

***2006 Rick Harris, Jr.
Memorial Golf
Tournament
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Rick Harris, Jr.
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**The 2006 Rick Harris
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Welcome! We are so glad you are able to join us for the 2nd Annual Rick Harris Tournament. We're going to have a great time together. Our thanks to the Harris family and friends for planning and coordinating this tournament. Their energy and good will are boundless and this is truly a labor of love. We are honored that they have selected The Consortium to reap the benefits of this event. We also thank all our sponsors, donors and volunteers – for their gifts of resources, time and talent.

Janice Harris heads our Options & Opportunities division. I know she regards this tournament as a wonderful demonstration of community support for her life's work. Janice exemplifies commitment and compassion. She knows how to blend her life, her community ties, her knowledge and experience to creatively support people living with disabilities. She has known many of the people we support for decades and has seen them through many of life's triumphs and sorrows. She hones in on what's most important and steadfastly supports individuals to create the homes they desire. She inspires us daily.

We hope you enjoy the stories included in this book - they provide a little window to our mission in action. When you are through with this book, please pass it on to others so that our community ties will grow!

Thanks so much for joining us – Enjoy!

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For Jeff M. recovery was possible. He lost time, almost his entire 20's. He had stopped moving forward in life due to his addictions. Before he found a way out, he never believed he was good enough or smart enough or worth while. Living in a school bus, and getting by as a musician, he realized his life came to a halt.

He found out he was going to be a father, and a friend helped him open the door to recovery. When he began his journey of change, his life turned around 180 degrees. He was able to get an education and find happiness. He is a good parent and a trustworthy individual. He is employable and has a future.

When asked if he ever felt hopeless in recovery he said yes, however never completely. He talked to people in recovery, and they told him if he did certain things it would get better. It did. There was a time in his life when the people he loved he hurt. Now he isn't so selfish; he says it's not all about him. He can be there for the people in his life.

He maintains hope with prayer and continues to go to meetings. Although he is coming up on 15 years, Jeff will not consider himself recovered. When asked why, he said because "my life has improved beyond any mark I could have imagined, why would I ever want to not continue?"



**Sitting: Jeffrey, Tyler, Barb, Kelly, Katelynn, and Nick
Standing: Corey, Janice, Kevin, Patrick, Kevin, Susie,
Chelsea, Pete, Brian, Sue and Joey**



**Chris, Corey, Nina, Kevin, Mary Kate,
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Hampton Beach

By Janice Harris

How many memories the beach holds of the years of vacations, of course the many family vacations, the trips with people we support and with friends. It's a place I enjoy greatly and a reminder of how life changes, just as the beach changes after every tide.

One day this past vacation, Barb and I were talking to the owner of the place we stay, trying to remember how many years we have been going. We thought about 15, and it is easy to picture Rick standing on the porch assessing the beach, looking as red as a lobster. We remembered back to when we used to go camping at Shel Al—those were some trips! That's where Susie and Kevin met.

This year was another great week with beautiful weather. It was Thursday night and I decided to take a quick walk down to the beach after the tag waffle ball game was over. I heard music in the background, which was a cover band playing the Eagles music. Their name was Spread Eagle,

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(Rick would have had a few comments), they were performing at the outdoor band shell. I walked over to check it out and was hit by such a flood of memories. Rick loved the Eagles. I grew to hate them because he played their music constantly.

I realized how grateful I am to be surrounded by such loving family and friends. We all still feel the loss, but have our memories to carry us. We planned our week for next year, as tradition will carry on.

There is no place like Hampton Beach.



**Rick and Corey
Summer, 1985**

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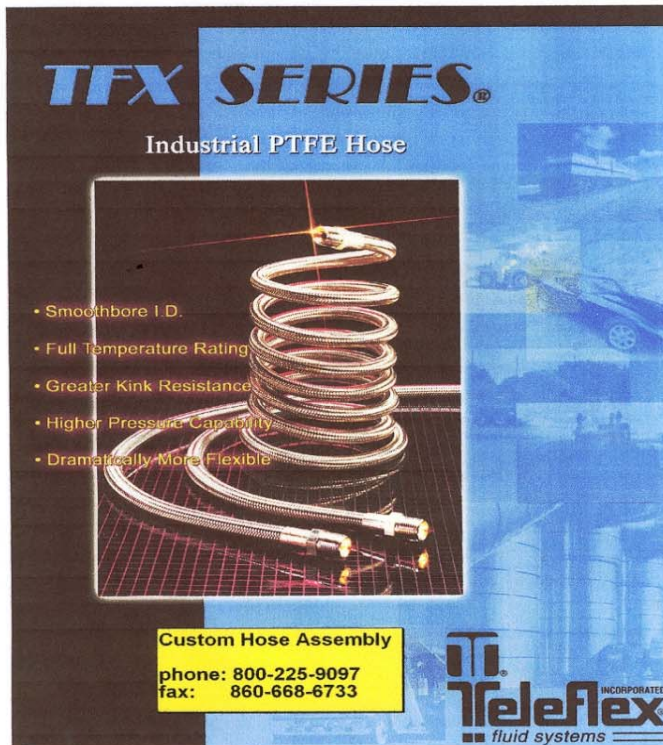
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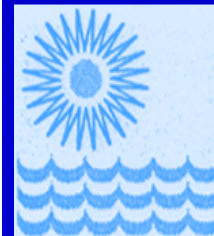
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An Inspiration

By Julie Ann Quintana

As a high school graduate, a part-time college student, an influential and well known (Self) Advocate for the rights of those with developmental disabilities, a Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities councilman, a member of a number of Human Rights and Advocacy Committees and a volunteer for voter's rights, Mark N. has accomplished a great deal in his 37 years. But, in fact, Mark is in the middle of starting and promoting his own small business as a Motivational Speaker and healthy lifestyle advocate for people within the developmental disabilities community.

Mark has lost over 120 pounds in a very health-focused way over the past year. Now he is sharing his belief that people with developmental disabilities should and can access the healthy lifestyles of their choice. He is showing them just how they can do that on what are usually very limited incomes and with limited motivation and choices.

Mark has never let the fact that he has Down's Syndrome stop him from doing the things he likes and wants to do. He has been a constant source of inspiration to those around him and will continue to be so for years to come.

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right course**



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wonderful donations, support,
and having such a wonderful son!**



**Barb and Todd McGee,
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Kelly and Pete Leclerc, Barb Harris, Rick and Janice Harris, Susie and Kevin Harris
In front Sue and Brian Harris


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Since that time it has been a wonderful ride for Larry. Now Janice Sorensen is Larry's personal art teacher. Larry travels regularly to Janice's Shelburne Falls studio to develop his skill with watercolors and collage design. Larry loves to paint and create while listening to the flowing and rhythmical sounds of classical music in Janice's studio. Janice has remarked that Larry paints with a purpose that is rare, even among professional artists.

In the past year Larry has created more than 5 original pieces. Two of his watercolors were accepted into The Consortium's 4th Annual Art Show, "Crystallizing Moments Acrisolamiento," at Open Square in Holyoke. As a result of his new found vocation, Larry was given a Holyoke/Chicopee Area Citizen Advisory Board "Stories of Success" award earlier this year. Larry's work has received press coverage in multiple local papers and he recently displayed his work at a regional Developmental Disability Conference.

Last month, Larry was accepted for a second year with Career Initiatives. We wish him another successful year, as he surely deserves it!



"Warm Map" c. 2006
Larry Ditman
Watercolor and tape on paper

Larry's Story

By Kati Brandt and Oryx Cohen

Larry became a part of The Consortium family over 7 years ago. Ever since that time he has received residential and community supports from our Options and Opportunities program. It is his support team's belief that Larry endured tremendous hardships while growing up in Belchertown State School that he is still unable to articulate. After moving out of the institution and into the community Larry has experienced being overlooked, teased, and excluded. Despite this adversity, Larry retains his curiosity, positive outlook on life, and kindness toward others.

When Larry and his support team decided to attend The Consortium's 3rd Annual Art Show, "Eclectic Dreams," at the Canal Gallery in Holyoke, Larry's life changed forever. Larry's eyes lit up as he saw walls covered with colorful, well-constructed paintings and sculptures crafted by The Consortium's Career Initiatives grantees. He was especially taken by Janice Sorensen's watercolor collage series entitled "And the dish ran away with the spoon." On that night in May of 2005, Larry found the artist in himself.

A month later, with the help of his support team, Larry applied to be a part of The Consortium's Career Initiatives program. Career Initiatives helps people in mental health, addictions, and trauma recovery start businesses and self-employment projects (several of the businesses are in the arts). In July of 2005, Larry became the first person served by Options and Opportunities to be accepted into the Career Initiatives program.



Chris, Barb and Corey
2005 Tournament



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**Barb and Brian
2005 Tournament**

Self Advocacy

By Elaine Spier-Kalmar

Self Advocacy is about helping people find their voice. Helping people to have equal opportunities. Helping people to have the same services and programs as others. Helping people to speak up about their needs and wishes.

The Consortium hosts two self advocacy groups – one in Holyoke/Chicopee (Leadership Through Advocacy) and one in Springfield (Self Advocacy Network). Both groups have been very active this year working on topics ranging from: dealing with prejudiced people; guiding your i.s.p.; seeking additional services; attending the national self-advocacy conference; hosting the western regional self advocacy conference; speaking at colleges; and attending hearings on new delivery systems with D.M.R.

The program has received a grant from the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council to develop a curriculum and train persons to own/operate their own small businesses. We will be making seed grants to up to ten persons to try to make their dream of self employment a reality. This is an exciting new direction for our program and we are looking forward to this new opportunity.

Each of the self advocacy groups wanted to reach out to the community and be of assistance to local projects. Leadership Through Advocacy is working with the Woman's Shelter/Compañeras here in Holyoke and will be collecting personal hygiene items for the women and children at the shelter. The Self Advocacy Network is working with the Worthington Shelter in Springfield and is collecting items for the men and women living at the shelter. Community involvement was a goal for both groups for this year.

We are looking forward to new opportunities and ask anyone interested in joining to contact me, Elaine Spier-Kalmar, Self-Advocacy Coordinator at extension 3017.