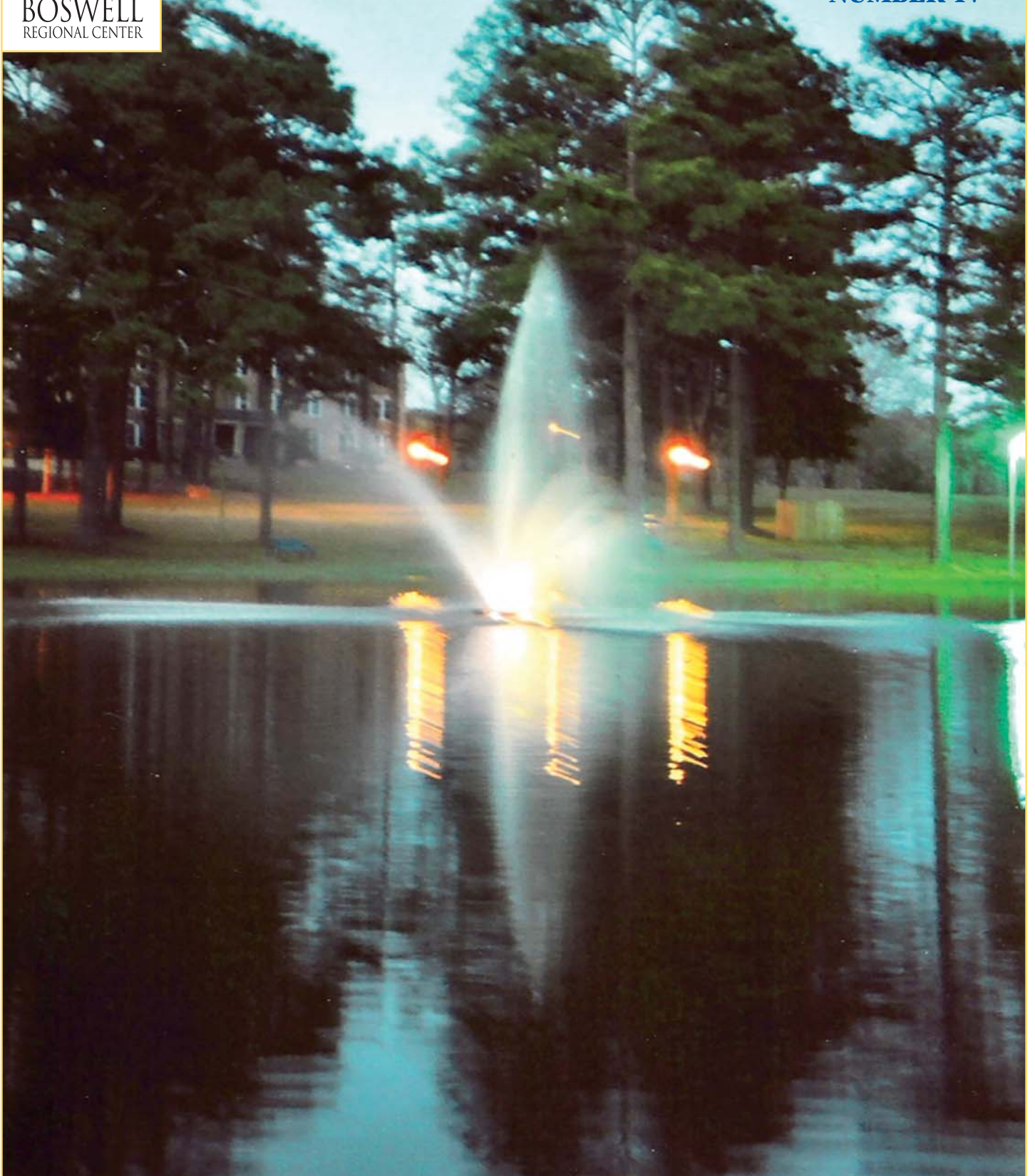




# BOSWELL REGIONAL CENTER'S **BULLETIN**

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# DIRECTOR'S COLUMN



*Raymond Johnson*  
*Director*

Ask any good business owner or responsible home owner, and they'll tell you they appreciate having adequate insurance. Without it, they are subject to property damage,

lawsuits and innumerable losses. While some might question what a good insurance policy has to do with Boswell Regional Center, I believe there are some similarities.

Even if you don't have a family member with mental retardation or other disabilities, there is comfort in knowing that quality care is available 24 hours a day if and when you ever need it.

At Boswell Regional Center, quality care means comprehensive and advanced treatment, coupled with a constant focus on the individuals' needs, regardless of the level of disability.

Boswell has professionals in every field related to the care and treatment of the mentally disabled. Our experience and broad base of expertise means we have seen and managed virtually every condition related to mental retardation.

In addition, we have a unique ability to bring together, when needed, experts from within our network of Department of Mental Health facilities to solve individuals' specific problems in an integrated manner.

That ability to corroborate with other centers from across the state can make all the difference in the positive outcomes of specific challenges we face on a daily basis.

By the same token, Boswell's focus on adult individuals is equally important to others. Improved treatment of children with mental retardation at other centers that serve this segment of the population has led to a growing

number of adults who desire to spend their adult years at Boswell.

Early intervention and greater access to medical and therapeutic care for disabled children has resulted in a growing segment of adults who are a good fit for Boswell. We place great importance on job training and placement, community living when appropriate, and a more independent lifestyle. These factors have created our reputation as a desirable place to live.

Because of this reputation, we consistently have a waiting list of individuals from across Mississippi eager to make Boswell their home. The single biggest problem we face is finding adequate space for housing, programming and treatment. But despite the challenges associated with this situation, I must say it does have its positive aspects.

We are constantly working to upgrade our existing buildings and build new ones to make room for additional individuals.

In support of our mission to provide a more independent way of life for those who have completed the campus living program, our new apartment complex in Magee is nearing completion. These spacious units will offer private bedrooms and baths for individuals, a common area for recreation and programming, and staff apartments. We hope this first construction phase will be followed by several more as our individuals develop to the point that they can live in this unique community setting.

In case I haven't been specific enough - helping individuals learn to manage their own lives is one of Boswell's primary goals.

Just as you and I like to make our own decisions, big and small, regarding our daily lives, the greater majority of our individuals feel the same way. We are constantly striving to bring the latest treatment and therapies to the fulfillment of this common goal we all share.

In 2005, it will be our challenge and commitment to find ways to accomplish this as well as many other goals that will result in more independence, greater fulfillment and a brighter future for those we serve.

## BRC BULLETIN

The Boswell Bulletin is a publication of Boswell Regional Center. The Bulletin is published free of charge to inform the



public and interested family members and individuals about Boswell Regional Center activities, policies and progress. This publication also serves to provide information to those interested in mental retardation and the clients served at BRC.

**Raymond Johnson, Director**  
**Kara Kimbrough, Editor**

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health and each facility to recruit, employ, and promote qualified employees and applicants without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability. The Department of Mental Health/Bureau of Mental Retardation complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. It is the sole purpose of this act to provide a clear mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities.



### COVER PHOTO

Boswell's fountain glows in colors of red, white and blue at twilight in honor of all U.S. troops in

Iraq, but especially in support of three of its own — Dr. Robert Bailey, Jimmy Joiner and Dale Mitchell — employees who are on leave while serving their country.

# BRC'S EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM CELEBRATES FIRST GRADUATION

The first graduating class of Boswell's Early Intervention Program in its Meadville location was honored with a special ceremony held in December 2004. Twenty-four children at or near the age of three successfully completed the habilitation program presented by EIP, which is one of BRC's Community Programs.



EIP Director Rosalynn Forrest, left, pins a "Well Done!" ribbon on the dress of graduate Natalia Tavaréz, center, during graduation ceremonies, as teacher John Hardy, right, handles certificate duties.

EIP Director Rosalynn Forrest presented each child with a special certificate and a school backpack in preparation for daycare, preschool or other mainstream educational programs.

Forrest said the event was bittersweet as she and the center's

employees said farewell to many children and families they had grown to know well over the past years.

"We are very excited that so many children and their families have progressed to the point that they are ready to move to the next stage of their lives," she said. "At the same time, it's hard to say goodbye after working in their homes, hosting them at our center, and generally feeling that we are part of their families, sometimes for nearly three years."

Teachers at the center work with developmentally-delayed children from birth to the age of three to help them increase their cognitive, developmental, social and fine/gross motor skills. Many children enter the program as infants, while some are one to two years of age. Either way, close relationships form with the families of the children as well as the students themselves, Forrest said.

EIP's facility moved to Meadville from Natchez in 2003.



Teacher Yaschia Davis, left, presents a graduation certificate to Kendrick Rowan, center, as BRC Assistant Director Gloria Johnson, center, and other family members look on.

Forrest said the move has been beneficial to many parents, who enjoy the convenience of being able to bring their children to classes. In addition, EIP teachers conduct classes in the child's home, or meets with them at area churches, daycares or Head Start centers. Services include a comprehensive evaluation, speech and physical therapy, educational instruction, social services and parental training and support.



EIP staff members pictured with BRC Assistant Director Gloria Johnson, far left, are from left: teacher Yaschia Davis, Director Rosalynn Forrest, teacher John Hardy, Caroline McKowen, speech pathologist, and Janice Taylor, office secretary.

# CHRISTMAS '04 WAS A M

December is always a busy month at Boswell. Not only are there numerous Christmas activities and parties planned for individuals, but the Board of Mental Health's monthly meeting is typically held at BRC each December. A flurry of activities ranging from preparing Christmas decorations for the enjoyment of residents



BRC Director Raymond Johnson, far left, welcomes the Board of Mental Health to the campus at the beginning of the board's monthly meeting.



Case manager Cindy Allbritton, left, helped prepare and serve refreshments for the Community Services division's Christmas Party, an annual event for individuals that features a meal, keepsake photos with Santa, and a dance. This year, BRC's "Friends and Family" association also provided fruit baskets for the community individuals to enjoy during the holidays.



Community residents, some of whom live in separate areas throughout the county, enjoy visiting with each other at the division's annual Christmas Party.



Priority One Bank in Magee has adopted BRC's retirees who live in the area. At their annual Christmas Party for this special group, Vickie, seated center, holds tight to the hand of her long-time friend, Charlene Loyd, Magee branch manager.



Ole Miss fan Tommy proudly shows off his new insulated cup that he received at the bank party.

# MEMORABLE ONE AT BRC

as well as visitors, preparing special meals, and decorating Christmas floats kept just about every department busy from Thanksgiving to the end of the holiday season. Below are some scenes from just a small sample of BRC's Christmas festivities:



BRC's "Friends and Family" association purchased hooded sweatshirts to present to individuals at their annual campus Christmas Party. Janet was excited to receive a colorful red one.



Charlene checks out the stash of presents waiting to be opened at the Priority One Bank Party. Each retiree's "Wish List" was filled by bank employees, who say this method of celebrating the holidays is much more fulfilling than buying gifts for each other.



A horse-drawn wagon was just one of the creative entries enjoyed by individuals and staff alike at BRC's own campus Christmas Parade. Bruce Hutchison of the Maintenance Department provided the creative "float."



Charles unwraps his sweatshirt and looks for other goodies from the "Friends and Family" association in his Christmas bag.



Community Services' "Island of Misfit Toys," featuring Director Ronald Britt as Jack-in-the-Box, aka Uncle Sam, won first place in the campus parade, which had a patriotic theme.

# AAMR 2004 CALLED A 'GREAT SUCCESS'

Several hundred professionals in the field of mental health and mental retardation converged on the Pearl River Resort in November, 2004, to participate in the 23rd Annual Mental Health/Mental Retardation Joint Conference. The Mississippi-based organization also hosted members of the Southeastern AAMR at the conference in honor of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Chaired by BRC's Assistant Director Gloria Johnson, the three-day event was deemed a success by all who attended.

"I do feel we were able to offer a unique and very information package of educational presentations, exhibits, guest speakers and special events," Johnson said. "With the southeastern group meeting with us this year, it was important that we meet every-

one's professional needs and requirements, and offer an enjoyable event as well. I feel we accomplished both of those goals."

In addition to Johnson and BRC Director Raymond Johnson, BRC was represented by several staff members. BRC was recognized as the center with the second-highest number of informational posters displayed at the event, coming in second to North MS Regional Center.



Board of Mental Health member Amanda Griffin, left, congratulated BRC Assistant Director Gloria Johnson, right, at the end of a successful conference.



DMH employees who have exemplified outstanding service to individuals were recognized at the conference. BRC's "Stars" included David Tedford, pictured back row, fourth from left; Eddie Conn, sixth from left, and Chris Barnes, back row, far right. Also pictured with the group are DMH Executive Director Dr. Randy Hendrix, back row, far left, and Ed LeGrand, Deputy Executive Director, back row, second from left.



BRC's nurse recruitment plan was the topic of a display and information provided Pat Burris, far left, director of medical services, and Susan Butler, right, director of nursing.



BRC's geriatric and retirement programs serve as models for other centers. Education Director Cindy Womack listed several methods her department uses to provide a quality way of life for individuals in their Golden Years.

# *BRC'S GROUNDS CREW PREPARES FOR APARTMENT OPENING*

The sheetrock is up... the paint is dry... appliances have been installed, and the remainder of construction details are being finalized in preparation for individuals to move in BRC's new apartment complex within the coming months.

While interior work is near or close to being finished, the work is beginning in earnest for BRC's Grounds crew. Under the direc-

tion of L.J. Runnels, the crew is taking advantage of every warm winter day (and some that aren't) to make sure the complex's exterior is just as impressive as the interior. Lawns are being mowed and edged, and other landscaping details are being finalized in preparation for move-in day.

City officials have already commented on the positive impact BRC's new apartment complex

will have on an area that was formerly characterized by old, run-down buildings. Many of these were part of the "State Farm Property," and were unsightly structures that have been torn down in the past year.

The grounds of the complex make a major contribution to this new, scenic look BRC has given to a well-traveled highway running along the outskirts of the city.



While most lawns have been hibernating during the winter, the grounds of the new apartment complex have been well-maintained in preparation for a spring opening. Here Gene Lee attacks stray weeds at the building's edge.



Mowing the hundreds of acres on BRC's property is a never-ending job for the grounds crew. Work on the apartment complex grounds has been underway for several months, long before construction was complete.

# *NEW MEMBERS NAMED TO BOSWELL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE*

Boswell Regional Center recently announced the addition of four area residents to its Human Rights Advocacy Committee (HRAC).

Named to the committee were: Rev. Jerry Sullivan of Magee, formerly the Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Magee, and now Interim Pastor of First Baptist Church of Mendenhall; David Dunn of Magee, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Magee; Ramon Johnston of Mt. Olive, former principal of Mize and Mt. Olive High Schools; and Rev. Jimmy Sellers of Magee, Chaplain of Boswell Regional Center.

Boswell's HRAC is representative of professional and consumer groups and center employees involved in medical, psychological and other areas of treatment. Members perform oversight review of treatment programs to

insure that individuals served by the center are treated with dignity and respect.

Boswell Director Raymond Johnson said the expertise of the new members will be a valuable addition to the committee.

"We are fortunate to have the combined experience and insight

these men bring from their respective fields," he said. "They possess a wealth of knowledge in the important area of effective human relations, which is an important element of our mission. I only anticipate positive results from their input."



New members of the HRAC are, pictured from left: Rev. Jimmy Sellers, Ramon Johnston, Rev. Jerry Sullivan and David Dunn.

# *ANOTHER BRC EMPLOYEE LEAVES TO DEFEND THE U.S.*

Another event that's been dubbed "Farewell (for just a little while) Reception" was held recently to send off Dale Mitchell, a registered nurse in BRC's Medical Services Department, to serve with his unit in Iraq.

Mitchell was presented with a patriotic cake and presents from his supervisors and fellow employees in Medical Services. He joins two other employees, Dr. Robert Bailey and Jimmy Joiner in representing the U.S. (and BRC) in Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Dale Mitchell, RN, enjoyed a reception in the medical clinic on his last day before leaving for Iraq.

## **Boswell Regional Center**



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