

## Patchwork Central Bike Shop



Most Tuesdays and Thursdays you'll find a lot of activity in and around our Bike Shop. People stop by to see if there might be a newly repaired bike available for them. Others already have a bike, but the brakes stopped working or a tire is bent or the seat is missing.

Many of the people seeking the Bike Shop's services need transportation in order to get a job. For instance, they report that they work at a factory located several miles past the end of a bus route. With a bike, they can load that bike

onto the front bike rack of a bus, take the bus as far as possible, then ride the bike the rest of the way.

Other people walk to the Bike Shop from the Civic Center immediately after their first meeting with their parole officer. In these cases, one stipulation from the parole officer is that the individual find work immediately, and transportation by bike is key to that work search.

Even when someone has a job, the Bike Shop is key during the first few weeks of that job when reliable transportation means that the new employee can get to work on time for scheduled shifts. But, the two- to three-week wait for the first paycheck means that the new employee has no extra money available to pay for any bike parts or repairs needed to keep their ride reliable.

It is difficult when someone is in need of a bike but there is no bike to give out. To continue to meet the neighborhood's needs, the Bike Shop depends on donations of used bikes that are in good shape and can be easily refurbished. The most useful donations are adult (24" wheels and larger) mountain bikes in need of a minor tune up.

Pete, our Bike Shop Coordinator, is also looking for an additional volunteer to help organize parts on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from about 8:30–noon when the shop is open. This person would sort through and organize the parts available in order to streamline the bike repair process. Organizational skills and an interest in bikes would be ideal, but the person would not need to be a bike repair expert.

If you have a bike to donate or if you are interested in volunteering, call Patchwork (812-424-2735) or stop by the Bike Shop on a Tuesday or Thursday morning and ask for Pete.

We are also grateful for continued financial support for the Patchwork Bike Shop from the Evansville Bicycle Club and from other individuals. This support helps with items like bike tubes that must be purchased new.



## Patchwork Magic *by Amy Rich*

Patchwork is a magical place, and during the Summer Arts & Smarts Program, that magic is condensed into a few short weeks.

The fun began with Art Garden Week I. The group began each morning being transported by Susan Fowler's stories. They were "Purple People of Possibility for the Planet." They were Jim Henson coming up with the idea for Sesame Street, which turns 50 years old this year. They were the seven stars of the Pleiades. They were the three sisters growing in a garden: corn for support, beans to provide nutrients from the soil, and squash to give protection by covering the soil (and perhaps by scaring away the raccoons with its prickly leaves).



The group heard stories from Gary about the Native American storyteller doll he brought to share and from Amy as she talked about collecting trash in the streets between her house and Patchwork in order to turn it into art. And they heard the heartwarming story about how Andrea, the mom who headed up the gardening this year, had a much beloved principal named Norb Wooley when she was a student at Culver School. Norb was a longtime supporter of Patchwork and donated the land where our garden is now located. When he was a child, Norb lived in a house that used to be on that land. Norb died a few years ago, so before the first day of Art Garden when Andrea paused to say a small prayer to bless the garden, she also said a prayer that she would make Mr. Wooley proud.

As Susan said, we were showered with stories and blessed with information. As Susan also said, "I'm curious: What will tomorrow's story be?"

In addition to the stories with Susan, everyone spent time in the garden with Andrea planting sweet potatoes, corn, peas, beans, tomatoes, and rattail radishes. They spent time in the ceramics studio with Jean making garden markers and a variety of bowls. One boy who was new to Patchwork was feeling a little hesitant to join all the activities. But out in the studio he found something he loved, and after his group's time making ceramics he proudly showed off his muddy fingers.

Everyone also spent time making snacks in the kitchen with Rita and Gail. They cut and mixed and



spread. They worked together as a team, and one group that included several 10 to 12-year-old boys told "Dad Jokes" like, "What do you call a pair of banana shoes? A pair of slippers!" On the first day, Gail commented that when you are at a fancy restaurant the really good food has a really fancy name. So the kids decided to come up with a fancy name for each day's snack. Chips and salsa became "Mix-a-Rita Salsa Spectacular." Toast with Nutella and a side of fresh fruit became "Frutella a la Fruit Noot Kids' Spectacular." A mix of watermelon and cantaloupe became "Wat Can Melon Spectacular." And chips and guacamole became "Guack Guack Holy Guacamole with Electric Lime Guitar" (because half an avocado is shaped like a guitar).



## Patchwork Magic (Continued)



Art Garden Week I was followed by two Bike Weeks for teens. First, participants practiced their bike repair basics in Patchwork's studio under the supervision of Pete and Paul, our regular Bike Shop volunteers, and Charles from the Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library. After a week of practicing on their own bikes, our Bike Week participants were ready to do a service project by visiting several area parks and offering their bike repair services to any passerby. Each day, a group of us rode our bikes from Patchwork to that day's location. Once there, we organized bike obstacle courses, bike helmet safety demonstrations, and additional bike rides to celebrate all things bike while we waited for customers.

Dance Week followed Bike Weeks with a different kind of action and excitement. Sadia, from the Children's Center for Dance Education, came to lead the group in a series of fun experiences in dance. There were morning stretches, grand jumps across the circle of sun cast by Patchwork's big circle window, swirls of streamers, Hawaiian poi balls, Spanish fans, and a Soul Train dance line. And, there was laughter and acceptance of everyone who joined in to exercise and to happily move their bodies.

The summer ended with a final Art Garden Week filled with a new mix of art, gardening, food, and Susan's stories. Susan returned to the three sisters of the garden. Then she told us about the farmer at a local fair who whittled a point on her pencil to sharpen it and who gave her some of his popcorn. Susan told about Mary Pickersgill, the grandmother who helped create an enormous 30' x 42' flag for Fort McHenry in Baltimore—the one that inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner". Susan told us about the big dreams and ambitions that led to landing the first men on the moon 50 years ago. Susan told us dreams don't have to be that ambitious to be big—like Emma Gatewood's dream to be the first woman to walk the entire Appalachian Trail solo and in one season.



## Patchwork Magic (Continued)



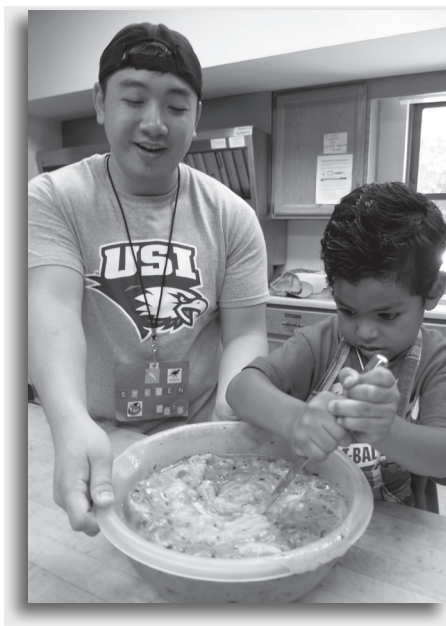
The stories wove together. Suddenly we had beans, corn, and squash who transformed into astronauts, and there was a woman with a walking stick hiking among the astronauts, and the Eagle was landing on the moon and water splashed as we all returned to Earth, and there was a 10' x 42' portion of Mary Pickersgill's flag with its red and white stripes waving through the middle of the room.

Groups worked in the garden with Andrea to tend our own three sisters—corn, peas, and sweet potatoes. They picked blackberries (always a favorite) and rattail radishes and planted more plants for the butterflies to enjoy. Since it was so hot, they also got to play in the sprinkler. In the art studio with Jean, everyone glazed the garden markers and bowls that they'd created earlier in the summer. While those items were fired in the kiln, the group returned to the idea of the three sisters and learned to braid friendship bracelets using three strands of yarn.

Meanwhile in the kitchen with Rita and Gail, the group added berries and radishes from the garden to a variety of other fresh ingredients to make salads and smoothies along with tasty cheese straws. In continuing the tradition from Art Garden Week 1, all of our food received fancy restaurant names like: "Eleven Lucky Lunch Leprechauns," "Strawberry Strawblue-nanza," and fanciest of all, "Chezful Cheztastic Cheesestraw Surprise with Turtles (No turtles were harmed in the making of this snack)."



It all concluded with the annual Garden Feast, an evening for participants, volunteers, staff, and their families to celebrate the summer. An entire energetic summer of fun came together in a frenetic swirl of art, food, music, dance, and bicycles. Woven through the evening were themes of love, family, community, and dreams. It was full of wonderful, creative children and caring, supportive adults.



We are very grateful for our partnerships with the Patchwork Bike Shop volunteers, Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, the Children's Center for Dance Education, and the Evansville Audubon Society. These partnerships are essential in making Patchwork's summer magic happen!





## Parable of the Shopping Cart *by Amy Rich*



The man is friendly and talkative. He looks approachable. He's relatively young.

He first met John during a Sozo Health Ministry First Friday at Central Library. John answered a health question for him, and he was very grateful for John's time and care.

A few weeks ago, the man came to Patchwork for the first time. He saw John right away and asked, "Remember me?"

"Yes," John responded. "I'm glad you came to Patchwork."

The man looked around in shock, "Wait, this is Patchwork?! I'm at Patchwork?!" It was as if he'd reached the promised land.

"Yes. Yes you are," John told him.

The man has come to Patchwork often in the past few weeks. He's homeless and has many serious issues going on in his life. His personal hygiene can be a problem, even with the use of our shower. Our staff watches out for him and helps him connect with his case manager from Aurora, Evansville's homeless services agency. The reasons for his homelessness and the solutions for his homelessness are complicated, but we all want to see things get better for him. Patchwork is one safe place in a city with many places where he is unwelcome.



A couple weeks ago he took a shower at Patchwork, and in the time that he showered, his feet swelled so much he couldn't put his shoes back on. We were all worried about him. It was very cold, but he was ready to walk out of Patchwork in his stocking feet. Finally, we convinced him to take time to sit in the recliner in Patchwork's library where he could put his feet up. He remained a little agitated, though. Things got worse when the next person to come through Patchwork's doors was an older man with a small dog.

"I'm afraid of dogs! I'm afraid of dogs!" the first man yelled.

The dog looked at him, then jumped up in the recliner and snuggled next to him. The man started petting the dog, and we all saw his body relax.

The dog's owner leaned over to one of our staff members and whispered, "Don't tell him, but that's a dog."



This is what community looks like at Patchwork.

This week, the homeless man was back. He appeared one afternoon to reclaim a grocery cart that he'd left behind that morning. As I wheeled it out to him, he realized that he was waiting for a ride from his case manager, and she wouldn't be able to transport it.

"Keep it," he told me. "Give it to the next person who you see who needs it."

"Are you sure?" I asked. I know the carts can be very helpful when someone is carrying things and is on foot. I also know that they

## Parable of the Shopping Cart (Continued)

take up a lot of space and that we didn't need another one taking up space at Patchwork.

"Yes," he confirmed. "You help people, so keep it and give it to someone else."

I looked at this cart that Patchwork did not need, that I did not want, and that harbored who knew what colonies of germs.

"OK," I said, and I took it inside.

It was a gift generously given. It was a gift just like the financial contribution we received in the mail that day, the volunteer's time spent in the Arts & Smarts program, or the food dropped off for our food pantry. Someone carrying too many bags too far across the city will, indeed, be grateful to receive it.

Who am I to turn down this gift.



## Back to School Again



On a busy morning at the end of July, a large team of volunteers poured over a mountain of school supplies, unpacking, sorting, counting, and repacking it to prepare for our annual Back to School Sale. Small groups were assigned to each grade level from K-5, and they checked over lists of supplies and filled their bags accordingly. Others sorted socks and underwear, adding them to boxes labeled by size. Extra school supplies were left stacked on tables to be sold a la carte. It was a room full of activity and a riot of kid-friendly color.



On the day of the sale, families lined up early, waiting patiently for our doors to open so they could put in their order for the grade levels that they needed. Their children eagerly looked through their new supplies as their parents waited to pay. The parents shared their gratitude for our help in getting their children ready for school. As always, it was a fun and upbeat morning. Our kits sold out in a record 45 minutes, but even after that families were able to put together helpful amounts of a la carte items.

We want to help all children be ready for their first day of school, which is why we continue our annual sale. It takes more than a year of careful shopping to be able to stock up for it, and we've already begun purchasing for next year. While we charge fees for the school supplies, the amount of money we receive from these fees comes nowhere near the actual cost of the items, so we are always grateful to receive funding from our donors to help us with the purchases. If you would like to get involved, please contact us!



## E-Newsletter

### More Stories! More Photos! More News!

Sign up for our bi-weekly e-newsletter! You will receive email updates highlighting the most recent happenings at Patchwork.

Simply visit our website, [www.Patchwork.org](http://www.Patchwork.org), and click the "join our mailing list" link!

## Bequests

The next time you update your will, please consider adding Patchwork Central, Inc. as a beneficiary. As a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization, Patchwork is eligible to receive donations from bequests. Any size of gift makes a big difference in providing for our programming and contributing to our long-term stability.

## Sunday Worship

The Patchwork Community meets for worship  
**every Sunday 5:15 p.m.**  
at the Meetinghouse, 100 Washington Ave,  
followed by a covered dish supper.  
*All are welcome!*



## Patchwork Central, Inc.

100 Washington Ave.  
Evansville, IN 47713-1521  
(812) 424-2735  
[www.patchwork.org](http://www.patchwork.org)

### MISSION STATEMENT

Patchwork Central creates community, honors personal dignity, empowers people, and encourages spiritual and social growth through its programs and hospitality, its opportunities for learning, its creative atmosphere and cultivation of the arts, and its work toward reconciliation and a more peaceful and just world.

### -S-T-I-T-C-H-E-S- STAFF

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Please be generous as you consider sending your cash contribution in the envelope provided for your convenience. Your generosity will help us continue the Patchwork tradition of providing these many creative programs.





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Evansville, IN 47713-1521

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**PATCHWORK  
CENTRAL**