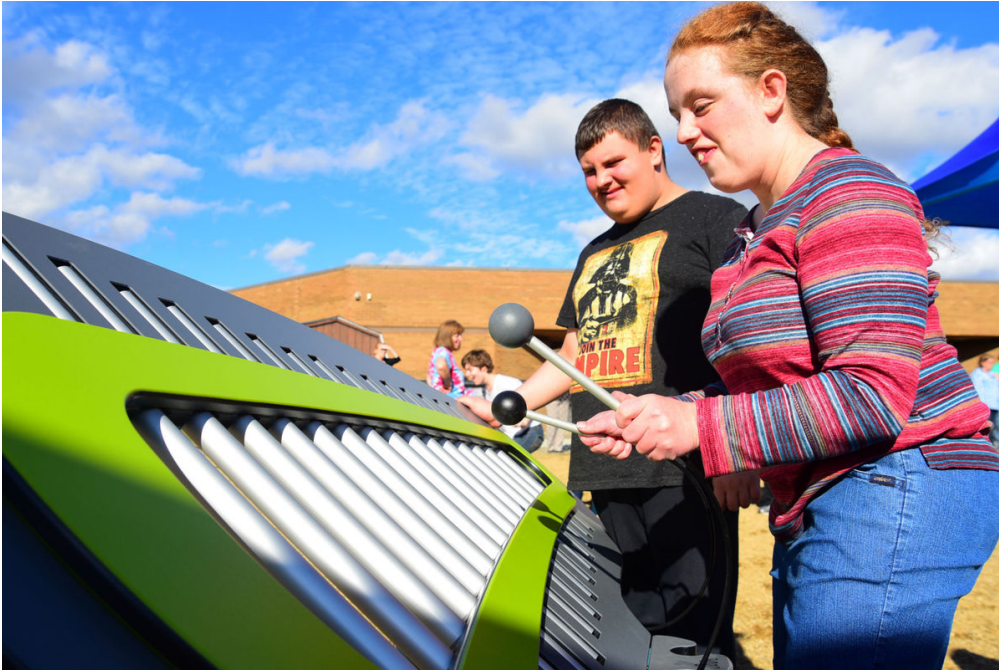


Beacon School dedicates donated playground equipment

By SARAH GUINN MESSENGER STAFF JOURNALIST 9 min ago



Messenger photo by John Halley

Kris Whitmore listens while Willow Blatt bangs out a few note on the new Beacon School playground xylophone.

A Beacon School student stepped up to the shiny, new xylophone-like instrument in the playground just behind the school and was amazed by the sound. She struck a scale of bars, each changing in pitch from the tiny shrill ones to the larger and lower ones.

Myrdith Sherow wiped away tears of happiness as she watched the student take to the newly-installed musical playground equipment.

"My mother and my sister loved music," she said, overcome with emotion.

Myrdith was joined by her sister, Stephanie Goldsberry, along with brother, Gregor Sherow and his wife, Jo Ellen, as they cut the ribbon to Beacon School's new playground. The equipment was made possible by funds from the estate of their late sister Yvonne Emerson. The playground is named in honor of their mother, Marjorie Sherow, who was among Beacon's first teachers. Their sister, Carla Levien, was unable to attend.

Other new musical equipment included drums and chimes for students to play with and enjoy.

Beacon School staff and Athens County Board of Developmental Disabilities administration gathered alongside Sherow family members Tuesday afternoon to mark the installation of new playground, and students released blue and white balloons following an official ribbon cutting.

Reflecting on their mother, Goldsberry and Myrdith said their mother had a strong passion for education and to be an advocate for children with developmental disabilities.

"She (Marjorie) was an incredibly strong woman in a time in a day when women were not so strong," Jo Ellen added.

Marjorie passed away in 1997 and Emerson later followed in July 2014.

Members of the DD Board approved to spend \$50,000 on the playground renovations earlier this year in July, according to a previous Messenger report.

The new installations are included in the first phase in updating all three of the agency's playgrounds. Future plans for the playgrounds are expected to come before the board in the future, according to DD Supt. Kevin Davis. Currently, the board is looking at removing pea gravel from the playgrounds and replacing it with a turf-like surface, he said.

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