

BRC BULLETIN

Where Dreams can become reality



February 2024



A Night to Shine & an Experience to Never Forget

February 9th was the date, and Easthaven Baptist Church in Brookhaven, MS was the place. Throughout the state, people with special needs (age 14+) were invited to attend the *Night to Shine* event sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation. For one night, these individuals got to experience what it's like to be the real star of the show and be treated like the kings & queens they are.

(See pages 5-6)

Hearts and History

Hearts, History, & Love were certainly showing all around Boswell campus this Valentine's Day. It was a tough decision with all the heart and love put into the decorations, but the winner is... *(See page 15)*



The Boswell Bulletin

is published without cost to inform the public, employees, friends and family of Boswell Regional Center's activities, programs and progress. This publication also serves to provide information to those interested in the work conducted by BRC employees to enrich the lives of those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Mission Statement

Boswell Regional Center offers specialized program options to Mississippians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. These programs are designed to identify the necessary supports for successful community transition. With collaboration between the person, family, and community, dreams can become a reality

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(601) 867-5078***

Welcome Aboard!

**Feb. 1st
Class**



Row 1:
Lakerious Ducksworth,
Madison May,
Chasnice Evans,
Latorsha Burrell

Row 2:
Taylor Lonzo,
Barbara Hynes,
DaNita Aldridge

Row 3:
Brando Collins,
Dalton Leist,
Marany Yates,
Isaiah Woods

Row 1:
Hope Grantham,
Keiunae Washington,
Tori Sandford,
Za'Nesa Knight,
Gabriel "Seth" Sheppard

Row 2:
Lacey Rice,
Ebony Craft,
Daylin McGill

Row 3:
Michael Smith,
Dekequa "Kiwi" Simmons,
Contreyvus "Trey" White,
Jacoby Bridges



**Feb. 16th
Class**

Saint Patrick

Maewyn Succat (St. Patrick) was born during the 5th century to a Christian family in Britain. His family was considered wealthy, as his father was a tax collector. At the age of 16 Maewyn was kidnapped by a band of raiders who brought him to Ireland to be sold him as a slave. For 6 yrs, he spent much of his time in isolation, without proper food or clothing, herding cows and sheep for local chieftains. He says an angel appeared to him in a dream and told him of a ship leaving Ireland, so he walked across 200 miles of peat bogs and forest to arrive at a port bound for the European continent. He returned to his family in Britain, and after a period of religious training, he was ordained as a deacon. He was later consecrated as a bishop and given the name Patricius (Patrick). As providence would have it, Patrick requested an assignment back to Ireland to serve as a missionary and is credited with bringing the Christian faith to the Irish people. Today, he is known as the Patron Saint of Ireland and is Ireland's national apostle.

Did you know...

Saint Patrick was not born in Ireland, nor was the color originally associated with him green?

“What?!?” you may be thinking. Never fear! St. Paddy’s Day Trivia Q&A is here.

Question: What do the three leaves of a shamrock symbolize on St. Patrick’s Day?

Answer: The Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), according to the legend that Saint Patrick used the shamrock to illustrate the concept to potential converts. It can also symbolize love, hope, and faith

Question: Of which country is Saint Patrick the patron saint?

Answer: Ireland.

Question: Why is St. Patrick's Day celebrated on March 17?

Answer: It's the day Saint Patrick died in 461 AD.

Question: What demographic group was largely responsible for shifting St. Patrick's Day from a religious observation to a secular one?

Answer: Irish immigrants in the United States.

Question: Where and when was the first St. Patrick's Day parade ever recorded?

Answer: St. Augustine, Florida, in 1601. The area was then a Spanish colony, but it had an Irish vicar

Question: What is the traditional main dish served at many St. Patrick’s Day celebrations in America?

Answer: Corned beef and cabbage.

Question: St. Patrick was originally associated with what color?

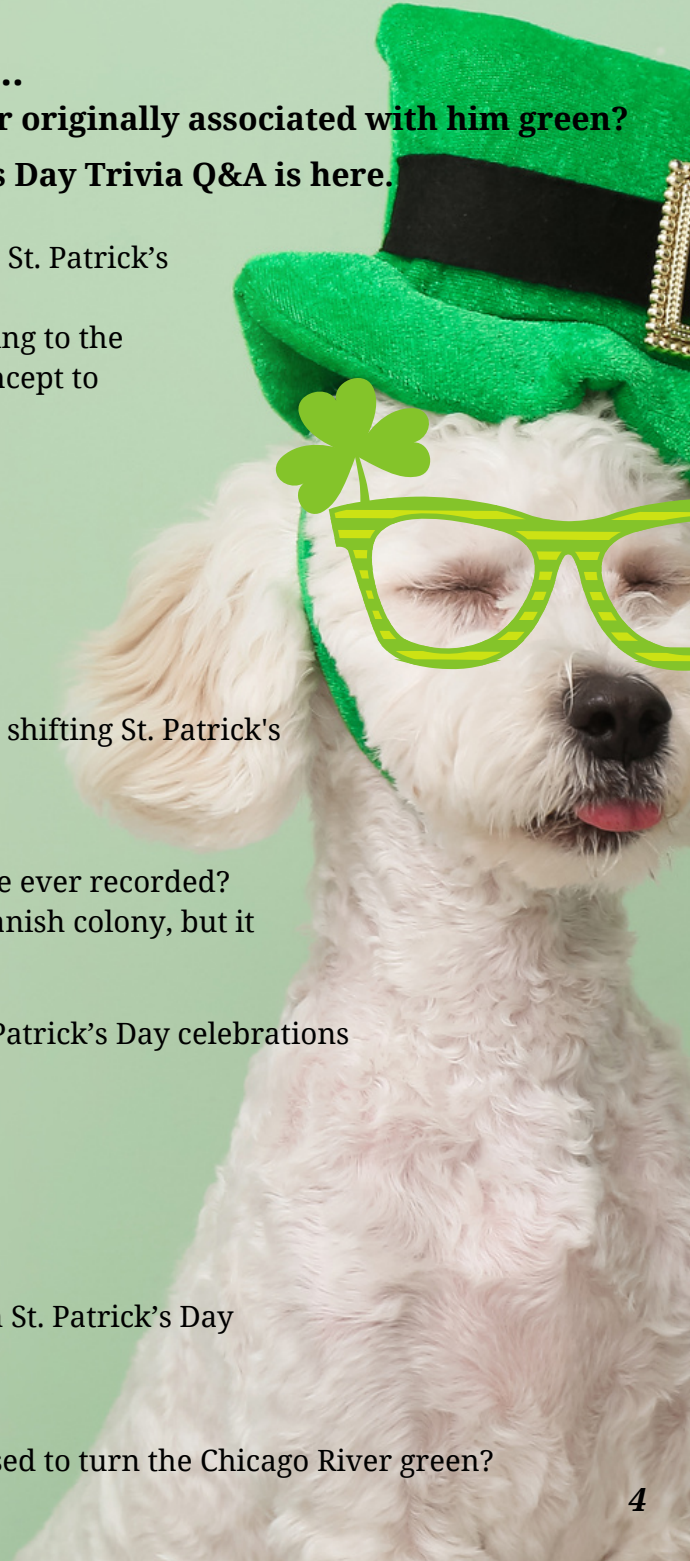
Answer: Blue.

Question: How many pints of Guinness do drinkers consume on St. Patrick’s Day worldwide?

Answer: 13 million

Question: How many pounds of green vegetable dye are now used to turn the Chicago River green?

Answer: 40 pounds.



NIGHT to Shine

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NIGHT *to Shine*

SPONSORED BY THE **TIM TEBOW**
FOUNDATION™

On Friday, February 9th, Easthaven Baptist Church, located in Brookhaven, MS, hosted its first ever “Night to Shine” event. Night to Shine, launched 10 years ago by the Tim Tebow Foundation, is an unforgettable prom night experience, centered on God’s love, for people with special needs ages 14 and older. The complimentary event for people with special needs is hosted by local churches and takes place simultaneously around the world on the same date each year.

This year several BRC individuals from the Brookhaven/Wesson area took advantage of this special event and enjoyed activities like: a red-carpet entrance, complete with cheering fans and paparazzi-style photographers; hair, make up, nail, and shoe-shine stations; limousine rides; a host of games, dancing, karaoke and even a visit from “Love”, the golden retriever from Canines 4 Christ. All honored guest also had the opportunity to enjoy a delicious catered meal. Each person received a boutonniere or corsage upon arrival and a crown or tiara during the crowning ceremony.

As each guest & staff arrived onto the scene, they were formally greeted, given King and Queen name tags, and paired with a “Buddy”, a volunteer who had undergone stringent background testing, to accompany them as guests participated in all the activities their hearts desired. Afterwards, caregivers and family members were invited to relax in their very own respite area, where they could enjoy their own night of pampering, complete with a delicious, catered meal, games, and door prizes. They also heard from guest speaker, Miss Mississippi, whose platform advocates for more ID/DD-inclusive curriculum in Mississippi’s public schools, a cause that’s dear to heart through a brother who lives with physical disabilities. In the respite lounge, there were two very large TV screens that allowed family members and caregivers to keep watch over their loved ones in the next room, giving them the assurance they needed while being separated.

The amount of preparation and attention to detail that went into making this night a success is impossible to convey through words or even pictures. Everything was “Top Notch” and definitely a night our individuals will never forget. Thank you to everyone who participated in and took the initiative to get our ladies and gentlemen registered and ready for this exciting night. A special thanks to Blush and Bashful of Brookhaven for donating formal wear that had our ladies red-carpet ready.



 *In Loving Memory*

Theresa Collins

February 20, 1958 ~ January 28, 2024



Theresa served as a Support Care Professional Supervisor in the Community. She will be greatly missed by work family and the many individuals who have happy memories of her taking them to church on Sundays. Her funeral services were held on Friday, February 2, 2024, at Westhaven Funeral Home in Magee, and a Celebration of Life service was held the following Saturday, February 3, 2024, at Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in Magee, MS.

Claude Ellis Lewis

May 15, 1936 ~ February 6, 2024



Longtime resident of the Wesson Geriatric Group Home, Claude Lewis loved going out to eat with family, participating in daily activities, and spending time with special friends like Shannon Smith, his companion for over 25 years. Memorial services for Mr. Lewis were held Friday, February 9, 2024, at the Riverwood Family Funeral Home in Brookhaven, MS.



Wagon Train Participants Visit BRC

Not uncommon for February in Mississippi, Monday, Feb. 5th, started out as a cold, wet, wintry day. But thankfully the riders of the 2024 Dixie National Wagon Train did not let this hinder them from making their regularly-scheduled trip through the BRC campus, where both staff and individuals lined sidewalks to get a glimpse of real cowboys and cowgirls making their way to the Jackson for the Dixie National Rodeo. Each year participants of the wagon train make the 160 mile trip (approximately 20 miles per day) from Philadelphia, MS to the the fairgrounds in Jackson during the seven day journey just prior to the start of the Dixie National Rodeo.





BRC Staff roll up their sleeves to give the gift of life during the first blood drive of 2024



Chasity Butler



Don Thames



Deanne Clark

All 27 donors who participated in our most recent blood drive had their names entered into a raffle for 4 free meals at the Le Grande (including drink and dessert). Congratulations to Vicki Kettleman for being the winner and for generously giving these coupons to her staff as Valentine's Day gifts.

Winner, Winner!!!

Considering the rate of inflation these days, \$25 may not seem like a lot of money, and it sure won't get you as far as it used to. But free money is free money, right? And who doesn't like being a winner and getting something for free? For Super Bowl LVIII (58), all BRC staff and Individuals could enter their names into a raffle and vote on the team they wanted to win. Of course we all know the how the game turned out; Kansas City Chiefs narrowly took the win with a 3 point lead over the San Francisco 49ers, but they weren't the only winners...

Congratulations!

Other winners not pictured:

- ICF Staff: Shantqua Harris
- Waiver Staff: Ingrid Mills
- ICF Individual: J. Pratt

**Community winner,
David Collins,
proudly stops for a
photo to show his
winnings.**



DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT



We're greeted by them everyday with a friendly smile and a *how ya doin'* wave, as we enter the campus grounds of BRC to begin our daily service to our individuals as well as to each other. So much of what they do goes unnoticed, but there is a certain calmness and peace of mind that's created in the environment just knowing they're here. The men and women who serve on BRC's Campus Security Department do far more than patrol the campus grounds or perform traffic control during our many events. They also provide a courier service for our internal mail system, screen visitors, and direct those who are unfamiliar with our campus, even providing escort services where needed. In the event you (like myself) have needed a jump-start or if you have a flat tire or locked your keys in your car, Security will do everything possible to assist you, even if that means just staying with you until additional help arrives.

After hours, when most of us have gone for the day, BRC Security become watchmen during the longest hours of the night. They regularly monitor campus buildings, ensure windows and doors are locked and that the back gate remains secured. They are always on the lookout for perpetrators or suspicious activity on our campus, and they won't hesitate to confront an unauthorized person or contact the authorities when necessary. Protecting BRC individuals and staff and ensuring a safe, secure environment where daily operations can run smoothly, is their number one goal.





Sharon Keys

Sharon is the Supervisor for BRC's Campus Security. She is from Mendenhall and has served at Boswell for 29 1/2 years. She received her law enforcement training at MLEOTA, and before coming to security, she worked at Jaquith. Her favorite thing about BRC is the individuals, the staff, and the BRC Security Dept. Her goal is to be a better person each day and to love and encourage others.

Marvin Easterling

Marvin is from Prentiss and has served in the Security Department for 6 years. He studied welding trades at Pearl River Community College and enjoys farming. His goal is to one day get back to farming cattle, but until then, his favorite thing about BRC is how his department works as a team.



Julius Antonio Bower

Julius is from Magee and has served in the Security Department for 6 years. He holds a BA in Political Science from JSU and says his favorite thing about working at BRC is the level of Excellence that's evident, expected, and achievable here.



Charles M. Meadows

“Mike” is from Magee and has served in the Security Department for 4 years. He enjoys being outdoors, hunting and fishing, and his goal is simply to be the best he can be. His favorite thing about BRC is that he gets to meet new people.



Kelly Wade

Kelly is from Mize and has served in the Security Department for 2 years. After graduating high school, he attended Jones County Junior College. His favorite thing about BRC is being able to work with our individuals and keep them safe.

Joshua Cole

Josh is from Magee and has served at Boswell for 11 months. He holds a BA in Sport Coaching from USM and enjoys coaching basketball. He says he loves helping people and wants to be the best security officer he can be.





Donald McKinley

Don is from Taylorsville and has served at Boswell for 11 months. He received training at MLEOTA and also has military experience and explosives training. He enjoys hunting, fishing, and spending time with his grandkids. He looks forward to retiring one day but, for now, says he enjoys working with his fellow staff members.

Shaun P. Riptoe

Shaun is from Jackson and has served at Boswell for 4 months. He enjoys art, photography, and collecting fossils. He wants to pay off a few bills so that he can get back into doing art and says his favorite thing about BRC is being able to help other people in their departments.



Christopher Hall

Christopher is from Mt. Olive and has served at Boswell for 3 months. He has training in computer graphics and once served as a firefighter for the City of Mt. Olive. He says his goal is to simply work hard for his family and that his favorite thing about BRC is the people.





Madison May

Maddie is from Mize and has been at Boswell for one month. She enjoys art, writing, comics, and canine rescue. Her goal is to attend university and earn a degree in Psychology. Her favorite thing about BRC is the community and working with such a friendly team. Most people don't know she helped paint the City of Mize mural.



Mardi Gras

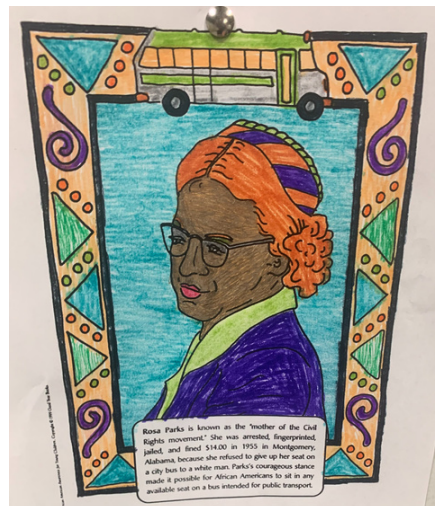
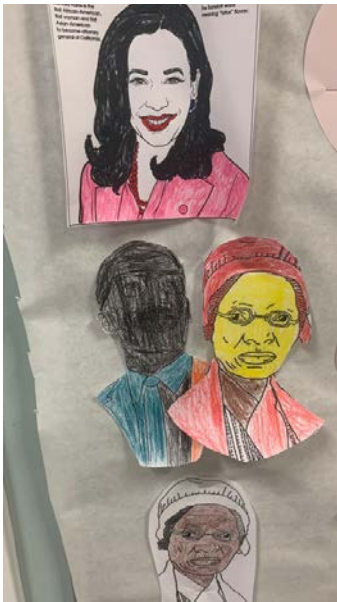
BRC



Dream Haven Celebrates

Each February, individuals from BRC campus and community find meaningful ways of celebrating Black History Month, and this year was no exception. Several of the participants from the Dream Haven Day Services Program in Brookhaven, set aside a special day to recognize and pay tribute to the unique contributions made by black Americans throughout history. Pictures below include Oprah Winfrey, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, and former President of the United States, Barack Obama.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



For the Love of Competition

“Competition is good for business.” It’s also good for morale and team building, as the staff at each of the BRC campus units put their best foot forward in decorating their units for Valentine’s Day. This is always a fun and exciting time of year, especially for the individuals who love any occasion to celebrate. Celebrating along with them was the team at Oakbrook, who won this year’s Valentine’s Day Decorating Contest.

Happy Valentine's Day



Valentine's Day at Dream Haven

We all know that Valentine's Day is a celebration of love, but it doesn't always have to center around romance. Valentine's Day is a day to remember ALL the loved ones we have in our lives, including our wonderful family and friends. And what better way to get friends and family together than by having a party with lots of fun decorations and great food. Looks like the staff and participants at Dream Haven Day Services have this figured out already.



Upcoming Events

March

- 6 **IDD Day at the Capitol, 8:00-11:30, MS State Capitol**
- 12 **Mental Health Day at the Capitol, 8:00-11:30, MS State Capitol**
- 13 **Events Team Meeting, 1:30, Admin. Bldg. Conference Room**
- 14 **Friends & Family Meeting, 11:30, (location TBD)**
- 15 **St. Patrick's Day Parade, 10:00, Campus**
- 17 **St. Patrick's Day**
- 29 **Good Friday Chapel Service, 10:00, BRC Auditorium (tentative location)**
- 31 **Easter Sunday**

Boswell Bad Boys bring home 1st Place trophy!

Boswell Braves bring 2nd!

On Saturday, February 24th, Mississippi Special Olympics held their State Level Spring Games in Oxford, MS. The young men from Boswell Regional Center played hard and came away victorious, earning first and second place trophies in the basketball tournament.

Congratulations, guys! We are so proud of you.

