



Assisting people with developmental disabilities so that they have the opportunity to build safe, healthy, meaningful lives in the community

Choices' Voices

CHOICES IN COMMUNITY LIVING, INC. EST. 1985

Founding Partner of **Partners For Community Living**



Our family album – the ladies of Pepper Hill

It's a time of transition at the home that sits on a corner on a quiet tree-lined street in Kettering and a time of transition for the family who moved there in September, making it one of Choices newest homes.

In most ways they are like any family making their way in a new house and new neighborhood, but they are different because they not only need to settle into the house, they need to settle into their new relationship as an extended family.

Four ladies moved into that house on the corner. Mindy (Melinda) Hussman quickly took on the title of "house mother," according to staff. She likes everything about her new home, except that there is no basement. "Mindy is the worrier in the home," says staff member Debbie Goecke, "it's part of the mothering nature she has." She worries because there is no basement for safety if there is a bad storm or tornado. She can be found frequently at her computer, where she is sure to be looking at weather forecasts, as well as doing her emails and playing games. "I do want to know what the weather is going to be," she smiles.

Mindy moved to Pepper Hill from her family home, bringing along her cat Smoky Mittens, who spends most of his time in her room. She is 52 years old and has two jobs. She has worked at the Taco Bell which is near her new home for nine years. She has worked in the Recovery Department at Miami Valley Hospital for 23 years, where she helps with filing. She loves Mexican food and really hot food, going to 'cheap' movies, and old television shows, like Ghost Whisperer and Highway to Heaven.

She speaks a little Spanish and can write with both hands. She is diabetic and takes her own shots. "Sometimes I cuss a little," she laughs when talking about herself, "mostly at my cat and at thunderstorms."

There is so much reason for laughter and happiness in the life now, her family, her new extended family, her new home and life itself. "The doctors told my parents I wouldn't live to be one year old," she says, "then they said I wouldn't walk and I wouldn't talk. Well, look at me now. I guess I showed them!"

Mary Ridenour is 66 years old. Before moving to Pepper Hill she had lived alone in her family home for the past nine years following her father's death. She likes the company of her new family but admits it is still hard sometimes having other people around. The favorite part of her home is her room, where she is surrounded by memories of her parents. There is

her ceramic dog collection, all boxers, that reminds her of her pets she had when she was a young girl. There is her mother's collection of Hummel figurines. There are even a few items, a pillow and such, that let you know immediately that she loves Elvis. "I have all his old records but I can't play them because I don't have a record player." She also admits to being a crossword puzzle addict.



Our Pepper Hill ladies gather around their dining room table for a photo, including (l-r) Mindy, Lisa, Carolyn and Mary.

She is retired from McGregor, where she helped make parts for refrigerators, stoves and other appliances. She likes just about any foods but laughs at Mindy for liking spicy food. "No spicy food for me," she says giving Mindy a pat on the shoulder. One of the best things about her new home is that she likes going out to eat and now she has someone to go with her.

Lisa Panstingel moved from another Choices home to the new home so she could be nearer her mother and father. She goes home almost every weekend. She is still finding her way in her new home. There is new staff, three new women, and a new work place. She worked at the Kuntz Road Adult Services Center and now is working at the new Liberty Center. It's hard sometimes because she misses her friends from Kuntz Road.

She likes a good cup of coffee first thing in the morning and enjoys household chores. "We've put a chore list together," shares staff member Debbie,

(Continued from page 1)

“and all the ladies have things they are assigned to do to keep the house running smoothly. They really take pride in keeping the house looking nice. Lisa and the other ladies really take pride in their home.”

Like the other ladies, she likes going out, especially when they go out for ice cream, although she is concerned about her weight. She bowls in a league. She participates in Choices Adult Day Services program where she goes to the YMCA for activities, especially swimming.

At 61 Carolyn Clark still enjoys her work at McGregor, especially the ‘green’ that comes with it. She likes using her own money to shop for clothes and jewelry and personal items. Like Mindy, she is diabetic and treats herself from time to time with sugar free candy. She also bowls in a league. She is the one in the home who enjoys doing laundry. She likes going out to eat at Bob Evans and Steak ‘N Shake. She laughs heartily when she tells you she loves rock and roll.

She goes home on the weekends to be with her mother. “She’s in her 80s now,” she says, “and she can’t do as much as she used to. I help her with her chores, clean the bathroom, things like that.”

They are four different personalities with four different stories to tell but they are enjoying the challenges and the joy that comes with building a new family, which for them includes their staff, Diane Sadler, Delores Williams, Tonia Bray, and Debbie Goecke. “We really love our staff,” the ladies share in unison, “they take good care of us and they are good cooks!”

“They are a very caring staff,” affirms Program Administrator Taiwana Johnson. “They care about the ladies individually and as a family unit. Mary is our newest member and staff is really dedicated to helping her adjust and get her room together. The ladies are all funny. They all get along and they support each other.”

Pepper Hill is owned by Miami Valley In-Ovations (MVIO.) CICL provides the services and supports that make it a home for Mindy, Mary, Lisa and Carolyn, one of the new and happy families on that quiet tree-lined street in Kettering.



Our Route 42 staff (Madison County) were among those honored during the 21st Annual Appreciation Awards of the Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Pictured with their award are (l-r) Christine Johnson, Fred McAfferty, Kathy Howard and Kathy Liff. They were recognized for their ongoing personal commitment and support of clients. When one client recently lost a member of his family, the Route 42 staff came together and made food to take to his family during their time of loss, just one of many stories of the depth of their caring.



Saying good-bye to Dan the Man

It just might be impossible to find anyone in and around London (*Madison County*) who didn't know Dan Burchnell, just as he knew everyone around town. He was London's "Dan, the Man." Dan, who was 61 years old, passed away on January 9, 2011 following nearly a year of failing health. He became a member of our Choices family in 1995, finding a home with two other men at our Madison County Jacqueline Home.

If there was one word that best described Dan it was love. He loved all kinds of music, including Salsa music. "Dan would often ask me to put in my Salsa music when we got in the van," remembers staff member Yaisa Seward. "The words were in Spanish and he couldn't understand them, but he just loved that music. He loved all music. He often called me "that gypsy lady" because of my large earrings."

He loved going to church, going out to eat (*especially Perkins*), velvet art, and the color red. He would have been glued to the television during March Madness because no one but no one loved the Ohio State Buckeyes more than Dan, especially when they played basketball. He related to that because he had been a member of the Madison County Tigers when his team won the State Special Olympics tournament. He loved his work at MATCO.

He loved life and those who filled his life and now they are left to mourn the loss of the man so many knew as "Dan the Man." As his Choices family we mourn the man who was so friendly, so outgoing and so caring. We mourn the loss of a beloved family member.



Partners For Community Living

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

Lorene's recipe for service

It was the first Friday in April. Before most of us had even rolled out of bed, Lorene Miller was busy in her kitchen in Plain City, busy baking 60 pans of her famous caramel-covered cinnamon rolls – six rolls to a pan. Her family usually helps her make her rolls but on that April morning she made them herself. She then packaged them and put them in her car for the trip from her home to St. Peter's Catholic Church in Huber Heights.

She has made that trip to Huber Heights and our Partners Fish 'N Chips Fish Fry for several years now. Her rolls are the most sought after item at our bake sale, often selling out almost before they are all unloaded. She will accept no money for the rolls. They are her contribution, another one of the ways she brings blessings to her own life and to the lives of others through her baking. "I've made rolls and baked goods for the Ronald McDonald House for years," she shares, "including huge amounts our church volunteers have provided over the years."

She has also volunteered in support of one of the people in Madison County served by Choices In Community Living. "That's how I found out about the fish fry," she says, "just knowing I'm making a contribution to a good cause where people with disabilities are given choices and are accepted as people worthy of respect and love makes it worth my time."

There's that deep personal reason why baking cinnamon rolls on a Friday and driving them from Plain City to Huber Heights means so much to her. She and her husband were blessed with seven children, six sons and one daughter. Their third and fourth sons were born with severe cerebral palsy. "Lowell lived only 17 months," she says, "Lendall was born the following year and lived to be almost six years old. We will never be able to put into words how their lives ministered to ours and many others. How can someone speak so loud, yet never utter a word? We cannot say how many people touched our lives through their lives." Her favorite uncle, Uncle Lester, was born with disabilities and worked at MATCO in Madison County before moving out of state to live with relatives. He is now 70 years old.

There is the celebration of a life well lived by a favorite uncle and the memories of two little boys that guide Lorene's hands and heart when she is baking her pies, braided garlic bread, carrot cakes, pumpkin bread and when she is up early baking 60 pans of cinnamon rolls that benefit people with developmental disabilities. "If Lowell and Lendall were living today, they would be 24 and 21 and we would be wondering what their futures would hold," she continues. "We would have wanted them to stay with us in our home as long as possible, but if they needed a home other than ours, then Choices In Community Living would have been a good choice! As for me and my cinnamon rolls, it is a blessing to help others even when you know there is nothing in it for you other than a blessed heart!"



*CICL's Charlie Johnson (l) and Roger Ellis (r) pose with Craig Roberts, who plays the role of Barry in The Dayton Theatre Guild's production of **The Boys Next Door**. The Guild hosted a reception and rehearsal performance for guests from Choices and Resident Home Association. Not only did our guests get to have dinner with the actors and see the rehearsal performance, they were taken on backstage tours at the Theatre Guild where they got to see props, costumes, make up areas and all those things that go into putting on a production.*

Thank you to Director Natasha Randall, Guild President Carol Finley and all of the actors for an unforgettable time!

Meet Arnold, Lucien, Norman and Barry

They are **The Boys Next Door** in the classic play by Tom Griffin. The play focuses on the four men with disabilities who live together as part of an independent living program and their social worker. The play is full of humor and wisdom as they each face their own separate trials on the path to happier lives.

You are invited to see their stories unfold as the Dayton Theatre Guild hosts a benefit performance of **The Boys Next Door** at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 16 at the Guild at 430 Wayne Avenue in Dayton. All proceeds from the performance will support Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association.

Reservations are now available at \$25 a seat. Please call Pam Skelly at 937-278-0791 for credit card reservations, send a check, payable to Partners For Community Living, 1651 Needmore Road, Dayton, 45414, or send us an email to partners@choicesincl.com for more information or to make your reservation.

The performance is coordinated by the Dayton Theatre Guild and Partners For Community Living.



CICL's Brian Mayenchein (c) and K99 Radio Morning Host Nancy Wilson are part of a mutual admiration society, based on years of friendship centered around our Talent Show, Bowl-A-Thon and other activities. That's why it was Brian's honor to attend the Ohio Public Images statewide awards ceremonies to accept an award on Nancy's behalf.

Partners nominated Nancy for her advocacy and friendship for people served by Choices and Resident Home Association, as well as people with disabilities from throughout the community. Nancy could not attend the ceremonies due to the recent death of her radio partner Steve Kerrigan. Brian was accompanied to the OPI Awards Ceremonies by RHA Executive Director Pete Roll (l) and CICL Executive Director Tom Weaver.

We congratulate Nancy for her statewide recognition, thank her for all she has given to us, and send her and her colleagues at K99 radio our sympathies on the passing of Steve Kerrigan.

Don't miss our events

- Join us on Friday, April 8 for the opening reception and awards ceremonies of our 4th Annual **Art & Soul** juried art exhibit. The event will begin at 6:30 at the Town & Country Fine Arts Gallery in Kettering. Our jurors selected 40 pieces from more than 100 that were submitted. The top ten awards will be announced during our event, along with awards selected by each juror. The reception and ceremonies are open to the public at no cost.



Art & Soul is planned and coordinated by Partners For Community Living and Toward Independence. Sponsors include County Boards of Developmental Disabilities from Butler, Greene, Hamilton, Miami and Montgomery. Judges include professional artists Bridgette Bogle, Sinclair Community College, Trish McKinney and Bill Woody.

- Reservations are still available for our benefit performance of **The Boys Next Door** at the Dayton Theatre Guild on Saturday, April 16, at 8:30 p.m. To make your reservation (\$25 per seat), please call 937-278-0791.
- No one has more fun than those who join us for our Bowl-A-Thon. That could be you this year when you join us on May 20 at Beaver Vu Bowl. See our Wish Ad for more information.

WISH AD

WISH – bowlers to help us fill 62 lanes at Beaver Vu Lanes on Friday, May 20 for our annual Partners Bowl-A-Thon; sponsors and donors to help support this important fund-raising effort – sponsorship levels available.

BENEFITS – pizza and pop (5:30-6:30); two games of bowling; trophies; 50/50 drawing; the best time you'll ever have bowling; tax deductions for sponsors and donors; become a partner in support of the Wish Lists of Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association, make wishes come true when there are no other funds available.

Someone is waiting for a new pair of shoes, new clothing, furniture, holiday gifts and more. Register as an individual or as a four member team, bowl with family and friends or join our bowlers on a team.

Registration and information is available on our website at www.partnersohio.com, by calling 937-898-3655 or emailing us at partners@choicesincl.com.

Come tour our homes

Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association homes will be among those open for tours for families who want more information about residential options in Montgomery County. The tours are sponsored by the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities Services. Due to challenging times ahead, the Board anticipates limited expansion for out of home residential housing options.

The Northern Montgomery Tour of homes will be Tuesday, May 3. The tour will depart from Northview School, 8114 North Main Street at 5:30. The Southern Montgomery County Tour will depart from Southview School, 25 Thorpe Drive on Thursday, May 5, at 5:30 p.m.

To register for the tour of homes, please RSVP to Sharon Mays at 937-457-2823 by April 15.

We honor our caring donors

Gail Basine, *CICL Wish List*
 Terran Harrison-Bryant
 Joe Hauser, *in honor of Clifford Kimmey*
 Ellen McCloskey, *Boys Next Door*

Fish Fry donors

Stephanie Beiser	Janet Peasant
East Side Jewelry & Exchange	Charles Schicht
Steve Gaterman/Wells Fargo Home Mortgage	Sinclair Community College
Paul Hutsonpillar	Bob Steinbach
Judy Leasure	Pam Winston
Lily of the Valley Wellness Center	Betty Yung

We like Mike!

"I get to be out in the community and be a part of our clients interacting in the community. I get to watch them be a part of our community." Mike Richardson can't help but smile when he talks about his new role at Choices. Three months ago he became Program Manager for our Adult Day Services Program and Transportation Program following former Manager Kelly Defibaugh's move out of state.

Mike has been part of our Choices family for two and a half years, beginning as a Program Administrator at our Endicott Home and then as a member of the Adult Day Services team. In his new position he oversees people in the Adult Day Services Program and 16 people in our Transportation Program.

"We serve 25 people in our program at the West Carrollton YMCA," he says, "and another 30 in our first community location, the Kleptz YMCA in Englewood. The people we serve in both our Adult Day Services and Transportation programs include some of our CICL clients, as well as people from the community, so that's a great mix."

Mike openly shares that he loves his job. "I get to participate right alongside clients. I'm there in the pool with them every day. I play one-on-one basketball with William every Monday and Tuesday and he doesn't let his wheelchair get in the way of being very competitive. Amy is my biggest inspiration. She has made such strides in her strength and stamina since joining our program. She always wants to do better and always challenges others to succeed. She has just an amazing attitude, is always smiling."

Our Adult Day Services Program runs Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Both sites are currently at capacity and there is now a waiting list. According to Mike the Program is so well received that a big part of his job now is planning to expand the program to another YMCA in the community. The focus of the Program is on building healthier lives for our participants. They swim, play basketball, walk, use treadmills, bikes and other gym equipment, and participate in exercise classes. "One of our oldest participants has lost almost 20 pounds so far and is really feeling great," shares Mike.

The success of the Program would not be possible without the support of the YMCAs. "Our Ys are very professional while at the same time they're just like our family," says Mike, "their staff are just awesome. They know our participants by name."

The Transportation Program has been just as successful as the Adult Day Services Program. CICL vans are used to transport participants to and from work at Adult Services Centers. Transportation is door to door. Like the Adult Day Services Program, the Transportation Program is open to Choices' clients as well as eligible community participants with developmental disabilities.



Mike Richardson (l) with Adult Day Services participant Peter Seni

According to Executive Director Tom Weaver, our newest programs came about as our response to needs and interests identified by families and people we serve. "We're really pleased to be in the forefront in offering these new options and opportunities and equally pleased by the very favorable response to our new programs, which is due to the creativity and dedication of Mike and his team," says Tom.

Mike credits his staff for the success of these two programs. Adult Day Services staff include Tonya Brown, Gentry Worth-Heflin, Heather McCormick and Rob Sukel. Transportation staff are Alan Walder and Ira Levin. "My staff make these programs," Mike shares, "our participants respect them. They are loyal, patient and caring. They are just great staff!"

His new job is a perfect fit for Mike because it's all about family. Family is the center of his life, his family at home, including wife Chrissy and children Emily and Payne, who enjoy watching him pitch in a competitive softball league. When not spending time with them, Mike has found just where he wants to be. "There's no place I'd rather be than right here at Choices. I love working with all our staff. They are all loving and patient and take pride in what they do. It's just so motivating to watch and learn from other staff. This is not a job. It's a family. I love Choices!"

Editor's Note: For more information or to be placed on our waiting lists for our Adult Day Services and Transportation programs, please contact Mike at 937-898-2220.

Doing well by staying well

At Choices the emphasis on wellness and healthy living is a focus for clients and for staff. Program Administrator Amy Jewsikow recently took fitness to a new level when she completed the 2011 Disney's Princess Half Marathon at Disney World. Amy, who is pictured with her Marathon medal, finished the 13.1 mile run in 2:52:31, placing 7842 out of 13,797 runners.



As part of our commitment to healthy living, Choices provides reduced membership fees to Premier Fitness for staff. Planning is also underway for a Wellness Retreat/Fair that will be held in July. Choices staff have teamed together to participate in community events, such as the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk.

"Our focus on a healthy lifestyle is a win-win for all of us," says Human Resources Director Trent Grooms. "Healthier staff means more consistency and continuity for our clients when staff don't miss work due to illness. It means staff have more energy to share with clients. It also means we win as an agency by reducing insurance costs. It means staff win by not only feeling better about their work, but feeling better overall."



And the winds blew

Mother Nature ruled once again! Like homes throughout our community, our homes were not immune to the recent high winds, freezing rain and ice. Just like those other homes, some of our homes escaped Winter's wrath, while others found themselves without electricity. While it isn't an everyday happening, our staff went about the business of providing safe and nurturing homes just like it was any other time.

We again are indebted to and inspired by our staff who didn't miss a beat when the lights went out. In Preble County our Maple Street home lost power for two days. On the first day staff and clients stayed in their home. By the second day it was getting beyond chilly so Rob Walton bundled everyone up and took them to his house to spend the night. The next day Camesia Ditmer took them to a hotel in Richmond, Indiana. It turned out to be a real adventure for the clients.

Preble County staff also kept busy keeping driveways free of snow and ice. Our Frizzell staff went through 80 pounds of salt in two days. Our Cedar Circle ladies were among those that didn't mind the weather because it meant that their workshop was closed for three days so they could enjoy the time at home. Several staff worked extra shifts to cover for staff who couldn't make it to work because of the weather conditions.

Our Preble County stories were repeated throughout Montgomery, Clark and Madison counties where staff responded with the same level of response and care as those in Preble County. We're happy to report that one home didn't have a worry about the weather. Our Wendhaven home stayed warm and safe and no one had to leave because of the in-house generator that was installed last year through the support of grants from The Dayton Foundation and Brighter Tomorrow Foundation. The winds blew but they were no match for caring staff and generous friends.

Choices In Community Living, Inc.

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

Return Service Requested

Board of Trustees

Robert Steinbach, President
Paul Hutsonpillar, Vice-President
Stephen McHugh, Treasurer
Dr. Betty Yung, Secretary

Eugene Aukerman
Janet Peasant
Dr. Julie Williams

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

Going for the final four

No, not THAT final four, but the final four for Ohio Special Olympics basketball. SIL Program Administrator Butch Van Meter has been a Special Olympics coach for many years, including coaching basketball. Butch and his team, which included CICL hoopsters Pete Smith, Marvin Heard and Jack Held took to the hardwoods in early March in the Special O Division II sectionals. They were the victors in their first game against a Darke County team and went on to play a hard fought game against a team from Hamilton



County. "The game was close for three quarters," says Coach Butch, "but they pulled away from us in the fourth quarter. We played the best we could but we lost to a better team this time."

CICL's Sam Klapheke and Nate Jones are members of a Division IV team that also lost out in the sectionals, although Sam and Nate didn't get to participate due to illness and injuries.

"Our players didn't win this time," says the Coach, but they did their best, had a lot of fun and lived up to the Special O oath of "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me brave in the attempt."

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Dayton, OH
Permit #1522