



Now You Know

the staff newsletter

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edited by
Roger Richmond

HIGHEST STANDARDS

Mike McElhinney



For those of you that were born and raised in Roane County you know much better than I do the rivalries that exist between Rockwood, Oliver Springs, Harriman and Kingston.

Old timers tell me this goes back well before high school football, to the influx of outsiders brought in by TVA and Oak Ridge, the construction of the interstate exits, the industrial vs. agricultural economies of the communities, and even to Civil War allegiances. Many commu-

nity leaders point to these continued rivalries as one of the major stumbling blocks holding back the progress of the county.

With this background in mind, the remarks made by Jim Henry, one of the most respected people in Roane County, were particularly noteworthy. At the Roane County Chamber of Commerce Annual Gala Jim stated that despite our differences, there are two things that everyone in the county can agree on and support: Roane

State Community College and Michael Dunn Center!

I have pondered Jim's comments and will probably never forget them. What an honor, and a responsibility, given to all the employees and board members of Michael Dunn Center. No matter what town you are from, or where you live now, what church or civic club you attend, your political party affiliation, or any of the other many things that we often let divide and separate us, there is at least

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE. MAKE IT MATTER.

Roger Richmond

In recent issues of NYK, we've focused on our Values Statement and on Person Centered Practices.

As another year turns over, we're reminded to renew our commitments, both personal and professional.

One key element of the Values Statement is Professional Commitment, reminding us of our purpose and why we do the work we do.

Many of you understand that what we do is not just a job. The work demands a commitment to

the mission and to the people we support.

Michael Dunn Center presently employs 112 people who have been with us for five or more years.

Of that number, six have 30-plus years with MDC; eleven have 20-30 years;

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DID YOU KNOW?

Last year Michael Dunn Center:

- provided services to over 400 children and adults with disabilities
- served more than 200,000 meals
- administered approximately 673,000 medications
- assisted with more than half a million personal care activities
- sustained our caliber of care even amidst continual cuts in our state funding

High Standards, continued

(Continued from page 1)

one thing virtually everyone in the county can agree on—the mission of Michael Dunn Center of supporting people with disabilities.

Jim's comments are a good reminder that it is a privilege to work at Michael Dunn Center. It is a good reminder that each and every shift, every day, we have the responsibility to do our very best and provide that highest quality of services and supports possible.

People throughout the county are constantly watching us and admiring us. However we do what we do because we believe it is the right thing to do. Thank you all for your hard work, long hours and dedication to the people we support. Your work is noticed, deeply respected and much appreciated.

Make it Matter, continued

(Continued from page 1)

eighteen have 15-20 years of service; twenty four have 10-15 years; and fifty three have 5-10 years of employment with us.

Given that this field has never provided for wages commensurate with responsibilities, that sort of dedication does not happen without strong professional commitments.

Reading some of the articles contained in this newsletter and looking at comments about Debbie Langley, our Walk the Talk award recipient, a strong personal and professional commitment is clearly evident in our personnel.

Such commitment is also clearly evident in the comments we hear from other professionals, from DIDD personnel, and in the

remarks from Jim Henry that were included in Mike's article. Michael Dunn Center is very fortunate to have employees with as much dedication and skill as we do.

As I was considering what to write for this article, I heard a program on NPR about a man who was researching obituaries of people with no known family who had passed away. He looked into the shortest obit he could find, which was "John Smith passed away. He loved jazz music".

The researcher found that the belongings from such deceased individuals went into a box for keeping, in the event that someone came to claim them. He learned that John Smith had worked for many years at a shoeshine stand in a busy professional office building.

A memorial had been placed on John Smith's shoeshine stand, and it was evident that his good character and congenial personality has had an impact on many people.

As I listened to the story, I found myself thinking of a very brief obit for myself. "The good things he did outweighed the bad; he made a difference".

If every one of us could have a positive impact, even in small ways, imagine how much of a difference we could make as a whole.

As we start another new year, give some thought to what your legacy may be and how you can have a positive impact.

Commit yourself to making a difference. Make it matter.

ROANE HIGH SCHOOLS SUPPORT MDC

Melanie Harmon

Michael Dunn Center recently reaped the rewards when four local schools, Harriman High School, Midway High School, Roane County High School, and Rockwood High School, participated in a recycling contest. The high schools accumulated aluminum cans over the course of one month. They were delivered to Michael Dunn Center Work Programs who used proceeds from the sale of the aluminum cans to support employment services.

The winner of the contest, based on total pounds recycled, was Rockwood High School, and was announced on October 30, 2014 during half time ceremonies at the final regular season football game (final score Rockwood High School 22, Grace Christian Academy 15). A large trophy was presented to the school.

Alan Reed, Rockwood High School principal, attributes their win to ecology teacher Sandra Billings and the Science Club. "Our recycling program has been in place for two years" said Mr. Reed, "and it just keeps growing". Sandra said "The kids have really gotten on board. The students and their parents tell me they never realized how much they threw away until they started recycling."

DEBBIE LANGLEY WALKS THE TALK!

The Walk the Talk Award evolved from the development and implementation of the Michael Dunn Center Mission, Vision, and Values Statements. The specific intent of the award is to recognize those employs who exemplify the six elements of our Values Statement, which can be found on the last page of this and other recent NYK newsletters.

Debbie Langley is one of those individuals that, when her name was suggested for nomination, the only likely response would be "of course!".

The following text comes directly from her nomination, as submitted by Denise Pankey-Lurry:

Debbie is very compassionate, loving and cares for the individuals we support. She often goes above and beyond to assure that each individual is taken care of.

She displays empathy, makes ethical decisions and can be trusted to do the right thing when caring for the individuals we support. She is always professional and always represents MDC and those we support with respect.

Debbie is able to respect the opinion of others and remain unbiased. She is able to maintain relevant communication with various support systems for the individuals we support and is always even tempered and person centered.

She has high unending ethical standard that is often displayed each and every day with the individuals we support. Her never-ending display of dedication is often shown through the many shifts and additional hours she has worked at the various nursing houses. Her advocating skills and dedication are often utilized for the individuals we serve.

Debbie can be perceived as the individual one would want to clone. She runs like a well-oiled machine that refuses to quit. Over the past year, she has become comfortable with her new role as a nurse case manger. Debbie not only often picks up extra shifts, she also does other assigned and unassigned duties and helps her team with tasks that may need to be completed. Her strong-willed personality is a great asset and is well appreciated by her team.

Debbie is our portrait of what a nurse should be and exudes all the qualities you would hope a nurse would have. Her compassion and integrity, if compared to MDC's mission and values, is one perfect example. Florence Nightingale once quoted these words, "Nursing is an art, and if it is to be made an art, it requires as exclusive a devotion, as hard a preparation, as any painters or sculptor's work...".

Congratulations to Debbie for a much-deserved recognition!



Roger Richmond presents Debbie Langley with her Walk The Talk Award.

Making a Difference and Making it Matter!

"It's the action, not the fruit of the action, that's important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that doesn't mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result." *Mahatma Gandhi*

Michael Dunn Center is fortunate to have an outstanding Board of Directors.

Pictured left to right:



Front row:

Barbara Capell, Harriet Westmoreland, Debbie Alexander-Davis, Gail Christian

Back row:

Bill Fowler, Wayne Tipps, Jim Pinkerton, Ron Blanchard, Ken Yager, Jim Conway

Not available for photo:

Lana Seivers, Bill Leuking, Ted Bowers, Chris Whaley, Kent Calfee

TRANSITIONS MATTER

Dee Ann Lindsay

We've had a flurry of activity recently, with transitions into our homes. We were previously renting a home on Lilac Lane in Rockwood, but after the lease expired in November, we moved to a new home on Valley Drive in Kingston. Joe L, who we have supported through day programs for many years, has now moved into this home. He seems to be very happy there and he is doing well.

I received a call from someone at DIDD asking if we had an available home for a person who needed ICF care. Thanks to DIDD and Denise Jandro, we were able to move quickly and help Patricia F. move into Caillouette within a matter of days. Patricia seems to be happy in her new home and she is adjusting well.

Ben M. needed emergency respite services due to family health issues. He spent a few nights at Van Stowe and loved it. He was excited to tell everyone about his new friends and housemates, and showed off his room to anyone who came to visit the home.

The respite service went so well that his family asked that we consider permanent placement for Ben. We just received word that he has been approved for Supported Living services and will live at Van Stowe.

JANE DEHART MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Tiffany Whittenbarger

Jane DeHart does much more than just being a Mental Health Case Manager who takes over 100 individuals to see their Psychiatrist and/or counselor.

She works very closely with TennCare, Medicare and Social Security, as well as the psychologist, behavior analyst and neurologist who come to MDC to see individuals that they support.

Jane is very knowledgeable about SSI, SS, TennCare and Medicaid/Medicare. Because of her, several of our individuals have benefitted from the supplemental monies owed to them that they would have never known about otherwise.

Recently, there was a person who moved into one of our homes who came to us in debt for about \$8,000.00. Due to Jane's expertise, this person is no longer in debt. Not only is this person now out of debt, but they didn't have to pay a penny back. This assignment was very demanding and took a lot of time and energy.

I deeply appreciate her diligence on this matter. As always, it is great to know that we can count on Jane to go the extra mile. Thank you, Jane, for your hard work and in all that you do for the people we support. Your contributions make a real difference.



Jane DeHart

MICHAEL LINDSAY IS AN INSPIRATION TO ME

Brian Phillips

I want to recognize someone that I work with for all his hard work on the job and off the job. Michael Lindsay is an inspiration to me. This is a young man who really has his priorities in order.

He has been working here at Post Oak well over a year now and he works the 4pm to 8pm shift with one of our guys who has severe behaviors at times. Michael has always, from day one, jumped right in and assisted with any problems that may occur.

Michael began his work here right after graduating high school, at an age when, for most young men and women, the last thing they have on their minds is getting a job. Most of them are worried about crushes and what school they are going to go to, if any. Michael jumped right on board and began working with me in the evenings.

He is always on time and as soon as he walks in he starts working. I have never had to correct him or counsel him on his job performance. He volunteers to help when needed and he is excellent with Jackie and the other guys that live at Post Oak House.

Michael attends Bryan College, where he is on the basketball team. Michael loves the game of basketball; his favorite player is Kobe Bryant, which is obvious to anyone who knows him. He attends college full time and now works here on weekends- when he is not in school or on the basketball court, he is working.

I have never heard him complain about anything. He has a great rapport with the guys that he works with here at Post Oak and they all like him. Michael is the son of Dee Ann and Goose Lindsay and they have truly raised him right. He is a very respectful young man and I know, without a doubt, that he makes them proud and anything he decides to do career wise he will succeed in it. I am honored to work side by side with him and call him my friend or as I always call him "little brother".

editor's note: Brian Phillips is House Manager at Post Oak House. Dee Ann Lindsay, Michael's mom, is our Vice President of Day Services



Michael Lindsay

Arrivals

Renee Kittrell announced the birth of her newest grandson, Cory Austin Lumley, born December 1, 2014.

Bethany Hicks, speech therapist, and her husband Wesley, welcomed the arrival of a baby girl on 12-10-14.

Stacey Suttles is going to be a grandma!!! Baby will be here on or around July 5th.

Promotions

Erin Alonso, promoted to Assistant House Manager

Kimberly Reed, promoted to Asst. Manager/trainer ICF

Melissa Buckner, promoted to House Manager

Katherine Vallies, promoted to QA Case Manager

Holly Becker, promoted from QA Case Manager to QA Team Leader

Stacy Boston, promoted from QA Case Manager to Mental Health Case Manager

Happenings

Jessica Bartlett plans to start college the first of the year to work towards a nursing degree.

Nan Woodbury is one of three Monroe County women who are considered heroes after saving a small dog who was stranded on a log in the middle of the river for several days. The story can be found at <http://www.wbir.com/story/life/pets/2014/11/03/kayakers-save-stranded-dog-in-tellico-river/18432071/>



Dr. Chris Whaley, RSCC President, read "Jingle All the Way" for children at the Henry Center



Dr. Chris Whaley, President of Roane State Community College, visited the Henry Center to share a very special Christmas story with the children. President Whaley shares a special connection with the center as his second grader was previously enrolled at our center. He also serves on the MDC Board of Directors.

Thank you, Dr. Whaley, for your continued support.

**Kudos and Congratulations**

Kudos to HR staff for hosting a memorable Christmas luncheon.

The theme for this year's event was "Ugly Sweater", with a contest being held for best ugly sweater.

Taking top honors in the contest was Debbie Langley, although the "table guy" arguably should have won!

As always in such events, much good food was on hand for the covered dish affair. MDC is blessed with many good cooks, as well as many good staff!



EMILIE GREGG, A LITTLE GIRL WITH A BIG MISSION

Vicki Hix

Former Henry Center student Emilie Gregg is *paying it forward* by collecting teddy bears for children receiving services at Children's Hospital.

Emilie has spent approximately eighteen months at Children's Hospital due to a blood disorder and now goes once a week for treatments.



Surrounded by bears

Emilie stated that teddy bears were used for demonstration and then given to her by the nurses, providing comfort and security. Her plan is to have enough teddy bears to provide that same comfort to other children going through similar situations.

Emilie's goal was to collect 500 bears. Her church and community have supported her efforts and the children and staff of The Henry Center recently joined in providing support towards this wonderful cause.

Forty-four bears were collected and presented to Emilie, who also spent some time in one of the classrooms visiting with the children and explaining her cause.

Emilie is the granddaughter of MDC employees, Jody and Cindy Gregg.



Emilie proudly displays some of the bears she collected.

ABOUT A GIRL

(WBIR, Knoxville) - A visit to the hospital for any child can be a little scary, but one 9-year-old is hoping to make that trip a little easier.

About a month ago, Emilie Gregg set out on a mission to collect 500 bears to donate to East Tennessee Children's Hospital.

"I just kept asking people and they just kept donating to me," she said. "Right now I have 644 bears total."

Emilie is no stranger to Children's Hospital. For the past five years, she's made weekly visits for plasma transfusions due to a plasma deficiency.

"When I was four, I used to get a bunch of bears for when I had to get I-Vs and pick line supports," she said.

That was her inspiration to start collecting the bears to make sure every patient at Children's Hospital gets one. "All the bears are really cute and fuzzy and they are really fun to cuddle with."

The bear's soft exterior is only part of the comfort the bear provides patients at Children's Hospital. Nurses can also use it as an educational tool to put a child at ease.

On Wednesday afternoon, Emilie was able to hand deliver some of the bears to patients who are going through similar treatments.

"I'm hoping they get joy and fun that they get a bear."

Children's Hospital is always taking donations for teddy bears. You can call the Volunteer Services Department at 865-541-8136 for drop off information. Emilie Gregg says you can also send them to Harriman Church of God, and they will make sure the bears get to the right location.



michael dunn center

*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.*