



Summer 2012

Bulletin

A Tribute to BRC Director
Mr. Raymond Johnson



Raymond Johnson retires from Boswell Regional Center



The days are getting longer and much warmer as we usher in summertime and all that comes along with it. This year, however, it's a bittersweet time for our BRC family. Long-time facility director, Mr. Raymond Johnson, announced his retirement for June 30, 2012. As the date draws near, we want to take a moment to remember his contributions to Boswell and his public service to the State of Mississippi.

During his years with the Department of Mental Health, Mr. Johnson has served in various administrative positions. He began his career in 1989 as a Personnel Officer at Mississippi State Hospital. Later, he was promoted to the Staff Education Director. After his time with MSH, he transferred in November 1994 to South Mississippi Regional Center as a Bureau Director. He worked for and with the staff and individuals of SMRC until July 1995.

So in 1995, Mr. Johnson joined the Boswell family under the supervision of Ms. Susie Lassiter as Assistant Director. In 2000, he was promoted to the position of Facility Director where he served until his retirement in June 2012. His tenure as Facility Director earns him the distinct designation of the longest serving Facility Director for BRC thus far.

During his service as Director, Mr. Johnson has played a major role in the beautification of the campus and in a number of projects

As the longest serving Director for BRC, many changes have come to pass under his leadership. A quote from Mr. Johnson himself sums it up best: "When we invest in a new structure or upgrade our surroundings, it is tangible proof of the importance we place on the activity that will take place there...whether it's creating a new home for our individuals, enhancing the overall scenery and recreational areas they enjoy on a daily basis, or providing space for employees to accomplish greater tasks for those we serve." This statement was made about the opening of the State Farm apartments and truly embodies Mr. Johnson's vision for Boswell and the mobilization for us to get there.

In addition to being a graduate of The University of Southern Mississippi, with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Mr. Johnson also graduated from William Carey University with a Masters of Education degree and from the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, Mississippi State University. He is a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, Certified Public Manager, Certified Mental Health Therapist, Certified Mental Retardation Therapist, Certified Mental Health Administrator, and Certified Volunteer Fireman. Mr. Johnson is a recipient of the Bradley A. Sanders Service award. Upon his retirement, the mayor of Magee, Jimmy Clyde presented Mr. Johnson with a proclamation for his service and a key to the city.

This bulletin serves as a tribute to Mr. Johnson and the contributions he has made to the community through his service to the State of Mississippi. All we can say to Mr. Johnson is Thank You for your tireless efforts, your fairness, and your undying loyalty to BRC. You are truly

BRC BULLETIN

The Boswell Bulletin is a publication of Boswell Regional Center. The Bulletin is published free of charge to inform the public and interested family members and individuals about Boswell Regional Center activities, policies and progress. This publication also serves to provide information to those interested in intellectual disabilities and the individuals served at

Steven Allen,
In-Coming Director
Kristen Andris, Editor
Kathy Pittman, Photographer

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health and each facility to recruit, employ and promote qualified employees and applicants without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability. The Department of Mental Health/Bureau of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. It is the sole purpose of this act to provide a clear mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals

Boswell Regional Center

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 128
Magee, MS 39111

Physical Address:
1049 Simpson Hwy 149
Magee, MS 39111

Phone Number:
601-867-5000

Boswell Regional Center would like to express sincere appreciation to Mr. Raymond Johnson. Congratulations on your Retirement!!

State Farm Apartment Complex

(The following excerpt is from the Summer 2003 Bulletin)

Boswell Regional Center recently began construction on Phase I of an apartment complex that will, upon completion, serve as the new home for 35 of the center's clients. On Tuesday, June 10, BRC officials held a Groundbreaking Ceremony at the construction site, located at 229 Hwy. 545.

"With site preparation on the apartment complex now underway, we are one step closer to providing our clients with a more independent way of life," BRC director Raymond Johnson said at the ceremony. "Being able to live in the community in facilities such as this allows clients to enjoy the many benefits of living in their own home. In addition, living in the community will provide easier access for many of them to their places of employment and allow them to contribute in a meaningful way to the city of Magee and



Pictured breaking ground on BRC's new apartment complex are, from left: Steve Allen, BRC Director of Support Services; Simpson County Sheriff Tom Royals; Brent Barron of Grantier Architecture; Buddy Grantier Grantier Architecture; BRC Director Raymond Johnson; Ed LeGrand, MS Department of Mental Health; Wanda Smith, Office of the Governor; State Rep. Clint Rotenberry and wife Christy; Justin Sullivan of Sullivan Enterprises; and Rev. Brent Barker, pastor of Good water Baptist Church

Ribbon Cutting at State Farm

(The following excerpt is from the Summer 2005 Bulletin)



Pictured cutting the ribbon at the dedication ceremony of Boswell's State Farm Apartments on May 13 are from left: Simpson County Supervisor, Sammy Welch; Simpson County Supervisor, Curtis Skiffer; Dr. Randy Hendrix, Executive Director of the Department of Mental Health; apartment resident and BRC individual, Connie Green; Raymond Johnson BRC Director; Bradley Sanders, DMH board member; State Representative, Clint Rotenberry; Anthony Grayson, Smith County Circuit Clerk; and Robert Landrum, DMH Board Chairman

(The following excerpts were taken from the Arts Fair 2011 Bulletin)

Blessing of New Buildings– Units 2 & 3



Pictured at left is Steven Allen, Assistant Facility Director; Brother Rudy Jackson, BRC Chaplain; Gloria Johnson, Assistant Facility Director; Brother Buddy Keys, Pastor First Baptist Church & Raymond Johnson, BRC Facility Director

Many hands worked on the new buildings which now house individuals from Units 2 & 3. The work was difficult and time consuming. Very hot days and weather delayed the process; however, the hands that build these homes continued working until the buildings were completed.

Now that the construction has been completed, it is time to fill the homes with “hearts”. Those “hearts” are the individuals who will be occupying these new homes. BRC found it important and fitting that we invite Dr. Buddy Keys, Pastor of First Baptist Church in Magee, Mississippi, to bless these new homes.

Dr. Buddy keys holds a special place in his heart for our individuals, as many who occupy these new homes are also members of First Baptist. So, it was on August 29, 2011, that Dr. Keys, assisted by BRC Chaplain, Brother Rudy Jackson, so graciously blessed these new dwellings. We want to thank Dr. Keys for taking his time to perform this very special

How Does Your Garden Grow?

That’s a question that folks around Boswell Regional Center will soon be asking thanks to the donation of five “To Go Gardens” from the Simpson County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Delivered in late August, these “To Go Gardens” are being distributed to various Boswell locations and are literally transportable from one area to another. The structure sits on wheels and can be used in an outdoor setting as well as indoors. Three different containers of soil, with rocks underneath to retain moisture, are placed on a bench attached to the structure and can be used to grow flowers, plants or veg-

.....

“ We feel that a number of our individuals will benefit from planting, watering and being able to watch things grow. There’s a sense of satisfaction in taking part in this type of activity.” said Raymond Johnson, BRC Facility

.....



Pictured are, from left: Edith Wallace, District Officer; Bill Blair, BRC; Nell Hughes and Tom McAlpin, Simpson County Commissioners. Pictured back row are: Don Wallace and Malcolm Lowe, District Conservationist. Pictured at right: Steven Allen, BRC; Gladys, a recipient of Boswell Regional Center services; Raymond Johnson, BRC Director; Jeff Wilson, Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commissioner; and Jason Martin, BRC. Pictured back row is Orlando Rankin, BRC.

BRC Wins Business of the Year

Boswell Regional Center received the Business of the Year award during the 32nd Annual Membership Meeting of the Simpson County Development Foundation (SCDF) held on June 21st.

Accepting the award on behalf of Boswell was Raymond Johnson, Facility Director.

“Receiving this prestigious award is a humbling experience and we thank those who made this possible,” Johnson said.

(Pictured at right is Michael Ingram, Executive Director of the SCDF, and Director Raymond Johnson)



Boswell's Pine Straw Project

(The following excerpt was taken from an article from the Clarion Ledger; article originally printed December 25, 2008)

In a time of cutbacks for state agencies, Boswell Regional Center has found a new money maker: collecting and selling the pine straw. Boswell officials told the state Board of Mental Health they expect to gross \$20,000 a year from selling the pine straw that falls on some of Boswell's more than 30 acres.

“The clients get paid for their work”, explained Raymond Johnson, Boswell facility director. “And the little bit of profit goes into the special-needs fund, where it will be spent on client projects. We're hoping it will expand the services we can't.”

The acres of pine trees on BRC property weren't bringing the facility any money, but what about the pine straw that blanketed the ground beneath them?

At first they started clearing the pine straw by hand. Then, they realized they needed more training to deal with the snakes and insects. Boswell officials studied farms in the Delta that harvest pine straw commercially and ended up buying equipment that would condition the pine straw and turn it into bales.

Officials hope to soon recover on their investment, and then would put any profits the pine straw project makes back into the program to



The Bradley A. Sanders Award



Pictured above (left) with Mr. Raymond Johnson accepting his Bradley S. Sanders Award are family members, from left, Ashley Jones, Kelly Jones, Kristen Cockrell, Junior Cockrell, Cindy Cockrell, Alison Johnson, Diane Johnson, Joseph Johnson, Shea Johnson, Kathy Davis, & Sid Davis, Jr. Pictured above (right) is Mr. Johnson with Bradley Sanders.

The LeGrand Café



Pictured at right is Mr. Raymond Johnson welcoming employees and visitors from the community to the LeGrand Café's Grand Opening in 2003. Also pictured is Mr. Ed LeGrand, Executive Director of the Department of Mental Health

Through the Years...



Pictured at left, Raymond Johnson and friends. Pictured at right: a tree was planted in memory of former social worker Cindy Lassiter Williams during National Social Workers' Month. Renee Cotton, who was Williams' supervisor during the time of her employment, spearheaded the planting of the tree. Pictured are Cindy Renot, left, Social Services Director, and BRC Director Raymond Johnson



Pictured donating an American flag to Boswell Regional Center is VFW Commander Robby Austin, and Chaplain Larry Berry, far right. Director Raymond Johnson receives flag on behalf of BRC.



"Mr. Johnson has always been a supporter of the armed forces and has taken pride in showing patriotism. The installation of the flagpoles at the main entrance to BRC is proof of his love for his country." Steven Allen

Largest Graduating CPM Class in BRC History

(From Spring 2012 Bulletin)



Mr. Johnson has always supported staff in developing and enhancing their skill set in order to be better employees. His willingness to allow staff to attend training for enhancement will have a lasting impact on service delivery for years to come. –Gloria Johnson, Assistant Director

This graduating class of December 2011 is the largest class that we have graduated at BRC thus far. Pictured above are BRC Director Raymond Johnson, Assistant Director Gloria Johnson, Carol Tobias, Craig Kittrell, Kerry Bynum, Veronica Martin, Bill Blair, Karen Hamilton, Will Beeson, Cindy Quick, Calvert Sims Jr., Bobby Hamilton, and Steven Allen, Assistant Director.

Boswell Regional Center Administration Promotes Wellness

(From Winter 2011 Bulletin)

“Mr. Johnson has always been an advocate for employee health as well as the people we serve. One of his greatest accomplishments was making Boswell Regional Center Tobacco Free”. Steven Allen, Assistant Director



Pictured above are Steven Allen, Assistant Director; Raymond Johnson, Director and Gloria Johnson, Assistant Director.





The influences of Mr. Johnson will be felt for years to come...



A Final Farewell from Gloria Johnson & Steven Allen

“As we look around the campus of Boswell Regional Center we see the impact that Mr. Johnson made on the facility, which will live on for many, many years to come. Best wishes as you enter a new phase in your life. You're starting a new journey and exceptional chapter of your life. May your days be filled with laughter and happiness and may they be all that you hoped for! We thank you for your integrity and dedication and con-



Pictured above with Mr. Raymond Johnson, at his retirement reception, are Steven Allen and Gloria Johnson

“Mr. Johnson brought a sense of pride and professionalism to Boswell Regional Center that will remain for many years to come. His exemplary leadership style has had a positive impact on myself as well as most everyone affiliated with this facility. On behalf of everyone, I congratulate Mr. Johnson on his retirement and pray for this new chapter in his life to be the best chapter of all.” - Steven Allen, In-Coming Director