

**PARENTS ASSOCIATION
BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER
10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD
ST. LOUIS, MO 63137**

PHONE 314-340-6002 Thrift Shop
PHONE 314-264-9100 BHC Switchboard
WEBSITE www.parentsassociationbhc.com

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2017

PARENTS ASSOCIATION MEETING
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2017 2:00 p.m.
Administration Bldg. Room #10



All Parent Association members, friends and staff are invited. Keep up with the latest news about Bellefontaine Habilitation Center. Bring your talents and expertise for our advocacy efforts. With everyone's involvement, the lives of the residents at BHC will be the best possible. All are encouraged to stay informed and take some action. Attend a parents meeting, talk with other families, share your concerns and ideas, write a letter, or make a phone call to help provide a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for the residents of BHC and others. They have no voice but ours, so we must continually speak up for them. Refreshments served.

UPCOMING PARENT MEETING: FEBRUARY 12, 2017

2:00 P.M. in the Administration Bldg. Room #10

2017 PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING DATES: MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

FEBRUARY 12

MAY 21

AUGUST 13

NOVEMBER 12

The switchboard phone for Bellefontaine Habilitation Center is 314-264-9100 or 314-264-9101.

Our Parent Newsletter is online at www.ParentsAssociationBHC.com!! Pass it along to friends, family, and political leaders.

2017 brings new political leadership on the national, state and local levels. Education of all legislators is an ongoing necessity as part of our advocacy for intellectually disabled residents living in habilitation centers.

The 2017 Missouri Legislative Session began on January 4 and ends on May 12, 2017. Missouri has a new governor, Eric Greitens, and many new legislators. To find your legislators, call the Missouri Capitol Switchboard at 1-573-751-2000 or go to www.mo.gov.

House Bill 626, revising Missouri guardianship laws has been introduced by Rep. Jim Neely.

Many Issues affect the daily lives of our family members. Some topics to be aware of: no new long term admissions to habilitation centers, maintenance of habilitation centers, ensuring quality care, threats to keeping sheltered workshops open, guardianship law changes, Olmstead decision protecting choice of living environments, budget cuts, possible changes to Medicare, Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act.

The 2017 VOR Annual Conference and Congressional Visits will be from Saturday, June 3 – Wednesday June 7. The conference is a worthwhile opportunity to meet other families and to make visits to U.S. Senate and Representative Offices in Washington, D.C. Think about attending – some or all of the days – be a voice for intellectually disabled persons. For more information go to www.vor.net

**2017 BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER
PARENTS ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS**

10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD ST. LOUIS, MO 63137

314-340-6002 Thrift Shop

314-264-9100 or 9101 BHC Switchboard

www.parentsassociationbhc.com

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Ruth Vondras

Members of the Parents Association of the Bellefontaine Habilitation Center enhance the lives of the residents. Examples of resident support by the Parents Association include:

BIRTHDAY CAKES AND GIFTS

HOLIDAY PARTIES

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

HOME FURNISHINGS

SPECIAL PROGRAM FUNDS

PICNIC FUNDS

DANCE BANDS

CAMP FUNDS

STAFF APPRECIATION

A Parent Newsletter is published 4 times a year, and can be accessed on our website, www.parentsassociationbhc.com. Do you have a relative, friend, or community leader that would be interested in the Parent Association? 2017 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE \$5.00 annually. Pass along the membership form in this newsletter issue.

For questions about the Parents Association, call 314-340-6002.

TRIBUTE FUND

Celebrate a birthday or anniversary, offer get well wishes or congratulations, remember a loved one by sending in a tribute - support the residents at Bellefontaine Habilitation Center. A few examples of the use of funds are: annual picnic, Christmas gifts and decorations, birthday cakes and presents, holiday decorations, treats and dances, household items, and special programs. The tribute form is on the last page of the newsletter.

<u>DONOR</u>	<u>RECIPIENT</u>	<u>OCCASION</u>
Sharisse Bush	Ruth Vondras	in memory of Linda Hayden
Patsy Christen		in memory of Patrice Christen
Lisa Cressey	Cressey family	in memory of Floyd Cressey
Marge Martens	Cressey family	in memory of Floyd Cressey
Thomas Martens	Cressey family	in memory of Floyd Cressey
Gina Walsh		in memory of Jim Mulvaney
Sarah Jane May	Shirley Golby Haas	90 th birthday congratulations

Thanks to all who send in tributes in support of activities for BHC residents.

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FUNDS APPROVED BY PARENTS ASSOCIATION BOARD

- \$ 5400.00 Christmas gifts, parties, decorations, program
- \$ 1270.00 Birthday gifts for residents
- \$ 175.00 Household goods, Apt. A
- \$ 250.00 Household goods, Home 1606



Because of your donations and the dedicated work of the volunteers at the Hidden Treasure Thrift Shop, these generous funds are available for the enjoyment of the BHC residents.

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PARENT ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR YEAR 2017

Dues are \$5.00 a year. Make checks payable to "BHC Parents Association".

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

NEW MEMBER yes no _____

If you are a new member, please let us know for mailing the newsletter.

**Mail to: PARENTS ASSOCIATION 10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD
ST. LOUIS, MO 63137**



THANK YOU

The Parents Association extends a note of appreciation for generous donations to the Hidden Treasure Thrift Shop that help us brighten the lives of the residents at Bellefontaine Habilitation Center.

We thank you with all our hearts: 

- The Mulvaney family
- Celeste Ledwidge
- Mr. and Mrs. Jack Deming and members of "Overland Baptist Church"
- Members of "Church Women United"
- "Women's Closet Exchange"
- "The Knights of Columbus", Fr. Griffin Council No. 3586, Tootsie Roll Drive funds

FALL/WINTER RESIDENT ACTIVITIES

BHC residents have been "on the go" off campus and on campus!



Activities off campus: Pumpkin farms Restaurants Shopping
Movies Barber/Beauty shop Christmas lights Christmas Festivals

Activities on campus: Halloween Dance with treats - Everyone received a bag of treats for Halloween day.



Christmas Dance & Parties - Everyone had snacks and received a bag treats for Christmas.

Bob Kramer Marionettes Christmas Program: The Christmas mood was set on the BHC campus early in the morning as a sprinkling of snow began to fall. The decorations in the gym added to the festive mood. The residents were entertained with a variety of Christmas stories, songs, and dances through the marionettes program.

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MISSOURI HOUSE BILL 626 – REVISION OF GUARDIANSHIP LAWS

www.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills171/hlrbillspdf/1115H.011.pdf

Another bill to revise Missouri guardianship law, House Bill 626, has been introduced by Representative Jim Neely. Depending on how the revisions would be interpreted, guardianship could be weakened. Some of the wording that is concerning:

CONCERN NUMBER 1: the new wording (page 22, line 39) that states:

(3) "The guardian shall give priority to home or community-based settings when not inconsistent with the ward's goals and preferences;"

COMMENT: A guardian should not be forced by law to give priority to home or community-based settings. This goes against federal and state laws protecting the right of the guardian to choose from all available living options, not giving preference to any of them. The guardian should not be limited in this way. The needs of the wards must be the priority in making decisions concerning their welfare. This wording should be deleted.

CONCERN NUMBER 2: the repeated necessity of including the ward that has been determined by the courts to be "incapacitated" in the decision making process (page 22, lines 11-19)

3. Before making decisions on behalf of the adult ward, the guardian shall, to the extent possible, ascertain the ward's goals, needs, and preferences as follows:

- (1) First, the guardian shall ask the ward what the ward wants;
- (2) Second, if the ward has difficulty expressing what the ward wants, the guardian shall do everything possible to help the ward express his or her goals, needs, and preferences; and
- (3) Third, if the ward, even with assistance, cannot express his or her goals and preferences, the guardian shall seek input from others familiar with the person to determine what the individual would have wanted.

COMMENT: If one has been declared incapacitated, the reason for guardianship is to make decisions for the ward that are in the best interests of the ward.

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ARTICLE CRITICIZES A “ONE SIZE FITS ALL” APPROACH TO SERVICES FOR INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED PERSONS

The excerpts below gives a personal perspective of how the “one size fits all” idea of total inclusion in education, work, and living environments does not benefit many individuals with severe intellectual disabilities. (emphasis added)

**“Surviving the Inclusion Delusion: Danny at 40”
The DD News Blog, by Jill Barker, Monday, October 3, 2016**

My son Danny is forty years old this week. He has multiple disabilities resulting from brain damage acquired during his first few days after birth. He functions at the level of a 6 to 12 month old infant and always will. And, yes, I know he is not really an infant. We do not love him less because he lives and survives with profound developmental disabilities.

...I first heard the term Inclusion around 1990. Danny was 13 years old and attending High Point School in Ann Arbor. High Point was an outstanding program for Danny, bringing together services, expertise, and a supportive community to accommodate children with the most severe disabilities, including complex medical and behavioral conditions.

...Most discussions of the idea (of inclusion) did not include an examination of whether the premise on which the belief is based is true for every child or whether it is required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (it is not). In the face of any disagreement with the idea, promoters of inclusion encouraged families to take sides: “Are you for ‘Inclusion’ or against it?” Or as many advocates would have it, “Do you want disabled children isolated and segregated from the rest of society or do you want them to be fully integrated into and embraced by ‘the community’”? This continues to this day.

...But the uncritical acceptance of the Inclusion Delusion disregarded a number of moral and ethical questions:

****Is it right to make judgments about “all children with disabilities” without considering their individuality and acknowledging the full range of their diverse needs?**

****Do advocacy organizations or government agencies have a right to impose on children and their parents an all-encompassing doctrine when the parents and others who know the child best have good reason to disagree?**

****Is Inclusion the ultimate goal of educating children with disabilities or are the needs of the individual child paramount in determining educational services and placement?**

****Is Inclusion a cause that must be served, whether or not it is appropriate for a specific child?**

In the early 1990’s, the indoctrination for inclusion in schools was intense, an obvious sign that the project was well-funded and a great opportunity for organizations and local agencies to tap into a new funding stream. I attended a meeting sponsored by our local ARC (formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens) featuring a speaker from another state. She gave a rousing speech citing success stories of even the most profoundly disabled children blossoming in the presence of their non-disabled peers. Non-disabled children, she said, were learning acceptance, tolerance, and the value of people with disabilities to society and their fellow citizens.

As I listened, I pondered how Danny would be accommodated in a regular middle school classroom? How would they deal with his bouts of vomiting after meals, the necessity for frequent diaper changes, and his need for floor space for his favorite activity - rolling over? Would other students and staff tolerate his occasional blood-curdling screams when things weren't going well for him? Was it wise to remove him from an environment that had every accommodation that he needed and place him where virtually nothing was geared toward his needs? Could anything prevent him from becoming the chief source of disruption for almost every activity that normally occurs in a typical classroom?

...The Inclusion Delusion, that all children could be accommodated in regular classrooms, signaled a dramatic shift in thinking. Rather than determining the education that each child received based on his or her unique needs, it made the assumption that every child could succeed in placement in regular classrooms. If that did not work, the parents, the schools, and the professionals must have done something wrong. Or, as one parent said in another short documentary promoting Inclusion, "Even if it doesn't work, you should do it anyway. It's the right thing to do".

For years, the proponents of Inclusion in schools have pitted parents against parents, demonized teachers and staff who work with children in specialized classrooms and special schools and set the stage for years to come for disability movements based on over broad generalizations about people with disabilities.

In the mad dash to close institutions and many other specialized programs for people with disabilities, the people directly affected by these closures were rarely asked their opinion early enough in the process to make a difference.

Instead, advocacy groups, especially those that receive federal funding to promote their causes, claimed to represent people with disabilities and swooped in with all the answers: No one would choose to live in an institution or group home, work at a sheltered workshop, attend a day program with other people with disabilities, or live anywhere but in their own home or at home with their family. All people with disabilities can and should live independently, make all their own decisions, and work in integrated, competitive work settings.

The truth is that there are people with disabilities who can do only some of these things, some who can do none of them, and some who choose to do things differently than other people with similar disabilities. They have been marginalized.

The closure of programs and services that meet their needs has been justified with the promise that closing programs that no one wants, according to the advocates, will pay for more services to more people, "in the community". This is unlikely to ever be realized as states see "savings" as opportunities to fund more popular government- supported programs (such as fixing potholes), to reduce taxes, and to continue to ignore many of the needs of people with disabilities. Attempts to develop innovative family-initiated projects to serve and house people with disabilities that may actually save money in the long run are also being thwarted by advocates who fear any incursions into the territory they have claimed for themselves as the representatives of all people with disabilities.

Thanks to Danny (and Ian who came along eight years later), my blog has been an attempt to set the record straight, give a voice to people who are rarely heard, and attempt to restore some balance in the stories that are told about people with disabilities.

This is an unbelievably frustrating time for families who see their judgment questioned at every turn as they attempt to salvage necessary services for their loved ones and hope for a truly inclusive future that acknowledges differences in abilities and needs and honors the choices that families and their loved-ones must make.

Jill Barker is the mother of two adult sons with profound intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). She is the author and editor of The DD News Blog. She serves on the Board of Just Us Club in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and is a former member of the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council and the former president of Friends of DD, a family organization in Washtenaw County, MI.

Jill is a member of VOR, a national non-profit organization that advocates for a full range of services and settings to meet the diverse needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Standing up for choice and access to community and facility-based homes, VOR is dedicated to maintaining individual and family choice, offering advocacy support for access to community, legal, medical and educational resources for individuals with special needs and their families. For more information, visit <http://www.vor.net>.

PARENT ASSN COMMENT: While inclusion can be successful for many, individual need should be the determination of appropriate services. Residents of habilitation centers have opportunities to be included in community activities, and also have the specialized services they need.

Families must continue to be a voice for a full continuum of services. There are families calling Bellefontaine Habilitation Center looking for placement, but are not allowed to look at habilitation centers because of the no new admissions policy of the Missouri Department of Mental Health.

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Stay informed. Take action. Make change happen.
Contact Information

BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER

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Marcy Hargis, Assistant Superintendent
10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD
ST. LOUIS, MO 63137
314-264-9100 or 314-264-9101

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mark Stringer, Director of Department of Mental Health
Valerie Huhn, Director-Division of Developmental Disabilities
April Maxwell, Director-State Operated Services

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MISSOURI STATE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

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www.mo.gov

U.S. SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

United States Capitol Switchboard: 1-202-224-3121
www.house.gov
www.senate.gov

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Switchboard: 1-202-256-1414
www.whitehouse.gov

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Telephone: (573) 635-9145
Toll-free: (800) 554-2054
www.afscme.org

VOR (a national organization representing a full continuum of care for persons diagnosed with an intellectual disability, including ICFs/IID, habilitation centers in Missouri)
1-877-399-4867
www.vor.net

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letters to the editor letters@post-dispatch.com

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TRIBUTE FUND FORM (please print)

ENCLOSED CONTRIBUTION _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

ON THE OCCASION OF _____

PLEASE SEND TO (name) _____

(address) _____

FROM (name) _____

(address) _____

MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO "BHC Parents Association"

MAIL TO: PARENTS ASSOCIATION 10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD ST LOUIS MO 63137



**THE HIDDEN TREASURE SHOP
SHOP TILL YOU DROP!! BEST THRIFT SHOP PRICES!!**

BLDG #1901 FIRST BUILDING ON THE LEFT AS YOU ENTER BHC CAMPUS

WEDNESDAYS, 9 A.M. TO 3 P.M. AT BHC

Please leave donated items at the Parents Association shed near the Thrift Shop.



PARENTS ASSOCIATION, INC.
BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER
10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD
ST. LOUIS MO 63137

**FORWARDING AND ADDRESS
CORRECTION REQUESTED**

