



7TH ANNUAL TRAILS N RAILS EVENT!

We are excited to announce this year's annual Trails N Rails event!

While we traditionally take to biking trails and the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic railway to celebrate sponsors who support South Street's work, this year's Trails N Rails is happening virtually.

From now through September, and leading up to the October 3rd online event, you will be encouraged to give back, move your body, and exercise gratitude with our staff and friends. You'll receive fun, entertaining, and educational videos ... Facebook Live surprises by our very own Joe Tucker ... ways to get involved with family or friends ... and more.

Stay tuned — don't forget to register! Visit southstreetministries.org/trails-n-rails today ... and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates.

A WORD FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOE TUCKER

Joe, how are things at South Street?

In my many calls, Zooms, and meetings, I am often asked about how the pandemic has affected the ministry.

My answer: We are still ministering!



with God's guidance.

Through it all, I am grateful for your support. Your generosity and prayers make a difference in all we do!

—Joe

1. We switched most of our youth programs to virtual meetings or drive-way visits.
2. Reentry has switched from large group gatherings to one-on-one support.
3. We have paused the service and ministry of the Front Porch Cafe for the time being.

I ask you to pray for us in this — just like you, we are all learning new normals, utilizing different opportunities for service and connection, and envisioning what is next. I have taken a deep spiritual encouragement from this, because **God makes all things new.**

We have seen it in the lives of students and children. We have seen it in women and men returning home from institutions and slowly rebuilding their lives. So, too, shall we see something new at the Front Porch Cafe! We will re-open, but in new ways and

Ways to Give



GIVE ONLINE:
southstreetministries.org/donate



MAIL A CHECK:
South Street Ministries
130 W. South Street Akron, OH 44311

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WORD ON THE STREET

A SOUTH ST. MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER • AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER



RICH KIDS: YES, IT'S WORTH IT!

By David Shahata

2020 has brought about many changes to the regular rhythms of life. Living in this season has caused many to reevaluate what is most important to them.

The RICH Kids team is no different. We realized quickly that no matter what adjustments were needed, keeping the *relational connection* with as many of our students as possible was key.

Before COVID hit, we were seeing amazing successes, God moments, and growth with our students. Our discipleship efforts were manifesting in ways we couldn't have imagined. And we were fueled by the energy of it all.

But then came mid-March — and strict social-distancing orders followed. Yet we were, and are, committed to our youth and their well-being, so we continued meeting with students through Zoom and home visits. We planned out and pivoted our approach to RICH Kids in this new season. Some days we were disheartened — discouraged. Some days the question "Is it still worth it?" came and

went, especially when the students' interest or participation was low.

But through the struggle of getting them to show up on Zoom, we *also* got to experience a snippet of what God goes through to reach us. Many of Jesus' parables speak directly on God's heart to pursue humanity even if it's just one.

So instead of being disheartened, we at RICH Kids are focusing on the unique opportunity to pursue and love our students well, in this season, even if there's only one.

A good reminder that we must love well in the big and in the small!

Your support and prayers make ministry efforts like this possible — thank you!

"GOD WILL ALWAYS PURSUE THE ONE — SO MUST WE!"

ACROSS THE LAKE: A VOICE FROM THE OTHER SIDE

By Roy Johnson Sr.

My family has resided in Kenmore for about 20 years now. We relocated to Akron in 1995 from New Jersey.

At first, it was easy to dismiss the small body of water that is Summit Lake when comparing it to the Hudson River or Atlantic Ocean. It usually evoked no special interest within me.

However, after spending the last two years at South Street Ministries — both as an intern and volunteer — I have been afforded a valuable historical lesson about Summit Lake and ZIP code 44311. It has been a real privilege for me to sit at the table and be engaged with many of South Street's "Unlikely Partners Taking Shared Risks to Renew Our Community for Christ's Sake."

Civic Commons has invested a lot of energy and resources to advertise and encourage our

"ACROSS THE LAKE — UNITING TWO SIDES TOWARD ONE FUTURE ... AND ONE OF MANY WAYS YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A LOCAL IMPACT."

community to use the green spaces on each side of the lake. Its towpath has been renovated and improved for exercise and more. So, where do we go from here? Together, let's better connect residents and neighbors around the lake — so ALL can enjoy the treasure in our midst!

STUDENTS SHAPING THE FUTURE

by Coach Kemp Boyd

Thanks so much to South Street Ministries, Project Uijma, the Kenmore community, and others who are telling their Across the Lake stories. Interestingly enough, being the Head Football Coach at Kenmore-Garfield High School and a Kenmore resident, I have noticed the connection of the three communities of Summit Lake, Kenmore, and Firestone Park.

The students who attend Kenmore-Garfield High School are bridge builders who help connect these communities together. The young men I coach come from these three areas and create a mighty football program that carries the responsibilities of the culture, tradition, and legacy that make these communities so unique.

Our students will continue to be the catalyst that help shape the future. Across the Lake is our opportunity to highlight the stories of individuals who live in these communities ... but we must not forget the students who enrich them with pride and spirit.

BIKE SHOP: HITTING THE ROAD WITH BIKE SHOP

By Joe Tucker

For more than 20 years, kids have come to 130 W. South St. to work on and earn a bicycle. This year, Bike Shop has shifted gears to deliver bikes to kids and families instead.



Being "On the Road" means our Bike Shop team prepares the bikes but leaves a few key repairs undone. We drive to the family's house in a caravan, then turn the driveway into a mini repair station. It's a slower pace — only one family at a time — but we're able to connect with parents and children as we teach about bike fixes and maintenance and converse about community, school, church, and more.

In many ways, this approach feels more grounded — we're able to meet neighbors, parents, family members, guardians. We're sharing stories and connections while adjusting seat heights and affixing training wheels.

Henri Nouwen wrote:

More and more, the desire grows in me simply to walk around, greet people, enter their homes, sit on their doorsteps, play ball, throw water, and be known as someone who wants to live with them. It is a privilege to have the time to practice this simple ministry of presence. Still, it is not as simple as it seems. My own desire to be useful, to do something significant, or to be part of some impressive project is so strong that soon my time is taken up by meetings, conferences, study groups, and workshops that prevent me from walking the streets. It is difficult not to have plans, not to organize people around an urgent cause, and

not to feel that you are working directly for social progress. But I wonder more and more if the first thing shouldn't be to know people by name, to eat and drink with them, to listen to their stories and tell your own, and to let them know with words, handshakes, and hugs that you do not simply like them, but truly love them.

"I MAY MISS THE FRENETIC ENERGY OF OUR ORIGINAL BIKE SHOP SETUP, BUT I AM THANKFUL FOR A DEEPER SEASON OF KNOWING AND LOVING MY NEIGHBOR."

The gift of Bike Shop: On The Road has been the slow reality of presence. Time with a family. Time with youth. And I am thankful for partners like you who help South Street keep connecting with children and families who need it most.

SOUTH STREET NEEDS YOU!

Volunteers are an essential part of the heart of South Street Ministries. The hands that join our work make the weight of our calling lighter and the scope of our reach wider.



As we move from summer to fall, South Street is looking for prospective volunteers and offers an opportunity to serve neighbors in need. We're using a hybrid model — virtual and visitation — for every program!

For more details about volunteer opportunities with South Street, visit our website or email us: southstreetministries.org/august-enl/#vol Jocelyn Grant at jgrant@southstreetministries.org

Thank you for your investment in our community!



ACROSS THE LAKE is a new initiative of South Street Ministries to connect the east and west sides of Summit Lake ... to explore the social and racial histories in our communities ... and to renew a future vision for our neighborhoods.