



Safe Haven Farms

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# The Safe Haven Way

A Publication of Safe Haven Farms, Butler County, Ohio



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# property improvements

## Donors and Fundraisers Make Projects Possible !

As you might imagine, keeping our 60-acre property and all our buildings and equipment running is a big job! The indoor/outdoor activities of farm life exact a lot of wear on our interior spaces. Keeping the floors, furniture, and appliances clean and in good repair helps extend the useful life of our residential possessions, but eventually things break down or wear out and need to be replaced. In the Hatton Center wonderfully messy tasks such as painting and crafts, cooking classes, dinners, social events and dances in the Community Room subject many surfaces to hard use.

In 2018 we were fortunate to have received donations large and small that helped us with maintenance and needed repairs as well as allowing us to undertake major exterior renovations, improvements to buildings affected by age and weather, and the construction of new structures. The Welcome House now has a new HVAC system. We built an equipment shed, a containment pad for horse waste, and a hydroponic greenhouse, which will enhance our vegetable production. We were pleased to work with our provider Choices in Community Living to add several new items for participants in the Learning Center such as puzzles, books, videos, iPads and CD players.

## 2019 Planned Major Projects

- Replace the roof & gutters on the Welcome House, funded by an anonymous \$20K donation through the Hamilton Community Foundation
- Maintenance to the Horse Barn including installation of security cameras to the stalls, inside & outside arena areas, painting of the metal roof and asphalt repair to prevent tripping hazards to horses, farmers & staff
- Professionally cleaning vinyl and carpets in the Hatton Center & adding new instruments to the music therapy room
- Replace living room and staff room carpet with vinyl plank flooring in all four houses
- Replace damaged old fencing on the west side of the property towards Elk Creek
- Finish assembly of the hydroponic greenhouse, including water & electrical service
- Execute a contract for regular lawn care, mulching and maintenance area around houses, picnic area, Welcome House & Hatton Center

The Property Committee of the Safe Haven Farms Board meets regularly to assess the needs for the year, recommend the projects to be funded, negotiate funding with the full board, and coordinate with the property management team to get them done. The group also evaluates and awards contracts for regular maintenance for areas which are beyond the scope of the property management work team.

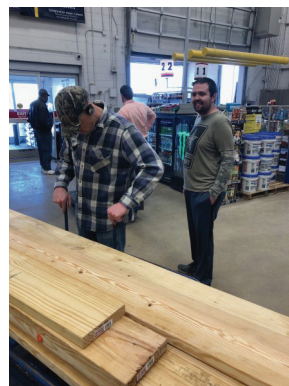
None of what we've accomplished would have been possible without your donations and support of our fundraisers throughout the year. Thank you for your continued financial support, and thank you to the Property Committee and property management team that made it all happen!

# choices in community living update



## Update of Leadership for Choices in Community Living

Choices in Community Living functions as the provider of day and residential services at Safe Haven Farms. They have reorganized staffing with Tom Weaver and David Rustio spending administrative time at the farm. Stacy Roberts is Deputy Director and is managing residential services. Program manager for houses 110 and 120 is Stephanie Dunaway. Paula King is program manager for houses 130 and 140. Jody Crum is now Program Manager for the day program. We have some amazing staff at the farm in both the day and residential programs and we really appreciate everything that they do. We have found that word of mouth referrals from current staff are the most effective form of recruiting new staff but we encourage everyone who cares about the farm to be on the lookout for those special caring people who want to work in this very rewarding place.



## College Education Assistance Opportunities

Please spread the word to all college students who need or want to work that there are terrific opportunities with Choices in Community Living at Safe Haven Farms. Choices employees selected to participate in the Education Assistance Program at Safe Haven Farms will be doing good by making a difference for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. At the same time, they will be improving their own meaningful work experience, earning a regular paycheck and qualifying for an end of semester bonus of up to \$1,500. The bonus is based on points accumulated from hours worked.

Opportunities are available to work days during the week, as well as all evenings and nights. The need for help is greatest on weekends, both days and nights. Increased points toward the end of semester bonuses are awarded for weekend and holiday hours worked.

For participants who work during the summer and other times school is not in session, points toward the end of semester bonuses can be accumulated and deferred to future semesters, as can points earned in excess of those required for an end of semester bonus.

Openings are available now. For additional information about working for Choices and participating in the Employee Education Assistance Program:

Go to [cicljobs.com](http://cicljobs.com)

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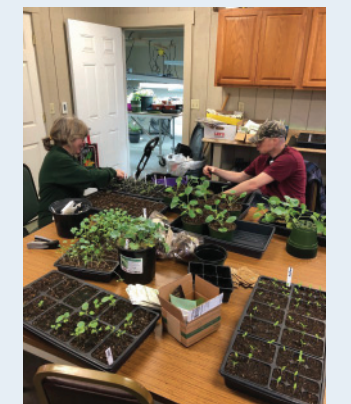
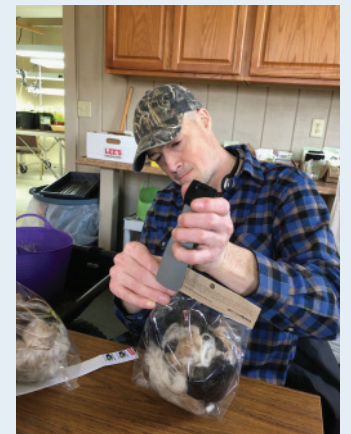
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# community activities



Booth at Fiber Fair - Berns Garden Center located at 825 Greentree Road , Middletown, OH



## Safe Haven's Community Connection with Berns Garden Center Continues

For the past two years Berns Garden Center, Choices and Safe Haven Farms have established a budding relationship. In February 2019, they participated in Berns' Fiber Fair. Additionally, this year Berns has extended an invitation to Safe Haven to have a weekly farm stand at the retail garden center! Days may vary according to availability of farm vegetables, but keep your eyes open for the farm stand when shopping at Berns. The center will also publish the weekly schedule through their social media and email posts.



## Farm Stand Schedule at Middletown Pendleton

Beginning May 14, 2019 Choices will again be selling their seasonal vegetables, herbs, flowers and fruit from SHF at the Pendleton every Tuesday Farmers Market, 11-3 in downtown Middletown. Safe Haven farmers and Choices staff grow, harvest and ready the farm's bounty for the weekly farm stand. There are no chemicals used in farm production. The farm stand has also been a place where customers and community members learn more about Safe Haven Farm. Several have come out to visit the farm and have become volunteers.

Joe Spencer is one of those special people. Joe is well known in the Middletown community for his gardening expertise. Not only has Joe come out to the farm to share his farming knowledge but he has also generously donated a truckload of pots and gardening supplies to the organization. This donation included thousands of flower seeds that the farmers and staff will begin to sow next winter for spring growing. Thank you Joe for all you do!

Did you know that The Pendleton Art Center has not only provided a great venue for Safe Haven Farmers to sell their flowers and produce but has also provided a fun and creative outlet for the farmers while not tending to the animals or crops? Check out the beautiful artwork created by some of our farmers. While you are visiting the farm stand stop into the Pendleton and check out all of the other wonderful ways they enrich the Middletown community.



Farmer-Artists enjoying a creative moment at the Pendleton

The Pendleton Art Center -1105 Central Avenue, Middletown, OH

# equestrian news

## New Opportunities "Blooming" this Spring at SHF

Spring has always welcomed new beginnings at Safe Haven Farm because each spring is a new season of growth for our crops and our programs. Spring 2019 is particularly exciting as SHF welcomes two new opportunities to serve more participants in equestrian programs.

At this time, classes have begun for the season and four new riders are now regularly attending the therapeutic riding program. One new opportunity that is being offered includes the addition of more times to ride on Mondays. Two additional classes times will be added on Mondays, one from 5 PM to 6 PM and the other from 6 PM to 7 PM. There will be 8 total slots available for riders. The second new opportunity is truly significant! Safe Haven Farm is happy to announce the inclusion of children and adults in the therapeutic riding program with any type of disability, not just autism. If you are interested in enrolling in a class contact our equestrian director, Brandy Hinkel at [safehavenequestrian@gmail.com](mailto:safehavenequestrian@gmail.com) for more information on class times and cost. Last but not least, if you love horses and want to help around the barn, we would love the help. Contact the farm and speak to Brandy about available volunteer opportunities.



## Rezoning Provides Opportunities for Individuals With Any Disability To Participate In Therapeutic Riding At Safe Haven Farm

Safe Haven Farms is excited to announce that we are now able to accept participants with a variety of disabilities, not just autism. We founded Safe Haven Farms to serve adults with autism and we hold dear our original mission. We also recognize that participants with other types of disabilities could benefit from our programs such as the equestrian program. The Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities and our provider, Choices in Community Living, will now be able to refer a variety of individuals to our Day activities program and when appropriate openings occur, our residential program.

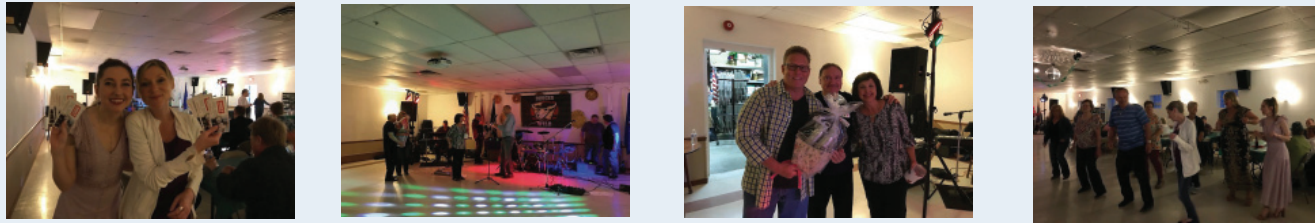


The change to our defined population to be served required a local rezoning process, and it was recently completed. It involved presenting our request to three Butler County groups: the Zoning Commission, the Planning Commission and the Butler County Commissioners. The process went smoothly, and, in fact, we were thanked by a Commissioner for our efforts to expand the population we are able to serve. The equestrian and day programs are delighted that they can now accept other participants into their programs!

# more fundraising

## Deuces Wild "Wows" their fans at SHF Charity Dance

A SHF fundraiser charity dance was held on May 11 at the American Legion Hall in Mason, OH. Debbie Judd and Mike Deffinger, along with their many friends helped with this event. Raffle prizes were donated from 9 companies/ persons. The Deuces Wild band played free for our dance and made this an awesome event for all to enjoy. Thanks to all for attending!



# fundraiser Save the date

## Save the Date – Walk On for Autism 2019

The **fifth** annual *"Walk On" for Autism* to benefit Safe Haven Farms will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2019 at the Voice of America MetroPark, located at 7850 VOA Park Drive, West Chester, OH 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 a beautiful wide multi-purpose paved path to walk around the scenic northern lake at the park, crafts for the children, miniature horses, balloon animals for the kids, and more! Look for registration details by mail or follow our Facebook page for more information. 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](mailto:Leslie.Odioso@gmail.com).

# fundraising reminders



## Kroger Community Rewards

We need you to sign up today! Only 36 families have designated Safe Haven Farms as their rewards partner, but those families have raised \$235 in 3 months. Imagine how this could grow if we could double or triple the number of families who participate!!

By linking your Kroger Plus customer card to benefit SHF, you will help us earn a quarterly contribution 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.

# farm activities

## Bountiful Harvesting Begins

Winter is not a time of relaxation for Safe Haven farmers and Choices staff. This winter and early spring has been a busy time of planning and planting. While tomatoes and peppers are a particular favorite, 4000 vegetable and flower pots have been started and ready for spring planting – a record number. This includes multiple types and varieties of most every locally grown vegetable, as well as petunias, impatiens and cutting flowers for bouquets.



## Hydroponics On Its Way

Thanks to a very generous grant last year, Safe Haven Farm will begin its Hydroponics production next fall. A group of volunteers from GE Aviation is completing work on the hydroponics greenhouse this spring. Hydroponics gardening is clean, no soil and weed-free and will allow for yearlong production of vegetables at SHF.



Starting the spring crops

## In Memory of Lacy

Farmers lost Lacy, the farm's 12 year old white mini, a special member of the SHF family this winter. She was a bundle of energy and could have a little attitude. She loved to take candy from everyone and was our special girl. Our farmers loved her. She loved going on walks and particularly loved to drag everyone to the grass. We will never forget the crazy adventures she took us on and how much she made us laugh. She will be missed.



"In Loving Memory of Lacy, our spirited mini"

## New Alpacas join SHF Barnyard

Our newest additions in the barnyard are 4 Alpacas, donated by Lisa Knapp. They love walking with the farmers and receiving treats from your hand. They are all females and are between 8 to 12 years of age. They are all very gentle. They are Bella (tan), Angel (dark brown), Flirt (black), and Sable (tri-color). Beautiful little ladies!



Meet Bella, Flirt, Sable, and Angel

# social activities

## Fun Galore!

“A picture is worth a thousand words”. All that really means it that a picture tells a story just as well as, if not better than, a lot of written words. So without many words, enjoy the pictures on this page that capture the social nature and spirit of the Safe Haven Farm community that includes the farmers, staff, family members, volunteers, and farm supporters.



## Special Visitors Surprise Teresa

Everyone has heard about ELVIS sightings...right? Well truth is one SHF resident knows him personally! Teresa Blevins turned 55 on March 21st. She is so special to so many people that her birthday was celebrated by loved ones over an entire week. Family traveled in from across the country, a surprise luncheon was held, and then the week culminated with a 50 guest party in the Community Room of the Hatton Center at Safe Haven Farm. After great food and cake was enjoyed her final surprise arrived.

ELVIS entered with his signature moves of swiveling hips, snarling lips, and scarves for the ladies! He entertained the birthday girl and her guests for over an hour! Teresa was “All Shook Up!” on her big day!



Teresa beams as Elvis sings

# fundraising

## Share the Love 2019

The **fifth** annual fundraising dinner welcomed over two hundred benefactors to dinner at the historic Grand Finale in support of the mission and programs of Safe Haven Farms. Guests chose from four entrées with sides and a salad; complementary beer or wine; and one of nine decadent desserts.



Grand Finale - Glendale, OH

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 heart-felt appreciation for our returning sponsors!

- Entrée Level Sponsors:** First Financial Bank; Impact Autism
- Dessert Level Sponsors:** Heidt Family Foundation; Ken Anderson Alliance
- Cocktail Level Sponsors:** Alliance Printing & Mailing Services; Truepoint Wealth Counsel
- Raffle Level Sponsors:** Fey Bruder Insurance Advisors
- Sweetheart Sponsors:** Peter & Donna Kaufman; Karl & Michelle Matson; Dennis & Ann Rogers; Joseph & Kate Wespiser

Congratulations to the winners of our evening raffle! **Jerry Gerace** will receive a custom watercolor portrait painted by local artist Bobbi Thies; **Mei Carpenter** will enjoy a one week stay at a private cabin near Rocky Mountain National Park; **Judy Kuhl** gets to dine at a Jeff Ruby steakhouse then attend a Kelly Clarkson concert at US Bank Arena; and **Arlene Jones** took home a Mark Kay cosmetics gift basket with a MasterCard gift card. Congratulations to all the winners!

Please plan to join us next year at the Grand Finale restaurant in Glendale on **Tuesday, February 12, 2020**.

If you have something to donate for next year’s raffle, please get in touch with Leslie Odioso at [leslie.odioso@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.odioso@gmail.com). Items for donation include a week stay at a vacation house/condo (beach or mountain destination), airline miles, hotel certificates, or fine dining restaurant gift cards.

