



The Sunland Beacon

JULY 2019
Volume 5/Issue 7

Alabama Bluesman Rocks the House!

Residents and staff filled the Sunland Auditorium on July 26 to see legendary Blues entertainer, Mr. Leon Atkins, aka Lil' Jimmy Reed who is best known as the "Alabama Bluesman." Lil' Jimmy still has it going on, even in his 80's! Truth is though, he is ageless! With all his charm and captivating charisma, Lil' Jimmy Reed truly is the real deal. He epitomizes the classic Louisiana down-home blues tradition. According to his website, he continues to play all over the US and Europe and as he happily says "life just get better with time." Sunland has certainly been blessed to have the Alabama Bluesman provide live performances over the past couple of years. His energetic shows are certainly entertaining and quite interactive. Each time he visits Sunland, concert attendees fill the isles, with many gathering at center-stage to dance to their favorite tunes. No doubt about it, Lil' Jimmy has become an all-time Sunland favorite!



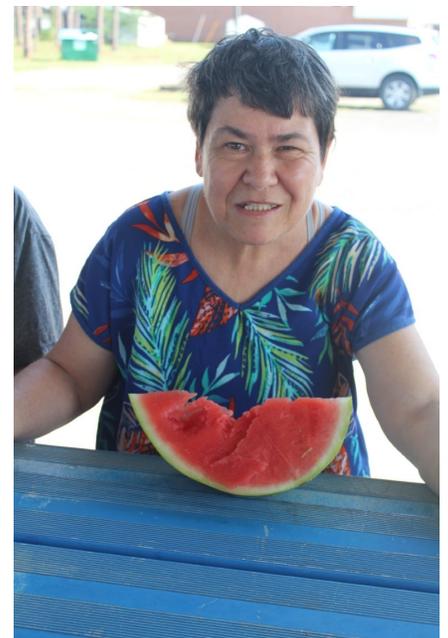
Sunland Center
Developmental Disabilities Center
3700 Williams Drive, Marianna, FL 32446


agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

The Agency Supports Persons with Developmental
Disabilities in Living, Learning, and Working in their
Communities

For the Love of Watermelon!

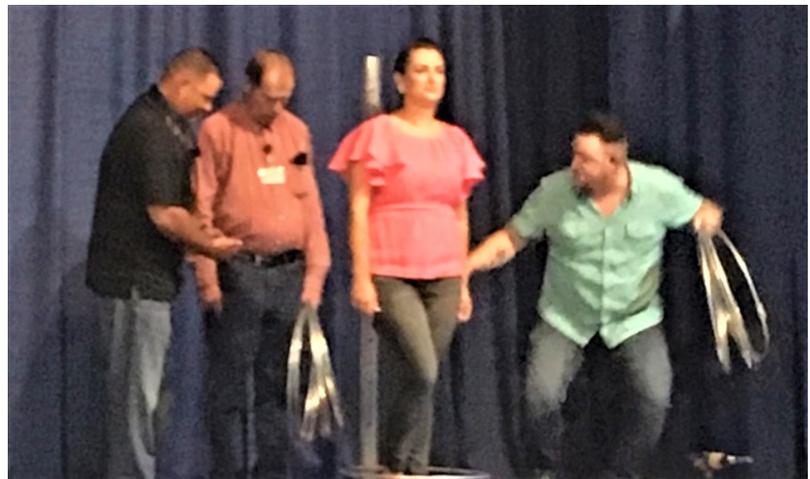
It's a Summertime tradition! Each summer, Sunland residents anxiously look forward to the Center's watermelon cutting. Nothing beats ice cold watermelon on a hot summer day. It's one of our summer loves. Especially when the delectable melons are grown at the Sunland Ranch. Thanks to Matt Dryden, Vocational Supervisor at the Ranch, and his staff for hosting this event. It just wouldn't be summer at Sunland without watermelon. One look at the photos below and you can see it was a big hit!



Magic in the Air!

Sunland residents and staff were treated to the Center's first ever magic show on Friday, July 19. The show was held at the Auditorium with a crowd of curious onlookers on hand. Guest performers were world class illusionists, Noah and Heather Wells, stars of the "MAXIMUM MAGIC" Show. They traveled from Panama City to Sunland where they treated a full house to lots of trickery and slights of hand. The large crowd was mesmerized by a variety of magic tricks that had everyone sitting on the edge of their seats. This show was truly a treat for Sunland. Thanks to Centralized Support Services for your commitment to provide quality entertainment for our residents!

Contributed by: Clint Cox



Suntown Mall Hosts Summer Social

The Suntown Mall hosted their 5th Annual Summer Social on July 23. The common area of the Mall was filled to capacity with residents and staff. As the event began, Peter P. provided an opening prayer, followed by Johnnie Mae W's famous welcome, which is always a crowd pleaser. Residents enjoyed special singing and dancing performances, and especially an assortment of delicious refreshments at the conclusion of the program.



From the Superintendent...

This summer I had the opportunity to participate in the 4 week American Sign Language (ASL) classes taught by our own Jenny Johnson, instructor with our on-site Jackson County school system. ASL is a natural language that serves as the predominant sign language of Deaf communities in the U.S. Users of ASL have a distinct culture and way they interact when talking. Body movement, facial expressions, and hand movements reflect what is being communicated.

During the classes I had the privilege of meeting many of my dedicated Sunland coworkers and sharing this learning experience. Our beginners class included learning the 26 signs known as the American manual alphabet, numbers, and over 350 signs. Signs may use one hand or both and include handshake, palm orientation, hand location, hand movement, and upper body movement, and change in any one of these may change the meaning of the sign. We had to be careful with this as there are some signs we certainly do not want to use!

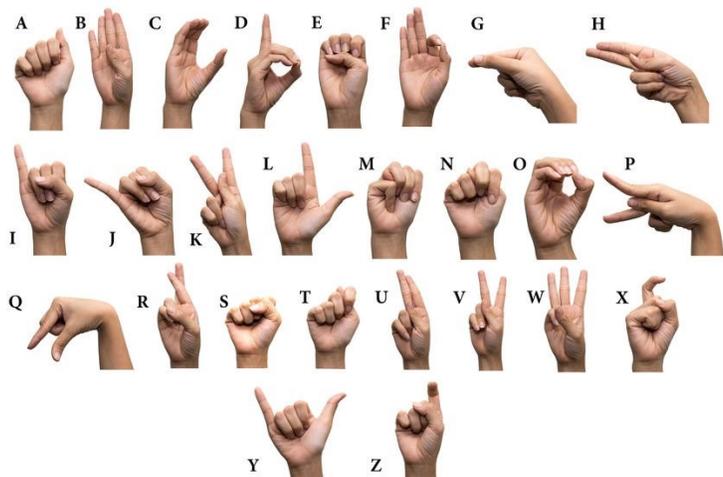
Communication plays a vital role in human life as it helps to build healthy relationships, share information, and helps us to understand others. As we serve residents who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, it is vital that we are able to effectively communicate, and for their thoughts, opinions, needs, and wishes to be understood. The class culminated with a luncheon at a local restaurant where only non-verbal communication was allowed in order to gain the experience of challenges faced by our Deaf or Hard of Hearing population.

I encourage each of you to consider this training opportunity and I look forward to ASL classes again next summer!

Much appreciation,

Marguerite

Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent



American Sign Language Classes

Sunland has been blessed to offer American Sign Language (ASL) classes for our employees over the past couple of years. Participants state the classes have been very beneficial to them, personally and professionally, increasing their ability to communicate with individuals who are hard of hearing. Classes are provided during the summer months and are open to all employees. Instructor for the classes is Ms. Jenny Johnson, who teaches at the Jackson County School at Sunland and is very proficient in ASL.

At the conclusion of the 2019 summer series, class participants had a chance to put their newly learned skills to the test during a "silent" luncheon. Rumor has it that the interactive luncheon was a lot of fun! Following lunch, certificates of completion were presented to the participants.

If you've not yet had an opportunity to enroll in the ASL classes, be on the look out next summer. What a wonderful opportunity to learn new communication skills!



Sunland Pool Re-Opens with a Splash!

The re-opening of the Sunland Pool was literally a “splash” and quite a hit with residents! Due to damages from Hurricane Michael, the use of the pool was not possible until the end of July. With the heat of summer, everyone had been anxious for the pool to re-open. That day finally came on July 26.

But first, the backstory! We would be amiss to not send a shout-out to our Maintenance Department, DOC work crews and our Recreation staff for the hard work it took to prepare the pool for use. The pool sat dormant with no working pumps for over six months. The extensive clean up and repair process included draining the pool, removing all debris that had collected in the pool during the storm and afterwards, pressure washing all the walls and floor, repairing and/or replacing broken tiles and concrete, and then finally repainting the entire pool. As the initiative progressed into the summer, all this work was being done with little to no cover from the heat and humidity, yet the team demonstrated dedication and perseverance to ensure the job was done right. Hats off to our Maintenance Department for making this a priority for our residents! Once the work was completed, Johnny Hodges, who works in Recreation, took the initiative to come in early, maintaining pool chemicals, vacuuming and all other measures necessary to ensure the pool was ready for inspection by the Health Department. When the Health Department conducted their inspection, Sunland passed with flying colors. Johnny also ordered new table umbrellas and inflatable pool floats to make the pool area more attractive for residents. Thanks to everyone for their hard work. The end result was a beautiful new pool ready for summertime enjoyment!

Fast forward to the re-opening of the pool...it was a *perfect day*! Blue skies and warm weather made the pool absolutely irresistible! Residents from all three Units and Pathways gathered for a huge pool party. They enjoyed swimming, playing water games, and floating around on the new floats. After swimming, the grilled hotdogs, chips, drinks and sno-cones were a big hit! Thanks to Centralized Support Services staff for making this much anticipated day so much fun for everyone!



Special Olympics Bowling Rolls On!

Sunland's Special Olympics athletes continued their bowling outings during the month of July, traveling to Patricia Lanes in Dothan each Tuesday afternoon. The outings have been rotated each Tuesday between Unit 1 and Unit 2 residents with 15-20 residents taking part each Tuesday. With five Tuesdays in the month of July, a total of 79 residents took part in the bowling outings. This schedule will continue through the months of August, September and October to prepare athletes for State-wide competition in December.

Contributed by: Clint Cox



Special Olympics Awards Banquet

Reviving an old tradition, Sunland held a Special Olympics Banquet at the Mixer on July 31. Every individual that lives at Sunland, as well as a few from the community who participated in any Special Olympics event during the fiscal year of 2018-2019 was invited to attend. Those in attendance were treated to a variety of appetizers specially prepared by the cooking crew at the Mixer. Following a time of fellowship and enjoying the refreshments, each attendee was recognized for their efforts during the past year. Attendees were awarded a specially designed certificate (courtesy of the Sunland Print Shop) as well as a souvenir backpack and water bottle. Sunland appreciates our Special Olympic athletes and congratulates them for their athletic achievements!

Contributed by: Clint Cox



Chaplaincy Services Hosts Vacation Bible School

Each summer, Chaplain Ruthie Moore works with local churches who wish to partner with Sunland to provide Vacation Bible School activities for our residents. When asked about VBS, Chaplain Ruthie stated *"It was a delightful sight to see bicycles and carts parked outside the Mixer as I arrived early to greet our guest churches from the community. In the month of July, four community churches graciously provided VBS sessions for our residents. Everyone was very excited as they gathered to sing, pray, hear Bible stories, visit, participate in arts and crafts and enjoy an assortment of refreshments. In all, fifty plus residents were happy participants in the VBS activities."* Much appreciation to the following churches for investing their time to share these special programs with Sunland: Foundation Temple Apostolic Faith Church from Cottondale, Memphis Baptist Church from Dothan, Alabama, Altha United Methodist Church from Altha, and St. Peter Missionary Baptist Church from Sneads.



Character Matters...

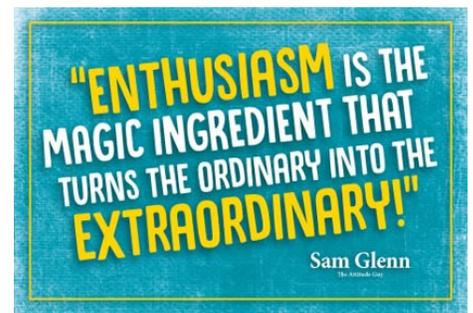


This month we will look at the character trait of **"Enthusiasm"** and how this trait can positively impact your job. You may ask, can a person really experience "enthusiasm" on the job? The answer is ...Absolutely! But, it really depends on you. Enthusiasm goes hand in hand with having a good attitude, an "I can" attitude. When an employee has a good attitude, they generally experience and display enthusiasm in their work. An enthusiastic person can make an ordinary day seem extraordinary, all because of their great attitude. Author and speaker Sam Glenn, known as the "Attitude Guy" encourages people to do their best with what they have every day. He says "My observation is that many people view "enthusiasm" as a buzz word. Actually, more of a fluffy word or a Peter Pan positivity word. Let's explore that a bit. Have you ever worked with a group of uninspired people?

- ✓ Do you like to buy from people who aren't excited about what they are selling?
- ✓ Do you trust a nurse's care if he or she doesn't care?
- ✓ Have you ever had really bad service?
- ✓ Have you ever called a company – any company - and the way they answered the phone was about as exciting as staring at a wall for an hour? Think about it.

Glenn goes on to say "The absence of enthusiasm feeds disengagement and weakens trust. People who are excited about their work have purpose in what they are doing, so they are not going to go out of their way to make your day a bad one. Just the opposite – they are going to give you everything they have. Without enthusiasm, it's called work."

Read that again and let it sink in. Let's not just embrace our jobs as "work"...let's be an organization that embraces enthusiasm. It starts with each one of us. It shows up in our attitudes. When put into practice, enthusiasm really is the magic ingredient that turns the ordinary into the extraordinary! The residents we are privileged to serve deserve no less.



July Star Awards

Congratulations to Sunland's July Star Award recipients! Honored at the July 25 Star Awards ceremony were: Operations/Maintenance Gold Star Team Award - Allen Ward, Michael Padgett, Scotty Edwards, Keith Jarrett, Lincoln Therrien, Kevin NeSmith, Walt Holloman, Jerry Skipper, Jon Norris, Steve Barwick, Randy Lowery, Jimmy Brooks, Clayton Mitchell, and Randy Benton; Gold Star Award Johnny Hodges, CSS/Recreation; Gold Star Award Linda Edwards, Unit 2/Woodridge; Gold Star Award Kandis Smith, CSS/Recycling; Gold Star Award Ed Smith, Medical Services/Pharmacy; Gold Star Award, Darius Raines, CSS/Mall; Gold Star Award, Bill Himes, Operations/Maintenance; Gold Star Award, Stephanie Groover, Medical Services/Nursing; Silver Star Award Christina Murff, Food Service.

Character traits recognized in July were Attentiveness, Cautiousness, Dependability, Enthusiasm, Flexibility, Initiative, Loyalty, Responsibility, and Thoroughness.



**GOLD STAR TEAM AWARD
OPERATIONS/MAINTENEANCE DEPARTMENT**

Pictured: L-R: Steve Barwick, Keith Jarrett, Marguerite Morgan, Scotty Edwards, Allen Ward, Clay Mitchell, Lincoln Therrien, Kevin NeSmith, Michael Padgett, Jon Norris, Walt Holloman, Jimmy Brooks, Jeremy Skipper



**GOLD STAR AWARD
JOHNNY HODGES**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Johnny Hodges, Clint Cox, Recreation Director



**GOLD STAR AWARD
DARIUS RAINES**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; James Godwin, CSS Director; Darius Raines



**GOLD STAR AWARD
KANDIS SMITH**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Kandis Smith, James Godwin, CSS Director

July Star Awards



**SILVER STAR AWARD
CHRISTINA MURFF**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent;
DeRon Johnson, Food Service Supervisor,
Christina Murff



**GOLD STAR AWARD
CHRISTINA MURFF**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent;
Linda Smith, John Coady, OMCI Unit 2



**GOLD STAR AWARD
ED SMITH**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Ed Smith,
Debra Johnson, Administrative Services Supervisor
(Nominator)



**GOLD STAR AWARD
BILL HIMES**

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Bill Himes,
Allen Ward, Operations/Maintenance Supervisor

Staff Honored at Service Awards Ceremony

Sunland's semi annual Service Awards ceremony was held on July 30 at the Mixer. Staff who completed 5 - 35 years of service with the State of Florida during the period of January - June 2019 were honored during this event. Superintendent Marguerite Morgan and Deputy Superintendent Adrian Abner presented each honoree with an engraved award, certificate of service and service pin. Following the presentation of awards, honorees and guests were treated to a delicious assortment of refreshments. Congratulations to the following employees on their career milestones:



5 Years – Pictured L-R: Ralph Barwick, Geraldine Messer, Lizzie Holland, Megan Mabe

Not Pictured: Vershawn Perry, Virgil Johnson, Whitney Merritt, Allyson Johnson, Dreanna Holden, Latoya Baker, Callie Boyd, Shaneika Lovett



10 Years – Pictured: Emma Bellamy, Luzanne Goodlet

Not Pictured: Shondra Caldwell, Annie Gammons



15 Years – Pictured L-R: Bruce White, Tommy Williams, II, Theresa Mabe, Dustin Pettis, Kaishauna Smith

Not Pictured: Naton Williams, Tommie Rivers, Jr.

Staff Honored at Service Awards Ceremony



20 Years – Pictured L-R: Lucille Speights Kirkland, Joann Williams, Angela Pittman, Donald Rehberg

Not Pictured: Shannon Stewart



25 Years – Pictured L-R: Sharron Pollock, Jerry Yon, Renee Perry, Ruth Jones, Shellie Owens

Not Pictured: Samuel Brunson, Sabrina Pope



30 Years – Pictured: Ollie DeBose

Not Pictured: Joni Laramore, Onna Lipford



35 Years – Pictured: Willie Stevens

Not Pictured: John Tummenelle

Summer Safety Tips

When working outside during hot weather, remember:

WATER: You need plenty of water throughout the day—every 15 minutes. Don't wait until you feel thirsty.

REST: Rest breaks help your body recover.

SHADE: Resting in the shade or in air-conditioning helps you cool down.



Remember to pace yourself!

HUMAN RESOURCES

For any personnel needs, please contact Veronica Mullinax, Katey Hobbs, Lizzie Holland, Nicole Sims, Robin Morris or Lisa Rabon. The HR Team is always happy to serve you!

For more information regarding personnel matters, the Sunland Human Resources Department can be reached at 482-9230 or *04.

Information regarding vacancies can be obtained at the People First website at:

<https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>

**WE ARE
HERE
TO HELP**

NEW EMPLOYEES

Tonya Hatcher

Robin Maynard

Shalonda Curl

Belynda Barcena

Jamal Howard

Alexi Nix

Demetrius Gilbert

Takelia Baker

Christopher Glover

Angel Pierce

Jennifer Powell

Shaneka Kent

Valory Lewis

**Welcome
Aboard!**