

THE PATCHWORK EXPERIENCE:

What do you see happen here that makes you happy to be part of Patchwork? Compiled by Amy Rich

GAIL, HOSPITALITY HOST ON TUESDAYS

Gail says, "Patchwork is a nurturing place. We nurture each other."

Gail describes herself as short and grandmotherly. Of her personal approach to the Hospitality Host position, Gail says, "I collect smiles. The guys know I collect them." She explains the philosophy behind the request for a smile, saying, "Often I will hear, 'Thank you.' Thank you is a way to give back. So is a smile. It's a way to exchange something—to give back."

One after another of our morning guests comes to the kitchen window for their coffee and snacks. Gail asks most for a smile and they give her one. Some of the most striking smiles are on the faces of men who have clearly worked to curate a rough and stoic visage. For a moment, they give Gail a genuine grin.

Gail comments, "They always use a lot of sugar in their coffee. I say to them, 'You guys are so sweet already. Why do you need so much sugar?'"

But then she says that guests tell her things like, "I come to Patchwork because this is the only place where people say nice things to me," and "I know if I miss a week people will check that I'm OK."

Brandon comes to the window and Gail asks what makes him happy to be part of Patchwork.

He responds, "I come around because of the love you show to me...although I do love the coffee. When you're alone, you sometimes need someone to love on you. You can feel the love in here. And when you feel the love, you can give it back. The love here is unconditional. It gets me through. You need that little bit of love and support."

Gail pours him another cup of coffee, then offers him a cookie.

Brandon pauses for a moment to consider then says, "No. Too much love is going to fatten me up!" ♦

PHIL & TOM, MONDAY FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS

Phil says, "It's the variety of things that Patchwork does: hospitality, health ministry, food pantry, children's program, you let people take showers, having the piano over there where people can play. The diversity of things you do is large. They're all little sections of Patchwork. They're all different but under the same umbrella. It's amazing if you think of all the things. Then there's the paid staff and tons of volunteers."

Tom says, "For me, I think it seems like a nice place for people to hang out. Like a coffee shop. A nice atmosphere. A nice vibe." ♦



Phil, Johnny, & Tom, Monday Food Pantry Volunteers

MARI, HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEER IN THE ARTS & SMARTS PROGRAM

In her reflection on her year volunteering at Patchwork, Mari says, "I'm beginning to see the impact I have at Patchwork in some subtler ways. Most of the kids can talk about their interests with everyone because they have common interests like Pokémon, which literally everyone has heard of. However, one of the other kids has a very niche interest in medieval history and fashion. Now, while most of the other supervisors or volunteers will listen, it's a bit harder for them to really respond to. This is where I come in, because due to my experience in my European History and Art classes, I actually do have some overlapping knowledge. This means that rather than needing to ask background questions, I can jump straight into a discussion about the repercussions that Shakespeare's play *Richard the Third* had on the perceptions of the monarch later on. I think throughout my experience there I think my ability to actually connect with others has been trained more to be applied in different situations. I think that that ability becomes super useful in a program like Arts & Smarts, because it makes this a place where these kids can really express their creativity and uniqueness." (Continued on Page 2)



Mari, High School Volunteer in the Arts & Smarts Program

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(CONTINUED)

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MARI, HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEER IN THE ARTS & SMARTS PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

(Continued) “During the Thanksgiving season, a tradition at Patchwork was to create a ‘Thankful Turkey.’ It was a collaborative art piece in which everyone would write what they were thankful for on a scrap of paper and that would become a ‘feather’ for our turkey. Due to some of the kids being littler, they would have to ask for help spelling some of the bigger words, and I was so surprised that ‘My friends at Patchwork’ or ‘Being at Patchwork’ came up so often. I absolutely agreed with them, and their kind words inspired me to also put ‘Getting to go to Patchwork’ on one of my thankful feathers.” ♦

JUDY & MARY JANE, HOSPITALITY HOSTS ON THURSDAYS

“What makes us happy? A lot of people are grateful,” Judy begins.

“They tell us thank you every time,” adds Mary Jane.

“You take away something from being here. You learn how other people live. I don’t know their stories. I don’t know how they ended up where they are,” explains Judy.

“Though some of them tell us,” Mary Jane continues.

“Still, they’re human beings and should be treated with respect,” Judy finishes. “Any little thing you do, they really enjoy it. Like when we bring hot dogs, chili, biscuits and gravy. It doesn’t have to be a steak dinner.”

“We like seeing the pets, too,” Mary Jane says.

A man sits at Patchwork’s piano playing a variety of songs from movie scores. It’s his first morning at Patchwork, but the regulars have been showing him around.

Judy observes, “He’s got talent.”

“A lot of them do. A lot of talent,” Mary Jane goes on to say. ♦

PAUL, JEFF, & PAUL, BIKE SHOP REPAIRMEN

Paul says, “We get thanked and we get blessed.”

Jeff says, “Another thing is knowing people might get to work or where they need to be because of us.”

Paul provides an example, saying, “There was a couple who got their bikes repaired. They worked at a place on Kansas Road. They took a bus every day to Lynch and Oak Hill then rode their bikes the rest of the way. They were riding five miles each way. They were riding in all kinds of weather. They were up front about it, but after work then they’d have to ride their bikes to get drug tested.”

“I wonder if they kept it up. We didn’t see them again,” says Jeff.

“Yes,” Paul responds. “I hope they did.”

Jeff provides another example, “There was a guy who said he needed his bike fixed because he was using it to get to school. He said he was studying sociology. You never know if that’s true or not, but then I saw him at the bus stop by Ivy Tech. During spring break, he got his bike fixed.” ♦



JEAN, ARTS & SMARTS VOLUNTEER AND JANE & MOLLY, ARTS & SMARTS STAFF

“The first thing that comes to mind,” says Jean about what she sees that makes her happy to be part of Patchwork, “was the day I was working with a student—he was on the spectrum—and we were sewing. He was terrified of the needle. But I worked with him on it. I was thrilled to see the progression and see him working through it. It never was his favorite project, but a picture came together.”

She continues, “And there was CeCe. She was asking for me to help her with math...”

“An art teacher helping with math!” Jane inserts.

“Yes,” Jean continues. “There hadn’t been a connection between us before. It touched me that she asked me. Then she got an A and from that point on she asked me every time for help on math.”

“She was also excited about her pour painting,” Jane says.

“She entered it in an art show at school and she got a blue ribbon,” Molly continues.

“She was so excited to share that with the group,” Jane adds.

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JEAN, ARTS & SMARTS VOLUNTEER AND JANE & MOLLY, ARTS & SMARTS STAFF (CONTINUED)

(Continued) Jane has recently heard from a past Arts & Smarts participant who sent Jane a note along with her high school graduation announcement.

Molly recently heard from another past participant who will graduate next year but who already has an early acceptance into art school. And today another past participant came to

power wash our building as part of the power washing business that he owns.

With these things in mind, Jane says, “Hearing from Cassie and Jordan is a good reminder that what we do here matters. And in the end, that’s what we’re really trying to do. To give kids an experience that matters.” ♦



Nancy, Hospitality Host on Alternating Mondays

NANCY, HOSPITALITY HOST ON ALTERNATING MONDAYS

Nancy begins by asking some of the regulars the question, “What makes you happy to be part of Patchwork?” She reports that some of them said they are part of Patchwork because they feel comfortable here, that they enjoy meeting up with one another, and because it feels like home. Another said that coming to Patchwork keeps him feeling social. He said that he often feels anxious in social settings, but this is a very comfortable place for him to be, and he’s glad for that.

“That’s why I like it here,” Nancy says after relaying these thoughts. It’s comfortable, it’s homey, and above all Patchwork treats everyone the same—whether it’s volunteers or the folks coming in. Everyone gets treated the same. “It’s why I’m here and not some other places,” she said. ♦

FROM FAITH RINGGOLD TO PATCHWORK CITY by Amy Rich

This past spring, our Arts & Smarts Program examined the work of Faith Ringgold. Ringgold is a Black artist whose art tells semi-autobiographical stories from her life. She made some of those stories into children’s books illustrated with her artwork. Her art references American folk art, storytelling, quilting, and African fabrics.

Our study of Faith Ringgold focused on her children’s book *Tar Beach*. In the story, a little girl named Cassie tells of happy memories of her family, neighbors, and friends gathered together on beautiful nights on the roof of their apartment building in New York City. Cassie remembers falling asleep during these gatherings and imagining herself flying over her city. As she flies, she is free and can go wherever she wants. In the end, she realizes anyone can fly, “All you need is somewhere to go you can’t get to any other way. The next thing you know, you’re flying above the stars.”

As with all good projects around Patchwork, when we began our study of Ringgold we never imagined where we would end up. It was a little like Cassie’s flight beyond the stars. We began by studying quilt making. We looked at quilts created by residents of Gee’s Bend, Alabama as well as traditional quilts and art quilts made by Jean Page, Jane Vickers, and myself.



Jean began working with our participants to create drawings that depicted favorite moments in their lives. These drawings would eventually be transferred onto tote bags for the participants to color with fabric markers and surround with a faux quilt block frame that was reminiscent of Ringgold’s art. In Patchwork’s ceramics studio, Jean and Molly Fahrlander taught our participants how to make 3D houses and buildings that would become a cityscape to fly over like Cassie did.

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(Continued) Meanwhile, Seth Barr, one of our high school volunteers, decided that he wanted to do a special project with our participants because he would soon be graduating and heading off to college. The project he proposed was “The Magical Patchwork Town Storybook.”

To begin, Seth created character sheets to help the younger kids create their own characters complete with sketches of their character and their character’s home, written descriptions of character traits, and written descriptions of their character’s sparks (the things that bring the character joy).

Seth’s original idea was to take the characters and build them into a story with the kids. But, this is where the project merged with our study of Faith Ringgold in unexpected ways. The ceramic buildings that the group was originally making into a basic cityscape, became “Patchwork City.” Additional discussions about how to work together as a group grew into a bigger discussion that laid out a “city charter” for Patchwork City and its citizens.

According to the city charter, the laws and rules of Patchwork City include:

- Follow the Patchwork Arts & Smarts Creed
- No littering
- Follow the speed limit
- No being mean
- There should be nothing scary/harmful
- No denying customers


Potential slogans for the city include:

- *The Amazing City*
- *The Patchwork that Laughs Every Day*

The city includes:

- A park that includes a slide, swings, basketball, a rock wall, soccer, baseball, and monkey bars
- Trees, plants, a garden, and a water fountain
- A police station
- A grocery store
- Taco Tuesday
- A “Stay Positive” flag
- A skate park
- A news station
- A carnival
- Recycling for repurposing and edible food wrappers to cut down on trash
- A community center
- An arcade
- Book boxes
- And much, much more!

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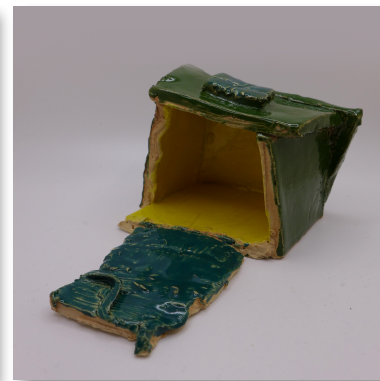
<p>Character Name <u>Maura</u></p>  <p>Draw what your character looks like!</p>	<p>Basic Character Info</p> <p>Age: <u>16</u></p> <p>What they like:</p> <p><u>she likes her family</u> <u>she likes to play</u></p>	<p>Character Name <u>Pachomir</u></p>  <p>Draw what your character looks like!</p>
<p>Basic Character Info</p> <p>Age: <u>15</u></p> <p>What they like:</p> <p><u>Basketball</u> <u>Foot ball</u> <u>baseball</u> <u>video games</u> <u>food</u> <u>reading</u> <u>sleep</u></p>	<p>Where do they live? <u>in a jungle forest</u></p>  <p>Draw your characters house!</p>	<p>Where do they live?</p>  <p>Draw your characters house!</p>
<p>Where do they live?</p>  <p>Draw your characters house!</p>	<p>Character Name <u>Jvy the wolf</u></p>  <p>Draw what your character looks like!</p>	<p>Basic Character Info</p> <p>Age: <u>1,000</u></p> <p>What they like:</p> <p><u>she likes candy</u> <u>french fries</u> <u>bread</u> <u>animals</u> <u>magic flying</u> <u>making paper</u> <u>air planes</u> <u>and</u> <u>water and playing</u> <u>climbing, and swimming</u></p>



FROM FAITH RINGGOLD TO PATCHWORK CITY *by Amy Rich*

(CONTINUED)

Going back to Seth's original idea, the group created a story using the characters they created, the ceramic city they constructed, and the detailed description of what life is like there. In the story, everyone lives happily in Patchwork City. Everyone spends their time engaged in their sparks and helping one another. Then a monster comes along and he starts ripping up everything in the Patchwork City garden. Everyone is afraid, but finally someone asks the monster what is wrong. He tells them that he's ripping up the garden because he's hungry. The people of Patchwork City help him find food and also help him discover his sparks. They engage him in a process of restorative justice to address the ripped up garden. Everything works out for the better. ♦



SOZO HEALTH MINISTRY: A DAY IN THE LIFE *by John Rich*

It was the first day in a long time that really felt hot. The wave of dehydration problems started as an innocent trickle: One regular hospitality guest asked for a couple of "baby aspirin" (small 81-mg tablets) to treat a mild headache. I mentioned to him that it was really warm out today and maybe he was also a bit dehydrated and he should drink more water.

Another regular guest came up to me and said he was feeling a little light-headed. He told me that he takes medication for high blood pressure and was wondering if his prescription had dropped his blood pressure too low and that was why he was feeling dizzy. I checked his blood pressure. It was perfectly normal. I told him that maybe he was dehydrated and encouraged him to drink more water.

We had several non-dehydration-related cases, as well. One guest was having some heartburn and needed antacid tablets. A moment later, I handed a pair of reading glasses to a man who said that his broke recently. He was elated to be able to read again. Another guest suffers from seasonal allergies, but even generic over-

the-counter allergy medicine can be too expensive, so he asks for an allergy pill every day that he's here at Patchwork. Being an allergy sufferer myself, I'm more than happy to help alleviate his symptoms with a daily dose.

Then we had a possible emergency. A woman came into the office and said she had rolled her ankle and was afraid it might be broken. She asked me to look at it and tell her if it was broken or not. The ankle was swollen and obviously painful. I told her that there was no real way to tell if it was broken without an X-ray. I offered to drive her to the ER myself. She declined. When I asked why, she said that the last time she'd gone into an Emergency Department, it was with her ill husband. He was admitted to the hospital and died shortly thereafter.

Ever since then, she said, she hasn't been able to go to the ER--even when she probably should. I offered emotional and spiritual support for her grief at the loss of her husband and for dealing with her fear of Emergency Rooms and hospitals. We helped her elevate her foot on a chair and put an ice-pack on it to reduce the swelling.

I found some crutches in our Health Ministry Supply Closet and gave them to her so she could walk without putting any pressure on the affected foot. I gave her some ibuprofen for the pain. She thanked us profusely and told us how much it meant to her have a place and people that really cared about folks like her who were going through homelessness.

I went back to my office to try to get some administrative work done. A voice came over the intercom: "John! We need you out here right now!" I rushed out into the main room. A man had literally stumbled into Patchwork and could barely stand. A stranger had noticed him on the sidewalk and helped him into the Meetinghouse and sat him in a folding chair at one of our tables. As I came around the corner, I saw him sitting there, his hair matted with sweat and his face red as a pomegranate.

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(Continued) He said his name was Aaron. He claimed he was hypoglycemic and hadn't eaten in four days. He said he'd walked to Evansville from Mt. Vernon (about 20 miles away!). I could tell that he was also terribly dehydrated. Staff, volunteers, and other guests sprang into action. One person made sure he had lemonade—both a fast-absorbing source of sugar for the hypoglycemia and fluid for the dehydration. Someone else started making him peanut butter toast so he would have some protein, something more substantial than lemonade.

One of our regular guests helped a volunteer soak a hand towel in ice water and put it on his head to help cool him off. I got him into a more comfortable chair and took his vital signs. His blood pressure was a bit high, but not immediately dangerous. His pulse was fast and thready, which concerned me. He kept saying he felt like he was going to pass out. I offered to call an ambulance for him, but he declined. I was mentally prepared to call 9-1-1 anyway as soon as I saw the first sign of confusion or unconsciousness. Thankfully, no emergency call was necessary. With staff, volunteers, and other guests coordinating compassionate ministrations of food, fluids, cooling towels, and emotional support, Aaron recovered after about an hour and a half.

That same afternoon, I had two separate medical appointments in which I was accompanying a client to a healthcare provider. One was a mental health appointment to evaluate the patient's recent behavior and discuss adjusting psychiatric medications. The other was a client who usually goes to doctor's appointments by herself. This time, however, she was feeling uneasy and really wanted someone to go with her. She was worried that her apprehension about the appointment might cause her to miss some vital piece of information from her healthcare providers. I was more than happy to accompany her, both for moral support and to be another set of ears listening to the doctor.

This was one day in the life of the Sozo Health Ministry. From baby aspirin and blood pressure checks to potential emergencies to grief, fear, and mental illness, we offer compassionate, holistic healthcare to anyone that walks—or stumbles—through our doorway. ... And remember, you should probably be drinking more water. ♦



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

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. You are welcome to join us!

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.

DONATE HERE!



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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.



PATCHWORK CENTRAL STAFF

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Jane Case Vickers	Director of Arts & Education Programs

Molly Fahrlander	Program Assistant
Bill Hemminger	Food Pantry Coordinator
Pete Emery	Bike Shop Coordinator
Jill Miller	Associate Health Minister



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