

COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Johns Main Street: Current Mission and Projects

By Barbara Quinn

(This is Part II of my two part series on the origins and current mission of the St. Johns Main Street program. Part I can be found at: www.stjohnsreview.com. Click on "Archives," the "2015" folder and then "1-Jan 15, 2016 issue. The article is on Page 3.)

Part II:

A major goal among local grassroots activists organizing the St. Johns Main Street program in 2008 was that the neighborhood's historic roots and blue-collar persona should be preserved during inevitable growth. The organization, still young, remains a vol-

unteer driven non profit whose headquarters continues to be the brick building at 8250 N. Lombard generously lent by McMenamins. New community growth and needs have spurred an updated mission: besides traditional small business support and beautification of main street, its boundaries have expanded to include all of St. Johns. It has added the goals of local job development, affordable housing advocacy and support for community groups.

That translates to on-the-ground activities such as support of local businesses with training and resources, encouraging local hiring through a job board and paid youth internships, acting as a clearing house for affordable housing information and lending space for

community gatherings.

With not only a full-time Executive Director, Lindsay Jensen MBA, but two part time employees, Sydney Leonard, Community Programs Manager, and Maria Rojas, St. Johns Farmer's Market Manager, SJMS has provided a much needed reliable presence in the town center. The Board of Directors is dominated by volunteers who are local small business owners, property owners and residents.

Main Street has contributed to the enhanced appearance of the town center through physical improvements like new trash receptacles, refurbished benches, street sign toppers and by organizing clean up and planting events. It also supports sales promotions and events throughout the year to

champion businesses.

One of the major ways SJMS helped improve the appearance of the business district is through its role as liaison with the Portland Development Commission (PDC) on storefront improvement matching grants. Over the last 2 years the program has distributed \$40,000 in mini matching funds for storefront enhancements. The one-to-one match has fostered a total of \$80,000 in building renovations in St. Johns' core over the last 2 years. It is a benefit that has helped address the dark, dingy, decrepit phase leftover from the 80s. Starting in January 2016, \$30,000 more in match is being made available to business and property owners with building projects. Applications can be found on the

Main Street website.

Another vital but overlooked role Main Street plays is to foster better communication within the community with monthly meetings between representatives of various groups to share updates. They also act as liaison with city leaders and between the neighborhoods and developers since they often are the first ones developers contact.

Other Main Street projects include:

- Monthly business mixers at different locations to foster networking among store owners
- An Annual St. Johns Volunteer Fair, which this year is on Feb. 4, 6-8pm at Los Prados at 10105 N. Lombard
- the St. Johns Farmer's Market
- A new monthly plaza clean up day, Revive the Plaza!, at 1pm every third Sunday of the month. All tools are provided. The next one is Feb. 21
- Fiscally sponsoring like-minded groups such as the St. Johns Bizarre

St. Johns Main Street has brought a great deal of dedicated energy to enhancement of the town center as well as general livability in St. Johns. They welcome visitors and questions. Stop in any time Tuesday-Friday, 9-5pm.

If you would like to learn more about SJMS events, volunteer opportunities or how you can become involved, go to the St. Johns Main Street website at stjohnsmainstreet.org.

FREE LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

St. Johns Main Street to host event celebrating St. Johns history

St. Johns Main Street is happy to announce, "St. Johns Speaks: Our Hearts, Our History," a storytelling event celebrating the rich history of St. Johns. The event will take place from 2-4pm on Saturday, February 20th at the site of the original, historic St. Johns Post Office, now the St. Johns Baha'i Center at 8720 N. Ivanhoe Street. Historians and local residents will speak to the history of St. Johns and their love for this unique community along with involvement from Roosevelt High School's exciting new journalism program. Attendants will be invited to leave their own stories as well. More details to come.

For more information contact Sydney Leonard at sydney@stjohnsmainstreet.org, 503-841-5522.

hood, were looking for a preschool for their three-year-old son. By participating in a preschool fair—and getting to know dozens of preschools—they found the school of their dreams, Aprende con Amigos Preschool Academy on N. Interstate.

Families like Amy and Doug's can explore schools at the Preschool, Kinder and Camp Fair, on Saturday, January 30, 2016, from 10 am to 12 noon, in the St. Johns Community Center, 8427 N. Central, Portland, OR.

The Preschool, Kinder, and Camp Fair gives families the opportunity to explore up to 36 local schools, camps, and enrichment programs. The Fair is free and open to the public (tabling schools pay a small fee to participate). For a list of schools, directions to the venue, and to pre register, go to: <https://2016nopopreschoolandkinderfair.eventbrite.com>.

St. Johns Christian Church. St. Johns Christian Church has opened their doors for the music series by providing the space for the weekly concerts. Composer-Concert Pianist Aszemar Glenn came up with the series idea and is the managing director. This reflects his intention of having classical music in the SJ-CP neighborhood. Mr. Glenn noticed that no one is doing classical music performances on a weekly basis in that area, his hope is that in time the SJ-CP neighborhood will appreciate having a noon music series.

Place: St. Johns Christian Church
Address: 8044 N. Richmond Ave.
Date(s): every Tuesday starting February 2, 2016

Time: 12 noon to 1:00 pm

Cost: Free

The first four concerts will be solo piano recitals featuring Aszemar Glenn. Other performing groups and musi-

cians will be added into the music series.

Here is Mr. Glenn's first planned program pieces for the February 2nd performance.

1. Prelude No. 2 by Gershwin
2. Metamorphosis No. 2 by Glass
3. Prelude No. 1 w.t.c. by Bach
4. Spanish Dance by Granados
5. Evening in the Meadow by Rebikoff
6. Tippin' My Hat by Glenn
7. The Entertainer by Joplin
8. First Arabesque by Debussy
9. May-Night by Palmgren
10. Prelude in G major by Chopin
11. In Elegant Style by Glenn
12. Pathe'tique Sonata by Beethoven

SwapNPlay offers annual Preschool, Kinder & Camp Fair

Sat., January 30: 10 am to 12 8427 N. Central

In 2010, Amy Potthast and Doug Geier, residents of St. Johns neighbor-

Enjoy Chamber Music

A weekly chamber music series will start in the St. Johns-Cathedral Park area February 2016. These concerts will be free to the public, specifics below. The Johns-Cathedral Park Tuesday Noon Chamber Music is sponsored jointly by Aszemar Glenn and

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By Kay - the Light Bulb Lady

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