



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

## Celebrating Sunland's 39th Annual Fall Festival!

Once again, the annual Fall Festival was a great day for residents and their families, people from our local communities and the staff of Sunland Center! Despite the prediction of rain, the crowds were not daunted and the turnout was huge. Thankfully, only a few drops of scattered rain fell before the skies cleared and a beautiful Fall day unfolded! Festivities kicked off with the 9 a.m. parade, followed by a day filled with excitement, live entertainment and the savory aroma of tantalizing festival foods wafting through the air. As the parade concluded, families quickly descended on the "Funland" area to enjoy the bounce houses, carnival rides and haunted house, while others enjoyed strolling through the park to visit vendor booths or catch a show at one of three entertainment stages. Many gathered at the log cabin heritage homestead to learn about the history of turpentine collection in North Florida and take a turn working the old fashioned foot-powered wood lathe. Close by, the hayride wagon was a popular attraction offering a more laid-back opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the park.

All in all, the 39th Annual Fall Festival was a wonderful day for the community of Sunland. The weather was good and the grounds were beautiful. Pumpkins and scarecrows placed throughout the Environmental Park added just the right ambiance for a perfect Fall day!



Photos Courtesy of Real Florida Magazine & Sunland Center Communications

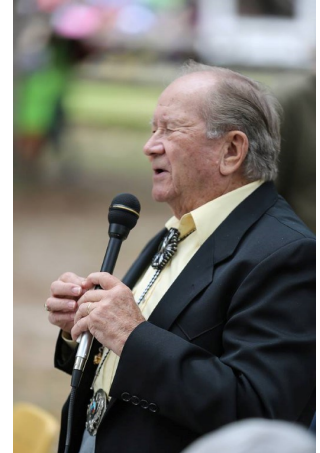


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## Pumpkins on Parade!

Pumpkin carving is an age-old Halloween tradition that is oftentimes overrated. A few years ago, Sunland came up with a new idea - painted pumpkins, which would encourage individual artistic expression...without all the mess! And thus...the annual "Pumpkins on Parade" contest was birthed. Each year, residents look forward to getting their own pumpkin to decorate and enter into the contest.

Judges for the contest are chosen from the Jackson County community. They certainly have a tough time determining the winning pumpkins, but all would agree it's quite fun to serve as a judge. Sunland extends a special thank you to year's judges - Mrs. Lula C. Vann, co-owner Vann Funeral Home; Mrs. Mary Carol Murdock, Jackson County Tax Collector; Mrs. Rebecca Morris-Haid, Jackson County Property Appraiser and Mrs. Charlotte Gardner, Jackson County School Board Representative, District 5.

Winners were selected in 1st, 2nd and 3rd place categories from Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3, Pathways and DDDP. The Best of Show winner was James R., who resides in Unit 2. Congratulations to those listed below who placed in this year's contest. All winners received a participant certificate and a certificate to use at the Coffee Shop or Sunny's

UNIT/AREA	1 <sup>ST</sup> PLACE	2 <sup>ND</sup> PLACE	3 <sup>RD</sup> PLACE
UNIT 1	Eugene R.	Kimberley W.	Ronald C.
UNIT 2	James R.	James G.	Herman J.
UNIT 3	Shawn N.	Laura D.	Tevin H.
PATHWAYS	Freddie U.	Zachary B.	Calvin B.
DDDP	Louis O.	Richard D.	Taura C.



Contributed by: CSS - Tonya Kelly & Beverly Cobb



## Sunland Hub Art Class Wins Big in October!

Students in the Sunland Hub Art Class were all smiles when they learned their scarecrow, "Leonardo DaVinci" won the People's Choice Award! Posing with their trophy are Ruby P., Robert C., and Jerry S. The students have excelled under the tutelage of their instructor, Maria Johnson. Ms. Johnson not only serves as the Volunteer Coordinator for Sunland, she provides art classes for residents interested in the arts. In her free time, she volunteers with local civic clubs, to include the Artists Guild of Northwest Florida, where she is serving as the President for 2017-18. Ms. Johnson works hard to ensure Sunland residents have opportunities to express themselves through their artistic creations and engagement with community activities.



Not long after Sunland's scarecrow contest concluded, the Hub learned about an opportunity to enter a community pumpkin decorating contest, sponsored by Evangel Worship Center in Marianna. The pumpkin contest was a part of Evangel's annual fall festival, which attracts hundreds of people. Robert C. and Jerry S., two of Sunland's well known artists, began working on their pumpkins with much detail. Robert's pumpkin was a rendition of Oscar the Grouch, and Jerry's pumpkin was a purple Minion. When the pumpkins were entered into the contest it was clear that the competition would be tough. We are very proud to announce that Robert's "Oscar the Grouch" emerged as the winner! For his efforts, Robert received a Halloween bucket filled with assorted candies and a \$15 Walmart gift card.

A special thank you to Evangel Worship Center for extending Sunland an invitation to participate. This was a great community inclusion activity for the individuals we are privileged to serve and we are very appreciative. Congratulations Robert and Jerry, and the Sunland Hub Art Program! We're proud of you guys!





## Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Sunland residents and staff participated in the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Exceptional Employer awards celebration on October 4. The 12th annual event, hosted by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Florida Division of Blind Services and Vocational Rehabilitation was held at the Tallahassee City Hall as a part of Disability Employment Awareness Month. APD Director Barbara Palmer, joined by Chief of Staff Karen Hagan, presented awards to 10 businesses for their support of persons with disabilities. Our staff and residents were quite excited about the opportunity to meet Ms. Palmer and Ms. Hagan.



During the event, drawings were held for a Rish Park vacation get-a-way, along with several plants donated by Superintendent Geri Williams and her husband Wendell, in addition to other door prizes.

## Sunland & DDDP Participate in "Live2Lead" Training



On Friday, October 6, a large delegation of employees from Sunland and DDDP took part in the "Live2Lead" leadership simulcast. The event was held at the Rivertown Community Church and community center, and sponsored by the Finch & Finch Consulting Firm. This training opportunity is an annual leadership gathering developed by The John Maxwell Company. For almost a decade, Live2Lead has shared leadership and personal growth principles to a live audience, and broadcasts over 300 simulcast locations around the world. Attendees gained new perspectives on relevant leadership topics, and received practical teaching tools to take home with them. Speakers for this year's event were Dr. John C. Maxwell, named a #1 leadership expert by the AMA and Inc., Magazine, NY Times and best-selling author; Dave Ramsey, personal money management and business expert, best-selling author; Warrick Dunn, former NFL running back, limited partner of the Atlanta Falcons, and Cheryl Bachelder, former CEO, Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen, Inc.



Sunland appreciates the opportunity to engage in professional leadership training opportunities, and extends gratitude to the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, RCC, Finch & Finch and other entities for hosting such events.



## From the Superintendent...

### **Sunland Center Presents Prestigious Goodwill Ambassador of the Year Award to Judge “Woody” Hatcher**

Judge Hatcher, a Jackson County native, has a passion for justice and helping people. After serving 35 years as county judge, his tenure places him among Florida's longest serving judges. His call to serve in the criminal justice system expanded to many human services delivery systems as well; including Sunland Center.

Sunland Center excitedly began this year's Fall Festival by having Superintendent Williams present its new prestigious Goodwill Ambassador Award to Judge “Woody” Hatcher. At the morning reception, Judge Hatcher was surprised to receive this award. After cheerful chants for a speech, he expressed appreciation to the Sunland Team and talked about some of his advocacy work over the years and how important Sunland is to Jackson County. Judge Hatcher garnered this prestigious award by unselfishly donating his time and resources to continue strong advocacy for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities, Autism, staff, and the entire Sunland Community.



Congratulations, Judge Hatcher! We salute you and appreciate your advocacy!

Grateful,

*Geri Williams*  
Superintendent



# Halloween Carnival

At Sunland, Halloween and carnival are synonymous. You can't have one without the other! Residents enjoy dressing up for the annual Halloween carnival, playing games and collecting delectable treats! Truth be known...the staff enjoy the carnival just as much! Lots of staff also got in on the fun by sporting some very creative costumes. Halloween at Sunland is just a fun day!





# Halloween Fun!





## Fall Family Fishing Day

The staff of Centralized Support Services held its first "Family Fishing Day" on Saturday, October 14, at the Sunland Environmental Park. Staff and their families enjoyed an exciting day of fishing, with a total of 175 fish being caught at \$2.00 per pound. The largest fish caught was a monster catfish which weighed in at 10.5 lbs! If you didn't get a chance to join in the fun, mark your calendars ~ another fishing day has been scheduled for Saturday, November 18! Proceeds from these events benefit the Sunland Welfare Trust Fund.



Contributed by: James Godwin



# Queen for a Day!

"Once upon a time..." a phrase dreams are made of...the beginning sentence often found in fairytales and storybooks that invokes imagination and daydreams. Such was the inspiration of Carolyn L. who resides at Unit 1 Buchanan House, and works at the Sunland Recycling Program. Staff recently observed Carolyn's tremendous interest in a book at her worksite. Each day, she would be seen admiring pictures of elegant queens in their carriages, wearing beautiful ballroom gowns and jeweled crowns. Recognizing Carolyn's appeal and fascination with the book, staff remind her that she too was beautiful and talked about her interest in being a queen. She was quite ecstatic about that. Soon afterwards, Carolyn received a formal gown, high heel shoes, and tiara. She delighted about having her hair and make-up done, and dressing up as a queen. To replicate the queens in her book, she proudly practiced her poise and wave. She was queen for a day!

A special thank you to Robin Snellgrove, Nikki Spires and Annette Odom for investing in the lives of those we are truly privileged to serve! What wonderful role models you are! Not only has Carolyn overcome her timidity, she looks forward to going to work everyday. She felt special and was recognized for the beautiful young woman she is, which has contributed to her positive self-esteem and sense of worth. As with all good stories that have a happy ending, we are certain Carolyn's life story shall read "...and she lived happily ever after."



Contributed by: Teresa Ellis, Unit 1 Social Services



## Centralized Support Services Hosts Staff Appreciation Fish Fry!

James Godwin and the supervisory staff of Centralized Support Services (CSS) hosted a Staff Appreciation Day event for the employees of CSS on Friday, October 27, at the Sunland Environmental Park. Staff were treated to fresh fried fish, wings, baked beans, cheese grits, coleslaw and an assortment of delicious homemade desserts.



Contributed by: James Godwin



## Annual Lynwood Baxter Softball Tournament

Each year Sunland pays tribute to a former employee, the late Lynwood Baxter, by hosting the Lynwood Baxter Softball Tournament. The annual softball tournament was held recently and a capacity crowd came out to enjoy the day. In addition, members of Baxter's family were also present and were recognized prior to the start of the tournament. On hand were his wife Carolyn, son-in-law Michael John Carr (current Sunland employee) and his wife, former Sunland employee Diane Powell and her husband and several of his grandchildren.

Baxter, a longtime Sunland employee, was instrumental in the implementation of the center's transition to becoming an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) and helped establish the Quality Assurance program. In addition, Baxter worked for a period of time in the Recreation program. He passed away in March of 1996, two weeks before his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. There is a plaque in the gym, as well as a granite bench and marker in front of the gym, to honor his service at Sunland.

Attending were members of Baxter's family, along with a large crowd of Sunland supporters to cheer the teams on. Blue skies and warm weather made for a perfect day of softball!



Contributed by: Clint Cox



## Residential Services

**Unit 1** - We all know there is nothing like the love of family. Unit 1 Social Services works really hard to ensure our residents have many opportunities to visit and spend time with their families. We wanted to share a couple of photos taken this month: Ronald F. with his mother, and Eugene F., who celebrated Fall Festival with his entire family. Let us all be reminded that we are entrusted with the care of the loved ones of other families, and truly it is our privilege to serve them.



Contributed by: Renee Perry, Unit 1 Social Services



## Whispering Oaks Hosts 3rd Annual Cancer Awareness Program

On Tuesday, October 24, the staff of Whispering Oaks hosted their 3rd Annual Cancer Awareness program at the Sunland Environmental Park. Tammi Garrett, Residential Services Supervisor at Whispering Oaks organized the event, with the assistance and support of her staff. As the program began, musical performances were provided by Scott A. and Santa Maria D., along with a poem written by Whitney Merritt and read by Shawn Everett and Eric Weddington. Personal testimonies were then shared by two staff who are cancer survivors ~ Jessica Callahan, and Shellie Owens. During a duet performed by Nola Register and Billy Davis, a candle was lit in honor of all who have been touched by cancer. Sandra Helms, ARNP addressed those who gathered, providing an overview of various forms of cancer and emphasized the importance of preventative measures and screening tests. The program was very nice with a different twist: pumpkins painted pink and white adorned the stage, along with a pink and white CURE sign, all flanked by pink and white balloon pillars and a beautiful back drop. A special award was presented to Ms. Garrett from the staff of Whispering Oaks in appreciation of her work efforts on the home and for bringing such events to Sunland. At the conclusion of the program, attendees were treated to desserts and drinks - pink, of course! Staff from the Jackson County Health Department were also on hand during this time to provide informational pamphlets regarding cancer awareness. Thank you, and congratulations to the staff and residents of Unit 2, Whispering Oaks, and all others who supported this important event...well done!





## Pathways Holds Fall Festival for Residents

On October 25, Pathways celebrated their annual Fall Festival designed especially for the individuals who reside at the facility. The festival began with bike rides around the center, followed by a game of basketball. Resident Orlando S. was the honorary music D.J. for the event. Festivities continued with face painting, fun outdoor games and an assortment of snacks. The event ended with grilled sausage dogs for everyone. The Pathways Fall Festival was an exciting day filled with smiles and laughter!



Contributed by: Juanita Alford, Pathways



# October Star Awards!

Star Awards for the month of October were presented on Tuesday, November 7. Presentations were made by James Godwin, Centralized Support Services Director and Felicia Smith, Program Operations Administrator, Unit 1 and Beth Basford, Communications Coordinator/Employee Recognition Committee Chair.



Unit 3 Silver Star Team Award - Monroe House  
 Pictured: Shelby Morris, RSS East Washington House accepts award on behalf of Monroe House, James Godwin CSS Director



Unit 3 - Silver Star Award Martin Pierce  
 Pictured with Shelby Morris, RSS East Washington House and James Godwin, CSS Director



Bronze Star Award - Lori Burke, CSS  
 Pictured with James Godwin



Bronze Star Award - Earl Matthews, CSS  
 Pictured with James Godwin



Gold Star Team Award - CSS Recycling  
 Pictured: Felicia Smith, Unit 1 POA, Jake Wood, Billy Davis and James Godwin  
 Not Pictured: Paul Money



Gold Star Team Award - CSS Recycling  
 Pictured: Robin Snellgrove, Nikki Spires, Annette Odom and James Godwin



## Jackson County School Program

The JCS Program at Sunland is always a hub of excitement and innovative learning opportunities for our students. Recently, the program implements new skill function kits designed to help students learn about sorting by color, shape and size. Pictured below, Billy M. sorts poker chips while Marie D. sorts circles, triangles, squares, rectangles and hexagons.

To help students gear up for Fall, they learned about the beautiful colors of Fall by making a "Fall Handprint" wreath, which was displayed with the Fall décor in the school. Later in the month, a Halloween celebration was held for the students complete with hand crafted costumes and a delicious assortment of treats and goodies.



Contributed by: Jennifer Grantham, JCS Program



## HUMAN RESOURCES



For any personnel needs, please contact Veronica Mullinax, HR Manager, Lizzie Holland, Nicole Sims and Regina Decker at Sunland, and Debra Cone, Faith Bentley and Jodi Nesmith at DDDP. The HR Team is always happy to serve you! For information regarding personnel matters, the Sunland Human Resources team can be reached at 482-9230 or \*04, and the DDDP Human Resources team may be reached at 663-7738.

## NEW EMPLOYEES

### Welcome Aboard!

Jordan Sapp  
Becky DeLapp  
Orise Kendall Jr  
Corliss McGriff  
Mary Pearson

Phyllis Jones  
Lori Davis  
Malissia Dillard  
Heather Hollis  
Janice Mack  
Carrie Deese  
Benjamin Beall

## Retirees

### Bon Voyage!

Vanessa Shelley

# Information Technology

Another friendly reminder asking you to please beware of suspicious emails. If you receive an email asking you to review a document by clicking on a link, please know that it is most likely not legitimate, but rather an attempt to steal your APD password. Many times these emails will say they are from another APD employee or from someone you know, but they are not. The "From" address is spoofed. *You should never have to enter your APD password to review anything on a non-APD site such as Docusign or Dropbox. This is always an attempt to steal your password.*

One very important point to remember: if you are ever lured to a website that appears to be an Office365 site, one that prompts you to enter credentials, after entering a username, the landing page will refresh to include APD's logo. If you do not see that logo anywhere on the page, DO NOT enter your password. Close the page immediately and notify IT. *If you have any questions about any email that appears suspicious or unusual, please contact the APD HelpDesk at 850-488-4357.*

The initial landing page may look similar to this



Sign in with your work or school account

Email address

Password

Keep me signed in

Sign in

Can't access your account?

Don't have an account assigned by your work or school?  
Sign in with a Microsoft account

If this APD logo does not appear on the page, DO NOT enter your password







agency for persons with disabilities  
State of Florida

## Project Sunland PRIDE



Beautification Program!

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT

# "Community Spotlight of the Month" Sunland Front Entrance



### "The Sunland Beacon" - Newsletter Committee

*Suggestions and/or news article submissions are welcome; please contact any committee member:*

Beth Basford, Administration - Editor; Clint Cox, CSS/Recreation - Co-Editor; Stephanie Parker, CSS/Print Shop; Renee Perry, Unit 1; LaWanda Calhoun, Unit 2; Allison Jones, Unit 3; Juanita Alford, Pathways; Joni Laramore, Administration; Mary Gallagher, Quality Management; Suzanne Laramore, RN/Nursing-Medical