

Volume 2,
Issue 3,
Spring, 2009

THE STARGAZER



HEADLINE STORY - STAR WALK, ROLL & STROLL

Theresa Taylor, Co-Chairperson of the Walk, commented: “We are very blessed to have the supporters that we do. Everyone came out to the park on a rainy day – in hundreds – and stayed throughout, for all the events. It was amazing -- a great day.”



STAR received volunteer support from throughout the community, including friends and family members of participants, Norwalk High School students, Westport Firefighters, Westport EMS and Westport Y Men, who helped with the event. Prior to the event, numerous volunteer groups helped with the preparations including Norwalk, Weston and Westport Girl Scout Troops (Juniors and Daisies), Stapes High School Girls Lacrosse Team, Brien McMahon High School Happy Group, Norwalk RSVP Senior Volunteers, and Students Supporting Special Athletes group.

STAR, Inc., Lighting the Way is a not-for-profit organization serving individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities, as well as providing support services to their families. We create opportunities for individuals to live full lives with independence, freedom of choice and personal growth by providing support, services and advocacy. We inform and encourage the community to recognize and appreciate the value of all individuals.

May 3, 2009: Friends and supporters of STAR, Inc., Lighting the Way ... enthusiastically came out to show their support for the **4th Annual STAR Walk, Roll and Stroll** held at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport on Sunday, May 3 from 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Despite the rain, approximately 600 participants attended the event which benefits STAR’s services and programs for infants, children and adults with developmental disabilities in Fairfield County. The event raised over \$85,000.

In addition to the walk, participants enjoyed family activities, games and crafts, clowns, a magician, face painting, animals from the Darien Nature Center, entertainment and lunch—all under the covered family picnic area and pavilion at Sherwood Island State Park. Rubberband Unplugged, an acoustic rock and roll musical group composed of persons with and without developmental disabilities performed, as well as the Fairfield University Dance Team and Cheerleaders, Wilton High School Cheerleaders, Norwalk Y Hip-Hop Dancers and STORM of the Bridgeport Sound Tigers.



Katie Banzhaf, Executive Director of STAR, said: “It was a great day. We are just so thankful and proud to have a wide range of supporters from area businesses, corporations and community organizations throughout the area. STAR is proud of the loyal partnerships that have been forged among our new and long-term supporters involved with this event.”

A SHINING SUPERSTAR – MS. LUCILLE CAPASSO

The first thing you are likely to notice about Lucille is her beautiful, ever-present smile. She says, “I’m a happy person. I like to be happy instead of sad.” And she is! Lucille is also a hard worker. She is a sales clerk at the Darien Sport Shop 5 days a week, from 10am to 3pm. Her job duties include hanging up clothes before they go out onto the floor, making boxes for clothes, stocking shelves and keeping the floor clean. Lucille says, “I like my job because it’s a nice place to work. It makes me feel good to go to work every day; it gives me something to do.” She added that she likes her co-workers who treat her very nicely and assist her if she is having a problem.

Lucille lives with her sister and niece and is close with her family. She loves going to the movies and her favorite movie is ‘Mall Cop.’ She enjoys TV and her favorite shows are ‘George Lopez’ and ‘American Idol.’ Last year she voted for David Archuleta and his song, ‘Crush’, is her very favorite. Lucille also likes Alicia Keys and Mariah Carey. Other activities she enjoys are shopping for food and clothes. Lucille said she especially likes shopping at holiday times so she can buy gifts for her family.



Pictures taken by: Jamie Bartone

In the kitchen Lucille is an enthusiastic cook. She says, “I cook everything, Italian and American.” She makes excellent steak and lasagna; her favorite foods are macaroni, meatballs and chocolate pudding. For a birthday treat, Lucille likes going to the Outback restaurant.

All in all, Lucille likes to keep busy and enjoys meeting new people. Her job coach, Jamie Bartone, says, “Lucille has a nice, friendly personality; she’s helpful, has a good attitude and a great work ethic. She is always on time and is willing to stay late and do extra work if needed. She’s a great person to work with.” Lucille’s supervisor, Annie Pisante, at The Darien Sport Shop said “Lucille is a hard worker and always has a smile on her face. She’s extremely trustworthy and dependable and has made numerous friends at the store. It’s a pleasure to work with her on a daily basis.”

Congratulations to you, Lucille, on earning such wonderful praise.

You’re the best!

MEET STAR STAFF - MR. DAN GAMACHE

Dan Gamache has been working at STAR since July, 2006 as a Program Coordinator for Team B. Dan was born and raised in Poughkeepsie, New York where he graduated from FDR High School. He went to Dutchess Community College and received an Associate's Degree in Art. Dan earned a scholarship (half for art, half for baseball) to the College of St. Rose in Albany, NY; he then went to SU NY (State University of New York) at Oneonta and graduated with a degree in Graphic Arts.

Baseball was Dan's passion when he was younger and he was a star left-handed pitcher who was scouted by the Cincinnati Reds, Mets, Dodgers, Marlins and Tampa Bay Rays. An injury prevented him from going further in baseball.

After college, Dan worked at the Anderson School for Autism in Stattdburg, NY. He was there for 2 years as a direct care worker in a group home. He has been at STAR ever since.

Everyone who knows Dan also knows about his great sneaker designs! His avocation and budding entrepreneurship are evident in "Mache Custom Kicks" where Dan's creativity is displayed in the sneakers he designs. This evolved when he initially designed, with special paint and a myriad of colors, a pair of sneakers for himself. People were curious and asked where they could buy them, word got around, and the rest is history! He personalizes sneakers with original designs from varying patterns to portraits. He also collects sneakers and has over 300 pair!

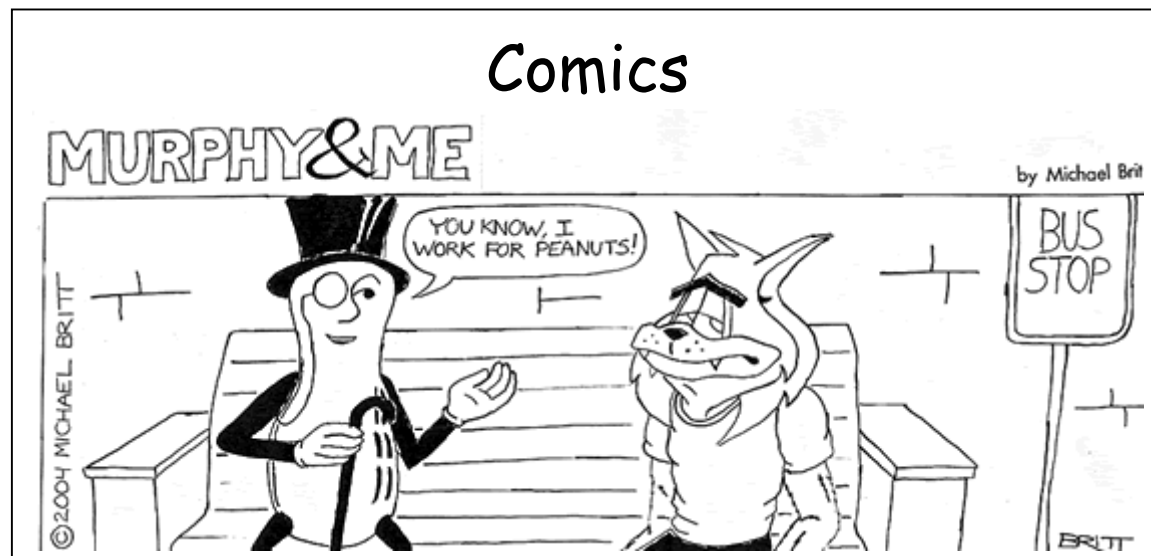
In his spare time Dan still loves to play baseball; he also plays basketball, works out and runs 3 miles a day! His favorite baseball team is the Chicago White Sox and his favorite basketball team is the L.A. Lakers.

Dan's family resides in Poughkeepsie and North Carolina. He has an older brother Bryan with whom he is very close." I like the fact that my guys take so much pride in their jobs and work." He added that he likes STAR's mission statement, especially the part about "advocating for people to live full lives with independence, freedom of choice and personal growth." He added that he respects anyone who lives their life in a genuine and authentic way.

Congratulations, Dan, on your dedicated service to STAR and your team!



Dan with Neil Reilly in the workshop





Arts & Entertainment

"FUN FACT"

The first TV show ever to be put into reruns was "The Lone Ranger."



Music Club

Dates

June 9th & 23rd

July 7th & 21st

3pm - 5pm, water will cost \$1.00



Game Night Friday June 5th

3pm - 5pm

Cost: \$5.00

Game Night is the first Friday of the month in the large conference room

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

COME TO THE FIRST GIRLS NIGHT OUT.

TEA TIME \$5.⁰⁰ PERSON

WEDNESDAY JUNE 17TH

3:00PM - 5:00PM IN THE STAR CAFETERIA

BRING YOUR BIG IDEAS FOR FUTURE EVENTS!

Thank you for reading **THE STARGAZER**.

If you are interested in receiving **THE STARGAZER**, it can be picked up in the Reception Area at STAR Center & TEC.

If you have questions, comments or suggestions please send your message to:

Connie Baron @ concon100@sbcglobal.net or Mark Minnock @ mminnock@starinonline.com

Call STAR, Inc. @ (203) 846-9581 or Fax @ (203) 847-0545

Check Out STAR's Website @ www.starinc-lightingtheway.org

Guys Night Out

Golfing @ Belmont's Golf, June 11th

5:30 - 8:00

\$15.00 per person

6 B B N/LM July 22nd

5:00 - 8:00

\$25.00 per person



To reserve your spot call 846-9581 * 358