



# Timelines



FEBRUARY 2007

## in this issue...

- 1 Star Warriors
- 2 Message from the Executive Director  
Board of Directors
- 3 Employee Profile—  
Chenine Johnson &  
Jim Sullivan
- 4 Donations
- 5 Life Choices  
Upcoming Events  
Volunteer News
- 6 Membership Application  
Car Donation Program



The Arc of East Middlesex  
20 Gould Street  
Reading, MA 01867-2927

SOMWBA Certified

Phone 781.942.4888  
Fax 781.942.0820  
www.theemarc.org  
info@theemarc.org

## Local Man Interviewed for *Star Wars* Documentary

*Club provides opportunities to develop social skills & friendships*

Reading's own Jonathan Moscarillo will be featured in a documentary tentatively titled *Star Warriors* and commissioned by Lucasfilm Ltd., makers of the *Star Wars* movies. Jon, age 22, is a member of the New England Garrison of the 501st Legion, a *Star Wars* costuming fan club that currently holds a 2500+ membership in all 50 U.S. states and 25 countries worldwide, according to their web site.

*Star Warriors* profiles a handful of Legion members from around the world to highlight the ways in which the *Star Wars* films have affected their lives. Jon was interviewed for the documentary in November at his Reading home.

"It was great. I thought, I'd like to be one of the people interviewed for this documentary because there were not many people from my area included," Jon said in a recent interview.

What the *Star Wars* films and by extension the Legion have provided Jon is an opportunity to develop social skills and friendships beyond his high school circle. "Jon's included in the club independently. It has helped him to become a more comfortable and social being, said Brian Gordon, Director of the Arc's *School*



**From Fan to Star**—*Star Wars* aficionado Jon Moscarillo (right) and his father Pete (left) were interviewed in November for a documentary about the 501st Legion, a *Star Wars* costuming fan club.

*to Work* program, who works with Jon and was also interviewed for the documentary.

How did Jon become involved with the club?

"I saw it (information about the 501st Legion) on the internet. One time I went to see them at an event and decided to join them when I was older," said Jon. He joined the group of adult *Star Wars*

*continued on page 4*

**Real Troopers**—  
Members of the  
501st Legion,  
including Jon,  
served as greet-  
ers at the Muse-  
um of Science  
*Star Wars* exhibit.



## The Arc of East Middlesex Board of Directors

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### **Timelines is produced by:**

Jo Ann Simons, MSW  
*Executive Director*

Susan Ring Brown  
*Director of Development*

Paula Vratton  
*Administrative Assistant*

## New Communication Devices— We Love to Hate Them *Making a Shift to Save Paper, Time and Resources*



Whether is it voice mail, call waiting, email, fax, iPods and other MP3 players, web pages, BlackBerry-like devices and all those things that make our lives easier, you might have a love/hate relationship with them. We know that here at The Arc of East Middlesex, Inc. we certainly do. But, we are also aware that technology and modernization have made us more efficient and that means we can do more with less.

Doing more with less is what we are used to. More families in needs of services and program cuts. Inadequate staff salaries and governor's vetoes. In spite of these challenges, we continue to grow and be innovative.

One area in which we are moving fast ahead is increasing our use of technology whenever possible. We have redesigned our web site and in addition to finding the latest news of The Arc of East Middlesex, Inc. there, you can buy products from our Center for Emerging Artists and make donations to us as well. Our newsletter is posted there, too.

We are now ready to take a new step. We are going to use email to send you both *Timelines* and our Recreation brochures. In addition to saving us money, you will receive this important information as soon as it is available. Presently, we send this material using our bulk mail certificate and it can take a week to 10 days for our members to receive mail this way. This has meant that you have missed important events or an opportunity to sign up for one of our recreation programs. In addition, the bulk rate rules will be changing soon and the costs increasing.

It won't happen overnight, but soon we will be sending those of you who have valid email addresses an active link to our *Timelines* and Recreation brochures. While they will also be posted on our web site, you won't have to go there to find it. You will have a direct link to these pages. You won't be getting an attachment, so there is no fear of a virus infecting your computer.

If you do not have email, you will continue to receive mailings the old fashioned way.

By using more technology, we will create more efficiencies and reduce our costs. We would rather spend our resources directly on the families and individuals we support. Thank you in advance for your support of this innovation!

## EMPLOYEE PROFILES

### Chenine Johnson & Jim Sullivan Co-Directors, Recreation Program *The Right to Play: Making it so!*

What is the philosophy of the Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Department?

"Like Chenine says, 'get everyone out and playing'," replied Jim Sullivan.

"Everyone has the right to play and do what they are interested in," agreed Chenine Johnson.

Working with city and town Recreation Directors, local YMCAs and schools, Jim and Chenine, Co-Directors of the Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Department, are putting that philosophy into practice in the communities we serve.

"Jim and Chenine compliment one another so well. With their expertise we have been able to create a recreation program that is not only fun but therapeutically enhances learning, coordination, social skills, overall health and fitness. How many programs can claim that?" said Kerry Mahoney, Director of the Arc's Family Resource Center, which includes the Recreation Department.

Chenine, a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, joined the Arc as Recreation Director 16 months ago. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Recreation with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation and Child Development and a minor in Psychology from Western Washington University. The experience she brought to her position included providing recreation services for medically fragile children and young adults with severe disabilities at Children's Convalescent Hospital in San Diego and leading camp programs for children with serious illnesses and their families at Camp Sunshine in Casco, Maine. Once on board, she quickly began expanding programs to meet the needs expressed by our families. In September 2006, Chenine and Kerry recruited Jim to co-direct our dramatically expanding Recreation Department.

Jim earned a BS in Physical Education with a minor in Recreation from Bridgewater State College. His previous experience includes working with students on the Autism Spectrum as a ABA specialist at Melmark New England and serving as Assistant Director of Day Habilitation and Special Olympics Coordinator for one of our sister Arcs.

They've divided responsibility for the various programs within the department. Chenine oversees Youth and Teen Social Clubs, creative movement, arts and summer camp. Jim coordinates Special Olympics, and the new Tri-city area programs based at the Malden YMCA.

What challenges, in addition to the need for more funding, face the Department?

"Making surrounding communities more aware of the capabilities of people with disabilities. Recreation can be a great leveling ground," said Chenine.



**Howdy Partner—Jim Sullivan and Chenine Johnson, Co-Directors of the Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Department, ham it up at an inclusive Harvest Hoe-Down dance.**

"Inclusion—overcoming the fears families have. It's okay if their son or daughter fails, because part of life is learning from that and trying again," said Jim.

"They learn how to play from adults, but mostly from other kids," added Chenine. It's a safe environment in which to take risks."

Jim just joined Chenine as Co-Director in the fall and already they are completing each other's sentences. It's a partnership which benefits the children and adults with disabilities we support. How do they spend their own leisure time?

"Traveling, to get to know other parts of the world and how other people live. I took a dance class last fall and recently got my own equipment to do rock climbing. I also spend a lot of time at camp," said Chenine.

Camp is Camp Sunshine in Casco, Maine, where for several years Chenine has volunteered to support children with serious illnesses and their families.

Jim fills his leisure time with more sports and competition. He just began a wiffleball league with 12 teams and 55 athletes signed up to play.

"It's just a great way to interact with your friends," said Jim.

Jim has always been interested in sports, playing baseball since the age of six until he hurt his shoulder in college and basketball in high school.

"With sports you have structure, rules, respect, competition and team work, and I just liked challenging myself. When you meet those goals, it's so rewarding," said Jim.

Here Chenine and Jim compliment one another.

"I was not good at team sports, I was always the one picked last," recalls Chenine, who played tennis in high school. "I was

*continued on page 4*

## Local Man Interviewed for *Star Wars* Documentary

*Continued from page 1*

fans from across Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island a little over a year ago. The costume Jon chose to make his own is that of a Storm Trooper. "I just like the way it looks," he said of his selection. It is a cool costume.

The Legion takes part in official *Star Wars* events and benefits. Jon participated with the Legion as a greeter for the *Star Wars* exhibit at the Museum of Science in Boston and marching in the Woburn Halloween parade. They slowed down around the holidays but Jon expects more activities now that 2007 has arrived. He looks forward to the anticipated release of the documentary late this year.

Do members of the Legion keep in touch between appearances? "We stay in touch by email," said Jon.

"The Legion presents Jon with a great opportunity to cultivate and maintain friendships throughout his adult life," concluded Brian.

## The Arc of East Middlesex is Pleased to Acknowledge Gifts from the Following Donors...

### Friend—Gifts up to \$100

Mike Green  
Ladies Charitable Reading Society

### Sustainer—Gifts \$250–\$499

Reading Cooperative Bank  
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### Patron—Gifts \$500–\$999

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### Grants

Samantha's Harvest

### Tribute Gifts

Use the pledge form on the fundraising page of our website ([www.theemarc.org](http://www.theemarc.org)) to remember a loved one or honor a friend or relative for a special occasion. We are pleased to acknowledge the following tribute gifts.

### Memorials

*In Memory of Kerry Rubman*  
John Draper

### In-kind Gifts

Laurie Babock  
Michael Berardo  
Susan Ring Brown  
Paula Vrattos

### New Members

#### Welcome to:

Kenny Chen and family  
Eric Dorflinger and family  
Linda Villaneuva and family  
Maureen Kenny Woodworth and family

*Gifts received through December 19, 2006*

### STAY IN THE LOOP

We are using email with increasing frequency as a quick and cost effective way to reach our members. To be sure that you receive important information in a timely fashion, please send your email address to [info@theemarc.org](mailto:info@theemarc.org). Thank you!

## Employee Profiles—Chenine Johnson & Jim Sullivan

*Continued from page 3*

more of a musical kid, and I still am."

Chenine is a great fan of the non-competitive outdoors and providing opportunities for people to go hiking and kayaking. She took three teens to Outdoor Explorations' Girls Camp last summer.

"I like the friendships my teens are creating," said Chenine. The participants aren't the only ones forming friendships as a result of our programs. "At the new Malden programs, it's been great for the parents to network with one another," Jim added.

What is the most rewarding part of their jobs?

"Getting to know the families and spending time with their kids," said Chenine. "I have the most fun going out with the teens on Friday nights."

"Seeing the growth the participants experience—even in a six week class," said Jim. "I like to give them the opportunities that I had growing up. Without those experiences, I wouldn't be the person I am today. One of my goals is to provide more choices for adults." One such initiative is the Adult Sports Club, which is making plans to attend a game of each of the Boston professional sports teams.

Looking into the year ahead, Chenine and Jim's plans include the expansion of programs for kids with multiple needs and increased inclusion. As the Recreation Department continues to grow, the pair keeps in mind the standard which makes the Arc programs unique: "Offer quality programs and maintain the personal

touch, knowing the families. That makes all the difference," said Chenine.

To reach Chenine, call 781-942-4888, ext. 4036. To reach Jim, call 781-942-4888,

Jim Sullivan, Co-Director of the Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Department, has assembled a team called rEMARCables to raise money for our Special Olympics programs through the February 10th Passion Plunge at 11 a.m. at Revere Beach. To support the Arc's team, go to [www.passionplunge.org](http://www.passionplunge.org), under the **Team Rank** box click on **More** and then click on **The r"EMARC"-ables**, then click on either **General Team Donation** or the name of one of our plungers to donate.

## Coming Attractions! Life Choices Program

Helping your son or daughter become the director of his or her own life



The Arc of East Middlesex will be launching a **Life Choices** program this summer to support adults in developing their life skills to increase independence. This innovative new program will have distinct focuses

for various age groups, such as young adults. Emphasis will be placed on connecting participants to the community and leading a healthy lifestyle. The physical space for the program and methodology will tap into pop culture, creating a location and classes on topics such as healthy cooking and fitness, which will appeal to young adults. These alternative day services will be open to both those who have community jobs and those who do not.

You are invited to help us shape this important new initiative. What is your vision for a meaningful day for your son or daughter? Email your thoughts to Shawn Nault, Director of Day Services, at [snault@theemarc.org](mailto:snault@theemarc.org) or call 781-942-4888, ext. 5011. Watch for more details on the **Life Choices** program in a future edition of *Timelines*.

## Volunteer Opportunities

The Arc of East Middlesex's Recreation Department has volunteer openings for the following programs:

- NE Voc Swim, Wakefield, Saturdays 2:30–3:30 p.m.
- Tennis, Winchester, Sundays, 3–4 p.m.
- Men's & Women's Groups, Reading, Wednesdays 6:30–8:30 p.m.
- Teen Expressive Arts Class, Reading, Tuesdays 3:45–5:30 p.m. (looking for peer model)

*Interested? Please call Chenine Johnson at 781-942-4888, ext. 4036.*

### At the Malden YMCA:

Monday—Adult Water Aerobics 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Tuesday—Youth Swim 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Friday—Teen Swim 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Sunday—Unified/Challenger Basketball 3:30–4:30 p.m.

Sunday—Special Olympic Basketball (Adults) 2:30–3:30 p.m.

*Interested? Please call Jim Sullivan at 781-942-4888, ext. 5034.*

For more volunteer opportunities, please contact Pat Simons at 781-942-4888, ext. 4032.

## Upcoming Workshops, Exhibits and Events

### FROM THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

**Surviving Adolescence**—Thursday, February 15, 2007, 7:00–9:00 PM

Parenting a teenager is a difficult task. Parenting a teenager with a disability poses an even greater challenge. Independence, separation, peer relationships and sexuality—these are some of the significant issues they are facing. How does a parent negotiate the developmental tasks of the teenage years while still responding to the special needs of the child? This workshop will focus on the changes that occur for teenagers and how parents can respond. Rachel Siff, LICSW is a Social Worker in the Special Education Department at Concord Carlisle Regional High School in Concord, MA. She works with Pathways, an inclusion program for students with significant disabilities. Her role involves addressing the social, behavioral and emotional needs of these students as well as assisting with transition out of high school. In addition to her work at CCRHS, Ms. Siff is an outpatient therapist at the Eliot Center in Concord, MA. There is a \$10 charge for this workshop. To register contact Kerry Mahoney 781 942-4888 x 4015 or Email [km@theemarc.org](mailto:km@theemarc.org). Held at The Arc of East Middlesex, 20 Gould Street, Reading.

### FROM THE CENTER FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

#### Reading Public Library Exhibit

See our artists' work now through the end of March at the Reading Public Library, 64 Middlesex Avenue, during library hours: Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday: 9:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.; Thursday: 1:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.; Friday & Saturday: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

#### Shop Natural Elegance for Valentine's Day—February 14th

We are producing exquisite earrings, bracelets and necklaces through collaboration among our artists with disabilities and professional jewelry designer Janeen Gutierrez. We use hand selected stones and pearls, finished with quality findings such as sterling silver and pewter. Stop by 20 Gould Street, Reading to purchase a gift for your Valentine!

We are now accepting reservations to **host a Natural Elegance Jewelry Party**. Gift to hostess! To schedule a party, please contact: Heather Weikel at 781-942-4888, ext. 5029 or email [ceapromo@theemarc.org](mailto:ceapromo@theemarc.org). To learn more about Natural Elegance, please visit our web site at [www.theemarc.org](http://www.theemarc.org) and click on Artists Gallery, then Natural Elegance.

**The Arc of East Middlesex**

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### On-line Car Donation Program

To donate a car online, visit our web site at [www.theemarc.org](http://www.theemarc.org), click on vehicle donation at the bottom of the left hand column of our home page and follow the instructions that pop up. Be sure to designate The Arc of Massachusetts, Waltham as your charity and email us at [info@theemarc.org](mailto:info@theemarc.org) so that The Arc of East Middlesex is credited for the donation.



### The Arc of East Middlesex Membership Application

Membership includes 10 issues of our *Timelines* newsletter; the Arc US newsletter; the Arc MA newsletter, *The Advocate*; access to our Recreation and Advocacy programs; invitations to Arc of East Middlesex events and an opportunity to nominate honorees for our Annual Spring Awards Ceremony.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Please check all that apply:

- Family Member     Professional     Interested Friend

Family Member Served (used to send mailings for age-appropriate events)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive this newsletter by email rather than regular mail?

- No     Yes    Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues:** \$40 per year. Please make check payable to **The Arc of East Middlesex.**

