Our Mission

The Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network, sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, provides leadership, advocates for local residents, and partners with the broader community to develop opportunities for both personal growth and neighborhood revitalization.

2017-2018 SSJNN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Robert Guthrie
Vice President: Cass Shimek
Treasurer: Lori Hetrick
Secretary: Catherine Manning, SSJ
Executive Director: Heather May Caspar
SSJ Member: Clare Marie Beichner, SSJ
Catholic Charities: Ann Badach
Peter Austin
Mary Fromknecht, SSJ
Mary Jarvis, Esq.
Julie Pelkowski
Ann Stephanie Stano, SSJ, Ph.D.
Marianne Stuckert, SSJ
David Wachter
Julie Wilson

Have a Hand in the Mission

VOLUNTEER your time and talent — with our youth programs, soup kitchen, gardens, office duties, events, committees, clean-ups, & much more.

DONATE hygiene & household products, diapers, non-perishable food items, snacks for children, paper products for the soup kitchen, art supplies, used bicycles & parts.

CONTRIBUTE on our website, through the mail or in person, or consider making long term financial plans for SSJNN and the vital neighborhoods it serves in the city.

ATTEND the 13th Annual Guess That Tune Gala on Saturday, May 4th, 2019 at the Bayfront Convention Center.

Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network
425 West 18th Street
Erie, PA 16502

“Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut...” Revelation 3:8
From the Director

At a recent meet-up with Peter, Joel and Jeff Natalie, brothers who grew up in Erie’s Little Italy and Co-hosts for our next Guess That Tune Gala!, I was entertained by their stories of reaching a bare hand into the olive barrel at Arnone’s and raiding neighborhood gardens and the next-door neighbor’s grapes. I was also struck with the historical nature of nurture within Erie’s many, family-centered neighborhoods. Caring environments providing opportunity for building both memories and character.

On behalf of all of us at the SSJ Neighborhood Network, I am pleased to present this annual snapshot of the many ways YOU help us continue this tradition in the neighborhoods we serve across the City of Erie. This report is a thank you and testament to so many who gift their time, treasure and expertise, helping us provide neighbors with experience, engagement, assistance and empowerment.

We are so grateful for your support of our mission and our work.

Heather May Caspar
Executive Director

From the Board

Over the past year, I watched as the role of the SSJ Neighborhood Network grew and changed. While maintaining our core mission to revitalize neighborhoods and provide opportunities to our neighbors, our East Side facility is now in the public schools, providing students a chance to understand that there are opportunities ahead of them in the world. Our West Side Network continues visually significant change in the neighborhood, where over 100 facades have been improved, and young adults learn how to work through gardens and mentoring.

Sitting in a LIRA meeting, I had to smile at how much things have changed. Around the table were people who grew up in the neighborhood, people from City offices, and representatives from several other non-profits, all working together and talking about how we could help each other, cooperate, and provide opportunities and growth for all in our neighborhoods. We are not just revitalizing buildings and streets, but the lives and hopes of our neighbors and their children. I could feel this change of pulling together, not just in our own neighborhood, but with our larger community. In a rising tide, we are no longer struggling to row our boat against the current. We are all rowing together, making progress across the whole city.

To all of our volunteers and supporters, I cannot say thank you enough. All of your smiles, your time, your hard work! With all of us working together, you are making a difference that we could never achieve alone.

Bob Guthrie, President, Board of Directors

Financial Review

2017-2018 was a solid year for support income from grants, corporate contributions and private donations. Thanks to 310 individuals who provided a combined 6,219 volunteer hours, we were able to pour nearly every penny into the growth of scope and reach of our programs.

Support
- Contributions & donations
- Grants
- Revenue
- Fundraising
- Rental Income
- Interest Income

Expenses
- Program Services
- Management & General
- Fundraising

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwest Pennsylvania: In Memory of Bobbie Wood by Jeff and Judith Idzik • FUNDS OF THE ERIE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION: Richard & Mary Ann McCormick Fund, Thomas L. & Mary K. Quinn Family Fund, Bruce & K.D. Rainey Fund, Sobella Family Fund, William & Kathleen Stroh Family Fund, Walter Family Fund • IN KIND DONATIONS: Gina Adams, Alkeme Mediterranean Café, Allburn Florists, Mary Anderson, Mr. & Mrs. C. Antonacci, John & Marian Armstrong, Arrowhead Wine Cellars, Inc., Arthur F. Schultz Co., Mary Ann Ashworth, E. E. Austin & Son Inc., Paula Bauda, Mr. & Mrs. John Bauman, Maggie Benson, Berry Global, Ronald Blasca, Wally & Shelly Brown, Caring Hands, Donna Cattino, Cathedral Preparatory School & Villa Maria Academy, Armant Chimenti, Gertrude Christie, Margueritz Czyzko, Christine Cicero, Old City’s Pizza, Elaine Ciburny, Curves, Kevin Cybloski, Dahlemkiper’s Jewelry Connection, Kathy Davis, Mike DeDad, Judy DeFrel, Delta Kappa Gamma, Lucia DePalmia, Brenda Dessier, Steve & Susan Drabant, Dragonfly Lake Scents, Dave & Gretchen Durney, Mike & Janice Durney, Edible Arrangements, Erie Earn It! Juvenile Probation, Erie Insurance, Erie Times Publishing Company, Erie Water Works, Andrew Falcon, Judy Farrar, Mr. & Mrs. James Falter, Mary Ferrando, Sandra Filippi, Mr. & Mrs. Les Frost, Gap & Old Navy Employees, Giuseppina Mazzei Civic Association, Grandview Elementary School, Maureen Griffin, Mr. & Mrs. Bob Habach, Rebecca Haverly, Michele Healy, SSJ, Joan Heinzel, Lori Hetlick, Mr. & Mrs. William Hilbert, Kim Hinkston, Howard Hanna, Tom Hudson, Lisa Hurta, International Bakery, Lucy John, Jr’s Last Laugh Comedy Club, Bruce Kobal, Patricia Kneel, Ladies of Harley/Santa’s Helpers, Lake Shore Industries, Inc., Mr. & Mrs. Tim Lakari, Mr. & Mrs. Henry Langer, Lesene Floris Design, Larry’s Central Market, Mary Ann Larsen, Mr. & Mrs. Dave Lefebre, Mary Lyons, Paoli Marzock, Sue McCready, Gary McEnery, Homer & Clemente Merson, Marlene Miller, Molly Brannigan, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Monocello, Montenero Ladies Society, Morrocco Motors, Barbara Noonan, Debbie Norman, Kathleen Nuber, Mr. & Mrs. George Oneson, Fil Ory, Our Lady of Peace Rosary Society, Our Lady of Peace School, Elizabeth Pacelli, Deolores Pascelle, Otto A. Pasquale, Penske Truck Rental, Rita Petersen, Mr. & Mrs. Cliff Pess, PittMoss, LLC, John & Janet Plavcan, Sherry Post, Petals Floral Shop, Red Cross, Red Hat Honeys, Red Hat Ladies, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Roberts, April Roy, Mr. & Mrs. Cesar Ruiz, Jeanne Ryan, Sacred Heart Church, Saint Mary’s at Astbury Ridge, Saint Patrick’s Haven, Saint Vincent Quarter Century Club, Saint Vincent Health Center, Saint George Food Pantry, Saint Luke’s School, Saint Mark Catholic Center, Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, Matthew Lutherian Church, Roy Sambuco, Kim A. Sargent-Bryner, Mr. & Mrs. Bob Schenker, Robert Schudaeker, Scott Enterprises, Bruce & Rose Scouting, Marlene R. Scully, Janet Sedelmyer, John Sobolitsch, Spartas Mini Spa, Ron Susmalski, Aaron Susmaraki, Peggy Svensk, Taco Bell, Tipperary West Irish Imports, Jeanne Torrance, Atty. Richard & Carolyn Vendetti, Audrey Vieira, Joe Walsh, Patrick Wendrich, Ashley Westgate, Susan Wilber, Betsy Williams, Jane C. Wood, Terry Woodward, Ellen Zimmer • Donations listed were received between 07/01/2017 and 06/30/2018. Please contact (814) 454-7814 or jprickman@ssjn.org to correct any errors. THANK YOU!
A home renovation on West 17th Street was finished and is now open in an area that was previously a blight. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the community. The area has come a long way, and the residents are proud of the progress made.

27 facade improvement grants, such as the new front door shown above, were completed this year. An additional 22 Renaissance Block improvement grants funded by ECGRA were also initiated this year. This brings the total number of facades since 2012 to over 100. A full map of these and several other improvements is available at www.ssjnn.org.

More than 1,200 neighbors came through our doors for assistance with food or household needs, individual ministry or referral. Countless individuals, schools and groups stocked our shelves with these items. Many friendly faces such as Rita, above, greet these neighbors as they volunteer to be receptionists with us each and every weekday.

More than 5,000 meals were served last year at our weekday soup kitchen held at St. Paul’s Community Center on West 16th Street. Hundreds are welcomed through the door each week, and nourished by more than just the meal. Hundreds of volunteer hands, like Kathy’s, above, make light work of everything from the preparation of food, to the scrubbing of every last pot, and every task in-between.

WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR OUR MANY SUPPORTERS:

Pedal Mettle is our Earn-A-Bike Program for youth and adults at the ReCycley Shop allows us to repair donated bikes. This year we served over 220 with the help of 16 skilled volunteers who spent over 700 hours with us. This year we also joined a national program and are now the “Trips for Kids Erie” Chapter. As part of this national network we join others to special the joy of riding a bike among young people in our neighborhoods.

There are many ways we do outreach and community engagement, including the snippet of a summer block party shown here. National Night Out, the block parties, drum circles, special events at the farmers market - all of these are gateways for building relationships and more good works.

Two tiny doors were installed in our neighborhoods in the form of Little Free Libraries. Neighbors can take or trade books in these boxes at close to home. See them for yourself in front of our east side office and in International Flavors Garden on West 18th Street.