New Officers for People First of Missouri

At the November 2015 Steering Committee meeting, officer elections were held for the next term that will begin January 1, 2016 and run through December 31, 2018. There were several candidates for all but one of the offices, which made for an interesting and exciting election. Prior to the voting taking place, each candidate had an opportunity to share with the group why they felt they should be elected. All of them did a great job sharing. The new elected officers are as follows:

- President: Cathy Enfield
- Vice President: Roger Crome
- Treasurer: Judy Moffett
- Secretary: Katie Kinder
- Sergeant at Arms: Johanna Wortmann

Congratulations to each officer elected. We look forward to your leadership.

PFMO would also like to thank each of the outgoing officers for their leadership and contributions over the past two years.

People First of Missouri is Strong and Active

People First members and chapters are busy learning, giving and growing. We make a positive difference in our communities.

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Message From the President
by Cathy Enfield, President

First of all, I would like to say how much I appreciate this opportunity to serve as the President of People First of Missouri. It is both a great honor and a great responsibility and I will do my best to both lead and serve our People First family.

I am very fortunate to have had a great mentor in Roger Crome who has done many things that have helped me to be prepared for the role of President. I am very grateful for his guidance and his assistance. I look forward to working with Roger and all of the newly elected officers over the next two years.

I would like to ask each of our members to think about what is the most important thing to them about People First. I would like to try to find ways to involve people who would like to help make our organization better in ways other than serving on the Steering Committee. If you are interested, please let your Steering Committee Representatives know your name and what you are most interested in.

Most of all I want to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. I hope your Holiday Season is filled with peace and happiness.

-Cathy Enfield

PFMO Reviews a Disability Rights Statement for Missouri

At the November People First Steering Committee meeting, members had the opportunity to consider and comment on a disability rights statement being developed for Missouri. The statement is being drafted by a broad stakeholder group made up of people with disabilities, advocacy groups such as People First of Missouri, family members, supporters, and professionals working in the disability field.

The statewide stakeholder group has met twice and is asking for input on the draft statement.

After the Steering Committee meeting, People First members shared their feedback with the stakeholder group. To see a copy of the disabilities rights statement, go to missouripeoplefirst.org.

Photos top and bottom left: PFMO Steering Committee discusses topics such as the proposed Disability Rights Statement for Missouri. Photo bottom right: A surprise visit from the fire department interrupts the Steering Committee meeting.
Missouri’s HSRN Organization Plan

PFMO is a member of the Heartland Self-Advocacy Resource Network, which connects self-advocacy groups in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas to help each other grow and improve. As part of the project, PFMO gathered information about our organization and self-advocacy development in Missouri over the past year. Based on that information,  Steering Committee members have been working on creating a new strategic plan for PFMO. The plan was reviewed, refined, and accepted at the November PFMO Steering Committee meeting. After accepting the plan, the Steering Committee then selected four out of the ten priority issues listed in the plan to work on in the coming year, which are listed below.

The following two organization enhancement priorities were identified to work on:

- Organizational Priority Issue I. – To enhance how PFMO communicates with local chapters, members, advisers and supporters, as well as other advocacy groups.
- Organizational Priority Issue IV. – To give serious attention to encouraging and supporting local chapter development.

The following two self-advocacy/self-determination support priorities were also selected to begin working on:

- Support Priority Issue III. – To engage in efforts to raise awareness with a variety of audiences of the importance of practices that promote inclusion and self-determination.
- Support Priority Issue V. – To undertake efforts to include youth (age 15 to 30) in self-advocacy and leadership development activities.

PFMO Chapter Updates

Boone County

October was National Bullying Prevention Month. People First of Boone County partnered with Boone County Family Resources to stand up for kindness, acceptance and inclusion, and against bullying! Our Vice President, Jason Mize, along with BCFR Executive Director Robyn Kaufman, rode together on a classic Mercury Cougar in the Mizzou Homecoming Parade. People First members and volunteers walked alongside, handing out informational leaflets and candy. Arnold and Donald carried a banner as a show of our unity.

October was also National Disability Employment Awareness month. Each year, a coalition of agencies called the “Columbia Employment Consortium” recognizes three local employers for their inclusive hiring practices. Our President, Jeff Johnson, helped deliver the awards. Among the recipients was the Mizzou Athletic Department. We had the opportunity to meet the Tigers’ quarterback.

In November, with help from University of Missouri student volunteers and funding from the Friends of Boone County Resources, we built and entered a float in the Jaycees’ Annual Holiday Parade. It was another opportunity to engage with others in the community. We got acquainted with several other groups and organizations in the parade lineup, including students, firefighters, postal workers, community leaders, and an awesome guy who had a completely restored ’49 Ford pickup. In December, we closed out the year with our annual Holiday Dance – a partnership between our group and Columbia Parks & Recreation.

North Kansas City

The North Kansas City chapter had a meeting on November 17. We had 10 people attend, which is a record number for our chapter. The group passed a motion that requires people who are running for office in People First of North Kansas City to be a member for at least one year and attend at least half the meetings before running. Randy Todd discussed the recent People First Steering Committee meeting in St. Louis and the newly elected statewide officers of People First of Missouri. PF NKC discussed having a potluck dinner on December 15 and participating in the Legislative Day Rally at the state capitol on March 10.

above: Members of People First of Marshall, Missouri participated in several parades this fall and won prizes in two.

Marshall

People First of Marshall participated in several parades this fall. The Marshall High School Homecoming Parade was on Friday, September 11, 2015. Larie Hutson drove in the parade, and John Burriss walked. The Santa Fe Trail Day parade took place on September 12. Kelly Ray and John Burriss walked, Larie Hutson drove, and Gina Chevalier rode. Then our chapter won first place in the Missouri State Corn Husking Parade on Friday, September 23, which included a prize of a $100. Later, we won second place in the Missouri Valley College Homecoming Parade on Saturday, October 23, and received a prize of $25. Larie Hutson drove and Kelly Ray and John Burriss walked.

At left: Members of People First of Boone County walked in the Mizzou Homecoming Parade.
Pike County

Our chapter in Pike County has been very busy this last year. We help out at our area fair, festivals, and community events throughout the year.

We worked closely with a children's group this fall to raise money for a sensory park to be built in Bowling Green, Missouri. We co-chaired an event in a local park that raised money for the sensory park. The event was called the Fall Extravaganza. There was a petting zoo, cupcake walk, pictures with Minnie and Mickey Mouse, train rides, games, and vendors. It was a perfect day for family and friends to enjoy, and everyone can't wait till next year to do it again!

People First of Pike County wishes everyone a happy holiday season and can't wait for the exciting activities in the new year!

Randolph County

Randolph County People First would like to congratulate our chapter President, Judy Moffett, for being elected as the People First State Treasurer. We are very proud of Judy. She helped start this new chapter almost three years ago. We are still growing and welcome new members from Randolph County. Congratulations Judy!

St. Charles

We are proud of Johanna Wortmann for being elected State Sergeant at Arms. We know she will take her role very seriously and do an excellent job.

We also held our local elections. Our new officers are:
- Johanna Wortmann - President
- Jennifer Floretta - Vice President
- Terry Hopper - Treasurer
- Lizzie Bennett - Secretary
- Arlie Schlueter, Jr. - Sergeant at Arms

Stones and Taney County

The Stone Taney People First chapter had elections in November. Our new officers are:
- Michael Broy - President
- Joni Ruby - Secretary
- Jennifer Kendall - Treasurer

Our Steering Committee representatives are Michael Bray and Thomas Towler. We had a tie for Vice President and will be voting again at the December meeting.

We are going through some changes beginning in January. We are restructuring the meetings to make them more fun and engaging for those involved already and for new and returning members.

We have chosen a topic to fight for. In Branson, we have a community that is near a busy highway. Our members and others have to walk in the ditches. Stone and Taney County People First is going to learn and start the process of talking with city officials about getting sidewalks at this busy street.

We will also be planning fundraisers three times a year and have a "meet and greet" every month. We are hoping that this will attract new members and let them know they have a voice.

In October and November, we had a cookie dough fundraiser. A few of our members did a terrific job selling frozen cookie dough to friends, co-workers, and family. They raised $300 for the chapter. Way to go!

Independence

The Independence Chapter has had a challenging year. Due to serious health issues, our President Joe Wrinkle has been forced to miss a number of meetings. However, by using telephone conferencing, he was able to take part in most of them and continue to handle most of his duties as President. We are looking forward to having him back full time after the first of the year.

Our chapter membership has held steady this year as we lost one of our members, but also gained one new member, so we are happy about that.

In August, we had our annual summer cookout and picnic. We were joined by some friends of our members and also some of their staff and everyone had a good time.

Several of our members and their staff attended the Real Voices, Real Choices Conference at Tan-Tar-A in August and had a great time.

We have continued to work on training about self-advocacy and living in the community and having control over our own lives as part of our meeting agendas.

We are planning a Holiday party as part of our December meeting. As part of our celebration we want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
HAPPY New Year
from People First of Missouri
Welcome 2016!