

# THE JOY OF SOX

Neighbors Tracy McGuckin and Michelle Giffroy-Rossi share the warmth of giving back.

The mission of The Joy of Sox (TJOS) is to provide joy and health to those experiencing homelessness by giving them new socks. Tracy began volunteering for the nonprofit TJOS in 2015 after reading an article about TJOS and encouraging her son to conduct a sock drive at his school. Michelle began volunteering for TJOS in 2018, having learned about TJOS from Tracy as they shared a walk through their neighborhood. Both Tracy and Michelle joined the Board of Directors of TJOS with Tracy as the Board President and Michelle as the Board Secretary.

The formation of The Joy of Sox in 2010 was borne out of Tom Costello, Jr, founder and chief sock person, and his wife Nancy Costello volunteering at a soup kitchen in Philadelphia. Through their discussions with a podiatrist, they learned that people experiencing homelessness rarely get donations of new socks and have severe foot problems because of the lack of clean socks. During a visit to volunteer at the soup kitchen, they decided to bring new socks along to give to the guests of the kitchen. They saw the profound and positive impact new socks made on the homeless. One guest said, "You know, no one has ever given me a pair of socks before?" And then she started to cry. So many charities provide all types of clothes to the homeless but rarely are socks a part of what is available. Tom knew he needed to be a sock person and The Joy of Sox came into being.

Since 2010, TJOS has expanded tremendously and has collected and distributed over 850,000 pairs of socks to men, women, and children experiencing homelessness in the Philadelphia area, across the US, and in countries including Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Uganda. In 2019, TJOS opened its warehouse in Phoenixville, with great thanks to the kindness of a generous benefactor, where socks are received, sorted,

and bagged for distribution to shelters, soup kitchens, clinics, etc., to get socks to those in need.

TJOS is a volunteer organization and would not be able to fulfill its mission if it weren't for the schools, businesses, service groups, and other organizations, that run sock drives to collect the needed socks and



Tracy McGuckin

the volunteers who come to the warehouse to help sort and bag them. In 2011, TJOS had a resolution that was passed in Pennsylvania making Valentine's Day Socks for the Homeless Day. Please consider not only giving your sweetheart a valentine but providing new socks for those in need.

If your family, school, business, sports team, or group would like to run a sock drive or come to the warehouse to volunteer, please contact [info@tjos.org](mailto:info@tjos.org). Also, visit [TJOS.org](http://TJOS.org) and follow us on Facebook @thejoyofsoxorg

Tracy and her husband, Rich, and Michelle and her husband, Jim are neighbors living in Valley Forge Meadows.



Michelle Giffroy-Rossi