Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities
January — February 2011

Upcoming Events
- February 8 – Superintendent’s Family & Advocate Forum
- February 21 – Presidents’ Day Holiday
- February 22 – Board of DD monthly meeting
- March 3 – Statehouse Rally for DD Awareness Month
- March 8 – Superintendent’s Family & Advocate Forum
- March 8 – Lott Parent Group
- March 25-26 – Special Olympics State Basketball Tournament

Gilbert and Florence Seeburger honored for a lifetime commitment to persons with developmental disabilities

Get the most timely information regarding activities, programs and services in Lucas County for persons with developmental disabilities with the Board’s free weekly e-mail newsletter, the Friday Update. To subscribe send an e-mail to comments@lucasdd.org

Board revises Mission and Vision Statements

This year more than 4,000 individuals will rely on the Lucas County Board of DD for information, referrals, services and supports. Through its 2011 Action Plan, the Board is committed to delivering a service that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families get the support they need. Their priorities will be the priorities of the Board. And so, the Board has introduced a new Mission and Vision that reflects this commitment.

The Mission identifies that we exist to assure that all individuals with developmental disabilities have the same opportunities as all other citizens.

The Vision identifies leadership and advocacy to create a community where individuals with developmental disabilities have real friends and where families are connected. Individuals will decide what a quality life means for them and then make real choices about how to live that life. The community will welcome all individuals equally and people are given the opportunity to share their talents.

The annual Spirit Award recognizes a lifetime commitment to improving the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities. The recipients this year are Gilbert and Florence Seeburger.

Their volunteer work began more than 50 years ago when Gil helped build Camp Courageous. He served as Camp president for seven years.

Flo was active with the Lott Guild, Arc, and bowling. Both are still active with the Lott Parent Group.

And they were always there to play a major role in the life of their daughter. They have helped with her independence and have always believed that “if an individual has the capability to do for herself, others should not take that ability away.”

The Seeburgers are great role-models and embody the spirit of service to individuals with developmental disabilities. The Board is truly honored to recognize their lifetime commitment.
What is a self-advocate? It’s a person who promotes self-determination, community integration and participant-driven supports. A self-advocate develops the confidence to speak up for himself, makes his own decisions about life, and learns how to get information so that he can understand things that are of interest to him.

This description of a self-advocate is certainly a reflection of our Self-Advocate of the Year, Kevin Tyree.

Kevin is a senior at the Wildwood Environmental Academy.

Kevin can take pride in the role he took at the First Transition Expo held at BGSU and his participation in the Transition weekend. What better activity for a self-advocate than to get involved in the complicated process of transitioning from school to adult life. Kevin is a participant in the documentary being produced with Lott Industries. The focus of that documentary is to explore how to create more opportunities for employment for persons with developmental disabilities.

Kevin has impressed us with his ability to communicate what it is he wants in the future. Hats off to Kevin, our Self-Advocate of the Year.

Yes, there are techniques parents of children who are overly sensitive can learn that will have a calming affect on the children.

These techniques will be the focus of a series of retreats that will be held at Camp Courageous in Whitehouse on March 26, April 2, and April 9.

Made possible by a grant from the Lucas County Board of DD, the retreats will be presented by Camp Courageous and the University of Toledo Occupational Therapy Program.

Participants will receive individualized instruction and examples of how to adapt activities to the needs of their children.

The cost is $10 per child; $25 for professionals. Scholarships are available. For more information call 419-875-6828 or send an e-mail to stevek@campcourageous.com

Karen began her career with the Board as a teacher substitute in September 1975 at Jay Shuer School. She eventually became a full-time teacher and is now a Habilitation Specialist in the Larc Lane Senior Options program where she is highly respected by her peers. She has always been a wealth of knowledge and willingly provides assistance to anyone in need.

Karen is extremely dedicated to the people she supports, always vigilant in monitoring their well being. She is in constant contact with the guardians and even physicians, if need be, to ensure that the person is getting the best possible care.

Due to the age of the population the senior program supports, many of the individuals do not have any family in their life. Karen takes it upon herself to ensure that their significant life events are recognized, such as birthdays. She purchases cakes and/or presents to make sure these special days are happy ones. Karen visits people who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness on her own time.

She has also assisted in making funeral arrangements when there has been a need.

Karen is a great example of dedication and the Board’s Core values.
The Community Partner Awards presented at the Board’s Annual Meeting are presented to organizations and individuals who partner with the Board in the mission to advocate for a fully integrated community where everyone can work, play, socialize, live and participate as equal citizens.

Capabilities, Inc., founded by Karen and Bill Blumhorst, is working through the Internships that Work initiative through the Board’s Children’s Options Department. This project helps find paid summer internships.

Lori Schoen, the Art Director at the Shared Lives Studio & Gallery, is to be commended for her efforts to change how our community views artists with disabilities. And, through art, Lori is assisting individuals to produce meaningful work for which they are receiving compensation and true recognition for their creativity, talent and abilities.

Mike Barchick at Charlie's Dodge has embraced an enclave from Inclusive Solutions. Not only does this enclave have an opportunity for meaningful employment, but participants are made to feel welcome to participate in company cookouts and activities.

Helping parents with the development of their Individual Education Plans, coordinating support groups, developing family events, and administering the Autism Society’s extended school year summer program. It’s all part of the non-stop commitment you receive from Linell Weinberg, the Executive Director of the Autism Society of Northwest Ohio. She has successfully developed the Practical Solutions for Everyday Challenges through the Children’s Options Family Empowerment Grants and she sits on the Best Practices Committee.

Helen Palochko has helped open the options in our community by introducing individuals served by the Board of DD to their neighbors and their neighborhoods. Many of these activities have had an environmental theme. Helen has shown individuals how they can contribute great things as Lucas County citizens. Photography groups have gone on nature shoots. One Lotts of Nature group was featured on television cleaning storm drains for the City of Oregon.

John Hoshack and his entire management team at Buffalo Wild Wings are to be commended for their efforts to provide employment for persons with developmental disabilities. Noteworthy is the commitment to assist one individual for whom they have shown infinite patience, cooperation, an open mind, and willingness to see beyond today and into the future. This individual has been able to grow beyond each milestone because of the nurturing support and understanding of the staff and management.

Governor Kasich stated, "John's record of accomplishment is highly impressive. He understands many of the challenges faced by Ohioans with developmental disabilities and their families. John is a man of great character, and I look forward to him serving in my cabinet."
Grass roots communication can begin with the Family Advisory Council

How can family members get their concerns to the policy-makers on the state level? The answer is by participating in the Family Advisory Council of the Ohio Department of DD. Those who attend Council meetings can provide information from a grassroots level to policy-makers who impact direct services. It is important that policy-makers are informed of issues/concerns that are statewide. The Family Advisory Council provides an opportunity to exchange information about programs, services, and options available to people who have family members with developmental disabilities.

Family Advisory Council meetings, held in Columbus, are open to all interested members of Ohio's developmental disabilities community. Join the Council's listserv at join-family.advisory@list.dodd.ohio.gov. The Council's contact is Peggy Martin. She may be reached via e-mail at peggy.martin@dodd.ohio.gov; by phone at (614) 466-8706; or, by writing to her at DODD, 30 East Broad Street, 12th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215-3434.

Polar Bear Plunge will be March 19 to support Special Olympics

The inaugural Maumee Bay Polar Plunge to benefit Special Olympics Ohio will be March 19. All activities will take place at Maumee Bay Resort Lodge.

Plungers are asked to raise a “bear” minimum of $75 per plunger.

For more information about the Plunge contact Meghan Carney at carneysooh@aol.com or call 614-239-7050. The Maumee Bay plunge is one of eleven Polar Bear Plunge fundraising events in Ohio throughout the months of January through March.