

SAINT John's HOSPICE

**WHERE HOMELESS MEN
FIND DIGNITY, RESPECT
AND NEW BEGINNINGS**



A Legacy That Makes a Difference in the Lives of Thousands



From left: SJH Program Director David Stier presents Patricia Fritz, step-daughter of Nicholas Muraresku, and her husband Joseph Fritz, a relief sculpture of Fritz Eichenberg's *Christ of the Breadlines*, honoring her step-father for his generous bequest to SJH. Also pictured is CSS Secretary for Catholic Human Services, James Amato.

The great Albert Einstein once said, *"The value of a man resides in what he gives."* This adage rings true for a recent major benefactor of Saint John's Hospice (SJH), **Nicholas Muraresku**. This past spring, Saint John's was notified that the late Mr. Muraresku had left a legacy gift of over \$800,000 to Saint John's in his will.

Overwhelmed by this selfless act of generosity to our homeless brothers, SJH posthumously honored Mr. Muraresku on December 10th at its annual Gathering of Leaders Holiday Celebration, held this year at the Fleisher Sanctuary. One of Mr. Muraresku's step-children, Patricia Fritz, along with her husband Joseph and mother-in-law, Pat Fritz, were present to accept this recognition acknowledging our appreciation on behalf of the hundreds of men served each day at SJH.

Nicholas, or "Nick" as family and friends knew him, lived a simple and humble life, yet one that in retrospect was indeed of great value. Nick grew up in Philadelphia and was a proud WW II veteran, having served as a Gunnery Sergeant in the U.S. Army. When his enlistment ended, he went to work for Haussemann's Pharmacy at 5th and Girard Streets. Nick was a close friend of the owner Mr. Paul, and truly loved his job delivering prescriptions to customers. Nick also had a special "knack" for investing his money

wisely, which enabled him to continue in the personal service job he so loved at the pharmacy.

When asked why she thought that Nick chose SJH as the recipient of this exceedingly generous bequest, his step-daughter Patricia replied, *"I believe that Nick gave to St. John's because he worked in Philadelphia and had seen the homeless population grow. That must have left an impact on him, knowing that so many people had nothing, and that he had so much and was grateful for it."* Nicholas never had children of his own, but did have a very close relationship with his four step-children through marriage at the age of 86 to the love of his life, Mary Jane Huml, then 81 years of age. Patricia reflects on their life together: *"He loved my mother so much and she him—it was beautiful to experience."* Asked how she thought Nick would feel being honored for his kindness and generosity, Patricia replied, *"I think he would be very humbled to know that he was helping so many people. I'm very honored to have loved and known Nick, and I'm so happy that Saint John's has given him this very special recognition!"*

Through his deep love for family and heartfelt compassion for others, Nick's legacy will live on, impacting the lives of thousands of homeless men for years to come.

A life-affirming legacy or bequest gift through your will or estate enables Saint John's Hospice to provide life-sustaining services to the homeless community of Philadelphia, today and far into the future.

***For more information, please contact Kris Jaeger
at kjaeger@chs-adphila.org or call 215.563.7763***

From Saint John's Hospice Program Director



Dear Supporters of Saint John's Hospice and Good Shepherd,

From my vantage point, I have the blessing of witnessing for myself countless examples of your heartfelt love for the men that we serve. Sometimes our men can see this for themselves, but more frequently they do not. I think it is important to try to convey this to them. I intend to convey your concern during our resident Christmas party on December 20th with this message:

Good evening gentlemen. It is such a pleasure for us to celebrate the blessings of Christmas with you. Can you all see the wrapped Christmas present that I am holding? The tag says, "To a special man, from someone who cares." There are many, many people around here who want to tell you that you are special, and that they care about you. I see many of these people, and I want to pass on that good news to you.

I'm sure there are times when you all feel alone. Every person alive feels alone at times. We all struggle, particularly those who have been homeless. But I want you to know that you have many, many people who are rooting for you, who want good things for you. There are hundreds and hundreds of people who are giving to our fundraiser

because they care about you – people who sacrifice of their own possessions because they want to share with you. Many people shop for special presents for you. They buy food and cook it for you and your brothers on the streets. They literally knit blankets, scarves and hats for you. They volunteer their time to come down to help serve our lunches and perform other acts of service for you. I see people filled with emotion as they reflect on your circumstances and are moved to act. I see hearts full of love for you.


Gentlemen, I'm sure that our supporters want you to know this – that you are not alone, and that they care about you. They want your needs to be met, and they want you to thrive and be happy. You and I and all of us have more reason to hope than often meets the eye. We are loved by others. We are loved by God. My prayer for you is that you see this and that you believe in it – that you believe in yourself, and that you love yourself. We pray that you see your great value; that you find a kernel of peace inside you to give you rest, and to fill you with faith and hope.

Take a look at all of these gifts before you. Lots and lots of people put love and care into buying those items for you. I ask you do something when we call your name to come up and receive your gifts...acknowledge that tag on the gift I showed you and say to yourself, "To a special man, from someone who cares."

We thank our many donors and supporters. Thanks for caring! I think it is important to convey something to you as well – that every day, many of our men express deep gratitude for what Saint John's does for them on your behalf. They wish to thank you.

May you experience the peace and love of God this Christmas and always.

Sincerely,



David Stier
Program Director



Saint John's Hospice seeks to be a community grounded in faith and service where homeless persons find dignity, respect, nourishment and opportunities for new beginnings.

Saint John's Hospice 2016 Fall Fling!

SJH Fall Fling • Reading Terminal Market • September 24, 2016



SJH 3rd Annual Gathering of Leaders Holiday Celebration

The Fleisher Sanctuary • December 10, 2016



Thank You to Our Sponsors!

The following merchants graciously donated food and auction items to the SJH 2016 Fall Fling Gala.
In appreciation for their generosity, we kindly ask you to support their establishments.

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In appreciation for their generosity, we kindly ask you to support their establishments.



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Spotlight on Our SJH Family

SJH Volunteers Spread Birthday Cheer Throughout the Year

When Jeanne Grimes and friends come to Saint John's Hospice, there's always a party! Four times each year Jeanne and her colleagues from A.S. Jenks School host birthday celebrations for our SJH residents. It all started one Christmas 14 years ago, as Jeanne recalls, "Our faculty was discussing our \$50 per person Christmas dinner. A few of us looked around the room as we totaled the cost of the party in our heads and were aghast at the amount we would be spending. A teacher turned to me and said, 'We should donate the money to help others.' I sent around a note asking, 'Party for us or Donate?' The response from the faculty and staff was, "BOTH!" And so began the tradition of birthday parties at John's.

For the first year and a half, each Friday the group collected money with half designated for decorations and cake for the parties at SJH. The first party was on Valentine's Day, celebrating the birthdays of all residents born in the new year. Today, a handful of the original Jenks faculty along with Jeanne still attend the parties four times each year. The SJH men look forward to sharing their special day with these very special friends of Saint John's. When asked to explain what keeps her coming back to SJH, Jeanne replies, "We realized we got so much more than we gave. The men were so polite, and grateful. We have found that always to be true, even today."



From Left: Madeleine Casciano, Irene Galdo, Jeanne Grimes, Lisa Leslie, Carol Graham

As Temperatures Plummet, SJH is Ready to Meet the Needs Of the Homeless Community



IVC/SJH Volunteer Dan Campbell hands gloves to a day guest.

When temperatures drop below freezing, Saint John's Hospice is ready to respond. Thanks to the many generous donations from our family of supporters, SJH is able to distribute free cold weather items essential to keeping our residents and day services guests safe during these cold days and nights. Dan Campbell, IVC volunteer for SJH notes, "We've given out over 232 hats, scarves and gloves this afternoon alone." Other items such as blankets and sleeping bags are also available for all who need them. As one day services guest commented, "It's truly a blessing to be able to come to (Saint) John's for a hot meal and also get a hat or gloves or even a blanket; it makes this cold a little easier to bear," In

addition, SJH also provides emergency shelter every day of the year to chronically homeless men through it's Coffee House Program. Find out more at www.saintjohnshospice.org

Members of the Philadelphia Bar Association Lend a Hand This Giving Season



On the first of December, 15 members of the *Philadelphia Bar Association*, Workers Compensation Section provided over 400 meals for the men of SJH. The Honorable Tina Marie Rago coordinator for this event, commenting: "Our members have such a rewarding experience and come away so thankful for what they have. We feel like we are paying it forward when we serve at Saint John's. It is also located in the community in which we work and we feel it is important to give back." We thank Judge Rago and her team for their hard work, compassion and dedication to the SJH mission and to those whom we serve!

This past September 24th, SJH proudly honored *Back On My Feet*, (BOMF) as this year's recipient of our ***Partner in Mission Award*** at the annual SJH Fall Fling Gala held in the historic Reading Terminal Market. This honor is given each year to an individual or group who reflects the SJH mission and shares in our efforts to care for the homeless of our city. *Back on My Feet* is a national non-profit organization that combats homelessness through the power of running, community support, and essential employment and housing resources. Over the years many of our SJH men have benefited greatly from the support that BOMF has to offer, so SJH was overjoyed to have the opportunity to acknowledge BOMF for its good work. Cathryn Sanderson, Executive Director of BOMF is pictured here with David Stier, SJH Program Director and Mason Wartman of Rosa's Pay-it-Forward Pizza and ***SJH 2015 Partner in Mission*** recipient.

Back on My Feet Receives the Saint John's Hospice 2016 Partner in Mission Award



From Left: David Stier, SJH Program Director, Cathryn Sanderson of BOMF, and Mason Wartman of Rosa's Pizza

Saint John's Hospice 2016-17 Annual Appeal Help Us Reach Our Goal of \$550,000



Many of you have already contributed to our 2016-2017 Annual Appeal, with **gifts totaling in excess of \$280,000!** We are pleased and excited to hear from so many more of you who are planning to make your gift during this holiday season. To one and all we say, "THANK YOU!!!" Your contributions enable Saint John's Hospice to continue to provide life-sustaining services to the homeless men of our city—it is what we have done for the past 54 years. For more information on our programs and how your donation can truly make a difference, contact Kris Jaeger at **215.563.7763** or **kjaeger@chs-adphila.org**. If you have not yet done so, please join us as our partner in mission!

In Loving Memory of Our Friends and Donors.... *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.*

Alan Babitt
Angeline Cammarota
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