



The Sunland Beacon

February 2019

Sunland Hosts Special Olympic County Games

On February 27, Sunland played host to the annual Special Olympics County Summer Games, although in a somewhat modified fashion. While rain forced the cancellation of the outdoor sporting events, as they say the show must go on. The Parade of Athletes and the Opening Ceremony were moved indoors to the gym. A capacity crowd was on hand in the gym, including numerous dignitaries from Sunland and Jackson County, and the Malone Beta Club who served as volunteers for the event.

Following the opening ceremony, the volleyball portion of the County Games took place. In the first match it was the Sunland Sonics taking on the Hope School Falcons. The two teams split the first two games and then the Sonics captured wins in the final two games to win the match 3-1. In the second round of action, the Sunland Boom took on the Hope School Thunderbirds and in a tight contest the Boom edged the Thunderbirds. The final match, after lunch, pitted the Sonics versus the Jets from Pathways and the Sonics came away victorious in that match.

All athletes, including those scheduled for outdoor sporting events, were provided a hamburger meal for lunch provided by the hardworking staff of The Mixer. Next up will be the Area Two Games to be held here at Sunland on Wednesday March 20th. Mark your calendars and come join in the fun!

Special Olympics County Summer Games



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

From the Interim Superintendent...

Dear Sunland Employees,

It has been a pleasure and privilege to work alongside you during this transition period between Superintendents. The past few weeks have passed so quickly. I am amazed at the progress made to restore the Center after the devastating Hurricane Michael. Cleanup and repairs are now well underway! I am even more amazed at the continued staff focus on providing the best care and support possible for the residents. A sense of normalcy has returned. I admire your resiliency and optimism for the future.



The kind of reception I've received during my tenure will never be forgotten. I've sensed the pride in the workplace with staff understanding the important role they play in the lives of Sunland residents. Staff have eagerly told me with passion and excitement about the many programs, services and daily operations that have such a positive impact on the people who reside here and call the center home. It must be recognized upfront that this is not easy work as the care and support required to address the complex medical, behavioral, and therapeutic needs are great. The value of this work should never be underestimated.

"To the world you may be one person. But to one person you may be the world."

With an abundance of thanks and appreciation for the difference you are making, I commend you for a job well done.

Sincerely, Tom

Tom Rankin
Agency for Persons with Disabilities

2019 Night to Shine

Each February, Sunland residents look forward to walking the red carpet at Tim Tebow's "Night to Shine." This event takes place the Friday before Valentines Day, in an effort to expand this celebration of love to a celebration of love for the special needs community.

Because of Hurricane Michael, Night to Shine was not hosted in Marianna this year. However, Sunland was extended an invitation from Genesis Church in Tallahassee, which sponsors Night to Shine for the Tallahassee area. This year's extravaganza was held at the Pavilion at the Centre of Tallahassee. Unit 2 staff members Heather Poythress, LaTonya Libert, Kit Reagan and Phil Anderson accompanied Cheryl D., Santa Maria D., Arnaldo M., and Antonio G. to the event. Everyone was beautifully dressed to the nines in their fancy, formal attire. Needless to say, they danced the night away, representing APD and Sunland very well!

A special thank you to Genesis Church, Unit 2 Administration and all others who worked together to ensure our residents were able to attend.



Special Olympics Basketball

Sonics Bring Home Bronze

For some folks, winning a bronze medal might seem like a letdown. But for the Jackson County Sonics basketball team, who brought home a Bronze medal from the recent Special Olympics State Basketball Championships, it was anything but a letdown. The Championships were held at The Big House in Tavares, Florida and over 500 Special Olympic athletes from the North Region of Florida took part in the event.

In the opening round on Friday the Sonics were in a very close battle that went right down to the final buzzer against the Pinellas Heat. Trailing by two in the closing seconds, the Sonics had a 3-point shot at the final horn that could have won the game. But it was not to be and the Sonics fell 51-49 to the Heat. In the second game on Saturday, the Sonics trailed almost the entire ball game against the Scorpions of Okaloosa County. The Sonics trailed by as many as 10 points and got as close as 3 points several times during the game. In the final two minutes of the game however the Sonics mounted their comeback rally. First the Sonics got back to back three point shots to tie the game. With 20 seconds to play the Sonics took their only lead in the game on a 2 point shot and then held off the Scorpions for a 47-45 win. That win earned the Sonics well deserved Bronze medal for their efforts.

The Sonics included John B. and Arnaldo M. from Sunland and Anthony P., Franciose P., Marcus H. (community athletes). Coaches and staff accompanying the Sonics on the trip were Clint Cox, Chuck Dickson and Mary Herring (Nurse).



Contributed by: Clint Cox

Celebrating Valentine's Day

The Optimist Club of Jackson County hosted a Valentine party Tuesday evening, February 12, for the ladies that reside on Woodridge House . The ladies were treated to a delightful evening including refreshments and special gifts. Each lady received a sequined valentine pillow for their room. The party concluded with a sing-a-long and a great time was had by all.

The Optimist Club of Jackson County sponsors Woodridge House and hosts several events for them throughout the year. The ladies of Woodridge always look forward to visits with their special friends.

To learn more about volunteering or sponsoring a home at Sunland, please contact Maria Johnson, Sunland Volunteer Coordinator at 850-482-9373.



Contributed by: Maria Johnson

News from Residential Services

Unit 1 - The residents of Unit 1 always enjoy special activities at Sunland! Pictured are staff Mozell Jackson and Julie H. who resides at Buchanan House. Julie was especially excited to show off her new Valentine's Day outfit that she received from her family.



Unit 2 - Saying goodbye is never easy, especially when it comes to someone who has become a strong member of your team. Unit 2 recently bid farewell to Bonnie Spates as she enters into a new season of life as a Sunland Retiree. Bonnie was a valued member of the Unit 2 team and will certainly be missed by staff and residents.



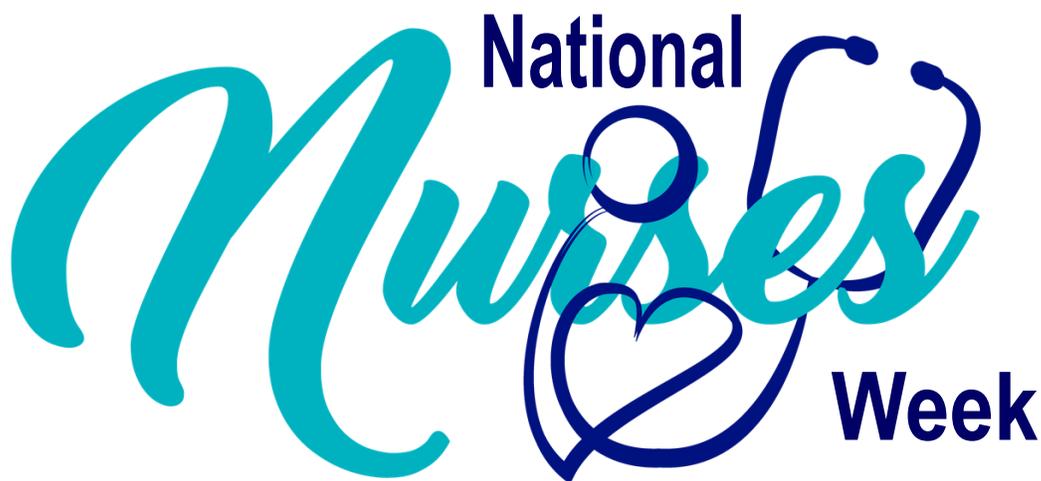
Nursing Poster Contest

Attention Residents!! We are having a poster contest in honor of National Nurses Week and you are all invited to participate. Our theme is "Sunland Nurses Rock." National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale's birthday. It features a host of events across the U.S. to honor nurses for the work they do and also educates the public about nurses' role in health care.

Resident entries will need to be turned in to the Hub by April 30, 2018. Your artwork will be on display in Cox Medical for the month of May.

The Recreation Department will be hosting opportunities to work on your posters during the month of April and prizes will be awarded to the top three entries during our Nurses Week festivities.

We look forward to seeing all of your creative artwork!



Celebrating Black History Month

Sunland Center celebrated Black History Month with a special program held in the Auditorium on February 21. The theme was "Some Contributions of African Americans to American and World History."

Host for the occasion was James Daniels, Rehabilitation Therapist, CSS/Recreation. The program began with the national anthem, by Security Officer Ralph Barwick. Herman J., of Unit 2 led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by Frankie P. of Unit 2 who provided an opening prayer. Johnnie Mae W., of Unit 2 greeted the audience with her signature "Welcome" greeting, much to the delight of the crowd. Entertainment was provided by Charisse Gray, from the Jackson County School Program at Sunland, English Gilbert, Vocational Instructor I, the Sunland Singers and Takiyah Gregory.

Maria Johnson, Sunland Volunteer Services Coordinator, who also teaches art at Sunland's Hub, spoke about art appreciation and life experiences. Sunland retiree, Lillie Clark, who is a local artist provided an art exhibit and a special song. Belinda Kirkland, Rehabilitation Therapist at Unit 3 conducted a special interview with Mr. Clifford H. who also resides in Unit 3. Guest speaker for the event was Robert Pittman. The program was closed with a prayer offered by Peter P. who resides in Unit 2. Following the program residents enjoyed refreshments at the Mixer Express, located across from the Suntown Mall.

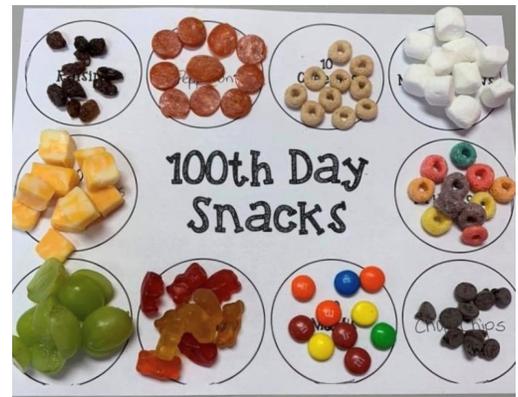
Thank you to everyone who participated and supported this event.



Jackson County School at Sunland

After the holidays, many schools anticipate finishing the 100th day of school. The 100th day of the school year is a classic "teachable moment." Teachers celebrate the day by organizing a classroom or school celebration that engages students in activities that promote special fun and memorable learning. Students at the Jackson County School Program at Sunland recently celebrated 100 Days of School! This milestone was nothing short of an all out celebration in Jennifer Grantham's classroom.

 **Hooray**
For the 100th
Day of School



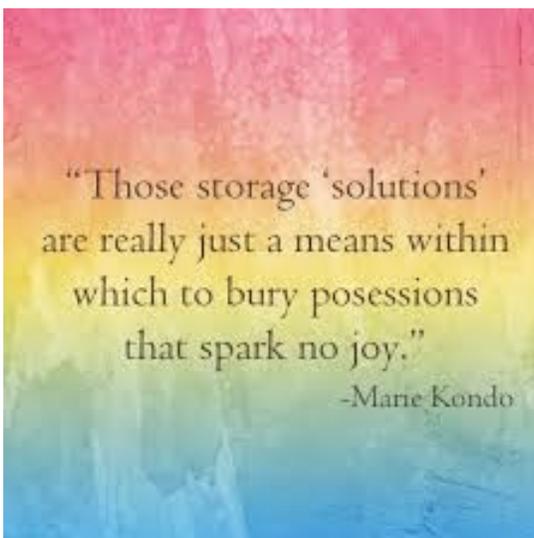
Character Matters...



This month we are considering the character quality of Orderliness. If you are a Netflix junkie, chances are you have seen “Tidying Up with Marie Kondo.” Marie is a world-renowned tidying expert who helps her clients clear out the clutter, all while choosing joy! If you haven’t seen the show, why not take time to check it out? You’ll definitely learn how orderliness can bring joy into your life. And, you can apply it not only at home, but also on the job!

Think of it this way: Orderliness is arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve greater efficiency. Orderliness is being neat, and living with a sense of harmony. It is being organized and having a place for things when you need them. Orderliness is planning something so that it works, doing it step by step instead of going in circles. Orderliness is putting first things first, and taking care of things you need to do.

Why, you ask, should I practice orderliness? When people are orderly, they get things done efficiently, without wasting time and effort. Without order there is confusion, and it is easy to lose things. People who need to do things quickly and skillfully need to be very orderly. What would happen if doctors and fire-fighters misplaced the tools they need to save lives? When you are orderly you can find a solution to any problem.



So, how do you practice orderliness? Decide how you want to arrange the space around you to keep it orderly and attractive. Have a place for your things and put them away when you finish using them. Orderliness helps you do things efficiently, by making a plan and following it, step by step. Orderliness can help you solve even difficult problems. Divide them into small parts and handle them one at a time.

Order around you creates order inside you. It gives you peace of mind.

February Star Awards

During the month of February, a number of employees were honored with Star awards. These employees were recognized for demonstrating a wide range of character qualities, to include: *Availability, Determination, Enthusiasm, Benevolence, Compassion, Dependability, Endurance, Diligence and Responsibility.* Congratulations to the following employees: Doug Stone, Security; Cessna Folsom-Melvin, Unit 2; Corliss McGriff, Unit 1; Derreck Thrash, Unit 1; Sarah Foster, Unit 1; Vanessa Guilford, Unit 3, Jenethal Reed, Unit 3; Adams House, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Shift staff; Unit 2 Administration and the Unit 3 Learning Center Staff.

Employees were recognized at the February Star Awards Program, held on February 26 at the Suntown Mall. Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/Interim Superintendent, along with department heads recognized Star Award winners with certificates of appreciation. A large crowd was on hand to cheer on the honorees!

Pictured L-R: Felicia Smith, Unit 1 POA, Corliss McGriff, Gold Star Recipient & Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim Sunland Superintendent



Pictured L-R: Franklin Williams, Unit 1 RSD, Antwuan Rudolph, representing 1st & 2nd Shift Adams House Gold Star Team & Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim



Pictured L-R: Adrian Abner, Deputy Superintendent, Gold Star Team Members LaTonya Libert, Kit Reagan, Phil Anderson, Heather Poythress & Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim Sunland Superintendent
Not Pictured: Lucious Williams, Unit 2 POA



February Star Awards



Pictured L-R: Phil Anderson, Unit 2 RSD, Cessna Folsom-Melvin, Gold Star Recipient & Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim Sunland Superintendent



Pictured L-R: Bart Harrell, Unit 3 POA, Jenethal Reed, Gold Star Recipient & Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim Sunland Superintendent



Pictured L-R: Bart Harrell, Unit 3 POA, Gold Star Team Recipients Dollette Everett, Rima Kolanda, Allison Jones, Tiffany Pollock, LaRhonda Barnes, Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim Sunland Superintendent and Gloria Jackson
Not Pictured: Zina Coleman & Belinda Kirkland



Pictured L-R: Adrian Abner, Deputy Superintendent, Doug Stone Gold Star Recipient, Phyllis Daniels, JCS Administrator & Tom Rankin, APD Deputy Director/ Interim Sunland Superintendent

Not pictured: Unit 1 Silver Star Award recipient Derreck Thrash; Unit 1 Silver Star Award recipient Sarah Foster; Unit 3 Gold Star Award recipient Vanessa Guilford; and Unit 3 Adams House 3rd Shift Gold Star Team Award

Service Awards

Sunland Administration and the Employee Recognition Committee hosted the Center's semi-annual Service Awards Ceremony February 28, in the Auditorium. Staff having attained 5-45 years of service with the State of Florida were honored during the event. Honorees were presented with an engraved award, certificate of achievement and a service pin. Following the ceremony, a reception was held for the honorees and their guests, co-workers and supervisors. Congratulations to the following staff for their career accomplishments:

5 Years – Britney Altland, Jeffery Bowers, Terrell Brown, Kellie Carroll, Brandy Davis, Stephanie Groover, Kevin Johnson, Allison Jones, Willie Kirkland, Marilyn McCalister, Shelly McCormick, Danielle Moss, Shirley Pittman, Stacy Reed, Byron Small, Ethan Smith, Daniel Stephens, Felicia Varnier

10 Years – Latasha Bellamy, Matthew Durden, William Pollock, William Chris Searcy

15 Years – Hawlen Ebanks, Atwain Hooks, Marcus Mallett, Mary McKinnie, Cathy McWaters, Veronica Mullinax

20 Years – Rhonda Cox, Mary Hatcher, William Hill, Virginia Lewis, Earl Mathews, III, Kimberly Peterson

25 Years – Bruce Jackson, Jacqueline Williams, Lisa Wilson, Charles Yon

30 Years – LaRhonda Barnes, Sharon Dudley, John Payne, Stephanie Russ, Cynthia Williams, Leola Williams

35 Years – Derit Godwin

45 Years – James Miller, II



5 Years of Service L-R: Pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent are: Jeffery Bowers, Corliss McGriff for Britney Altland and Kellie Carroll, Adrian Abner, Shirley Pittman, Stacy Reed, Phil Anderson for Terrell Brown, Willie Kirkland, and Byron Small, Chephus Granberry for Ashleigh Davis,



10 Years of Service L-R: Pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent are: Tom Rankin, Latasha Bellamy, Phil Anderson for Matthew Durden, Chris Searcy and Adrian Abner



15 Years of Service L-R: Pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent are: Tom Rankin, Chephus Granberry for Atwain Hooks and Marcus Mallett, Hawlen Ebanks, Bart Harrell for Mary McKinnie, Cathy McWaters, Veronica Mullinax and Adrian Abner

Service Awards



20 Years of Service L-R: Pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent are: Tom Rankin, Ashley Hill, Mary Hatcher, Phil Anderson for Virginia Lewis, Earl Mathews, III and Adrian Abner



25 Years of Service: Pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent are: Tom Rankin, Bruce Jackson, Corliss McGriff for Jacqueline Williams and Lisa Wilson, Doug Stone for Charles Yon, and Adrian Abner



30 Years of Service L-R: Pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent are: Tom Rankin, LaRhonda Barnes, Allen Ward for John Payne, Sharon Dudley, Stephanie Russ, Bart Harrell for Cynthia Williams, Leola Williams, and Adrian Abner



35 Years of Service: Derit Godwin, pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent Adrian Abner

45 Years of Service: James Miller, II pictured with Interim Superintendent Tom Rankin and Deputy Superintendent Adrian Abner



Looking Ahead...

- As Sunland moves into March, we look forward to Marguerite Morgan joining the team as our new Superintendent on March 8!
- Residential Staff Appreciation Day is scheduled for Wednesday, March 13, at the Suntown Mall. This will be a special event to celebrate the achievements of residents who work in vocational programs around the Center.
- Special Olympic Area Games will take place at Sunland on March 20. Kick-off begins at 9:00 a.m.
- Florida Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day will be observed on March 20 at the Capitol.
- Spring Break will be observed March 25 - 29. Vocational and educational programs will be closed during this time. Special activities are planned to include:

✓	March 25	2:30 pm	Wagon Rides, Sunland Gymnasium
✓	March 25	3:00 pm	Bike Rides, Gym
✓	March 26	2:30 pm	Movie Day, Sunland Auditorium
✓	March 27	TBA	Mass - St. Anne's Catholic Church, Marianna
✓	March 27	2:30 pm	Art Class, The Hub Art Room
✓	March 27	9:00 am	Volleyball, Gymnasium
✓	March 28	3:00 pm	Spring Break Dance
✓	March 29	9:00 am	Thrifty Flea Market - Suntown Mall
✓	March 29	3:00 pm	Bingo, Sunland Gym

Happy Spring Break

"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; Joni Laramore, Administration; Suzanne Laramore, RN/Nursing-Medical