

## 4H Participation Helps Hope Succeed

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### Go 'Green' with Us

Across the nation people are making an effort to have as little impact on the environment as possible. For many County Boards of MRDD and businesses, the simplest way to spare the environment is using less paper. The Knox County Board of MRDD has been on the forefront of the move to keep records electronically and we do recycle paper, but now we need your help! If you have an e-mail address, you can receive publications (like this newsletter) and other information the "green" way; you can help save money and save trees! Please send us your e-mail address (with your name) to [aperry@knoxmrdd.com](mailto:aperry@knoxmrdd.com).

At 12 years old, Hope Williamson knows the pride of achievement through hard work and responsibility. At the 2008 Knox County Fair, Hope won several awards both for her handling of her miniature draft pony, J.J., and for her other projects.

Hope won 1st place in Junior Showmanship. Showmanship is meant to showcase the handler's grooming ability, as well as the handler's leading abilities. Hope was scored on the horse's appearance, the horse's movement and behavior, as well as Hope's leading skills. Hope kept her composure and, although she was nervous, she remembered what to do. Hope said her favorite part of Showmanship was doing the horse's hair and to "roll" the mane and put ribbons in its hair. In addition, Hope won 2nd in Draft Pony and 4th in Overall Championship.

This was Hope's second year as a member of the Knox Draft Horse Pony 4H Club and she has been very committed to learning and becoming a better handler. This summer, Hope attended 4H camps and Mohican Wilderness camp. Hope is very devoted to her animals. One of her main chores at home has been to care for them and, with supervision, Hope spent all fair week sleeping in the barn with her horse and

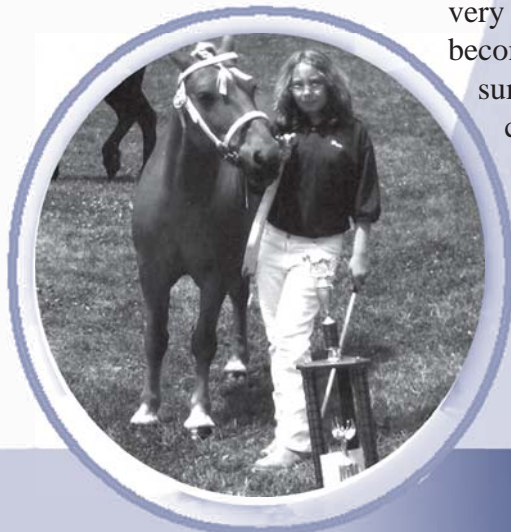


taking care of her animals. This year Hope also went to judging for her "Lets Bake Quick Breads" project. Hope has a great memory and this is something she prides herself on so Hope was able to tell the judge about the different food groups & could name foods that fit into each group. Hope also had to set up a proper place setting for the judge and was able to do everything correctly by herself. She received an "A" and a blue ribbon for her project.

In addition, this year Hope has come to understand measuring liquid & dry ingredients.

Hope's parents are very proud of her hard work. "She was so attentive & really worked hard," said Jill, Hope's foster mother. "Hope gives it her all on everything she tries."

Jill says that the 4H projects have helped Hope with so many skills. Jill has always valued the way that 4H teaches children life skills, responsibility, schedules, planning, health and safety.



# Partnering with Individuals

## Staff Scoop

**Virginia Harden**  
Director of Human Resources



*I have worked at Knox MRDD 28 years*

*What I like best about my job is* understanding and assisting staff with HR issues, and interviewing new staff

*I consider my best skill:* as an HR Director, really listening to what staff are saying, meeting deadlines and keeping the program in compliance. Personal skills - making a good meal for family without breaking the budget.

*The most influential person in my life was:* my parents. They believed in giving their best in providing for their five children. Later, former Superintendent, H. Michael Miller encouraged me to pursue on-line classes to obtain my Associate Degree in Business Administration

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## Ten Years for People First of Ohio

*People First of Ohio are self-advocates with a voice. (file photo)*

Self-advocacy is speaking out for the things you want in your life. When self-advocates work together or work with other organizations they can, and have, achieved important goals that lead to fuller and richer lives.

Many years ago, Knox County advocates united with the goal to have their voices heard and today self-advocates are still making a difference in communities across Ohio.

Knox County was on the forefront of the self-advocacy movement and had one of the first advocacy groups. The group, then called the Consumer Choice Club, was started in the early 90's by people with disabilities who wanted to voice their opinions and make changes in the lives of all individuals with disabilities. They believed that they should have

what everyone else had - goals for the future that included moving into their own homes, buying their own groceries, deciding for themselves where they would like to work, having a girlfriend or boyfriend, getting married and living full lives within the community.

In 1998, after traveling to Columbus to learn about People First of Tennessee, many advocacy clubs decided to come together under the People First banner. People First of Ohio is now 50 counties strong with 52 chapters trained in advocacy, the advocates' Bill of Rights, community awareness, Roberts Rules of Order, Self-Determination, and how to find a voice to achieve their dreams. People First of Ohio celebrated 10 years at the Ohio Self-Determination Conference September 16.

## Collaboration Spotlight: Reaching Out to the Community

We would like to recognize those that have found creative ways to partner with the community. Recently, Creative Foundations (CF), an Adult Day Service program on Main Street, has found innovative ways to partner with area businesses. They partnered with The Pink Cupcake for cake decorating classes and will be partnering with Focus Studio to offer photography classes to the individuals they serve.

Easter Seals, an Adult Day Service program located at the MVDC campus, recently partnered with Chrisitan Star Acad-



*Jack K. dances with clowns of 'Jesus Jesters'*

emy to have their Jesus Jesters provide an entertaining and feel-good time. These activities inspire individuals and create community connections. If you have a collaboration you would like to share, please call Andrea Perry-McKay at 263-1034 so we can continue to spread the good news about the work you do!

# and the Community

## **Community Spotlight:** **Aktion Club Honors Friend Lost**

The Knox County Aktion Club turned their sadness into an opportunity to give back to the community when they dedicated a bench in honor of a peer that passed away. The club members, volunteers, family and friends spent the day clearing Riverside park, placing a bench and planting plants and flowers around it. The bench was purchased from the Adult Day Service provider, New Hope Industries, and was mounted with a plaque honoring Crystal Maybrier.

The mission of Aktion Club is to provide



*Aktion club, volunteers, family members and friends dedicate bench to lost friend*

members the opportunity to develop leadership skills and to serve their community. The Knox County Aktion Club is looking for new members to join them. For more information about Aktion Club log on to [www.aktionclub.org](http://www.aktionclub.org) or call 740-397-4475.

## **Agency Spotlight:** **Creative Endeavors - Amazing Results**

Many people could not imagine a career as an artist as being profitable, but thanks to the many creative activities of Knox County Adult Day Service programs, art is not only a fun way to express oneself, it is also a new opportunity to put a little extra money in the pockets of individuals with disabilities.

Almost all Day Services now offer some form of skill development that can lead to employment. Increasingly popular among Day Services is encouraging individuals to express themselves in artwork. If the individual is interested, these can then be sold at craft shows for some added income. In addition, many individuals are experiencing the pride of producing artwork valued by others.

“My objective is never to have individuals working on art that they will take home and throw away,” said Dawn Joiner of Midwest Innovations. “I want them to be proud of it.”



The artwork produced at Adult Day Service providers runs the gamut from the practical (such as the handmade greeting cards produced by Concepts in Community Living [pictured left]) to the whimsical (such as the concrete faces produced by the individuals of Gantt farm [pictured bottom right]). These are used as wall hangings, garden ornaments, or are produced with pots to act as sturdy planters. Local Day Services also create many more items that make great gifts or keepsakes and all reflect the unique personalities of the individuals that made them. “We are constantly experimenting,” said Bo Rambo of Concepts in Community Living. “We are always looking for new creative projects.” For more information on purchasing artwork produced by an Adult Day Service Program please contact Andrea Perry-McKay at 263-1034 or [aperry@knoxmrdd.com](mailto:aperry@knoxmrdd.com)



## **Staff Scoop** *(Continued from page 2)*

**What motivated me to get into/stay in this field:** High school secretarial class. Once I was employed in a school system I continued working in the field. I worked with the Superintendent of an MR program as secretary, account clerk, and administrative assistant all rolled into one position, but I never lost sight of the fact that I was really working for the community. I've always believed in giving an honest days work by separating personal life from business.

**About my family/pets:** I was married Nov. 16, 1950 and widowed January 21, 1988. I have six children; four daughters and two sons. I am living with my youngest son and his family. We have a fifteen (15) year old Dalmatian answering to “Gonzie”

**I would like to add that** I've been blessed with good health allowing me to continue working for the County Board of MRDD. Everyday is a new day and a continuous learning experience.

## Name Us!

Time is running out to help us choose a new name for this newsletter. We have been called the “Ambassador” for many years, and we think it’s time for a change! If you have a new name that you feel fits this newsletter, call us or send it to us!

Phone: 740-397-4656  
Mail: 11700 Upper Gilchrist Rd., Mt. Vernon, OH 43050.  
You can also tell your SSA or provider.

October 31 we will choose the winning name and award them a prize!

## Staff Scoop

### Brody Boggs

Service & Support Administrator



*I have worked at Knox MRDD 5 years*

*Before my current position I worked at Bisys Fund Services (Mutual Fund Accounting)*

*I like best about my job that every day brings new challenges.*

*I consider my best skill to be communication.*

*What motivated me to get into/ stay in this field is I wanted to work with people and feel like I’m doing something fulfilling.*

*The most influential people in my life were my parents. They are always willing to do whatever is needed for someone to lend a helping hand.*

*If I could meet any person (living in the past or present), it would be Jesus. He’s my role model.*

*About my family/pets: I have a wife, 2 sons (ages 2 and 3) and 2 cats.*

*My favorite word of advice is: Life is full of changes. Roll with it!*

## Speak Up!

*Have a great story idea or an event you want to tell about? Have ideas about what you would like to see in this newsletter? Want to share your story, your artwork, or your poems? Please contact us!*

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