since we were little girls in Grafton. We were like sisters,” she said. “When I found out that she passed away, I was too upset to eat dinner that night.”

Losing her friend was difficult and although she still misses her, she cherishes the memories she has of their lifelong friendship.

Roberta is well-connected and knows her way around the community. She knows the city bus routes and although she doesn't drive, she knows all the streets and intersections and can give incredibly accurate driving directions.

When asked what advice she would have for someone new moving to Grand Forks, she said, “I'd say welcome to Grand Forks. Here's my phone number. Call me if you need help or just want to talk.”

FINDS Survey (Family & Individual Needs for Disability Supports)

The Research and Training Center on Community Living at the University of Minnesota in collaboration with The Arc, is seeking caregivers to share their perceptions on a range of life-span issues impacting individuals with I/DD.

We are inviting people aged 18 years or older who provide frequent primary paid/unpaid support to a person with an I/DD to participate.

The results of the 2010 Survey provided unique insight into the growing gaps in education, employment, and other life-span activities that exist between persons with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, which has informed further dialogue and policy changes at the Federal and State levels.

**Survey: www.thearc.org/finds
Survey deadline is March 31, 2017**

Parent Support



Find support, share ideas and problem-solve with other parents of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Meets the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 PM in the family room at The Arc, Upper Valley.

For more information call 701-772-6191.



Meet The Arc's New Gaming Manager

Hello, my name is Melissa Harvey and I am the new gaming manager. I'd like to give you the opportunity to know me a little better and to share some of my goals for charitable gambling.

I was born and raised in Fargo, ND, except for the 5 years my father was part of the United States Air Force. Once he received his honorable discharge, my parents decided to move back home to be close to family. My sister and I attended Fargo Public Schools. I graduated from Fargo South High in 1998 with an emphasis on music and JROTC. I attended UND and MSUM.

After college is when I first got involved with the gaming industry by becoming a licensed dealer at the Shooting Star Casino. Following a move back to Fargo, I then worked for Plains Art Museum, Sharehouse Inc., and Boys and Girls Club as a dealer and shift lead. I have had interest in being a gaming manager since obtaining my license.

I am honored that The Arc, Upper Valley has selected me to fill the position. I look forward to expanding the number of sites we have as well as improving our current sites. I enjoy working with our staff, and the complexity of this position.

I have a wonderful family, that includes my significant other Jon, my son Lucas, and my dog Reggie. I enjoy traveling, reading, and walking. I am very passionate about living life to the fullest and being kind and supportive of others. I love to volunteer which I am passing onto my son by doing volunteer work together. We are very active with the PTA, the VA, and all the local nonprofits that help homeless or neglected animals.

I hope to meet some of you down the road. Again, I am so thankful to be here and cannot wait to see my hard work benefit The Arc, Upper Valley.

Arc Angel Project

Thanks to our wonderful donors, The Arc Angel Project was once again a success, serving 55 individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who would otherwise not have received a gift this holiday season.

Our staff works together with service providers in the community of Grand Forks and at the Life Skills and Transition Center in Grafton to obtain referrals and wish lists.

Arc Angel Project Donors

Kim & Alan Albrecht
An Elegant Affair/Carnegie Lofts
Anonymous
Dave & Kelly Arganbright
Kathy Ashe
Richard & Luise Beringer
Bremer Bank
Allan & Marcy Cleem
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Trish Schindele
The Arc of Dickinson
Doug & Kathy Twite
Liz Tyree
Vaaler Insurance Employees
Valley Petroleum/Kathy Reiser
Laurie Watkins
Steve Zitzow Family

Volunteer Opportunities

Share Your Talent With The Arc



Human Rights Committee

The Human Rights Committee meets monthly to review individual plans for self-advocates, who are receiving services from area providers, to ensure that their basic human and civil rights are safeguarded. Committee members review plans prior to meeting times. Total volunteer time amounts to about 6 hours per month.

Book Club

We are looking for one or two volunteers with a love of reading who would like to facilitate a book club for young adults/adults with special needs.

Toddler Playgroup

The Arc is seeking one or two parent volunteers who are interested in starting a daytime playgroup for toddlers with special needs. and their parents

The Arc Thrift Store

Is photography your thing? We are seeking a volunteer to take photos at The Arc Thrift Store on a regular basis for social media.

For more information on these volunteer opportunities, call Rachel at 772-6191.

If you follow us on social media, you have undoubtedly seen the fantastic, artistic photos posted on our True Colors Facebook and Instagram pages. These are courtesy of our volunteer photographer, Haley Bruhn. Thank you, Haley, for sharing your talent with The Arc!

The Arc 2016 Local Awards

The Annual Awards Ceremony holds great value to The Arc, Upper Valley, as a way to honor and thank individuals, groups, and organizations who exemplify the best in contributions to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Award winners were nominated by community members and were presented with their awards at The Arc, Upper Valley's Annual Dinner Celebration in November 2016.

Employer of the Year

Julie Schneibel of Dollar Tree was recognized as Employer of the Year for a business regularly employing people with intellectual disabilities at the same wage and benefits as other employees.

Julie has long been an advocate for people with intellectual disabilities. She worked for Success Unlimited for several years, at different times working as a job coach and a direct support professional.

Julie's background in working with individuals with intellectual disabilities makes her a great manager. Job coaches are not always on the job site, so she is able to step in and communicate and work effectively with her employees who have disabilities.



L to R: Hannah Watson & Julie Schneibel

In her nomination letter, Tanja Kapinos of Success Unlimited said, "She is a pioneer in helping us work with businesses we've never had the opportunity to work with before."

Excellence in Self-Advocacy

The Excellence in Self-Advocacy Award recognizes an outstanding individual with an intellectual disability who is an achieving, included member of their community.

Penny Johnson is a self-advocate who works tirelessly in the movement to create a world that treats people with disabilities with fairness and respect.

Penny was married and is the mother of two children, one of whom has a developmental disability. She advocates for her son but, more importantly, is always encouraging him to advocate for himself.

She is active in the community and was recently named the Grand Cities Art Fest Volunteer of the Year for her work on the community-wide event.

Her nominators said, "Penny is a positive person. She believes with her heart, sees with her heart and works with her heart. She is a role model and mentor for many and is so deserving of this award."



L to R: Hannah Watson & Penny Johnson.

Professional of the Year

Amanda Hosler is employed by Development Homes in the Accessing Community Employment Solutions (ACES) Program.

ACES focuses on employment skill building and pre-employment skills training in Development Homes' technology and career center. Skill building topics are work related, and cover issues relevant to employment, such as attire, hygiene, workplace safety, social etiquette, interview skills, resume writing and City Bus training.

In his nomination letter, Robert Johnson said, "Amanda is the best staff to me. I am her client, but she is my BSF (Best Staff Forever). The one thing is, she is my hero. She works with me in the ACES Program. Every day, she uses her kindness, compassion and wonderful skills in helping me be an independent man and worker."



L to R: Hannah Watson & Amanda Hosler

as needed so that everyone can participate, regardless of physical limitations.

She facilitates an exciting experience leading to a culture of fun and acceptance. Karen spends a lot of time contacting agencies within the community to raise awareness of her class and to assist in coordinating supports and transportation so that everyone has the opportunity to participate.

Teacher of the Year

The Teacher of the Year Award recognizes a teacher who has demonstrated excellence in teaching students with intellectual disabilities.

Karen Lauer is employed by the Grand Forks School District as a teacher of students with special needs. She has made positive contributions to the lives of individuals with disabilities through various roles both in the school system and community.

It is her work as a cycling instructor at Choice Fitness that provides her with the avenue to impact the lives of individuals with disabilities in a unique and exciting way. Karen had an idea to create a spin class for individuals of all abilities, but specifically aimed at including individuals with disabilities to enable them to reach their fullest potential in the realm of health, fitness, recreation and leisure.

EPIC (Endless Possibilities in Cycling) allows Karen to help individuals reach their highest degree of independence. She works with others to modify equipment



Back row, L to R: Virginia Esslinger & Karen Lauer. Front: Hannah Watson.

EPIC Cycling

An interactive cycling class created for people with special needs who have endless possibilities.

Monday & Wednesday
4:30 - 5:00 PM
Choice Health & Fitness

Contact Choice Health & Fitness for scholarship opportunities.

The Arc State Awards

The Arc of North Dakota recognized two of our 2015 local award winners as state award winners for 2016.

Lin Thorson was recognized as The Arc of North Dakota Teacher of the Year.

Mark Kauk was recognized as the Bill Sackter Citizenship Award winner.



Lin Thorson attended The Arc of North Dakota Annual Dinner in Bismarck, ND to accept her award.



Mark was unable to attend the dinner in Bismarck, as he was busy cheering on one of the local athletic teams he follows. He was presented with his award in Grand Forks at a later date.

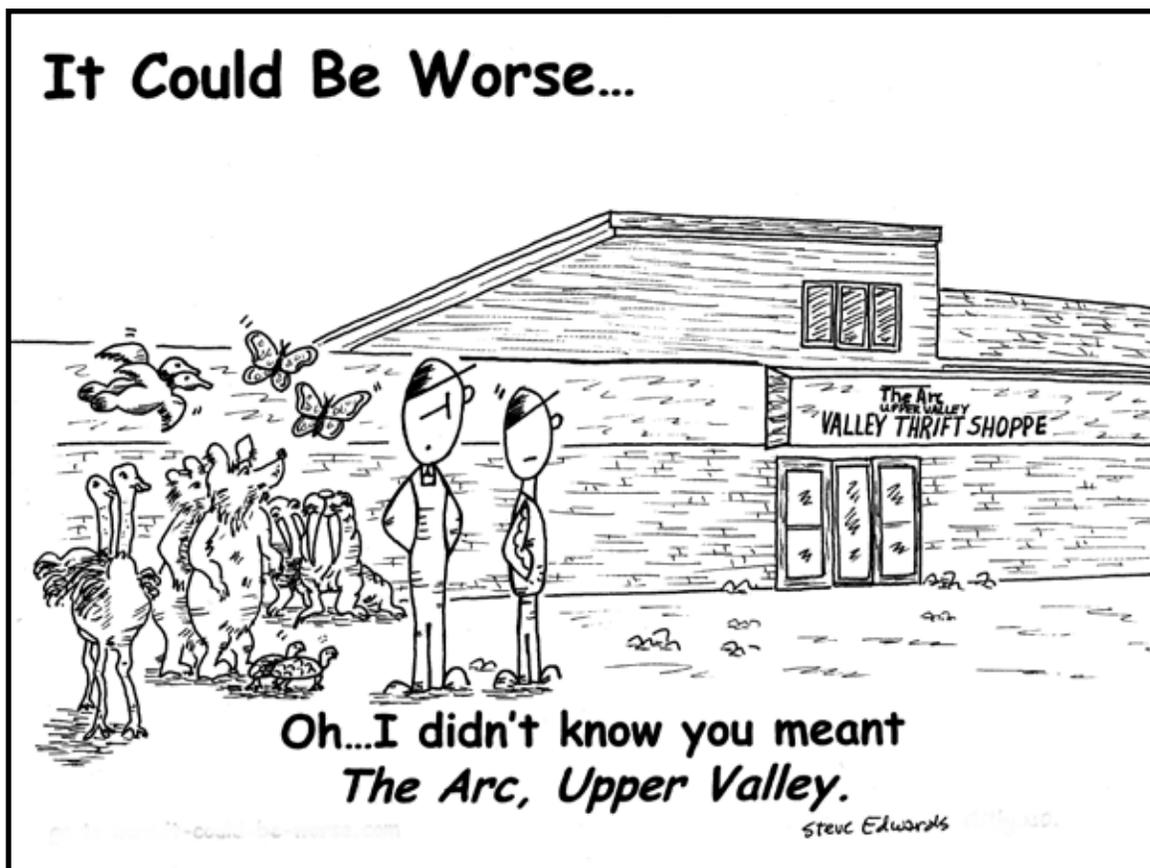


The Arc.

Upper Valley

2500 DeMers Ave Grand Forks ND 58201

We are The Arc. Not The ARC and not ARC.



This was created in 2006 by cartoonist Steve Edwards, former resident of Gilby, ND and regular contributor to The Grand Forks Herald.

Thank you, Steve, for sharing your talent with The Arc during the re-branding of our name. Your message is still relevant today!