



Planting Possibilities volunteers and Campagna Academy students planting new crops during the 2017 growing season.

## Thankful For A Bountiful Year

Twice a year, I sit down and write to you about Planting Possibilities' accomplishments and activities over the previous six months, progress on our mission and our hopes for the future.

Our last newsletter highlighted the cast of volunteers that make our mission come alive day after day. As I reflect, I

am struck by the number of people and groups who support us in other ways.

So many people from different corners of our lives come together in different times and places to support us with their time, talents and treasures.

Although sometimes we might feel like a very small group taking on a very big job, we are, in fact, a very big group made up of all the people, organizations and companies that you will see mentioned in this newsletter and every newsletter we have published.

We are also those whose names you don't see in our newsletter – those who support us with their good wishes and their kind words of support, their “Likes” and shares on our Facebook, Instagram

and Twitter pages or their prayers for our success.

Some of those kind words of encouragement have come at exactly the right times – when I may have needed a little prod to re-energize! I cannot tell you how thankful I am that Planting Possibilities is made up of so many kind and caring people and companies.

In this Thanksgiving, Christmas and Hanukkah season we wish you all the warmth of your family and friends gathered around you and all the happiness a New Year can bring!

*Mary Anne Neiner*  
President, Planting Possibilities



# Planting Possibilities in the Community

## GOLF FOR POSSIBILITIES



For the first time in many years, we had amazing weather for our annual golf outing. Our golfers were greeted by wonderful registration volunteers who made sure everyone had a hot cup of coffee, donuts, and fruit.

After a picture perfect day on the course, we met up again in the clubhouse for lunch where there was an abundance of silent auction items to bid on and lots of door prizes to choose.

Our lowest scoring team, Bill Fox, Kurt Dietrich, Tom Dietrich and M.J. Larkin, graciously donated back their \$200 purse. Our oldest golfer, Mr. Bob Brakley (95), won the prize for closest to the pin. Of course, he has had the unfair advantage of nearly 50 years of practice!

We thank all of our generous sponsors and golfers for making this event not only a financial success, but a very fun day. We also thank our volunteers: the

Gergets and Patterson families and friends, Beth Ondas, Ruth Yothment, Marge Dytrych and Brad Hemingway for organizing such a nice event.



*Thank you to the donors and sponsors who made this event a success.*

### Platinum Sponsors

Dr. George Cybulski  
Griffith Windustrial

Karen Neiner & Rick Nosal  
Peoples Bank  
Michels Sports Eatery, St. John  
Providence Bank & Trust  
Second Chances Crafts & Candles  
WJOB 1230AM/104.7FM

Chicago Cubs  
Julie Click  
The Gergets Family  
Gary Railcats  
Mont Handley  
Hands on Car Wash, St. John  
Indianapolis Colts

The Patterson Family  
Pepino's Italian Restaurant  
Pet Haven Pet Shop, Valparaiso  
Wally Peters

### Silver Sponsors

Johnson Service Group  
Northern Illinois Steel Supply Co.

### Donors and Friends

Donald & Marian Adamczyk  
Albert's Jewelers  
Judy Allen  
Anytime Fitness, Schererville  
American Printing  
Amex-Nooter  
Carrabba's Italian Grill  
Chicago Bears  
Chicago Bulls  
Chicago White Sox

Hooters, Schererville  
Horseshoe Casino, Hammond  
Houlihans, Schererville  
Innsbrook Country Club  
Intrigue Salon, Dyer  
J & M Golf  
J & L Fasteners  
Karma Cigar Bar  
Kathy Lieberman  
Terri Livingston  
Luxury Nail and Spa

PittMoss  
Red Robin Gourmet Burgers  
Purdue Northwest  
Skyzone, Schererville  
Spa Pointe, Munster  
The Times of NWI  
Tomato Bar Pizza Bakery  
Carol Wachala  
Wines for Humanity  
Joann Wleklinski  
Jerry & Ruth Yothment  
Zig-E's Funland, St. John

### Bronze Sponsors

Alkon Consulting Group  
Alsip Nursery  
Calumet Lumber  
Centier Bank, Munster  
Franciscan Health Fitness Center  
Great Lakes Roofing  
Grindhouse Coffee, Griffith  
Dr. James Krol, DDS

## MUM SALE

Our fall mum sale was a beautiful day for picking out the colors for our fall gardens and porch pots. The colors were spectacular and the company was the best. This is the first year that we sold out, so we did not have mums available after that date as we have in the past. We'll order more next year! In the meantime, mark your calendar for **Saturday, May 19, 2018** for next year's spring geranium sale.

# Donor Highlights

## THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Elaine Apple  
Arcelor Mittal  
Nancy Boling  
Michael & Martina Boyle  
Patrick & Kathy Cronin  
Paul & Joyce Gergets  
Patrick & Carolyn Gorman  
Ann Gregorovich  
James & Kathy Hilbrich

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Jim & Arlene Kender  
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Catherine Pfister  
Tornados, Inc.  
Tim & Amy Wiess

Jim & Judy Wilkins  
Vidomos, Inc.  
Jennifer Wisowaty  
Jerry & Ruth Yothment  
Knights of Columbus, Weiss Council  
Tri Kappa Sorority, Hammond Alpha Chapter  
Tri Kappa Sorority, Gamma Nu Chapter



## ALSIP CHECK-OUT CHARITY DONATION

We were happy to be selected by Alsip Home and Nursery in St. John, IN as their check-out charity for the months of May and June. When gardeners were stocking up on spring and summer seeds, plants and flowers, they had the option of adding a donation to their purchase at checkout. Alsip Nursery's CEO, Rich Christakes and General Manager, Sharisa Eatinger presented a check for over \$2400 to Planting Possibilities' Executive Director, Mark Neiner representing the donations of generous customers.

Alsip Nursery in St. John, Indiana is also a site where our job trainees work with job coaches to develop their employment skills. We are very grateful to Rich for his ongoing support of our mission.

## CN ENGINEERING 2017 GOLF OUTING DONATION

Planting Possibilities was honored to be selected as the first charity to be the beneficiary of the CN Southern Region Engineering Golf Outing, held on June 22 at Cress Creek Country Club in Naperville, IL. The CN has supported Planting Possibilities each year through the "Railroaders in The Community" employee program. CN donates \$1000 to charities supported by 40 or more hours of volunteer time by a CN employee. The CN Engineering Golf Outing donated \$6300 to Planting Possibilities, representing the proceeds from this event. In an unexpected and overwhelming show of their support, many railroad suppliers attending the event made very generous donations as well. The suppliers pooled together a gift totaling \$7600. Their generosity is both humbling and very gratefully accepted!

*Along with the CN Engineering Department, we thank these donors:*

Contech	Holland Co.	Patrick Engineering
ESCO Equipment Service Co.	Herzog Railroad Service	Rail Pros
Encore Rail Systems	Stella Jones	Right of Way Consultants
Georgetown Rail	LB Foster	RJ Corman
Mr. Don Grabowski	Natural Wood Solutions	Stanley Black & Decker
Harsco	NORDCO	Vossloh

A very special Thank You to Mr. James Hansen of The National Railroad Construction & Maintenance Association for inspiring the generosity of your colleagues.

## WHOLE FOODS COMMUNITY SHARING DAY

On October 14, Planting Possibilities participated in Whole Kids Foundation Family Fun Day at Schererville's Whole Foods Market. Marge Dytrych, Ruth Yothment and Mary Anne Neiner helped kids paint pumpkins in preparation for their Halloween festivities. It was messy, but fun!

Whole Foods provides ongoing support for our mission. If you live in Northwest Indiana, please consider shopping at Whole Foods in Schererville on Thursday, January 11, 2018 when Planting Possibilities will receive 5% of check out totals for that day.



## CHILI COOK-OFF

Once again, Planting Possibilities entered the annual Munster Chamber of Commerce Touchdown Chili Cook Off competition. As in the past, we were awarded Second Place in the People's Choice category as well as Second Place in Best Decorations category. Thanks to our inventive chefs, Bob Crist and Dave Lerner for creating this year's award-winning recipe. Special thanks to Brad Hemingway for his innovative booth design skills and to Eric Neiner for serving our yummy chili!

## Campagna Project Update

Our greenhouse, classroom and garden at Campagna Academy has been buzzing with activity! This year we grew tomatoes, peppers, sweet corn, and a myriad of other vegetables that we sold to Alsip Nursery's Farm to Table CSA Program. We also planted a small "salad garden" outside our classroom door where we grew a sampling of brussel sprouts, broccoli, okra and and sweet potatoes to use in classroom recipes. Our soil is improving each year as we add cover crops to fallow portions of our garden. The Town of Schererville supplies a few truckloads of fall leaves to add organics to our soil.



Our garden produced a bumper crop of cayenne peppers this season, and you can visit Pepino's Italian Restaurant in Schererville, IN to sample our peppers. Joe Daniele, owner of Pepino's, member of our Board of Directors, and coach for our Special Olympics basketball and softball teams, uses our pepper flakes at his restaurant — diners can find pepper shakers with Planting Possibilities stickers on each table. Tell us what you think of our peppers! We are also experimenting by canning some peppers in a brine to make our own hot sauce.

Over the winter, we are also experimenting with growing basil in our greenhouse for a local restaurant.

Complementing our horticultural programs, our volunteers work with Campagna residents who show an interest and ability to learn building maintenance and landscaping skills. We



have trimmed trees, patched drywall, painted doors and repaired outdoor furniture with these young men. This is perhaps the only exposure they have had to using tools to perform routine repairs and maintenance in their everyday environments. Our hope is that they take and apply these skills as they move forward with their lives.

# Donor Thanks, Shoutouts and Updates



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARY ANNE NEINER

Colleen Neiner  
Joyce Sarria



## IN HONOR OF FR. MIKE YADRON'S BIRTHDAY

St. Thomas More School  
Faculty & Staff  
Richard Gard  
Virgil Ramirez  
Gary & Jayne Gardner

Paul Kozy  
Cindy Block  
Stanley Lewandowski  
Michelle Fetcko

Joyce Stodola  
Andrea & Steve Ziemba  
Fr. Jordan Fetcko  
Fr. Ian Williams

## AN UPDATE ON OUR LAND SEARCH

We are actively searching for 20 acres of land in Lake County, Indiana, for our permanent home. Please contact us with any leads.

## ARE YOU AN INDIANA STATE TAX PAYER?

Planting Possibilities is participating in the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). Donations of \$100 or more are eligible to receive a **50% Indiana State tax credit**, with Planting Possibilities still realizing the entire amount of your donation! This is a win-win situation for you as an Indiana state taxpayer and for Planting Possibilities.

Your donation to Planting Possibilities	\$100	\$1000
Indiana NAP tax credit (50%)	(\$50)	(\$500)
Indiana state tax deduction (3.4%)	(\$3.40)	(\$34)
Federal tax deduction (28%)	(\$28)	(\$280)
<b>The actual cost of your donation</b>	<b>\$18.60</b>	<b>\$186</b>

### How it works:

Planting Possibilities was granted a limited amount of 2017 tax credits to "sell" on a first-come, first-serve basis to individuals and businesses alike. We are thrilled to announce that we have "sold" all of our 2017 allotment, but expect to be receiving additional credits in 2018.

If you are interested in lowering your Indiana state tax burden for the 2017 or 2018 tax year while maximizing your giving power, please consider making a substantial donation to Planting Possibilities. To qualify for participation in the purchase of NAP credits, the minimum eligible donation is \$100, while the maximum eligible donation is \$8,250. Contact us or ask your accountant for additional details.

## PLANTING POSSIBILITIES LEADERSHIP

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Judy Allen, Rich Christakes, Joseph Daniele, Karl Dytrych, Marge Dytrych, Paul Gergets, Brad Hemingway, Mark Neiner, Mary Anne Neiner, Carol Wachala

**PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY BOARD** Mont Handley, James Hitz, Adj Kitt, David Wendlinger

**STEERING COMMITTEE** Beth Ondas, Meagan Yothment, Ruth Yothment

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE** Meagan Yothment, Tanner Olo, Ruth Yothment, Bianca Cordova, Beth Ondas



Planting Possibilities  
PO Box 1805  
Highland, IN 46322

## Inside:

- >> An update on our activities with Campagna Academy
- >> Celebrating our community
- >> How to give back this season

*Planting Possibilities is a registered 501(c)3 with the mission to provide job-skills training, employment, and volunteer opportunities for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities in Lake County, Indiana.*

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info@plantingpossibilities.org | 219-237-9353

WWW.PLANTINGPOSSIBILITIES.ORG |    |

*Our special thanks to Guru Systems, INC. of Munster for donating their mailing services.*

Planting Possibilities is an authorized provider of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR). Voc Rehab provides individualized services to enhance and support people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain or retain employment. The individual works closely with a VR counselor throughout the process. Through active participation in their rehabilitation, people with disabilities achieve a greater level of independence in their workplace and living environments.

If you know a person with a disability, or if you are a person with a disability, and would like to experience the pride you can feel through working, please contact Planting Possibilities to find out how we can help you achieve your employment goal.

## VOC REHAB

## CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 28, 2017

Giving Tuesday

facebook.com/plantingpossibilities

JANUARY 11, 2018

Community Sharing Day

Whole Foods, Schererville

MAY 13, 2018

Spring Geranium Sale

Sarkey's Florist, Highland