Disability Rights Legislative Day 2017

On March 15, members of People First chapters across the state joined hundreds of others at the Missouri State Capitol for Disability Rights Legislative Day. The theme of the day was, “We Choose.”

The day began early for some People First members who met with their state senators and representatives before the rally began. Together, they talked about Missouri House and Senate bills that directly affect people with disabilities, their families, and providers.

The rally began at 11 am in the Capitol Rotunda. Emilio Vela, Jr., CEO of Southwest Center for Independent Living (SCIL) welcomed the group to the capitol. Senator Scott Sifton (D-01) spoke about state budget cuts and how they could impact people and their services. He encouraged citizens to talk to their representatives about their concerns. Representative Jim Neely (R-008) spoke about guardianship reform and House Bill 626. Patty Goss, a self-advocate and member of People First of Missouri (Springfield chapter) spoke concerning budget cuts and her services. She told her story, past and present, as well as what she hopes for her future and the futures of other Missouri citizens with disabilities.

The crowd at the rally also watched a video of Missouri State Treasurer Eric Schmitt announce that Missouri and four other states are partnering to implement tax-advantaged ABLE savings accounts for expenses related to disabilities and special needs.

At the end of the rally, Emilio Vela closed by encouraging participants to go talk to their legislators if they hadn’t done so. The crowd left energized to continue to advocate for themselves and others. •

by Melony Grote, Pike County chapter

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.

In this Issue

• Disability Rights Legislative Day, p.1
• President’s Message, p. 2
• Spring into Action conference flyer, p. 3
• Cut-and-mail Conference registration form, p. 4
• Chapter updates, p. 5-7
• Steering Committee gets ready for Legislators, p. 7
• Come to the Conference this April!, p. 8

Photo below: Rally attendees filled the capitol rotunda and spilled into nearby hallways.
Message From the President
by Cathy Enfield, President

Happy Spring Everyone!

I know we have had a busy and somewhat confusing time since the beginning of the year. I hope you are all ready to stay busy because it looks like it’s going to be needed.

I was pleased to see such a good turnout at the Disability Rights Legislative Day last month in Jefferson City. This is the kind of turnout we needed. The issues we are facing, particularly cuts in Medicaid, or just as bad, providing them as Block Grants to the State, will hit people with disabilities and the aging particularly hard. The weakening of supports will continue to get worse year after year if these changes in Medicaid are allowed to happen.

People First of Missouri held their annual Legislative Steering Committee meeting the day before Legislative Day. It was great to see our members prepare to advocate and then to go to the Capitol and carry the message to our Legislators. This is very important for our future, and it will continue to be important that we speak up at every opportunity about these issues.

If you have not yet registered for the PFMO Conference being held April 21-23 in Osage Beach, Missouri, please join us. You can cut out and mail the registration form found on page four of this newsletter.

Many of you will receive this newsletter in your conference materials at the People First of Missouri biannual conference, which happens every other year. I want to take this opportunity to welcome each of you who are attending the conference this year. I hope it is useful, valuable, and fun for each of you.

I urge each of you to keep educating others and advocating for our rights and our futures as citizens of our communities. Never stop believing in our mission and in yourselves.

Your President,
Cathy Enfield

People First of Missouri 2017 Officers

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The 2017 Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference

Keynote Speaker
Julie Petty
National leader in the self-advocacy movement, founder of People First of Arkansas, and former president of Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)

Featured Speaker
Chuck Graham
Associate director of the Great Plains ADA Center at University of Missouri-Columbia, served four years as a Missouri state Senator and eight years in the state House of Representatives

Endnote Speaker
Chris Worth
Activist, Community Organizer, Self-advocate and Team Manager at Paraquad; former lead organizer for the Enable Project Appalachia and volunteer organizer in the environmental movement for over 12 years

Breakout Sessions Include:
Anyone Can Lead - That Means You!
Who’s in Charge? Self-Directed Supports
Map Your Money Using the LifeCourse Star
Meet the New Project STIR
How to Run Great Meetings
Charting the LifeCourse: Getting Your Good Life
Defend Yourself! Parts I and II
Spread the Movement: Building Chapters
On Our Own: Self-Advocates Living Independently
Reaching Youth Today: The Next Wave
Victimization: The Signs and What to Do ...and more!

Conference Registration
$95 Per Person - includes three meals, participation in all events, & conference materials. Hotel not included. T-shirts - $5 each

Hotel Reservations
Must be made separately through Tan-Tar-A Resort by calling (800) 826-8272 or at Tan-Tar-A.com. Room rate is $95+tax per night of stay for up to four people.

Conference Location:
Tan-Tar-A Resort
Osage Beach, MO
Conference Agenda
Friday, April 21, 2017
5:00 pm Registration
7:00 pm Welcome Reception
7:30 pm Networking
8:00 pm Dance and Karaoke

Saturday, April 22, 2017
9:00 am Registration
9:30 am Welcome and Flag Ceremony
10:00 am Keynote Speaker - Julie Petty followed by the Heartland Self-Advocacy Resource Network panel
12:00 pm Lunch on your own
1:15 pm Featured Speaker - Chuck Graham
2:15 pm Breakout Session 1
3:30 pm Break
3:45 pm Breakout Session 2
5:00 pm Break
6:30 pm Dinner and Award Ceremony
8:15 pm Dance

Sunday, April 23, 2017
9:00 am Registration
9:30 am Breakout Session 3
10:30 am Brunch and Endnote Speaker - Christopher Worth
12:30 pm Closing Ceremony and Door Prizes

PFMO Chapter Updates

Boone County

We usually hold our holiday dance in December, but had to postpone it until January because of weather this year. We made it into a New Year’s theme and served a huge sheet cake. Over a hundred people came.

In March, we asked the Boone County Commission to issue a proclamation to make March Developmental Disabilities Month in our county. They agreed, and Jeff, Jason, and Katie were there to receive the proclamation. Commissioner Janet Thompson read the proclamation (see photo, middle right).

Also in March, some of our members, along with others from Columbia, went to Disability Rights Legislative Day at the Missouri state capitol. We met with our legislators and some of their aides. We talked with Representative Kip Kendrick and Senator Caleb Rowden about some of the issues and bills brought up at the rally. It was also good to just introduce ourselves and get to know each other.

- chapter updates continued on next page
Pike County

Pike County chapter had a Christmas party in December where we elected new officers. Sadly, one of our new members and a newly appointed steering committee member, Jessica Duke, passed away suddenly just a few days later. Since her passing, the chapter decided to host a fundraiser on February 14th to raise money to sponsor the People First Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference in Jessica’s memory. Members raised $247.45 by selling a ballpark hotdog lunch. We are excited to sponsor the conference.

Randolph County

Randolph County People First recently held elections and welcomed a new President, Brian Roselius, and a new Secretary, Brittany Lancaster. We held a fundraiser in conjunction with Pizza Hut that was moderately successful. We also organized a painting class fundraiser around Valentine’s Day at Moberly’s “Stroke of Magic.” The group had so much fun! (see photo, bottom right)

St. Charles

St. Charles Chapter is busy working on the campaign. We are going out to all the schools in our county, dropping off posters to each one individually and introducing ourselves. We presented at the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board last month and reminded them of People First language, inclusion, and “who we are.” It went over extremely well.

St. Charles, continued

The officer installation ceremony was held during the December meeting.

Randolph County member Jessica Duke, age 19, passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 27. Her chapter is honoring her by sponsoring the PFMO conference in her memory.

St. Charles

St. Charles Chapter members presented to their local DDRB Board.

Steering Committee members get ready for Legislative Day

The PFMO Statewide Steering Committee gathered on March 13 for its spring quarterly meeting and to prepare for the next day’s rally and self-advocacy with legislators.

St. Charles, continued

had presentations by Pre-employment, TASH, and the executive director from the Resource Board. Our chapter continues to grow as we continue to bring awareness to our community. On a sad note, we lost Sandy Gray this past month. She had been a member for over 10 years.

Above, left: St. Charles Chapter members presented to their local DDRB Board;
Above, right: Longtime chapter member Sandy Gray passed away recently.

St. Charles, continued

below page St. Charles Chapter members presented to their local DDRB Board;
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PFMO Statewide Steering Committee held their spring meeting in Jefferson City to continue working on organization goals and prepare for legislative day.

Photo left: Pike County chapter members meet with Missouri State Representative Jim Hansen before the Disability Rights rally at the Capitol. Photo right: Randolph County chapter members organized a painting party fundraiser around Valentine’s Day at Stroke of Magic in Moberly.
Please Join us for the 2017 Statewide Self-advocacy conference April 21-23 at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, Missouri.

Registration closes April 15!

Are you registered? Come to the Conference! Details inside...