

# The Safe Haven Way

A Publication of Safe Haven Farms, Butler County, Ohio



## THANKFUL FOR OUR SPONSORS



### Walk On for Special Riders Sponsors – September 2019



# Thanks to our Sponsors

#### Bronze

- Middletown Ford
- Butler County Board of DD
- The Knolls of Oxford
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- Simply Floors

#### Platinum

Pamela Lockwood, MD



**BLEVINS FINANCIAL**

#### Gold

**FIRST**  
first financial bank

#### Bronze

- Butler Rural Electric Co-Op, Inc.
- Summit Funding

Fey  Bruder  
INSURANCE ADVISORS

#### Silver



Warren County Educational Service Center

**GRAYDON**



Western Hills Veterinary Clinic

#### Grand Finale

- Edward Jones
- Brubaker Grain

# community activities



No horsing around needed to generate smiles at the Equine Affaire in Columbus



Therapeutic Riding Program highlighted at the Middletown Memorial Day Parade



Everybody needs a pumpkin OR a Hole in One at Putt Putt OR a yummy luncheon out!

# social activities



As the song goes...  
*Dance, Dance, Dance*



Memorial Day and Labor Day Picnics provide the ultimate summer fun with family & friends at SHF



Save the Date for the 6<sup>th</sup> annual **Share the Love** dinner for Safe Haven Farms on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at the Grand Finale restaurant in Glendale, OH.

This event is sold out every year and is a great opportunity to showcase your business as an event sponsor. Please contact Event Chair, Leslie Odioso, at [leslie.odioso@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.odioso@gmail.com) or at 513-560-6376.

You can also help by donating the use of a time share, a week at your vacation home, or gift cards for a raffle to be held at the dinner. You may also contact Leslie if you have an item to donate.

Look for your invitation to arrive at the beginning of the New Year!

# The Employee Education Assistance Program Has Been Enhanced

Recent revisions will make it easier for employee/students of Choices at Safe Haven Farms to qualify for education assistance bonuses.

Now, if an individual becomes a Choices employee/student, even in the middle of a semester, they can begin to accumulate points immediately toward bonuses. And, in addition to the one point awarded per hour worked during the week, 1.5 points will be awarded per weekend and holiday hour worked. A bonus of \$1,500 will be awarded for 300 points accumulated at the end of a semester. For 200 points, \$1,000 will be awarded. Any points beyond 200 or 300 can be deferred to a future qualifying semester. A minimum of six credit hours with a grade average of 2.0 or better at an approved college or university is required.

Even with the previous tougher requirements, two employee/students qualified for the full \$1,500 bonus last semester.

This program is a fantastic way to reward hardworking students who are dedicated members of the Choices Team thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor from the Hamilton Community Foundation.



(L to R) SHF Board Member, Gary Blevins; EEAP recipient, Maria Peerzada, and Choices Executive Director; Tom Weaver

## Examples of point accumulation and bonus paid:

Employee/student "A" works an average of 24 hours per week any shift with no weekends or holidays worked for 13 weeks. Points accumulated for  $13 \times 24 = 312$  points, earning a \$1,500 bonus with 12 points deferred to a future semester.

Employee/student "B" works an average of 16 hours any shift only on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays for 13 weeks. Points accumulated for  $13 \times 16 \times 1.5 = 312$  also, and earns \$1,500 bonus with 12 points deferred to a future semester.

Of course, there could be any combination of hours worked during the week (one point per hour worked), weekends and holidays (1.5 points per hour worked). And points carried over to future qualifying semesters could be any amount.

For a brochure providing additional information, email [garyb\\_2121@yahoo.com](mailto:garyb_2121@yahoo.com).

# fundraising

## Sign-up Today - Giving made Easy! Every Contribution Counts!



**Sign up for Kroger's Community Rewards program!!** By linking your Kroger Plus customer card to benefit SHF, you will help us earn rewards from Kroger. First time users need to set up an account at [www.kroger.com](http://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 KA609 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.

**Get ready for holiday shopping and support Safe Haven Farms this season!!** If you shop online at Amazon, visit [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and select Safe Haven Farms as the nonprofit charity to support and a percentage of every purchase will benefit SHF. Amazon has donated over \$80 million dollars to charity since this program has begun. Sign up today!



## Did you celebrate a milestone birthday this year?

If so, you may have a new option to make a charitable gift and realize some tax savings. If you are 70 ½, consider directing your Required Minimum Distribution from a qualified IRA to Safe Haven Farms (tax ID: 26-1269652.) You might be able to avoid income tax on this distribution and still support your favorite non-profit. Ask your tax advisor for more information.

# equestrian news

## Sidewalkers Enhance Each Riders Experience

Alyssa Bourgeois is a young lady with many talents, a creative mind, and a big heart. Alyssa began volunteering as a side walker at SHF this past summer. She herself benefitted from therapeutic riding when she was younger and has “missed the horses.” When she heard about SHF and the need for volunteers she thought this could be her opportunity to be with horses and give back to the community.

Alyssa has a special air about her and connects easily with riders—especially the little girls who think she’s just the coolest! Alyssa smiles warmly as she encourages them to drop their hands or straighten their legs, get their toes or chin up. It’s so much to remember and coordinate, but Alyssa has been there so she understands.

“We are so blessed to have Alyssa here at the barn,” says Brandy, the equine program manager, “not only does she help with our little riders but she also helps with our older riders. Alyssa has come so far; she has a couple of riders who ask for her by name to be their side walker. She puts a smile on everybody’s face and always has a positive attitude toward the program and riders. Alyssa is always willing to learn and gives amazing feedback.”

When not volunteering at the barn, Alyssa loves to play with her cute little dog, Bailey, volunteer at church, travel to D.C. or Lexington or just about anywhere, and create jewelry. She has her own business where you can find just the right piece to complete any outfit at *Jewelry by Lyssie Lou* on Facebook or at *Beaux MondesSalon* in West Chester.

Thank you, Alyssa, for being a SHF Equine Program Side Walker! You are such an inspiration and a wonderful addition to the team!

If you feel your heart strings tugging at you to become a side walker at SHF contact Brandy Hinkel at [safehavenequestrian@gmail.com](mailto:safehavenequestrian@gmail.com) or [alyssa@safehavenequestrian.com](mailto:alyssa@safehavenequestrian.com)



Side Walkers facilitating therapeutic riding at SHF

## Safe Haven Farm’s Equestrian Program Receives Spaulding Foundation Grant



Therapeutic Riding benefits riders of all ages at SHF

We are very grateful to The Spaulding Foundation for the grant of \$20,000 toward the expansion of our therapeutic riding program.

This grant will enable us to include more children and adults from the community, in addition to our 16 adults with autism living at SHF. We are excited that the County is now allowing us to serve children and adults with a variety of disabilities in our activities at the farm.

Our hope is that we can continue to receive more funding enabling us to not only serve more individuals, but also include hippotherapy. Hippotherapy relies on specially trained and certified occupational and physical therapists to address a variety of impairments and limitations. Children as young as 2 years old can be served in Hippotherapy.

Many of the therapeutic riding programs in our community have waiting lists of individuals wanting to enroll in classes. As Safe Haven Farm’s equestrian program adds instructors and therapists, we feel we can help more families in the community.



# Safe Haven Farms

thanks you for supporting



## “Walk On” for Special Riders

On a picture-perfect late September day, the 5th annual **Walk On for Special Riders** took place around the lake at Voice of America Park in West Chester. This annual fundraiser benefits Safe Haven Farms’ therapeutic horseback riding program for participants with autism and other developmental disabilities. Walkers and team sponsors stepped up to support 27 different teams named for the farmers and riders at SHF. A record 18 corporate sponsors contributed to the success of this year’s event!! In addition to taking a lap around the lake, attendees could visit with a miniature horse and an alpaca; enjoy pumpkin painting, balloon animals, and refreshments; and take pictures at the new selfie booth. The event planning committee extends deep gratitude to our many Gold, Silver, and Bronze sponsors (as shown on Page1) , participants, and awesome volunteers!

### Provider Update

Our provider of residential and day services, Choices in Community Living, has extended their service contract through 2020. They are working to add new participants to the day program and several have started over the recent months. Participants with any developmental disability are now able to participate in the farm based upon our rezoning which was approved several months ago. Openings in the day program are available and we are hoping to recruit “farmers” who wish to participate in our agricultural and animal programs. Our vision for the farm is to have a true farmstead model with each participant engaged in as many farm activities as they are interested in and capable of performing. Thanks to the staff and all of the Choices management for their hard work.



### Safe Haven Board Strategic Planning

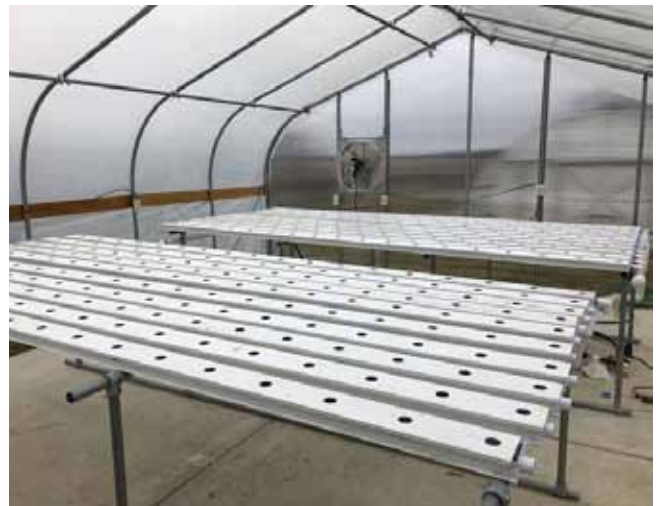
The Safe Haven Board of Directors is entering into a strategic planning process to focus on organization direction, sustainability and priorities for the next 3-5 years. Input is solicited from all interested parties and may be sent to [plock733@aol.com](mailto:plock733@aol.com).

# property improvements

## Donors Generosity Makes a Difference at SHF

Thanks to the generosity of our many donors and grants from local foundations, we are continuing to improve and grow the facilities at Safe Haven Farms. This summer and fall, we completed construction of our new hydroponic greenhouse and installed electrical and plumbing services to it. We look forward to using it this winter to keep our vegetables coming all winter.

We received a grant from an anonymous donor through the Hamilton Community Foundation in March to allow us to replace the leaking roof and the gutters of the Welcome House (office building). The original roof was built in 1972 and had



New Hydroponic Greenhouse

been re-shingled a couple of times. All of the old shingles were removed, and new ones installed in August, so now it's as good as new!

Our horse barn roof has been peeling paint for a couple of years and it was down to bare metal in some places. We had it stripped and repainted this fall. It looks great and should be good for several more years.

After 10 years of wear-and-tear, the carpets in the living rooms and staff rooms of our four residences needed replacing. We replaced them with vinyl plank flooring this spring which will make for longer life and much easier cleanup for the staff. Your continued donations and participation in our fundraisers are what makes these kinds of important property projects possible. Thanks to everyone for your support.



Anonymous Donor with Hamilton Community Foundation Provides a new roof & gutters for Welcome House



SHF Horse Barn Roof with Fresh New Paint!

# farm activities



## Fall Visitors to the Farm

We have had a lot of visitors to the farm this fall! It was a good opportunity to make some new friends and spread the awareness of Safe Haven Farms throughout the local community.

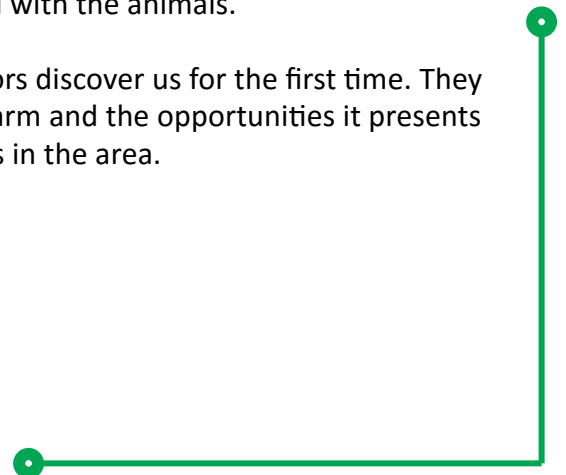
Twenty-two (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) elementary students with developmental disabilities from three classrooms at nearby Madison Elementary School visited the farm for a field trip on September 13<sup>th</sup>, along with ten teachers, aides and volunteers. They had lunch in the picnic shelter, took a hay ride to the back pasture to pick pumpkins and stopped by the garden to pick some fresh vegetables to take home. Then they went to the barn where they interacted with our horses and alpacas and make an “alpaca people” craft in the viewing room. Everyone seemed to have a good time. We are hopeful that this experience will encourage some of them to join our equestrian program in the future.

Four parent advocates representing DD programs from several local high school districts came out for a tour and to learn more about our programs on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Lakota, Middletown, Princeton and Oak Hills school districts were all represented.

They viewed the houses, gardens and greenhouses, barns and Hatton Center and got a good understanding of the activities at Safe Haven Farms to take back and share with their parent groups in their districts. This could be a good pipeline for future day participants and equestrian riders.

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, five students with disabilities and five teachers and aides from Madison High School visited the farm for a few hours to enjoy the fall weather and experience farm activities. They had lunch in the Hatton Center, took a hay ride, collected pumpkins and vegetables and interacted with the animals.

It's very satisfying to see visitors discover us for the first time. They are generally amazed at our farm and the opportunities it presents for individuals with disabilities in the area.





# farm activities

## Fall Agriculture on the Farm



Picture: Last of Summer Vegetables from SHF being sold in Middletown

Fall is a busy time on the farm. The last of summer harvest and the weekly Middletown Farmers Market are finished.

Late fall activity has turned to winter vegetable planting of spinach, Swiss chard, arugula, garlic, and lettuce blends in SHF vegetable hoop houses. While these will not be grown for market, residents of the farm will have fresh produce available for their own use.

SHF wants to thank its growing list of supporters who come to the Middletown market to especially buy SHF produce and flowers. The community support has been amazing as has the interest in farm activities been gratifying.

Late fall is also a time of planning ahead for next spring. Seed ordering and bed preparation are well under way in anticipation of seed planting in late winter. The goal is to broaden the selection of seedlings planted so that there is a succession of vegetable produce throughout the year. To support this, SHF received a generous donation to purchase

and build a Hydroponics operation for the Farm.

This will allow an expansion of the year-round growing season. Winter 2020 will be the initiation of the hydroponics initiative. The plan is to continue the weekly farmers market in Middletown and to add a produce retail store at SHF as well. Stay tuned for more details about this new operation.



Closeup of SHF Harvested Vegetables

# Dave Wilson and Dan Norris Remembered



David Wilson passed away on August 17, 2019. He was the husband of Sue Wilson, former member of the Safe Haven Board, and father of Jim Wilson, a resident and assistant farm manager of Safe Haven Farms.

Dave and Sue were part of helping to establish Safe Haven Farms and Dave was always willing to help with grant writing or activities at the farm. Many of us have known Dave for many years but were not aware of all of his amazing professional and personal accomplishments. Speakers at his Celebration of Life in Oxford on September 7 discussed his devotion to family, his commitment to teaching and mentoring of students and his role in creation and direction of the “Mallory Wilson Center for Health Care Education” at Miami University. One of his former graduate students flew halfway around the world to honor him and describe his accepting and caring mentoring of his time at Miami.

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Dan Norris passed away on October 10, 2019. He was the husband of Sally Winston, and father of Kate, Joe, and Jake (who lives at SHF). Dan graduated from St. Xavier University and UC Law. Professionally, Dan served as Principal of D.W. Norris Co. LPA, with a specialty in Social Security and Veterans disability law. His greatest pride however was in helping found and sustain Safe Haven Farm. While the SHF Community knew Dan well many may not know that his volunteer commitments extended well beyond SHF to include other worthy causes such as Joseph House, Tender Mercies and Cincinnati Bar Association.

(L to R) - Denny, Dan and Ann



**-Dave and Dan's incredible dedication, vision, and friendship will be missed and cherished-**

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# REDDAY

 renew  energize  donate



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **Red Day** at SHF – Keller Williams Realty Volunteers

Thanks to the Keller Williams Team for their contributions to SHF on RED Day. Red Day, which stands for **Renew, Energize and Donate**, is Keller Williams Realty's annual day of service. Each year on the second Thursday of May, they celebrate RED Day as a part of their **legacy worth leaving**. Making a difference in the lives of others and bettering the communities that they serve lies at the heart of the Keller Williams culture. This observance defines who they are and is a natural extension of their commitment to the highest level of professional customer service. Over time, a growing number of their family members and friends continue to participate in this extraordinary event. It **embodies the generous spirit and commitment associates have to "giving back"** to the cities and towns they live and work in.

Check out some of the projects the Keller Williams Team worked to accomplish on "Red Day"





Safe Haven Farms

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Middletown, OH 45042

513.422.1880

[www.safehavenfarms.org](http://www.safehavenfarms.org)

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