

The Marsh Messenger

• Fall 2015

• www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

2015 Alumni Reunion a Success!

Once every five years, The Marsh Foundation celebrates its history and invites back the hundreds of alumni who once called the campus home. Recently, more than 400 past students, employees and their families visited The Marsh campus for a memorable weekend.

On Saturday evening, alumni and their families enjoyed a meal and plenty of time to catch up with each other. There were more than 225 individuals that attended that evening.

Sunday began with a luncheon and featured many other wonderful events. Former director, Ron Bagley, was honored by alumni for his time and dedication to The Marsh. He was presented with a beautiful clock.

In the afternoon, alumni had the opportunity to tour the



campus. All of the buildings were open for them to reminisce, visit their old rooms and see the updates to the campus. More than 400 people were on campus to enjoy Sunday's festivities.

Following the open house, a meeting was held in the auditorium. The three current executives gave an update on current services and happenings

before the alumni association conducted their meeting. The group elected new officers for the coming year. Mable (Trindle) Johnson was elected president, Dave Newland was elected vice president and Linda (Newland) Rowell was elected secretary/treasurer. The officers can be reached at marshalumniOfficers@gmail.com.

You can see more photos from the event on page 4.

Established as an orphanage and children's home in 1922, The Marsh Foundation programs have evolved over the past 90+ years. The Marsh continues to serve children who need a home but has expanded its services to include counseling and a more comprehensive treatment program.



THE MARSH
FOUNDATION

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



This picture of Marsh Foundation alumni was taken Saturday evening during the Alumni Reunion in August. For more pictures from the weekend, see page 4.

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

From the Executive's desk ...

This year, The Marsh Foundation School is implementing a lot of change. The biggest change our students will get the opportunity to experience includes the implementation of a new 1:1 computer initiative. Each student will have access to a computer at all times during the school day.

Our focus as a school is to individualize instruction to meet the needs of each student and our ultimate goal is to prepare our students for what comes after they leave The Marsh Foundation, whether it be to another facility, a regular school, or the workforce. The challenge we face is to best serve the wide variety student needs that we work with every day.

With each student having access to a computer, we are delivering a lot of our curriculum in our core classes through an online source. Using this online resource to educate our students is ensuring that our curriculum is current and also gives our students practice in reading online text, something that is of utmost importance of this current generation.



Robbie Breese

“Although change always seems to present many challenges, our staff continues to show resiliency in keeping the ultimate goal in mind: helping our children.”

We are also offering a technology course, focused around typing and word processing. Our teachers are

also using Google Apps for Education which is a tool in which we currently use to collaborate with each other, complete projects, assign work and most importantly teach digital citizenship.

The Marsh Foundation staff is also using the advancements in technology to increase efficiency across campus. As WIFI capabilities continue to increase throughout campus, we are able to use devices as tools for note taking, record keeping and collaboration. Many staff meetings now include a group of people with an electronic device in front of them, rather than the pencil and paper we’re used to seeing.

As we are taking a few bumps and bruises along the way, our staff continues to improve in the area of technology. Although change always seems to present many challenges, our staff continues to show resiliency in keeping the ultimate goal in mind: helping our children.

Robbie Breese
Principal and Director of Education, The Marsh Foundation School

Public Open House Held to Showcase Campus; Highlight Involvement Opportunities

Earlier this month, The Marsh Foundation held a public open house. The beautiful historic campus was open to the public for free tours. Giveaways and refreshments were provided.

Individuals had the opportunity to tour the group homes, historic Homestead, school building, greenhouse and more.

The event was geared to those who were curious about The Marsh and what the big, old buildings are like inside. However, there was also information provided about the services currently provided by The Marsh, and how people can get involved.

Specifically, The Marsh is currently looking for Foster Families to join us. Many, many children are turned away monthly because of the lack of foster homes in our network. If you are interested in learning more, call 419.238.KIDS.

Historical Project Underway at The Marsh

We are excited to announce that we are working on a full-length video tour of the Historic Marsh Homestead. On the National Registry of Historic Places, the Homestead has quite a story to tell. It is the residence where George, Hilinda and daughter Katie spent their entire lives together. The video will tell more of the untold story surrounding the family and how they were inspired to create The Marsh Foundation.

Visit our website, <http://marshfoundation.org/about-us/videos/> or our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/Marsh-Foundation to see a preview of the video!

The video tour is just one portion of the historical project currently occurring at The Marsh. An archivist has been hired and has been working diligently to sort and preserve letters and photographs dating back to the 1800s. The items all work to tell the story of how George H. Marsh acquired his wealth and how he used it to benefit others. Aside from The Marsh Foundation, Marsh founded the first Van Wert County Hospital, The Van Wert YWCA, Fountain Park as well as other philanthropic endeavors.

The hope is that in the near future, much of this will be able to be displayed.

Project Believe Donates Back Packs and School Supplies to Marsh Students



(L to R) Tammie Rafferty and her assistant, Owen Boesenberg from Project Believe present backpacks and school supplies for the 36 group home students at The Marsh Foundation School to Robbie Breese, principal and director of education at The Marsh Foundation.

For the second year in a row, Project Believe was able to visit campus and bring along a donation of backpacks and school supplies for the 36 group home students. Project Believe is no stranger to The Marsh Foundation; the non-profit has also donated Christmas presents and Valentine's for the past three

years.

The organization, which originated in 2009, has continued to grow and expand. Tammie Rafferty, the group's founder, was inspired to help others by her own daughter's circumstances.

Rafferty visited the campus to present the backpacks and

supplies to Mr. Robbie Breese, Marsh Foundation School Principal, and students.

You can learn more about Project Believe by visiting their website at www.project-belive.net. Or, you can contact Rafferty directly at projectbelieve@live.com.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Mentors Needed

The Marsh Foundation and Big Brothers Big Sisters need volunteers to be a Big for the Supper Club Program. There are several youth from The Marsh looking forward to spending some time with a special friend a couple of times a month beginning in late October.

Without enough volunteers some of these youth may not be able to participate in the program. You could be that special person!

In the Supper Club program,



the Bigs and Littles get together on the first and third Thursdays of the month for supper and an activity.

Volunteers also visit their Little at the youth's group home

once a month on a weekend day of their choosing for a couple of hours.

To participate in this program, or for more information, please contact Sherry Grone at 419-605-2512 or sgrone@marshfoundation.org.

It doesn't take a lot to make a BIG difference in a life of a youth at The Marsh Foundation. A past youth summed it up when he said, "It is really cool how you guys do this for us. It is really appreciated. It's a lot of fun."

Memories from The Marsh Foundation 2015 Alumni Reunion



For more pictures, visit www.marshfoundation.org or www.facebook.com/MarshFoundation.



Clockwise starting at top left: Youth have the opportunity to use their own Chromebook throughout the school day. Many youth participated in and won ribbons in the annual horse show. It was a beautiful day for the community to come out and enjoy The Marsh campus at the recent public open house. The memorial patio to the west of the Administration Building is now complete. Brick pavers are available for engraving at \$100 and \$200. The Marsh hosted a booth in the Commercial Building at the Van Wert County Fair.

The Marsh Awarded Three-Year CARF Accreditation

CARF International recently announced that The Marsh Foundation has been re-accredited for a period of three years for its Case Management/ Services Coordination: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents); Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Adults); and Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents) programs.

The latest accreditation is the fourth consecutive Three-Year Accreditation that the international accrediting body has awarded to The Marsh Foundation.

This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization

and shows the organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards. An organization receiving a Three-Year Accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process and has demonstrated to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit that its programs and services are of the highest quality, measurable and accountable.

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

- "The staff members of The Marsh Foundation demonstrate clear dedication and passion in providing quality services to the children and families served. All staff members go above and beyond to meet the needs of the



organization and the persons served."

- "The Marsh Foundation provides a safe environment to the persons served that is very welcoming, clean, and comfortable."
- "Staff members consistently focus on empowerment, recovery, wellness, and healing in the lives of the persons served and their families. The persons

served are treated with dignity and respect."

CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. The mission of CARF is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process and continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of the persons served. Founded in 1966, CARF assists service providers in improving the quality of their services, demonstrating value, and meeting internationally recognized organizational and program standards. More information about CARF International can be found at www.carf.org.

Garden Crew Hosts Season's End Harvest Meal

The Marsh Foundation 'Marsh Grown' garden program celebrated the end of the summer growing season with a Harvest Meal for staff, peers and Trustees. The meal was held recently at the First Presbyterian Church in Van Wert and featured many items grown in The Marsh Foundation garden as well as other local products. It was entirely prepared by the garden crew.

The Marsh Grown youth garden program is dedicated to helping young people develop a sense of land stewardship and learn the importance of healthy food. Participants are taught valuable gardening skills



The 'Marsh Grown' garden crew recently hosted their harvest meal at the First Presbyterian Church. The group used items from their garden and other locally produced products.

throughout the season. In addition, the program serves as a catalyst for youth to develop

important job skills for future employment.

Throughout the sum-

mer, the garden crew grows vegetables and sells them at the farmer's market for income. The group will continue to be at the Van Wert Farmer's Market on Fox Road on Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. through October.

Participants in the Marsh Grown garden crew are youth who are a part of The Marsh Foundation's Independent Living Group. They are all 15 ½ years of age or older and are working on skills that will help them be successful adults. The garden program is an opportunity for them to interact with peers and adults, develop quality job skills and learn how to grow healthy food.



Clymer Chat

Clymer Hall is currently full with 10 girls. The girls enjoyed an eventful summer, including the horse program, trips to the pool, caring for the rabbits in the rabbit barn and more.

The girls were excited for the reunion and public open house when they had the opportunity to give tours through their home. They made and decorated cookies to share at both of the events.

Some of the girls were involved in 4H this summer. One youth in particular, showed her rabbit at the Van Wert County Fair and won a total of six ribbons for her projects!



Marsh Matters

Marsh Hall is currently with all 10 beds full. The boys are adjusting to being back in school and the fall schedule. They had a fun summer fishing at the pond, completing community service projects and participating in the horse program.

The summer horse program teaches youth not only how to ride but how to care for the animals. It culminated with a horse show in August where all of the youth on campus were able to showcase their skills for an audience. Awards were given for the top riders in each class. Donated shirts and jackets from Quick as a Wink Printing were a great perk for those participating



Senior Stuff

Senior Hall currently has two openings in its Independent Living Program. The home accepts boys ages 15 1/2 and over who are working on skills they will need upon emancipation.

The boys at Senior Hall spent a lot of the summer at their off campus jobs. They also had time for recreation and took some fun day trips together.

Some of the boys had the opportunity to work on the Marsh Grown garden crew throughout the summer. The crew raised produce that they were then able to sell at the Van Wert Farmer's Market.



Vance Voice

Vance Hall is currently full with 10 boys. They have been excited to start the school year and incorporate their new chrome book computers into their daily routine.

The new computers are available for them to use individually throughout the day. Youth are using them to communicate with each other and staff, complete assignments and learn new technology tools.

The boys at Vance Hall have been spending a lot of time outdoors enjoying the nice weather. They have been riding bikes and playing basketball quite a bit. One day recently, the boys released balloons in honor of a youth's father who has passed away.

Clinical Stakeholder Annual Satisfaction Survey Report Compiled

Each year, The Marsh Foundation conducts a survey of its stakeholders about the clinical (counseling) services that clients are receiving. Results from the 2015 fiscal year survey were recently compiled.

These surveys are conducted to measure performance improvement and gather input. The rating scale is 5 - 1, with 5 being very satisfied and one being very dissatisfied. Any question's total average rating that is below 4.00 indicates

an area needs improvement.

When all respondents were averaged, they answered a 4.64 to the question, "Overall, how satisfied are you with the clinical services you received at The Marsh Foundation?"

Client parents were surveyed about things such as convenience, accessibility, confidentiality and whether the treatment is reaching goals. The average of all responses was over 4.

Treatment team members

were surveyed on things like communication, treatment goals, cooperation and accessibility. The average of all responses was above 4.38.

Many respondents left comments in the space available. Several expressed gratitude for the helpfulness of services and staff was complimented on their dedication and commitment to youth.

One parent stated, "I don't think the community realizes

what a great place The Marsh Foundation is. I have lived in Van Wert County my entire life and never knew about all the great things they provide for the children who are there. I am thankful that such a place exists for my daughter. You have helped her immensely."

And, a treatment team member said, "I am very pleased with The Marsh Foundation and the services they provide."

The Marsh Foundation
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Have You Liked Us Yet?

Did you know that The Marsh has it's 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

October - December 2015

- Marsh Foundation representatives will attend the Public Children Services Association of Ohio's conference on Oct. 21- 23 and the National TFA Conference Nov. 16 - 18 in Indianapolis.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences for The Marsh School are Saturday, Oct. 31.
- The Marsh Grown garden crew will once again host their poinsettia sale this November. Stay tuned for details.
- The Marsh Foundation School will not be in session Nov. 25 - 27 or Dec. 21 - Jan. 4 for Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.



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.