

Substance abuse manager sees many changes

Ray Jones logs 14 years at agency

Ray Jones, director of substance abuse services for CRDC, didn't coin the phrase, but he certainly lives up to the "never met a stranger" ethic. Always ready with a smile and a joke, his energetic personality serves him well in his efforts to provide the best services possible for those suffering from chemical dependencies.

For nearly 14 years, Ray has been a member of the substance abuse management team for Crowley's Ridge Development Council. He served as the assistant director prior to moving into his present position.

And for those who aren't already aware of it, Ray will be happy to point out the merits of the new Northeast Arkansas Regional Recovery Center (NEARRC) facility in Jonesboro.

The new, 50-bed facility is located in the Jonesboro Industrial Park and provides complete recovery possibilities for up to 25 men and 25 women simultaneously.

"This is absolutely top-notch," Jones said of the facility when it opened in 2002. "We offer the best services and the best accommodations for our customers. We're really proud of the new facility."

Robert Wilford, executive director of CRDC, couldn't help but poke a bit of fun at Ray. "He (Jones) strutted around like a tom turkey for weeks after the

center opened. But, seriously, he deserves to be proud of the new facility. He has worked really hard to get the funding, land, furnishings, etc., and we are very proud of Ray, his staff and his new center. This is an important service to Northeast Arkansas, and I think Ray has done and continues to do an excellent job."



Ray Jones

Born in Memphis, Ray is married to Sharon (Ramsay) Jones. He and his wife are the parents of three daughters, all now married, and have been presented with two granddaughters and one

grandson over the years.

The grandchildren (and probably the children, as well) no doubt enjoy helping him in his pursuits with model trains, his favorite hobby, and have likely seen more than one of his appearances in historical reenactments of Civil War battles and encampments.

The father of three obtained his B.S. degree in business administration from Arkansas State University in 1965 and went on to obtain a masters in rehabilitation counseling in 1989. Throughout the years, he has enhanced his knowledge with numerous hours of correspondence school classes, workshops and post graduate studies.

He retired from the Arkansas Army National Guard in 1993 with 35 years of duty.

His list of memberships and certifications is quite lengthy and lends much credence to his ability to lead the substance abuse efforts for CRDC.

"My staff works hard to give the people at the center what they need to get through their problems," Jones said recently. "But, no matter what we do, it's still up to the individual to want to break the substance abuse cycle. Our success rate shows that we're doing something to make these folks help themselves. It's a good feeling."

And it's a feeling that Ray and his entire staff can embrace with pride.

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