

The Arc's Parent Coalition to Host Legislative Coffee

Wednesday, December 7th, 9:30am-12:30pm

The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

It's that time of year again! Election Day is coming up on November 8th. Don't forget to make your voice heard at the ballot box (see the sidebar and page 3 for important voting information).

Remember, your opportunity to make a difference doesn't end on Election Day. Our state is gearing up for a legislative session starting in January, and our federal legislators continue to work on issues that impact individuals with developmental disabilities (see page 2).

An important goal of the Parent Coalition is to provide the connections and resources for families to make their voices heard. The Annual Legislative Coffee provides a relaxed environment for people to meet their legislators face-to-face and communicate their experiences in a meaningful way.

Prior to the coffee, there is an informational forum and guided discussion. Whether you are knowledgeable about the legislative process or completely new, this information is important to make the most of the opportunity with our legislators.

The Legislative Coffee is a rewarding experience for families, self-advocates, community members, and legislators. Please join us, and let your voice be heard! *Due to limited space, please register by contacting Monica Burke: (360) 715-0170, ext. 303, monicab@arcwhatcom.org.*

Remember to Vote by November 8th!

In Washington State, all voting is done by mail or drop-off boxes, except for Accessible Voting Units (AVUs), which are available at voting centers for people who need them. (See page 3 for more information.)

The Arc of Washington State has created lists of candidates on their website to provide citizens with information about those running for 2016 statewide public offices in Washington State. To view responses from candidates about DD issues, visit http://www.arcwa.org/takeaction/washingtonstate/2016_candidates_for_state_offices.

The Arc of Washington State does not endorse ANY candidates. The Arc is committed to educating individuals, families, and other community members about the issues that affect their lives in order to enable them to make informed decisions when they vote. Please share this information with others, and help everyone make educated decisions on Election Day!



Lifelines for Washington Residents with Disabilities

Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are lifelines for Washingtonians with disabilities, including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families.

Medicaid

- Washington's Medicaid program enrolls over 1,396,000 people including over 213,000 non-elderly adults and children with disabilities.
- Over 11,800 Washingtonians with I/DD receive Medicaid home and community-based (HCBS) services.

Medicare

- Medicare enrolls over 1,056,000 Washingtonians, including over 182,000 people with disabilities.

Social Security

- Social Security serves over 1,164,000 Washingtonians, including over 196,000 Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries, along with their spouses and dependent children.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- SSI serves over 147,000 low-income seniors and people with disabilities in Washington.

Boosting the Washington Economy

Medicaid and Medicare bring federal dollars into Washington and help create jobs.

- Medicaid brought the state of Washington over \$3.8 billion in federal dollars in 2012.
- Medicare spending in Washington was over \$7.9 billion in 2009.

Social Security and SSI benefits are typically spent in-state and help boost the Washington economy.

- Social Security paid over \$16.5 billion in benefits to Washingtonians in 2013, including over \$2.6 billion in Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits.
- SSI paid over \$950 million in federal benefits to Washingtonians in 2013.

Source: *The Arc of the US*



DON'T CUT OUR
LIFELINE

What is School Advocacy?

Advocacy means to support or speak on behalf of someone or something. School or education advocacy is supporting a student by speaking up and taking action to make sure they get all the services and supports they need.

An advocate is a person who speaks up for and defends the rights of him or herself, or of another person.

Parent-advocates are people who speak up for and defend the rights of their children and are willing to work with a school or other service provider to make sure that their children get the services they need and deserve.

What if I have a question about special education or need someone to help by looking over a document or coming to a meeting?

- The Arc of Whatcom County provides free workshops, information, one-on-one support, and special education advocates. Visit www.arcwhatcom.org or call (360) 715-0170, and ask to speak with Monica, our Parent Coalition Coordinator.
- Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE) provides free information, resources, and trained advocates who can assist individual families. Visit www.wapave.org for more info, or call (253) 565-2266.

What if I have a dispute with the school and need help to resolve it or information on what I can do?

The Office of the Education Ombuds provides informational booklets and can resolve complaints, disputes, and problems between families and elementary and secondary public schools in all areas that affect student learning. Visit www.oeo.wa.gov or call (866) 297-2597.

Where can I go on the web for comprehensive and parent-friendly information about special education law and advocacy?

WrightsLaw provides special education law and advocacy information. Visit www.wrightslaw.com.

Where can I learn about specific laws governing special education?

- The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has information on the laws governing special education in Washington State. Visit www.k12.wa.us/specialed/default.aspx or www.k12.wa.us/specialed/families/assistance.aspx or call Scott Raub, Special Education Parent Liaison at (360) 725-6075.
- The US Department of Education (IDEA) has information on federal laws governing special education. Visit www.idea.ed.gov.

Assisting Voters with Disabilities: What You Should Know



Voting is a fundamental right. Voters with disabilities have the right to assistance in voting and are entitled to receive any assistance they need to cast their ballots. Only a Superior Court can declare a person unable to vote due to mental incompetency and therefore unable to vote. Do not assume that a person under guardianship due to their mental capacity is ineligible to vote. A guardian may not vote on behalf of a person under guardianship, and power of attorney does not extend to voting. Whether a person under guardianship may vote depends on when the guardianship was imposed and whether the guardianship is full or partial.

Who may assist a voter?

Federal law gives voters with disabilities the right to decide whether to get assistance in casting a ballot and who will provide it. Voters can choose a friend, family member, caregiver, assisted living provider, facility staff person, or almost anyone else. The only people who may not assist a voter are the voter's employer or an agent of that employer, or, if the voter is a member of a union, a union officer or agent of the union.

The assistant supports the voter's independence. The assistant knows that helping someone vote may be perceived as having control over the voter. To prevent unduly influencing the voter, any helper avoids expressing personal political opinions to the voter because the voter may feel uncomfortable voting contrary to the assistant's opinion. Assistants who are personal care providers risk making a voter feel like the quality of personal care received will be affected by casting a conflicting vote. Assure the voter that the voter's decision is confidential.

What can assistance providers do to help a person vote?

- First, an assistance provider or helper should ask the voter what choice he or she wants to make.
- The helper must respect the voter's privacy at all times during the voting process.
- The helper should be familiar with the instructions on how to cast a ballot and be prepared to explain them to the voter and/or demonstrate the voting process.
- The helper should be prepared to read or explain all ballot choices or questions in a language the voter understands.
- The helper may mark a ballot for a voter with a disability only if the voter has directed him or her to do so.
- After the ballot has been completed, the helper should make sure that it accurately reflects the voter's choices. The helper should offer to correct any mistakes and to check the ballot for any election contests or questions that may have been missed.

What actions would not be appropriate?

- Making decisions for the voter—for example, marking or changing a ballot to reflect a choice other than a choice expressed by the voter.
- Communicating with the voter in a way that makes the voter feel forced to make certain choices.
- Pressuring the voter to vote for a particular candidate or in a certain way.
- Withholding information or giving false information to a voter.
- Pressuring the voter to cast a vote on every measure or candidate. Everyone has the right to choose whether or not to vote on each contest.

The assistant protects the voter's privacy.

The assistant respects the privacy of the voter at all times during the voting process. This includes ensuring that the voter's choices remain private even after the voting is completed and refraining from discussing the assistance provided.

Information is also available on Whatcom County's website (see box at right). If you have any problems providing assistance on Election Day, you can call Election Protection at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683).

Whatcom County Auditor's Office

311 Grand Avenue, Suite 103

Bellingham, WA 98227-0369

Office Hours: 8:30am - 4:30pm

Phone: 360-778-5102; Fax: 360-778-5101

Accessible Voting Units are available beginning October 19. An Accessible Voting Unit (AVU) is equipped with visual and audio technology that allows a voter with impaired vision and/or physical disability to vote a secret ballot.

Where: Whatcom County Auditor's Office

When: Oct. 19 – Nov. 7: 8:30am-4:30pm.

November 8 (Election Day): 8:30am-8:00pm

For more information, visit

<http://www.whatcomcounty.us/1574/Elections>

Community Events

ASK THE ADVOCATE WORKSHOP **Guardianship & Alternatives**

For parents & caregivers

Tuesday, November 15, 6-8pm
The Arc of Whatcom County
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham



A guardian's role is to advocate for the rights of the person and help make the most of the person's abilities, with as few restrictions as possible. A guardian may have substantial authority and duties to protect the person's finances and health while minimizing the negative impact on the independence of the person. Join us as we discuss guardianship and alternatives to guardianship.

Please RSVP by November 10th: (360) 715-0170, ext. 303, monicab@arcwhatcom.org. Limited supervised care for family members is available on a first-come, first-served basis with RSVP by November 10th.

Spin Dance

6-8pm, Monday, November 21
Bellingham Senior Center
315 Halleck Street, Bellingham

Theme: Photobooth Night (Props provided)

Bellingham Parks and Recreation, The Max Higbee Center, and Whatcom County Parks sponsor monthly dances for individuals with disabilities. All persons age 14 and over are invited for music, dancing, and fun! For information, call Amanda: 778-7000.



P2P Support Meeting

7-8:30pm, Monday, November 14
Fisher Elementary School
501 14th St, Lynden

Join other parents of children with developmental delays, disabilities, and ongoing health care needs in a comfortable, confidential setting for mutual support. On-site child care available for those who RSVP by November 11th: (360) 255-2056, ext. 1.



"Get to Know The Arc" Volunteer Orientation

Thursday, November 10th, 5:30-6:30pm
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

Have you already volunteered a few times with The Arc but want to learn more about the various programs and opportunities available? Or have you been considering getting involved and just need a little nudge? Then this fun and quick "Get to Know The Arc" Volunteer Orientation is for you! There are so many exciting things happening at The Arc, and we would love for you to be a part of them.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Makenna: (360) 715-0170 ext. 205, makennap@arcwhatcom.org. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you soon!



Seattle Children's
HOSPITAL · RESEARCH · FOUNDATION

Autism 200 Series

Autism 200 is a series of free classes for parents and caregivers of children with autism sponsored by Seattle Children's Autism Center. **You must RSVP in advance.** Contact Emily Seynaeve: seynaee@students.wvu.edu.

Autism 211: In Our Own Words: A Panel of Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder

7:00pm-8:30pm, Thursday, November 17th
Western Washington University Speech-Language Clinic Building
AIC Building, Room #360, 516 High Street, Bellingham

Facilitator: Gary Stobbe, MD

Join Dr. Gary Stobbe, director of the UW Adult Autism Clinic, and a panel of adults with autism spectrum disorder to hear about their perspective of growing up with autism. What was helpful? What was not helpful? What should parents and professionals know about their children, students, and patients? Audience participation will be encouraged!

www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics-programs/autism-center/resources

Autism Support Group Meeting

For Parents & Caregivers

The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- 12-1pm, Wednesday, November 2
- December meeting cancelled due to the Legislative Coffee.

For more info, contact Monica at monicab@arcwhatcom.org or call (360) 715-0170, ext. 303.



Young Adult Self-Advocacy (YASA) Meeting

4:30-6:30pm, Thursday, November 3
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

Are you between 16 and 30? Are you an eligible client of the Developmental Disabilities Administration? If you answered yes to both questions, then you are welcome to join! We will play games and get to know each other. We will learn about helping others and helping ourselves. You need not have any special skills to join the group. We will find the best way for everyone to have fun together. All meetings are free!

For more information, contact Jessika:
jessikah@arcwhatcom.org or (360) 715-0170, ext 304.



FAIRHAVEN GIVES BACK

On Thursday, November 17th, the Fairhaven Historic District will launch the 4th Annual Fairhaven Gives Back program. All day on the

17th, customers making purchases at participating Fairhaven shops will be asked to check one of the non-profits on a checklist provided and 10% of that purchase will be donated to the designated non-profit. **We hope you will check The Arc of Whatcom County!**

The Fairhaven Gives Back committee believes that this is a program in which everybody wins. Local non-profits will benefit and local stores will have crowds of people in their stores, exactly one week before Thanksgiving. Thank you for your support!

11.29.16

SMILES OF LIFE 2017

You're Invited to the

★ *Red Carpet* ★

Calendar Release Party

DATE & LOCATION: Tuesday, November 29, 2015
6:30-8:00pm
Bellingham Cruise Terminal
355 Harris Avenue, Bellingham

Event will include dessert and a red carpet entry for 2017 calendar models. Tickets are \$15 per person / \$10 per child (12 and under). To purchase tickets, visit www.arcwhatcom.org. For more information, contact Christine Stone: 360-715-0170, ext. 305. If you are unable to attend, but wish to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit www.arcwhatcom.org.



*Please join us for
this unique event to
celebrate our
beautiful, inspiring
models!*

PLEASE NOTE: The calendar release party will be your exclusive opportunity to purchase calendars at the low price of \$10 each. Following the party, the price will increase to \$15 per calendar. These calendars make excellent gifts for family, friends, teachers, and physicians, so stock up now!

Programs & People

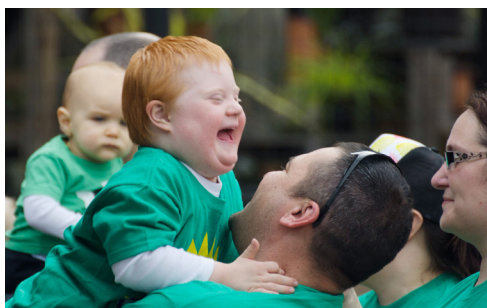
A WINDY & WONDERFUL 2016 BUDDY WALK!

The 13th Annual Whatcom County Down syndrome Outreach Buddy Walk was held on Saturday, October 1st, at Fairhaven Village Green in Bellingham. With 441 people registered at this year's event, families and friends showed strength in numbers as we walked together for Down syndrome. By honoring people in our community who are affected by this condition, we are able to spread awareness and gain an incredible sense of strength and support.

Highlights of the event included the pre-walk ceremony with presenters Laura Rawlins and Beth Margolis, both of whom are writers, public speakers, and advocates who work to strengthen our community through their art. To get everyone ready for the walk, Nooksack High School cheerleaders and Tiffany, another self-advocate, lead a Buddy Walk cheer! Following the cheer and group photo, Fernando and Clifford helped lead the walk around Fairhaven. The event featured music by Out of the Ashes, team photos and posters for the amazing Team Captains, arts and crafts, lunch from Kelly's O' Deli, and interactive games from Inner Child Studio. It was a joy for everyone to reconnect and meet new people!

We would like to extend special thanks to over 70 volunteers who worked together to make this special day a reality, including the Buddy Walk Planning Committee, Vanessa Vaughn who worked tirelessly on donations for the raffle and silent auction, WECU's Sweat Equity Team, Kiwanis Young Professionals, Hannah and Students Helping Our Community (SHOC) from Bellingham High School, and the Bellingham Police Department for a tour of their SWAT vehicle!

If you would like show your support or to get involved with The Arc's Down syndrome Outreach, please contact DsO Coordinator Jessika Houston: jessikah@arcwhatcom.org or (360)715-0170, ext. 304. Everyone is always welcome!



THANK YOU, BUDDY WALK DONORS & SPONSORS!

Event Sponsors:

Barlean's Organic Oils
Bellingham Parks & Recreation
Bellingham Police Association
Costco
Frito Lay
Inner Child Studio
WECU
Woods Coffee

Silent Auction & Raffle Donors:

Aslan Brewing
Barber Shack
Barre 3
Bellingham Golf & Country Club
Blessings Salon & Spa
Blue Fox Drive-In

Boundary Bay Brewery & Bistro

Children's Imagine Museum
Chrysalis Inn & Spa
Community Food Co-op
Epic Events

Amie Stafford & Eterna Studios

Fairhaven Toy Garden
Fairhaven Village Inn
Fireside Martini & Wine Bar

Go Big Paintball

Gym Star Sports Gym

Hotel Bellwether

Kids Northwest

Kulshan Brewing

LA FIAMMA

Lynden Skateway

Massage Envy

Mt. Baker Theatre

North Bellingham Golf Club

Park Bowl & Splits Grill

Perch & Play

Pickford Films

Samson Estates Winery

Silver Reef Casino & Hotel

Stones Throw Brewing Co.

Strider

Swinomish Casino & Lodge

The Hub Bike Shop

Trampoline Zone

Upfront Theatre

Village Books

Wander Brewing

Whole Foods

SKAGIT COUNTY NEWS



Skagit County now has a Parent Coalition Coordinator, Sara Stiers! Sara has two children, ages 8 and 10, who receive special education services, one with a developmental disability. She is certified as a Parent Special Education Advocate (PAVE) and is an active participant in Snohomish County Disability Rights Advocacy. Sara is the creator and administrator for the Stanwood/Camano Parents of Children with Disabilities Support Group. She also works with teens and young adults at Washington Vocational Services providing transition curriculum on site for the ATTIC program and in area classrooms as part of the Dream Builders Program. Sara can be reached at: parentcoalition@wvs.org or (360) 519-0910, x225. Welcome, Sara!

SKAGIT COUNTY NOVEMBER EVENTS

Parent To Parent Transition Workshop: Guardianships, Wills & Trusts

Thursday, November 10, 5:30-7:30pm
Mount Vernon High School Cafeteria
314 N 9th Street, Mount Vernon

Do you have questions about guardianships, wills, and trusts? Come get answers to questions like: Why do I need a will? What kinds of special needs trusts are available and why might I need one? What is a guardianship and do I need to apply for one? Presented by Christy Thompson Ibrahim, Attorney from the Law Offices of Larry A. Jones.

Light dinner and childcare provided. Two weeks notice required for translation and accommodations. Registration is required. Contact Mai at (360) 416-1510 or maih@co.skagit.wa.us.

Skagit Parent to Parent Autism Support Group

Friday, November 18, 6:30-8:00pm
Skagit Family Resource Center
320 Pacific Place, Mount Vernon

Are you the parent of a child on the Autism Spectrum? Are you looking for support, resources and connections? Join us for our Autism Parent Support Group. Spanish translation and light refreshments provided. Adults only please! RSVP for childcare (ages 2-10) by November 14th to amanda@sparckids.org or (360) 416-7570, x403. For more info, call (360) 416-7570, x401.

Skagit Parent to Parent Anacortes Parent Support Group

Wednesday, November 30, 11am-12:30pm
Calico Cupboard
901 Commercial Avenue, Anacortes

Are you the parent or guardian of a child with special needs? Then join us for our monthly Anacortes Parent Support Group. Adults only, please. Light refreshments will be provided. For more info, call (360) 416-7570, x401.



For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities

The Parent Coalition

The Arc of Whatcom County provides leadership support for individuals with developmental disabilities and their parents/guardians. The goal of the Parent Coalition is to enable persons with developmental disabilities and their parents/guardians to become effective and involved in accessing services.

*The Parent Coalition newsletter
is published monthly by:*

The Arc of Whatcom County

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www.arcwhatcom.org
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Susan Larson; Samantha Bokor

Stay Connected

Online Community Calendar:

Visit The Arc's website at www.arcwhatcom.org and click on Events.

Facebook: Visit our FB page: www.facebook.com/ArcWhatcom for the latest information and events.

E-alerts: The Parent Coalition emails updates on legislation, workshops and upcoming activities. To sign up, visit www.arcwhatcom.org or email monicab@arcwhatcom.org.



PARTNER AGENCY

*The Parent Coalition is funded by grants from the
Developmental Disabilities Program of Whatcom County,
the United Way and your generous donations.*

IN THIS ISSUE

- Page 1: Legislative Coffee
- Page 2: Lifelines for Washington
- Page 3: Assisting Voters
- Page 4: Community Events
- Page 5: Community Events Cont'd
- Page 6: 2016 Buddy Walk
- Page 7: Skagit County News

DID YOU KNOW?

The DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration office in Bellingham has moved to: 2219 Rimland Drive, Suite 315, Bellingham, WA 98226. ALL PHONE NUMBERS REMAIN THE SAME. If you have any questions, please call 360-714-5000 or 1-800-239-8285. They will be having an open house on Wednesday, November 16th from 2-5pm.



The Arc of Whatcom County
Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Bellingham, WA 98225

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Event Calendar

November 2016

3 Thursday, 4:30-6:30pm
Young Adult Self-Advocacy Meeting
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Contact Jessika: 715-0170, ext 304

10 Thursday, 5:30-6:30pm
Volunteer Orientation
(see page 4 for details)

12 Saturday, 10:30am
My Way Matinee: Trolls
Barkley Village Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX
3005 Cinema Place
Contact: (360) 527-1320

14 Monday, 7-8:30pm
Parent to Parent Support Meeting
Fisher Elementary School
501 14th St, Lynden
Contact Karlene: 255-2056

15 Tuesday, 6-8pm
PC Workshop: Guardianship
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Contact Monica: 715-0170, ext 303

16 Wednesday, 2-5pm
DDA Open House
2219 Rimland Drive, Suite 315
Contact: (360) 714-5000

17 Thursday, 7-8:30pm
Autism 200 Series
See page 4 for details.

19 Saturday, 6-7pm
People First Meeting
For meeting location and details,
contact Susan Larson: 738-2060

21 Monday, 6-8pm
Spin Dance
Senior Center, 315 Halleck Street
Contact Amanda: 778-7000

29 Tuesday, 6:30-8pm
Red Carpet Calendar Release
See page 5 for details.

30 Wednesday, 5:30-6:30pm
The Arc's Board of Directors Meeting
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Contact Beverly: 715-0170, ext 306

Coming soon...

The 2017 Smiles of Life Calendar

Featuring beautiful photos, inspiring profiles and motivating quotes, The 2017 Smiles of Life Calendar is dedicated to people with developmental disabilities and their friends and family. *The calendar makes a unique gift for families, friends, neighbors, teachers and anyone special on your holiday list.* Your generous support (suggested donation is \$15 per calendar) will help fund valuable programs for individuals with developmental disabilities. Calendars will soon be available to order online at www.arcwhatcom.org.

*Don't miss the
Calendar Release
Party on November
29th!*

*See page 5 for
details.*



Special thanks to this month's sponsor:

