



Inside Mount Aloysius

March 2021

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www.mountalloysius.org

Remembering Three Long Time Residents



In January, the staff and residents of Mount Aloysius were saddened by the passing of three long time residents.

Rory Thomas passed away on January 2nd. Rory had lived at Mount Aloysius since November of 1970, and recently celebrated his 50th anniversary of living at Mount Aloysius. Rory was a very friendly, quiet individual who loved sitting in his rocking chair. Everyone called him Pops. He could light up a room with his smile. He worked at PerCo from 1985 until 2008. Rory is survived by his brother Jeff Thomas and sister Nancy Thomas.

On January 25th Dominic Alexander passed away at the age of 63. Dominic moved to Mount Aloysius in December of 1969, most recently celebrating his 51st anniversary of living here. Dominic was a former member of the Mount Aloysius Marching Band and Special Olympic Bowling Team in which he competed and won several medals over the years. Dominic worked at PerCo from 1985 until 2011. Dominic is survived by his mother Carmen, brother Frank (Donna), brother Michael (Lori), sister Becky, sister-in-law Joyce, nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews and his Mount Aloysius family. Dominic was laid to rest at Holy Cross Cemetery in Akron, Ohio.



Rufus Ayers passed away on February 8th. Rufus lived at Mount Aloysius from September 1987 to September 2018 when he was presented with the opportunity to move to a group home in the New Lexington area. Rufus was an avid artist and would often draw pictures to give to staff. He also helped out each year during Family Day by passing out the church service flyer. Rufus will be remembered fondly by his Mount Aloysius family.

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March is Developmental Disabilities Month. Look for an update in the next newsletter on the activities we did at Mount Aloysius to bring awareness to Developmental Disabilities.



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Celebrating 50 Years of Living at Mount Aloysius

We have thirteen residents who have recently celebrated or will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary of living at Mount Aloysius this year. These residents include: Don Amrine (November 1969), Jim Anderson (April 1970); Scott Berzon (Fall 1969); Steve Berzon (April 1970), Brian Dougherty (May 1970), Bob Hotze (September 1971), Bill Kavanaugh (January 1971), Brendan O'Shea (Fall 1969), Mitchell Paul (November 1969), Jeff Penson (February 1971), Robert Robbe (Fall 1969), Greg Stuhldreher (Fall 1969), and Mike Tafoya (October 1969). We hope to hold a celebration for them later this year if COVID restrictions lift. In the June newsletter, we will be sharing stories from families on how Mount Aloysius has impacted not only their lives but the lives of the residents who live here.



Milestone Anniversaries



On February 22nd, Sarah Swackhammer celebrated her 35th work anniversary at Mount Aloysius. Sarah is a Direct Support Professional at Mount Aloysius and also is the Union Vice-President. She is the most senior employee at Mount Aloysius.

Lynn Harper recently celebrated her 30th work anniversary on March 4th. Lynn is the Payroll Clerk and also helps out at the Front Desk and with other tasks on occasion. She is dependable and always willing to help out.



Jill Davis will celebrate her 32nd anniversary as a Direct Support Professional on April 3rd. Jill works second shift and is always willing to lend a helping hand.

Bill Shimp, Chairman of the Board extends this heartfelt message to these employees: On behalf of the Board of Directors and the families of Mount Aloysius, we thank you for your many years of service and dedication to the residents of Mount Aloysius. Our mission of enriching the lives of the developmentally and intellectually disabled community would not be achievable without you sharing your gift of compassion, patience, and respect to our residents for all these many years. We are so very grateful you have chosen to make Mount Aloysius a part of your life; it is your love and dedication to our residents that makes Mount Aloysius such a special family. Our best wishes for your continued fulfillment with your work in the years ahead.

The men of Mount Aloysius would like to express a sincere THANK YOU to all of our staff and all Direct Support Professionals in the community for being there when we needed you the most. You are all true HEROES and should be celebrated not just today but every day!

Welcome Note



On November 19, 2020 we were pleased to welcome Richie Goheen as a resident of Apartment 7. Richie enjoys watching Ohio State Football.

On February 1, 2021, Joey Baggs was welcomed to Mount Aloysius as a new resident of Apartment 9. He enjoys drawing. He especially enjoys drinking Diet Pepsi.



Welcome to the Mount Aloysius family, Richie and Joey!

Two New Program Supervisors Welcomed



On February 8, 2021, John Bess began as Program Supervisor of Apartments 2, 4, and GLOW House. John graduated from Ohio Northern University with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. John previously worked at Integrated Services and the Perry County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

John currently resides in Perry County and has three children Brooklyn, Blaine, and Branson. In his free time, he enjoys fishing, hunting, working in the garage, playing video games, magic cards, crafting, and building models.

Raeanna Fitz started her career as a Program Supervisor on February 22, 2021. Raeanna is Program Supervisor of Apartments 1, 8, and 9. Raeanna graduated from Franklin University with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She is recently married and has three children Bryson, Anslie, and Ava. Her hobbies include spending time with family, watching sports, being outside, and reading. She previously worked as a Life Enrichment Specialist at The Oaks at Bethesda and as a Supportive Specialist at Muskingum Starlight Industries.



Stacey Bell Promoted to Day Services Coordinator



Stacey Bell was promoted to Day Services Coordinator on February 24, 2021. Stacey has worked as a Direct Support Professional at Mount Aloysius since 2016. Stacey was born and raised in New Lexington and graduated from New Lexington High School. She has two children, Keianna and Kollin and four grandchildren. She has previous experience in school and public transit. Stacey finally realized her calling in life in 2016 when she started at Mount Aloysius. She feels every day is a chance to make a difference in the lives of the residents at Mount Aloysius. In her spare time, she enjoys driving in poker runs, hitting the trails, and traveling. Congratulations, Stacey!

Tax Reminder for Parents



Tax preparations are underway for the residents of Mount Aloysius and GLOW House. Some of the residents are employed at PerCo or Mount Aloysius and receive a paycheck and have state and federal taxes withheld. The residents also receive a W-2 form at the end of the year. In previous years, we have received calls from parents asking if the residents file tax returns. In order for a resident to be claimed as a dependent on a tax return, the resident must have lived with you for more than half of the year. A parent must have also provided for more than half the support for the year. For additional information, please refer to the IRS website.

Mount Aloysius Board of Director's & CEO Update **Submitted by Justin Gall, CEO**

Spring is just around the corner and we have much to celebrate at Mount Aloysius. I want to begin by thanking each of you for your continued dedication and support as we navigate how to return to normalcy on the hill.

In January and February, we had the opportunity to offer vaccinations to our residents and staff. This is a huge step in moving not only Mount Aloysius, but Perry County, toward herd immunity and taking one step closer to normalcy. Although vaccination is a step in the right direction, we still have a long way to go and must continue our cautious approach to all gatherings, visitation, and community activities to ensure we continue to move in the right direction.

Even though vaccinations have been administered, Mount Aloysius must continue to follow guidance as provided by the Ohio Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control. Even with restrictions in place, we strive to ensure quality care and place the utmost importance on keeping everyone active. We have resumed with our onsite day programming activities including opening the greenhouse and pool, returning to off-site day programming, and participating in limited community outings. All activities fall within the prescribed guidelines, and we always take the risk of the individual into account.

We are also only in the first quarter of the year, however we are working hard on the continuation of our strategic plan. As you are aware, our plan focuses on four main topics - creating the community as our customer, enhancing service provisions, diversifying funding streams and workforce development. As we began 2021, we were well on our way in outlining our future and are excited to see what the future holds for Mount Aloysius. A few items we have accomplished so far include:

- Becoming a certified respite and short-term provider
- Restructuring of our Nursing Department
- Partnering with our local school in providing training in our service field to upcoming high school graduates
- Exploration of options to enhance and grow our service delivery outside Mount Aloysius

I would like to end by thanking all of you again for your continued support, understanding, and trust. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself, Shannon or Kim with any questions, suggestions, or comments. We welcome your input.

New Flooring

The flooring in the dining room and hallways was recently updated to a more modern and homey look.



Tim Raymond

Options Unlimited Update Submitted by Stacey Bell

Options Unlimited staff are gearing up and ready to kick start the warm season ahead of us!

As always we look forward to enjoying time outside soaking up some of the sunshine and working on things such as our community garden, orchard, and revamping our greenhouse once again.

We strive to keep the men physically active while also practicing social distancing. The men as well as staff are looking forward to nature walks, outside picnics, basketball, corn hole, and all the great things spring and summer bring with it.

Kudos

A Special Thank You to Family Dollar for delivering Valentine's Day balloons to the residents. It really brightened their day!



Harry Tye, David Estep, & Mike Chapman



Glenn Belluscio

Attendance Awards

We are pleased to announce that nine employees received Perfect Attendance in 2020 including James Bowling, Ben Brannon, Kim Flood, Justin Gall, Tiffany Hambel, Lynn Harper, Shannon Jones, Rita Ratliffe, and Cheryll Walker.

Six employees were also recognized for achieving an Honorable Mention of Attendance in 2020 including Jamie Bond, Paulette Crane, Margaret Garlinger, Tiffany Lafferty, Rob Luderman, and Kasey Penrod.

Congratulations on your achievement!



John Colwell



Brian Dougherty

FAMILIES WIN FIGHT AGAINST STATE TO PROTECT DISABLED LOVED ONES

In a detailed 20 page written decision, federal **Judge Edmund A. Sargus, Jr.** has denied the state of Ohio’s attempt to dismiss a lawsuit brought by families who claim the state has failed to provide their disabled loved ones and others Medicaid benefits. The claims were filed by a dozen families throughout the state who claim the state – meaning the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), the County Boards, and the Governor – improperly deny or thwart the Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) entitlement that thousands of developmentally disabled Ohioans rely upon. The ICF benefit provides comprehensive care to intellectually disabled Ohioans with a wide range of needs, including housing, nursing, therapy, food, and habilitation. Because of Judge Sargus’s ruling, the families’ case moves on, and the state must now defend it and answer for it.

In his written decision, **Judge Sargus** held: “The Court simply finds that the Medicaid Act requires Ohio to provide information about all of the services available, allow choice between waiver services and ICFs, and provide ICF services if that is the choice made by the individual or his or her guardian.”

The lawsuit was actually commenced in 2016 by **Disability Rights Ohio (DRO)** – *not* the families – when DRO sued the state and Governor Kasich. Because DRO’s lawsuit affected the ICF families, the families intervened, and in late 2018, the families filed their own claims against the state and county boards to protect the ICF choice.

The lead plaintiff for the families is **Caroline Lahrman**, a Columbus mother of severely disabled twins – Henry (21) and Elizabeth (21) – who live at the Heinzerling Community, an ICF in Columbus. Said Ms. Lahrman: “Families like ours with disabled children simply need to know what all our options are, including the ICF option. There are families on waiting lists, including those with elderly parents, whose child could move into an ICF today, and it would meet their needs, but they are unaware of the choice.” Lahrman explains: “Ohio’s DD System was built by families from the ground up over decades, but in recent years special interests have sought to marginalize those who need intensive care and reduce care options like the ICF. The state even incentivizes ICF providers to close their doors.” Lahrman adds, “Families are grateful for the Court’s ruling that recognizes the diverse needs of disabled individuals. We filed our claims reluctantly and take no joy in having to bring this case, but on behalf of thousands of other families in the dark, we will try to make sure all choices – including the ICF choice – are properly offered.”

The families are represented by **William Choslovsky** from **Ginsberg Jacobs LLC** in Chicago and **John Brody** from **Kegler Brown Hill & Ritter** in Columbus. Said Mr. Choslovsky: “This is an extremely important case, and we are privileged to represent the families. We appreciate and respect Judge Sargus’s detailed and thorough decision, and encourage all to read it. We prefer to resolve all issues with the state and county boards, as that is best for all.”



Dan Hunsaker



Tony Scott



Mike Wills

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Congratulations to the following employees who recently celebrated employment anniversaries:

35 Years

Sarah Swackhammer, DSP

30 Years

Lynn Harper

20 Years

Amy Ross

15 Years

Donita Starrett

10 Years

Scott Davies

Stephanie Huff, PTA

5 Years

Cherrie Leber, Sprt Services Group Leader

1 Year

Daniel Fuller

Katelyn Gall, DSP

Kylee Mourey, DSP

Katelyn Rainey, DSP

Sarah Smallwood, Program Supervisor

WELCOME NOTE

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome new staff:

Annette Banik, Dietary Aide

John Bess, Program Supervisor

Westlee Bobb, DSP

Skylar Chiki, DSP

Raymond Fiore, DSP

Raeanna Fitz, Program Supervisor

Hannah Hart, DSP

Kali Heston, DSP

Jennifer Knapp, DSP

Dillon Moore, DSP

Hunter Moore, DSP

Courtney Price, DSP

Kirsten Parker, Lifeguard

Gary Privett, DSP

Gaige Taylor, DSP

Taylor Wills, DSP

We are glad to have you with us!

Happy Birthday to our Residents!

March

7 - Kevin Coyle

11 - Mike Tafoya

14 - Chris White

15 - Troy Dunlap

Robert Grinnell

Dan Hunsaker

21 - Matt Capps

26 - David Hutton

May

8 - Robert Sayres

16 - Scott Berzon

Steve Berzon

17 - Melvin Hollenback

22 - Dan Williams

26 - George Earley

April

1 - Shawn Lutz

Tyler Waggle

2 - Chip Tye

22 - Terry Hanan

Jeffery Liggett

25 - Dean Harris

27 - Carlos Garcia-Velez

Garry Wojciak



UPCOMING Events

April

1 - April Fool's Day
Airport/Travel Day

2 - Good Friday
Airport/Travel Day
No Options

4 - Easter Sunday

5 - Airport/Travel Day

6 - Airport/Travel Day

30 - Arbor Day

May

6 - National Nurses Day

National Day of Prayer

9 - Mother's Day

14 - Spring Fling Dance

31 - Memorial Day

No Options or PerCo

June

4 - Mount Aloysius Appreciation Day

20 - Father's Day

25 & 26 - Summer Games

The dates are subject to change and events may be canceled as a result of the pandemic or current orders by the Governor. If we decide it is safe to hold an event, please know that we will do so in the safest manner possible.

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INSIDE MOUNT ALOYSIUS NEWSLETTER



We hope you enjoyed this edition of *Inside Mount Aloysius*. Please direct any comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter to Mount Aloysius, c/o Kim Flood, P.O. Box 598, New Lexington, Ohio 43764. Telephone #: (740) 342-3343. E-mail: kim.flood@mountalloysius.org

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