

Logan Daily News
April 1, 2013
by Debra Tobin

Bishop Educational Gardens receives artwork from kids in court-related program



ROCKBRIDGE — While most high schoolers reveled in the idea of not having school last week athere were some who felt they were still in a classroom, but this one had wide-open spaces.

The Hocking County Juvenile Court has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of requests for custody of young children. Many of those requests are by concerned family members who believe that the parents of the young children are unable to care for themselves and their children because of drug or alcohol addiction or

depression or mental health disorders. Two senior and two sophomore ladies participating in the Hocking County Juvenile Treatment Court Program called Reclaiming Futures hiked the trails at Bishop Educational Gardens Friday with Intensive Treatment Court Probation Officer Yessika Woolever-Barber and Program Coordinator Christa Myers. Led by Hocking County Soil & Water Conservation Education Specialist Rebecca Miller, the ladies received a lesson on identifying trees and bushes along the trails.

Miller walked the group through the sensory trail and explained the concept of it, giving them ideas on what they might create from recycled items such as pots and pans, wood, and other objects.

“This was a monthly activity that we plan for our juvenile treatment court program,” Myers explained. “The program has been in existence since 2000. It is a specialized docket, and this year we will be working towards certification, along with all other specialized docket programs with the Ohio Supreme Court.”

After their hike through the trails, the group enjoyed lunch provided by Carol Martin, a Reclaiming Futures of Hocking County Community Fellow, and spent the remainder of the day working on creative artistic activities.

The girls paired off into two teams and the two sophomores made a colorful wind chime from old pots and pans and spray paint. The seniors made a butterfly that Miller intends to use in her butterfly lectures.

Three adults also participated in the activities. Barber made a beautiful flower image on a skillet with yarn and decorations; Miller showed off her artistic talents and made a dragonfly with wood; and Myers made a wind chime with pans.

“It was a really fun day,” Myers said.

“Two of the youth that participated will soon be graduating our program, as well as graduating high school,” Myers added. “We are encouraging youth to make positive choices, including to not use alcohol and other drugs, and to work on their education. These are a couple of the goals of juvenile drug court programs.”

The program is small, serving typically seven to 13 youth at a time and takes over a year to complete. Most court-involved youth with substance use disorders start at a lower level of care with only a small number progressing to the juvenile treatment court program.

“Some other positive pro-social monthly activities the youth have participated in include Ohio University basketball games, Recovery Month Carnival, zip line canopy tours, hiking at Old Man’s Cave and family potlucks at Kachelmacher Park,” Myers added. “We want to give families and program youth a chance to have fun together.”

Some of the youth in the program have participated and helped local organizations including The Bowen House, area churches, Lilyfest, the Hocking County Fair, and many other projects.

“We appreciate all the people, groups and businesses who have allowed court-involved youth to help out,” Myers said. “We are always interested in other opportunities for the youth.”

The program has been supported with Reclaiming Futures grant money for the past five years. Other agencies involved with the juvenile treatment court program are TASC of Southeast Ohio and Hocking County Behavioral Health Services (Health Recovery Services).

For more information on the program, contact Myers at 740-380-9644.