



# PEER *connections*

A PUBLICATION OF THOMAS M. WERNERT CENTER | OCTOBER 2022

## MOTIVATED BY GRATITUDE

### Gwendolyn's Push Toward Success

**G**wendolyn is someone who enjoys being busy. Alcohol kept her busy for a long time before she realized she had other options. "Today, I have choices," says Gwen. Today, and for the last four years, Gwen has chosen to show up for herself, making the time to sustain her wellness and to make recovery her top priority.

Utilizing community resources such as Unison, Thomas M. Wernert Center, and other support systems has really helped Gwen on her journey. It was through Unison that Gwen met her close friend Pamela, who also attends TMWC. "I talk to Pam every day," says Gwen. "It's nice to have someone who understands."

Over the past six months, coming to the Wernert Center has become a part of Gwen's routine. "There are great people here," says Gwen. "The Wernert Center just boosts me up!" She has been a regular participant in the Diabetes Support group and the Eigensee Family Fitness room. Since March, her A1C (blood sugar levels) have dropped from a

6.9 to 5.5. She credits knowledge learned in Diabetes Support for adding healthier eating habits to her routine.

"I look forward to Lindsay's encouragement every day," Gwen says, referring to TMWC's Fitness Room coordinator. Lindsay shares the same feeling. "Gwen's energy extends to everyone in the fitness room," says Lindsay. "She and Pamela cheer everyone on, not just each other."

During her free time, Gwen finds joy through creativity and play. Some of her favorite hobbies include crocheting, puzzles, exercising, and playing pool. "I like playing pool. I'm good at pool," she says. "But, I stopped playing when I stopped going to bars." Now Gwen enjoys a game or two a week in the Wernert Center recreation room.

Gwen is not immune to the feelings of temptation. Alcohol kept her busy when she did not want to be alone. "Now, I keep a full schedule of activities and by the end of the day I am at peace," she says. She spent time



this summer volunteering with the Wernert Center's Litter League Crew, picking up trash around Downtown Toledo. She is also excited to volunteer at the Toledo Library SAME Café this month.

Gwen continues to wake up and show up, not only for herself, but for those around her. "I am so grateful for the environment TMWC provides," she says. "To be surrounded by people who are like me – who understand and lift each other up. It has made my choice to focus on my wellbeing so much stronger," she adds.



## Annual Meeting & Thanksgiving Lunch

Monday, November 21, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.

The Annual Meeting will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, November 21, 2022, followed by a Thanksgiving Luncheon for members. The meeting and lunch will take place in the Clubroom at TMWC.

During the annual meeting, members will have an opportunity to hear from those interested in serving on the board of trustees as an Elected Voting Member. Voting will take place during the lunch.

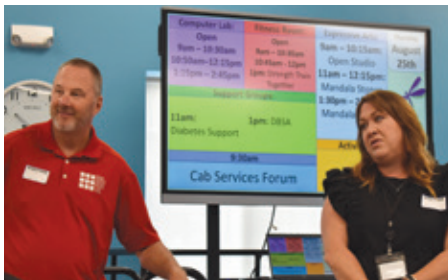
**VOTE FOR YOUR PEER REPRESENTATION AT THE ANNUAL MEETING**

# Members Advocate for Improved Transportation Services

Scott Sylak, Executive Director of the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (MHR SB) of Lucas County and Breda Osburn, Director of Lucas County Job and Family Services (JFS) met with TMWC members to discuss issues with local transportation providers contracted by JFS. Member cab services are part of a non-emergency Medicaid program that provides transportation to appointments and service locations. Members were informed that some actions were already in place to



Pictured left to right are Scott Sylak, Executive Director of MHR SB of Lucas County, Sarah Berendt, TMWC Peer Supporter, Patti Robb, TMWC Executive Director and Breda Osburn, Director of JFS.



improve cab rides and that staff shortages among providers continue to be a problem. The meeting was the result of a letter writing campaign by TMWC members to address this ongoing situation.

It was determined that documentation of specific issues and communication with JFS would be ongoing, with a follow-up meeting scheduled for the future.

## FRIDAY FORUM SERIES

Thomas M. Wernert Center is happy to continue our Friday Forum series in October. Speakers at each forum are well-informed on their topic and willing to share their knowledge with members. Attending a TMWC forum is a great opportunity to learn something new, or share your thoughts and ideas, and ask questions.

This month's series will include discussions on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and fire safety. Thank you to all of the amazing community members and organizations that have offered their time and expertise.

.....  
**Friday, October 14 at 11:00 am:**

**Quinn Thomas (they/them)**  
 Executive Assistant & People First Facilitator  
 Courageous Community Services

.....  
**Friday, October 21 at 11:00 am:**

**Dale W. Schulte**  
 Fire Safety Educator 2 – Fire Prevention  
 Bureau, Ohio Department of Commerce,  
 Division of State Fire Marshal

.....  
*Previous forum guests include: Toledo City Council member, Nick Komives; Singer/Songwriter, Mark Sims; and Toledo Lucas County Librarian, Mely Arribas-Douglas. (All pictured on right)*



# PEER SUPPORT IN ACTION



Strength Training Together warms up for an outdoor work out. ►



▲ Gardening Club hosts monthly 'Make & Take' craft activities. Check the calendar for this month's date and time!



▲ Troy uses TMWC's Computer Lab to research his favorite topics, send emails, watch videos, and more!



▲ Expressive Arts and Gardening use items from the garden to create a Mandala on campus.





THOMAS M. WERNERT CENTER  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY & SUPPORT

208 W. Woodruff  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419.242.3000  
Fax: 419.242.0750

www.wernertcenter.org  
info@wernertcenter.org

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Toledo, OH  
Permit No. 175

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Our social with TMWC on  
Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

### MISSION

To improve the quality of life for persons living with mental illness by offering hope and peer-driven programs that address recovery through education, advocacy and peer support.

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Deborah Riley-Jackson – President  
Fair Housing Center

Amanda Denniss – Vice President

George Monger, CPA – Treasurer  
William Vaughan Company

Evamae LaVoy – Secretary  
Community Volunteer

Lisa Urrutia – Former President  
Oswald Companies

Jesse Baum – Glass City Academy

Taylor Burns – ABLE  
(Advocates for Basic Legal Equality)

Timothy Cummins – US Coast Guard Marine Safety  
Office Toledo

Lucy Dias – Community Volunteer

Warren Fray – Community Volunteer

Georgia Humbarger – Community Volunteer

Patricia J. Robb – Executive Director

SUPPORTED BY:



**Saturday, October 22, 2022**  
**6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.**

**HALLOWEEN@HENSVILLE**

(In The Stadium Concourse - Dress for the Weather)

**COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!**

**Live Auction**

**Dinner - Great Silent Auction Items - Free Parking  
Games - Live Entertainment - Cash Bar**

**Tickets \$50 in advance / \$60 at the door**

**For Reservations, Contact Abbey Riley  
heartandsoultoledo@gmail.com or 419-764-4387  
www.heartandsoultoledo.com**

**Proceeds will benefit Northwest Ohio Psychiatric Hospital  
and Thomas M. Wernert Center.**

*An event to raise awareness for mental illness  
and help erase the stigma associated with it.*