

CHOICES IN COMMUNITY LIVING, INC. EST. 1985

Founding Partner of Partners for Community Living



Assisting people with developmental disabilities to have access to build safe, healthy and meaningful lives in the community.

We are 1st in the nation!

Empowerment and self-advocacy for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) has taken a monumental step forward for our nation, and it began right here in the Miami Valley. Choices In Community Living has been partnering with the Greene and Montgomery County Boards of Developmental Disabilities for several years now in the development and growth of two-award winning self-advocacy groups, Voices of Greene County and Voices Matter/ Montgomery County.

As an outgrowth of that work, the first chartered Optimist Club in the nation led by officers with I/DD, the Greenmont Optimist Club, is already working to charter other clubs, including one with Partners For Community Living. Greenmont received their charter in September, 2018 and has been active since then not only within their own club but in reaching out to expand involvement for others.

The Greenmont Club is sponsored by the Greene Optimist Club, with support from Dan Drago, and the Centerville Noon Optimist Club, with support from Bob Duffy and Myron Rheame. According to Myron, "during discussions with Choices' Executive Director Tom Weaver and Voices of Greene County's Staff Liaison David Gleason, it became evident to me that we had a golden opportunity to leverage the existing group dynamics of Voices of Greene County and Voices Matter/Montgomery County to get them involved in the Optimist initiative."

Torry Brown (*Voices Matter*) and Jenny Johnson (*Voices of Greene County*) couldn't agree more. Both already pioneers as founding members of their self-advocacy groups, they see becoming Optimists as a next step in growing their voices and for being fully included in service to their communities. "The Optimists are just a pleasure to work with," shares Jenny, who is the first Secretary-Treasurer of our nation's first inclusive chartered Optimist Club that includes officers and members with I/DD, as well as providers, parents, and members from other Optimists Clubs. "We all really like working with them and are happy to be joining them in serving the community. Our group is already talking about volunteering with SICSA, food pantries, feeding the hungry and more."

President Torry Brown echoes Jenny's words. "I am so excited to be the president of Greenmont Optimists. We are going to get involved and help make the community better and to help children in need." Jenny shares that Greenmont Optimists has around 50 members now, with more than 20 attending their monthly meetings. "We are an integrated Club," she stresses, "and we are all volunteers and we are all here because we believe in the Optimist mission of providing hope and vision and to bring out the best in youth, our communities and ourselves."

For Myron, it's a win-win for everyone.

Continued on page 2



Call him Mr. President. Torry Brown (*Choices*) is the first president of the first chartered Optimist Club in the United States that is led by people with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Torry is featured at a recent meeting with Sue Armstrong, Optimist Governor Ohio District; Bob Duffy, Club Advisor from Centerville Noon Optimist (sponsoring club); and Myron Rheame, Optimist Governor Elect Ohio District, Chair, Optimist Special Needs Outreach. Myron is also a member of the Choices' Board of Trustees and Partners Joint Development Committee. Myron will be installed in October as a Governor of the Optimist Ohio District consisting of 80 Optimists Clubs.



Jenny Johnson is the Secretary-Treasurer for the Greenmont Optimist Club, as well as a founding member of the self-advocacy group

Voices of Greene County. She will speak at the Optimist state-wide conference in April in Columbus.

Don't miss Partners Fish Fry on April 5.

SEE INSIDE OUR PARTNERS INSERT FOR DETAILS.

The hardest job you will ever love

by Tom Weaver, Executive Director

It does seem like we use that phrase a lot ... this is the hardest job you will ever love. We share it with young people and students who may have an interest in working in our profession and in working with people with intellectual/developmental disabilities. We share it with people who have applied for jobs and to new people we hire as they are going through training. Sometimes we even have to share it with each other ... to remind us, those of us who have been here since it seems time began, or at least, since community services began.

It's really hard work. The responsibilities are high, matters of life and death literally. The wages are low. The documentation is never ending. The funding is never enough. There is too much to do and too little recognition for doing it, even when you do it really, really well. The days are long and yet just how short life really is hits you like a brick wall and breaks your heart every time you have to sit together in a funeral home and comfort each other, for the time Cecilia left us and Doug left us and for all those who have left us ... filling us to overflowing with this lingering sense of loss. It's just sometimes really, really hard. If, like so many of our professional caring staff, you stay for five years, or ten years, or, like some of us, for more than 30 years, you need something to remind you why you do this really hard work.

Home. Family. Community. These are more than just three words. Think what they mean to you. What does your home, your family, your community mean to you? They mean that much and more to people whose lives and quality of life depend on us. They mean that much and more to people who devote decades of their lives not

for a paycheck, but for the next time they know they have really helped someone they love like family. Those are the times we share our stories. We share them with you in our newsletters. We share them with each other on good days when we are celebrating and on those days when it seems just too hard. It's our stories that hold us together, that keep us committed, that keep us here.

There's celebrating a 94th or 95th or 97th birthday with someone who spent too many years of his young life secreted away in an institution. There's being at Fun-Fit with someone and watching not only their hard work but their joy when they lose 90 pounds. There's getting a job you've wanted for so long and now in your late 30s and with the support of your staff, you're going to get a paycheck. There's joining a club, a community club and finding that gift of belonging. There's all that effort in trying to get enough money for a new bed for someone. There are people falling in love. There are people buying their own homes. There are people, like Shelley, who stand beside you as life ebbs away and then stands by you in death, telling you she loves you still and thanking you for all that you gave her.

The hardest job you will ever love. We never said it would be easy. We always say it is worth every minute of it!

Editor's Note: Join us as a member of our Choices' professional team and be a part of sharing our stories in our really hard and really meaningful work. Full and part-time positions available. Paid training. Contact Trent Grooms at tgrooms@ciclob.com, 937-898-2220 or apply today online at cicljobs.com. Tell someone you know that you've read our stories or been a part of our stories and encourage them to join our team ... our extended family.

We are 1st in the nation! *Continued from page 1*

"Here we have opportunities for my Club and other Clubs to participate side-by-side with the Greenmont Optimists for community projects and events in keeping with our Optimist mission. I also see other benefits that can come from this partnership, in such areas as employment. As other Optimists meet and get to know the Greenmont Optimists and other Clubs that will follow, they will see firsthand the leadership qualities and abilities of our new members. What makes them great Optimists also makes them great employees." He will speak at the 2020 Optimist International Convention where he will focus on the innovation, leadership and success that began with the chartering of the Greenmont Optimist Club.

Torry speaks with the voice of a true Optimist when he shares what this new experience means to him. "I love helping people. That's the most important thing. I want people to see and to know that people with disabilities care about others and want to help. I do this for others and from my heart and not for me. And when I do this, I learn more about myself every day."

Editor's Note: The second chartered Optimist Club in the nation is in our area, the We Care Arts Optimist Club. As Choices Voices goes to print, we congratulate the third Club, Partners Optimist Club, with following officers from Choices: Hargis Proffitt, President; Melicia Fontenot, Vice-President; Scott Rheume, Secretary; Brian Mayenschein, Director; Matthew Evans, Director; and Angela Ingram, Director. Staff liaison/support is provided by Volunteer Coordinator Cheron Barclift and David Gleason.

We remember and honor the life of Doug Hoyer, who spent many years as a member of our Choices' family. One of our favorite memories is when we helped him celebrate his 50th birthday with a plane ride to Dallas to watch his beloved Dallas Cowboys play football, where it didn't even matter that they lost the game. He had a great time and we had a greater time watching his excitement!



Partners For Community Living

enhancing the quality of life for people served by
Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association

Welcome to our Legacy Society



It is with deep appreciation we welcome Brenda Whitney to our **John W. Pratt Legacy Society**. Our **Society** recognizes those individuals who have confirmed that they have made a planned giving commitment designated to Resident Home Association or Choices In Community Living or an undesignated

planned gift to Partners For Community Living to be used where most needed. Brenda served for more than three decades as the first Executive Director of Resident Home Association and continues her advocacy as part of the Joint Development Committee for Partners For Community Living.

Our **Legacy Society** is named in honor of John W. Pratt, a pioneering advocate who was instrumental in the founding of both Choices and Resident Home, as well as a passionate advocate for the work of Partners For Community Living. His story is featured in both our ***Lest We Forget: Silent Voices*** film documentary, as well as our book, **Home from Purgatory: Freedom, Choice and Life after Christmas in Purgatory.**

For more information on how you can join Brenda as a member of our **Legacy Society**, please contact Tom Weaver at Choices In Community Living, tweaver@cicloh.com, 937-898-2220, or Pete Roll at Resident Home Association, proll@rhadayton.com, 937-278-0791.



Geraldo, our Fryin' Fish, is back for our 2019 edition of our Partners Fish 'N Chips Fish Fry.

We've made some great changes for our event on April 5 at the Huber Heights Athletic Foundation, 5367 Fishburg Road

in Huber Heights! We're proud to announce that the well-known Huber Heights restaurant Christy's will be catering our dinner this year, which will feature fish, chicken nuggets, sausage, baked beans, cole slaw and beverages. Dinner will be served from 6:00 – 9:00. An assortment of great desserts will be available in our Bake Sale. Beer bracelets will be just \$2.00.

Our Casino-style games will run until 11:00 and will feature our Raffle Basket Extravaganza, 50/50 Jackpot, Chuck-A-Luck, Showdown, Blackjack and more. We will also have a raffle from Gallery Home Furnishings in Englewood, who makes a donation to our Fish Fry each year.

Save \$5.00 on every adult ticket when you purchase your tickets in advance. Advance tickets are \$15.00 and can be ordered by contacting Cheron or Annie at Resident Home at 937-278-0791. Tickets are also available at our Choices office

Continued on back...

Did you say taxes?

by Laura Fike, Development Consultant

I received a 1099 form in the mail recently, which was a reminder that it's that time again – tax season. My husband Al and I have always been obsessive about maintaining receipts for every possible tax-deductible item. We are by no means wealthy, but we have gradually increased our charitable giving over the years and reaped the benefit of reducing our income taxes by deducting those gifts.

Changes in the tax law now mean that we won't be able to deduct those gifts to our universities, church, arts organizations and social services. We can't possibly have more than \$24,000 (*married couple, filing jointly*) in itemized deductions, which is what we would now need in order to deduct charitable contributions for 2018.

Does that mean we reduced our support for these organizations? **No.** If anything, knowing there was no tax benefit for us in making charitable gifts helped us affirm that we will continue to give, and, in some cases, increase our support for the causes and organizations that are meaningful to us.

The need to help nonprofits meet human needs has never been more important! Choices In Community Living (Choices) and Resident Home Association (RHA) help nearly 500 people with intellectual/developmental disabilities live meaningful, productive lives in the communities these agencies serve. They may be your neighbors, seated next to your table in a restaurant, or the bowlers next to you the next time you go bowling. To live in a safe and welcoming house or apartment, to earn a paycheck, to perform community service as a volunteer, to order an omelet, to make that spare on the bowling lane next to you, they need a team of caring people, partners, who will help them realize their potential every single day.

They need transportation to jobs, day programs, recreation, medical appointments, shopping and more. They need someone to assure they get their medications when they are needed, that they have nutritious meals, a coat in the winter and new shoes when old ones wear out. Like us, they want to share good times with their friends and family.

The tax law has changed. Their needs have not. They need Al and I and you to continue to make charitable gifts so that they can continue to live their lives not defined by their disabilities but by their dreams and goals. Thank you for continuing to support Choices and RHA with your charitable gifts and for supporting other nonprofits that make our communities better places for all of us to live.

(Partners Fish 'N Chips Fish Fry, *continued*)

at 1651 Needmore Road and the RHA office at 3661 Salem Avenue or on our secure website at www.partnersohio.com. Tickets will be available at the door the night of the event for \$20.00. Tickets for children ages 6 – 12 are \$5.00.

If you would like to be a part of our Fish Fry, including participating in our raffle baskets, 50/50 drawing, donating to bake sale and more, please contact Cheron Barclift at cbarclift@rhadayton.com.

Our 11th Annual

Art & Soul opening reception and awards ceremonies will be

held Saturday, April 13 at the Dayton Public Library in downtown Dayton. Cash awards will be presented to the top artists, as selected by our two professional jurors, Glen Cebulash, Chair of the Art and Art History Department at Wright State University and Shawna Hatton, professional artist and instructor at the Dayton Art Institute. The Exhibit will remain on display for two weeks following the opening ceremonies. All art will be for sale during the opening, as well as the two weeks the Exhibit remains on display at the Library.

Our generous sponsors provide for professional framing and matting of the selected pieces, as well as cash awards to the artists and support for the ceremonies and Exhibit. We thank Hutcheson HomeCare Pharmacy for joining us as our Platinum Sponsor, as well as our Legacy Sponsors, the Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery and Warren County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. We also recognize the commitment and professional service of Sketches Framing. The reception is open to the public at no charge.

Please contact Annie Shaver at ashaver@rhadayton.com or 937-278-0791 for more details as to time and other information about this year's opening ceremonies.



"Hello! My name is Annie Shaver. Please introduce yourself when you see me at our Fish Fry, **Art & Soul** or as I'm out and about in my new role as Development Coordinator with Partners For Community Living. I would love to meet you! I have felt very welcomed the last few weeks and have enjoyed meeting coworkers and individuals at Resident Home and Choices.

I have returned home to Dayton after nine years of working as a Direct Support Professional (DSP) in Missouri, Illinois and Australia. I am excited about my work with Partners, where I will be working on events, community awareness and advocacy. My hope is to effectively tell the stories of the people we serve, our families and our partnerships and to get to know and work with our caring and supportive donors. Peace to you all!"

In honor of our caring friends and partners who have made donations since our Resident Home Association newsletter in December, 2018:

Choices In Community Living

Randall & Gianina Griffin,
adaptive bicycle

Charles Havener
Mary Panstingel

In remembrance

Doug Hoyer, from Arlene Deis

Doug Hoyer, from Gerald, Verena & Joe Shroyer

Resident Home Association

Wilma Creager

David & Rhonda Rich

Mary Sue Gmeiner

& Cardinal Health

Nancy Houtz

James & Frances Sheehan

Gary & Patti Lepa

Brian & Pam Tompkins

Richard & Janet Matthews

Samantha Webb

David & Bobbie Murphy

Brenda Whitney

In remembrance

Kirstin Andersen, from Karen Andersen

Jerry Duskey, from Joyce Fouts

Betty Gmeiner, from Tom Gmeiner

Harold & Violet Hays, from Dennis Hays

Robert T. Hart, from Dana Kane

John Pernik, from Robert & Patricia Hermann

John, Verda & Lindsay Ping, from Keith & Sue Miller

Maureen Riazzi, from Robert & Elizabeth Schaeffer

In honor

Kathy Morgan, from Connie Gilhooly

Carmen & Ann Riazzi, from Robert & Elizabeth Schaeffer

Partners For Community Living

Anonymous

Stephen & Ellen McHugh

Jerome Bohman

Tim & Barb Riazzi

Ronald & Patricia Burnside

Patricia Sales

William Kramer

Theodore Trzaska

Ellen McCloskey

In remembrance

Friends of Todd Mebane, from Todd & Wynema Mebane

In honor

Vivienne Himmell, from Ronald & Dona Fletcher

Judy Leasure, from Avis Stecher

Elvia Thomas, from Brea Thornton

Does your donation matter?

Those who served and loved Joanne Maloney have the answer to this question, even as they grieve her recent death. Because of caring donors, Resident home had the funds to get Joanne a portable mobility lift that allowed her to stay at home as long as possible before going to a nursing home for her final days. She had that extra time at her Hemphill home, time to sit around the dining room table with her housemates and staff, time to take a few more sips of coffee from that very tiny coffee cup ... her very own cup in the place that was home for decades, staying there longer than she would have been able to stay had it not been for those caring donors.

The lift is now available for the next person who needs it. It is part of Joanne's legacy. It is part of your legacy as well, each of you who touched Joanne's life. **Yes, your donation really did matter!**



2018 Annual Report



We lost three members of our extended family in 2018, Wendy Harm and Ken Woodyard from our Wendhaven home in Montgomery County and Mary Berndt in Clark County.

What Choices In Community Living does goes far beyond being a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization that was founded in 1985 in Montgomery County and that now provides services in Butler, Clark, Greene, Madison, Montgomery, Preble and Warren Counties.

Our lifelong services, provided around the clock, every day of the year by our 394 professional staff, support more than 300 individuals with a range of intellectual/developmental disabilities. What we are beyond our services is a value-based, mission-centered extended family that includes those we serve, their families, our professional staff, Board members, volunteers, donors and community partners. Together we are Home, Family, Community.

Susan Seitz, a long-time professional in the field of intellectual/developmental disabilities and advocate, joined our Board of



Trustees in 2018. Our Trustees are the governing board for Choices and serve in a volunteer capacity, representing clients, families, business and the community. Other Board members in 2018 included: Clinton Brown, President; Eugene Aukerman, Treasurer; Jennifer Roberts-Grewe, Secretary; and Deborah Dulaney; Larry Hansgen; Andy Horstman; William Kramer; and Myron Rheame.






Celebrating Home, Family and Community

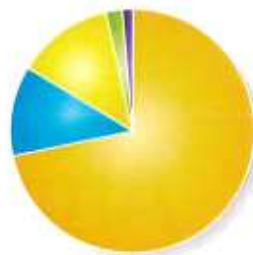
- Choices' received the 2018 Community Award from the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) for innovation in building and supporting community partnerships.
- The congregation of Omega Baptist Church raised more than \$1,500 in monetary and in-kind donations for our Westbrook (*Interim Care*) home during their Christmas in July and Christmas in August efforts led by Wynema and Todd Mebane.
- Summer of Service volunteers from Terra Haute, Indiana were among those who helped us with landscaping, gardening, painting and more throughout 2018. Our caring volunteers provided more than 3,000 hours of service to Choices and Resident Home and those we serve.
- The Englewood (Kleptz) YMCA received OPRA's 2018 Volunteer Award and a 2018 Community Award from the Erin Ritchey Memorial Awards for their leadership in pioneering Choices' Fun-Fit Adult Day program that is now in all counties served by Choices.
- The Beavercreek Police Department received an Erin Ritchey Community Award for their partnership with self-advocacy groups Voices of Greene County and Voices Matter/Montgomery County, including advocacy with law enforcement agencies throughout Ohio. Choices' partners with the Greene and Montgomery County Boards of Developmental Disabilities in support of the award-winning self-advocacy groups.
- More than \$9,000 was allocated from the Choices' Wish List in 2018 to provide clothing, furniture, medical equipment, recreation, holiday gifts and more when no other funds were available. The Wish List is funded 100% by donations, including from employee pledges, and from proceeds for our Partners Bowl-A-Thon and its sponsors, such as a fund from Pickrel, Schaeffer and Ebeling, LPA and the George Martin Funeral Home.
- The Civitan Club of Dayton extended their friendship and support by hosting two Family Fest events, with support of Elks Lodge #58.







2018 FINANCES IN REVIEW

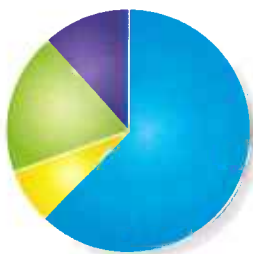
Revenues:

	IO Waivers Homemaker/ Personal Care	\$10,369,715.99
	Day Services	\$1,703,318.24
	Client Benefit Resources	\$1,866,471.11
	Supported Living	\$301,153.70
	Grants/Other Donations	\$190,740.59
Total		\$14,431,399.63



Operating Expenses

	Support Staff Wages/Benefits	\$9,127,960.87
	Home General Services	\$1,086,777.03
	Administrative/ General Services	\$2,742,001.77
	Food & Daily Living Expenses	\$1,696,004.34
Total		\$14,652,744.01



Sponsors change lives



Ohio's statewide juried art exhibit recognizing and

celebrating the creative expression of artists with intellectual/developmental disabilities celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2018, with the continuing coordination of Partners For Community Living and Toward Independence. As with previous years, the 2018 Exhibit, which was showcased during a two-week display at the Dayton Public Library, was made possible solely by sponsorship support, including our Premiere Sponsor Hutcheson HomeCare Pharmacy and our Legacy Sponsors, the Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery and Warren County Boards of Developmental Disabilities and with professional support from Sketches Framing.

We also honor Hutcheson HomeCare Pharmacy for their sponsorship for our updated Partners For Community Living website that will be online in early 2019, as well as a fund from Pickrel, Schaeffer and Ebeling, LPA and George Martin Funeral Home for sponsoring our 2018 Partners Bowl-A-Thon, along with numerous caring donors.

2018 Annual Report

Access and integration in the community would not be possible without accessible, safe and reliable transportation.



During 2018, Choices welcomed two new vans to our 65 van fleet, with grant funding from the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission. Our fleet includes 12 vans that are used to provide transportation to and from our Adult Day Services programs.

While State regulations require us to provide accessible transportation, including a van for each home (*like this one used in our Preble County homes*), there is limited funding available for the purchase of vans. We have been able to continue to provide access to the community with our vans because of the support of community partners over the years, including the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, The Brighter Tomorrow Foundation, The Dayton Foundation, CareSource Foundation and Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

During its first full year of operation in 2018, Choices' newest program, FunOne, provided one-on-one recreational opportunities for 48 individuals served by Choices in Montgomery County, including Charlie Johnson, filled with joy at attending a Motown Review event at the Frazee with FunOne Coordinator Anita Kitchen. During the pilot project, which received generous funding from The Brighter Tomorrow Foundation and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, individuals were given the opportunity to decide what they would like to do and then go to that activity with one staff person. Those opportunities were as diverse as the individuals, from attending Bengals, Dragons and Reds games, to Haunted Houses, WWE Wrestling and riverboat rides, to movies and restaurants, to attending concerts of their dreams, including Hank Williams, Jr., Culture Club, Luke Bryan and Beyoncé.



Foundations support services

While Medicaid provides the primary funding stream for Choices, foundations serve as vital partners in providing critically needed funding support. Working with foundations is one of the key roles of our Partners For Community Living team. **Our recent Foundation partners include:**

The Brighter Tomorrow Foundation – including grants in support of our Venturing Crew (Scouts); furniture and flooring for Choices' homes; support for Choices' Fun One program;

The Dayton Foundation - Greenlight Grant – assisting with a new database that will be shared by Choices, Resident Home and Partners;

Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission – Choices' vans; and

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities – project start up for FunOne program.

Missing Cecilia's laughter

Formally she was Cecelia Clements, but to her sister Sherry, her Brantford family and all who loved her at Choices, her nickname of CeCe seemed to also capture the depth of who she was and so she would be known as both Cecilia and CeCe. She died recently, just after her 65th birthday. She had had to leave her Brantford home and was in respite care at the Stillwater Center when she passed away.

She had been a part of our Choices' family for 15 years, with the last five years living at our Brantford Home. Her younger sister Sherry (*younger by three years*) had been part of our family at our Ashview home before her medical condition made it necessary for her to be cared for in a nursing home. Sherry was there for the music, that sad but joyous music, and the words of comfort during her sister's funeral, as she had been with her in all those visits they shared together, there to be comforted by the staff of our Brantford home and CeCe's other friends from Choices.

No one knew CeCe at the same level as those who cared for her every day, who embraced her as family. Shelley Mills was a Direct Support Professional (DSP) when she started caring for Cecilia and the other ladies at our Brantford home five years ago, where she would later become Program Administrator.

These are some of Shelley's favorite memories of her Cecilia:

I didn't know quite what to expect when I walked into Brantford. I had heard about Cecilia and that she had limited communication skills and used frequent loud screams to let people know what she was feeling. I soon discovered that if she was not screaming that was a sure sign something was wrong. I took time and really got to know her and we found a way to communicate that not many other people got to experience. So many people knew her at Choices, but not many people knew my Cecelia well, not like me.

She loved music ... all kinds. She loved to dance and to laugh. She loved Mickey and Minnie Mouse and Donald Duck. One of my favorite memories of her was taking her to feed the ducks. She managed to scream out 'Donald Duck.' When other staff would ask about our trip, she would laugh and tell them I ATE the ducks. She meant I fed the ducks. We also had a great laugh when I told her I was going to let her drive a truck and we went to Troy Community Park where she got in and 'drove' the stationary truck.

What touched me most was the love between the two sisters. Cecilia and I often talked about them one day being able to be under the same roof again. As I was visiting her the day before she died, we talked, laughed and joked. Most importantly, we talked about Sherry and the two of them

being together again one day. Now mind you, these two had sibling rivalry like all siblings do. When they had their monthly visits they would sit together in a room that had vending machines. They would pick snacks to share with each other. They would be loving and nice up until the snacks were gone and then Sherry would roll away in her wheelchair and begin talking "oh, Lordy, Lordy, CeCe" and talking about living on Third Street. Those moments with the two of them made me wish I had known them earlier, when they were younger, so that I could participate more with them in sharing their memories as they became old together.

I miss her every day, my Cecelia. She taught me so much about my own abilities and what my voice is capable of achieving not only for those I serve, but for myself. It is because of my Cecilia that I am with Choices and the Brantford home. She taught me that I have an openness and ability to hear my ladies' non-verbal voices and then be the voice they need. I love her for teaching me that.



Cecilia as she celebrated her 64th birthday at her Brantford home.

Pilot program announced for Safe Haven staff

In partnership with the Board of Safe Haven Farms (Butler County), Choices is announcing a pilot Employee Education Assistance Program (EEAP) in support of recruiting and retaining professional staff at Safe Haven. Choices' is the service provider for Safe Haven, which provides residential care for individuals with autism, as well as Adult Day Services on the grounds of the Farm. This is an effort to support a caring and professional team of direct support professionals while supporting their efforts to further their education.

EEAP will provide educational (tuition) assistance for full or part-time Choices' employees working at Safe Haven. Employees who meet the criteria will receive a payout of \$1,500 or \$1,000 depending on points in their account. Participation in EEAP is open to Choices' staff currently working at Safe Haven, as well as new staff. Start up funding has come from generous donors. While working to provide ongoing funding for this important effort, we welcome donations at any level designated for the Employee Education Assistance Program.

For more information about joining the Safe Haven team and participating in the Employee Education Assistant Program, please contact Human Resources Director Trent Grooms, at tgrooms@cicloh.com or 937-898-2220. For more information about supporting the EEAP program with a donation, please contact Tom Weaver at tweaver@cicloh.com or 937-898-2220.

**Partners Bowl-A-Thon
May 3 – Capri Lanes**

**WATCH FOR
MORE DETAILS!**

Choices In Community Living, Inc.

1651 Needmore Road
Dayton, OH 45414-3851
(937) 898-2220
(937) 898-3553 fax
www.partnersohio.com

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*Choices Voices is written, edited and distributed
through the office of Partners For Community Living*

Choices' Voices

Just sitting on their adaptive bike in the garage at their Gardenside home is enough to put smiles on the faces of Danielle Gschwender (*left*) and Patty White. What puts an even bigger smile on the faces of the four Gardenside ladies is taking their bike out of the garage and riding it around their neighborhood, getting out of the house, getting exercise and getting to know their neighbors.

The side-by-side team dual tricycle was donated to Choices by Randall and Gianna Griffin, with support from staff at the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities. It is a most welcome addition to the home and appreciated by the ladies and their staff, who can't wait for spring to get here so they can add some miles on the bike and more smiles on their faces as they ride around their neighborhood every mile and every smile made possible by Randall and Gianna's caring donation.



Don't miss Art & Soul Exhibit opening reception on APRIL 13.

SEE PARTNERS INSERT INSIDE FOR MORE DETAILS.