Urban Resurrection
The Remaking of a South Bend Park

Shreveport
An Unexpected Letter

Recipe
Greens Done Right
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This spring Martha Delaney (Buffalo, left) celebrated receiving a master’s degree in theology from Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, NY, with fellow branch member Arlene Meyerhofer, who received her certificate of continuing education in theological studies from the same institution.

V&B

The Magazine of the People of Praise

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FRONT COVER
Beth Sanford (South Bend, right) and her neighbor Lu Ella Webster spearheaded efforts to transform a decaying neighborhood park into a place of peace and fun. Photo by Margaret Anderson.

BACK COVER
Bud Northway took this photo of a goldfinch at her mother’s lake house in Wisconsin.

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For Lu Ella Webster, a lifelong resident of South Bend’s northeast neighborhood, Kelly Park is a place of happy memories. She can recall playing with other children, black and white together, on the domed monkey bars and pump merry-go-round back in the 1950s when the park was new. But in more recent years, she says, the park became run-down. Some neighbors would warn children not to play there. There were hypodermic needles on the ground, and cars speeding close to the remaining playground equipment made it dangerous for little ones. The park’s one bench had broken slats. Its swingset and basketball hoops were faded and worn.

Today the park has been rebuilt from the ground up, with two basketball half-courts, a pavilion, a perimeter fence, new playground equipment and dozens of beautiful trees. This summer, South Bend city representatives will gather with neighbors and friends to cut the ribbon across the park’s brand new entrance and officially dedicate it.

The seeds of the park’s resurrection lay in the dreams of a group of neighborhood children. With the help of many others moved by those dreams, Beth Sanford (South Bend) and her friend and neighbor Lu Ella turned them into a reality. They raised $220,000 in donations and pushed the reconstruction forward from start to finish.

Matt and Beth Sanford and their children live half a block away from Kelly Park. They’ve watched their neighborhood change in recent years as new houses were built, attracting families connected with the University of Notre Dame, located just to the north. Wealthier households moved in next to or replaced middle or lower-income families. Kelly Park remained uninviting and unsafe, until some neighborhood children voiced a desire to change it.

The children were attending a program at Robinson Community Learning Center, a Notre Dame-sponsored outreach to the neighborhood. After taking a closer look at their neighborhood through the program, they told their leader, Lu Ella, that if they could improve one thing about their neighborhood it would be Kelly Park. In 2013, the group of a dozen eight-to-twelve-year-olds made a small grant proposal for park renovations that was approved.

Lu Ella still lives on the property where she was born and raised, directly across the street from Kelly Park. She says her family—she’s one of 15 children—were the first African-Americans to move into the neighborhood. She has been a leader in neighborhood projects and helped the children develop and publicize their hopes for the park.

In 2013, Beth was a stay-at-home mother of five and also an architect by training. With her children in school, she was starting to feel a creative itch. She asked the Lord about it and decided she should offer to help Lu Ella. She had no
idea that she had just gotten herself into a five-year project.

“The first thing we did was to have a design charrette with the kids,” Beth says. “We worked with them to draw pictures of what they wanted. They wanted a basketball court, a walking path for parents to exercise while their children play, a gated playground, a place that was handicapped-accessible. They wanted benches for adults and elderly people, a pavilion and grill. What they wanted was not just for themselves, but for the community. I was really inspired.”

Beth and Lu Ella started pounding the pavement. They quickly secured a $10,000 donation from a neighborhood revitalization association. They approached their neighbors around the corner, the owners of a local business, who wrote out a check for $7,500 on the spot. Encouraged, they kept going, eventually securing tens of thousands of dollars towards the renovation.

Beth worked with vendors, cutting costs and asking for discounts on materials and labor. She found out that Indiana masonry workers had an apprenticeship program and asked if they could build the entrance piers for free. “I brought this really architecturally pretty drawing of the piers, and the guy in charge said, ‘That’s great, but I can’t build that’—because they’re just first-year apprentices. And I said, ‘Oh! Well, what can you build?’ So we sat and modified the drawing.”

She worked with neighborhood children and youth groups to help clean up trash in the park. She spoke with neighbors about what was going on in the park and asked for their input, and she and Lu Ella kept in touch with city officials. They made sure to express their thanks to everyone involved. “Lu Ella and I fed the masons a full meal, and they said, ‘Wow, we always just get cold pizza!’”

Beth had plenty to learn, since her background had been mainly in commercial, residential and light industrial architecture. “As an architect I’m a research junkie,” she says. “I started contacting my friends who are landscape architects to get their opinions. I called the manufacturers of the swingset: ‘this is how I’m interpreting your safety standards. Is this correct?’ I found out how expensive playground equipment is, about the requirements for loose-fill barriers, about surface materials and their compaction rates. Even things like where to put the grills and trash cans—you have to think about it from the city’s maintenance standpoint. I felt like it was God’s gift to me that I got to do this.”

Beth’s son James saw kids playing on the new courts even before the paint was
down. “The courts are definitely very well used. With two separate courts now, you can have a playful game with grade school kids and a real scrimmage with some high schoolers. I think that was really smart.”

At the Sanford house, family mealtime conversations often came back to the park. Matt works as a machinist in the Notre Dame Department of Physics shop which donated scrap metals to the local blacksmiths’ guild, where the men designed and built the new entrance sign for the park and a sculptural bike rack designed like a carousel. Matt himself engraved the plaques on each of the park benches with the names of donors. James brought fellow Trinity classmates out to help paint the new fencing. “Our family unit has grown in patience and support,” Matt says. “We pray for Beth’s work at the park and we’re proud. The Lord has guided her.”

After working together so long, Beth and Lu Ella call one another sisters, and their families have become close. “When something goes wrong, we text each other: ‘Remember the Lord is in it.’ Every step of the way, we said, ‘Lord, lead us to the people you want to lead us to, and to the people you want me to ask for money.’”

This year, workers planted 26 boxwoods and 116 trees, including 83 arborvitaes that created a green screen around two sides of the park. Recently Beth noticed that someone had been stealing some of the shrubs. As she was thinking about what to do, she saw a woman walk into the park with a wagon and some dirt, looking like she was about to take off with another shrub. Beth started to pray and got the sense that, instead of confronting the woman, she should listen to her. The woman began talking about how Notre Dame had paid for all the plants, and how she and some friends were going to come over and fertilize them. Beth explained to her that she and others had raised the money to renovate the park, showing her pictures of the renovation. While they were talking, a group of boys rode up on their bikes, and Beth invited them to help water the plants. Soon the woman was helping to clean up around the plants, and the boys started to help her. “God bless you,” the woman said to Beth. “You’re good with these boys.” She left promising to come back and help again.

“Beth and Lu have been great partners,” says John Martinez, Director of Facilities and Grounds for South Bend’s parks department, which honored the two women as volunteers of the year in spring, 2018. (They even got to throw out the first pitch for a South Bend Cubs minor league baseball game.) “This has been well-received by the whole neighborhood,” said John. “I wish we had more neighborhood groups like them.”

“It’s a good feeling,” Lu Ella says, seeing the fruit of their labors every day from her home. “One day there must have been a hundred kids over here in the park, and what a blessing to hear the laughter! And the Notre Dame law students had their family picnic over here. We had a man whose wife passed and they wanted to have a celebration for her, and all the family were saying let’s do it at Perley Park, and he said, ‘No, she grew up across the street. This is the park she played in.’ They had it here in the park. And then they did fireworks later on at night and it was beautiful.”

Now Beth sees neighborhood families, rich and poor alike, playing alongside one another in the new park. “For me, learning how to build a park is one thing, but now I can see the social impact, and I know how God has had his hand in it . . . you have all the expensive new homes coming in next to all the older homes that have middle to lower-income families. Before, the new families would not even come to this park. Now you’re starting to see the neighborhood coming together. It’s like a place of union.”
IT WAS A SUNDAY MORNING THIS APRIL, just after church, when I checked my email and found this letter:

Hello there. My name is Ciarra and I was just up early this morning and decided to google the people of praise because I remembered them from my youth. About ten or eleven years ago I lived in Shreveport Louisiana where I was pretty much a miserable poverty stricken teen with no family there outside of my father step mother and little brother. I lived a hard life there in the Allendale neighborhood. One day when I was at a friends house a group of people walked up and invited us to come to a camp that was starting in a few weeks. We didn't say much to them at the time because number one they were strangers and number two we really didn't know how to take it. Here is this bold group of people just as happy as can be be marching around in this mean old neighborhood without a fear or worry! That intrigued us. We ended up going to the camp and it was the start of a great journey. We did EVERYTHING with them! We woke up early just to go over there and play with their toys. I joined a film club with a woman named Genevieve and had the time of my life with a disposable camera. They started making dinner at night and inviting the neighbors and even started making breakfast and inviting us to that as well. Sometimes it was the only way we were able to eat. One sad day about a year after meeting these people me and my little brother were forced to live in a homeless shelter with our stepmom by the state because we had toooons of dogs. The people of praise WITHOUT HESITATION helped my father clean and remodel that house for us to come home. They even built dog houses in the backyard. Later, the child welfare authorities came to inspect the house, they deemed it safe for habitation and the children returned. The children's father threw a barbecue for the whole missionary team to say thank you. Just over a year later, in the spring of 2008, Ciarra and Eric left Allendale for good, and that was our last contact with them until Ciarra sent her letter.

Ciarra's story goes back to February of 2007, when her little brother Eric came to find Nathan. Child welfare authorities had come to their house and decided that the children could no longer live there because of the filthy conditions. (There were eight or ten pit bulls living in the house and defecating everywhere.) Ciarra and Eric wound up going to live in a Salvation Army shelter, while Nathan contacted the father and offered to help clean the house. “The whole house was like a toilet,” Nathan recalls. Working in the dark, since the house had no electricity, Nathan and Rus Lyons removed furniture, ripped out the carpet and cleaned the floors. As he chipped away at the encrusted dog droppings with a paint scraper, Nathan fumed with anger. Then, as he recalls, “All of a sudden Rus started singing one of the songs from the songbook. I started singing too. That was a beautiful moment.”

That weekend, Genevieve had traveled to Shreveport from Minnesota to visit Nathan. They were dating seriously but not yet engaged, and time together was precious. But their plans changed as Nathan dedicated much of his time to working at the house. Later, Genevieve herself got the chance to clean, working with Joan Pingel with rubber gloves and Lysol to disinfect every surface—the perfect preparation for a missionary marriage!

Nathan and crew hauled the old furniture to the dump and lent a few items to the family, who also bought a few furniture pieces. They built several dog houses in the backyard. Later, the child welfare authorities came to inspect the house, they deemed it safe for habitation and the children returned. The children's father threw a barbecue for the whole missionary team to say thank you. Just over a year later, in the spring of 2008, Ciarra and Eric left Allendale for good, and that was our last contact with them until Ciarra sent her letter.

I replied quickly to her message and received a second email, just as beautiful, and then we arranged a time to talk on the phone. She told me that she very much wants others to know her story,
and she filled me in on some of the background.

Ciarra and Eric had come to Allendale from Florida with their dad in 2005, when she was 12. Their lease in Florida had run out and a friend in Shreveport had found them a house there. When they arrived, they didn’t know anyone in the city aside from that friend, who soon moved away. Ciarra remembers getting in lots of fights during their first weeks in the neighborhood. That summer she attended our summer camp and she has good memories of beating out drum rhythms on overturned paint buckets, learning a praise dance with some of the other girls and some of our praise songs.

At home, things were changing for Ciarra and Eric. “When we first moved there . . . I saw a complete change in my dad. I was used to him being an outgoing, bubbly, friendly person, but a couple of months after we got to [Louisiana] he just became like a hermit, never left the house. If he needed something from the store, he would send us. He didn’t work. . . . I ended up finding later on that my dad had gotten on drugs really bad.”

The drugs brought financial difficulties. The city cut off water to the house, and they spent a year living without electricity. “We lived across the street from a baseball stadium. [My dad] made us wake up at 4:00 a.m. We had this big storage tote, and he would make us fill it up with water at the stadium and wheel it all the way home. It was so heavy we used to cry . . .

“To cook, we had to walk around the neighborhood and collect sticks. To make a pack of Ramen noodles, we had to cook it on the grill. It was just an awful, awful situation.”

The children ate at school and at an after-school feeding program sponsored by Mt. Sinai Church, and sometimes at the community’s houses on Yale Avenue. They had arrived in the neighborhood with only two dogs, but the dogs kept having puppies.

“I felt like living in my house I was a slave. My dad was a slave to the dogs. I had to cook for my little brother. I had to clean for my little brother. I would have to cook chicken for the dogs, and we couldn’t eat until his dogs ate.”

She added, “We just didn’t have a childhood. Our only sense of being a child was when we were at the People of Praise.”

During this period, Ciarra did not have much contact with her mother in Ohio. When she did talk with her, “My dad would make us talk on speakerphone to make sure we didn’t tell her that we were having a rough time.”

But her dad allowed her to go to the public library, and there Ciarra created a Myspace page and used it to get in touch with her mom, telling her the truth about their situation. Her mom called and told Ciarra’s dad that she would be coming for a visit, and arrived a couple of weeks later. Ciarra remembers filling a pillowcase with her clothes and her brother’s clothes, and telling just a few of her friends that she would be leaving for good. Her mom picked up Ciarra and Eric from the community’s houses on Yale Avenue, and then went to tell Ciarra’s dad that they would be leaving. “That was the last time I saw my dad for maybe four years,” Ciarra said. Ciarra had engineered her own rescue.

Today she lives in the Toledo, Ohio, area with her two small children and their father, and works at a license branch. She told me she was thinking about homeschooling her kids and we chatted about that, since Gretchen has been teaching our own kids. I told her that our summer camps in Allendale are still going strong and I told her all about Praise Academy and how the school serves children from extremely difficult backgrounds like hers.

She asked me for pictures of the camps and school, and said that she would like to go back to see the progress in the neighborhood. “But on the other hand it was so painful. I don’t know when I’ll be able to go back and have the courage to face it.”

“I could tell that story a thousand times,” Ciarra says. “God showed me that when I thought I didn’t have anybody he sent an army to swarm around us and smother us in love, love we weren’t getting at home and didn’t get anywhere else.”
RECIPE

GREENS DONE RIGHT

RECIPE BY JERMAIN CARTWRIGHT
PHOTO BY JENNIFER KENNING
STORY BY ELIZABETH GRAMS
Hey, brother, come over here and get you some greens!

It’s a hot Saturday afternoon in Evansville, and on the corner of Linwood and Monroe a cheerful man named Jermain stands under the shade of an old silver maple with a steaming pot in one hand and a phone blaring Gospel music in the other. He wipes his brow on his mitt and calls again, “We’re just out here bringing people together for the kingdom.”

Behind him, a canopy gives additional shade to several long, vegetable-laden tables. Farther behind the farm stand, the cultivated rows of Praise Harvest, the community’s urban farm, stretch across a big open lot, where missionary sisters pick cherry tomatoes with neighborhood children. Jermain grooves to his music, his sonorous voice and the aroma of his cooked greens beckoning every vehicle and pedestrian within earshot or downwind. A steady stream of neighbors comes by the stand to peruse tomatoes, okra, cucumbers and of course, leafy greens. Many know Jermain or the missionaries already and, as they talk, Jermain tells them about the good things God is doing in the neighborhood, giving his personal testimony more than once over the course of the afternoon.

“The People of Praise and what they’re doing here in Evansville is a wonderful thing,” Jermain says. “I met them, and ever since I’ve been cooking and adding a little flavor to the bunch. I got a little twist, a little salsa, to my food. ”

Last summer, Jermain cooked for neighbors at several block parties the missionaries put on. “When Nick [Holovaty] called me up to come cook, it was really God telling me, ‘Get on over there to do something for the kingdom.’ You got the People of Praise telling you about the goodness and the grace of God, and then, I’m being used and my gift, cooking wonderful food, and I put my flavor in. And you got it going down both ways, spiritually and in your belly, you know what I’m saying? That’s the best way I like it! So, it’s just an all-round blessing to be a part of what Christ is doing.”

The People of Praise missionaries in Evansville started Praise Harvest three years ago to build community and give neighbors easy access to affordable, healthy food. The farm produced two tons of produce in the 2017 season, much of which they sold or gave away at their weekly farm stand.

“Making greens is a big part of our neighbors’ culture,” says Mary Timler. “Last Mother’s Day, we had harvested a bunch of greens. People pulled over to the farm stand and said, ‘Well, it’s Mother’s Day, this is right on time! I’m getting my greens!’”

“Maybe half the people coming to the farm stand are getting greens,” notes Peter Putzier, who is responsible for the 10,000 square feet of Praise Harvest farmland scattered throughout the block.

“It’s like mama’s chili: everyone has their own version of the recipe,” Abby Earhart explains. “Some people really like to use jowl bacon. One of the things most recipes have in common is multiple kinds of greens. Most popular are collard greens, mustard greens and turnip greens. Some people put kale or spinach in. They’re very dense, really filling. The longer you cook them, the tenderer they get. They aren’t fibrous—they almost melt in your mouth.”

Peter noticed at a recent mission team dinner that the greens—now not an uncommon feature on People of Praise tables in Evansville—were the first thing to disappear from plates. “I’ve been won over to greens,” he says. “They’re very savory. I think those who are adventurous and try them might like them!”

Jermain shares his culinary secrets.

Jermain’s guide to cooking greens

Actually I make some real good greens. I cook so many different ways, so I really don’t have one certain way I do it.

I put all different kinds together in one pot, about four bunches. Collard greens or mustard. I like the stems because I cook ’em for like four hours. But you gotta take the ends off. You chop ’em up and break ’em up real fine . . . into pieces about the size of three fingers.

You put ’em in water and then put a stick of butter in there. You want to make the greens to come down to the water level.

Meat—we’re getting to the good stuff now. You get jowl bacon or any kind that has a lot of fat, the more fat, the better. Get smoked turkey neck. Or a drumstick the size of a kneecap. And smoked.

Then you get with the seasoning. Get soul food seasoning. Or Lawry’s is the closest thing. You need paprika and those crushed red pepper flakes. I taste my food until the flavor is to my desire. That’s the number one rule of cooking: “To taste.”

GREENS

Ingredients

Four bunches of greens, chopped and roughly destemmed
2-3 quarts water
Soul food seasoning, to taste
¼ cup butter
1 pound jowl or other fatty bacon, chopped
4 necks or 1 large drumstick smoked turkey

Directions

1. Fry bacon in a large pot. Do not drain.
2. Melt butter in the same pot. Add greens and 2 quarts water and bring to boiling. After the greens have cooked down some (about 15 minutes), add turkey and seasoning.
3. Cover and simmer for four hours or to desired consistency. Check after an hour and add more water and/or seasoning as needed, keeping the greens mostly submerged. Remove bones from turkey meat and serve hot.
TRIBUTES

MICHAEL O’BRIEN
By Bud Northway

Always energetic, Michael was proud of his Irish heritage and fiercely loyal to family, friends, brothers, sisters and the Lord Jesus. The fourth of eight children of a very devout family, Michael had two younger siblings with an extremely rare and disabling disease requiring constant care. Contrary to the advice of doctors, who recommended that the children be institutionalized, his parents heroically chose to raise them within their loving family. Everyone pulled together and cared for them throughout their lives. As a result, Michael was a man of great compassion who found joy in simple pleasures. He loved to laugh and was the instigator in more than one practical joke. He shared his love of nature and of God freely with all, but always had a special connection with youth. As an avid traveler and nature lover, he explored the U.S. from the Adirondacks to Alaska.

Michael was an integral member of the team that started up our Buffalo camp. He also gave numerous teachings in the branch, and he served as the main speaker at our Festival of Lessons and Carols in Black Rock in 2016.

Michael authored two books after he retired. Love is Stronger than Pain tells the story of his mother’s selfless love, with all the proceeds going to Hunter’s Hope, a Christian nonprofit organization that works on behalf of those with leukodystrophy. I Want More speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit, with all the proceeds benefiting Buffalo camp.

facts

• Michael Joseph O’Brien was born September 21, 1951, in Ithaca, New York, and died in Buffalo December 6, 2017, after a brief illness.
• Michael was a well-known educator in Buffalo’s public and Catholic schools, serving as teacher and principal. He was highly regarded by parents and students alike.
• In 1986, Michael was one of the leaders of the Disciple of the Lord Community when it became the Buffalo branch, and he was among the first to make the covenant here, on October 15, 1989.

ANNE MILLER
By Mary Claassen

Bob and Anne constantly sought the Lord, raising their large family in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In the early ‘70s Anne became a leader in the Cursillo movement, and in 1973 started a chapter of Birthright, a life-care center. Newly baptized in the Spirit, they joined the local prayer group, hungering for deeper Christian life. Then they discerned a call to move to the Twin Cities in 1977 to join Servants of the Lord.

In early community here, people called her a “mother to all” because of her ready smile, her hugs and kisses and her ability to listen warmly and to offer encouragement and sage, holy advice. From 1978 to 1988 she was the head cook at Servant Camp, providing home-cooked meals, and when our Trinity School opened she sewed costumes for the plays. Desiring to preserve the amazing stories of those who formed Christian community in the ’70s, she compiled a book of sharings— a treasure to read and remember.

She served, but most of all she simply loved each of us. One of the last times she shared at a meeting she said, “Learn people’s names. When you say their names, they feel loved.”

Her holy presence was a gift, even as she gradually declined with Lewy body disease. She communicated a lot by responding to prayers and kisses from others.

Jan Terhaar wrote, “She was our encourager to love more.” Renee Long wrote, “We will miss her twinkling smile, the light in her face.” Whenever people talked to her about what was on their hearts, they knew she always prayed for them as a mother would.

facts

• Anne Corlis Miller was born March 30, 1927, and died February 16, 2018.
• She and her husband Bob were married for 70 years. They had 10 children and 48 grandchildren, plus 54 great-grandchildren . . . and counting.
• Anne and Bob made the Servants of the Lord covenant in 1980 and the People of Praise covenant on January 27, 1985. Anne served as a women’s leader and as a women’s group leader.
• Three of their daughters, Jeanne Oberg, Ginny DeSanto and Mary Claassen (all Servant Branch) are also covenanted members.
Left: John Gehl (Buffalo) didn’t let cancer or confinement to a wheelchair keep him from leading a branch meeting on May 6. Right: Matt Harris (northern Virginia) lends his skills in Louisiana/Cajun-style cooking to the branch’s annual pig roast, an Action fundraiser.

**LIFENOTES**

**Births:**
Welcome to our newest little brother and sister:
Grace Marie, born May 14 to Rob and Laura Brickweg (Servant Branch).
Luke Timothy, born May 29 to John and Karen Xenakis (South Bend).

**Weddings and Anniversaries:**
Congratulations to Philip Gaffney (Servant Branch) and Emily Barth, who were married April 7 at St. Agnes Church in Saint Paul, MN.
Best wishes to Peter Coleman (Mission, Indianapolis Triangle) and Rebecca Reinhardt (Servant Branch), who were married May 5 at Holy Family Church in Saint Louis Park, MN.
Congratulations to Gjon Kadeli and Mary McCabe (both northern Virginia), who were married May 5 at St. James Catholic Church in Falls Church, VA.
Congratulations to John Earhart and Ellen Putzier (both Mission, Evansville), who were married May 19 at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Evansville.
Best wishes to these brothers and sisters who recently celebrated their 30th wedding anniversaries:
Tim and Ann Marie Pingel (South Bend) on January 9.
Michael and Mary Frances Loughran (northern Virginia) on May 7.
George and Meg McMannon (Servant Branch) on May 21.
John and Mary Behrens (South Bend) on May 28.

**Graduations:**
Congratulations to these brothers and sisters who recently graduated:
Mary Brophy (South Bend), B.A., English writing, Saint Mary’s College.
Margaret Bulger (Servant Branch), B.A., mathematics, University of St. Thomas.
Joe Cassell (Mission, Indianapolis Triangle), B.A., chemistry, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.
Peter Coleman (Mission, Indianapolis Triangle), M.D., Indiana University School of Medicine.
Martha Delaney (Buffalo), M.A., theology, Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, NY.
Michaela Loughran (northern Virginia), B.S., economics, and B.A., history, George Mason University.
Andre Magill (South Bend), B.S., electrical engineering, University of Notre Dame.
Shannon Meaffey (northern Virginia), B.S., senior healthcare administration, George Mason University.
Arlene Meyerhofer (Buffalo), certificate of continuing education in theological studies, Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, NY.
Martha Olson (Vancouver-Portland), M.A., teaching, University of Portland.
Kaitlyn Raway (South Bend), B.F.A., graphic design, Indiana University South Bend.
Dan Schwab (Vancouver-Portland), B.S., communication studies, Portland State University.

**Work and Achievements:**
The Buffalo branch raised over $12,000 at its annual combined fundraiser for Buffalo Camp, Action and the Black Rock outreach on May 7.
The northern Virginia branch raised over $8,000 for Action on May 7 with a pig roast and family festival.

Anne Varevice (Colorado Springs) and her supervisor presented at the 43rd annual Oncology Nursing Congress, May 16-20, on topics they recently had published in Oncology Nursing Forum.
Memorial Hospital Nurse Pete Gaffney (South Bend) recently received a Hero Award from the nonprofit group Home for Heroes for his work with terminally ill patients. The award was presented at the hospital’s Nurse’s Fair, which takes place during National Nurses Week.
Steven Walker won the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Notre Dame Graduate School on May 19 for his public service career dedicated to advancing U.S. hypersonic flight and space access. He is the director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

**Death:**
Since the last issue of V&B, we’ve received word that a sister in the community has died. We pray for her family and friends in this time of loss.
Jane Fesler (Tampa, living on assignment in Arizona) died November 17, 2017.

**Executive Office Announcements:**
On May 16, Charlie Fraga (Vancouver-Portland), Bob Magill (northern Virginia) and Pat Murphy (Servant Branch) were elected as members of the community’s board of governors. Their six-year terms will begin August 22, 2018. Pat was reelected and will be serving his second consecutive term. Bob will be serving his first term. Charlie has twice served for a period of 12 years and will be starting a new six-year term.
Mary Grams has been transferred from the South Bend branch to the Mission program office’s Christians in Mission team in Allendale.
“How varied are your works, O Lord” (Ps. 104:24).