

# SAINT STEPHEN'S WAY

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*A Community for Homeless Families with Schoolchildren*

Spring 2025

NEWSLETTER

Issue #20

## OUR MISSION

**Saint Stephen's Way** provides affordable housing, along with supportive services, to homeless families with schoolchildren in Brevard County.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

### President

Eddie Struttman

### Vice President

Don Lees

### Treasurer

Dave Myler

### Board Members

Linda Lees

Bob McCarthy

Jan McCarthy

Jock Walker

Katherine Conrad

Michael Sullivan

Mary Broderick

Destiny Collazo

*Saint Stephen's Way is an active non-profit 501(c)(3) Corporation, Federal Identification Number 45-5390085, providing affordable housing with supportive services to homeless families with schoolchildren in Brevard County, Florida.*

## Executive Director: "The future is bright!"

**"For all of us at Saint Stephen's Way, this is not a job: it's a calling," says Andrea Scott, the new Executive Director** who has a wealth of experience doing this type of work.

A native of Queens NY and graduate of Syracuse University, Andrea obtained her Juris Doctorate from the SUNY at Buffalo School of Law. **She served 10 years as Programs Director for the City of NY Dept. of Juvenile Justice and was landlord for multifamily units in NYC.** In 2002, she decided to move to Melbourne, FL, and purchased a small mixed-use apartment building that she affectionately named "Saint Anne Apartments" after her late mother. After 15 years she sold that property, which happens to be walking distance from SSWay!



Andrea Scott

**Andrea first learned of SSWay about a year ago through a friend in the Housing Authority of Brevard County.** "At first I was brought in to develop programs for the residents and to bring services to the community," she recalls. "My role was essentially a Program Director." **Andrea's experience and skills made her a great candidate for the Executive Director position. "I understand how to manage low-income housing, all the rules and regulations that apply, and I'm well connected with many of the service providers in South Melbourne."** She applied for the job, was selected, and started work in late February this year. **"I'm still learning, and I need to learn more. The financial side of the program is very intricate, but our dedicated volunteers on the finance team have skills and experience that are second to none!"**

Andrea says her primary role is "to bring programs and services here, but also keep children and families safe and secure. Keeping the property maintained helps with that." Day-to-day, Andrea is a very hands-on leader. **"Weekly I interact with at least a third of the families because we have activities at the Holman Community Center. I get to see both kids and parents. Some activities are for adults and I encourage them to come."** Andrea walks the campus often, has an open-door policy, and often stays late in the day.

The Executive Board meets weekly with Andrea to discuss activities and property matters. **"I have never met a Board of Directors as dedicated as this one!"** About her staff she says, "Ginny Clark is my right-hand person. Mindy Kremer, the property manager, and Mike Tamburro, our maintenance person, work well together to ensure the property is well maintained. **We are a good team."**

**"I'm very excited for the future of SSWay," Andrea beams.** "I feel great things will come as we further develop programs and services, and community members continue getting to know one another. **The future is bright!"**

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Meet our New Executive Director
- Our New Development Director
- Boots & Bling Fundraising Success
- Jakub's Landing Nearly Completed
- 1 May Breakfast
- Even More News

# “A Call to Action” for Everyone!

“What brought me to SSWay is that they not only provide housing for families in need, they also provide practical supportive services to better their lives,” says **Debbie Strawhand**, the new **Director of Development**. Debbie and her husband moved to Melbourne in 2014 to live near the water again, and to be near her dear friend Kathy Conrad. “It was Kathy who told me about SSWay 4 years ago. I attended Gala events and helped her plan Boots & Bling” (article below).

Over the past year, Kathy and Jock Walker, both Board Members, talked with Debbie about considering a fundraising position. “Then, **Eddie Struttman**, **President**, asked me to give a presentation to the **Board** in January this year and again in February to discuss my vision for fundraising and what I believe is needed for growing SSWay. They liked the ideas I presented, and so I was hired as SSWay’s **Director of Development** and began work on 1 March.”

Debbie is laying foundations for essential processes, as she explains with a few examples. To boost donor retention, “We need more frequent interaction with and consideration of our donors, as well as showing appreciation to those who consistently support SSWay.” To grow the volunteer base, “We need a process to provide training and guidance to volunteers and show them our appreciation for the value they bring.” (Continued on p. 3 . . .)



## SSWAY ADVISORY BOARD

Eddie Struttman  
Dr. Anthony Catanese  
Don Lees  
Linda Lees  
Bob McCarthy  
Jan McCarthy  
Dave Myler  
Dr. Sally Shinn  
Lyman Rowan  
Glenda Shirhall  
Jock Walker  
Rich Thompson  
Hugh Evans  
Erin Trauger  
Katherine Conrad  
Nina Rawal  
Bob MacDonald  
John Levitt

## “Boots & Bling” Gala—A Fun-tastic Success



The evening of 15 February, cowboy and cowgirl look-alikes moseyed down to the Eau Gallie Yacht Club to enjoy good company and great music for a wonderful cause. While many women sported lots of “Bling” with rhinestones and sequins, the majority of men typecast themselves with black cowboy hats and/or black attire. Fortunately, no one rode in on a horse.

Everyone enjoyed Home-on-the-Range food—chili, corn bread, BBQ, cherry cobbler, and much more. The **Tom Jackson Band** was superb, and those who chose to trip the light fantastic (or just dance) added to their own enjoyment of the evening (and everyone else's).

A silent auction tempted collectors with various treasures from celebrities and sports greats (like a baseball signed by Willie Mays!), but also with paid vacations, a combo of fine wines and spirits, and many more.

The best news is the main reason for the Gala. The final tally showed the event cleared more than \$52,000 to directly support SSWay’s work to help 40 families with schoolchildren build a better life. Our thanks to all Gala participants for showing your support for SSWay in a tangible and meaningful way. A special thanks to Kathy Conrad and all those who worked so hard to make this an exceptionally fun and worthwhile event!





**(“A Call to Action” for Everyone! continued from p. 2)**

**To Help build SSWay’s programs,** “We need to work with the Executive Director to provide, for example, after school and summer programs, for example, as well as others. **If we bring in people willing to share their time and talent, such programs are sure to be successful.”**

Debbie doesn’t hesitate when asked what she likes most about her job, **“Talking with people who never heard of SSWay and seeing their excitement for what we’re doing and working to achieve for the community.”** She is also impressed by how many people have volunteered over many years, and continue to be enthusiastic about what SSWay is doing. **“The Board members are excited, very supportive, warmly welcoming, and always there to answer my questions.”**

SSWay attracted Debbie not just for providing housing for families with schoolchildren. **“It doesn’t stop there. SSWay is also providing supportive services** like helping families better manage finances, improve their training and education, find better jobs, and deal with emotional issues from being homeless. This supportive approach helps families become more self-sufficient so they can move on to having their own homes. **Then we help the next set of families.”**

**“I want to put out a Call to Action,” says Debbie. “We need assistance with our fundraising events.”** Do you have a business that would like to provide decorations for events? Are there other skills (event planning?) or resources you could offer to help share the work? **“I am the person to talk to. We would LOVE to know who you are and what you have to offer.”**

**Moved to answer Debbie’s call? Please email TODAY! [debbie@ssway.org](mailto:debbie@ssway.org)**

**MISSED PAST NEWSLETTERS? FIND THEM ALL HERE:**  
**[www.ssway.org/newsevents/newsletters](http://www.ssway.org/newsevents/newsletters)**

## **Jakub’s Landing Construction Nearly Done**

*This follows up on an article in issue #19 about the generous pledges for building “Jakub’s Landing,” a memorial to Jeff and Slávka Roselip’s oldest son who died tragically in an auto accident 25 December 2023.*



**Lukas Roselip**

**“We are incredibly proud of our son Lukas for his resilience and determination after the devastating loss of his brother and best friend,” says Jeff Roselip.** Lukas has been working with Windward Building Company to build Jakub’s Landing, **which will be a memorial that serves as a meaningful outdoor space for the children and families at SSWay.**

Lukas learned carpentry skills from his dad. “I like to remodel houses,” Jeff recalls. “Over the past 20 years Jakub and Lukas helped me remodel 17 houses. Lukas’s dedication to helping build the Landing has made a profound impact, and we believe Jakub is watching over him, guiding him every step of the way.”

**“The certificate of occupancy will come soon, and then we’ll schedule the Dedication and Opening Ceremony,” reports Jeff.** The date for the ceremony will be posted on [ssway.org](http://ssway.org). Fish Florida will provide fishing lessons that day for the kids and donate fishing equipment to SSWay.

**Funds for safety lighting are still needed. Want to help? Contact Jeff at [jroselip@hotmail.com](mailto:jroselip@hotmail.com)**



**Jakub’s Landing construction as of 4 March**

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE . . .**

# 4TH ANNUAL HOMES FOR HOPE BREAKFAST

*Benefiting Saint Stephen's Way*

*May 1, 2025*

*Doors Open at 7:30 am*

*Breakfast to be served starting at 8 am*

*Eau Gallie Yacht Club*

*100 Datura Dr, Indian Harbour Beach FL 32937*

**Tickets \$100/each**

**Table Sponsor for 8 (limited) - \$750**

**Table Sponsor for 10 - \$950**

## Sponsorship Opportunities

### GOLD - \$10,000

- Prominent Recognition from Presenter
- Recognition in event promotional materials
- Event Table for Sponsor Marketing Materials
- Twenty tickets to the event - 2 tables of 10

### SILVER - \$5000 (1 Available)

- Recognition in event promotional materials
- Table Recognition
- Sixteen tickets to the event - 2 tables of 8

### BRONZE - \$2500 (2 Available)

- Recognition in event promotional materials
- Table Recognition
- Eight tickets to the event - 1 table of 8

### TABLE SPONSORS

- \$750 Table of 8 (1 available)
- \$950 Table of 10

**ONLINE TICKETS:** [ssway.org](http://ssway.org), click **DONATE** select **Solicit Code** "Homes for Hope Breakfast 2025" then click on **\$100** for one ticket or **Other** for multiple tickets or **Table Sponsors**

**For Sponsorship Opportunities:** email [Debbie@ssway.org](mailto:Debbie@ssway.org) or Call: 321-317-8241

## More SSWay "Happenings" Now & Later

### Four SSWay Residents Complete Nursing Courses

Congratulations to four SSWay residents who graduated from the Brevard Nursing Academy. **All four received Home Health Aide certifications** after completing 75 hours of classroom/laboratory instruction plus 16 clinical hours. **Three of the four ladies continued training for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)** certification by completing a total of 120 classroom hours and 40 clinical hours. Those three must now wait their turn to take the state Board of Nursing CNA Certification Exam. Training expenses were covered by SSWay in partnership with the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

### Response to President's Call for Bicycle donations for SSWay Children

Eddie Struttman got 20 bikes, each given to a SSWay kid. **Eddie's their repairman!**

### Flagpole and Rotary Club International "Peace Pole" on SSWay Campus

Eddie Struttman, Bob MacDonald, and two volunteers from Patrick Space Force Base installed a flagpole just inside the SSWay gate (**photo at right**). Both Indian River and Melbourne Beach Rotary clubs installed a "Peace Pole" (**foreground**), a Rotary Club International initiative, with the inscription "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in seven languages.



### Palm Bay Mayor Rob Medina Breakfast Guest Speaker

On May 1st, join us at the "Homes for Hope" Breakfast Fundraiser to help support SSWay's mission to serve needy families with schoolchildren in Brevard County. Mayor Rob Medina is the keynote speaker for the event. (**See the top of this page for the event details and how to buy tickets or sponsor a table.**)

### COMING IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE...

- ♦ **Completely new SSWay website** in the works to be available soon
- ♦ **Playloft playground** to be installed on SSWay campus by this summer
- ♦ **Basketball court** in planning stages for install later this year

