



The Advocate

"To build and support one-to-one long term, independent relationships between unpaid community members and individuals with developmental disabilities so that all are heard, respected, included and empowered."

Fall/Winter 2011

COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

Coordinator's Message

As I reflect on my first year with Orleans County Citizen Advocacy OCCA, the smiles of so many remain the most wonderful memory.

We had such incredibly beautiful weather to have our Echo Lake Road Race and NEK Lakes Century Tour this year with an amazing amount of participants. We had a wedding party competing in the Echo Road Race the morning of their Wedding! We had Family Members, the young and old, others from great distances, dedicated volunteers, Board Members and very generous donors. Advocates and partners were at every event enjoying the day as well as lending a hand. We also had the most competitive golf teams join us for our First "Golf on Ice" Challenge. It was a 'challenge' with the February weather, the ice and the challenging course!!

The smiles that were shared amongst the Partners and Advocates who attended this year's, BBQ and Ice Cream Social made me proud to be part of such a valuable Organization and such a caring community. These relationships are the heart of Orleans County Citizen Advocacy.

I am also very grateful to have been able to share these moments with our community members in Orleans County.

I invite you to join OCCA in any way you can, by offering your expertise on our Board, or your time and energy to volunteer and /or participate in our Winter Golf Challenge, Echo Lake Road Race and NEK Lakes Century Bike Tour and most especially to become an Advocate!

Orleans County Citizen Advocacy continues to facilitate and support community connections, friendship, support and advocacy between those with Developmental Disabilities who may be isolated in Orleans County communities with unpaid community members. OCCA relationships are such a valuable part of Orleans County.

Please join us to create a happy, healthier, caring community.

Paula Manzi, Coordinator

Advocate Speaks

Being an advocate for someone with a disability - What I get out of it!

People get connected in relationships such as partnering with a person with a disability in various ways; sometimes through an agency who is specifically looking for a match, such as OCCA, sometimes through word-of-mouth, and sometimes just through a chain of circumstances. In my case, what started out to be a guardianship for someone in the Brandon Training School, requested by Probate Court, gradually turned into an advocate, and eventually into a caregiver. Pam is the youngest of a family of ten, had lost both parents, and although a brother had been her guardian for a short time, it had not been successful.

The closing of Brandon followed, which brought Pam back to this area which was once home to her. Then followed many community care homes over a period of many years, and during that time she became like "one of the family" spending all the Holidays with our family. The most recent caregiver, however, which had been a good home for many years began having problems and an event brought it to a sudden close at which time Pam moved in bag and baggage.

Since then Pam has been able to develop a relationship with one of her family members which she never had before, and her care is divided between he and his family and our family.

These years of experience, over thirty years, have taught me many things – especially to be thankful for our health and for a caring family with a stable home; and especially having some person who is always there to look out for any need you may have. In being the provider of these needs, it makes you feel that you are making the world a better place. In Pam's words; "I have two homes, two beds, two TVs, and I go for two weeks." This is what she tells folks!

- Connie Daigle, OCCA Advocate

CARD OF THANKS

19th Annual Echo Lake Road Race - August 27, 2011

The T-Shirt Sponsors:

Red Ribbon Sponsor:

Paul Decelles Investments...

Yellow Ribbon Sponsor:

Richard Isabelle-Farm Family Insurance, Columbia Forest Products, Concept 2 Rowing, North Country Hospital...

Green Ribbon Sponsor:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of VT, Brighton Garage, Brown's Drug Store, People's United Bank, Community National Bank, Don's Carpet One, Edward Jones, Garon-St. Sauveur Granite Co., Gene A. Besaw & Associates, Green Mountain Electric Supply, H&R Block, Hayes Ford, Hoagie's Pizza, Keene Medical Products, Nadeau's Plumbing & Heating, Newport Jewelers, Newport Rental Center, Passumpsic Bank, Poulos Insurance, Rusty's Electric, Village Bike Shop, Blue Flame Gas, Fred's Plumbing & Heating, Evansville Trading Post, Morgan Country Store, Brighton Motor Sports, Memphremagog Press, B&D Builders, Kingdom Racquet & Fitness, Louise Garneau, Pick & Shovel, Bond Auto, L.L. Well's Chapter National Honors Society, The Ponds Edge Pub & Eatery, Big Bear Real Estate,

and a special thanks to Sean McCarthy of Hold Fast Designs of Hardwick...

The Food Donators:

L & B Snack Bar, Tim and Doug's Ice Cream, Price Chopper, Shaw's, Circle K, and Vermont Heritage Spring Water...

The Volunteers:

before, during or after the race, these folks were willing workers...

Ellen & Russ Bowen, Gerry Cahill, Connie Daigle, Pam Hebert, Mark Sokolis, Sue Ashworth, Mike Gruteke, Jim & Winnie Stewart, Sue Dwelle, Peter Engels, Graham Rae, Cindy Smith, Ann Stannard, Roy Stuewe, Joan Alexander, Christian Wellhoff, Paula Manzi, Steve Mengel, Sophie Congdon, Cindy Stone, Ron Boucher, Susan Guilmette, Tom Wagner, Alex Evans, Maryanne O'Brien, Patti Lennon, Lynne Mann,

Ingrid Mahler, Frank Daigneault, Michael Vinton, Peggy Stevens, Arron Coffin and David Woodward...



The Prize Donators...

Advanced Auto Parts, Bond Auto Parts, E.M. Brown, The Chronicle, Currier's Quality Market, Derby Village Store, Northwoods Stewardship Center, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Kingdom Trails, Kinney Drugs, L & R Automotive, Louis Garneau, Maple Grove Farms of VT, Newport Farm & Garden, Subway, Craftsbury Outdoor Center, Junction 101 Restaurant, Big Bear Real Estate, Margie's ½ off Cards, VT Parks & Recreation, Connie Daigle, Mountain View Farmstand, Wellness Center, VT Beef Jerky, Great Outdoors, Country Thyme, East Maine Styling Salon, Nature By Design, Graham Rae, Ellen Apple Rae, Burke Mountain, Little G's Deli, Greensboro Garage, Village Sport Shop, IROC...

The Echo Lake community....

What a beautiful setting! Nineteen years ago, it was Gerry Cahill who suggested that Echo would be a great spot for a race, and it has been! We thank the Engels for sharing their front yard, and Richard Mallory for the parking field, the State of Vermont and all the residents around the lake and the fishermen for their hospitality. We also thank Constable Martin Davis, ADA Traffic Control and the Derby Line Ambulance who helped keep everyone safe!

And the Racers!...

No matter how many prizes, food, t-shirts and volunteers we pull together, it wouldn't be much of a race without racers and so, finally, a big thanks to all for their enthusiastic biking, running and walking around the lake! Thanks to all the 160 registrants!

***The Echo Lake Road Race
netted over \$6000 for
Orleans County Citizen Advocacy.
Thanks again for all the support,
and see you next year on
the last Saturday in August!***



19th Annual Echo Lake Road Race

We are thankful that Hurricane Irene came on Sunday rather than Saturday as we had beautiful weather for our popular fundraising event. The 157 participants that biked, ran & walked all enjoyed the “calm before the storm”. The couple pictured above along with their wedding party came to enjoy the festivities with an energizing 5 mile run before their walk down the aisle. Their identifying stickers said: Dash To The Alter.

Orleans County Citizen Advocacy would sincerely like to thank the 41 businesses that sponsored their logos on our handsome t-shirts, as well as the 35 businesses and individuals that donated prizes to make the event that much more enjoyable. We also had 6 businesses donate food and water to fuel the event goers after their exhilarating go around Echo Lake. None of this though would have been possible without our 35 volunteers – thank you! Everyone added to our being able to raise \$6,000 for our program that supports people with developmental disabilities.

We look forward to next year’s **20th Annual event on Sat Aug 25, 2012! Hope you can support us again!**



Advocate Appreciation Luncheon!

On 4/21/11 OCCA held a wonderful Advocate Appreciation Luncheon at the Eastside Restaurant. Many advocates and their friends with whom they are matched in a citizen advocacy relationship came and joined OCCA’s staff & Board of

Directors for a delicious meal. Be ready for next year as we plan to make this luncheon an annual event!

Letter Drive: We met our goal!

OCCA’s newsletter goes out each December with our donation request letter. This fundraising appeal accounts for a quarter of OCCA’s yearly income. We are very appreciative to our contributors who support us so generously despite the difficult economic times we are all facing. Last year’s campaign raised \$3,885. **THANK YOU!**

Tom & Deb Fiorilla	Cindy Stone & Ron Boucher
Wayne Gersen & Gail Kuhl	Cryus & Miriam Benson
France Smith	Ned Andrews & Darlene Young
Lynda Barber	Denis & Carolyn Lyster
Ben & Fran Batchelder	Patrick & Lisa Clark
Bernard Matthews	Joan Alexander
Paul & Verne Nadeau	John & Marguerite Bolog
Gregory & Michele Lesoine	John & Dorothy Ruggles
Christopher & Mary Osgood	Donald Salcito
Thomas & Paula Gray	France Lambert
Paula Bresnick	Marielle Bonin
Jonathan & Sally Margolis	Radiant Floor
DeLaBruere’s Auto Sales	Bruce & Mary Muir
Richard Dreissigacker-Julia Geer	Will Werntgen & Barb Delzio
Robert Cochran	Conrad & Connie Daigle
Tom & Jan Doody	Christian Wellhoff
Doug-Harriette	Peter & Sue Ashworth
Phillips-Hamblet	Eugene & Lorraine Webster
Scott & Patricia Laber	Mary Jo Rigby
Russ & Ellen Bowen	E.M. Brown & Son, Inc
John & Joanne Ceraso	Harold Runsvold
David & Nancy Burnett	Passumpsic Savings Bank
Louis Perron	Helen Gjessing
Martha Alexander	Blanchard Oil
Bill & Shelly Howard	Derby Lions Club
Stephen & Susan Slosek	Paul Wolfe
Ann Stannard & Karen Karnes	Roger & Janet Cartee

What Have We Been Up To?

- OCCA’s Board of Directors has been working hard on a 3 year strategic plan.
- We have revamped our by-laws & mission statement, added vision & value statements to our portfolio. Designed attractive donor & advocate packets.
- Incorporated background checks into our organization.
- And are working on setting up bequest giving.
- Orleans County Citizen Advocacy’s website now has a Pay Pal donate button for your convenience.

www.orleanscountrycitizenadvocacy.org



CARD OF THANKS

14th annual Terry & Ben Claassen Memorial Northeast Kingdom Lakes Century September 17, 2011

Orleans County Citizen Advocacy's board of directors, program director, Ellen Bowen, and coordinator, Paula Manzi, want to thank everyone involved in making this year's bicycle tour a fun, safe, spirited fundraiser that raised over \$6,000 for our non-profit. OCCA's mission is to: build and support one-to-one independent long term relationships between unpaid community members and people with developmental disabilities; to ensure that people with disabilities are protected, heard, empowered, respected and included.

This year's 65 riders, most who tackled the full 100 mile loop. The cyclists couldn't have been more enthusiastic about the ride! We appreciate their praise about the routes, the food, and the friendliness of the volunteers. After 14 years, many riders feel like old friends, and hopefully we made some new ones as well!

Special thanks to: our \$500 sponsors: Shawn Austin Construction & Excavation, The Animal Doctor & Taplin's. Our \$250 sponsors: TD Bank, Concept 2, Columbia Forest Products, Poulin Grain and the Wildflower Inn. Our \$100 sponsors: Associated Insurance Agencies, Community National Bank, Rusty's Electric, Newport Rental Center, Barton Area Chamber of Commerce, Auto Outfitters, Village Bike Shop in Derby, Hayes Ford, H&R Block, Garden Patch, Eastside Restaurant, Green Mountain Electric Supply, Passumpsic Savings Bank, Edward Jones, Gervais Plumbing & Heating, Hoagie's, Taylor-Moore Agency, Poulin Lumber, Kingdom Construction, Right Wheels, Louis Garneau, Tivoly, Ray's Electric, Wild Branch Solutions and Blue Cross Blue Shield of VT. Much appreciation to Thomas Lichtenberger and Sean McCarthy of Hold Fast Designs in Hardwick who made our T-shirt happen.

The Newport Rotary Club was our major funder for the BBQ, with a number of other businesses donating food for the dinner & rest stops: C&C Supermarket, Bouyea-Fassetts, Garden Patch, Derby Village Store, Wendy's Restaurant in Newport, Buzzy's Beverage, Price Chopper, Shaw's, Vista Foods, Vermont Heritage Spring Water and Circle K in Barton. A special thanks to Ann Creaven for organizing all of our food related needs and to Russ Bowen for his time manning the grill. Our thanks to all the board members & other volunteers for baking the goodies and making other food for the rest stops, also to Cleo's Catering for the delicious meal.

13 volunteers staffed the rest stops. Thanks to: Joan Al-

exander, Ann Stannard, Paula Manzi and Chris Wellhoff at Crystal; Sue Ashworth and Debbie Brooks at Lyndonville; Kay Courson at Country Thyme; Ellen Bowen and Crystal Howard at Derby Line; Lisa Farney and Roberta Pheiffer at Island Pond; & Ann Creaven and Susan Guilmette at Willoughby. Many thanks to Vinnie Vanlunder & Carl Ball for all their assistance with packing up at the end. Our appreciation also goes to the providers of the rest stop spaces: The Haskell Library/Opera House, Country Thyme, Town of Willoughby for the use of the Willoughby North Beach and Bruce Grant for the use of the old Sheffield Potato Co. shed.

Thanks to Gerry Cahill and Joan Alexander painted all the directional arrows along the route; VT Transportation Agency and other towns who allowed for the important directional markings so our bikers could easily find their way around; to the on-call mechanics, Earl Whitmore and Jeff Manning; to Jeremy Edwards and Al Marin for updating the website; plus our volunteer treasurer, Steven Mengel, for all his support. We appreciated the support of Crystal State Park Ranger John Coriveau and Brighton State Park Ranger Todd Gregory, as well as the Town of Barton for allowing us to put up our event sign on the village green. The riders especially enjoy Graham Rae & Ellen Apple Rae of Derby Line who provided free massages at the event. Thanks to Cindy Stone, Connie Daigle & Pam Veroot although they could not be there sent food for others to enjoy.

We look forward to next year's **15th Annual Ride, on the third Saturday in September, 2012.**

*With so many to thank in both events,
we are bound to leave someone
out by mistake,
and apologize if we have.*



**OCCA Welcomes Treasurer
Steven Mengel!**

Steve joined the OCCA board in May of 2011. He brings over 40 years' experience in accounting and management to the organization. He received his BBA degree in accounting (with a minor in English) from Fort Lauderdale University in Fort Lauderdale, FL. Steve is currently employed by Caledonia North

Supervisory Union in Lyndonville, VT and owns and operates S&D Accounting Services in Derby, VT with Diana, his wife of 39 years.



1st Annual "Golf on Ice" Challenge February 12, 2011

Orleans County Citizen Advocacy's board of directors, Program Director, Ellen Bowen, and Coordinator, Paula Manzi want to thank everyone involved in making this year's golf challenge tournament a fun, safe, spirited fundraiser that raised money for our non-profit that builds and supports one-to-one independent long term relationships between unpaid community members and people with developmental disabilities; to ensure that people with disabilities are protected, heard, empowered, respected and included.

This year's 20 golfers braved snow, wind and an interesting 9 hole golf course at Prouty Beach. Although the event was small this year we plan to grow next year with more sponsors, prizes, food, and an expanded course. Many ideas are in the works! Look for save the date flyers this fall.

Special thanks to Andy Cappello of Newport Parks & Recreation Dept who worked tirelessly despite many setbacks to create the wonderful course we had, and to Steve Dalpe of the North Country Mountaineers for grooming the course on such short notice. Your volunteer support was invaluable, and made the whole event happen. Much appreciation also to Newport Rotary Club, Rusty's Electric, Robert Taplin Septic Service and Memphremagog Rentals for their supportive hole sponsorships. Included in the list of gratitude on behalf of OCCA is Community National Bank who donated the bright orange golf balls which help the participants find their lost balls in the large amount of surrounding snow. And no OCCA fundraising event would be complete without giving out some prizes. For that we owe recognition to Jay Peak Country Club, Newport Country Club, Orleans Country Club and Barton Golf Club who all gave 4 18 hole green fee passes that were very well received by the winners. We also thank Memphremagog Press and The Front Desk for donating printing material.

OCCA certainly wants to acknowledge our volunteers. Jason Willey & Chris Lyon gave plenty of back labor with their help in digging the holes on the course as well as making pathways from one fairway to the next. This was no small feat given all the snow that needed to be moved. Also volunteering was Sue Engel who took

beautiful photographs for us and formatted them into a professional package.

All of these very special people and businesses made the golf event come together and a great success!

We look forward to OCCA's 2nd Annual Winter Golf Challenge on February 4, 2012 at Prouty Beach in Newport.

Many Thanks Go Out To...



Carl & Susan Taylor of Derby who yearly cover the cost of OCCA's insurance. This allows our Board of Directors, employees, and fundraising events to function smoothly. We are very grateful to them!

North Country Career Center for allowing OCCA's Board of Directors to meet monthly in one of their conference rooms at no cost. We value their community spirit!

Check out OCCA's new website design at compliments of the North County Union High School computer class under the director of teacher, Bob Dunn. And Special Thanks to our webmaster, Al Marin, for keeping it up to date. Although he will be stepping down at the end of 2011 we so very much appreciate his years of assistance!

The North County Union High School National Honors Society was also a great help to OCCA this year. Not only did their L.L. Well's Chapter donate \$1,000, several students helped out getting businesses to sponsor t-shirt adds for our summer fundraisers. Thanks!

Juniper's Restaurant at the Wildflower Inn in Lyndonville for holding a Thankful Thursday night in October where 15% off all proceeds were donated to OCCA.

We also appreciate the Vermont Community Foundation for awarding us a \$2,000 grant to help with operating cost. Those funds helped pay for the addition of a second staff member, a first in OCCA's history!

Every year in March, at Town Meetings throughout Orleans County, OCCA request donations from each town to help support our program. We deeply appreciate the generosity of all individuals that vote for this appropriation to be passed. Town appropriations account for a third of OCCA's budget, so they are a vital part of our sustainability. Please be ready to vote again when you hear OCCA mentioned, knowing we are grateful for your support.



Ice Cream Social!

OCCA Coordinator, Paula Manzi, was busy this year organizing events between Board of Directors and program participants. Despite the rainy Labor Day, many showed up at the Big Dipper for an ice cream on OCCA. Mark Sokolis won the door prize of a tie dyed t-shirt from Winnie Bartley.



Board of Directors:

Director: Ellen Bowen, Derby Line
Coordinator: Paula Manzi, W. Charleston
Board Chair: Ann Stannard, Morgan
Vice-chair: Christian Wellhoff, N. Tory
Secretary: Sue Ashworth, Newport
Treasurer: Steve Mengel, Barton
Members: Mike Gruteke, Derby Line

Associate Board Members:

Katherin Austin, Derby
Tim DeLaBruere, Newport
Jim Torrisi, Derby Line
Maria Danziger, Demarest, NJ
Harold Runsvold, Nashville, TN

THE ADVOCATE...

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Orleans Citizens Advocacy!



See our interview on WCAX.
Type Orleans County Citizen
Advocacy into their site
search, and then click on "VT
community finds friends to
help needy residents".

*How can I be a part of
Citizen Advocacy?*

- Become a citizen advocate
- Recommend a person who would benefit from an advocate
- Make a donation
- Help with fund-raising
- Join the Board of Directors

www.orleanscountycitizensadvocacy.org