

The Marsh Messenger

• Summer 2017 • www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

Marsh Foundation Hosts 2017 Graduation and Spring Celebration

The Marsh Foundation School held its annual spring celebration on Wednesday, May 24. The day included piano recitals, a musical production of *The Wizard of Oz*, a graduation ceremony and a luncheon. Two students were honored for receiving their high school diplomas.

Many of the youth's friends and families, as well as community members joined in the celebration. More than 40 students participated in the day's festivities. Many received academic awards for their successes throughout the school year. Following the program in the auditorium, everyone in attendance enjoyed a luncheon in the cafeteria.



Above: Marsh Foundation graduates Zoey and Caleb are pictured in their caps and gowns after receiving their diplomas.



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

Marsh Sponsors Trauma Presenter, Dr. Bruce Perry



Romer's Catering in Celina was full of area professionals, recently, listening to Bruce D. Perry, MD, PhD, presenting on trauma, the effects on the brain and what can be done to promote healing.

The Marsh Foundation was proud to be a sponsor of a recent collaborative training event in Mercer County. Bruce D. Perry, MD, PhD, who is well known for his clinical and basic neuroscience research. Dr. Perry's clinical research and practice has focused on high-risk children. This work has examined the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, and physiological effects of neglect and trauma in children, adolescents and adults. This work has

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

From the Executive's desk ...

My favorite season on The Marsh Foundation Campus is spring; with school graduation, Wizard of Oz production, grass growing, trees blossoming and the flowers blooming. This is a special campus and very beautiful during this time of the year. This spring has been no different.

It has been a slow and difficult start for many of The Marsh's farmers. Planting has been delayed due to the heavy downpours of rain received in the Van Wert area. This record breaking rain in the Ohio City area has made planting difficult. The flooding in the city of Van Wert did not affect the campus of The Marsh Foundation.

Currently The Marsh Foundation has 2,677.49 acres of farm ground broken down into 12 different farms with 10 different farmers. Statistics of our farms are tracked on a yearly and five year average basis. These stats of corn, wheat, soy beans and popcorn are tracked by yields and income. Farm income accounts for approximately 11 percent of The Marsh Foundation income budget.

The renovations scheduled for the summer of 2017 include the replacement of window lentils (steel I-beams located on top of the windows to support



Jeff Grothouse

"Mr. Purmort will be remembered as a caring, gentle man and has been one of this organization's biggest supporters."

— Jeffrey M. Grothouse

the building's brick exterior). These steel lentils have rusted over the past 90 years and are beginning to expand. This expansion of the steel is causing the brick walls to stress crack. The Marsh Foundation Trustees continue to support the upkeep and maintenance of these special buildings.

The Marsh Foundation barns, farm maintenance, power

house, quonset and Marsh Homestead will all receive a freshen-up of paint this summer by The Marsh maintenance staff.

On December 2, 2016, The Marsh Foundation family lost Mr. Paul Wally Purmort Jr. Wally, or Grandpa Wally to the Marsh Hall boys, passed away from an extended illness. Wally was a Trustee of The Marsh Foundation from March 1987 – December 2009. Mr. Purmort will be remembered as a caring, gentle man and has been one of this organization's biggest supporters.

During Mr. Purmort's 22 years of service, he was involved in many changes and the evolution of the organization. When he became a Trustee, there were 100 youth in four homes on campus. Now, The Marsh has three group homes on campus, licensed for 10 youth each, an independent living group home, and 8, soon to be 11, licensed foster Homes

Purmort was a lifelong resident of Van Wert. He graduated from the Culver Military Academy, Miami University and the Wharton Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania. He was an Army veteran of the Korean War where he served as an aide to a General. Wally will

be greatly missed by the entire Marsh Foundation family.

The Marsh Foundation is continuing to sell brick pavers to be placed in a Memorial Patio designed for The Marsh Students and Staff. Proceeds from the brick pavers are earmarked for the construction costs, upkeep and future improvements of the area. Individuals and businesses may purchase a regular size brick paver (4" x 8") for \$100. Double size brick pavers may be purchased for \$200.

The brick pavers will be inscribed with the donor's name or business name. The brick pavers may also be purchased to honor or memorialize a loved one. For more information on this project contact Jeffrey M. Grothouse, Executive Secretary & Treasurer at e-mail address jgrothouse@marshfoundation.org and I will send you the Memorial Patio Brick Paver application form.

I wish to take this time to express my gratitude to the Trustees, Directors, Business Office Staff including the office, kitchen, custodial and maintenance staffs for their dedication to the Mission of The Marsh Foundation. It is an honor and privilege to work alongside these dedicated employees.

Jeffrey M. Grothouse

*Executive Secretary & Treasurer,
The Marsh Foundation*

A commitment to excellence

2017 - 2018 Marsh Foundation School Calendar

Monday, Aug. 14

Faculty Work Day

Tuesday, Aug. 15

Faculty In-Service

Wednesday, Aug. 16

First Day for Students

Tuesday, Aug. 29

Staff In-Service (Dismiss at 1:08 for students)

Monday, Sept. 4

Labor Day (No School)

Friday, Nov. 3

Staff In-Service - No School

Saturday, Nov. 11

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Wed. - Fri., Nov. 22-24

Thanksgiving Vacation

Thurs. - Tue., Dec. 21 - Jan. 2

Christmas Vacation

Wednesday, Jan. 3

Classes Resume

Monday, Jan. 15

MLK Day - No School

Friday, Feb 16

Staff In-Service - No School

Monday, Feb. 19

President's Day - No School

Mon. - Fri. March 19 - 23

Spring Break - No School

Friday, March 30

Good Friday - No School

Monday, April 2

Easter Break - No School

Saturday, April 21

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Tuesday, May 22

Last Day for Students

Wednesday, May 23

Faculty Work Day

May Honors National Foster Care Appreciation Month

One of the most meaningful things you can do in life to help a child is to become a foster parent. The Marsh Foundation celebrated Foster Care Appreciation Month throughout the month of May. The organization is consistently focused on recruiting additional families to help care for the many children in need.

To celebrate foster parents, and show our appreciation, each foster family was presented with a s'more supply kit as well as a restaurant gift card during May. The gift tag read, "We need s'more foster parents like you!"

The Marsh offers a continuum of care that includes a Foster Care Program. Last year, hundreds of children were turned away from our program because of a lack of foster homes. The Marsh believes that all children have the right to love, protection and to be cared for by a committed family.

If you have an interest in



becoming a foster parent, please call 419.238.KIDS for more information. Inquiries can also be placed at www.marshfoundation.org/helpkids.

All foster parents receive extensive training. Certified foster parents are required to undergo continuing training to maintain their license.

Foster parents can be

married couples or a single individual. Foster parents are substantially reimbursed for costs associated with caring for a foster child. Consultants are assigned to each foster family and are available 24 hours, seven days a week. Consultants help create the youth's treatment plan, offer support and are available in crisis situations.

Marsh Holds 5K Run to End Child Abuse



In an effort to raise awareness and funds to fight child abuse, The Marsh Foundation held its first annual 'Run to End Child Abuse' on Saturday, April 29. The event was a great success. The day brought out several volunteers and participants and most importantly, raised nearly \$1,000 to help fight child abuse in Van Wert County.

"We are extremely excited about the turnout and success of our first 5K fund raiser," said Melissa Gearhart, foster care supervisor. "We are thrilled to be able to donate almost \$1,000 to the Family and Children First Council of Van Wert County," she said.

The event featured a 5K walk/run as well as a one mile fun run for kids. The event was made possible in thanks to several sponsors. Northwest Ohio Trophy, Pepsi and Van Wert FCFC all played an integral part in the event's success.

Generous Donors Make Easter Even More Special

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 seventh straight year.

Haight's daughter, Cindy Henderson, went above and beyond again this year to make Easter even more special for youth currently residing at The Marsh Foundation.

This has become a tradition on campus that the youth thoroughly enjoy and the staff appreciates immensely. "The donations we receive from the Haight family make a dramatic impact on the kids we serve,"



said Kim Mullins, executive director of Child & Family Services at The Marsh Foundation. "It has become an event that the entire campus looks forward to excitedly."

The family's generosity and creativity are always above par and this year was no different. In addition to decorated boxes containing gifts for each child, there were bags and fabric

markers sent so that each child could decorate a bag and make it their own.

"They think of all the details and their generosity each year makes Easter an extra special holiday on our campus."

In the 1940s, Shirley Haight came to live at The Marsh. Now, her daughters and grandson continue to give back to the campus at Easter time. 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. It was a memorable day and enjoyed tremendously by Marsh Foundation youth.

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Bruce D. Perry, MD, PhD, a well known clinician and researcher, recently presented to a group of local professionals regarding the effects of trauma on children and their brains. Dr. Perry's experience has led him to be contacted for consultation following high-profile incidents involving traumatized children such as the Columbine school shootings, the September 11th terrorist attacks and the Sandy Hook Elementary school shootings.

been instrumental in describing how childhood experiences, including neglect and traumatic stress, change the biology of the brain - and, thereby, the health of the child.

According to Marsh's clinical service's supervisor, Annette Herrmann, LISW-S, the training was a great opportunity for Marsh staff to learn more about how the brain works and how events in the lives of children impact how they behave. In addition to sponsoring the event, The Marsh had several staff members in attendance. "He spoke about how life events affect the brain and how these things manifest into behaviors," Herrmann said.

She said they took away more ways in which to work with the youth at The Marsh. "He shared tools that we can use to help kids with their coping skills, which is extremely helpful to us."

Dr. Perry's clinical research over the last ten years has been focused on integrating emerging principles of developmental neuroscience into clinical practice.

This work has resulted in the development of innovative clinical practices and programs working with maltreated and traumatized children. These approaches to clinical problem solving have been integrated into the programs at dozens of large public and non-profit organizations serving at-risk children and their families.

In addition, his experience as a clinician and a researcher with traumatized children has led many community and governmental agencies to consult Dr. Perry following high-profile incidents involving traumatized children such as the Columbine school shootings, the September 11th terrorist attacks and the Sandy Hook Elementary school shootings.

"We were fortunate to have such an informative and educational opportunity so close to home," she added. CEUs were also made available for Counseling, Social Work and Teaching. Other sponsors of the event included Mercer County Job and Family Services, the Tri County Mental Health Board, Mercer County D.D., Mercer County ESC, Kip and Mary Wright and Foundations.

Clockwise starting at right: This spring, an oil painting workshop was held in the art room. Each group home spent a day learning and creating their own artwork. The boys at Senior Hall have been working on perfecting their cooking skills. Youth spent much of spring break serving others. Projects included volunteering and serving meals at the Lima Rescue Mission, West Ohio Food Bank, Van Wert's Bread and Bowl and more. Staff and youth on campus participated in the #Ohiowearsblue day in April to raise awareness about child abuse prevention. Before Easter, the art classes made pysanky eggs, which are Ukrainian Easter eggs, decorated using a wax-resist method.



Closet 1:27 Connects with Marsh Foster Care Program

Closet 1:27 is an initiative operated by Woodburn Missionary Church in Woodburn, IN. The ministry provides support and supplies for Christian adoptive and foster families. They learned of The Marsh Foundation's need through one of our own foster families.

Closet 1:27 provides two main services for adoptive and foster families: foster journey bags and its resource closet. They recently delivered 28 journey bags to give to Marsh foster youth. The bags are filled according to gender and age and include things like pajamas, blankets, books, toiletries, a Bible and much more.

"We are thrilled that Closet 1:27 has reached out to The Marsh Foster Care Program," said Melissa Gearhart, foster care supervisor. "Our kids often come into care with little that belongs to them and this program gives them something that they can call their own. Plus, the items in the bags are quality, useful items that are very much appreciated by our kids and our foster parents."

According to Closet 1:27, the foster journey bags are meant to help foster children feel the love and concern of others, and introduce them to, or remind them of the love of their Heavenly Father.

The Marsh Foundation is looking forward to distributing these bags to foster children.

The Marsh is currently placing children ages 0-18 in local foster homes. Foster parents can be married couples or a



Pictured is Melissa Gearhart (left) foster care supervisor, with Kayla Bagley from Closet 1:27 and their donation of foster journey bags.

single individual. Foster parents are substantially reimbursed for costs associated with caring for a foster child. Consultants are assigned to each foster family and are available 24 hours, seven days a week. Consultants help create the youth's treatment plan, offer support and are available in crisis situations.

Families that are interested in becoming licensed as foster or adoptive homes can contact Gearhart at 419.238.1695 ext. 307.

New Staff Members

The Marsh Foundation would like to welcome new staff member:

- Elspeth Neville - counselor
- April Sandkuhl - family teacher
- Ashley Michel - family teacher
- Skylar Wannemacher - family teacher
- Wes Laughlin - family teacher
- Matt Bittner - family teacher
- Sage Schmitmeyer - family teacher



Clymer Chat

Clymer Hall currently has one opening following a recent successful completion. The girls are enjoying the flexibility and freedoms of the summer schedule.

Summer school and credit recovery is offered each morning as well as reading and library time. Each group home also has designated time with the horses each weekday morning. Then, the afternoons feature free time and the opportunity to go to the pool.

One of the graduates this spring was from Clymer. The girls have had fun celebrating each others' accomplishments.



Marsh Matters

Marsh Hall is currently full with 10 boys. They have been enjoying summer so far. Some of the boys have spent extra time shooting baskets or fishing at the pond.

Several boys from Marsh Hall took advantage of the recent field trip to the Fort Wayne Museum of Art to see the Expressions of Existence exhibit. The exhibit highlighted different disabilities and portrays them in an art form. The boys enjoyed the experience and found it very enlightening. The group also was treated to a lunch out after their trip to the museum.



Senior Stuff

Senior Hall has one opening for a boy aged at least 15 1/2. The boys there have been busy going on job interviews and some starting off-campus employment. These boys provide a good example for other youth on campus to follow. Their ability to work off campus and gain extra privileges often is motivation for others to work harder toward their goals.

Some of the boys are attending summer school in the mornings which runs until July.

The boys at Senior enjoyed participating in the recent Wizard of Oz production and all played a role.



Vance Voice

Vance Hall currently has one opening with nine boys currently in the program. They have been busy adjusting to the summer schedule.

Several boys on campus are participating in the on-campus 4H club and have started their summer projects in anticipation of the Van Wert County Fair in August. Participants are able to choose projects that reflect their personal interests with hopes of showing and earning ribbons at the fair.

The boys have also been enjoying activities such as fishing, riding bikes and playing outside.

Marsh Holds Panel During Women's History Month

Earlier this spring, the cultural diversity committee at The Marsh Foundation organized two guest panels during Women's History Month. The focus was women in the workforce and featured females in traditionally male dominated fields.

The two panels featured professional women in our own community and included: Officer Brandi Dershem, Van Wert Police Department; Erin Patterson, Engineering Student; Beth Runnion, Retired School Principal; Judge Jill Leatherman, Van Wert Municipal Court; Eva Yarger, Van Wert County

Prosecutor; and Cindy Hurlless; Customer Services VP, Central Insurance Companies.

Staff had the opportunity to listen to the panel answer various questions regarding their experiences in the workplace and how their gender has played a part in their career paths. In addition to pre-written questions, audience members also had a chance to ask their own. The educational opportunity received positive feedback both from staff and panel members.

Hurlless, Central Insurance's Vice President of Customer Services, thought that it was a worthwhile experience that gave

her the chance to share her life path with others.

"It's important for women to share their career path stories with others. Not just women but with men too. While we are similar – men and women have differences in approach and leadership styles that create solid and diverse workplaces. I think my daughters as well as my sons have benefitted from watching me pursue my professional passions," Hurlless said.

She went on to say that there is now more diversity and equality in the workplace. "I think we are raising a generation of women and men that respect

their peers abilities and talents – regardless of gender," she added.

Her favorite question of the day was 'can women have it all?' And, the panel's answer was a resounding 'no'!

"There are choices and priorities to contemplate and there are always trade-offs. Women spend too much time apologizing (in my opinion) for the choices we make," she concluded.

The cultural diversity committee at The Marsh works hard to feature workshops throughout the year that focus on different populations each time.

The Marsh Foundation
1229 Lincoln Highway
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Address Service Requested



Save The Date!

Annual Horse Program Aug. 9

The horse program on The Marsh Foundation's campus is one of the most anticipated and exciting activities of the year. The youth and staff look forward to spending the summer mornings riding and learning to care for the animals. The horses are leased from the University of Findlay and trained professionals teach Marsh youth the proper way to saddle, ride and clean the horses. This is a unique opportunity that many youth wouldn't otherwise have the chance to participate in if not at The Marsh.

This year, the annual horse show will be held on Wednesday, August 9 at 10 a.m. In case of rain, the make-up date is scheduled for Aug. 11. After spending much of the summer with the horses and perfecting their riding skills, the students will have the opportunity to showcase their skills at the show in front of family and friends.

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

Calendar of Events

June ~ September 2017

- The on-campus summer schedule is in full swing and will last through Aug. 11. It includes summer school, the horse program, 4-H time and more.
- The Business and Child and Family Services Offices on campus will be closed on Tuesday, July 4 in observance of the Independence Day holiday
- The summer horse show, open to the public is Wednesday, August 9 at 10 a.m. Rain date is August 11.
- First day of school - Wednesday, August 16. Faculty will have in-service and work days on the 14th and 15th.
- School will dismiss early (1:08 p.m.) due to faculty in-service on Aug. 29.
- The Business and Child and Family Services offices, as well as the school, will be closed on Monday, Sept. 4 for the Labor Day holiday.



For more information about any event, visit www.marshfoundation.org.