

# Pipeline Quarterly

A quarterly feature publication of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

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Spring 2011

## Director's Column We Appreciate Your Input

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During the first two weeks in June, DODD staff and key stakeholder representatives traveled around the state hosting six Family Forums, designed to gather ideas and input from individuals and families within Ohio's developmental disabilities community regarding how we can improve the service system.

We took this grassroots approach to gathering input in order to speak candidly about the current budget issues, and to listen and learn from constituents across the state.

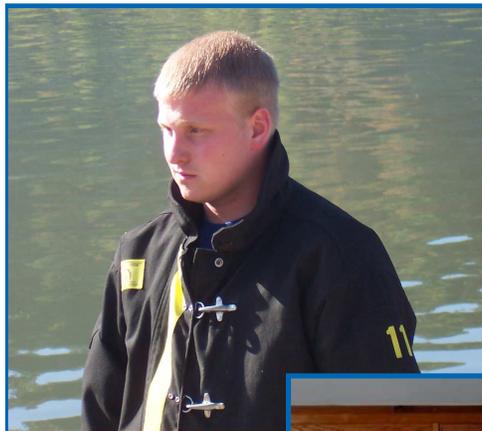
At these forums, County Board of Developmental Disabilities Superintendents, service providers, and family members shared ideas about how we can best manage the available funding and 'do more with less.'

The stakeholder suggestions and ideas gathered will help DODD to move forward more effectively in planning  
(cont., p. 9)

"See this?  
This equipment helps us live our lives."  
-page 4

Learning, Working, Living ...

## An Integral Part of Their Communities



**Fireman Bill,**  
trained to achieve  
his goal, pages 6-7.



As the nation continues to look for progress in the economy by tracking a variety of economic indicators, states are taking a hard look at what characterizes progress for them. Ohio can point to many positive characteristics to build upon, including its hard-working citizenry. And of course that includes Ohio's more than 80,000 citizens with developmental disabilities.



**Cora, on-the-job at  
Roppe Corp.,  
page 3.**



In this issue of *Pipeline Quarterly*, reporting on Spring 2011, we spotlight people with various challenges using self advocacy



**Danny, at last a homeowner,  
page 8.**



skills, supportive families and caregivers, and a service system of supports, to achieve their goals. We find them working in the community, owning a home, volunteering in a field they love, and helping to make their communities stronger in the process.



"Hey, they're my clothes. I can wear what I like!" -page 2  
Isreal, on-the-job at Roppe Corp., wearing a Steelers jersey.

## In this Issue of PQ

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"It's a fantastic  
partnership." -page 3

## In Seneca County

### Roppe Corp. Offers Solid Employment Opportunities in Fostoria

The Roppe Corporation has opened their doors to 100+ individuals who work in the Sampling Division. They ARE the Sampling Division.

The Roppe Corp., Fostoria, OH, manufacturers of rubber and vinyl flooring products sold worldwide, has within its production complex a group of approximately 100 individuals with disabilities who last year turned out more than 42 million pieces of sample product and related promotional sample materials. The individuals are a totally integrated part of the organization, and thanks to a strong working relationship with the Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities (SCBDD), this effort has been successful for more than 25 years.



Don Miller, Roppe Corp. CEO, addresses employees in the Fostoria sample production area. No doubt he's mentioned 'workplace safety' - a key Roppe theme.

"We always take our customers on a tour through the sample production area. They tell us that this is what they remember about our company - the people working there. I'm proud of that ... and of them." -Don Miller, Roppe CEO



#### A Little History

In 1984, Roppe Corp. CEO Don Miller offered the SCBDD adult services group 2500 sq. ft. of space, rent-free, in a building that was a former car dealership. He directed the facility's remodeling, including new insulated windows, painting inside and out, new flooring (of course!) and heating/air conditioning units. Soon, eight individuals began making product sample sets for Roppe. Who but an entrepreneur like Don Miller would have thought this would be the start of the Roppe Sampling Division?!

Now, about 27 years later, more than 100 individuals work in 21,000 sq. ft. of space which is part of a Roppe industrial complex, purchased in 1989. The Roppe engineering department and other offices and work areas are adjacent to this space, which allows for prompt technical assistance and support, as needed. In fact, Roppe's commitment to the partnership includes two staff who work with SCBDD supervisors in the production area to focus mainly on maintaining equipment and scheduling.

#### And In Return

According to Mark Leahy, SCBDD Adult Services Director, Don Miller and the Roppe staff have shared with him numerous times that, "Our employees are behind this working relationship 100%, and it means a lot to them." It certainly means a lot to the employees with disabilities ... (cont. on p. 3)

Isreal (a.k.a. #43) is a Pittsburgh Steelers fan and hard workin' man on the production line. He's reported an equipment issue to Steve, Roppe maintenance engineer, who works through the process with him to find the solution. As for those Steelers shirts, about which he receives some playful flack, Isreal told *Pipeline*,

"Hey, they're my clothes!  
I can wear what I like."  
How's that for self determination?

## Seneca County's Roppe Corp.

(cont. from p. 2)

Behind the Roppe product samples seen at home improvement stores and building supply centers around the world are the more than 100 individuals who work 8:20 a.m. - 3:20 p.m., five days per week, earning good wages. They are keenly aware of the strong work ethic the company represents, and remind each other daily of the importance of safety and quality in their jobs.

Last year Roppe completed a year of cross-training so that most people can do most jobs. Some found a specialty, and some found they have developed surprising skills. For example, Brian, who is blind, was thought to need a manual set-up for his work, but never needed it! "He's right there on the line working quality checks -- he feels the quality by touch," says Leahy. (cont. on p. 5)



Above: Everyone is cross-trained and has opportunities to work in different areas, adding to the skill set each person brings to the job and to the team.



Above: Supervisor Cathy Nye displays a composite sample set. Far left: This employee sports matching headwear according to the color of vinyl she is working with. Who knew there was a market for hot pink vinyl trim! Left: Cora completes a chain set, carefully threading a metal chain through pre-punched vinyl sample pieces.



Preparing sample sets, the group at right exemplifies the strong teamwork and productivity these workers have long been known for within the Roppe organization. According to Seneca County Board of DD Adult Services Director Mark Leahy, "It's a fantastic partnership, and when we are referred to in Roppe's literature as 'Our Sampling Division,' that pretty much says it all."



## In Sandusky County

### Remote Monitoring a New Choice

In Sandusky County, Remote Monitoring at home is very much a part of living successfully in the community for Steve, Maya, and Aaron.

When Steve Queen is asked if he would recommend 'remote monitoring' support to someone else living in the community with the assistance of County Board services, he'll typically respond ...

**"Would I recommend it? Well, it saved my life once already! So yeah - I'd recommend it."**

Steve, his wife Maya, and friend/housemate Aaron are pleased to share information about how their lives are now more connected to services and supports in a cost-effective way, and how the service provider *Rest Assured*, works in tandem with the local County Board.

Sandusky County's first experience with a remote monitoring service is at Steve's home in Fremont, where last autumn *Rest Assured*, a Lafayette, Indiana-based service provider, installed video cameras, sensors, an interactive monitor, and speakers. The equipment is installed in the main living area with a camera in the kitchen, and one pointed toward the front door. Sensors can be put on the stoves and doorways to trigger a signal to the response center.

**The goal of remote monitoring is to improve the lives of people with disabilities, seniors, and others who many benefit from the service - increasing their independence, and maintaining their privacy, health, and safety - while reducing staffing costs.**

The internet-based system uses wireless technology and live/real-time interaction with people on-screen at the provider's support center.

According to Steve, "I can talk with them 24/7! Denise (*Rest Assured* staff on-screen) and her co-workers are great. They've helped me when I cut my finger in the kitchen -- I just showed them my hand and they kept me calm and told me what I needed to do. They also reported immediately, using our emergency contact procedures, when I passed out one day! They pretty much saved my life that time, because I was up one minute and down the next, and no one else was home."

He adds, "Sometimes they keep me company when I'm nervous about something, and before, I probably would have called 911 to go to the Emergency Room. I feel a lot better knowing that I've got them here when I need them, and I don't have to have a staff person here all the time."

(cont. on p. 5)



**Members of the team** involved in putting together the service needs for this home include (L. to R.) Doug Krieger, Maya and Steve Queen, Megan Craun, and Sande Corfman. Doug, Megan, and Sandy are with the Sandusky County Board. Not shown, Aaron Fenner.



**"See this? This equipment helps us live our lives."**

**Steve points out a monitoring sensor on their front door. Steve is quick to tell you that Remote Monitoring equipment and off-site communication has provided needed support, security, and even emergency assistance. Thanks to this service, Steve says he can 'rest assured!' and feel more independent in his home.**



## Remote Monitoring *(cont. from p. 4)*

Steve, Maya, and Aaron continue to share drop-in staff for two hours each day, and SCBDD staff through the Level One waiver, for medical appointments and bill-paying. The difference now is that assistance from the staff is focused on these specific needs, and not on constant supervision.

Says Doug Krieger, SCBDD Director of Service and Support Administration, "Remote monitoring is not for everyone -- but it is a great option for someone like Steve, who, along with Maya and Aaron are quite able to manage most day-to-day activities, but could use a little help in some areas. Such areas could include following directions on food boxes, prompting for safety when preparing food, reminders to take medicine, or maybe a little advice on how to handle minor disagreements that may come up."

And, in the areas of health and safety, Steve is especially supportive of the system. He notes, "I like it that if someone comes into my house, the on-duty *Rest Assured* staff monitors and asks questions of people they haven't seen before. I'll go over to the screen and introduce them to Denise or whoever is online, and say that they're OK to be here. Otherwise, security

**Remote monitoring is used voluntarily, and planned for in the Individual Service Plan, with the individual and the Service and Support Administrator working together to determine if this service meets health and safety needs, and offers desired independence.** »

## Roppe Corp. *(cont. from p. 3)*

He also notes that during one very busy period, Roppe job-tested some people referred by a temporary employment firm, and the result was, "Our folks out-produced them by 35%!" The numbers don't lie. Sample Division employees are hard-working and cost-effective. Cathy Nye, an on-site supervisor in the Sample Division for more than 25 years, notes that there are 11 work area managers (SCBDD staff) who work with 8-11 employees each. She observed, "We are always looking for ways to improve our work flow and output -- and we know if we have a question, we can go to one of the Roppe staff -- including Don Miller!"

Roppe flooring and related products are known for their durability -- "You're going to get tired of it before it wears out," says Leahy. And after all these years, it appears that the employment relationship between Seneca County individuals with disabilities and the Roppe organization is every bit as durable as what's underfoot. »

procedures would be followed to access 911, the County Board, or whatever steps need to be taken. It makes me feel better to know that."

Steve has been able to reduce overuse of ambulance/ER services, and feels more at ease without staff physically in the home. Adds Krieger, "It's a cost-effective way to have the supports needed, and individuals can use the additional service dollars they are saving to do other things."

Flexibility for waiver service expenditures under the new service rule\* is scheduled to be effective July 15. The service in Fremont currently is provided as Supported Living through Clearwater COG. As for Steve and Maya, they say simply, "It helps us live our lives the way we want to."

**\*Rule 5123:2-9-35, scheduled effective date, 7-15-11. Affects Home and Community-Based Services waivers -- specifically remote monitoring and remote monitoring equipment, under the Individual Options waiver. The purpose of the rule is to define remote monitoring and remote monitoring equipment, and set forth provider qualifications, requirements for service delivery and documentation of services, and payment standards for the services. See [www.dodd.ohio.gov/rules](http://www.dodd.ohio.gov/rules)**



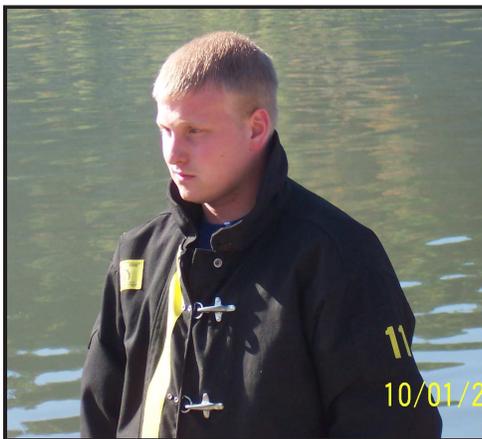
**Brian (left) keeps the quality check moving. "Most impressive to me is that the work performed in the Sample Division is such a natural community work environment. We couldn't be more a part of the Roppe team." -Lew Hurst, SCBDD Supt.**

## Fireman Bill, A Southeast Ohio Success Story

" I want to be a Firefighter ... like my Dad ... and my Grandpa."

*Special thanks to Bill McAllister's mom, Brenda, and to the staff at the Scioto County Board of DD for sharing this story.*

Bill McAllister's long-time dream was to be a fireman and a member of his local Volunteer Fire Department in the small Southeast Ohio town of Rarden, Ohio. Now, the 23-year old resident has achieved that goal, and is the only volunteer firefighter in Ohio who also has autism.



**Bill McAllister, in his element.**

"From the beginning of this journey with autism, 'community' has always been an important component of Bills life. Attending school with his peers, living in and being a part of his community -- just simply living life."  
-Brenda McAllister

### The Journey Begins

Bill was diagnosed with 'pervasive developmental disorder' at age two, and a few years later he was diagnosed with autism. He used mostly gestures and screams to communicate, he didn't want to be held or cuddled, and was hyperactive. Bill's parents, Roger and Brenda McAllister, recall the early years when they first heard the words, "Your son may be autistic" ... words that changed the course of their lives forever.

**Individuals diagnosed with autism show some impairment in social functioning and communication.**

**Symptoms of autism vary from person to person – some individuals are severely affected while others have barely detectable differences. Because of this broad range, autism is often referred to as a 'spectrum disorder,' and thus the terminology Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD.**

Brenda relates, "It doesn't seem possible that it's been more than 20 years. To say those early years were easy would not be true ... but, like many families raising a child with autism or any type of disability, we're better people because of it. We appreciate each and every milestone, big or small."

She adds, "We've had the opportunity to meet so many people we otherwise would not have known,

and, as a student, Bill had a very supportive School District, which was truly a blessing!

Brenda continues, "Keeping Bill engaged in the world around him, wasn't always easy. Our efforts would sometimes push him outside of that autism 'comfort zone.' Looking at him now as a young adult, I'm confident we made the right decisions.

### Journey on to Success

Bill's dad, Roger, is Chief of the Rarden Fire Department, and has been in the field for more than 44 years. So, when Bill came to his mother one day and said "I want to be a fireman like my dad," she wasn't totally surprised. Says Brenda, "We weren't sure what obstacles we might face in Bill becoming a fireman." She adds,

"According to the Ohio Department of Public Safety, no one with autism had ever enrolled in an Ohio State Firefighters course. It was a first for Ohio, and possibly the nation!"



Brenda continues, "As we started down this path, we noticed something wonderful ... the community we've given so much to was giving back to Bill ... the Rarden Village Council approved his application to be a member of the Fire Department, and friends, neighbors, family members, fellow firefighters, and others were strongly supporting Bill in reaching his dream."

In 2009, Bill participated in a 'Partners-in-Policymaking' (PIP) class funded by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council. PIP is an innovative training course that (cont. on p. 7)

## Fireman Bill A story of tradition ... family ... and self determination.

(cont. from p. 6)

teaches parents and self-advocates to change the way people with disabilities are supported and perceived. Part of the class assignment was for each participant to commit to a personal or community project. "Becoming a Firefighter" was Bill's personal project.

With the information and confidence gained through PIP, and the support of his family, community, and friends, Bill then enrolled in the Ohio Volunteer Firefighters course sponsored by the Pike County Career and Technology Center's Adult Program.

In order for Bill to be successful in this adult education course, his parents knew he would need extra supports, as they remembered his previous school-related struggles. His short attention span, hyperactivity, splintered academic skills, difficulty establishing and maintaining relationships with peers, and the need for consistency and continuity could still be obstacles for him.

So, they contacted Ohio Legal Rights Services, and Leah Ann Joyce, Behavior Specialist with the Scioto County Board of Developmental Disabilities for guidance. She helped them establish reasonable accommodations that would meet Bill's needs.

**Classroom accommodations would include a support person to take notes; extra classroom breaks; extended test time; and all essays and the final exams were to be given orally.**

The Pike County Career and Technology Centers Adult Program and the Ohio Department of Public Safety approved the classroom accommodations, and Bill began attending classes.

To complete the course, Bill would be required to review and study chapter questions; complete a workbook; participate in class and in a challenging Skill Practical; and, pass a final exam. Upon successfully completing these requirements, Bill then would be eligible to take the state certification test.

Much to his parents' surprise, while enrolled in the

firefighting class, Bill would sit for hours ... studying, reviewing chapter questions, and completing his workbook. In fact, they were told that during the Skill Practical, Bill would often be the first or second to volunteer!

**It was then his parents realized that Bill was now living his dream, and experiencing the opportunity of a lifetime.**

### A Dream Realized

On November 14th, 2010, Bill was presented with a Volunteer Firefighters Certificate of Completion. Bill is now a proud member of the Ohio Valley & Pike County Firefighters Associations which meets monthly at various Fire Stations in Scioto, Pike, or Adams County. At the meetings Bill is 'just one of the guys,' sharing in the camaraderie of firefighters!

And, Bill is an example of the importance of looking beyond a diagnosis of 'autism' and seeing a person who has dreams, gifts, and talents... seeing the person first, not the disability.



**Bill, living his dream!** Firefighter Bill McAllister enjoys inspecting the equipment involved in firefighting and knows all about what each piece is expected to do in an emergency situation. His attention to detail is a great asset on the job.

**Sometimes there is so much focus on the 'deficits' of autism, that we fail to see the unique gifts -- gifts that can be developed into work skills.**

Brenda sums it up -- "People with disabilities want nothing more than what others already have. A job, to have friends, to volunteer, to live and participate in their community, to worship in the church of their choice, to *simply belong*." 

## Talk About Empowerment ...

### Danny Cassell, Homeowner

In Marion, Ohio, Danny Cassell has a feeling of independence he never experienced before purchasing his own home. Putting it plainly, he readily explained,

**"I was sick of paying rent, and it made me want to have something that was my own. I wanted a house that was mine. I'm very happy here."**

While many individuals receiving services from the Marion County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDD) live independently in the community, Cassell is the first to purchase his own home.

"This was all Danny's idea," observed MCBDD Superintendent Lee Wedemeyer, "He walked into my office one day and said he was tired of paying rent and wanted to know if he could buy a house. I said, 'I don't see why not.' "

Wedemeyer continued, "And I know if anything were to happen and Danny ended up facing some challenges, our network of service providers would not let him fail. It's a great accomplishment for him."

As reported in *The Marion Star*,\* Cassell recently purchased the house in Marion for \$67,900. To secure the reasonably-priced home, Northland Home and Properties helped Cassell obtain a loan, on which he makes the monthly mortgage payments. The Ohio Self Determination Association and the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council also assisted Cassell and MCBDD in the loan process, and identified various helpful resources.

**Cassell was able to purchase the home, in part, because of his legendary work ethic. He has worked at Meijer in Marion for 18 years and, to the best of anyone's memory, has never missed a day of work.**

His supervisor reports, "Danny's dependability is outstanding." It is also well-known in the community that Cassell rides his bike to work in all kinds of weather. His strong employment record helped make him an ideal candidate for home ownership.

"My job is so important to me because if I do not go to work, I do not get paid, and the house payment would not get made," Cassell noted with his usual straightforward approach, adding,

**"Owning my own house makes me feel much more respectable."**

And, he's already experienced some of the challenges associated with



Marion County resident **Danny Cassell** enjoys owning his own home, and is known in the community for having...

**A Legendary Work Ethic.**

being a homeowner, including a basement full of water. But, according to Cassell, worse than any flooding issues, the diehard *Buckeyes* fan has had to live with the fact that one of his neighbors is a *Michigan* fan!

Cassell lives with longtime girlfriend, Karen, who shares responsibilities for the home. It's also very helpful that Cassell enjoys strong family support from two sisters and their husbands, who stop by regularly to eat supper together, make sure the house is clean, sort bills, and help with budgeting. The family is involved and interested, yet not intrusive.

"The King of his Cassell" has made many interior home renovations, and is ready to tackle outside projects. "I love being able to make my own changes to the house," he remarks. MCBDD staffer Jessica Trainer, who has assisted Danny Cassell in meeting various goals, sums it up -- "We're just so proud of him, and we know he is capable of anything he really puts his mind to doing." ✎

Acknowledgements to *The Marion Star* newspaper, May 9, 2011 titled, "Danny Cassell has a home of his own."

## Belmont County Children's Advocacy Center Finds a Welcome Home

Previously vacant space in the Belmont County Board of DD Transportation building in St. Clairsville soon will welcome children who need support and services via *Harmony House*, a Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) based in Wheeling WV, that has opened an affiliate office in Belmont County, OH. CAC's are designed to strengthen a community's response to child abuse, neglect, and other issues using a multi-disciplinary team approach. They also serve the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities who, in cases of alleged physical or sexual abuse, could benefit from services that reduce trauma and produce healing.



Accredited member  
of the National  
Children's Alliance.

The Belmont County affiliate office of *Harmony House* is the result of collaboration among several agencies, including the Belmont County Department of Job and Family Services, County Commissioners, prosecutor's office, sheriff's office, medical and mental health professionals, and the Belmont County Board of DD. The location was deemed to be one that would allow children to feel physically and emotionally safe, and was offered as an in-kind contribution to the effort.

According to County Commissioner Ginny Favede, "*Harmony House*, will serve as the hub for the child protection team, providing the leadership, the facility, and the coordination to implement a multi-disciplinary approach needed to assist these children. The CAC also will include partners from law enforcement, specialized therapists, and professionals through child protective services."

Monty Kerr, BCBDD Superintendent during the formation of the partnership, notes,

**"Harmony House is a respected Children's Advocacy Center, and we are pleased to be part of the team that brought its valuable and much-needed services to Belmont County."**

Recent state budget issues have prompted alliances such as this to develop more innovative, networked services to support children and their families in times of turmoil, and promote healing for alleged child victims and their non-offending family members. People with developmental disabilities benefit from local access to these specialized services in a familiar environment. *Harmony House* already has provided services to several individuals served by the County Board. 

For more information: Pamela McCort, BCBDD, [pmccort@cbdd.org](mailto:pmccort@cbdd.org)

## Director's Column

(from front cover)

and continue to build good stewardship of the system, while increasing opportunities for individual choices and independence.

Areas of discussion also have included how individuals and families can *use services differently*, to broaden choices and increase independence, while being cost-effective.

Good stewardship of the system may be achieved in many ways, including geographically shared services, and innovative, collaborative partnerships enabling service dollars to stretch further.

And we have begun to explore some new areas already, such as 'Host Homes' -- personal care and support provided in a private home by an unrelated care giver who lives in the home -- and Remote Monitoring services, which involve the use of technology such as live video feeds, to enhance an individual's security, safety, and independence at their residence. (See story, p. 4-5)

As we move forward and put to work the input gathered through the Family Forums, we will continue to look for ways that will make lives better for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, and streamline the delivery of needed services. We thank you for your continued input in that process.\*

-Respectfully, John Martin 

\*Contact us at [feedback@list.dodd.ohio.gov](mailto:feedback@list.dodd.ohio.gov)

## Welcomed into the community ... Union County's Unique Partnership Home



Chelsea (left) and Elaine.

"More than a little excited about moving in."



A firm foundation awaits the home. No local dollars were spent on the land due to the availability of federal funds.

Ohio Hi-Point supplied student labor, U-CO supplied a controlled work environment, and UCBDD is the home owner. *Over the span of about two years, the students from Ohio Hi-Point Career Center built an accessible modular home in the back area of UCBDD's employment facility, UCO Industries.* Along with input from Creative Living Systems, a manufacturer in nearby Delaware County, they built a 1456 sq. ft. home, and installed an overhead door to allow the structure to exit the building. This summer, with the help of waiver-funded services, and a little help from their friends and family, Chelsea and Elaine will be welcomed to their new neighborhood. SO

"The community cooperation has been awesome.  
We're going to do this again." -Kim Miller, UCBDD Superintendent

"Moving Day," has taken on a slightly larger connotation than usual in Union County, on West Eighth Street, in Marysville. In this natural, comfortable community setting, in a grassy lot between two other homes, will be Chelsea and Elaine's home -- moving in June in two large pieces, directly from inside U-CO Industries.

As reported in *Pipeline Quarterly, Spring 2009*, The project began two years ago as a partnership between the Union County Board of DD and its U-CO Industries; Ohio Hi-Point Career Center; and Delaware Creative Housing, among other project partners.

## Pipeline Quarterly

Published four times annually (*fall, winter, spring, summer*) by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities' (DODD) Division of Legislative Affairs & Communications, *Pipeline Quarterly* focuses on people, highlights topics of interest to the developmental disabilities community, and reinforces DODD core concepts and philosophy.

We thank all who have allowed us to speak with them for this issue, and all who have contributed to its preparation. Reader comments, ideas, and feedback are welcomed!

Submit ideas for *Pipeline Quarterly* to editor Sherry Steinman: [sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov](mailto:sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov), or call (614) 644-0262. *Pipeline Quarterly* and the twice-monthly *Pipeline* are archived at [dodd.ohio.gov/publications/pipeline.htm](http://dodd.ohio.gov/publications/pipeline.htm)



"Hancock County Ladies" These colorful metal ladybugs are a new art creation from the Blanchard Valley folks. [www.blanchardvalley.org](http://www.blanchardvalley.org)