



Saint Stephen's Way

A Community for Homeless Families with Schoolchildren

Spring-Summer 2021

NEWSLETTER

Issue #9

<https://www.ssway.org/>

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OUR MISSION

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

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Jock Walker

Groundbreaking Ceremony a Joy-Filled Event!



Master of Ceremonies Pastor Garry Edwards

organized all logistics and her husband Rick helped setup that day." Glenda Shirhall worked with Mary Broderick, Amy Irwin, and Barbara



Keynote Speaker Tony Catanese

live-stream and record the ceremony. [Access the video at [ssway.org](https://www.ssway.org). Hover over "Newsletter" then click "Ribbon Cutting Ceremony!"] Pastor Garry Edwards from (page 2...)

Olson to get the invitations out. Jock Walker got the Knights of Columbus from Our Lady of Lourdes and Holy Name of Jesus churches to assist with parking. Michael Faucher used his golf cart to shuttle attendees from and to the parking lot. Owner of Indian River Networks, Eric Smith, and his team set up cameras and a network to

"Groundbreaking day was surreal to me," says Eddie Struttmann, SSWay's President. "The start of this first phase of constructing a development of dreams brought tears to my eyes, and there was a great mood of celebration. People commented on how beautiful the property is." Eddie emphasized his thanks for so many who made this event possible. "First, Mary Broderick, one of the original founders of SSWay,



SSWay President Eddie Struttmann

(Photos on this page courtesy of Florida Today.)



(from p. 1) Saint Sebastian's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church was an outstanding Master of Ceremonies. When the ceremony started he asked all ordained ministers to come forward. "It was amazing," says Eddie. "Behind him stood a line of ministers that spanned the entire 30 feet of the tent! And Tony Catanese did an awesome job telling our story and his journey to join us."



With more than 200 people attending the midday ceremony, serving a meal was a must. Dennis Manion and daughter Denise Rowell provided the incredible food—pulled pork, brisket, and even a veggie burgers option—assisted by Linda, Pat Cass and Rick Broderick. They even used plates, napkins, cups, and utensils made from environmentally sustainable bamboo!

Eddie emphasized his personal gratitude. "I'd like to say thank you to everyone who took a chance to believe in me and in Saint Stephen's Way. This is another step toward realizing SSWay's goal of transforming the lives of so many needy families with schoolchildren. It's not only my dreams, but the dreams of many children who will soon have the comfort of a home and the opportunity to dream beautiful things. For me, our founders, board of directors, advisory board—for all those involved, it's all about the children!"

ADVISORY BOARD

Eddie Struttman
John Farrell
Dr. Anthony Catanese
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Dave Myler
Brian Bussen
Ken Lebron
Tom Boyle
Sally Shinn
Lyman Rowen
Glenda Shirall
Jock Walker
Rev. Garry Edwards
Rick Thompson
Hugh Evans
Scott Buescher
Erin Trauger
Patricia Knapp
Richard Ballantyne



(Photos on this page by Pamela Stimpson.)

Construction Starting Also Means More Work Ahead

"The Phase 1 construction contract is in legal review and expected to be signed by the end of April, with work starting in early May" reports John Farrell, SSWay's Executive Director. "We have selected Don Luchetti Construction, Inc. of Melbourne for this horizontal construction phase," meaning preparing the land, building underground utilities, water retention areas, roads, parking, sidewalks, and fences. "We also learned in early March that all construction costs have increased 30 percent due to scarcity of materials attributed to the pandemic," John explains. "Therefore, we updated our budget and changed from four phases to five."

Phase 1 will take through the end of 2021 to complete. In early 2022, Phase 2 will begin construction of the Community Center, one six-unit apartment building and one three-unit apartment building. "We will begin moving families into the apartments as soon as they are completed," says John. From April through December 2022, Phases 3 to 5 will build the remaining six apartment buildings. This means the entire campus should be complete and all 40 family apartments occupied in early 2023. So, the "More Work Ahead" is in large part the Fundraising Campaign.

Fundraising Expands with Grants and Giving Channels

Tony Catanese never stops. “The big thing we’re working is the **\$250,000 Challenge Grant.**” The “challenge” is getting donors to match all \$250,000 so SSWay will received a total of \$500,000, which would cover the remaining costs for Phase I construction. “We are collecting a lot of matching gifts,” Tony says “and will continue work this through summer.” In another effort, Tony is working with potential major donors to SSWay and is happy about that progress, as well.

Also, Tony and John Farrell report that the **United Way of Brevard and Catholic Foundation in Orlando approved SSWay for donations.** Donors to these organizations can now designate SSWay to receive their funds.

Just 2 months ago, SSWay started a Grants Working Group. “There are just two of us right now,” says Karen



Eisenhauer, “me and Cyndi Chanou” (pronounced *hah-noo*). Karen retired from Eastern Florida State College where she worked with students who found school difficult. “I’m familiar with what happens to people who struggled in school when they were younger, so I was appalled at the number of homeless schoolchildren in Brevard.” One of Karen’s first full-time jobs at college was writing grant reports. Cyndi retired 2 years ago from teaching elementary school and wondered what God might like her to do next. “I prayed about it and SSWay kind of fell into my lap!” Cyndi is new to grant writing but has learned a great deal.

Their job is to scour the universe for grant opportunities and apply. “We’ve submitted seven grants so far. I’ll have another submitted this week, and Cyndi is working one now, too.” This is the real grunt work of grant writing. “We’ve submitted grants applications for a total of a quarter million dollars, but we have no idea yet what we might be awarded.” Lately

it has become harder to find new grant opportunities that SSWay can apply to. “We have some strong leads, but it’s not easy to find other viable grants.” Still, they’ll keep searching.



Cyndi Chanou

Of course, anyone can contribute to SSWay directly at any time, whether by a check through the mail or electronically through the ssway.org web site. **All donations are eagerly sought and deeply appreciated!** Here’s why...

Phase I costs (\$1.7M) should be covered by the end of this summer. **Phases 2 to 5 total \$5.5M and are to be completed in 2022.** John Farrell has been looking ahead. “The Florida Housing Finance Corporation told us that SSWay is a good candidate for at least \$2.8M in grants in 2022; we’ll apply early next year.” John is working other funding sources, as well. So, give thanks for all who are working the Fundraising Campaign, **AND A HUGE “THANK YOU” TO ALL OUR DONORS!**

New Partnerships: HBCA of Brevard and Case Management

“I learned about Saint Stephen’s Way through a dear friend Dr. Anthony Catanese, and from John Farrell who I greatly admire.” John Thomas is the Executive Director of the Homeowners and Contractors Association of Brevard. **“I was stunned and saddened to learn so many of our school aged children and their families are homeless, but I was quickly impressed with the mission of SSWay.”** The HBCA of Brevard is an industry association consisting of home builders, general commercial contractors, skilled trades, and other professionals who are associated with the building industry. **“As more people know about this problem and what SSWay is doing to address it, people and companies will want to be involved,** whether it be HBCA members or the business community at large.” He invited John Farrell to speak at a recent event to help build that awareness. However, the benefits of this partnership go beyond that.

“HBCA recently spearheaded a workforce development workshop that brought together many different organizations including Brevard County Schools, Brevard County Vocational, EmployU, the Sheriff’s Department, and many others.” Training is available by some organizations to teach skilled trades, and some companies will hire even without formal training and provide on the job training. “HBCA is happy to work with Saint Stephen’s Way to see how we can best serve wherever we can.” This means family members in SSWay’s program will have opportunities to learn trades and gain skills for better employment opportunities. “As I learn more about SSWay’s specific plans and what’s already been done, I can better determine ways the HBCA can help.”

John Farrell is also excited. **“We now have four partners on board to recommend families for SSWay and provide case management services for them during their stay with us.”** Catholic Charities, Brevard Family Partnership, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., and Eckerd Connects are all going to be coordinating with each other to provide these important services for the benefit of our resident families. SSWay continues building its critical partnerships support base!



John Thomas

NEXT PAGE: A 1-page summary of SSWay’s mission and fundraising campaign...



Saint Stephen's Way

A new community providing affordable housing, with supportive services, to homeless families with schoolchildren in Brevard County

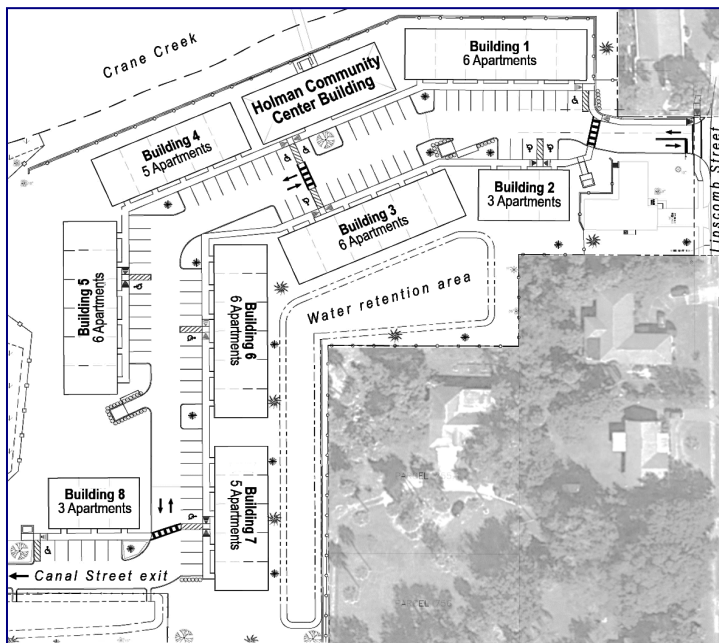


Our Mission

Before the Coronavirus pandemic, there were approximately 3,000 homeless schoolchildren in Brevard County representing 3.8% of Brevard's more than 79,000 students. Homeless families are sleeping in cars, campgrounds, motels or doubled up with others. The primary reasons for their homelessness is the lack of affordable housing.

Our goal is to provide stable but transitional housing for families in a community setting, enabling them to regroup and focus on creating a more resilient future. We will assist them in developing the skills necessary to become more financially, physically, psychologically, and spiritually self-sustaining.

Campaign to Build Saint Stephen's Way



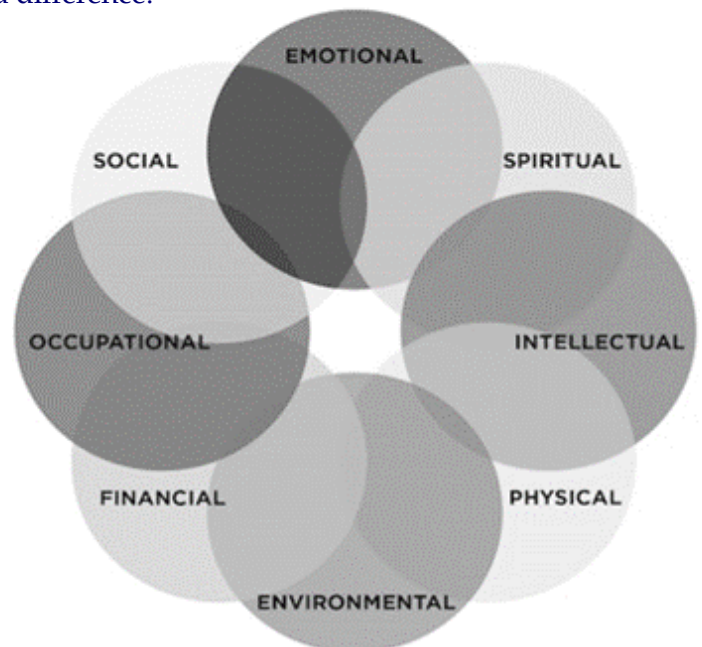
St. Stephen's Way will have 40, 3-bedroom, 2 bath apartments; community center; and caretaker's residence. The cost to build this community is projected at \$13,631,880. As of March 31, 2021, more than \$7,644,494 in donations and in-kind support had been raised, and fundraising for the remainder is ongoing. Ground-breaking occurred on March 2, 2021 with site development to be complete in November 2021. Construction of the Holman Community Center and the first 9 apart-

ments will immediately follow with a planned completion date in February 2022. The remaining residential buildings are set for completion by December 2022.

Through the Holman Community Center, families will also have access to many supportive services from partner agencies offering medical treatment, assistance in budget design and implementation, childcare, tutoring, etc. For example, Brevard Health Alliance will provide medical services. With the aid of these programs and services, we will help families build a more sustainable and successful future.

To obtain a lease, families must be employed and able to pass drug and background checks. Saint Stephen's Way apartments will rent for 30% of the family income, with a minimum of \$600.00 a month. Apartments are 1,100 sq. ft. in size and leases range from 8 to 24 months. SSW is designed to be a financially self-sustaining, 501(c)3 corporation, with no debt.

We invite individual and corporate donors to partner with us by sponsoring part of our holistic community. Gifts of any size are welcome and appreciated. Contact us at (321) 306-8873 or visit www.ssway.org for more information or to make a donation. Together we can make a difference!



SUPPORT SERVICES