

A Mask Mission

Local women make face masks to benefit individuals with developmental disabilities



MENTOR – Lake County women banded together May 14 on a mission to make face masks for individuals with developmental disabilities who attend adult services programs at the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD) / Deepwood.

The women who volunteered their time and talents were either members of the Deepwood staff or the LCBDD Board of Directors. The group consisted of just 10 women to respect the state's social distancing parameters, but that didn't hinder them from meeting their goal of making 70 masks and 15 kits with fabric and elastic to make more masks if needed.

County Board Adult Day Support (ADS) programs were required to close on March 20 due to guidance issued by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Seventy masks were made from fun fabrics by volunteers for individuals with developmental disabilities who attend adult services programs at the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD) / Deepwood.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS
LCBDD board members Pam Martin (above left) and Andrea Polkar-Byrne (above) help make masks for Deepwood program attendees.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS
Mike (above), John (left) and Barb (below) wear face masks made by a group of volunteers. Clients of the LCBDD/Deepwood were able to choose their own mask from many colors and fun fabric designs.



LCBDD / Deepwood board member Sonja Maier makes face masks for Deepwood clients.



Carol Krider helps sew face masks for clients of Deepwood.

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Upon receiving guidance on May 8 from the Ohio DODD to slowly reopen ADS programs, the women organized quickly to explore how to make the experience of returning a more comfortable one for the individuals served by the county board.

"We know that the individuals who attend our programs have missed their friends, our staff and activities," said Elise Roman, LCBDD / Deepwood's superintendent. "We recently received word that adult day support programs may begin to slowly reopen under specific guidelines and we wanted to be prepared to do so with face masks. We thought allowing individuals to choose from a selection of bright, colorful mask options in different themes would make the experience a bit more positive."

"Many individuals are eager to return to their ADS program, however, the restrictions only support us opening the JCR Imagine Program (with a staggered schedule) and the Vocational Guidance Center (limiting participants to only our Residence Programs ARC and JCDC) at this time," she added.

Lynnmarie Landweil-Phillips, public relations director, secured fun fabrics with which to make the masks, such as superheroes, Cleveland Indians and plain

or bright floral prints.

To add some fun to the task, and to keep workflow moving, Pam Martin, LCBDD Board Member, motivated seamstresses with some friendly competition.

The remaining mask mission members, Robin Irons (director of nursing), Ann Mahler (assistant superintendent), Linda DeRosa (early childhood supervisor), Jackie Sheridan (day program director), Sonja Maier and Andrea Polkar-Byrne (LCBDD / Deepwood board member), Carol Krider (adult services substitute), and Beki Schrieber (operations administrative assistant) helped cut fabric and elastic, iron, pin pleats, sew and trim strings.

"It was good for my mental health to spend a day away from my computer and give back to our community," Polkar-Byrne said.

Masks were provided to individuals as they began returning to adult day support programs May 18.

"It was great to see the smiles on the individuals' faces when they picked out their face masks," Mahler said. "Adding a bit of fun to help with their comfort level made every stitch worth it."

Visit their website at www.lakebdd.org or social media @DeepwoodLakeDD for updates from the County Board as they become available.

Board of education to meet

PAINESVILLE - Painesville City Local School District Board of Education will meet June 8 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.
The meeting ID is 999 8160 8060; password 998766.
Regular meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m.
The next meeting is scheduled for June 30 to close the fiscal year, at 5:30 p.m.

Farrell Insurance Agency
Mike Farrell, Agent/Consultant
440-576-0839 • farrellinsurance@hotmail.com
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