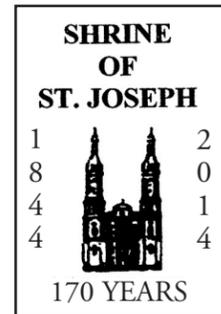




The Shrine of Saint Joseph's Friends, Inc.
1220 North 11th Street • St. Louis, MO 63106-4614

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The Shrine of Saint Joseph's Friends, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

1220 N. 11th Street • St. Louis, Missouri 63106-4614 • Rectory Telephone (314) 231-9407

WINTER-SPRING ISSUE 2016

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Check if appropriate:
 My name is misspelled.
 My address is incorrect.
 I received more than one copy.
 I no longer wish to receive the Newsletter.
 Please clip this address panel and mail it to us noting your request.

Religious Services

Sunday Mass--11 a.m.

First Friday of each month--Mass at 12 Noon

Veneration of St. Peter Claver or St. Padre Pio Relic after Mass

Fr. Dale Wunderlich, rector, and recipient of an Aquinas Institute "Great Preacher" award.

Supporting the Shrine with Your Membership



The restoration and on-going maintenance of the Shrine is accomplished strictly through private contributions. Annual membership dues is only \$10 (\$20 for husband and wife). All donations are tax deductible. If you are already a member, we **GRATEFULLY THANK YOU** and ask for your continued support. If you are not a member, please consider joining. **Your financial support is needed** to help in preserving this irreplaceable historic and religious landmark for future generations. If you have any questions, please contact Sherry Chibnall, your Membership Committee Chairperson, at (314) 231-9407.

Please Remember the Shrine in your Will or Trust.

Application for Membership
Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc.
Dues are \$10 per person per year

Mr. _____
 Mrs. _____
 Ms. _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____
 Phone _____
 Check \$ _____ Check No. _____
 Date _____ Cash \$ _____

Make checks payable to:
Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc.
1220 N. 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63106-4614

Air & Steam Club

Members of the Air and Steam Club have, since the beginning, helped to cover utility costs. We need your continued support for the Shrine.

Your donations last year contributed about 60% toward the Shrine's heating, air conditioning, gas, and water bills.

Thank you! Thank you! Please continue your level of support for the Shrine. If you are not currently participating, please join now. Your help is needed! Drawings are monthly for prizes totaling \$200. Tickets are \$12 each yearly with no limit to the number you may purchase.

Mail the form below along with your check made out to: "Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc." and mail to 1220 N. 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63106-4614. If you need more information, please contact Bernie or Dooley Pestka at (314) 231-9407.

Visit our website: www.shrineofstjoseph.org

Air and Steam Club
Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc.
1220 N 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63106-4614

1st prize \$100
 2nd prize \$50
 3rd prize \$50

3 winning tickets every month! \$12 per ticket

Name _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____
 Phone _____

Restoration of East and West Center Wall Statuary

An analysis done last year of the condition of the irreplaceable religious works of art inside the Shrine, revealed that two of the statuary needed attention. Most of the funding needed to fully restore these two marvelous pieces of religious art work were from donations received from you, our donors, in last Spring's fundraiser. The "St. Ann with Mary" statuary on the center west wall and the "Blessed Mother at the Crucifixion Scene" on the center east wall had never been restored. Both of these works of art are quite large, each actually containing two statues requiring scaffolding to reach the upper sections, and due to be completed by mid-February.

Master artisan, Michele Bowman, was chosen to perform this work--she is no newcomer to the Shrine. Michele worked with the original group of artisans on the interior restoration from 1988 to 1993. She and another excellent artisan, Diane Pappas, during those years, restored nearly every major Shrine statue.

Michelle, along with her assistants, Erica Robertson and JT Cacciatore, at this printing, were just beginning by thoroughly cleaning both statuary areas before taking on the painstaking process of carefully removing loose chipped paint using razor blades. Michelle said, "then, using a special chemical mixture, we are going to perform what is called 'controlled paint removal' to get back to the original colors." (The St. Ann with Mary statuary was carved in the year 1897 by Max Schneiderhahn, who was a very well-known religious wood sculptor, who also created the Shrine's historic pulpit). "I can already tell that additional colors have been added to this statuary," said Michelle. "When we find the original colors, I will meet with Ted Wofford (Shrine's architect) and show him what we have. Most likely we'll finish the statuary in these original colors that we discover."

On the east side center wall, the other statuary to be restored, is a very emotionally moving depiction of Mary kneeling and weeping below Christ nailed to the crucifix, which is dated 1892. "In this statuary," said Michelle, "the large, tall crucifix has been just painted over with dark brown solid color paint. We will remove that brown paint and replace it with stain that will enhance the wood and create a more grainy, actual wood-like appearance." Michelle has also found some gold colors that have been painted over on the Blessed Mother and "we are also looking for some gold on the Mary with St. Ann statuary," she said, adding that "all of this gold we uncover, we will replace with a very high-quality gold gilding."

Michelle said, "returning to the Shrine reminds me of the first statue I ever restored--the Shrine's guardian angel statue. So that statue holds special meaning to me". Michele added, "I really learned my craft here from two talented men--Ted Wofford (Shrine architect) and Tom Sater." She returned several years ago and restored the nativity Christmas figures, gold-plated around the tabernacle, and gold-plated the organ pipes to their beautiful brilliance. Obviously, Michele has achieved a great reputation here with her complete mastery of this type of very high-quality restoration work. She founded her own company--Restoration Plus, where she specializes in all aspects of ecclesiastical art preservation which involves restoring and giving new life to statuary, bells, clocks, art glass, candelabras, and paintings.



"Mary at the Crucifixion Scene" behind scaffolding on east wall



Erica working on upper part above St. Ann; Michele and JT below working on Mary statue



JT sanding lower area of St. Ann while Michele brushing on chemical to perform controlled paint removal



Michele meticulously removing loose paint with a razor

Shrine Weddings - 2016

"Guests were awestruck by the wedding Mass at the Shrine of St. Joseph." This comment was made in the *Ladue News* when the newspaper featured a recent Shrine wedding. And another Shrine wedding featured in the *St. Louis Magazine* this month described the wedding location as the "opulent Shrine of St. Joseph." No matter what words you use, the magnificent Shrine is well known as the perfect, Catholic church site for an unforgettable traditional church wedding.

Our wedding office reports 57 weddings are signed up for 2016 so far. There are still openings remaining especially in the Fall. Please call the wedding office at 231-0869 on Tuesdays or Thursdays if you have questions. You can schedule a visit if you wish, and see for yourself the extraordinary beauty of the Shrine.

Bernie and Dooley Pestka's Long-time Devotion to the Shrine

Among the last of the generation that grew up here in the old neighborhood

The lifeblood of the Shrine are our volunteers. In this issue, we feature two long-time volunteers--Bernie and Dooley Pestka. Faithful and reliable--these are two words that keep cropping up in describing the Pestkas' high level of volunteering.



Bernie and Dooley Pestka

Amazingly, they actually grew up within a short distance of each other--Bernie at 16th and Cass Ave. and Dooley, just 3 blocks away. "Back in those days," said Bernie, "there were several Catholic churches in this immediate area." Then he proceeded to name at least five churches now gone. "People today don't realize what a densely populated area this was at one time," he added. Dooley said, "we would get together as kids and play ball at Mullanphy Park." For Bernie and Dooley, their childhood friendship ended up with marriage now in its 60th year, having 2 sons and 5 grand children.

Bernie was baptized here at St. Joseph's and went to St. Joseph's parish school which was just two blocks from the Shrine. Dooley was also baptized at the Shrine some years later. "We would literally march in straight lines from the school into the church for Mass every morning," said Bernie, adding "in cold weather we used the basement chapel (now the thrift shop). I still remember the old pump organ in the chapel. Boys and girls in church were seated separately--on Sunday there were two Latin Masses. There were no bathrooms in the church building. I vividly remember privies lined up out back with steps from the church's east sacristy room going down outside to their location where the courtyard parking area is now situated."

"I recall," said Bernie, "Joe Baldes, the church's custodian. Joe managed to live in the west room above the priest's sacristy. He would

ring the tower bells before Mass. The rope attached to the bells hung all the way down from the top of the west tower and I would sometimes watch as he got the gigantic bells ringing."

Bernie would sometimes meet up with his classmate, Ralph Ellerbrock before school (long-time Shrine organist who passed 4 years ago) at Ralph's parent's bakery--the Ellerbrock Bakery. "They nearly always gave me a free doughnut before we headed out of the bakery for school," said Bernie. "The year I graduated from 8th grade, there were just 13 of us in the class." Bernie went into the Navy and Dooley continued in school. Sometime after his five years of service, the two married right here at St. Joseph's in 1955.

The Pestkas, over the years, have pitched in to help out wherever needed. They have always helped with raffle tickets from fund raisers and with the air and steam club. Dooley has been a long-time Eucharistic minister and both have been part of the wedding group volunteers. A long-time member of the men's club, Bernie is currently its vice-president and he is also head of the men's usher group, helps with funerals, and makes sure the Shrine is available for visitation one hour before Mass.

But now Bernie and Dooley have agreed to take on yet another assignment in addition to all the above by being in charge of the work associated with running the air and steam club. For years, they assisted those in charge before them. Now they will be assisted by Ed and Pat Shanahan and others. Obviously, the Pestkas have a lot of experience with this fund raising area which contributes directly toward paying the Shrine's utility bills.

We thank Bernie and Dooley for their extraordinary length of service helping out as they have done in so many ways. Childhood friends, devoted married couple, and dedicated Shrine volunteers--how could it get any better than that? Thank God for Bernie and Dooley--years of volunteering here together has been their gift to the Shrine.

Expansion of Religious Counter

For years, it was just a counter in the rear of the thrift shop. But with the volume of quality religious items donated and received, and no where to suitably display them all, the thrift shop staff decided to dedicate a larger amount of space for religious items. The expansion actually comes to an additional 50 feet of space down the north side of the thrift shop.

Said Terry Davis, who has headed up this effort, "some of the items we have received, you probably wouldn't find anymore. They have been in people's families for years or in their estates and finally were donated to us." For example, he pointed out a set of crucifixes and said, "these are in mint condition and are said to be over 100 years old." Because the new expansion has many items never heretofore been displayed, it is an excellent place to pick out an unusual gift for confirmation, first communion, or other special occasions.



Ellen Capuano & Terry Davis in expanded area

From One Bad Deed Came Many Good Deeds

The Shrine's rectory doors were set on fire by an arsonist on Oct. 22nd. While the doors had to be replaced and there was significant smoke odor inside the rectory lower level, there was no further damage. Quick response by the fire department easily extinguished the fire. Since the Shrine was the seventh in a string of churches in St. Louis to be hit by an arsonist, it brought out numerous media outlets and it soon became national news. Father Wunderlich, the Shrine's rector, spent a great deal of time talking with the local news channels and newspapers as well as interviews with the national headquarters of NBC, CNN, CNBC, the LA Times, the Guardian, EWTN, and others.

A generous second collection was taken up at the Shrine to help out the other churches that were hit. Five were African-American Protestant and another Catholic Church. "It was the largest second collection we've ever had," said Fr. Wunderlich. Likewise, the Shrine also received financial and spiritual support. One especially poignant story was \$1,000 to help with the damage that was collected and donated to the Shrine from another African American Baptist Church. In addition, ministers from three of the damaged African-American churches paid the Shrine and Father Wunderlich a visit offering support and prayers. Said Father, "I felt a deep kinship and spirit of ecumenism and brotherhood with these other ministers."



Fr. Wunderlich

Gene Boll Was Passionate About Saving the Shrine

With the death of Gene Boll last Nov. 11th, all of the original founders of our organization are now deceased, including not only Boll, but also Charles Fininger, Robert Voss, Robert Arteaga, and Charlie Heisler. They, along with Ted Wofford, the Shrine's long-time, devoted architect, set this organization into motion in March of 1979. Wofford is the only one of this group left.



Gene Boll

It didn't take anyone very long in talking with Gene Boll to realize that he was profoundly and passionately committed to saving this Shrine. He was steadfast and never wavered in confronting the powerful forces that were in favor of taking down this religious, historic, and architecturally significant landmark. Furthermore, he had a deep, unshakable respect for Father Filipiak.

Boll was among the first to recommend the formation of a not-for-profit corporation. Gene had a near-perfect photographic memory and re-called that evening in great detail: One cold blustery night on Jan 10, 1979, both Boll and Arteaga were talking with Fr. Filipiak in the run-down rectory on the need for a new roof because the existing roof was in very bad shape with many leaks that needed immediate attention. Then he and Arteaga drove up to Fininger's Restaurant to discuss it some more with Charlie Fininger. Along the way, they picked up Bob Voss. After discussing the roof situation, Boll changed the topic to that of needing to form a not-for-profit corporation to provide a base for receiving tax-free donations. They got in touch with Ray Bruntrager, an attorney who was also devoted to saving the Shrine, and he drew up the necessary legal papers pro bono. By March of 1979, the Friends, Inc., was officially in existence.

A few months later in August, the Friends, Inc, managed to get a new, but cheap roof. Boll said that all funding for restoration had to go through the new corporation because Fr. Filipiak was not allowed to collect any donations for restoration. A month later, Fr. Filipiak

was murdered, which garnered support for saving the Shrine. In 1980, the Friends, Inc., were granted financial control.

Boll's official last service was as president of the Board in 1987 after having served for 7 years as its first treasurer. Mrs. Voss, our long-time sacristan and wife of founder Bob Voss who was the first vice-president, recalled that one of the tasks Boll accomplished was to set up a system at the bank where donors would get their money returned if the restoration did not succeed. As she said, "at that time, there was never any certainty there would be a successful outcome."

Gene loved the beauty of wood and was a good woodworker in his own right. Said Ted Wofford, the Shrine's long-time architect, "I can still see Gene on his knees fitting replacement pieces into the beautiful multi-species wood parquet floor we discovered beneath a later floor in the rectory hall." Unfortunately, Boll became plagued the rest of his life with serious back problems. Although Gene and his wife, Peggy, attended Mass weekly as long as possible, his back only slightly improved, and it curtailed his volunteer efforts.

Gene's most vivid memory of the Shrine was about 1976. He could not believe the astounding level of decay that prevailed throughout the church and rectory. Gene said, "I could not visualize any human being living in the conditions that existed in the rectory. In the church, there were leaks everywhere, some walls were devoid of plaster, and it was bitter cold in the winter."

Gene was especially moved by the conditions that Fr. Filipiak lived under. Before his murder, Father worked closely with Gene and trusted Gene implicitly. The humble life and tragic death of Fr. Filipiak so deeply affected Gene that he became passionately committed in his determination to rescue the Shrine from demolition, to restore it to its former grandeur, and to fervently always remember Father Filipiak. Against what appeared to be overwhelming odds, Boll, Wofford, and the other Founders began the task of funding and directing the restoration. Gene will forever be remembered for his gutsy, unfaltering perseverance. He was a beacon of leadership in the difficult early years and played a very critical role in creating our organization and in saving this Shrine.

Strecker Descendants Here-Mar. 13

The Shrine has a very special group that we invite to the Shrine every March--the descendants of Ignatius Strecker. A very dramatic cure took place on March 16, 1864, when their ancestor, Mr. Strecker, was brought into church, near death, and was miraculously cured. After thorough investigation, this cure was formally declared as an authentic miracle in 1887 which led to the canonization of Peter Claver. The Shrine is the only church-site in this part of America where a Vatican-authenticated miracle has occurred.

The Strecker descendants have once again been invited here for the March 13th Mass with a reception following in the rectory. Last year there were over 35 descendants who made the annual pilgrimage. Most of these are now 5th and 6th generation descendants who have direct lineage down from two of Mr. Strecker's daughters.



Strecker group photo

Visit our website: shrineofstjoseph.org | Photos by Arteaga

In Memoriam

Walt Raney's funeral was held at the Shrine on Nov 6th, 2015. He served on the Board of Directors for 14 years beginning in the year 2000, and became an active member of both the Board's finance and building committees. Both Walt and his wife, Dianne, who succeeds him, were also active together for well over 25 years in numerous other projects to help preserve the Shrine.



Walt Raney

Charmaine Moeller passed on Oct 15 of 2015. Both Charmaine and her husband, John, who predeceased her, served in the wedding volunteer group for many years. They were always staunch, generous supporters of saving and restoring the Shrine.



Charmaine Moeller

Upcoming Events

- Feb 14 11 am - Mass in remembrance of Fr. Valentine
- Mar. 13 11 am - Ignatius Strecker Descendants Pilgrimage
- Mar. 19 11 am - Feast of St. Joseph (blessed bread after Mass-- will be distributed only on this day.)
- Mar. 20 11 am - Palm Sunday
- Mar. 27 11 am - Easter
- April 3 12:30 - Friends Annual Meeting and elections (9 am-12:30)