



April 2016

# Imagine

Bringing about a **vibrant community** where people lead **fulfilling lives** and make **meaningful contributions**.

## Celebration Successful!

The 2016 Celebration of Possibilities took place March 31 at the Crossroads Event center in Lancaster and was a well-received and successful event. In its eighth year, the annual awards evening entertained a crowd of over 400 people and featured outstanding entertainment, inspirational stories and lots of laughter.

The theme of this year's Celebration was *Channel Your Dreams* and revolved around well-known television shows from the 1970s. Over 45 cakes, created and donated

by local bakers, adorned the tables as centerpieces and dessert, and echoed the TV theme. Dinner, prepared by Table 1, was served by over 35 volunteers, most of whom were Fairfield DD employees and family members. And more than 36 employees and community members served on committees to help bring this year's event to fruition.

"It is not lost on any of us that this event would not be possible without the hundreds of volunteer hours that our staff and community lend to us each

year," said Superintendent John Pekar who showcased his guitar playing in the night's grand finale. "I'm blown away every year."

Performances by singer Jessica Armstrong and guitar prodigy Zayne Harshaw thrilled the crowd before headliner comic Maysoon Zayid took to the stage to entertain the audience with funny, biographical anecdotes about living life with cerebral palsy in the entertainment world.

Among this year's award winners was our own Dr. Mark Weedy, Board president, who received the Legacy Award.

With no rest for the weary, plans for the 2017 Celebration are already being discussed. So mark your calendars and we will see you next March! (For award winners, see inside).



# Superintendent's corner

Wow! It is such a simple exclamation and yet so powerful. And I cannot think of better way to express my feelings about the past month than to simply say it again. Wow!

It has been a goal for Fairfield DD to take the entire month of March, which is National DD Awareness Month, and come up with a variety of ways to engage the community while spreading awareness. I personally hope it will one day be anticipated as a month-long celebration with captivating events and activities. Of course, the pinnacle of DD Awareness Month will always be the annual Celebration of Possibilities. But if we can expand the success of the Celebration from one day to many days then our awareness efforts will be that much more impactful.

In recent years we have amped up our presence in the community during March by filling it with numerous speaking engagements, local tv segments, local radio PSA's and print media sponsorships. This year was no exception. But in addition to that, we hosted three free community events that surpassed our expectations for our first year.

The **Piece of Me** art opening featuring Kayla Council and music by the Salty Caramels was a colorful and fun event at 150 West Main. The **Walk at the Mall** had a turnout of more than 120 people who circled the mall to raise awareness. And the **Free Movie Night** featuring the film *Where Hope Grows* and an amusing presentation by lead actor David DeSanctis received excellent reviews from the more than 230 people who attended.

Of course, the 2016 Celebration of Possibilities proved, once again, that Fairfield County and Fairfield DD have much to be proud of.

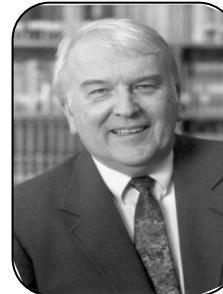
The number of volunteer hours, the amount of work, and the enthusiasm behind producing such a large-scale event is humbling. Our staff and community volunteers give 110% to this event every year and every year I am amazed.

Further, it was a pleasure to welcome Maysoon Zayid to our event and to know that, after only an hour into the evening, we had managed to impress her as well. She could not have been more encouraging or entertaining or personable.

As for the award winners—congratulations and thank you to each of you.

Needless to say, I am already thinking about March 2017. But for now, let's continue to bask in the success of all we accomplished—together!

John Pekar, Superintendent



**DR. JOHN FURLOW**, who passed away in 2014, served as dean at Ohio University-Lancaster from 1993 to 2011 and during his time was an excellent partner to Fairfield DD. His support of the GROW project and the Zone helped to create opportunities in employment for people with developmental disabilities.



**SALLY GRIMM** began her employment with us in 1977. She retired in 2009 with over 31 years of service,. In addition to serving as an Instructor Assistant for 31 years she also filled in at other times as Workshop Specialist Intermittent, Special Olympics Coach and has worked for the school during the summer .



**PAM PATULA** has been the Executive Director of the Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living (SOCIL) since 2003. Prior to SOCIL she worked with individuals with intellectual disabilities for 25 years. Pam has been a valuable partner with the Sensory Trail committee ensuring ADA accessibility as we have developed this project.

## Benefits Class Accepting Reservations

On Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, Ron Swain, Benefits Analyst, Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities will be presenting a **Benefits Program for families of Children with Disabilities** from 6:30pm-8:00pm at the SOCIL Office in Hocking County, 1369 East Front Street, Logan. RSVP to Lisa at 740.689.1494

**Special Olympics track season begins at 4:30 pm April 18th in the Forest Rose Multipurpose Room. Call 740.215.7640 for details.**



# Dr. Mark Weedy Receives Legacy Award



Dr. Mark Weedy, Board President for Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities, was surprised during the Celebration of Possibilities to learn that he was the recipient of the 2016 Legacy Award. This award is unveiled the night of the event and is given to someone who has gone

above and beyond what their designated role to Fairfield DD requires.

Board president since 2009, Dr. Weedy not only has shown tremendous support to the Board and to the Superintendent, but he is dedicated to the entire staff and its leadership team. It is not unusual for him to initiate positive efforts such as employee wellness challenges or even to meet with leadership members outside of work. His dedication to Fairfield DD was illustrated by his unwavering support during the November 2015 levy campaign during which time he attended every meeting, posted signs, participated in fundraising and even stayed up until midnight with staff awaiting the election night results. He partakes in Fairfield DD events and is quick to recognize positive changes when he sees them.

"Mark has been a huge support for me personally," said John Pekar. "Beyond that though, he supports our mission and our staff and makes decisions that reflect that support."

Fairfield DD thanks Dr. Weedy for his devotion and hopes he won't hold a grudge for his surprise award! GOTCHA!



Dr. Mark Weedy, Board President

*"Pekar, you are  
in so much trouble."*

- Dr. Weedy

## Fairfield County Celebrates National County Government Month

Fairfield County will celebrate National County Government Month (NCGM) during the month of April to showcase how the county is building a safe and secure community by managing justice systems, bolstering economic opportunities, responding to natural disasters and facilitating emergency management response.

The theme for this year's celebration of NCGM is "Safe and Secure Counties."

The annual State of the County address will be held on Tuesday, April 19th and will highlight Fairfield County as a Safe and Secure place to live.

"Fairfield County is proud of the programs and services provided to our residents," said Board President Dave Levacy. "Our efforts combined with efforts of counties across the country do help keep American communities safe and secure. I encourage all county residents to take advantage of National County Government Month to learn more about the services the county provides for you and your loved ones."

Since 1991 the National Association of Counties (NACo) has encouraged counties across the country to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of counties.

*The county website contains a calendar of events for April 2016. Go to [co.fairfield.oh.us](http://co.fairfield.oh.us) to view the calendar.*  
For more information, please contact Carri Brown, at [cbrown@co.fairfield.oh.us](mailto:cbrown@co.fairfield.oh.us).

*"Words matter. Say no to being silent."*

- Maysoon Zayid

# Congrats to the WINNERS !



**JULIE BRUCKELMEYER** is the highly-energetic, self-motivated Community Connections Coordinator, a position she has developed and expanded. Devoted to linking people with people in the community, if she cannot fill a need with an existing resource, she creates a new opportunity. Her tireless efforts have helped opportunities such as Next Chapter Book Club, Impact 4 Fun, and community dances to flourish. Julie also is instrumental in promoting and coordinating efforts for the Community Communications software and is active in the central Ohio Best Buddies program. In her spare time, Julie continues to be a very active volunteer in her church and in her community including volunteering with Millersport Local Food Pantry. Julie is also a board member for the Millersport Community Theater.

## HARTUNG FAMILY PIONEER AWARD

**KATHI BOYER** has been a teacher at Forest Rose School for over 20 years—first as an intermediate class instructor and then in the primary class.

As a teacher she has great respect for each of her students and for meeting their individual needs. She expects effort and achievement and celebrates successes. In addition, Kathi is involved in the community as a home health/personal aid worker. She also is involved through her church in outreach efforts and mission trips.



**TESSIE SWAIN** is known throughout Fairfield County as an advocate for families in crisis. Employed by Family Adult and Children First Council, she not only is always willing to help a family in need, she is a resource for many other social workers in the county.

Tessie has worked with the I-Team and Early Childhood Cluster, both of which are multi-agency groups focused on helping the entire family of children in need. Her generous spirit and willingness to help any family, regardless of the circumstances, has enriched many lives throughout Fairfield County.

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

## McGHEE FAMILY INSPIRATION AWARD



**JENNIFER CAPRETTA AND STEPHANIE MILLER** are teachers with Lancaster City School's Multiple Disability program at General Sherman Junior High and are revered by students, parents, co-workers and supervisors alike.

Sharing 14 students on a daily basis, they push their students to excel academically while focusing on social and life skills as well. They include their students with same-age peers throughout the junior high and take them on two community trips a week. In addition, they collaborate with outside agencies, such as therapy dogs, to encourage a positive learning environment.

Jennifer, a volunteer with Special Olympics, created Capretta's Café which serves lunch for the staff at General Sherman, prepared and delivered by the students. Stephanie had her classroom moved to General Sherman this year from Thomas Ewing and was able to make the transition seamlessly.



## COMMITMENT AWARD



**PRISCILLA FITZSIMMONS** is an independent provider who has been working with the DD community in Fairfield County since 2008.

In addition to providing home-maker and personal care services, Priscilla is a tireless volunteer and a guardian for her nephew Kenny. She works closely with Fairfield Athletic Association/Special Olympics as a basketball coach, softball coach, swim team volunteers and equestrian team volunteer. She contributes to the success of the Mark Everly Bowling Event, No Limits Basketball and Special Olympics Car Show. Last fall she forfeited her own thanksgiving this year to take an individual to an out-of-state gathering.

## GOLDIE FIELDS SPIRIT AWARD

### KROGER MARKETPLACE PICK-ERINGTON

has been a supportive employment partner of Fairfield DD for more than 13 years. They provide a welcoming learning environment and seek out Fairfield DD when permanent positions become available. They provide productive feedback to follow-along trainers in the best interest of employees.



## VISION AWARD



**ELIZABETH BURGOON** is a very active young lady who is involved in Fairfield Athletic Association's basketball program, church activities, Gloryland Nazarene After-School BRICK program and is employed at Fairfield Medical Center in the Dietary Department.

An enthusiastic employee and volunteer, Elizabeth is passionate about working with both patients and children. A 2011 graduate of the Project

SEARCH program, she is working toward her dream of earning an Early Childhood Aide certificate.

## DEANNA KIRWIN AWARD INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

# DD AWARENESS MONTH



## DD Awareness Month Success

March was tremendously busy as Fairfield DD attempted to reach all corners of the county to promote DD Awareness Month. Over 40 different activities and events that promoted DD Awareness, including four community events (BSA Opening/Salty Caramels, Walk a Mile in the Mall, Free Movie Night, and Celebration of Possibilities), took place in just four weeks.

In addition, guest speakers made presentations at local civic groups, Chamber events, area schools and on local radio and cable channels. Print advertising and government proclamations completed the list of activities.

An estimated 65,155 people in the county were reached through all of these efforts. In addition, employee purchases during Patronage Month contributed to \$5,200 in sales at local businesses partnering with Fairfield DD.

Many thanks to our speakers and to the committee members of DD Awareness Month, as well as all the volunteers and attendees at the events!

## Fairfield DD Wins Award



The Fairfield DD Community Relations Department received Ohio Public Image's Award of Outstanding Media Coverage in the state of Ohio for its Fulfilling Lives Video Series. The award was accepted during the OSCB Conference by Temple Montanez and John Silfies.



## Staff Shoots and Scores

By Tim Heft

The basketball team (Fairfield Athletic Association) played the staff and we won the game 10 to 6.

The game was a good game on February 17, 2016. The team had a good time playing the staff. (The staff) had a good team. The team had good people.

It will be exciting next year.

## ADAPTIVE ASCENTS



Register online:  
[www.verticaladventuresohio.com/adaptive-ascents](http://www.verticaladventuresohio.com/adaptive-ascents)

Free Clinic  
Saturday, May 21st, 9am-11am

Adaptive Ascents is a program designed to offer adaptive opportunities to anyone with a disability

VERTICAL ADVENTURES

## Gayheart Wins First Place



Blue Shoe Art Studio artist Leah Gayheart won first place in mixed media for her piece *Beautiful Woman* at the 2016 VSA Accessible Expressions art opening in March. Her piece, along with nine other artists from the studio, will travel Ohio for a year raising awareness for artists with disabilities.

## Kids and Cops Day Planned



The public is invited to check out the helicopters, Air Evac, SWAT vehicles, patrol cars, motorcycles, smoke house and much more available at this free event scheduled for 10 am to pm May 21 at Ohio University Lancaster.

## Wear Blue for A Good Cause

Participate in Child Abuse Prevention Month with Fairfield County JFS on April 13. People are asked to wear blue that day and also to take a selfie and send it to [wearblue@fcjfs.org](mailto:wearblue@fcjfs.org). IN addition, check out the Facebook page at [Child Abuse Prevention Month Fairfield County JFS](#).

## Lucky Strikes



Two local students took home awards at a recent Special Olympics bowling tournament. Cierra Brunton earned first place while Maizie Rigsby took home third!

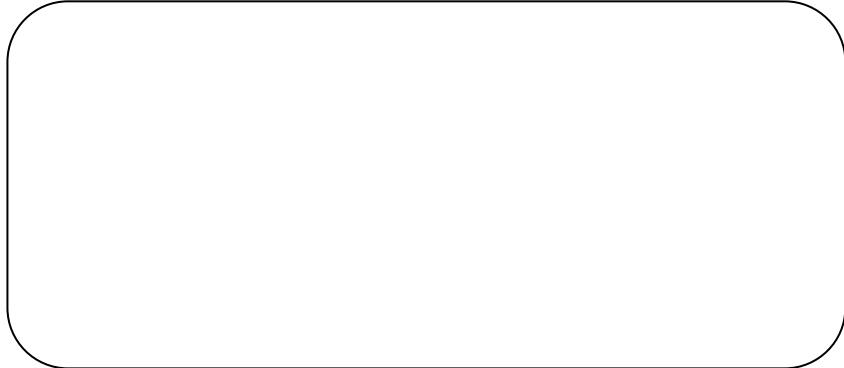
ADD A PINWHEEL to your profile pic for April and support Child Abuse Prevention. Visit [twibbon.com/support/child-abuse-prevention-8](http://twibbon.com/support/child-abuse-prevention-8) and click "Add to Facebook."





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## Contact Us

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Forest Rose School .....	740-652-7225
Early Intervention/Birth to 3 .....	740-652-7225
Opportunity Center .....	740-652-7230
Art & Clay on Main/Square 7 Coffeehouse.....	740-653-1755
JobFusion.....	614-835-2700 or 740-652-7235
Transportation .....	740-652-7228
Pickerington Regional Office..	614-835-2700 or 740-652-7235
Volunteer Opportunities .....	740-652-7220

## Our Mission

**To bring about a *vibrant community*  
where *people lead fulfilling lives and*  
*make meaningful contributions.***

**Superintendent**

**John R. Pekar**

**Board Members:**

**Mark Weedy, President**

**Kelly Brick**

**Theresa Nixon, VP**

**Robert Competti**

**Linda Barber, Sec.**

**Sharon Scruggs**

**Sharon Murphy**



**The gang at Art & Clay on Main, Square 7 Coffee House and Blue Shoe Art Studio  
are embarking on a three-month community art project  
which will involve "yarn bombing" downtown Lancaster.  
To participate in this wild event, call 150 West Main at 740.653.1755.**