

FALL 2024

THE ARCHIVE



SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SINCE 1964



LETTER FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT



The Fall Season has flown by quickly and the winter months are already upon us. The Arc is currently in the middle of a remodeling project at our administrative office building on Pythian Street. When the construction is completed next spring, we will have a newly designed front entrance that offers greater accessibility, security, use of space, and a welcoming appeal to individuals entering our building.

The Arc of the Ozarks recently celebrated our 60th Anniversary as an organization serving individuals with disabilities in the community. A celebration was held at the Timothy Grant Newport Activity Center in Springfield on August 8th. It was a great time to reflect on the past, our early beginnings, celebrate our achievements, and look forward to opportunities for growth in the future

I would once again like to express a big thank you to all of the current/past board members and staff that have made The Arc of the Ozarks the successful organization that it has become. It truly takes a team of dedicated, mission-focused individuals working together to achieve success. I'm proud of the work our staff have provided to individuals and family members throughout the years. Once again, thank you for your dedication!

In this newsletter, you will read stories about our 60th celebration, fall events and activities, the SOAR talent show, and an update on Infinity Academy. Thanks for being a part of The Arc of the Ozarks and we hope all of you have a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

Mike

THE Arc OF THE Ozarks

THE AUTO DETAIL Shop

FULL DETAIL \$40

Monday - Thursday: 9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Friday: 1:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.

Contact: Amanda Whited 417-324-7011
awhited@thearcoftheozarks.org
or Richard Lara - 417-427-2557

- A conference room may be available to reserve during time of your detail, must be reserved at time of booking the detail
- Closed for most traditional holidays. Call for availability
- Average time for detail is 1-2 hours per vehicle

AM

DONUTS & COFFEE

A.M. DONUTS & COFFEE

Your local ozarks food truck

Established in 2021, the A.M. Donuts & Coffee Food Truck is staffed by people with disabilities who cook and serve delicious coffee and donuts to the community, made fresh daily from a special recipe.

SERVICES OFFERED
We travel to various locations across the Ozarks each month to serve up fresh specialty donuts, hot drinks, cold drinks, and specialty coffee.

OUR MISSION
To support individuals with disabilities in directing their own lives as valued members of the community.

417-874-1951

A.M. DONUTS & COFFEE

AMDONUTSANDCOFFEE.COM

AMDONUTSANDCOFFEE@THEARCOFTHEOZARKS.ORG

BOOK THE TRUCK





CLIENT SUCCESS STORY 04

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS 05

FEATURE STORIES 08

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT 10

EVENTS 11

LOOKING FOR A NEW CAREER?

COME WORK FOR

THE Arc OF THE Ozarks

CHECK OUT OUR OPEN POSITIONS!

[HTTPS://THEARCOFTHEOZARKS.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/JOIN-OUR-TEAM/](https://thearcoftheoazarks.org/get-involved/join-our-team/)



SOAR client and staff duo, performing to Disney's "Let it Go".



SOAR performers.



SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Access, Resources) is a community-based program in The Arc's Springfield Division aimed at giving individuals served the life skills and social skills they need to become independent members of their community.

The SOAR talent show was a success, filling The Judy to capacity and leaving standing room only. The energy in the packed theater was exciting as performers took the stage, each showcasing their unique personalities and talents. The talent show featured a lively lineup including singers,

dancers, and even a pianist, whose skills captivated the audience.

The show included a rendition of Frozen's "Let it Go", performed by a SOAR participant and staff member. Their duet wowed the audience and showcased the dedication that staff members had invested in the talent show. Solo singers also took to the stage, with one standout performer delivering a Taylor Swift song that had the audience singing along. In a tribute to classic rock, another performer captivated the audience

and took the stage as Elvis Presley. In a nod to Disney, a group performed as Beauty and the Beast and warmed the hearts of the audience. With each act, the audience's applause grew louder, showing their excitement and appreciation for the courage, effort, and talent displayed by each SOAR performer.

We're incredibly proud of our SOAR performers and all they accomplished at their talent show this year. A huge round of applause goes to each of them for their dedication, courage, and excitement.

Infinity Academy

The Arc of the Ozarks has expanded its educational offerings with the addition of Infinity Academy, joining the Rivendale Institute of Learning and Center for Autism in providing specialized services for students with disabilities.

Infinity Academy is a private school in Ozark, Missouri designed to meet the educational needs of middle and high school students who require an alternative to traditional schooling, including those with developmental learning differences. Infinity Academy operates year-round and is currently accepting new enrollments. The academy offers flexible options for students including full-time, part-time, and in-home programs to accommodate varying needs.



“With new resources, opportunities, and personalized attention, we are excited to provide an alternative to traditional schooling and empower every student to reach their full potential,” said Alisa Lowry, The Arc of the Ozarks Vice President of Programs. “This acquisition underscores our commitment to provide an alternative to traditional schooling and meet the unique needs of students who want high standards for academics but need a non-traditional pace and more one-on-one attention.”

To meet the needs of students, Infinity Academy offers individualized learning with an emphasis on social and emotional support. As the number of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder continues to rise, the integration of Infinity Academy into The Arc of the Ozarks expands its comprehensive services for students with autism, learning disabilities, and gifted students. This acquisition supports The Arc’s mission to empower individuals with disabilities to direct their own lives as valued members of the community.

Meet Julie Doerr

Julie Doerr is the Director of Infinity Academy. Julie earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary and Special Education, a Master of Arts in Counseling, and an Educational Specialist degree in Elementary and Secondary School Leadership and Administration, all from Lindenwood University. Julie has worked in both private and public schools and has experience with a variety of individuals with special needs.



As a child, she struggled in school and graduated only because of alternative school programs and a few truly dedicated teachers who took her under their wings. She became a teacher in hopes of being that same source of inspiration for her students. In addition to her professional life, she is also a wife and mother.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, visiting new places, camping, and reading. She takes pleasure in learning about each student and supporting them in reaching their personal goals. For more information on Infinity Academy, contact Julie Doerr at jdoerr@thearcoftheozarks.org or (417) 551-4173.

Fall in Love with

The Arc of the Ozarks

The Arc of the Ozarks embraced the spirit of fall this year with a series of exciting events that brought everyone together. From trunk or treats to a pumpkin decorating contest, this fall season has been a celebration of fun, creativity, and community spirit.

Infinity Academy

We kicked the season off with Infinity Academy's annual fundraiser, The Night of the Dragons Trunk or Treat. The event featured creatively decorated trunks by local businesses, alongside those by students and families from Infinity Academy. There was a Halloween Bingo game table, the A.M. Donuts & Coffee truck, mystery boxes for sale, and airbrush tattoos provided by Art Zone. Julie Doerr, Director of Infinity Academy, said that her "goal each year, through this fundraiser, is to raise greater awareness in our community about our small, yet mighty, school and our unique approach to education for students with special needs, all while having fun!"



Alisa Lowry, Vice President of Programs, participated with a pumpkin-themed trunk.

Education & Recreation



"Toy Story" themed trunk took first place.

The Arc of the Ozarks Education & Recreation program also participated in the fall fun, by hosting their annual Trunk or Treat on October 18th. This year's Trunk or Treat was a huge success, with beautiful weather and a record number of attendees. One of the highlights was the incredible variety of costumes on display, ranging

from classic favorites to imaginative creations. All the decorated trunks this year filled the parking lot with a spooktacular atmosphere. The Director, Amy Holland and Liz Dressler, Assistant Director of Education & Recreation stated that this event could not happen without all the amazing volunteers who donate their time, trunks, and treats.

Autism and Neurodevelopmental Center

This was an exciting time of year for the Autism and Neurodevelopmental Center as this was the first year to host the 9th Annual Sensory Safe Trick-or-Treat in the new facility. This event allows children and families the opportunity to practice their trick-or-treating skills in a safe, calm, and sensory-friendly environment. Melanie Stinnett, Vice President of Therapy Services, said, "The Autism and Neurodevelopmental Center employees really went above and beyond decorating

their doors to make the environment feel fun and special for everyone! Students from several different college programs came to volunteer and were a big part of the event's success!" This year's event shattered previous attendance records with 859 participants that ranged from very young children to adults. The Arc is proud to provide so many families with a great evening, plus an environment that was just right for their sensory needs!



Trick-or-treaters enjoying the sensory safe trick-or-treat.

Rivendale Institute of Learning

Rivendale Institute of Learning and Center for Autism loves getting in the spirit of fall and Halloween. Every year, they host a pumpkin decorating contest for their students. This year the submissions were extremely creative and fun. There were many creative pumpkins ranging from a puffer fish to a brightly colored bird. The children love doing this contest every year as it lets their artistic spirits shine bright. The puffer fish pumpkin took first place. The students also got to show off their imaginative costumes in the Halloween costume parade. Many departments came together to be at trick-or-treat stations for the kids. It was a fun time for everyone and a great opportunity for the kids to practice their trick-or-treating skills before the big night.



Rivendale pumpkins entered into the decorating contest.



First place winners of the costume contest.

Please Pardon Our Progress

Everyone visiting our Pythian office has noticed the alternate entrance set for the duration of the remodel of our lobby and restructure of our main entrance.

The Arc of the Ozarks Timothy Grant Newport Activity Center is in the process of phase one of the remodel projects. After nearly 40 years, The Arc's original administration and services building identified a need for renovation. The goals of this project include structural repairs, ADA accessibility and security improvements. This phase will include renovations to the entrance and lobby area of the building to create functional space that allows greater accessibility for guests at the entrance. This upgrade will also offer greater security for clients and employees. The Activity Center is vital for client services and planned activities that take place at this location throughout the year.

Phase one will be completed by the end of December. Phase two will include updated laundry, restrooms and showers for the pool and an added sensory room off the gym. These additions will help us better serve the needs of the community that use our space. These upgrades will be complete around the end of March 2025. We appreciate your patience and "pardon our progress".



The Arc of the Ozarks Timothy Grant Newport Activity Center reception area rendering.

Autism Center Resource Guide

A resource guide has been developed for individuals and families dealing with autism and other neurodevelopmental issues. The guide can be found on the Autism & Neurodevelopment Center's website and helps connect individuals with local, state, and federal services. In addition, it shares helpful links to other autism services and information about diagnosis and treatment.

Scan the QR code to view the online resource guide or visit autismcenteroftheozarks.org.





Staff members enjoying "Arc in the Park" with co-workers and families.

Celebrating Our Incredible Staff!

Direct Support Professional Recognition Week, held from September 9th to 14th, was a special time to honor the dedication and hard work of our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) at The Arc of the Ozarks. The Arc deeply values the hard work and dedication of our DSPs and takes great pride in celebrating the incredible impact they make every day in the lives of those we serve. Throughout the week, DSPs received gestures of appreciation, including thoughtful treat bags and personalized notes from supervisors, symbolizing how vital they are to the The Arc's mission.

As Erika Salmon, President of the Employee Relations Committee, shared, "Direct Support Professionals are the backbone of our agency and the ones who have the biggest impact on making a difference in our clients' lives. Without our DSPs, we wouldn't see the growth that we do. Their work matters, and it's important as an agency to recognize that worth."

Daily prize drawings also brought extra excitement, with 56 DSPs winning gift cards

and three lucky staff members receiving grand prizes, including a VIP Season Pass to Silver Dollar City and two Season Passes to Worlds of Fun in Kansas City.

To further celebrate, a heartwarming video was created featuring clients expressing their gratitude for the hard work of our dedicated staff. This video, shared across The Arc's social media pages, helped spread the appreciation even further! Additionally, we recognized over 100 staff members on social media with thoughtful appreciation quotes from their supervisors, honoring their commitment and impact.

The week concluded with a celebratory event, "Arc in the Park" at Silver Dollar City and Worlds of Fun, where staff enjoyed a well-deserved day of fun with their peers and families. This special gathering emphasized the deep gratitude we hold for our DSPs, whose work transforms lives every day.

Associated Electric Cooperative Inc.

The Arc of the Ozarks has been honored to partner with Associated Electric Cooperative Inc. (AECI) for more than two decades. AECI generates reliable and affordable power for rural electric cooperatives, and they invest in organizations like The Arc to help people in and around Springfield.

AECI's Joe Wilkinson, Senior Vice President, and Chief Member Relations Officer states, "Supporting communities to be as strong as possible is a key cooperative principle and priority for Associated."

Embracing community needs and helping bridge gaps is what AECI does with a passion. Year after year, AECI supports The Arc's mission of supporting individuals with disabilities to direct their own lives as valued members of the community.

"The Arc of the Ozarks provides invaluable services for those with disabilities and their families. Associated is proud to play a small part in helping that effort," Wilkinson said.

AECI has consistently maintained its commitment to its member-owners and organizations like The Arc of the Ozarks. Thank you for moving our mission forward!



Associated Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



AECI team member serving the community.

Pickleball Tournament

The Arc of the Ozarks was the recipient of funds from the Seventh Annual Nick Hostler Foundation Pickleball Tournament. The foundation was created by Gil and Mary Kay Hostler in honor of their son Nick after his unexpected death. Nick was a special education teacher with Springfield Public Schools. Mary Kay Hostler recently presented a check for \$6,700 to create funding for Infinity Academy.

The Hostlers have been longtime supporters of individuals with developmental disabilities in our community, and we are proud to partner with them.



Mary Kay Hostler presenting the check to Infinity Academy.

Joplin Morning Brew

The Arc of the Ozarks Joplin Division hosted the Chamber's Morning Brew on Friday, October 4. Chamber members attended the networking event and were able to tour the facility and hear from leaders about our programs and services.

"The Arc hosts the event annually because it is a great opportunity to meet community members and spread our message," said Travis Gaston, Joplin Director. Over 50 people attended the event.



Joplin Chamber members networking at Morning Brew.

Fishing Tournament

Our 6th Annual Open Buddy Bass Fishing Tournament at State Park Marina at Table Rock Lake was a success again this year! Thanks to the support from our sponsors and participants, this tournament raised \$26,900 benefiting The Arc's Residential Services. The proceeds from this tournament help us provide much needed items for individuals in community living where there is not funding available from other sources. First Place Winners were Jeff and Brian Lodwick with a total of 12.95 lbs. Second place went to Aiden Small and Jack Cunningham, and in third place were Rodney Dawson and Josh Hite. The Big Bass winner was Justin and Pam Brand at 4.31 lbs, and the second Big Bass winner was Jeff and Brian Lodwick. Congratulations!



Tournament winners standing proudly with their trophies.

This year's sponsors were: Presenting Sponsor- Central Bank, At Home Real Estate, Rick's Automotive, SRC, CSI, Johnson, Vorhees, and Martucci, O'Reilly, Higginbotham Insurance, Rapid Roberts, Cash Family Orthodontics, Old Missouri Bank, Moseley Office, JMARK, CNH Reman, American Baitworks, Wide Open Networks, and Boat Floaters. We are thankful for their support!

Kansas City Expansion

The Kansas City office held their official Ribbon Cutting and Open House on Thursday, October 3. The event, with over 150 in attendance, featured comments from representatives from four area Chambers of Commerce, the Mayor of Lee's Summit, and State Representative Jeff Coleman.

Individuals attending the event were treated with a "behind-the-scenes" tour of the new facility, refreshments, and giveaways.

With this new space, The Arc of the Ozarks is ready to continue to support individuals with disabilities in directing their own lives as valued members of the community by broadening our services in the Kansas City area.



On August 8, 2024, we hosted our 60th Anniversary Celebration, honoring over six decades of enriching lives and building community. Our Pythian location was filled with over 200 community members, legislators, partner agencies, staff, and individuals that we support as we celebrated 60 years and updated the audience on the past 10 years of growth. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has made an impact on our journey over these decades. It was an honor to gather with so many supporters and community partners as we reflected on our growth and transformation.

What began around a kitchen table, where parents came together to seek resources for their children with developmental disabilities, has grown into an organization that now serves over 9,000 individuals across four divisions in southwest Missouri and Kansas

"We are so happy to be able to show the community the new building, explain our services and share ideas for growth and expansion," said Vice President of Program Services, Harvey Lucus.

The new facility is located at 500 NE Colbern Road, Lee's Summit, Mo.



The Arc of the Ozarks and Lee's Summit Chamber staff "cutting the ribbon".

City. This milestone is truly special to us, and we owe it to the dedication of those we serve, their families, board members, employees, and our community partners.

While much has been achieved, the need remains significant. The Arc of the Ozarks is committed to meeting the evolving needs of individuals and families, and we look forward to continuing our work to make a difference for many years to come. Thank you for 60 years of unwavering support.



The Arc of the Ozarks Executive team.

2024 Upcoming Events

CHRISTMAS *Extravaganza*



December 6, 2024

The Arc of the Ozarks formally invites you to our 30th Annual Christmas Extravaganza event on Friday, December 6, 2024, at the White River Conference Center. Please join us for a fun night of live entertainment, cocktails, and dinner. Check off your Christmas shopping list and shop our silent auction. Dress is cocktail attire. Proceeds raised through Christmas Extravaganza will benefit The Arc of the Ozarks Children's Autism Services.

Scan or click the QR code for more information or to purchase tickets and view sponsorship opportunities.



Grants Received

Monett Phil & Friends
\$1,874 was awarded to support "Camp Ability – Magical Expeditions" at The Arc's Monett Division.

The Ball Foundation
\$10,000 was awarded to support music therapy for Rivendale Institute and Infinity Academy.

Brockshmidt Trust
\$19,626 was awarded to support The Arc's Employment Services.

2025 EVENT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- **Open Buddy Bass Fishing Tournament**- Benefiting clients' unmet medical and personal needs. *March 29, 2025*
- **Charity Golf Tournament**- Benefiting the Autism and Neurodevelopmental Center. *May 5, 2025*
- **Christmas Extravaganza**- Benefiting children's autism and neurodevelopmental services. *December 5, 2025*

Event Sponsorship and Registration Contact

Michele Fields, Senior Development Specialist

mifields@thearcoftheozarks.org or (417) 874-1955

CONTACT

The Arc

Administrative Office

1501 E. Pythian St.
Springfield, MO 65802
417-864-7887
Fax: 417-874-4307

Program Services Office

1721 West Elfindale St.
Springfield, MO 65807
417-864-7887
Fax: 417-874-4307

Monett Office

1010 Old Airport Rd.
Monett, MO 65708
417-354-0071
Fax: 417-354-0631

Kansas City Office

500 NE Colbern Rd.
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
816-929-8129
Fax: 816-929-8165

Joplin Office

4722 E. 32nd St.
Joplin, MO 64801
417-625-4826
Fax: 417-625-4827

info@thearcoftheozarks.org
thearcoftheozarks.org

Autism & Neurodevelopmental Center

2864 S. Nettleton Ave.
Springfield, MO 65807
417-605-7100

Behavioral Health Services

3023 S. Fort Ave.
Springfield, MO 65807
417-605-7100

* Satellite centers available in
Joplin and Branson.

autismcenteroftheozarks.org



FOLLOW US



The Arc of the Ozarks



The Arc of the Ozarks



@TheArcoftheOzarks



@ArcoftheOzarks