



# STARLIGHT

APRIL  
2024

## Bradley May Earns Welding Certification



At Blanchard Valley Center, we love celebrating the success of the people we support, and this month we proudly celebrate Bradley May, who recently earned his Shielded Metal Arc Welding certification through Owens Community College.

While this is an awesome accomplishment, Bradley is just getting started. He is currently working on his certification for tungsten inert gas (TIG) and

metal inert gas (MIG) welding. He expects to earn those certifications this spring. He hopes to someday own his own company, specializing in residential or small commercial construction. He enjoys many different trades, including carpentry, HVAC, electrical and, of course, welding.

Bradley's original goal was to enlist in the Army after high school. However, a hearing impairment prevented him from enlisting.

Bradley has worked at Menards for more than five years, having had roles in receiving and stocking. He also has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity.

Another of Bradley's goals is to eventually live on his own.

## Prepping and Partying for the Big Blackout

Nearly 60 people attended Blanchard Valley Center's Solar Eclipse Prep Party on March 27, and this was the big message: WEAR YOUR PROTECTIVE GLASSES!

At 3:10 p.m. on April 8, the eclipse will begin as the moon passes directly between the earth and the sun, totally blocking out light through a wide swath of Ohio. It will last about four minutes.

Solar Eclipse Party attendees visited stations that provided demonstrations of what to expect during the upcoming solar eclipse (Hint: It's going to be dark.) and safety tips for protecting their eyes. Each person receiving supports through the County Board received a pair of eclipse glasses, which were provided by Hancock Public Health.

This prep party was eclipse-themed with snacks and drinks that included Starburst, Sunkist, Milky Ways, Cosmic Brownies, Capri-Suns and Sun Chips.

The Blanchard Valley Center team is encouraging folks to be prepared for this event by securing a pair of eclipse glasses,

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### FAMILY NETWORKING SERIES

**JANUARY 24, 2024**  
How did I get here & where do I go next?

**APRIL 10, 2024**  
Transition/Summer Work

**AUGUST 14, 2024**  
Special Ed 101

Blanchard Valley Center | 1700 E Sandusky St | 5:30-6:30 PM

#### What to Expect

Each session will consist of a panel for Q&A during the first half hour. The second half hour will allow for networking.

Agencies such as Family Resource Center, Family & Children First Council, and Ohio Rise will be on hand to help answer any questions you may have.

Questions? Plan to attend? Let us know - contact Nadine Weinger at [nweinger@blanchardvalley.org](mailto:nweinger@blanchardvalley.org) or 419-422-6387.

DATES TO REMEMBER | VISIT [WWW.BLANCHARDVALLEY.ORG](http://WWW.BLANCHARDVALLEY.ORG) FOR MORE DETAILS

April 3 - 1pm  
Provider Meeting

April 3 - 5pm  
Cardio Drumming

April 8  
BVC Closed

April 10 - 5:30pm  
Family Networking Series:  
Transition Age & Summer Work

April 22 - 5:30pm  
Board Meeting

NOTES FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

## A Month for Success



On behalf of myself, my staff and the many Hancock County individuals receiving supports from Blanchard Valley Center, thanks to everyone who supported our recent levy renewal.

As I have stated many times, we are fortunate to live in a county that sees the value in the mission of Blanchard Valley Center, which is to provide resources and supports that empower people with development disabilities to live lives with meaning and purpose. That noble mission cannot be completed without your support. And for that, we thank you.

We wrapped up another successful DD Awareness month in March. Thanks to all the Hancock County teachers and students who welcomed guest readers into their classrooms to read, *Who's New at Lou's Zoo*.

Our seventh annual celebrity basketball game was another hit. We had a great turnout, and we're already making plans for next year. Special thanks to the sponsors – State Bank, Reg & Peg Routson, Premier Bank and Kelly Slough Team Key Realty.

The Blanchard Valley Center annual report is hitting the mailboxes. You can find a copy online at: <https://www.blanchardvalley.org/strategic-plan-annual-report> or at our website under the *Get to Know Us* tab.

Is anyone else ready for warm weather? I sure am. I'm tired of the winter doldrums. For me, the Special Olympics Golf Outing on May 11 is always the kickoff to summer. It's still chilly in the morning but by the afternoon we're basking in the sun.

Kelli Grisham, Superintendent

## Date set for 2024 Special Olympics Golf Outing

The 20th annual Hancock County Special Olympics Golf Outing is scheduled for May 11 at Hillcrest Golf Club in Findlay.

To sponsor a hole or get your team registered, contact Manager of Community Supports Melanie Williams at [mwilliams@blanchardvalley.org](mailto:mwilliams@blanchardvalley.org) or 419-422-6387.

All the money raised at the golf outing stays in Hancock County and benefits our Special Olympians. Hancock County offers a wide variety of opportunities for our athletes, who can participate in basketball, bowling, golf, competitive cheer, softball, swimming, and track and field, powerlifting and bocce.

Team C & Y Painting won the 2023 outing. The team included Max Yankee, Matt Shimp, Christian Volk, and Todd Hitzeman.

## Mandatory Meeting Set For Softball Players

There will be a mandatory meeting for anyone interested in playing Special Olympics softball on April 17, 6 p.m., in the BVC Training Center.

A code of conducts and sport commitment letters must be signed by the athlete or guardian before players are permitted to participate. Also, all athletes must have a current physical.

CONTINUED "PREPPING AND PARTYING FOR THE BIG BLACKOUT"

ensuring medication and groceries are stocked up, and to have lots of patience if planning to venture out. Findlay and the surrounding areas are expecting an influx of visitors. Some estimates say that as many as three times the population of Hancock County will be on hand for the event.

BVC provides resources and supports that empower people with DD to live lives with meaning and purpose.



**Blanchard Valley Center**

Hancock County Board of Developmental Disabilities

1700 E. Sandusky Street, Findlay, OH 45840  
[blanchardvalley.org](http://blanchardvalley.org) | 419-422-6387

**Service & Support  
Emergency Number**  
419-722-9262

