

NEIGHBOR to NEIGHBOR



March 2010

Inner-City Neighborhood Art House • 201 East Tenth Street • Erie, Pennsylvania 16503 • 814-455-5508
www.eriebenedictines.org

MARCH Mastering Art, Respect, Care and Hope

Helping children learn to master visual, performing and literary arts is one of the basic goals of the ministry of the Neighborhood Art House. All kinds of skills are developed in painting, drawing, writing, dancing and playing an instrument. However, what makes the Neighborhood Art House special is the effort that is made to help the children become practiced in respect, care and hope. Every day opens with a mantra written by Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB:

May my mind think no harm.

May my lips speak no harm.

May my hands do no harm.

*May the children of tomorrow
bless the work I offer.*

This is followed by a rousing rendition of a simple song that assures the children they are part of a circle that welcomes everyone in, a circle bound forever in love. Reminded of these important values, the children go to their classes inspired and grounded. Hope blossoms and the belief that good things do come to those who live with respect and care for themselves, for others, and their world, starts to become a reality.

RECEIVING FROM THE COMMUNITY Sister Anne Says

There is something special about receiving from the Erie community. The Neighborhood Art House often benefits from a variety of local functions. The beauty of it all is simply this: thoughtfulness and largesse never grow old. Each event on our behalf glimmers with originality and manages to overwhelm us yet again as a result of good intentions, big hearts, and generous giving. Through the efforts of various organizations we have been gifted with donations: **Art, Antique and Gift Auction** presented by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie with the help of Mary Lubowicki; a **Souper Book Swap** sponsored by Mercyhurst College community with the help of Hooked On Books! Supervisors: Barb Behan and Helen Hovey; and a **Holiday Benefit Concert** put on by Mercyhurst Preparatory School with the help of student, Emily Schultz.

Sometimes the gifts come from people

beyond the local community who have read about our endeavor. Not long ago a woman from Ohio came across our newsletter and made a plea to her friends and co-workers on our behalf. Her words said it all: "Just think what your donation can do." I would be

remiss if I did not express public gratitude to everyone who reaches out to help us. Every single donation has value; every single donation is appreciated. Personal gifts, tax credits, memorials and fundraisers remind us every day not to take blessings for granted.

But, as you well know, it is not what we say about our blessings that is important;

rather, how we use them is the true measure of our gratitude. This newsletter is our way of sharing with you the things we do. Because of you and your generous giving many dreams are realized. Thank you from all of us here at NAH!

Sister Anne



Sister Anne accepts a donation from Tim Malesiewski from Waste Management.

GIVING TO THE COMMUNITY At the Neighborhood Art House

students and staff alike have come to understand and value the importance of finding ways to reach out to the community. Most recently, under the direction of various teachers, the students have engaged in special projects to benefit the Erie community. Supervised by Sister Margaret Ann Pilewski, OSB, **placemats were made by the children** for the Sisters of St. Joseph annual Thanksgiving Dinner held at Gannon University for those who were in need, alone, or otherwise unable to celebrate the holiday; special Christmas **gift bags were designed** for the residents of Benetwood Apartments in Harborcreek. A **tree was decorated** for Saint Vincent Health Center Auxiliary's Festival of Trees. It featured origami ornaments made by the children under the direction of Laurel Taft and Joe Wiecezorek. Photos used were produced in the Digital Photography class with the help of teacher Lourdes Jasso.



NAH Makes A Difference

It is always a memorable day when the Neighborhood Art House hears from former students. Sometimes they stop in for a visit; sometimes they send an e-mail. Here is one such e-mail that serves as a reminder that what is done at NAH can and does make a difference:

You might not remember me but I was a student at the Art House in the late 1990s. Recently, my college speech professor asked us to write an inspirational speech. I was stuck until I came across an issue of a magazine the Art House had published. I couldn't believe I had it after all those years! I decided to write about the Art House and the difference it made in my life and how it was the one thing I could always count on to be steady. It may have been a long time ago but I realize even more now what a huge difference the Art House made in my life. I don't think I would be where I am today without all the love and care that was shown me through my years there. Thanks for all your dedication! —A former student

SPECIAL events
SAVE THE DATES

May 6 • 7:00 PM
Spring Music Recital

May 20 • 7:00 PM
Spring Open House

May 22 • 8:30 AM
2010 Art&Sole
5K Run/Walk

September 14 • 5:00 PM
Taste of the Arts



IN MEMORY

Founding Women's Core Committee member, **Ann Teed**, died on January 8, 2010. At the request of her family, the Neighborhood Art House has been the recipient of many memorials made in her name. While her passing is mourned, her life is celebrated. Ann was



known for her love of children. As a former teacher she brought a special presence to the Neighborhood Art House where she found time to not only serve on committees but to give of herself through volunteering. She will long be remembered in our hearts. Without the vision and efforts of the Core Committee NAH would not be what it is today. Sympathy is extended to her family and friends, in particular to her son,



Dan, who presently serves on the NAH Development Committee.

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Erie piano tuner, **Norman Plumb**, died in November of 2009. He will long be remembered for gifting NAH with many years of piano tuning.

KUDOS to Women's Core Committee member, **Mary Ann Toohey**, who is being recognized by Mercy Center as one of this year's Dynamic Dozen, women who are making history. In addition to the Core Committee, Mary Ann has served on the Community House board of directors and given of her time as a mentor through Family Services of Erie's Mother-to-Mother program.



TAX CREDITS Thank you to the following businesses for their generous donations to the Neighborhood Art House through the EITC (Educational Improvement Tax Credit) Program: **Patterson-Erie • Eriez Magnetics • PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. • Waste Management • Bayside Development Corporation**

STUDENTS' TALENTS SHOWCASED


- The **DECEMBER OPEN HOUSE**, showcasing performances in music, dance, and poetry and featuring a display of a variety of visual arts was held at the end of the Fall Session. Students and guests alike enjoyed a memorable evening of entertainment.
- In January, 47 children shared their progress at the annual **WINTER MUSIC RECITAL**. Students of all ages and levels offered a gift of music using piano, stringed instruments, flute, guitar and voice.



Neighborhood Art House children and teachers gathered for this group photo following the Winter Music Recital

*In every community there is work to be done.
In every heart
there is the power to do it.*
-Marianne Williamson

Inner-City Neighborhood Art House



Benedictine Sisters of Erie
201 East Tenth Street
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NEW TEACHERS

The Neighborhood Art House is pleased to announce that four new teachers have joined the staff. After teaching in Summer Session 2009, Nicole Reedy stayed on and teaches *Painting with Watercolors*. She is joined by Laura Czano-Hirsh and Dottie Glover. Children are enjoying classes in *2-D & 3-D Art* and *Arts and Crafts* from these teachers.



Nicole Reedy



Dottie Glover



Ehren Knapp

Most recently, Ehren Knapp was welcomed. His classes in *Drawing*, *Multimedia Imaginary Creatures*, *Portrait Painting* and *Mask Making* have likewise met with success.

New avenues are being opened and new adventures are being experienced by students and teachers alike.



Laura Czano-Hirsh

Seven-Year-Old Siblings

Everyone knows that birthdays are extra-special at the Neighborhood Art House. The birthday child is celebrated in song and given the coveted "Birthday Bag."

But perhaps best of all is the day a child turns seven. On that very day they can begin to attend NAH classes. He or she is welcomed with a spirited chorus of "Happy Birthday" and a wonderful bag of gifts. But more importantly, a whole new world of art and music and poetry and dance is opened before them.

This is particularly enchanting when the child is walking in the footsteps of an older sibling who guides them along the way and helps them get their start. There is nothing more pleasing than to see our students taking pride in NAH and assuring their younger sisters and brothers that this is truly a great place to be.



Carlos and Isaias Andino