

BOSWELL REGIONAL CENTER'S BULLETIN

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Words of appreciation from Diana Mikula



Boswell Regional Center's

The Boswell Bulletin is published to inform the public, employees, family members and friends on Boswell Regional Center's activities, programs and progress. This publication also seeks to provide information to those interested in the work conducted by Boswell's employees to enrich the lives of those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

Clint Ashley, Director
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Editor



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ON THE COVER:

Taking a break from cleaning the building as part of Boswell's Employment Services division, Community individual Perry, right, enjoys a balmy summer day on the steps of the historic Boswell Auditorium while wearing a mask. The auditorium was built in 1928 in one of the numerous phases of Dr. Boswell's campus building projects. Using a \$450,000 appropriation from the Mississippi State Legislature, the money also funded the Preventorium, apartments, dairy barn and a cottage for the assistant superintendent.



Dear Boswell staff,

I know you understand first-hand just how difficult 2020 has been. We have seen the pandemic spread across our state, bringing with it fear and anxiety about our health and the health of our families. It has affected our workplaces and the economy, causing uncertainty around the jobs of many of our friends and families.

Despite that difficulty, I am thankful for each and every one of you and the service you continue to provide to our fellow Mississippians who are most in need. However, I also want to remind you that the difficulties are not over yet. Mississippi is not alone in seeing increasing number of coronavirus infections across our communities. We have to remain cautious and remember that the Centers for Disease Control and our own Mississippi State Department of Health remind us that continued social distancing and precautions like vigilant hand washing and mask wearing are important ways to prevent the spread of this disease that has disrupted our lives so much.

We've been washing our hands all our lives and we know why it is important. It is still important to remember to wash properly though - wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, reach between our fingers, scrub our fingertips, and wash around our wrists and thumbs. Washing our hands properly will keep us and everyone in our programs safe.

One thing many of us probably didn't do before March is wear masks in public. It's new, it's uncomfortable, and it still feels strange, but please remember how important masks are in preventing the spread of illness. Experts tell us that COVID-19 can be spread by people who don't have symptoms or know they are infected. That's why masks are so important. They won't make this virus disappear, but they can help keep it from spreading. When we wear masks in public, we are protecting ourselves, our families, our communities, and everyone who is served by the Department of Mental Health.

As I said, we know how difficult the past six months have been. Please make sure you are taking care of yourselves, and always remember that if you need help, you shouldn't hesitate to reach out. Ask about your Employee Assistance Program, which provides access to anxiety and stress management services, or call the SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990. Thank you again for all you are doing. Your work is making a positive difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Sincerely,
Diana Mikula
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Mental Health

New leadership on DMH Board



Dr. Manda Griffin named chair of the Board of Mental Health

Dr. Manda Griffin of Houlika has been named the Chair of the Board of Mental Health for the year beginning July 1, 2020.

Dr. Griffin has extensive experience in the medical field. She is a registered respiratory therapist, a licensed social worker, a board certified family nurse practitioner, and a board certified psychiatric nurse practitioner. She received her bachelor's degree from Mississippi University for Women and her master's degree from Alcorn State University. She also has a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Maryville University.

She has worked with several hospitals in north Mississippi, as well as with GSV Care Medical Clinic in Houlika, a family medical clinic that provides health care to pediatric, adult, and older patients. She also serves on the board's Patient Care Subcommittee. Dr. Griffin was appointed to serve as the social work representative on the board.

The Board of Mental Health is composed of nine members appointed by the Governor of Mississippi and confirmed by the State Senate. Members' terms are staggered to ensure continuity of quality care and professional oversight of services. By statute, the nine-member board is composed of a physician, a psychiatrist, a clinical psychologist, a social worker with experience in the field of mental health, and one citizen representative from each of Mississippi's five congressional districts (as existed in 1974).



Dr. Jim Herzog Named Vice Chair of the Board of Mental Health

Dr. Jim Herzog of Oxford has been named the Vice Chair of the Mississippi Board of Mental Health for the year beginning July 1, 2020.

Dr. Herzog is a clinical psychologist in private practice. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Creighton University and a master's and doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Mississippi.

Currently, his practice involves consultation with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation/Disability Services. He has previously provided services through Region 8 Mental Health Services and Catholic Charities, as well as providing individual therapy and assessment with adults, adolescents, and children. Dr. Herzog was appointed to serve as the Clinical Psychologist representative on the board.





Spotlight On...

Boswell hosts campus parade for parents, friends of individuals

One of the most trying aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the inability of family members and friends to visit Boswell individuals during the time the campus has been closed. Boswell hosted a parade May 29 to allow family members to drive through campus to wave to loved ones, drop off packages and let them know they are loved and missed. Organized by Boswell's Recreations Department, the parade passed by campus buildings and front yards filled with individuals sitting under tents, allowing them a perfect view of the passing parade. Cars, trucks and golf carts decorated with balloons and personalized signs were a festive sight. Participants threw beads and candy and made individuals feel special.

Others participating in the parade were Magee Police Chief Randy Crawford, Mayor Dale Berry and the Magee Fire Department. A few photos of the event are below:



Magee Police Chief Randy Crawford led the Boswell parade through campus. Chief Crawford is a long-time supporter of Boswell and always participates, when asked, in Boswell activities.



Individuals were happy to see Clint Ashley and Cindy Womack, who rode in Administration's decorated golf cart.



Magee Mayor Dale Berry rode in the parade, waving to all of his friends. Mayor Berry is also very supportive of Boswell and knows many individuals by name.



Spotlight On...



Family members decorated vehicles with their loved ones' names, letting them know they're not forgotten.



Anna Beeson, left, the daughter of Will Beeson, campus unit administrator, helped her dad by manning the package drop-off location for families wishing to leave items for their loved ones.



Spotlight On...

Retirees given altered, yet heartfelt send-offs

Boswell employees who choose to retire can normally celebrate with their supervisors and fellow employees at a campus-wide or departmental reception. To follow social distancing and limited access guidelines, right now retiring employees are limited to sharing their last day on the job with fellow employees with whom they've already come in contact.

In spite of the altered receptions, retirees enjoyed departmental gatherings highlighted by the presentation of engraved trophy presented by Boswell's Friends and Family Association and refreshments. Below are some photos from summer retirement receptions:



Cindy Quick, left, director of staff development, retired at the end of May after many years of dedicated service. She received an engraved trophy from Boswell's Friends and Family Association, presented by Clint Ashley, right.



The "two Cindys," Cindy Quick, left, and Cindy Womack, right, worked together for nearly 20 years.



Stanley Sullivan, left, was named Employee of the Year in 2018 for his exemplary work as Boswell's plumber. He is pictured at his retirement reception with Clint Ashley, right.



William Armstrong, right, retired in May after serving faithfully in a number of areas around campus. He ended his career in Day Services. He received a trophy at his reception from Clint Ashley, left.



Spotlight On...



Syble Thornton, right, has kept Boswell's clients looking stylish and neat in her latest "finds" from frequent shopping trips made during her years as clothing coordinator. She declined a retirement reception but was surprised with a cake to take home and enjoy with family by her supervisor, Cindy Womack, along with an engraved trophy.



Willie Willis, left, kept unit floors and other surfaces sparkling during his many years on the Maintenance staff. At his send-off, he received a card made with a client's artwork and an engraved trophy for his dedication from Marty Sasser, maintenance director.



Shannon Austin, center, worked in several departments, including dietary, before ending her career in Community Services. At her reception, she was presented with a handmade card containing a client's artwork from Ronald Britt, director of Community Services, and an engraved trophy from Clint Ashley, right.



Spotlight On...

Summer blood drive was huge success

Despite dealing with the current health crisis in numerous ways, including working long shifts and filling in wherever a need has arisen, Boswell employees rose to the challenge of assisting Mississippi Blood Services with its summer blood drive. Held July 9 on campus, a record number of staff and administrators volunteered to donate critically-needed blood in the midst of their hectic day.



Susan Shoemaker, RN, director of Pinelake, relaxes in the MS Blood Services mobile unit as she donates blood during Boswell's summer blood drive.

A few more random shots of summer!



Boswell nurse Shonda Fontenot, left, proves that nobody is exempt from temperature checks, even Magee's Chief of Police Randy Crawford, right. Fontenot and other campus nurses braved the heat and assisted with checks of extra visitors on the day of the parade. Security officers are in charge of conducting checks on a daily basis.



It's rare to find light pink crepe myrtles growing these days, but several are still going strong on campus, serving here as a beautiful border around Boswell's Auditorium.

A little parade-goer expressed her appreciation to Boswell for providing her and her family the opportunity to see their loved ones, even if it was from afar.



Special Thanks To...

Maranatha Baptist Church in Mize (Bro. Rudy Jackson's church) for making masks for staff to wear during the health crisis!

Do's and Don'ts

Do's and Don'ts for Health Care Staff Wearing Facemasks During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Do's

- ✓ Wear a cloth or medical facemask whenever you are within 6 feet of other people.
- ✓ Wear a medical facemask as personal protective equipment when providing direct care.
- ✓ Change your facemask if it is damaged (e.g., torn, wet or visibly soiled) or becomes hard to breathe through.
- ✓ Remove ear loop facemasks by handling only the ear loops and tie face masks by handling only the ties.
- ✓ Perform hand hygiene before and after removing a facemask.
- ✓ Practice extended use of disposable medical facemasks (e.g., do not remove mask except to discard) rather than reuse (e.g., remove and store mask between uses) if supplies are limited.
- ✓ In crisis situations, if a facemask must be re-used, store and handle in a manner that prevents contamination of the inside of the mask and wash hands after re-applying.

Don'ts

- ✗ Wear a cloth facemask as personal protective equipment (e.g., when providing direct care to a patient).
- ✗ Remove your mask unless you are at least 6 feet away from other people, this includes co-workers, visitors and patients.
- ✗ Touch the front of a used mask during use or removal.
- ✗ Wear a facemask that is soiled, damaged or hard to breathe through.
- ✗ Wear a medical facemask for aerosol generating procedures (use an N95, Elastomeric, or Powered Air Purifying Respirator for these procedures).
- ✗ Reuse medical facemasks unless the organization has reached crisis situation and has contacted the local health authority and no alternative or additional supplies can be anticipated.

* Facemasks are just one element that should be used in conjunction with other measures, such as social distancing, to protect people from exposure to COVID-19. When facemasks are worn as PPE they must be used with other PPE as determined by the clinical situation and facility policies and procedures.