

Column: Putting the 'fun' in fundraising

By Staff reports

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Georgina-Keefe Feldman, North Shore Arc — Keeping the “fun” in “fundraising” is what I like to do best.

As director of development for the North Shore Arc, my charge is to raise money to support programs for adults and children living with developmental disabilities — everything from Autism programs to vocational training to residential homes. It is challenging but rewarding work. The North Shore Arc has been providing a wide range of services for people with developmental disabilities for over 50 years, in 143 cities and towns in Massachusetts. As a nonprofit that relies heavily on the generosity of corporations, foundations, and individuals to augment government support, private funding is absolutely necessary. The Arc needs to offer innovative services that meet today's real needs, even when government funding is not available.

For some, fundraising can be a tedious task — but I take a different perspective. I have found success by keeping the “fun” in fundraising. And it seems to be working! One way we raise much needed dollars throughout the year is through our events, including our Annual Wine Tasting and Auction with host Kim Carrigan, the Annual Walk & Family Celebration as part of the Danvers Family Festival, the Spotlight Comedy Night, and the Mike Frangos Invitational Charity Golf Tournament at Myopia, just to name a few. These events are truly delightful and are talked about long after they are over.

It is equally important to promote what I affectionately call “friend-raising.” We are fortunate to have developed some incredible friendships, united by the common goal to help people live their best possible lives. One of the friendships that I absolutely cherish is the one we have established with the Boston Private Bank and Trust Co., particularly with their CEO and president, Mark Thompson.

For more than 15 years, Boston Private Bank & Trust has been there for us, offering volunteer manpower, financial support and advice. I have witnessed firsthand the incredible impact that our relationship with Boston Private Bank has made on the employees, programs, and services offered throughout this agency. More importantly, they have had a direct impact on the lives of adults and children living with disabilities.

Under Mark's astute leadership, many of the bank's employees have also become involved in our events and fundraising efforts. An exceptional role model, Mark not only serves as a valued member of our Board of Directors and past president of our board; he has been instrumental to the continued growth and success of our entire organization. He has been a visionary for us, and helped to accelerate our fundraising efforts at many events — particularly the annual Mike Frangos Commodore Golf Tournament, for which Boston Private Bank and Trust Co. is the lead sponsor.

Mark stepped up as chairman of the tournament in 1994 at the bidding of the tournament's founder, Mike Frangos. Mike Frangos was a well-known restaurateur (The Commodore in Beverly) and philanthropist on the North Shore, with a particular interest in helping disabled children. Our Early Intervention Center in Beverly is named after him.

When Mike was getting ready to retire after 25 years as the tournament's sponsor and organizer, he turned to his friend and fellow golfer Mark Thompson and we have been privileged to have Boston Private Bank & Trust as our event sponsor ever since.

Since that day 14 years ago, Mark has been a strong voice for us, introducing dozens of new supporters to the North Shore Arc, and taking the time to understand our financial needs, and the needs of the thousands of people who annually receive our services. Boston Private Bank goes beyond the usual corporate sponsorship as well. They share our deep sense of social responsibility and commitment to make life better for some of our most fragile citizens.

At Boston Private Bank, you will find a group of dedicated men and women that have endeared themselves to our entire organization. They have not only been a very generous partner; they share our commitment to offer a nurturing environment where people with disabilities feel safe and cared for, and where they have the opportunity to experience life to their fullest potential.

Over the years, the Commodore Invitational golf tournament has raised more than \$1 million for the North Shore Arc. Proceeds from the tournament, the oldest continuously running charity tournament in the country, help us offer summer programs to autistic children, vocational training to people with developmental disabilities, a place to live for medically fragile individuals and so much more. It has become our signature event.

On Monday, Sept. 15, more than 200 golfers will enjoy a round of golf on the magnificent Myopia Hunt Club golf course in South Hamilton, while supporting the work that we do at the North Shore Arc. There are still openings for those who wish to play. There are two flights — morning and afternoon — and breakfast, lunch and a sumptuous dinner are provided. During the evening banquet, there are fun raffles, golf prizes and a live/silent auction that promises many unique items. We invite you to join us. It is the perfect venue for fun, friend and fund raising!

To inquire about the 39th annual Charity Golf Tournament and available sponsorships, contact Becky Landry at the North Shore Arc, 978-762-4878 ext. 2401, or e-mail blandry@nsarc.org.

Georgina-Keefe Feldman is the director of development at North Shore Arc.

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