



# NEWSLETTER

Volume 30 No. 2

March/April 2019

*People in community feeding the hungry*

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## GINNY SCHRAG TO RETIRE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GATHERING

*"I was on The Gathering Board when Ginny was first hired as Site Manager and then moved into the Executive Director position. It is my pleasure to share a bit about her as she leaves at the end of April after twenty years with the organization." **Mel Johnson, Board Member Emeritus***

As Ginny Schrag looks back over her years at The Gathering, beginning as Site Manager in 1998 then as Executive Director in 2001, the first thing she mentions are the people she has met including thousands of guests, and hundreds of volunteers and board members. Many are people she has served with, and many are people she has served. This work has been and continues to be supported by a community of financial donors, food donors, artists and faith communities, and so many more, all faithful to The Gathering as "People in community feeding the hungry".

In reflecting on these two decades of work, Ginny states she is most thankful for being able to maintain this ministry through good financial times and difficult ones, through floods and moves, and through changes in corporate, foundation, and government regulations. To this she adds being grateful for the stability of the Fresh Produce Preservation Project, the Golf Event, and the bag lunch program. She is most thankful, however, that the guests remain the focus, and the ministry of hospitality continues.



Ginny Schrag,  
Outgoing Executive Director

Ginny's work has given her a strong fundraising portfolio, strong strategic planning and board development skills, and furthered her experience in project and program development, all skills The Gathering needed to move forward. But more importantly, through all the years, Ginny has held the belief that this is God's work, and like many of us who are involved with The Gathering she feels blessed to have had the opportunity to make a difference in another's life every day. Her prayer for The Gathering is that the guests will always be first.

Now as she begins to look forward to what is ahead only a few plans have been identified, including some time in the Rockies this summer, learning to kayak, taking up classical guitar, and focusing on her Spanish.

From all of us in The Gathering community we thank Ginny for all she has brought to The Gathering and all she has given. May she now go with our blessing into her new beginning.

**THE MISSION:** of The Gathering is to provide meals and associated services or programs to those who would otherwise go hungry or without. **WE RESPECT** the dignity and values of every individual we serve and value our volunteers who allow us to serve the community. **WE ACT** directly and in concert with others to alleviate hunger and to address the root causes and related problems associated with hunger. **OUR SUCCESS** will be demonstrated by providing quality services to our guests and remaining a viable volunteer-driven organization.

**VISION:** We are a community of guests, volunteers and staff united by a common goal:  
to feed the hungry in body, mind and spirit.

## PROGRAM FEATURE: TAPPING INTO THE CREATIVE SIDE

*Volunteers, we love you! You do 98% of the work at The Gathering, cooking and serving meals, but that's not all. You are joyful and creative people, and here are some of the ways you have creatively supported The Gathering's mission and our guests over the past six months.*

*What will you come up with next?*

- ✓ Bus rental to transport meal guests to Salvation Army's Coats for the Homeless distribution site.
- ✓ Sleeping mats made from plastic grocery bags - complete with carrying straps - for our homeless guests.  
*(Check out YouTube for a "how to" video.)*
- ✓ Street Supply Bags with the basic essentials – gloves, socks, hand sanitizer, water bottles, snacks, hand warmers



- ✓ Beautiful roses created from spoons to thank Gathering staff for their work

- ✓ Jefferson School Community Day with projects for all grade levels – placemats, bag lunches and scarves



- ✓ Donating Christmas Cards, stamps and the time needed to help guests connect with family & friends at Christmas
- ✓ Proceeds from a Charity Poker Tournament in honor of a beloved friend
- ✓ Decorating sites, baking pies & Christmas cookies, roasting turkeys for holiday meals

*Thanks to Kathy Phillipson, Jefferson Community School, Stephanie & Byron Zieball, St. Paul's Episcopal, Karen Dardy, Mira Meadows & Friends, Jeanne Baade, St. James-Mukwonago, Milwaukee College Prep, Immanuel Presbyterian, Fox Point Lutheran, St. Mark's Episcopal, Spiritual Living Church, Jim Wahlen.*

## **MOTOWN COMES TO THE GATHERING** VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION 2019

*-Celebrating 2018 Volunteer Milestones-*

**Sponsored by Direct Supply**

**Friday, April 26**

**5:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

**Awards Program Starting at 6:45**

**St. Mark's Episcopal Church**  
**2618 North Hackett Avenue**

**PLEASE RSVP BY APRIL 19 TO:**  
**soulfood@thegatheringwis.org or 414-272-4122**  
**When RSVP'ing, please provide your full name,**  
**contact info, and which volunteer group you are**  
**a part of, if applicable.**



# REFLECTION: Living in the Ordinary

By Ginny Schrag, Outgoing Executive Director of the Gathering

It was the summer between my freshman and sophomore years in high school, and it was the final evening of church camp in southern Nebraska. Some type of church or Christian camp experience comprised a part of my summers from fifth grade through college and a few years after – whether as camper, employee or counselor. I loved it.

This final evening was highlighted by a huge bonfire with all of us sitting around it singing and sharing what we had found significant in our week together...some would call it witnessing. At some point I found myself standing up and announcing to all that I thought God was calling me to be a missionary nurse – probably because at that time the only way I understood that one could live a life of faith and service would be through becoming a minister or a missionary (both career choices uncles, aunts and cousins had made). I didn't grasp yet that faith is lived out in the ordinary – that my mother with her teaching, library work, homemaking, Sunday school instruction and music, and my father with his farming, school bus driving, umpiring, poetry and drawing were both living out lives of faith.

I do now, and...I didn't become a missionary nurse... and I didn't go to a faith-based college. In fact, I intentionally made the choice to go

to a state university (University of Kansas) that at that time was experiencing the unrest of Vietnam protests, an increasing drug culture, and a rising black student movement. I intentionally chose a place where everything I knew would be challenged – and, admittedly, it didn't hurt that I was a huge college basketball fan. I graduated from KU with a degree in social work and a commitment to live out my faith in service.

Scroll to now – when I am retiring from the work that brought all of this together, and that returned me to the ordinary. For what could be more ordinary than cooking a meal and inviting another to eat? What could be more ordinary than washing pots and pans, and pouring coffee? And yet in every step it takes to get that meal out, in every person that walks through our doors, in every volunteer and donor and vendor and group and collaborator and staff person and guest, in every little ordinary thing, God's kingdom is breaking through... every...single...day. I could not be more thankful for this opportunity, for the ability to give and for all those angels among us.

Thank you  
*Ginny*

## THE GATHERING AT WORK



Bag lunches prepared and donated by Hmong Consortium



Dinner is Served



Produce Donation from Shepherd's Purse



# PEOPLE OF THE GATHERING: BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

## Guillermo Gutierrez, Gathering Board President

By Natalee Kashou, Gathering Communications Manager/Breakfast Coordinator



"I was always encouraged to be myself..."

Guillermo, a native of Mexico, came to the United States in 2004 as an expatriate with the Kohler Co. He moved to Sheboygan in 2006 and it was there where he met Ellen, born and raised in Wisconsin, whom he married in 2011. Today, Guillermo works as a Senior Talent Development Consultant at Baird. His day-to-day work includes coaching and training his teams toward success and cultural diversity.

Guillermo's passion for cultural diversity developed at a young age. He lived and worked in four different countries before coming to the US and immersing himself in American culture. As a Mexican immigrant he has experienced seeing the world with different perspectives and enjoys sharing his Mexican culture with his American friends and colleagues.

When Guillermo first joined The Gathering's Board of Directors, The Gathering was actively working to diversify its Board, and Guillermo took the opportunity to bring his talent and passion to the organization. Guillermo is currently serving as The Gathering's Board President.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **APRIL**

**MOTOWN COMES TO THE GATHERING:** *Volunteer Appreciation Event - Friday, April 26 (see page 2)*

### **JULY**

#### **2019 GATHERING GOLF CLASSIC**

*All proceeds benefit The Gathering's meal programs for Milwaukee's hungry and homeless*  
Monday, July 15, 2019

**NEW VENUE: BROWN DEER GOLF COURSE, Milwaukee County**

7625 N. Range Line Rd., Glendale, WI

Online registration open April 15; [www.thegatheringwis.org](http://www.thegatheringwis.org)



### **AUGUST**

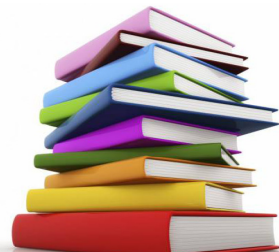
#### **HUNGER BOOK SALE**

*All proceeds benefit local and global hunger relief organizations*

Thursday, Aug 1 – Tuesday, Aug 6

All Saints Cathedral, 818 E. Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

To donate books contact All Saints Cathedral at 414-271-7719



### **OCTOBER**

#### **2019 MILWAUKEE EMPTY BOWLS**

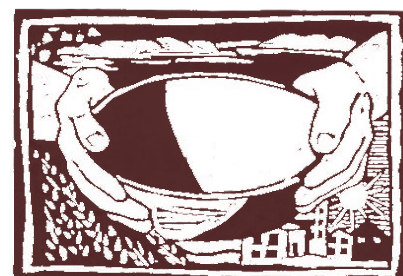
*All proceeds benefit Milwaukee area hunger relief programs*

Sunday, October 2019; 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

(check website – [www.milwaukeeemptybowls.org](http://www.milwaukeeemptybowls.org)

for exact date)

MSOE Kern Center, 1245 N. Broadway, Milwaukee



# OUR DONORS

**THE GATHERING BOARD OF DIRECTORS THANKS THE FOLLOWING GENEROUS SUPPORTERS  
GIVING \$250 OR MORE BETWEEN OCTOBER 16, 2018 AND FEBRUARY 28, 2019**

*We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of all donor names.  
If we have missed you or spelled your name incorrectly, please let us know.*

## **\$15,000 - \$25,000**

Catholic Community Foundation-  
JCC Fund

## **\$10,000 - \$14,999**

Emmanuel United Church of  
Christ-Hales Corners  
Herb Kohl Philanthropies

## **\$5,000 - \$9,999**

1 Anonymous Donor  
All Saints' Cathedral Hunger  
Book Sale  
Christ Church Episcopal –  
Whitefish Bay  
Mel and David Johnson  
Komatsu Mining Corp.  
Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation  
Joseph and Joni McDevitt  
Marshall H. Pepper Revocable  
Living Trust  
St. Paul's Episcopal -Milwaukee  
Donor Choice-United Way of  
Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha  
County

## **\$2,500 - \$4,999**

2 Anonymous Donors  
Direct Supply  
Jim and Nicole Hermann  
Hunger Relief Fund of Wisconsin  
Greg and Jackie Johnson  
Luedke-Smith Fund (other  
funds)-The Greater Milwaukee  
Foundation  
Lux Foundation  
Mark and Karen Meunier  
St. Christopher's Episcopal-  
River Hills  
St. Mark's Episcopal-Milwaukee  
John Zacher

## **\$1,000 - \$2,499**

7 Anonymous Donors  
Community United Methodist-  
Elm Grove  
Lucy Cooper  
Rachel Finger  
John Florsheim and Lindy Yeager  
Gathering Memorial Fund -The  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Thomas and Mary Hawley  
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The Jennifer Friedman Hillis  
Foundation  
Jerome and Lynn Johnson  
Anne Kebisek Dudek  
Lutheran Chapel of the Cross-  
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St. Joseph's Catholic Church-  
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Waukesha County Community  
Foundation  
Jason and Laura Thurow  
Charles Trainer and Anne Booth  
Robert and Ellen Venable  
Patrick and Joanne Ward  
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Lee and Carol Wolcott

## **\$500 - \$999**

7 Anonymous Donors  
AAUW Milwaukee Branch  
Fund-The Greater Milwaukee  
Foundation  
Robert C. Archer Designated  
Fund-The Greater Milwaukee  
Foundation  
James Bauman and Candace Moore  
Richard and Carol Bayerlein  
Evert and Cindy Berndt  
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DK Sales-Sussex  
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Greendale Community Church  
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Eugene and Gwendolyn Lavin  
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Andy Martin and Janet Trostel Martin  
Robert and Carol Matenaer  
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Fund-The Greater Milwaukee  
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Kevin and Cheryl O'Connor  
Jack and Martha Prince  
Family Fund-The Greater  
Milwaukee Foundation  
Mason and Julie Ross  
St. Matthias Parish-Milwaukee  
Gary and Maureen Shebesta

*Continued on Page 6*

## **KEEP THE GATHERING'S MEAL PROGRAMS GOING STRONG PLEASE GIVE A GIFT**

Use the **ENCLOSED ENVELOPE** (*check, cc, cash*); give **ONLINE** at [www.thegatheringwis.org](http://www.thegatheringwis.org);  
**TEXT** "gathering" to 501-55 on your mobile device; shop **AMAZONSMILE** (*select The Gathering as your  
charity of choice*); **MATCHING GIFTS** (*ask your employer if they will match your donation*); host your  
own **FUNDRAISER**; designate The Gathering as a **BENEFICIARY** in your will or trust.

***\$500-\$999 continued***

James and Christine Speaker  
Fred and Anne Stratton  
Carrie Taylor and Nettie Taylor  
Robinson Memorial Fund-The  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Barbara and John Trimble Family  
Foundation  
Trevor and Margaret Will  
John and Julie Wolf  
George Yu

**\$250 - \$499**

13 Anonymous Donors  
Barney Family Foundation  
Barbara Becker  
Patricia Bowne  
Robert and Elizabeth Bradley  
Timothy and RuthAnn Bultman  
John and Julie Cabaniss  
John and Georgia Cain  
JP Morgan Chase Foundation  
CoBank

Rick and Lana Colbo  
Paul and Mary Counsell  
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Brian and Suzanne Lanser  
Evan Lenhardt and Virginia  
Finn-Lenhardt

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St. Nicholas Orthodox -Cedarburg  
Marilyn Schlosser  
Bruce and Janine Smith  
Gerald Smith and Sharon Beste  
Southbrook Church  
Stere'n's McDonald's Restaurants  
Scott and Holly Stoner  
Trinity Episcopal -Wauwatosa  
Waterstone Mortgage  
Gene and Carmen Witt



St. Gregory's Serving Group



White Eagle - Gathering Guest



First Saturday Cooking Group

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Guillermo Gutierrez, President  
Nicole Hermann, Vice-President  
Mark Hohensee, Treasurer  
Jim Leurquin, Secretary  
Jeanne Baade  
Cindy Berndt  
Maggie Broeren  
Joe Bruno  
Jeremy Gilbert  
Joe Graf  
John Hickey  
Shane Morrison  
Harry Moseley  
Rhonda Taylor Parris  
Mary Thickens  
Teresa Trostmiller

**BOARD MEMBERS EMERITUS**

Mel Johnson  
Mitzi Roy  
Margaret Schumacher  
Carl Templar

**GATHERING STAFF**

Virginia Schrag, *Executive Director*  
Jim Ardis, *Dinner Coordinator*  
Steve Beste, *Operations Manager*  
Moses Cook, *Security*  
Natalee Kashou, *Breakfast Coordinator & Communications Manager*  
Ed Kowach, *Dinner Cook & Security*  
Lynette Lane, *Breakfast Cook*  
Marianne O'Connor, *Office Administrator*  
Angela Wright, *Program & Volunteer Manager*

**PUBLICATION INFORMATION**

The Gathering Newsletter is a publication of The Gathering, an interfaith meal program carried out by individuals and church, business and civic groups. Its principle mission is to feed the hungry and homeless. The editor welcomes any comments on the content of the newsletter.

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