

The Marsh Messenger

• Fall 2021

• www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

Open House October 16

The Marsh Foundation is excited to reveal the new dining and fitness facilities that have been added to the campus. On Saturday October 16, an open house will be held that will highlight several important areas of The Marsh campus and history. It will begin at 1 p.m. with a ribbon cutting ceremony and last until 6 p.m. The day will include tours of the Administration Building, the new gymnasium, Clymer Hall, and a memorial tribute in honor of Ron Bagley at 3 p.m.

According to Jeff Grothouse, executive secretary and treasurer, this is an exciting opportunity to showcase the new areas and facilities at The Marsh Foundation. "We are thrilled to invite the public to tour our new fitness area, dining facilities and gymnasium," he said.

"Because of the mutual love and respect between Ron Bagley and The Marsh, this also seems like an ideal time to honor his memory." At 3 p.m., a tribute service for Bagley will be held in the Bagley Auditorium. The day's event will conclude with fellowship and refreshments in the cafeteria.

Campus tours will include the 15,000 square foot addition to the Administration Building which includes a gymnasium, locker rooms, kitchen, dining



In May of 2019, ground was broken on the newest addition to The Marsh Foundation campus. The 15,000 square foot area holds a kitchen, dining area, gymnasium and more. It will be open to the public on October 16 beginning at 1 p.m. with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Several areas of campus will be open for tour as well as a Ron Bagley tribute at 3 p.m. All are invited.

area and more. Clymer Hall will also be open for tours. As The Marsh transitions to a QRTP facility, Clymer now houses boys, the same as Vance and Marsh Halls. "We are very proud of these facilities and the additional opportunities that they represent for our youth," said Grothouse. "We think the community will be equally as proud."

Bagley dedicated much of his life to The Marsh Foundation. His passing in December, left a large void for those at The Marsh. From 1962 to 1991

he worked at The Marsh as a teacher, principal and director. Most recently, he served as the organization's official historian. The Bagley family will be on hand October 16 to honor their husband, father and grandfather at 3 p.m. "Ron touched numerous lives and was loved by many" Grothouse said. "We are excited for this opportunity to honor him, his life, and legacy." The public is invited to attend. For more information, please contact Jeff Grothouse at 419.238.1695 ext. 120.



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 Clay
 - Gary Corcoran
 - Robert Gamble
- **The Marsh Foundation Executive Team:**
 - Robbie Breese
 - Jeff Grothouse
 - Kim Mullins

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

The 2021-2022 school year is off to a great start. Every new school year presents new challenges. This year, we welcome those challenges with open arms now that the COVID-19 restrictions have lightened and things are getting back to normal. This year's changes include new staff, a new schedule and we are now an all boys campus.

Mrs. Valori Dunn retired at the end of the last school year after 22 years of teaching at the Marsh Foundation School. Dunn taught reading and social studies. Those subjects were absorbed by our current school staff. This enabled us to hire our first ever physical education teacher. Mr. Kevin Longstreth was hired over the summer with the task of starting our first physical education program. Longstreth got a head start by coming in this past summer and leading a fitness class during our summer program. His mental health and



Robbie Breese

recreation background have contributed toward him being a great fit. He also understands and believes in the importance of fulfilling our mission. We are looking forward to watching him grow our physical education program and continue to positively impact the lives of our youth.

Ms. Claire Fleck was our school family teacher for Clymer Hall last school year. Over the summer, Fleck accepted a position with our Bridges program. She was replaced by Ms. Nicky Metzger. Metzger has been employed by The Marsh Foundation for three years. She

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- Robbie Breese
Principal & Director of
Education

has worked as a family teacher at Clymer Hall for those three years. She is very passionate about meeting the needs of our youth and works extremely hard to accomplish meeting those needs. We look forward to having Metzger utilize her skills in the school.

We have implemented a new schedule for this school year. The main reason for the new schedule was to integrate day treatment into the school day. Day treatment involves

students learning skills critical to their treatment in a clinical setting. Our day treatment groups include; skill building, a young teens group, independent living, relapse prevention and self-regulation. Flexibility in our schedule allows students to participate in parts of these groups during the school day helping them build skills to be successful both in and out of the classroom.

Lastly, one of the biggest changes to the school year is that we no longer have female youth living on campus. We genuinely miss working with the girls, but it has opened the door to more opportunities in the school. Having all boys will allow us to better accommodate learning needs, even more so than we have in the past. Large group activities will be easier to supervise and we will be able to have these activities more often, which is something we are really looking forward to.

As previously mentioned, the school year is off to a great start and I anticipate having another great year.

Robbie Breese
Principal, Director of
Education

October 16: Open House Agenda

Campus Open – 1:00 p.m.

Ribbon Cutting: Gymnasium & Dining Facility

Tours: Clymer Hall, Administration Building and Gymnasium

Ron Bagley Tribute – 3:00 p.m.

Bagley Auditorium: Speakers from the Bagley Family and The Marsh

Cafeteria – 3:45 p.m.

Refreshments, Fellowship and Tours

Campus closes – 6:00 p.m.

Project Believe Donates Back Packs and School Supplies to Marsh Students

Project Believe has once again stepped up to help the students at The Marsh Foundation start school on a positive note. Last week, they visited campus with a delivery of backpacks and school supplies for all students.

The organization, which originated in 2009, began by donating Christmas gifts to children in residential facilities. They now are also active on Easter, Valentine's Day and the start of the school year. Tammie Rafferty, the group's founder, was initially inspired to help others by her own daughter's circumstances.

This year, Bob Lavoie, visited the campus to present the backpacks and supplies to Mr. Robbie Breese, Marsh Foundation School Principal and teachers.

"We feel very fortunate that Project Believe has chosen to



Left to right: Kevin Longstreth (teacher), Mandy Looser (teacher), Lavoie, Joy Caldwell (librarian), and Breese are pictured with this year's donation.

continue to assist The Marsh Foundation in our mission of inspiring hope to our children," said Breese. "Our students and teachers are very excited

to accept the backpacks and supplies as we return to the classroom this school year."

You can learn more about Project Believe by visiting

their website at www.projectbelieve.net. Or, you can contact Rafferty directly at projectbelieve@live.com

Need to Make a Referral?



THE MARSH
FOUNDATION

Residential/Group Home Referrals: Call Kelly at 419.238.1695 ext. 360 or kgross@marshfoundation.org

Foster Care Referrals: Call 419.238.1695 option 3, then option 1.

After Hours/Emergency: 419.605.8056
fostercarereferrals@marshfoundation.org

New Staff Members

The Marsh Foundation would like to welcome new staff members:

- Rick Eberle III - Family Teacher
- Alanis Nichols - Overnight Family Teacher
- Tammi Taylor - Overnight Family Teacher
- Chad Hubert - Family Teacher
- Amber Hunt - Family Teacher
- John Copeland - Family Teacher
- Logan Gross - Maintenance Department
- Matt Tuttle - PRN Family Teacher
- Nicky Metzger - moved to School Family Teacher
- Claire Fleck - moved to Bridges Liaison
- Kevin Longstreth - moved to PE Teacher/ Intervention Specialist

Marsh Foundation Foster Care Division Holds Successful Summer Day Camp

This summer, The Marsh Foundation Foster Care Division held a successful day camp for youth in their clinical program. There were a total of 14 youth ranging in age from 5 to 15 who participated. The camp was held for one week from 9 a.m. until noon each day. The camp featured a theme each day, friendship, kindness, emotions, choices and leadership.

According to Melissa Snyder, foster care director, the purpose of the camp was to allow the youth to come together, participate in fun activities, while also learning positive character traits. “It was an amazing adventure and all of the kids were very well behaved,” she said. “It was great for our staff to get to know the kids on a more personal level and it was also cool to see them form friendships among themselves.” An additional perk to the camp, was the free time the foster parents got those mornings.

Each day, the activities coordinated with the theme and included activity pages, deep breathing, yoga, dance parties, games, reading, crafts and group parachute activities. Some crafts included friendship bracelets and heart sun catchers. Each day, lunch was provided by The Marsh kitchen

staff. Friday included zip lining and rock wall climbing at Camp Clay for the older kids. This was part reward for helping throughout the week, but also emphasized leadership, teamwork and being a good role model.

Beth Dye, foster care clinician, along with the rest of the department staffed the camp. They considered it a huge success for their first camp.

“Several of our parents commented that it was an incredible experience for their kids,” Dye said. One of the biggest benefits of the camp, according to Dye, was that kids got to meet other kids who are in similar situations to their own. “These are kids who understand better than anyone what they are all going through, as there are different sets of concerns and anxieties that kids who are unable to live with their biological parents experience.”

Dye took the lead when it came to planning the camp and according to Snyder did an excellent job. “I also think it’s important to make note of all of the extra work she put in to make this possible. She went above and beyond to give our kids this amazing experience,” Snyder said.



Photo captions: Activities at The Marsh foster care day camp revolved around a daily theme and included rock climbing, dance parties, crafts and much more.



Clockwise starting at top left: The Marsh Foundation Foster Care Division has officially moved into their new home on Westwood Drive. Maintenance staff are currently painting, installing doors and doing other improvements. An Open House will be planned when completed. The Marsh students participated in the annual horse show in August. They were able to showcase all of the skills they had learned working with the horses throughout the summer. A new billboard can be seen on Highway 30. It commemorates the 100th anniversary of the establishment of The Marsh Foundation. Summer is fleeting and autumn is right around the corner. Consultant Elizabeth Truxell captured this picture of the west side of campus one late summer morning.



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The Marsh Foundation
Serving Children & Families for 100 years
1921 - 2021
Fulfilling the Vision of
George & Hilinda Marsh



New Bridges Liaison Hired at The Marsh Foundation

The Marsh Foundation has hired Claire Fleck as the new Bridges Liaison for the Northwest Ohio Region. Bridges is a statewide program administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services through a grant agreement with The Child and Family Health Collaborative of Ohio. As a member of this Collaborative, The Marsh Foundation provides services through the post-emanicipation support program to eligible former foster youth.

Fleck holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from The Ohio State University and has worked as a school family teacher and family teacher at The Marsh most recently. Before that, Fleck worked for ten years investigating child abuse, neglect and dependency cases for several Northwest Ohio counties. Fleck said she enjoys work at The Marsh for several reasons. "I chose to work at The Marsh Foundation because of the variety of opportunities not only for staff but also for the youth we serve," she said. "The greatest reward is seeing the youth I have worked with successfully discharged and doing well after they leave."

She has several goals for her new position and is looking forward to helping youth transition into young adulthood. "I hope to continue to build a program that meets the needs of the young adults in Northwest Ohio. I hope to build stronger community relations to be able to assist these young adults to



Claire Fleck

feel supported in the communities where they live," Fleck said. She also hopes to work toward program expansion.

The Bridges program was established in December 2017 to extend housing and case management services to eligible young adults who leave foster care on or after their 18th birthday but have not yet turned 21. Fleck will continue to work with young adults in this age range who have recently emancipated from foster care. She'll supply them with resources and help them with tasks such as finding affordable housing, finding a job, creating a budget and transportation. Essentially, she'll assist with anything that helps them transition to adult life.

Fleck is a mother to two teenage children and enjoys spending time with them, her boyfriend, family, friends and her dog. In her free time, she enjoys refinishing vintage or worn furniture, listening to all types of music and enjoying hot tea.

Marsh Hires Longstreth as Physical Education Teacher and Intervention Specialist

The Marsh Foundation has hired Kevin Longstreth as a physical education teacher and intervention specialist. With the addition of the physical fitness area and gymnasium on campus, this is another opportunity to expand the opportunities for youth at The Marsh.



Kevin Longstreth

Longstreth holds a bachelor's degree in education from Bowling Green State University, a teaching license for physical education grades K-12 and an intervention specialist degree from The Ohio State University. Longstreth's experience involves casework at Westwood Behavioral Health as well as crisis intervention and vocational rehabilitation. He has also worked for the City of Van Wert Parks and Recreation Department. This summer, he was hired as a fitness instructor at The Marsh.

Longstreth said he is looking forward to the opportunity to make a positive impact on students each day. "Physical education is an important class for students because it teaches them how to work as a team, strengthens their social skills and teaches them the value of staying active," he said. "I am excited to be able to teach and utilize the new facilities at The Marsh and with that comes the flexibility to hold classes in a variety of different spaces."

As the first physical education teacher at The Marsh, Longstreth said he has several goals. "As I work directly with students, I hope to influence and connect with them in a meaningful way. In addition to sharing my love for physical fitness, I want to promote inclusiveness, responsibility, cooperation and diversity."

Longstreth and his wife Danielle have three children; Grady 10, Nora 8 and Quinn 4. He enjoys watching and participating in all types of sports and physical fitness. He spends most of his free time with his family and watching them participate in many different activities.



Clymer Chat

Clymer Hall has officially transitioned to a home for boys. Many of the boys are new to campus and are adjusting to their new home and the back-to-school schedule and routine. They have been doing well with all the newness.

As summer ends, the boys at Clymer Hall are looking forward to cooler days and fall activities. The annual fall festival will be held on campus in October. It will feature a costume contest, pumpkin decorating contest, a chili cook off and more!

The boys are looking forward to the Open House on Oct. 16. They will be providing tours of Clymer Hall and are excited to show off their home to guests from the public. There will also be tours of the Administration Building, new gymnasium and dining areas. We hope to see you!



Marsh Matters

The boys at Marsh Hall had a successful summer and are looking forward to a successful school year as well.

Several boys participated in the Independent Living program on campus and worked on the Marsh Grown garden crew throughout the summer. This gives the youth hands on work experience not only in the garden, but also at the farmer's market. This year, the program continued with their market stand right on campus (open to the public) on Wednesday afternoons.

By selling the produce they grow in the garden, they also learn money management and sales skills.

As summer comes to an end, the boys will miss their extra free time spent outside. However, their days will be filled with new and exciting projects as school gets underway and the new activities schedule starts.



Vance Voice

The boys at Vance Hall had a good summer, participating in a wide variety of fun and educational activities.

A highlight of the summer was the horse program. It concluded with a great horse show and all of the boys appreciated the opportunity to show off their new skills.

The boys also enjoyed spending time outdoors throughout the summer. They spent downtime shooting baskets, riding bikes or fishing at the pond. These activities are not only enjoyable for the boys, but they also give them an opportunity to work on relationship building and various social skills with their peers.

Like the other youth on campus, the boys at Vance are looking forward to the school year as things return closer to normal. The Marsh School is anticipating a year full of learning, fun and skill building.

If you are interested in making a referral, please contact Kelly Gross at 419.238.1695 ext. 360.

Welcome Autumn!

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

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Did You Know? We offer adoption services!

The Marsh Foundation has the ability to license homes with a dual foster care and adoption license. This means that families that may be interested adopting their foster children in the future can simplify the process with The Marsh Foundation.



This allows The Marsh to provide additional support to families. Families that think they may be interested in adoption can complete the necessary steps up front, with very little additional work. Many families that are interested in becoming foster families are interested in accepting young children that may be available for adoption in the future.

If you are interested in more information, contact The Marsh foster care department at 419.238.1695.

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

Calendar of Events

September 2021 - December 2022

- The Marsh will host an open house and Ron Bagley memorial on Oct. 16, from 1 - 6 p.m.
- There will be no school Monday, Oct. 11 or Friday, Nov. 5 because of staff in-services.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences for The Marsh School are Saturday, Nov. 6.
- The Marsh Foundation School will not be in session Nov. 24 - 26 and the CFS and Business offices will be closed Nov. 25-26 for Thanksgiving.
- The Marsh Foundation School will not be in session Dec. 22 - 31 for Christmas break.



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.