



Fostering Hope

Summer 2018

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Stop By and Take a Peek

You're Invited to Murry Hill Center's Open House



The public is invited to stop by and see COBYS Family Services' new Murry Hill Center, at 444 Murry Hill Circle, in Lancaster, on June 10 and 13. The new facility houses adoption, foster care, and family life education staff.

On Sunday, June 10, from 1 to 4 p.m., and Wednesday, June 13, from 3 to 7 p.m., COBYS Family Services will host an Open House at 444 Murry Hill Circle, in Lancaster, to show off our new 13,600-square-foot facility. COBYS purchased the building in January from the Simon Lever accounting firm for \$1.1 million to help alleviate severe over-crowding at our main office in the historic mill at 1417 Oregon Road, Leola.

Murry Hill Center, which is centrally-located between our main office and two downtown facilities, is an additional location for COBYS; all other buildings are being retained. The main

office continues to house administration and counseling staff.

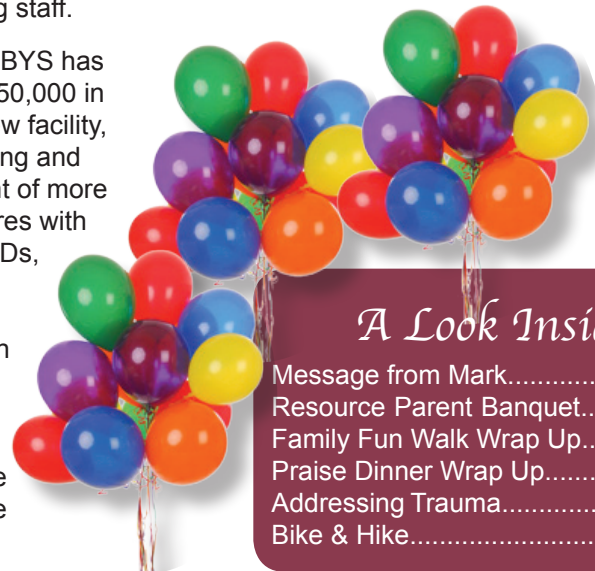
Since January, COBYS has invested nearly \$250,000 in upgrades to the new facility, including new roofing and siding, replacement of more than 180 light fixtures with energy efficient LEDs, new carpet and paint, and various repairs. Renovation costs to the 1970s structure would have been much higher, if not for the generous response

of more than 60 volunteers, who provided over 660 hours of labor in a six-week period.

In late February, 24 adoption and foster care staff, who had been doubled-up and tripled-up in offices at COBYS' main location, packed their supplies into boxes (piled almost to the ceiling in the lobby at one point) and moved into new offices at Murry Hill Center. Seven family life educators joined them in March, moving from their downtown Lancaster location.

And through all the moves, it was business as usual. Now that our staff are settled into their new digs, we'd like to "show and tell" you what business as usual means for COBYS.

The Open House will include light refreshments; tours of the facility; program displays; and staff available to explain COBYS ministries serving children, families, and the community. A dedication service will take place at 2 p.m. on Sunday and a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on Wednesday at 5 p.m. Stop by and say hello!



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Mission Statement

Motivated by Christian faith, COBYS Family Services educates, supports, and empowers children and adults to reach their full potential.

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Fostering Hope is the quarterly newsletter of COBYS Family Services, a Christian family service agency, affiliated with the Atlantic Northeast District of the Church of the Brethren.

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Turning Points

With more than 120 staff working from four locations, one of the challenges we face is how to keep everyone at COBYS feeling connected. One way we attempt to do that is to have three all-staff events during the year.



In September, we have a picnic; in December, a Christmas party; and in May, a breakfast at a local restaurant. At the breakfast, we recognize staff for years of service and hear from a guest speaker. The speaker this year was John Hostetter, pastor of the Lampeter Church of the Brethren. When I invited John, I asked him to focus his comments on encouraging our staff in their work.

After a few jokes that elicited some groans (appropriately), John shared from his heart about the importance of investing in the lives of those who desperately need it. He said that each day COBYS staff are planting ideas in children and adults that will shape their future behavior.

John concluded with this story:

A number of years ago a man introduced himself to me. In the conversation, he related the story of a couple who I had known 30 years earlier. At that time, because of the choices they were making, the trajectory of this couple's life wasn't good. I had a conversation with them that was open, honest, and direct about what guides my life—my relationship with Jesus Christ and my desire to live life in obedience to Jesus. I never knew if that conversation had an impact. But the man who introduced himself to me 30 years later (he knew the couple well) explained how this couple had changed and had become disciples of Jesus. Then he said to me: "They attribute the change in their lives to that conversation they had with you 30 years ago." You see, on that day of the conversation, I unknowingly planted an idea in their hearts. It took root and totally changed the trajectory of their lives.

Like John, we may not know whether we are making a lasting difference. But every now and then we may learn of someone who remembers an encounter with a caseworker, or educator, or therapist, or another staff member as a turning point in their life. We continue to trust that if we are serving in God's name that God will use us to touch, and sometimes transform, the lives of his children.

Thanks, John, for your challenging and encouraging words.

Mark Cunningham, Executive Director



Recognized for years of service at a May 16 staff breakfast were (from left) Jennifer Linder Miller (5 years), Holly Hardin (10 years), and Bethany Kauffman-Raub (20 years).



Resource Parents Honored at Academy Awards-Themed Banquet

COBYS Family Services recognized nine foster/adoptive resource families for their service at a Resource Parent Appreciation Banquet held at the Fireside Tavern in Strasburg on May 7. The annual dinner honoring resource families is held in conjunction with National Foster Care Month.

This year, more than 120 guests (foster and adoptive parents and COBYS staff) entered the Academy Awards-themed event in true "Hollywood" fanfare, with resource couples walking a red carpet studded with gold stars bearing their names. To continue the Hollywood theme, those in attendance were invited to have their photo taken (paparazzi-style) with a variety of bling and crazy props.



The Hollywood theme continued into the banquet hall, with "Oscar" statues and Hollywood décor on each table. Following an elegant meal, entertainment for the evening was provided by four COBYS resource couples competing in "The Not-So-Newly Resource Parents" game, a spoof of the classic Newlywed Game.



"This evening is your time to sparkle, shine, and be the celebrity that you are in the eyes of your children," said Terrie Stauffer, organizer and emcee of the event.

Contestants included Dan & Bethany Fethkenher, Ryan & Renae Gullede, Dennis & Ann Saylor, and Brad & Jen Shade. In the end, Brad & Jen were named the winners.



Foster parents were honored at the banquet for their years of service. (front row, from left) Connie & Rodrigo Ugalde and Wanita & Cody Zimmerman (5 years). (back row, from left) Matt & Kelley Waller (5 years), and Fran & John Lusaitis (20 years).

Also recognized, but unable to attend, were Alex & Carol Rabold (15 years) and Mike & Kelly Eshleman, Jim & Brenda Gould, Jay & Nancy Martin, and Tom & Shellie Smith (5 years).

Each family in attendance had the opportunity to win family-friendly appreciation gifts donated by area businesses.

Currently COBYS has 100 approved resource families caring for 92 foster children from Lancaster, Berks, Schuylkill, Montgomery, and Delaware counties. The heroin epidemic in Lancaster and neighboring counties has contributed to recent growth in the number of children in care.

COBYS holds free informational meetings twice a month at 444 Murry Hill Circle in Lancaster for those wanting to explore foster care or adoption. Orientations are scheduled for the first and third Tuesdays of the month. Upcoming dates are June 19, July 3, July 17, August 7, and August 21. Learn more on the "Becoming a Resource Parent" page at www.cobys.org.

COBYS Trashes E-recycling Program



COBYS Family Services is out of the recycling business. Since 2003 COBYS has recycled inkjet

printer cartridges, cell phones, and other small electronics to generate income for our ministries.

Thanks to individuals, churches, businesses, and others who shared their trash, recycling over 15 years raised more than \$33,000 for COBYS. However, not much of that income was generated lately.

"We appreciate all the kind folks who collected cartridges, phones, and other trash," said Director of Development Don Fitzkee. "Their efforts weren't wasted."

Annual income peaked at \$8,731 in 2005 and dropped sharply after 2008, when a former partner discontinued a collection system that had worked well for COBYS. In recent years the program generated just a few hundred dollars per year, and logistics associated with trying to bolster income seemed to be a lot of trouble for little return.

24th Annual Fun Walk Raises \$11,500+



They came.
They walked.
They ate ice cream.
They took home a door prize. They gave generously. They did not get wet.

That pretty well sums up the COBYS Family Fun Walk, held May 6

at Peter Becker Community in Harleysville.

With a threat of rain in the forecast, 72 participants raised more than \$11,500. Final income is expected to beat last year's figure of \$11,569, despite a drop of nearly 20 in attendance.

Bolstering the income figure were seven families/groups who raised \$500 or more. Top fundraisers were Joan Kabakjian, \$1,445; Sam & Rachel Trettin family, \$1,304; Philadelphia First Church walkers,

\$1,150; Brian, Holly, and Casey Kelly, \$1,025; Donna Parcell, \$900; Bob & Pat Lane, \$515; and Brad & Heather High family, \$503. Joan received the most valuable grand prize ever awarded at a COBYS event—four Diamond Club Phillies tickets donated by Hatfield Quality Meats—and the Trettins received two tickets to Sight & Sound Theatres' production of *Jesus*.

"We had an unusually large number of people who raised \$500 or more this year," said Director of Development Don Fitzkee, "which helped the income grow despite a drop in attendance. We really appreciate everyone who invested their time and energy to support COBYS through the walk."



Top event fundraisers were Joan Kabakjian, shown with son, Daniel (on right); and Sam & Rachel Trettin family.

Youth groups from the Quakertown and Coventry Churches of the Brethren earned gym and pizza nights by raising more than \$1,000.



Income figures for the two groups were \$1,572 and \$1,467, respectively.

Because of the lower attendance, every participant

received a door prize, including the usual selection of Bauman's Fruit Butters and Boyertown Inn Russian Dressing.

Additional photos from the event can be viewed on the COBYS Facebook page.

Thanks to Our Fun Walk Sponsors:



Facilities

Peter Becker Community

Grand Prizes

Hatfield Quality Meats
Sight & Sound Theatres



Door Prizes

Bauman Family Fruit Butters & Cider
Center Point Pond
Chick-fil-A, Lansdale
Franconia Heritage Restaurant
Hatfield Quality Meats
Rick & Deb Houck
Towne Restaurant



Wenger Foundation Praise Dinner Raises \$24,000 for COBYS

COBYS Family Services received financial gifts totaling \$24,000 from the 23rd Annual Wenger Foundation Praise Dinner, held at the Lebanon Expo Center on April 10.

The Wenger Foundation, Inc. was established in 1996 as the charitable arm of the Wenger Family of Companies. Since then, the Foundation has provided more than \$2.8 million to a variety of Christian and community organizations.

COBYS Family Services has received gifts totaling more than \$408,000, through the generosity of the Foundation, since becoming a beneficiary of the dinner in 1999. The evening fundraising event is held each year with a dinner, inspirational speakers, musical performances, and the opportunity for guests to support select Christian ministries.

Total giving this year was \$112,685, benefitting COBYS, Evangelical Seminary, Friendship Community, and On Fire Youth Ministry.

This year's event, tastefully decorated with colorful floral centerpieces and balloons, was attended by 720 people. The program, held in the Expo's large conference area, began with a buffet dinner provided by Country Home Catering. After the meal, southern gospel family trio from Tennessee, The Talleys, took the stage. The group, composed of Roger and Debra Talley, and their daughter, Lauren, has been singing together since 1984. The high-energy trio performed in an engaging-style, with opportunities for the audience to join in.

The program continued with an inspirational message by guest speaker Bob Kettering, who currently serves as interim associate pastor at Lancaster Church of the Brethren.

The event was underwritten by Ambassador Advisors; Gene Wenger's Meats & Fine Foods; Good's Disposal Service;



More than 700 people attended the Wenger Foundation Praise Dinner on April 10.

The Talleys performed southern gospel music.

Jim & JoAnne Speers; Kline, Kreider & Good Auctioneers; North Group Consultants; Roger & Carolyn North; Sight & Sound Ministries; Tom B. Morrissey TV & Appliance; Carl & Margaret Wenger; Wengers of Myerstown; and others.

Guest speaker Bob Kettering shared an inspirational message.



COBYS Counseling and Family Life Education

Working Hand-in-Hand to Comprehensively Address Trauma and Addiction

It's about filling in the gaps—making sure nobody falls through the cracks.

According to Director of Family Life Services Abby Keiser, several COBYS grant-funded programs are making a big difference in the lives of children and families. Gap areas are being identified and addressed—changing lives for the better.

Some of these programs include the *Incredible Years* series, and the newly-implemented *Seeking Safety* program.

COBYS has been providing the *Dina Dinosaur/Incredible Years* series for almost five years for children ages 4-8 who exhibit challenging behaviors. Some of these behaviors might include impulsivity, lack of social skills, anger management issues, etc. Based on attachment and cognitive behavioral therapy theory, this evidence-based series teaches basic life skills to children through the *Dina* program, while their parents discuss related topics in the *Incredible Years* parent class.

Initially funded by one-time grants, COBYS *Incredible Years* programs will now be sustained by recurring sources of income.

As the opioid crisis continues to grow in the county and beyond, so does the need to provide additional services that support those in recovery and their families.

With grant funding from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, COBYS introduced the *Seeking Safety* program six months ago, helping individuals referred by the Lancaster County Drug Court to address and overcome their substance abuse and past traumas. *Seeking*

Safety is the only evidence-based curriculum that treats these co-occurring issues. It is present-focused, helping individuals obtain specific skills designed to productively move them forward in life.

“The *Dina* and *Seeking Safety* programs are joint-ventures for COBYS’ Counseling and Family Life Education departments. We work hand-in-hand with a therapist and an educator in the room to provide services. It’s a beautiful mesh. It really is,” said Keiser.



COBYS therapists provide comprehensive counseling services for adults and children.

The *Seeking Safety* grant goes until June 30, and is expected to be sustained. Two people have graduated from the program so far, with 14-16 more expected to follow soon.

An additional *Seeking Safety* group began recently to serve residents at the Gate House, an all-male addiction recovery house in Lititz.

“Everything we are dealing with (in this program) has some kind of background in addiction,” said Keiser. “This is another way we are trying to fill a gap. We are helping people with

recovery from addiction, but we also need to address the trauma in an individual’s life.”

“Many acting-out behaviors are due to some type of trauma that has not been addressed.”

Abby Keiser

COBYS therapists also address trauma through *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy* for children, ages 3-18. This therapy addresses trauma in the lives of children but can also dredge up unresolved trauma for their caregiver who is part of the therapy. Sometimes this can lead to an unfinished program for the child. To be more comprehensive and address this gap issue, a county-wide grant request has been submitted for the Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) program. COBYS has taken the lead in writing this grant to deal with unaddressed trauma in adults. Grant monies will be awarded in September.

COBYS is on the front lines of making sure that gaps are filled with services that make sense and produce results.

“When people walk through our doors, we need to be able to address their needs,” said Keiser. “So, we are really trying to be proactive, not reactive. We are trying to make sure we are on the cutting-edge of what is working and what is researched and what is proven to be effective. Our therapists and our family life education department are both willing and ready to meet those needs.”

22nd Bike & Hike to be Held September 9

COBYS Family Services will host the 22nd annual Bike & Hike Sunday, September 9, at the Lititz Church of the Brethren, beginning at 1 p.m. The event includes a three-mile walk, 10- and 25-mile bicycle rides, and the 60-mile Dutch Country Motorcycle Ride, which will meander into scenic western Lancaster County, sporting views of the Susquehanna River. A silent auction will run throughout the afternoon.



This annual event is COBYS' signature fundraiser, having raised more than \$1.4 million since its inception in 1997.

Proceeds from the event support COBYS services to children and families. Last year's turnout tied the high attendance record set in 2008, with 601 walkers and riders, grossing over \$133,000. Nearly 100 more people walked last year than in 2016.

We are hoping for another surge in participation this year to untie the tie and set a new record!

So how does it work? How can you participate?

Walkers and bicyclists donate a \$25 registration fee, obtain support from sponsors, or both. Motorcyclists donate \$35 per cycle, plus \$25 for an additional passenger, and also may seek sponsors. Those who pre-register by September 4 may take a \$5 discount. Individuals who raise \$25 or more in pledges do not need to pay the registration fee.

Each participant receives a free t-shirt (jade in color this year), ice cream and refreshments, and a chance to win a door prize. Those who raise certain levels of support earn additional prizes. Junior and senior high youth groups who raise \$1,500 or more earn a gym and pizza night.

Brochures will be mailed in July. Also keep an eye out for information on Facebook and the News & Events page at www.cobys.org. Online registration will be available, beginning July 15.



Here are some ways you can help us make this the best Bike & Hike event yet:

- *Donate an item for the silent auction. Practical items, gift cards for food or experiences, and vacation rentals are especially good sellers.*
- *Serve as a business sponsor.*
- *Encourage your church's youth group to participate.*
- *Walk or ride and invite others to sponsor you.*
- *Invite friends and family to walk or ride with you.*
- *If you are unable to attend, sponsor someone else or make a donation.*

Donations of door prizes and auction items will be welcomed until September 3. To arrange pick up of these items, or to learn more about the walk, contact Development Associate Anne Stokes at 717-656-6580 or anne@cobys.org.



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Murry Hill Center Open House: June 10 & 13



New Spaces for COBYS Counseling

COBYS recently improved facilities for its seven part-time therapists at three locations.

At the Oregon Counseling Center in the historic Oregon Mill, 1417 Oregon Rd., Leola, staff moved from the lower (garden) level to first floor offices. While the therapists didn't have far to go, things look a whole lot different in their new location. The first floor has been transformed to provide a brightened-up space, more comfortable waiting areas for clients, and an additional small group therapy room for future use by children and families enrolled in *Incredible Years* programs.

Remodels also have occurred at the Family Life Center counseling office, located at 171 E. King Street in Lancaster, and at the Palmyra Counseling Center, located in the Palmyra First United Methodist Church.



COBYS Therapist Tracy Bosis welcomes clients at the newly remodeled Palmyra Counseling Center.

At the Family Life Center, therapist Landon Miller moved from a third-floor makeshift office to a newly created office on the first floor. For Tracy Bosis and Michele Fry, two COBYS therapists who serve clients in Palmyra on Mondays and Tuesdays, the church built a new therapy office, a comfortable and inviting setting with lots of natural light.

All COBYS counseling locations offer clinical services for children and adults including marital and family counseling, depression, anxiety, trauma, addiction, social disorders, etc.

Additional COBYS therapists are Rosie Good, Michelle Sheaffer, Michelle Wegman, and Amy Wittmaier.