

Pony Pages



Fall/Winter 2021

Celebrating Abilities!

Also featured:

- **Community Showcase**
 - **Pony Bird Annual Appeal**
 - **Pony Bird VIRTUAL Great Taste Information**
- ...and more!





Letter from the President & CEO

Dear Friends and Community Partners,

2020 posed unprecedented challenges for Pony Bird, Inc. as it did for many of our community partners and families. There are times challenges can inspire us to be better. The pandemic is an example of this. The challenges we faced empowered us to enhance our programs and services in ways that are even more beneficial. We expanded medical assessment and diagnostic oversight through our nursing staff, enhanced a telehealth infrastructure to address critical health needs in a timelier manner, and implemented successful, rigorous COVID protocols to keep individuals we serve and employees safe.

Pony Bird's amazing employees proved they are committed and compassionate in remarkable ways. They showed up every day committed to creating enriching programs, fun activities and environments. They adapted and created plans that were creative and outside the box. They kept us all connected when we could have been most disconnected.



Tracy P. and Direct Support Professional, Cyndi Meredith, share the message to our friends, family, community partners, and supporters.



There are times challenges can inspire us to be better. The pandemic is an example of this. Pony Bird's amazing staff proved they are committed and compassionate in remarkable ways... They kept us all connected when we could have been most disconnected.

We recognize that we could not have done any of this without you - our friends, family, community partners, and supporters. Each of you stepped up in generous ways and made possible the many changes required to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of every individual in our care. Thank you for helping us navigate the unknown and emerge stronger than ever. You empower us to fulfill our mission and advocate on behalf of individuals with significant disabilities.

With gratitude,

Sara Sucharski, President & CEO

Our Board of Directors

Chairperson
Charles Wooten

Treasurer
Paul Flynn

Vice-Chairperson
Mark Westcott

Secretary
Donna L. Litton

Eric Ammons
Susan Curfman
Ann Ferguson
Sue Hockensmith

Roy Burnside
Kyle Drury
Dana Hockensmith
Heather Williams

Cover photo: Pony Bird individual, Chris, celebrates his graduation from DeSoto High School.

Community Showcase

Community Partners

United Way of Greater St. Louis Selects Pony Bird as a Safety Net Partner

The United Way of Greater St. Louis knows there isn't one single answer to our region's needs. That is why they strategically invest in safety net systems and targeted programs through local nonprofits. This past year, Pony Bird was selected as one of those safety net partners because of our commitment to helping and advocating on behalf of individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In the upcoming weeks and months, you will be able to learn more about this partnership and how Pony Bird helps strengthen the region through high-quality programs, resources, and advocacy efforts.

Proud partner of



Greater St. Louis

Community Partners Step Up to Meet Needs During COVID

2020 introduced new and unforeseen challenges for Pony Bird. Fortunately, our community responded to these challenges by stepping up and meeting needs in unique and creative ways. Here are just a few examples:



Mercy Hospital donated a van which will transport individuals to and from appointments.

Victory Church coordinated a caroling drive-by for the individuals at all Pony Bird locations.

The Juliettes from the Colonnade Assisted Living Community hand-stitched blankets and food protectors for individuals.

William Polley surprised Pony Bird individuals with a surprise visit from Jolly Old Saint Nick himself.

Laura Brandt's kids hosted a backyard extravaganza that raised \$1,000 for Pony Bird.

Many others donated masks, sanitizer, and personal protective equipment to keep everyone safe. We are grateful for our community and the ways in which we make a difference together.

Corporate Partners

While our doors were closed to visitors and our events looked very different, our corporate partners showed just how committed they are to making a difference at Pony Bird.

J.W. Terrill, Buzze, Good Earth Tools and so many more coordinated Christmas present deliveries for Pony Bird individuals.

Ameren provided a grant to help us purchase vital personal protective equipment for our staff.



In order to keep players and staff members safe, Pony Bird's golf tournament was overhauled with COVID protocols in mind. In spite of these differences, our corporate partners still stepped up. **2020 Annual Golf Tournament Sponsors included:**

Arco Construction, J.W. Terrill, Lakeside Children's Academy, AuditSolv, CJC Transport, Fabick Cat, Lakenan Insurance, American Boiler & Mechanical, Bank of Springfield, Bartch Roofing, Bloomsdale Bank, Foam Products, Roberts, Wooten & Zimmer, LLC, Rudd Equipment, Andre's Banquet, Erb Turf Equipment, Greensfelder, Hemker & Gale, Health Care Direct, MC Mechanical Services, Spencer Fane, and Wies Drywall & Construction Corp

Thank You!



Brad & Ann Summa – volunteers at this year's golf tournament.

Foundation Partners

Pony Bird is proud to introduce four new Foundation Partners this past year.

Delta Dental provided a generous grant to promote the dental hygiene of the individuals we support and donated 1,500 toothbrushes.

Home Builders' Association generously funded the replacement of flooring in the Drury home.

The Saigh Foundation and **E. Walter Hausstette Foundation** funded programming for our younger generations who are referred to us by the Missouri Children's Division.

In addition, Pony Bird is proud of the rich and ongoing relationship with foundations such as:

Developmental Disability Advocates

The Jefferson Foundation

The Trio Foundation of St. Louis

The Wayne C. Kaufmann Foundation

The Charles W. and Jean H. Frees Foundation

Missouri Employers' Mutual

Boeing Employees Charitable Fund of St. Louis

Missouri Department of Transportation

Through their partnership, Pony Bird has emerged from 2020 stronger than ever, well-equipped to continue serving individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout 2021.

ANNUAL APPEAL

Ron



Ron was born on December 17, 1972, in Southeast Missouri. As a child he was funny, outgoing, warm, and engaging. He attended school, spent time with his family and friends, and enjoyed the things young people enjoy doing. As he grew up, he discovered his love of football and, even more, he could play. He was preparing to play for the University of Missouri-Columbia on a football scholarship, but a car crash with four friends in the late 1980s altered the course of his life.

Ron's car accident resulted in cervical and traumatic brain injuries. Doctors told Ron's family he would not be able to do anything, and that the damage was so severe they were not certain he would survive. But Ron did survive. He was unwilling to give up. The accident resulted in paralysis and restricted his ability to communicate verbally. He required



assistance with basic activities and moving around his home. His mother cared for him tirelessly in their Festus home. His family even carried him up and down the stairs of their two-story home, but they knew Ron deserved more. Ron was too outgoing and fun-loving to simply remain at home every day. That's when they learned about Pony Bird from Linda Dallas. Linda guided them toward potential services and equipment they would need.

Pony Bird's day programs helped Ron cultivate new friendships and enjoy activities outside his home. He was able to increase his independence, physical capabilities, communication skills, and decision making.

Ron thrived. In 1994, Ron graduated from Festus high school. He volunteered at neighboring hospitals or delivered food to the elderly and helped host annual blood drives for the American Red Cross. Being an integral member of the community was exactly what Ron needed. The friendships he developed brought him incredible joy.

As Ron's mother aged, it became harder for her to provide the care Ron needed. She was a strong woman, committed to her family, but once again she knew she needed to do what was best for Ron.

In 2014, Ron joined the Pony Bird residential community in DeSoto, just one year before his mother passed. Ron's niece, Michelle, stepped in as his advocate, ally, and guardian. She's quick to tell us that she is a nurse because of Ron. Helping care for and spending time with him helped her discover her love of caring for others.

Today, Ron brings joy to everyone around him. His life has certainly been challenging, but he hasn't allowed that to get him down. In fact, it's made him stronger. He still enjoys watching football and loves listening to the 80s hair band music he listened to in high school.

Michelle tells us, "you can not find a better place than Pony Bird. Pony Bird is family. My children and I have grown close to many of the staff who work there." Pony Bird ensures that every person, regardless of ability can experience a life well-lived with community, compassion, and an unwavering commitment to individual value.



Yes, I would like to be a part of the **ANNUAL APPEAL**

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Gift Amount \$ _____ check (payable to Pony Bird, Inc.)

credit MC Discover VISA AMEX (only accepted on "square" scans)

Card No _____ 3-digit CVC _____

Name on card (if different than above) _____

Exp. _____ Billing Zip Code (if different than above) _____

Make my gift monthly.

Donations can also be made online at www.ponybird.org or by contacting Jennifer Adams, Director of Development, jadams@ponybird.org.

Looking Forward

Pony Bird to Launch a Staff Spotlight Campaign



This year, Pony Bird will launch a weekly story featuring a Pony Bird staff member. This new campaign will serve a two-fold purpose. First, it will **celebrate Pony Bird staff** in a fresh way and aim to address the ever-growing, direct support workforce crisis. Direct support workers impact individuals with significant disabilities tremendously. These are the front-line workers who create enriching and engaging environments, who create fun and interactive activities, and who provide the daily support needed for a rich and full life.

The second goal of the campaign is to **increase knowledge and awareness** of Pony Bird's work and the impact these incredible staff members have on the lives of individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities. You'll find the stories featured on Pony Bird's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram feeds as well as on LinkedIn and our website. Stay in the know by following us at ponybirdblue on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Simply search for Pony Bird, Inc. via LinkedIn. We will showcase the stories on our website under News at www.ponybird.org.

Planning for the Future

There are simple ways you can help Pony Bird plan for a strong and vibrant future.

Did you know you can increase the impact of the gift you are already making by setting up recurring, monthly donations? Set up your monthly, automatic donations by visiting <https://bit.ly/3qYNEty>.

Monthly Giving: Become a Sustainer

You already give and give generously! Thank you! Did you know that you can increase the impact of that gift you are already making by setting up recurring, monthly donations? It takes the pressure off you to remember and helps us better prepare for the year! Your monthly giving in action:

- ➡ \$25 provides healthy food options for two individuals per month.
- ➡ \$50 empowers one individual to participate in creative activities.
- ➡ \$75 ensures individuals have the equipment they need to move safely.
- ➡ \$100 provides a home with inclusive, community activities.

Lessons from a Pandemic

Telehealth

What began as an immediate implementation of rigorous protocols to keep our staff and the individuals we serve safe quickly evolved into an opportunity to explore ways to do our work even better. This year, Pony Bird, Inc. will finalize a telehealth infrastructure roll-out which improves our ability to address critical health needs in a timelier manner. Telehealth empowers us to connect with medical professionals to weigh in on treatments and diagnostics. This is an effective system for addressing medical needs more efficiently and improving overall quality of life.



Better Data, Better Health

Pony Bird is further stepping into the 21st Century with an eye toward data to improve our ability to better track and evaluate the programs and supports we offer to help those we serve. This year, our internal data tracking system will be improved with upgrades to help us accomplish health goals for each of our individuals. Pony Bird, Inc. is a premiere provider in the field, and our ability to evaluate our services must consistently evolve. With the support of our Medical Committee and the Board of Directors, we will be empowered to better determine our capacity and scope of care related to our strategic plan. These vital steps will better prepare us to be proactive advocates for ensuring resources are allocated appropriately from state and government funding partners.

We, at Pony Bird, will be hard at work to create a brighter 2021, serving and advocating on behalf of individuals with significant intellectual and physical disabilities.

You can also make a lasting difference for individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities by including Pony Bird in your estate plans. If you would like to discuss your options or be connected to a qualified estate planning professional please contact Jennifer Adams, Director of Development, at 636-931-5818 x107 or by email at jadams@ponybird.org.

Exercise your
WILL to GIVE



PONY BIRD'S

VIRTUAL

20
21

Great Taste

MARCH 19, 2021

Once again, due to the uncertainties of COVID **Pony Bird's 14th Annual Great Taste event** will be hosted virtually. This year's Taste will include our **week long online auction** and raffles. Along with **two new elements** to enhance your Taste experience, a "LIVE" stream event on Friday, March 19, 2021, starting at 7:00pm and a Great Taste Club dining card.

As community partners, area restaurants have faithfully supported Pony Bird's Great Taste making it the true success it is today. As we face this global pandemic together, times are proving to be very challenging for all of us. In support of area restaurant and due to social distancing guidelines for large group gathering we have decided to create a **Pony Bird Great Taste Club card**. This card not only offers a 10% discount at all participating restaurants and unlimited use for one year, but also, allows you to enjoy your meal from the comfort of your own home, patronize area restaurants and help Pony Bird further its mission.

We want YOU to be part of the club!

Reserve your sponsorship and Taste Club Card at <https://Taste2021.givesmart.com>

Questions: Contact Kelly Feldmann at 636.931.5818 or email kfeldmann@ponybird.org

Sponsorship/Taste Club Card Form

If you would like to be a sponsor, purchase a Taste Club Card or make a donation please complete this form and mail to Pony Bird, Inc. by February 22, 2021.

- \$5,000 Presenting Sponsor
- \$2,000 Platinum Sponsor
- \$1,000 Gold Sponsor
- \$500 Silver Sponsor
- \$250 Bronze Sponsor
- \$30 per Taste Club Card Qty. _____
- I would like to make a donation.
Amount \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Cell phone (required) _____

Payment type: Check (enclosed)

Credit (complete below) MC Discover VISA

Card No _____

Name on card (if different than above) _____

Exp. ____ / ____ / ____ 3 digit security code _____ Billing Zip Code _____

Signature _____

To ensure inclusion in our video production all artwork and videos must be received by **February 22, 2021** along with payment to:

Pony Bird, Inc., Attn: Taste
P. O. Box 190
Mapaville, MO 63065

Pony Bird Supporters

Fall/Winter Donations

Aftton Elks Lodge #2635	Developmental Disability Advocates	Jean Christensen	Peggy Kleffner
Alfonso Amato	Diane Brown	Jefferson Foundation	Pfizer
Aligned Studio LLC	Domash Designsource LLC	Jennifer & Greg Wooldridge	Phillip L Tessereau Insurance Agency Inc
Andre's Banquet Facilities	Don & Ellen Ladwig	Jerome Lawrenz	Poehlman-Post
ARCO Construction Company, Inc.	Don Kelley	Jerry Grindstaff	Polsinelli
Arsenal Credit Union	Dorris Oliver	Jill Biundo Clymer	Porlier Outdoor Advertising Company
Auditsolv	Dot Gormley	Jim & Cindy Yamnitz	Renee Sucharski
Baldrige-Dorsett LLC	Dr. David Stansfield	Jim Loud	Rhodey Construction
Balke Brown Transwestern	Dr. Gary & Barbara Hansen	Joe & Laura Schlereth	Richard & Susan Duerst
Bank of Springfield	Drury Properties	John & Donna Shain Jr.	Rick & Beth E Moss
Barb Bakhit	Dwight Cartier	John Wootten	Robert & Patricia Rydell
Barbara Schwent	Elizabeth Williams	Jones Lang Lasalle Americas	Robert Keilholz Sr
Barrett Thiele	Employees Community Fund of Boeing	Joseph & Kathleen Perks	Roberts, Wooten & Zimmer, LLC
Bart Amatetti	Enterprise Bank & Trust	Joy Cozart	Ron Baechle Advertising Inc
Bartch Roofing Co Inc.	Eric & Chris Ammons	K&K Car Repair	Roy & Barbara Burnside
Ben & Ashley Gormley	Extreme Electrical Contractors, LLC	Kathryn L Nixon	Rudd Equipment Company
Berlin Oliver	Fabick Cat	Kathy Rose	Saigh Foundation
Birkel Electric	Ferguson Family Foundation	Kay Whitener	Sandra Bauer
Bloomsdale Bank	First State Community Bank	Kelly & James Feldmann	Sanford & Sarah Scott
Brad & Christine Jones	Foam Products Corporation	Kenneth & Sharon Stover	Spellman Brady & Company
Bruce Benz	Forklifts of St. Louis, Inc	Kimberly Tucker	Spencer Fane LLP
Busenbark Flooring & Granite	Fortune Bank	Kyle Cook	St. Lukes United Church of Christ
Cardinal Blinds & Shutters	Frederick Hill	Lakenan	Stanley Erb
Carol Jean Crossley	Friends of Steve Farmer	Larry & Elizabeth Adams	Sterling & Mary Ellen Cook
Carol Freyling	Gerald & Ginger Moenster	Larry & Judith Hart	Stephen Oliver
Central Bank	Gerald Schmitz	Laura Brandt	Stuckmeyer's Inc
Charles & Catherine Vaaler	GMP Plumbing- American Boiler & Mechanical	Laurie & Thomas McKenna	Sue Spaeth
Charles & Mary Hunt	Grafe & Batchelor PC	Laverne Ehlmann	Susan & Ken Curfman
Charles Herzog	Greensfelder Hemker & Gale, P.C.	Linda M Dallas	Susan Noah
Charles Phegley Jr	Harriet Kettenhofen	Long Term Care RX	Terese & Patrick Cooke
Chep Charitable Foundation	Harry & Rowena Dapron	Loren Bodendieck	The Elks
Chris McGrail	Hayley Baker	Lucas Smith Chrysler	The Hockensmith Giving Fund
Chris Robles	Health Direct Pharmacy	Lucille Drury	The Omaha Community Foundation
Christina Duepner	Herbert Walker	Mandel & Mandel LLP	Theodore Kohler
CJC Transport	Hillsboro Title	Marian Marcinkiewicz	Thermal Refrigeration
Claire Crawford	Home Builders Association	Mark & Bonnie Westcott	Thomas & Diane Drury
Classic Carpet & Flooring	Home Service Oil Company	Mark Steiner	Tim Wilson
Cliff Lane	Hopson Lumber Co.	Martina Carr	Trio Foundation of St. Louis
Commerce Bancshares Foundation	Iness Panni	Mary Alice Weber	United Fire Protection
Constance Moody	J.W. Terrill, a Marsh & McLennan Agency	Mary Lee Doyen	Valerie Kaelin
Cort Dietz	James & Gayle Truesdall	Maurine Conti	Walmart
Cushman & Wakefield	James & Kathy Nausley	MEEH Climate Service LLC	Walter Kautzner
Dan Govero	James Bundy	Midwest Regional Bank	Wayne C. Kaufmann Foundation
Daniel & Tammy Gormley	Jan Baldenweck	Nancy & Al Reimer	Werner & Janet Stichling
David Moenster	Janet & Gary Williams	NuMotion	Wies Drywall & Construction Corp
DDI Media	Jarrell Contracting Company, Inc	Pace Properties, Inc.	William Stone
Delta Dental	Jay Kitson	Patrick & Swat Watson	William Stork Jr.
Denise Fitzgerald		Paul Hilton	
DeSoto Ozark Electric		Paul Solomon	
		Peggy Keilholz	



Pony Bird, Inc.
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636.931.5818
www.ponybird.org

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Pony Bird
inc.
**is Proud to be a leader in
care for individuals with
significant intellectual and
physical disabilities.**

#1 in providing non-ambulatory care!

