

December 2020



NEWSLETTER

HOLMES COUNTY
Board of Developmental Disabilities
supporting people in living meaningful lives



Adult Service Updates

by Sheri Martin



We have successfully been able to have individuals return again to both the habilitation and production areas. We are still only operating at one third of our typical daily attendance. The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities still requires us to provide services to individuals in groups of 10 or less with staff included in that number. Lynn Hope Industry individuals have attended more days than Habilitation since our reopening in August. This is partly due to less illness because the Lynn Hope Industry individuals are able to maintain social distance and wear masks and shields. The Habilitation area requires more diligence by staff to provide additional safety measures for the individuals and themselves. Many individuals in this area cannot tolerate or keep on a mask or shield so we must take extra precautions for everyone.

We are hopeful that in 2021 we can eventually bring back more adults to both Habilitation and Lynn Hope Industries. But until then, we will continue to have staff checking on those not attending and taking out activities or other items of interest they may want.

We all are anxious to get past this Covid outbreak. It has been like having your family split up and we just want to be together again. But we must stay diligent until that time happens.





Superintendent's Message

by Marianne Mader

What a year! 2020, you shall not be missed! This year presented some unique challenges to us. The autumn was difficult for us as 12 of our staff tested positive for COVID-19. In addition to them, quite a few others were exposed and had to stay home to quarantine. Although we had to suspend in-person services for weeks this fall, we were able to provide some services and tackle tasks we had set aside for some time. Well, we are back at it again! This time with reduced capacity in the school and adult service areas. Our EI, SSA, Dental, and Admin staff have faithfully continued services throughout the entire pandemic with only a few hiccups here and there.

Everyone working at Holmes DD/Training Center looks forward to the day we can return to the way things used to be. We will bring with us some new ways of doing things that we will continue to use as we move forward. We have learned how to use ZOOM and Microsoft TEAMS so we won't always have to travel to meetings. Also, using this technology, our teachers can provide instruction to students in their classroom and at home at the same time. In our buildings, we now have faucets that turn on when we wave our hand under them. We also have more doors that open "automatically". Some things we learned we took for granted....a smile, a handshake, and being surrounded by friends.

And now for a bit of news....back in 2017, Holmes DD/Training Center announced that we would no longer provide adult services and transportation on or before July 1, 2021. While this change must still occur, due to COVID, Holmes DD/Training Center Board members have extended this date to July 1, 2022. Lynn Hope Industries (LHI) was set back by COVID in finalizing their plan to become a provider of vocational habilitation and adult day services. After the first to the year, LHI will search for an Executive Director who will lead them as they do necessary work to become an Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities certified provider. In regards to transportation for adults, Holmes DD/Training Center is well on its way to meeting the goal of no longer providing transportation to adult passengers by July 1, 2021. Precious Angel and Midwest Community have the capacity to transport adults. Holmes DD/Training Center busses will still be on the road but only with students attending our school.

On behalf of the Board members and staff of Holmes DD/Training Center, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Important Dates

December 23	School, LHI, and Adult program Christmas Break begins. Office open.
December 24-25	Office Closed
December 28-30	Office Open
December 31-Jan 1	Office Closed
January 4	Regular Office hours resume
January 13	School, LHI, and Adult Programs resume
January 18	MLK Day. Facility and all services closed

Don't forget to "LIKE" us on Facebook to get regular updates.

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SSA Update

By Mimi Patterson



Holmes DD/Training Center Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department has been providing the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities information about local COVID cases involving people with developmental disabilities. Each week in return, we receive an update on how COVID is impacting individuals with developmental disabilities in Ohio.

As of 12/11/2020,

-Just over 600 people with developmental disabilities have been hospitalized after testing positive for COVID. Hospitalizations for COVID have happened in 75 of Ohio's 88 counties.

-Seventy-seven (77) people with developmental disabilities have died because of COVID. Those that have died were 20-89 years of age, with the average age being 62 years. Deaths have happened in 31 of Ohio's 88 counties.

In Holmes County, we are aware of 6 individuals with developmental disabilities who have tested positive for COVID and several more that have experienced symptoms but were not tested. We have had 1 COVID related death of someone who attended our Adult program. Twelve of our staff members have contracted COVID-19 since September.

Due to the increase in COVID cases throughout the state, County Boards are working with residential providers to support them by searching for additional staff to help in their group settings. A number of Holmes DD/Training Center staff and independent waiver providers are willing to help in residential settings if there is a staffing crisis. Also, our SSA Department is available to help residential providers with picking up groceries, medications, and meals. If you know anyone who would be willing to help in the event of a staffing crisis, please contact our SSA Department so we can connect them to the agency in need of help.



Winter Weather is Here.

One important service provided to many is transportation to/from necessary services. If a Holmes DD/Training Center bus or Precious Angel or Midwest Community van is expected at your house, please make sure your driveway has been cleared of snow and ice. During the winter, transportation may be running a few minutes late as drivers know that it's okay to be late because their goal is to make sure everyone arrives alive. If road conditions are unsafe and services will be delayed or canceled, you will receive notification through our ONE CALL NOW system or a phone call from your child's teacher.

Early Intervention Updates

By Renee Spencer



I just finished a study with a group of local women through Love INC called "Get Out of Your Head". In the last chapter, it referenced a verse from Philippians 4:12, "I (Paul) have learned to be content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry; whether living in plenty or want." When reading that, I thought of our EI Provider Meeting on Tuesday where the team shared that our current state of delivering services (virtually) is not what we would choose. It is not our ideal. We long to be able to meet with families in person, we miss the personal interactions, we dislike the barrier that a mask and "six-foot" distance creates BUT there has been gain.

The team identified that because COVID took us out of our comfort-zone, we grew in ways we would have not likely grown otherwise. Some of the ways the therapists and developmental specialists have benefited is they have found resources and developed materials to use with families that they would not have had time to accomplish previously and they have developed their coaching skills because being able to coach a caregiver is essential for virtual visits. Interestingly, some families, especially younger ones, prefer virtual visits and there is more contact with some families because it is easy for parents to text a question or send videos of their child practicing or achieving a skill. Now that providers possess the skill of having virtual visits, they will be able to use them when things return to "normal" such as on a snow day or if a child is sick or if a family just prefers it.

We are not saying that we would trade virtual visits for home visits, but we have learned to adapt, grow, and "be content" in our current situation.



Alumni Spotlight

By Curtis Goehring



Dave Cleveland was a long-time employee of our Board, his tenure spanning over 20 years from December 1992 through January 2013. He served our organization in several capacities, including Workshop Director, Business Manager, and Personnel Manager. Staff that worked with Dave describe him as a person of integrity, a mentor, and all-around nice guy.

Dave is doing very well and enjoying his retirement from the Board of DD. Both of his children are married with children of their own and Dave (and his wife Diane) see their grandchildren from their son's side on a weekly basis (his son, Christian, still lives in the area). Brittany, his daughter, lives on the West Coast so they have learned and become accustomed to "Zoom" calls to stay in touch. With the pandemic, any travel plans to visit have had to be put on hold for the time being.

Dave and his wife still live in Sugarcreek and what he enjoys most is his time with the grandchildren and working out (napping in the afternoons is a close third). I asked him what he liked most about working at the Training Center and what he told me was the autonomy and support from leadership that allowed staff to flourish by growing professionally and personally. He also has many good memories of the people he worked with and for and coming to the Holmes County Board of DD was one of the best decisions he ever made.



School Program Update

By Rhoda Mast

During this time of uncertainty as we cope with the pandemic, we are grateful for the things we can depend on and seeing some silver lining shine through. Staff have been focused on how they can reach every student remotely and working very hard to offer online services as well as weekly packets for every student, individualized to address their interests, preferences and educational goals. We have appreciated the way families have taken initiative with the home activities and are staying in touch with teachers and therapists. Teachers are learning to use new tech programs and making these lessons more accessible to students at home. We are learning too.

Beginning the week of December 7th, we enjoyed the return of our students, even just a day a week. Their big smiles and body language clearly communicates their excitement to be back too. We hope to continue this hybrid arrangement with hopes of increasing the days in the future.

We are grateful we can depend on parent support and understanding as we work through the rest of the year. We are all wanting the same thing; getting our students back to school full time. Together, we will get there safely.





HCAHC News

By Kathleen Winkler

Who isn't looking for a bargain these days? Let me tell you what an \$8.00 annual membership (September-August) or \$100.00 lifetime membership will get you.

HCAHC (Holmes County Assn for Handicapped Citizens), the organization that hosts the annual Spring Festival, will reimburse families up to \$.75 a mile for trips to Holmes DD/Training Center for meetings and functions. This does not pay for mileage for your loved one to receive services at Holmes DD/Training Center. Families can also be reimbursed up to \$.75 a mile for up to 6 medical appointments for your loved one each year (within Ohio).

Everyone needs to get away and take a break from time to time. HCAHC will pay a provider \$10.00 an hour to care for

your loved one while you are getting a much-needed break. If you are gone between 9 ½ and 24 hours the provider will receive a flat fee of \$140.00. If they care for 2 or more individuals they will receive \$15.00 an hour for up to 9 hours or \$210.00 for 9 ½ to 24 hours. The HCAHC trustees ask families reimburse them for ¼ of this cost.

Most families select provider(s) they personally know to care for their loved one. The provider must be at least 18 and sign-up as a respite provider prior to receiving payment for caring.

If you have any questions regarding HCAHC benefits, contact Jane Hall at (330) 674-8045.

Staff Update

By Curtis Goehring



Holmes DD would like to thank Ed Whitman for his hard work and dedication to our program in ensuring that our buses were well maintained and safe to transport students and adults. Our buses always passed the State Highway Patrol's bus inspections with flying colors and that is a testament to his experience and skills as a mechanic. Ed has been with us since March of 2014 following his retirement from the East Holmes School District. He has decided to finally enjoy being retired and his last day with us will be mid-December. We thank Ed for his hard work and sense of humor and wish him all the best in his retirement.

With Ed's retirement, Holmes DD has hired Paul Troyer for the vacated bus mechanic's position. Paul also has years of experience working as a mechanic for a local school district and we are excited to have him as an employee. Holmes DD would like to officially welcome Paul as a member of our



Good luck in your retirement Ed!



Welcome to the team Paul!

Meet the staff... *Kathleen Winkler*



Where do you live?

Wooster, I live in the same home I grew up in.

Tell us about your family.

I do not have much immediate family, but have wonderful friends who I consider my family. I am "Dog Mom" to Allie Rose my 15 year old Aussie and Ebony Rai my 2 year old German Shepherd Mix.

How long have worked at Holmes DD?

I have worked at the HCBDD for 29 ½ years.

What is your role at Holmes DD?

I am the Habilitation Manager. I provide Program Management to individuals in the Habilitation Area, serve on the Human Rights Committee (with Tusc County), serve as secretary of HCAHC, and am a Good Life Trainer

What do you think is the most important part of your job?

Getting to know the individuals and their families to best meet their needs.

What is an accomplishment you are proud of?

That I was able to "give back" to my parents and care for them.

What is something you are looking forward to?

As much as I love my job, I am looking forward to retirement which will hopefully be 6/30/2022.

What are some of your Hobbies/Activities?

Cooking, walking, and spending time with good friends. I also love my Christmas decorations (and there are LOTS). So many of them were given to me by special people in my life (some who are no longer with us) or represent special people, events, and things.

What is your Favorite Book and/or Movie?

I don't watch too many movies. I am too "hyper" to pay attention that long. If I did have to pick it would be "We Are Marshall." It is a great example of overcoming a tragic situation through determination and teamwork.

What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

When I was in college I said I wanted to work with troubled teens and thought I would never work with the elderly or disabled. Life sends you curve balls that set you on the direction your life was intended. I have been truly blessed that the last (almost) 30 years allowed me to meet the most amazing people – Individuals, Families, and Staff. It doesn't get any better than that!

Until we meet again – This year we lost five amazing friends.

We would like to take this time to remember:

Peter Beachy

Danny Wengerd

Elma Shetler

Ina Erb

Roy Hochstetler

With heartfelt sympathy,

Your friends from the Holmes DD/Training Center

Until we meet again

WE THINK ABOUT YOU ALWAYS.
WE TALK ABOUT YOU STILL.
YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN FORGOTTEN.
AND YOU NEVER WILL.
WE HOLD YOU CLOSE WITHIN OUR HEARTS
AND THERE YOU WILL REMAIN,
TO WALK AND GUIDE US THROUGH OUR LIVES.
UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN



Planning for the Future

By Marianne Mader



Each County Board of Developmental Disabilities in Ohio is required to have a Strategic Plan. The plan that Holmes DD/Training Center developed in 2017 will expire soon. We have begun working on a new plan and need YOU to help us develop our plan. If you are receiving this newsletter via email or reading it on our website, please click [here](#) to take a short survey. If you have received a paper copy of this newsletter, be on the lookout for a paper survey coming your way after the first of the year. Information collected will help us plan for the next few years.



Batteries can be recycled!



Last September 38 pounds of batteries were taken to the Holmes County Household Hazardous Waste Day from the Training Center. These used batteries were collected over the year instead of throwing them in the trash. Batteries can contain toxic metals such as lead, cadmium, nickel, steel, zinc, mercury, cobalt, lithium, silver and manganese depending on the battery. We recycle the batteries because it helps keep these heavy metals out of the landfill.

These metals are considered toxic because of their impact if they get into the water or into the air through incineration. Most can cause birth defects. Lead and mercury are highly toxic to the brain and nervous system. Surprisingly, all button batteries contain mercury, on average about 5 mg each, and are the largest contributor to mercury from household trash. So even though they are small, they are worth sorting out of your trash.

Join us in saving your batteries for Holmes County's 2021 Household Hazardous Waste day. The date for this event will be set shortly after the first of the year.

Spreading Cheer

To help spread some Christmas Cheer our staff participated in a door decorating contest this month. Staff immediately got to work to create masterpiece displays for the students and adult clients to enjoy upon their return. Here are the 3 winning doors.



HOLMES COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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The mission of the Holmes County Board of Developmental Disabilities

is to support individuals in living meaningful lives.