

Winter 2011

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And Now-A Word From Your President

By Blair H. Brubaker, Miami County Board of Developmental Disabilities

This is my final "Leader" article as President of OAAS. It's very tempting to thank everyone for their support, thank the Board for all of the work they do, pledge my support to the incoming President (to be elected in January) and oh yeah, it's the end of the year so a "Happy Holidays" is definitely in order and call it a day! However, I can't let this opportunity go without elaborating further regarding our organization and our Board of Trustees.

My drive to and from Columbus takes approximately an hour and a half. After our December OAAS Board Meeting, I spent that time, driving home, thinking of the many items on our agenda (literally and figuratively). One topic of discussion involved H.R. 3086, the bill to phase out Special Wage Certificates under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Our discussion regarding this bill was involved, lengthy and it took a variety of directions. There are those "in the know" that are professing opposite view points. Some say the bill has no chance of being voted upon, while others support the notion that paying people with disabilities sub minimum wages has taken on a national importance, the results of which will change the way we all conduct business.

During our discussion, much effort was devoted to develop a Position Statement. We even criticized ourselves for not coming up with a statement with substance, everyone could agree upon. We kept adding, subtracting and rewriting it. The good news is that we had very open conversation, OAAS is in touch with several other organizations that have an interest in this topic (note our several liaisons) and we continuously came back to the real topic: supporting the development of meaningful, gainful employment opportunities for the people we serve and their varied interests and capabilities. OAAS is steadfast regarding this topic.

We left our meeting with the agreement that each Trustee would review the statements agreed upon, for further consideration during January's meeting. I have no doubt that we will develop a statement. What really encourages me is the fact that we all met, on a Friday afternoon, to engage in such a meaningful conversation, about opportunities we work hard to offer on a daily basis. And for those of us who provide non work opportunities, don't feel left out. We discussed those challenges and opportunities as well. If you have a strong opinion about H.R. 3086 or more importantly, about employment options and opportunities, let your Regional Representative know. We need to hear from our diversified membership. We have a strong, knowledgeable and dedicated Board of Trustees. Because of that, I look forward to serving in the capacity of Immediate Past President. Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Sincerely,
Blair

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Go to: www.yahogroups.com

Do a Search for OAAS
Click on the OAAS Logo and
sign up!



It's that easy!



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Driving in Snow And Ice

The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all, if you can avoid it.

Don't go out until the snow plows and sanding trucks have had a chance to do their work, and allow yourself extra time to reach your destination.

If you must drive in snowy conditions, make sure your car is prepared, and that you know how to handle road conditions.

It's helpful to practice winter driving techniques in a snowy, open parking lot, so you're familiar with how your car handles. Consult your owner's manual for tips specific to your vehicle.

Driving safely on icy roads

1. Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
2. Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
3. Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
4. Keep your lights and windshield clean.
5. Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
6. Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
7. Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.
8. Don't pass snow plows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
9. Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.

If your rear wheels skid...

1. Take your foot off the accelerator.
2. Steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they're sliding right, steer right.
3. If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle completely under control.
4. If you have standard brakes, pump them gently.
5. If you have anti-lock brakes (ABS), do not pump the brakes. Apply steady pressure to the brakes. You will feel the brakes pulse — this is normal.

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If your front wheels skid...

1. Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but don't try to steer immediately.
2. As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.

If you get stuck...

1. Do not spin your wheels. This will only dig you in deeper.
2. Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way.
3. Use a light touch on the gas, to ease your car out.
4. Use a shovel to clear snow away from the wheels and the underside of the car.
5. Pour sand, kitty litter, gravel or salt in the path of the wheels, to help get traction.
6. Try rocking the vehicle. (Check your owner's manual first — it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse, and back again. Each time you're in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going.

Sources: National Safety Council, New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, Washington State Government Information & Services

The Y Bridge Arts Festival

Heart of Art Studio – Muskingum County

By Diana Geidenberger

The Heart of Art Studio recently participated in the third annual Y Bridge Arts Festival. We had art displayed inside and outside The Starlight Cafe, which was also open during the two day event in August.

The artists collaborated in making a six foot tall paper mache' Totem Pole which greeted guests as they approached the cafe and became "the" premier spot for photo opportunities!

The artists also painted a colorful market umbrella for the picnic table which can still be enjoyed outside the Starlight Cafe on nice days. An eight foot tall tree branch was brightly painted, lit, and hung with dozens of uniquely painted fish and starfish made from recycled plastic bottles-huge hit! There was also community sidewalk chalk art all around the cafe which disappeared after every shower, only to reappear a few hours later. Paul Mainini and friends were generous enough to play music outside the cafe both days of the art festival. Thanks guys, it was great!

We had record art sales from this event and consider it to be a huge success. Thanks to everyone who helped with this event, and a special thanks to all the talented artists at Starlight, who put their hearts into their beautiful art!

And a very special thank you to Beverly Hartong, who designed our Heart of Art Studio logo and was one of the very first artists who inspired a few of us to believe that there was a place for art at Starlight. Beverly, you will always have a special place in our hearts, and we



NOTICE

2012 Minimum Wage

know you are now painting the clouds with all your hearts and flowers and happy faces you always loved to paint!

STATE OF OHIO

Minimum Wage will be

\$7.70 per hour on January 1, 2012

For all Non-Tipped Employees

NON-TIPPED EMPLOYEES

“**Non-Tipped Employees**” includes any employee who does not engage in an occupation in which he/she customarily and regularly receives more than thirty dollars (\$30.00) per month in tips from patrons or others.

“**Employers**” who gross under \$283,000.00 shall pay their employees no less than the current Federal Minimum wage rate.

“**Employees**” under the age of 16 shall be paid no less than the current federal minimum wage rate.

“**Current Federal Minimum Wage**” is \$7.25 per hour.





Community Employment Now...and in the future

Trumbull County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Adult Services Program is looking at Community Employment in a whole new way. In May 2010, Direct Link was formed to highlight the Board's commitment to becoming the premier employment resource in our community. Direct Link is a service offered by TCBDD with a focus on developing jobs, providing job coaching, and follow-along services to those job seekers who want to work in the community. Additionally, Direct Link partners with Rehabilitation Services Commission to ensure quality services are provided to qualified job seekers with disabilities.



One year later, Direct Link has successfully assisted job seekers in finding community employment in their chosen careers as an Office Assistant, Landscape Design as well as building a DJ business. Much of Direct Link's success can be attributed to the TCBDD employees' dedication, innovation and genuine desire to make community employment a reality for the individuals we serve.

Over the next year, as part of our agency commitment, the Trumbull County Board of DD has been chosen to be part of a statewide Employment First Initiative. This project implemented by Wilson Resources, Inc and the DODD, will provide momentum for Direct Link to support 8 additional job seekers to develop their career options and become competitively employed in our local community. TCBDD has also made a commitment to ensure employees are learning innovative approaches to employment as offered by the Employment First Initiative and the Griffin and Hammis' project. With this knowledge, TCBDD staff is able to provide guidance with business planning and resource ownership opportunities.

As one example of the support and innovation provided by the employment staff of the Trumbull County Board, Jim is well on his way to making his newly developed DJ business a success.

Jim decided to make his lifelong dream of being a Disc Jockey a reality. Diamond Jim's DJ service provides fun entertainment for all those who like to Rock! Jim and his support team were able to put together a business plan and secure funding for the professional equipment used by disc jockeys in the field today. Jim will be able to learn to use his new equipment with the assistance of another professional disk jockey who has agreed to mentor Jim. Jim has successfully DJ'd several gigs already!

The future of Direct Link's success will depend on supporting this type of innovation and continuing to build relationships within our local business community. The Trumbull County Board's Direct Link program demonstrates the Board's willingness to move outside traditional employment services and engage job seekers in the possibilities of competitive employment and business ownership.

Written by:

Jennifer Hudak, Habilitation Director

Trumbull County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Tony Tomaski Center

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