

# Clelian Heights Newsletter



# Shavings

Summer/Fall 2012

## Mission

The mission of Clelian Heights is to provide spiritual, educational, and vocational programs for children and adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities that enhance their quality of life and maximize their potential for independent living.

## Vision

The vision of Clelian Heights is an atmosphere of choice, mutual acceptance, respect, and love that will make a lasting difference in the lives of persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

## Non-Discrimination

Clelian Heights offers services to all without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religious creed, disability, sex, ancestry or national origin.

## United Way

Clelian Heights can receive United Way Campaign donations. On the pledge form list, our Contributor's Choice Code is #403. Write in our address: 135 Clelian Heights Lane Greensburg, PA 15601.

## Publication Statement

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## SUMMER and FALL ACTIVITIES





## Farewell Sister Margaret Ann and Sister Marilyn and Welcome Sister Marialice



The end of the year brought some changes as two sisters left Clelian Heights for new assignments and Sister Marialice arrived for her first experience at Clelian Heights.

Sister Margaret Ann Calcutta, ASCJ, Residential Supervisor of the Women's Apartments, and Sister Marilyn Lagermann, ASCJ, School Nurse, left for new assignments in June to continue their faithful service in new positions in Florida and Connecticut. Sister Marialice Ackermann, ASCJ, arrived in mid-August as the new Residential Supervisor of the Women's Apartments.

After being a part of the Clelian community for thirty years, Sr. Margaret Ann headed south, to Pensacola, Florida, to begin a new special needs site as an extension of the Morning Star School program at St. John the Evangelist school.

Sister Margaret Ann began her service at Clelian Heights as a Boys' Residential Supervisor and after seven years moved to the "white house" as the Residential Supervisor for young women. In 1993, when the apartments were built, she began coordinating that program. In addition to being a residential supervisor, Sister Margaret Ann also worked as a Job Coach in the Clelian Center and coordinated various fundraisers such as the diocesan marathon and candy and gift-wrap sales. She led the green house activities which, for many years, were organized with the help of her father, Joseph Calcutta, along with members of the Pittsburgh Garden Club.

Sister Margaret Ann enjoyed making the residents' lives fun and stimulating. She often made the extra effort to secure admissions to various community events, theatrical performances, and other venues. She is missed by all who knew her and our prayers and wishes for future success accompany her wherever she may go.



While at Clelian Heights, Sr. Margaret Ann was a leader in the Contemplative Outreach spiritual network committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospels.

Center Photo: Sr. Margaret Ann with friend, Tim Janis, inspirational instrumentalist who entertained for Clelian Heights several times.

Below: Sr. Margaret Ann and Shirley Whittier (at far left) with a group of the women from the apartments.



Sister Marilyn spent 11 years at Clelian Heights, serving not only as the school's nurse, but also as the yearbook coordinator. The care of the fish in the lobby's large fish tank was a task she faithfully undertook knowing how much the children enjoyed it. Everyone benefited from the beauty of the various flower beds around campus that were maintained with the talent of her green thumb.

Sister Marilyn is now at Sacred Heart Manor in Hamden, CT, where she continues her nursing care helping the retired sisters of her community. She is no stranger to Sacred Heart Manor and is enjoying the rekindling of friendships, especially with Sister Clotilde and Sister Clelia who both moved to Hamden from Clelian Heights a few years ago. Sister Marilyn does miss the spirit of Clelian Heights, the precious children and staff. Her plans include continuing her gardening hobby at the Mother Clelia Memorial Garden at Mount Sacred Heart .

Sister Marialice was the Program Director for 3 and 4 year olds at Santa Maria Early Childhood school in the Bronx, NY, before coming to Clelian Heights. She has a broad background in education, from high school, to principal, to teacher of various grade levels. She says that her classroom experience has helped her in this transition from school to working with the Clelian women.

"Some of the educational values that I find helpful include treating everyone openly and fairly and encouraging the attitude that 'there isn't anything that we can't do together.' I ask questions. I let them be helpful. They have the right answers. They have to transition and adjust to me being their new supervisor after years of having Sister Margaret Ann with them. Just as in school, on occasion, one might need a bit more attention. I'm here for that, ready to give encouragement, to help, to let them know that I have confidence in what they can do and I believe that they can do it, even when they are saying they can't. Happily, I see already, that often they do just fine."

The biggest difference that Sister Marialice finds is the weekends. "Here, you don't have Monday through Friday with the week-end to plan lessons and grade papers. It's a 24/7 schedule where constant reinforcement of life skills, housekeeping, and social and interpersonal skills happen. I try to guide but not interfere. I want them to resolve issues or conflicts. I ask, 'What can you do to fix this situation?' And we discuss their options and make decisions. The women are very involved in life around them, very busy, in fact. It is wonderful to see how many people in the community reach out to them. It's a tribute to all Sister Margaret Ann has done in the past. I'm enjoying the benefit of her work and I'm enjoying being a part of the women's lives," said Sister Marialice.

At the end of each work day the women come home and express a real sense of accomplishment content with the variety and quality of work they have achieved. Regarding her newest responsibilities, Sister Marialice says that each day is not only a learning experience but a fulfilling one as well. She finds her transition has been a good one. "I have learned a lot from the in-service trainings held here. There is so much research being done and all are aware that more is needed. Things are always changing. So much is new. It's a challenging and an exciting time as well."

"The women are so loving toward each other and their kindness is a real example to me. They help me grow in patience and awareness of their needs, too. I feel like a mother because what I do is very similar to parenting, but, with more paperwork," she says with a smile!



Sr. Marilyn, with those she cared for, pictured in the garden she loved.



Sr. Marialice is welcomed to Clelian Heights.



## Cor Jesu Students' *Lasting Project*



Pictured above and on the next page, the Cor Jesu students mix with Clelian adults and staff at work and at play.

Fifteen seniors from Cor Jesu Academy, located in St. Louis, Missouri, recently volunteered to spend some time with our students and the sisters during the summer Extended School Year (ESY) program as part of their school's service-learning ministry called *The Lasting Project*. During two weeks of the four-week ESY program, separate groups of students spent the week in residence at Clelian Heights. They helped in classrooms and in the adult workshop, actively participated in weekly Mass with the Clelian community, and spent time socializing and relaxing with the residents of Chip's House and the Sweeney/Melenyzer Apartments.

Most of the girls had heard of the opportunity and how positive the experience could be from other students at Cor Jesu who attended ESY in the past. They wanted to break away from their comfort zone and take the chance to learn from the students and adults with developmental disabilities at Clelian Heights.

Katie Thieret and Christina Sinak worked with the adults in the Clelian Center. During several of their evenings, the young women spent time with men and women in residence.

"I was a little scared," admits Katie Thieret, "I did not know what to expect, but I knew I wanted to broaden my horizons; be away from home; challenge myself to this new experience; grow in my own tolerance and understanding of those with special needs. These children and men and women can do a lot. I've learned that some just need a little more time and patience but they can do whatever task you present to them."

"My sister, Kimberly, came here for her senior year," said Christina, "and she was so full of excitement afterward. I was inspired to work with special needs children at home. But to come to Clelian was a whole new context of experiences. The other night the guys were telling us jokes and we were hanging out. I really love it here. I would stay longer than a week if I could."

Emma Gambaro has been with a classroom of teenage students all week. She herself has been diagnosed with ADHD and aspires to be an education or psychology major. She enjoys being with the Sisters, the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and felt that the opportunity of coming to Clelian might be a good one personally and spiritually.

"One of the things we have to do as part of our experience is to write in journals and then come together as a group and share some of our thoughts each evening," explained Emma. "What has impressed me the most is that these young people are open to have anyone in their lives. They want to share themselves with you. If they make a mistake or feel they have hurt you in some way they are quick to apologize and own that mistake."

Christina Belt agrees with Emma and has felt the impact on her own way of thinking. "These people, both young and older, live how they want to live. They have so much joy! There is no intrusion of



what people think of them. Getting to know these students and helping them with projects has been so immersive. I would stay longer. I love it.”

Overall Claire Noles would say these students remind her of her friends from home.

“They like to sing and dance just like me and my friends back home,” said Claire. “Sometime a task might be a little more difficult and it takes them a little more time or a few more tries or maybe their speech is a little slow but I learned they are not that different. They like the same music, TV shows, games. They laugh over the same stupid stuff my friends and I do. This experience has made a big impact on me because I am here living and doing it with these kids who are just like me in the classroom. We are learning and doing it together.”

At Cor Jesu, *The Lasting Project* is a service-learning ministry of 40 hours to be completed by the senior year. It incorporates social-justice learning. Sister Colleen Mattingly, ASCJ, is the Cor Jesu theology teacher and chaperone for the young women who come to Clelian Heights.

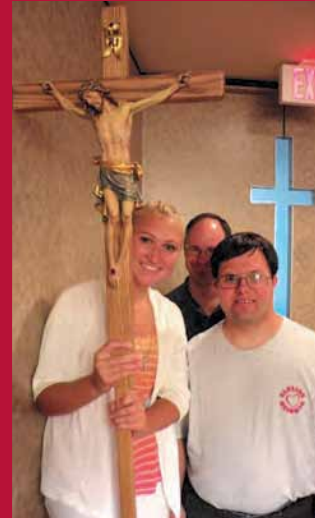
“The focus is Catholic Social teaching which at its core asks ‘what is the value and/or dignity of a human person?’” says Sister Colleen, “in the journaling aspect for the week, the girls are asked to reflect and ask, what more could be done for these individuals? They are told to interview campus staff and find out what difficulties these individuals may have in life. This is to create awareness and then to help them discover possible solutions.”

The entire project culminates with photo slideshows and presentations to the junior class and a newsletter of their volunteer experiences.

“Year after year, I really see my students transformed by this experience and more importantly by the Clelian Heights’ kids and adults,” said Sister Colleen. “They teach my students and it is wonderful.”



Below: Sisters and students caught on camera as they bid farewell after their special experience.





## Sisters Reflect On Their Summer Visit to Clelian Heights



Sr. Colleen

“The first time that I came to Clelian Heights as its nurse, changed my heart,” said Sister Lisa Florio, ASCJ, as she fondly reminisced about her first experiences with the children and adults at Clelian Heights. “That’s what this place does to you. It’s beautiful and it works both ways. I was more compassionate as a nurse and a person because I had changed inside as a result of getting to know and love these very exceptional people.”

Many sisters from the Apostles of the Sacred Heart have been assigned to Clelian Heights over the last fifty years and they like to come back to visit as they travel from various mission assignments around the country. Others request the opportunity to come back during the summer to get their “Clelian fix” as one sister called it on a recent visit. The warm hospitality of the sisters who reside here and the prayerfulness of this community always brings them back.

Sister Colleen Mattingly, ASCJ, first came to Clelian Heights in 2004 during her pre-postulancy experience and volunteered as a teacher’s aide. “When I came to Clelian Heights I really didn’t know much about it. I came because I was sent, told to come.” It was part of her religious and educational formation experience. “Now, I know why I was sent and now I need to keep coming, not just for my students, but for myself,” said Sr. Colleen. Now, she doesn’t want to stay away and has come back several summers either with students from Cor Jesu Academy in St. Louis where she teaches or on her own as her schedule allows. She enjoys visiting the sisters and children as often as she can.

Sister Colleen was back this summer with a group of students from Cor Jesu. “The older sisters here are so hospitable and have made the campus so inviting. It’s like coming back home where everything is comfortable and you’ve left fond memories and expect an enjoyable time--like when you visit your grandparents who welcome you with open arms and share their love and joy with you and make you feel that you are their special visitor. I find that this is such a prayerful community--it’s spirit penetrating. It’s a real blessing to be a part of and I feel blessed when I’m here.”

“Clelian Heights teaches me what it is to be a caring, compassionate person and shows me, as no other place has, what is most important in life --KINDNESS-HUMILITY-COMPASSION-VULNERABILITY-GENEROSITY and LOVE. Clelian Heights is truly an exceptional place.”

Sister Lisa agrees. She wishes she would have come to Clelian Heights as her first assignment. “The children here taught me how to be a real nurse. They don’t let any physical or mental challenge stand in their way. They face them and do the best they can no matter how difficult.”

This summer Sister Lisa had the opportunity to reside with the women in the apartments as staff transitioned between Sister Margaret Ann’s departure and Sister Marialice’s arrival. Sister Lisa already knew many of the women from being here as school and resident nurse from 1994-1997. “It was so nice to be back with everyone and see them grown up and independent. Clelian is such a good place and they feel secure here,” said Sister Lisa. She was very happy to see the increased number of both students and adults. “Clelian has grown, too, during the years. It’s had many good changes, but still the same warm spirit.”

Sister Angela Gertsema, ASCJ, is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at St. Raphael School in Bridgeville, CT, and if she is not assigned elsewhere in the summer, Clelian Heights is first on her volunteer list. Sister Angela, too, has been to Clelian



Sr. Angela



Sr. Lisa



A birthday dance celebration!



several times on and off for the last 18 years. When she comes, she will stay for as much of the Extended School Year (ESY) program as she can.

This year Sr. Angela spent much of her time assisting in the Clelian Center. Part of the time was spent as a job coach. She accompanied the staff and crew of adult workers to the Marriott in Greensburg. She was very “impressed not only with the work assignments that the adults were expected to accomplish during the day but also with how efficient they are in getting the job done.”

“I love coming here,” said Sister Angela. “The sisters here are so generous. They truly care for the kids. The kids love them unconditionally. There is this great culture of selflessness here.”

Sister Angela finds that Clelian Heights really represents the mission of Mother Clelia, the foundress of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart. “I became an Apostle because I was drawn to her spirit. She loved all people but especially those who were normally insulted by society. I am so glad to be one of her daughters.”

Sister Margaret Mary Stoverink, ASCJ, made a special trip this summer from the Bronx, NY, to be here to coincide with the student-volunteer visit of her niece, Claire Noles, who attends Cor Jesu academy in St. Louis. “Since her freshman year, Claire has said she would be coming to Clelian Heights. I think it is such a special experience for these students to come and see what we do here. You can see the love of Christ in the Clelian students and adults. It makes me want to come back.”

Sister Margaret Mary is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading teacher at Santa Maria School and enjoyed the change of pace working with the adults in the Clelian Center. “The experience is wonderful for everyone,” said Sister Margaret Mary. “The positive reinforcement from client to client and staff to client is ideal. Everyone encouraging each other has been great to see. I have been very inspired by this experience.”

Sister Margaret Mary has been on campus for visits many times but it has been a while since she has been involved in the program. Having her niece here and working along with the Cor Jesu student volunteers was an extra bonus.



### Special Moments-Special Pictures

2nd photo from top: Sr. Margaret Mary and her niece, Claire, enjoy some picnic time with a student.





## Family Focus: Sarah Heeter and Tyler Reed Family

Sarah Heeter through the years.



Terry, Lorry, John, Sarah and Grandmother, Bev Heeter

### SARAH HEETER & FAMILY

Sarah Heeter and her parents, Terry and Lorry who live in Clarion, PA, about 75 miles north of Greensburg, heard about Clelian Heights from The Children's Hospital Down Syndrome Center. Sarah was in seventh grade at the time.

"We felt Sarah would benefit more from Clelian's program than she would have by attending her home school," explains Lorry. "Sarah needed true friends and a feeling of belonging rather than just acquaintances. Sarah was perceptive enough to realize that all the other girls had best girlfriends and some were talking of boyfriends. Sarah had none of that. The girls were friendly and if invited over to play with her they would come but she was not invited to their houses or to parties. When Sarah went to Clelian she made friends and to this day feels like she belongs."

Currently, Sarah is 22 years old and resides in the Melenyzer apartment building on campus and attends the Clelian Center for work each day. "Sarah has grown tremendously," says Lorry. "She interacts well with everyone and is independent. She is learning responsibility with her job and truly enjoys her work."

Sr. Shawn Lyons, Director of the Clelian Center agrees, "We have seen Sarah grow and mature. She is very capable and happy with her accomplishments. And that means so much. Sarah has a wonderful sense of responsibility. This May she began working in the community and is doing very well. She is so proud to be part of the crew for the new Latrobe *Springhill Suites by Marriott*, a newly secured facilities maintenance contract begun this past summer."

In fact, working at Springhill Suites by Marriott is not only Sarah's newest job but her favorite one. She says that she enjoys interacting with the members of her Clelian group as well as with the other house-keeping employees of Springhill who have formed great friendships with the Clelian crew.

"I even enjoy the relaxing car ride there, looking out the window at all the trees and now that it is fall, it is just beautiful," said Sarah.

Her second favorite job is soap making. "Because it reminds me of the things I love--art and science," said Sarah. "You can be creative with colors and paint the picture on the soap. But the science of it is the measuring and melting. Knowing how much dye to get the right colors and how many drops of scent so that you don't make it too strong. I also like when we layer soaps. You pour the clear glycerin first and when it cools, it hardens. Then you can add the color layers. It's all science and chemistry."

Clelian Heights has "more than exceeded our expectations", says Lorry. "It is Sarah's home and she feels loved and safe there." Sarah has lived in her apartment for about three years now. She stays a couple weekends a month instead of going home. "Sarah attends church at home but does not have the activity choices at home as she does at Clelian. The options are very limited. This is one of the reasons



(Continued from page 8)

that we feel so lucky she is there because she would be very limited in choices for activities at home.”

“Sarah loves the outings on the weekends and thanks to Sister Margaret Ann, Sarah is now in her 2nd year of ballet lessons at Laurel Ballet, which she loves.”

Sarah enjoys time spent with friends from the *St. Vincent Best Buddy* program. Several of her buddies went to see her dance as a courier in *Laurel Ballet’s* performance of *Sleeping Beauty* in the Spring.

Sarah’s free time centers around music including song writing, dancing and fashion. “I write songs about how I feel about life. I put myself in the other person’s shoes to see life from their point of view, to see what they know about it. I’m writing a song right now about how the walls of life open up and another song about repeat the beat. That’s about me having fun with my friends and enjoying everyday life, repeating the beat, repeating the things we like to do together. It’s fun and it’s really danceable. I love to dance. When I’m dancing I’m showing that I’m happy. That’s joy and believing in yourself. I love being outside and I can enjoy doing these things outside too.”

“I love the bowling parties. I like to bowl for fun, not competition,” says Sarah. “The girls in the apartments can relate to each other. We get along and help each other with any problems. It’s kind of like having sisters. I have a best friend and hang out a lot with her; we like the same things and do them together.”

Sarah’s brother, John (23 yrs), recently graduated from the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. He is recently engaged to his fiancée, Ella, a Marine, and Sarah is looking forward to being a bridesmaid.

Sarah’s mother is happy for her daughter and the opportunities that Clelian Heights has provided her.

#### **TYLER REED & FAMILY**

Tyler Reed has developed into a confident, kind, and mature young man according to his teacher, grandparents and principal, since he came to Clelian Heights thirteen years ago.

According to his grandfather, Ron Opatka, Tyler came to Clelian “with some formidable challenges in his young life. He was a special needs child with autistic spectrum traits, speech difficulties, cataracts in both eyes but, most challenging of all, was the passing of his mom.”

“It was during this time that the family began investigating potential schools that would hopefully develop Tyler so as he could reach his maximum potential. Various public and private schools were researched, and although most were considered adequate, none seemed to meet the parameters that the family had in mind.”

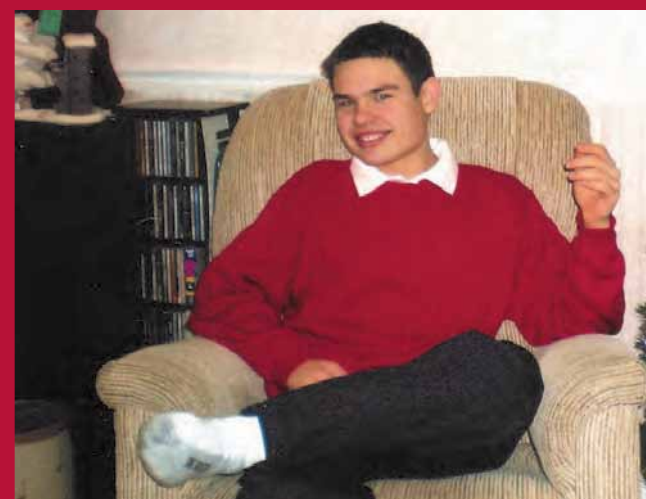
“After recommendations from professional social workers, other special needs parents and our own research, our family chose

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Sarah at work in the Center and with her best friend.

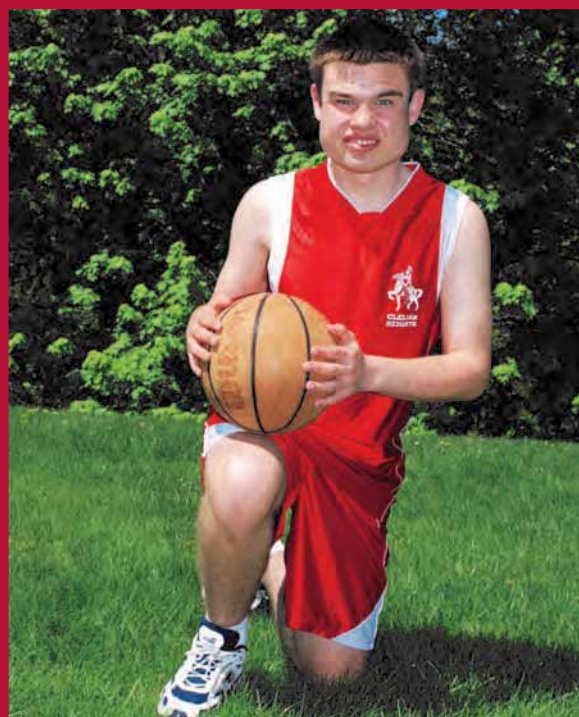
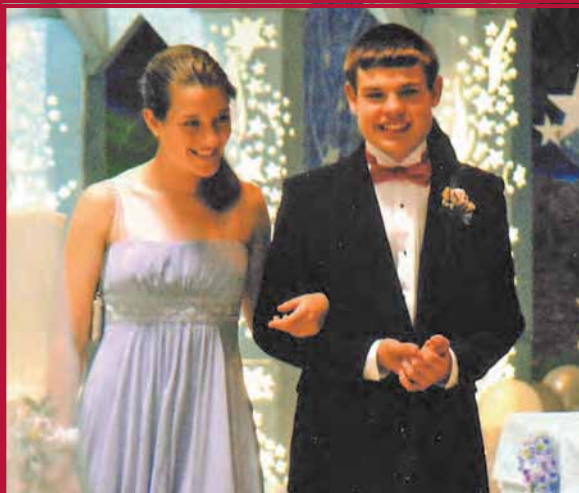


Ron Opatka, Tyler, and Marian Opatka





Photos on these 2 pages catch Tyler as he enjoys a variety of activities on campus and off.



*(Continued from page 9)*

Clelian Heights. The reasons for choosing Clelian Heights were many, however, among the most important were its church relationship, its exceptional reputation and its caring leadership and staff.”

“Tyler began attending Clelian at age six and at age seven circumstances were such that he came to live permanently with us,” recalls Ron. Tyler’s grandparents, Ron and Marian Opatka, have raised their grandson as their own and they are most happy with the results they see.

“We took an active and sincere interest in his education,” commented Ron, “and have never regretted the decision to enroll Tyler at Clelian Heights School. Clelian Heights has fulfilled and exceeded all of the expectations we hoped for Tyler. Educationally Tyler has progressed each and every year. From reading, (checking out the newspaper sports pages), to surfing the internet (finding movie starting times), to making conversation with classmates, teachers and friends.”

“Socially, Tyler has grown from a shy sometimes fearful young child to a confident, happy young man. He interacts graciously and appropriately with most everyone and displays the good manners his teachers and staff have taught and come to expect of him,” said Ron proudly.

“Physically, Tyler has grown quite normally and his physical growth has allowed him to enjoy and participate in Clelian Heights’ outside work programs as well as various ‘jobs’ his teachers assign him in class. At home, Tyler loves to work outside doing yard work, clearing brush, and especially driving his ATV (under close supervision).”

Ron continued, “Tyler enjoys and participates in many activities outside of school. Many of which would not have been possible had it not been for Clelian Heights. He is an usher at St. Vincent Basilica Church. He works at the St. Vincent DePaul Store. He is a huge NASCAR fan (his favorite drivers are Jimmy Johnson and Jeff Gordon). He loves baseball and is an honorary member of a local teen league baseball team and he attends most St. Vincent College basketball and football games.”

At school, Tyler has been a member of the Clelian Crusader basketball team since its inception. He has represented the school in both swimming and track and field competitions for the Special Olympics winning gold, silver and bronze medals over the years. He is a member of the Walking Club. He has participated as an altar server during school Masses and at the Christmas Midnight Mass. Tyler has attended most of the after school dances and has enjoyed four school Proms!

His teacher, Elizabeth “Miss Betty” McCormick, agrees with Mr. Opatka regarding Tyler whom she has taught since 2007. “Tyler is a very pleasant young man, who you can tell is surrounded by love at home,” says Miss Betty. “Every day he walks into the classroom and says, ‘Good morning, everyone!’ He is very easy to work with both in the school setting and in the community. At school,” Miss Betty continued, “he serves during Mass and eagerly sings and participates in all aspects of the celebration. He truly has grown in every way, shape and form. He is just a terrific young man.”



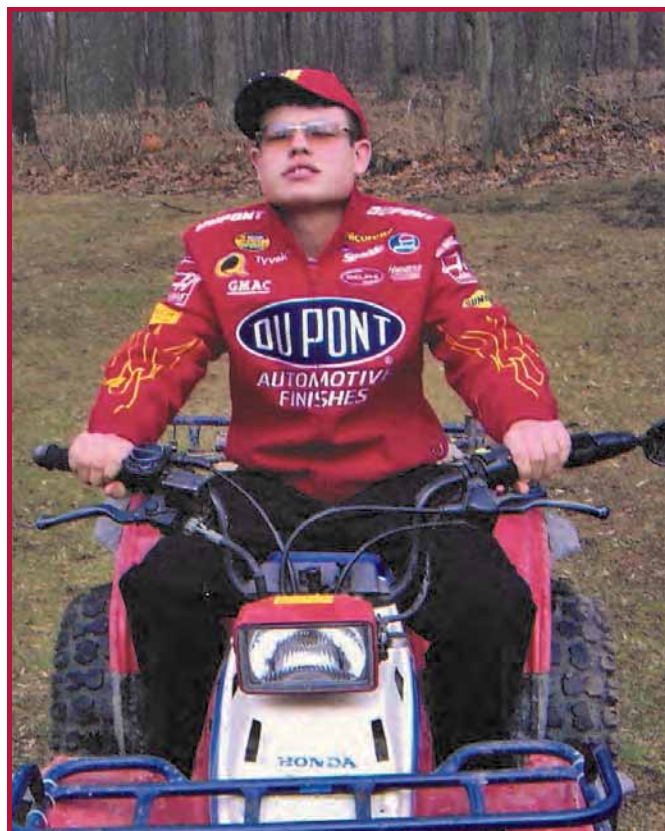
Sister Charlene Celli, ASCJ, Tyler's former teacher and current principal has also seen the growth and maturity in Tyler over the years. "It has been a pleasure and a blessing to watch Tyler grow into the fine young man he is today."

According to his grandfather, Tyler continues to improve and progress each year he attends Clelian. His teacher also says he is very savvy on the computer and especially using the keyboard. Occasionally, his excitement will get the better of his speech and Miss Betty said he will often type out or even write out what he wants to say to get his point or story across to whomever he is speaking with.

"Clelian Heights School has fulfilled or exceeded all our expectations for Tyler," says Ron Opatka. "And without the caring, loving and talented sisters, teachers and staff, it would have been most difficult for Tyler to be the fine young man he is today."



Shown at right with teacher, Miss Betty.



## ESY Summer Highlights

The Extended School Year (ESY) is a four week educational and social enrichment program held during the summer attended by numerous Clelian students in addition to many of our friends from area public schools. During ESY, students take part in educational reviews, vocational and daily living skill training, social and recreational activities. Therapy is also offered for those who require it. Several community outings and group activities are planned as well. Here are some of the "highlights" of the 2012 ESY program:

- A day at *Idlewild* and *Story Book Forest* in Ligonier.
- Visit to the *Carnegie Science Center* in Pittsburgh.
- Karaoke, dancing, and running the Lazer Maze out at *Rockstarz*; in Connellsville.
- A visit from Buffo, of Evans City, *Buffo's "The World's Strongest Clown."*
- Zumba lessons with Leisa from *Janet's School of Dance* in Irwin.
- Trip to *Living Treasures Animal Park & Petting Zoo* in Donegal.
- A musical review for all at Clelian Heights by *Alabaster Theatre* of Greensburg.
- A Disney movie treat, *Brave*, at *Latrobe 30 Theatre and Café* followed by outdoor fun and a picnic at *Hempfield Park*.
- A performance of *Aesop's Fables* by *Sadecky's Puppets* of Tarentum.
- *St. John de La Salle* of Delmont and sister parish *St. Mary's Export*, *Music Camp* presentation of *Life of the Party*.
- A day at *Kennywood Park* in West Mifflin.
- *State Police Camp Clelian* held at Clelian Heights for safety awareness sponsored by the Kiski Valley Station.
- *Sadecky's Puppets*, Tarentum, performance of *Respect*.
- A great *Field Day at Clelian* filled with game stations, obstacle courses and delicious food including a BBQ lunch and made to order snow cones.



Buffo and friend perform for the crowd.





Above left: Lolly & Amber Marsh, educational marionetter's from Chicago entertained at Clelian Heights this summer.



Learning to Zumba dance!



Bowling Olympics 2012



Above: "Christmas in July" in Room 108.



Sr. Michele and Sr. Marialice (behind the camera) accompany the women from the apartments as they dine out with their St. Vincent "Best Buddies."



Cornerstone Ministries' Volunteers







Photos of Clelian Center at work and out in the community.



Below: King's employee, Lauren, Five-Year award and below, Sam's Club employee, Julie, one-year accident free award.



Our Halloween Dance Rocks!

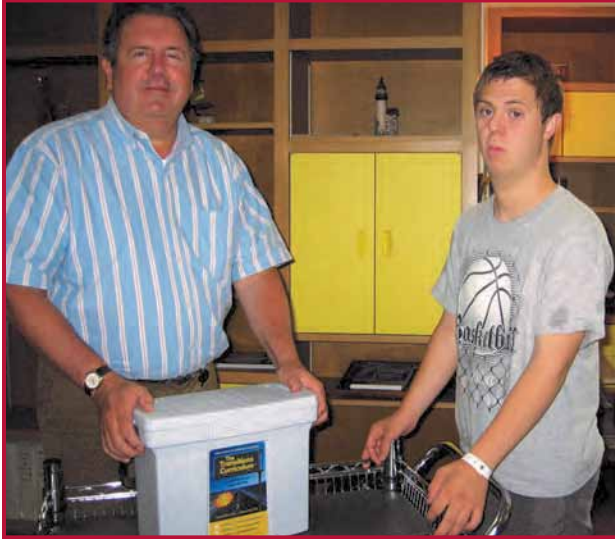


Right: Sam's Club Employee, Melanie, shines!





## Partnering with the Private Industry Council for Summer and School Year Employment Experiences



Each summer the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/ Fayette, Inc. offers the In-School Summer Work Experience Program for special needs youth in our area. Any qualifying students age 16 to 18 can earn up to \$500 through a participating non-profit, school or government agency such as Clelian Heights. Mr. Ron Dezzutti, one of our Transition to Work coordinators helps with the program on the Clelian campus. This summer, 16 students participated in the program working 5 to 10 hours a week during Clelian's four week ESY program.

"The students had the opportunity to learn new skills and to reinforce skills they already knew," said Ron. "This program is really good because it reinforces good work habits and punctuality, skill areas that we have stressed in our other Transition to Work programs and it adds the important dimension of the link between work and earning money that provides for individual needs and desires. Our other Transition to Work programs take place at community outlets and nonprofits and all the work is totally voluntary so there is no exchange of money for services."

Some of the students' summer employment was with other staff members. Leslie Weinell, an occupational therapist, had a student working with her doing office oriented work. The student employee was responsible for completing specific tasks within a given time as she signed in and out each day. "Her self-confidence really improved," said Ms. Weinell.

The student's personal care assistant agreed. "She was excited to come to 'work' each day." It was a responsible position and her behavior reflected the sense of accomplishment she felt in being employed in tasks that needed to be done and that she felt qualified to do. "She likes being needed", her PCA added. Don't we all!

"From an occupational therapy standpoint, even something as simple as collating papers and clipping them together has value", says Leslie. "These little tasks are getting her ready for the work force. One of her responsibilities was cleaning the toys and equipment used each day." The health of the other students and preventing the spread of germs was an underlying part of that responsibility. "These are types of skills needed at work and in life," added Ms. Weinell.

Mr. Dezzutti ran this program with the same expectations as those for regular employees. "We posted employment rights just like we have in our own staff lounge downstairs. It is a real employment opportunity for our students offered through federal funding. We have just begun a new employment program this fall that will run through this school year—12 students have applied and will benefit."



Top: Ron Dezzutti works with a student during the school summer employment experience.

Second photo: Leslie Weinell demonstrates proper collating to her summer employee

Bottom photos: Students have the opportunity to begin Transition to Work training during the school day.



## Welcome New Staff

Mr. Anthony Townsend, classroom teacher, and Christina Bougher, the school nurse, were two new additions to our school staff this year.

Mr. Townsend had a pre-view of Clelian Heights when one of the other teacher's was on maternity leave during the second semester, he became a long-term substitute. This summer Mr. Townsend had the opportunity to teach during the Extended School Year (ESY) program. Now, "Mr. Anthony," as his pupils call him, has become a full time teacher with his own homeroom.

"Clelian Heights has some incredible resources for the kids," said Anthony. "I think that the transitional work program for the older students is an outstanding example."

Mr. Townsend earned both his bachelor degree and his Master in Special Education from St. Vincent College. He chose special education in part because of personal experience with those who have developmental disabilities, but more importantly because he feels that he can help the children achieve more. "I get more personal satisfaction working with a child with disabilities. The gains we make here are so important particularly to their future as far as their independence, living a fulfilling life and being a part of their community."

In addition to his classroom of 8 junior high students, Anthony also teaches 10 music classes each week in the afternoon. He plays guitar and tries to balance between a typical music class for the enjoyment of it and a music therapy type of class where student incorporate relaxation in some cases or movement in others.

Mr. Townsend lives in Leechburg with his wife Sarah, sons Taylor (19 yrs.) and Max (18 mos.) and baby Townsend on the way.

Clelian has a new nurse for the day program. Mrs. Christina Brougher is an experienced, delightful addition to the staff. She has been a critical care unit nurse giving her the background for any emergency that might come up at Clelian. She has also worked with dialysis patients. She shows much care and concern for all the children and finds them most enjoyable and their parents absolutely great and immediately supportive. "I love it here. Everyone is so nice."

She sees how individual each child and adult is but happy that, "Here, they have a voice and if I take it slow, especially with those that are non-verbal, they will make themselves understood and explain things to me. I have learned a lot of ways to communicate with them already and we're doing fine!" Christina attended Penn State University and earned her bachelor's degree as a Registered Nurse. She currently resides in Bullskin Township with husband, Jerod, and their two cats.



Anthony Townsend, Teacher



Christina Brougher, School Nurse



### Welcome New Staff!

The following caring and hard-working Personal Care Assistants (PCA's) have joined our classrooms: Row One from left: Dona Clement and Rebecca Barner. Row Two from left: Ida Rudick, Steven Dillard, Jamesdean Visley, and Blake Barner. Missing from photo: Megan Baughman. We are so glad to have them here at Clelian Heights!



## Clelian Center Highlights



Seated Front (L. to R.): Carol Parrish, Nadine Garris, Karen Cannon. Standing: Suzy Gresh.

### Center Welcomes New Staff

The Clelian Center has added several new staff members since September: Karen Cannon, a job trainer/supervisor, working in all areas of the Center; Suzy Gresh, a job coach assigned to the Greensburg Marriott team; Carol Parrish, Workshop trainer/PCA; and Nadine Garris, ATF trainer/PCA.

Karen Cannon began in October and has a wide background of experience including working with elderly dementia patients, students with autism, and special needs adults transitioning from high school. She holds a bachelor of arts degree in Psychology from Penn State University and currently resides in Greensburg. "So far, being with the adults and seeing them work so hard and seeing how proud they are of their accomplishments at the end of the day--I really like the Center."

Suzy Gresh is one of our new job coaches but she has known and worked with Clelian adults for some time now. In this new role Suzy takes a crew of three to four adults to the Marriott in Greensburg three days a week. The other two days she moves around wherever she is needed. She has worked in *Soap Scensation*, commercial laundry and the ATF. Currently, she has been supervising an intern from Seton Hill who is an art therapy major who has been doing various projects with Adults in the center and the ATF.

Suzy takes a different team to the Marriott every time she goes and the day is tailored to their skill sets and to the jobs that need to be done. "We look around to see what needs to be done," said Suzy. "We communicate with the regular housekeeping and maintenance staff to let them know what we accomplished that day." We are responsible to: vacuum, mop, collect trash, weed, clean glass, clean elevators, bus tables, do laundry. Occasionally, there are special jobs requested of us if there is an event that requires special preparations.

"When we are out in the community, I expect the Clelian workers to be professional adults," said Suzy. "I love their attitude. I really enjoy coaching them. I especially like to see them make friendships with others in the community who might not otherwise take the opportunity to meet and interact with special individuals. It is refreshing to see those relationships develop."

Suzy earned her bachelor's degree in art therapy from Seton Hill University. She currently lives in Johnstown and has recently become engaged to Pat Albaugh. Congratulations Suzy!

Carol Parrish, living in Latrobe with her husband, Raymond and son, Nathaniel (20), is working at many jobs as a PCA/Trainer, as she moves with her adult client, one-on-one, through completing recycling, vacuuming, counting, sorting, and assembling jobs. Carol's job is to teach her client to focus and remain on task. She has seen significant improvement in the short time she has been here providing "...some gentle reminders and encouragement. My goal is to keep my client on task because the potential is there and we both know it can be done." Prior to coming to Clelian Heights, Carol lived in Wyomissing, PA and had 12 years of experience working with pre-school children. "In ways, working with these adults is similar in that they require a lot of praise and encouragement to stay focused", says Carol with a smile. "We want to help them become as independent as possible and reach their full potential. It really is like a family here and I like the Christian atmosphere. It's what I'm used to...It's a comfortable feeling."

Nadine Garris, as a personal care assistance works to develop the daily living and work skills of the adult she is supervising. Currently, they are working on increasing times for focusing on specific tasks including job skills as well as using appropriate personal contact while interacting with others. "It's about listening and following directions and following through. It's also important to have appropriate social skills for the individuals own success," says Nadine. "We went bowling a few weeks ago and needed to use those skills. Each interaction is reinforcing what we teach and practice in the ATF."



## Clelian Center Highlights

Before being employed at the ATF Nadine was a staff substitute in the Clelian Center workshop and she recalls, "When I was substituting in the Center Workshop I learned that everyone here has a lot of talent. There are some very intelligent people working here. Some of them have wonderful memory skills and know a lot of things that I don't even know. These are hard working people who give 100% of their time and attention."

Nadine lives in Latrobe with her husband Bill and children Billy (6) and daughter Alisha (18). She has 7 years experience as a therapeutic foster parent for emotional/medically fragile and developmentally disabled children. She has many years of respite care experience and is currently a private DOM-Care provider in her home.



### Soap Scentsations Debuts



A very generous donation has taken the offerings of the *Clelian Scentsation* soap line to the next level expanding the line to more professional types of offerings. Judy Komarinski, parent of Karli, a Clelian student, has donated numerous silicone molds to the Clelian Center for use in their soap making shop.

"In my business, I hand-carved each design in clay," said Judy, "make a resin cast for each from which I would produce molds to be sold to crafters for candles or soaps. Unfortunately, people in China began to sell molds on-line for a fraction of the cost and my business was ruined virtually overnight. Luckily, I moved on to a new business venture. I was at Clelian Heights one day looking at the display case and saw the soaps. They were very nice but I felt that God made me look there to show me what I could do with all my silicone molds that were sitting at home. I thought, 'They can have a new purpose. I can help!' I donated my molds and some supplies to the Center."

Above: Some of the many soaps now available.  
At Left: Judy and Karli Komarinski are pleased with the finished soaps.

(Continued on page 18)



## Clelian Center Highlights



Clelian Center Director, Sr. Shawn Lyons, ASCJ, is extremely grateful for the gift from Judy and Karli. “The molds are so detailed and beautiful. They give our soaps such a high quality. They allow us to make a greater selection as well as creative diversity and the clients love the opportunity to be more creative. We now have more high quality soaps to offer and the clients have taken ownership and responsibility for developing this new line. It’s wonderful to see.”

The variety of new molds includes over fifty selections for the holidays, various seasons and subject matter, a wide assortment for bridal or showers, and more. According to Robin Lasich, a supervisor in the Center who works with the soap making, “Judy and Karli’s donation has really allowed us to expand our soap making offerings. We have more customized colors now and a variety of scents and Judy is giving us pointers to improve our work.”

“The molds themselves are so detailed, you can see the individual petals on the roses,” continues Robin. “Some of the adults love to take the time to paint on each color to accent, for example, the red shine of an apple or the gold fish in a tank. It helps their fine motor skills and allows them to express creativity. They really put themselves into it.”

Everyone gets an opportunity to try a new skill throughout the soap making process. It begins with cutting the large shea butter and soap base bricks into small chunks for melting. The next step is to add dye and scent. Another person will microwave the product to melt. Then molds are filled and refrigerated to facilitate quick firming and set-up. Some soaps are more intricate and may require several layers of various colors to complete. Another group of workers separate the finished soaps from the molds. The workers thoroughly clean all molds, knives, trays and tables at the end of each shift. A few individuals clean, polish, and trim the soaps. They are then labeled with an ingredient list and the *Clelian Scentsations* logo.



Photos: There are so many possibilities for color, style, and occasions.





## Clelian Center Highlights

Others work on packaging which includes die-cutting boxes and decorating them with custom-stamped artwork, or soaps may be wrapped in transparent paper and tied with a ribbon if boxing is not requested. The soaps are then sorted, and counted and placed in bins ready for sale.

The adult soap-makers learn the entire process and see it through from beginning to end. Everyone gets a chance to try each station.

### *Clelian Confections*

The idea of adding a new line of product to Clelian Center's in-house productions came about from the need for more work opportunities and from the desire to provide the adults with more jobs that they could produce on their own, step by step, to completion. Adding the *Clelian Confections* allows for this to happen. When making the different *Clelian Confections* treats there are a variety of jobs of varying difficulty: preparing trays and ingredients, measuring, stirring, mixing, and spooning mixtures onto trays, timing and baking, racking and cooling, wrapping, labeling, and packaging.

"Some of the adults are great at crushing the peppermint candy used to decorate chocolate covered pretzel rods, some are great at adding the just right amount of decorative drizzle," said Helen Todd, who supervises and coordinates the candy making for the Clelian Center. "Others are excellent at placing the *Clelian Confections* labels perfectly centered on the cellophane bags we use for wrapping. We try to find the right job to make each person successful."

The adults work in the *Clelian Confections Kitchen* in small groups led by staff supervisors Helen Todd, Sister Rosemary, Kim Hampton, and Sandy Sucke. The candy making crew alternates each week and with the variety of candies offered, each group can have a new job experience with each turn. *Clelian Confections* produces assorted chocolate covered pretzel rods, *Puppy Chow* cereal snack mix, *Jumbles* candy snack mix, chocolate covered Rice Krispie bars, peanut butter meltaways bars, cookies and cream bars, and

*(Continued on page 20)*



Everyone is busy with Clelian Confections





## Clelian Center Highlights



Above: Chocolate covered pretzel rods are wrapped and chocolate covered Rice Krispie bars are in production.

seasonally, additional choices include, turtle candies, peppermint bark, and glazed pecans.

“Many of the clients start in our newly added *Confections Kitchen* not knowing what to do but in two, maybe three weeks at most, they know exactly what to do,” said Kim. According to Helen, most who try candy making ask to come back.

Helen and Kim pointed out many life and job skills learned with candy making: hygiene is number one. All work with covered hair, either hair nets or hats; everyone washes hands and uses gloved hands at all times; everyone wears aprons; measuring, counting, sorting, labeling, and packing skills are used as well as those skills needed for filling orders. Safe use of the heat sealing machine is another skill they have learned in other jobs but need to apply here as well. They learn how to keep all peanut and nut products and utensils separate of the non-nut products. Dishwashing and general cleaning skills are also reinforced.

The new space has allowed the Center staff to expand their candy offerings with in-house sales, during Open House, at the Wholey chicken barbecue and during the Night at the Races fundraisers. This year, they will be selling candy, along with *Clelian Scentsation* soaps at area parish craft shows to be held in October and November at Our Lady of Grace in Greensburg, Mother of Sorrows in Murrysville, and St. John de La Salle in Delmont. In addition, Kate Calla, Executive Director of East Suburban Citizen’s Advocacy has helped the Center to secure candy sales at area stores and coffee shops.

### Clelian Center Secures New Business Service Contracts

Two additional Business Services contracts have been added to the Clelian Center over the summer, one for the commercial laundry and the other for the workshop.

The Clelian Center Commercial Laundry has secured a fourth *UPMC Center for Rehab Services* located in Latrobe. The adults in the laundry are now responsible for all sheets, towels and pillow coverings at this location. The items are laundered and sanitized, folded, sealed in plastic and placed in the appropriate color-coordinated bin for delivery.

In June, a new crew began to clean at the Springhill Suites by Marriott in Latrobe. The Clelian Center Employment Services rotates three groups three days a week. Jobs vary each day and include tasks such as cleaning and mopping the café area to working in the laundry.

“The hotel which is co-owned by Arnold Palmer is quite beautiful,” said Connie Gipson, the job coach and coordinator of this program. “There is a large amount of Arnold Palmer memorabilia throughout the lobby. On each floor there is a large mural of individual golf courses that Mr. Palmer owns.”

Having worked with a group of adults initially at the Greensburg Marriott, Connie is very happy to see the relationship expand to the new Latrobe location. “We are blessed to be involved with this organization and, in many ways that the Marriott staff has expressed, they feel blessed



Above: Wrapping and packing the next delivery for UPMC Center for Rehab Services.

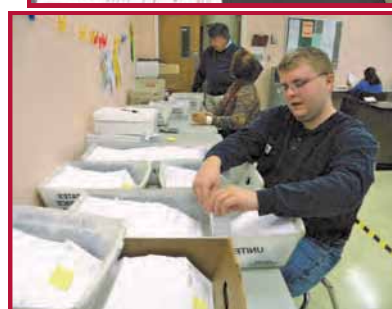


## Clelian Center Highlights



to have us. When Marriott hosted the staff picnic on Springhill's grand opening, our crew eagerly attended as well. During a recent staff appreciation, our group was well represented."

"The Marriott, from our beginning days, has been genuinely supportive and an ideal employer and we appreciate that so very much. It is so nice to hear so often the many compliments our crew is paid. The Marriott staff is always thanking us for all we do for them, about the nice job that we're doing. They appreciate that we not only pull our own weight but try to anticipate or accommodate a special need and readily go beyond for that extra mile which means not only happy fellow employees but many happy and satisfied customers."



Left and Right: Busy hands at the Marriott and on the job.

And we at Clelian Heights in turn, are most grateful and appreciative of Connie Gibson's leadership. Her love for our workers, her unselfish giving of time and self are not only an example to our Clelian Crew, but to all of us. Thank you Marriott for a wonderful partnership and thank you Connie and crew for a wonderful job!

### Clelian Center Winners at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Champions of Art Juried Art Show

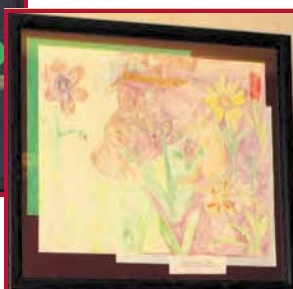
And

### Clelian Center artists on Permanent Display at the County Commissioner's Office



The Clelian Center participated in the "12<sup>th</sup> Annual Champions of Art" Juried Art Show. Several awards were won by our adults artists and two of them took the top prizes! Ashley won a First Place ribbon and the *Best of Show-Adult Category Award* for her original painting, "Ashley's Garden," while Sabby came away with a Second Place ribbon and the *People's Choice Award* for his original composition, *Spaghetti and Meatballs*. Congratulations everyone!

Clelian Center Artist, Rachel, had her *Snowman* (far left) chosen along with artist Valerie's two paintings, *The Last Super* and *Garden Flowers* (center and right). Valerie is pictured with County Commissioner Ted Kopas. They have been honored by their art work being put on permanent display at the Westmoreland County Commissioner's Office. Good Job, ladies!



(Continued on page 22)



## Clelian Center Highlights

### ATF Enjoys Community Outings

An important part of the Adult Training Facility (ATF) program is community integration activities like shopping, dining out and other outings are important for social and life-skill building. These outings to a variety of settings provide opportunities to practice the skills learned in the ATF in real-world situations. They are also an opportunity for socialization, exercise, and fun with fellow members of the ATF outside of their daily routines.

Community activities for the summer and fall have included the following:

- A trip to *Apple Hill Playhouse* in Delmont to see the production of *Straw into Gold*, the classic story of Rumpelstiltskin and Princess Briar Rose.
- Monthly visits to *Main Bowling Center* in Greensburg for fitness fun and a lunch of delicious pizza.
- A visit to the new *Bill Mazaroski Miracle Field* in Murrysville for an exercise workout at the fitness stations and a run around the bases.
- A picnic at *Twin Lakes Park* in Greensburg.
- An afternoon spent at *Lynch Field*, Greensburg, for a picnic and walk around the track.
- An outing to the *Mt. Pleasant Glass & Ethnic Festival* to enjoy the music and dancing, pumpkin carving, crafts, and glass demonstrations and glass displays, and to purchase delicious ethnic foods.
- Another visit to the *Bill Mazaroski Miracle Field* to enjoy the walking trail and then to the *Dollar Tree store* and *Pat Catan's Craft Center* in Murrysville for some fun shopping.
- An outing to *Schramm Farms & Orchards* in Harrison City to learn about the variety of pumpkins, take a hayride, sample cider, pick a pumpkin, and do some shopping.
- A trip to *Ligonier's Diamond* to set up a floral scarecrow display -- *Ligonier Floral* was the ATF Sponsor for this annual contest. The day ended with an ice cream treat at the *Ligonier Creamery*.

### Sharing A Day, Sharing A Memory

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, a group of 30 volunteers from Sanofi US, a global healthcare company, spent the day in the Clelian Center as part of their annual Volunteer week called "Sanofi Season of Solidarity" where employees from across North America (United States, Puerto Rico, and Canada) choose a day to give back to their communities through company sponsored projects.

Lesley Snitger, Sales Professional, and Alenna Dunlap, Specialty Sales Representative, both in the Pittsburgh District, coordinated the effort for their team. "This has been a great experience," said Alenna. "We would like to come back."

Joe Marotta is a territory manager in the Latrobe, Greensburg, and Mon Valley area. He spent his day in the ATF and was very impressed with what he experienced. "The level of commitment and caring by the staff was impressive. This whole experience has been very life affirming. I am getting as much out of today as they are. It has been very gratifying." To read more about the event, see the full article with a slideshow of highlights at [www.clelianheights.org](http://www.clelianheights.org).



Above: Out and About with the ATF





## 15th Annual Wholey's Old Fashioned Chicken Barbecue

Clelian Heights' 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Wholey's Old Fashioned Chicken Barbecue was held in September with over 700 attending! Our guests were more than satisfied by the plump, juicy chicken brought and prepared by Sam Wholey and his pit crew Dean and Wayne Countz and Larry Spieler of Wholey Co. and our own volunteers—Glenn DeRusha, Dan Raschiatore, Bob Veshosky, Steve Nelson, Jerry Lonergan, Henry Hoffer and Jerry Liston. The guys worked from 8 AM until nearly 4 PM and we are very grateful for their hard work and dedication. The results were delicious!



Peeling and coring apples for applesauce.



Applesauce cooking crew

To the chicken was added homemade applesauce prepared by our kitchen and Clelian Center food prep staff. The apples were donated by the *Davis Apple Orchard, in Alum Bank, PA*. Apples were peeled, cooked, and packaged into eight hundred individual cups. Melt-in-your-mouth potatoes and fresh green beans were cooked in our kitchen that morning by Paul Lightcap, school cook, and family volunteers.

In addition, all guests had the opportunity to win some fabulous baskets in our basket raffle and silent auction. There were sixty-eight fabulous choices in our basket raffle thanks to Anna Suman who solicited local businesses around Latrobe, Greensburg, Delmont and New Alexandria for their support. Working along with her were Beverly Kosor and Joyce Trew, a fantastic sister team who performed their magic with baskets and more to make each basket selection beautiful and desirable.



Thank you Sam Wholey for the delicious chicken! We are blessed to have you as our friend!



Great items for bid!

The event was a complete success thanks to our many volunteers who worked throughout the day cooking, serving food, helping with drinks or dessert, bussing tables, selling tickets, washing dishes, running between the kitchen and the gym, and cleaning-up. All did a wonderful job! This is Clelian's single largest fundraiser and the day's event raised over \$28,000! That includes the numerous donations we received from the barbecue mailings. Thanks to Sam Wholey and everyone who attended the event that day, those who volunteered time, and who supported the event through participation in the mailing. Your united efforts made it a great success again!

Clelian Center is hosting a *Breakfast with Santa* and much more on Sat. Dec.1, 2012 beginning at 9:30 a.m. Details, call 724-853-9540!

Be sure to be a part of the 2012-2013 Annual Report by donating today!

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## 12th Annual Night at the Races

**Saturday, March 23, 2013**

**5:30 pm - doors open**

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