

Direct from the Director. . .

What an incredible evening we had on September 18, 2008! Our twentieth anniversary dinner was attended by 314 people. It was an evening I will never forget. As I said in my speech: "I remember the early meetings at St. Anselm's Church, sparked by the call from Bea Scanlon who was then on the staff of the Monmouth County Department of Human Services. I recall the seven founding congregations and our very humble beginnings."

A situation that took place in 1989 changed my one-year commitment to Interfaith Neighbors and the direction of my own career. I had met with a family of four – a father terminally ill with cancer and his three beautiful children, ages 7 to 13. All they wanted was to be with their father (and vice versa) until he died. When I told him we would give them a rent subsidy so they could avoid eviction and homelessness he embraced me with all his might. That was my signal that this was where God wanted me to be, and this was what Interfaith Neighbors was meant to be about. AMEN!

– Joseph Marmora
Executive Director

Affordable Housing



This year, Interfaith Neighbors completed construction of our 20th affordable home! Pictured is one of the homes dedicated this summer. Our next affordable housing project at 507 Ridge Avenue is already underway. Within the next two to six months, we will break ground on a minor sub-division that will yield two additional two-family homes!

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Celebrating 20 Years of Service

On Thursday, September 18th, Interfaith Neighbors celebrated 20 years of "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" at Branches Restaurant in West Long Branch. This celebration was a chance to recognize the support of friends who have helped make our work possible.



At the dinner, Interfaith Neighbors honored New Jersey Natural Gas for their years of support and dedication to the affordable housing program. In 1996 Interfaith Neighbors began renovating abandoned homes and building new affordable housing units in Asbury Park and Neptune Township. Starting with a \$25,000 donation from New Jersey Natural Gas, Interfaith Neighbors has renovated or constructed twenty affordable homes in Asbury Park, Neptune and Long Branch. New Jersey Natural Gas has a longstanding commitment to the community that extends beyond its customers' energy needs, ☘

focusing on wellness, education and the environment. As a part of that commitment, NJNG presented a check for \$50,000 to Interfaith Neighbors at the dinner in support of our many programs!

Interfaith Neighbors also recognized many of our supporting congregations. In 1988, a group of seven founding congregations assembled from throughout Monmouth County to address the issue of homelessness. From those early meetings, Interfaith Neighbors was born. During our 20 year history, many more congregations have supported our work, some of which have been donating funds and supplying volunteers consistently throughout those years. Interfaith Neighbors recognized and honored the contributions of all of these supporting congregations at the dinner.

Each year, Interfaith Neighbors recognizes the importance of our dedicated volunteers. This year, those recognized were Mary Anthopoulos, Don

Founders Circle

Church of St. Anselm, Wayside
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Atonement
First United Methodist Church, Oakhurst
Monmouth Reform Temple
St. Jerome Roman Catholic Parish
St. Mary's Church, Deal
Tower Hill First Presbyterian Church of Red Bank

Brockel, Bevin Irvin, Steve Klusas, Rose Marie Lyons, and Marie Truex. These six special volunteers were cited for their outstanding and enduring commitment to Interfaith Neighbors and the people we serve.

As an added special feature of the event, Interfaith Neighbors offered guests the chance to directly help those we serve through a unique opportunity called "The Giving Tree". Guests were able to "purchase" items that would directly benefit the people we serve, and were also able to give an amount of their own choosing. Many items were available for purchase, such as windows for our affordable homes, meals for our seniors, bus passes for our youth, and utility payments for struggling families. As the gifts were made, our beautiful "Giving Tree" blossomed with the names of each guest that donated in support of people in Monmouth County. We were most proud that we were able to designate 100% of the donations ☘

Long-term Supporting Congregations

Ascension Parish, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Bradley Beach
Ballard United Methodist Church, Asbury Park
Calvary Baptist Church, Belmar
The Church in Brielle, Reformed Church of St. Catherine, Holmdel
Church of St. Veronica, Howell
Community Outreach Group
Congregation B'Nai Israel Rumson
Diocese of Trenton
First Baptist Church, Manasquan
First Presbyterian Church of Belmar
First Presbyterian Church of Long Branch
First Presbyterian Church Manasquan

First United Methodist Church, Belmar
Hamilton United Methodist Church, Neptune
Holmdel Community United Church of Christ
Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Manasquan
Hope Presbyterian Church, Tinton Falls
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Holmdel
Manasquan United Methodist Church
Middletown United Methodist Church
Old First Church of Middletown
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Asbury Park

The Presbyterian Church at Shrewsbury
Presbyterian Church on the Hill, Wayside
Red Bank United Methodist Church
St. Andrews United Methodist Church, Spring Lake
St. George's-by-the-River Episcopal Church, Rumson
St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Asbury Park
St. Joseph's Parish, Keyport
St. Mary's, Colts Neck
St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Ocean Grove
United Methodist Homes of NJ
Wall United Methodist Church
West Grove United Methodist Church, Neptune

directly to the people we serve.

It was truly an amazing night! We at Interfaith Neighbors would like to express our deepest thanks to all those who helped make this memorable evening a success, including each and every one of our dedicated Advisory Board members! We would also like to thank all of our supporters for their generosity - we treasure that support and pledge to you our continued commitment to helping the less fortunate among us.



Mary Anthopoulos: The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation (an initiative of the Corporation for National and Community Service) awarded Mary Anthopoulos the President's Volunteer Service Award. This award recognizes Mary's dedication to volunteer service and signifies that she has served her community with distinction.



On Sunday, October 12, the Deal Fire Co. #2 and the Jersey Shore Running Club held a 5k race "Run Thru Deal" for the benefit of Interfaith Neighbors. Over 240 runners and walkers, including parents pushing baby carriages, took part. The weather cooperated by providing a magnificent day.

The winner of the men's division was Joe Pawlish of Asbury Park, and for the women it was

Mary has completed 4,000 hours of service with Interfaith Neighbors Meals on Wheels program, serving meals to the elderly of Monmouth County.



Don Brockel: Don is a member of Interfaith Neighbors Advisory Board and has organized and run the Annual Golf Outing each year for the past eleven years. He has worked at Fort Monmouth as an industrial engineer for 31 years. Don is a Scout Leader of Troop 71 in Oakhurst, and has been involved with scouting for 40 years. Don is also a life-long member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Asbury Park. His dedication and commitment over the last eleven years have helped Interfaith raise funds for our programs helping working poor families throughout Monmouth County.

Megan Heavey. Megan is Executive Director Joe Marmora's granddaughter. Joe took part as a walker and was pleased that he didn't finish last!

Thanks to the James Carasia of the Deal Fire Co. #2 and Steve Foley of the Jersey Shore Running Club as well as Scott Lewis. This donation was most appreciated and we at Interfaith Neighbors look forward to this event next year.



Bevin Irvin: Bevin is a custom homebuilder and general contractor who has worked with Interfaith Neighbors since 2000, volunteering his services to our Affordable Housing program. Introduced to us by the NJ Natural Gas Company, Bevin has helped complete 18 high quality, affordable homes for working, low-income families in Asbury Park, Neptune, and Long Branch. Joe Marmora says, "Bevin is one of the bedrocks upon which we have built our affordable housing program. He is a remarkable individual who personifies our overall mission here at Interfaith to help those in need."



Steve Klusas: Steve runs our Cliffwood Beach Route three times a week. He is a retired businessman. In his career, he taught executives how to handle public speaking. He brings a wonderful interest in people to his time with our homebound seniors, the seniors at the center, and the other volunteers as well. Steve is always willing to help in whatever way he can. Margaret McGinn of our Keyport program says of Steve, "He's a kind and generous person, and a truly dedicated volunteer. When I see him at work, I think that it's because of volunteers like him that our program works."



Rose Marie Lyons: Rose Marie has volunteered with Interfaith Neighbors for ten years as an office assistant with our Rental Assistance Program. She has two daughters and has lived in West Allenhurst with her husband, Mike for the past 24 years. She has been an Office Manager of D2L Associates water treatment and testing since 1984. She is a member of St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Deal, and volunteers there as a lector and a council member. Rose Marie is a truly dedicated volunteer and a wonderful supporter of Interfaith Neighbors.



Marie Truex: Marie has delivered meals for many years in the Meals on Wheels program. Marie and her husband Jack raised five children. After the youngest was born, Marie and her neighbor decided to volunteer to deliver meals on wheels. Some years later, her neighbor passed away, yet Marie continued on by herself, bringing her youngest child (now an adult) and in recent years, her grandson, with her on meal deliveries. She has consistently volunteered on Tuesdays on the same route, and always lends a helping hand when needed. This marks her 30th year of service to the meal delivery program. ■