



TOGETHER WE ARE THE COMMUNITY

December 2008 • Issue 6 • Volume 4

A Newsletter about Butler County Board of MRDD programs, supports and staff

Thank You Denny!



Denny Rogers has served on the Butler County Board of MRDD since January 2005. Denny and his wife, Ann, are parents of Emily, a young woman who receives services from us. As a Board member, he was always at the meetings and he always came prepared with questions and suggestions. He has been a crucial member of the Finance Committee during one of the most volatile financial periods the Board has seen.

We will miss Denny as a Board member, for not only is he a fine person to know, he also brings a positive energy force and has always been quick to compliment the staff and to encourage us and push us to keep growing. He has contributed much beyond the board meetings by connecting us to valuable resources. Denny has given us much

information about autism from a personal perspective as well as information about the latest research and trends. Denny, a GE employee, has also connected us with many GE employees who continue to volunteer their time and efforts to improve our buildings, to show acts of appreciation to staff, and to sponsor events such as the great "GE Dances" for individuals we support.

It is Denny's passion to make a difference for the people with autism and their families that takes him from continuing service on our Board to fulfill another venture for a residential option targeted to meet the special needs of people with autism.

We know we will continue to see Denny and will continue to feel and see his "force". At the December Board Meeting, Denny was presented with a token of appreciation that included a statement that fits Denny and his life. It said, "Excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise, risking more than others think is safe, dreaming more than others think is practical, and expecting more than others think is possible".

Thank you Denny, for your excellence, for pushing us to excellence, and for your contributions as a Board member!

Christina Hurr, Superintendent

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to be a special friend to someone with special needs. If you would be interested in finding out more about how you could help enrich someone's life by spending some one-on-one time with them out in the community, call Cathy Howell at (513) 420-2570 ext. 25.

Christmas Cards for Sale

It's not too late to purchase your holiday cards! Artists from the Heart of the Art program at the Butler County Board of MRDD have designed some festive cards for the season. The cards are sold in packs of four, one of each design, or individually.

Purchase your cards by stopping by the Liberty Center, 5645 Liberty-Fairfield Road in Fairfield Township or by contacting Tracy Boraz, Program Coordinator, by phone at (513) 867-5977, ext. 209 or by email: tracyb@butlermrdd.org.



Artists Josh Abbott, Sean Briede, Jane Lane, and Brandon Riley designed this year's holiday cards.

Richard Moore: Fitting In and Loving Life



Three years ago, and for the first time in his life, Richard Moore, who was nearly 60, moved out on his own. At the time, his mother had just passed away, and his siblings, regrettably, were unable to take him in. When Richard lived with his mother, the pair mainly stayed close to home, not wanting to leave the other's side. They were very close. When Richard was growing up, his sister Paula Bryant said that they never pursued getting him involved in work or

day habilitation services because he was company for his mother, and vice versa. He was content being with her all day.

When searching for a place for Richard to live, his brother considered Fairfield Center, but the center did not have any openings at that time. There was room at a supported living home on the west side of Hamilton where two young men resided. With the help of his Support Coordinator, Margery Brown, and the IO Waiver, Richard's transition from his family home began. He went to the Hamilton home for a trial visit, and because it went so well, that "trial visit" turned into a permanent home for Richard for the next three years. Sadly, Richard passed away in October of this year after a short illness following hip surgery.

During those three years, Richard got to experience many "firsts" including his first pizza, his first pair of jeans, to having a life where he was able to do as he chose. He went from staying home day in and day out, to attending Caring Hearts Adult Day Center five days a week. He enjoyed going to Caring Hearts and enjoyed the company of everyone there. At home, Richard dearly loved his staff, Debbie and Jennifer from Inclusive Solutions, who took Richard

under their wings and not only cared for him but gave him unending assurance and opportunities to experience things he had never done before.

"Richard was very happy living on his own. He made new friends, connected with old friends. It was his house and something that was his, and he was proud of that. He felt like he could do things on his own and for himself", said Paula.

Richard loved his roommates, whom he proudly referred to as "my kids" because they were each 20 plus years younger than him. Richard was an extremely grateful and spiritual man, and those who were blessed with the opportunity to meet him were very grateful indeed.

His funeral was a real testament as to how much Richard was loved. "He had the funeral of a king", Paula said. "He had touched a lot of hearts. If you were Richard's friend you were his friend for life".

The new Butler County Quality Co-op video, "A Clear Idea", is dedicated to the memory of Richard Moore.

Margie Fussinger, Butler MRDD Quality Assurance Coordinator, contributed to this story.



For the past few years, Hamilton resident **Bill Jones** has spread holiday cheer, one smile at a time, to those less fortunate by handing out Christmas gifts. He came up with the idea after attending the Hamilton Center years ago. This year, Bill gave the Liberty Center four bulging bags of gifts, which will be handed out at the Center's holiday party. Bill is pictured with Gina Fox at the Liberty Center.

*Our Mission:
supporting
individuals to
successfully live,
work and learn in
their community.*



William Jones from Hamilton was Santa's helper at the annual Sno Ball Dance held December 3rd at Tori's Station in Fairfield. Jones helped Santa (GE volunteer Gary Graf) pass out candy canes. The Sno Ball dance was sponsored by GE Controls.

SWORA Awards JVS Organization of the Year

Southwest Ohio Rehabilitation Association has awarded Jewish Vocational Service their prestigious Organization of the Year Award. The award was announced at a luncheon at the Sheraton Inn in Glendale December 5th.



The JVS was granted the award for their commitment to assume the rehabilitation services of the financially failing agency in Butler County, Connex. This included the operation of two employment centers, several mobile work crews, transportation, and the provision of work for two sheltered workshops operated by Butler County MRDD. This transition included service provision of one type or another to a total of 356 consumers.

JVS went into this endeavor with several initial goals:

- To provide services at all locations without interruption or a decrease in program quality.
- To maintain open communication with family members, residential providers, Butler County MRDD, customers, staff, etc. regarding the changes between JVS and the agency that formerly provided services.

- To ensure provision of needed supplies to complete work contracts appropriately.
- To maintain relationships with all business customers to ensure continuation of work supply.
- To ensure that all facilities and transportation services were run in a safe manner.

During the past 18 months, the successful transition and integration efforts have created a synergy that has positively affected services in Butler and Hamilton Counties. Today, after combining four work centers into two, all Butler County consumers who choose to work full time are now located at the newly renamed JVS Employment Center on Symmes Road in a facility owned by Butler County MRDD (formerly the Hamilton Center).

JVS has been able to do all of this by carefully coordinating transitions with Butler County MRDD and by maintaining a dedicated staff. This has minimized disruptions and assured continuity, safe transportation and uninterrupted work opportunities for individuals served.

Congratulations, JVS!

UPCOMING EVENTS

FOR 2009

JANUARY 27, 7PM

Friendship Squares Square Dancing. Redeemer Church, corner of Route 4 and Millikin Road.

FEBRUARY 12, 6:30PM-8:30PM

Valentine Dance. Liberty Center, 5645 Liberty Fairfield Road, Fairfield Township. Tickets are \$1 at the door.

FEBRUARY 26

Growing Connections: Finding High Quality Support Systems.

Held at Janet Clemmons Center, 282 Fair Avenue, Hamilton.

Morning Session: 9:00-11:30AM

Topics include "PATH" and funeral preplanning.

Evening Session: 6:30-8:30PM

Topics include "Planning for Life After High School" and "PATH".

More information will be shared as available or contact Jack Pealer at (513) 867-5924.

MARCH 7, 11:00AM-4:00PM

Summer Adventures for All Kids.

Tri-County Mall, 11700 Princeton Pike, Springdale. Information about camps, programs and community resources.

Correction: In the last newsletter, a building directory was provided. The directory mistakenly omitted one of our offices. The West Hamilton Community Team Office houses the Hamilton Community Team, including support coordinators and early intervention specialists.

The office is located at:

**1270 Eaton Avenue
Hamilton, OH 45013
(513) 867-5750**

For an up-to-date directory of our buildings, go to our website, www.butlermrdd.org. Click on "About Us" then "Facilities".



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Removing MR from Our Name

The Butler County Board of MRDD supports pending legislation to drop the words "mental retardation" out of our name. We support this because the "R" word is being used in a derogatory and demeaning way and because mental retardation is a developmental disability. We are proposing that our name be changed to The Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Go to our website, www.butlermrdd.org to see a video about the name change and to access other resources.

*For more news and information, please visit
www.butlermrdd.org*

In This Issue:

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- Remembering Richard Moore
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- *and much more...*

Together we are the Community is edited by Wendy Panicka, Communications Coordinator. Send story ideas or other suggestions via email to wendyp@butlermrdd.org or call 513-867-5962 ext. 21.
For accessibility issues or concerns, contact Karen Whalen, Director of Quality Assurance and Medicaid Services, at 513-867-5671 or email her at karenw@butlermrdd.org.

Address service requested

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