



The Madison Express

Since 2000



Volume 12, Issue 8

September 2011

Bridging the transition gap

Transitioning is serious business.

Just ask the group of Madison County high school students who have spent the last six weeks learning a variety of things.

They have been doing some serious work lately in learning skills that will be needed when going from the classroom to the work force.

“The Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities determined the need to insure that high school students with disabilities made the transition from school to work,” said MCBDD Organization Services Director John LaCivita. “That need was met through a partnership between the Board, MATCO Services, Inc, the Ohio Association of County Boards, the Rehabilitation Services Commission and the Union County Board of DD. This collaboration enabled the Board to access grant dollars to assist in funding these services.”

This collaboration gave birth to the Madison County “Bridges to Transition,” a six-week, 20-hour-per-week work experience for five local high school students within the Fairhaven class at London High School. Participants in the program included Saira Arriaga, Sierra Chapman, Dominique Gonzalez, Briana Keaton, and Eric Stedding. *See GAP, pg 2*



SOFTBALL TIGERS CAPTURE STATE CROWN

This time there was no doubt.

Over the years, the Madison County Special Olympics softball team has won a number of awards. Typically, the championship games for local tournaments or the state have been nail biters.

Not this year.

Using a strong offense — and an even stronger defense — the Tigers beat Upper Arlington 20-1 on September 10 to capture the Division II title. This is Madison County’s fourth unified softball title.

“Our defense rose to a whole new level during the State tournament,” said Tigers coach (and Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities Recreation Coordinator) Lincoln Comer. “The title was a total team effort.”

The defense was just as stellar in the state semi-final contest against Morrow County as the Tigers again gave up just a single run to win 9-1.

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Just by looking at their regular season record (7-12), it would not appear as though the Tigers would be able to reach the championship game, let alone win the title.

“We played a tough schedule primarily made up of D-1 opponents, which I believe helped us in the long run,” Comer said. “We just needed a while to figure out our line-up and fit where best.”

They definitely figured it out as the Tigers exploded for an impressive 33 hits in the title game. The athletes were led by three hits each from Shawn Stewart, Adam Campbell, Waymond Harris, and Thomas Cunningham. Hit leaders for the unified partners were Mike Mast, Jessica Wiggins, and Jorge Gonzalez with four a piece.

“With a big lead in the title game we were fortunate enough to get everyone in,” Comer said. “We smacked the ball well all day — from top to bottom everyone carried their weight.”



Members of the championship team include (front, left) Mike Mast, John Zeeck, Megan Long, Jessica Wiggins, Michael Long, Mike Ellis, (back, left) Lincoln Comer, Waymond Harris, Bill Birmile, Dominique Gonzalez, Billy Fuller, Shawn Stewart, Adam Campbell, Nick Dummitt, Paul Hiles, Thomas Cunningham, Jorge Gonzalez, Caternia Dummitt

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The summer work experience included work opportunities located within Madison County Hospital in the areas of laundry, housekeeping, and stocking supplies. Assisting with the process were Madison County Hospital staff Chief HR Officer Becky Rozell, Recruitment Coordinator Beth Millikin, and Director of Environmental Services Sam Stires.

“Additional work experiences were set up at the MATCO Services Activity Center, where students assisted staff in setting up activities, cleaning, and production tasks,” LaCivita said.

The students worked 20 hours per week, and were assisted at both locations by job coaches through MATCO Services.

“The Bridges to Transition program has given Briana the opportunity to experience what will be coming next in her life, (and also) having a summer job has helped her build her confidence and independence,” said Briana Keaton’s mother, Tonya. “As a parent I have seen that she recognizes that if you do your job well you are rewarded.”

The program began with informational sessions in April for the students and their families. Jeanette Bury, the Transition Coordinator for Union County conducted the assessments leading up to the placements.

“Employers, students and job coaches worked together for six weeks this summer in a unique program designed to provide employment opportunities and work skills development,” said Sharyn Koelling, Director of Compliance and Standards for MATCO Services. “(It) provided an engaging and positive supported work experience to a group of seriously determined youth.”

Golf Classic 2011

Team Campbell are Repeat Champs

'Soup'er Bowl II.

One of the most difficult things to do in the National Football League is to repeat as champion, let alone make it to the Super Bowl in consecutive seasons.

On September 8, Team Campbell showed the Green Bay Packers how it is done as they won their second straight Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDD) Golf Classic. The annual event – now in its thirteenth year – is held in support of people with disabilities. The event took place at London Country Club. Funds gathered from the event will benefit all facets of the MCBDD recreation program, Madison County Special Olympics, as well as the MCBDD Levy Committee for future campaigns.

Members of Team Campbell (see photo) included Patrick Campbell, Patrick Campbell, Sr., Ryan Parrish, Zach Sebert, Dennis Dolby, and Chris Campbell. They finished at -17. Second place was captured by One Source Lawn Care (-14), followed closely by Madison County Tire (-13).

Prizes were awarded to participants in a variety of categories. They included: Men's longest putt (Wayne Holland), women's longest putt (Susan Thompson), men's closest to the pin (Jerry Rainey), women's closest to the pin (Susan Thompson), women's longest drive (Katreika Gambrell) and men's longest drive (Zach Sebert). Carol Ansel won the putting contest.



Golf Classic 2011

Now a word from our sponsors ...

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**Madison County Board of
Developmental
Disabilities**



Special Initiatives by Brothers & Sisters (SIBS)

Conference to be held November 11th and 12th in Columbus

Just call it Sibling Revelry.

The purpose of the eleventh annual Ohio Adult Sibling Conference is to have an opportunity to meet and collaborate with other adult siblings, to become better-informed decision makers and gain the tools to prepare and secure the future health and well-being of individuals with a disability and their families.

The conference will be held November 11-12 at the Columbus Airport Marriott Hotel, and is \$85.00 per person (which includes meals and materials). A special nightly room rate of \$109.00 (plus tax).

Conference attendees will hear presentations from state and national DD professionals, meet other adult siblings, and have opportunities to explore topical areas of interest throughout the conference.

Conference topics will include Future/Family Planning, Life Transitions, Employment, Advocacy, Community Living, Program Funding, and Social Support.

Among the speakers scheduled are ... Mary Morningstar, PhD (associate professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas and Director of the Transition Coalition), Kate Fialkowski (a Joseph P. Kennedy Jr Public Policy Fellow posted at the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) in Washington DC responsible for developing and coordinating a grassroots strategic planning process called Envisioning the Future), and Angela Martin (a Community Support Specialist/Research Assistant at Michigan's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities located at Wayne State University).

This unique conference has been extremely well received and represents an attempt to both inform and empower adult siblings. There is no question that adult siblings represent the next generation of supporters, advocates and caregivers for people with developmental disabilities.

Registration forms are available on the internet at www.ohiosibs.com. Those without internet access can call Tom Fish at 614-292-7550.

