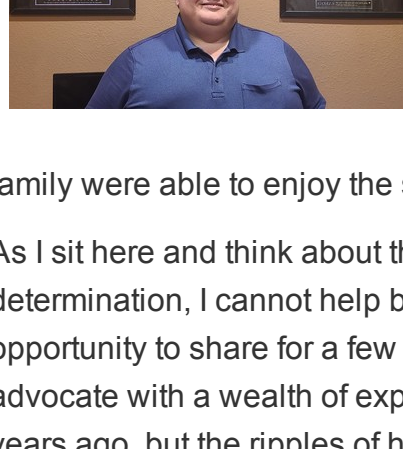




People First of Missouri 2022 Newsletter



President Letter

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

Summer is almost over, and soon, the leaves will begin to change with that beauty that nature is showing us, once again, the grand scheme of an ever-changing world. I hope you and your

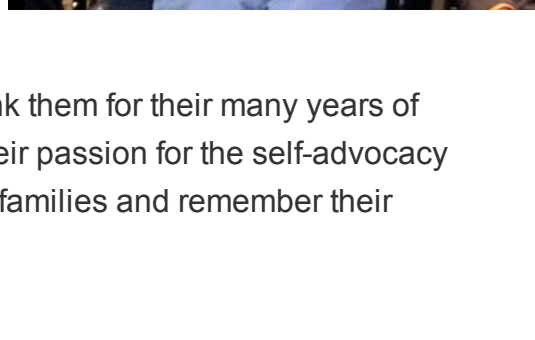
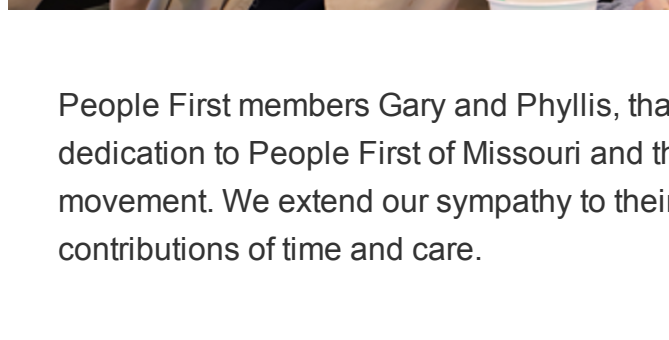
family were able to enjoy the summer.

As I sit here and think about the theme of this newsletter which is all about self-determination, I cannot help but think about the great duo we had the opportunity to share for a few short years. Gary Stevens was a powerful advocate with a wealth of experience to share. Sadly, Gary passed on a few years ago, but the ripples of his advocacy and memory will live on for a long time. Phyllis Hollinsworth was his friend, assistant, and mentor. Phyllis was the advisor of the Rolla chapter for quite a few years and a very important addition to the Steering Committee. Phyllis passed away in the last few months, and like Gary, the ripples of her contributions will be felt for a long time. I bring up these two wonderful people because not only will they be missed, but there is much we can learn about self-determination when we look back at them.

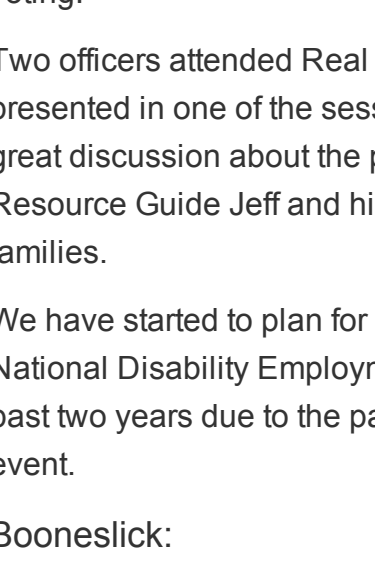
Gary had Cerebral Palsy and had challenges with getting his words out in a way that was easily understood by others. As I stated above, this did not mean he did not have a lot to say. Gary was informed on legislation and skillful in advocating for change. Phyllis was an excellent support to Gary and could quickly translate what Gary was trying to communicate. The two made quite the team. There were times that Gary would say something, and as a friend and mentor, Phyllis would ask if this was really what he wanted to say for whatever reason, but when Gary would pretty much say tell them, Phyllis would respect his wishes. That is what self-determination is in a caring and supportive relationship. Those in the supporting role provide advice and guidance when necessary but have a balance and respect that the decisions for the person are that person's choice to make. Advice is not controlling or manipulating the result you desire. Advising and supporting is providing perspective while respecting independence and individuality. From the self-advocate perspective, self-determination and autonomy are not having all the answers or doing everything yourself. Self-determination is understanding the goal and seeking perspective from others. We learn about what we do not know through looking at and listening to views. With this information, we can make decisions for our lives, but this does not mean we will always make the right choice. So, self-determination is making informed choices and living with the result.

One final thing I would like to share with you is that there has been a scammer attempting to pretend to be me and trying to get others to provide money. I want to clarify that none of the officers will ever ask you for money. If you get a request, please report it immediately to the officers and ignore the email or message.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to represent you. Feel free to contact me at any time.



People First members Gary and Phyllis, thank them for their many years of dedication to People First of Missouri and their passion for the self-advocacy movement. We extend our sympathy to their families and remember their contributions of time and care.



Chapter Updates

Boone County:

On June 29, the Boone County chapter partnered with the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council to host a voter education event. It was a timely event because that day, the governor signed House Bill 1878, requiring a non-expired photo ID of voters. The event was well-attended. Two registered people and one signed up to vote absentee. The County Clerk was there with voting machines, and everyone got to practice voting.

Two officers attended Real Voices Real Choices in August. Vice President Jeff presented in one of the sessions on his School to Prison project. People had a great discussion about the problem, and several requested copies of the Resource Guide. Jeff and his SARTAC team developed for students and families.

We have started to plan for a Walk & Roll-a-thon, which we do annually for National Disability Employment Awareness month, in October. We skipped the past two years due to the pandemic and looked forward to seeing people at the event.

Booneslick:

We started meetings back in April of this year. Due to COVID-19.

Each month a member or a few members choose topics to discuss and give a presentation on, as well as donate to an organization of choice, "Act of Kindness."

July was our Annual BBQ. The ladies gave a fantastic presentation on the 4th of July at Harmon's house. All houses and members brought a dish. The advisor Debbie donated the hotdogs and prepared all the food.

The chapter's upcoming events will be our Fall Formal and Christmas Dinner. We will be sending out the dates for both of these events soon.

Franklin County:

Our chapter currently has 15 members, with nine active members who attend regularly.

We have added zoom to our meetings so that members can join virtually.

We received a grant from Ability.

We have been reaching out to our community and have several volunteering opportunities in the next few months.

Howard County:

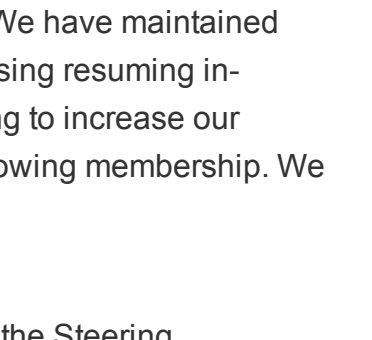
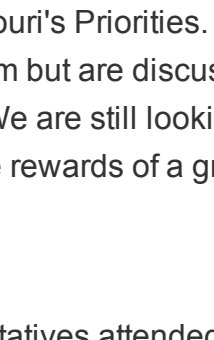
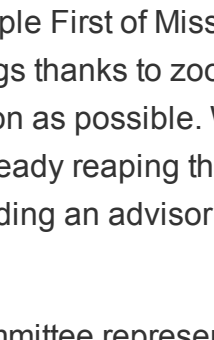
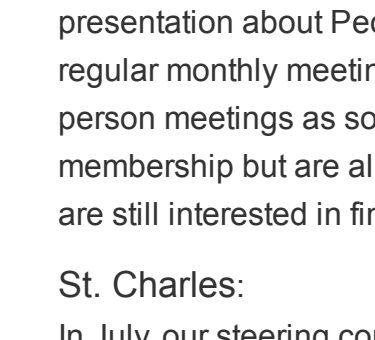
Howard County People First to 18 individuals to the Real Voices Real Choices Conference at Tan Tar A and provided \$50 for meals for each person. T-shirts were also offered to those individuals and their staff to attend. We are still looking for a "neutral" location to hold meetings.

Madison County:

We met with a representative of the Senate Bill 40 board and planned the best method for advertising for the first in-person meeting in a long time.

Mark Twain Area:

People First of Mark Twain Area has been super busy this summer! We have participated in the steering committee meeting in Columbia, MO. Our chapter has been a speaker at the Palmyra Kiwanis club, attended the Real Voices Real Choices conference, and planned a game day and Krispy Kreme fundraiser for September. We also had Valerie Dornberger, our county clerk, come and speak to our chapter about voter rights and new legislation impacting persons with disabilities and signed us up to vote if we had not done so. We have had great turnouts for our chapter and are busy planning for the rest of the year!



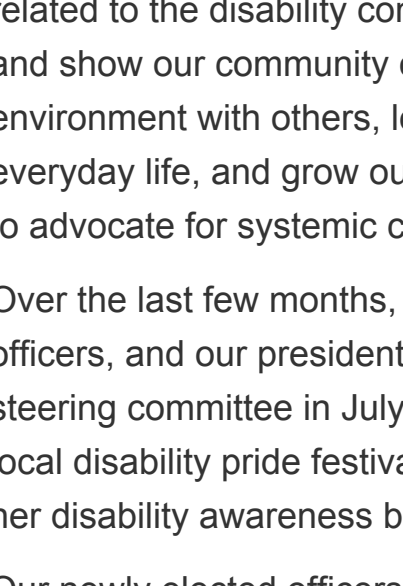
Marshall:

We had two members attend the Missouri Jaycees Access Day at the State Fair, where they provided lunch and free admission to the Missouri State Fair. We had two members attend the Real Voices, Real Choices conference. Kelly Ray and John participated in the July steering committee meeting in Columbia. We are still working on finding a meeting place and hoping some of the members who were attending our meeting that live in group homes will be able to start attending again since COVID-19 restrictions are beginning to be lifted.

North Kansas City:

The North Kansas City People First chapter returned to the Life Unlimited office at 320 Armour Road for the first time since COVID-19 hit in 2020. We had five of our members attend the meeting. At the meeting, we discussed how we need to send another member to the statewide meetings. We also went over our by-laws.

Our next meeting will be at Macken Park on September 20, 2022, as part of our chapter picnic.



Pike County:

The People First of Pike County volunteered to stuff backpacks at a local back-to-school fair and plans to donate to a local movie theater that has been family owned and operated for many years and needs projector repairs. This small theater has hosted many events welcoming individuals of all abilities and is a strong community supporter in the disability field. We look forward to cooler weather and more members to our chapter.

Randolph County:

Randolph County has been selling tickets for a gun raffle that ends on September 21st. We received funding to take 12 individuals to the Real Voices, Real Choices Conference. In June, we handed out two inclusion awards. One was an individual, and the other was an organization that showed outstanding commitment and contributions to the disability community in Randolph County.

Springfield:

In the last quarter, our vice president, Lindsay, graduated from the peer support program from NAMI. David, Patty, and Thomas from Branson were able to attend the Real Voices, Real Choices conference. David did a knowledgeable presentation about People First of Missouri's Priorities. We have maintained regular monthly meetings thanks to zoom but are discussing resuming in-person meetings as soon as possible. We are still looking to increase our membership but are already reaping the rewards of a growing membership. We are still interested in finding an advisor.

St. Charles:

In July, our steering committee representatives attended the Steering Committee meeting in Columbia, MO. At the meeting, we had updates from the Division and Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council. We broke up into groups and worked on the People First of Missouri's priorities: guardianship, supported decision-making, transportation, financial wellness, self-determination, and housing. In August, we enjoyed a pool party. We also hosted a Rock n Roll Bingo fundraiser that was a blast and brought in lots of donations. We also attended the Real Voices, Real Choices Conference in August.

St. Joesph:

We will have a Kool-Aid Pie Fundraiser in collaboration with Progressive Community Services. The flavors are cherry, blue raspberry lemonade, pineapple, lemon-lime, Watermelon, orange, and strawberry. Order forms are on the MERIL website. Five of our members attended the Real Voices, Real Choices Conference. Our chapter president serves as secretary of the MERIL Board. Two members participated in the Photo ID Clinic and will partner with Progressive Community Services to plan a Photo ID Clinic.

St. Louis:

People First of St. Louis has been busy this summer! The energy of our seven new members has revived their transportation advocacy efforts. Our chapter is drafting a plan to improve Call-A-Ride services in St. Louis City and County. Members attended Festability at the Missouri History Museum in July and raised money with a car wash fundraiser in August. Five members attended the Real Voices Real Choices conference.

St. Louis Region:

Hello, we are St.Louis Region People First! We have members in St. Louis County and Jefferson County. We want to make statements on issues related to the disability community, bring awareness to our causes, and show our community our value. We hope to create a safe environment with others, learn how to promote self-advocacy in everyday life, and grow our group with social media. Lastly, we hope to advocate for systemic change for people with disabilities. Over the last few months, we held elections to elect our chapter's officers, and our president and vice president attended their first-ever steering committee in July. Some of us got to explore Festability, a local disability pride festival, and take pictures with our president for her disability awareness brand at a booth!

Our newly elected officers are; president Anna, vice president Charlie, secretary Amy, and treasurer Paula. During the steering committee, we gave a chapter update that we were new, had our elections, and picked our focus areas and committees.

Stone & Taney County:

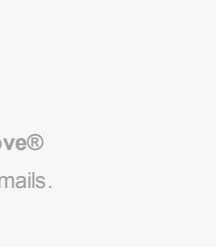
Our chapter has decided to change our name from People First of Stone and Taney County to People First of Taney County. Our chapter members will go on a Community Integration/ Awareness field trip to the Aquarium at the Boardwalk here in Branson! We welcome a new member, Tery, to our chapter.

We have started planning to represent our group in the annual Adoration Parade in December. Thomas shared much he learned at the Real Voices, Real Choices conference with the rest of our members.

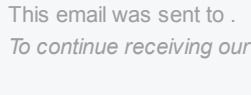
Warren County:

Our chapter has met three times. We began in June. We meet on the third Monday monthly at 6:30 pm. We meet at the office of Warren County Pathfinders. During our August meeting, our members voted on chosen positions. The members that decided to run for a position campaigned during our August meeting. They shared why the members should vote for them. Some gave a speech, while a few had poster boards showing their strengths and why they should get the vote. It was fantastic!

We have chosen a steering committee, and we have a committee for completing our by-laws. We have discussed and explored fundraising ideas. The chapter is planning on having a presence at the Warrenton Fall Festival. We are a new chapter with currently 13 members.



Share this email:



Manage your preferences | Opt out using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.

View this email online.

5030 Cherry Street Room 120
Kansas City, MO | 64110 US

This email was sent to .

To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

Subscribe to our email list.

Funding for People First of Missouri provided in part by the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council (MODDC), Grant #1801MOBSSDD Seq. No.: 2018 as authorized by Public Law 106-402 -Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act).