



Speaking Up

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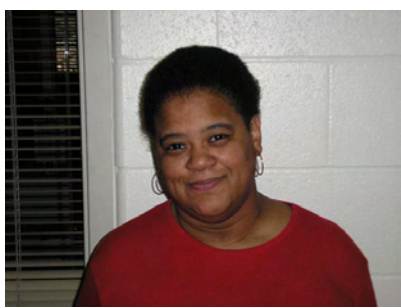
Hamilton County Board
of MR/DD

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Greetings From The Editor

My name is Leah Dawn Alexander. I would like to tell you about workplace situations. A situation can be anything or any place. It can happen with or without people. I had situations at my old job that caused me to change departments and make new friends. Those people in my old department would cause a great deal of stress in my life that I could not take. There are still people at my job who I do not get along with. The part I did not like was the frustration of other people doing things to people like myself and others. Have you ever been like this? What would you do? In my case, I see my counselor or talk to a friend or family member.



Leah Dawn Alexander
Editor-In-Chief

Kidd Center Picnic By Robert Kenney

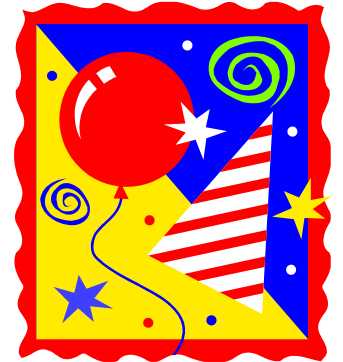
The Kidd Center had a picnic on June 13th. Ed Milano was our DJ for the dancing. The Cincinnati Reds Gapper visited for awhile. He made everyone happy. Our food was good. We were happy to eat together.



Susan Rowe and Gapper

Events At Work By Elliot Brown

We have many events at Franks Center. We celebrate Christmas, Halloween, birthdays and summer. At Christmas, we have a party at the center with gifts food, beverages, Christmas carols, dancing and games. A group comes in to sing for us which we enjoy very much. We eat turkey and ham with all the fixin's! Yum. Yum. Santa visits us to hand out our gifts. At Halloween, we have a party with candy and treats and we play games. Birthdays are celebrated each month for the people who have birthdays during that month. The birthday people receive cards and have "Happy Birthday" sung to them. Each summer we have a picnic at Franks with hot dogs, hamburgers and many other goodies. We are entertained with music, dancing, games and a dunking booth. Some brave supervisor usually volunteers to be the "dunkee." We have a lot of fun at work and the special events certainly add to the fun.



Partners in Policymaking By Diana Mairose

My name is Diana Mairose. I am a graduate of Partners in Policymaking. Partners in Policymaking is a class for advocates, family members and professional staff who want to learn how to advocate for people with disabilities on a national and state level. Every year in Columbus, we have a gathering to network and meet new and old friends. We also have the chance to meet inspiring people who have overcome obstacles to show the world what they can do and say to make a difference in today's society. In December, we had the opportunity to meet Chris Burke also known as *Corky* on *Life Goes On*. Chris is from New York. He speaks to many groups about his family, friends and acting opportunities that he had when *Life Goes On* was on television. Chris told us that humor is important, to have goals and to never give up on what we believe in. He also said to have a network of family and friends who believe in you. I was honored to meet and introduce him. He really enjoyed meeting and seeing what Ohio Partners in Policymaking was all about.



If you would like the newsletter on audio tape, large print or Braille contact Mike Fasanella at 559-6663.

A Dream Realized The 2008 Elections By Judi Mendriski

We are living in historic times today. Over the last two years, we have seen and heard the following events:

- The longest Presidential campaign
- The oldest man running for president - Senator John McCain
- The youngest man running for President - Senator Barack Obama
- The first woman running for President - Senator Hillary Clinton
- The 2nd woman running for Vice President - Governor Sarah Palin
- The first African American man running for President - Barack Obama

Dr. Martin Luther King spoke, "Where men and women would be judged not on the color of skin but on the contents of their character..."

With the 2008 elections being over and the economy going crazy, people need to put aside differences and work hand in hand to come up with solutions to our issues and problems.

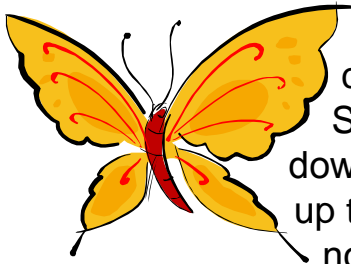
As President-Elect Obama stated, "He can not do this alone, we all must do our part..." In the agenda of his plan for people with disabilities, he stated, "We must build a world free of unnecessary barriers, stereotypes and discrimination...policies must be shaped and buildings and organizations must be designed to ensure that everyone has a chance to get an education they need and live independently as full citizens in their communities."

Over the past several years, people have been discriminated against and intimidated, etc. Hopefully, this is over. We are in for a change, a positive one I hope. As I listened to the debates, I discovered that not one of the candidates spoke about disability issues.

I hear and understand that President-Elect Obama has a policy and agenda dealing with disability issues. The only time I heard the candidates speak on disability issues was at the "Presidential Candidates Forum" in Columbus, OH on July 26, 2008 at the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act 18th Anniversary. The President-Elect has a policy and agenda about disability issues. I hope the reality holds up to his ideas and plans.

Butterfly

By Linda Kunick



A girl was walking down the street. When she got to the corner, she saw a butterfly. She thought the butterfly was pretty. She wanted to pick up the butterfly. Then a lady was walking down the street. She said, “Don’t pick up the butterfly. If you pick up the butterfly, it will go to butterfly heaven. The butterfly does not want to go to heaven.” The next day, the same girl was walking down the street again and she saw a butterfly. She looked at the butterfly for 20 minutes then she walked away and said “I will see you again.”

Founding Leaders In Action members are honored

Three of the founding Leaders In Action members, coordinator and consulting support for the development of the advocacy group were honored at a board meeting in December. The group gave a presentation on the 10th Anniversary of Leaders In Action and advocacy in Hamilton County.



Left to right: Mel Brauning (Coordinator), Margie Moeller (LIA member), Essie Pederson (Consulting Support), Brian Welty (LIA member), Patrice McHale (LIA member) and John Romer (presented the awards)

Congratulations, Linda!!!

Linda Kunick won the ESDY Award at the Ohio Self Determination Association Conference in Columbus. The award is given away each year to someone who has played a role in advancing self-determination.



Goodbye To Susan By Debbie Rosenblatt

Susan Noonan who worked as an editor for the MR/DD newsletter died October 15, 2008. She was in her late 40's and left us much too soon. Susan well liked by everyone at Jewish Vocation Service and we will all miss her very much. She was my wonderful friend. Susan always helped people and tried to make them smile. Susan left several brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews who will miss her greatly. We will miss Susan's joy and the happiness she brought to others.





Speaking Up

**Together Everyone
Achieves More**

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If you would like to submit a story or poem, please email it to Mike Fasanella at mike.fasanella@hamiltonmrdd.org or mail it to Hamilton County Board of MR/DD, 1520 Madison Road, Cincinnati, OH 45206.