



Boswell Regional Center's

VOLUME VII

BULLETIN

**Winter 2009
Number 9**



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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN



Raymond Johnson

As always we've had a lot of activity continuing on campus, including the installation of a new water tank. Although the project is not completed, we've been very excited to see this project get off the ground. This improvement will soon be a reality.

We received news that we've been given authorization to tear down Lakefront. This building is in sad shape and this will enable us to locate a couple of the new buildings that will house individuals on this spot which overlooks the lake.

We were delighted when we received a heavy snow in December. There was about six inches on the ground and an actual snow storm blew throughout the day. Of course, we took all precautions necessary to keep our individuals and staff safe.

Our Pine Straw Project received recognition with a story in the *Clarion-Ledger* on Christmas Day. On Page 3, you'll find some information on this worthwhile project that has been beneficial to our individuals and our vocational program.

We appreciate all the support and donations we received throughout the Christmas season that helped to make the holiday special for the individuals.

Each day we realize how fortunate we really are here at Boswell as we continue to care for the individuals entrusted to us.

Mission Statement

Boswell Regional Center provides Mississippians with intellectual and other developmental disabilities a comprehensive array of service options promoting independence and an optimal quality of life. Through an active partnership of individual, family, staff and community, these service options are designed to enhance each individual's quality of life through teaching skills which aid in reaching personal potential.



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 intellectual disabilities and the individuals served at BRC.

Raymond Johnson, Director

Kathy Lee, 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 Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities 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.

On the cover...

Pictured on the cover of this edition of the *Bulletin* is Boswell Regional Center's new water tank. The project, funded by bond money, is still in Phase 1. The tank is not operational yet, but should be up and running soon.

Pine Straw is a valuable resource at BRC

Boswell Regional Center is making the most of its resources by utilizing an existing source and existing manpower to create a product that has a widespread appeal.

The existing source is pine straw. The facility first set its sights on 20 acres of pine straw for harvesting.

The manpower is provided by Boswell individuals who receive payment for their work. The portable work crew, consisting of 12 individuals who receive services through Boswell Regional Center, have been trained in safety and continue to have on-site job coaches in the field through BRC's Vocational Services Department, as well as from the Supported Employment program. When going out into the field, their first order of business is putting on protective gear. In order to have "clean" straw, they remove any existing debris on top of the straw, which is usually in the form of limbs and rake the pine straw from between the pines into the open lanes for the equipment to rake, condition and bale the straw. The 17-pound bales are easy to han-



Individuals are pictured above raking pine straw that will be bundled into 17-pound bales.

dle both for stacking and transporting. They are also easy to market for individual as well as commercial lawn maintenance. While the program is still in its infancy, the facility is already looking forward to adding acreage in the future.

"This project is an innovative way to utilize existing resources we have on

our campus," Raymond Johnson, BRC facility director, said. "It is beneficial to both the facility and to the individuals that we serve."

NOTE:

BRC's Pine Straw Project received publicity in *The Clarion-Ledger* on Christmas Day.



Boswell's Christmas float participated in five Christmas parades this year: Magee, Mendenhall, Raleigh, Mt. Olive and Mize. The float took first place at Magee, Raleigh, Mendenhall and Mt. Olive and took second place at D'Lo.

Thank you to all the individuals and staff who worked so hard this year to produce another winning float for Boswell!

BRC staff members receive CSM

Several Boswell Regional Center employees received their Certificates in Supervisory Management (CSM) in December. Immediate supervisors, other BRC staff and the Executive Director of the Department of Mental Health were on hand to congratulate them.

Pictured at right are, front row, front left: Bill Blair (CSM), Risk Management; Karen Hamilton (CSM), Unit 1 Administrator; Lori Thames (CSM), Director of Records Management; Lisa Bryant, Director of Support Services; Jeff Martin, Director of Business Services; Ed LeGrand, Executive Director, DMH and Advisory Board Member; Dr. Larry Gibson, BRC Physician. Pictured back row, from left: Orlando Rankin (CSM) Director of Recreation; Teddy Hutchinson (CSM), Business Services; Bobby Hamilton (CSM), Unit 4 Administrator; Janet Gibson (CSM), Director of Education; Cindy Womack, Director of Residential Living; Steve Allen, Assistant Facility Director; and Henry Brown, Director of Risk Management. CSM is a training program built on the philosophy that the study of management can impact certain skills, attitudes, and behaviors which characterize successful management and is offered by the State Personnel Board.



Boswell employee wears many hats!

Boswell employee Vonnell Pruitt has worn many hats in her 13 years at Boswell. As a matter of fact, for the past several months she's worn a variety of hats...literally.

Over the years, Vonnell has faced many challenges including her recent reoccurring bout with cancer. She received permission to wear hats to work when the chemotherapy treatment she was undergoing caused her to lose her hair. This determined woman carries it with a sense of style by sporting an assortment of hats including seasonal ones (with a little help from some of her co-workers).

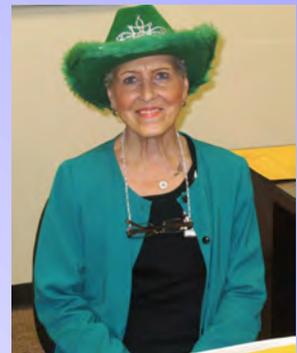
Vonnell has been a familiar face at Boswell since 1996 when she transferred here as a secretary for Program Services after 10 years at MS State Hospital. She currently works

as Administrative Assistant for Community ICF/MR. Interestingly enough, Vonnell worked in the TB hospital at the MS State Sanatorium in the 50's for about four and half years in basically the same location where she works now.

Vonnell has been married to her husband, Dick, for 59 years. They have three children, seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren (and one on the way).

She said she appreciates so much the prayers, thoughts and support she has received from many of her fellow employees during her illness.

"It's great to work with such caring people," she recently said. Vonnell added that coming to work each day helped to lift her spirits.



Some of the many hats of Vonnell Pruitt are pictured above.

The BEST of Fall Ball

Boswell Regional Center's Annual Fall Ball was held in October and was enjoyed by individuals and staff alike.

The Annual Football Game between the Hurricanes and the Tornadoes ended in a victory for the Hurricanes. The Hurricane cheerleaders were on hand to support their team.

The Boswell Employee Softball Tournament (B.E.S.T.) was an exciting match up between Kopedia's Team and Randy's Team. But Randy's team ended the contest and was the recipient of this year's trophy.

Thanks to the Education Department for sponsoring this annual event.



The best of the B.E.S.T.



Randy Robertson, at left, received the winning trophy on behalf of his team from Dr. Larry Gibson.



Commenting on the game from the sidelines were: DeWayne Pittman, William Gates, David Sullivan, Bobby Prince, Sam Cole and Steve Allen.

Boswell employee Barbara Jean Duckworth is pictured at her Retirement Reception in February. She was congratulated by Facility Director Raymond Johnson, who presented her a Certificate of Appreciation for her service to Boswell.



Three Join FOCUS

Boswell employees Susan Lott, Director of Support Coordination Services; Susan Butler, Director of Nursing Services and Calvert Sims, QMRP, Magee ICF/MR Group Homes, were selected to participate in the Department of Mental Health's third FOCUS Group.

Congratulations to these employees!



Let it Snow,
Let it Snow,
Let it Snow!

At left, the Rock at the intersection of Boswell Blvd. and Sanatorium Parkway was already decked out for Christmas, but the December snow made a picture perfect Christmas card.

The entire campus was covered in a blanket of white and looked like a "Winter Wonderland."

At right, the Auditorium is pictured during some of the heaviest snow that fell.



Faughn Chapel



Pictured are, from left: Bro. Rudy Jackson, BRC Chaplain; Bro. Steve Ramp, Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church; Orlando Rankin, BRC Recreation Director and Jimmy Garraway. Not pictured: Joy Garraway

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hattiesburg has been providing presents for individuals at Boswell Regional Center longer than anyone can remember.

The ministry has thrived with Mrs. Joy Garraway heading up the project, and has continued through the generosity of the members of Westminster's congregation.

The congregation receives a list of items and purchases them for the individuals.

Westminster also hosted the Boswell Choir this past year and enjoyed fellowshiping with them.

Rev. Steve Ramp, Pastor, said they were glad to have the choir come so the congregation could put some faces with the presents they purchase in December. The choir hopes to make another trip to Westminster this year.



Co-Lin LPN students at BRC

Students enrolled in the LPN Program at Simpson County Center, Co-Lin spent two days at Boswell Regional Center for their clinicals.

Here they are pictured after a great meal at the LeGrand, front row, from left: Lane Flynt, Instructor, Mt. Olive; Catina Brown, Magee; Savannah King, Mendenhall; and Lisa Pearson, Instructor, Madison; second row, from left: Jenise Smith, Collins; Leann Sullivan, Mize; and Brandi Ponder, Magee; third row, from left: Jessica Davis, Silver Creek; Mollie Taylor, Mize; and Tamara Bryant, Prentiss; back row, from left: Ben Chain, Mt. Olive and Jeremy Bowen, Raleigh.

We remember....

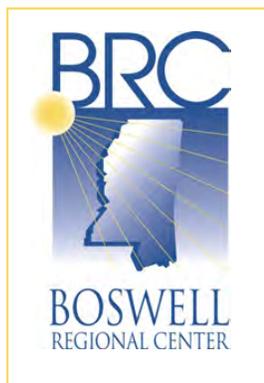
Boswell mourned the loss of one of our individuals, Adonna, who lost her battle with cancer in December.

A memorial service was held in the Campus Chapel and was well attended by both individuals and staff. Family members were able to be with us for this moving service.

The BRC flag flies at half-mast (at right) in remembrance.



Boswell Regional Center



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