

The Marsh Messenger

• Fall 2009

• www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

The Marsh Foundation Clinical Program Awarded Three-Year CARF Accreditation

CARF International announced that The Marsh Foundation has been accredited for a period of three years for its Case Management/Services Coordination: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents); Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Adults); and Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents) programs. The latest accreditation is the second consecutive Three-Year Accreditation that CARF has awarded to The Marsh Foundation.

This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization and shows the organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards. An organization receiving a Three-Year



Accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process and has demonstrated to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit that its programs and services are of the highest quality, measurable and accountable.

Some of The Marsh's strengths, as noted by CARF, are:

- "The Marsh Foundation has shown the ability to adjust its mission and treatment models to provide a valuable service in an ever-changing landscape

where local, state, and federal dollars are often not available."

- "The Marsh Foundation is recognized as an organization that is willing to provide quality services for troubled children and youths."

- "The commitment of the trustees and the dedication, enthusiasm and skills of the staff members are strengths. This level of professional commitment is found from upper management to direct care staff members."

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body whose mission is to promote the quality, value and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process that centers on enhancing the lives of the persons served.

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THE MARSH
FOUNDATION

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Leadership

- **The Marsh Foundation Board of Trustees:**
 - Paul Purmort
 - Don Sutton
 - Gerald Thatcher
- **The Marsh Foundation Executive Team:**
 - Kim Mullins
 - Roger Salisbury
 - Jeff Grothouse

Summer Equestrian Program Concludes with Show

The youth at The Marsh Foundation 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, Steph Hall 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 in August. Each youth had the opportunity



Above: A Marsh Hall youth demonstrates his riding skills during the recent horse show.

to demonstrate their skills for the audience. Medals were given to the top placers in the following categories: trail class trot;

trail class lope; walk-trot rail and walk-trot-lope rail. All youth also received a participation gift from the instructors.

The Marsh Foundation
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From the executive's desk ...

I have been asked to write this article as I begin my 18th year as the Marsh School Principal, so I thought this would be a good time to reflect on the many changes I have witnessed since my arrival in August of 1992.

First and foremost, we have seen a large change in the students we admit to The Marsh Foundation. In 1992, the organization was still in the process of transitioning programs, and we began the school year with 12 students on campus with six students in The Marsh School. At that time the high school students attended Lincolnview High School, a practice that didn't change until 1997.

Today's students arrive with a greater intensity and variety of issues. This is evidenced by the fact that in 1992 we had one student that received Special Education Services as outlined on an IEP. Today, we have 22 students that are identified as special needs students.

To help meet the needs of the youth, we have made many changes. In 1992, we operated four group homes, and each group home employed a married couple and one associate to run the program. During this time, the couple and their family actually made the group home their residence. As the children we were admitting began to change, it became evident we needed to convert to a shift staff in each home, with each home employing several staff members



Roger Salisbury

"The Marsh Foundation is not a static entity, but rather a dynamic organization that evolves to meet the needs of a shifting society."

*—Roger Salisbury
Marsh School Principal*

to provide the appropriate staff-youth ratio.

We live in an age of specialization, and The Marsh Foundation is no exception. We recently have created the positions of activities coordinator and public relations specialist. Their titles adequately describe their duties. We also contract with an outdoor specialist to provide summer camp activities for the students, discovering the outdoor wonders of The Marsh Foundation.

In 1992, we had no Foster Care Program. Today, we have

12 children living in seven different foster homes in the area. In addition, in 1992 we had not yet formed our Clinical Division. Today, we employ four full-time staff, and contract with three others to meet the needs of the youth. These programs have proven invaluable in many ways, and I can't imagine what The Marsh Foundation would be like without these services.

We also have made changes here at school. We have expanded our art program from a once a week activity to an everyday class. As I mentioned earlier, we now educate our high school students in our campus school. Several years ago we created the position of school family teacher. These three individuals have experience working in the group homes, and at school serve a variety of roles. They monitor behaviors, help with homework, and serve as the bridge between home and school. The Marsh Foundation School could not survive without the expertise and experience these individuals bring to the table each day.

As you can see, The Marsh Foundation is not a static entity, but rather a dynamic organization that evolves to meet the needs of a shifting society. The one thing that remains constant, however, is my appreciation to be part of this team that is very dedicated to helping children and their families.

Roger Salisbury
The Marsh School Principal

Marsh Foundation School 2009 - 2010 Calendar

- Thursday, Aug. 20**
Faculty In-Service
- Friday, Aug. 21**
Faculty Work Day
- Monday, Aug. 24**
First Day for Students
- Wednesday, Sept. 2**
Staff In-Service (early dismissal)
- Monday, Sept. 7**
Labor Day - No School
- Wednesday, Oct. 14**
Staff In-Service (2-hr Delay)
- Saturday, Nov. 7**
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Wednesday - Friday, Nov. 25-27**
Thanksgiving Vacation
- Monday - Friday, Dec. 21 - Jan. 1**
Christmas Vacation
- Monday, Jan. 4**
Classes Resume
- Monday, January 18**
Martin Luther King Day - No School
- Monday, Feb. 15**
President's Day - No School
- Friday - Friday, April 2 - 9**
Spring Break - No School
- Monday, April 12**
Classes Resume
- Saturday, May 1**
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Friday, May 28**
Last Day for Students
- Monday, May 31**
Memorial Day
- Tuesday, June 1**
Faculty Work Day
- ~~~~~
- First Nine Weeks**
Aug. 24 - Oct. 23
- Second Nine Weeks**
Oct. 26 - Jan. 8
- Third Nine Weeks**
Jan. 11 - March 19
- Fourth Nine Weeks**
March 22 - May 28

A commitment to excellence

The Marsh Provides Summer Jobs for Youth on Campus

This summer on The Marsh Foundation campus, four jobs were created in an effort to help youth gain marketable job experience and learn valuable skills. The program was established under the Independent Living group already functioning at The Marsh. The group aims to teach youth important life skills for when they reach adulthood and are out on their own.

Kitchen assistant, mechanic assistant, custodial assistant and grounds keeper were the positions created and offered to the youth on campus and in foster care. Youth had to submit applications and go through an interview process in order to obtain a job. According to Laura Beckett-Avery, community psychiatric support treatment worker at The Marsh, the youth handled the interview process really well.

Beckett-Avery and a committee of staff devised the job descriptions and outlined the process for applying, interviewing and choosing employees. Applicants were to have passing grades, support of their treatment team, permission from their guardians and it was preferred that they be 15 or older. All youth were required to complete a time card and were paid for their work.

Brice Miller*, the foster child who was given the custodial assistant job, said he really enjoyed the experience. He said he has learned time management skills, gotten experience and learned from his mistakes. "I've gotten to work with things I haven't done before," he said. This was his first job. "The paycheck is nice," said Miller. "I'm saving up for my driver's ed class."

Beckett-Avery said one of the strong points of the program was to build confidence in the youth. "The jobs were meant to



give kids more responsibility and teach them problem solving skills before they attempt to get a job off campus," she said.

According to Sue and Keith Bowersox, Miller's supervisors, he is a good, hard worker and he never complained. "Hopefully we've taught him some skills that he can use later in life and put on his resume," said Sue.

He's spent time cleaning windows, floors and emptying trash. He was also given the responsibility of maintaining the floors, running the scrubber and buffer. "We trust him and gave him quite a bit of responsibility," said Keith.

The jobs began the first of June and were held through August and were set at no more than 10 hours per week.

Beckett-Avery said she knows the program was successful. "They all have some money and some experience. They've been able to build some confidence and practice what they've been learning in the group homes."

Keith agrees that the program has been a good addition for The Marsh. "I think it has been really good. He [Brice] has worked hard and he's saving money for his goal."

Beckett-Avery and her committee hope to be able to continue the program next summer.

** Youth's name has been changed to protect his identity.*

Clymer Chat

The girls in Clymer Hall finished the last week of summer with a trip to the lake and have now started the school year. Over the summer, the girls enjoyed several activities, including Camp Lomack, gardening, horseback riding, swimming and much more. In recent weeks, there have been a couple of successful completions, creating openings for girls in Clymer Hall.

Marsh Matters

The boys at Marsh Hall have had a very busy summer. Currently, the house is full with 10 boys. However, there is a possible discharge anticipated in the coming weeks. Over the summer, the boys spent a lot of time outdoors. They really enjoyed participating in the

equestrian program on campus and in August wrapped it up with a horse show for friends, family, staff and trustees.

They also spent a good deal of time at the pond fishing, and outside playing kickball and softball. Now that school has started the boys are focused on their academics.

Vance Voice

The 10 boys at Vance Hall also had a busy and productive summer. Several of the boys were involved with the gardening program and selling produce. One highlight of the summer was their day trip to the lake for boating, tubing, fishing and playing games. Throughout the summer, the boys also continued working on their community service. Their schedules have now been adjusted for the start of the school year.



Brice Miller, a Marsh Foundation foster child, works buffing the cafeteria floor as his supervisor, Keith Bowersox, looks on. The custodial assistant position was created as part of the Independent Living summer job program on campus.

Camp Lomack



Outdoor specialist Jay Lomack returned to The Marsh campus in June for his eighth year. He led the youth from each group home in a week-long session of Camp Lomack. Under his direction, the students enjoyed a camp experience without leaving campus. Activities included canoeing, fishing, studying wildlife, hiking, eating over campfires, making crafts and much more. Once again the camp proved to be a very positive and rewarding experience for the youth.

Meet Marsh Foundation Trustee Don Sutton

Don Sutton has been a trustee of The Marsh Foundation for the past 22 years. He said he feels really good about his role as trustee at The Marsh and what the organization has been able to accomplish during his time here.

According to Sutton, many people don't realize that The Marsh isn't an orphanage as it was in the past. "Now, three homes house 10 youth each that are more challenging, have deeper needs and have not been successful elsewhere," he said. The organization also offers foster care and a variety of clinical services.

The last will and testament of George Marsh, which created The Marsh Foundation, indicated that the organization is to have three trustees and that they be appointed by the Third Appellate Court in Lima for a life-long term.

"I feel real good about the way we have been able to keep the campus up," said Sutton. In the last few years, three group homes on campus have been renovated. The fourth group home has been used as temporary housing during the renovations. In addition, earlier this summer a new greenhouse was built. "The greenhouse gives the kids hands-on skills," he said.

According to Roger Salisbury, principal of The Marsh School, the staff and trustees have appreciated Sutton's inside view and knowledge about renovations and maintaining the buildings. "We really appreciate his active role in the building maintenance and the agricultural aspects of The Marsh Foundation," he said.

The Marsh Foundation currently leases out several hundred acres of land to area farmers. The funds raised go directly to



Don Sutton

support the on campus Teaching-Family program. Sutton is proud that, over the years, he and the other trustees have been able to protect this land asset for the betterment of the organization.

Sutton said that his favorite day of the entire year is graduation day. "It's a real feel-good day," he said. Often, members of the public, family and others join for the celebration and it makes the kids smile. A list of what each youth has accomplished over the past year is read aloud. Sutton said the school is a strong asset of The Marsh, "It offers a low student to teacher ratio and provides the youth with individualized attention."

According to Salisbury, many changes have taken place since Sutton joined the Board of Trustees. "He was instrumental in researching and implementing the Teaching-Family program in the early 90s," Salisbury said. "He always has the best interest of The Marsh Foundation at heart and takes his role as trustee very seriously."

According to Sutton, he has greatly enjoyed his time as trustee. "My greatest pleasure is seeing kids come in with multiple social problems and leaving with a better understanding of the world," he said.



Clockwise starting at top right: A Marsh Hall youth goes tubing during the house's day at the lake cabin. A Vance Hall youth participates in the copper enameling workshop held in the art room during summer school. A youth participating in the summer gardening program through the independent living group shows off some of the garden's produce. A girl from Clymer Hall participates in the horse show at the conclusion of the summer equestrian program. Vance Hall youth and staff play a game of corn hole during their day at the lake cabin. Foster siblings spend an evening fishing during the summer.

Staff Spotlight

Meet Tim Dull

Tim Dull has been employed by The Marsh Foundation for the past 19 years. Currently, he serves as the organization's director of recruitment and intake. However, he has held various titles and job responsibilities over the years.

When he first started, he and his wife Karen moved into Marsh Hall and served as live-in, full-time family teachers. They utilized the Family Teaching Model of care, which is still used on campus today, and had one assistant to help with the daily responsibilities of the youth.

Following his time in Marsh Hall, Dull became a consultant. He offered supervision and guidance to staff who were directly working with the youth. He still serves as a consultant today for the Independent Living Foster Home on campus.

In the early 90s, Dull was responsible for starting The Marsh's Foster Care Program. He built the entire program from the ground up, interviewing and licensing foster parents, setting the budget, monitoring the state's rules and regulations for such programs, etc.

For the past 10 years, Dull has spent his days in recruitment and intake. He interviews and hires new employees, communicates with referral sources, coordinates client intake and is responsible for the employee and foster parent training program. He is the direct contact



Tim Dull

for anyone wanting to place a child in a group or foster home, or for anyone interested in becoming a foster parent.

According to Dull, he enjoys the variety that comes with the job. "Every day can be different," he said. "I get to interact with a lot of different people and it's never the same." He said his job is rewarding and he has seen a lot of positive changes in his time at The Marsh. "There have been a lot of upgrades to the campus and we have more staff now," he said.

He and his wife have been married for 25 years and have three children, Drew, DJ and Darci. While he's not at work, he enjoys spending time with his family, exercising, playing or watching sports and golfing. Dull can be reached at 419.238.1695 ext. 360 or tdull@marshfoundation.org.

Foster Child: College Bound

Before Garrick Smith moved in with Steve and Marilyn Reno at the age of 11, he had already been placed in three different foster homes. In each, he stayed approximately one year, and then he would usually get into trouble and be moved into another home.

His time at the Renos' started like many of his other placements. After he had been there about a year he got into some trouble. Smith feared that the Renos would turn their backs on him, but they didn't. He ended up living with them for six-and-a-half years until he graduated from high school last spring.

According to Smith, he enjoyed his time at the Renos and appreciates all they have done for him. He plans to keep in touch with them as he moves forward to the next stage of his life. Smith is enrolled in Bowling Green State University and has started the architecture program there this fall.

"I think the Renos helped me to become responsible and helped me learn how to make

good choices," he said. "I get compared to Steve a lot."

While living with the Renos, Smith transitioned from childhood into adulthood. One of his accomplishments was getting good grades in school. He graduated 26th out of a class of 79 at Crestview High School.

Another one of his accomplishments was getting and maintaining a part-time job to help save money for college expenses. He worked at McDonald's for the past year and this summer he worked for Habitat for Humanity. Through these experiences he has learned valuable skills that he will take with him.

Now, the world is wide open for him. As part of the architecture program at BGSU he will be required to complete three semester-long co-ops which could take him anywhere in the country, or even across seas. "I'm very excited," he said.

So far, college is going well and Smith is adjusting to life on campus and in the dorm. He has a full schedule, with four classes and said he's keeping busy. "So far, so good," he said.

New Staff Members

- Brad Petrie - Floating family teacher at Marsh Hall
- Jennifer Burley - Overnight family teacher at Vance Hall.
- Mr. Tom Mayes - Music teacher

CARF continued from page 1

Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and now known as CARF, the accrediting body establishes consumer-focused standards to help organizations measure the quality of their programs and services.

For more information about The Marsh, or their CARF accreditation, visit www.marshfoundation.org or call 419.238.1695 ext. 378.

A Day in the Life ... of a Foster Parent

For the past 12 years, Steve and Marilyn Reno have been Foster Parents for The Marsh Foundation. In their home near Convoy, they have had 20 children live with them anywhere between a couple of weeks to six-and-a-half years.

After being placed on disability for a back injury, Steve had a lot of extra time on his hands. "I felt like I wasn't accomplishing anything," he said. "I thought if I had a youth around we could do things together, go fishing, or whatever." After an extensive application process, the couple was licensed as Foster Parents and have been making a difference in the lives of children ever since.

The Renos have undergone specific training and are considered Therapeutic Foster Parents for children who need more attention and treatment than typical foster children. Currently, they have three boys. They are able to take the Teaching Family Model, the treatment method used in The Marsh Group Homes, and use it in their home with the foster children. The Marsh provides training throughout the year to help them keep their skills current.

The couple has seen their

foster children go on to be successful, get married and have productive lives. "It is rewarding to have the kids come back, I get satisfaction from seeing them go out on their own and create their own lives." Most recently, Garrick, a foster child who lived with the Renos for more than six years, graduated from high school and is attending Bowling Green State University this fall. (See the previous page for his story).

The Renos enjoy doing various family activities and have spent a good deal of the summer at Lake Erie. The family enjoys boating, fishing and turtle trapping. All year, the family spends a lot of time outdoors. Recently, the family has taken trips to Florida and South Carolina.

According to Steve, he attributes a lot of their success as foster parents to his honesty. "I'm open and honest and I shoot from the hip," he said. When a new kid arrives at the home he sits them down for a heart to heart. "I don't butter it up; when they come in they know where they stand and exactly what I expect from them."

Steve said he doesn't expect anything different from the



kids than he does anyone else in his life. "They are good kids, they just need some guidance." He said he considers himself a fair parent. "I'm not a push over, but when they are doing well I let them know it, and when they need discipline, they lose [privileges]."

The Renos have also raised three biological children and have 13 grandchildren. Between the biological family, the foster kids, past foster kids and now the children of the foster kids, it makes for one big family. Two of their biological children have attended training so that they may provide respite and give their mom and dad a break from the kids occasionally.

The Marsh Foundation offers ongoing support and training for foster families. Because the Renos are licensed as therapeutic foster parents, they undergo extra training hours

each year. The Marsh also provides an on-call consultant 24-7 in case of any difficulties. There are also plenty of opportunities for family activities and recreation provided by The Marsh.

Steve said their calendar is busy, and a little difficult to keep track of sometimes, but he wouldn't have it any other way. Just like your own kids, Steve said, they can sometimes get on your nerves. "It has its ups and downs, but there are more ups that's for sure," he said. He wouldn't know what to do without kids in the house, he said. "Without kids around, there is just an emptiness in me, a void."

According to Steve, there is a need for more foster parents. "There is a system full of kids and no place for them to go," he said. "We need more people to step up to the plate, who have the time to take a kid. Try to make a difference."



The Renos enjoy spending time outdoors with their children, grandchildren and foster children.

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Marsh Foundation 2010 Alumni Reunion Slated for Aug. 7-8

The dates have been selected for the 2010 Marsh Foundation Alumni Reunion. It will be held August 7 and 8 on The Marsh campus in Van Wert.

After the first of the year, alumni can expect to receive more information in the mail as well as registration forms.

Since the last reunion in 2005, Marsh, Vance and Clymer Halls have all been completely renovated. A new greenhouse has also been built.

Mark your calendars now! We look forward to seeing you in August 2010!



THE MARSH
FOUNDATION

Visit The Marsh
Foundation
website at:

www.marshfoundation.org

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

Calendar of Events

September ~ December 2009

- October 16 - Visionary Promotions presents Storyhill concert in the auditorium.
- November 7 - Marsh Foundation School Parent-Teacher conferences.
- November 25-27 - Marsh Foundation School Thanksgiving break.
- December 10 - Visionary Promotions presents Jimmy Fortune concert in the auditorium.
- December 21 - January 1 - Marsh Foundation School winter break.



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

Attention Marsh Foundation Alumni

Are you an alumni 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.