# ANOTHER YEAR OF BEING HERE by Amy Rich

Patchwork Central has completed another year of life as an organization. On October 1, 2021, we turned 44!

In times like these, it is even more of an accomplishment to have successfully completed another year serving our neighbors. The year was marked by plenty of challenges thanks to the ongoing pandemic. But, we responded to everything that came our way, continuing all of our programming in person—with a variety of modifications that changed through the year depending on the local infection rates. For instance, for much of the year our Neighborhood Hospitality operated outdoors under the shade of the big tree in our courtyard. And, we've implemented a variety of risk reduction strategies in our Arts & Smarts Program to help prevent the spread of illness as groups of children play and learn together.

Below is a list of our core programming and the numbers of people served by each program during our most recent fiscal year.

### THE PATCHWORK CENTRAL EMERGENCY

FOOD PANTRY — Last year, our food pantry served 849 individuals from 539 households by distributing over 9.8 tons of food. The Pantry is open Monday-Thursday mornings and is one of seven that make up Evansville's Emergency Food Pantry Consortium. Individuals are eligible for a food

order every 30 days and must obtain a food referral from a referral agency before they receive food from the pantry. Last



year our main office wrote referrals for 531 households at Patchwork, rather than asking those in need to make an extra trip to another agency. Each food order includes 3-4 days' worth of food, meaning we distributed approximately 10,000 meals-worth of food. Our food pantry also distributed 653 pounds of pet food from the Tuly Fund so recipients would not have to choose between feeding themselves or their pets.

#### ARTS & SMARTS AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING —

From September 2020 through August 2021, 33 children and youth in grades K-8 attended at least one day of Arts



& Smarts activities. A total of 118 days of activities were offered in that time, resulting in 575 individual afternoons of creativity, learning, and growth. Of those children, 88% belonged to low income families. All of our programming was offered at no cost to the children's families. Daily activities included one-on-one homework help, visual arts, gardening, leadership training, substance abuse prevention, and reading. Through these activities, children gained important skills for life. Our program evaluation indicated that they built relationships within a supportive community of adults and fellow participants who encouraged them to explore their interests and to do better, which are indicators of future success.





**NEIGHBORHOOD HOSPITALITY** — One service Patchwork provides to our neighbors is simply our presence in the neighborhood. We call it Neighborhood Hospitality. Last year, we logged approximately 5500 instances of hospitality. These included cups of coffee, phone use, bread, fresh vegetables, and referrals to other

local agencies better equipped to assist the individual with their needs. It also included 230 showers for individuals who, for various reasons, had no other access to shower facilities. Sometimes this hospitality is simply having a staff member able to lend a respectful listening ear to hear our neighbors' frustrations, anger, or



celebrations. We also brewed approximately 590 pots of coffee and mixed up 73 pitchers of lemonade. For much of the year, our Neighborhood Hospitality was offered as Shade Tree Hospitality, outdoors in the shade of the big tree in Patchwork's front courtyard.

"Another Year of Being Here" Continued on Page 2

# ANOTHER YEAR OF BEING HERE (Continued)

**BIKE SHOP** — The Bike Shop is open Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30-noon and provides refurbished bikes to people who need them for transportation and repairs that allow existing bike owners to keep their means of transportation roadworthy. From October 2019 through March 2020, we provided 68 refurbished adult bikes to new owners and we did 66 repairs for walk-in clients.







#### SOZO HEALTH MINISTRY — The Sozo Health Min-



istry promotes health and wholeness through weekly health screenings, education, advonon-emergency medical transportation, and spiritual care. It is coordinated by Rev. John Rich, RN. Last year, it provided 193 total

health encounters for 135 total clients. Services included 22 instances of transporting clients to medical appointments, 106 checks of blood pressure, and 64 instances of medical supplies distributed. They also included 2 occasions in which staff identified emergency health situations in clients and 911 was called or the client was transported to an ER.

**BUILDING USE** — Patchwork provides space for other



organizations who, like us, are working to make a stronger, healthier, and more peaceful community. Many people pass through our building on a weekly or monthly basis to visit these organizations. Last year, these groups included Narcotics Anonymous, the

Evansville Friends Meeting, an Interfaith Study Group, and the Greater Evansville Youth Group.

#### **COMMUNITY GARDEN** — Patchwork maintains an

urban garden next to our building, and we have since 1995. It provides pleasant green space for our neighborhood and it serves as an educational tool to use with the children in our programs.



**WORSHIP** — Patchwork holds weekly worship services on Sunday evenings at 5:15 pm. Services are ecumenical and completely volunteer-led. Worship has been important at Patchwork since its beginning as a neighborhood ministry in 1977. This year as a result of the pandemic, our Sunday worship services have been held both in person for fully vaccinated individuals and on Facebook Live.







# **THANK YOU!**

Of course, we would not have been able to accomplish everything that we did in the last year without generous contributions from many, many individuals, businesses, organizations, foundations, and congregations. These gifts allow us to make our services available to everyone who stops by our building. They are what allow us to make a difference in our community and, through it, the world.

**INDIVIDUALS:** Leola Ahrens Salim & Patricia Akrabawi Greg & Mary Allen Elaine & Phil Amerson Anonymous Yoko Aratani Ruth Arn Erin Atkinson Dennis & Marcia Au Mohammad K. & Helen Azarian Carol & Joseph Ballard Marcia & Tom Ballard Margaret Ballard Robert & Mary Bartlett Charles Bauer Vaneta Becker Eric & Patricia Beckman Jean Beckman Bonnie Benson Donald & Jean Bernhardt Darlene Blagg Dean & Karen Bosler Al & Cathy Bragin Vicki Brasel David & Christina Brown **Bob & Carol Bryce** Samantha & Jeremy Buente Charlie & Debbie Butler Casey & Lisa Calvert Daniel Knight & Missy Carrigan Mary Jo & Peter Cashel-Cordo Jerry & Deanne Cheadle John & Barbara Cheadle Robin Church Glenn Claybaugh Nino & Linda Cocchiarella Dick & Meg Connolly Ed & Candice Cook Kristina Coon Jack & Phyllis Corn Mary Council-Austin Ladonne & David Craig Mary Damm Rita Davis Linda Dennis John Deppe John Dewitt Brian & Lita Doesken George Donigian Leonard Dowhie

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Indiana Arts Commission

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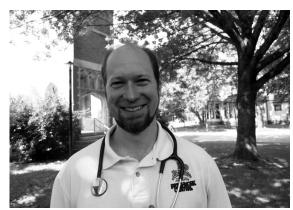
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These lists include gifts received and volunteer time completed between 10/1/2020 and 9/30/2021. We are very grateful for every donation we receive. While we have worked to assure that this list is correct, we apologize for any errors we may have made. We appreciate your support and understanding.

# SOZO EXPANDS by Rev. John Rich, RN

The Sozo Health Ministry is expanding! We are excited to announce that Patchwork has received funding that will allow me to spend more of my time doing this work that facilitates holistic health and healing for our neighbors in and around Patchwork. Whether it's taking blood pressures to screen for hypertension, teaching someone about their medications, praying with someone who is anxious about a health problem, providing basic over-the-counter health supplies to those who cannot afford them, advocating for a patient to a seemingly impersonal healthcare system, or driving patients to appointments and helping them communicate with their doctors, the Sozo Health Ministry will now be able to do more than ever to improve the health of our community.



I started the Sozo Health Ministry about six years ago because I saw all kinds of health needs that were not being met. I felt called to use my background as an ordained minister combined with my training as a nurse to help meet some of those needs and facilitate holistic healing in our community. I am excited that this new funding will increase the number of clients I can help, but I'm also dreaming of other ways that Sozo can do more to create a healthier community for all.

# SOZO EXPANDS (Continued)

In the coming months, I will be doing several things to expand the scope and depth of the Sozo Health Ministry: trying to recruit more volunteers to help with the program, seeking to create more collaborations with other community non-profit organizations, and imagining—and then implementing!—some new activities, services, and/or events that will hopefully contribute to greater well-being in our community. If you want to talk about any of this with me, or even want to volunteer with the Sozo Health Ministry, please don't hesitate to contact me. You can call the Patchwork office at (812) 424-2735 and/or email me at: JohnRich@patchwork.org. Here's to your health!

# **FAREWELL, DARLENE!**



All of us at Patchwork Central were deeply saddened by the unexpected death of Darlene Blagg, a volunteer extraordinaire and a member of the Patchwork Central Worship Community.

Darlene was present in many parts of life at Patchwork. She worked in the food pantry two days a week every week. She made cookies for First Fridays. She made mini breakfast casseroles for our hospitality guests. She baked artful communion breads for Patchwork's worship services. She peeled boxes and boxes of apples for our pancake breakfasts.

Her life was a testament to the many good things that happen at Patchwork every day. Her death leaves many, noticeable impacts within Patchwork's programming.

Her obituary: Darlene Raye Blagg was born on June 19, 1941 in Evansville Indiana and lived in Vanderburgh County for all of her 80 years. She died on September 11, 2021. She enjoyed her childhood growing up on a farm in Union Township with her mother Martha Gentry Blagg Lovell and stepfather Hallet Lovell. She was a beautiful soul whose life was not easy, but she met each challenge and difficulty with determination and grit, and with a steadfast belief in God.

Darlene was a loving, faithful friend with a servant heart, as evidenced by the many ways she helped others. She was a lover of animals—over many years she had a number of dogs and when she was younger she owned two horses, a mule, and a donkey. Most recently she and her dog Kelly were fixtures around the Haynie's Corner Arts District, a neighborhood that she loved and championed by connecting with and looking out for those who live there. She saw value in making her home there near downtown Evansville, even when others in the city did not see it as a good place to live.

Darlene had a number of jobs and for a time drove a semi-truck for a living. She also worked as an aide for elderly and disabled people, and in the 1980s until it closed, she was the Manager and Head Baker for the Back Alley Bakery on Kentucky Avenue, a ministry of Patchwork Central.

Many years later, after reconnecting with Patchwork, its people and its programs, she came back as a volunteer there and has been a treasured and invaluable member of the Patchwork Community ever since. Besides taking on many tasks including volunteering at the food pantry, helping with the yearly pancake breakfasts and back-to-school sales, she prepared delicious food for the neighborhood guests who come to Patchwork in the morning for coffee and hospitality. She loved to make special, homemade birthday cakes for her friends, and baked beautiful artisan communion breads for the Sunday evening worship services at Patchwork. More than anything else, Darlene was the truest and most generous friend a person could ever have and those who were lucky enough to be in her orbit were blessed beyond measure. Rest in peace, dear one.



## **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, 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 beguests. Any size of gift makes a big difference in providing for our programming and contributing to our long-term stability.



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

# **SUNDAY WORSHIP**

Every Sunday at 5:15 pm, the Patchwork Community meets for worship both in person at Patchwork and virtually on the Patchwork Central Worship Facebook page. In person attendees must be fully vaccinated. You are welcome to join us!

# **PATCHWORK** CENTRAL, INC.

100 Washington Ave. Evansville, IN 47713-1521 (812) 424-2735 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

# PATCHWORK CENTRAL STAFF

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