

Task force recommends using both schools

A revised plan to restructure FCBDD schools is moving forward after a task force charged with planning the restructuring obtained feedback from parents, staff and others.

The task force has recommended using both Northeast and West Central School for students ages 14 to 22, with approximately half the students assigned to each school.

Each school would endeavor to network with school districts, employers and community agencies in its area.

The plan would restructure current curriculum to a more transition-focused program.

The plan also calls for relocating existing FCBDD staff from other departments who have responsibilities for transition to adult services.

"We believe that the restructuring plan described will improve quality and efficiency of services... and is consistent with our agency mission," the proposal says.

Members of the task force are Lynn Watkins, Nancy Taggart, Barbara

Michael-Jones, Carol Rantala, Mary Ey, Cathy Bregar, Paul Chenderlin, Teresa Kobelt and Marcy Samuel. FCBDD Director of Schools Jack Brownley chairs the group.

Superintendent Jed Morison is inviting all interested in the plan to offer feedback and has indicated that he will not ask the Board to approve the proposal until its meeting on June 28th.

For a copy of the seven-page School Restructuring Proposal, please call Linda Fleming at 342-5950.



Creative Housing celebrates 20 years of service

FCBDD leaders were ahead of most in the developmental disabilities field when, in 1992, they anticipated the need for new housing options for individuals served and led the move away from a facility-based model toward more person-centered services.

As a result of their foresight, the nonprofit corporation Creative Housing, Inc., was born. Twenty years later, it is clear that the housing program developed by Creative in partnership with FCBDD is one of the most comprehensive in the country.

Robert Albright, Ben Hale and the late Roger Murphy served as the initial trustees of Creative Housing. Others who provided early guidance were William Wilkins, who



Bennie and Fannie Norris

“Creative Housing” continued from p. 1

chaired FCBDD at the time, former Superintendent Steve Pleasnick, and the late, former FCBDD Chairman Nick Wasyluk.

In the early years, Creative Housing acquired primarily three-bedroom homes in established neighborhoods. “Along the way our customer wanted more choices,” said Pat Rafter, Creative Housing CEO. “As the need for more housing options grew, we started to develop duplexes, small apartment buildings and the option to rent from the existing private market using rent subsidies.” As a result, Creative Housing now provides housing to 1,500 people in over 900 locations throughout Franklin County.

The Creative Housing staff is regularly on the road inspecting properties for needed repairs and preventive maintenance. In addition, regular inspections of furnace and air conditioning systems, fire safety inspections, and electrical inspections are conducted. As a result, the maintenance staff handles over 650 work orders per month.

FCBDD Superintendent Jed Morison has been pleased with Creative Housing’s efforts to tap new funding streams. “Creative has been awarded over \$6 million in HUD grants to support the development of accessible apartments,” he noted. These apartments are in seven locations within Franklin County. An



Dan Mitchell at home.

eighth location will be opening soon in Grove City.

Creative has also secured \$750,000 in operational subsidies through the Section 8 program of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority.

Four years ago, Creative Housing created a new division named Creative Renovations to respond to the growing market for accessibility renovations, including ramps, additions to existing homes, bathrooms and lift systems to aid caregivers. Over 250 renovations have been completed each year in Franklin and contiguous counties.

Creative Renovations is also expanding its use of “home automation” products. These can be as simple as a perimeter security system, and as complex as a “voice activated” house allowing a person in a wheelchair to admit guests, control lighting, and other systems.

Looking back, Pat Rafter is pleased with the progress made to date. “An incredible ‘sea change’ in community acceptance of people with disabilities has occurred over the last twenty years.”

“Two decades ago the idea of people renting their own homes was considered revolutionary. Now it is the norm. We have found the Columbus community to be tremendously accepting of people with disabilities. Our neighbors have become some of our best friends and advocates. Most importantly, we have hundreds of very happy customers.”

For more information on Creative Housing, please visit: www.creativehousing.org.

SCORE CARD	
Apartment Units:	157
Duplex Units:	104
Single Family Homes:	230
Private Apartments Subsidized:	443
Homes Renovated Annually:	250+

In memoriam

FCBDD staff member Isaac Smith passed away in late April. Hired in 2001 as a Training Specialist at ARC Industries North, he continued in that position throughout his career. He oversaw a habilitation group, providing daily supports and activities. He built strong relationships with the individuals whom he served and their families, providing constant communication to improve the care he provided.

Isaac was survived by his wife, Georgina, and three daughters, Hannah, Georgina and Barbara, of whom he was very proud. He will be greatly missed by his family, coworkers and the individuals served.



Road work expected to begin in July

The County Engineer's Office has announced that it will undertake a construction project at the intersection of Stelzer and Johnstown Roads that will include the widening of Johnstown Road immediately east of the intersection to allow multiple lanes of traffic, including two turning lanes for entry onto Stelzer Road.

That's the good news.

The bad news?

For a period of about four months, the construction work will necessitate the closing of Johnstown Road, east and west of Stelzer Road. An alternate detour route around the project will be posted. The detour route will include Stygler Road, Agler Road, and North Cassady Avenue.

The project is expected to begin in mid-July and run through October 31st,



although the exact dates are not firm at this point. The project will include resurfacing, construction of a water line, storm sewers and sidewalks.

According to FCBDD Transportation Director Paul Chenderlin, all FCBDD bus routes originating at the East Compound will be affected by the closure. "Children

attending the Early Childhood Education and Family Center will probably have slightly longer rides," he noted.

"The widening is much needed," said FCBDD Chief Financial Officer Dot Yeager. "Although we will experience some temporary inconvenience, in the long run we should see greatly improved traffic flow."

Project STIR graduation held

Graduates of Franklin County's Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility) program celebrated the completion of their training on May 18th. A graduation ceremony at 2879 Johnstown Road marked the occasion.

Superintendent Jed Morison served as Master of Ceremonies. Self-

Advocate Coordinator Christine Brown gave a welcome address. Ruben Garcia, Self-Advocate and board member of the Ohio Self Determination Association (OSDA), served as keynote speaker.

The graduating class consisted of 57 persons.

A reception followed the ceremony.

Project STIR is a training program for self advocates designed to provide individuals with the tools to advocate for themselves, mobilize others and gain leadership experience.



Beloved longtime school, ECE staff retiring



Dorothy Brown, Tracey Fowler, Jimm Burrell, Gayle Oberlitner and Phyllis Berman, Northeast.

Mary Arthur, Northeast School

After many years of helping FCBDD students, thirteen dedicated staff members in the school and early childhood programs have chosen to retire this month. Remarkably, these staff have combined service with the agency of more than 350 years.

"It will be hard to see them go," said Superintendent Jed Morison. "These staff members have contributed much to the success of our agency and students. But we do wish them the very best."

The retirees include three staff from West Central School, six from Northeast and four from Early Childhood.

Teresa Durbin

Instructor Assistant Teresa Durbin began her career in 1980 at old Southeast School, where she worked for ten years. She then went to Northeast School for fourteen years, before moving to West Central, where she has been assigned for the past eight years. She has worked at many job sites with students, including Pizza Hut, Marriott Hotels, and local hospitals.

Teresa says she will miss everyone and that her coworkers "have been like

a family." She is looking forward to "sunny Florida" after retiring.

Cheryl Miller

Instructor Assistant Cheryl Miller has 33 years of experience with the agency, including eight years as a Habilitation Assistant at ARC Industries South. In 1986, she joined West Central School. She has long experience in collaborative classrooms, including Hilliard Darby and Central Crossing High Schools.

Cheryl is looking forward to spending more time with her family, continuing to assist others become independent, and simply "enjoying life."

Debbie Osborn

Instructor Debbie Osborn joined West Central School in 1981 after a stint as a Special Education teacher at the old Orient Developmental Center. At West Central, she worked as an Intermediate and Primary Instructor. She fondly remembers former principal Pauline Kichton and Curriculum Supervisor Ann Johnson. An Ohio State graduate, Debbie loved working with sports teams and cheerleaders. Her favorite part of the job was "interaction with people... students, parents, staff

and many college students doing coursework."

Debbie is planning trips to Maine and Washington, D.C., and to do photography as well as volunteer projects at the school.

Phyllis Berman

Instructor Assistant Phyllis Berman began her career with the Early Childhood Department in 1974 before moving to Northeast School in 1975, where she has been serving for the past 37 years. She has seen many changes over the years, but has greatly enjoyed her time with the agency. "I am looking forward to the next chapter of my life," Phyllis notes. "But I will greatly miss the students and staff of Northeast School."

Dorothy Brown

Instructor Assistant Dorothy Brown began her FCBDD career in 1984 in a primary class at Northeast School. In 2003, she joined the collaborative team at Reynoldsburg Junior High School. In 2005, she helped establish the first middle school-level collaborative classroom at Waggoner Road Middle School. As part of her duties, Dorothy helped integrate students from the collaborative classroom into interactive

Continued on next page



Teresa Durbin, Cheryl Miller and Deb Osborn from West Central.

science classes. An expert at sewing, Dorothy was commissioned by the Principal of Waggoner to create window coverings for the classroom doors.

Dorothy enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and traveling. She hopes to take a long train trip next year.

Jimm Burrell

Music Specialist Jimm Burrell recalls walking into Northeast School in the summer of 1982 to inquire about doing volunteer work. He had just finished an internship in music therapy after having graduated from Ohio University. A week later, Curriculum Supervisor Sam Geldis called him back for an interview. Jimm has been employed by FCBDD ever since. He notes that “The time has gone by so quickly. I enjoyed the music program as well as working in the YMCA pool and community classes.”

After retirement, Jimm looks forward to continuing to write music, travel, as well as teaching *English as a Second Language*. He also hopes to spend more time with his grandchildren.

Tracey Fowler

Instructor Assistant Tracey Fowler started at Northeast School in 1983 although she says “I feel like I’ve been there forever!” To explain, Tracey’s brother was a graduate of the school,

and Tracey began her career there as a teen. She is “thankful” and “feels very blessed” to have been a part of the school’s staff and is looking forward to her retirement.

Gayle Oberlitner

Adaptive Physical Education Instructor Gayle Oberlitner has been teaching at Northeast School since 1989. Prior to that, she had spent a dozen years with the Delaware County program. She enjoyed working with every level of class and especially “trying to get them involved in some way.” One of her favorite activities was accompanying the children on outings to Innis Woods, Blendon Woods and other parks.

After retirement, Gayle intends to travel, do gardening and spend time with her new grandson, Tanner. She is hoping that “people will remember the Northeast Spaghetti Dinner as a reunion.”

Sharon Bush

Instructor Sharon Bush has worked as a teacher in Early Childhood Department for 27 years. She is going to spend her retirement traveling and volunteering in the ECE Library.

Donna Hammond

Instructor Assistant Donna Hammond started with Franklin County as a volunteer under Thealka Lehman, the first director of ECE, and went on



Sharon Bush, Donna Hammond and Karen Smathers from Early Childhood.

to become an assistant teacher. She has worked for 37 years. Donna plans to work with children in the homeless shelters.

Karen Smathers

Karen Smathers has worked as an assistant teacher for 24 years. Karen plans to go camping, rest, and visit with her children who are out of town.

Jill LaCivita

Jill LaCivita (not pictured) started her work with FCBDD as an Occupational Therapist in the school program. She then transferred to Early Childhood. She has worked for Franklin County a total of 23 years. Jill’s plans are to create greeting cards and sell them.

We congratulate all the retirees and we look forward to their continued imprint on the future of our programs. Good luck on your new journey!

Mary Arthur

Mary Arthur has worked for FCBDD for 35 years. Her plans are to spend more time with family and her cat “Johnboy.” Also she hopes to work on cross stitch and learn cake decorating. Mary has enjoyed working in the class rooms, the kitchen and the vocational program. She also has enjoyed helping with the Northeast Spaghetti Dinner, graduation and the prom. Mary is very thankful for the opportunity to work with the students.

We congratulate all the retirees and we look forward to their continued imprint on the future of our programs. Good luck on your new journey!

AC Lens makes first hire in Employment First program

by Kurt Schmitter

We are excited to introduce Tsewang Chambee, the first Franklin County job seeker placed under Ohio's Employment First Initiative.

Tsewang was hired by AC Lens, a full-service, direct delivery contact lens supply company. Founded in 1995 by Dr. Peter Clarkson, AC Lens ships lenses to all states as well as Europe, South America and the Far East.

Tsewang has lived a very interesting but challenging life. His journey demonstrates that with determination, perseverance, and strong supports from families, friends, and service providers, individuals with disabilities can achieve much more than many would expect.

Tsewang was a 15-year-old Tibetan monk in the Takhupai Monastery during the 1959 China uprising. Like many other monks, he had to flee his native land or face imprisonment and torture. Tsewang fled Tibet by traveling over the Himalayan Mountains. After many stressful nights of being chased by the Chinese army, he arrived in India as a refugee.

Like many refugees, Tsewang was put to work building roads. The work was grueling and dangerous. Tsewang began having headaches and difficulties with his eyesight. After many visits to doctors without success, he lost his eyesight.

Tsewang enrolled in a school for the blind, learned Braille and handcrafting skills. Tsewang excelled at handcrafting baskets and brooms. He went on to become a handcrafting instructor at a Tibetan foundation in India. Tsewang taught there for 25 years while attempting to reconnect with his brother, Lobsang, who had become a U.S. citizen.

Tsewang began the application process to move to the U.S. in 1978. In 1989, his family and he received approval to enter the U.S. They arrived in Columbus to live with Lobsang. Tsewang quickly found employment



with the Vision Center, was referred to Goodwill Columbus and then FCBDD.

Tsewang's persistence was evident from the start of the referral process. His wife, Jampa contacted the ARC Industries On-Site Crews Department daily, requesting that Tsewang be given an opportunity to demonstrate his skills.

The On-Site Crews Department obtained a contract expansion that required the assembly of o-rings on tube fittings. Quality was critical since missing o-rings could result in serious injury to operators of machines that had the pressure connections. Tsewang excelled at the assembly and packaging, and his accuracy and productivity were excellent.

Thanks to Tsewang's favorable impression on the customer, ARC Industries was able to place six other individuals with visual disabilities at that facility.

Recently Tsewang was in need of new employment and became part of FCBDD's Employment First Initiative.

Bob Reardon, Tsewang's newly assigned Employment Services Program Manager, identified AC Lens as a potential employer. Jackie Morrow, Job Developer, followed up on Bob's lead and contacted Bill Hill, the Warehouse Manager for AC Lens. Bill agreed to meet Jackie to discuss employment options.

After some initial uncertainty, AC Lens agreed to take part in an assessment for Tsewang.

Tsewang performed well during his assessment with the assistance of Dave Hearn, FCBDD Job Coach. During the training, Tsewang's production improved daily, but one obstacle remained -- his clocking in and out on a computer. Fortunately, Dave found a template that could be put over the computer keys. With the template and some training, Tsewang could now successfully clock in and out, and this success boosted his self-confidence overall.

Bill Hill reports that Tsewang is making good progress and is now considered an important part of the AC Lens family.

Retirees meet monthly

Although retired, a group of former FCBDD staff members still get together to share memories and stay in touch. This informal group meets the second Wednesday of each month at 9:15 a.m. Marie's Scrambler restaurant is located at 6152 Cleveland Ave., just south of the I-270 exit.

Please call Harriet Haniotes at 794-1425 with any questions or feel free to stop by on June 13th.

Good For You

Notable Achievements in the FCBDD community

Career Milestones



Jack Smith, Supervisor with the Service Coordination Department, received a well-deserved honor from the Ohio State University School of Social Work recently. An engraved plaque was presented in recognition of Jack's leadership role in developing a successful partnership between FCBDD and the University. Under the program, students in the School of Social Work's graduate program are able to earn course credit while getting practical experience in the developmental disabilities field. Congratulations, Jack!

Apparently due to overheating in the computer room, many computers at FCBDD's Administration Building went down during the week of May 7th. FCBDD's Information Technology (IT) staff did yeoman's service in restoring the operation. Special thanks to **Travis Sherick**, IT Director, **Marty Downs** of the IT staff, and **Mike Boyce**, Maintenance Foreman, for their exceptional dedication.

Barbara McKenzie is an advocate, presenter and organizer of inclusive communities. She is also the author of Reflections of Erin, a 72-page book about her daughter, Erin, who passed away in 2004 two months after graduating from high school. The book emphasizes the importance of relationships and learning. For more information, please email the author at bmckenzie@columbusrr.com

Human Resources Director **Dan Darling** has been chosen to serve on a special committee of the Ohio Association of County Boards. The committee is studying how county boards of developmental disabilities may best take on staff certification duties currently performed by DODD. Best of luck, Dan, to you and your colleagues!

30 years

David Powell
Nancy Taggart

25 years

Darrell Bruffy
Barbra Davis

15 years

Amy Kulow
Jay Marlowe
Pamela Weisbeck

10 years

Michele Williams

5 years

Deanna Bealer
Greta Oneal
Jeffry Pattison
Kimberly Thomas
Tauhir Wise

Class visits circus elephants by Kathy Ahlers

Dale Pugh's senior-level class from West Central School went to the Schottenstein Center on May 10th to watch circus elephants do a short run. The activity was part of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure opening ceremony.

Six Asian female elephants from Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus raced approximately 100 feet.

A circus employee enlightened onlookers with facts about elephants. He also asked questions. West Central student David Cope answered correctly a question about an elephant's number of teeth.

After watching the elephants consume about a hundred pounds of fruit, vegetables and French bread, the class went to a nearby park for their lunch.



The green spot by Carrie Vamos

The Green Team at Hague Living Skills Center held its 2nd Annual Earth Day clean-up on April 20th.

The Green Team members were armed with gloves, bags, and long-reach grabbers to clean up the parking lot, yard area surrounding HLSC and Goodwill, and the service road. The effort was hampered as the warm weather in March brought early blooms, thick leaves and tall grass. Nonetheless the volunteers did a terrific job of collecting trash to fill our mobile trash cart.

Thanks to all who participated in this clean-up. You did a terrific job!

In other news, HLSC is participating in the TerraCycle program. We've made almost \$200 from collecting personal care item packaging, mouth care packaging, candy wrappers, and dairy packaging. When HLSC's lighting was refurbished with a more energy-efficient system, we turned the scrap in for recycling and made \$255.

HLSC also continues to recycle aluminum cans, paper, light bulbs and batteries.

Dateline

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Information about the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

is always available on the internet at:

www.fcbdd.org

Save the date

A conference co-sponsored by Professionals, Advocates, Resources (PAR) and the Ohio Self Determination Association (OSDA) is planned for October 3-5, 2012.

Among the sessions to be featured are Shifting the Power: What It Takes for Real Empowerment, The Funny Thing About Stress, and Weaving the Social Fabric.

The conference will be held at the Dublin Embassy Suites, 5100 Upper Metro Place.

For more information, please go to www.ohiosda.org or www.par-ohio.org.

Calendar

June, 2012

- 5 Family Advocates of Adult Children, 2879 Johnstown Rd., 11 a.m. Special guest speaker will be Larry Macintosh
- 14 FCBDD Self-Advocate Advisory Council, 2879 Johnstown Rd., 10 a.m.
- 12 Franklin County Residential Services Board of Trustees meeting, 1021 Checkrein Ave., 11 a.m.
- 14 Flag Day
- 20 Family Support (formerly Parent League) meeting, 2879 Johnstown Rd., 9:30 a.m. Meeting is open to all family members.
- 17 Father's Day
- 22-24 Ohio Special Olympics, the Ohio State University. Please call Andrea Stonebraker at 342-5989 for details.
- 25 ARC Industries Board of Trustees meeting, Fawcett Center, 11:30 a.m.
- 25 School-age Summer Center begins, Northeast School.
- 26 ECE Summer Center begins, 2879 Johnstown Rd.
- 28 FCBDD Finance and Human Resources Committees meeting, 2879 Johnstown Rd., 4 p.m.
- 28 FCBDD Board meeting, 2879 Johnstown Rd., 5 p.m. meeting,