

# THE CONNECTOR

## NEWSLETTER

August 2025



### HAT FASHION SHOW SUCCESS

Our first-ever Hat Fashion Show was a joyful celebration of creativity, self-expression, and inclusion!

Participants walked or rolled the runway in one-of-a-kind hats to music of their choice, dazzling the crowd with color, confidence, and community spirit.

Thank you to everyone who participated, cheered from the audience, and helped make this a highlight of the Disability Pride Celebration!

See more photos on our website.



### THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING DISABILITY PRIDE WITH US!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us at this year's Disability Pride Celebration at Harmon Park! From our incredible attendees, passionate vendors, and dedicated volunteers, to our generous sponsors—you made this event a powerful day of inclusion, advocacy, and joy!

We're already looking forward to next year—see you in July 2026! 💜



# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## **Disability Advocacy is for All of Us**

As we celebrate Disability Pride Month this July, it's important to recognize that disability advocacy isn't just for the 1 in 4 Americans currently living with a disability. It's for all of us.

Whether through illness, injury, or aging, most of us will experience some form of temporary or permanent disability in our lifetime. According to the CDC, more than 40% of people over 65 live with a disability, and this number is expected to grow as our population ages. Disability is part of the human experience.

That's why the work of organizations like The Arc of Buffalo County is so vital. Our mission is simple but powerful: to ensure that every person has the opportunity to learn, live, work, and play where and how they choose. Achieving that mission requires community events and direct services. But, it also requires public policy that invests in accessible communities, inclusive education, employment supports, and a strong social safety net.

Many people with disabilities still face barriers to healthcare, housing, and economic opportunity. Programs like Medicaid, Social Security, accessible public transportation, and special education funding aren't handouts. They are lifelines that make it possible for people with disabilities to contribute to their families, communities, and workplaces.

When we strengthen these systems, we're building a more just, compassionate, and resilient society for everyone.

This month, The Arc of Buffalo County encourages all of us to listen to the voices of our neighbors with disabilities and to advocate for the policies and practices that uphold their rights and dignity. Because disability rights are human rights. And we all have a stake in that future.

The Arc of Buffalo County Board of Directors

Jordan Squiers

Chelsea Jensen

Janet Anderson

Penny Warford

Christine Fisher

Jordyn Ihle Robinson

Grace Thomsen

Angela Klaus

Dani Straetker

Juli-Ann, Self Advocate

Hunter, Self Advocate

# ACCESS ALL-STARS★★★★★

We are proud to honor the 2025 Access All-Stars. These are businesses, employers, and organizations in our region that go above and beyond to support inclusion and accessibility, as submitted by our members.

## 2025 Access All-Star Award Winners Include:

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly Businesses**

Advanced Auto Parts  
The Big Apple  
Golden Ticket Cinema

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly Restaurant**

The Lodge  
Perkins  
Pizza Ranch  
The Cellar  
Culver's  
Kyoto  
Whiskey Creek

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly Coffee Shop**

Baristas  
Java Junction  
7 Brew  
Kitts Coffee Shop  
Dunkin Donuts

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly Grocery Store**

HyVee  
Apple Market

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly Retail Store**

Walmart  
PetSmart  
Hobby Lobby  
Target

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly Health or Wellness Provider (gym, clinic, therapist)**

Kearney Family YMCA  
Family Practice  
Elevate Counseling  
CHI Wellness Center

### **Favorite accessible recreational space or entertainment venue (park, movie theatre, etc.)**

The World Theatre  
YMCA  
Trails & Rails Museum  
Cruise Nite Car Show  
UNK Sports

### **Favorite Disability-Friendly local service provider (salon, mechanic, tech support, etc)**

Jim Brown - Cozad Barbershop  
Salon 11/27 - Lindsay Cody  
Walmart

Kearney Police Department  
Buffalo County Sheriff's Office

### **Favorite School, Daycare, or Educational program that supports kids/adults with disabilities**

Kearney Public Library  
Fabulous Fridays at Trails & Rails Museum  
Buddy Bowling  
Bright Futures Preschool  
Hands of the Heartland  
ILC

These champions are creating  
a more inclusive community  
for everyone!





# UPCOMING EVENTS

We have a lot of great upcoming events. We'd love to see you. If you have questions or suggestions, give us a call at 308-237-4343 or email [ArcofBuffaloCounty@gmail.com](mailto:ArcofBuffaloCounty@gmail.com)

## AUGUST

### **End of Summer - Dance Party**

Tuesday - August 5<sup>th</sup>

6 pm to 7:30 pm at Harmon Park Activity Center.

Cost: \$5 per person.

Notes: We are serving Hotdogs, Chips & a Drink

### **Beginner Fitness for Females**

Monday, August 11 - Sept. 29

2:45 pm - 3:30 at Kearney CrossFit

Cost: \$80

Trainer Jade Brown will take participants through a beginner level class.

### **Girls & Guys Night Out - Mixer**

Wednesday- August 13<sup>th</sup>

5:45 pm - Kyoto

You are responsible for providing your own transportation and paying for your food and drinks.

### **Craft Class- Mini Door Hangers**

Monday, August 25

4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

at the Arc Office

Cost: \$15; Limited to 10 people

### **Buddy Bowling**

Wednesdays - Sept. 17. - Nov. 5

4 pm to 5 pm at the Big Apple

Cost: \$40 for members

\$50 for non-members

Register by Sept. 10

## SEPTEMBER

### **Loper Stars**

September 14, 2025

6 pm to 7:30 pm at Cope Stadium Band (Drumline), Sport Specific Activities, Cheer and Dance

Register by Sept. 1st. -

See *LOPER Flyer*

### **Girls & Guys Night Out - Mixer**

Tuesday, September 9

5:45 pm - Whiskey Creek

You are responsible for providing your own transportation and paying for your food and drinks.

### **Craft Class**

#### **Mason Jar Candle Holder**

Monday, September 22

4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

at the Arc Office

Cost: \$15; Limited to 10 people



### **Coming Up This Fall/Winter:**

Cooking Classes

Craft Classes

Girls & Guys Night Out Mixer

Halloween Dance

The Arc of Buffalo County

# Merch Store

*Fundraiser*

Online Store Open  
until August 11, 2025



**\$15**

- Prices starting at \$15
- T-Shirts
- Hoodies
- Crew Neck Sweatshirts
- Zip Up Options!



**SCAN ME!**

**Order Here:**

<https://thearcapparel2025.iteorder.com/shop/sale/>



4511 6th Avenue  
Kearney, Nebraska 68845  
308-237-4343

ArcOfBuffaloCounty@gmail.com  
[www.ArcOfBuffaloCounty.org](http://www.ArcOfBuffaloCounty.org)

  
**The Arc.**  
Buffalo County

# THE ARC OF BUFFALO COUNTY

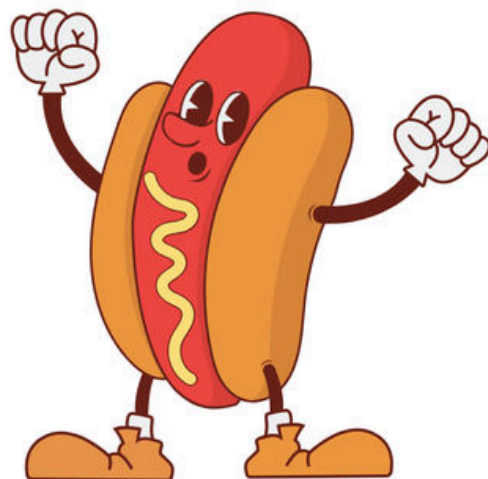


## Dance party!

**Tuesday, August 5, 6 pm - 7:30 pm**  
**at the Harmon Park Activity Center**  
3100 5th Avenue, Kearney, NE 68845

**Hotdogs, Chips, & a Drink provided.**  
**The cost is \$5 per person.**

Questions? Call 308-237-4343.



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**The Arc.**  
Buffalo County



Come join **LOPER STARS**  
because

*"Together we shine!"*

Help the Loper athletic programs kick off the fall season! We want to welcome individuals with disabilities and their families.

All ages and abilities are welcome!

# SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

6:00 – 7:30 PM | COPE STADIUM

**ACTIVITIES:**

- Band (Drumline)
- Cheer and Dance
- Sport-specific Activities
- Highlight Individuals & Families

*Register for  
Loper Stars*

REGISTER BY  
**SEPTEMBER 1**  
TO ENSURE  
T-SHIRT & SIZE



Scan QR Code





The Arc of Buffalo County

# BUDDY BOWLING

**Wednesdays**

**September 17 - November 5  
from 4-5 pm at The Big Apple,  
500 West 4th St. in Kearney**

## BOWLERS

**Cost: \$40 for members  
\$50 for non-members**

**Register by September 10**



Scan the QR Code or  
use this LINK  
[https://forms.gle/Sr  
RmlzByQVsJYNVN8](https://forms.gle/SrRmlzByQVsJYNVN8)

## VOLUNTEERS

**Please register to volunteer  
with our Google Form**



Scan the QR Code or  
use this LINK  
[https://forms.gle/7d  
eAdeksPqbkpNy46](https://forms.gle/7deAdeksPqbkpNy46)

Buddy Bowling is an 8-week bowling program that brings together people (ages 6 & up) with developmental disabilities and volunteers from UNK, KHS, & the community. On the last day of Buddy Bowling, we will enjoy a food and awards celebration.



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**The Arc**  
Buffalo County



4511 6th Avenue, Suite 204  
Kearney, NE 68845



The Arc relies on fundraising and donations to make our events and programs possible. Ways to Donate: Cash, Check, or Card. Scan the QR Code to donate at our Website.



## EVENTS REGISTRATION FORM

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Wheelchair Walker Crutches

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Events:

- ☐ Craft Class  
☐ Buddy Bowling  
☐ Beginner Fitness Class  
☐ Summer Dance Party

Additional limitations and/or information that will benefit the staff helping you or your person:

Does the participant have any food/drug allergies? If yes, please list:

Card Payments can be accepted over the phone. Please make checks payable to:

Arc of Buffalo County  
4511 6th Avenue, Suite 204  
Kearney, NE 68845