

The Safe Haven Way

A Parent Publication of Safe Haven Farms, Butler County, Ohio

F A L L 2016



PENDLETON ART CENTER



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Pendleton Art Center Experience Widens Community Horizons

With the opening of the Bittersweet Middletown studio in April, Safe Haven residents enjoy not only a working art studio and gallery, but they have also become welcomed members of the downtown Middletown business community.

The center's Savorie Gourmet Café uses our free range eggs and fresh produce for their weekly menu items. The farmers enjoy



delivering the produce to the Café's owners, Joseph and Kevin. Joseph comments, "Our guests receive a farm-to-table dining experience, and we are honored to promote the mission and vision of the farm."



Once a week during harvesting season, the farmers operate a produce stand on the walkway outside the center, stacked with colorful produce grown, picked, washed, and displayed by the farmers. There is no cost for the vegetables; customers may do-

nate if they wish, and most do—some returning week after week for more.

The farmers have become acquainted with surrounding business owners and have struck agreements with several to recycle cans each week, with the proceeds going to the farm's vocational program. Safe Haven is delighted to offer services and goods that benefit the community and provide the farmers with the recognition their hard work deserves.





Garden Bounty

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Horticulture director **Mike Rogers** glows with pride when describing the success of the 2016 gardening program.

The purchase of grow lights, tables, and carts for the pole barn led to an early crop of 3600 seedlings. Nearly a third were sold to the McMonigle family farm stand and others were sold during the Madison Twp. Spring Fest.

The remainder were planted in the outdoor garden on site and in the hoop houses. Five new raised beds in the larger hoop house contributed to a yield of twice as many plants as last year. The Safe Haven farmers had a hand in every step— from seed to harvest to distribution and everything in between.

The results of these initiatives have broadened the interactions of the farmers into neighboring Middletown. Beyond what the four farm houses could consume, produce was sold to staff and volunteers and a sizeable amount to local businesses around the Pendleton Art Center—Savorie Gourmet Café, Mockingbird Café, Triple Moon Cafe and Gold Star Chili in Trenton.

As Mike plans the fall and winter activities that will lead to next year's crop, he reflects, "I am so proud of how much we have grown, how hard the staff and farmers have worked and all that we have learned this year and I am most proud of the way the farmers are becoming a part of the "new Middletown" community. The farmers really enjoy working the produce stand, seeing the Pendleton folks and regular customers, and meeting new people. Everyone has welcomed us as part of their community."



Keaton packs up produce for the equestrian volunteers to enjoy.



It Takes a Village to Field a Farm



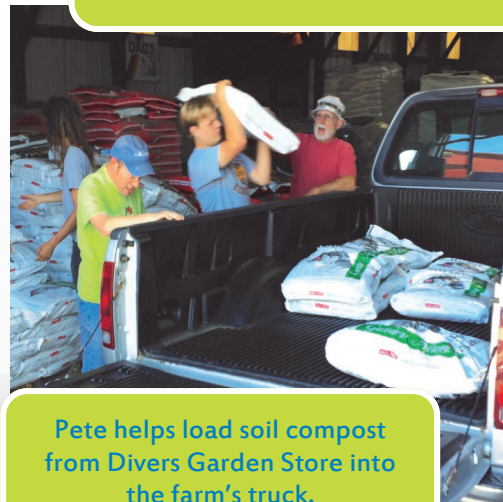
Kevin delivers freshly picked produce to be sold at the McMonigle Farm store.



Saraya and Alex are amused by a baby turkey while delivering the weekly animal feed order list to Brubaker



Emily and her mom on a frequent visit to Peggy's Produce to buy a pumpkin.



Pete helps load soil compost from Divers Garden Store into the farm's truck.



Brandy and mini horse fans at the VOA walk in Sept.

Equestrian Program—This is How We Ride



Brandy Hinkle, equestrian program director, maintains a busy schedule among her beloved horses—large and small. When she's not coordinating and leading the riding sessions for farmers and community riders, making sure the horses are well cared for, or showing off our "community ambassadors," the mini horses, she is working toward her PATH certification,

which is nearly completed. PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) certifies individuals as therapeutic riding instructors. Samantha Lape and Lauren Bosse, already PATH certified, have been leading riding sessions while Brandy is getting certified.

In the spring riding will resume for the Safe Haven farmers.

Community Riding Program Well-liked

The Safe Haven community riding program, which is open to those with autism from the community, has been uniformly welcomed by participants and their parents. There are currently six community riders, and some travel from as far as an hour away.

Kelly, 18, has participated for 2 ½ years and was the first community rider. According to her mother, this is one of Kelly's favorite activities. She notes that riding helps her achieve focus in other activities.

Owen, 10, is in his second year. Riding calms him and improves his behavior. His mother says he is much more able to concentrate on playing piano the day after a riding session.

The parents speak enthusiastically about the benefits of the equestrian program. They particularly like the farm atmosphere and the staff and volunteers, whose generosity and commitment to helping the riders enjoy a profound experience is so evident.



KELLY HORNE follows instructions to complete a task while riding Sassy in the indoor riding arena

The community riding program will break in late November and resume around Easter. For more information email Brandy Hinkle at safehavenequestrian@gmail.com.





Focus on a Farmer—David

High energy and enthusiasm are the hallmarks of veteran farmer **David Edelstein**, who literally bounces into each day with a true love of farming and the great outdoors. David, one of the first residents of Safe Haven, craves movement, especially jumping on his favorite trampoline.

The 34-year-old also thrives in the open-air environment, hiking, swinging and working diligently on physical farm chores.

Activity and abundant space are by design and make the farm

model a perfect fit for David, and many others on the autism spectrum. "David loves to move and being in the farm environment is so perfect for him," said mom Pam Lockwood. "He had been in locked settings before."

Unfortunately, locked spaces are a reality for many, and Safe Haven excels in fostering independence and the joy that freedom brings. His mom remembers witnessing the first time David realized he could open his own front door and go out on his own. "The look of surprise and amazement on his face was precious," she said.



When the strong and handsome farm hand takes a break, he listens to his favorite tunes. Whether jamming or jumping, David has obviously found his happy place!

Welcome to Our New Residents, Sam, Willie and JR



SAM CUMMINGS and his mom enjoy the Bengals dance. Dinner/dances nearly every month provide social opportunities for farmers and family.



WILLIE HENSLEY pitches in to prepare a planting bed. Mom Desiree notes that he "loves all the things the farm has to offer."

Exciting changes are always happening at Safe Haven Farms, including welcoming three new residents since the last newsletter publication.

Our new members are great contributors who can be seen working hard on agricultural activities and enjoying the freedom and healthy lifestyle afforded by the farm program.

SHF is thrilled to add to its family and wishes them every continued success.



JR PASTORIUS cashes in on recycled cans at Mindlin Recycling. Farmers recycle cans for the farm and some Middletown businesses.



From Denny Rogers

President, Safe Haven
Board

"The seed of good reaps the harvest of goodness." – Sunday Adelaja

It's autumn. A peace has settled over Safe Haven and the fields and planting beds have begun a well-deserved rest before everything begins anew in the spring. Autumn is a good time to reflect on another successful year and to give thanks for our many blessings.

As this newsletter describes, in 2016 we welcomed new residents and day participants, increased the growth and distribu-

tion of our horticulture products, forged new liaisons with community members and businesses, continued outreach of the equestrian program and completed successful fundraisers.

I'm honored to thank a group of people who make this success possible—our many donors! Without your generous support each year, none of this would be achieved. We still need your help, though, to close the year successfully. Won't you please consider making a year-end donation to Safe Haven. Your gifts provide us with sufficient funds to continue improving the quality of life for individuals with autism in Southwest Ohio. We would be deeply grateful.

Thanks also to those responsible for taking care of the property, the buildings, and the equipment as if it were their own and overseeing the animals and equestrian program. To the parents, friends and board members, thanks for your leadership and support of our social events and fundraisers.

Most of all, thanks to the leadership and direct care professionals of Bittersweet, Inc. for their loving care of our "farmers" and for helping to create the meaningful life that we always dreamed our sons and daughters could have.

All of us at Safe Haven hope you and your families have a blessed holiday season and a prosperous new year. Please keep our farmers and our farm in your prayers.



Labor Day picnic, a delicious pot luck at the Carpenter Pavilion and for Parul a birthday cake

Are You Looking for Ways to Reduce Your Tax Burden in 2016?

You can lower your taxes and make a positive impact for those who attend the programs offered at Safe Haven Farms.

Make a gift from a qualified IRA: If you are 70½, you can roll over up to \$100,000 from your IRA to charity, free from federal income tax. Better yet, an IRA rollover gift qualifies for your Required Minimum Distribution, permitting you to lower your income and taxes for this year while supporting the programs you care most about.

Request the holder of your IRA to direct all or part of your RMD to Safe Haven Farms, PO Box 633, Monroe, OH 45030. Ask them to include your name as the do-

nor so we can thank you for your generous contribution!



Transfer of appreciated securities: If you transfer shares of stock or mutual funds that you have owned for at least one year, you may be eligible to receive an income tax charitable deduction for the fair market value of the stock at the time of the gift. This may allow you to avoid capital gains on the appreciated value and take the value of the shares as a charitable gift deduction. Your gift of appreciated stock is fully deductible up to 30% of your adjusted gross income. For additional instructions on gifting shares of stock or mutual funds, please contact us at donations@safehavenfarms.org

Thank You UCBMA !

Thanks to the Union Centre Boulevard Merchant Association whose grant allowed us to purchase a new keyboard and a cajon drum for our music therapy program. Music therapist Laura Baggette continues to help the Farmers make beautiful tunes during her inspiring sessions!





Walk On for Autism at VOA

The second annual **Walk On for Autism** event was held on September 24 around the lake at Voice of America Park in West Chester. The fundraiser benefits Safe Haven Farms and highlights the therapeutic equestrian program for participants with autism. The event brought out 163 walkers on a beautiful Saturday morn-

ing. Walkers, sponsors, and volunteers enjoyed miniature horses, pumpkin painting, balloon animals, and treats donated by the parents of SHF participants. The event planning committee extends deep gratitude to our Gold, Silver, and Bronze sponsors! We look forward to seeing all our supporters at the walk next year.



TEAM ADDIE'S ARMY

Thanks to all who support our walk teams. Whether you walk with us or pledge support online, you provide nearly half of our proceeds.



Thanks for Visiting—Open House and Craft Show



Once again the annual Craft Show and Open House on Oct. 15-16 was blessed with good weather and a stunning array of artisan made arts and crafts, such as the holiday linens stitched by **Rena Blevins**, parent coordinator of the craft show.

Bittersweet day staff Jennifer and Donna proudly display the many arts and crafts items cre-



ated by the Safe Haven farmers. The dog biscuits 'Riley's Rewards,' hand-made by the farmers during day vocational activities, are sold around town in various stores. Proceeds from the craft sale enable staff to accompany farmers on community outings without having to spend their own money on meals, entrance fees, or tickets,



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Mark Your Calendars



Share the Love Dinner at the Grand Finale

Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2017

Keeping the Dream Alive: Honoring Jon and Audrey

Safe Haven has met with extreme heartbreak in the last two years with the unexpected passing of farmers [Jon O'Brien](#) and [Audrey Odioso](#). Their treasured presence at Safe Haven is being commemorated on the grounds where they lived. A memorial bench in honor of Jon has been erected near his former residence, with a newly planted cherry tree nearby, reminiscent of his favorite dessert, cherry pie. Plans are progressing for a plaque and a flag pole to be installed in the spring near the Hatton Center in memory of Audrey.

While the parents of the departed farmers might back away from involvement in a venture which no longer has immediate benefit to their families, the

Odiosos and O'Briens continue to support the farm. Audrey's mother Leslie has joined the Safe Haven board and has directed fund raising activities including the yearly walk in September and the Valentine's dinner in February. Her husband Mike also contributes to

fund raisers and presses our legal concerns surrounding CMS regulations. Jon's mother Suzanne continues as a board member and as the newsletter editor. Her husband Don supports maintenance, guides some volunteer efforts, and contributes handmade crafts to sell at the annual craft show and open house.

All four parents feel that Safe Haven is a place that must be nurtured to serve a population for which there are not enough adult placements. As Don has stated many times, "The farmers, staff and parents are part of our extended family. We share an uncommon experience."



January 13, 2014



June 5, 2015

