



Partners For Community Living

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

The best of partners

Pete's reflections

(Pete has served alongside Tom as one half of Partners For Community Living, the collaborative partnership between Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association that was formed in 2002 under the leadership of Tom and Brenda Whitney. Following is his retirement message to Tom.)

I have known for quite some time that retirement was coming for Tom. Every time I gave it much thought I had a mix of emotions for my friend and colleague. From a professional point of view, the loss of such a dedicated and genuine passionate voice for those we serve is immense. It is not that those who follow in Tom's footsteps are not up to the task. To the contrary, Choices is blessed to have Trent Grooms and the leadership team that will keep things moving forward. Taking away an active, experienced leader in the I/DD field will have lasting effects on so many who have known and worked with Tom. His insight, commitment, energy and dedication to this profession can be matched by very few. Having one less voice, especially one like Tom's, cannot help but leave a void.

Now Tom is off in a new direction. To borrow a quote from Fred Rogers, "often when you think you're at the end of something, you're actually at the beginning of something else." In Tom's case, he is joining the ranks of the unstructured. No more setting the alarm, driving (*perhaps a little too fast*) to endless meetings. No more being told to do more with less. Now he can forget about the clock, drive at a slower and safer pace (*maybe*), do less and do it more often. I am truly proud of Tom and happy for him. Congratulations on your retirement, my friend. No one deserves it more!



Over years of dramatic change, Tom Weaver (I) (Executive Director, Choices In Community Living) Mark Schlater (CEO, Toward Independence) and Pete Roll (Executive Director, Resident Home Association) formed not only system-changing partnerships but lasting friendships. One of their proudest collaborations has been the statewide Art & Soul juried art exhibit that has honored artists with developmental disabilities for 14 years. Few things could equal the pride they have shared together as they have presented awards to deserving and talented artists at each year's opening reception/awards ceremonies.

Mark's reflections

(Mark has worked alongside Tom in the development of new residential services throughout our region, as well as creating new and innovative service options. He has been active with Tom at the state level in the important advocacy and legislative work of the Ohio Provider Resource Association. Following is his retirement message to Tom.)

It's nearly impossible with just a few words to give justice to the impact Tom Weaver has had on the I/DD system in Ohio over the past

35 years. I met Tom 25 years ago at OPRA (*Ohio Provider Resource Association*) meetings where he would always advocate for needed changes in the system. Over all these years, he has never wavered in that advocacy, speaking first for individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as for those on the front lines who care for them, our Direct Care Professionals (*DSPs*.)

There was often tense and important conversations and debates at OPRA on state policies, budgets, departmental needs and other concerns for our I/DD system. You could always count on Tom to give his valued opinion, and even during heated debates, you could count on him to provide a little levity, sarcasm, or self-deprecating humor to break the tension and keep us moving forward.

Tom has touched so many lives over his 35 years of working in the field. It is impossible to reflect on all the impact he has had and to note all his accomplishments. I do, however, want to share one specific point about Tom. It takes a truly special person to dedicate a significant part of his life to ensure that the lives of others (*in Tom's case, people with I/DD*) are the best that they can be. Tom has seen a lot and done a lot. The system of services for individuals with I/DD here in our communities and across Ohio is so much better because Tom Weaver has been a leading part of it! Bless you, Tom, for all that you gave, all you did over your impressive career. Take care and God Bless!

Safe at home – because of you

Our funding priority following the 2019 Memorial Day tornadoes was to assure the safety of individuals served by Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association during emergencies. That priority resulted in a significant partnership between our donors and grantors, coordinated by Partners For Community Living, to purchase and install whole-home generators for designated homes for each agency. All donations since May, 2019, unless otherwise designated, have been used for this purpose. We also received funding from community partners through designated grants.



It's a thumbs up from Aaron Knight (l) and Bruce Hart for the whole-home generator at their Kenbrook home (RHA.)

Because of you, 11 whole-home generators have been installed!

The generators insure that clients and residents will be able to remain in their homes during most emergencies. When electrical power is disrupted, the generators will kick on within 60 seconds. This will insure that people within these homes will be able to stay

at home. It will also provide enough homes to accommodate other clients/residents to be temporarily re-located if necessary during an emergency instead of needing to find shelter in hotels and other locations that are not prepared to meet their needs.

Resident Home Association now has generators at the following homes: Elm Grove; Garber; Greenhill; Kenbrook; Springmill and Woodbury.

Choices In Community Living now has generators at the following homes in Montgomery County: Abraham; Blue Ash; Broadbush; Gardenside and Lavon.

Because of you, we are now moving forward with other funding priorities, including the Cooking Immersion Project for Choices. You can support the Cooking Project with a donation to <https://bit.ly/3xikCry>.

Thank you to our generous donors (April 1 - June 25, 2021)

Choices In Community Living

Danette Addison
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Becky Toomey
Keshia Tuttle
Tom & Kathy Weaver

Partners For Community Living

Anonymous
Julia Bell
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in honor and memory of Brenda Whitney
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in memory of Thomasine Hill
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in memory of Richard F. Kane
Ellie Kent,
in memory of Brenda Whitney
Casey Marchal
Joyce Marsh, *in memory of Roger & Charles Marsh*
Ellen McCloskey
Michael & Diane Pratt
Marcia Rock
Pete & Polly Roll,
in memory of Brenda Whitney
Edwin Shock, Sr.
Tom & Kathy Weaver

Resident Home Association

Patricia Burnside,
in memory of Stephen 'Steve' Shock
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in memory of James Sheehan
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in memory of James Sheehan
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in honor of Tom Gmeiner
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Christopher Traylor
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Betsy Whitney,
in honor of Kris Bergman
Ken & Ellen Zolnowski

The following grants have been received in support of Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association:

- Good Shepherd Foundation of Ohio, to Choices In Community Living for cooking project at the Martin Center;
- Kettering Family Philanthropies, to Choices for whole-home generators;
- Kettering Family Philanthropies, to Resident Home Association for whole-home generators;
- Disability Foundation, to Resident Home Association for transportation.

There's still time to let Partners know what you think! Thank you to those who have completed our **2021 Partners Supporter Survey**. If you have not yet completed your survey, we would appreciate your time and support in completing it and returning it to us. Please share your thoughts and insights in support of the individuals served by our partner agencies, Choices In Community Living and Resident Home Association.

Completing the survey should take only a few minutes, so won't you please find a pen, a comfortable seat and share your responses with us? Together we will provide ongoing support that adds to the quality of life for those we serve, such as support for the new Cooking Immersion Project that will provide cooking classes and possible job opportunities at the Martin Center (*Choices In Community Living*.)