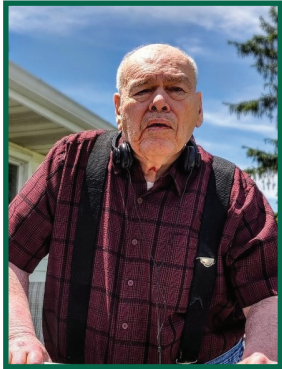


Assisting people with developmental disabilities to have access to build safe, healthy and meaningful lives in the community since 1985.



A last wish fulfilled

When it comes to Joe Holland, we stood true to our commitment to him, that commitment to provide him lifelong, quality of life support in a manner that he chose to have for himself. In his golden years, Joe wanted one thing above all else, determined and persistent in his choice. He

wanted to live out his life on his family farm, the place where he lived with his brother Richard until his death, the place where he lived the last 19 years of his life.

Even as his health continued to decline, his voice never wavered in his desire to stay in his home. With staff there to support him, he lived in that home until the end, dying there in September at the age of 87. He had the distinction of being the oldest person served by Choices for many years.

“Joe was a true homebody,” remembers Program Director Diane Hayslip. “He loved being at home on his farm in Madison County. He was a tall, gentle man with many stories of ‘the good old days.’ He really liked a good joke. He loved living with his brother. He opened his home so that it could be a home as well for his Choices roommate Larry Puckett.”

A man of deep faith, Joe is survived by his cousins, extended family members, and by his Choices family, including those who knew him the best ... those who kept their commitment to him so that Choices could keep our commitment to him ... including those who were by his side as he lived his best life Rhonda Blair, Paula Smith, Leonard Smith, and Claudia Price.



A long-time dream for Sam came true in April 2010 when he was inducted into the Developmental Disabilities Hall of Fame, with him calling it “one of the most special days of my life.”

“He was finally recognized for all he had accomplished,” says proud sister Kathy. Honoring him at the Hall of Fame were his brothers (l-r) Steve, Mike, and Greg and his sister Kathy.

All in the family ... a journey 40 years in the making

Sam Klapheke’s life has unfolded like a rare tapestry, an intricate weaving of life, filled with diverse experiences and moments that have been woven into a purposeful, beautiful whole. Celebrating his 62nd birthday in April, he is facing his latest challenge with dignity and a calm acceptance. Born with Down Syndrome, Sam is an example of one of those statistics, facing decline now from dementia that was first diagnosed three years ago, a condition affecting more than 50% of individuals with Down Syndrome.

Gone is the ball of energy that Sam was not so long ago, the big personality, even bigger sense of humor, an outgoing ambassador for Choices. There is less independence, with him leaving behind his own apartment and moving into our Abraham home where he can get around the clock care.

What is not gone is his importance. He is important to all those who know him at Choices, to his friends, and to the family who have wrapped their hearts and their lives around him since the day he was born, his four brothers and his one sister, that sister his fraternal twin. “Our mother died when we were five,” shares sister Kathy Pitchford, who now joyfully serves as his guardian. “It was really difficult then. Our father

(continued on page 3)

Congratulations to our 2026 Bunny Bucks winner, John Lindquist of Muncie, Indiana. Thank you to everyone who supported our Spring ‘fun’raiser. To participate in Boo Bucks in October or for more information about giving, please contact Kara Danner at kdanner@cihoh.com.



Welcome to year 41

by Trent Grooms, Chief Executive Officer

Looking ahead ... Following a busy 2025 filled with celebrations recognizing Choices 40th anniversary, we are well on our way in 2026. As we move forward this year there is a real sense of momentum across our entire organization. It is a year that will be filled with opportunities to grow, strengthen our services, and deepen our connection with the clients, families, and communities we are so proud to serve.

Investing in the tools to thrive ... To support our growth, we will be making meaningful investments in our infrastructure and technology. Think upgraded systems, better tools, and smoother processes – all designed to help our teams work more efficiently to create even better experiences and quality of life for those we serve. Strengthening our internal systems ultimately strengthens our impact.

Staying connected ... No matter how much we grow, our clients and community remain at the center of our work. During 2026 we will continue to focus on listening more closely, collaborating more intentionally, and offering programs and activities that genuinely reflect what our clients care about. We want to stay connected in ways that feel and that are in all ways meaningful, relevant, and supportive.

Building stronger teams ... and building those teams from the inside out. Just as important as our external growth is the growth happening inside Choices. This year we are continuing our emphasis on staff development, creating more opportunities for learning, leadership, and skill building. It cannot be said strongly enough that our staff are the heart of our mission. Investing in them and their success helps us build a stronger, more capable organization for the future.

Serving with gratitude ... The journey that began in 1985 would not have lasted, grown, and thrived over four decades if we were not in this mission together. You have, in all this time, encouraged, supported and led us in expanding not only our geographic and service base, but the ongoing need to be innovative, creative, and to always be ‘thinking outside the box.’ You have been our cheerleaders – our biggest investors – giving not only monetary and other gifts, volunteering and supporting our fundraising and other activities, but also offering the things that are priceless: pats on the back, high fives, kind words, and even the words that challenge us to do better.

You have been our link to your family, your/our communities, our resource and support in building friendships and partnerships. We are more connected and we are stronger because of what we have accomplished together over 40 years. Here’s to year 41 and beyond as we focus on the mission that began in 1985 *building safe, healthy and meaningful lives in the community.* **Now that is something to celebrate!**

Out and about in Clark County



Summer adventures for Terri Mercer will be all the happier because of the work she did during the Spring as part of our Clark County group fundraising effort. Terri joined staff and clients in preparation for their Craft and Bake Sale in April, and then hosting the event, resulting in more than \$700 that will be used for upcoming activities, including the annual trip to Cincinnati

for a boat ride on the Ohio River and attending a performance at LaComedia Dinner Theatre.



Clients and staff teaming up to make our Craft and Bake Sale a success were (*l-r*) Jim Soloway, Susan Buell, Glenn Gerlaugh, Ruth Haynes, David Cockrell, Marless Thompson, Margie Little, Jan Ewers, Ron Ewers, (*seated*) Megan Ackley, Gretchen Zinkhon



The spirit of a happy holiday season was all around Choices. Joe Geis and Elizabeth Deyo were happy to visit with Santa during our Clark County holiday party.

All in the family *continued from page 1*

had six children, one of them with Down Syndrome. The only option at that time was institutionalization. My Dad was heartbroken to have to send him to Orient. I have such awful memories of that place.

My Dad was always committed to a better life for Sam even before our Mom died. When Sam turned 11, our Dad learned about St. Johns Villa in Canton, a Catholic-run facility caring for children. Sam lived there from 11-16. It was a tremendous blessing. He thrived there.”

Wanting him to be more connected to family, they brought him back home when he was 18, where he moved into a home with five other men on Olive Road, that home operated by the Montgomery County Board of Mental Retardation. It would not be long after that move that state regulations required the County Board to discontinue residential services, with those services spun off to a new organization named Choices In Community Living. Sam Klapheke became a pioneer, one of those successfully making the transition from life in an institution to life in the community, paving the way so that others could follow his lead. “Choices has been a blessing,” says Kathy as Sam nods his head yes. “I can still picture Sam performing in all those talent shows, going to lasagna dinners, and being front and center whenever there was an activity or event.”

That blessing has included him taking an active role in making his own choices. He worked for MONCO for many years, and was a pioneer in what was then the new concept of Supported Employment programs, working in community enclaves that included janitorial support with the Sheriff’s Department, working at Ponderosa, and at a work enclave in housekeeping at Courtyard by Marriott, again leading the way so that others would be seen as valued employees. He mastered the use of public transportation. Kathy remembers the many RTA trips he made from his apartment to visit her in Miamisburg. With Choices staff for support, he lived in his own apartment for more than 30 years.

He just might be the number one Ohio State Buckeyes fan. He might even try to convince you that they’ve won every national championship. He almost always wears his Buckeye shirts or caps. Always competitive and determined to give it his all to win, he excelled in many Special Olympics events. “All of us would go and cheer on Sam in all his events and then go out to have cake and ice cream, remembers Kathy. “He was even featured in a front- page story in the Dayton Daily News about Special Olympics. He loved that!” The highlight for him and his family came in April 2010 when he was inducted into the Developmental Disabilities Hall of Fame. “That just validated what we already knew about him,” says Kathy, “that all his work had meaning. It mattered. He mattered in all those things he accomplished, and he matters now in what he is teaching me about patience, grace, and acceptance of whatever life may bring to us.”

With each new day now a challenge, it is good for Sam and it is good for Kathy and their brothers to always remember how much they have overcome as a family, what they have achieved together, to prepare them for what lies ahead.



This 2024 photo is the last time the six siblings gathered together for the holidays, including (l-r) Steve, Chris, Mike, Sam, Kathy, and Greg.

“Sam and I are joined at the hip,” confirms his twin. “We just can’t imagine our lives without him, without all his ‘Sam-isms’ – like *black makes me look skinny – way back ago – I’m always right.*”

Now there are lunches and outings for Sam and Kathy to share, she known as the ‘Sam-Whisperer.’ There are times for the five brothers to go bowling or just to go out to eat. Following their father’s interests, there were more than 30 years of fishing and camping trips, with no girls allowed, those trips now the source of so many good stories for brothers to share.

Now there are quiet times at his Abraham home, surrounded by friends and his Choices family. There are all those Buckeye games to watch on television by their biggest fan. There is the time he spends at Better Living Adult Day Services. Most of all, there is that unbreakable bond between five brothers and one sister, the legacy of family instilled in them by their mother and father all a part of Sam’s intricate tapestry, filled with so many achievements, so much joy and laughter, so much love ... all woven into his purposeful, beautiful life.

Breaking News ...

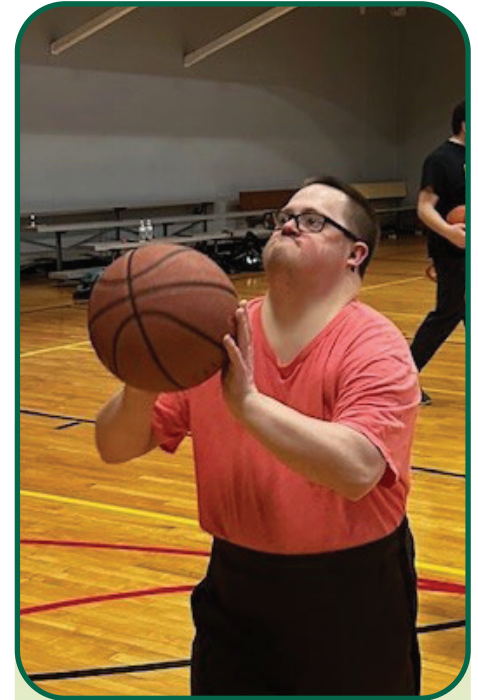
The Ohio Department of Transportation has awarded Choices a 2026 grant of more than \$290,000 for the purchase of five vans, with those vans to be purchased in 2027.

Out, about, and around Choices



Making sure we can be out and about: Chief Executive Officer Trent Grooms (r) joins our group of happy passengers in welcoming two new vans to the Choices fleet. One of the new Honda Odyssey vans is now providing transportation for our Brandtford home, while the other is now at its new home at Mill Trace. “The new vans have been a great upgrade,” says Senior Program Manager Darlene Bridgeman. “Staff appreciate the comfort and reliability, while our clients say they enjoy them because the rides feel smoother, safer, and are more enjoyable.”

The two vans are part of seven that will be purchased during 2026 through additional funding from a 2025 matching grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation, the largest grant received in our 40 year history. Our fleet consists of vehicles for each of our residential homes/locations, as well as vans providing door-to-door non-medical transportation for our community-based Adult Day Services, such as Choices Champions, Fun-Fit, field trips and other community activities. We also provide door-to-door transportation for individuals to and from jobs in the community.



Out and about Warren County style ... He really loves to sing to sing at the top of his voice so maybe the best theme song for Miciah Evan would be the Village People’s famous YMCA. There is his YMCA, the Countryside YMCA in Warren County. That’s where you’ll see Miciah. Most of all, that’s where you will hear him, as he participates in various Fun-Fit activities, including getting up to speed on the treadmill while singing at the top of his voice. He has been a Fun-Fit participant for over seven years. He is known not only for his singing, but for his wonderful attitude and big smiles. He really enjoys working out, talking with friends, and meeting other members of the Y.

Countryside is one of four YMCAs partnering with Choices for Fun-Fit Adult Day Services, with services also available at the Hillside Church of God in Springfield, the Vandalia Recreation Center, and at Choices’ Martin Center. Plans are now underway for a new Fun-Fit location to be held at the YMCA in Xenia (Greene County).



Getting out and around for the winter holidays ... it couldn’t have been a better time for some of our Clark County participants as they made the trip down from the Springfield area to I-75 to celebrate both the holidays and the Dayton Dragons. Taking part in the Dragons Deck the Diamond holiday spectacular at Day Air Ballpark were (l-r) Jan Ewers; Ron Ewers; Joe Geis; Elizabeth Deo; Margie Little; and Chris Whittington (seated.) They were among guests from throughout the region getting a different view of the home of the Dragons, with the event showcasing more than 1,000,000 twinkling lights, light shows, and a variety of holiday activities.



Getting out and about for the Spring holidays ... after a cold winter, it was finally time to officially welcome Spring with our annual Easter Egg Hunt and party held on a beautiful April day on the grounds in and around our Martin Center. A great time was had by all, including Senior Program Director Kesba Tuttle and Ron Ewers (Clark County) as they welcomed the star of the season, the Easter Bunny in his finest Spring attire.

A season of celebration

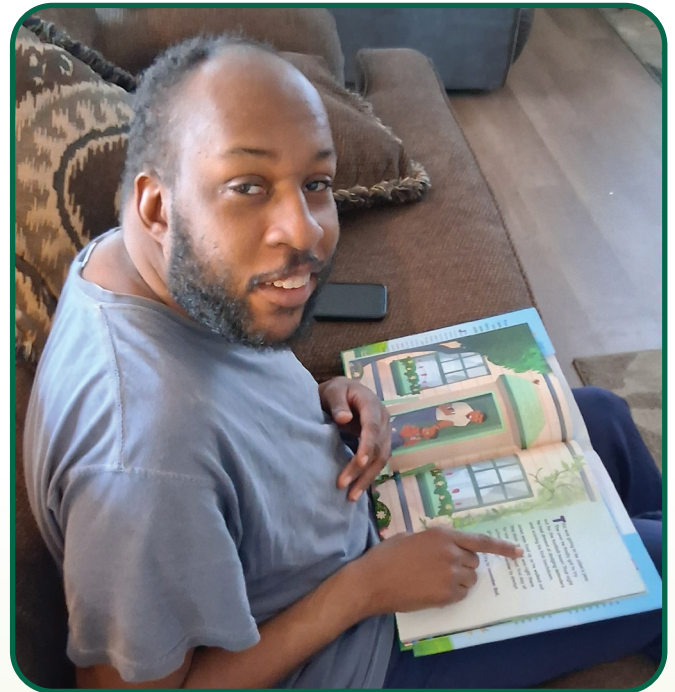
A year of remembrance and celebration in recognition of our 40th anniversary came to a fitting end in October with the official closing ceremonies and dinner at the Mandalay Banquet Center. Board chair Deborah Dulaney and Chief Executive Officer Trent Grooms welcomed guests.



Few can match the memories from very different viewpoints than Myron Rheaume, sharing memories as both the father of a son with developmental disabilities and as a long-time member of Choices policy-making Board, where he is currently serving as Vice-Chair Emeritus.



Myron Rheaume



Sometimes staying in can be the biggest adventure of all ... One of the favorite things for Chris Camp (*Cliffwood home/Montgomery County*) as this Spring unfolds is taking a seat on the sofa in the living room. That is where he will now pick up a book and lose himself in the magic that comes with learning to read. “Chris has a goal in his ISP (*Individual Service Plan*) noting that he would like to learn to read,” says Program Manager Fannie Woods. “Being the big Philadelphia Eagles football fan that I am, I remembered a book for young readers written by Jalen Hurts called *Better than a Touchdown*. With Chris also being a big football fan, I thought what a great opportunity this might be, so I bought the book and then sat down with him one day and we began reading it together.

The first day I just let him tell the story from the pictures he saw, the way he wanted the story to go. The second day I sat down with him and we began going over the words. We did this every day for a couple of weeks, and then he started reading it on his own. It didn’t matter whether he got all the words right or not. He then began getting the majority of the words correct with little or no assistance from me. One day he smiled and said proudly to me, ‘Ms. Fannie, I finished the book in less than 30 minutes!’ Now for the next goal ... trips to the library for more books. I am really proud of him and know this is just the beginning of his reading adventures.”

We join Chris in saying thank you to Ms. Fannie for showcasing the standards of professionalism and caring of our staff through her attention to Chris’ goals and for setting an example for us all with her initiative, creativity, patience and commitment to him and those she serves at Cliffwood. Job well done!



CHOICES IN COMMUNITY LIVING

A 40 year commitment to mission

Assisting people with developmental disabilities to have access to build safe, healthy, and meaningful lives in the community since 1985

2025 Community Report

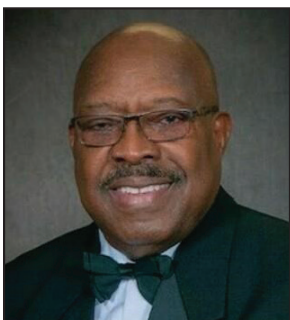
Remembering lives well lived as we said good-bye in 2025



Ron Blue, 68, Clark County, member of Choices extended family for eight years



Tim Powers, 80, Montgomery County, member of Choices extended family for 27 years



Clinton Brown, 75, long-time member of Board of Trustees

Due to the leadership of Program Director Amy Fansher, CICL received the largest grant in our 40-year history, with a \$545,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation awarded in 2025 for the purchase of five vans to add to our accessible fleet of 52 vehicles. The vans are scheduled for purchase in 2026.

Board Chair Deb Dulaney welcomed guests to our 40th anniversary celebration at the Mandalay Banquet Center in October, just one of the year-long events that included our Mothers/Fathers Day Luncheon and Board reunion.



Choices In Community Living (CICL) is governed by a policy-making board of community volunteers representing clients, families, organizations and business. Our 2025 Board members included:

Deb Dulaney,
Chair

Myron Rheame,
Vice-Chair Emeritus

Sharon Hairston,
Treasurer

Shirley Fahnestock
Larry Hansgen

Steve McHugh
Doug Stanley

Greg Wasmund
Alex Wertheimer

Trent Grooms,
Chief Executive
Officer



Melaina Thurman
Abraham home
Direct Support Professional of the Year



Darlene Bridgeman
Brandtford, Gavin, Mill Trace, Pepper Hill, and Wendhaven homes
Manager of the Year



Diane Hayslip
Clark County
Program Director Director of the Year



Jennifer Priske
Consumer Benefits Specialist
Behind the Scenes Award

Honoring continuity and consistency of service

There was more than one reason for Semi-Independent Living Coordinator Renee Mills to celebrate 2025. She had the opportunity to put her diverse hosting skills to work as one of our planners/bosts for our 40th anniversary celebrations, while she celebrated her 35 years of service with us.



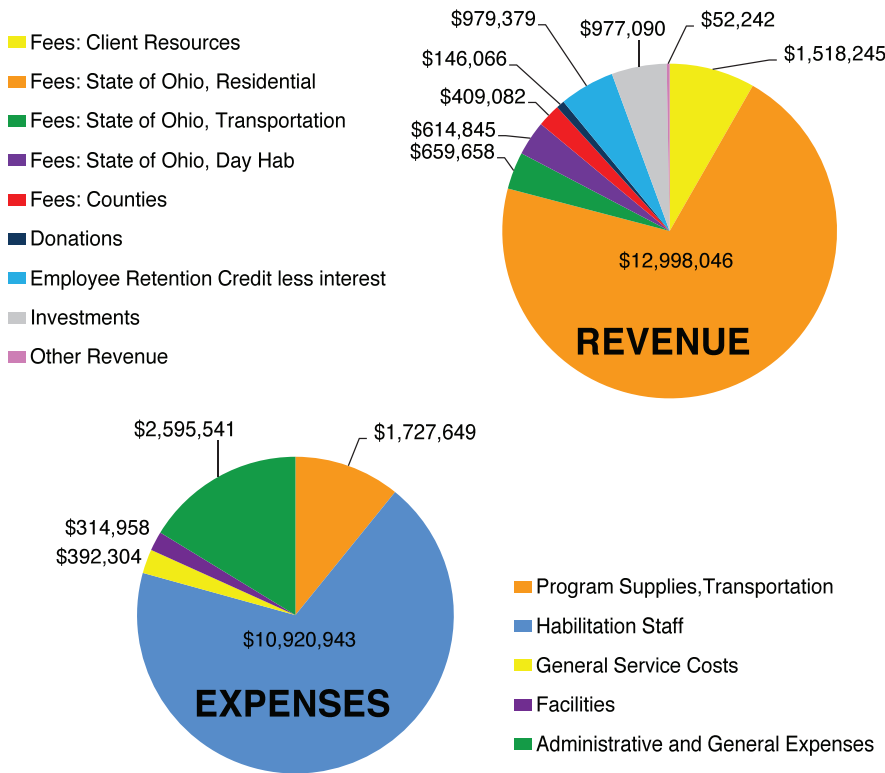
25 years of service: Lindsay Bowser; Michelle Ortel; Butch Van Meter

20 years of service: Tonia Bray; Trent Grooms; Donna Denise-Saddler; Kesha Tuttle

15 years of service: Paula Smith

10 years of service: Darlene Bridgeman; Taiwana Johnson; Whitney Lowery; Felicia Merchant; Waymond Moore; Chris Slaton; Gentry Worth-Heflin

2025 Finances in review



CICL is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization founded in Dayton, Ohio in 1985. Programs and services are licensed and certified by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. We are a member of the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA.) Our service area in 2025 included the counties of Clark, Madison, Montgomery, Preble, and Warren.

Our primary funding source is Medicaid (78%), with additional support from state and local revenues, including the Montgomery County Human Services Levy. Tax-deductible donations, grants, wills, trusts and proceeds from fundraising activities support quality of life needs that are not funded by Medicaid or other sources.

Two hundred fifty-eight professional staff provided services during 2025: 181 Direct Support Professionals (including NMT Drivers and Remote Support); 40 Managers/Senior Managers; 16 Office Administration; 9 Directors/Senior Directors; 5 Coordinators; 4 Maintenance; 3 Shared Living.

Residential Services

Group Living ... providing lifelong residential services and supports with continuous staff support 24/7/365 in family environments within accessible communities, serving 167 individuals

- Clark County (3 homes)
- Madison County (1 home)
- Montgomery County (26 homes)
- Preble County (1 home)

Semi-Independent Living ... supporting individuals living in their own homes/apartments, with staff support as needed, serving 21 in the following homes/locations

- Clark County (1 location)
- Montgomery County (13 locations)

Shared Living ... providing individuals and families in the community the opportunity to open their homes to individuals with developmental disabilities while receiving payment for their services

- Montgomery County (1 individual)
- Preble County (4 individuals)

Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) ... providing accessible transportation for Adult Day Services, including Choices Champions at the Martin Center, Fun-Fit in community locations, as well as door-to-door transportation to and from community jobs, with 91 individuals served in Adult Day Services and NMT, with services available to those receiving residential services from Choices, as well as eligible individuals from the community

- Clark County (7 individuals)
- Montgomery County (79 individuals)
- Warren County (5 individuals)

Adult Day Services (Day Hab) ... providing a range of choices for recreation, leisure, health and fitness, fostering inclusion, integration, and community participation/partnerships, including Choices Champions, Fun-Fit, and Summer Camp, 233 individuals served

- Clark County (14 individuals)
- Montgomery County (90 individuals)
- Warren County (7 individuals)
- Fun-Fit (82 individuals)
- Summer Camp (40 individuals)

Adult Day Services in 2025 were provided at the following locations:

- Countryside YMCA (Warren County)
- Englewood YMCA (Montgomery County)
- Hillside Church of God (Clark County)
- Huber Heights YMCA (Montgomery County)
- Martin Center (Montgomery County)
- West Carrollton YMCA (Montgomery County)
- Vandalia Recreation Center (Montgomery County)

Remote Monitoring ... supporting independence by providing remote monitoring for individuals while in their homes and while participating in community activities to ensure safety, well-being, and privacy, while providing around-the-clock access to immediate care and support as needed as an alternative to on-site staff, with 16 individuals served

- Clark County (1 individual)
- Montgomery County (15 individuals)



CHOICES IN COMMUNITY LIVING

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(937) 898-3553 fax

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- Shirley Fahneschok
- Larry Hansgen
- Steve McHugh
- Doug Stanley
- Greg Wasmund

Trent Grooms, *Chief Executive Officer*

To update your mailing or email address or to remove your name from our mailing list, please contact kdanner@cicloh.com.

Judy Leasure, Editor

Choices' Voices



Looking back on a year of 40th anniversary celebrations ... celebrating family was the focus of our Mothers/Fathers/Families luncheon at the Dayton Women's Club in 2025, with that celebration including time together for Andrea Ginnan and her brother Howard Mathews. Howard is one of the first people served by a newly formed Choices In Community Living, living at our Olive Road home, one of our first three homes.

"Choices has been and is his family," says Andrea. "They have been his family as much as I am and I can't say enough good things about them. They are WONDERFUL!"

Be our Guest
Celebrating mothers, fathers,
sisters, brothers,
families and friends

*Mothers & Fathers
Brunch*

Friday, May 29
10:30 - 12:30
Main Street Club House
5425 North Main Street
Dayton

RSVP to Kara Danner
by May 25
at kdanner@cicloh.com
or 937-898-2220.

Limited Seating