

home address

a publication of resident home association

Founding Partner of **Partners For Community Living**



“This Ole House”

by *Pete Roll, Executive Director*

*“Ain’t a-gonna need this house no longer;
Ain’t gonna need this house no more;
Ain’t got time to fix the shingles; Ain’t got
time to fix the floor.”* They may not be the
most grammatically correct words, but
these lyrics to Stuart Hamblin’s **‘This
Ole House’** just might be the best words
to sum up what it was like for me on a
sticky August day to stand in an empty
old house that had seen its better days.
That enduring song has been a hit across
generations, from Rosemary Clooney to
Pat Boone to Johnny Cash and, of course,
Elvis. Standing alone in an empty house, I
think I now understand a little more why
it has endured all these years.

It was on that day in August when our
long awaited move from that old East
Third Street house to our new McSmith
home in Butler Township was finally
completed. There was this sense of grati-
tude that our ladies are now living in an
accessible double home in a safe neigh-
borhood, with four ladies living in each
side of the double. They now have more
access to stores, restaurants, recreation
and parks. As time passes we expect that
most of our new neighbors will be the
accepting, tolerant people we have heard
them to be.

While filled with gratitude on that one
August day as I looked around an empty
house that seemed so much bigger now
that it was empty of every last item that
had filled it for so many years, the feeling
was bittersweet as well. It was as if those
old walls were bidding me to stay for just
a few minutes more, to take in and absorb
all that it had once been. There were those
first days when moving into that house
was just as exciting and welcome as mov-
ing into McSmith now was. There most
certainly had to be the lingering sounds of

hammers, the smell of paint and clean-
ing products as mothers and fathers and
friends and neighbors came together to
get the house ready for its first residents.
How could we let this old house go and
not remember them and all they did in
those first days and all the days that would
follow!

There was a smile as I looked around at
the beautiful woodwork and the unique
nuances of a 1920s home and acknowl-
edged that we just don’t build them like
this anymore. And then there were those
other memories, 38 years of memories of
the laughter and tears of a house full of
women, once strangers to each other, who
in this old house became family to each
other. These old walls and old floors were
home, the last home for some as they
spent their final days there, the first home
away from their families for some, the
first taste of independence. There were all
those birthdays and special dinners and
preparing to go to dances and wrapping
holiday gifts and decorating the Christ-
mas tree every year.

So wrapped up in all the details that go
into moving into a new house, so much
relief in getting a home our ladies deserve,
so much pride in our staff for all they did
to get our ladies moved – everything
focused on the new house. Who would
take time, if only a brief moment, to say
thank you to those families and to that
one old house – to that old house with
too many steps up to the bedrooms and
down to the basement, to that old house
that was and that always will be a part of
who we are as the RHA family. *“This ole
house was home and comfort as they fought
the storms of life.”* **It is that home and
comfort and those memories that filled
an empty house far more than rooms
full of now relocated furniture ever
could that let us know we will not forget
you. So long old friend!**

Resident Spotlight

It will be a very different autumn this year
for John Ping and for the staff and men at
our Greenhill home. It is time for a neces-
sary but difficult transition, as we prepare
to assist John in his move from our home



to Stillwater Cen-
ter. There is much
sadness knowing
there will be a space
at Greenhill that no
one will ever fill, but
a sense of assurance
as well knowing that
John will be where he

can receive the round the clock medical
care he now requires.

John became a member of the RHA fam-
ily in 2001, moving into Greenhill from
his family home. He has been the “charac-
ter” in the eight man home since mov-
ing in. Although he is non-verbal, John
always found a way to make his presence
known in the home. “You know John
accepted you when he patted you on the
head,” says Program Administrator Grant
Jacobs. “When he really got to know
you and really liked you, that pat would
sometimes become a smack on the head,
followed by a laugh. I was one of those
fortunate ones to be liked well enough
by John to get his occasional smack. He
always got my attention,” he laughs.

His mischievous nature would show itself
when he would be throwing a ball back
and forth with staff and he “psyched”
them out by throwing it in the opposite
direction and then laughing as they had
to run for it. One of his more mischiev-
ous moments came when he threw all
the toothbrushes out of the bathroom
window.

John loves bluegrass music. He grew up
surrounded by it and by enjoying his

(Continued on Page 2)

Staff Spotlight

“When they are happy, I am happy.” When Tina Ford says those words you know she is talking about her family, because family is at the center of who she is. Those words extend beyond her own family, which includes three children and nine grandchildren and her husband of 27 years. They include her very important extended family of three men and six women in our Piedmont Home, where she serves as a DSP (*Direct Support Professional.*)



Tina has served in several homes since joining RHA in 1993 and she has enjoyed all of her experiences but really enjoys working with our Piedmont seniors. “Our senior home is full of life even though they are older,” she wants everyone to know. “They really enjoy getting out and doing recreational activities, like Senior Day at the office, going to movies and restaurants. They all have a great sense of humor and are known for their quick comebacks and off the wall remarks. They always say please and thank you, greet you with a smile or a hug and tell me they missed me when I have a day off.”

There have been some days off for Tina. She had to take time away from RHA in 2007 when she was diagnosed with Good Pasture Syndrome, a disease that causes the kidneys to attack each other. Following plasma pheresis treatments and medication, she was given a clean bill of health in 2009. Having experienced her own health concerns, among the things she wants for her residents is good health. “I didn’t have any expectations when I started with RHA,” she says, “I just wanted to do my best to teach residents how to be independent. I didn’t know I would grow to love them the way that I do and that they would become my extended family. The most difficult part of my job is when a resident becomes ill or passes away. That just hurts to the core of my soul.”

Her favorite memory is the first time she went with the Woodbury men to a dance at Northview School. “They had such a great time dancing to Michael Jackson music and doing the chicken dance. This was the first time in my life I ever heard of or saw the chicken dance.”

Tina considers herself an ordinary person living an ordinary life, but her commitment

to family is beyond ordinary. There are those times spent with her family watching movies, going skating, going through old photo albums and the special times during holidays. And there are those times spent with her other family. “My dream for my residents is for me to be a part of their lives for as long as life will allow, to help them live their lives knowing they are appreciated, loved and valued.” Her other dream is to become a registered nurse. “We’ve had setbacks with my illness and with cutbacks in my husband’s job, so I had to stop for a while, but someday I will make my dream of being a nurse a reality.”

She gives praise to her co-workers at Piedmont and to Executive Director Pete Roll for his kindness through the years. She gives even more praise to her residents. “They have taught me patience, understanding and to look at life from a different angle. God created us all and God doesn’t make mistakes.” In everything that she does she lives out her philosophy of life – treat people the way you want to be treated. Go above and beyond the call of duty. Always try to do your best. By any and every measure, that makes her far more than just an ordinary person.

Resident Spotlight

(continued from Page 1)

father playing the banjo. While his health permitted, he liked to go shopping and really liked going to aquariums to watch fish. What John loved most of all was food. According to his sister and guardian Sue Miller, “John’s favorite thing was eating!” Then came the episodes of aspiration pneumonia brought about by aspirating food into his lungs. Following many medical appointments and much heart wrenching discussions, the decision was made that John would receive a PEG feeding tube, which meant no more eating or drinking. He received the feeding tube in 2008.

That medical change could well have meant the end of his time at Greenhill, but staff were not ready to let him go just yet. It would be a challenge to continue to care for John along with seven other men eating “regular” food, but it was a challenge that staff met. Home Manager Evelyn Johnson arranged for her staff to get training in tube feeding and care and they all stepped up so that John could stay at home.

“We expected John would have difficulties adjusting to the feeding tube,” remembers Grant. “We worried about things like him pulling out the tube but we were amazed at how well he did.”

His sister believes she knows why. “We believe that John willingly sacrificed eating real food so that he could stay with his staff and the guys at his home. He trusts and loves them like his own family.”

As surely as Fall follows summer and the earth prepares for the winter to come, even that trust and love could not hold back the physical ravages on John’s body and his time for transition has come. Again his family had to make a decision for him, just as they had all those years ago when they chose RHA. While his sister lives in the Springfield area, she and her family chose Stillwater Center to care for John as his health continues to deteriorate. They did so for two reasons. They know that John will receive the quality of care they want for him at Stillwater. Perhaps the most important reason is that Stillwater is just down the road from Greenhill. They know that Grant, Evelyn, staff and the guys will be there at Stillwater watching out for John, caring for him as we care for members of our families when we must face changes in their health.

Thank you, John, for the pats on the head that sometimes turned into smacks, for the great stories of toothbrushes and more, for bringing a sense of mischief and humor into our home and into our lives. It will help us as we help you move from our home but never from our hearts.



Two times the fun - That’s just what it was during a housewarming shower for our RHA ladies as they prepared to leave their Third Street home and move across town to a new home. Home Manager Lori Singer (l) helps Joyce Short open one of the many gifts from generous guests, several of whom provided two of each item. The new McSmith is a double home, with four ladies living on each side, which also meant a need for two times everything and so our housewarming guests wanted to make sure both sides were covered. The eight ladies attended the housewarming shower and each had the opportunity to open several gifts and to thank their guests for making sure their kitchens were filled with so many new things.



It was a blast

That was just what Kent Cruea and sister Bobbie Smith and all the other guests thought about the first annual Family and Friends Summer Cookout in August at our Woodbury home. Staff had a great time planning the event so that residents could invite their families to their home. All eight Woodbury residents had family join them at the picnic, including Louis Lowe who had his twin sister join him for the picnic. There were also some family friends who enjoyed the day.

Staff provided ribs, hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken, steak and even pulled pork. Families brought some of their favorite picnic dishes to share. Many of the dishes were so good that there was an exchange of recipes. There were all the fun picnic activities as well for adults and children. There was volleyball, cards and board games, with many photos to capture all the memories.

“Families told us that they look forward to the Christmas party we have every year,” says Home Manager Frawnsbay Billingsley. And now they are looking forward to our summer picnic next year. I can’t thank our staff and our residents enough for all the hard work and for being such gracious hosts to our guests.”

Woodbury residents include Kent Cruea, Chuck Fortson, Calvin Hines, Louis Lowe, Cyrus Monie, Valvin Owensby, Jeff Seagraves and Steve Shirley. In addition to Frawnsbay, staff include Gwen Davis, Tracey Johnson, Keith Lewis and Vernetta Walker.

The best of friends

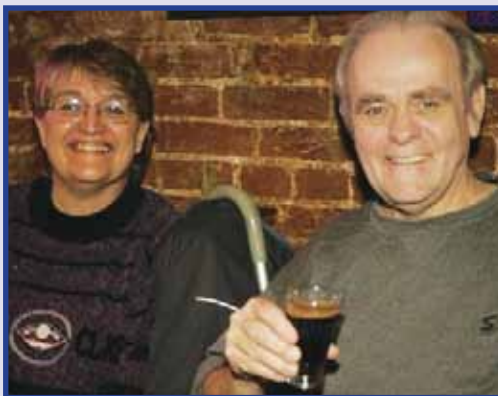


Photo courtesy of Jim Witmer, Dayton Daily News

In the truest meaning of the word, Mike and Donna Schwartz have been RHA friends for more than 30 years, first getting involved through the many activities of the Knights of Columbus in support of people with developmental disabilities. That friendship came before Mike and Donna started their business, Belmont Party Supply, Miami Valley BrewTensils, in 1984. Belmont Party Supply is nationally rated for its beer selection and has one of the area’s best selections of liquor, including an array of boutique wines. BrewTensils is Miami Valley’s go to place for wine and beer making supplies.

Their friendship and their business has merged into a community event that brings in much needed funds to RHA. Mike and Donna will host the 2nd Annual Miami Valley Beer Fest on October 9 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. “All those years ago we got

involved in supporting RHA because we wanted to help people that have the will but not the means. Now with Beer Fest, we want to use whatever influence we have in our industry and customer base to collectively benefit RHA.”

Mike is key to the planning of Beer Fest, as well as helping with all the details. Donna does a lot of the contact work and assists with volunteers. They donate employee hours to assist at the event. “We want people to know that the people served by RHA are real people,” says Mike about why he is involved, “they truly deserve to live here in our community with us. They have hearts of gold and a passion for life. They should never be in institutions like too many of them were when we first got involved with RHA.”

The Schwartzs don’t think of themselves and what they are doing as all that special. “We’re just regular folks trying to make a difference for other people,” sums up Mike. In the offices and homes of RHA, there is a different view of two very special friends and advocates. “Mike and Donna were there with the Knights of Columbus through our early years,” says Executive Director Pete Roll. “They were there for the card parties and dinners that provided us generous donations and so many acts of kindness. Their leadership with Beer Fest continues that legacy of caring. We are so very fortunate to have friends like them.”

Thank you to the following who have joined Mike and Donna Schwartz for our 2010 Miami Valley Beer Fest.



Distributors: Bonbright; Cavalier; Heidelberg; and Premium Beverage.

Pouring Sponsors & Ticket Sellers: Belmont Party Supply; Blind Bob’s; Boston’s Bistro; BrewTensils; Chappy’s Tap Room; 5th Street Wine & Deli; Harrigan’s Tavern; Jimmie’s Cornerstone Bar; Kings Table; Miami Valley Wine & Spirits; One Eyed Jacks; Oregon Express; Peach’s Grill; South Park Tavern; The Pub; Trolley Stop; and Quanexus

Media Support: City Paper; DaytonMost Metro.com

More information about our Miami Valley Beer Fest on Saturday, October 9 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds is available at www.mvbeerfest.org or www.partnersohio.com.

DSPs recognized for service

More than 300 guests from across Ohio gathered in Columbus in September for the first annual DSP Recognition Event. The event was conceived and coordinated by RHA Staff Trainer Lisa Barnes. In addition to her responsibilities with RHA, Lisa is one of the strongest and most dedicated advocates for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) in her role as a regional coordinator for PATHS (*Professional Advancement through Training and Education in Human Services.*)

RHA was one of 20 agencies from across Ohio to sponsor the event. One of the most exciting parts of the event was the film festival, with The Sprout Touring Film Festival screening seven films featuring people with developmental disabilities. According to Lisa, the films touched, inspired, encouraged and enlightened our DSPs. Another exciting part of the event was the presentation of awards (*Oscars*) to DSPs from across the state who submitted short videos related to their work.

The Best Teamwork Award went to RHA's Woodbury Home, which included staff members Frawnschay Billingsley, Tracey Johnson, Keith Lewis and Vernetta Walker, along with three mothers of Woodbury residents.



RHA staff members received the "Oscar" for Best Professionalism. Lisa (l) is pictured presenting the award to Frances Canady, Nafessa Huff, Frawnschay Billingsley and Tracey Johnson. Fatica Ayers (r) of the Developmental Disabilities Council also helped present the award.

One of the most important highlights of the event was the award presentation to Lisa Barnes for her outstanding leadership as chairperson for the 2010 DSP Recognition Event and Film Festival. She received a standing ovation from all those who were so happy to have an event just for them that recognized them for what they do. "It couldn't have been more perfect," sums up Lisa, "people felt appreciated, motivated, inspired and important when they left."



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RHA is guided by a policy-making board of volunteers representing families, DD organizations, businesses, and the community.

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Partners For Community Living

a collaborative partnership between Choices In Community Living, Inc.
and The Resident Home Association

Become a member today

With the end of 2010 just around the corner, this might just be the time that you can insure the future for the people served by The Resident Home Association (RHA) and Choices In Community Living (CICL) with a tax-deductible donation to our Partners Endowment Fund. Our Endowment is held at The Dayton Foundation. No donation is too small to make a difference in growing our Endowment.



We also invite you to consider becoming a member of our *John W. Pratt Society*. Our *Society* honors the example and legacy of John, who was a founding member both of The Resident Home Association and Choices In Community Living, as well as a long-term member of the board of the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities. His last effort in advocating on behalf of the people he served and loved was in helping us establish our Endowment Fund.

Like John, you too can leave a legacy and add your name to the list of caring and dedicated families and friends who have named our Endowment in their estate planning. You don't need a lot of money to leave a legacy to our Endowment. What you do need is care and concern for the people we serve and the services we are providing today and want to provide well into the future.

With that care and concern you can leave any percentage of your estate in your will or in a trust. As with annual gifts to our Endowment, no gift is too small. You may also include us as one of your beneficiaries in life insurance policies or retirement accounts.

Our Executive Directors, Pete Roll and Tom Weaver, invite you to contact them at any time for a confidential conversation on how you can become a part of our *John W. Pratt Society* through a planned gift. Please contact Pete at 937-278-0791 or Tom at 937-898-2220.



And the Oscar goes to....

It may not have been Hollywood and it may not have been Oscar but for RHA's Karen Gabbard and CICL's Vicky Wagers it meant even more. It meant being recognized by their peers from across Ohio both for their artistic creativity and their dedication as Direct Support Professionals (DSPs.) Karen and Vicky walked away with their own version of the Oscar for their comedy rap video "DSP Ladies." They received a raucous standing ovation from the audience, with chants of 'DSP Ladies.' Many people in the audience scrambled to get their photo taken with them after the presentation. This dynamic video duo also won Honorable Mention – Most Realistic for their video "Coffee Chat." Pictured are DSP Recognition Event and RHA Staff Trainer Lisa Barnes (l), Karen, Vicky, and Fatica Ayers of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council. The winning videos from the event can be seen at <http://www.YouTube.com/OADSP>.

A new Friend By Choice

Making a difference one person at a time, one friend at a time – that's the goal and the promise of our Friend By Choice program. We welcome Kenneth Hilliard as our newest Friend By Choice volunteer. He has been matched with Tom Barnes (CICL) and the two of them are enjoying getting to know each other. In addition to being Tom's new friend, Kenneth is a RHA staff member.

There are still many people at RHA and CICL waiting for a friend just like Kenneth. You may just be the person to help us find those friends. Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Pamela Winston at 937-278-0791 and let her know about your church or community groups that would be interested in hearing more about our volunteer program and Friend By Choice. Help us open up new opportunities for friendship and service.



It's a win-win situation when we team with area college and university students, like Lisa Mable-Grisez writing class from Sinclair Community College. The students recently took part in a project to write ads for our online volunteer recruitment campaign. It's a win for us each time we partner with classes and individual students in the service and support we receive for our agencies, programs and clients. It's a win for students when they receive credit for their service with us while learning more about people with developmental disabilities and the services we provide.



Jingle all the way

It's that time again – time to be thinking about holiday shopping and we have the perfect answer for how you can go on a shopping spree this year. It's time for Jingle Bucks '10. There are just 500 Jingle Bucks tickets available at \$25 each. One winner will be selected to receive up to \$5000 (based on number of tickets sold.) All proceeds benefit Partners For Community Living in support of RHA and CICL. The winning ticket will be drawn on December 10. Winner need not be present to win. All applicable rules apply.

Go to www.partnersohio.com for rules and to order your ticket on our secure website.

It promises to be a very full Fall

Two of our most exciting and popular events are on the schedule for October. There will be the 2nd Annual Miami Valley Beer Fest on October 9 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. Not only is there great entertainment, food, beers and ales, but all of the proceeds go directly to support Resident Home Association.

It's busy as usual at Choices In Community Living as well, with rehearsals underway for the annual Talent Show, the premiere event for fun, laughter, friends and family. Talent Show 2010 will get underway on October 22 at Northview School, 8114 North Main Street.

It's a busy time for our shared volunteer program as well. There is a new class of OTA (*Occupational Therapy Assistant*) students from Sinclair Community College doing their field practicums with us. The fun of another Bingo season got underway in September.

Our annual Halloween Dance/ Party for RHA and CICL clients will be October 23 at the offices of United Rehabilitation Services (URS). The Dance/Party is planned and coordinated by Jessica Minor and the Sinclair Community College Sign Language class.

Editor's Note: Our Bingo and Halloween Dance/Party are two events that provide the most enjoyment and interaction for our clients, made possible by the support of our volunteers. Each event costs us \$300 each year, including such things as refreshments, decorations and prizes. They are two events/activities included in our Adopt A Project program. If you, your family, friends or church or civic group would like to get involved in adopting these or any of our other client-centered projects with a sponsorship or donation, please contact us at 937-898-3655 for more details. Your donation or sponsorship will mean that we can use the funds currently used for these projects in other ways to serve our clients and support our programs.

Won't you Friend us?

Please help us expand our friends on Facebook. We have a Facebook link on our www.partnersohio.com website where we share updated news, information and stories. We would like to make new friends to share our good news. There are three ways you can help: 1) send us a list of your Facebook friends (first and last names only – we don't need emails or other information) to partners@choicesincl.com and we will contact them to ask them to be our friend; 2) you contact your friends on our behalf and tell them about our Partners Facebook link and ask them if they will be friends with us and ask them to contact us with an email to partners@choicesincl.com; 3) send a message to your friends and let them know about our events and activities, tell them about our Jingle Bucks tickets, let them know about volunteer opportunities and more – be a Facebook advocate for the people we serve.

Help us reach out and make new friends to support people with developmental disabilities.

Thank you for your donations

Donations to RHA in memory of Dorothy M. Thomas

Ruth Brown
Wilbur & Diann Brown
Ann Marie Nonkin
Jim & Joan Thomas
Paul Thomas
Al & Ina Weinstein
E. David Zennie
Gerald Zennie

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Gerald & Verena Shroyer – *CICL 25th Anniversary*
Steve Schulte – *CICL 25th Anniversary*
Bob & Ruth Steinbach – *CICL 25th Anniversary*
Ron & Diane Timmons – *RHA Ladies Home*
Brenda Whitney – *CICL 25th Anniversary*

Thank you to all the caring donors who attended our housewarming shower for RHA's new ladies home and who donated wonderful kitchen and bath items.

Thank you to staff, families and friends who donated so many items for Choices fundraising auction during our Silver Anniversary celebration.

McSmith thank you notes

You made a difference to our McSmith Ladies.

"I really like to sit out on the quiet back porch and knit" are Barbara Kost's words of gratitude, with an emphasis on the word *quiet*.

"I love to see all the birds, little frogs and hear the crickets in our back yard," shares Linda Favorite.

For Darlene Hobbs and Joyce Whittamore it's all about the privacy. *"We like that everyone has our own room."*

From all of us at RHA to our donors, thank you for warming our new home with your friendship and generosity.