

Know Your Voting Rights

Mid-term elections are on Tuesday, November 6. This is an important election, not only for self-advocates, but for the whole country. Here is some information that may help you to make sure you are able to vote.

If you have questions or need information about voting, you can get help by calling 866-Our-Vote (866-687-8683) or by going to 866ourvote.org/state/Missouri.

Sample ballots are really helpful so you know ahead of time what you will be voting on and can think about the issues before you go. You can fill out a sample ballot at home and take it with you in the voting booth. Get a sample ballot for anywhere in the United States by going to Sample Ballot Lookup-Ballotpedia using this link: [ballotpedia.org/Missouri elections, 2018](http://ballotpedia.org/Missouri_elections, 2018).

It is also your legal right to have someone come in the booth with you to help you read and understand the ballot or to help you with the mechanics of voting. They **MUST NOT** tell you how to vote or express any opinion while in the voting booth but they can explain issues and options for you.

Curbside voting is legal and should be available at every polling place for people who have mobility or other health issues that makes going into the polling place difficult for them. **All polling places must be ADA accessible.**

At least one accessible electronic voting machine should be available for use in every polling location. Local laws vary on absentee voting but some form of it must be made available for all voters. Contact your

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Go Vote on Tuesday, November 6!
It is important to know your rights about voting in our next election. The articles above and on page 2 will help you learn more. Also, to find out about what kinds of ID you can use to vote, visit the Missouri Secretary of State's website at: <https://www.sos.mo.gov/showit2vote>

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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People First
of Missouri

Message From the President

by Cathy Enfield, PFMO President

Hello People First,

As you may have heard, we have a very important election coming up on November 6, 2018. We will be voting in mid-term elections and many important seats will be filled and many issues will be decided both nationally and locally.

As I thought about this, it occurred to me that one of the most important issues that will be affected by these elections is not even on the ballot and that issue is Medicaid. The outcome of these elections, including both issues and people that are on the ballot, will probably have a great impact on Medicaid. We all know that Medicaid has a huge impact on the lives of people with disabilities. So I thought it might be good to talk a little about Medicaid so we can understand a little better what is at stake for people with disabilities in this election.

Most people think of Medicaid as providing healthcare for low income

individuals and that is somewhat true. But Medicaid also provides long term care, including services and supports to about 75% of those who receive them, which includes older adults and people with disabilities.

When I was born, Medicaid had not yet been enacted and neither had laws that protect people with disabilities like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Olmstead Decision that bans segregated living and gives people community living options.

Due to the supports provided through the Medicaid Waiver, I have been able to achieve my dream of helping other people with disabilities. I am a full time advocate for the rights, of not just people with disabilities, but of all people. I probably would not be here with you today if it were not for the supports I have received from Medicaid. I realize what a different world it would be for all of us if Medicaid went away, which is one of the reasons these elections are so important to us.

Legislators have turned Medicaid into a political football. Every session of Congress someone wants to change Medicaid. Even worse, every session of Congress some action is taken that tries to take away money from disability offices and private providers. This adds

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People First

of Missouri

INVITES YOU TO OUR REGIONAL CONFERENCE:



HEARTLANDSELFADVOACY.ORG/CONFERENCE

Want to Present
at SOAR?

Help PFMO find
Conference
Sponsors

Get Excited for Our Next Self Advocacy Conference!

We hope you have already marked your calendar for the next statewide self-advocacy conference in Missouri. People First is hosting our friends from the Heartland Self-advocacy Resource Network (HSRN) as we work together to plan for the best conference ever! For one thing, we'll have great speakers. Want a sneak peak? Here's a first look at our speaker lineup (more to come):

- Garrett Holeve - an MMA Bantamweight Fighter with Down Syndrome
- Michael Beers - Sit Down/Stand-up Comic from Montana who hits his audiences' funny bones and has a disability
- Ed O'Malley - Leadership Expert and full inclusion advocate

You can stay up-to-date with news about the conference by visiting the

HSRN website at:

heartlandselfadvocacy.org/conference and by following PFMO and HSRN on Facebook. We will post information about speakers, entertainment, breakout sessions, fun door prizes, hotel, and more.

Right now, you can find three things on the website:

- **Sponsor Info** - Did you know it will cost almost \$10,000 to feed our group dinner? It's true. Sponsors help PFMO keep registration costs low for self-advocates to attend. If you know of a business who might be interested in helping, they can find information about [Sponsor levels](#) on the conference website.
- **Presenter Info** - Do you have some ideas for a breakout session you'd like to give? Great! We're taking submissions now. But don't

wait too long! **Proposals are due by December 1.** You can find details and links to the [presenter online form](#) or [paper packet](#) on the conference website. Not all ideas will be picked, so take your time making your submission the best it can be!

- **Save the Date flyers** - print them out for the members of your chapter to start making plans now. It's going to be great!

People First members will have a chance to help with the conference as we get closer. For now, a small group of representatives from each state is working together on a planning committee. We're excited to be doing this conference with self-advocates from Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa.

Let's get excited to SOAR together! 🌟

Message from the President, continued

stress and complications to the lives of people who are already living under a terrible load because of their health or life situations.

This sort of annual changing back and forth wastes money that should be spent delivering services and not on reinventing the wheel every year.

Medicaid has been good for me and many others. But we need to show others that this is about humans. This should change the way we view and provide these supports. It is not about slots or beds to be filled. It is not about units to be expended. We are living, breathing human beings who need assistance. The system was meant to serve and assist people, and we need to know that it will remain stable. While Medicaid is not on the ballot, the outcome of these elections will have an impact on its future.

I believe we are facing one of those rare elections that will reset the moral compass of this country for years to come. I am not here to tell you how to vote, but I am here to tell you to vote. Get your family, your friends, your neighbors and anyone else you can to the polls. This election is far too important for any of us to choose to be an observer.

This is America, and if you choose to call yourself an American you need to get your ticket punched and the only way to do that is to vote!

Justin Dart very wisely told us to vote as if our life depended upon it...because it does!

I am asking you to vote as if your country depends upon it...because it does!! See you at the polls.

Cathy ☺

Steering Committee News

Steering Committee will have its next meeting in Jefferson City on November 10-11. This group is made up of 2 elected representatives from each PFMO chapter in good standing. The costs to attend are paid for by People First funds.

Steering Committee will be working on the Position Statements it started writing a few meetings ago. They will be the thoughts our group has about:

- Advocating for quality of life in our communities
- Advocating for quality of services and supports
- Advocating for self-determination in decision making
- Advocating for rights and respect.

Steering Committee will also be talking more about the SOAR Conference and how we can work together to make it a great event for everyone who comes from the four midwestern states of Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas. See page 3 for more information.

A Friend of Self Advocates

People First of Missouri congratulates Dolores Sparks on her retirement from the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council. She has done great work for Self Advocates and she is a true friend. We will miss you Dolores. Thank you.



PFMO chapter updates

Boone County

On October 13, People First of Boone County held their 3rd Annual Walk & Roll-a-thon, gathering over 50 attendees. Among those in attendance was City Councilman Ian Thomas, who read a proclamation from the mayor declaring October Disability Employment Awareness Month in the City of Columbia. Other attendees included Representative Martha Stevens and the newly formed organization Missouri Disability Empowerment (MoDE). Volunteers from a local scout troop distributed bottled water and cookies to walkers/rollers at they crossed the finish line.

People First of Boone County experienced a great turn out at the Disability Issues Candidate Forum on October 18, which they hosted with several other local organizations. Missouri House of Representative candidates were present to answer questions about employment, transportation, housing, Medicaid, and inclusive education.

Booneville

Booneville People First has been busy. In August we donated school supplies to local schools. All members purchased items to put together for the donation.

October was a busy month for us. We organized a can food drive at the local food pantry. Alicia Meyer stepped down as president and moved to a different town. Chapter Vice President Jonathan Spencer stepped up as Chapter President to finish out the 2-year term.

Our group hosted a Fall Formal where over 100 people attended. There were plenty of snacks and dancing. Everyone had a great time. Marsha Tinsley was crowned the 2018 Fall Formal Queen and Steven Gilmore won



Photo, above: Fall Formal King and Queen, Steven Gilmore and Marsha Tinsley.



Photo, above: Boone County chapter hosts Disability Issues Candidate Forum.

the title of King. Both Marsha and Steven are long term members of People First. Our group also hosted a Halloween party complete with a coloring and costume judging contest.

Branson

Branson Tri-Lakes People First has had a good quarter. Our current President is doing well. He gets lots of encouragement from the past president and members and is learning all rules necessary to conduct meetings effectively.

Our current secretary had to step down for reasons out of his control, and we are having an election in November to fulfill the remainder of the term.

In an effort to place our t-shirt orders, we worked hard to raise money to purchase them. One fundraiser we took part in was the selling of Scentsy candles. The Scentsy representative was so impressed by our initiative that she gave 1st and 2nd place prizes for the most sales. She donates her commissions of all candle sales to People First, and this year we were told that we surpassed last year earnings of \$192. We have ordered our new T-shirts and plan to wear them when we have our car wash or when we are out in the community recruiting new members. We also plan to wear them at community events such as Earth Day and Developmental Disability Awareness Month Day Out.

PFMO chapter updates, continued

Branson, continued

Our adviser will be leaving our chapter in April of next year, so we are asking friends and family members to step up to the plate and support this terrific bunch of people. We are eager to recruit new members, have social events and raise money for the chapter.

Independence

The Independence Chapter had an eventful summer as three of our members moved out of the Truman Apartments and into Individualized Supported Living (ISL) in the community. We are hopeful that that their new living arrangement will have transportation that will allow them to continue to attend meetings with us.

Several of our members took a trip to the Great Mall of America in Minneapolis and had a great time there. The Chapter also held its annual picnic in September which everyone enjoyed.

We spent our last meeting reviewing material from the Guardianship Summit and talking about Supported Decision Making. We also discussed the upcoming mid-term elections and what our rights and responsibilities are as citizens. Be sure to vote!!

Lake Area

The Lake Area People First in Camdenton has been very busy. We recently held a Halloween Party, in which 75 – 80 people attended. We organized a pumpkin decorating contest, both assisted and non-assisted. We also enjoyed Karaoke, and some people dressed up in costumes. Other events we hosted included a movie night and a cookout where we grilled hamburgers and hotdogs.

Photo, below: Lake Area chapter holds Halloween party.



North Kansas City

The North Kansas City People First Chapter did not have an August meeting due to some of our members traveled to Tan-Tar-A for the *Real Choices Real Voices Conference*. Our September meeting was held on September 18 at the Life Unlimited office. Guest speaker Senator Lauren Arthur presented various issues relating to people with disabilities. In our October meeting, we discussed goals and shared ideas for 2019. Our main goals are to become more effective in advocating, being more creative in inviting legislators, city council members, and other chapters to our meetings. We also plan to organize camping trips.

Pike County

On August 10th we lost a great member of our chapter, Scott Ray. He was always encouraging others and volunteering in the community with that great smile of his. He is missed greatly and we will never forget the way he touched all our lives. Fly High Scott!

On September 6th members participated in the annual Tons of Trucks sponsored by The Little Explorers. This event provides a family fun night where children can learn about all types of vehicles: Members set up a booth and demonstrated how a person uses a wheelchair accessible van.

On September 8th, members set up a Caramel Apple Stand at the local Heritage Day Festival. It was a rain-filled day, but thanks to our friends, The Little Explorers, we stayed dry in their building! Some braved the rain to hand out samples!



Photo, above: Pike county chapter provides caramel apples at Heritage Day Festival.

PFMO chapter updates, continued

Randolph County

In September we participated in Moberly's Homecoming Parade. We showcased our new People First banner and posters. On October 6 we participated in a bake sale at the Higbee Fair. While at the fair we joined in on the parade. We plan to distribute treat bags on Halloween at the Trick or Treat trail.



Photo, above: Randolph County chapter participates in Moberly's Homecoming Parade.

Springfield

People First of Springfield would like to remember Dennis Brown, our advisor since 2003, who recently passed away. We could count on him for anything and he made sure that everyone's voice was heard. He always kept up to date with what was going on in the state. We remember his laughter and that he was generous and kind. He was the life of the party. Dennis liked to help people and was a good listener, very selfless, and compassionate. We will miss him greatly! We are grateful for the help of our new advisor, Megan Richards.

We are planning a fall festival to take place on November 17 and hope that it will be a successful event. We have continued to go out into the community and engage in trainings on various things. We will also continue to participate on community boards as well.

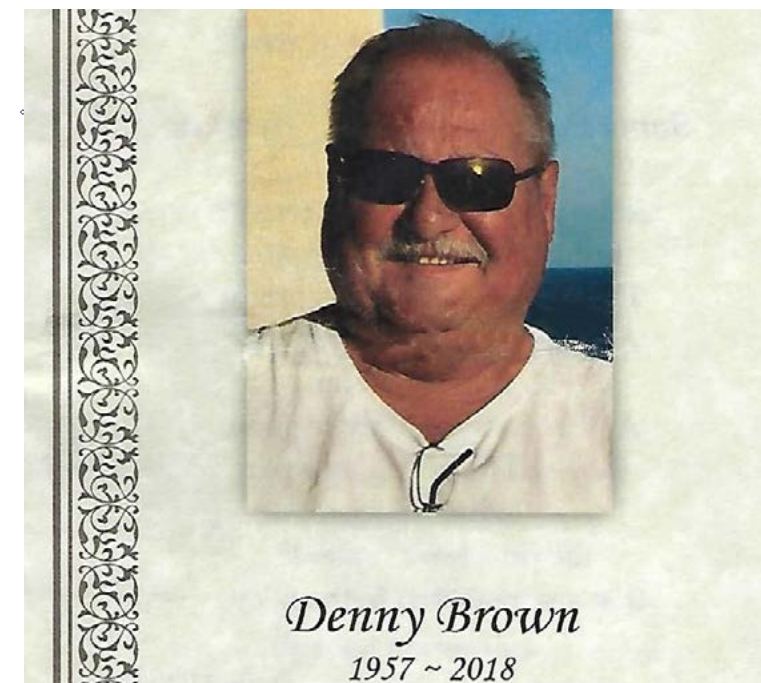
Photo, right: PF Springfield chapter remembers advisor Dennis Brown.

St. Charles County

Our chapter attended the Real Voices Real Choices Conference back in August and had a great time celebrating the 10-year anniversary. We have had guest speakers come in from our Disabilities Resource Board and our own members presented occasionally, sharing life and success stories. Our chapter continues to grow and is always adding new people. We are gearing up to start working on our campaign for 2019. ☺

Make sure your chapter is included in the next issue!

Send an update about what your chapter has been doing by emailing underwooddm@umkc.edu. Articles and pictures are welcome!



Know Your Voting Rights, continued from page 1

local Election Board to find out how it works in your location. The most common problem for voting is having to show proper ID. There is still a lot of confusion about the laws about identification. If you are denied the right to vote, ask for a “provisional ballot.” If you need help, the following numbers may be useful for you:

- 866-ourvote at 866-687-8683
- MO Protection and Advocacy at 866-777-7199
- Your local County Election Board
- MO Secretary of State at 573-751-2379
- MO Attorney General at 573-751-3321

If you are denied the opportunity to vote for any reason, do not be afraid to contact your local media (TV station, radio station or newspaper) and make

them aware of your problem. It is very important that you get to vote if you are a REGISTERED VOTER.

This is America and this is your right. We must fight hard to keep anyone from taking it away from us. ∞



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