

# The Marsh Messenger

• Spring 2011

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

*Serving children and families since 1922*

## The Marsh Foundation Celebrates Black History Month

The Marsh Foundation spent February celebrating Black History Month with a variety of projects. Several activities were planned to involve both staff and youth on campus.

February's Child and Family Services in-service was presented by Daryl Dowdy, director of multicultural affairs at Bluffton University. He spoke about black history. The interactive presentation included information on influential African Americans, historical videos and a jeopardy style quiz game at the end. Staff participated by answering questions and reading biographical information about prominent African Americans.



**Director of intake and recruitment, Tim Dull, reads an African American's biographical information during February's in-service.**



**During the live rendition of "Are you Smarter than a Teenager?" Vance Hall program manager, Matt Tuttle served as the humorous host and clinical supervisor Annette Herrmann was the lively contestant.**

During February, youth were given the challenge to work on creative projects that honored Black History month. There were a wide variety of projects turned in, including posters, poems, essays, interpretive dances, bulletin board decorations and much more. First, second and third prizes were awarded to the top projects. First place was awarded to a pair of Marsh Hall youth who created a replica of the underground railroad out of popsicle sticks. Youth who participated received certificates and Wal-Mart gift cards.

In addition, a special cultural luncheon was held that gave youth the opportunity to learn about African American cuisine. Staff and youth both were encouraged to research African American dishes and

bring something revolving around that theme to the luncheon.

The activities concluded with a game show in the auditorium, "Are you Smarter than a Teenager?" which was modeled after the popular TV game show "Are you Smarter than a Fifth Grader?" by director of residential services, Kathleen Davis. Vance Hall program manager Matt Tuttle served as the show's host and clinical supervisor Annette Herrmann was the game's contestant.

Six campus youth were selected to sit on the panel by their peers and were required to study material in preparation for the event. Questions revolved around black history and provided for an entertaining yet educational afternoon.



**THE MARSH**  
FOUNDATION

### You're Invited

The Marsh Foundation will hold its annual Spring Celebration and Graduation ceremony this spring in the school auditorium. A luncheon will follow in the cafeteria. All are invited. Please watch our website for the official date when it's announced. Due to school make-up days it's not yet been scheduled.

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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

## From the executive's desk ...

We are nearing the end of the third nine weeks of the 2010-2011 school year, and obviously the rugged winter weather has played havoc with our classes this winter. As a result of the cancellations we will be making up days at the end of the school year. The exact make-up days and date of the spring program and graduation have yet to be determined.

Many of our high school students are currently taking the Ohio Graduation Tests. High school sophomores take this test, and unless a student is exempted because of an IEP, the student is required to pass all five sections (reading, writing, math, citizenship and science) in order to graduate. Our elementary and junior high students also are tested beginning in April, and these tests are called the Ohio Achievement Assessments.

It may be interesting to note that the results of these tests, while remaining a permanent part of each student's record, are not reflected in Lincolnview's District Report Card. Since our school is in a residential setting, the Ohio Department of Education has determined that it would not be fair to hold Lincolnview accountable for test results for campus students that are



**Roger Salisbury**

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*—Roger Salisbury*

typically transient in nature. Many times, we have several students taking the test after being admitted to our campus only a few days prior.

Our schedule again allows teachers and students to take a much needed and deserved spring break from March 28 through April 1. Since our students must attend school in our June and July summer session, it is important that we give the youth a chance to catch their breath and get a break from the school routine. Activities coordinator Sherry Grone has many meaningful activities planned for the students during this week.

This year we have added instrumental music to our daily curriculum. Mr. Mayes provides daily guitar instruction to our youth. This is another example of our commitment to providing our students with a well rounded experience. In addition to guitar, the students have daily art and vocal music classes.

The students also are provided weekly piano lessons. These special activities, added to math, social studies, reading, science, and English give the students a well rounded education during their time at The Marsh School.

*Roger Salisbury*

**The Marsh Foundation  
School Principal**

## The Marsh Publishes Charitable Giving Brochure

The Marsh recently published a tri-fold brochure that details the charitable giving options available at the organization.

Many times, when individuals are planning where to leave their estate, they struggle to choose non-profit organizations that might benefit from donations.

The mission of The Marsh is to inspire hope, to teach and to care for children and families. The brochure outlines the organization's programs such as residential services, foster care services, clinical services and the on-campus school. Charitable gifts to The Marsh help ensure that our children and families continue to receive the services they need.

By giving, you will help continue the legacy of The Marsh Foundation. Charitable giving can be done in a variety of ways: cash donations, real estate, charitable trusts, life insurance or bequests in wills and living trusts.

The brochure details these options. If you would like a copy, it can be found on our website [www.marshfoundation.org](http://www.marshfoundation.org), or you can contact The Marsh at 419.238.1695 ext. 120.

# A commitment to excellence

## Spring Project to Focus on Homelessness and Hunger

### *Month-Long Event Will Conclude with Concert and Homestead Tours*

This spring, activities coordinator Sherry Grone has organized a campus-wide event to raise awareness about homelessness and hunger in our communities. The effort is titled: *Homeless and Hungry: Becoming Part of the Solution.*

Homelessness and hunger are areas of growing need in our local and global community, especially for at risk youth. The goal of the month-long program is to develop an awareness and concern in youth at The Marsh for the needs around us. And, show them how they can give back to help fill those needs. The activities will hopefully help them feel like an important part of the community and help them to develop a heart for serving others.

At the end of February, the effort was kicked off with the campus movie. The youth viewed "The Blindsight" because of its theme relating to homelessness.

Throughout the month of March, youth have been leading a community wide food drive. All of the food collected will be donated to area food banks. In addition, barrels have been set up around campus and donations can be used to 'vote' for certain staff members. The staff member with the fullest barrel at the end of the food drive 'wins' a pie in the face!

On Wednesday, March 23, there will be a guest panel in the auditorium. Guests will have an opportunity to share their experiences relating to homelessness and/or hunger and the youth will have a chance to ask questions and to learn from their stories. A video presentation will



**The Voices of Unity Youth Choir from Ft. Wayne, Ind., will perform at The Marsh Auditorium on Saturday, April 2 at 7 p.m. Concert admission is free with the donation of perishable food items for local food pantries.**

also be shown on the topic.

During the Marsh School spring break, March 28 - April 1, each group home will have a designated service day.

Activities that day will involve traveling to Lima where they will serve and then eat lunch at the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen. After that, they will spend time serving at the West Ohio Food Bank. The day will give all youth the opportunity to experience what it is like at a soup kitchen and food bank, while also getting to actually volunteer and help the organizations.

Because the family of George, Hilinda and Katie Marsh left such a strong legacy of helping the less fortunate in the community, the closing event is designed to honor them. Recent events are an illustration of how The Marsh consistently works to continue that legacy.

George Marsh was extremely valuable to those in Van Wert. In addition to creating The Marsh Foundation with his last will and

testament, he also founded the first hospital in Van Wert as well as the Van Wert YWCA. Hilinda and Katie were also significant and did things such as drive around town to deliver food and medicines to those in need.

On Saturday, April 2, the month-long program will be capped off with a benefit concert and tours of the historic Marsh Homestead. At 7 p.m., the Voices of Unity Youth Choir (VOU) will perform in The Marsh Auditorium.

Admission to the concert is free, with the donation of non-perishable food items. All items collected will then be donated to Van Wert area food banks. Items of most need include canned fruit, boxed cereal, flour, sugar and cooking oil. Toilet paper, tissue and healthy canned food items are also needed.

VOU is a unique and exciting soulful choral group from Fort Wayne, Ind. consisting of youth ages 7 – 19. In July, 2010, VOU was invited to represent

United States of America, competing at the highest level, in the 6th World Choir Games in Sha-oxing, China. The World Choir Games is the largest choir competition in the world and over 400 choirs, comprised of 27,000 singers from 80 countries competed in various categories. VOU won two gold medals, one in the popular choral music category and one in the gospel and spiritual category, and were also named champions in the gospel and spiritual category.

For those interested in learning more about the Marsh history and seeing the preserved Homestead, public tours will be given at 1 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and again at 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 2. Ron Bagley, former Marsh Foundation director, will lead the tours. They will be done on a first come, first served basis and will last approximately 30 minutes.

For more information, call 419.238.1695 ext. 233.





## Clymer Chat

Currently, Clymer Hall is at capacity with 10 girls. One opening is anticipated soon as a youth transitions into foster care.

The girls have had a busy winter and are anxiously awaiting spring. With several new residents arriving over the winter, the girls have been presented with opportunities to learn about adjusting to change and sharing responsibilities.

Many of the girls at Clymer Hall participated in the competition for Black History Month projects. Two of the girls created a poster about influential African American women that

won second place.

The girls are also gearing up to sell candy bars to benefit the Van Wert Relay for Life. Last year, the girls raised over \$900 for The Marsh team by selling candy bars as a fundraiser. The Relay for Life will once again be held on The Marsh campus on May 6 and 7.



## Marsh Matters

Marsh Hall is nearly full with nine boys. Currently there is just one opening.

Most recently, the boys at Marsh Hall have been busy organizing the campus and

community food drive for the *Homeless and Hungry: Becoming Part of the Solution* project. The boys participate in an empathy group on campus that has been an instrumental part of this project.

Each month, the boys visit the Van Wert Manor nursing home. At their last visit, they surprised a resident with a 90th birthday cake that they made.

Three boys currently participate in a local bowling league and their season is wrapping up. Two of them did well enough to qualify for districts and then for regional competition. Both are anxiously waiting to see if they qualify for state.



## Vance Voice

There are currently ten boys living at Vance Hall.

Many of the boys at Vance participated in the Black History Month project competition. One youth's poster on Martin Luther King, Jr. tied for third place.

The boys are very anxious for the weather to break and spring to officially begin. Many of them have already been outside playing basketball and riding their bikes.

Many of the boys are also doing exceptionally well in school. When the honor roll was recently announced, one youth received honors for having eight As and Bs, and two received distinction, for having seven As and Bs.

Summer time also means on-campus jobs become available and there has already been talk among the Vance boys about applying for positions.

## maurices® Donates Stuffed Dogs to Marsh Foundation Youth

Pati Jenkins, manager of the Van Wert maurices clothing store, came to The Marsh Foundation in December to donate stuffed dogs for the youth. She brought more than 25 dogs that were given to the youth at Christmas time.

The plush toys were originally sold at maurices to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. Jenkins, who also volunteers for the American Cancer Society and the Relay for Life, said it's nice to be able to give back to an organization that gives so much to the community. The Marsh Foundation is the host of the 2011 Van Wert Relay for Life event in May.

The dogs made the holidays a little brighter for the kids on campus. Jenkins has donated dogs in years past as well. She's a former Marsh student, and thinks it is great to be able to give back to the organization that helped her during her youth.

**At right: Pati Jenkins, maurices manager, presents a Clymer Hall student with a stuffed dog for Christmas.**





Clockwise starting at top left: Christmas 2010 was an exciting time at The Marsh Foundation. The Christmas celebration and play featured family teacher Laura Sanford and her family as Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus. For the first time, select students participated in a guitar performance. Several staff members sang at the conclusion of the play along with students. All of the youth participated in a piano recital prior to the play. Clymer Hall and the Greenhouse on The Marsh campus were featured in the 2010 YWCA Holiday Home Tour. Both buildings were decorated and toured by the community to raise funds for the YWCA of Van Wert County.





## Marsh Foundation Videos Now Online



In preparation for the 2010 Alumni Reunion, videos were produced for The Marsh Foundation. Two short videos profile the history of the organization as well as the current programs and services offered.

These videos are now available to be viewed online. They can be seen at our website, [www.marshfoundation.org](http://www.marshfoundation.org) under the About Us tab. Or, they can be viewed on The Marsh Foundation's YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/themarshfoundation](http://www.youtube.com/user/themarshfoundation).

If you view the videos via YouTube there is opportunity to comment on them. Or, you can visit The Marsh Facebook page to discuss the videos as well at [www.facebook.com/MarshFoundation](http://www.facebook.com/MarshFoundation).

Copies are also still available for purchase at \$10 each. If you are interested, please contact Dawn Berryman, marketing and public relations specialist at 419.238.1695 ext. 233 or [dberryman@marshfoundation.org](mailto:dberryman@marshfoundation.org).

## Marsh Foundation Student Competes in County Spelling Bee

Jennifer is an eighth-grader at The Marsh Foundation School. Recently, she participated in the school spelling bee where she beat out several of her peers to earn the right to participate in the Van Wert County Spelling Bee.

The County Spelling Bee was held in The Marsh Foundation auditorium on Feb. 10. Jennifer said she was nervous when competing in the school's bee, but even more so for the bigger county competition. She said that she was surprised that she won The Marsh's spelling bee to qualify.

"I'm not really a studier, but I used all of my reviewed all of my spelling words to practice some," she said. The County Spelling Bee is for grades one through eight. Jennifer said she was nervous about getting beat by someone younger.

After spelling a couple of words correctly, she misspelled 'candidate' to end her chances of winning the title.

"I was frustrated," Jennifer said. "I knew how to spell it and I made a mistake. I wish I could have done better," she said.

Even though she didn't end up winning the county bee, she said she was proud of herself and her ability to qualify and participate.



**The Van Wert County Spelling Bee is annually held in The Marsh Foundation auditorium. This year, a Marsh eighth-grader participated in the Bee.**

Mr. Roger Salisbury, Marsh School principal, said he was proud of the job that Jennifer did. "Jennifer is an excellent speller and she did a fine job of representing our school at the County Spelling Bee," he said.

Jennifer said that her favorite school subject is science and

her least favorite are math and history. For the most part, she enjoys school at The Marsh and thinks the teachers are fair. She admits that sometimes it takes her a little longer, especially in math, but when the teachers teach she listens and eventually gets it.

## New Staff Members

The Marsh Foundation recently hired a new staff member:

- Nicole (Nicky) Blair ~ group home custodian.

## A Day in the Life ... of a School Family Teacher

When she was in high school and college, Joy Smith couldn't quite decide between a career in education or social work. Now, she seems to have the best of both worlds as a school family teacher at The Marsh Foundation.

Five years ago, Smith was hired as a family teacher working in Clymer Hall. Two years later, when the school family teacher position opened up, she jumped at the chance. "I have a bachelor's degree in early education and I've always been interested in social work, so the school family teacher position was perfect," she said.

Although it's hard to describe a 'typical' day on the job, all of Smith's days include a mixture of paperwork, mediating, teaching to behaviors and much more. She starts her day at 7 a.m. by reading transition notes from the evening before. It's critical, she said, to stay informed about what is happening with the girls on a daily basis.

She then transitions with night staff and checks on the girls to make sure they're ready for school. Then, she takes them over to breakfast before they start school at 8:15 a.m.

Her role throughout the day varies. Oftentimes, she is an advocate for the students, helping mediate struggles they may be having with teachers or peers. She's also responsible for documenting grades, addressing issues such as forgetting supplies or homework, and communicating with the group home about the school day and students' progress.



**Joy Smith has been a school family teacher at The Marsh Foundation for three years. She enjoys working with girls in the classroom to help them make the most out of their educational experience at The Marsh.**

"It can be challenging," she said. "I'm just one person and there are 11 kids." Sometimes, she said it's hard to balance her time between those who need more attention and those who may be feeling a bit left out.

Working 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, Smith sometimes feels like she doesn't build relationships as quickly with the girls she works with. "I really try to take time each day to touch base with each girl and have a short conversation about life outside

of school," she said. In the summer, she feels like she does even more relationship building when there is less structured time and she gets to participate in more activities with the girls.

Since she attends school with the girls and is in the administration building all day, she often has interactions with counselors and CPS workers. "I think it's helpful that the counselors include me on some things because then I can help the girls work through other problems," she said.

Smith said her job is very

rewarding and most days she goes home feeling good. "There are rough spots of course, but when they can finally break through and accomplish something, it makes it all worth it," she said. The best part of her job, she said, is seeing the difference in the girls from when they enter the program and when they leave it. "Usually, we see success. They get their grades up and learn to maintain in the classroom."

The youth at The Marsh tend to have difficulty in school, for a variety of reasons. Smith believes her role as a school family teacher and her use of the Teaching Family Model, helps the youth gain a different perspective and look at things in a different light. "We can help them be successful by explaining things differently, or mediating a conflict with a teacher which creates a better learning environment for them and their classmates," she said.

Each year, one of the school teachers has the students write a letter to their school family teacher, telling them why they've helped them or why they haven't. "That's when you know you've made a difference, when they are able to tell you how you've helped, even though some days they say they hate you," Smith said.

Smith is from Van Wert originally. She and her boyfriend enjoy doing things with his nine-year-old daughter like attending her dance recitals and basketball games. In Smith's free time, she also enjoys scrapbooking and reading.

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## Relay for Life Returns to The Marsh

This spring, the Van Wert County Relay for Life will once again be held on The Marsh Foundation campus. The event will be held Friday, May 6 and Saturday, May 7. The Relay will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday and conclude at 2 p.m. on Saturday. All funds raised are for the American Cancer Society. The Marsh is proud to have this event on our campus and invites the community to attend and support the very worthwhile cause.

## Marsh Foundation Alumni Wanted

We know that several Marsh Foundation alumni are not on our mailing list and do not receive newsletters or updates. If you are in contact with other former students of The Marsh Foundation, please encourage them to contact us. They can fill out the alumni form on our website, [www.marshfoundation.org](http://www.marshfoundation.org), or they can contact Dawn Berryman, [dberryman@marshfoundation.org](mailto:dberryman@marshfoundation.org), to be put on the mailing list. We would like all alumni, no matter what years they attended The Marsh, to be on our contact list.

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

## Calendar of Events

March 2011 ~ July 2011

- March 28 - April 1 - Marsh Foundation School Spring break.
- April 1, 7 p.m. - Peony Pageant in The Marsh Auditorium.
- April 2 - Conclusion of Homeless & Hungry: Becoming a Part of the Solution, including tours of The Marsh Homestead and a concert in the auditorium at 7 p.m. Tours will be held at 1 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. The concert will feature The Voices of Unity Youth Choir from Fort Wayne, Indiana.
- June 21, 1 p.m. - Brumback Library Puppet Show in the auditorium.



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