

The Marsh Messenger

• Fall 2013

• www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

Marsh Foundation Unveils Advertising Campaign to Recruit Foster Families

This fall, The Marsh Foundation is making a concerted effort to grow its Foster Care Program by recruiting more foster families. Throughout the state of Ohio, there are more than 22,000 children in the foster care system. Last year, The Marsh alone, turned away more than 100 kids because of a lack of placement options.

In an effort to serve more children, The Marsh Foundation has developed an advertising campaign to attract more families that can help care for these children. A video and television commercial are currently being viewed on area cable networks.

The Marsh Foundation has organized a television and billboard advertising campaign in an effort to recruit more foster families. Last year, the agency turned away more than 100 kids due to a lack of families. Below is the billboard that will appear in the area in September and October.

The videos can also be viewed on The Marsh website at <http://marshfoundation.org/about-us/video/>.

In addition, billboards have been developed to draw attention to the fact that many children don't have parents to help them make normal, lasting childhood memories. "Foster parenting is filled with opportunities to care for children who can greatly benefit from the love and support of a family. We are looking for people who can be good parents, not perfect parents, but good parents who are willing to share their home and family with a child in need," said

Kim Mullins, executive director of Child and Family Services at The Marsh.

If you are interested in learning more about the opportunities to foster, visit <http://marshfoundation.org/helpkids>. By visiting the website, you can learn more about the basic requirements and the many rewarding benefits to fostering. "If you know someone who is willing to consider sharing their home and family with a foster child, please encourage them to call or visit our web site. We would very much like to answer questions or chat with anyone interested," said Mullins.



THE MARSH
FOUNDATION

Please Share

Please share The Marsh Messenger with others in your family or office who might like to read it. Thank you!

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Leadership

- **The Marsh Foundation Board of Trustees:**
 - Gary Corcoran
 - Robert Gamble
 - Gerald Thatcher
- **The Marsh Foundation Executive Team:**
 - Kim Mullins
 - Roger Salisbury
 - Jeff Grothouse



Help us fill the frames.

Become a foster parent and help
a child make lasting memories.



marshfoundation.org/helpkids

The Marsh Foundation
1229 Lincoln Highway P.O. Box 150
Van Wert, Ohio 45891

From the Executive's desk ...

In the next several months, The Marsh Foundation will focus more attention on the recruitment of foster families. Foster Care is a vital part of a continuum of services for children in care. Last year, we turned away over 100 children, who were referred to foster care, because of a lack of homes. Some of the referrals were for children with little to no behavior problems, ages 0-17 years old. Many of the children were being removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. Because many of the children we serve have had tumultuous histories, behavioral symptoms are present. We hope that some of our future foster families will be able to serve our children who have worked very hard to complete their treatment in the group homes. Once they are placed in a family setting, they will be able to build trusting relationships with a loving family and continue to work toward long term goals such as; finishing high school, living independently or reunifying with family.

Foster parents care for both the physical needs and the emotional needs of the children they serve. They provide for them as they would their own children in that they take care



Kim Mullins, P.C.C.

of food clothing and shelter and make sure any medical and dental needs are addressed. They are sensitive to the emotional needs, as well. They support them through birth family difficulties and provide a listening ear and a shoulder to cry on. Foster children who have had to move away from their family, friends and comforts of his or her previous home need to be able to grieve over these losses. Foster parents can give the needed support and guidance during this difficult transition time.

Foster parenting is filled with opportunities to care for children who can greatly benefit from the love and support of a family. We are looking for people who can be good parents, not perfect parents, but good parents who are willing to share their home and family

"Foster parenting is filled with opportunities to care for children who can greatly benefit from the love and support of a family."

with a child in need. They must be able to have the means to provide for their own family and have additional space for the foster child. There is substantial reimbursement for those who qualify but the best reward is being able to make a difference in the life of a child.

If you know someone who is willing to consider sharing their home and family with a foster child, please encourage them to call or visit our web site. We would very much like to answer questions or chat with anyone interested.

Kim Mullins, P.C.C.
Executive Director, Child &
Family Services
The Marsh Foundation

Marsh School Back in Session

Tuesday, Aug. 20

Faculty In-Service

Wednesday, Aug. 21

First Day for Students

Tuesday, Aug. 27

Staff In-Service (early dismissal)

Monday, Sept. 2

Labor Day - No School

Friday, Sept. 20

Staff In-Service (2 hr. delay)

Saturday, Nov. 2

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Wed. - Fri., Nov. 27-29

Thanksgiving Vacation

Mon. - Wed., Dec. 23 - Jan. 1

Christmas Vacation

Thursday, Jan. 2

Classes Resume

Monday, January 20

MLK Day - No School

Friday, Feb 14

Staff In-Service - No School

Monday, Feb. 17

President's Day - No School

Mon. - Fri. March 24 - 28

Spring Break - No School

Thursday, April 17

Staff In-Service - No School

Friday, April 18

Good Friday - No School

Saturday, April 26

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, May 23

Last Day for Students

Monday, May 26

Memorial Day

Tuesday, May 27

Faculty Work Day

A commitment to excellence

Summer Equestrian Program Concludes with Show

The youth at The Marsh Foundation recently concluded their summer equestrian program with a show for staff, trustees, families and guests. The program, which began in May, gave the youth opportunities to ride at least four times per week.

For the program, The Marsh leases horses from The University of Findlay and hires on-campus riding instructors, Stephanie Hall, Katie Singer and Erin Calvelage. In addition to riding instruction, the youth also learn how to care for and demonstrate respect for the horses.

The program culminated with a horse show. Each youth had the opportunity to demonstrate their skills for the audience. Fun contests were also held such as seeing if they could trot while holding an egg on a spoon in one hand. Medals were given to the top placers in the various categories. All youth also received a participation gift from the instructors

At right: A Marsh Hall youth carefully balances an egg on a spoon while guiding his horse. Staff and audience members look on.



STAFF TRULY MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The Marsh regularly surveys constituents about the work our staff and foster parents are doing with the youth in our care. Several comments have come back recently complimenting their hard work.

"MATT TUTTLE AND THE STAFF AT VANCE HALL WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR THIS YOUNG MAN, AND CONTINUE TO DO SO. MATT AND EMERY WERE TWO OF THE BEST ADULT ROLE MODELS THIS YOUNG MAN HAS EVER HAD. AS A WHOLE, THE MARSH FOUNDATION; RESIDENTIAL, SCHOOL AND COUNSELORS WERE A GOD-SEND FOR HIM. UNFORTUNATELY, HIS CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE LEAD HIM, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, DOWN A DIFFERENT PATH."

~ YOUTH'S CASEWORKER COMMENTS AT DISCHARGE

"SHANA FRYER IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE FOSTER PARENTS!!! SHE DOES AN EXCELLENT JOB WITH EVERY CHILD I HAVE PLACED THERE. I WISH THERE WERE MORE FOSTER PARENTS JUST LIKE HER."

~ YOUTH'S CASEWORKER COMMENTS

"I WANT TO GIVE THANKS TO MARCUS BOATMAN FOR ALWAYS HEARING ME OUT AND ALSO DANI DUNCAN FOR GIVING ME OPPORTUNITIES TO EARN THE THINGS I WANTED. AS FOR LISA, LISA, SHARON, CHRISTY, JESSICA, JOY, CHRISTINA AND KENDRA, I JUST WANT TO SAY THANKS FOR BEING THERE FOR ME AND NEVER GIVING UP! MATT TUTTLE IS A PRETTY AWESOME GUY ALONG WITH JESSE AND MACKENZIE."

~ YOUTH'S COMMENTS AT DISCHARGE

Marsh Youth do Well at 2012 Van Wert County Fair

The Marsh again had an excellent year at the county fair. A total of nine youth participated in 4-H projects. The highlight of their accomplishments was the youth who won Reserved Champion Meat Pen with the rabbit she was showing. The rabbit also won Best Opposite Breed for the Netherland Dwarf Breed.

Another youth won the Senior Showmanship Award, also showing a rabbit as well as Best of Breed for her dwarf hotot.

The youth care for the rabbits all year long and the county fair is an excellent way to earn recognition for all of their hard work.

One youth qualified and competed at the Ohio State Fair with her project on Drugs and Alcohol.

All nine youth also received Outstanding on Interview Judging with their projects.

The group worked hard preparing for the fair. They designed and decorated a booth



Michelle Bird, school family teacher, entered some items from her garden and won first place for this pumpkin.

in the Jr. Fair Building that was on display throughout the week as well.

"Even though it is great to be competitive and do well, I tell the kids it is most important to have fun, learn from the experience, and "win/lose" gracefully," said Sherry Grone, activities coordinator.

Continued on page 6!



Clymer Chat

Currently, Clymer Hall is full with ten girls. Two are nearing their program completion date and will be transitioning back home soon. We wish them congratulations and best of luck in their future endeavors! The spots will quickly be filled by girls currently on the waiting list.

The girls at Clymer Had a busy and fun summer and are now settling back into the school year routine. Several of the girls kept busy during the summer caring for the rabbits and participating in the 4-H program. See page 2 for all the success they

had at this year's fair.

Many of the girls also participated in the annual talent show held in the auditorium earlier this summer. A couple girls sang and one showed off her exceptional hula hooping skills.



Marsh Matters

School is back in session but the Marsh Hall boys can still be found outside riding bikes and enjoying the nice weather in their free time. Marsh Hall is currently full with ten boys.

Marsh Hall has enjoyed several fun activities and outings during the summer months.

They took an outing to the DeBrands Chocolate Factory in Ft. Wayne. Not only did they get an inside look at how the goodies were made, they also got to sample some for themselves.

The boys especially enjoyed the summer zoo trip held at the end of the summer school session. The youth spent the day at the Toledo Zoo observing animals and having a good time with their peers.

Several of the Marsh Hall boys also participated in the 4-H program and were able to show rabbits at the Van Wert County Fair this year.



Vance Voice

All ten openings at Vance Hall are currently full. This summer, several youth were able to leave the program and new youth have transitioned in. The boys have done a good job learning new personalities and making new friends.

The Vance Hall boys had a very busy summer at the pond. They went fishing nearly every chance they got and had a lot of great catches to show for it. Fishing is an activity that they thoroughly enjoy and gives them a great sense of accomplishment.

The boys also enjoyed fun outings this summer like the zoo field trip. They made several trips to the Delphos swimming pool on hot days to cool off and enjoy some fun in the sun.

Now that summer is over, the boys have adjusted to their back-to-school schedule.

Clinical Stakeholder Annual Satisfaction Survey Report Compiled

Each year, The Marsh Foundation conducts a survey of its stakeholders about the clinical (counseling) services that clients are receiving. Results from the 2013 fiscal year survey were recently compiled.

These surveys are conducted to measure performance improvement and gather input. All active clients and their treatment team members are surveyed. The rating scale is 5 - 1, with 5 being very satisfied and one being very dissatisfied.

When all respondents were averaged, they answered a 4.5

to the question, "Overall, how satisfied are you with the clinical services you received at The Marsh Foundation?"

A total of 69 client satisfaction surveys were sent and 52 were returned for a 75 percent return rate. Clients are asked questions pertaining to confidentiality, input in treatment planning, if they are treated with respect, etc. All questions were answered with an average of 4.19 or higher.

Parents were also surveyed. A total of 43 parent satisfaction surveys were sent and 22 were

completed for a 51% return rate. Parents were surveyed about things such as convenience, accessibility, confidentiality and whether the treatment is reaching goals. The average of all responses was over 4.

A total of 63 treatment team member surveys were sent to case workers, CASA workers, probation officers, etc. 42 of those were returned for a 67 percent return rate. Treatment team members were surveyed on things like communication, treatment goals, cooperation and accessibility. The average of all

responses was above 4.4.

Many respondents left comments in the space available. Several youth and families expressed gratitude for the helpfulness of services and staff was complimented on their dedication and commitment to youth.

One parent stated, "As a parent already dealing with stress, it's been a relief to have Marsh work around our work schedules, etc. This is a wonderful program and we're thankful for your support! Keep up the great work. Oh, and Thank you, so much!! These children are the future."



Clockwise starting at top left: The Marsh youth participating in 4-H designed and decorated a booth in the Jr. Fair Building during this year's fair. The annual horse show was a great success thanks to everyone involved. A wonderful pizza lunch was held at the pond afterward to celebrate. The Marsh again had a booth in the Commercial Building during the fair. It highlighted our need for foster parents and the many community activities that our kids are involved in. The IDL garden crew hosted a fantastic luncheon for staff and members of administration. They prepared the meal with many things grown in their own garden as well as from other local suppliers. Again this summer, youth, staff, foster kids and families had the opportunity to enjoy a night at the ballpark. A meal was also enjoyed before the Fort Wayne Tin Caps took the field against the Dayton Dragons.



Fair Continued

Following the fair, she surveyed the kids on what they had learned through the process and here are some of their responses.

- Learned how to take care of rabbits; confidence in myself
- Learned not to give up; that I'm more competitive than I thought; felt humbled; surprised; and appreciative
- Learned how shows work and dedication it takes to compete
- How to care for rabbits; how to improve; how to stay calm; learned about fair
- Learned to follow through; to have confidence; and takes a lot of time to work on project

One youth also shared with her that this is the first time that they felt successful at anything and usually feels unsuccessful at everything they try. "I hope these life lessons spur them on to greater heights than they thought possible. Thanks to everyone here on the Marsh team that have supported the youth in their 4-H projects and helped us finish out our 7th 4-H season!" Grone added.

The youth weren't the only ones from The Marsh who participated in fair projects. Grone herself entered some livestock into the Senior Fair competition. Another employee, Michelle Bird entered vegetables in the agricultural judging and won Best of Show for her pumpkin.

The Van Wert County Fair provides a lot of great learning opportunities for the youth. The Marsh Foundation is proud of how they represented the organization while in the public eye.

Who Do We Serve?



The Marsh Foundation serves youth from around the state of Ohio from many different counties. Currently, there are 30 youth in group home care and another 17 in foster care. At this time that is just about as many as we can serve. With the addition of new foster homes, we'll be able to increase the number of foster children we serve. The above map illustrates where these kids come from. These are just the number of residential youth in care. There are also a small number of youth we serve in our school or in our counseling department that aren't accounted for here.

Briefs

- The Marsh recently partnered with several area organizations to bring nationally known speaker and author Heather Forbes to the area. She presented in Celina at the Wright State Lake Campus in August. The training expanded on the concepts and modality that she talked about at her training here at The Marsh last year. Thanks to the Mercer County Department of Job and Family Services for spearheading the event.
- Thank you Rod and LeAnn Stoller for purchasing tickets for Marsh youth and staff to see The Isaacs and Taylor Mason performance at the Niswonger Performing Arts Center in Van Wert this month. The Isaacs are a family Southern Gospel group, and Taylor Mason is a Christian comedian/ventriloquist on a concert tour for Life Song for Orphans, an orphan care, adoption and foster care ministry. The evening was enjoyed and very much appreciated by staff and youth.

Expansion of Foster Care Program Means Additional Staff

The expansion of the Marsh Foster Care Program means additional foster families, youth in care and in turn additional staff. Recently, Laura Beckett-Avery, who has been with the agency since 2000 in different capacities, was promoted to foster care supervisor.

The position has many responsibilities revolving around the recruitment and training of new foster parents. Beckett-Avery is responsible for conducting the home studies for all new foster parents. This is a very intensive process, ensuring that the homes are ready and safe for foster children.

She also is responsible for supervising the foster care consultant and foster parents. She's available for consultation to all of them to ensure that foster

care services are being delivered in accordance with the highest ethical, professional, state, and local standards.

Beckett-Avery is excited about the importance and opportunities of her new role. "This position is important to increase services provided through our foster care network. This will allow us to place more children in need of homes with caring families," she said. "I am happy to fill this position to help recruit foster homes and provide children with a stable, loving environment to grow up in."

If you are interested in our Foster Care Program or would like more information, feel free to contact her at 419.238.1695 ext. 300.



As the Foster Care Program at The Marsh grows, so does the program's staff. Recently, Laura Beckett-Avery, LISW, was promoted to Foster Care Supervisor to oversee the program. She's pictured here in the new foster care office space and training area, which is located in the old Trustee's building on the north side of campus.



The Independent Living Garden Crew had a busy summer working in the garden and growing produce. They've been selling their goods at the Van Wert Farmer's Market on Saturdays.

Independent Living Group has a Busy Summer

The Independent Living group on campus focuses on a wide variety of activities and projects to help prepare them for life outside of The Marsh. They work on skills that they will need as they enter adulthood and go out on their own.

This summer, the crew again worked vigilantly in the garden on campus. They grew a variety of produce that they were then able to take to the Van Wert Farmer's Market on the weekend and sell for a profit. They grew tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, garlic, beans, spinach and much, much more.

In addition, they also participated in several other

beneficial activities. They spent time doing team building exercises at Camp Clay. They also had a couple different cooking classes presented by local volunteers.

One very important project they were able to undertake was CPR and First Aid certification. All the youth took the training course and became certified. This is a life skill that will benefit not only them, but the people they associate with.

The Independent Living Group is led by CPST worker Christina Flinn. Sherry Grone, activity coordinator assists and leads the Marsh Grown garden team.

The Marsh Foundation
1229 Lincoln Highway
P.O. Box 150
Van Wert, Ohio 45891

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Volunteers Needed!

There are often opportunities for volunteers at The Marsh Foundation! Our partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters provides a wonderful mentoring program for our youth. If you're interested in spending a little extra time with one of the kids on our campus, volunteer for our Supper Club!

This collaboration allows youth to be partnered with mentors in the community. The group meets twice monthly and one-on-one activities are also scheduled with the youth. If you are interested in being a role model for our youth, please contact Sherry Grone at 419.238.1695 ext. 270.

"Like" The Marsh on Facebook!

The Marsh Foundation's official Facebook page is www.facebook.com/MarshFoundation. In addition to a variety of photographs from the past and recent events, the Facebook page features updates on current activities and various things happening at The Marsh Foundation and in the community! Please stop by, like our page and tell your friends!



The mission of The Marsh Foundation is to inspire hope, to teach and to care for children and families.

Calendar of Events

October - December 2013

- The first nine weeks at The Marsh School ends Oct. 18
- The Marsh Foundation will be represented at the Public Children Services Association of Ohio's annual conference in Columbus on Oct. 23 and 24.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences for The Marsh School are Saturday, Nov. 2.
- The Marsh Grown garden crew will once again host their poinsettia sale this November. Stay tuned for details.
- The Marsh Foundation School will not be in session Nov. 27 - 29 or Dec. 23 - Jan. 1 for Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.



For more information about any event, visit www.marshfoundation.org.

Attention Marsh Foundation Alumni

Are you an alumnus of The Marsh Foundation? Did you know that on our website, www.marshfoundation.org, we have a directory of alumni? To view the directory, or sign up yourself, visit the Alumni page online at www.marshfoundation.org.