

People First Gazette

People First of Tennessee would like to welcome our two new interns:

Brett Woodard

My name is Brett Woodard, I am an intern at People First of Murfreesboro. I am a senior social work major at Middle Tennessee State University, and am currently in my first field placement. While at People First of Murfreesboro, I'll be helping integrate new chapters into the school systems in Rutherford County, and developing a notebook, which will hopefully be a helpful tool for future interns, regional coordinators, volunteers, and whoever will be working with people first. I am very excited at the opportunity to get people first back into the school system, and know that it will be a major asset to those with disabilities in the Rutherford County school system. If you're interested in starting a new chapter please call 615-898-0075, and ask for myself or Leanne Boyce.

Canessa Carrier

My name is Canessa Carrier and I am a senior at Middle Tennessee State

**Save the Date:
April 2-4 2009
Microconference**

University. I am currently in my second field placement as a social work student. I will be graduating in December of 2008 and would eventually like to be a school social worker. I believe the experience at People First of Tennessee will help me understand social work on a macro level and understand the importance of advocating for all individuals.



People First of Tennessee, a non-profit self-advocacy organization for individuals with disabilities, and the Tennessee Microboards Association are hosting their **4th Annual Masquerade Bowl** on October 25th at Cumberland Lanes, 3930 Apache Trail, Antioch TN. 37013.

Participants will be able to enjoy games, bowling, food, entertainment and a costume contest!!

The event will be held Oct. 25th from 12:00-4:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for children under 12.

If you are unable to purchase a ticket you can collect pledges of at least \$25. Call 1-800-264-7773 for more information. Call Sharon Bottorff @ (615)512-9551 for tickets. Please visit www.tnmicroboards.com or www.people1sttn.org

Photos will be available by **Evan Rodgers Photography**
\$2 for 4x6 photos
\$3 per order for shipping





Just Say No: Stop the Protocols Campaign What Can You Do?

1. Write a letter to the Judge by June 13th before the upcoming Federal Court hearing on the Settlement Class (Clover Bottom)
Write Senior District Judge Robert L. Echols, Chambers, Room 824, Courtroom, Room 874, United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, 801 Broadway, Nashville, TN 37203, (615) 736-2774
2. Attend the Federal Court Hearing (Status Conference) with Judge Echols to hear for yourself about the Court Suit. The hearing will be June 18th in Judge Echols' Court Room, at the Federal Courthouse, 801 Broadway in Nashville. Bring others with you.
3. File a written complaint with the federal government for the Waiver programs - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS):
Gail Arden, Director of Elderly and Disabled Programs Group
7500 Security Blvd., Mail Stop S-2-14-26
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850
Voice: 410-786-7810 Email: gail.arden@cms.hhs.gov

Theresa DeCardo, Associate Regional Administrator, Region 4
61 Forsythe Street SW, Suite 4T20
Atlanta GA, 30303
Voice: (404) 562-7500 Fax: (404) 562-7162
4. Call your U.S. congressman to file a complaint about the use of Federal funds not helping your family member. Reach your Congressman through the Congressional switchboard at 202-225-3121.

5. Call the QRP chairperson Michael Lottman 615-783-2860; email: qrplottman@aol.com
6. Write Judge Bernice Donald, Chambers Room #951, 9th Floor, Courtroom #3, Clifford Davis Federal Building, 167 North Main Street, Memphis, Tennessee 38103 (Arlington Remedial Order)
7. Contact the Arlington Court Monitor, Dr. Nancy Ray 1-866-478-0982 (toll free) or email: nkr@nrassociates.org
8. Contact Governor Bredesen, Governor's Office, Tennessee State Capitol, Nashville, TN 37243 Tel: 615-741-2001
9. Call your State Legislators
 - a. Find the phone number or email for your State Senator
<http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/senate/members/smembers.htm>
 - b. Find the phone number or email for your State Representative
<http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/house/members/hmembers.htm>
10. Call People First of Tennessee – 1-615-898-0075

**Announcement from the Disability Resource Center,
Knoxville**

Partnership for Legal Services with UT College of Law
Now you can get assistance with:

Accessibility, Disputes, Educational Opportunities, Employment Discrimination, Housing Problems, Juvenile Justice, Landlord-Tenant problems, Nursing Home transition back to community, Wills and Living Wills, etc. S.S. Disability Appeals

UT Law Students: Daniel Ellis and Joseph Hubbard working under the guidance of Otis Stephens, Supervising Attorney. Call the DRC for an appointment at 865-637-3666.

The Sondra Connection

As we know, when it comes to individuals with developmental disabilities, sometimes first impressions can be a bit daunting. An individual in a wheelchair can make those around feel pity for them and somewhat obligated to help if needed. But don't go feeling that way around Sondra, especially now that she's living in her own home, mainly on her terms. She'll let you know in a minute that if she needs help, she knows how to ask for it. Otherwise, just enjoy her company. According to staff who have worked with her over the years, Sondra has always had a bend toward being as independent as possible. Now that she's in one of the WTFS homes, the degree of that bend is far greater. And that is exactly the kind of spirit we encourage among the individuals we serve.



The un-mistakable Sondra

Even when Sondra is sitting alone by herself you will find her doing exercises to stay in shape as if to say, "Entropy will not rule over my life". And despite a language impairment, she overcomes it by speaking slowly and mustering

as much diction as possible. Her love for children inspired the staff at WTFS to help out more in that area by getting her a job reading to little ones at the Small Steps Childcare at 1422 Gillham Cove in Memphis. Her joy in doing it and the enthusiasm of the children can not be measured.

Sondra also cleans tables and helps put things away too. Tanya Ragland, the Director of the facility says, "Sondra is a real good worker. Everyone loves having her around".



Sondra reading to the little ones at the Small Steps Childcare.

But Sondra doesn't let her notoriety overshadow the importance of her job. "You need to read to children" she said. She makes it by Small Steps twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays. While she only stays an hour, it is sixty minutes of pure quality time.

Through her positive and upbeat spirit, Sondra is breaking new ground in her connection with those of us who have a disability in the way we look at others with disabilities.

Stay tuned for more information

People First is happy to be partnering with the Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Division of mental Retardation Services in the Good To Great Project. Leanne will be meeting with the Council and DMRS to discuss our role in the project.