Human Services Commissioner Munnell Dies

Dr. Edward R. Munnell, 10-year commissioner with the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services, died April 16. He was 84.

The commissioner, known for his outspokenness and advocacy for OKDHS staff and aging programs, received his medical degree from the University of Chicago in 1946. He moved to Oklahoma City in 1956 with his wife, Phyllis, and two children, Marcia and Mark.

According to Munnell’s obituary, he was part of the team of Oklahoma City Clinic and Presbyterian Hospital doctors who pioneered open-heart surgery in Oklahoma. Munnell also helped develop heart by-pass surgery and chest drainage systems.

As a result of his volunteer work for the Oklahoma Council on Aging, Gov. Frank Keating appointed Munnell to fill a vacancy on the commission in 1995.

Munnell’s last contributions to OKDHS will be his leadership of the commission’s Policy Committee, where he headed successful efforts to streamline agency policies, procedures and instructions to staff. He was also a leading force behind the Division of Child Care’s Reaching for the Stars program and the expansion of OKDHS volunteer programs.

Donation Made In Memory of Beloved Public Servant

By Dustin Pyeatt
Associate Editor

In 1979, Theodoll Magness came to the small OKDHS office in downtown Okemah as an intern. Divorced with four children, Magness had gone back to college with the goal of working in a profession where she could help people.

Magness retired in June of last year and, sadly, passed away only five months later. As a testament to the lives she touched, her classmates from the 1991 Leadership Oklahoma class donated $2,700 to the Lou Hartpence Scholarship Fund in her name during a small ceremony on April 14 in Oklahoma City.

“She was a great influence on all of us and on OKDHS,” said Dr. Bob McCaffree, who attended Leadership Oklahoma with Magness. “When we heard about her passing, we wanted to remember her in some specific way. The class all pitched in to make this donation in her name.”

Prior to coming to OKDHS, Magness worked at Oklahoma State University and Langston University. She began her OKDHS career as a probationary eligibility worker before going on to serve as a social worker I and II and then as a social services specialist II.

“She didn’t meet a stranger,” said Carla McCarrell, Magness’s daughter and a social services specialist IV in Oklahoma County. “She’d talk to a grasshopper if it would talk back. Clients would call her on the weekend and she wouldn’t mind.”

“Her bark was worse than her bite,” said Magness’s son, Johnny. “She preferred to love you.”

Magness’s sister, Clara Breaux, who retired from OKDHS as a child welfare supervisor in 2003 after 30 years of service, was touched by the donation in her sister’s name.

“I’m grateful. This is really, really nice what they’ve done,” said Breaux. “It exemplifies the love she gave and it’s coming back. That speaks well of her.”

Also in attendance with McCaffree and Johnny were Magness’s other children, Angela King, Charles McCarrrell, Jr., Elizabeth Williamson and her grandson DeAngelo Crawford.
Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Administrator John Coleman said the event was carried out in an orderly manner; however, there were areas identified for improvements. Keeping employee lists current and knowing where staff are who may need extra help in an emergency or evacuation are critical to saving lives in any emergency situation. These lists can be used to identify and locate missing employees when an actual fire or other life-threatening event occurs.

“Our employees must know that emergency drills and exercises are done so that we can learn what works and what does not work,” Coleman said. “We debrief ourselves and team leaders after exercises so that we can make better plans to handle things when a crisis or emergency happens.

“The leadership in all OKDHS offices should make sure new and veteran employees alike know what the emergency procedures are in and around their offices,” Coleman said. “While many of our offices across the state are smaller than the Sequoyah Building, all would benefit from knowing what to do in an emergency.

“Knowing where the primary and secondary exits are in the building is important. Know where safe rooms and storm shelters are located. Oklahoma’s storm and tornado season is here and knowing emergency plans before an emergency occurs could save lives.”
Recognition: Sharing It With Those Around Us

By George Earl Johnson, Jr.

May is a time of putting our Best Foot Forward through celebrations at the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. We have Foster Care Month, Older Americans Month and the State Conference on Aging, National Mental Health Month, National Public Service Recognition Week and the Governor’s Quality Team Day Awards at the Capitol.

We recognized 118 employees as the Best of the Best. Their peers selected them because they are the ones who inspire us day in and day out to carry on with our Human Services mission.

On May 4, they joined more than 350 co-workers and agency partners who worked on five Quality Award winning teams and 16 Quality Honorable Mention teams. They gathered in Oklahoma City to share their best practices and to receive well-earned recognition and awards during the 2005 OKDHS Quality Awards and Best of the Best Employee Recognition ceremony.

Being recognized for the work we do is fundamental to achieving continuing success. We all learn about recognition at an early age when our parents put our first paintings and our highest grades on the refrigerator for all the family to see.

But some of the best recognition we receive is from family, friends and co-workers that are personal kindnesses. It’s the handwritten note of appreciation, the e-mail just to say hi, I’m thinking about you or the face-to-face personal smile, warm hug or kind words just because.

We can all use special and simple recognitions every day to make the world around us a better place. Today, I’ll put my Best Foot Forward to offer those around me more positive recognition and appreciation, great and small. Will you join me?

The Chaplain’s Corner:

Show Your Respect for Life

By Kent Richie
Noble County Chaplain

R-E-S-P-E-C-T . . . We have all heard songs and clichés about how important respect is to each of us and that it is earned not given. Many things and people in our lives deserve respect. Electricity, if not respected, can severely injure people or damage property. Those in authority deserve our respect because of the position they hold.

Life deserves our respect because of its fragility. We do not have the power to give or hold on to life. Each of us wants to experience quality of life. Quality of life takes nurturing, care, concern and love. When life is devalued, it becomes a privilege that can be taken away if someone deems it necessary or convenient to do so. Too often when people, young or old, cannot care for themselves, they become viewed as a nuisance and are given little respect. It is at these times we must step forward and show these persons love, concern and nurturing to preserve the highest quality of life possible.

“Respect for Life” is an attitude and an action.

Discover A New Opportunity to Touch and Transform Lives

Oklahoma’s Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives invites you to visit their new Web site at http://www.faithlinkssok.org

OKDHS Chaplain Kent Richie

INSIDE OKDHS — May 2005
Reece Receives Award

Liz Reece, founder of the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association, received the Lifetime Achievement Award during the 2005 Friends of Children award ceremony given by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. Reece, along with six other Oklahomans, was honored at a banquet April 26.

CIO Published

Marq Youngblood, chief information officer, was published in the March 2005 issue of the American Public Human Services Association magazine, Policy and Practice. Youngblood’s article, “The User is the Key,” explains the benefits of involving non-technical staff when information technology departments plan projects.

Kay County Has Heart

Kay County employees, family and friends from the Ponca City and Newkirk offices participated in the first Kay County Heart Walk benefiting the American Heart Association on March 5. The OKDHS team raised more than $2,700 and won the top walker prize, as well as the top team award. Kay County’s goal for the inaugural event was $26,000, and more than $35,000 has been raised to date. The event was held at the Hutchins Trail in Ponca City with a three-mile destination.

CPR, First Aid Classes Offered

Free cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training classes are available from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. June 14 and June 28 at the OKDHS Risk Management Training Room, 2409 N. Kelley Ave., in Oklahoma City. Employees receive training credits for the class, and those who take it will be certified in first aid for three years and in CPR for two years. Class space is limited. To register, contact Greg Lott in the OKDHS Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Unit by e-mail at Greg.Lott@OKDHS.org or by telephone at (405) 522-6020.

Risk and Safety Conference Set

The 9th Annual Oklahoma Department of Human Services Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Conference is scheduled for June 16 at the Postal Training Center in Norman. All registered conference participants will receive lunch. For more information, contact the OKDHS Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Unit at (405) 522-2094.

Governor Signs Memorial Bill

Gov. Brad Henry signed House Bill 1001, which provides a $5 million permanent endowment for the Oklahoma City National Memorial. “The measure helps guarantee that this memorial remains a place for people to visit, reflect and learn.” More than 250 OKDHS employees were affected by the Murrah Building bombing.

55H Under Construction

The Oklahoma County 55H office, located at 10th and Rockwell, northwest Oklahoma City, has begun construction. Completion date is scheduled for March 2006.

Commission Meets

The next Oklahoma Commission for Human Services meeting is May 24, 9:30 a.m., Room C-48, Sequoyah Building.
Matthew, a 17-year-old with long hair, denim jacket and boots, looks as if he’d be more at home on the back of a motorcycle than at a camp for foster children. He leans his large frame over the table and delicately traces the hand of his little sister, Ashlinn, 8, while their brother, Luke, 14, holds some fabric in place.

The three siblings were making a “Family Flag” during one of the arts and crafts sessions at the Sibling Roundup Weekend 2005.

Building on the success of last year’s Sibling Reunion Weekend, Girl Scout Troop 798 again partnered with OKDHS to host the camp where siblings who are separated in different foster homes can reunite for the weekend.

The camp was held April 9–10 at E-Ko-Wah Girl Scout Camp just east of Marlow. The Old West theme included roping, a mechanical bull, stick-horse making, a reenactment of an Old West shootout and country line dancing.

“It went really well,” said Katie Schaeffer, 17, one of the Girl Scouts responsible for the event. “I wish there’d been more kids, but it’s been more relaxed with fewer kids. Plus we learned a lot from last year.”

The members of Troop 798 raised nearly $1,300 for the event and one of the troops in Moore made bags containing personal grooming items for each child. Volunteers from the Boy Scouts also pitched in on the event.

This camp means a lot to children like Matt, Luke and Ashlinn. Matt and his two siblings have been in foster care for five years, but Luke and Ashlinn have been separated from their older brother for the last four years.

“I like stuff like this,” said Luke, “just spending time with each other.”

They take their time with their project. While other sibling groups finish quickly, these three are relishing every moment of doing something together, of being together.


They spend the last minutes retracing each other’s names with markers, Matt watching over them with the patience and love of a father.

As the bell rings and they go to their next activity, Ashlinn wears her flag on her head. Matt takes it off of her and hands it to Luke who folds their flags together as they walk off into the wood, a family forever.
Youth Belies Experience of Laura Dester Shelter Employees

By Dustin Pyeatt
Associate Editor

Thomas Vincent, a direct care specialist II at the Laura Dester Children’s Shelter in Tulsa, walked into the room wearing a ball cap, sunglasses and just the slightest hint of attitude. At 24, he’s far younger than most OKDHS employees. But despite his youth, he has more depth of experience than most seasoned child welfare workers will ever hope to have, and are lucky they don’t.

Though he’s worked at the shelter for only four years, his knowledge of it is more intimate. At age 17, Vincent was placed into the custody of OKDHS and became a resident of the shelter. He was placed in foster care in Oklahoma City and Tulsa have witnessed an increase, population to the point that they both continually operate well above capacity.

“We’re not sure what’s happening, but we do know two things for certain: we need more foster homes and people and have to stop hurting children,” said Linnemann. “These numbers, these children we’re seeing now, are only causing strain on an already overloaded system, but it doesn’t bode well for the future of our state.”

To become a foster parent you must be 21 years old and financially stable. You do not have to own your own home and you can be married or single. There can be a maximum of five foster children in the home and six children total. Medical, dental and mental health benefits will also be provided to the foster child. Child care assistance is available for foster parents who work 20 hours or more a week.

“We have a particular need for foster homes for siblings. Most of the children that are placed in our custody have brothers and sisters, as well,” said Linnemann. “We need people who are ready to make a positive difference in the lives of children and in the stability of families.”

“So if you or someone you know would like to experience the rewards of becoming a foster parent, or if you would like to become a volunteer or donate items to an OKDHS children’s shelter, please call 1-800-378-9729, or click on www.okdhs.org. To report suspected child abuse or neglect, call 1-800-522-3511, or contact your local OKDHS human services center.”

McNeil is currently attending Tulsa Community College and plans on going to Northeastern State University in Tahlequah. Vincent plans on attending Tulsa Welding School and eventually wants to go to college to study criminal justice.

“I can talk to the older kids. I know how they feel because I felt the same way,” said McNeil. “They say, ‘You don’t know what it’s like,’ and I say, ‘Yes, I do,’ and they start liking me and talking to me.”

“They’re both doing a real good job for us,” said Tyner. “Thomas was older when he came here and everyone liked him. And Dionne’s done well for herself. We’re really proud of both of them.”

Having been on both sides of the foster care system, McNeil and Vincent have seen many changes, both good and bad.

“The program has changed and there’s a lot more activities now,” said Vincent. “Our outings were riding a bike around the block or going to the park and walking around. And we didn’t get Pop Tarts either, but the kids now do.”

Added McNeil, “And the volunteers, we didn’t have them, or counselors. And everyone used to be in the same building, now the boys and girls are separate.”

“The number of kids is greater now,” said Vincent. “It’s really high.”

McNeil added, “The abuse is worse, too, a lot worse. Especially sexual abuse, there’s just no reason.”

“I think the number one reason that kids are here is because of drugs,” said Vincent. “That leads to the verbal and physical assaults and neglect. Parents just need to take a time out, walk away and come back. If they’re struggling financially, there are programs out there to help.”

McNeil agrees, “As far as drugs go ... I don’t start them. If you start you will become addicted. I don’t see what the curiosity is. I also think we need more foster parents, and good ones. And the workers need to see the kids more.”

“I’d say more foster parents are needed, too,” said Vincent. “And better family counseling. Teaching parents what to do and how to react to a situation would go a long way in stopping abuse.”

Both Vincent and McNeil are parents themselves now. Vincent has been married since 2003 and has two boys, Kobe, 5, and Kellen, 2. McNeil has two children of her own, Antealia, 7, and Juliana, 4. She is also a kinship foster parent through OKDHS for her niece.

“If someone wants to be a foster parent they have to be prepared for someone to be all up in your business, which is good,” said McNeil. “You have to have a heart and not do it for the check.”

As for the child welfare system itself, both were affected in different ways from their experiences, but both have come to appreciate what workers deal with on a daily basis.

“The shelter helped me more than foster homes,” said McNeil. “The workers and Marshall helped me. I was very independent before I came in here,” said Vincent. “That was the toughest part. I never hung around kids; I always hung around adults. I went AWOL to go back home and get clothes. My worker wouldn’t help me get there. We were here two weeks with only the clothes on my back before I left. But I’d probably never have gotten my GED if it weren’t for coming to the shelter. I’d probably have been out on the streets and never recovered from it.”

“I had the worst foster parents. The system is better now, but I feel that I made a difference in my own life,” said McNeil.

“You do feel like you’re locked up,” added Vincent. “I guess I didn’t mind it too much because I got three meals a day and air conditioning, which I remember didn’t work very good.”

“My problem now is the food,” said McNeil. “I’ve gained 30 pounds since I’ve been working here.”

Though both work with older children, according to Tyner, the large influx of infants and toddlers has caused every- one to pitch in.

“I was having to hold a five week old the other day,” said Vincent. “It takes a certain kind of person to do this job.”

Added McNeil, “I don’t even read the files anymore because it’s too sad.”
Seniors Meet to Voice Legislative Concerns

Marilyn Moore, a grandmother from Chandler, Okla., remembers trying to raise her seven drug-abused grandchildren. She remembers the children crying all the time and acting out. She remembers the frustration of not knowing how to take care of them and not knowing where to turn.

“I cried a lot and prayed day and night, night and day,” said Moore.

Moore and her husband, Herman, eventually entered counseling and found needed legal help, though not without great struggles. Moore started a support group for grandparents raising grandchildren.

“The main reason I started Grandparents and Kids Connection Support Group was so I could share and try to help someone,” said Moore. “I knew I could help someone struggling like me.”

Indeed, sometimes, programs established to protect seniors seem to be yet another obstacle to maintaining a secure and desirable lifestyle.”

Jewell Dietsche, from Vinita, Okla., shared how she became the sole caregiver of her 92-year-old mother. She

INSIDE OKDHS — May 2005

By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor

The 2005 Legislative session adjourns sine die May 27. During the Legislature’s last few weeks, members of the Executive Team, as well as OKDHS staff, walked a steady path to the Capitol, supporting the governor’s health initiative and talking to legislators.

At the end of March, the governor signed SB219, the supplemental appropriations bill allocating OKDHS $20 million to finish out the fiscal year ending June 30. Chief Financial Officer Phil Motley said the money will be used to meet fiscal year 2005 work plan obligations.

For fiscal year 2006, OKDHS seeks more than $500 million to continue the agency’s current work plan, which includes mandated employee salary increases and program rate adjustments. According to Motley, the Senate, House of Representatives and governor all presented early appropriation recommendations well below what OKDHS has requested for its maintenance budget.

Director Howard H. Hendrick said the Department will “continue the planning processes for establishing the operational improvements desired for fiscal year 2006.” These include: information technology initiatives; child support enforcement expansions; reducing the Developmental Disabilities Services Division In Home Supports Waiver waiting list; strengthening the funding and workforce of child care, DDSD and Aging Services providers; sustaining the adoption gains and continuing to work on employee compensation.
OKDHS Staff Steps Forward for Governor’s Health Initiative

OKDHS staff took 100,000 steps to kick off the governor’s state health initiative for a Strong and Healthy Oklahoma.

More than 30 staff members gathered April 6, strapped on pedometers, and walked around to the south steps of the Capitol to participate in Gov. Brad Henry’s rally. The governor’s event coincided with National Public Health Day, Oklahoma Wellness Week and Turning Point Partnership’s “Walk This Weigh” Oklahoma health promotion.

“We walked our ‘weigh’ to good health, as well as represented OKDHS in response to Gov. Henry’s invitation for all state employees to participate in the Strong and Healthy Oklahoma initiative,” said Tina Tate, OKDHS Wellness Coordinator.

During the rally, which featured state employees from various state agencies, Secretary of Health Terry Cline said the governor’s initiative marks an important step to building a strong and healthy Oklahoma. “As the largest employer in the state with 35,000 employees, state agencies and employees can have a huge impact on influencing Oklahoma’s health,” said Cline.

Gov. Henry said he developed the initiative due to how poorly Oklahoma scores on health issues. “It’s time to do something to change this,” said Henry. “Healthy employees are more productive employees.”

The governor spotlighted OKDHS staff’s involvement in OK Health, the pilot program of the Employee Benefits Council’s State Wellness Program. More than 400 OKDHS employees have participated in OK Health, a Web-based health behavior change program tailored to each participant’s needs. The program began two years ago. “OKDHS has saved 30 percent in health care costs under this pilot program,” said Henry. “Employees are more productive, have fewer sick days and are getting the job done.”

To further support her husband’s initiative, first lady Kim Henry hosted free cholesterol screening and blood pressure checks at the State Capitol on April 7. “Heart disease remains one of the most deadly threats to the health of Americans,” said the first lady. “Oklahoma has made considerable progress in recent years with regard to public health, but much remains to be done.”

Recovery Day Efforts Focused on Expanding Treatment Access

Oklahomans in recovery from substance abuse addiction, as well as their family and friends, gathered April 7 for Addiction Recovery and Treatment Day at the Capitol. The message to legislators: expand access to treatment.

“OCARTA is holding this Recovery Day at the Capitol to show legislators that they need to support access to treatment in Oklahoma,” said Donna Woods-Bauer, executive director of Oklahoma Citizen Advocates for Recovery & Treatment. “It is time to let all Oklahomans know that we are not going to take being left out of funding anymore.”

Participants, including OKDHS staff, listened to speakers, visited booths and shared a catered lunch.

“We have employees in recovery and clients in recovery,” said Kyle McGraw, OKDHS director of substance abuse services. “Recovery does work.”

OKDHS provides employees with an Employee Assistance Program through the Corporate Assistance Program (CAP) of Integris Behavioral Health Services. CAP is responsible for coverage throughout the state for all full-time OKDHS employees and family members in their immediate household. EAP counselors are made up of psychologists, licensed professional counselors, licensed marriage and family counselors and certified drug and alcohol counselors. They have special training in handling personal, family and career matters. Each representative is selected not only for expertise, but also for the special qualities of understanding, sensitivity and compassion necessary in managing personal difficulties.
Ann A.: A Profile of Success

By Stephanie M. Bond

Ann A., a long-time employee of OKDHS and recovering alcoholic, credits the Department, and particularly one of her supervisors, for saving her life and leading her to recovery, though not necessarily in ways you might think.

“I could not have come to work at a better place for someone so scared and insecure as I was. There is nothing like being around a bunch of social workers to make you feel safe. I’ve had a lot of supervisors in this organization; some wonderful, some not so wonderful. I had some who enabled my drinking because they wanted to be liked and be my friend and others than knew “being my friend” meant having high expectations of me and for me.”

Conventional wisdom states “like attracts job.” For Ann, a long-time recovery organization whose mission is to help people in need, logically, that same organization sometimes attracts people in need to work for it. Social workers, nurses and others whose mission is to help people can also be the same people who need to be helped.

Ann, who entered the 12-step recovery program Alcoholics Anonymous 16 years ago, chooses to remain anonymous not out of embarrassment or shame, but because of her work for AA. The 12 Traditions give guidance for how AA should be run. Tradition 11 states, “Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.”

“It’s not about protecting me,” said Ann. “I want to live my life in a way to have no secrets. It’s about protecting AA.”

Ann entered counseling and tried “controlled drinking” after her boss confronted her. She would consciously limit the drinking and “black out” if she thought it difficult. During a holiday party with friends, Ann allowed herself to celebrate. All she remembers is accepting a beer and then waking up the next morning in her bedroom. She didn’t remember how she got home. She crept to the window and saw her car in the driveway.

“That scared me. I experienced the most incredible fear and anxiety and guilt you can imagine. I’d blacked out a lot, but losing control like that really scared me. I had no idea what I had done.”

Over the next few days, Ann’s embarrassment, humiliation and shame increased. “I couldn’t trust myself to have even one drink. I could kill somebody or kill myself.”

Ann tried an AA meeting after that, but didn’t feel like it was for her. Over the next year she “white knuckled it,” trying to make it through each day without drinking and without any other coping skills.

“I had two very good friends who would just pick up the pieces day after day. It was the hardest year of my life. It’s the sense of deprivation, that there’s nothing you can do for a release.”

At the end of the year, Ann found herself depressed and feeling hopeless. She knew she couldn’t continue to live her life as she was. She allowed a friend to take her to another AA meeting.

“I found the people at this meeting were having fun. It was a bunch of little, blue-haired, old ladies talking and laughing about what they had done when drinking. And they were happy as recovering alcoholics. They knew all the things I had done, felt, been through because they’d done it, gotten over it and moved on. I had this incredible sense of belonging.”

As she went back again and again, her secrets came out. Just as Ann’s alcoholism affected every aspect of her life, Ann said recovery has changed and shaped her life, including her job as a social worker, supervisor, leader, co-worker and friend.

“I can’t afford to get emotionally out-of-whack: that might risk my sobriety. I’m a much calmer person and try to take life as it comes. Recovery has changed my perspective and showed me that the world doesn’t revolve around me. I’m not an egomaniac with an inferiority complex anymore. I don’t have to control things as much.”

From a public policy standpoint, Ann said she understands the lives of OKDHS clients who struggle with substance abuse.

“I don’t have trouble believing the amount of substance abuse in our clientele. I understand when parents who abuse drugs and alcohol lose custody of their kids continue to use. Even the loss of custody doesn’t sober up a drunk. I’ve seen parents use while their children are parents drink or use. I understand how easy it can happen, how easy it is to get hooked on drugs and alcohol and how difficult it is to get off.”

Ann not only supports policies for clients that are upfront, even confrontative, but also for OKDHS staff.

“Turning your head, making light of the situation, making excuses, covering up – these are all the worst things you can do if you really care about people. If you care, if you want to make a difference, you’ve got to confront, you’ve got to do what my supervisor did for me.”

Ann plans to retire soon. She doesn’t know where her path will lead, but she looks back on her years at OKDHS with great fondness and gratitude. “Working here and getting sober has given me a life second to none. I wouldn’t change it.”

“If I had the chance, I’d have loved working for this agency and I love the people here. I can’t think of any place that would have been a better fit for me or a better place to have spent the majority of my working life.”

Workplace Substance Abuse Awareness

Every supervisor’s job is to remain alert to changes in employee performance and to work with employees who are having problems so that performance improves. Performance and behavior problems are common to many substance-abusing employees. Symptoms, however, do not necessarily indicate that the employee has a substance abuse problem.

Performance
- Inconsistent work quality
- Poor concentration
- Lowered productivity
- Increased absenteeism
- Unexplained disappearances from the job site
- Carelessness, mistakes
- Errors in judgment
- Needless risk-taking
- Disregard for safety
- Extended lunch periods and early departures

Behavior
- Frequent financial problems
- Avoidance of friends and colleagues
- Blaming others for own problems and shortcomings
- Poor socialization
- Complaints and excuses of vaguely defined illnesses
- Deterioration in personal appearance
- Complaints and excuses of vaguely defined illnesses

Intervention
- As an employee’s performance begins to deteriorate for whatever reason, the supervisor has the right and responsibility to intervene. The supervisor does not need to be an expert on alcohol and other drugs to intervene appropriately.
- Maintain control of the conversation
- Stick to the facts as they affect work performance
- Have all supporting documents and records available
- Do not discuss alcohol or drug use
- Be clear and firm
- Explain agency policy concerning performance
- Explain substance abuse policy
- Explain consequence if performance expectations are not met
- Be supportive
- Offer help in resolving performance problems

www.okdhs.org/oksubstanceabuse/
OKDHS rolled out the red carpets around the state and gave standing ovations to more than 270 Oklahomans and 148 organizations who have acted to help the Department.

“We all have the same number of hours in a day; the difference is how we use them,” said Farilyn Ballard, OKDHS Chief Operating Officer, at the state volunteer ceremony held April 18. “These people that we’re honoring don’t just talk about helping other people, they don’t just think about it, they do it. That’s the theme of this program this year: Lights, Camera, Action. That’s what distinguishes these people, they’re action.”

Each OKDHS area held its own ceremony honoring local volunteers and organizations and hosted a reception afterward. At the state ceremony, Ron Mercer, vice chairman of the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services, read a proclamation by Gov. Brad Henry. The proclamation recognized volunteers for their “compassion, selflessness and generosity.”

“Volunteers make a huge budget impact on this Agency,” said Karen Jacobs, coordinator, Office of Volunteerism.

Author Karen Bush Dye received the Donna Nigh Award for Public Service for her work promoting Newkirk, Okla. Ninety-four-year-old Gladys Booker received the 2005 Ed Birchall Award for Humanitarian Service.

“We cannot do this work by ourselves,” said Ballard. “We’re very grateful for volunteers’ help.”
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