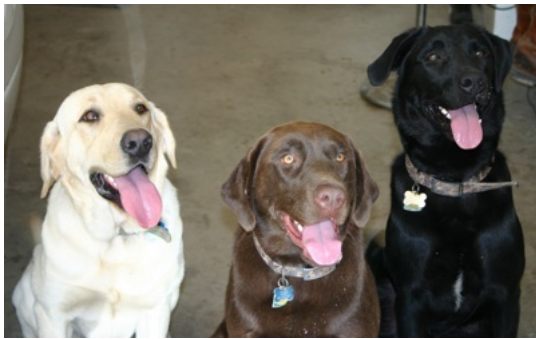


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## Tail Wagging Fun



As part of Vanderheyden's commitment to supporting self care, with a focus on stress reduction, Lauren Sirkin, Vanderheyden's Activities Coordinator invited Josh, Dougie, Lexi, Lulu, Oasis, and Penny to come for a visit. These guests didn't have a lot to say about managing stress, but they did wag their tails vigorously and accepted a whole lot of love and hugs. Studies show that petting and interacting with a dog can lower blood pressure and feelings of stress.

This friendly group of Shepards, Retrievers, Labs, Setters, and a Shih tzu, were accompanied by their families, all members of the Schenectady Chapter of Therapy Dogs International.

## SAVE THE DATE

Imagine More  
Fundraiser

Saturday, June 13

11 am to 4 pm

Raymour & Flanigan  
Furniture Stores:  
Clifton Park, Latham  
and Niskayuna

Vanderheyden 2015  
Oktoberfest  
Thursday, October 29  
6 pm to 8pm  
Brown's Brewing  
Company: Troy

### **Do You Have...**

Our Community Service Department  
is looking for Lego's; model cars;  
board games and community

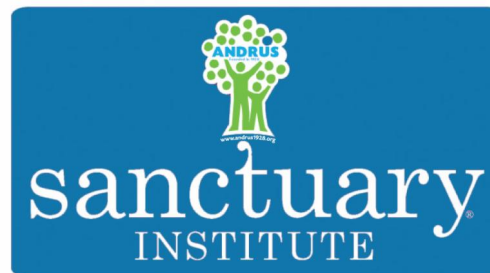
Lauren explained, "The kids who came down to the pet therapy extravaganza were all very excited to see the dogs. Every single participant was well mannered and behaved. One of the girls basically melted into the dog and had him laying on her stomach while he was on his back. The dog just allowed her to do it, and she had the biggest grin I had seen her have in a very long time. Multiple kids asked 'Can we do this everyday?'"

"At the same time, another staff member and I were helping kids make balloon and rice stress balls. This sparked conversation about why dogs help reduce stress, and why its important to reduce your stress." Many thanks to Wendy, Carol Bessette, Kim Bruton/Dougie, Keith Hoffman, Heidi Atkinson, Ann Halburian, and Royce Moeske. Special thanks to Penny, a Shih tzu, who along with Royce Moeske, has been visiting Bessey House every week for years!

## The "Never Been To" Person

At Vanderheyden, all staff and residents are encouraged to find a way that they can contribute something to the community. For staff, the "give back" is something they do outside the responsibilities of their positions. Many staff have volunteered their time and treasure for years during and

gaming systems (Wii, Play Station 3 or an X Box 1). If anyone has any they would like to donate to Vanderheyden - we would be very grateful. Please email Lauren lfinlan@vanderheyden.org or call (518) 283-6500 ext.750 if you wish to donate.



### The seven commitments to which our Sanctuary Community commits:

- Non-violence
- Emotional intelligence
- Social learning
- Open communication
- Growth and change
- Shared Governance
- Social responsibility



after work hours, frequently volunteering their time for the events and activities that are held within the Vanderheyden community. Vanderheyden's decision to become a Sanctuary-certified agency evolved into a request that all members of the community find a way to contribute to the collective good. Social responsibility is one of seven commitments that all members of a Sanctuary community agree to.

As Maura Psoinos, Vice President of Community Services mulled over options for her give-back, a conversation with the girls who live in the Bessey Group Home struck her. So many of the girls had not experienced activities that Maura's own 12-year-old and her friends consider routine: girls night, drive-in movies, Guptills roller-skating, tubing, bowling or an afternoon at a make-your-own bracelet place. So Maura decided that once a month, the Bessey girls would get to select a "never been to" activity. Maura's daughter and her younger son come along on these excursions, which contributes to everyone enjoying a feeling of connection.

The girls from Bessey enjoy doting on Maura's young son, and he thrives on the extra attention. Maura's daughter and the girls talk non-stop about the trials and triumphs of being preteen girls.

"I'm not sure who benefits most by our outings," says Maura. "The girls, my kids, or me. It's fun and a win all around."

## Summer in February

As this bitter cold winter maintains its grip, the staff at Vanderheyden provided residents with a reminder that summer will eventually return. All of the kids were encouraged to wear summer clothing and to prepare for a day of summer fun. The heat in the gym was cranked up, and the food, music and games of summer were offered in abundance.

Beach blanket music filled the room as the kids enjoyed face painting, lawn darts, bean bag tossing, Frisbee throwing, rope jumping hula hoops and limbo. Those needing to cool off from all the activities were offered snow cones and smoothies.



**to Eva!**



Recently, the Vanderheyden community said farewell to Eva Howe, 26, a resident for the last twelve years in one of our group homes for people living with developmental disabilities. Eva has grown tremendously through her own hard work, the care of staff and the love and support of her family living nearby. Her aunt and guardian, Angela, says, "Unless you've ever walked this road, you don't know how hard it is. But Vanderheyden helped Eva grow into the young lady she has become. We all worked together on annual goals and she's learned many of the skills of daily living. She's funny and makes us laugh. She's a great kid!"

Angela cited the care given to Eva by Beth Carr, Rhonda Darmetko, and Pam Condon, and said "I always felt Eva was safe, even when she became upset. The staff knew how to calm her down without resorting to medication."

"Saying goodbye to Eva was bittersweet," says Julie Ramos, Director of the Community Services program that managed Eva's home. "There was the sadness of losing a family member who is moving far away, but also the joy of seeing someone be able to move on to the next stage of her life."

All of us wish Eva all the best as she and her family all adjust to their new lives in North Carolina!

## The Results are in From Vanderheyden's 2nd Annual Blood Drive

Despite yet more snow and bitter cold, Vanderheyden staff and members of the community took the time to donate blood on February 3rd. Twenty-seven "productive units" were collected, meaning that up to 81 individuals will benefit by the donations. Ten donors were first-timers.



Who donates blood? Of 9.2 million annual donors nationally, half are male, half are female. The number one reason given for donating is "I want to help others." Among Red Cross donors, half are regular donors, 19 percent donate occasionally, and 31 percent are first time donors.

Although it is estimated that 38% of the U. S. populations is eligible to donate, less than 10% actually donate each year. Vanderheyden is proud to be part of a community that is encouraging donations. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S.

needs blood and more than 41,000 blood donations are needed every day. Each pint of blood can help save the lives of up to three people. We look forward to expanding the number of donors from our community at next year's drive!

"We want to give a special shout out to our employee Dawn Clark, who, at our event, donated for the 66th time!"

### Shop for a Cause

Did you know Target will donate 1% of your Credit or Debit REDcard purchases made at Target or Target.com to our school? Go to [Target](#) and register your card with our school ID 19042. We can all make a difference - one at a

time!

PASS IT ON!



### Want to Learn more about us?

Call today for a tour and speak to Cathy Yudzevich  
518-874-4901



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### SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING ON OUR SOCIAL SITES



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4/15/2015

Vanderheyden Times March Eletter

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