

# DSSK TALK

## MISSION STATEMENT

- *Show caring in all we do*
- *Exhibit pride in our work*
- *Respect the people we serve*
- *Value & practice honesty daily, and*
- *Eliminate poverty in McDowell County*

*McDOWELL COUNTY DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES*

### PROGRESS!!!

What a difference a year can make! It is hard to believe that it has been a little over a year since Phillip Hardin became our Director here at McDowell DSS. Looking back at this year in review two words come to mind...Positive Changes.

Since Mr. Hardin has come on board he has appointed employees to several committees such as The Building Committee, The Painting Committee and The Personnel Committee. As a result of implementing these committees, and motivating the staff, the agency has had a tremendous amount of positive changes.

The Building Committee and The Painting Committee are responsible for the make over done to our front reception area. The wall mural is a representation of landmarks found in McDowell County.

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### DIRECTOR'S CORNER By Phillip Hardin

#### CUSTOMERS: PLAIN AND SIMPLE



It is clear that our agency will focus its work around **GOOD OUTCOMES** with families over the coming years; it is equally clear that we will focus around **CUSTOMER SERVICE**. What we do is important because, otherwise, the public doesn't need us — we become irrelevant. How we do what we do is important because it affects our ability to successfully engage our clients and each other in a positive, productive relationship. And, relationships ultimately impact our ability to work — day in and day out — towards positive goals. Positive change occurs when we sustain our efforts over time.

So, customer service will be front and center over the coming year as we plan our work. How we behave is a big part of it. How respectful we interact with clients, and how we structure our office processes to accommodate them is critical also. Simply put, we want clients to feel respected and accommodated as they use our services. We want them to have no legitimate reason to citizen the service they receive. We want them to be able to say at the very least, "DSS is a place where people try to help you".

At the same time, we want our staff to feel the same way. The organizational climate — how it feels to work in the system — is ultimately the responsibility of management. My goal is for all employees to be able to legitimately say "McDowell County DSS is a good place to work". The creation of a positive, creative, and empowering work environment starts with good selection of employees. It continues with effective supervisors and development of employees by supervisors. And it means recognizing and rewarding employees who excel so that we can build commitment to "staying on course".

The culture of an organization develops over time. It also defines your organization, like it or not. Our job as managers and supervisors is to take steps to make sure that the culture of the organization produces the kind of service the community needs, and results in the kind of work atmosphere the staff need to serve and do their jobs successfully. Sometimes we get too comfortable with "things as they are". As we move forward our emphasis is to make sure things are "as they should be". Every employee is authorized and encouraged to take such an approach in their work. This is the way to build for tomorrow.

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## PROGRESS

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New chairs, magazine and brochure racks and flooring have all been added to make a great first point of contact for our customers. The front conference room now has new blinds and has been painted and though it is a work in progress, it already looks fresh and clean.

The Personnel Committee has implemented several policies such as a dress code and the Employee of the Month acknowledgment award. They have also been involved with the Senior Games, luncheons, blood drives and several fund raisers. They help put these things together and then we as an agency, with the guidance of Mr. Hardin, help to make it happen.

Mr. Hardin has also appointed a staff of people to create this wonderful quarterly publication. It has become a great way to share the events of our agency with each employee as well as outside agencies.

Mr. Hardin has also made great strides in bring us up to date with our office technology. We now have adequate computers and copiers that help us to provide the quality of customer service that our customers deserve. We will now be able to sign our customers in and out using our computers, as well as signing ourselves in and out for the day. We are also in the process of getting a new system that will allow us to utilize more space for our filing.

Everyone was given the opportunity to attend the Partnership Training at the YMCA. This training was provided to help us learn to work together and create a better work environment.

Leadership training was also provided to all supervisors. This training focused on effective management. As a result of this training, Mr. Hardin implemented an employee evaluation system. This system is goal oriented and designed to offer positive feed back to the employee to create a more positive work environment.

So remember, the next time you see Mr. Hardin be sure to let him know how much you appreciate the PROGRESS that he has made by setting the example of positive thinking and hard work.

## McDOWELL COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTER

SHERRY OWENBY, Director

Everyone here has enjoyed a busy Spring! We have been very fortunate to have one of the children's dad work on our playground. Wayne Dickinson has done an outstanding job of landscaping around the Tricycle Path on the playground. We now have log benches, a beautiful trellis as well as flower and garden beds. The children have planted seeds and are fascinated with watching them grow into plants - we can't wait to see their faces when the plants start bearing fruit! We also want to say thanks to those of you at DSS who donated seeds and to Jay for the Butterfly House! Please drop by and enjoy sitting in the shade on one of our log benches and watch the children play for a few minutes - it is a guaranteed stress reliever!

We are also proud to announce that we held our 2007 Graduation Program on Friday, May 25th. The children entertained the standing-room only crowd with some of their favorite songs. This year we had four graduates. They were Trey Mitchell, Sarah Ramseur, Bryson Swepson and Austin Loftis. I read a poem that I had written especially for them and they were presented with a book about going to Kindergarten and a brand new backpack to get them started off on the right foot.

Beginning this month, we are going to be enjoying "Fun in the Sun" every Friday until September. Special activities will include playing under the sprinkler, a picnic, making homemade ice cream, eating watermelon and lots of other fun summer activities!

One of our staff members is out of work for a while. We have a substitute for the Summer. Cassandra "Miss Casey" O'Keefe is doing a wonderful job and we welcome her to the center! She is young, full of energy and she is simply GREAT with the kids!



## ADULT SERVICES

MIRIAM EARLY, Supervisor

Hello from Adult Services Unit! We are so happy to once again be fully staffed. Robin Ayers returned from maternity leave and Pat Biddix from medical leave, the 1st of May. Norma Mauney came out of retirement to help us during the month of April, and we certainly enjoyed having her. We were wondering why our APS referrals were at an all time high, and then learned that Norma was praying for anyone needing help to be sent to us. That made having her leave us again a little easier! (Our referrals are "way down" this month!)

As previously mentioned, Robin is back and we are all grateful to Shannon Jones for having kept her caseload going in her absence. Robin is our Adult Care Home Case Management (ACH/CM) worker. The goal of this program is to enhance the overall quality of care of heavy care residents living in Adult Care Homes, who receive Special Assistance Medicaid.

Robin spends most of her time authorizing and monitoring Enhanced Adult Care Home Personal Care. As clients age, their need for personal care usually increases. Enhanced care provides payment to the facility for extra assistance given for ambulation, toileting and eating.

Robin is also responsible for preparing a service plan to address the overall health care needs of the resident while working with the facility, the client and the client's family/responsible party to locate and arrange for services which are Medicaid funded to meet the health care needs of the resident; coordinating services when multiple providers are involved; and determining that services being received are appropriate and adequate. Her caseload averages in the 50's, which is somewhat more than the state recommended 40.

## EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



DEBBIE

WILLIAMS

MARCH 2007

ADMINISTRATIVE



SHANEAH

MCCAULEY

APRIL 2007

WORK FIRST



DEBRA

SMITH

MAY 2007

CPS / INTAKE

The employee of the month is chosen by our Personnel Committee from the nominations submitted each month. Any employee can nominate anyone for this award. Each winner is awarded a framed certificate to hang in their office, and their name is engraved on the plaque in the front lobby.

Nominations are accepted until the 10th of each month. If you think one of your fellow employees goes above and beyond to help families, or other employees, give your nomination to Debbie Gardin, in Office 107, before the 10th of each month.

### FOSTER PARENTING

Foster parents are special people who willingly open their homes in order to provide temporary care for children who are unable to remain with their own families. They are substitute parents who work in partnership with the child's birth parents, child, Guardian Ad Litem and social worker to help reunite the family. Domestic violence, alcohol and drug use/addiction and family turmoil are just some of the reasons that the need for foster homes for children continues to increase. Abuse and neglect are major reasons children are placed in custody; while abandonment, delinquency, and undisciplined children are other reasons. Children are not removed from homes unless it is absolutely necessary. There is always a need for foster parents; especially those who are willing to parent teenagers, sibling groups, teenage mothers and bi-racial children. Requirements for foster families to be licensed with McDowell County Dept. of Social Services include:

**1)** Potential foster parents must participate in and complete 30 hrs of pre-service training provided by DSS. The curriculum is called MAPP-GPS (Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting—Group Preparation and Selections); **2)** potential foster parents must complete a family profile by providing the most accurate and honest information regarding their family; **3)** the family's home must receive and pass a fire and safety inspection arranged for by DSS; **4)** all foster families must receive and pass a environmental safety check that is arranged and completed by DSS; **5)** all family members in the home must have a physical exam. All family members in the home over age 18 must also have a TB test; **6)** all family members 18 yrs and older must be fingerprinted in order for criminal records to be conducted locally, through the SBI and the FBI; **7)** to be licensed, foster parents have to be at least 21 years of age and in good health; **8)** foster families need to have adequate income to financially support their own family without relying on the foster child's board payment (this payment is designed to cover the essentials for room and board for the foster child); foster parents may work as long as they are able to meet the basic needs of the foster child; **9)** the foster home must have working telephone; **10)** the foster family must have access to transportation to meet the needs of the foster child; **11)** the foster home must provide each child with their own personal bedroom space; **12)** foster parents must complete a mental health evaluation arranged by DSS; **13)** foster parents must work well with the agency's social workers, birth families, therapists, and professionals in the community in this "partnership of parenting".

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a foster parent or for further information, please contact **CHRISTINE WOOTEN** at 652-3355, ext 122.



### JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 – Shaneah McCauley
- 4 – Pat Biddix
- 6– Lynn Queen
- 9 – Kim Frisbee
- 12 – Debbie Street
- 25 – Helen Logan

### AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 6 – Barbara Stroud
- 7 – Janice Hensley
- 13 – Connie O'Brien
- 13– Rose Kuhl
- 24– Cindy Reel
- 27 – Tina Laughter
- 27 – Betty McKesson



### SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 – Sandra Washburn
- 4 – Denise Duncan
- 5 – Norma Foster
- 5 – Phyllis Lowe
- 18 – Tim Gautney
- 19 – Amy Horney
- 25 – Ray Burleson
- 25 – Sharon Morrison
- 26 – Latoya Conley
- 27 – Rob Farkas
- 30 – Shirley Ward
- 30 – Dwana Ledbetter



### AMISH COUNTRY TRIP— Including “In the Beginning”



#### 4 days — October 2-5, 2007

The McDowell Senior Center is taking a 3 night 4 day trip to see the Amish Country in Pennsylvania. The trip is being offered by Christian Tours. It includes 3 Cont. Breakfasts, 1 lunch & 1 dinner. It also includes a new theater production by Sight & Sound Millennium Theater called” In the Beginning”. It will also include visiting Amish Country, Longwood Gardens, Kitchen Kettle Village and Baltimore ‘s Inner Harbor.

\$ 534.00 double, \$504.00 triple, Quad \$490.00 Final payment is due by August 31<sup>st</sup> .

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### 4th ANNUAL SUMMER DANCE

AT THE

MCDOWELL SENIOR CENTER

Friday, July 13th

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Featuring Live Music by

TERRY MCKINNEY & FRIENDS



This event is for adults of all ages. All line dancers and ball-room dancers are welcome to participate. Drinks will be provided, bring finger foods.

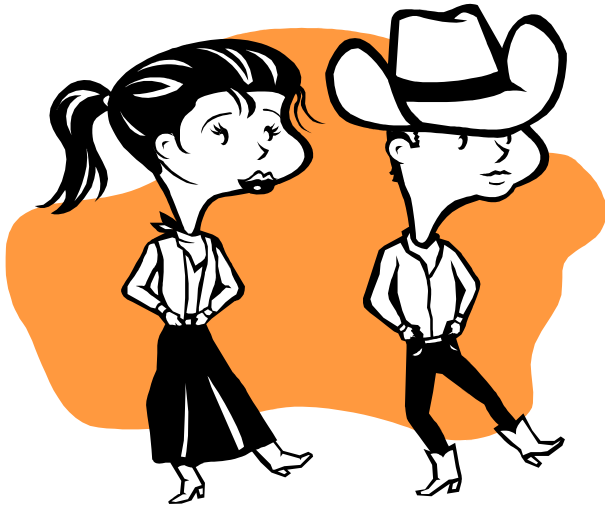
\$6 Single / \$10 Couple

At the Door — \$8 Single / \$12 Couple

To purchase tickets or for more information, call Lisa Wylie at

659-8953





### GREAT FORM OF EXERCISE!!!

The McDowell Senior Center will be offering line dance classes for adults 55 years and over starting on Tuesday evenings from **6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.** beginning on Tuesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007. **Classes will run for five weeks and the cost is \$15 per person.** You do not need a partner. This is a fun way to start an exercise program. Please call Lisa Wylie at McDowell Senior Center at 652-8953 for more information and to register.

## LINE DANCE CLASS

***TUESDAYS***

6:00 pm-7:00 pm

New students welcome.

Classes begin Tuesday,

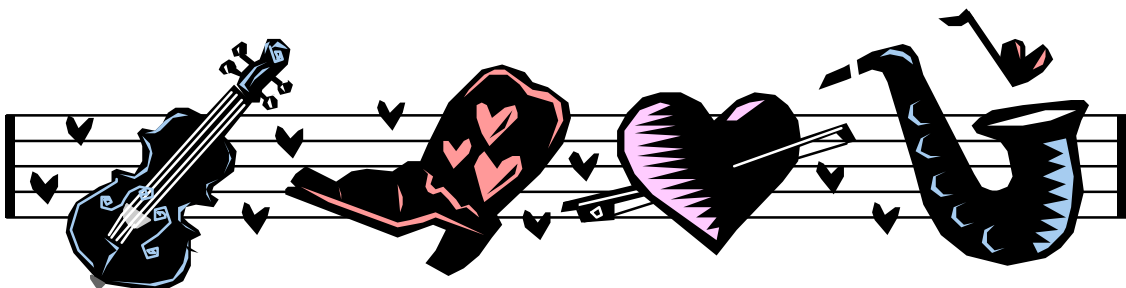
JULY 10<sup>TH</sup> , 2007

**\$15.00 PER  
PERSON FOR FIVE  
WEEK SESSION**

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### *High Country Opry and Daniel Boone Inn Trip*

The McDowell Senior Center is offering a **day trip** to the High Country Opry and Daniel Boone Inn on **Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Spend a great day in the high country of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Trip includes visiting the "Shoppes on the Parkway at Blowing Rock, the every popular Mast General Store (and candy barrel), the Wilcox Emporium, and other sites. We'll enjoy a delicious family style meal at the Dan'l Boone Inn (country ham, fried chicken, and all the trimmings plus some delectable desserts). and then a great country music show at the High Country Opry featuring the best in country, bluegrass and gospel music with lots of comedy. **The price of this trip is \$59.00 per person and this includes dinner and show.** The bus will be departing from the Wal-Mart parking lot at 12:00 noon and returning around 10:00 pm. Participants are encouraged to eat lunch prior to departure. **The deadline to register and pay is Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. Payment is expected at registration. This trip will fill up fast, please register early.**





## Minnesota Summer Pasta Salad

### Ingredients:

- 1- Box of Barilla Rotini Pasta
- 1-16oz. Bottle of Kraft Zesty Italian Salad Dressing
- 1-Diced English Cucumber
- 1- Diced Red Bell Pepper
- 1-Green Bell Pepper
- 1-Diced Red Onion
- 1- Container of Cherry Tomatoes (Diced)
- Salt to flavor
- A Dash of Vegetable Oil

### Directions:

Bring a large pot of water to a full boil and add salt and oil . The oil helps to prevent the pasta from sticking. Be careful not to over cook the pasta.

While your pasta is cooking clean and dice all of your vegetables for the salad.

When your pasta is done run under cold water to prevent further cooking. Drain well and add half of the Zesty Italian Salad Dressing to the pasta and mix well. Then toss in your vegetables and add the rest of your Zesty Italian Salad Dressing. Refrigerate and serve cold.

### **QUOTE OF THE QUARTER**

***Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt. A. Lincoln***

# BITS AND PIECES

## NEW HIRES AND JOB CHANGES

**CINDY REEL** began employment on April 16th as the Front Desk Receptionist in the Clerical Unit supervised by Shirley Keith.

**DUANE LINDBLOM** started on April 2nd in the CPS Unit supervised by Daniel Pearce.

**AMY HORNEY** began in the CPS Unit on June 4th, also supervised by Daniel Pearce.

**BRANDON GADDY** returned after graduation at Appalachian State to work in the CPS Unit supervised by Betty McKesson.

**ELIZABETH GARTNER** came to work in the Child Support Unit on June 18th and will be supervised by Roger Elliott.

**CONNIE O'BRIEN** has moved into the Adult Medicaid Unit on April 23rd, and is now under the supervision of Shirley Keith.

**ROSE KUHL** joined the Food Assistance Unit on May 19th, supervised by Sandra Washburn.



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Congratulations to **Denise Prewitt** from the Work First Unit on the arrival of her new grandson, Liam Gabriel Perry. Liam was born on May 20, 2007, weighing 7 lbs. 5 oz.



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Congratulations go to **Debbie Gardin**, Family & Children's Medicaid on the birth of Braden William Gardin, coming to the world on June 11, 2007 and weighing 7 lbs. 10 1/2 oz.

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Congratulations to **Jake Williams**, son of **Debbie (and Jim) Williams**, on his graduation from Erskine College on May 19, 2007.

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### CHILDREN'S VISITATION ROOM

What began as a dream several years ago has almost reached completion. Judy Hartman, along with the help of her Sunday School class at First Presbyterian Church began planning to remodel our Children's Visitation room.

Judy's husband and son, Larry and John, along with Joyce and Gene Suppes and Debbie Williams pulled out the old carpet, leveled the concrete floor and put down wood laminate, painted the walls and build and installed a beautiful book shelf and toy chest.

Our Director, Phillip Hardin, matched the church's donation to help facilitate this labor of love. The visitation room is almost complete. It is now equipped with a high chair, new toys, a rocking chair, rug and stand-up fan. We hope you enjoy this new room and please, clean up after each visit.

Thanks again to all who had a part. What a difference you make in the lives of others.

