

The Safe Haven Way

A Publication of Safe Haven Farms, Butler County, Ohio

SPRING 2018



HONORING OUR DONORS

Hamilton Community Foundation Grants Our Wishes

In February, Safe Haven Farms received a significant grant from an anonymous donor through the Hamilton Community Foundation. This generous grant was given to help us with some major items from our wish list that we could not fund on our own.

The key items funded by the grant include 1) purchase of a replacement farm truck to do the heavy duty hauling needed on the farm and to provide more cabin space to take farmers into the community 2) construction of a new equipment shed to provide some much-needed storage space for the truck, tractor, RTV, riding mowers, etc. 3) construction of a new hydroponic greenhouse and purchase of equipment to significantly increase the vegetable and herb production at the farm 4) construction of an enclosed concrete containment pad to temporarily store manure and prevent potential ground water contamination 5) funds to support a college student scholarship fund we are establishing in conjunction with our service provider, Choices in Community Living, to help them recruit and retain direct care staff for the farm from nearby universities.

See our first purchase with the grant— our new 2017 F-250 Super Duty truck, with 4-wheel drive and a crew cab that exactly meets our needs. We plan to have the other items funded by the grant constructed by the end of this year. We sincerely appreciate the support from our generous donor and the Hamilton Community Foundation for providing this incredible gift to Safe Haven Farms. THANK YOU!!

— Denny Rogers



community activities



Pendleton Center Activities

Farmer Pete manning the produce stand at Pendleton. There is no charge for goods, but donations are accepted.



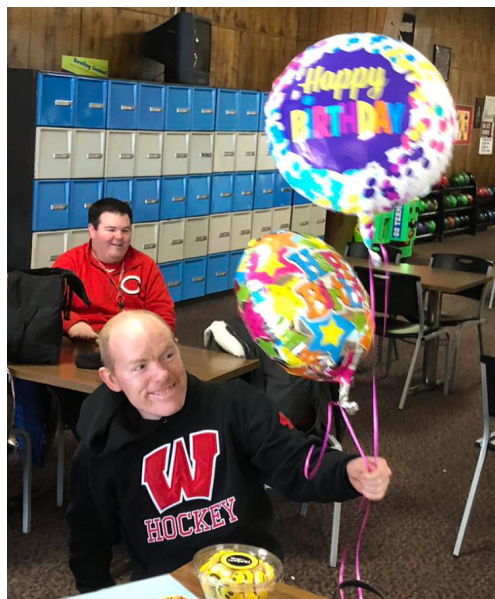
Safe Haven forming Bowling Team for League Play

Safe Haven farmers love bowling every week at Eastern Lanes Bowling Alley in Middletown. During their 7 years of rolling towards the tenpins, they have made many friends. They are warmly welcomed by alley employees and other bowlers who share lanes beside them. Darcy, one of those friends, recently surprised farmer Pete with a birthday party at the alley. Getting to know the other bowlers has led to an invitation for Safe Haven farmers to form a team and be part of the Seniors League who bowl at the same time. Safe Haven staff hope team play can start in time for Fall league play. Go Safe Haven!

—Kay Brown



Farmer John puts finishing touches on his painting.



Visit the Safe Haven studio during First Friday events at the Pendleton Art Center.

farm activities

Welcome Holly and Farewell to Riley

Holly is our new watch dog, another Great Pyrenees, who was generously donated by farm staffer Jean Smith. Holly came by her name because she arrived at Safe Haven during the Christmas holidays.

Holly replaces Riley, also a Great Pyrenees, who patrolled the property very well, scaring off critters. In honor of Riley's watchful services, a rustic bench with a memorial plaque has been placed at the farm near Riley's grave site.

—Don O'Brien



"In Loving Memory of Riley, a Great Dog"

Farmer Jake with his buddy Riley



Here We Grow Again

The fresh market stand at Pendleton returns. We will be there from 11-2 nearly every Tuesday and a few Saturdays a month. Check the Safe Haven Facebook page for dates and see what we will have available. Pay what you can for our farm-to-table produce, and support Safe Haven Farms. We will have veggies, plants, herbs, fruit, flowers, art, alpaca nesting balls, fire starters, ceramics & so much more.

—Mike Rogers



social activities

The Party's Just Getting Started

There is no shortage of fun at Safe Haven throughout the year. Each month, the parents organize and present a themed dinner-dance in the Hatton Center community room. Holiday potlucks on Easter, Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day are a foodie's delight. These events create a strong feeling of community among the farmers, the staff, family members, volunteers, and farm supporters.

Says Ann Rogers, a Safe Haven founding parent and social event chairman, "We want to establish these holiday events as a tradition to celebrate holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas so that when we parents are gone, the celebration will continue."

And that, after all, is the mission of Safe Haven Farms.



fundraising events *by Leslie Odioso*



Choices in Community Living officials anticipate a delightful meal: (left to right) Shawn Valentine, CFO; Tom Weaver, Exec. Director; David Roustio, Chief Program Officer, HPC Services. Seated, Kathy Weaver, Tom's wife.

Save the Date Walk On for Autism 2018

The annual "Walk On" for Autism to benefit Safe Haven Farms will be held on Saturday, September 22, 2018 at the Voice of America Park in Butler County. This annual event supports our therapeutic horseback-riding program for participants of Safe Haven Farms and special riders with autism from the surrounding community. Our family friendly event offers crafts for the children, miniature horses, balloon animals for the kids, and more. Look for registration details by mail or check our Facebook page.

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.

The Norris family group, relatives of farmer Jake, enjoy a private party room.



Share the Love 2018

On the unseasonably warm evening of February 15, two hundred benefactors dined at the historic Grand Finale to support the mission and programs of Safe Haven Farms. Guests had their choice of an entrée with sides and a salad, complimentary beer or wine, and their choice of a decadent dessert. The beautiful decorations lent a festive mood throughout the main floor dining areas and the upstairs private party rooms.



Event Chair and Safe Haven board member Leslie Odioso (lower left) and her family group in a private room.

We are grateful to the staff of Grand Finale and to our sponsors for contributing to the success of our event and want to extend a special welcome to our new sponsor:

The Heidt Family Foundation!

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Alliance Printing; First Financial Bank, Impact Autism, Ken Anderson Alliance, Truepoint Wealth Counsel

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Sweetheart Sponsors:

Karl & Michelle Matson, Michael & Leslie Odioso, David & Patricia Poppelwell, Alice Poth, Dennis & Ann Rogers, Joseph & Kate Wespiser

Congratulations to the winners of our evening raffle! Tim Collins took home a beautiful Swiss Blue Topaz ring and a restaurant gift card; Karen Ronnigan will enjoy a one week stay at a condo in the Rocky Mountains this spring; and Dennis and Ann Rogers will dine at the Jeff Ruby Steakhouse and then enjoy an evening performance of the *The King and I* at the Aronoff Center for the Arts.

Please plan to join us next year at the Grand Finale restaurant in Glendale on Wednesday, February 13, 2019.

donors & grants

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 -Leslie Odioso

equestrian news

by Sue Radabaugh

FAREWELL OUR FRIEND

The inconsistent temperatures of this past winter were hard not only on us but also our animals, particularly our horses. Unfortunately our beloved Champ died in January.

Champ was our first program horse, coming to us in the spring of 2011. We couldn't have had a better horse for our farmers. He was willing to let anyone ride him and he knew exactly what each rider needed.

Champ came from the Benecchi family whose triplet girls all rode and showed Champ. Tori (one of the triplets) and Champ were true partners. After Tori visited Safe Haven, she felt that Champ really wanted something special to do and Safe Haven was the answer. How right she was!

Tori and her mom Gaie Benecchi saw on the first day he arrived how gentle he was with the farmers, staff and volunteers all surrounding him in the stall at the same time. He settled in quickly! The Benecchis kept in touch with Safe Haven and when they were in town, they would visit Champ at the farm.

Needless to say the Benecchis loved our farm and couldn't be happier that Champ was there helping our farmers. They are very grateful that Champ was everyone's favorite horse and that he loved living at Safe Haven.

We are so grateful to the Benecchi's for sharing their Champ with us.

Remembering Champ's first day at Safe Haven Farms.



L to R: Bobbi Thies (friend and equestrian consultant), Gaie Benecchi & her daughter Tori (who donated Champ to SHF), Sue

Radabaugh (SHF board member in charge of Equestrian Programs and PATH certified riding instructor)

CONGRATULATIONS BRANDY

Anyone enrolled in therapeutic riding activities should be aware of the importance of PATH certification. If the riding instructor has PATH certification, parents, caregivers and riders can be assured that all safety, facility, and program standards are best practices.

Obtaining certification to become a PATH instructor is not easy; there are stringent Standards for Certification and Accreditation that riding instructors must meet. The training process usually extends over 2 years.

After submitting to become an instructor, the first year involves learning the standards, attending many training sessions, interning with a certified PATH instructor and completing equine management skills. The first year goal is to become an instructor-in-training.

The second year requires 25 hours of riding instruction under a PATH certified instructor. Many written tests are administered. The PATH certified mentor provides continuing evaluations of the trainee's riding and horsemanship skills and also assesses her skills for teaching riders with disabilities. The process is thorough and the journey challenging.

Once training is completed, the trainee sends videos to PATH demonstrating that her horsemanship and teaching abilities are in compliance with Standards for Certification and Accreditation. When approved, the journey to become a PATH instructor is complete. The certification requires continuing education for all certified instructors every year. We are very proud of all the hard work Brandy has done for our program.

Welcome Poco!

We are happy to announce that we now have a third therapy horse. Poco is a 13-year-old Paint Cross gelding. After a month-long trial period, Poco has passed all his tests including those from our veterinarian. He has acclimated to his new environment, met many of the farmers and staff and participated in riding activities from our instructors. He seems fully at home. We are thankful to Sonya Macakbee for her generous contribution of Poco to our program and look forward to many years with him.



Brandy Hinkle is now a PATH Certified Registered Instructor! (PATH INTL) is the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. Through equine-assisted activities and therapies, PATH is responsible for ensuring excellence and changing the lives of riders. Their mission promotes safety and optimal outcomes in equine-assisted activities for individuals with special needs.



Poco with Brenda Haven, our head horse lead and trainer.

community choices news

SPECIAL CICL STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Thinking of working at Safe Haven Farms? You could join Choices in Community Living and work alongside these 2 outstanding staff members.

Success at Safe Haven Farms can be measured in the relationships and shared talents between staff and farmers. Choices staff member, **Montana Moore**, and farmer Sam have a common interest in guitar playing.

Sam has difficulty transitioning to new activities. Guitar playing has been a helpful bridge for Sam. Montana takes Sam to weekly guitar lessons at Lester's Guitar Shop in Middletown. Then Montana supports Sam and his guitar skill-building with practice and jam sessions at the farm.

Sam and Montana not only have a blast together, but they also provide fun and entertainment for friends and other staff. Sam looks forward to their guitar sessions, and his sense of achievement carries over into other areas of his life. Thanks, Montana, for the extra joy that you provide Sam with his guitar. –Kay Brown



Farmer Sam and his guitar-playing buddy Montana.



April and her youngest family member at one of the farm's family-staff picnics.

Let me tell you a little bit about **April Meyer**.

April began as a caregiver at the farm nearly 5 years ago and is now the Lead for House 3. Like many Safe Haven staff members who enjoy a work day filled with varied experiences, April says working at Safe Haven is not like a typical job. "No day is ever the same. It's an enjoyable job that takes us outdoors and into the community."

April has been instrumental in planning a variety of community integration activities for the farmers. The list is long but a few examples include volunteering at food pantries, animal shelters and senior centers, taking yoga or sewing classes. One farmer is taking classes on how to blow glass. Farmers are going

to the YMCA. Some folks have gone to hockey games, the comedy club and of course, they go out to eat regularly. When summer comes they will likely revisit Kings Island, the Cincinnati Zoo and Cincinnati Reds baseball games.

April doesn't see herself sitting at a desk from 9 to 5. I asked her what keeps her in this job and she said it was because she has become a part of something. "I know I mean something and I can contribute." She also gave kudos to the parents who show their appreciation of staff efforts and thank them "for taking care of their children."

We deeply appreciate April and all the staff who provide such wonderful and creative care for our farmers.
–Pam Lockwood

Join us on the farm.

NOW HIRING

meaningful work in a welcoming farm setting

Choices In Community Living, one of Ohio's most creative and respected nonprofit corporations, has openings available in Adult Day Services and Residential Services on the grounds of Safe Haven Farms.

First (7:00 am – 3:00 pm) and Second (3:00 – 11:00 pm) shifts available. Full and Part-time positions.

- ♦ Work as part of a professional team providing person-centered innovative services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities on the grounds where they live and in activities in the community.
- ♦ Benefits include: paid training, paid vacation and sick leave, life and disability insurance and more.

Immediate openings! Complete your application at cicljobs.com.



property improvements



Managing the culvert.

Eagle Scout Project Constructs New Hiking Trail

Safe Haven Farm has been improved substantially through many Eagle Scout projects over the last few years. The latest connects the two separate trails in Safe Haven woods, making the hiking trails more enjoyable and easier to traverse for the farmers on their many outings.

The project was led by Jacob Wilson, who is the nephew of farmer Jim Wilson. Jacob became interested in doing the project at the farm when he attended the annual Fourth of July picnic at Safe Haven, which also celebrates his uncle Jim's birthday.

Jacob describes the project. "About 10 volunteers and I went out to Safe Haven Farms from 9am to 5pm on April 7th and 14th. We worked on clearing a 6ft wide hiking trail and laying down wood chips. We also installed a culvert over the creek crossing towards the end of the trail."

"The finished product turned out well and the experience for me and all the volunteers was great. We had a lot of fun, finished the project on time, and most importantly no one got hurt."

Jacob concludes, "The trail will serve as a great opportunity for exercise and getting out in nature for both the residents of the farm and its staff members. I would like to thank Bill Ison for the amazing help with the project and I hope the trail will serve a good purpose at the farm."

Many thanks to Jacob and the hard-working volunteers. We know you worked long days in terrible weather, but the result was worth it. Great job!

—Don O'Brien and Sue Wilson



Scout crew on the new trail.



Jacob Wilson, left, and his Uncle Jim on the new trail.

Donors—Here's What You Helped Us Do!

It might be hard to believe that Safe Haven Farms has been open for 8 years as of May, but our property is starting to show it! A significant and increasing part of our operating budget each year goes toward maintaining the property and equipment at the farm.

We were very busy over the last year sprucing up. Our wonderful donors made it possible to hire a local landscaper to design a process for maintaining our property in a more sustainable manner. A general clean-up was completed with weeds tamed and dead plants and bushes removed. We are ready to mulch this spring with the help of some volunteer groups coming to the farm. The "Lockwood Garden" was completely torn out and redone with hardy plants and river rocks making it easier to maintain. The roundabout and entrance sign area have been cleaned up and are ready for new plantings. A design is underway to improve the look of the Hatton Center landscaping.

Some of the major maintenance projects planned for 2018 include replacing the barn doors on the horse barn, replacing the underground drainage tile from the large pond across the alpaca pasture to eliminate a significant erosion problem, adding a sink to a hoop house for cleaning vegetables, replacing the countertop and two sinks in the Hatton Craft Room, several upgrades and repairs to the Welcome House and replacement of furniture as needed in the residences.

Many thanks to everyone who donated, volunteered or helped in so many ways to make Safe Haven a wonderful place to live and work. Thank you for your continued generous support! —Pam Lockwood



A major project was the asphalt sealcoating of our 0.5 mile of asphalt roadways. The staff and farmers did an amazing job of working around this project and keeping the route clear.

The much awaited north fence installation of 1600' of new fencing was completed, making that perimeter more secure.

New gravel was spread on all the parking areas and the road to the greenhouses.

In the Hatton Center/barn area, the flooring was cleaned in the community room, the learning center, the kitchen and break room. Flooring was replaced in the sensory room, the barn viewing room and rest room.

Refrigerators were replaced in all four residences, and new living room furniture was purchased in one residence.



Safe Haven Farms

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Larry Proctor joins Safe Haven Board



Safe Haven Farms is pleased to welcome Larry Proctor as a member of the Board of Directors. Larry is new to the Board, but not to the farm. Larry and his wife, Connie, were early supporters and have been dedicated volunteers. Their son Adam was among the residents moving into the first home completed in May of 2010.

Adam moved at age 27 from his family home where he had lived his entire life. He adjusted quickly to his life on the farm where he has made many friends. Adam enjoys going to the Hatton Center, hiking, sitting in his white rocking chair on the front porch of house 1, bowling at Eastern Lanes in Middletown, attending monthly dances and most recently attending Zumba classes at his church.

Connie and Larry also have a daughter, Kristy, who is a special education teacher. Kristy and her family live on a farm outside West Liberty, OH. Connie is retired from teaching and Larry recently retired from The Ford Motor Company in Sharonville where he was a member of the skilled trades, specializing in machine repair. Both Larry and Connie are lifelong residents of Butler County and attended Miami University.

Among Larry's many interests, he plays both trumpet and flugelhorn as part of the worship music for their church where he is a deacon. In his spare time, he is learning to play golf. Larry brings to the Board not only his perspective as a parent, but also his extensive mechanical knowledge—so valuable with the equipment and machinery involved in operating the farm.

Larry and Connie think the farm has been a dream come true for their family. After eight years of working together, they feel that the farmers, families and loving staff are extended family. It truly is a "Safe Haven." —Gary Blevins