

# HIGHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER 2024



### Mission Statement

Ensuring effective systems are available to assist people in achieving their life goals.

### Vision Statement

Enhancing the quality of life in our community – one person at a time.

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Follow us on Facebook!



### From the Desk of Superintendent Larry Gray

It's summertime! Hello, my name is Larry Gray, and I am the new picture you see in the superintendent spot. I hope everyone is enjoying their summer. I have now been with the Board for a little over six months as the new superintendent. We have been busy here at the Highland County Board of DD this summer as you can see in our newsletter below.

One fun fact I would like to share with you about my summer is my quest to see a bear in the wild in Tennessee or anywhere actually. We have several of our kids and grandkids that live in Tennessee, and we visit quite often. They are always sending pictures and telling me how they have seen bears when they go to the mountains. I have yet to see one, so I am convinced they don't exist there. Stay tuned for updates in our next newsletter as I continue my search to see a bear in the wild. I hope you enjoy the newsletter and have a great summer.

Larry Gray, Superintendent

## It All Started with A Dream...

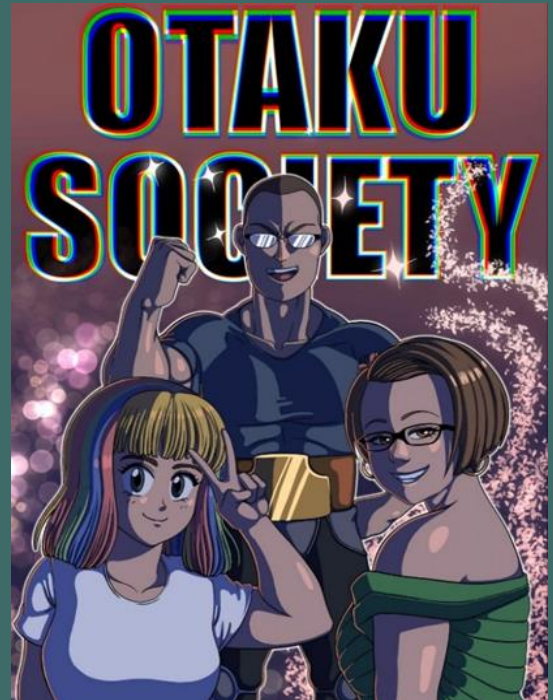


Emily had always wanted to start a local Anime Club, where others who shared her love for Anime could gather. With her self-advocacy skills, the encouragement of her team, and the facilitation of her Service & Support Administrator, the planning process started! Since March, this club has not only helped Emily's dream come to fruition but also facilitated new friendships.

Currently, the club is in the planning process of attending an Anime/Cosplay convention, as well as checking out an Anime themed restaurant, Izakaya, in Dayton.

The Otaku Society is now facilitating their own meetings, with the help of community members. Their logo (shown to the right) is a result of this partnership.

The group meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month at 3 pm. They utilize various community spaces to hold their meetings. If you enjoy Anime, they would love to have you join!



*\*Image designed by Jess Ferguson*





# Fun, Fun, Fun!!



# Highland County Wildcats



Highland County Wildcats are having a great year! Basketball season was a success, with a new coach, Bobby Thornburgh, who taught our players the fundamentals of the game. Under his leadership, the Blue team had five victories, which was a good improvement from the previous year. There were sixteen cheerleaders this year, cheering on both the Blue and White teams.



Spring games were held at Lakota East High School. We had twelve athletes competing and each of them took home a medal!

Two bowling matches were held with Brown County. Wildcats had twenty-eight bowlers. It was fun watching our bowlers compete and enjoy the competition.

Twenty-two bocce players competed in the weekly tournaments, held at the HCBDD track. Athletes are getting more skillful and much more competitive as they play this sport.



**Special Olympics**  
*Highland County*



# Community First

Four local students performed landscaping and other work at the Hillsboro Elks Lodge 361 from May 28 to June 28 as part of the Summer Youth Work Experience coordinated through the Highland County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. The program offers youth between the ages of 14 and 20 a chance to earn minimum wage and learn job skills while performing jobs in the area. This year 18 students participated in programs at the Highland County YMCA, Star Cinemas, Ponderosa Steakhouse, Highland County Community Action, and the Elks Golf Course. Each week, youth not only earned money but learned responsibilities to guide them as working adults. They learned skills that they can use as job experience when applying for positions later.



Our local chapter of People First meets monthly on the first Wednesday of each month at 1pm at Southern State Community College. We have eighteen members in our local chapter. Some members attend the SOAG (Southern Ohio Advocacy Group) each month as well.

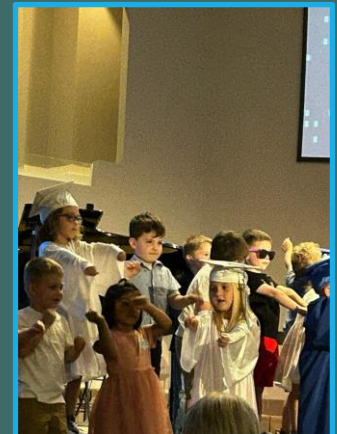
Four of our local members attended the two-day conference in March. Our group was inspired by guest speakers who were interesting, informative, fun, and inspiring.







Hills and Dales Preschool ended the year with a graduation ceremony. Great job to everyone for a productive school year. Looking forward to the 2024-2025 school year!



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Hills and Dales Preschool

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- August 13 & 14- Screening for new students. Staff have already reached out to families who need to participate and given appointment times. If you have misplaced your appointment time just email, [nhaines@highdd.org](mailto:nhaines@highdd.org) or after August 1, you may call the preschool office, 937-393-4237 ext. 143.
- August 15 - Open house! 4:30-6:30pm
- August 19- Student's first day!
- September 2-6- Fair Break

We must have a copy of your student's birth certificate, social security card, proof of residency, a physical and dental exam, and immunizations on file. These can be emailed to [nhaines@highdd.org](mailto:nhaines@highdd.org) or brought in during screenings or open house. Physical and dental exam forms are available on our website, [www.highdd.org](http://www.highdd.org).



Preschool Families, mark your calendars

## HILLS AND DALES PRESCHOOL

# Open House

August 15, 2024  
4:30--6:30pm





## Early Intervention and Help Me Grow



Movement, art, and games both inside and out gave the Early Intervention Team a chance to enjoy their own families for a few hours. An awesome afternoon was had by all.



During a Help Me Grow Home visit, this entire family was engaging in an activity. Family engagement at its best!



**Congratulations to Harper & her family**  
for graduating from the  
Highland Co.  
Early Intervention  
Program.



 **HIO** Highland County  
Early Intervention Board Of  
Developmental Disabilities



**Congratulations to Cohen & his family**  
for graduating from the  
Highland Co.  
Early Intervention

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Early Intervention Board Of  
Developmental Disabilities

# Superintendent presents at OACB Spring Conference

Superintendent Larry Gray was part of a panel that presented at the Spring OACB conference. Larry's presentation was titled "Exploring Innovative Housing Opportunities." Larry has significant experience in the housing area and provided valuable information to the group at the conference.



## HCBD Nurse Becky Pollard Retires

After serving the county board for twenty-eight years and nine months, Nurse Becky hung up her stethoscope for good. Becky was an important part of the team, providing training to board staff and providers, completing medications reviews, and providing insight to preschool medical needs and technical support to providers and department heads. Thank you, Becky, for your years of dedication and commitment. Enjoy retirement!

