

# Expressions

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Portage County Board  
of  
Developmental Disabilities

**Portage County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities**

Dennis M. Coble  
Administration Building  
2606 Brady Lake Rd.  
Ravenna, OH 44266-1657

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330-297-7261

**Board Office:**  
330-297-6209

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**Website:** [www.pcbmrdd.org](http://www.pcbmrdd.org)

**Business Office:**  
330-297-8991

**Service & Support  
Administration:**  
330-297-4100

**Family Support  
Services Program:**  
330-297-4106

**Residential  
Services Program:**  
330-297-4106

**Transportation:**  
330-297-6462

**Adult Services:**  
Portage Industries  
7008 State Rte. 88  
Ravenna, OH 44266-9134  
330-296-2839  
Fax 330-296-8875

**Children's Services:**  
Happy Day School  
2500 Brady Lake Rd.  
Ravenna, OH 44266-1698  
330-678-2400  
Fax 330-673-3714

**PCBDD  
Emergency Number  
330-678-7559**

*PCBDD does not discriminate in  
provision of services or employment  
because of handicap, race, color,  
creed, national origin, sex or age.*



**Linda Legg, 2009 Earl and Mary Lohr Community Service Award Recipient  
presented by Harry Friedman, 2009 Board President**

## **2009 Earl and Mary Lohr Community Service Award presented to Linda Legg**

Linda retired from the Board after 35 years of service in the Adult Services Program at Portage Industries, Inc. During that time on many occasions, she provided supports for individuals on her own time assisting them with problems or giving the opportunities they would not have had otherwise. Linda always did her work with a sense of humor and great perspective on the daily challenges. She demonstrated skill, patience, and competence in delivering services and providing excellent supports.

Linda took her job seriously and took the individuals in her care into her heart. She provided encouragement to individuals to be involved in activities inside and outside of the workplace.

She continues her support of individuals with developmental disabilities as a Board member of the Residential Resources for the Developmentally Challenged, Inc.

# Mack's Message

## Board Adopts Three-Year Strategic Plan



The Board adopted a three-year strategic plan at its meeting on January 27, 2010 at the Dennis M. Coble Administration Building. The Board also reviewed fiscal projections for the next several years.

The strategic plan consists of two major components. The first, *Core Strategies*, focuses on the primary functions and competencies which define who the Board is and what it does. In other words, the Board's core business. The second, *Internal Development Strategies*, focuses on modifying or improving organizational structure, systems, processes, and procedures to more effectively pursue Core Strategies. The action steps for the strategic plan will be the objectives addressed in each year's Annual Plan. The following are some of the highlights of the core and internal development strategies addressed in the plan.

Core strategies for the Adult Services area include a significant expansion of community-based enclave opportunities, increased community-based competitive employment outcomes, expanded work opportunities for facility-based programs, and expanded recreation/leisure activities for adults. The Children's Services program will focus on maintaining and expanding its position as the foremost provider of Early Intervention Services in the County and developing an integrated, multiple agency early childhood center at Happy Day School. In the area of Residential Services, the plan sets a goal of eliminating the waiting list for residential service through aggressive pursuit of Home and Community-Based Medicaid waiver slots.

Internal development strategies are divided into two categories – organizational and financial. Financial strategies are focused on securing and maintaining local, state, and federal revenues to support and expand services to eligible consumers today and into the future and to preserve financial stability in anticipation of severe reductions in state and federal funding. Organizational strategies include the expanded use of technology to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services and business operations, maintaining a positive public image through community outreach and public relations efforts, developing staff wellness activities and a succession plan for replacing long-term

retiring employees, and conducting a review of organizational structure and work processes to maximize utilization of staff and resources.

The Board's current fiscal condition is very strong but the projections for the next few years are not so rosy. The fiscal projections are built on several assumptions. First that our levy issue renewal this November, which generates almost 4 million dollars per year, is successful as are our two other levy efforts scheduled for 2013. We also anticipate that beginning in state fiscal year 2012 (July 1, 2011) we will lose our personal property tax state replacement funds (approximately 2.2 million dollars per year) and state department of Developmental Disability (DODD) subsidy funds of approximately six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000.00) per year. The outcome of the loss of these funds is a projected deficit at the end of 2013. Obviously we are not permitted to operate in a deficit and we will either have to reduce expenditures significantly, secure additional revenue or both. If the anticipated loss of state revenues does not occur, then we should continue to be in good fiscal condition. I think it only prudent, however, that we plan very conservatively and prepare for the worst. To paraphrase a quote by Zig Ziglar, "We expect the best. We will prepare for the worst and capitalize on what comes!"

Respectfully,  
Pat

Got a question or topic for future issues, drop me an e-mail at: [patm@portagedd.org](mailto:patm@portagedd.org)

## Retirement News!

Congratulations go out to the following retirees from the PCBDD:

**Jill Fertig**, Registered Service Assistant – 27 years of service  
**Linda Mitchen**, Account Clerk I – 28 years of service  
**Anna Rankin**, Instructor Assistant – 27 years of service



## Parent Council News

Parent Council held Santa's Secret shops at Happy Day School and Portage Industries in December. As usual, the volunteers made it a delightful shopping event for clients, students and family members. Thank you to all of the helpers (and none of them had to wear elf hats this year!)

On January 15, 2010, Parent Council hosted Mom's Night Out at Happy Day School. Many vendors were there with home, personal and jewelry items available for purchase. Massages and a yoga class were available. There was also a refreshment area with herbal teas, cookies and much conversation. Babysitting was provided by county board staff. Everyone who attended seemed to have a wonderful time.

The Second Annual Rummage Sale will take place at Portage Industries on March 6, 2010. Donations are being accepted at Portage Industries now through March 5, 2010. Take your donation between 10a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Check in at the front desk and someone will direct you to a loading dock, where you will have assistance in unloading your donations.

April 10, 2010 marks the date of the Third Annual Community Carnival at Happy Day School. This event is open to all and will have games and prizes for every level of ability. Don't miss the great hot dog lunch and bake sale!!

Coming up in May is the Annual May Dinner. More information on this annual event will be sent out soon.

Parent Council is composed of all people concerned about the residents in Portage County with developmental delays. Parents, caretakers, teachers, staff, professionals and interested folks in the community are all welcome to become members and participate fully in all events and positions within parent council. With state budget cuts, the general economic crisis, and increasing awareness of disabilities in the community, demands on parent council are increasing. Participation needs to increase so that everyone can be assured that Portage County is doing its best for its residents who cannot advocate for themselves. For more information, please contact **Annette Dowling** at 330-297-0302 or **Debbie Kempisty** at 330-678-2400.



## Volunteers Make a Difference

The staff who work at our board also spend many extra hours giving back to their communities in volunteer time. On two Saturdays before Christmas, 19 different staff from the PCEAMR Union donated their time by ringing the bells for Salvation Army. One staff wrote of her experience "I was surprised by the generosity of the many people that gave. I was glad to see that there were children under the age of 10 giving. That was heartwarming. All shapes, sizes, genders and all walks of life were giving of themselves. When we would say thank you some people seemed to be embarrassed about being thanked. In the same vein, one lady said to me thank you for doing this. I was taken by surprise and was at a loss for words. All in all, I had a terrific time, maybe it had something to do with the people that gave of themselves and/or the beautiful day. The volunteering had a positive effect on me and I would have no hesitation to ring the bell again." Another staff noted that Salvation Army never hesitates to help a family in need, and it felt good to give back.

Other staff volunteer at PCBDD agency sponsored events such as Special Olympics, Bowling, the annual craft auction, golf outing, working the booths at the Portage County Fair or Balloon A-Fair and assisting with Parent Council events. The list is long, but a few other places that our staff regularly do volunteer work for include : donating food for families in need, the H1N1 flu vaccination clinics in Portage County, planting flowers in downtown Kent (adopt-a-spot program), Pioneer cemetery perseveration, Hiram Farm, various ministries, soccer coach for Kent Soccer Club, swim team volunteer, and various public school events.

We as staff are so proud to be part of this community and feel that it is an honor to be able to give back.





## A Day in the Life of Raymond

As we continue to try and focus on our programs and the students we serve, we sometimes look at all the wonderful things that occur at school and with kids and families, but seldom do we get the opportunity to look at the world through a child's perspective.

Raymond started receiving services from the County Board when he was just two months old. He came to Happy Day School through Early Intervention and is currently enrolled in our school-age program. With the help of his mom Cheri, here is Raymond's story:

It's 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday morning and I'm so excited that today is a school day. I can't wait for my mom to come get me out of bed, get me dressed, fed and ready for the bus. If I could do all these things myself, I would get up and get going even earlier because I love school days. But since I'm not able to, I'll wait for mom. I let her know I'm awake by kicking the mattress so hard you can hear the echo through the house. This is just one of the ways I am able to talk to her.

My name is Raymond. I'm 13 years old and I was born with multiple disabilities. I've come a long way since being born. Life wasn't so pleasant for me back then. Every day, every hour, every minute seemed to be a struggle. When I was younger, my constant coughing and hacking would fill the house as I went through my morning routine. Just to suck, swallow and breathe would wear me out not long after waking up. The bus ride was torture. I hated being in my wheelchair because it wouldn't let me move and I needed to move constantly. Even being the last pick up before heading to school was too long of a ride for my liking. I needed to be moving, bouncing, swinging, or swimming. Those things helped me to forget about my troubles.

As difficult as my life may still appear to be, I have become a happy teenager who looks forward to many things including the bus ride. I actually like to sit in my wheelchair. I don't even resemble the stressed out, upset youngster who would tune everyone out and exhaust himself by lunch time and have to go home. Now I can stay and enjoy four full days a week!

Happy Day has become one of my favorite places to be. When I arrive at school I work with special people who understand me and have helped find what I need to change my life for the better. These days I can sit still and be a good listener when I am being taught new ideas. I will let my teacher know I understand with an instant smile on my face. The school staff knows what I need so I can concentrate throughout the day to be able to join in so many activities. I don't miss any of the fun because I can stay the entire day.

When I get home from school it is time to switch gears. Mom and Dad eat their supper in shifts so one of them can sit with me during my dinner. That's when we read my notebook from school which tells everything I did that day. I smile and laugh when they read the note out loud, telling them about the days activities at school.

Around 9 pm Dad gives me my bath. I've grown too big for my mom to do it safely. Our house is old with small rooms that don't have the space for big equipment to lift me. So getting in and out of the tub can be a slippery job. I love the warm water and my excitement shows with lots of kicking and splashing.

Someday soon I sure hope to learn to talk to everyone with more than just my smile and body movements. I have so much that I want to say. I do have a communication board that helps me tell those people closest to me about what I want to do. But it doesn't cover everything that I'm thinking and feeling. In the meantime, I'll keep kicking with excitement and smiling my big smile to let everyone who works with me know that I am so happy to be there and blessed that they are there with me to live, learn and grow.

**Just  
like  
YOU**





Participants of the 33rd Annual Basketball Shoot Out

## 33rd Annual Basketball Shooting Contest

The 33rd Annual Special Population Basketball shoot out sponsored by the Portage County Chapter of the Knights of Columbus and hosted by the Kent Chapter was held on Saturday, January 20, 2010 at Happy Day School. There were about 60 individuals who participated in the shoot out.

- Kendra Koger** - winner in the Adapted Female Division
- Carley Domres** - winner of the Ladies age 15 – 20 Division
- Angela Rader** - winner of the Ladies age 21 – 30 division
- Jackie Howe** - winner of the Ladies age 31 – 40 division
- Jason Servey** - winner of the Men's age 31 – 40 division
- Kenny Postlethwait** - winner of the Men's age 41 – 50 division
- Sylvia Cuvelier** - winner of Ladies age 41 – 50 Division
- Kathy Sisley** - winner of the Ladies age 51 and over Division
- Matthew Craft** - winner of the Men's age 15 – 20 Division
- Chris McDaniel** - winner of the Men's age 21 – 30 Division
- Ray Markward** - winner of the Men's age 51 and over Division
- Scott McNeil** - winner of the Adapted Male Division



Jerry Fiala, Kent Mayor

Ravenna Mayor, **Joe Bica** and Kent Mayor, **Jerry Fiala** were there showing their support for the athletes. **Pat Macke**, Superintendent of the Portage County Board of DD, and **Luigi Letteri** presented **Doug Palmer**, President of the Portage County Chapter of the Knights of Columbus with a Proclamation for their support and Hosting the Basketball shoot out for 33 years. Board member, **Tom Cochran** and PCBDD Recreation Coordinator, **Linda Fiorentino** were also present. The Knights of

Columbus presented **Gail McAlister** with a check for Special Olympics. Coffee, donuts, pizza and pop were available for all to enjoy.



Luigi Letteri, Doug Palmer and Pat Macke



Joe Bica, Ravenna Mayor



Participants of the 33rd Annual Basketball Shoot Out

## Mark Your Calendar!

### Tune in to Discovery Health Channel

Mystery Diagnosis show on March 22, 2010, 10 p.m. Eastern on Discovery Health Channel will feature a segment on Prader Willi Syndrome.

### Spring Dance Scheduled

Friday, March 19, 2010  
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Happy Day School

This year's theme is "Spring Break Disco Fever!"



### Spring Unskating Party

Roller Skating for EVERYONE!

Wednesday, April 21, 2010  
6:00-8:00 pm  
Springfield Lake Roller Rink  
1220 Main Street  
Lakemore, Ohio 44250

Wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, and shoes permitted in the rink.

No fee! Free skate rental! Refreshments provided!

Sponsored by Springfield Lake Roller Rink and the Field/Southeast Parent Mentor Program

For more information contact Robin Howard at 330-673-2659, [rhowardpm@aol.com](mailto:rhowardpm@aol.com) or Sandy Craft at 330-678-2216 -1226, [sandra.craft@neo.rr.com](mailto:sandra.craft@neo.rr.com).

Directions: Take route 224 to Canton Rd/Route 91 South, go ¼ mile, turn right on Springfield Lake Dr., follow road to the rink.



### Freezin' For A Reason



### Taking the Plunge for a Good Cause

Chrissy Motz is getting ready for the Polar Bear Plunge which will happen on February 27, 2010 at Breakwater Beach in Geneva. It is the Law Enforcement Polar Bear Plunge which benefits Special Olympics. Chrissy has been busy collecting money and pledges. Go Chrissy!!

### Rotary Camp Provides a Fun, Safe and Exciting Experience



The Rotary Camp for Children with Special Needs, in conjunction with the Akron Area YMCA offers children and adults with disabilities, the opportunity to experience the friendship, fun and excitement of camp. Rotary Camp is American Camping Association (ACA) accredited. It was founded to meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families.

Rotary Camp provides year round programming including respite week-ends, Social Respite Days. For more information please contact their office at 330-644-4512, or [michelle@akronymca.org](mailto:michelle@akronymca.org) or [www.gotcamp.org](http://www.gotcamp.org).

### Ravenna Parks and Rec Spring Events

The Ravenna Parks and Recreation Department has some great family fun events coming up in the spring! The Easter Eggstravaganza will be held on Saturday April 3<sup>rd</sup> at John Tontimonia City Park. Take a Kid Fishing Day will be on Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at Lake Hodgson. Got a green thumb? There is a Community Garden at Chestnut Hills Park. Please contact the Ravenna Parks and Recreation Department to find out about these and other programs at 330-296-1280 or [www.ci.ravenna.oh.us](http://www.ci.ravenna.oh.us).





## A Tribute Dance to the "King of Rock & King of Pop"

A "Tribute to Elvis and Michael Jackson" dance was held at Happy Day School on January 19, 2010. Several 'dancers' came dressed as one of their favorite performers. Everyone had a great time, dancing the night away to DJ Tony. Snacks were available throughout the evening.



### New PCBDD Investigative Agent Introduces Herself

My name is **Kim Sumwalt** and I am very happy to be a staff member at Portage County Board of DD. I have been a Portage County resident for about 15 years. I graduated from Kent State University and grew up in Summit County. I started my career in Florida as a job coach, a follow along specialist and a supported living support staff. I then took a position as a case manager in Florida before returning to Ohio. When I returned to Ohio I worked in a residential setting for almost 7 years. My next move was to the Summit County Board of Developmental Disabilities where I was an Investigative Agent for 7 years and a Service and Support Administrator two years prior to that. My favorite things to do are walk my dogs, play racquetball, cook, and laugh.



For people interested in the Haitian Disaster Relief Efforts, monetary donations are the most effective form of assistance. Donations can be made by texting Haiti to 90999 and \$10 will be automatically donated to the American Red Cross. Other ways to donate include going online to the Red Cross at: [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) and to Mercy Corps at [www.mercycorps.org](http://www.mercycorps.org).

### In Memory

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of **Danyel Hayes** who passed away on February 13, 2010.



## Calendar of Events

March/April 2010

March 12, 2010	Agency In-Service	Programs Closed	
March 15, 2010	Programs Resume		
March 17, 2010	Board Meeting	5:30 p.m.	Dennis M. Coble Administration Building
March 26, 2010	Articles due for April Newsletter		
March 29 – April 5, 2010	Spring Break – HAPPY DAY SCHOOL ONLY		
April 2- 5, 2010	Break – 240 Day Staff	Portage Industries Closed	
April 6, 2010	All Programs Resume		
April 21, 2010	Board Meeting	5:30 p.m.	Dennis M. Coble Administration Building

The mission of the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to ensure the availability of programs, services, and supports that assist eligible individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities in choosing and achieving a life of increasing capability such that they can live, work, and socialize in the community, and to assist and support the families of these individuals in achieving this objective.