



Lil' Red Wagon

of the Servant of God Julia Greeley

**official newsletter of
The Julia Greeley Guild
a ministry of
the Cathedral Basilica of the
Immaculate Conception, Denver**

**Thirty-first Issue 10-4-2021
St. Francis Day edition**

141st Baptism Anniversary Brings Julia's Friends Back to Her Neighborhood ♥

From 2013 till 2017, the Guild encouraged its Friends to gather at Sacred Heart Church to remember the anniversary of Julia's death on June 7, 1918.

Once her body was transferred to the Cathedral in 2017, the Guild started marking that day, the date of her birth into heaven, with a Mass of the Sacred Heart in her memory.

Anxious, however, not to forget Sacred Heart Parish's special place in Julia's life, the Guild decided to start a second annual Mass remembering her birth on earth. Not



even Julia knew the date of her physical birth, so the Guild very appropriately chose the date of her spiritual birth in Baptism, June 26, 1880.

Thus, this year on Saturday, June 26, the Guild celebrated the 141st anniversary of Julia's baptism at Sacred Heart Church, with a 7 pm Mass.

Two days prior to the event, Roxanne King's article on the event was posted at the *Denver Catholic* site, and about 50 Members and Friends joined us for the Mass, celebrated by the pastor, Fr. Joseph LaJoie and concelebrated by Fr. Joseph Cao, pastor of Cure d'Ars Church, and Fr. Blaine Burkey, O.F.M.Cap.

Fr. LaJoie celebrated the Mass "ad Oriente" with a vintage fiddleback chasuble, as he had been doing for several months. His facing the East with his back to the congregation surprised many of those present, but someone pointed out that, that is exactly how Julia would have seen the Mass before the Vatican Council.

During his homily, Fr. Joseph called attention to the fact that there had been a Julia Greeley Mass in early June and now one at the end of June, bookmarks as it were, to the heightened concern for social justice that had





engrossed all of Denver in the days in between.

Light snacks were served in the basement after Mass, and copies of the new edition of Fr. Blaine's book were available. Among those present were Sr. Faustina OCD, principal of SS. Peter and Paul's school in Wheatridge, and others who were excited to report on a new more adequate playground, dedicated to Julia Greeley, which is being planned at the school.

Charles Leisring 1928-2021 ♥

Julia's 'Lil Red Wagon, learned with great sorrow of the surprisingly sudden death of Guild President Mary L. Leisring's husband of 45 years. Charles entered the hospital for the first time in his 93 years of life on Wednesday, Sept. 22, and left for the Father's house but three days later. Please pray for the repose of his soul, and also for Mary as she mourns his loss.



Beyond sharing with the Guild the love of his life, Charles (*far right*) also celebrated with it at every significant event in its history, and he will be fondly missed.

Burial will be from St. Ignatius of Loyola Church, Denver, at 10 a.m., Oct. 27.

Excerpted from *Julia Greeley Home*

Robin's Story ♥

Robin, then 56, came to the Julia Greeley Home in fall 2017. She is a mother, grandmother, and a former professional bookkeeper with the city of Denver. She went to Ignatius and Annunciation grade schools, and graduated from Manuel High School.

Robin worked for the city until excruciating back pain made work impossible. Her injuries — which eventually required surgery — were caused when she became a target of domestic violence.

"But I didn't want to have the back surgery until I had raised my kids," Robin says.



"After her children, Aaron, now 27, and Veronica, 30, were grown, they found her an apartment. That seemed like a good solution until her rent skyrocketed and became impossible to pay—and Robin had three days to find somewhere to live.

What followed was six weeks of temporary shelters and living conditions, until Robin was referred to the Julia Greeley Home. She used her time with us to explore independence — a job and apartment — giving her the means and space to welcome her children and grandchildren.

While easing into life at Julia Greeley Home, something unexpected happened — Robin founded an unlikely calling as an actress. She was chosen to play Servant of God Julia Greeley, our home's patron, in the first annual "Night at the Cemetery" program sponsored at Halloween time by Mt Olivet Cemetery and the Archdiocese of Denver.

The program gave high schoolers the chance to see a wholesome depiction of Halloween seen through the eyes of saints, rather than in the worldly display of Halloween as a time of “goblins and ghouls.”

For Robin, it was a special honor to play Julia Greeley, because the beloved Denver figure had recently been recognized for her heroic life and set on the path of canonization as a saint.

Robin was given several pages of dialogue to absorb and narrate, but soon the role of Julia Greeley took on a life of its own. Robin set aside the script and, taking on the persona of Julia, she delivered a passionate and accurate account of the future saint’s life to the fascinated audience of students and teenagers.

The organizers of the event, and the staff and residents of Julia Greeley Home who came out to see her, were amazed at Robin’s mastery of the complex material in so short a time, and in her ability to bring Julia Greeley to life.



Robin shares her heritage with Julia Greeley as an African-American woman, but beyond that, she knows little about her family background. As far as the family’s distant past more than a century ago, “I’m

sure we were born into slavery, but my mother took a lot of secrets to the grave with her.”

Whatever life holds, Robin knows one thing — she has already been asked to play Julia Greeley when Halloween rolls around again.

“It was a privilege,” she said at the end of 2017. “I will definitely be there next year!” And she was. Robin, by then happily living in her own apartment and enjoying her family around her, played Julia Greeley again in 2018. Encore!

From Westword, Aug. 3, 2021

Historic Denver Reveals 50 Actions for 50 Places

by Patricia Calhoun

It’s not easy to celebrate a historic anniversary during a historic pandemic. Historic Denver, which got its start in 1970 with the save of the former home of Margaret Brown (the Unsinkable “Molly,” for those who pay attention to Broadway musicals instead of actual history), had big plans for its fiftieth year. But COVID didn’t sink them entirely. Instead, the celebration has rolled out slowly but steadily.

After all, a group that came together in response to another crisis — the urban-renewal movement of the late ’60s, which was wiping many legacy buildings off the map — knew how to take the long view, and postponed some events while planning others. “The idea was to be proactive and positive,” explains executive director Annie Levinsky. “I think preservation too often gets a reputation for being reactive.”

So this past spring, Historic Denver announced that it was launching 50 Actions for 50 Places, taking nominations for spots and spaces deserving of preservation attention. They didn’t have to be architectural wonders or engineering marvels — just important to the story of

Denver. They didn't have to be in imminent danger, or even threatened — just parts of the past worth celebrating.

They had to be places that you "couldn't imagine Denver without."

The initial plan was to release the list of those that made the cut in May, during National Preservation Month, but that timetable proved overly ambitious when more than 100 nominations arrived. Historic Denver staffers researched all of them, then took them through a scoring process and presented them to a review panel with members of a preservation committee. After the list was reduced to fifty places, Historic Denver contacted the owners of all of them to see if they'd be averse to having their real estate show up on a list of fifty places that should stick around Denver for at least the next fifty years. No one refused Some owners had actually nominated their own properties. Others had been suggested by relatives. Still others have been offered up by admiring strangers.

Levinsky was surprised by the scope of the nominations, ing the city's second historic cultural district, approved by Denver City Council on August 2. But Levinsky was also excited to see how involved so many people were in all aspects of the city's heritage, from cultural accomplishments to kitsch. "There were things we didn't expect," she says. "The number-one thing, the pleasant surprise, was the diversity, range and also types of things represented. The other thing that was surprising was so many hidden stories. These might be buildings that people go by all the time but never think about."

For example, there was the old horse trough in downtown Denver, a school that was intrinsic to the U.S. Supreme Court's desegregation decision, a house Levinsky herself passed every day that had been designed in the '30s by brothers who lived in the Auraria neighborhood and were

educated in Chihuahua. It reminded her that history happens everywhere, to everyone.

When we looked back at our history and saw how much great, grassroots activity there had been in our early years, part of our inspiration for Historic Denver's fiftieth anniversary was, how do we do that again?" Levinsky recalls. "This isn't just something that happens because it's done by the city or a select group of people. It's really everyone."

After coming up with the final list of fifty and dividing them into categories such as Civic Asset and Legacy Business, the work is just beginning. Now Historic Denver will come up with "appropriate action plans" for the sites. In some cases, the action might just be signage. In others, it might be securing landmark status for the locations — as Historic Denver has done for so many places in the past.

"These fifty sites demonstrate the meaning, value and diversity of historic places in our city," Levinsky concludes. "We can't wait to launch the partnerships and strategies that will amplify the stories and significance of each place in support of an inclusive, vibrant and rooted city."

Julia Greeley Boarding House 2911 Walnut Street

This building was once a boarding house where former slave Julia Greeley, known as the Angel of Charity, lived while she carried out various acts of charity in Denver in the 1870s through the 1890s. After the Civil War, Greeley had moved here with a white family as their servant before moving out on her own. Her charitable efforts were so legendary that there's now a movement to have her canonized. "I did not know this story," Levinsky confesses. "It's a great example of hidden history." And much of its historic nature is hidden by major alterations to the building, located in a commercial area that hasn't been residential for sixty years. "It

doesn't look super-historic now," Levinsky says, "but the owners are open to telling her story."

[Editorial note: One can see the announcement by Historic Denver's of its choice of Julia's 1903-1916 Rooming House at 2913 Walnut St. at <https://50actions.historicdenver.org/places/julia-greeley-home>]

New Find:

Julia in Florida in 1973 ♥

You never know when or where you might run into Julia Greeley. The year before Fr. Pacificus Kennedy started collecting info on Julia, the *St. Petersburg (FL) Times* carried on Aug. 14, 1973 an article by Walter L. Lowe Jr. which mentioned Julia.

"As part of our continuing series on Black Heritage Tours, this month we take you to the beautiful mountainous regions of New Mexico and Colorado," it began.

In its Colorado section, after telling of the well-known black businessman, escaped slave Barney Ford, who's buried with his wife Julia in Denver's Riverside Cemetery, it continued,

"In another Denver cemetery, Mt. Olivet, Julia Greeley, known as the 'Colored Angel of Charity,' is buried. A servant to Colorado's forest [*sic!*] territorial governor, she was so widely known for her charitable works and generous nature, that on her death she was given the highest honor ever bestowed on a Colorado Catholic; her body laid in state in the Sacred Heart Church from three until eight o'clock, and a contemporary account said that limousines and touring cars carried the rich to her side, and the poor flocked to the church to pay their last tribute to the Colored Angel of Charity."

Julia on WikiTree.com ♥

A profile for Julia has been established on WikiTree.com, a free genealogical site that

aims to eventually connect everybody on a single, family tree. We have profiled her there in the hope of someday finding a way to connect her with presently unknown relatives, through the help of genealogists who are skilled in helping descendants of former slaves in such matters. Her profile is at <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Caldwell-9693>. Caldwell was the name of her owner and is simply used as a placeholder on WikiTree because of lack of a known surname at birth.

Julia Presentations ♥

- ♥ Howard University, Washington DC, ZOOM, date TBD, Mary Leisring
- ♥ Julia Greeley Committee at St. Matthew the Apostle Church, Gahanna OH, ZOOM, date TBD, Mary Leisring.
- ♥ Recording of an on-line presentation which Mary Leisring made Apr. 26 for the various offices of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe on April 26, can be accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX-nx7g4Nlo>

New Edition Available in Various Venues ♥

The new edition of *In Secret Service of the Sacred Heart* sells for \$22.00 and it contains 25 totally new pages and 17 color photos. The new edition is available through Julia Greeley.org, as well as at Gerken's Religious Goods in Denver, Thomas More Parish Book Store in Centennial, Cabrini Shrine Gift Shop in Golden, and the Josephite Center in Baltimore.





Julia's Canoe Masses ♥

Intentions placed in Julia's Canoe, either by email or other forms of submission, are listed in a digital file constantly updated by Brigid Demko. In conjunction with the Guild, the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception celebrates monthly Masses for all in Julia's Canoe.

These are on the First Fridays of the month. A member of the Guild leads a prayer for Julia's intercession and the Litany of the Sacred Heart after the Mass near Julia's tomb in the Sacred Heart Chapel. Upcoming Masses will be on:

Fri., November 5, 12:10 p.m.

Fri., December 3, 5:30 p.m.

Place yourself and your intentions in Julia's Canoe at juliagreeleyscanoe@gmail.com

Welcome to Our Meetings ♥

All Guild Members and other Friends of Julia are welcome at our planning meetings. During the pandemic, we meet by ZOOM every Third Thursday of the month at 10:30 am MT. Next meetings: October 21 and November 18. If you have not previously been to a meeting, you will need to contact us at 720-352-4995 to obtain the meeting ID number and password. ZOOM meetings have allowed friends of Julia to join us from anywhere on the planet. We've already enjoyed having friends from Perrineville NJ, Austin TX, Duluth and Minneapolis MN, Jefferson City

MO, and Brooklyn NY join the Colorado faithful.

Official Guild Statistics ♥

Friends of Julia
On our mailing lists – 10-4-2021

1,096

which includes

Guild Members
Dues paying –10-4-2021

227

Paid Memberships ♥

Help us build our **paid** membership by joining the **Julia Greeley Guild** and inviting others to join. A membership application form can be found and printed at our web site, <http://www.juliagreeley.org/guild.html>
Dues are \$20 a year or \$50 for three

Guild Forebearers ♥

honored posthumously

Msgr. Matthew Smith

Agnes Rooney Urquhart

Marjorie Ann Urquhart Simpson

Fr. Eugene Murphy, S.J.

Eleanor Pavella Castellan

Theodora O'Donnell Arnold

Fr. Pacificus Kennedy, O.F.M.

Honorary Life Members ♥

honored while with us

Fr. Marcus Medrano

Mary Frances O'Sullivan

Sr. Mary Prudence Allen. R.S.M.

Fr. Gene Emrisek, O.F.M.Cap.

Linda Marie Skidmore Chase

Deceased Friends ♥

we commend to Julia's intercession the eternal happiness of her deceased Guild Friends.

Geraldine Magnie

Elaine Massie

Hanna Nevin

Ginger Perkins

Wilmetta Ann Roth

Fr. Marcus Medrano

Joseph Staab

Patricia Lucille Deleon

Janie Smith

Charles Leisring

Our Officers ♥

Mary Leisring, President & Treasurer

Dustin Caldwell, Vice President

Kevin Knight, Secretary

Fr. Ron Cattany, Pastor *till July 1*

Fr. Sam Morehead, Pastor *as of July 1*

Fr. Blaine Burkey, O.F.M.Cap., Consultant

Other Guild Officers ♥

Frankie Rachell-Bruce, phone secretary

Sharon Doerflinger, membership secretary

Office vacant, recording secretary

Minnie Cassell, associate secretary

Essy Goffinett, associate secretary

Ria de Dios, associate secretary

Guild Contacts ♥

Julia Greeley Guild

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Wagoneers ♥

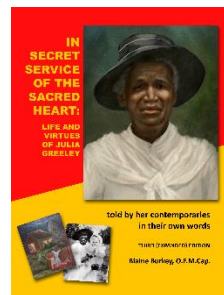
Fr. Blaine Burkey, pro tem editor; Mary Leisring, president & circulation mgr.



Greeley Guild Galleria

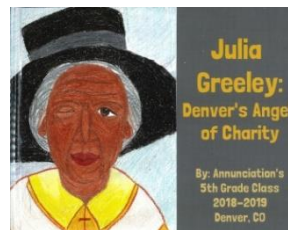
The Guild has a number of items available for purchase at its office at the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, 1525 N. Logan St., Denver CO 80203-1913. A check made out to "Cathedral Basilica" in the amount of the price of the item(s) wanted and the name and address, phone number, and email address of the purchaser should be accompanied by the item number(s) and number of copies desired. Domestic shipping and sales tax will be paid for by the Guild. Quantity discounts and foreign shipping should be discussed ahead of time with the Guild at 720-352-4995.

Unless told otherwise, the Guild will subscribe free of charge all purchasers to *Julia's Lil Red Wagon*, the Guild's free newsletter you have in hand.



Item JG-14 -- In Secret Service of the Sacred Heart: Remembering the Life and Virtues of Julia Greeley, 3rd edition, 168-page book by Fr. Blaine Burkey, O.F.M.Cap., bringing

together everything of significance about Julia published between 1918 and 2021. -- \$22.00 a copy.



Item JG-12 -- Julia Greeley: Denver's Angel of Charity, a full-color children-illustrated 17-page book, produced by Annunciation grade

school's fifth-grade class, now in its second printing. -- \$15.00 a copy.



Item JG-13 -- An Hour with Julia Greeley, a 24-page pamphlet by Fr. Blaine Burkey, O.F.M.Cap., provides an excellent brief and accessible overview of Julia's life and witness. -- \$2.00 a copy

