

February 2019



## A Day in the Life...

By: Juanita Smith, Director of Women's Ministries

If you've been involved in the day-to-day ministry of the Erie City Mission for any length of time, there's a few things that you've learned. The first is that no two days are the same. The second is that any given day, you may be faced with a situation that will challenge you beyond your expertise and stretch you beyond your capacity.

Recently, I was in the middle of a day--or should I say a series of days that fit both of those descriptions, when someone asked "how are you holding up?" Without thinking, I answered, "just another day in the life". My answer was unrehearsed, abrupt and an effort to restrain the many emotions brewing beneath the surface. The truth is I was exhausted, disoriented, and carrying the weight of grief--not just my own, but that of the entire Grace House community.

We were in the midst of an unusual season of transition and loss. Losses we didn't expect and found difficult to explain; losses that included the sudden deaths of both a staff member and a graduate of the program. We are a small but intimately connected community and the only words I found

to express how I was doing was just, *another day in the life*. It couldn't have been any farther from the truth but it was all I had.

Over the few days prior, I spent quite a bit of time reminiscing, about our graduate, Susan. I can recall the day she arrived at Grace House. She was unlike anyone we had encountered--poised and mature on the outside; yet struggling and suffering from the effects of addiction on the inside.

I remembered the beginning of her journey with us and thought about the many days we laughed together; the times we agreed and disagreed with one another; and the day she received the message of the gospel. I thought about her graduation from the program, as she wept with tears of joy for completing the program, and of fear for having to continue alone. I made a commitment to her that day assuring her that the Grace House would always be home and that she never had to be alone again. She held on to those words, visiting often, making a point to be present at all holidays and special occasions.

On one of those visits, she asked for an appointment to see me and when she came she made what I thought was an unusual request. She asked that I take care of her affairs if anything was to happen to her. She asked that no extraordinary measures be taken to sustain her life. She gave explicit instructions about her burial and the managing of her affairs. I didn't know what to think but understood that we, the Erie City Mission, were the only family she had--so I agreed. Looking back, it was as if she knew something that I didn't. It was as if she knew the day would soon come, as well as the circumstances that would arise. She also knew I would keep my word and we would support her to the very end.

"How are you holding up?"; "Just another day in the life." The truth? I stood by her bedside, saying goodbye, promising to do what she asked, requesting that the doctor discontinue the lifesaving measures. The truth? I was planning her service and managing her affairs, while helping the Grace House community deal with the losses. Through it all--God's grace has prevailed.

*story continues on bottom of pg 3.*



# The WORD on the Street

*a message from the Chief Executive Officer*

2019 has certainly begun and the Mission continues to fulfill its purpose of *restoring hope and transforming lives* in the name of Jesus Christ. We are very grateful for all your prayers and support to the Mission over the recent holiday season.

We hope you've had a chance to either stop in, or drive by our new facility on the corner of French and 11th Streets. Our 9-year "Mission Possible" building project is substantially complete, and we are busy seeking new ways to innovatively and effectively utilize our new kitchen, dining hall and chapel.

As an organization, our Staff and Board are leaning into our five new Core Values; setting forth the fundamental beliefs of our Mission that we seek to live out daily, serving our guests and participants.

**Our Core Values are: Rooted in Jesus Christ; We go the second mile; We lay down our stones; In the City, for the City; We run the race to Win the prize.**

Please pray for us as we seek to fulfill God's purposes as a team.

As you read through this edition of the *Beacon*, you will notice we are closing in on our 12th annual Knockout Homelessness (KOH) fundraiser. It's going to be a great evening that raises much-needed resources for our Samaritan Care men's homeless shelter--as we continue the fight against homelessness.

Throughout this newsletter, you will see other examples of how the Mission provides transformative programming for our participants, seeks to work collaboratively and provide leadership in our City, and celebrates some of the leaders that have helped us navigate the waters over the years.

May God continue to bless and keep you throughout 2019--this is Our City, Our Mission!

—Steve



Left to Right: Albert Ganzer Jr., Board Member; Steve Westbrock, CEO; Jerry Marshall, Former Executive Director; and Dr. Timothy Marshall, Men's Ministry Counselor.



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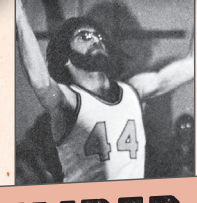

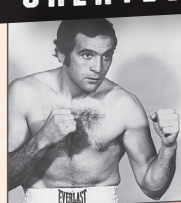
#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Leo Heintz, Chairman  
Alan Hamilton, Vice-Chairman  
Marshall Piccinini, Secretary  
Greg Paulding, Treasurer  
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THE ERIE CITY MISSION PRESENTS

## GREATEST REMATCH OF ALL-TIME


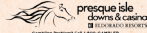

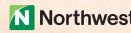



# BIZZARRO v. SCHEMBER

LOU BIZZARRO, SR., ERIE, PA;  
CHALLENGER - UNDEFEATED 24-0

JOSEPH SCHEMBER, ERIE, PA;  
ERIE MAJOR

TUESDAY NIGHT - FEBRUARY 19, 2019 - 6:00PM - BAYFRONT CONVENTION CENTER



## It's The Rematch Of The Year!

Knockout Homelessness Round 12 is almost here. For the first time in event history, the Erie City Mission welcomes back last year's main event contender, Mayor Joe Schember, for what is being called "the rematch of the year"!

Tuesday, February 19, marks the 12th Annual Knockout Homelessness event, which raises much needed funds for the Mission's Samaritan Care Emergency Shelter. Since its start in 2008, this signature event has raised over \$500,000 in revenue to support the programs and services of the Mission that focus on alleviating homelessness.

This year's fight card also includes celebrity boxers, Colby Atkins, Lead Pastor at Elevate Church against John Rogala Evanoff and Matt Pribonic, Vice-President of Level Red Boxing against Lou Bizzarro, Jr.. The Main Event is sponsored by Erie Federal Credit Union, Northwest Savings Bank and Northwest Insurance Services, Marquette Bank and Presque Isle Downs and Casino and features Erie's own Lou Bizzarro, Sr.

You too can join in the fight against homelessness by donating to your favorite KOH, Round 12 celebrity boxer. Visit the Mission's Facebook or Website, click on your favorite boxer and follow the instructions on how to donate towards their campaign. All funds raised through crowdfunding directly support the Erie City Mission.





## Leaders Are Made At Urban University

Vince Lombardi once said, *"Leaders are made, they are not born."* For the Erie City Mission Urban University (UU) program, service learning is a large component of leadership development. With most students not expected or required to engage in community service opportunities until high school or college; the UU after school program believes in introducing those opportunities earlier (ages 11-14).

As research continues to point to the benefits of young people developing character and building quality relationships through serving others; all UU students are expected to engage in at least one service project a semester. The program provides between 8-10 service opportunities and hopes student's involvement will create an individual pursuit of service leadership and civic awareness.

During the winter semester, Urban University (UU) students and mentors participated in multiple service learning activities, giving back to those in their community. Projects included: making stuffed animals for children residing at The Refuge; playing games with seniors at Elmwood Gardens Nursing Home; supporting WCTL Radio's Valentine Campaign; helping clean the WLD Ranch facility; making treats and toys for the animals at the ANNA Shelter; baking cookies for guests at the Overflow Shelter; and supporting services at Second Harvest Food Bank, the Women's Care Center and Chosen Ministries.

## Erie City Mission Partners with the Erie 2030 District

As a property owner in the downtown area, the Erie City Mission recently joined a growing group of businesses

**2030**  
**DISTRICT**

and owners, as a founding member, pledging to support the goals of the Erie 2030 District. Sandell Snyder, Facilities Manager for the Erie City Mission says, the District goals are simple; reduce energy use, water use and transportation emissions. Reductions of this type will not only lessen our City's environmental impact, but save money and resources at the same time.

The Erie 2030 District provides opportunities for education and collaboration to help Erie partners assess the performance of their buildings and the impact of their current operational and maintenance standards. We can then identify strategies for improving efficiency, reducing costs and promoting healthier, sustainable living practices.

Joining with other organizations and property owners to make our community healthier and stronger is just another way that we are living out our belief that this is 'Our City, Our Mission.'

## Board Member Serves Nine Years



Matthew Sahlmann retired from the Erie City Mission, Board of Directors after nine years of service. On Friday, November 30, during the monthly meeting, Leo Heintz, Board Chairman, presented Sahlmann with a framed picture of the finished campus, at the corner of French and 11th Streets. "We are thankful to Matt Sahlmann, for selflessly serving the ECM board for nine years," said Leo.



## Upcoming Events

**February 19** – Knockout Homelessness 12, Bayfront Convention Center

**May 10** – Mother's Day, Designer Bag BINGO, Grace House fundraiser

**August 10** – Designer Bag BINGO, Grace House fundraiser

**August 13** – Erie Gives 2019

**October 24** – Annual Banquet

**October 25** – Annual Banquet

*"A Day in the Life" story continued from front page*

I've had time to rest and reflect on the experiences of the last few weeks, and I'm reminded of the ministry that we at Grace House have been called--to be stewards of God's grace. Even in a season of transition and loss, a day in our life is a reflection of God grace.



# Holidays at the Mission

The holidays are big for the Erie City Mission. Because of your support, we were able to bless so many during a time when family and giving are emphasized. Thank you so much for your heart to help people feel loved and connected over the holidays. Thank you for making this possible!

Here's a recap of all you helped provide this holiday season:



Thanksgiving bags - distributed to families in need.

**1,500**

**Thanksgiving Turkey Bags were packed with the food a family needs for a Thanksgiving dinner.**

The Mission collaborated with over 25 churches and community partners to gather the food items needed to fill each bag and deliver them to the Mission. 3,859 individuals were fed through this annual distribution.

**440**

**Meals served in the expanded Dining Hall during the Mission's Thanksgiving and Christmas Lunch.**

That means deboning, cooking and carving over 25 turkeys!



GE employees help prepare the Thanksgiving lunch.

**563**

**Volunteers served throughout the Mission over the holiday season; decorating the halls, packing turkey bags and prepping and serving meals to those in need.**

**114**

**Urban University fall semester students, mentors and their families celebrated the Christmas holiday with food, fun and lots of smiles.**



Urban University students celebrate Christmas with their families.

**81**

**NLP and Samaritan Care men celebrated Christmas Koinonian style, through carols, laughter, gifts and fellowship, during the annual Koinonia Christmas Party.**



NLP participants and shelter guests enjoyed a visit from Santa.

## Because you gave...

Giving Statistics for November 2018 and December 2018

**4**

Men graduated from the New Life Program.

**2,524**

Approximate number of emergency shelter bed nights.

**5**

Grace House women received rehabilitation, recovery and shelter.

**7,288**

Volunteer hours clocked.

**23,362**

Meals prepared and served.