



JULIE CENTER NEWS

November 2015

At the Annual Meeting this year, we commemorated 39 years of community service. Wonderful years spent working with our neighbors to strengthen our community, support the academic and personal development of youth, and move people and families out of poverty.

As we enter the 40th year we plan to **Celebrate!** We will reflect upon all the work and accomplishments that occurred during the first four decades, listen and learn from neighbors, and plan for the future. To quote Kool and the Gang, "... a celebration to last throughout the year! Yahoo!"

To begin our celebration we need to start at the beginning. I don't mean 1975. We need to go way back to 18th Century France to understand who "Julie" of the Julie Community Center is.

The Julie Community Center was founded in 1975 by a group of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and local women from the community. When it came time to name the center, they chose the name *Julie* to honor the foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Julie Billiard was born and baptized Marie Rose Julie Billiard on July 12, 1751, in Cuvilly, France. She was the fifth of seven children of Monsieur and Madame Billiard. The Billiards were a simple farming family who also kept a small store to supplement their income.

One night when Julie and her father were working late in the family shop, someone hurled a rock through the window and followed that with a gunshot aimed at them. Neither was wounded but Julie was traumatized by the violent incident. Already overworked, she grew ill, began to lose the use of her legs, and eventually became paralyzed.

With the help of her niece, Felicite, Julie lived modestly in Cuvilly. Despite her physical condition, Julie taught Felicite needlework and together they made and sold lace work and crocheted articles. Julie also spent time preparing children for their First Communion. The news of her talent in teaching spread, and rich and poor

alike came to visit her, hear her stories and join her in prayer.

In 1789, the French Revolution broke out. The new government required all priests to sever ties with the Pope and the Catholic Church. Anyone who did not, was on the list to be executed. Because Julie stood by those who refused to swear allegiance to the new law, she too, was targeted for punishment. However, before the revolutionists could get to Julie, Madame de Pont l'Abbe, a noblewoman and friend, sent a carriage to take Julie to a chateau in Gournay. This refuge was short-lived and once the revolutionists discovered where Julie was, they set out to capture her. A simple farmer thought of a quick solution. They hid Julie and Felicite in a hay cart under a mound of straw, hitched the wagon to a horse, and plodded calmly past the revolutionists.

With the help of good-hearted women in Compiègne, Julie and Felicite found refuge. They had to move five times during a period of three years, but each time found a safe shelter. During this time, Julie's father died, and her sixteen Carmelite friends were beheaded at the guillotine. All this stress took its toll on Julie and she suffered a new paralysis.



She lost her ability to speak.

One night in Compiègne Julie dreamed that she would found a congregation of women to do God's work. One of the moves she took to escape the wrath of the revolutionists was to a small apartment in Amiens, part of the property of Countess Baudoin. During her stay there, Julie met the Viscountess Françoise Blin de Bourdon. Slowly, they forged a strong friendship. Julie also met Father Varin, a member of the Fathers of the Faith, in Amiens. He was taken with her story and although she had difficulty speaking, he engaged her in conversation and eventually she regained her ability to speak.

A small group of women began to gather regularly with Julie in Amiens. Françoise rented a home for them and they formed a community. Fr. Varin helped them create a temporary Rule of life, a set of guidelines for living life in a religious community. In February of 1784, Julie, Françoise, and Catherine Duchatel vowed themselves to God and promised to devote themselves to the education of young girls, especially the poor. These three were the first Sisters of Notre Dame.

Now known as Mother Julie, Julie took on the work of this young congregation at age 52. When public worship

was restored in France, the Fathers of the Faith asked Julie to speak during mission talks. The requests for instruction were overwhelming so the Fathers of the Faith asked Julie to teach the women and children. Fr. Enfantin, one of the Fathers of the Faith, became a good friend of Julie. He prayed to God that Julie's health would be totally restored so that she could walk again and reach out to many more people. He started a novena for this end. On the fourth day, he asked Julie to stand up and take a step. She did. He asked her to not to say anything but to continue the novena. On the ninth day, Julie walked down the stairs and joined the sisters in the dining room. Then she started a non-stop ministry of meeting people and opening schools for the poor, of training sisters to be educators and helping them grow into strong religious women.

By 1806, Julie, Françoise, and the young community of sisters opened their first school for the poor in Amiens. That same year, the Bishop of Ghent in Belgium invited Julie to come to his diocese. Julie formed a Flemish-speaking community there and a school for the poor. On her way back to France, she stopped in Namur, Belgium, at the request of Bishop Pisani. Before Julie left Namur, she and the bishop

had made a pact that in the next year the Sisters of Notre Dame would establish and community and a school in Namur.

Meanwhile, in Amiens, trouble was brewing. Fr. De Sambucy, the chaplain for the Sisters of Notre Dame, increasingly insisted that the Sisters of Notre Dame should be restricted to the diocese of Amiens. Julie increasingly insisted that this restriction would put them at odds with the spirit and principles for which the congregation was founded – that it was meant to be a congregation, free to respond to needs anywhere in the world, especially to the “needs of the poor in the most abandoned places.” Fr. De Sambucy relentlessly engaged the bishop of Amiens in his dispute with Julie, until Bishop Demandolx requested that Julie leave Amiens or become a diocesan congregation. Julie shared his ultimatum with the sisters and invited whoever wished to join her to open a community and school in Namur. In 1809, the Sisters of Notre Dame began their life-in-mission in Namur and to this day are known as Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

On April 8, 1816, Julie died. On May 13, 1906 she was beatified and on June 22, 1969, she was canonized St. Julie Billiart.

~~~~~

# 2014-2015 at a glance

## Community Outreach

Ms. Phyllis Savoy heads our social outreach efforts to assist families dealing with food, housing, and employment issues. 376 individuals/families were served via support of two food pantries located in local schools, Commodore John Rodgers School (CJR) and Rayner Brown School. The Food Pantries consistently surpassed their quarterly goals and is a much needed resource for families. During Thanksgiving and Christmas more families were served due to the wonderful food donation, over 4000 canned goods, from the students at Maryvale School. **Thanks to the Maryvale students, Phyllis Savoy, volunteers, and our school partners.**

## Adult Education

The McElderry Park Resource Center has been our partner for many years. Ms. Adriana Foster, our Notre Dame Americorps member, coached 28 students in the basics of the GED program through individualized and group instruction. 4 students were set to take the test. **Thanks, Adriana for superb teaching!**

## Workforce Readiness

Director Laura Syron is building upon current community partnerships to

strengthen the Child Care Careers program. A new class is already in full swing! **Thanks, Laura.**

## Youth

69 youth were involved in community service projects this year which included community clean-ups, organized activities with the elderly, and teen leadership activities. The Summer Peace Camp was loads of fun and the kids learned about present day and historical peace heroes and how each one of them can be a hero to their family and community. Sr. Tracy Dill also led us in learning about how things propel forward and all about trees for the younger campers. The Americorps volunteers, Meg Brauckman and Adriana Foster, assisted with the anti-bullying program for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at City Springs Elementary, worked with the McElderry Park Teen Initiative, and mentored and tutored youth in the Refugee Youth Project and Mi Espacio through Casa de Maryland. They also worked with Step Ahead, a youth directed (15-18yo) program and assisted the classroom staff at the St. Vincent de Paul Head Start Program-Patterson Park location. The Drama Club at Wolfe Street Academy was also a lot of fun and very energetic! **Thanks to Meg, Adriana, Phyllis, Sr. Tracy, Lynn Wynn, Danielle Jackson for a super year!**

## Health Promotion

Student nurses from Johns Hopkins and Univ. of MD Schools of Nursing and our extraordinary staff were quite busy this year. 142 individuals/families received health services this year. Residents at Apostolic Towers received quarterly blood pressure screening and health consultation from our Health Coordinator, Carm Dorsey, RN. Phyllis Savoy outreached to parents of CJR and Head Start students and community members coming to the CJR food pantry. Health information regarding coughs, colds, and influenza was distributed during food distribution as well as health and community resources. The student nurses provided health education and activities to families of Head Start students and families receiving care at the Esperanza Center. **Many thanks to Carm Dorsey, Lori Edwards, Phyllis Savoy, and the student nurses.**

♣ **Please welcome our new Americorps volunteers: MacKenzie Keefe and Victoria Moore ♣**

---

### Staff: 2015-16:

*Belinda Davis Carm Dorsey,  
MacKenzie Keefe Victoria Moore  
Phyllis Savoy Laura Syron*

### **Julie Center Board: 2015-16**

*President: Lori Edwards  
Vice-President: Barbara Moore  
Secretary: Rebecca Coppola  
Treasurer: Blaise D'Ambrosio  
Director: Laura Syron  
Peter Savage  
Therese Dill, SND  
Deborah Tillett*

# THANKS!

*The Mayor & City Council  
of Baltimore*

*The Baker-King Fund*

*The Charles & Margaret  
M.H. Obrecht Family  
Foundation*

*T. Rowe Price Foundation  
-Matching Gifts*

*Johns Hopkins Health  
System*

*Belles of Good Counsel\*  
Lombard Hardware  
Federal Hill Smiles*

*--Catholic Community of  
South Baltimore  
--Holy Trinity Russian  
Orthodox Church  
--Our Lady of the Angels  
Church  
--St. Joseph Church  
Hagerstown*

*St. Vincent de Paul Society  
-St. Mark's, St. Ursula's*

*Sisters of Notre Dame de N  
-Cable Street Community  
-Fort Street Community  
-Glen Avenue Community  
-Heather Hill Community  
-SNDdeN Geralate  
-SNDdeN TriProvince  
Development Program*

*Maryvale Preparatory  
School*

*Notre Dame Mission  
Volunteers*

*Gayle and Craig Adams\*  
Lily & Nelson Adlin\**

*Rev. John Auer*

*Patricia Babington  
Clinton & Katherine  
Bamberger  
Madelyn S & Howell Baum\*  
Valerie & Joseph  
Baumgartner\*  
Helen & Peter Bianca  
Carolyn & John Boitnott\*  
Janice Bonner++*

*Guy R. & Nancy Calamunci  
Dennis G. Carlson  
Teresa Cattaneo  
Damiana Chavez  
Norma Coffin  
Rebecca Coppola  
Catherine D. Cress, SND  
Marguerite Crocker*

*Blaise D'Ambrosio  
Mary T. Day, SND  
Carm & John Dorsey  
Charles & Lydia Duff, Jr.  
Melanie A. Dugan*

*Joan M. Earley\*  
Karen & Philip Earley\*  
Mary & John F.A. Earley\*  
Meredith Earley\*  
Lori Edwards  
Barbara Ann English, SND*

*Carolyn & Jerome Geraghty  
Lorraine & Tim Geraghty  
Bridgid Globensky  
Theresa Graves*

*Mary Halcott  
Carol A. Hartke  
Ashley & Brandan Hoffman  
Cynthia Hypki  
Alexis Johns  
Margaret Judy & Family*

*Robert & Sharon Kern, Jr.  
Ellen L. Kiel*

*Rosemarie & Tom Lehner*

*Miriam Ludwitzki*

*Michele & Marty Maren  
Denise Markoff  
Thomas F. McDougall  
James E. Melnick, Sr.  
David & Debra Miller\*  
Barbara M. Moore  
Rosalie Murphy, SND\**

*Jay & Michelle Naish  
Jeanne Noble*

*A.J. & Kate O'Brien  
Bernie & Mary Ellen O'Neill  
Helen Passano*

*Lynette Reagan  
Linda & Mark Richards  
Maria Rippery  
PR & TH Rokoske+  
Annette Rovito*

*Peter Savage\*  
Theresa Skepton\*  
Laura Syron*

*Patricia Thomas  
Deborah Tillett*

*Carol S. Wandres  
Cynthia Wang++  
Joan & Mark White  
Ann Wilson\*  
Eric W.K. Young*

*\*Outstanding Support  
+In memory of Carol  
Symons, SND  
++ In honor of Therese Dill,  
SND – 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee*

## **Special THANKS!**

*John Gos for setting up our  
new computers!*

*Marty Maren for starting our  
Facebook page!!*

# THANKS!