

People First Gazette

West Tennessee Community Service Projects highlights

October 2008 – Members made greeting cards for area nursing homes.

November 2008 – Members took about 40 greeting cards to Mission Nursing Home in Jackson and went around to residents rooms to hand deliver the cards.

December 2008 – Members gathered goods along with a ham for a needy family. The Pusser family was the family chosen. The family of eight of Jacks Creek, Tennessee was extremely grateful for the food and the gift bags that were donated by Teresa Anderson.

On October 25th 2008 People First and the Tennessee Microboard Association hosted their 4th Annual Masquerade Bowl! The event was a success with many different costumes and prizes to win. Prizes went out to the top bowler and top 6 costumes. There was pizza and soda for all people to enjoy. Pictures of the Masquerade Bowl can be found on our website at www.pfoftn.org. Join us next year on October 24th 2009 for our 5th Annual Masquerade Bowl.

Action Alert

Despite the fact that a year and a half remains in our contract to provide advocacy services to class members who reside in Middle Tennessee, the TN Division of Mental Retardation Services has partnered with the Arc of TN to provide advocacy services under a new statewide grant beginning January 1st, 2009. By submitting a proposal to replace the current advocacy contractors, the Arc of Tennessee has unfortunately agreed to a 75% reduction in providing advocacy services through the following steps:

1. reduce the current number of advocates from twenty (20) to seven (7) across the state.
2. increase advocates caseloads to a maximum of 150 from the current 50.
3. no longer require direct advocacy visits to class members or conservators.
4. fill the resulting advocacy gap with volunteers and by limiting advocacy to only short term issues.

Additionally, the new advocacy contract will eventually require that another 900 individuals who are at risk of institutionalization in Western Tennessee (Arlington Court case) be served without any additional resources.

Concerns/Complaints Related to
DMRS Services

People to Contact with

Concerns/Complaints Related to
DMRS Services

**WITHIN the State of TN –
DMRS**

Family Handbook A Roadmap to
State Services For Adults and
Children Who Have Mental
Retardation: A Resource for
Parents and Consumers

http://www.state.tn.us/dmrs/consumer_services/FamilyHandbook.pdf

What if there is a problem? (page 29) An individual or family may be unhappy with services or the way someone has been treated. The ISC can usually help. If the ISC cannot help, the person or family can file a complaint. If the person or family is unhappy with a service provider, a complaint may be filed with the service provider. All service providers must have a person who is responsible for resolving complaints. If a person is uncomfortable with filing a complaint with a service provider, the DMRS Regional or Central Offices or TennCare also have people who will help resolve problems. If a person is unhappy with a state staff person, they can call DMRS or TennCare to resolve the problem.

DMRS Central Office

http://www.state.tn.us/dmrs/contact_us.html

**Stephen H. Norris, Deputy
Commissioner**

615-532-6533

Felicia.Thompson@state.tn.us

**Debbie Payne, Assistant
Commissioner for Community
Services**

615-253-6885

Debbie.Payne@state.tn.us

TennCare

Family Assistance Service Center 1-
866-311-4287

Call this number for general
information regarding TennCare,
including:

Applying for TennCare
Disenrollment & Benefit Changes
Reporting a change (such as a new
address, or change in jobs)
Establishing or changing an
appointment with your DHS case
worker

TennCare Solutions 1-800-878-3192

Call this number to file an appeal
about medical or prescription
problems.

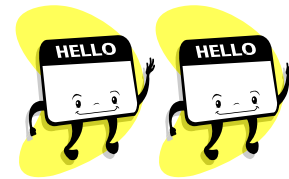
TennCare Partners Advocacy 1-800-
758-1638

Call this number if you require help
with mental health care or alcohol
treatment.

TennCare Advocacy Program 1-800-
722-7474

Call this number if you need help with
any other health-related care

TTY or TDD Phone Calls 1-800-
772-7647



Microconference 2008

**People First of Tennessee,
Inc.
&
Tennessee Microboards
Association, Inc.**

**Friday, April 3rd to
Saturday, April 4th**

**Embassy Suites
Murfreesboro TN**

**For more information:
call Leanne Boyce
1-615-898-0075**

Middle Tennessee Community Service Projects highlights

The majority of the Middle Tennessee chapters are working on several different community services projects. Several chapters are collecting pull-tabs for the Ronald McDonald Home as well as visiting Nursing homes. The Nashville night time chapter has members provide pet therapy as well as help with the shelter. A couple of the chapters volunteer at the food banks. The Lawrencburg chapters work with the local Hospice chapter and helps make crafts for the hospice patients. The chapters seem to have something going on weekly concerning Community Services projects.

East Tennessee Community Service Projects highlights

September, 2008: The Roane County chapter made key chains with a spiritual message on each of the 50 people who are volunteering to work on their building.

September, 2008: The Jefferson County members weeded a flower garden at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City. They received a thank-you note.

October, 2008: Sevier County members helped collect money for the local Alzheimer's Association.

Knox County members voted to send their \$51.00 to the Knoxville Area Rescue Ministries for Thanksgiving. (Now, whether the staff has gotten around to sending it is another story.)

Rhonda Johnson from Roane County People First reports that the members there are making Christmas cards to send to soldiers in Iraq.

**People First of Tennessee would to say thanks to our
interns, Brett Woodard and Canessa Carrier for their
support and hard work!**