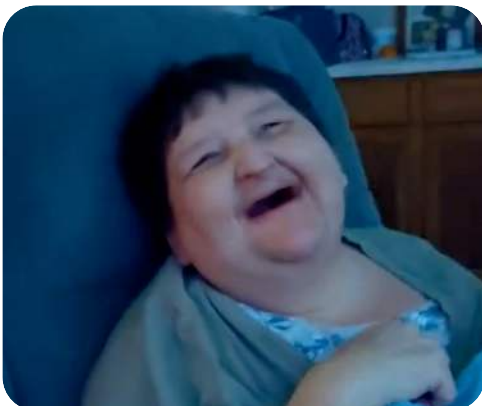


# HOPE HAPPENINGS

FEBRUARY 2026 EDITION

*Seeing Potential - Inspiring Opportunities*



## CREATING HER OWN PATH

By: Kris Banister

Crystal recently celebrated a major milestone in her life by moving from an ICF (Intermediate Care Facility) to her very own apartment. This transition marks an exciting new chapter where she is embracing independence and taking charge of her daily life.

Living on her own has brought Crystal immense happiness. She loves assisting her staff as they decorate her apartment with her favorite colors and accessories, making it a cozy and welcoming environment. She also enjoys participating in various activities with staff, including arts and crafts, music sessions, movies, and community outings. These activities help her stay engaged, make new friends, and explore her interests.

Crystal has a special fondness for the male staff members, often giving them her undivided attention during their time together. Her cheerful personality and genuine connections create a positive atmosphere wherever she goes.

Crystal's journey is made possible through the dedicated support from Life Guide Friends. These caring mentors assist her in setting personal goals, building independence, and overcoming challenges. They work closely with her to celebrate her successes and encourage her during setbacks. With their support, Crystal is thriving, making meaningful choices, and creating a life that reflects her personality and dreams.

Crystal also participates in the COREE ADS program. She has been actively engaging in creative projects like painting, drawing, and craft-making. She enjoys music, exercise, and games that promote physical health and enjoyment. COREE provides her with ongoing support, encouragement, and a community of peers and staff who celebrate her progress. Through her involvement, Crystal has gained confidence and a sense of accomplishment that fuels her motivation to succeed.

Her journey is a testament to her resilience, independence, and the positive influence of her support team. Crystal continues to grow and thrive, inspiring those around her as she builds a bright and independent future.

The next Board Meeting will be held  
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 4pm  
HOPE Services Activity Center

## Holiday Office Closures

**Closed February 16<sup>th</sup> for Presidents Day**  
The office will re-open on February 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am

# Baby + Toddler

## Developmental Screenings

Join us for a **FREE** screening of your little one's growth & development for those whose home address is in a **Defiance, Fulton, Henry, or Williams** county school district.

**ENROLL NOW** →



### The BEST possible start!

- ✓ For Defiance, Williams, Henry, and Fulton Counties
- ✓ Ages 0-5 welcome
- ✓ Preschool screenings are available, too! Children ages 3-5 must complete an Early Childhood Screening before entering local public school preschool.
- ✓ Level 2 snow is a cancellation

Step 1: Complete one Ages & Stages questionnaire (ASQ) per child online using the QR code to the right or go to: [www.asqonline.com/family/f34be3](http://www.asqonline.com/family/f34be3).

Step 2: Wait 2-3 business days for an email from Calendly to choose an appointment time.

List of all screening dates and locations:



Sponsored by Northwest Ohio Regional Early Intervention serving Defiance, Fulton, Henry and Williams counties, school districts, NwOESC, NOCAC Head Start and collaborating agencies.



No online access?  
**567-444-4818**



## Welcome TO THE TEAM



### Marissa Campos

Please welcome Marissa Campos, our newest Service and Support Administrator (SSA)! Marissa lives in Wauseon and is engaged to Anthony Molina. She is a proud mom to one child and two stepchildren—Jalyssa, Jaylah, and Benicio. In her free time, Marissa enjoys cheering on the Detroit Tigers and spending time with her family. We're excited to have her join the team!



### SCREENING DATES + LOCATIONS

Home address must be in a Defiance, Fulton, Henry or Williams county school district.

Screening Locations	Screening Date
Empower Church 9228 Hicksville Edgerton Rd. Hicksville, OH 43526	Feb 23, 2026
St. Peter's Lutheran Church 710 Joe E. Brown ISR Dr. Holgate, OH 43527	Feb 23, 2026
Crossroads Evangelical Church 845 East Leggett St. Wauseon, OH 43587 Schools: Delta & Wauseon	Mar 2, 2026
New Hope Community Church (Red Building) 15975 US 127 Bryan, OH 43506	Mar 2, 2026
Family Christian Center 1834 East Second St. Defiance, OH 43507	Mar 9, 2026
Delta Church of the Christ 600 Providence St. Delta, OH 43315 Schools: Evergreen & Swanton	Mar 23, 2026
Northwest Ohio ESC 205 Nolan Parkway Archbold, OH 43502 Schools: Archbold, Fayette & Pettisville	Mar 30, 2026
Crossroads Church 601 Bonaparte Dr. Napoleon, OH 43545	Mar 30, 2026
Bryan Elementary Preschool 1301 Center St. Bryan, OH 43506	Apr 20, 2026
New Hope Community Church (Red Building) 15975 US 127 Bryan, OH 43506	Apr 20, 2026
Northwest Ohio ESC 205 Nolan Parkway Archbold, OH 43502	Apr 27, 2026



# WORK WORK WORK



### Employment: Creating Opportunity and Independence

Employment plays a key role in building independence, confidence, and community connection for individuals with developmental disabilities. Meaningful work allows individuals to use their strengths, earn income, and contribute to their community.

Employment supports help individuals explore career interests, prepare for job searches, develop workplace skills, and maintain long-term employment. These services are tailored to each person's goals and provide support before and after a job is secured.

Inclusive employment benefits everyone. Individuals gain purpose and stability, while employers gain dedicated, reliable employees who strengthen their workforce and workplace culture.

By working together with individuals, families, service providers, and local businesses, we can continue creating employment opportunities that support choice, independence, and success.



### The 2027 HARC Rec Trip Survey is ready!

Please complete and return by May 1st, 2026.

If you are part of HARC Rec and want to vote on where HARC is going in 2027 please either submit your response by following the link below OR return the form to

HOPE Services, 135 E Maumee Ave.

Attn: Randy

<https://forms.office.com/r/xLND57vZyq>

### 2027 HARC Rec Trip Survey

Circle one and return to me. thanks.

- Maine 7 days 6 nights**
  - Historic Portland
  - Keenbunk and Kennebunkport
  - Boothbay Harbor
  - Pineland Farms
  - Boothbay Railway Village
- Mackinac Island 5 days, 4 nights**
  - Mackinac Island
  - Soo Locks
  - Mackinaw City
  - Colonial Michilmackinac
  - Dewadin Sault Casino
- Mt. Rushmore 9 days 8 nights**
  - Crazy Horse Memorial
  - Guided Tour of Deadwood and gaming at Deadwood
  - Mount Rushmore
  - Wildlife Loop at Custer State Park (this is awesome)
  - Badlands National Park
  - Black Hills
- Boston 6 days 5 nights**
  - JFK library
  - Tour of Boston
  - Visit Salem
  - Gloucester
  - Minuteman historical park
- Vermont 6 days 5 nights**
  - Dinner Cruise
  - Vermont Maple Farm
  - Shelburne Museum
  - Rock of Ages Granite quarry
  - Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream tour
- Niagara Falls and Toronto 5 days 4 nights**
  - Worlds Most famous falls
  - Magnificent Casa Loma Castle in Toronto
  - Hornblower Niagara Cruise
  - Cosmopolitan City of Toronto
- Branson Show Trip 6 days 5 nights**
  - The Hughes Music Show
  - Doug Gabriel Morning Show
  - Spirit of America Show
  - Beach Boys: California Dreamin
  - The Haygoods Show
  - Edge of Illusion featuring REZA

Return to Randy Barnes 135 E. Maumee Napoleon, OH 43545

### Register Now for the 2026 HARC and Friends Talent Show!

We are thrilled to announce that registration is now open for the 2026 HARC and Friends Talent Show! This is your chance to showcase your unique skills and share your passion with an enthusiastic audience.

#### Who Can Participate?

We welcome talents of all kinds! Whether you're a singer, dancer, magician, actor, or have another special talent, we want to see you in action. This is a fantastic opportunity to perform in front of a supportive crowd and be part of an incredible event.

#### How to Register

Scan the QR Code

Simply scan the QR code on our flyer to access the registration form and secure your spot.

#### Email Registration

Alternatively, you can register by sending an email to [Harc43545@gmail.com](mailto:Harc43545@gmail.com). Please include your name, contact information, and a brief description of your talent.

#### Important Information

Spots are Limited: Make sure to submit your registration soon to guarantee your place in the show.

Open to All: We encourage participation from everyone, regardless of experience level or background.

**HARC & FRIENDS PRESENT  
A SPOTLIGHT ON ABILITIES:  
A TALENT  
SHOW**

*Featuring Athletes,  
Advocates and Artists*

**01  
MAR** **AT 2:00 PM**  
Filling Home Community  
Center in Napoleon, OH

**Its time to register to perform! Scan the  
QR code below to submit your response  
or email [harc43545@gmail.com](mailto:harc43545@gmail.com)!**



HARC and Friends Talent Show  
Registration

**Filling Homes and HARC  
VALENTINE'S  
Dance Party**

**WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 11th, 2026**

**6:00 to 8:00 PM**

**The Filling Home Gym  
Music by Loco Sounds  
Snacks Provided**

R.S.V.P. to Sarah Jackson by Feb. 9th  
[sjackson@fillinghome.org](mailto:sjackson@fillinghome.org)  
419-592-6451 ext. 1350

### What You Need to Know About House Bill 144 "Keith's Law"

House Bill 144 – now known as "Keith's Law" is a new Ohio law that went into effect January 19, 2026. It expands and improves Ohio's Communication Disability Database so that any person with a disability can choose to include useful information that helps first responders (law enforcement, EMTs, firefighters) understand how best to assist them during emergencies.

Under this law:

A voluntary statewide database is available where individuals with disabilities can share important information, such as communication challenges or other needs, ahead of time.

Information submitted to the database will be accessible to each county 9-1-1 system and through the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS), so responders have helpful context before arriving on scene.

The Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities will provide and publicize the verification form people use to register.

<https://ood.ohio.gov/laws-rules-and-policies/laws/hb144>

Participation in the database is optional, and the form lets you decide what information you choose to share.

Why It Matters:

By giving first responders advanced awareness of communication or other support needs, Keith's Law helps build safer, more informed emergency responses and reduces misunderstandings in stressful situations.

If you or someone you support would like more information about Keith's Law, please contact your SSA.

## OHIO'S BLUE ENVELOPE PROGRAM

A **communication tool** to assist individuals with **developmental disabilities** during interactions with law enforcement and emergency personnel. Ask one of our personnel to receive your packet.



**FREE Blue Envelope Packet include:**

- Blue Envelope** — Keep important documents needed for traffic stops together in one place
- Blue Envelope Car Decal** — Tells law enforcement or first responders that someone in vehicle has a disability
- Wallet Card** — Carry with you to provide information quickly in emergencies
- Program Brochure** — Explains how to use items in the Blue Envelope packet

**The Blue Envelope Program is made possible by:**



Developmental Disabilities Council



Southern Ohio Council  
A Council of Governments

*Southern Ohio Advocacy Group*

This project is supported by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, under grant number 2401DHSODD from the Administration of Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$2,846,720 with 96% funded by ACL/HHS and 4% funded by the State of Ohio. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

**Voices of HOPE**  
Self-Advocacy Group

# SNOWBALL FIGHT

Thursday, February 19, 2026  
4:30-6pm  
Cost: \$3.00  
Pizza, Cookies, Water and Hot Cocoa!

**Special Guest Speaker**  
Heather Leader with SafeinHome  
Remote Supports and Assistive Tech

FILLING HOME COMMUNITY CENTER  
470 INDEPENDENCE DRIVE NAPOLEON

Please RSVP to Keri Bunke by February 13th  
kbunke@henrydd.org or 419-599-2892

Pictures from this event may be featured on social media or a newsletter. By attending, you are giving permission to be photographed.



What Is Voices of HOPE?

Voices of HOPE is our self-advocacy group made up of individuals who are passionate about speaking up for themselves and others. The group focuses on building confidence, developing leadership skills, and creating opportunities for members to make their

**Voices of HOPE WON the NOWAC Theme Contest!!!**

Join us to celebrate!

**Our Voice, Our Strength**

# PIZZA PARTY

**Rescheduled For:**

**FEBRUARY 23RD, 2026**  
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM  
**HOPE Services Activity Center**  
135 E Maumee  
Napoleon

**RSVP TO KERI BUNKE**  
419-599-2892  
KBUNKE@HENRYDD.ORG

## Special Olympics

We are incredibly grateful to the supporters in our community who stepped up when we put out a request for scrimmage partners. Several volunteers, including many employees from Life Guide Friends, came out to challenge our adult teams and help them prepare for their regional tournaments. They absolutely understood the assignment, giving our players great competition and helping them get ready for the big stage. Thank you for investing your time, energy, and encouragement in our athletes!

On January 11th, nearly 30 bowlers from Henry County participated in the Wood County Special Olympics Bowling Tournament. Many athletes brought home the gold, and everyone enjoyed a wonderful day of fun and friendly competition.

In January, our powerlifting team partnered with Knight Fitness in Defiance. Knight Fitness hosts a monthly Strength Club and provides our lifters with a space to push their limits and reach new goals. The January Strength Club was a big day, we had two lifters earn their names on the wall – Zach Parcher and Tyler Silveous, entering the 500 lb. Club. Our powerlifting team is now gearing up for their upcoming meet with Mercer County on February 14th.

### Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars

**February 4th** – Annual River Rivalry  
Henry County vs. Defiance County Special Olympics Hosted at Good Samaritan School in Defiance, Ohio

**February 27th** – Annual Homecoming:  
Under the Cherry Blossom Moon

We are thankful once again to St. Paul Lutheran Church & School for providing their gym and cafeteria for our annual game, dinner and dance. Game begins at 6 PM. We encourage the community to join us, fill the bleachers, and cheer on the Cougars!

**Sign-Ups Now Open.** Registration is officially open for the following programs: Volleyball, Bocce, Track & Field, Esports, and Softball. Athletes and families are encouraged to sign up early to secure their spot for the spring and summer seasons! Practices will be starting at the end of this month.

**Stay Connected & Get Involved** - As always, Like and Follow our Facebook page Special Olympics Ohio – Henry County for updates on our Cougars, their accomplishments, and where they're headed next. If you are interested in volunteering for any upcoming sports – competitive cheer, volleyball, track & field, powerlifting, bocce, softball, esports, golf, flag football, or basketball – please reach out to: Zach: [zmeister@henrydd.org](mailto:zmeister@henrydd.org) or Renita: [rkuehner@henrydd.org](mailto:rkuehner@henrydd.org)



### Under the Cherry Blossom Moon

2026 Henry County Special  
Olympics Homecoming



Friday, Feb 27  
St Paul Lutheran Gym  
Glenwood Avenue  
Napoleon, Ohio  
Basketball Game  
starts at 6 pm  
Dinner/Dance starts at 7 pm

Questions? RSVP - Zach 419-260-2176 or  
Renita 419-601-2372

DEFIANCE COUNTY VS. HENRY COUNTY



# RIVER RIVALRY

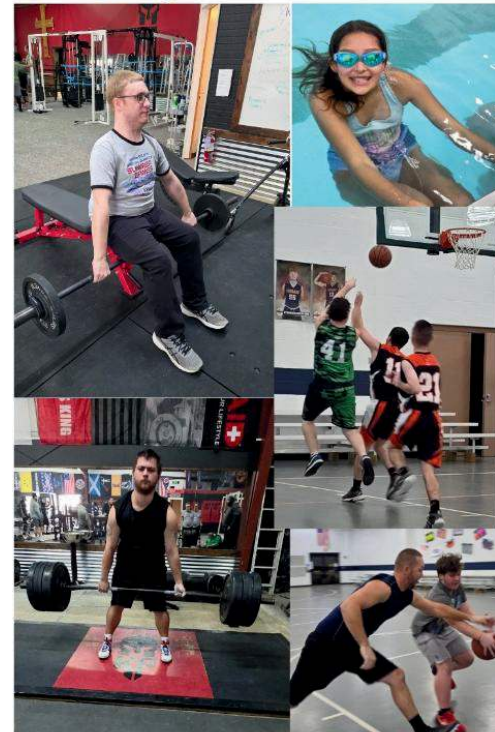
EST. 2018

LET ME WIN.  
BUT IF I CANNOT WIN,  
LET ME BE BRAVE  
IN THE ATTEMPT



WED. FEBRUARY 4  
6 PM

GOOD SAMARITAN SCHOOL,  
ISLAND PARK WAY, DEFIANCE



Have a great Valentine's Day with Family and Friends, Coach Zach and Coach Renita

## Contact Us

HOPE Services Office	419-599-2892
Special Olympics	419-260-2176
HARC Recreation	419-591-6798

Find Event Calendars on our website.

[www.henrydd.org/events](http://www.henrydd.org/events)

**Scan Code to sign up  
for the newsletter!**



*Seeing Potential – Inspiring Opportunities*

## Our Mission

HOPE Services is committed to creatively working in partnership with eligible individuals and their families to discover, pursue and achieve what is important to them.

*HOPE Services does not discriminate in provision of services or employment because of disability, race, color, creed, national origin, sex or age.*

