

# HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Arlington Department of Health and Human Services is the umbrella agency overseeing the Health department, Council on Aging, Youth Counseling Center, and the Veterans' Services Office. The agency also coordinates the activities of the following boards and commissions: Board of Health, Board of Youth Services, Council on Aging, Disability Commission, and the Human Rights Commission. Additionally, the agency works with the Food Pantry, Widows Trust Fund Commission, Youth Health and Safety Coalition, and the Health and Human Services Charitable Corporation.

The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services is to protect the health of the public and provide services to meet basic human needs.

During 2011 the Department received multiple grants from various organizations to fund programs within the Department. The Department also created the Food Festival Program which is held during school vacation weeks to feed children in Town that are on free and reduced lunches during the school week, but may not have access to hot, healthy meals while away from school. This program is a collaboration between local restaurants, churches, and other Town departments.



The Winter Food Festival Program provided hot and healthy meals to children at the Thompson School during February vacation. Volunteers from Scutra Restaurant, Health and Human Services, Police Department and the Church of Our Savior pictured above.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department Office is located at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Senior Center, located behind Town Hall. The Board of Health is required by state statutes and regulations to perform many important and

crucial duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution. These mandated requirements are conducted by staff in the Health Department Office.

### Environmental Health Permitting and Inspections

Staff annually permit and regularly inspect restaurants, tobacco retailers, tanning establishments, body art establishments, pools, the ice-skating rink, and two bathing beaches. Inspectors from the Department also follow up on numerous resident complaints related to any health issue within the community ranging from trash and dumpster complaints to housing code violations. The environmental health division is comprised of two full-time inspectors. The Department also contracts with two food safety consultants to conduct a portion of mandated food establishment inspections.

The Department has worked diligently over the past four years to improve upon regulating temporary food events and implementing a more comprehensive complaint tracking system.

| Permit Issued Board of Health | 2011       | 2010       | 2009       | 2008       |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Food                          | 324*       | 253        | 250        | 230        |
| Tobacco                       | 28         | 24         | 26         | 31         |
| Waste Hauler                  | 12         | 12         | 13         | 13         |
| Funeral Director              | 3          | 3          | 5          | 6          |
| Tanning Establishment         | 2          | 2          | 2          | 2          |
| Public Pool                   | 8          | 8          | 8          | 8          |
| Public Beach                  | 3          | 1          | 1          | 1          |
| Ice rink                      | 1          | 1          | 1          | 1          |
| Body Art Establishment        | 1          | 1          | 1          | 1          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>382</b> | <b>305</b> | <b>307</b> | <b>293</b> |

| Inspection Conducted Board of Health | 2011       | 2010       | 2009       | 2008       |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Food Establishment                   | 430**      | 456        | 426        | 449        |
| Tobacco Compliance Check             | 0          | 47         | 0          | 62         |
| Housing                              | 152*       | 42         | 43         | 48         |
| Demolition Inspection                | 14         | 18         | 23         | 16         |
| Nuisance Inspection                  | 102*       | 249        | 291        | 250        |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>698</b> | <b>812</b> | <b>783</b> | <b>825</b> |

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*\*As a result of the goal to improve upon regulating temporary food events and implement a more comprehensive complaint tracking system, there has been an increase in the number of food permits issued and housing inspections conducted. While the number of nuisance inspections appears to have decreased, it is the Department's belief that the number of nuisance complaints in previous years may have been mis-categorized to include food and housing complaints, public health questions, and other miscellaneous complaints that the Department investigates.*

*\*\* It should also be noted that because of budget cuts, the number of food inspections was decreased so that some lower risk establishments were inspected only once and higher risk establishments were inspected twice.*

## Food Protection

In 2011 the Department conducted 313 food inspections ranging from risk-based categories one through four. The Department assigns each establishment in Town that serves food to a risk-based category. A food establishment that sells packaged food such as a convenience store is considered low risk and is assigned to a category one and is inspected one time per year. A food establishment that serves food to a highly susceptible population such as a nursing home is considered a high risk and would be placed in a category four and is inspected four times per year. Additionally, the Department conducted 117 food inspections at various temporary food events such as the Feast of the East, Greek Festival, Taste of Arlington, Taste of Greece, Farmer's Market, Town Day and various other public events throughout the year. The Department also investigated 23 food complaints and held one administrative hearing to discuss food safety. Additionally, eight food establishments closed and seventeen new establishments (including residential kitchens) were opened in 2011.

| Food Permit Types Issued    | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Food Establishment Permits  | 173  | 167  | 180  | 180  |
| Mobile Food Permits         | 6    | 8    | 7    | 8    |
| Residential Kitchen Permits | 8    | 4    | 6    | 6    |
| Farmers Market Permits      | 12   | 14   | 16   | 12   |
| Temporary Event Food Permit | 125* | 60   | 54   | 24   |

*\* As a result of the department goal to improve upon regulating temporary food events throughout the year, the Department saw a dramatic increase in the number of temporary food permits issued in 2011.*

## Housing

The Department conducted 152 inspections of rental housing units in 2011 in accordance with 105 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 410.000, Massachusetts Housing Code. When a housing inspection is requested by a resident, an inspector conducts an inspection and may cite a landlord for violations of the housing code. The landlord is then ordered to repair violations. Violations documented in 2011 included: improper heating, chronic dampness, leaking plumbing fixtures, lead paint determinations, unsanitary living conditions, insect and rodent infestations, and many more.

One major achievement in 2011 was the development of a Hoarding Response Team. The Team is collaboration between police, fire and health officials. The team consists of two health inspectors and the Arlington Police Department's Clinical Responder. Occasionally, Police and Fire will respond to an emergency at a residential property and find unsafe, unsanitary and cluttered conditions. When officials respond to such situations, referrals are made to the Team for further investigation and follow up. The Team works to identify hazards and connect the resident(s) with services needed to bring a home into compliance and address potential personal and social needs. The Team responded to over a dozen reports of hoarding and was able to work together with residents to bring homes into compliance without condemning the property. As a result, the Department only condemned two properties due to uninhabitable conditions.

The Department also continues to work closely with the Council on Aging and Minuteman Senior Services to assist senior residents with alternate housing and services when necessary.

In 2011 the Department conducted 14 inspections at properties awaiting demolition in order to ensure the health and safety of the site. The inspector requires asbestos removal, pest control, dust control, and other control measures to protect the health of the public



## Emergency Preparedness

### Arlington Medical Reserve Corps

The Department conducted another major recruitment effort in September to enlist new volunteers into the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). Arlington residents both medical and non-medical professionals enlisted to assist the Town in the event of an emergency event. The recruitment event was held to enlist new volunteers and to offer current volunteers an opportunity to hear about upcoming events and activities.

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## Public Health Nursing

| Communicable Disease Monitored | 2011       | 2010       | 2009       | 2008      |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Amebiasis                      | 2          | 0          | 2          | 0         |
| Babesiosis                     | 0          | 1          | 0          | 0         |
| Campylobacter Enteritis        | 17         | 4          | 10         | 6         |
| Chicken pox                    | 0          | 6          | 0          | 5         |
| Cryptosporidiosis              | 1          | 2          | 0          | 1         |
| Enterovirus                    | 0          | 0          | 2          | 0         |
| Giardia                        | 5          | 1          | 1          | 5         |
| Haemophilus Influenzae         | 2          | 1          | 0          | 0         |
| Hepatitis A                    | 0          | 0          | 1          | 0         |
| Hepatitis B                    | 5 chronic  | 1 chronic  | 3 chronic  | 2 chronic |
| Hepatitis C                    | 21 chronic | 23 chronic | 15 chronic | 6 chronic |
| Influenza                      | 5          | 0          | 33         | -         |
| Invasive Bacterial Infection   | 1          |            |            |           |
| Legionellosis                  | 2          | 1          | 0          | 0         |
| Lyme Disease                   | 3          | 6          | 8          | 11        |
| Meningitis                     | 1          | 0          | 0          | 0         |
| Norovirus                      | 0          | 0          | 0          | 4         |
| Pertussis                      | 4          | 6          | 5          | 3         |
| Salmonella                     | 5          | 8          | 13         | 12        |
| Shigatoxin                     | 1          | 1          | 0          | 0         |
| Shigellosis                    | 1          | 1          | 3          | 3         |
| Strep pneumonia invasive       | 2          | 2          | 6          | 4         |
| Group A strep                  | 1          | 2          | 0          | 1         |
| Group B strep                  | 3          | 6          | 1          | 2         |
| Tuberculosis                   | 5          | 5 active   | 5          | 4         |
| Tuberculosis contacts          | 0          | 40         | 30         | 25        |
| Vibrio sp.                     | 1          | 0          | 1          | 0         |
| West Nile Virus                | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0         |
| Yersiniosis                    | 0          | 0          | 0          | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>87</b>  | <b>77</b>  | <b>104</b> | <b>96</b> |

### Communicable Disease Surveillance

To protect the community against the spread of contagious illnesses, Arlington continued to work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in conducting online disease reporting through the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network (MAVEN). State law requires that doctors, hospitals, and laboratories report contagious diseases including diseases such as tuberculosis, whooping cough, and salmonella. When a doctor diagnoses a resident with a contagious disease,

the public health nurse is mandated to conduct an investigation to determine if further control measures are needed. The illness is then recorded and reviewed to identify and respond to any possible disease outbreaks. The new online reporting system has streamlined disease investigation and has assisted the Massachusetts Department of Public Health with early detection of contagious disease trends beyond community boundaries.

The Public Health Nurse also coordinates all flu and pneumonia vaccination clinics in Town. All clinics are managed using Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers.

The Health Department hosted over 15 flu clinics in 2011. Clinics are held in large buildings, which allows the Department to vaccinate many people in a short time frame.



## BOARD OF HEALTH

The three member Board of Health meets on a regular basis. During meetings, environmental health concerns are addressed and public hearings and policy review is performed. In 2011 the Board of Health met eight times and conducted one food code hearing and one keeping of Hens hearing, which resulted in the issuance of a Keeping of Hens Permit. Additionally, the Board reviewed and adopted regulations for the removal of exterior paint. The Board also worked with the Planning Department and a Biotechnology consultant to review Biotechnology regulations, it is anticipated that the Board will adopt these regulations in 2012. Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick was the Board Chair in 2011.

### Weights and Measures

To ensure compliance with the Consumer and Merchant Protection Act, the Sealer of Weights and Measures conducts inspections of all scales, scanners, and dispensing equipment. This includes retail stores, gas stations, oil trucks, and food establishments. The Sealer responds to all consumer complaints to ensure fairness and accuracy.

As merchants are inspected annually, compliance with standards and accuracy of merchant measuring devices has increased steadily. The Sealer of Weights and Measures determines the amount of savings by

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computing the amount of fuel pumped each year from a particular measuring device such as a gas pump.

In 2010 the Department began contracting with the Town of Belmont to provide sealing services. This arrangement was developed to address a lack of a sealer of weights in measures in the Town of Belmont.

Below is a table of Arlington devices sealed by the Sealer of Weights and Measures in 2011.

| Device Sealed            | Number of Devices Sealed |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Scales 10 lbs and under  | 14                       |
| Scales 100 lbs and under | 92                       |
| Gasoline pumps           | 144                      |
| Vehicle Tank Meters      | 33                       |
| Taxi                     | 9                        |
| Other devices            | 8                        |
| Total                    | 300                      |



## ARLINGTON YOUTH HEALTH AND SAFETY COALITION

AYHSC is a federally funded, community-based coalition whose mission is to prevent and reduce substance abuse and other risk behaviors that adversely affect Arlington youth. It includes representatives from public (police, schools, local government) and private agencies (churches, businesses, youth-serving organizations) as well as parents and youth. AYHSC takes a public health approach to prevention and intervention, focusing on community-wide education, environmental initiatives, policy change, and improving youth access to treatment.

In 2011, AYHSC received \$125,646 in grant funding from the federal Drug Free Communities Program (DFC), and was authorized to spend an additional \$133,655 in 2012. During the past year, AYHSC was also awarded over \$50,000 in local grants from Symmes Foundation, Mount Auburn Hospital, and the Sanborn Foundation. Likewise, AYHSC received generous in-kind support, amounting to over \$85,000 from Arlington Public Schools, Arlington Police Department (APD), Department of Health and Human Services, Arlington

Recreation, and Arlington Center for the Arts. Logging nearly 1,000 volunteer hours, AYHSC members and community partners were able to channel the above resources into productive, community-wide prevention initiatives highlighted below.

### 2011 Highlights

- Co-sponsored a community viewing of the film documentary Race to Nowhere. Over 350 community members attended the screening, which was held at the Regent Theater.
- Conducted four, 5-week series of Guiding Good Choices parenting workshops.
- Partnered with APD and Arlington Recreation to offer the third annual HRC Summer Experience, a 4-day health and wellness summer program, to over 100 Arlington youth.
- Administered the Arlington Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to Ottoson Middle School and Arlington High School students.
- Collaborated with APD and youth volunteers to conduct alcohol compliance checks.
- Organized, developed, and implemented a social norms campaign about underage drinking at Arlington High School. Partnered with CADD (Computer Aided Drafting and Design) students at AHS to develop campaign messages and designs.
- Funded speaker presentation at Arlington High School's Health and Wellness Day.
- Conducted four community-wide drug take backs, and two needle disposal programs.
- Enrolled 36 youth into the Arlington Diversion Program, a community-based alternative to the criminal justice system. Oversaw a total Diversion caseload of 83 youth.
- Collaborated with Communities for Restorative Justice to incorporate Restorative Justice process into Diversion program
- Partnered with Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC) to pilot the Diversion Expansion Program- a program to understand and address the treatment needs of underserved, substance abusing youth. This program was awarded a three-year grant by Mount Auburn Hospital.
- Provided information to the community through cable and print media, AYHSC webpage, presentations to the School Committee and other local groups, and informal discussions with community members.

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## COUNCIL ON AGING

The Arlington Council on Aging (COA), a division of the Department of Health & Human Services, provides advocacy and support services to help Arlington elders live dignified and independent lives.

The Council's primary responsibilities are to identify the needs of Arlington's elder population and to design, promote, or implement services to address such needs and to coordinate existing services in the community. The COA carries out on a local level the programs of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs and coordinates with public and private service providers in the area.

The growing number of seniors is a developing challenge for the Town of Arlington. Nationally the number of elderly in our society is increasing at a rate of 7,500 to 10,000 seniors (65+) each day and will continue to do so over the next eighteen years (Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Commonwealth of Massachusetts). The 2010 federal census counted 9,245 elders (60+) in Arlington which when projected to 2030 suggests that one-third of the projected population of Arlington, or 15,193 residents, will be seniors (Metropolitan Area Planning Council).

In the past year, COA staff have noted a marked increase in the number of seniors in economic distress. Some clients are younger seniors who have been laid-off or have developed a disability that does not allow them to work. They have tapped all their resources and are now having a hard time meeting basic costs such as housing and food. Other clients are older seniors who have been living on social security with perhaps a small pension and are now not able to cover basic needs due to increased medical co-pays, property taxes, food and heating costs. This year COA staff has assisted many more Arlington seniors than in past years with applications for SNAP (food stamps), fuel assistance, subsidized senior housing, and other programs that address these concerns.

This COA coordinates with the Arlington Seniors Association, a private nonprofit organization, which provides the Senior Center's social and recreational programming. The Senior Center also hosts Minuteman Senior Services which operates the "Eating Together" meal site at the Senior Center and provides home-delivered "Meals-on-Wheels".

### Highlights for 2011

- Launched a revitalized Dial-a-Ride program by securing a new subcontractor, Arlington Belmont Transportation, as the provider for the in-town taxi program.
- Provided over 7,000 rides to Arlington seniors for medical appointments, errands in Arlington, and services and programs at the

Senior Center.

- Provided over 900 case-management interventions through office and home visits by the nurse, social worker and intake staff.
- Hired a part-time social worker in September to meet increased social service demands.
- Organized a large Senior Services Fair at the town hall in June with over 40 vendors and speakers.
- Sponsored a forum on property tax relief programs for Seniors for an over-flow crowd at the Senior Center.
- Provided over 2,000 units of health services, including podiatry, blood pressure, flu and pneumonia clinics.
- Assumed responsibility for assisting Arlington seniors with fuel assistance applications for 2011-12 heating season after the closing of the Community Teamwork fuel assistance office in Arlington.
- Provided staff support for the Arlington Food Pantry.
- Continued to provide financial support for dental services, transportation, urgent personal needs and Lifeline personal response systems for low-income seniors.

### Volunteer Involvement

Perhaps the most visible and dedicated people associated with the COA are its 125 volunteers. They contribute their time, skills and efforts to help deliver COA services to Arlington's elders and their families. More than 10,000 hours of service were given in support of the COA's mission. Volunteers serve as friendly visitors, medical escorts, and receptionists as well as assisting with health clinics and programs. Specially trained SHINE volunteers, income tax aides and tax abatement assistants provide direct service to clients in addition to an attorney and financial planner who also donate their time. Volunteers were honored at the annual volunteer luncheon that acknowledges their valuable service to Arlington seniors.



*Volunteers preparing 2011 Thanksgiving meal deliveries.*

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## Community Partnering Efforts

The COA continues productive working relationships with other Town agencies as well as with community organizations such as Arlington Visiting Nurse & Community Health, Arlington Community Media, Mount Auburn Hospital, Cooperative Elder Services, Park Avenue Congregational Church, Arlington ELKS, SCM Transportation, and many others. Examples of such efforts are:

The Retired Men's Club of Arlington again generously supported the annual home-delivered Thanksgiving Day meal program. The COA coordinated the many volunteers who packed and delivered the meals to seniors who would be alone on the holiday.

Minuteman Senior Services trains SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) volunteers that are then stationed at the COA. Over 126 people met individually with a SHINE counselor regarding health insurance issues.

AARP-trained tax preparers helped 200 seniors with preparation of income tax forms with the assistance of COA staff serving as schedulers.

The COA partnered with the Ottoson Middle School to provide snow shoveling and yard work for 76 Arlington seniors.

The COA serves as a field-training site for students from The University of Massachusetts School of Nursing, Simmons College School of Social Work, Harvard Divinity School, and other institutions.

## Funding

Principal funding for the agency derives from municipal, state, and federal sources. The Massachusetts' Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) Formula Grant provides half the salary of the social worker and the bulk of the salary for the geriatric nurse specialist. The Community Development Block Grant Program supports the COA transportation program, adult day health scholarships, and the transportation coordinator/supervisor of volunteers position.

Friends of the Council on Aging, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the mission of the COA, held their second annual 5k Road Race in 2011. With the funds raised, The Friends group made several significant donations in support of COA programs including transportation and a new scheduling software program. They also sponsored a Holiday Stocking Program benefiting 50 low-income Arlington seniors. Lahey Clinic again generously underwrote an exercise program for Aquacise and Tai Chi. The Trustees of Symmes Hospital made a significant grant to the Council on Aging transportation program as did the Elizabeth and George L. Sanborn Foundation For The Treatment and Cure Of Cancer. Cambridge Savings Bank made a generous contribution in support of the Senior Services Directory and the Yamaji-Newcastle Fund continues to provide

monies to recognize, educate and support volunteers at the Senior Center.



*Runners stepping out at The Friends of the Council on Aging's second annual road race.*

## BOARD OF YOUTH SERVICES ARLINGTON YOUTH COUNSELING CENTER (AYCC)



2011 was the second year of significant changes for Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC). In 2010 AYCC was given the task of developing a more sustainable model for long term survival, so that providing counseling services to children, youth and families in the community could continue. In 2010 it was determined with input from the town Town government, Board of Youth Services, and AYCC administrative team that changing to a fee for service model and putting supports in place to more effectively collect third party insurance offered the best opportunity for AYCC to become more fiscally sustainable. The first year was devoted to putting basic structures in place to accomplish this. The second year has been spent expanding



*Staff from AYCC pictured above. The agency has transformed into a larger agency with new staff after the agency transition in 2010*

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and refining basic structures, putting policies and strategies in place to insure maximum collection of insurance reimbursement, developing a fund raising strategy, and beginning clinical program development. An overview of 2011 is as follows:

- AYCC currently has 16 clinicians providing service.
- Participation in Town Day by having an informational booth and Open House.
- Fund Raising Committee organized and ran a well attended, major fund raising event in November that raised almost \$20,000.
- AYCC obtained \$25,000. in grant money from the Symmes Medical Use Nonprofit Charitable Corporation.
- AYCC with the Diversion Program was awarded a grant from CHNA for \$25,000 to develop a model for identifying and providing substance abuse treatment to at risk youth. Hired substance abuse counselor who will assist with development of the program.
- With Board of Youth Services began to have informational meetings with local Pediatricians.
- Began implementation of Outcome Measurement tools to track successfulness of services.
- Completed reorganization of space for clinicians which is HIPPA compliant and functional.
- Added medical records clerk to assist with organizing and managing clients records and with staff member audited them for completeness and quality.
- Developed a consultation program in two elementary schools piloted by staff member to provide consultation to school staff and intervention to children who are experiencing bullying.



The first annual fundraising gala for AYCC was held in October and raised over \$20,000 to support the agency.

- Established a group work program. Groups are funded by various grants and include: a Parent Support Group for parents of children having behavior problems, a friendship/socialization group for children with social skills deficits, a support group for High School students enrolled in the METCO program, a group for High School students who are struggling with anxiety, and a group for Middle School Students who have been bullied.
- AYCC sponsored a training run by MGH Think:Kids program. All clinicians from the clinic attended. School personnel, clinicians from the community and parents also attended the training which focused on strategies for helping youth with behavior problems.
- AYCC continued to have a strong relationship with the Arlington Public Schools. AYCC continued to provide on-site milieu counselors to the Workplace Program at Arlington High School. In addition to what was previously mentioned, AYCC provided in-school counseling to students at various elementary school. This was mostly paid for by third party insurance reimbursement. Arlington Public School provided contract money to assist students for whom co-pays or deductibles were unaffordable.
- Highrock Church funded a case manager for 10 hours per week to provide assistance for families with resource needs such as applying for government entitlements and/or emergency assistance with complex problems.



Board of Youth Services Members Lori Talanian and Lynn Horgan and Health and Human Services Charitable Corporation President Barbara Tosti accept a donation from the Arlington Police Patrolman Association Relief Fund represented by Detectives Fitzpatrick and Gallagher to pay for counseling sessions for youth and families that are unable to pay for treatment at AYCC.

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## VETERANS' SERVICES

The Department of Veterans' Services for The Town of Arlington is mandated to aid and assist veterans and their families as required by The Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and The Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS). All eligible veterans and their eligible dependents can seek counseling and assistance with applications for federal and state benefits, financial aid, medical care, educational/vocational benefits, and burial benefits.

As a result of interviewing fifty-six veterans and/or their dependents, fourteen new clients received benefits under Chapter 115 with a total of sixty clients receiving benefits over the course of the year. Seventeen veterans were awarded the "Welcome Home" bonus for service in the military since 9/11. Two Vietnam veterans were advised of their entitlement to a bonus for their service and were assisted on how to redeem them. Four widows of veterans were assisted in receiving their benefits as the surviving spouse of a veteran either "Killed in Action", receiving 100% service-connected disabilities from the VA, or veterans who died from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) and also an annuity from DVS.

After consulting with over a hundred veterans and or veteran dependents, twenty-three claims were submitted to the VA for service-connected compensation and/or pension, seventeen have been awarded. Requests for treatment at the VA medical centers by sixty-eight veterans have been referred and thirty-four burial benefits have been awarded eligible veterans. Markers for all veterans buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery were ordered. To date, seventeen unmarked graves of veterans have been identified, and authenticated, and markers ordered.

Veterans' Services is responsible for organizing, coordinating, and participating in the Memorial Day and Veterans' Day Parades. For Memorial Day, the office is responsible for decorating the over 5,500 veterans' graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and St. Paul's Cemetery with flags and assuring the maintenance of the veterans' lots. The Disabled American Veterans Chapter 49 assists by decorating the graves at St. Paul's. The file for the Veterans' Honor Roll located at Monument Park in Arlington Center, which will be refurbished at the conclusion of The War on Terrorism, is continuously being updated with veterans from all wars. The Director of Veterans Services also serves as treasurer on of the Patriots' Day Parade Committee as well as coordinator, and President of the Combined Veterans' Council of Arlington.

The Office of the Department of Veterans' Services is continuing to purge old files and improve computerization, while reaching out to advertise veterans' benefits and advocate for volunteer opportunities at The Bedford VA Medical Center.

| Veterans Benefits, Claims, and Referrals | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Chapter 115 Benefits                     | 62   | 65   | 61   | 61   |
| VA compensation/pensions                 | 17   | 22   | 14   | 16   |
| VAMC requests/referrals                  | 103  | 73   | 50   | 51   |
| VA Burial benefits                       | 21   | 27   | 25   | 18   |
| DVS bonuses/annuities                    | 24   | 21   | 17   | 14   |

### Moving Wall

Through the efforts of many individuals, the Town of Arlington hosted "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Moving Wall" otherwise known as "The Moving Wall" over the Patriots' Day weekend. This memorial was located on the Arlington High School grounds and was viewable 24 hours a day for three days. The Moving Wall is a half-size replica of the Washington D.C. Vietnam Veterans Memorial and has been touring the country for more than twenty years.

Having The Moving Wall memorial come to Arlington was truly a special event, one the Moving Wall Committee was honored to be a part of. The Committee would like to thank all the volunteers for their tremendous efforts in coordinating this event in a short amount of time. With the support of the Town we were able to present an event that was enjoyed by many residents, students, and Veterans from around the state. The Committee would like to give special thanks to Curt Morgan who sparked the idea to bring the Wall to Arlington and worked tirelessly with so many supporters to present an event that everyone was proud of. The Committee would also like to thank the many sponsors and donors, their contributions made the event possible. It was a very moving and emotional three days, three days we will never forget.



*Moving Wall Ceremony*



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## DISABILITY COMMISSION

In its eighteenth year of service the Commission on Disability has continued to provide information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to Arlington officials, residents, public and private agencies, and others to ensure that people with physical, sensory, cognitive, and other disabilities have equal access to Town facilities, services and programs. The all-volunteer Commission currently has six Commissioners with three vacancies. As mandated by State law, at full membership the majority of Commissioner's must have a physical, cognitive, or sensory disability. The mandate brings an intimate and informed understanding of disabilities to the Commission's agenda and ultimate decisions. The Commission continues to bring awareness to Arlington policy makers and other residents as to the legal rights of people with disabilities, enforcing those rights, and working towards community inclusion to make Arlington a stronger Town, capitalizing on the strengths each person living here has to offer.

Coordination and implementation of the Commission's agenda and goals continues to be handled by Jack Jones, ADA Coordinator. Cooperation between the Commission and the ADA Coordinator is effective and efficient. The Commission continues to occupy office and meeting space in the Senior Center building at 20 Academy Street.

### 2011 Activities

- The Commission hosted Joe Connelly, Director of Recreation, and Carol Kowalski, Director of Planning & Community Development, at its monthly meetings. Mr. Connelly said that over the next few years all play fields within the Town would have at least one piece of accessible play equipment. He also agreed that all play fields with portable toilets would have at least one accessible toilet. Ms. Kowalski discussed with the Commission safety concerns regarding bricks in the pedestrian path of travel at the Senior Center building. She agreed to explore applications other than bricks, which would be safer with a smoother surface and also appropriate for this historical area.
- The Commission again had an information booth at Town Day to answer questions and provide resources to Arlington residents.
- The Commission continued to request that the Town develop a policy against the use of bricks in sidewalks along the pedestrian path of travel.
- The Commission co-sponsored at Town Hall the third annual Diversity Career Fair. Twenty-three employers from health care,

financial, retail, and non-profit organizations participated.

- With DPW, the Commission continued its curb cut ramp project by monitoring the installation of curb cut ramps along several streets in Town.
- The Commission reviewed and issued decisions on several variance requests that had been submitted to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.

### 2012 Goals

The following are Commission goals for 2012 that will continue to revolve around the very clear parameters of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- Continue to represent the rights of Arlington residents living with disabilities.
- Continue to monitor accessible pedestrian safety, installation of curb cut ramps and the enforcement of snow and ice removal from curb cut ramps and sidewalks.
- Co-sponsor the fourth Annual Diversity Career Fair.
- Continue to work with Town towards the adoption of a policy of replacing brick curb cuts, sidewalks, and crossings in need of repair with smoother, safer, and more accessible surfaces.
- Continue to meet with Town Officials to discuss the rights of people with disabilities in order to work towards full community inclusion within the Town of Arlington.
- Continue to reach out to other commissions, groups, and agencies to strengthen connections, referrals, information and resources.
- Work towards reaching full membership.

### Retirements/Recognitions

In 2011 Commissioner members Barbara Cutler Ed.D, and Barbara Jones resigned from the Commission after each serving eighteen years. The Commission would like to recognize their many accomplishments and their dedication in helping to make Arlington a more inclusive community while serving on the Commission. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. Also in 2011 the Commission welcomed Michael Rademacher, Director of Public Works, as a member to the Commission.

The Commission meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 P.M. in the conference room of the Housing and Disability Program Office located at 20 Academy St., Suite # 203, Arlington (the Senior Center Building). Meetings are open to the public and residents are invited to attend to observe or voice their concerns.

# HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC) was created by Town Meeting in 1993 to advance issues related to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and to create a mechanism for addressing complaints arising out of these issues. The mission of the AHRC is to work individually and collaboratively with other groups in our community to celebrate the ever-changing tapestry of our Town, and to emphasize, through educational outreach, the danger of intolerance at every level. The Town Manager, School Committee, and the Town Moderator have appointing authority for thirteen members of the commission.

The AHRC began the year by re-electing Nancy Rhoads as chairperson and Stacy Davison as vice chairperson.

### Community Education and Outreach

During the course of the year, the Commission sponsored or co-sponsored several events:

- A non-violent training led by Dennis Brown. Reverend Christine Elliot volunteered space at the Calvary Methodist Church. Approximately 35 people attended. Should there be a need for a non-violent response to a human rights violation, the AHRC can call on this group of people. The training has been used successfully when hate groups have staged demonstrations in small towns. These demonstrations are often designed to provoke a public response which will lead to liability for the Town. Mr. Brown's training has been utilized in Lexington on more than one occasion in the last several years when the Westboro Baptist Church has demonstrated there.
- A meeting for Town of Arlington groups that also address concerns of diversity and inclusion. Regina Caines led the participants in an evaluation of respective missions and actions for achieving those goals. As a result, it was agreed that these groups should aim to work in a more coordinated fashion. The AHRC will coordinate regular meetings to increase communication.
- Two talks organized and run by Arlington Community Education.
- A booth at Town Day
- Collaborating in Arlington Public Schools
- Liaison to Ottoson's Building Respect Task Force.
- Liaison to the Superintendent's Diversity Task Group.
- Provided mediation and guidance to APS.
- Developed trial liaison program between the

Commission and each principal, as well as the Director of METCO to provide resources and guidance regarding human rights concerns.

- Consulted with the Special Education Parents Advisory Committee (SEPAC).
- Attended meetings to develop the Policy on Bullying.
- Attended meetings in Boston with METCO parents to hear their concerns.

### Working with Town Government

The AHRC chaired the Response Coordination Team (RCT). Composed of Superintendent of Schools Kathy Bodie, School Committee member Joe Curro, Reverend Christine Elliott, Arlington Public Information Officer Joan Roman, APD Chief Frederick Ryan, Chair of the Diversity Task Group of Vision 2020 Miriam Stein, and Reverend David Swaim. The Team developed a protocol to be used in the event of a hate incident or hate crime and a resolution, which has been adopted by the School Committee. It is anticipated that the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting will adopt the resolution in 2012.

In October, Chief Ryan presented updated information to the Commission on the Department's Compliance Performance Report.

### Incidents and Complaints

Despite two complaint packages being requested, the Commission received no formal complaints. One complaint related to discrimination based on mental illness and the other related to housing.

APD and APS notified the Commission of incidents involving graffiti, texting, racist speech, anti-Semitic speech and threats, and racial profiling.

### 2012 Goals

- Complete the HRC Commission's website.
- Permanently establish the school liaison program.
- Honor a group with the Arlington Human Rights Commission Award.
- Participate in Town Day.
- Increase collaboration with relevant Town groups.
- Adoption of the Human Rights Resolution developed by the RCT by the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting.
- Increase outreach to other community groups.