

Teen Board Launches this Spring

Applications for the new Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled teen board will be available on April 15, 2011. They will be due July 1, 2011. The purpose of the board is to promote OKFD in Oklahoma City to other teens and to plan an annual carnival for clients.

The board is open to all high school age students in the greater Oklahoma City area.

The board term is September 1, 2011 through April 30, 2012. Members will be required to attend a mandatory orientation on September 15, 2011 and at least four other meetings on Thursday

nights throughout the year. They will also be required to perform an additional eight hours minimum of volunteer work at the Foundation.

For an application or details contact Cathy Blackburn at 630-8641 or via email at cblackburn@coxinet.net.

I am very thankful for OKFD. It gives my son a safe place to go and socialize and provides activities to keep him busy and entertained. Without OKFD, I would not be able to work, so I am also very grateful for the program they offer.

- Angela Brown

What OKFD Means to Our Family



Georgia and Gary

As executive director, Georgia Devening is the leading advocate for the services provided by OKFD. Her special passion for the organization's clients started in the late 90's when her brother, Gary Owen, enrolled as a client. Together, Georgia and Gary have witnessed and been part of many changes at OKFD, and they have both grown as individuals who have a special commitment to the organization and its clients.

EDITOR: How long have you been associated with OKFD?

Georgia: Thirteen years. I was a volunteer at first. My husband and 24 members of my family spent the day at the Stroud, Oklahoma lodge that OKFD owned at that time. We did all kinds of chores, from trimming trees to mowing grass. Back in Oklahoma City, I also helped recruit volunteers to deliver Indian tacos the Foundation made and sold as a fundraising activity. I helped with the Thursday evening dinner dances, too. Our family also helped clean up the headquarters after a tornado. Oh, and I also helped with filing in the office.

EDITOR: When did you begin board service?

Georgia: I joined the board in 1999. The organization was financially challenged then, and United Way gave us an ultimatum to get things in shape or else we would lose their support. I volunteered to help one day a week to get things better organized in the office, but actually ended up working four days a week for four months! We succeeded in turning things around.

EDITOR: How did you become Executive Director?

Georgia: The board launched a serious executive director search, but the candidates we heard from required salaries we could not afford. I was then asked by a fellow board member, Judge Charles L. Owens, to consider applying. I did, and was hired on January 1, 2001.

EDITOR: What got you involved in OKFD in the first place?

Georgia: My brother, Gary Owen, became a client in 1998.

EDITOR: What did Gary do for exercise, recreation and socialization prior to coming to OKFD?

Georgia: Very little. He lived with my mother, who became ill and sold her home. She went to live

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Leona Stepney (center) is surrounded by performers from Southwest Plains Dancers, a group brought to OKFD to entertain clients.

Client activities include the "Wheelers" dance team. Shown here are Garrett Dunn, Reggie Dixon, Amber Burrows and Stephanie Lipscomb.

Activities are Opportunities to Play and Learn

Leona Stepney is the person responsible for ensuring that OKFD clients are not only kept busy each day, but are challenged to learn and grow as individuals. With more than 100 clients, each with different needs, her job is both challenging and rewarding.

EDITOR: How long have you been with OKFD?

Stepney: It will be nine years this May.

EDITOR: What special skills make it possible for you to work with developmentally disabled persons?

Stepney: The passion I have for caring for others.

EDITOR: What did you do before you began working at OKFD?

Stepney: I have been a public schools bus driver, done home health care, and worked for 20 years as a nurse assistant.

EDITOR: How does what you do help clients?

Stepney: Clients learn to manage their money, read and basic math skills. I also teach clients the importance of good hygiene care and respect for others.

EDITOR: What would you like people outside the Foundation to know about the organization?

Stepney: If you would like to meet new people, go places you've never been before, do things you've never done, and see things you have never seen, the Foundation might be the place for you.

Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled Board of Directors



The OKFD Board of Directors includes (left to right) Tom Lefmann, Cathy Blackburn, Connie Weber, Judge Charles L. Owens (Ret.), Rosetta Culpepper and Billy Thomas



United Way Partner Agency
(#7025)

Combined Federal Campaign
(#83541)

What OKFD Means to Our Family

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with one of my sisters and Gary came to live with me and my husband. The only social interaction he had at the time was with family members and people in a small church that he had attended with my mother.

EDITOR: What are the positive things the Foundation has done for Gary?

Georgia: He has made many friends. He bowls, goes on all the trips and outings, participates in Special Olympics, and takes speech classes. He's had a complete personality change. He is self assured, friendly and has lots of self confidence. Gary is concerned about the well being of his fellow clients, particularly when they are ill and cannot attend. He requests that his birthday celebrations be held at OKFD, preferably with our Elvis impersonator in attendance, as Elvis is his favorite celebrity.

EDITOR: Gary, what are your favorite things about OKFD?

Gary: Bowling, shopping, speech, dancing, field trips, riding the bus, food and friends. Everything!

EDITOR: How has OKFD changed since you first started coming here?

Gary: More people, summer trips on a big charter bus instead of one of our regular buses, and we have an ice machine.

EDITOR: What do you enjoy most about the Thursday night dinner dance?

Gary: Dancing and food.

EDITOR: What's your favorite holiday at the Foundation, and why?

Gary: Christmas, Halloween and Thanksgiving. Christmas has foods, gifts and I get to be Santa Claus. Halloween for the costumes and candy. Thanksgiving is fun because of the food, and Christmas is not far away.

In Memoriam



We were saddened at the passing of **MELVIN DONALD BLOSS** on January 20, 2011.

Mel, who lived and worked in Enid, was on our board for several years. He provided us with the special perspective of a parent who had a developmentally disabled child.

A member of Oklahoma's Special Olympics board, he was also founding president of ATS Foundation, a program that provides art scholarships for at-risk children. Mel was also past president of Substance Abuse Program Professionals and a member of the Enid Association Metro Realtors.

Mel is survived by his son, Joseph Maddox, his parents, a brother and many aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

TRIBUTE GIFTS

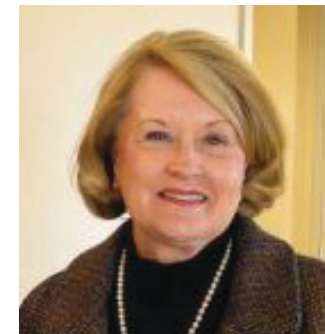
If you would like to honor a living person or memorialize someone who has passed away, please consider making a gift to OKFD. We will acknowledge your thoughtfulness to the person or persons you wish to know about your gesture, without revealing the amount, and also send you a gift acknowledgement letter and receipt for tax purposes.

You can use the gift envelope inside this newsletter, or make an online gift at www.okfd.org.

THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Client Scholarships Help in Tough Economic Times

By Connie Weber, Board President



Running a not-for-profit organization that receives 50 percent of its funding from state and federal government sources is particularly challenging this year.

financial gap between what the government allots OKFD for those clients who qualify for state aid (\$45 per client, per day) and our actual operating cost (\$56 per client, per day). We estimate the cost of an annual scholarship at \$2,700 per client.

With this in mind, we are appealing to individuals, groups and grant makers to support our client scholarship program as a way to maintain services in what are tough economic times. We hope you can help, and that you will share our request with others who may be in a position to support the positive programs we offer developmentally disabled adults in central Oklahoma.

Rising gasoline prices also impact our budget in a negative way, as our buses and vans travel more than 14,000 miles per month, crisscrossing several counties in central Oklahoma to pick up and drop off clients.

With these challenges in mind, we are very gratified to have received special funding from several charitable foundations during the last few months in support of our new client scholarship program. Client scholarships will help bridge the

If you would like to make a gift please use the enclosed gift remittance envelope, use our website www.okfd.org or contact Georgia Devening at 405-842-6636.

Our mission: To enhance the quality of life of adults with disabilities by providing life skills training, recreational and social activities in a caring and unique environment.

New Recreation Center Opens



What: Ribbon cutting ceremony and open house
When: January 18, 2011
Where: OKFD campus

Melinda Olbert, Impact Oklahoma president, Connie Weber, OKFD president and Jan Brown, Impact Oklahoma member



The new facility is the first major construction at OKFD since 1967 when its headquarters was built



Betsy Daugherty, Impact Oklahoma member, Susan Amis, Impact Oklahoma founder, Melinda Olbert, Impact Oklahoma president, Connie Weber, OKFD president and Georgia Devening, OKFD executive director



OKFD's new donor recognition wall pays tribute to annual donors

Susan Frantz, Sarkeys Foundation and Gayle Farley, Oklahoma City Community Foundation

