



## People First of Missouri 2022 Spring Newsletter

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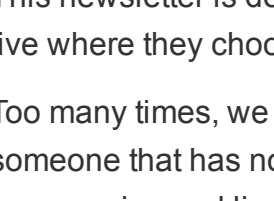
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## Message from the President

Written by the President of People First of Missouri, Roger Crome

Hello, my friends. It is hard to believe that summer is here again. It's time to hang out at the pool, spend time with friends, and enjoy the warmth. For People First of Missouri, it is time to evaluate our progress for the fiscal year and determine our priorities for the next year.

This newsletter is dedicated to housing and focuses on people being able to live where they choose.

Too many times, we have received reports of people having to room with someone that has no similar interests. There are times in our lives that we must compromise and live with others based on budget and other factors. However, the determining factor of who we live with should never be based on the convenience of those that provide support.

We believe that a person should always be given a true choice in where and with whom they live. This newsletter is focused on this, but even deeper than that, remember that we, as an organization, are focused on this.

If you ever find yourself in a situation where you are not given the choice you believe you should, please reach out to me or another officer and we will try to help you advocate for your preferences. We will not always fully succeed, but together we will continue to work for the world we want to live in.

[Click here to see Jeff's video](#)

## Housing and Choice

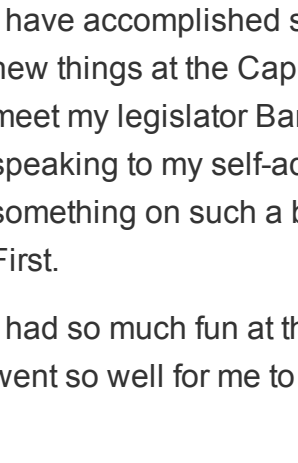
Did you know that there is a rule that protect your right to live where you want? Rule 9 CSR 45-3.030(I)(G) Individual Rights states that people receiving services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (Division of DD) are entitled to the right to "within one's financial means, to have a choice where to live and whether or not to share a home with other people?"

One of People First of Missouri's priorities is housing and being supported to where a person wants to live.

In January of 2014, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced a new Home and Community-Based Support (HCBS) Rule that may help people get the services they need in truly integrated settings. The Division of DD's goal for housing is to ensure the development of quality, affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities in safe locations where they can access support services, transportation, employment, and recreation throughout their lifespan.

Some of the housing questions from the ISP Guide are:

- Did you choose to live in this home?
- Did you choose your current housemate?
- Do you have space for privacy?
- Is it easy for you to get to work from home?
- Do you have friends who live close by?



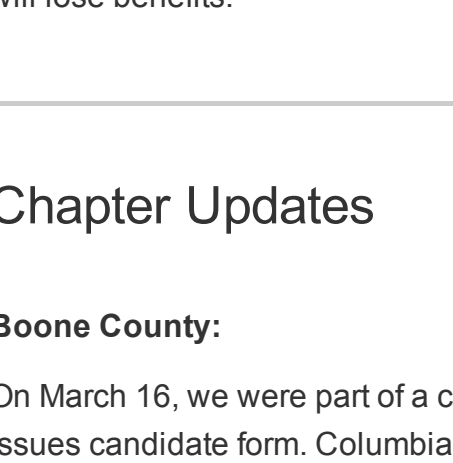
## Disability Rights Legislative Day Highlights!

Written by Lucy Salamon St. Louis Region member

I went to speak at Disability Rights Legislative Day. I felt nervous, but then I went up and did my thing. I am glad and proud of myself for going up there and telling my story. It means something being able to be excellent at it and tell them about my goals. Such as: I want to have a part-time job at the Kirkwood YMCA and study public relations.

I have accomplished so much in the last couple of years, and I got to try out new things at the Capitol for Disability Rights Legislative Day. I was able to meet my legislator Baraba Phifer and I asked her if she is interested in speaking to my self-advocacy group. She said yes! I am grateful that I got to do something on such a big day, and I am happy to be in St. Louis Region People First.

I had so much fun at the event, and I am just happy that I spoke at it and that it went so well for me to tell my story. Thank you for your time.



## Disability Rights Legislative Day Highlights!

Written by Boone County People First Chapter

Some members of the Boone County chapter attended Disability Rights

Legislative Day on March 9. We were joined by others from Boone County Family Resources. We focused our advocacy on the importance of competitive work, inclusive education, and reliable staff support. After the rally, we visited all of our legislators. The photo shows us with Senator Caleb Rowden.

## Disability Rights Legislative Day Highlights!

Written by Franklin County People First Chapter

Eleven members from the Franklin County chapter discussed staffing and transportation during Disability Rights Legislative day. They also discussed issues with people with disabilities not being able to get married because they will lose benefits.

## Chapter Updates

### Boone County:

On March 16, we were part of a coalition of organizations that held a disability issues candidate forum. Columbia candidates for mayor, city council, and school board answered questions about transportation, affordable housing, inclusive education, accessibility, and community law enforcement. Some of us attended the forum in person, others by Facebook or webinar. Our chapter split the cost of interpreting services with the Friends of Boone County Family Resources.

Officers and members have been meeting by Zoom since the spring of 2020. This has impacted the number of people coming to meetings - and of course, during the pandemic, we have had to postpone many of our events, like the holiday dance and the walk & roll-a-thon. Plan July; we plan to begin meeting again if COVID numbers are still low in Boone County. We are also discussing planning a walk & roll-a-thon for October, Disability Employment Awareness Month.

We have had a guest speaker at most of our meetings. Some have been candidates running for office, the local public housing director Randy Cole, self-advocates from other parts of the state, guests from the Institute for Human Development - UMKC, and the Missouri Inclusive Housing Director Wayne Crawford.

### Howard County:

The Howard County People First Chapter is working on increasing membership and finding a new neutral location to hold our ongoing meetings that is accessible.

Efforts are being made to get the word out about the upcoming Real Voices/Real Choices conference to get as many people from our local chapter to attend.

Since before the pandemic, we've been trying to replace our secretary. The treasurer is relocating out of the area and will soon hold elections to replace these key officer positions.

### Madison County:

The people of Madison County have not had an in-person meeting for a long time. There is progress on the horizon. We are working with the County Board to set up a meeting to start coming together in person again. We have a small core of people that have remained interested and engaged with each other for a long time, and we have a renewed interest from former members. So, once we get the in-person meeting set, our chapter should be starting to grow once again.

### Marshall:

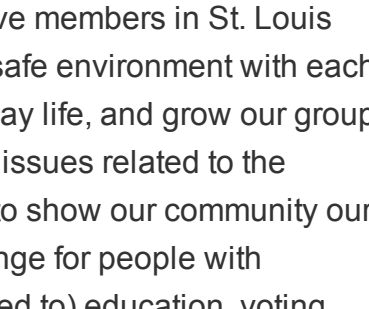
Marshall People First currently has two active members who are meeting monthly. They are looking for a new location to meet in person and hoping that members will be able to attend once all Covid restrictions have been lifted.

### North Kansas City:

On April 19, the North Kansas City People First meeting was held at Northcross United Methodist Church on Vivion Road. We discussed old business like the June picnic at Macken Park. We plan to get scholarships for the Real Voices Real Choices conference to fill out at our May meeting. Danny and Randy invited Kansas Congresswoman Sharice Davids and Missouri State Senator Lauren Arthur to our May meeting. At the meeting, we talk to them about how to keep services in place like Life Unlimited alive.

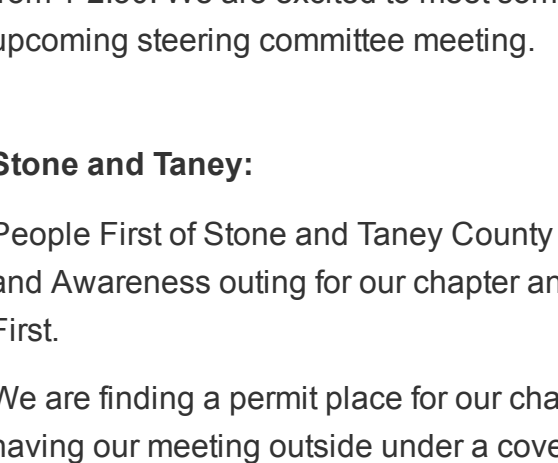
### Pike County:

Hello, People First of Pike County is so happy that the weather has finally started to warm up!



This spring we volunteered to purchase flowers for our hometown Bowling Green Revitalization Project and plant them in planters along our town square. We spent a weekend morning cleaning out the planters, adding dirt, and planting flowers. Some members had never planted a flower before!

We held a spring fundraiser selling occasion cards. The money that we raised went to buying the flowers and the rest will be used at a later date for other projects.



### Randolph:

Randolph People First had a memorial bench placed in the park for an individual that passed away last year from cancer.

We are starting a raffle fundraiser. We are continuing our inclusion award this year and expanding to include an individual and an organization award.

We are planning to start doing training at our meetings. In May we did a training with the Charting the LifeCourse trajectory. [Click here to learn more about LifeCourse.](#)

### Springfield:

We have continued to be a sounding board for the community. Paying close attention to our members. After the passing of Naomi Judd, I am becoming all about mental health. I have heard it said that mental health is health. I want our members to talk if needed or desired. We have gone back to basics. Giving an overview of People First of Missouri and officers' roles. People First language, doing check-ins and check-ups. To make sure everyone is doing well.



### St. Charles:

People First of St. Charles has been very busy these past couple of months. Our steering committee representatives attended the steering committee meeting in Jefferson City in March, where they learned about many issues related to the disability community.

After, the steering committee meeting, People First members met up at the capital for disability legislative rights day, where we all watched the rally. Afterward, we spoke with a couple of our local representatives.

We voted in a new Vice President since our past Vice President moved out of state.

In April, Susan Parker, the President attended the Charting the LifeCourse Showcase in Kansas City, MO. Susan brought the information about Charting the LifeCourse to our members.

### St. Louis:

People First of St. Louis voted in new officers for their chapter.

### St. Louis Region:

Hello, we are St. Louis Region People First! We have members in St. Louis County and Jefferson County. We hope to create a safe environment with each other, learn how to promote self-advocacy in everyday life, and grow our group with social media. We want to create statements on issues related to the disability community and awareness of our causes to show our community our value. Lastly, we hope to advocate for systemic change for people with disabilities. Our main topics will be (but are not limited to) education, voting, employment, and marriage.

Two projects we are looking forward to, this year are leadership development and membership development. Leadership will be run by people with disabilities that other members vote on. We plan to participate with another chapter to participate in leadership training, called "Success in Telling Your Story." This will help us learn to tell our stories in a way to get legislators to take action.

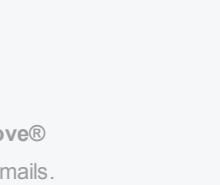
For membership development, we are encouraging members to bring friends with disabilities to our meetings and use social media and community events to get the word out about our chapter. We also have an online option for attending meetings.

We are a brand new group with some big goals. We have 18 members already, and we meet at Pioneer Bakery in Kirkwood on the fourth Friday of each month from 1-2:30. We are excited to meet some of the other members at the upcoming steering committee meeting.

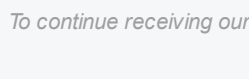
### Stone and Taney:

People First of Stone and Taney County is planning a Community Integration and Awareness outing for our chapter and letting people know about People First.

We are finding a permit place for our chapter meeting. Right now, we are having our meeting outside under a covered pavilion on the Development Connection property. Our chapter meets every other month on the last Tuesday from 4:30 to 5:30.



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