

Spring 2016



Home Happenings

Erie Homes for Children and Adults, Inc.
*extraordinary **people**, extraordinary **programs***



Our EHCA residents with complex medical conditions thrive best with daily doses of love and laughter.

What's Inside:

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Message from the CEO | 2 |
| Program News | 3 |
| People and Projects | 4-5 |
| A Little Havana | 6 |
| Spotlight on Support | 7 |





Charles Walczak

Message from the CEO

A strategic plan is more than an organization’s list of good intentions. It is a detailed map showing where we want to go and how we plan to get there. Like GPS, it enables us to travel new roads with confidence because we know we’re heading in the direction of our goals.

Our initial discussions started with a thorough examination of EHCA’s current strengths and needs. This helped us clarify our agency’s values and set priorities. Next, we identified goals for improvement

and growth that will take us to the next level in helping every individual we serve live a rich and fulfilling life. Finally, we translated those goals into specific plans for action. In doing so, we defined the steps to be taken over the next several years to transform our vision into reality.

Here is a list of our primary strategic goals:

- The pursuit of quality, service, and safety is always our main priority
- Provide opportunities for growth and development for people with ID/DD
- Ensure the sustainability of EHCA long into the future through growth and expansion that will address the state waiting list for services
- Foster a “best place to work” pro-employee culture
- Utilize strong financial practices to optimally manage our resources
- Further enhance communication among all EHCA facilities and programs
- Pursue strong advocacy efforts with our local and regional leaders to support EHCA and its mission
- Enhance community awareness of EHCA and the important work we do
- Develop a culture of continuous improvement and elimination of waste

We will soon be announcing initiatives that will enable us improve our facilities and specialized services while addressing the state waiting list for waiver programs. A great deal of the time and energy has gone into finalizing our plans, but we know what truly matters is the positive difference these goals will make in the lives of the remarkable individuals we serve.

As we implement the plan, we pledge to employ our best efforts and highest standards every step of the way. Thank you for being with us on this journey.

Management Team

Charles Walczak, MBA, FACHE

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Donna Huckno

VP of Nursing & Health Services

Shannon Weber

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Bev Keep

Chief Operational Officer (COO)

James R. McMann

VP of Human Resources

Peg Smith-Rich

VP of Residential & Community Services

Jonathan Rilling

Director of Development

Barbara Renker

Executive Secretary

Lorine Boboshko

Administrative Assistant

Home Happenings

is a publication of EHCA and is distributed three times a year.

Board of Directors

Jeffrey J. Presogna, CPA
President

Jerry Cannon
President Elect

Ellen Masteller
Secretary

James Thomas, Jr. MD
Treasurer

Edwin W. Smith, Esq.
Strategic Planning Chair

Jeffery I. Blake, MD
Property Committee Chair

G. Nan Mehl
Nominating Committee Chair

Bruce E. Arkwright

Carla Barnes

Cyndi Carter

William G. DeWitt

Cathy Fresch

Carl Larese

Angela L. Leasure

Elizabeth F. Lechner

Carly Manino

Lisa McChesney

Frances McCormick, Esq.

Edison Nicholson III

Colleen Shaffer

Erie Homes for Children & Adults, Inc. (EHCA)

226 East 27th Street

Erie, PA 16504

Ph (814) 454-1534

Fax (814) 452-6723

www.ehca.org

The mission of EHCA is to assist people with disabilities to live rich and fulfilling lives.

Admissions, provision of services, and referrals of residents or program participants shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, gender, or limited English proficiency.

A grant from the Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation provides childbirth, parenting supplies for PFS

Project First Step (PFS), EHCA's disability prevention program serving high-risk individuals and families, was recently able to upgrade infant simulators and purchase training materials for its childbirth and parenting skills classes thanks to a \$4,000 grant from the Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation.

Two of the program's five RealCare Baby infant simulator dolls were upgraded with new features so that staff members could collect and track additional care data. An infant simulator to demonstrate the effect of shaken baby syndrome was also purchased. The remaining funds were used to stock the program's training room with a library of printed materials, videos, and other instructional supplies used for teaching classes in both childbirth education and parenting skills.



Holding RealCare simulator dolls in Project First Step's training room are staff members (l-r) Jillian McCammon with a shaken baby simulator, Sarah Dougherty with an upgraded baby simulator, and Lisa Kobusinski with a fetal alcohol syndrome baby simulator. In addition to providing experience with infant burping, changing, and feeding needs, the upgraded doll addresses flat head syndrome and other critical infant care issues.

***Building stronger families
one step at a time***



Options computer lab makes computers accessible thanks to UPS grant

It's nearly impossible these days to complete job applications, find a place to live, or search for community services without going online. For individuals with disabilities, such tasks are not only physically difficult but also pose a risk to their online safety. Without the right furniture and equipment, participants in wheelchairs can't reach the keyboard and operate a mouse.



Staff members at Options, a community-based program, believed an on-site computer lab would enable clients to gain computer skills while ensuring their safety. That dream became reality in November thanks to a grant from The UPS Foundation. Touch-screen computers, adaptive equipment, and accessible desks have created a welcoming space that meets the online needs of Options participants.



Valerie Benjamin, Director of In-Home Waiver Services, has seen a great deal of enthusiasm and interest in computers generated by the opening of the computer lab. "Thanks to our friends at UPS, our participants now have the opportunity to gain and enhance their technology skills in a safe and accessible environment," she said.

EHCA honors the extraordinary commitment and contributions of these retiring board members...



Timothy Wachter, Esq., joined the board in 2006 and provided strong leadership as Board President 2012-14 & President Elect 2010-12. He also served on the Finance, Executive, Foundation, Future Planning, and Legislative committees. Tim is a lawyer with Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C.



Nancy Dolan, co-owner of PostNet in Erie and a former bank employee, joined the board in 2006. She served on the Nominating, Legislative, and Foundation committees. She was also a member of the Spring Swing Committee.



Brenda Pasko, who recently retired from HealthAmerica, joined the board in 2011. She was a member and former chair of the agency's Development Committee. She plans to remain an active member of THE Spring Event Committee (formerly Spring Swing).



Patricia Hause, OSB, joined the board in 2011. She is the Administrator of Benetwood Apartments and a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. She serves on The Spring Event Committee and remains the guardian of one of EHCA's Harborcreek residents.

Gold Award project creates garden, renews friendship



Allie prepares the garden bed for the winter as her Gold Award mentor, Amy Meehl (left), and her mother, Jeanne Haraczy, look on.

Allison Haraczy, a senior at McDowell High School, is an Ambassador Girl Scout in Troop 30418 with loads of badges to prove it. She also happens to be a student with special needs. Allie loves to be involved in her community and help other people.

When Allie set the goal of earning her Gold Award, the highest honor in Girl Scouts, she knew she wanted to create a project that would make a difference for others. She thought about Becky, her friend from the Gliding Stars adaptive ice skating program, who lives in an EHCA community home. Allie once attended an EHCA butterfly release with her mother, and she loved meeting residents there. Her friendship with Becky, her interest in EHCA, and her love of helping others all came together when she selected her Gold Award project: she would build a raised bed vegetable garden in the backyard of the EHCA home where Becky lives.

One of the requirements of the Gold Award project is that it serves a useful purpose that extends into the future. House residents will be able to enjoy planting and tending the garden each year. Allie assembled the raised garden bed by herself with adult supervision. When the time came to plant seeds in the garden bed, she invited Becky to come out and join her. She also provided seeds and gardening books so the residents could learn about growing vegetables and flowers.

In March, Allie received a letter congratulating her on receiving her Gold Award. The presentation will be held in Cranberry, PA, in May.



Allie with her friend Becky, the EHCA resident who helped inspire the project.



Community Home Coordinator earns state recognition

Machelle Myers, a Community Home Coordinator (CHC), had a surprise waiting for her at EHCA's fall All Staff Meeting.

She was nominated by Peg Smith-Rich, Vice President of Residential and Community Services, for the Front Line Manager Award presented by PA Advocacy and Resources for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities (PAR). Machelle received Honorable Mention honors for our region.

"Machelle is a great advocate, always researching for a proper piece of adaptive equipment to make someone sit better in a wheelchair or for a communication device so that the individual can express his/her wants and needs," Peg wrote in Machelle's nomination. "She is highly respected and valued by the staff she supervises. It is the residents, though, who benefit the most from having her in their lives."

Art Debut with Microbrews

What started as an idea for a MOVE art exhibit has blossomed into a full-blown art show and guest bartending contest all rolled into one happy evening.

Join us at The Brewerrie at Union Station on **Thursday, April 7, from 4 to 7 p.m.** for **Art Debut with Microbrews**. You'll view amazing art created by EHCA artists, employees, and families.

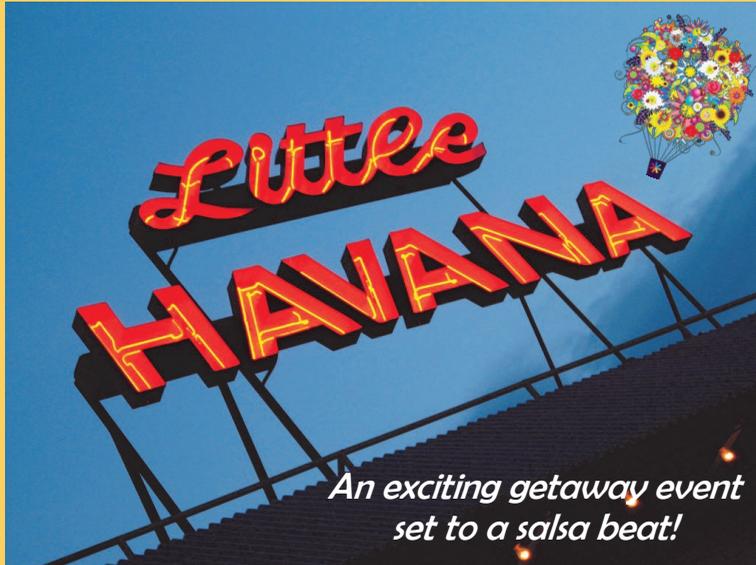
Three teams of bartenders will be competing for prizes. Most importantly, they will be encouraging guests to fill their jars with "votes" to raise money for MOVE's creative art programs.

Admission is free. Come out and support the creative efforts of our EHCA artists!



Volunteer extraordinaire...

Need paper shredded? Aaron's your man. An EHCA resident who participates in both the MOVE and Options programs, Aaron can be found Monday and Friday mornings at the Professional Building in Erie. First he collects paper from the EHCA program offices. Then he heads to the Staff Development office to shred, shred, shred. He earns a snack from the employees when he's done, but that's not what keeps him coming back. His Options staff companion, Kathy Ruf-McMehan, says Aaron loves to stay active and help others.



THE Spring Event

Friday, May 13

This could be your lucky day!

Join us at the
Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel

This year's destination: **Miami's Little Havana**

Your Hosts: John and Kim Pilewski
Master of Ceremonies: Brady Louis
Auctioneer: Tim Rocco

Music by
Mambo



Two reservation options

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| VIP guests | 6:00 p.m. registration with pre-event open bar & appetizers (\$100 per guest) |
| Event guests | 7:00 p.m. registration with cash bar, hors d'oeuvres, music, dancing, auctions, and prizes (\$75 per guest) |

Join us in thanking our generous sponsors:



BKD CPAs and Advisors
 ComDoc
 Erie Co. Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA)
 Bill & Becky Hilbert
 Medline Industries, Inc.

National Fuel Velocity. Net
 Brugger Funeral Homes
 Erie Federal Credit Union
 Absolute Fire Protection
 City Tile & Carpet

DeSantis Solutions
 Erie Bank
 MacDonald, Illig, Jones & Britton LLP
 PDC Pharmacy

Ridge Policy Group
 Tungsten Creative Group
 Ted Wood & Associates
 UC Assure
 Vantage Care Apothecary

Wish List

Here is a list of supplies and resources that would be greatly appreciated by the people we serve. If you can help, contact Karen at 814-315-1857 or karen.tuminello@ehca.org.

Project First Step

- Diapers, baby wipes
- Personal hygiene products
- Gas cards
- Car seats (infant and larger)
- Cribs, pack-n-plays

MOVE Program

- Storage containers
- Art/craft supplies
- Fabric and sewing supplies
- Yarn, knitting looms, craft kits
- Scrapbooking/stamping supplies
- Gift cards for supplies
- Gift cards for restaurants, activities
- Guest passes to the YMCA

HIGHMARK.

WALK FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Highmark is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



What's even better than a walk along the beach? How about a walk along the beach that makes a difference in the lives of EHCA residents with complex medical conditions? That's walking with heels and heart.

Saturday, June 4
Beach I parking area
Presque Isle State Park

Registration opens: 7:45 a.m.
5K Walk begins: 9 a.m.
One-Mile Fun Walk: 9:15

Register to walk

Create a team

Sponsor a walker

Make a donation



Mark your calendar today and start contacting family and friends to join you or to sponsor you on your personal walk page. You can also register as a virtual walker or create a team. You can even go to the EHCA page and simply make a donation.

Go to EHCA page: hcf.convio.net/ehca

Go to event page: walkforahealthycommunity.org

For registration questions or assistance, contact Karen Tuminello at 814-315-1857.

Getting *ALL SHOOK UP* at a birthday party for Elvis



EHCA's MOVE program facility was the scene of an Elvis party on Presley's birthday, January 8. The event featured Elvis music by Angelo Philips, 50s-era treats, and dancing.



Erie Homes for Children and Adults, Inc.
 226 East 27th Street
 Erie, PA 16504
www.ehca.org

NON PROFIT ORG
 US POSTAGE PAID
 ERIE PA
 PERMIT NO 273

*extraordinary **people**, extraordinary **programs***



The mission of EHCA is to assist people with disabilities to live rich and fulfilling lives.

Each person with a disability should have the opportunity to make choices, to contribute to his or her own daily lifestyle, to obtain the best education and training available, and to enjoy a home-like atmosphere with quality caregivers.

Save the Date



Art Debut with Microbrews
 MOVE Art Show & Guest Bartending
 Thursday, April 7, 4–7 p.m.
 The Brewerie at Union Station

THE Spring Event
 Friday, May 13
 Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel
Food • Music • Dancing • Auctions • Prizes



Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community
 Saturday, June 4, Presque Isle State Park

Victory Ride 2016
 Saturday, September 10
 Belle Valley Fire Department



WHAT'S HAPPENING