

# WestCare Express

The WestCare Foundation Employee Newsletter



## In This Issue

Page 1

It's Official! WestCare Foundation's  
Capital Endowment Campaign!

Page 2

WestCare Georgia Celebrates its First  
Graduating Class at Boggs Academy

WestCare Kentucky Celebrates  
Golden Dads

Page 3

GulfCoast-Florida Receives Grant from  
The Able Trust to Help Veterans Obtain  
Employment

Winner of the "Name the Newsletter  
Contest"

Page 4

WestCare California SASCA Program

Dee Wirth and the First Lady of Nevada

Page 5

A Special Fathers Day Picnic  
for the WestCare Inside Out Dads  
At Sheridan Correctional Center

WestCare Arizona Holds Two Big Events

Page 6

Village South Press Release – Joint  
Commission Site Visit

5 Questions With . . .



## It's Official! WestCare Foundation's Capital Endowment Campaign!

By Jim Schaitel, The DuBois Group

**W**ith our board's approval, we are launching a Capital Campaign and creating an Endowment Trust that will help ensure the future of WestCare for all those clients who need our help!

Often a Capital Campaign is an effort to raise money for a new building or for current support. But it can also be used to raise money to create an endowment where the money is set aside in a trust for funding future needs. With an endowment, the principle is invested and never be invaded but the earnings on the money are supervised by a Board of Trustees who can use those earnings to help our organization when there's a need . . . whether it's a new building, and unexpected program need, or a variety of causes.

We recently approved a feasibility study to determine whether there would be support for a WestCare Foundation (WCF) Endowment Campaign. Some of you may have met or even been interviewed by a member of The DuBois Group in the last couple of months. We originally hoped to see if our communities would support a \$5 million Campaign, but the results of the Study showed us that a lot of people believe in what we're doing and want to help us. With The DuBois Group's recommendation, we're launching a \$10.4 million Endowment Campaign – twice the amount we tested in our study!

The Endowment Campaign will take a full year and a lot of work by all of us! We've hired The DuBois

Group to direct our Campaign and their job is to guide us to reach our goal. They arrived in our Las Vegas offices several weeks ago and have put together a Campaign calendar that will keep us on track in each WestCare region.

We're going to be asking for a LOT of help from you! We will succeed only with your involvement and enthusiasm. We'll need volunteers in every region to support this important effort. This is a new adventure for WCF but is vital to ensuring the future influence of our organization! Did you know that 90% of the money for our current operations comes from government grants & funding? It's no secret that government funding can be pretty volatile . . . it may be here today and gone tomorrow. A successful Endowment Campaign will help us through future hard times balancing the peaks and valleys we encounter as well as create new services. Additionally it will create a donor base of individuals, foundations, major companies, and other groups we need to cultivate and develop long-term relationships that will continue to support WCF.

The Campaign will be done in "waves" with the focus on one WC region at a time. Your region may be this year or it may fall into early 2009. Regardless, we'll keep you updated on our overall progress as we move forward with this exciting new direction for WestCare Foundation!

# Georgia



Michael Langford, Khalil Johnson and Robert H.



Khalil Johnson, Lonnie Brown, and the Boggs graduates

## WestCare Georgia Celebrates its First Graduating Class at Boggs Academy

By Michael Langford and LaShauna Rogers

On Saturday June 14, 2008, approximately nine months since opening the doors of its sixteen bed, residential substance abuse treatment program for adolescent males, the WestCare Georgia family and friends celebrated its first Graduation Ceremony. Six (6) young men completed a major mile stone on their Road Towards Recovery. Katherine Lewis, Director of the WestCare Boggs Program, which is housed on the Historic Campus of Boggs Academy in Keysville, Georgia, congratulated the graduates on their accomplishment and challenged them to return to their communities and become productive, clean and sober citizens.

The Graduation attendees were treated to a powerful and inspirational message from Khalil Johnson, Manager of the Georgia World Congress Center, Georgia Dome and the Centennial Olympic Park. Mr. Johnson's message focused on personal choices and responsibilities. He reminded the graduates that recovery is a journey, and they can best achieve their goal to stay clean, one day at a time.

This program is free to adolescent males 13 to 17 years of age, who are residents of Georgia, and is funded by the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR), Addictive Disease Division. For more information call 706.437.1080.

## WestCare Kentucky Celebrates Golden Dads

By Amanda Ferguson

The WestCare Kentucky Hal Rogers Appalachian Trail Recovery Center, a substance abuse treatment center for adult males serving individuals primarily from eastern and southeastern Kentucky, was awarded a Fatherhood Initiative Grant by the Big Sandy Area Development District. This grant provided funding for WestCare's Annual Father's Day Picnic. Resident's invited their children or their fathers to spend the day with them participating in activities that bond and strengthen family ties.

On Sunday June 15, 2008, over 100 people participated in the event. Not only were the residents and their families ready for a day of fun but staff and their families enjoyed the activities as well. The day consisted of something for everyone; music, pony rides, inflatables, a dunking booth, a clown, face painting, arts and crafts, baseball, basketball and movies. Each resident and their family member received a framed photo to commemorate the successful day. The day was full of fun, laughter and love for all of those in attendance

# Kentucky



## Did You Know?

The WestCare Foundation has 1141 employees!!



## GulfCoast-Florida

# GulfCoast-Florida Receives Grant from The Able Trust to Help Veterans Obtain Employment

By David Rosynsky

Within the last few months, WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc. has been receiving high honors from the community on the state and local levels. In April, The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Citizens with Disabilities, awarded WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc. a grant to implement *EmployABLE*. *EmployABLE* will ensure that United States Military Veterans with disabilities are provided with increased opportunities to seek, secure and sustain long-term, competitive employment throughout Pinellas County, Florida.

WestCare GulfCoast-Florida will partner with WorkNet Pinellas and will seek referrals from non-profit organizations serving Veterans throughout the county. The program is focused on serving Veterans with a focus on returning Veterans suffering from PTSD, addiction disorders and mental and/or physical challenges. Representative Ed Hooper of Florida commented, "The program is part of a state wide effort

to provide services to returning veterans with disabilities."

The Able Trust is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be the leader in providing Floridians with disabilities fair employment opportunities through fundraising, grant programs, public awareness and education. Since its establishment The Able Trust has award over \$22 million to individuals with disabilities and non-profit agencies throughout Florida for employment-related purposes. Its programs enable over 2,000 Florida citizens with disabilities to enter the workforce each year. Jana Balicki, WestCare GulfCoast-Florida Area Director says, "*EmployABLE is critical to the success of Veterans with disabilities leading to their eventual transition into the community, into permanent housing and sustained recovery.*"

Following the grant award, WestCare GulfCoast-

Florida was nominated by the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce as Nonprofit Business of the Year 2008. The nomination has brought much attention and praise to the organization and the WestCare brand in the local community.

WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc., part of the nationwide WestCare family of non-profit, community-based behavioral health organizations, is a tax-exempt, charitable, non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, providing a wide spectrum of health and human services in both residential and outpatient environments, including substance abuse and addiction treatment, homeless shelters and behavioral and mental health programs. Programs include Turning Point, an emergency inebriate receiving shelter for the homeless and the Mustard Seed Inn, a 73-bed homeless transitional living program in St. Petersburg.

## Winner of the "Name the Newsletter Contest"

By Seanna Herring-Jensen

Wendy Simpkins is the winner of the "Name the Newsletter Contest." Over 100 ideas were submitted for the name of the new WestCare newsletter and the name "WestCare Express" was chosen by the Senior Management team. Ms. Simpkins will be awarded a \$50.00 Visa Gift Card and a WestCare t-shirt.

We were curious, why "WestCare Express?" So we asked Wendy why she chose WestCare Express for the new name of the newsletter.

"When I started thinking about a name for the new WestCare newsletter – one word came to my mind... Express. Express is a word that is used to define a way to send out by special messenger or rapid transport – this is how we want to get information to our WestCare staff.

WestCare is a caring and innovative organization, developing new ideas and methods to help those

in our communities live better lives. What better way to showcase our ideas and successes than in a newsletter! All of the WestCare staff throughout our agencies will benefit and strive to bring forth their projects. My hope is that the new WestCare Express will be a tool of ideas, thoughts and projects brought forth by our caring employees."

Wendy M. Simpkins is the Assistant to the Sr. VP – Frank C. Rabbito. She came to the WestCare Foundation in Miami from the Guidance Clinic of the Middle Keys in Marathon, FL, where she was the Assistant to the Executive Vice President. Prior to moving to the Florida Keys in 2001, Ms. Simpkins worked for Comprehensive Computer Solutions in Christiansburg, Virginia, as a Recruiter/Trainer where she was responsible for employee acquisitions, training, and overall personnel relations.

Ms. Simpkins earned an AAS degree in Business



Management from New River Community College, Dublin, Virginia, a BS in Organizational Management and Development from Bluefield College, Bluefield, Virginia and is currently attending Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Florida for her MBA with a minor in Public Health Administration. Ms. Simpkins brings over 10 years experience in Human Resources, Accounting, Marketing and Public Relations to the WestCare Florida Management Team.

Way to go Wendy!

## WestCare California SASCA Program

By Phillip Strickland

We all know that WestCare has many departments that handle different programs. One program that I would like to introduce to you is the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's SASCA program. You might ask yourself "what does "SASCA" stand for?" SASCA stands for Substance Abuse Services Coordinating Agency. WestCare California is the coordinating agency for Parole Region I - that covers 33 counties! It is a huge program!

SASCA has several different teams within the program that work together to produce the final result of helping the client's success with his or her lifetime goals. And, the WestCare team members do it with a passion!

**Here are the highlights:**

- WestCare SASCA offices are located in Sacramento, Bakersfield, Fresno and Corona.
- Case Management Services to Parolees (men and women) after completion of an In-Prison Substance Abuse Program
- Liaison between Community-Based Treatment

Providers, In-Prison Substance Abuse Programs, and Parole

- Contracting, Placement, and Coordination with Community-Based Treatment Providers throughout Parole Region I
- Creation of a Network of Community-Based Programs to Provide Outpatient, Day Treatment, Residential, and Sober Living Environments throughout Parole Region I
- Provide Transportation Services for Parolees Released from the SAP at Corcoran to Residential or Sober Living Continuing Care Services throughout the State of California
- Provide trainings to agencies and personnel throughout the 33 counties WestCare coordinates under the SASCA contract

The case management services are designed to assist the in-prison treatment participant with the transition from in-custody treatment to community-based treatment. SASCA case managers conduct outreach and begin working with clients six months prior to parole. Case managers help secure, and provide



payment for substance abuse treatment services in prison program graduates.

SASCA provides follow-up and other support services to help ensure the success of clients in community re-entry. SASCA also offers housing and employment referrals, gender responsive case management services, and referrals to social support services and organizations to help sustain recovery maintenance efforts.

Of the 272 employees in WestCare California, 56 are part of the SASCA contract. It is the biggest contract WestCare California holds.

## Nevada

Dee Wirth with her three children



## Dee Wirth and the First Lady of Nevada

By Heather Shoop

One of WestCare's own, Dee Wirth, a staff member and graduate of the Healthy Families Program was recently invited by Dawn Gibbons, the First Lady of the State of Nevada, to speak to a prestigious women's group at the Sun City Women's Community Center. Our First Lady made this invitation based on her positive impression of Ms. Wirth at other speaking engagements.

As Ms. Wirth shared her story of recovery with this group of highly successful women, she expressed apprehension that they would not be able to relate with her. What she found was that, as women, we all share a common struggle and triumph at some point in our lives. Ms. Wirth found that she touched the hearts of her audience, and that they touched hers, and regardless of financial standing, career and life story, we really are all the same.

### Did You Know?

From March - June 2008, WestCare submitted 89 grant applications requesting \$17,475,460 in funding

## A Special Fathers Day Picnic For the WestCare Inside Out Dads At Sheridan Correctional Center

By Loretta Berry

June 13th was a great day for a special group of WestCare clients at Sheridan Correctional Center in Sheridan Illinois. They were the honored guests of the Inside Out Dads Fathers Day picnic who became eligible for this unique privilege because they are members of the Inside Out Dads Program. IOD is a character based education and support program that assists incarcerated men in developing skills to become more involved and supportive fathers. The program is delivered by Ms. Judy Pedersen and Ms. Jessica Witkowski, Family therapists at the WestCare program at Sheridan.

Each father was allowed to invite 2 adults and 2 children to the event which was held from 11am until 2pm. The guests arrived early so the picnic could begin on time with introductions, activities for the day, and a song. Once all the guests had

arrived in the visitors center, there were board games and cards available, crayons, markers, coloring books and paper for the children. Our recreation therapist provided assistance with the activities for the children. Our menu for the event was traditional picnic fare including cheeseburgers, hot dogs, chips, soda and ice cream. Additional WestCare staff volunteered to man the serving lines and did a marvelous job making sure that everyone was well fed. The Inside Out Dads Fathers day picnic was a wonderful event.

The number of staff involved and the level of detail required in the planning an event like this in a correctional setting is fairly extensive, but the results were well worth the time and effort required. One of our clients' sat for the entire picnic smiling and cradling his beautiful infant son. Other clients sat and relaxed as they talked and laughed with their



children and family. Those clients whose families could not travel the distance to Sheridan sat together as a family and played cards and board games. Toward the end of the picnic, one of the Family Therapists introduced one of the IOD clients who sang, (and quite well I might add), a couple of songs for the group. After the talented young man sat down, his mother said in a surprised and pleased voice that she never knew her son could sing. The smile on her face and others made all of the efforts needed to coordinate the day a distant memory. You left still seeing that smile.

## Arizona



## WestCare Arizona Holds Two Big Events

By Kim Mitchell and Tracy Stevens

WestCare Arizona's held its 10th annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner was held on May 13, 2008 at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino in Laughlin, Nevada. The event was attended by over 80 people including several staff from the Foundation office. Volunteers were recognized for the contributions they have made to WestCare Arizona to continue to help us "Uplift the Human Spirit." After a great dinner, volunteers were given certificates and gift bags. The night ended with the Volunteer of the Year Award presented to Velma Anderson. Velma volunteers at WestCare Arizona's Community Thrift Store. Velma received an engraved trophy and an article was printed about her and WestCare in the local newspaper. All Arizona Coordinators and some Board members were in attendance for the presentations. A good time was had by all.

The second event was really its first! The First Annual Employee Service Awards Luncheon was held on June 5, 2008 at our local El Palacio Restaurant in Bullhead City. Thirty-five employees attended and were all being recognized for their years of service to WestCare. The staff were honored with lunch and presentations from their immediate supervisors including a certificate and gifts. Award levels were given at 1 year, 3 years, 5 years and 10 years. Two employees were presented with 10 year awards – Mr. Jamie Lucas and Mr. John Zirkle. Senior Vice President, Kirby Burgess, Director of Human Resources, Mike Shields and Regional Accountant, Mr. Ken Zueger from the Foundation office were in attendance. The employees enjoyed the lunch and appreciated the recognition they received in the company of their peers.

## Village South Press Release – Joint Commission Site Visit

By Wendy Simpkins

By demonstrating compliance with the Joint Commission's national standards for health care quality and safety, The Village South, affiliated with the WestCare Foundation, has once again earned the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval.™

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission is dedicated to continuously improving the safety and quality of the nation's health care through voluntary accreditation. The Joint Commission's on-site survey of The Village South occurred this June. This award recognizes The Village South's dedication to complying with the Joint Commission's state-of-the-art standards on a continuous basis. Dr. Frank Scafidi, Senior Clinical Officer for The Village South stated, "This is the best survey we have ever had in the 15 years I have been with the agency."

"In achieving our reaccreditation, demonstrates our staff's commitment to providing a high quality of care to our clients. The Leadership Team at the Village South appreciates the staff dedication that contributes to our continued successes with the Joint Commission," said Sharon Crippen, Administrator.

The Village South, located in Miami, Florida, was founded in 1973 as a not-for-profit agency and was the first residential treatment program licensed by the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families. For over thirty (30) years, The Village has been providing comprehensive (holistic) multidimensional treatment to adults and adolescents, males and females, suffering from chemical dependency, mental illness, dual disorders, delinquency and related behavioral problems. Today, The Village

South's philosophy is to utilize the best science-based information to interpret our mission and to serve our clients. For more information about the Village South, please visit [www.villagesouth.com](http://www.villagesouth.com).



## 5 Questions with . . .

**Michael O'Dell Lavin Jr.** was born 1954, in a small town in southern Indiana. Mike's father worked in navel intelligence for the United States Navy, and by seventh grade he had attended nine different schools. He joined the United States Marine Corps in 1972 and received an honorable discharge. In 1975 he married Ruth the "best women ever born" and they have two children and two grandchildren.

Originally hired in 1975, Mike currently serves as Vice President of Operations and oversees the WestCare Works Division. He is also responsible for construction projects, building leases, maintenance and vehicles throughout all WestCare regions. He left for a time in 1979 and returned to WestCare in 1984, his total years of service to date is 28 years. He holds a license as a Substance Abuse Counselor and Program Administrator.

### *What is your most rewarding experience and biggest challenge working for WestCare?*

We took on a small new region called California and needed to rebuild a 64,000 square foot facility that had been vacant for 5 years. I lived on site at this facility for 18 months in my personal motor home while a crew of 40 clients and WestCare employee's rebuilt this facility. The plaque which these clients gave to me proudly hangs in my office today.

### *What do you do in your spare time?*

I spend my spare time with my grandchildren because they are so much fun. I enjoy NASCAR racing events, drag racing events, and super bike races. I also ride my 2005 Harley Davidson Road King Classic.

### *What would everyone be surprised to learn about you?*

I cry at WestCare graduations.



### *What is your proudest personal or professional accomplishment?*

My proudest personal accomplishments are my children. I am very proud to be a part of what WestCare has done for thousands of men, women and children during my service to this organization.

### *What is your favorite TV show?*

My favorite TV Channel is the "Science Channel" and favorite show is "How It's Made."