

Welcome to Our Fall 2011 Newsletter!

# FOCUS on FRIENDS

The Newsletter of Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind



## Recently Completed TSB Life Skills Center Provides a Wealth of New Opportunities

On May 25th, TSB students, families, staff, and Friends of TSB celebrated the official opening of the Life Skills Center. This facility provides recreational and leisure time opportunities for all students, but particularly for those students who reside on campus during weekday evenings. Students also receive training in vending operations, food preparation, and house-keeping as part of the vocational education programs. The goal in the establishing of the LSC is to give students skills that go beyond the regular day and teach the wise and productive use of leisure time as adults.

Four years ago members of the school's administrative team met with State officials to discuss the real need for a recreational and life skills training facility for TSB students. A decision was made for major renovation of an existing TSB building, creating an ideal space for the new LSC. Funds were limited, but the State was able to replace the lighting, HV/AC, plumbing, windows, doors, flooring and provide funds toward furniture purchases.

This is where Friends of TSB came to the rescue. The school created a "wish list" of adaptive games, toys, appliances; arts and crafts supplies; exercise equipment; technologies and electronics. Literally, everything from Braille



TSB students Cory Browder, Emily Pace, Jeffery Springfield and Devin Surber enjoying one of the new large screen TVs in the movie room.



Lakin Householder, Laura Burnett, Stephanie Flatt and Laura Elliot at the new game tables in the large multiple use room which includes areas for socializing, entertainment and computer access.



TSB students Tim Hagans and Sara Grannemann utilizing the new fitness equipment in the exercise room.



Jeffrey Springfield, Devin Surber and Emily Pace exploring materials in the arts and crafts room.

playing cards to a Sound Around System. Because of the generosity of community organizations, corporate donors, foundation grants and many individuals, Friends of TSB was able to contribute over \$12,000 toward needed equipment. These purchases included: wireless capabilities so students can use their adaptive technologies in the study center and other areas of the building; TVs and related electronics for the movie room and large multi-

use area; an outdoor grill; and mats and fitness equipment in the exercise room. Through additional direct donations from other community and alumni sources, the school was able to fulfill every item on their wish list.

The Life Skills Center, already a favorite spot for students, has proven to be wonderful example of collaboration between TSB, the Friends of TSB foundation, and other community partners. 🌻



Marie Brewer at work in the new Study Room.

A special thanks to Dean and Joanie Dixon for the photography featured in this article.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for Friends of the Tennessee School for the Blind Inc. for their confidence in selecting me to succeed Mr. Ralph Brewer as president. When one is chosen to follow in the footsteps of such good, caring and dedicated community leaders as Ralph Brewer and the late Frank De Priest, it is an honor and frankly a bit daunting. I sincerely solicit the advice and support of all our friends and community partners.

Some of you may know that I retired as the school's superin-

tendent last July. As an alumnus, teacher and school administrator of TSB I've had a front row seat to witness the impressive results of FTSB. These range from small classroom and residential cottage projects to major purchases of needed adaptive equipment highlighted in this newsletter. A few of last year's smaller, but significant projects included: arts and crafts supplies for our cottage students; the purchase of meals and admission tickets for our middle and high school students for a tour of the Huntsville Space Center; meals and registration of students to attend the Model United Nations in Knoxville; support for our band, chorus,

forensics and athletic teams for off campus performances and competitions; and the purchase of "senior survival kits" (adaptive cooking and housekeeping devices) for our graduates. EVERY penny spent had a positive impact on the students of TSB.

Because of the continuing generosity of individuals, organizations and our community partners, the dream that Ralph had in 1997 has become a reality and can be witnessed as these very special students develop in mind, body, character and achievement.

Respectfully,  
**Jim A. Oldham, President**



# FRIENDS Accomplishments and Donors

We invite you to review the following lists of FTSB Grants, awarded to TSB Faculty, and FTSB projects completed in our 14th year of dedicated commitment to our mission.

## FSTB Grants to Faculty

### Whisperglide Swing

TSB students have been enjoying the new glider swing this year, purchased in a grant request from TSB teachers. This new swing has had a positive impact on the recreational and social life of the students.



### Enrichment Grants

Funding for transportation, food and accommodations for students to attend the Tennessee Rising Star Seminar March 11th was provided through Friends of TSB. This event motivates and equips students to be successful in university and work force settings.

Funding for 7 students to attend a 3 day Model UN Conference at U.T. Knoxville, January, 2012, was

For the over \$45,000 this list represents in benefits to TSB students, we express our deepest appreciation to community organizations, business leaders, corporate foundations, and generous individuals who support and are an integral part of the charitable efforts of Friends of TSB.

approved in a grant to Ms. Scott, TSB teacher.

Funding will be provided for the 2012 Souper Bowl Project based on the success of this year's event. Friends of TSB will be supporting the project by funding art supplies and instruction. See page 4 for article.

A **Special Thanks** to our friends at **Bob Parks Realty** for sponsoring the 11th Annual Auction, *An Evening with Friends*, on November 17th, benefiting TSB students.

## FOUNDATION, GRANTS AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

CIC Foundation  
Bob Parks Realty  
Louis R. Draughton Foundation  
AT&T United Way  
HCA Caring for the Community  
The Tomorrow Fund of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee  
Verizon Foundation  
Murfreesboro Breakfast Rotary Club  
TSB Alumni Association  
United Way Nashville  
Dollar General Literacy Foundation

## INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Rick and Kim Williams  
Family and Friends of Samantha Leech  
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Hillsboro United Methodist Women  
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Matthew Woods  
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Lavergne Sutton *in honor of Pat Galvin*  
Mrs. Catherine Keating *in honor of James Keating*  
Mrs. Catherine Keating *in honor of Olivia Keating*  
Judy Hutchison *in honor of Ruth Loper*

## Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind Mission Statement

The mission of Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind is to supplement state appropriations by enhancing and enriching the educational, vocational, special skills and social development of students enrolled at the Tennessee School for the Blind.

*Pi Beta Phi in honor of Vanderbilt chapter of Delta Gamma*

*Jim and Carolyn Oldham in memory of: Stephen Hatchett, Jack Kuhn, Joe Gregory's mother, Juretta Faye Gregory, David Frensley's father, Albert Clifton Frensley and uncle, William Grant Frensley, Debi Ponder's grandmother, Onie Ponder*

*Pat Galvin in memory of Earl Jones*

*Rachel and Terry McDonald in memory of Loyd W. Pate*

*Mrs. Amy Raleigh's 2nd grade class, Chapman's Retreat Elementary in memory of their teacher's grandmother, Ms. Carrie Tomlin*

*Ralph and Linda Brewer in memory of the mother of DGE Linda Justice*

*Lynn and Emily Wright in memory of the mother of DGE Linda Justice*

*Donna Richmond in memory of Blair Parkes' grandmother, Mona Davis*

*In memory of Phillip Hebert:*

*Donelson Lions Club, Olivia and Richard Riker, Bernice Vann, Robert and Georgia Way, Dedra Flynn/Texas Girlfriends, Ann Hacker, Ann and Paul Russell, Pete and Estella Gillette, Ava Sloan*

*In memory of Wyatt "Gene" Gibson:*

*Teresa Sullivan, Olivia Roberts, Mark and Lynn Ropel, Robert and Georgia Way, Nancy G. Robertson, Mavis Ilkenhans, Oliver and Carla Roberts, Glenda Lancon, Michelle Lewis, Elizabeth Moreno, Ann Hacker, Ann and Paul Russell, Marty and Linda Williamson, Wahnetta Mitchell and family, Pete and Estella Gillette, Ava Sloan*

# Students Benefit Others Through “Souper Bowl” Art

In January of this year, under the guidance of art teacher Monica Leister and artist Claudia Overstreet, students of TSB participated in the TSB Art Student “Souper Bowl” exhibition.

This event, sponsored by Friends of TSB and VSA Tennessee, allowed students to create clay soup bowls that were glazed and fired in the colors and themes of their favorite athletic teams.

The bowls were displayed at The Clay Lady’s Studio at The Mid-South Ceramic Supply Company with a exhibition and reception on January 26th.

Admission to the exhibit was a

can of soup, with the collection going to the Nashville Rescue Mission. Those attending the event also donated by placing cash into their favorite bowl. In keeping with the theme, the donations were presented to the Nashville Rescue Mission in time for the Super Bowl.

Since January, the bowls have also been exhibited at the Schermerhorn, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and the Green Hills Library.

Through this unique and creative project the students learned about the art of creating pottery as well as using their talents to help others in the community. 🌟



Brooks Gardner, Sabrina Black, Lauri Richardson, Jeffery Springfield, and George Guerrero were among the students who participated in the Souper Bowl and attended the reception.



H.K. Derryberry (below) created the bowl on the left in his favorite team colors.

Those attending the event voted for their favorite creation with a cash donation to the Nashville Rescue Mission.



## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind, Inc.

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The Board of Directors of Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind, Inc., would like to thank all persons and organizations that have assisted in the efforts to enrich the lives of students at the Tennessee School for the Blind.

**If you would like to make a donation to the Foundation or desire more information, please contact:**



### Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind, Inc.

c/o Jim Oldham, President  
115 Stewarts Ferry Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37214  
info@friendsoftsb.org  
(615) 231-7307

### www.friendsoftsb.org

Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind, Inc., is eligible for designations through the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville (UWMN) campaign, designation code 1038.

**Important:** Your gift may be doubled if your employer has a matching gift program. Please see your Human Resources Department today.