

# The Marsh Messenger

• Spring 2010

• [www.marshfoundation.org](http://www.marshfoundation.org)

*Serving children and families since 1922*

## Two New Marsh Foundation Trustees Named

The Third District Court of Appeals has named two new members to The Marsh Foundation Board of Trustees. Robert D. Gamble and Gary A. Corcoran were both appointed as trustee on Feb. 2. Both men bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the board.

The two vacancies in the board were created by recently retiring trustees Donald C. Sutton and Paul W. Purmort Jr. (Wally).

Gamble, a Van Wert resident, holds a bachelor of science degree from the Bowling Green State University. He pursued a double major in finance and insurance. He is currently a Nationwide Insurance Agent and the president of Bee Gee Realty & Auction, Ltd. In addition to being very active in his church, First United Methodist, Gamble participates in several other community activities. He is currently a member of the Van Wert City Planning Commission, Van Wert City Design Review Board, Community Health Professionals Advisory Board, Van Wert



**Above: The two new Marsh Foundation Trustees, (l to r) are Gary A. Corcoran and Robert D. Gamble.**

Service Club, Eagle Scout Review Committee and serves as the current chairman of the Appraisal Board of the Maumee Watershed Conservancy District.

Corcoran, also a Van Wert resident, retired from the Central Insurance Company after 40 years of employment. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from The Ohio University. He is currently a business counselor with Wright State University

and serves on Van Wert City Council, currently as president. Corcoran is a member of several community committees, including; Van Wert Public Access Television Board of Trustees, Van Wert County Regional Airport Authority Board of Trustees, Van Wert County Economic Development Advisory Board, Van Wert City Schools Community Advisory Council, Council on Aging Board of Directors, Salvation Army of Van Wert Board of Directors and more.



**THE MARSH**  
FOUNDATION

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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

## Exciting Things Planned for 2010 Alumni Reunion

Planning for the 2010 Alumni Reunion at The Marsh Foundation is well underway and there are some exciting things in store for those who attend.

Details and invitations will be arriving at your doorstep in May. Please complete the rsvp postcard promptly and return it in the mail.

There will be a Saturday evening meal as well as a large

meal on Sunday afternoon. The alumni meeting and presentations from trustees and executive staff will be held on Sunday afternoon.

A large open house is planned for Sunday afternoon as well. The Marsh will be showcasing its past, present and future with interactive activities throughout campus. The Marsh staff and youth will be involved with presenting and engaging

alumni in demonstrations and presentations. There will be things to do and see at each renovated group home, the garden, greenhouse, administration building and farm.

Watch the website for reunion updates and ways to connect with other attending alumni! You won't want to miss this weekend full of fun, great company and good food. We hope to see you here in August!

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

## From the executive's desk ...

Since the writing of the George H. Marsh Last Will and Testament, signed on November 26, 1919, there has never been a dual resignation or death of multiple trustees. As of December 31, 2009, Mr. Donald Sutton and as of January 31, Mr. Paul "Wally" Purmort resigned as The Marsh Foundation Trustees.

Both these men will be remembered for their dedication and service to the youth and staff of The Marsh Foundation. Both of these gentlemen were instrumental in the positive changes to The Marsh Foundation over the years including the major restoration of the buildings and campus for the safety and security of our youth. The new board of trustees bestow the title of "Honorary Trustee" to each of these gentlemen.

The Judges of The Third District Court of Appeals are to designate the appointee to fill the resigning vacancy. On, February 2, The Third District Court of Appeals designated and appointed Mr. Gary A. Corcoran and Mr. Robert D. Gamble to fill the vacancies.

Every five years The Marsh Foundation celebrates and gathers the former alumni and former employees who studied and served this campus. August 7 and 8, the campus will again celebrate. The festivities will begin Saturday evening with an



Jeff Grothouse

*"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit."*

*—Nelson Henderson*

informal gathering of friends including sandwiches and snacks. Sunday will provide the luncheon, campus tours and fellowship with former classmates and staff. We would be delighted if you would plan on attending this five-year celebration to visit with the past and current trustees, directors, staff and youth. More detailed information will be made available to you soon by invitation.

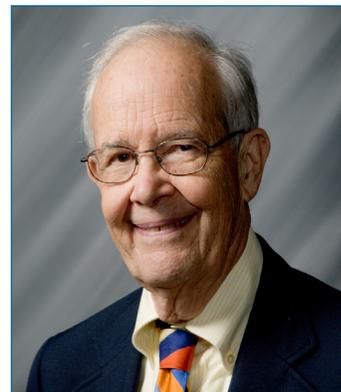
The Marsh Foundation has the design of a three piece wheel. All three pieces working together to allow the wheel to turn and be useful and productive. The three pieces to the wheel are the Child

and Family Services Division, the School and the Business Office. Each piece has a very important task just as important as the other pieces. Without any piece, the wheel would not roll effectively. The Business Office piece contains the following positions; executive Secretary and treasurer, business office coordinator, payroll and benefits coordinator, carpenter supervisor, carpenter assistant, painter supervisor, painter assistant, plumber / electrician, mechanic, vocational agriculture supervisor, horse program coordinator, horse program assistant, summer assistants, campus purchaser, cook, custodians. These men and women work very effectively and professionally to provide the needed safety services to the youth and staff of The Marsh Foundation.

You too could become a very important piece to the service of our children. If you wish to give to the youth of our campus by cash donation, charitable bequests, gifts from an estate or trust please contact the business office for more details. According to Nelson Henderson, the true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit. Our youth do appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity.

*Jeff Grothouse*

The Marsh Foundation  
Executive Secretary/Treasurer



Paul W. Purmort Jr. (Wally)

## Purmort Retires

The Marsh Foundation recently held a luncheon to honor retiring trustee, Paul W. Purmort Jr. (Wally). He was presented with a plaque honoring his 28 years of service to the organization.

His retirement was effective January 31. Purmort served as trustee since 1981 and has been one of the organization's biggest supporters. As a trustee, Purmort helped to oversee the operations of the organization, including all business and financial aspects.

Purmort said he enjoyed serving as a trustee but is largely grateful to its founder. "We are very fortunate that George Marsh's will provided for kids and foresaw their changing needs. Because of that we have been able to meet those changing needs today."

Purmort is a lifelong resident of Van Wert. He graduated from the Culver Military Academy, Miami University and the Wharton Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania. He is an Army veteran of the Korean War where he served as an aide to a General. He has been married to his wife Laurie since 1955; they have two children and four grandchildren. Purmort will be greatly missed by the entire Marsh Foundation family.

# A commitment to excellence



## Clymer Chat

There are currently nine girls living in Clymer Hall. Three of those are relatively new admissions and still getting adjusted to the campus and Marsh programs. School is now finishing up the third nine weeks and the girls are already thinking about spring and summer.

The garden program will be in full swing soon and independent living students will have the opportunity to apply for positions on the gardening crew.

Also, the spring production

of "The Wizard of Oz" will be held at the end of May on graduation day. The girls are preparing for the play auditions.

A couple of girls in the program are nearing graduation and have had their senior pictures taken recently.



## Marsh Matters

The boys at Marsh Hall have had a very busy winter. Currently, there are eight boys living in the home.

Several of them have been busy recently with their empathy projects. One youth decided

to collect goods and money to be sent to Haiti for the earthquake victims. He got the entire campus involved by soliciting donations and help with his project.

Another youth is currently collecting newspapers for an animal shelter. He has been collecting and organizing the papers and he and the other boys plan to volunteer for an afternoon when they deliver them to the shelter.

The boys are looking forward to warmer weather and the chance to spend more time outdoors.



## Vance Voice

There are currently nine boys living at Vance Hall, leaving one opening at this time.

Recently, some of the youth from Vance Hall went on a bonus trip with other youth on campus. Sherry Grone, activities coordinator, planned a Saturday trip to the Toledo Museum of Art for those that had earned extra privileges. A great time was had by all!

Several of the boys in Vance Hall took advantage of all the recent snow and built a small igloo on campus. The boys were very proud of their teamwork and their creation!

## Think Spring!!

# How to Become a Foster Parent

## *The Marsh Foundation Launches Speakers Bureau*

One of the most meaningful things you can do in life to help a child is to become a foster parent.

The Marsh Foundation in Van Wert offers a continuum of care that includes a Foster Care Program. Both family and treatment foster care for all ages of children are offered. However, the majority of foster kids are placed in homes as a step-down in their treatment plan from the group homes on campus.

Currently, The Marsh has 14 children in foster care. The Marsh believes that all children have the right to love, protection and to be cared for by a committed family. Many of the children

served have suffered abuse and/or neglect. The Marsh seeks out potential foster parents who can help to heal wounds and meet the needs of these children.

The Marsh's Foster Care Program provides service through two distinct programs. Treatment Foster Care means specifically trained and supervised foster parents serve youth who need more attention and treatment than is provided in a traditional foster home. Family Foster Care means trained foster parents provide care for youth of all ages in need of a safe placement. These youth do not typically require the intensive treatment and inter-

vention that is provided in Treatment Foster Care.

All foster parents go through extensive training before a child is placed and are required to undergo continuing training to maintain their license. They receive training in the Teaching Family model of care as well as individualized training based on the children they serve. Foster parents can be married couples or single individuals.

Consultants are assigned to each foster parent and are available 24 hours, seven days a week. They help create the youth's treatment plan, offer support and are available in

crisis situations. Foster parents are reimbursed for costs associated with caring for a foster child.

Because of the immense need for foster families, The Marsh has created a speakers bureau. Members of The Marsh staff as well as licensed foster parents are available to speak to your group or organization about the rewards of foster parenting. If you are interested in hosting a presentation, free of charge, please contact Dawn Berryman at The Marsh Foundation. She can be reached at 419.238.1695 ext. 233.

## Saying Good-Bye to a Long-Time Friend

Last month, The Marsh Foundation said good-bye to a long-time friend. Roy had come to The Marsh at age 15 and was leaving on his 18th birthday after nearly three years in Vance Hall. He'll be back in May to accept his diploma from The Marsh Foundation School and participate in graduation ceremonies.

The successful discharge was bittersweet. Originally from Miami County, Roy came to The Marsh with many physical and emotional wounds. He had been in and out of multiple foster care placements, had braces on his legs and was told before he turned 18 he would be wheelchair bound.

Now, he has no leg braces, rides a bike and has established lasting relationships.

In February of 2008, the staff at Vance Hall decided to try a new mentoring treatment method and thought Roy was a terrific candidate. Family teacher Lindsay James volunteered to take him on and formed a strong one-on-one relationship with him.

James said the two have



Roy is pictured working in the garden last summer.

been through a lot, and she's learned a great deal. "If I had to it over I would definitely do it again," she said. In addition to all of the physical changes she's seen from Roy, James said she's also seen a lot of behavioral improvement. "He's learned how to accept decisions and process bad news in a more mature way," she said.

Roy has moved on to live in an adult foster home with a great family. He said he is very excited to move onto this next stage in his life. "I'm so excited I haven't slept in four days," he said before he left. But, he also said he will miss The Marsh. "I'm going to miss everything, every bit," he said.

He refers to the staff and the youth at The Marsh as his family. "I think a lot of people have helped me. Before I came here I never had friends, now I have more than I ever imagined."

Roy also knows that the relationship he's formed with James is special. "I think she cares a lot about me." And, he said, it's different than the other relationships he's formed, "the best one," he said.

Sherry Grone, activities coordinator at The Marsh has worked with Roy extensively and saw a great deal of progress. When he arrived, hiking presented a large challenge for him, but when he left he was very active, hiking, walking and biking all over campus.

Grone said that she always admired how optimistic and caring Roy was, despite his lack of outside family support. "Roy embodied some of the values I try to instill in my programming to reach out to the whole person: reconnection to the



Lindsay James, family teacher, is pictured with Roy and his new bike during a completion and birthday celebration held in his honor.

natural world through experience and to the community through service. Grounding in core values like these are good cornerstones for building a strong and balanced person," she said.

The family teachers and other staff at The Marsh have seen Roy grow and mature first hand. But, they aren't the only ones. Ryan Thatcher, a Miami County caseworker, worked with Roy throughout his stay at The Marsh.

"Roy accomplished things I never thought he would, and I'm a fairly optimistic person," said Thatcher. "He reached goals at The Marsh Foundation that he wouldn't have reached

anywhere else."

Because of his physical limitations, increased activity helped improve his condition. "Being at The Marsh he wasn't allowed to just sit back and feel sorry for himself, he was empowered and encouraged and he went for it," said Thatcher.

He was also impressed by the progress Roy made in school and behaviorally. "He reached a level of maturity I didn't expect him to reach, physically, socially and emotionally," he said.

Congratulations Roy and best of luck in the future, we'll miss you!



It has been a very busy winter at The Marsh Foundation! Clockwise from top left: Executive treasurer/secretary Jeff Grotgouse presents retiring trustee Wally Purmort, and his wife Laurie, with a plaque honoring his 28 years of service to The Marsh. The annual Christmas celebration was held in December. It included a production of "Scrooge" by the youth and a piano recital. A fundraiser was held in December to sell poinsettias and raise money for the gardening program. It was a great success. A holiday open house was held in the greenhouse on the day poinsettias were available for pickup. Christmas tree ornaments and crafts made by the youth were sold and refreshments were provided. Activities coordinator Sherry Grone talks with a visitor at the open house. Trustees Gerald Thatcher and Wally Purmort present youth with gift cards at the annual Christmas party for youth and staff.

## Staff Spotlight

### Meet Holly Myers

July will mark 18 years since Holly Myers began her career at The Marsh Foundation. Myers began as administrative assistant in the Child and Family Services division. After five years, she moved to the position of secretary at The Marsh Foundation School.

Myers holds an associate of applied business degree from Wright State University's Lake Campus. Her responsibilities as school secretary are varied to say the least. There are several routine tasks that she performs each day, but the majority of her work depends on the principal's, teachers' and youth's needs.

Each day she organizes the schedules from the group homes and makes a morning sheet which contains each youth's appointments and schedule for the day. She keeps track of attendance, lunch count, school records, transcripts, report cards and a multitude of other forms and paperwork.

Like any school, the state of Ohio requires The Marsh School submit certain records and paperwork. Myers oversees all of that. She works closely with the superintendent's office at Lincolnview Local Schools to ensure seamless transition since The Marsh School is a member of Lincolnview Local Schools.

In addition to schedules

and paperwork, Myers is also responsible for tracking and administering medications. Group homes provide a small supply of the youth's medications and she ensures that they are taken throughout the day. She also updates all of the medication logs and associated paperwork.

Typically, Myers works one week before school begins and one week after it ends for the summer. "The beginning of the school year is definitely the busiest time of the year," she said. When new youth come on campus Myers is responsible for assembling all the pertinent information about them and their educational history. Sometimes that can be a challenge, especially if a student has attended multiple school systems.

Myers also keeps track of all reminders and they are reported to the youth's report cards and records. Reminders help students to remember important skills such as, completing assignments, asking for help, bringing materials to class and showing respect. When students meet improvement goals, they receive rewards at the end of the school day.

Myers works directly with principal, Roger Salisbury, to keep the motivation systems in place. In addition to receiving candy for low reminders, students can also earn pizza with the principal if they are caught



**Holly Myers has worked at The Marsh Foundation for nearly 18 years. Since 1997, she has worked as the secretary for The Marsh Foundation School.**

being unusually good. Or, on Mondays if the 'mystery motivator' meets their daily goal, all youth that meet their goal that day enjoy soda for lunch the following day.

"The kids really enjoy the motivators and respond well to them," she said. Her office is a type of home room, housing lockers and storage space for all the youth and their personal belongings. So, she has a lot of interaction with the youth.

In addition to working with the teachers and school staff, she also coordinates appointments with their counselors, gives information to their treatment team, corresponds with their caseworkers and interacts with parents.

Myers said she's seen sev-

eral changes in her years at The Marsh. The youth served are tougher than they used to be. In addition, she said, technology has made things easier. "Now, I can scan school records into a pdf and e-mail them. I never send out a large package of school records in the mail anymore," she said.

Holly and her husband Jerry have two sons, Brian 15 and Derek 9. Brian plays golf, basketball and baseball; so much of her family's time is spent watching sports. The family also enjoys camping and visiting the lake during the summer and watching the Little League World Series. She also enjoys attending concerts, shopping and watching IU basketball in her free time.

# A Glimpse Into Life ... *at The Marsh Foundation*

## Christmas Tree Hunting

This past Christmas, Marsh Hall decided to purchase a live tree. Over the years there has always been one reason or another why they were not able to get one. The reasons being, family teachers being allergic to pine, moving out for renovations, too busy, etc. However, in 2009 everything came together.

The program manager at Marsh Hall, Susan Mihm, suggested an excursion to cut down a live tree and the youth and the family teachers were very excited. The youth and staff researched the perfect place for Christmas tree cutting and they decided to go to St. Joe Christmas tree farm outside of Fort Wayne.

According to *Scott\**, a youth in the house, the whole experience was really cool.

The Christmas tree farm offered a gift shop, train rides and 27 acres of trees that you could cut yourself or have cut for you.

With 27 acres of trees, the boys and staff took a tractor ride to find the best tree. First, Scott said, they had about five trees they wanted. "It was a hard decision because they were all different shapes and sizes," he said.

Then, they were able to narrow it down to two. After

*"I have seen a lot of live trees over the years and this one, by far, was the most beautiful tree."*

*—Susan Mihm  
Program Manager*

measuring the chosen tree Scott and his house mates cut down the tree themselves.

Cutting down a live tree was a new experience for the boys in Marsh Hall. "I had never done anything like that before, it was a lot of fun," he said. "I'd like to do it again.

Scott also noted that the other group homes were a little jealous of their trip and their tree.

According to Mihm, the boys did a great job of picking the perfect tree. "I have seen a lot of live trees over the years and this one, by far, was the most beautiful tree," she said.

The boys had a great time bringing the tree back home and decorating it and the house for the Holidays.

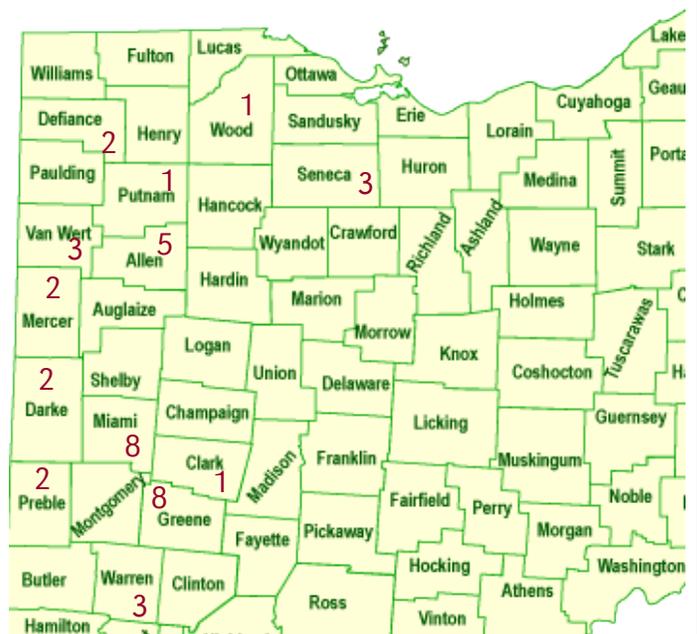
The beautiful tree that the boys chose is pictured to the right.

*\*The youth's name was changed to protect confidentiality.*



Youth at Marsh Hall sought out and cut down the Christmas tree for their house this year.

## Where's Home?



We are often asked where is home for our youth. Here is a snapshot of where our current group home and foster care youth call home.

## Joke Corner

**Q:** Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?

**A:** It didn't have any guts!



The Marsh Foundation  
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## Marsh Foundation to Again Host Relay for Life

The Marsh Foundation is proud to once again be the host site for the Van Wert Relay for Life. The event will be held on The Marsh Foundation campus on Friday and Saturday, May 7 and 8.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life is a life-changing event that gives everyone in communities across the globe a chance to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against the disease. At Relay, teams of people camp out and take turns walking or running around a path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event. Because cancer never sleeps, Relays are overnight events.



**THE MARSH**  
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Visit The Marsh  
Foundation  
website at:

[www.marshfoundation.org](http://www.marshfoundation.org)

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

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

- March 20 & 21 - Lincoln-view production of "The Wizard of Oz" in the auditorium.
- March 26 - Peony Pageant in the auditorium
- April 2-9 - The Marsh Foundation School Spring Break.
- May 7 & 8 - 2010 Van Wert Relay for Life on campus.
- May 28 - The Marsh School graduation and spring celebration will be held beginning at 10 a.m., provided there are no additional school cancellations.
- The Marsh Foundation 2010 Alumni Reunion will be held on campus on August 7 and 8.



For more information about any event, visit [www.marshfoundation.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.marshfoundation.org).