

EILEEN HARRIS MADE THINGS HAPPEN (HER WAY)

Roger Richmond

Most who are reading this probably didn't have the privilege of knowing or working with Eileen Harris, but those who did certainly remember her and most have a story to tell.

(see pages 6-7 for more stories)

Eileen was Executive Director of Michael Dunn Center from 1976 until 1991. Sadly, she passed away on July 29, 2015. She was not a person that anyone who ever knew her would likely forget. She was affectionately known as "the little grey-haired lady", but was also a well-known ball of fire. There were probably few in the state of Tennessee that worked with people

with disabilities that had not at least heard of Eileen, if not met her, and most certainly knew her by reputation.

Simply put, Eileen Harris made things happen, generally according to her own plans and design, and she refused to take "no" as an answer. This approach, with her steadfast reluctance to accept failure when it came to taking care of business, made her a power to be reckoned with.

She spent a great deal of time in Nashville lobbying for funding, but she usually returned with whatever she set out to get! I have no doubt the folks in Nashville could hear her coming as soon as she got in

her car to drive their way!

Eileen always had a good sense of humor, too. For example, whenever Francis Walker, then our Records Coordinator, had been out for more than a day or so, it seemed like we moved the records room. Always for good reason, mind you, but moved just the same.

So on one occasion, one of us (OK, it may have been me) suggested we move Eileen's office into the rest room of the White House/Finance Building while she was on one of her Nashville trips. We picked up her desk, which was suitably small, and set it in the restroom, with everything on her desk intact.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Harris Home was originally named Hope Haven III. It was renamed in 2012 in honor of Eileen Harris.



Eileen Harris
MDC Executive
Director
1976-1991

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INTO THE FUTURE WITH NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Mike McElhinney

On Friday, August 14th, Michael Dunn Center hosted a luncheon, half-day orientation, and tour for our six new board members that have been elected to a three year term.

Four current board members also participated, including Jim

Pinkerton, Center Board Chair, Bill Fowler, Center Vice-Chair, Ron Blanchard, Foundation Vice Chair, and State Representative Kent Calfee.

Many people know Lisa Stooksbury as the friendly, positive, cheerful lady that runs Foust

Family Fitness Center in Kingston. Actually she is the co-owner and manager.

Lisa has been a long-time customer of Michael Dunn Center's commercial recycling program and has en-

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Eileen, continued

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When she returned and discovered it, she had a big laugh with us and then said, just as we expected, "now put it back the way you found it and get to work!"

No one could have known Eileen and her husband, Wes, without knowing how devoted they were to one another; or how much they both loved to dance. In the early days, we had three Adult Program dances every year for Easter, Halloween, and Christmas at the local Eagles, VFW, and Elks Lodges.

Never a dance went by that Wes and Eileen weren't cutting the rug in fine form. Both not only enjoyed dancing, both were quite excellent dancers. Watching them glide effortlessly across the floor in perfect harmony with one another was a beautiful thing to see! They made it look so easy! No dance could end properly until the Tennessee Waltz was played for them to dance to.

Eileen left Michael Dunn Center to start a new venture. In partnership with Jim Henry, she established a new agency to serve children living in foster care. Omni Visions, Inc. was incorporated in March

1991 to provide therapeutic foster care services to children in state custody. The agency has grown into a multi-state corporation.

Borrowing from her obituary, "Those who were fortunate to work with Eileen knew her passion and commitment to the families that she served. Her dedication transformed the lives of some the most vulnerable children of our state. Her family knew this love, which was often shared over warm meals, red roses and the Tennessee Waltz. She will be dearly missed but never forgotten".

New Board Members, continued

(Continued from page 1)

thusiastically given testimonials at award ceremonies and media events.

Gaye Jolly is the Administrator of Roane Medical Center, our county hospital. She has worked with the Covenant Health System of hospitals for many years in a variety of different jobs.

Gaye, along with a group of friends and coworkers, decided almost three years ago to do a service project for Michael Dunn Center instead of exchanging Christmas gifts. They arrived at Harris Home early on Saturday morning in December and gave all ten ladies and staff money to buy a nice lunch in Knoxville and tickets to the Knoxville Symphony Christmas program. While the ladies were gone for the day, Gaye and her friends painted all the walls in the kitchen, dining room, two living rooms and all the hallways! Gaye repeated this the following Christmas at another large home.

Jill McMaster is well known in Roane County as the Coordinator of Imagination Library, but she is no stranger to Michael Dunn Center. For many years Jill volunteered her time and expertise to serve on our Human Rights Committee, finishing with several years as the chair. After a break for a year

or so, Jill has returned to serve on our boards. She said the timing is right; it is good to be back.

Almost everyone in Roane County knows Jack Stockton, our County Sheriff. What they may not know is that Jack has been a quiet, behind-the-scenes supporter of Michael Dunn Center and people with disabilities for many years. In his capacity as Sheriff, I have worked with Jack and his staff several times to investigate and resolve issues involving the people we support and our employees. Jack's professionalism, sense of duty, discretion and desire to help people will bring great value to us.

Coach Vic King was a teacher and football coach at Roane County High School for many years. He now is a well respected member of the Roane County School Board. During his self-introduction, Vic shared that he had an uncle that lived a full life with a disability and feels a special connection to the people supported by Michael Dunn Center.

Finally, but certainly not least, is Dr. John Belitz. Dr. Belitz is one of five physicians that works long hours at Roane Family Practice. This group of doctors sees a total of 54 adults supported by Michael Dunn Center. Dr. Belitz and his colleagues show tremendous compassion and knowledge of our population and the unique medical, psychological and social



**(Back row, L-R) Jack Stockton,
Jill McMasters, Vic King**

**(Front row, L-R) Lisa Stooksbury,
John Belitz, Gaye Jolley**

issues they struggle with. Additionally, they endure all the TennCare, DIDD and Michael Dunn Center rules, regulations, forms and billing that go along with seeing our people.

What folks may not know is that Dr. Belitz has traveled to our homes and offices on his lunch hour several times to check on people that are too ill or too scared to come to his office. He and his colleagues have even met our staff on a Sunday morning in the parking lot of the doctor's local church to check on a sick person.

Michael Dunn Center is extremely fortunate to have these six new, dedicated board members join an already strong board and make it even greater.

DOCUMENTATION IS ESSENTIAL- MAKE YOURS COUNT!

Holly Becker

Detailed documentation in the line of work we are in is extremely important. Without it our person centered practices would be lacking and our funding levels would dramatically decrease. Each day that you complete a communication note is an opportunity to provide our individuals with knowledgeable staff, an accurate understanding of their wants and needs, and proper staff assistance. The notes that are entered are viewed by many people including team leaders, directors, QA case managers, and DIDD personal and can be referenced back for years. Below is a list of some very important sections of the communication notes. The main thing to remember is to put as much detail in as possible.

Outcomes: The main goal of outcomes is to be person centered. When completing these outcomes we need to show interest and growth. What do you do if there is no interest in the current outcome? That is where the barrier section comes into play. A barrier is something that keeps the individual from completing the outcome, whether it is them refusing, their lack of interest, a risk factor that they have, etc. Remember we always need a beginning, middle, and an end and always provide the individual with choices because it is their right.

Sleep Charts: The sleep charts that are completed nightly are very important. This documentation is sent directly into DIDD when the annual ISP is submitted for approval. With that being said details, details, details are imperative. Did you check on the individual during the night? Document it. Did you have to assist them to the restroom? Document it. Did you have to assist them with personal hygiene? Document it. Was the individual awake when you did your night check? Please document it. As you can see, every little detail that can be documented should be. Please document any assistance that was provided by staff and if available second staff.

Behaviors: We have many individuals that staff document behavior data on. This data is reviewed on a weekly basis by the Incident Management Team and just like sleep charts, this data is pulled and sent directly to DIDD with the annual ISP. It is important to remember that even though an individual may have the same regular behaviors and that they might be a part of their regular routine, a behavior still needs to be entered. Did a second staff help assist during the behavior? Please document this. Missed and incorrect data can effect an individual's needs, wants, and funding levels. Remember when entering a behavior it needs to contain a beginning, middle, and an end.

2nd Staff Signature: When an individual requires a second staff signature it is important not only to sign the note but to document what the second staff assisted with. The creator of the note and the second staff need to document how the second staff was utilized. Each year during our annual FAR Review this is one aspect of the communication notes that is reviewed for extreme accuracy and if not documented properly then it looks like the second individual is not needed to assist. We have a variety of needs for second staff, some being the use of second staff for behaviors, feeding, personal hygiene, and/or transportation. These are only a few, so it is important to know the individual's ISP and if a second staff is utilized outside of the plan document it.

There are many other details that need to be incorporated into the communication note so the thing to remember is to take your time. It can be beneficial to take a note pad with you during the day and write down the little things that could be easily forgotten. The more descriptive the notes are the more benefits they will possess for the individuals that we support.

CLAIRE ATWOOD WALKS THE TALK AND TAKES PEOPLE WITH HER

Tonya Watts

Claire Atwood has been selected as this quarter's Walk the Talk Award recipient! She received a framed certificate, which will also hang in our lobby for the quarter, and a \$100 gift card!

Kudos
&
Congratulations!

CONGRATULATIONS, CLAIRE! WELL DESERVED!

Claire celebrated her third anniversary with MDC in July and was recently promoted to House Manager. The ladies that are supported at the Harris Home care a lot about Claire and it is very clear to see when you visit the home. In fact, the ladies were a part of the decision when we were interviewing people for the position. They all spoke kindly of Claire and how much they wanted her to be their new house manager. They all picked Claire and talked about how nicely she treats them.

The ladies at Harris gave Claire a party congratulating her and welcoming her as their new house manager. There were plenty of smiles and tears of happiness. Claire cares for them with compassion and respect. She is honest and open with the people we support. You can witness this when you visit the home and see how she includes the group in conversations and decisions.

Claire enjoys her job at MDC and loves the people she supports. She displays professional support and provides positive input during meetings and conversations. An ISC has stated, "She is absolutely wonderful", while a family member describes Claire as being "as sweet as Mary Poppins, and that sweetness just oozes out of her". The Human Rights Committee thought she was wonderful and every one of the ladies told them how much they liked Claire.

Claire understands diversity and has handled herself well in counseling employees about respecting others. Again, Claire is adaptable and ever changing with the times. She has made arrangements for the ladies at Harris to visit one of their longtime friends, a former housemate who is now in a nursing facility. She is trying new outings and activities. She is encouraging conversations with the people we support and encouraging them to have a voice and to speak up for themselves.

Her immediate supervisor says "I personally am very pleased that Claire applied for the HM position. She stepped up when there wasn't a house manager and began tackling duties as she could. She is very calm, relaxed and goes with the flow at Harris. Things are always ever-changing at the house and that is ok, because she changes right along with everything else. The ladies are ecstatic at having her as a house manager, and they constantly tell her they are so happy she is working at Harris."

Claire seeks out the positive in any situation and thrives to find a solution to issues at hand. She wants the people we support to be happy and healthy. She wants to see them be successful and productive, living the lives they choose.

Harris Home, and Claire specifically, have embraced being person centered with all the ladies. The ladies have more choices now, and are interacting with one another to a greater degree. Claire feels a responsibility in making sure the ladies are content and enjoying their lives as much as possible. With Claire being the house manager and promoting person centered activities, the other staff follow right along. It is encouraging to see Claire making such a positive change.

She is proactive and wants to find solutions. Again, things are ever changing and Claire works well through those changes. She has embraced person centeredness and they (staff at Harris home) are having conversations with the people we support about their lives.



MEET CYNTHIA, OUR NEW RECEPTIONIST

Cynthia Plemens graduated from Harriman High School in 1983. Soon after, she went to work with the Garden Plaza Hotel, Oak Ridge, Tennessee. In 2000, she made the transfer to Hilton Hotels Management and received her Hotel/Motel and Food and Beverage certification in 2003. In 2006, she continued her education with the hospitality industry and obtained a certification in Revenue Management.



Prior to arriving at Michael Dunn, she worked for the past five years with an environmental company and was highly involved in the TVA Ash Spill, the BP Oil Spill and several other emergency management projects.

Originally born and raised in Roane County (Harriman), Cynthia and her husband, Randy, live in the Dyllis Community and have one daughter, Carrie Koehler. Carrie was recently married in June of this year and she and her husband, Michael, reside in Knoxville, Tennessee. Cynthia attends college at night and will be obtaining her Associates Degree in the Spring of 2016. She has plans to continue her education and pursue a Bachelor's degree thereafter.

Cynthia takes great pleasure in attending church where her father, Freeman Hicks, has been a minister for 35+ years. She is honored to have the opportunity to help in the care of her parents in their golden years, alongside her sister. Cynthia enjoys serving others, enjoys people, and hobbies include eBaying, coupon clipping, rebating, and taking long summer motorcycle rides with her husband....and working at Michael Dunn!

GOALS ACHIEVED, BONDS ESTABLISHED, MEMORIES TO LAST!

Melanie Harmon, Sales Executive for MDC Work Programs, along with her hiking friends, recently accomplished a tremendous goal that makes her the envy of hiking enthusiasts all over. Beginning in 2010 and ending on July 10, 2015, the group section-hiked the entire 2,180 miles of the Appalachian Trail!

The AT runs through 14 states, beginning at Springer Mountain, in GA and ending at Mount Katahdin, in Maine, where some of the most difficult parts of the trail are located. A popular tradition of Appalachian Trail culture is to give nicknames to hikers. The group consisted of Melanie (Gamel) Harmon, Debra (Fireball) Barton, and Cindy (Loon) Spangler. They usually did three long trips per year, each lasting about two weeks.

Debra Barton credited Melanie for planning the details of each hike and determining which trails to take. According to Melanie, the nice thing about section hiking is that you can plan hikes to take advantage of wildflowers that are in bloom.

KUDOS AND CONGRATS, INDEED!!



Spangler, Barton, Harmon



Harmon, Barton

Deborah Puchel has been 1 year smoke free as of Wed of last week.

Submitted by Kat Vallies

I would like to recognize Brittany Vance, a co-worker at work programs. She does an outstanding job on work sites and at the center. She is good with people we support and is very organized.

She is a valuable employee for MDC.

Submitted by Kathy Reichard

MEMORIES OF EILEEN

Vicki Hix, Vice President, Children's Programs

I had the pleasure of knowing Eileen Harris for thirty-six (36) years. She was the Executive Director of MDC when I was first employed. She was my supervisor, mentor, and my friend. She gave her all and expected nothing less of everyone else. Eileen knew what she wanted and how she wanted it done. It was always in your best interest to try to think through things prior to your conversations with her as her mind was going full force and she would always out-think you.

Eileen could be described as enthusiastic, forceful, powerful, stubborn, controlling and manipulative; however, she was also loving, kind, fair and nurturing. Some of these words sound negative; however, Eileen was able to be these things in a way that demanded respect and never appeared negative. These characteristics worked for her in a positive way.

Eileen was definitely a force to be reckoned with! She never did "little things". Everything was like a Broadway play. We couldn't just move the Early Intervention program and combine it with another program to offer inclusion— we had to move it across the county into a 20,000 square foot building that at the time looked NOTHING like a building that could ever be used for Early Childhood activities.

It needed major renovations that brought people from all over Roane

and surrounding counties to eagerly volunteer their time and skills to bring this vision to reality, mainly just because Eileen wanted it. The opening date for The Henry Center was to be July 1, 1989— *regardless*.

Some of the renovations were not yet complete on that date and the DHS licensing supervisor wanted to delay the license and opening for two weeks. I attempted to suggest to her that her idea might not be met with enthusiasm; however, she moved ahead with her recommendation. She appeared later that week with the license in hand in order to deliver it herself to Eileen, at the suggestion of the DHS Commissioner. The Henry Center opened on schedule.

Eileen had an energy and spirit that was unmatched. She remained a major presence in my life all these years and is greatly missed. I can't help but think she is probably still trying to make changes to heaven that she knows to be greatly needed - and is probably receiving no argument. I'm also sure her wonderful and loving husband, Wes, is standing there with that smile that says "just go ahead and do it".

Roger Richmond, Vice President, HR/IT

One of my lasting memories of Eileen involves a bit of self-confession. The part of the building that is now the Community Room was being constructed and I was tasked with directing the dump truck driver. Part of my mission was

to keep him from driving over, and therefore busting, the septic tank. As I was monitoring the truck, someone called my name. I signaled the driver to stop and turned my head to respond. It was then that I heard the unmistakable sound of a dump truck crashing into a septic tank. The driver apparently had either not seen or failed to acknowledge my signal to stop.

After calling the biggest wrecker in Roane County to get the truck out of the tank, we observed the damage and determined that only the lid was broken. (Sigh of relief.) Carl Cox, who was then our (only) maintenance man, knew of an available septic tank lid and took a truck to fetch it. With the help of a handy tractor, we were able to replace the broken lid and cover the hole and all was good again in our world.

This all occurred, mind you, while Eileen was on one of her many trips to Nashville. Upon her return, of course she called me into her office. I've always remembered that meeting quite vividly. Eileen was very congenial and we chatted a bit. I explained to her what had happened before she asked about it, which was certainly a best practice move! She had a big smile on her face and said, "Well, I always believed everybody gets one big mistake...", and with a pause added, "I guess this was yours!" "Yes ma'am", I replied. "Thank you."

Shortly after that, Eileen promoted me to what was then called Adult Program Coordinator, the equiva-

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Eileen, Continued

(Continued from page 6)

lent of a director position, today, so I figure I must have been doing OK! I'd like to think that was my last "big" mistake. I'd also like to think I earned Eileen's respect over the years, as we had a very good relationship for many years that continued to the last time we met. There is no question that I learned most of my management skills from that little grey haired lady.

Early in my management career, during some sort of difficulty, Eileen advised me, "When you have a problem, deal with it immediately. Don't let it drag on, or it will just get worse". A sound piece of advice that helped shape my career; take charge and don't let things get out of hand. She was an inspiration to many of us in our early careers, quite an outstanding lady, a powerful individual, and a friend to the end. She will be missed.

Melanie Harmon, Sales Executive, Work Programs

November 12, 1990. It was my first day of work at the Michael Dunn Center. Eileen Harris had hired me. After arriving at the Michael Dunn Center, I went into Eileen's office. Her back was turned to me. When she turned around, her eyes widened, she raised her arms above her head, and said in a loud voice, "This is the worst day of my life!" I thought "Oh my gosh. What did I do wrong? I haven't even started work yet!" Come to find out, Eileen had just heard that Jim Henry lost his reelection bid for the Tennessee House of Representatives to Dennis

Ferguson. It turned out, like Jim Henry, Dennis Ferguson became a good friend of the Michael Dunn Center. It's just that Eileen didn't know it yet on my first day of work at the Michael Dunn Center.

Seven months later, Eileen left the Michael Dunn Center to start Omni Visions, a company that serves children and adults and focuses on community support systems for individuals and families that facilitate and inspire growth and development. On her last day of work at the Michael Dunn Center, I asked Eileen if she had any advice for me. She said, "Keep your blinders on." At the time, it seemed such a simple and succinct thing to say.

Twenty four years later, I realize it was the best piece of advice I ever received. The four word sentence provided a directive on how to accomplish what I wanted to in my professional and personal life - set goals then work on them in a diligent manner over time while minimizing distractions. Thanks Eileen!

Mike McElhinney, President/CEO

I started working at Michael Dunn Center almost ten years ago. Soon after I began the Board Chairman, Russ Schubert, gave me a list of names of very important people in the history of Michael Dunn Center that I should contact in order to introduce myself. The first name on the list was Eileen Harris.

Eileen served as the first long term Executive Director of Michael Dunn Center. Her tenure was from 1976-1991.

I met Eileen for the first time at a restaurant in Knoxville. I recognized Eileen from a picture I had seen of her. What I did not expect was a 5' tall lady driving up in a

Cadillac Escalade. As she got out it reminded me of a truck driver climbing out of the cab of a Mack truck, but with a purse.

Eileen gave me a big smile, a hug and said welcome to Tennessee. After we were seated she started talking about what a great man Jim Henry was, what a disappointment governors Sundquist and Bredesen were, and she then gave me an insightful 45-minute analysis of Roane County and Tennessee political history and funding for people with disabilities.

When we departed she encouraged me to call her anytime, and during my career I did reach out to her more than once. Eileen was always very thoughtful, yet very quick to give an opinion on any topic or question I had. She was an energetic, compassionate lady that left a tremendous positive impact on Michael Dunn Center and our person centered culture that is still felt today.

Birthday News!

Michael Dunn



Is Fifty!

**Pictured above :
Karen and Michael Dunn**



*Back issues of Now You Know can be found at
www.michaeldunncenter.org*

Phone Numbers:

Poison Control.....1-800-222-1222

Abuse Investigator.....1-800-579-0023

MDC Engineering On Call....(865) 335-0549

Mission *Empowering individuals living with disabilities and challenges to gain independence*

Vision *We strive to be a premier agency providing the highest quality of person-centered services with an emphasis on positive communication while inspiring people to open their minds to acceptance and inclusion.*

Values *We value a person-centered culture by promoting:*

•High Ethical Standards

Compassion *We value honesty and openness, and treat people with dignity, compassion and mutual respect*

Integrity *We have a positive reputation in the community and maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, ethical behavior and personal responsibility*

Diversity *We value the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual and respect the diversity of opinions, backgrounds and cultures of others*

•High Quality of Services

Professional Commitment *We maintain a disciplined, results-oriented organization reflecting the highest professional standards and ethical behavior*

Teamwork *We strive to develop positive working relationships based on trust and respect as we work together to achieve our common goals*

Responsiveness *We believe that our future is based on our current actions and decisions. Remaining open to change will define how we manage the challenges that come our way.*

WORKER COMPENSATION INSURANCE

AN EXCERPT FROM THE MDC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Employees are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance, if the injury occurs in the course of employment, or if the employee becomes ill due to work-related causes. The agency pays the cost of Workers' Compensation Insurance. Medical costs, as well as partial income replacement, may be covered if the employee is unable to work, as determined by a medical professional, and is off for more than 7 days because of the injury/illness. PTO time will be charged for lost time. An employee with his/her own short-term disability insurance may file a claim for income replacement independently. The following procedures must be followed, no matter how minor the injury may seem:

- Contact your direct supervisor immediately. If he/she is not available, contact another supervisor or manager and report the incident immediately.
- No matter how minor you believe the accident is, it must be reported, even if the employee chooses not to seek medical treatment.
- Do not wait until the end of your shift or until break time to report the accident.
- Provide your supervisor with as much information as you can about how the accident occurred and who may have witnessed the accident.

Try not to leave any information out when reporting your accident. The supervisor will contact Human Resources to determine the best course of treatment for the employee. Human Resources will offer a panel of medical professionals from which the employee can choose, depending upon the type of injury, availability of medical professionals on the panel, and time of day. A First Report of Work Injury must be completed by the employee and submitted to the Human Resource department and to the workers compensation insurance company within 24 hours. Department supervisors will conduct and submit an investigative report of injuries/accidents. Any medical bills you may incur due to such injury should be submitted to the Human Resource Department.

REMEMBER: *All injuries, no matter how minor, must be reported immediately. Claims not reported in a timely manner can complicate the processing of the claim and may be denied by the workers' compensation insurance company.*

Michael Dunn Center makes every effort to return employees to full employment as soon as possible following accidents/injuries and provides a Return To Work Program, the primary goal of which is to return the employee to his/her pre-injury position as soon as possible, while adhering to physician-ordered physical restrictions.