

Neighbor to Neighbor

December 2010



Inner-City Neighborhood Art House
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Star-Light,
Star-Bright
Have you seen the
Star of wonder
Star of grace
Star that lights
The life behind
Each face?

Steven Silent Wolf

AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD ART HOUSE
the star that lights the life behind the face
of each child comes in a variety of ways.



Sophia Worner and Norberto Gutierrez

Sometimes it is in the joy of a musical instrument and the unexpected pleasure of creating the sound of music; other times it is in the shaping of a pot with hands forming clay for the very first time. Singing and dancing do it, too, as does the amazement of creating poetry from familiar words that seem to become new. The hearts of teachers, volunteers and guests are warmed by the delight and awe that surprise the students when their hard work, effort and interest result in things much better than had even been imagined. Stars of wonder and stars of grace run rampant; eyes shine brightly and faces beam with success.

Happy
Holidays
and a
Blessed
New Year
be yours!

From the Desk of Sister Annette

Just like anyone who visits the Neighborhood Art House, my first impressions as Executive Director were "amazed," "delighted," "inspired," "proud." Now that I have been here for a bit, I would most definitely add "grateful." I am grateful . . .

★ for the vision and dedication of Sisters Mary Lou Kownacki, Joan Chittister, and Anne Wambach that brought the Neighborhood Art House to life fifteen years ago,

★ for all who provide the financial and material resources for inner city children to learn to see and create beauty,

★ for the talented and committed faculty and volunteers whose love for children and for the arts is so evident,

★ and for the children who bring their "best selves" to NAH, not because they are required to come, but because they are seeking the loving atmosphere and creative experiences that the Art House provides.

The next time you visit the Neighborhood Art House, listen to the murmurs of



children intent upon their projects; to the encouraging tone of volunteers reading to or tutoring young learners; to the strains of violin and piano or the rhythm of dancing feet; to the calm and kind voices of teachers explaining, demonstrating and challenging their students . . . and you will be grateful too, that nestled into Erie's center city there is such a place for children as the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House.

Sister Annette

Starry-Eyed Experiences

Since the last newsletter the children at the Neighborhood Art House have enjoyed many experiences that left them "starry-eyed" with wonder and joy. Some of them are recapped here:

Meeting a Local Artist

Erie sculptor Evan Everhart was commissioned by the Erie Playhouse with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to create metal sculptures for the set of its production RENT. Students (from left) Rosa Aguren, Laurie Troutman, Laky'la Ollie, Jacob Lehr and Destynie Thomas, all from the Neighborhood Art House, were invited to his studio for the unique opportunity to observe the artist at work and offer ideas. The children were given a tour of Everhart's inspiring artistic sanctuary and gardens, along with his work area and weld shop.



Evan Everhart, right, with Neighborhood Art House students

Awed by Tall Ships

The generosity of Women's Core Committee member, Mary Lincoln, made it possible for students from the Neighborhood Art House to attend the 2010 Tall Ships Erie festival. Lourdes Jasso, digital photography teacher, and her students made a class expedition out of the event and came away with many photos to keep the experience alive.



Photo by student photographer

Encounter with SPHINX

Thanks to longtime friend of the Neighborhood Art House, Brady Louis, NAH children had the opportunity to enjoy the Sphinx Chamber Orchestra Tour, including the Harlem Quartet, at Mercyhurst College. The Sphinx Organization is a national non-profit organization, founded by MacArthur Fellow Aaron P. Dworkin. SPHINX is committed to building diversity in classical music and for the past 13 years it has focused on development opportunities for young artists of color through year-round programming in arts education, awareness and presentation. The concert attended by NAH students highlighted works by minority composers and left the children with a new understanding of music as an unbounded gift to be shared and enjoyed by all.

Dreaming with the Heart

Fantasy at its best marked the day when children from the Neighborhood Art House visited the Erie Playhouse to enjoy the dress rehearsal of the ever-popular musical, Cinderella. Performed by the Youtheater, this new adaptation of an age-old classic was both fun and entertaining. The children enjoyed a production that left them singing "a dream is a wish your heart makes" and believing that dreams can come true.

“Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.”

William Arthur Ward

A Star-Studded Thank You

Because of its many donors and supporters, the Neighborhood Art House is able to continue its mission and ministry to enable the inner-city children of Erie “to experience beauty, grow in positive self-expression and self-discipline, and develop into full and productive human beings.” It is with deep gratitude that NAH is pleased to share that it has been the recipient of a number of grants, gifts, donations, and support from local businesses through the PA tax credit (EITC) program:

- **Jensen-Landis Golf Outing**—12th and final year of their event—\$1,000
- **Burger King**—\$9,000 donation (EITC)
- **PNC**—Erie Insurance Charity Challenge—\$2,000
- **PNC**—\$5,000 (EITC)
- **Arts Erie Grant**—\$2189 operating budget; \$1690 music recitals (Clarence E. Beyers)
- **Waste Management**—\$5,000 (EITC)
- **Scott Enterprises**—\$1,294 (EITC)
- **Schuster Program for the Arts, Gannon University** (Grant)—\$1,250 for the NAH Poetry Book project

Opportunities to Give

Children from the Neighborhood Art House participate in many projects that allow them to give of their time and talents. Throughout the Fall session, those opportunities have included:

- **Decoration of Place Mats** for the Sisters of St. Joseph Thanksgiving meal for the homeless, held at Gannon University.
- **Designing Gift Bags** for the Christmas gift of bread given to the residents at Benetwood Apartments, a senior citizen living center administered by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.
- **Decorating a Christmas Tree** for Festival of the Trees sponsored by the St. Vincent Health Center Auxiliary. This year’s tree, “A Jeweled Holiday,” will feature sparkly gold and silver handmade birds created by the children in paper, clay, fabric, paint and mosaics.



Anna Worner with the 2009 NAH tree.

- **Art Show** of children’s works at Whole Food Co-op Café.
- **Dream Rocket Project** under the direction of Fiber instructor, Deborah Sementelli who is working with three NAH classes to produce a 2’X2’ square of the class’s hope for the future. The Dream Rocket aims to connect art and education through a global collaborative initiative and hopes to inspire individuals not only to dream, but also to recognize their power to pursue their dreams.

MEMORIAL

A special thank you to the family of **Irene Lojewski** who designated memorials to the Neighborhood Art House in her memory.

Taste of the Arts 2010

September 14 was a beautiful, balmy evening made even more memorable by “Fly Me to the Arts,” the annual Taste of the Arts event held at the Neighborhood Art House. Imaginations were stretched; enthusiasm overflowed. An evening of fun, food, friendship and fundraising was enhanced by a wonderful display of children’s art work as well as an entertaining stage performance showcasing their many talents. Guests had the opportunity to participate in both silent and live auctions alike, purchase art pieces created by the children, and make a donation for a chance on special prizes. Thanks to chairwoman, Lynn McBrier and her committee, the evening was a grand success.



Lynn McBrier is recognized for her work and leadership as chairperson of Taste of the Arts 2010.



Long-time NAH participant Precious Johnson



Emcee Brady Louis and Art House friend, Trinity Moore-Stevens

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Benedictine Sisters of Erie
201 East Tenth Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503-1007

**Beauty
Vision
Hope**

Inner-City
Neighborhood Art House

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