

The Marsh Messenger

• Summer 2019 • www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

Marsh Foundation Breaks Ground on a New Fitness and Dining Facility

In May, The Marsh Foundation Trustees and Directors broke ground in conjunction with Peterson Construction on a new fitness and dining facility. The new building will be connected to and located northwest of the Administration Building on their campus in Van Wert.

The 15,000-foot structure will house a gymnasium, locker rooms, restrooms, kitchen, dining area, staff offices and storage areas. Jeff Grothouse, executive secretary and treasurer, acknowledged the legacy of The Marsh family. "I believe it is appropriate to thank George, Hilinda and Katie Marsh for their vision of The Marsh Foundation in the early 1900s," he said. "It is also appropriate to thank all past and present Trustees for their wisdom, guidance, service and stewardship to



Marsh Foundation Trustees and Directors break ground for the new fitness and dining facility; (l to r): Bob Gamble, Gary Clay, Robbie Breese, Kim Mullins, Jeff Grothouse and Gary Corcoran.

The Marsh Foundation. Their foresight and fiscal planning made this project possible," Grothouse continued.

Director of The Marsh School, Robbie Breese, noted that the new facility will help

accomplish many Marsh Foundation goals. "This project will help us expand the services that we provide to our youth and create more flexible learning

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Spring Graduation Ceremony Held, Hall Retires



Suzie Hall, center, is surrounded by Marsh Foundation School teachers and staff. She was recognized for 32 years in education and presented with a plaque recognizing her retirement.

The Marsh Foundation School held its annual spring celebration on Wednesday, June 5. The day included a musical production of *The Wizard of Oz*, a graduation ceremony and luncheon for the students and their families. Four students earned and received their diplomas.

Many of the youth's friends and families, as well as community members joined in on the celebration. More than 40

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THE MARSH
FOUNDATION

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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 2018-19 school year has ended as one of our more successful school years in recent history. Our students were consistently engaged the entire school year which brought a lot of success with it. 80 percent of our student body maintained honor roll grades the entire year and over 90 percent of our students were on honor roll the fourth quarter. We saw continued success in state testing results from this Spring. More than 57 percent of our students scored proficient or higher in English language arts, 77 percent of our students scored proficient or higher in science and more than 55 percent of our students scored proficient or higher in social studies. We also had multiple grade bands in different subject areas score above the state average.

On Earth Day, our Science classes organized a "Campus Clean-up" in which our entire student body did some spring cleaning across the main campus. As a group, our staff and students cleaned all landscaping beds, gathered fallen branches, and clean up all trash on the entire campus in just a couple hours. The planning, effort and teamwork was quite impressive and something we were very proud to accomplish.

On May 6, The Marsh Foundation staff, students and many community members gathered for a groundbreaking ceremony starting construction on a new addition that will be connected to the Administration Building. This addition will



Robbie Breese

"We are looking forward to a fun, relaxing summer and are excited to see what next school year has in store."

- Robbie Breese

be a 15,000 square foot structure housing a gymnasium, locker rooms, restrooms, kitchen, dining area, staff offices and storage areas. The goal of this project is to increase handicap accessibility, provide better fitness opportunities for our children and staff, expand services to our youth, create more flexible learning spaces and to increase the number of youth we serve. The new addition will be connected to the Administration Building by a corridor. Once we move our cafeteria and kitchen to the new building, our plans involve renovation of the empty spaces in the basement of the administration building to a fitness center. The fitness center will be designed

for weight lifting, cardio equipment, and a room for aerobic exercise. The project is projected to be completed by July 2020.

On June 5, The Marsh Foundation School ended the school year with our annual program and graduation. We held our traditional piano recital and play, led by Mr. Mayes and Mrs. McClure, in front of a large crowd in The Bagley Auditorium. After the play and recital, we recognized many students that received special awards for their achievement throughout the school year. Four students received their diplomas: Logan, Seth, Shawn, and Zane. We also recognized one our teachers that will be retiring on June 30 and our honorary guest.

Ms. Suzie Hall has served our community for 32 years, in education, with 25 of those years teaching at The Marsh Foundation School. Her students describe her as kind, warm-hearted, relatable, patient, and selfless. They felt she made social studies fun, enjoyed her projects, and loved many of the activities she had them work on in class. Ms. Hall's coworkers describe her as kind, honest, caring, considerate, a great listener, compassionate, a role model, and deeply spiritual. They expressed they will miss lunch room conversations, weekly staff meetings, playing make-up artist for the Wizard of Oz, and having that one person to go to for sound advice. Ms. Hall was recognized on stage and received a plaque as a small token of appreciation for her service to The Marsh Foundation.

This year, Marsh Foundation Historian, Ron Bagley, served as the honorary guest at the graduation ceremony and spoke to the students. Mr. Bagley served The Marsh Foundation from 1962-1991 as a teacher, principal and director. He began his speech in talking about the impact that a recent Marsh graduate had on him during the winter graduation ceremony. During this student's graduation speech, last December, he stated, "The staff at The Marsh Foundation have not taught me anything. They've shown me..." Ron expressed that this student's statement made a lasting impact on him and touched on the importance of character traits being "caught rather than taught." Mr. Bagley continued his speech touching on some important points in the history of The Marsh Foundation, Hilinda Marsh's resolutions to lead a better life, and challenged Marsh students and graduates "to be the best that you can be."

Now that the school year has come to a close, we will begin our summer school programming. Students will rotate sessions between library time, horse lessons, and media arts. We will also hold a daily credit recovery session for a few of our high school students that are credit deficient.

We are looking forward to a fun, relaxing summer and are excited to see what next school year has in store.

Robbie Breese
The Marsh Foundation
School Principal

A commitment to excellence

Students Hold Annual Plant Sale to Kick Start the Summer Garden Program



Youth in the Marsh Grown garden program held their annual spring plant sale this May.

The independent living group students held the 8th annual spring plant sale May 11 selling hanging baskets. This is a good kick start to the summer garden program that aims to teach job skills to independent living youth that apply for the campus garden job.

This will be the 11th year for the horticultural therapy program on The Marsh campus. The main purpose is job training. Youth involved in the program learn important job skills from resume building and interviewing to professionalism and teamwork. Two recent high school graduates from The Marsh Foundation reflected

back on their time working in the garden program and how it has prepared them for life beyond The Marsh. Both boys commented how the experience helped them to develop skills to be successful in their current and future jobs such as clocking in, managing a pay check and being held accountable for your responsibilities. Personal confidence in getting and maintaining future jobs increased as well from being in the program. We wish them continued success in their journey!

This summer the garden crew plans to set up a local market on The Marsh campus to sell fresh produce and other items.

Marsh Foundation Grateful to Easter Celebration Donors

Again this year, an egg hunt was the highlight of Easter weekend on The Marsh Foundation campus. It was all made possible by the Shirley Haight family, who sponsored the festivities for the ninth consecutive year. The family provided eggs, baskets and gifts for all of the youth on campus. Although Haight passed away in 1988, her family has made a tradition out of donating.

The weather was not very cooperative this year, but that didn't damper anyone's spirits. The hunt was still held, just indoors.

The youth enjoy and the staff appreciates the extra smiles it brings to the youths' faces. Donations like this not only have a direct impact on youth, but also help The Marsh's resources go further and provide a variety of benefits to Marsh programming.

Haight's family went above

and beyond again this year. The hunt and gifts are always well thought out, creative and perfect for the youth on The Marsh campus. The family's generosity and creativity are extremely thoughtful, even down to the smallest details.

"They think of all the details and their generosity each year makes Easter an extra special holiday on our campus," said Kim Mullins, executive director of Child and Family Services.

This year, Haight's daughter Cathy, son-in-law Don, grandchildren Missy and Amy, and great-grandchildren Ava, Jack and Ruby were all present to participate in the festivities.

"We are extremely blessed and thankful that this family continues to take time out of their busy holiday schedules to visit The Marsh and make a difference in the lives of our youth," Mullins said.



Pictured are members of Shirley Haight's family who visited campus this Easter to deliver items and facilitate the annual Easter egg hunt. Pictured are: Ava Stoner, Jack Stoner and Ruby Stoner, great-grandchildren; Missy Dziuba, grandchild, Cathy Anderson, daughter, Don Anderson, son-in-law; and Amy Stoner, grandchild.

Marsh Foundation Celebrates One Year in Downtown Location

One year ago, The Marsh Foundation opened its Foster Care and Adoption Center on Main Street in downtown Van Wert. With the goal of being more accessible to the community, the new facility has been successful in helping The Marsh to achieve its main goal; helping more children and families.

Becoming more visible and accessible has helped The Marsh recruit additional foster families. “We have added eight more homes in Van Wert County alone,” said Melissa Snyder, foster care supervisor. That translates to helping 10 more kids each day than the foster care division was helping last year at this time.

According to Kim Mullins, executive director of Child and Family Services, agrees that the

new location has been largely impactful on the foster care program at The Marsh. “This move downtown has given us new possibilities in serving foster children,” she said. “There is no greater gift to give a child than a family.”

Since opening one year ago, The Marsh has been able to give a home, and a family, to 90 children. “It is a great feeling to see our number of dedicated foster and adoptive families growing,” said Snyder. “We are thrilled about our expansion over the past year and look forward to even more future growth.” The Foster Care and Adoption Center currently employs five full-time employees and is contains office space that is for used for trainings, meetings, family visits and more.



One year ago, The Marsh opened their Foster Care and Adoption Center on Main Street in downtown Van Wert.

New Staff Members

The Marsh Foundation would like to welcome new staff member:

- Amanda Thomas - Family Teacher
- Claudia Sidenbender - Family Teacher
- Nicole Metzger - Family Teacher

Marsh Foundation Utilizes Family Teaching Model and Family Conferences to Help Youth Learn Responsibility and Leadership

A key concept within the Family Teaching Model is called self-government, and it's a way to help youths at The Marsh Foundation set certain rules and guidelines while holding themselves and their peers accountable.

It's an inclusive process that promotes family cohesiveness, helps develop relationships and teaches responsibility, leadership and problem-solving skills.

One of the crucial components is the family conference and according to Emery Rogers, lead family teacher at Marsh Hall, it's held three times a week.

“The purpose of the family conference is they (the youths) pick topics from the house, then self-govern,” Rogers explained. “It isn't always the staff correcting behaviors or deciding what the rules are. What we find is kids are a little harsher than we would be.”

“What it does is help the kids invest in their own future. What we (family teachers) try to do is maintain the order of it, so if someone gets mad or gets out of hand, we back it up. We don't solve the problem, except to ask how to handle it, then they come up with the solution.”

“Family conference is super important as it is the main vessel for youths to have more control over the everyday decisions that directly affect their daily life, Marsh Hall's program manager, Ben Marsee said. “When done properly, the self-government process can be very effective. Youths learn to problem solve alone and in a group of their peers, and this knowledge transfers directly into the job market and provides them with skills they might not otherwise develop.”

A rotating manager is chosen on a weekly basis by peers to run the meeting, with notes taken by an assistant and during the meetings, youths have the opportunity to voice concerns and make suggestions.

“It is amazing to see a youth's confidence grow as he becomes part of the managerial system,” Marsee said. “The youth then take that confidence with them to school and other parts of their life and are able to be more assertive and successful.”

At a recent family conference, one of the topics centered around changing the day of weekly elections of manager and assistant manager. After a group discussion, which included advantages and disadvantages of a change, the decision was made to keep weekly elections on Sundays.

Another topic addressed was a common one in any household with teenagers – children having bowls and plates in their rooms. “This topic was raised, and some of the youths expressed concerns that the consequence for such an action was not severe enough.”

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Groundbreaking continued from page 1 ...

spaces to help meet their varying needs,” he said.

Breese also noted the increase in handicap accessibility as well as better fitness opportunities for both youth and staff.

“The number of Ohio youth that are in need of services is consistently growing,” Breese said. “This addition to our campus will put us in a position to be able to serve more children and families in need.”

Perhaps most importantly, Fanning Howey Architecture has been able to design a structure that will not only have a modern interior but match the style and majesty of the existing buildings on campus on the exterior.

“Maintaining the integrity of our historical campus was extremely important to all of us as we went through this process,” said Kim Mullins, executive director, Child and Family Services. “I believe the end result is something that The Marsh family and all of our alumni will be proud of.”

Construction is expected to last a minimum of 12 months with occupancy expected by early to mid-summer of 2020. Future plans include renovation of the newly vacated space in the basement of the Administration Building into a fitness center with space for cardio equipment, weight lifting and aerobic exercise.

At right: Renderings from Fanning Howey Architecture are attached that depict The Marsh Foundation’s new fitness and dining facility.



2019 - 20 Marsh School Calendar

Wednesday Aug. 14

Staff In-Service

Thursday Aug. 15

Teacher Work Day

Friday Aug. 16

Staff In-Serve

Monday, Aug. 19

First Day for Students

Monday, Sept. 2

Labor Day (No School)

Friday, Sept. 27

Staff In-Service (2 hr. delay)

Friday, Oct. 25

Staff In-Service (2 hr. delay)

Saturday, Nov. 9

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, Nov. 15

Staff In-Service (no school)

Wed. - Fri., Nov. 27-29

Thanksgiving Vacation

Mon.- Fri., Dec. 23 - Jan. 3

Christmas Vacation

Monday, Jan. 6

Classes Resume

Friday, Jan. 17

Staff In-Service (early dismissal)

Monday, Jan. 20

MLK Day - No School

Monday, Feb. 17

President's Day - No School

Mon. - Fri. March 16-20

Spring Break - No School

Thursday, April 9

Staff In-Service (early dismissal)

Friday, April 10

Good Friday - No School

Saturday, April 18

Parent- Teacher Conferences

Thursday, May 21

Last Day for Students

Friday, May 22

Teacher Work Day

Graduation continued from page 4 ...

students participated in the day's activities.

Many received academic awards for their successes throughout the school year. This year's event was extra special because Ms. Suzie Hall was recognized for her retirement and 32 years in education; and the Bagley Auditorium was officially named in honor of past director Mr. Ron Bagley.

Marsh Foundation Principal, Robbie Breese, recognized and congratulated teacher, Ms. Suzie Hall, on her retirement. Ms. Hall taught for 32 years, with 25 of those years being at The Marsh Foundation School. She will be greatly missed. On behalf of The Marsh, Breese presented Hall with a plaque during the ceremony expressing gratitude for all she's given to the students she's taught.

This year, Marsh Foundation Historian, Ron Bagley, served as an honorary guest at the graduation ceremony and spoke to the students during the ceremony. Mr. Bagley served The Marsh Foundation from 1962-1991 as a teacher, principal and director. He spoke about some history of the Marsh Foundation, Hilinda Marsh's resolutions to lead a better life, and challenged the Marsh students and graduates "to be the best that you can be."

A surprise announcement was made at the 2018 Marsh Foundation Christmas party that the Administration Building's auditorium was to be renamed Bagley Auditorium in Ron's honor. It is now official and naming plaques have been hung.



Clockwise from top left: Ron Bagley speaks at the graduation ceremony. Four students received their high school diplomas from The Marsh School this year. Cast members of *The Wizard of Oz* production head to the stage to perform. Robbie Breese presents Suzie Hall with a plaque, recognizing her retirement.



Clymer Chat

Clymer Hall is currently home to eight girls. There are two openings available for girls ages 10 to 17. For referrals, contact Kelly Gross at 419.238.1695 ext. 360.

It has been a busy spring and now that school is out, the girls have started a busy summer schedule of school, horseback riding and other activities.

Five girls in the house made the honor roll for the 4th quarter of the school year. Other awards were also presented at the spring celebration and graduation for various successes throughout the school year.

The girls were excited to participate in the piano recital and annual production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Many of the girls had roles in the production this year.

Now that summer has started the girls are still just as busy. Several activities and special day trips are planned for the coming weeks.



Marsh Matters

There are 10 boys living at Marsh Hall leaving no current openings.

A few of the boys have been selected for the summer garden crew and will participate in the Marsh Grown program. The season kicked off with a spring plant sale and now the garden is planted. Youth will work in the garden during the week and then sell their produce at an on campus farmer's market.

The boys completed an exciting school year and are now looking forward to a great summer. The boys all agreed that it was sad to say good-bye to Ms. Hall. Even though they wish her well in her retirement, she will be greatly missed in the classroom next fall.

The boys have already been seen outside playing basketball and have been down to the pond to go fishing. They are also excited to have started the summer horse program. They have the opportunity to ride each day and are also learning care for the animals.



Vance Voice

Vance Hall has one opening with nine boys currently residing in the program. They finished a successful school year, with several boys participating in the *Wizard of Oz* production and receiving academic awards at the spring celebration.

A highlight of the spring was Earth Day. As a part of their science curriculum, students helped beautify the campus by cleaning up mulch beds and picking up sticks around their group homes. School staff and Vance boys worked around Vance Hall, the Administration Building and the front campus sign. It left them with a sense of pride and environmental stewardship.

Summer is now in full swing and the boys are busy with summer school and some are having the opportunity to participate in credit recovery classes. There is also plenty of time for outdoor activities like visiting the pond, riding their bikes or playing basketball.

Family Conferences continued from page 4 ...

"You're not supposed to have dishes in your room," one youth pointed out. "You're not supposed to eat or drink in your room and it's common sense those things attract bugs."

Following a group discussion, the youths agreed that the repercussion should be more discouraging and therefore they increased the consequence.

"That's exactly what the family confer-

ence is supposed to do, address how the house itself is run," Rogers said. "If they understand the other kids don't approve, they're more apt to internalize it and change it."

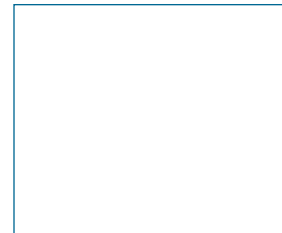
"It has a secondary effect to their cognitive skills," Rogers continued. "What happens is most kids feel alone in the world, but when they have these meetings they understand they're part of something and they

begin to believe they're part of something and part of a family."

The use of regular family conferences and self-government also helps teach children at The Marsh Foundation the importance of listening, taking turns, giving and receiving constructive criticism, as well as group problem solving, lessons that are meant to be lifelong.

The Marsh Foundation
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Address Return Service Requested



Have You Liked Us Yet?

Did you know that The Marsh has its own Facebook page? Have you liked us yet? You can stay atop of current happenings, get updates about events, or connect with friends you used to live with.



Most importantly, you can learn more about the upcoming reunion and connect with others who may be attending. As the event draws closer, we will be posting updates, agendas and reminders.

Please, visit our page at www.facebook.com/Marsh-Foundation and give us a 'like.' Then, encourage your friends to do the same!

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

Calendar of Events

June - September 2019

- Summer school is now in session until the first week of July.
- The Business and Child & Family Services offices on campus will be closed on Thursday, July 4 in observance of the Independence Day holiday.
- July 12 - The Marsh Foundation will participate in the Big Brothers Big Sisters golf outing at the Mercer County Elks.
- Monday, August 19 - First Day of School
- Monday, Sept. 2 - No School (Labor Day). The Business and Child & Family Services offices will also be closed.
- Friday, Sept. 27 - School Staff In-Service (2 hour delay for students.)



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/alumni. This ensures that you receive all mailings from The Marsh.