

Spring, 2015

# MCH: PEOPLE FIRST

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## Mission Statement

Macon Citizens Hab-  
ilities advocates for  
and protects the  
rights of individuals  
with intellectual and  
developmental disa-  
bilities.

MCH provides com-  
prehensive residen-  
tial and community-  
based services.

**MACON CITIZENS HABILITIES, INC. PO BOX 698, FRANKLIN, NC 28744**  
**[WWW.MACONCITIZENS.ORG](http://WWW.MACONCITIZENS.ORG) [mch@maconcitizens.org](mailto:mch@maconcitizens.org) 828-524-5888**

## From the Director...

Ellis Peters wrote: "Every spring is the only spring - a perpetual astonishment." I must agree. The weather is quirky, showers and storms come and go, flowers bloom and fade, late frosts appear, cold mornings dawn, glorious sunny afternoons abound, birds chirp, and the cardinals sing their never-ending songs! The world is alive with new birth and an invitation to get out and play in the dirt! With the coming of spring, things are certainly bustling at MCH. Among other spring events, there is always Special Olympics. Many thanks to Jennifer Garrett for all the effort to make practice day feel like the real event and to our own coordinator Becca Tallent who keeps us informed and serves on the SO committee. The actual event will be hosted by Clay County this year.

One of the most significant events for MCH *this* spring is ALL the plants now growing in the green-  
house. We especially want to thank Jean Farmer for visiting and offering advice and donating many  
materials. MCE staff and clients have worked hard to make this new endeavor a reality, so now we  
will depend on you, our supporters, to purchase the plants and grow your gardens. By doing so, you  
have provided someone with a disability a job. You can find prices and how to order in the flyer insert.  
Like our cards which are still being produced and are available, these plants are labors of love. Not  
only are our individuals working, they are learning how seeds come to life and how the nurturing pro-  
cess produces fine green vegetables and herbs.



Ready, set, go...



Potting and watering in the greenhouse

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## Greenhouse Plants for Sale

### Ready to Sale

#### **4 Packs - \$2.75**

Broccoli-Packman  
Squash-Yellow Crookneck  
Squash-White Scallop  
Cucumber-Burpless  
Cucumber-Bush Pickle  
Cucumber-Straight Eight  
Watermelon-Crimson  
Sweet  
Pumpkin-Jack o Lantern

#### **6 Packs - \$3.50**

Cabbage-Gonzales  
Cabbage-Flat Dutch  
Cabbage-Fast Vantage  
Kale-White Russian  
Lettuce-Salad Bowl Mixed  
Spinach-Novico Hybrid

#### **Single Pots - \$3.50**

Green Bell California  
Wonder  
Pepper-Yellow Banana  
Pepper-Jalapeño  
Tomato-Beefsteak  
Tomato-Yellow Pear  
Tomato-Cherry  
Pumpkin- Howden Field

#### **Herbs - \$2.50**

Cilantro-Santo  
Parsley-Favorite  
Thyme-English  
Sage  
Basil-Thai Siam Queen

### Coming Soon

#### **Vegetables**

Eggplant-Early Long Purple  
Zucchini-Black Beauty  
Squash-Acorn  
Squash-Butternut  
Tomato-Roma  
Tomato-Roma  
Tomato-Rutgers

#### **Flowers**

Zinnias-Giant Double, Mixed Colors  
Sweet Peas- Royal Family, Mixed Colors  
Four O'clocks-Mixed Colors  
Marigold-Crackerjack, Mixed Colors  
Marigold-Petite, Mixed Colors

Call Kathy at 828 524-5888 x 204 or stop by the office at 909 Lake Emory Road and see Brittany at the front desk. Someone will assist you to choose your plants. Sales tax will be added. Remember you are providing a job for someone with a disability .

# Thank You

Ed and Mary Henson  
Stamey's Café  
Jean Farmer  
Asian King  
Lamb Foundation – St. Mary's Catholic Church, Sylva  
Terri Head

**In Honor of Henry**  
Frankie Hughes/Cliff Cantrell  
Ruby Collier

**In Memory Of Jackie DeBetta**

Jack DeBetta

**In Honor of Roger**

Barbara Masters  
Robert Lee  
David and Kay Pitts  
Joel and Carolyn Sanders

*Thank you very much for your  
acts of kindness!*

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Another change coming to MCE this spring is a new aspect of the Adult Development Vocational Program which we will refer to by the acronym STAR, Sensory Training Activity Room. This will operate much like RAP, Retirement Activity Program, which although geared to our aging population is still part of ADVP. This concept will be geared to some individuals who are diagnosed with autism or similar disabilities and who respond best to sensory-type activities. A special room will soon be finished which will offer different activities which are more sensory in nature and are expected to stimulate these individuals to more participation in activities. These individuals will continue to eat lunch in the canteen with the larger groups, join in for music on Tuesdays, and bowl with a group. However, they will have certain days each week to eat out and go on field trips in order to increase their social skills and expose them to more community activities. Goals which teach activities of daily living will continue in order for these persons to continue in their growth toward independence. Someone once said there is nothing so permanent as change; however, change can be an indicator of growth rather than always remaining stagnant in thinking. Often someone around the MCH office is heard to say that if it doesn't work, we can always back up and punt again.

On April 24, Dona West, a long-time teacher for children with special needs in Jackson County brought her class and staff to visit MCE. Dona was greeted by several individuals she had taught plus some friends from the community and presented with a beautiful flower. She is retiring at the end of this school term. The person who takes her class will have big shoes to fill although Dona is quite diminutive. Dona, you will be missed!



*Until next time, Jeannie*



## Person-Centered Thinking and Putting the Person First

Understanding the dreams that people have for their lives is not an unusual concept for most of us. As children, we were encouraged to dream, and we were often asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Sometimes our answers weren't realistic but we were encouraged to think. Such dreams continue to be denied to some groups of Americans today. Persons with developmental disabilities are rarely asked what their dreams are. Their futures are typically limited by their disabilities, and they have to "fit" within in the suitable options within "the system". These options are usually either defined by families or funding sources. For many, these options are based on what is available: developmental centers, group homes, day programs, community rehabilitation facilities, family schedules and abilities to care for family members with disabilities. But the dreams of the individuals are not necessarily the focus. Instead of being encouraged to dream about their futures, they have been forced to struggle with the realities of their disability and how it defines their lives. That is not to say that everyone without a developmental disability gets to realize his/her dreams either; however, the so-call normal person is more in control of his/her life.

Shifting thinking about those with developmental disabilities from their deficits to appreciating what they have to offer, or their positives, must be at the core of person-centered thinking. By understanding the person, we see the person in terms of his/her capacities; we appreciate the person for what he/she can do, *not what he/she can't do*. Thus, our thinking is altered so that we can help the person have as normal a life as possible. This does not mean ignoring the disability but rather supporting it as normally as possible. The focus is on the person. It's not about whether every *i* is dotted or every *t* crossed. It focuses on the person's strengths and the needs to compensate for the deficits or help the person become more independent. Yes, we have annual plan meetings and complete "person-centered" documentation which is often done by someone other than the person with the disability because that person is non-verbal or has limited communication skills. *Too often, we plan it for them without determining what their dream is.* We don't take the time to find out. It might be as simple as riding a bus to another town or going to a ball game or as big as going to college. After years of working with individuals with developmental disabilities, I know that even the non-verbal can make wants and needs understood, but they may not be able to express in detail what they really want. They may withdraw and let only a few in because they don't trust given the numbers of people who pass through their lives. We may keep them safe, but do we really take the time to help them tell us what their dreams are? Do we go through the motions or do we listen and pick up on the cues they provide?

How does one begin to find out another's dreams, especially someone who has been bombarded with the message that dreams are limited by a disability? It's not easy because some people with developmental disabilities don't talk; some just say what they think is available in the service system. They don't dare dream outside the box and express when they don't want to be scheduled to death or go to a work center every day or do the same puzzle 10,000 times. Helping people with developmental disabilities dream involves being an astute listener. You must see underneath the first thing people say; you have to listen for the unsaid. Actualizing the dreams of people with developmental disabilities involves including the people who love them, care about them, and have been a part of their lives in some way. A group of committed people come together to create a life of meaning and purpose on behalf of the individual with the developmental disability. If someone cares about the person, he/she generally is willing to think more and delve deeper into what makes the person happy... listen to the unsaid and act on it. Sometimes it can't always be scheduled, and if one of the services offered must be utilized, those who care and develop a plan of action make room for impromptu opportunities which arise just as they do in our own lives. It might be a trip to a neighboring state since we live in such close proximity to 4 states which are easy day trips, or it might be attending a different church with a friend or family, going to a movie with a friend or family... the possibilities are endless. The thing is that every moment can't be scheduled or planned if they are to live normal lives. It might be a one-to-one outing with a favorite person to do something special. However, the key is taking the time to get to know the person...it is a person, not a robot. Even a baby at an early age recognizes and prefers some people over others. So it is even with those with profound developmental disabilities. We must never lose sight of the fact if they are to be treated as people first, they must have some control over their lives. Again, even a baby gains control, often by crying or having tantrums, the same is true for persons with developmental disabilities. We must meet them on their levels and understand them from their perspectives. They don't always speak, but they do communicate, and we must take the time to understand their communication if we really want to use the term *person centered!* It means to put the person in the center... think about it.

**I'm not an advocate for disability issues. Human issues are what interest me.  
Aimee Mullins**

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

I want to contribute to MCH, a private, non-profit organization. My contribution is tax deductible. I understand that I will be sent documentation to use for income tax deduction purposes.

Please make contributions payable to:

MCH  
PO Box 698  
Franklin, NC 28744

Complete the following information so that MCH can acknowledge your donation with a receipt for tax purposes.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory/honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include the name and address of any persons who should be notified if the gift is in memory or honor of someone.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank You!