



SPRING 2017

The Safe Haven Way

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

Honoring Our Donors

INSIDE

**Choices in
Community Living**

Farm Happenings

Donor Recognition

Grand Finale Fete

Walk On for Autism

Equestrian News



Choices in Community Living is Our Choice!

We are excited to announce the selection of **Choices in Community Living, Inc.** as the new provider of residential and day services at Safe Haven Farms starting July 1, 2017. Choices is a nonprofit agency that has provided “person centered, value based services” in the southwest Ohio community since 1985. Their mission “to assist people with developmental disabilities to have access to opportunities to build safe, healthy and meaningful lives in the community” aligns very well with that of Safe Haven Farms.

Late last fall Bittersweet Farms, our current provider, made the difficult decision to focus their services on their sites in northern Ohio. Their 3 years of hard work improving the care and programming at Safe Haven have been invaluable. Bittersweet Farms was instrumental in guiding us during the founding of Safe Haven, and our long-standing relationship with them will continue as we collaborate at the state and national levels to assure that the needs of those with developmental disabilities and autism are voiced and addressed. Bittersweet very graciously provided us with more than adequate time to find the best replacement available and they are working with us and Choices to ensure a smooth transition.

The Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities supported our search for a new provider by inviting

potential providers to apply if they had interest. Fortunately, we had several excellent responses. We were especially impressed with the staff we interviewed from Choices in Community Living and how they interacted with our Farmers. Their director, **Tom Weaver**, has been with the organization for many years and has built a compassionate staff with a strong emphasis on support for the direct care professionals who interact with our sons and daughters on a day-to-day basis.

Choices runs programs in conjunction with county boards of developmental disabilities and YMCAs. They hope to expand day activities at the farm and are exploring other community integration options in Butler County for those served by the farm. Visit their website at <http://partnersohio.com/home/choices-in-community-living/>

M. Kay Brown Joins the Safe Haven Board

Safe Haven Farms, Inc. is delighted to welcome M. Kay Brown to its Board of Directors. Kay has over 45 years of experience working with children and families within the child welfare, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities and mental health community.



She comments, “I bring a mix of personal commitment and professional expertise to the Safe Haven Board. Our son Jason, who had high levels of needs with multiple disabilities, died a year ago at age 42. Our family has over four decades of firsthand knowledge of issues specific to supporting individuals and families with disabilities. On the professional level, I am a social worker who has many years working in the area of program services—the last being Regional Coordinator for the Regional Autism Advisory Council (RAAC.) This gives me good knowledge of systems and resources. As our son grew into an adult, I had particular interest in adult services, including how to build a system of adult care to support a full range of needs.”

Kay remains active on several local, state and national work groups and boards related to services for persons with developmental disabilities. Her wisdom and knowledge will be a valuable addition to the deliberations of the Board.

Shop the Pendleton Produce Stand

Mike Rogers, farm specialist, reports the Safe Haven produce stand will be open every Tuesday from 11:00–3:00 outside the Pendleton art center in Middletown.



The stand will also be open during each month’s “First Friday” and every other Wednesday for the “Broad Street Bash.”

“We are not just selling veggies and herbs this year. We also have Alpaca nesting balls, fire starters, art work, Safe Haven equestrian t-shirts and other fun stuff!” says Mike. “We’ve doubled the size of our raised beds in the garden. We have so many new varieties of veggies & we’re trying a bunch of new herbs.” Come see us in downtown Middletown!

"We value people's potential to grow and are committed to the development of skills to support growth."

Choices in Community Living

No Safe Haven program better illustrates the special partnership between the staff member and the farmer than the horticulture program. Working side by side with the farmer, the staff member models and directs the farmer toward independence and pride of accomplishment.



Garden work continues through the summer and early fall with garden, hoop house and pole barn activities performed by farmers depending on their abilities and interests.



In the gardens, staff and farmer develop reciprocal communication and respect for each other and for the gifts of nature.

Pendleton First Friday Open Studios

Art and crafts created by Safe Haven farmers were recently on display at First Friday, a monthly event at the Pendleton Art Center when studios at the center are open to the public. Guests to the Bittersweet studio mingled with the staff and Safe Haven artists and enjoyed art works labeled with a short bio of the artist.

Art director **Donna Stoutenborough** takes groups of 5 farmers each week to the studio to work on projects. Donna selects art work that can be completed with the farmers doing at least 70% of the work, whether it's collecting nature items, packaging, counting, cutting, mixing, shopping, sorting, glazing, beading, painting, etc.

Donna helps John make "Bee's Please" flower bombs. Cellulose whirled in a blender is pressed through a strainer. Wildflower seeds are added to the mix. Then the product is pressed into silicone molds and dried in the sun. They are packaged to sell— 6 in each bag for \$3.00. Each one can be planted in a shallow bed resulting in wildflowers to save the bees!



Bittersweet staff Terrah, Donna, Dennis, and Erica welcome guests to the studio at the April First Friday event at Pendleton.



Thank You to Our 2016 Donors !

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Kroger Community Rewards – Join Once – No Need to Renew!

Good News! Kroger no longer requires Rewards members to renew each year. This program is a simple way to support Safe Haven Farms every time you shop by linking your Kroger Plus customer card to benefit SHF.

First time users need to set up an account at www.kroger.com: click on the register button in the upper right hand corner and follow the prompts to create an account. Use your email and password to log in and select your community rewards partner in the Account Settings. Enter 34324 or Safe Haven Farms in the search box; confirm your selection, and select Save. Next time you shop at Kroger's check the bottom of receipt to confirm that you have selected Safe Haven Farms as the non-profit you choose to support. We have 18 participating families, and we receive about \$250/qtr. Let's multiply the number of families by 10!

*Remembering Our Friend
Jon O'Brien*



Share the Love 2017 Had A Grand Finale

The third annual February “Share the Love” dinner at the Grand Finale restaurant on February 15, 2017 saw a record high number of guests who came out mid-week to support Safe Haven Farms. Guests dined on their choice of delicious entrees and, of course, a decadent dessert.

We are grateful to the staff of Grand Finale and to our sponsors for contributing to the success of our event:

Event Sponsors: Pamela Lockwood, MD and First Financial Bank

Supporting Sponsors: Alliance Printing; Ken Anderson Alliance, Impact Autism, Truepoint Wealth Counsel

Contributing Sponsor: Tom & Cathy Fey Family; All Phase Electrical; Jason S. Tinch, Guardian Savings Bank

Sweetheart Sponsors: Denny & Ann Rogers; Tom & Imogene O’Lenick; Sheldon & Mei Carpenter, David & Diana O’Brien, David & JoAnne Dukart



Have a special event to celebrate in February? Gather your friends and reserve a private Grand Finale dining room upstairs to celebrate a milestone birthday, anniversary, or special accomplishment like the Suits family did. Bruce Suits (lower right) celebrated his 70th birthday and supported a great cause. Bruce’s nephew Adam Proctor lives at Safe Haven Farms.



Julia & Tony Yocco (left) and their friends enjoy the evening. Tony is VP of the Butler County DD board.



Seen enjoying a cordial evening: Larry Mulligan, (right) VP of our event sponsor First Financial Bank, and guests.

Congratulations to the winners of our evening raffle! Tom Fey won a beautiful blue topaz ring valued at \$3,500; Scott Barbee will enjoy a relaxing get-away with vouchers on Southwest Airlines and a one week stay at a private villa on Hilton Head Island; and the Ken Anderson Alliance won tickets to a performance of “Beautiful: The Carole King Musical” at the Aronoff Center, a pearl bracelet and necklace, and a dinner gift card for a night on the town.

Safe Haven and Bittersweet jointly participated in the 11th annual **Autism & All Special Needs Expo** at the Sharonville Convention Center on April 1st. This all-day event attracts hundreds of families and professionals each year, offering informational booths from dozens of special needs organizations, service providers and product suppliers. Our booth attracted a lot of interest, expanding the awareness of Safe



Haven Farms, adding many local families to our mailing list, and generating interest in the day programs and employment opportunities at the farm. **Brandy Hinkle** and **Judy Olivia** brought Jack, our mini horse, and our alpaca Dexter to the event. Surrounded by kids all day long, they were the hit of the show and generated a lot of interest in our equestrian program.



Safe Haven Farms

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 633
Monroe, Ohio 45050

Street Address:

5970 No Mans Rd.
Middletown, OH 45042

513.422.1880

www.safehavenfarms.org

Watch for Notices about 2018 Events



Share the Love Dinner at the Grand Finale

Thursday, February 15, 2018

Save the Date "Walk On" for Autism 2017

Saturday, Sept. 2
Voice of America Park
West Chester

Bring the family to our third annual "Walk On" for Autism to benefit Safe Haven Farms therapeutic horseback riding and other farm programs.

Our family friendly walk event offers pumpkin painting, miniature horses, balloon animals and more. Look for registration details by mail or email, and check us on Facebook.



Promote your business or company by becoming a sponsor of this event. For more details or information, please contact **Leslie Odioso**: 513-560-6376 or Leslie.Odioso@gmail.com.



Community horseback riding has resumed on Wednesday evenings. Open to persons with autism, age 4 and up, the one-hour lesson includes 20-30 minutes riding time, as well as time forming relationships with the horses before and after riding.

If you are interested, contact Brandy Hinkle at safehaventherapist@gmail.com or call 513-324-5226 for program information.