

UPCOMING EVENTS

The 2009 Friendship Dinner is Tuesday, May 5th at the Foundry. Bruce Pearl, UT Vols basketball coach, will be our featured speaker and Hallerin Hilton Hill, from News Talk 100, will be the emcee. For more information, call (865) 524-5555 ext. 239 or email joan@sertoma.com.

On May 8th, 2009 the Kenny Withers Sertoma Center Golf Challenge will be at The Landmark at Avalon. The fee is \$150 per person to play and other levels of sponsorship are available. For information on registering a team or for sponsorship information, call (865) 524-5555 ext. 239 or email joan@sertoma.com.

Mark your calendar now for the Sertoma Auction Gala on Friday, August 28th at the Foundry. Great deals can be had in both the silent and live auctions as well as a very entertaining evening. Watch for more on the auction in the next newsletter.



Cruise and Travel Show on January 11, 2009

Yes, I would like to support Sertoma Center!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

Please find my gift enclosed in the amount of \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Sertoma Center

Please charge my: Visa MasterCard American Express

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

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Spring
2009
Issue

INSIDE:

Mobile Meals
Serving the Most Vulnerable
Upcoming Events



Sertoma Center
News

INCORPORATED



Corey delivering Mobile Meals.

MOBILE MEALS

Sertoma Center's individuals prove that even those with disabilities can give back to the community. One of the favorite activities of our men and women is delivering Mobile Meals to the elderly homebound. Being responsible for three routes five days a week give our clients at Sertoma Center a sense of purpose and a connection to the community. Three clients and two staff on three routes deliver approximately 45 meals daily.

Often, elderly Mobile Meals recipients are lonely and look forward to friendly faces from Sertoma. Virgil has one set of people on his route that he calls "his people". He will not let anyone else get off the van and take the food to the door. Although Virgil has severe speech problems, he lets all know that "Those are my people and they thank me".

Jackie loves to get off the van and take the food to the door. On returning, he tells all aboard word for word what the people said. Another lady, is so appreciative that you can just see the love in her eyes as our

individuals knock on her door. She doesn't like bread, so it is always sent back to the vans to be given to someone else.

One gentleman recently lost his wife and the Mobile Meals food is about all he has to eat. His standard greeting to our individual is "Young man, I am so glad to see you and to hear your voice today."

Our individuals and staff get very attached to "their people". Delivering a hot meal of meat, two vegetables, bread, dessert and milk is not the only part of their job. Individuals and staff also check up on the general welfare of their friends, peeking in to make sure they have heat or other basic needs. If a name is crossed off the list, our staff has to make a call to assure our individuals that they are OK. Delivering Mobile Meals is also a sort of counseling project as well. One lady told our staff, Dot and Dan, that she wanted angels to come. They reassured her that God wasn't finished with her yet and quickly called Mobile Meals to report that someone needed to get to her home and check on her because something was not right.

Seeing the love and caring on the faces of our individuals who have so many mental and physical problems themselves as they care for others is truly inspiring to all who witness it. They prove that we all have something to give and the rewards are much greater than the action!



SERVING THE MOST VULNERABLE

By Betty Bean

(Reprinted from the Knoxville News Sentinel)

With its \$5 million annual budget, the Sertoma Center has an estimated \$10 million annual impact on the community, primarily because it employs 155 people, most of whom are direct support professionals. But that economic impact is secondary to Sertoma Center's mission of providing vocational, life enrichment and residential services to some 100 individuals with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. This is what they've been doing in Knoxville since 1961, and it is a mission they intend to continue, regardless of the economic times. Executive Director Becky Massey says the Sertoma Center is looking for ways to both cut costs and raise money.

"We've analyzed all our costs and closed three homes. We've consolidated as much as we can. We're trying to operate smarter and putting more emphasis on fundraising. The downturn in the economy has affected us just like it has everyone else. "The state funds a major part of us, and they call the shots. As their budget has gotten tighter, we've felt the pinch." The Sertoma Center has moved away from the sheltered workshop program that was its mainstay 20 years ago, and its day programs now focus on employment in the community. What used to be the workshop area is now a Life Enrichment Center, divided into labs where clients learn how to do things like operate

the recycling program at the City County Building. They still do contract work like packaging, sorting and collating for businesses, but the emphasis is on employment out in the community. "Work procurement is an option because we believe there's not one answer for everybody," Massey said. "Plus, we do a lot more community outings. Our service recipients deliver three Mobile Meals routes every day, and they just love helping with that." The Sertoma Center operates 20 homes in the community, most of them accommodating two or three residents, many of whom have little in the way of family support. "We still have some large group homes, but we are transitioning them into senior care homes," Massey said. "We have found that people do better in smaller settings." She is proud to report that five Sertoma Center clients have built their own homes through Habitat for Humanity. Last year, the state trimmed 6.1 percent from its contribution to the Sertoma Center over a four-month period. From January '08 to June '09, the Sertoma Center will have lost \$180,000 in state funding. "That's tough to try to make up, especially in this economy. The backbone of my organization is my direct support staff, and they are really the crux of our services – they're the ones who are in the homes, working directly with the clients. So it's really hard to make ends meet and take care of the clients the way they deserve to be taken care of." The Sertoma Center's annual Pledge Dinner is coming up May 5, with UT head men's basketball coach Bruce Pearl as the featured speaker. There will be a golf tournament and an auction this year, as well.



Angel and Becky Massey, Executive Director