

8th Annual Starbelly Golf Tournament to Benefit The Arc

Army Employee, Musician Friend Organizes Golf Tournament

Date: Friday, July 30, 2010

Place: Ruggles Golf Course in Aberdeen



Several years ago, Joseph McKeever, an employee with the U.S. Army Developmental Test Command, and his close friend, Dennis Schocket, a local musician from the band, Starbelly, (a Baltimore-based power pop band that makes frequent trips to the Big Apple to perform) were discussing what they might do to support their local community. It occurred to them that an agency serving developmentally disabled citizens, such as The Arc, would be a worthwhile organization to help out. So they participated in an agency tour and decided to organize a charity golf tournament to raise funds for The Arc.

Their first tournament took place in the summer of 2003, and since then, the event has morphed into an annual fundraiser that takes place every July and has netted \$16,500.

McKeever does much of the logistical legwork to pull together each annual tournament, and Schocket gets many of the golfers to participate in the tournament, in addition to providing musical entertainment for tournament participants. Ten volunteers help organize the fundraiser as well.

"We wanted to find something that was local, where all the money stayed right here in the area," McKeever said of the tournament genesis. "I had earlier in my life donated a car to The Arc, and I thought, 'Well, I'll go to The Arc and talk to somebody there.'"

As it turned out, he and Schocket were invited to one of the agency's open-houses and were then convinced that The Arc was an organization they had to support.

"They gave us the whole tour, and we met a lot of the people who get services there," McKeever recalled. "It's a fantastic organization for giving these people a better life."

Tournament participants can play in teams, and their entry fees include the golf, food and beverages provided, and a variety of door prizes.

McKeever said tournament participation averages about 25 to 30 teams (100 -120 golfers), although a full field is anticipated due to the success of the last few year's tournaments. About half of the players work for tenant activities on APG, he added. The tournament appears to run smoothly because of the work McKeever, Schocket and the volunteers put into it well ahead of tournament time.

Anyone who is interested in participating in this July's tournament can contact Joseph McKeever at starbellymusic@aol.com or visit the Starbelly Web site, www.starbellygolf.com or contact Paul Levine at The Arc at 410-879-6785, extension 356 or email plevine@arcncr.org

