



July 2022, Issue 22

CHEFF CENTER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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JULY VOLUNTEER PROFILE: KASSIDY SIMON



Harry and Kassidy

Kassidy has been a regular at the Cheff Center for many years. Being the stepdaughter of our Executive Director Tara, Kassidy got to know Cheff as a youngster and was helping with barn chores by around age eight. She added volunteering in classes a little while later.

She's a student at Gull Lake High School. During the school year, she volunteers at Cheff weekly when her schedule allows and fills in at other times as needed.

Kassidy's pretty much grown up with horses. Between the herds at Cheff and at Eastfork Farms, where she used to live, plus her own horses, she's gotten to know and work with equines of all sizes and personalities over the years.



Kassidy and her horse Skeeter

As a young kid, one of the first horses Kassidy worked with was Stinker, a Mini Horse that many volunteers will remember from his years at Cheff. Before Cheff, Stinker lived at Eastfork. It was there that Kassidy rode him and, with assistance from her dad, helped train Stinker to improve some attitude issues. Volunteers may also remember Fauna, who was at Cheff a while and then moved on to Eastfork. Kassidy worked with Fauna and was able to show her.

Currently, Cassidy has two horses of her own: a Paint-Pinto cross named Scooby, and a full Quarter Horse named Skeeter. Skeeter's great-grandfather was Smart Chic Olena, a world champion in both cutting and reining. Besides Cassidy's horses, her family has one other full-size horse and a Mini Horse, for a total of four, along with 13 chickens.

Kassidy was a Kalamazoo County 4H member for several years. Her group was the Hickory Corners CC Riders horse club. She and Skeeter participate in Gymkhana, which involves a variety of timed speed events. Some of their favorite Gymkhana races are Speed & Action, Barrels, and Kegs. She and Skeeter are also getting into hunter/jumper events.

Kassidy said one of her favorite things is just hanging out with her horses and enjoying their companionship. Sometimes she'll sit in the pasture and wait for them to come over to her. If she has reading to do for school, she may take it outside and read with her horses. She also likes helping others learn to ride, including some of her eight nieces and nephews, friends who don't have a horse background, and, of course, clients at Cheff.

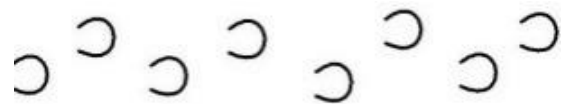
In previous years, Cassidy was very involved in gymnastics. She advanced to a level where she had to decide between gymnastics and horses, as she wouldn't have time to do both. "I've always been an animal-oriented person," Cassidy said. So, it makes sense that she decided on horses.

Some of the gymnastics has stuck with her, though, as she's known to do a bit of trick riding.

For the future, Cassidy would like to train horses and have her own barn, and she's also thinking about becoming a farrier. She said she's learned a lot from others about horse training methods and has started developing her own ideas and philosophy for how to do it.

As a Cheff volunteer, Cassidy said she especially enjoys being paired up with a particular client and getting to see their skills progress. She also appreciates the similarities in working with people and horses in learning situations, where it is helpful to see each person and each horse as an individual and adjust your approach to their unique qualities.

We hope you have a chance to meet Cassidy sometime. She's a big help to Cheff and a great resource for fellow volunteers. Thanks, Cassidy, for all your service to the Cheff Center. You've made a difference to many people and horses. We hope to see you often for many years to come!



HORSE BREED OF THE MONTH – QUARTER HORSE



The most popular and numerous breed in the world today is the American Quarter Horse. Since 1940 there have been over six million registered Quarter Horses, with approximately 80,000 new registrations being filed each year. Texas has the largest population, with over 420,000 American Quarter Horses.

The product of native horses and Thoroughbreds, the Quarter Horse traces its origins to the colonization of the United States, as far back as the early 1600s. Despite their association with America's west, Quarter Horses actually have their roots in Virginia. Not too long after settling in Virginia and the Carolinas, colonists started trading with the Chickasaw Indians

for a fast horse they were breeding, more commonly known as Spanish Barbs, and then began to breed them with their traditional Thoroughbred horses. These fast horses were themselves initially brought to America by way of Florida from early Spanish explorers.

Racing gave the breed its name; at first, as entertainment for ranchers, the "quarter-mile race" soon became a sport on its own, and a source of income for ranchers. Later infusions of more Thoroughbred blood enhanced this. Over shorter distances, the Quarter Horse is considered the fastest horse breed, with a top speed of 55 mph. The AQHA Record Holder for the fastest time was the stallion First Moonflash, who ran the quarter mile in just over 20 seconds.

Another fast Quarter Horse was Easy Jet, one of the most successful racehorses of all time. Easy Jet had 38 races under his belt, winning 27 of those races. He was named the Champion 2-year-old colt in the same year that he was also named the World Champion Quarter Running Horse *and* Champion Stallion, which is an honor rarely bestowed on a horse so young. He also has the distinction of siring three future racing winners.

Versatile, strong, and fast, the Quarter Horse is an excellent horse in sport, cattle-raising, and all-around family and personal riding. It can compete in all sports, though it shines the most in those that involve cattle, rodeos, and all things Western, as well as its own sprinting races. The Quarter Horse is the ultimate cattle horse: a quick, stocky animal with a superb "cow sense"; they are stable and level-headed around large animals, not easily spooked and have a natural understanding of herds and cow behavior.

Quarter Horses have three basic types: stock, hunter/racing, and halter type. **Stock (or bulldog)** type Quarter Horses are smaller and quicker, fit for Western-style riding and sport and cattle-handling, and are generally found in ranch or farm work. They have the right stamina to be true workhorses, muscular but agile, with a sturdy, stocky build, especially where the legs and hindquarters are concerned.



Hunter/racing types are lighter, taller, and closer to the Thoroughbred in appearance. They tend to be sleeker and narrower in body type, but still with strong muscles. Their head will often be longer and elegant – not quite as dishy as an Arabian or a Thoroughbred, but certainly less broad than a stock Quarter Horse. The show hunter type is slimmer, even more closely resembling a Thoroughbred, usually reflecting a higher percentage of appendix breeding. They are shown in hunter/jumper classes at both breed shows and in open USEF-rated horse show competition.



Halter type horses are shown in-hand in Halter competitions and are larger yet, with a very heavily muscled appearance, while retaining small heads with wide jowls and refined muzzles. There is controversy amongst owners, breeders and veterinarians regarding the health effects of the extreme muscle mass that is currently fashionable in the specialized halter horse, which typically is 15.2 to 16 hands (62 to 64 inches, 157 to 163 cm) and weighs in at over 1,200 pounds (540 kg) when fitted for halter competition.



All types have a broad chest, smallish head, thick neck, and powerful hindquarters, which became a striking characteristic of the breed, and run between 14 – 16 hh, and occasionally as tall as 17 hh. According to registration numbers, sorrel and chestnut are the most common colors in the Quarter Horse. Originally, there were just 13 accepted coat colors, though that has changed over the years to accept colors like cremello, perlino, and smoky cream. The most common color is sorrel, a brownish red, part of the color group called chestnut by most other breed registries. Quarter Horses tend to have a healthy lifespan of around 25 – 30 years, though they can often live longer.

There are several genetic diseases of concern to Quarter Horse breeders:

- [Hyperkalemic periodic paralysis](#) (HYPP), characterized by uncontrollable muscle twitching and substantial muscle weakness or paralysis among affected horses.
- [Malignant hyperthermia](#), which can be caused by overwork, anesthesia, or stress.
- [Hereditary Equine Regional Dermal Asthenia](#) (HERDA), also known as hyperelastosis cutis (HC), a collagen defect that results in the layers of skin not being held firmly together.
- [Glycogen Branching Enzyme Deficiency](#) (GBED), a genetic disease where the horse is lacking an enzyme necessary for storing [glycogen](#), the horse's heart muscle and skeletal muscles cannot function, leading to rapid death.
- [Equine polysaccharide storage myopathy](#), also called EPSM or PSSM, is a metabolic muscular condition in horses that causes [tying up](#), and is also related to a glycogen storage disorder.

- [Lethal White Syndrome](#), although Quarter Horses with Paint markings were not allowed to be registered for many years, foals born with this Paint Horse genetic defect have a nonfunctioning colon and need to be euthanized.



Cheff's horses with Quarter Horse in their breeding are wonderful Winston and good-looking Garth!



For more information on this versatile breed:

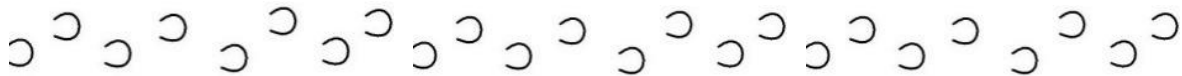
[What Is a Quarter Horse? - AQHA](#)

[American Quarter Horse - Wikipedia](#)

helpfulhorsehints.com/quarter-horse-facts/

[8 Fascinating Facts About the Quarter Horse](#)

[Quarter Horse Breed Origin, Characteristics and Uses](#)



Field of Flight hot air balloons at Cheff

Impacting Young Women Now and For the Future!

It's hard to believe that the Girls in the Barn/Camp Pegasus Program is entering its second decade! Recognizing the increase in anxiety, depression, challenges in school and with social skills facing young women, a group of visionary staff at Cheff got together to brainstorm what a psychoeducational program for girls involving horses might look like. The result was Girls in the Barn, which began as Camp Pegasus.

Both programs, which have now morphed into one (one was a summer program, one was a school year program), had the same program goals: giving young girls a voice--both metaphorically and literally. It is designed to support girls from about sixth grade through high school, who may or may not have a diagnosis of ADHD, depression, anxiety, or other emotional challenges. The goal is to empower them with confidence and mindfulness skills--things that start with work in the barn, with horses and each other, and is transferrable to everyday life.

Every girl that elects to participate has something she is working on--managing anxiety, building a skill set to cope with negative thinking or dysregulated emotions, and/or just finding her voice in a group, and her voice in expressing herself in a positive and assertive way.

Some Cheff supporters may not be aware of the difference between a regular therapeutic riding lesson (Equine-Assisted Activity), and a psychoeducational group which also includes riding. Girls in the Barn is co-facilitated by a licensed mental health professional, who is an Advanced PATH instructor, and also a certified specialist in Equine-Assisted Learning.

In order for Girls in the Barn to be a success, the team must model healthy interaction, discussion, problem solving, and support. The team for Girls is also made up of at least one other PATH Certified Instructor, and a small team of volunteers with experience in teen behavior and development. The team works together to modify curriculum and operates under a Trauma Informed Model of care. This means that trust, choice, empowerment, and emotional and physical safety are paramount and discussed as a team and with the participants. And OF COURSE, the horses are part of the team--the opportunities they give the young women to practice emotional regulation, problem solving, mindfulness, and relationship building are paramount. While it is not traditional therapy, it is a psychoeducational group with therapeutic benefits. Girls do group time, and take home specific handouts and worksheets, as well as additional horse information.

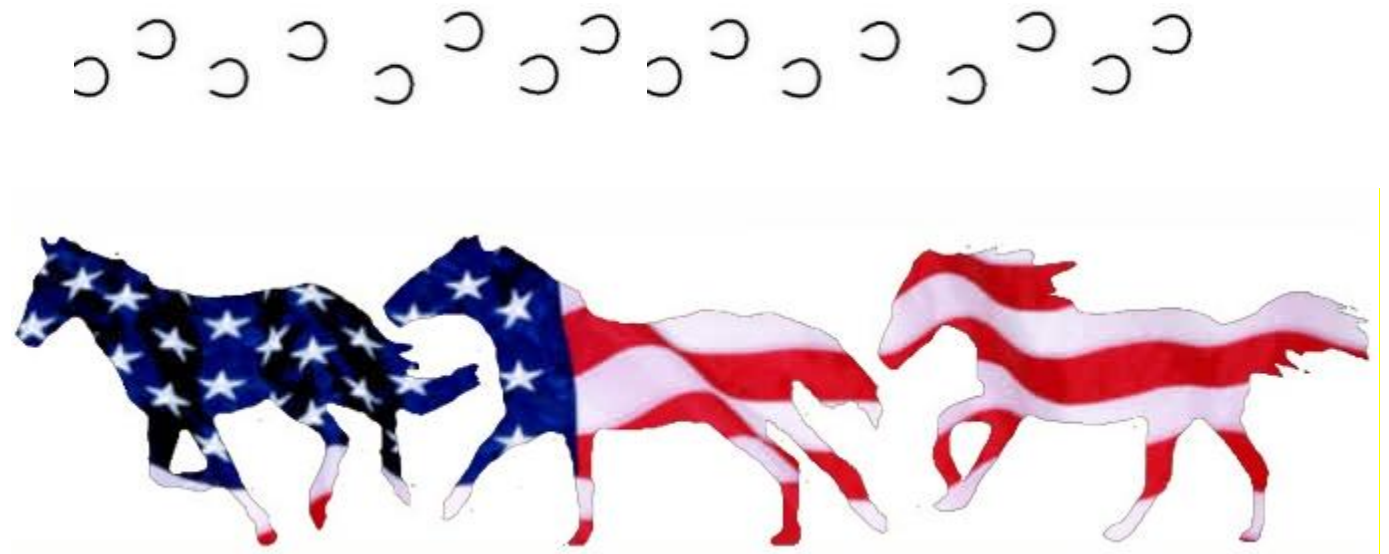
Besides the psychological benefits, Girls in the Barn is just plain fun! We created a safe, judgement-free zone, where it is okay to make a mistake, to "not do it right" (whatever that means to each person), to find support and care, and to practice decision making, and safe choices, which can be modified to work even better.

Society today is so busy--giving young women a place to slow down, to sit outside, have time with the horses without an agenda, and creating art with the horses is so important. One activity we try to do (modified for the pandemic) is eat together and talk about our day thus far.

So many kids do not get to eat as a family, with conversation and connection. We also do art with our horses and incorporate music, games, and fun into each day. Giving girls choices empowers them. Our curriculum is structured but very flexible. Many of our former campers/participants have returned to volunteer in regular Cheff Center programs.

Staff involved in this program are passionate about it--and would love to tell you more! The stories and activities are part of why we do this wonderful work! If you would like to learn more contact Emily or Jane at Cheff at 269-731-4471.

--Natalya (Tasha) Federinko, MA, LPC
PATH CTRI/Advanced instructor



BACK IN THE SADDLE - SHINDIG 2022!

Many of you have heard of the **Shindig** but may not know exactly what it is, other than being a fundraiser. We thought you might want to know a little more about it since we will be having the first one since Covid interrupted our lives almost three years ago.

Shindig is the Cheff Center's biggest fundraiser annually, raising nearly one-third of the income needed to run our programs in one evening of fun! This year, Shindig is on August 26 from 6pm-11pm. The event is invite-only, although there may be some tickets available closer to the actual date for other people to purchase online. Tickets are \$200/person, with \$150 of that being tax deductible.

Cheff staff start working on Shindig 6+ months prior to the actual event. First and foremost, we have to get sponsors. There are four sponsorship levels, each with different benefits:

1. Bronze Level--\$600 donation
 - a. Two tickets for an evening of dinner and dancing
 - b. Name displayed on the Cheff Center Shindig web page
2. Silver Level--\$1,500 donation
 - a. Four tickets for an evening of dinner and dancing
 - b. Name on the Shindig invitation
 - c. Name displayed on the Cheff Shindig page
 - d. Name announced throughout the evening
3. Gold Level--\$3,000 donation
 - a. One table of 10 for an evening of dinner and dancing
 - b. Two VIP parking passes
 - c. Your company-supplied banner displayed during the event
 - d. Name on Shindig invitations
 - e. Name/logo with click-through displayed on the Cheff Shindig page
 - f. Name announced throughout the evening
4. Platinum Level--\$6,000 donation
 - a. Two tables of 10 for an evening of dinner and dancing
 - b. Four VIP parking passes
 - c. Your banner displayed at the event
 - d. Name on Shindig invitation
 - e. Name/logo with click-through on Cheff Shindig page
 - f. Company ad with click-through displayed repeatedly on the live auction website up to one month prior to and during the event
 - g. Name announced throughout the evening

We also ask local businesses and individuals to donate items for our live and online auctions — these range from gift certificates for goods and services, to gift basket items, etc. Some of the items will be in the live auction, and most will be in the online auction, which anyone can participate in (do not have to be an invitee).

For the week prior to, during the event, and the day after the event we need a total of roughly **40-50 volunteers!** We thoroughly clean the facility, clean and oil the barn wood, wrap silverware, decorate, set up tables and the tent, set up the online auction items in the arena and other things that need to be done. During the event, we need people to help with registration, manning the auction tables, floating around the room making sure things are tidy and people are happy, and afterward to help put food away. It's a late night, so we need people to come on Saturday morning to help finish the cleanup.

So, how does the night go? It starts at six pm with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by a wonderful, catered dinner in the massive tent with an open bar throughout the evening. After dinner service is finished, they move on to the live and online auctions. When the auctions are wrapped up, the band starts for music and dancing! Attendees are encouraged to dress in their western gear, of course, and there is plenty of fun to be had!



Ready for the guests to arrive

So that's Shindig. It's a "Big Happenin" and incredibly important to us financially. Volunteers will receive a Shindig T-shirt and meal from Cheff. It's a great evening, and this, along with our classes, is something we cannot do without our volunteers.

Sara will be sending out sign-up sheets soon, but in the meantime if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sara directly at 269-243-5800, or email sara@cheffcenter.org.



Arena Games - Wine Toss!

We hope to see you there! 😊



Tara and Kenny enjoying the festivities



Dancing the night away! 1

CHEFF UPDATES

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION REMINDER: The next orientation is scheduled for August 20th, from 10am-1pm.

READ AND RIDE was a smashing success with kids, parents and volunteers!!! Everyone had a wonderful time, and the parents reported that they saw marked improvements in just one week in their child's reading and desire to read! Sara has copies of their feedback responses if you would like to see how this impacts kids in one week of camp.

HERD UPDATE:



Awesome will be out for a while to recover from EPM, (Equine protozoal myeloencephalitis). It's caused by the microbe, *Sarcocystis neurona*, commonly found in the opossum; horses that come in contact with infected opossum feces can develop this neurologic disease. **Art** has a much milder case and is still able to work.

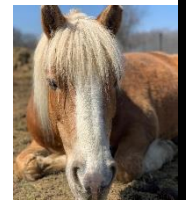


Gunny's eye has worsened, the tissue that caused his pain and problems will continue to grow back unless it is removed. He will be going to MSU this month.

Emma experienced some foundering and is now recovering.



Luna is well but will be off for two months for a training refresher.



LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD HORSES! Cheff is always looking for great horses to add to our herd. Because of their important role, we are very selective in determining which horses are accepted. If you know of any possible candidates with the qualities listed on our website: [WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN A HORSE](#), please contact Emily at: Emily@cheffcenter.org



July Fun Fact



Here are some fascinating (and good-to-know) facts about horse digestion:

- As forage (the horse's natural food) is chewed by the horse, the salivary glands produce up to 10 gallons of saliva (per day). Saliva is crucial for neutralizing stomach acids and reducing the risk of gastric ulcers. Horses do not make as much saliva when eating grain-type feeds.
- The esophagus, which empties into the stomach, only works in one direction for the horse. Food cannot be regurgitated or vomited.
- Gastric capacity is 8-10 liters, which is quite small compared to other parts of the digestive system.
- Water only remains in the horse's stomach about 15 minutes before moving on to the small intestine. Food retention varies depending upon the type - grass, hay, or grain.
- Horses do not have a gall bladder. Instead, the small intestine aids in the digestion of fats.
- The colon is shaped like a stacked horseshoe, with varying dimensions to allow proper food mixing and digestion.
- Food enters and exits the cecum (similar to the human appendix) at the top. This is a common site for impaction colic, which is often due to lack of water intake.
- The cecum and other parts of the large intestine contain active populations of bacteria and yeast, to help break food down in a process called fermentation. This results in the formation of free fatty acids, from which the horse derives most of its energy. It also results in a large amount of gas, as a by-product.
- The bacterial and microbe populations become specific in fermenting the type of food the horse normally eats. When a new food is introduced suddenly, the bacteria/microbes cannot ferment it effectively and the result is often colic, therefore, all feed changes should be made very gradually.
- Borborygmic sounds or 'Gut sounds' indicate that food is moving through the digestive tract. An absence of gut sounds likely means there is some digestive upset or obstruction.
- If it were to be stretched from end to end, the horse's digestive tract would be about 115 feet long, from mouth to anus.
- The entire digestion process, from oral to aboral, takes about 36-72 hours.





JULY BIRTHDAYS



Baylee A

Lori F

Josie K

Dia PB

Melissa C

Theresa G

Sam M

Molly R

Ellen F

Lauren J

Jordan MG

Launa R



*Happy
4th of
July!*

Summer Reminder: Notification will be sent out if the HEAT INDEX is too high for the horses to safely participate!

The following rule of thumb can be used as a guide. If the sum of the temperature and humidity is:

- 120 or less: The horse can cool itself.
- 140 or more: The horse is relying on sweat to cool itself - but use caution, especially if the humidity is greater than half of the total.
- 150 or more: The horse's cooling mechanisms are compromised and will need help.
- 160 or more: The horse has no natural means to cool off, and the rider must provide aggressive cooling.

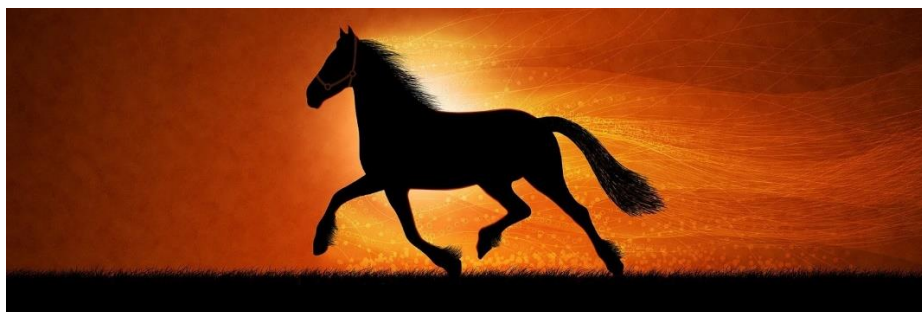
NOAA's National Weather Service

Heat Index
Temperature (°F)

| | 80 | 82 | 84 | 86 | 88 | 90 | 92 | 94 | 96 | 98 | 100 | 102 | 104 | 106 | 108 | 110 |
|-----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 40 | 80 | 81 | 83 | 85 | 88 | 91 | 94 | 97 | 101 | 105 | 109 | 114 | 119 | 124 | 130 | 136 |
| 45 | 80 | 82 | 84 | 87 | 89 | 93 | 96 | 100 | 104 | 109 | 114 | 119 | 124 | 130 | 137 | |
| 50 | 81 | 83 | 85 | 88 | 91 | 95 | 99 | 103 | 108 | 113 | 118 | 124 | 131 | 137 | | |
| 55 | 81 | 84 | 86 | 89 | 93 | 97 | 101 | 106 | 112 | 117 | 124 | 130 | 137 | | | |
| 60 | 82 | 84 | 88 | 91 | 95 | 100 | 105 | 110 | 116 | 123 | 129 | 137 | | | | |
| 65 | 82 | 85 | 89 | 93 | 98 | 103 | 108 | 114 | 121 | 128 | 136 | | | | | |
| 70 | 83 | 86 | 90 | 95 | 100 | 105 | 112 | 119 | 126 | 134 | | | | | | |
| 75 | 84 | 88 | 92 | 97 | 103 | 109 | 116 | 124 | 132 | | | | | | | |
| 80 | 84 | 89 | 94 | 100 | 106 | 113 | 121 | 129 | | | | | | | | |
| 85 | 85 | 90 | 96 | 102 | 110 | 117 | 126 | 135 | | | | | | | | |
| 90 | 86 | 91 | 98 | 105 | 113 | 122 | 131 | | | | | | | | | |
| 95 | 86 | 93 | 100 | 108 | 117 | 127 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 100 | 87 | 95 | 103 | 112 | 121 | 132 | | | | | | | | | | |

Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure or Strenuous Activity

- Caution
 Extreme Caution
 Danger
 Extreme Danger



Cheff gets a large discount on horse-related products!

If you would like to get more bang for your buck, you could make a [DONATION](#) to Cheff and we will gratefully use it where most needed!

Amazon Smile

Anytime you order online from **Amazon.com**, the Cheff Center can receive benefits. Support us each time you shop at *no* extra cost through Amazon. To find out more, visit:

<https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about>

Harding's

For those of you who shop at Harding's, if you join their Community Rewards program and select the Cheff Center as your organization of choice, we will receive a rebate based on your purchase amounts. Please let your friends and family know—every little bit helps!!!

For more information, click on the link below.

<https://www.hardings.com/savings-and-rewards/community-rewards/>

Rite Aid

Rite Aid has become one of Cheff partners and extended their shopper rewards program to us.

Please consider signing up as a Cheff Supporter, it's just one quick form: Rxfundraising.com - [Support Your Cause!](#)

Do you have any Questions/Comments/Suggestions?

If so, you can contact Sara Putney-Smith, Volunteer Administrator, at sara@cheffcenter.org

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