



# THE ARC OF KATY

## Bridging the Gap for People with Developmental Disabilities

An 'ark' is defined as a place of refuge or a place to house something of value. The Arc of Katy is just that for children and adults with developmental disabilities. The organization assists each in reaching his or her greatest potential. The program is designed to nurture its participants in various settings to stimulate their mental, emotional, and physical capacities. Through community support and involvement, including the sharing of time, talent, and monetary resources, the vision of the Arc of Katy is being realized as its members grow in body, mind, and spirit.

### Just Like Family

Donna Bode is familiar with the Arc of Katy both as a volunteer and as the parent of a child who attends the camp. "I feel really good about it being such a safe place with Peggy, Therese, Rosemary, and Danielle (the teachers)," explains Bode. "It's as good as having family taking care of all of the participants. You know they are going to do a good job, they'll be kind, and at the same time, they're teaching them worthwhile information."

Bode's daughter, Susan, has participated in the program since she graduated from high school in 2004. Susan enjoys exploring different cultures through the study of regions around the world through the Arc program. The focus last year centered on countries. This year, the group is exploring regions in the United States. As the participants study an area, they experience its essence through music, cooking indigenous foods, and other theme-related activities. Field trips include trips to the grocery store to purchase items needed for their recipes and excursions to local restaurants to dine on fare associated with a particular culture.

Susan, a talented dancer, also appreciates the fitness aspect of the camp through the generosity of the YMCA which provides space, materials, and instructors for an array of sports and exercise programs. Bowling at Times Square each month is another favorite activity as many of the members in Arc participate in league play.

Arc of Katy holds a Charity Golf Tournament every year to help raise money for the organization



resident. "The kids bring stuffed animals, pictures of their families, games, and CD players. They get to bring in what they want to decorate their room," says Lattal.

### In Full Bloom

The group also tends a plot of land (behind Katy City Hall on the corner of Avenue B and Second Street) where they bring tools for planting and weeding a flower garden. Being industrious and able to experience the fruits of their labor has been most rewarding. Being able to make a contribution in a tangible way and interacting with others enhances the lives of those associated with the Arc of Katy and provides its participants a wonderful world of opportunities. **KM**

Therese Lattal, who has worked with the group for many years, especially appreciates the members of Katy Art Reach who donate their creative gifts, inspiring the participants to design special works of art, giving each an opportunity for individual expression. "We encourage and welcome volunteers as they make a difference in the lives of the Arc participants," notes Lattal.

*DEANNA M. KRENEK has enjoyed teaching social and cultural dance forms to participants of the Arc of Katy. She appreciates their enthusiasm and creative approach to movement and song.*

### Learning Life Skills

Recently, a room at the Cinco Ranch YMCA Camp was converted into a mock apartment. During the day camp, the students get to practice how to make the bed, how to fold clothes, how to iron, and learn other everyday living skills like phone etiquette and banking. Each week, one student is selected to be the designated apartment

Scenes from Arc of Katy's annual gala



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