



Published twice a year
by Our Little Haven

Our Little News

St. Louis, MO
ourlittlehaven.org



Our Heroes: Foster & Adoptive Families

All of the content below is being shared with expressed, written permission of the foster/adoptive parents. We are grateful to them for sharing their stories and pictures.



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trainings, known as S.T.A.R.S and Spaulding. We asked Meike for her personal perspectives, in her own words. She shared her thoughts with us, (right):

Meike was licensed as a foster and adoptive parent in 2011. Since then she has fostered more than ten children and developed into an amazing foster and adoptive mother. Meike has one biological son, and in 2015 her family grew when she adopted her beautiful daughter.

In her role as a foster parent, Meike actively engages family members and supports reunification, by facilitating visits between children and their families, when deemed appropriate. She communicates with biological family in a respectful and caring manner. She is passionate about maintaining connections with children as well as parents she has helped.

Meike has been a mentor to new foster mothers, providing them with additional support and guidance. She also believes in the importance of educating future foster and adoptive parents and in 2015 was certified to teach foster parent

Batman, Spiderman, and Superman: what do all these superheroes have in common? They were all raised by foster and adoptive families. But you don't have to go to Metropolis to see heroes in action. Every day Our Little Haven works with heroes, the many foster and adoptive families caring for children in our community. This newsletter issue spotlights the families working with the Taylor Family Care Center who step up and to care for children in need. They welcome children into their home and family life for a short period of time, or through the adoption process.

Every day, Our Little Haven's Foster Care Case Managers work to help children and families go through important life transitions brought about by a large variety of circumstances. We have heard from former foster children who have been adopted through Our Little Haven programs. There are so many inspiring stories of successful outcomes: Ricky, Anthony and many more are growing into healthy productive adults, thanks to foster parent heroes and your support. .

More information at
ourlittlehaven.org

Luckiest Mommy On The Planet

"I enjoy being a foster parent because I love to help families in need. Taking care of kiddos in care is the main part of my role as a foster parent, but I also think helping biological parents and extended family members is part of my job and also an enormous blessing.

I have several memories that have helped me realize that I'm doing something good. One of my favorite memories is the time I was sitting in church with 3 precious little girls (2 year old adopted daughter, 1 year old former placement, 4 month old foster placement). I experienced a moment with them all on my lap that I will always remember. I felt like the luckiest mommy on the planet...so much love and joy being shared. I had an overwhelming sense of peace and assurance that God has called me to help children in their time of need.

I sincerely hope that my biological son and my adopted daughter can love beyond all boundaries and barriers, and that at the end of their lives (long lives, I hope) they can feel like they did all they could to help families in need."

They know they're doing good in this world.

"It is heartwarming for us to see how most of the birth parents (young and older) that we work with in our role as foster parents get their lives together, in order to reunify/get their children back. We know that they love their kids, and it melts our hearts knowing they are trying to do everything possible to get them back. We also enjoy seeing how far our "bonus" (foster) kids have come from the day they enter our home, until the day they leave.

When we dropped our first foster child off at their mom's house to reunify with his birth mother, all of us just cried (tears of joy). His mom kept thanking us---over and over. At that moment, I knew that we were doing good in this world.

We hope that every child that comes through our home knows that there is better (times to come) out there. (for them) They may be with us for just a couple hours, but that could be the best day of that child's life. I hope and pray that these children leave our house knowing they were cared for and loved."

Jason and Stacie explained in their own words what being foster parents means to them, sharing their personal reflections, (left). They have been licensed as a foster and adoptive home since 2009, providing nurturing and loving care to each child placed in their home. The couple have a beautiful adopted daughter and are currently providing placement for two boys who are thriving in their home.

Their case worker noted: "The family takes great care of the children in their home by meeting all medical and educational needs. They provide a loving home and demonstrate strong skills in working with the Family Support Team and the biological parents/extended family to help with either reunification or adoption."

Special thanks to Amy Newell, the Our Little Haven Saint Louis Partners Liaison, and to the foster care/adoption case managers for their help with this story.



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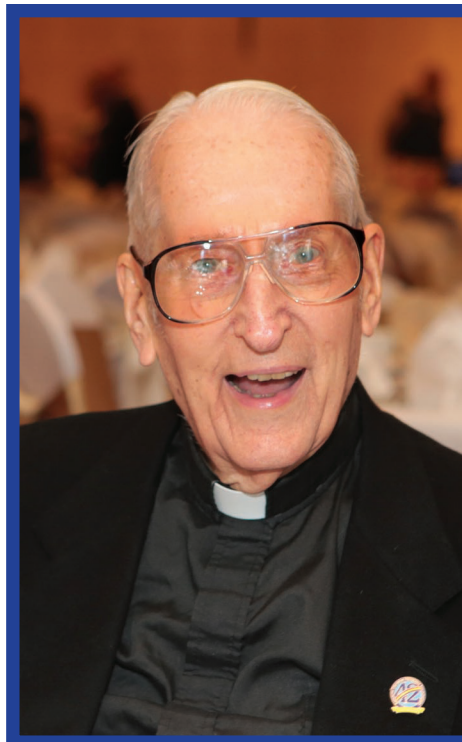
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YOP and NAP Tax Credits Are A Year End Giving Benefit

Any individual, corporation, shareholder/partner in an S Corp, limited liability company or partnership, or a self-employed individual may be eligible for a 50% MO State Tax Credit for any contribution greater than \$2,000. Individual tax credits may be available, please call Mike Bahlinger (314) 533-2229, x225,mikebahlinger@our-littlehaven.org



In Memoriam, Fr. Robert Weiss, SJ

Fr. Robert Weiss Tribute

Our Little Haven lost an old and dear friend over the summer as Rev. Robert Weiss, SJ was called to a heavenly journey. Fr. Weiss was instrumental in Our Little Haven's opening to serve the children and families and through his prayerful dedicated service to Our Little Haven, his legacy is secured with many people on many levels. We miss our old friend, but we believe his table in Heaven is set and our God is turning to him and saying, "Well done good and faithful servant." Rest in peace, Fr. Bob!

Below is a note, written by Bill Newbold, Chair of the Our Little Haven Board of Trustees.

June 10, 2016

To Friends of Our Little Haven,

It is with a heavy heart that we reach out to inform you that Fr. Robert Weiss, SJ, has assed away peacefully. I am thankful that several of us had some time to be with our friend and pray the Rosary with him.

I wish I was articulate enough to express Fr. Weiss' impact on Our Little Haven, as well as his impact on Scott, Kathleen, Michael, and myself. Certainly we all have fond memories and respect for a man who accomplished so many things in his life. From his service to his country, or his calling to the Jesuit community, his leadership abilities shone brightly at everything he did in life, yet when reminded of his these great accomplishments, he shrugged them off with a humble laugh or smile and always finished with the thought that everything he accomplished was a gift from God and that he was simply the tool. "For the greater glory of God" was core to Fr. Weiss. His demeanor and humility never changed and the joy he truly relished in his life was that of family and friends and his involvement with the numerous activities to which he contributed so much.

Whether it was St. Louis University High, Rockhurst University, the myriad of Jesuit institutions and activities that he spearheaded, or his beloved Our Little Haven, he contributed his wisdom and experiences to each with equal zeal. And for all the marriages and baptisms that he presided over, he took great pride and humility to be part of such blessed days for so many of us. Fr. Weiss possessed so many wonderful skills but he had a unique ability to ask the simplest, but most effective questions to complex issues.

Over the years at Our Little Haven, we came to quietly marvel at his abilities to tackle problems in his humble and quiet approach, often acting as the leader from behind, ever so gently guiding us down the right path. And we should all take great solace in knowing that this wonderful person absolutely "beamed with pride" when talking about Our Little Haven. Despite his calm demeanor and measured approach in everything that he did, the joy of being deeply involved with Our Little Haven always bubbled to the top and he always spoke of OLH with a gleam in his eye.

I know the children and families we serve held a special place in his heart, because as the years wore on and he gradually reduced his schedule with other activities, he never once thought about reducing his role at his beloved OLH, which included his key roles on the Executive Board, the Investment Committee, and the Compensation Committee. And, as his mobility decreased, he would host the Executive meetings at Jesuit Hall, where he enjoyed "rock star" status among the residents, yet his greatest pleasure on our meeting nights was letting everyone know that the Executive Board of OLH was now meeting at Jesuit Hall. Despite his lofty status, he always made the rest of us feel special, and we did because we got to sit with him, "royalty by default" as a result of our friendship with this great man. I am grateful that all of us got to walk "part of the journey" with Fr. Weiss - a part of the journey that he treasured so much. We will miss our friend and mentor and I have no doubts that he will be with us, always.

Gratefully,
Bill Newbold, Chair, Our Little Haven

Our Little Haven Loses Dear Friend, Mr. Jack Taylor

The Our Little Haven family wishes to acknowledge the passing of longtime Our Little Haven benefactor Mr. Jack Taylor. His support, along with his family's, has been instrumental over the years in the growth and development of Our Little Haven's capacity to help vulnerable children and families. Mr. Taylor's great generosity to our cause has been a strong cornerstone, and his legacy will live on through the Our Little Haven programs he has allowed to flourish and grow, through his magnanimous support. We are forever grateful. Our sympathies are extended to Mr. Taylor's family for their loss at his passing.

Dinner Auction Huge Success



Thank you to the many Fund The Need donors who raised their “cookie paddles” at the Annual Dinner Auction in record numbers.

Thanks to the strong support of so many generous donors, the hugely successful 2016 Dinner Auction raised a record-breaking \$210,000! Led by 2016 Chairs Bob and Margy Kemp and Dan and Andrea Tarlas, the annual event welcomed nearly 500 guests for an evening of dining, drinks, auctions and fellowship. Highlights included filling up a giant cookie jar with Fund The Need donations, as a record number of generous donors raised their paddles. The Live Auction pleased our patrons with the Tarlas’s Sebastian the Puppy, the Kemp’s Scavenger Hunt Party for 32, the Cameron’s Clayton Rooftop Dinner and the Shepherd’s Whale Tale Florida Vacation Home. Thank you to the Kemps and the Tarlas’s for their outstanding, creative and generous support of our 2016 Dinner Auction. We are extremely grateful for their leadership and vision.

Please plan to attend the 2017 Dinner Auction on Sunday, April 23, 2017 at the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel. **Save the date and watch www.ourlittlehaven.org/events/.** Please contact Chris Munoz for information on sponsorships and tables, (314) 533-2229 x232 or cmunoz@ourlittlehaven.org.

Haven Club Happenings

The 2nd Annual Haven Club Home Brew Fest was a big success! Congratulations to the Haven Club Young Professionals on hosting another successful Home Brew Fest. Led by Event Chair Andrew Evola and a strong committee of Haven Club members, the club was host to over 200 guests, food trucks, live band, and home brewers showing their best brew on Saturday August 6th. It was a great event we look forward to continuing. Thanks to OLH Trustee Carol Schuchard and husband Pat for allowing the group to host the event at Majorette, the hip new venue space here in St. Louis. Special thanks to Kamykowski, Gavin & Smith, P.C. for their sponsorship of the event.



If you are interested in learning more about The Haven Club and activities planned, visit the website to learn more or call Chris at (314) 533-2229, x232.



The Home Brew Fest Committee at The Majorette.

HOLIDAY GIVING

- YEAR END DONATION:** You can contribute [online](#) or call Chris at (314) 533-2229 x232. Remember we have **MO State Tax Credits**. Donate online: ourlittlehaven.org
- COOKIE JAR GROUP GIVING:** Involve your group! Our Group Giving Cookie Jars are the perfect way to share support in a group setting. Call Chris at (314) 533-2229 x232, or email cmunoz@ourlittlehaven.org
- IN HONOR OF HOLIDAY GIFT** for someone special. We send a special card announcing their gift, or we can send it to you so you can present it to them. Call Chris at (314) 533-2229 x232. You can see a sample online at ourlittlehaven.org.
- ADOPT-A-FAMILY:** Many OLH families need extra help this time of year to make the season bright. Contact Sharon (314) 531-3183 x229, swhalen@ourlittlehaven.org
- WISHLIST OR TOY DRIVE:** Involve your group/family: collect needed items or toys. Call Mary (314) 533-2229 x226 or email her at mary@ourlittlehaven.org

More online! ourlittlehaven.org

Our Little Haven wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the generous gift of John and Lynn McGuire through the bequest of The McGuire Family Trust

New Staff



Meagan Greenfield - Foster Care Case Management Program Supervisor
Meagan graduated with a BA-Social Work from Western Illinois University and an MA-Social Work from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. She has always had a passion for helping children and families, and loves to learn and grow in her education and experience. Meagan was promoted from Foster Care Case Management Manager to Supervisor in August '16. Married this September, she's still getting used to her new last name. Meagan says "I have enjoyed working at Our Little Haven over the past eight years. I really believe in the mission and values of OLH. I am so grateful for the opportunity to continue my career at Our Little Haven. I am excited to help guide the Foster Care Case Management team as we strive to serve our clients to the best of our ability and improve our program together!"



Niya Love - Clinical Administrative Assistant, Keystone Mental Health Services
Niya was born and raised in St. Louis, and worked for McCallum Place before coming to OLH. She has a young son who keeps her very busy and entertained. "He is the light of my life" says Niya. In her spare time, Niya enjoys cooking, trying new recipes and finding new things to do with her son around St. Louis. Niya really enjoys OLH and what it stands for. She likes this opportunity to be able to play a part in helping build up our children and families in the community.



Amy Newell - Saint Louis Partners Liaison
Amy earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in social work from St. Louis University. Since 2003, she has been working in foster care case management, first as a case manager, then a supervisor and now as the Liaison for Saint Louis Partners. Amy's love for working with children and families comes from the amazing opportunity she was given as a high school senior to travel to Romania and volunteer in an orphanage. She has been fortunate on several occasions to revisit the Balkan area to help rebuild and/or improve orphanage conditions. Amy also has several nieces and nephews who came to her family through adoption, and she has three children of her own who keep her going with soccer games and gymnastics! She is very happy to be a part of Our Little Haven and looks forward to many more years here!



Nicole Pashia - Foster Care Case Management Program Manager
Nicole came to Our Little Haven in July of 2007 as a case manager, covering four counties of jurisdiction included in our contract with St. Louis PARTNERS; she was promoted to case management supervisor in 2009. Nicole completed her Master's degree in Community Counseling and started a family during her journey as the case management supervisor. In July of 2016, Nicole was promoted to Program Manager of the foster care case management program. Nicole says "I am overjoyed to have this opportunity. I have always felt at home and been proud to work at Our Little Haven. It only seems right to take the next step in my professional development here at Our Little Haven."



Jessica Roeseler - Psychotherapist, Keystone Mental Health Services
Jessica is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Registered Play Therapist, having graduated with her Masters in Social Work from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and receiving her Registered Play Therapy certification from KC Play. Her clinical work has included treating children and adolescents, in both clinic and school settings. She has a particular passion for working with young children and their families, both clinical and in supporting access to services that allow for early intervention. Jessica lives with her family and enjoys being outdoors, spending time with friends and family, and exploring new things to do in St. Louis.

LEAVE A LEGACY OF HOPE



Leave A Legacy of Hope for generations to come. For more about Our Little Haven's legacy giving, including tax-wise options, call Mike Bahlinger, (314) 533-2229 x225.

Upcoming EVENTS



Every Wednesday in October, (four Wednesdays starting Wednesday, Oct. 5th) 3 pm to close.
Pietro's Anniversary Nights for the Haven: "Give Back Wednesdays"! 3801 Watson Road.
Celebrate with Pietro's special roll-back price dinners, either strip steak dinner or Chicken Pietro with sides for \$5.95. With the money you save, donate to Our Little Haven to your server. For directions see: pietrosdining.com



Friday, October 21, 2016 - Sporting Clays to Benefit OLH presented by Icon Mechanical - St. Louis Skeet & Trap, 18554 Franklin Road, Pacific, MO 63069. A day of sport shooting, with golf cart, ammunition, lunch, soft drinks, snacks, beer after tournament and Top 5 Annie Oakley Contest, four flights, trophy, best team, raffle prizes. \$150 per person, RSVP to Steve Faust, sfaust@iconmech.com, (618) 741-1629. See www.ourlittlehaven.org for more information and to register.



Saturday, Nov 5, 2016 - Chic Boutiques Fashion Show & Sale to Benefit the Haven - St. Louis Frontenac Hilton Hotel Ballroom, 10 am – 2 pm. Guests will enjoy a day of boutique shopping, Wine Pull, raffles, lunch and a fashion show. For more information and registration, visit www.ourlittlehaven.org

Sunday, April 23, 2017 - Spring Dinner Auction to Benefit Our Little Haven
5-9 pm Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel - 800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101

An elegant evening celebrating care for special children. Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, dinner, silent and live auctions, Wine Pull, live music, Fund The Need. Complimentary valet parking, cocktail attire. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us! See www.ourlittlehaven.org for unfolding details and information about sponsorships.



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2016 WISH LIST

COMPLETE LIST ONLINE
ourlittlehaven.org

GIFT CARDS

Gift cards are extremely helpful. Children enter foster care, often with nothing, and foster parents are scrambling to find clothing that fits. A gift card would help meet this immediate need.

- Schnucks, Aldi's/Shop N Save
- iTunes and Amazon giftcards (for the preschool)
- Target/Walmart
- Michael's/Hobby Lobby

EVERYDAY NEEDS

- Toilet paper, paper towels, kleenex
- Healthy snacks: 100 calorie packs, etc.
- Copy paper, large white paper for painting
- Small prizes for clinician's Treasure Boxes
- People playsets; animal playsets
- Matchbox cars, movie character playsets
- Coloring books (not just holiday type, please)
- Action figures, Lego kits

PRESCHOOL WISHES

- Tie Dye Kits
- Glitter Watercolors
- Crayola Washable Kids Paints
- Cushioned Headphones in kid sizes
- Do-A-Dot Paints
- Pillow Pals (light-up stuffed toy pillows)

CAPITAL NEEDS Call Mike, x225

- New minivan for Taylor Family Care Cntr
- 2016 Assessment Software, Keystone Mental Health Services (\$5,000)
- Autism Assessment Software (\$2,100)
- RDS server replacement (\$3,500)
- Network Upgrades (\$19,000)
- Workstations Replacement (\$8,000)
- Refurbishing of "The Link" access ramp between the Keystone building and the preschool building (outdoor carpet needs to be replaced, and several wooden steps need repair)
- Six laptops for Foster Care Case Managers, for fieldwork mobility (\$6,000)

ADVENT COIN BOXES

Fill a coin collection box with your change this Advent. Boxes are shaped like a house.



Available in large and small. FREE of charge, we deliver and pick up: cmunoz@ourlittlehaven.org