

A Newsletter for NEOCAP Staff, Family and Stakeholders



NEO NEWS

Message from the Director

The ramifications from COVID-19 are far from over, with budget cuts looming, reductions in staff and programming becoming a reality (all due to the pandemic); the next half of 2020 may prove to be as, or more challenging, than the first six months.

In times like this, I’m reminded of the proverbial saying “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” In other words, we are going to go through trials and tribulations or sour patches in life. However, if we are able to stay optimistic and find the positive during these times, we will be able to embrace the challenges and the “new norms” and use them to become stronger in our personal, professional, and spiritual life.

In addition to featuring our Mental Health Month celebrations, this edition of the NEO NEWS pays special tribute to the many ways the coronavirus has impacted our lives at home and at work; highlighting the COVID-19 preventative measures we have taken as an agency, as well as providing you with a peek into the home life of several staff during this extraordinary time.

Sincerely,

Jake E. Jones, Sr.



Jake E. Jones, Sr.
Executive Director

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COVID-19 Preventative Measures



Property Drop-Off — Male Facility



Day Area — Male Facility



Easter Sunday Snack — Male Facility

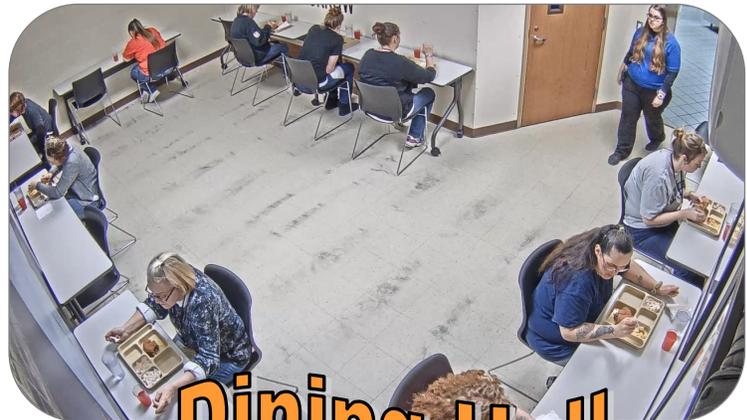


Quarantine Room — Female Facility

S O C I A L D I S T A N C I N G



Group



Dining Hall





Unit 1 Staff Post - Male Facility



NOVEL
CORONAVIRUS
**PROTECT
YOURSELF**



stay safe

Social distancing can be next to impossible in some areas of the facility. The Maintenance Department, with the assistance of a local contractor, erected plastic and glass barriers designed to protect against spreading of germs, and other airborne pathogens at the various staff posts at both the male and female facilities.



Unit 2 Staff Post - Male Facility

COVID-19

Working from Home During the COVID Pandemic



Mike Stassinis
Community Specialist

Intake Department comprised of Mike Stassinis, Jan Amstutz, and Jessica Kohut were forced to adapt to conducting their jobs remotely during this COVID-19 pandemic. Mike is pictured here carrying out intake duties from his home office.



"I found working from home a pleasant experience. Although a large part of my job requires me to visit jails and probation departments, which was not possible for the first few months of the pandemic, I was in constant communication with those departments, organized and focused to ensure the job was always completed."

Mike Stassinis

ORAS Training



Deputy Director Kim Massary provided Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) training for Probation Officers from Lake and Portage Counties as well as several NEOCAP staff. The training was held June 23rd and 24th at the Trumbull County Day Reporting Center.

Passing Time During the COVID Pandemic



Natalie Carr—Program Specialist and Milo
“Essential worker at home too.”



Samantha Works —Program Specialist
“Stepping into the uncharted waters of COVID-19.”



Susan Doudican, Facility Governing Board
Playing the flute, “learning Disney songs to play to my grandchildren when we video chat.”

COVID-19

LIVIN THAT
Quarantine
HOME LIFE



Shauna Nadzan, CQI Administrator and “Snydal”
2007 Grand Prix Rebuild



Brenda Waters, Compliance Manager
Sewing Masks for Everyone ...
150 and counting



Cheryl Moran, Administrative Secretary and Theo
“Can’t wait ‘til the groomer re-opens!”



Eric Anderson, Compliance Manager and Ava in the back yard



Jessica Kohut, Community Specialist
Bathroom remodel with Dad

STAY HOME STAY SAFE



Kristina Henik, Clinical Director
“Music soothes the soul.”
Band practice with the Heniks

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH—MAY 2020

This year's Mental Health America theme is Tools2Thrive, with a focus on what individuals can do daily to prioritize their mental health, build resiliency in the face of trauma and obstacles, support those who are struggling, and work toward a path of recovery.

While 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime, everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health. The good news is there are practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase resiliency—and there are ways that everyone can be supportive of friends, family, and co-workers who are struggling with life's challenges or their mental health.

The tool kit also explored topics such as: recognizing and owning your feelings; finding the positive after loss; connecting with others; eliminating toxic influences; creating healthy routines; and supporting others—all as ways to boost the mental health and general wellness of you and your loved ones.

For each of us, the tools we use to keep us mentally healthy will be unique. NEOCAP wants everyone to know that mental illnesses are real and recovery is possible. Finding what works for you may not be easy, but can be achieved by gradually making small changes and building on those successes. By developing tools, it is possible to find balance between work and play, the ups and downs of life, physical health and mental health—and set yourself on the path to recovery.

For more information, visit www.mhanational.org/may.



NEOCAP SUGGESTED READING LIST

Staff members have provided the following as encouraged reading of positive, motivating, non-fictional titles in support of the Tools2Thrive topic for 2020.

- *Everybody Always* — by: *Bob Goff*
- *The Fringe Hours: Making Time for You* — by: *Jessica N. Turner*
- *The Secret* — by: *Rhonda Byrne*



QUIET MEDITATION

As part of "Creating Healthy Habits" staff was invited to spend a few minutes during their lunch period in the Warren Compliance Office in quiet meditation with aromatherapy and soft music. According to research, people with daily routines have lower levels of distress when facing problems with their health or negative life events. Schedule some down-time as part of your daily routine.



Mental Health Month Tools2Thrive

“Supporting others” and “connecting with others” were two of this year’s focuses.

Staff at both facilities were encouraged to write down something that they have done, either at work or at home, to support or connect with others and then place the leaves on the tree.



TESTING YOUR KNOWLEDGE—MENTAL HEALTH ON-LINE TEST

In celebration of Mental Health Month, our Executive Director created an on-line Mental Health test covering the material provided by the Mental Health America website’s 2020 topic highlighting Tools2Thrive—what individuals can do daily to prioritize their mental health, build resiliency in the face of trauma and obstacles, support those who are struggling, and work towards a path of recovery.

The staff members scoring 80% and above were credited with 5 hours of COB training. The seven staff members scoring a perfect 100% on the test, Eric Anderson, Andrew Gibbs, Heather Kovac, Jennifer Melvin, Lisa Rowe, Brenda Waters and Christina Xenakis, had their names entered into a drawing to win one of two available gift cards. The gift card winners are Brenda Waters and Lisa Rowe.

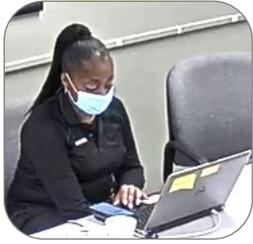
Congratulations to everyone that earned the training hours and to the winners of the gift cards.

CREATING HEALTHY ROUTINES STEP CHALLENGE

All healthy routines should include exercising, but no two routines will be exactly the same. Staff members were issued a step challenge where they competed individually for the top spot from each facility, as well as bragging rights for the facility with the highest overall total.



EMPLOYEE Spotlight



Theresa Day
IT Specialist

**MESSAGE FROM JUDGE GARY L. YOST
ASHTABULA COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS**

As you know, I have been conducting status hearings with our Drug Court participants, who are at NEOCAP, via Skype for some time now. Since the beginning, we have worked with your IT person, Theresa Day. I have always been impressed with her skill and knowledge. Problems in these Skype conferences have been rare, but when there has been a glitch, whether on the Court's end or at the NEOCAP facility end, she was quick to identify it and rectify it.

For the last six weeks or so, I have been conducting these status hearings from my home, using my personal computer.

Ms. Day has again demonstrated her expertise on two different occasions. She was able to quickly trouble shoot the situations and walk me through the steps to establish my video conferences, saving me from cancelling or rescheduling my status hearings.

In addition to her technical expertise, she is very pleasant to work with. I have never seen her without a smile. She is always professional and respectful with the court and with the clients at the facility who are scheduled to conference with me. On the days of our Skype conferences, I always look forward to her cheery "Good morning!"

I think she is a real asset to your organization. In my years of experience in public office, I have found that "government" employees with the best qualifications often lack good people skills, while employees with good personalities can often lack the necessary job skills. Ms. Day seems to have the ideal combination of both.

Working as an IT Specialist she may not have much occasion to represent the "face" of your organization, but I wanted to let you know what a positive impression she has made on me, which I feel, in turn, is a reflection of the management at NEOCAP.



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Judge Gary L. Yost
Ashtabula County Court of
Common Pleas



CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

Did you know Americans watch an average of 2.5 hours of TV per day, but only spend half an hour per day socializing. The female facility made time to be social and celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month by having a luncheon on the facility grounds. Staff was asked to bring a dish that matched their personalities to share with everyone.



Mental Health Sub-Committee
left to right: Rachel Defazio,
Jeigh Maynard and
Jennifer Melvin

"My dish was sugar free Jell-O with cool whip, which does not make sense. I am cool, calm, and collective. I'm sometimes inexplicable."



Tracy Grimes, Case Manager



"My dish was macaroni and cheese. It matches my personality because I am cheesy!"

Garrett Vaught, Treatment Specialist

NEOCAP COOK BOOK

All healthy routines should include eating a nutrition-rich diet. A flyer was posted asking staff to contribute one of their favorite recipes. A cookbook will be created, using these recipes, to distribute to all those that would like one. The following was chosen by the committee as the favorite to be featured in the newsletter.



Brenda Waters
Compliance Manager



Lemon Chiffon Pound Cake
With Blueberry Compote

LEMON CHIFFON POUND CAKE WITH BLUEBERRY COMPOTE - SUBMITTED BY: BRENDA WATERS

POUND CAKE INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 CUP CRISCO
- 1/2 CUP BUTTER
- 2 CUPS SUGAR
- 4 EGGS
- 3 CUPS FLOUR
- 1 TSP SALT
- 1 TSP BAKING POWDER
- 1 TSP BAKING SODA
- 1 CUP MILK
- OR 3/4 CUP ALMOND MILK MIXED WITH SOUR CREAM TO MAKE 1 CUP
- 1 TSP VANILLA
- 1 TSP LEMON FLAVORING OR 5-10 DROPS LEMON ESSENTIAL OIL TO TASTE

POUND CAKE INSTRUCTIONS:

In a mixer, beat together Crisco, butter and sugar. Add in eggs one at a time and mix well. Add flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda slowly mixing into wet batter.

Slowly add in milk (or almond milk mixed with sour cream), vanilla and lemon flavoring (or lemon essential oil to taste).

Spray or grease pans well, line bottom of pan with waxed paper and grease to prevent sticking. Makes 2 loaf pans or 1 bunt pan.

Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes—1 hour, check with toothpick for doneness. Cool slightly on rack before removing from pan.

COMPOTE INGREDIENTS:

- 2 CUPS BLUEBERRIES (FRESH OR FROZEN)
- 3 TBSP WATER
- 1/4 CUP SUGAR
- 2 TSP LEMON JUICE

COMPOTE INSTRUCTIONS:

Cook 1 cup of berries, water, sugar and lemon juice in a sauce pan over medium heat for 10 minutes. Add the other 1 cup of berries and cook for an additional minute, stirring occasionally.

Serve warm compote over cake and garnish with whipped cream.

COVID-19

N C Q G Y J G M O T L W O Q D K K C Y M
 N O T N G S A N W A R E U B T P Q D A M
 W R S I K J N A I Y R A D X N R D A T V
 X O H C I Y P T E Z R Z C Y T E F A S F
 J N H N S E N E Y A I M V K Q W G D E U
 Z A Y A E E E L N C S T L Q I B C V D B
 G V K T S O E T A P J Y I U Z N T E Z W
 X I S S O T I C Z I B N W N R D G U R U
 N R E I P N Q X J Y C E Z J A L P A O J
 O U H D E U U D J F Y O U D V S E Z G V
 Q S M D K Q Q R N K A G S P A A C B W X
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 C L E A N I N G C C E A L E P Z H H X U
 N T X X W W I T M X O S Z C J P E V X B
 H U H Q A S H F E P H H Y L K A J I R V
 A D K T L L V M P M S I C M L Y E H M S
 E X G P Y Q O F T U G N F T I E U L F K
 E Q Z D Q H F P T Y H G H O G K G B B K
 D V Q E S R N P P W P N P C R D H N E U

COVID-19 WORD SEARCH

- CLEANING
- ESSENTIAL
- QUARANTINED
- SOCIAL
- TEST
- CORONAVIRUS
- HEALTH
- SAFETY
- STAY
- TRACKING
- DISTANCING
- HOME
- SANITIZING
- TEMPERATURE
- WASHING



Newsletter Committee

- Editor: Jake Jones
- Writers: Jake Jones
Kim Massary
Rob Blower
Kristina Henik
Jennifer Melvin
- Proofreaders: Natalie Carr
Kristina Henik
Jennifer Melvin
- Layout: Cheryl Moran

