

MANATEE REGIONAL JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER



JIM PYRON

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www.sozomissions.com

OUR MISSION:

Passionately sharing the love of Christ with hope to transform the lives of urban youth, their families, and the communities in which they live.



Sozo Missions

3124 17th St East
Bradenton, FL 34203

My name is Jim Pyron. I retired August 31, 2018 from Merrill Lynch/Bank of America after a 36-year career as a financial advisor/consultant. My wife, Susan, and I moved to Cortez, FL on January 5, 2018 from Oak Island, NC.

I met Dwayne in September 2018 at a birthday party where he was the DJ. Not long after that I started attending a men's prayer group in Bradenton that Dwayne also attends. That is where I found out he is more commonly known as "Bishop Freeze". We went to lunch a couple of times and I became interested in Sozo. Dwayne invited me to go to the Manatee County Juvenile Detention Center with him and I started going every week and felt blessed to be able to share my faith with the young men incarcerated there. Susan and I helped serve dinner at Sozo Kidz and Sozo Teenz a couple of times and were impressed at the impact the ministry was having on those young people. Dwayne asked me if I would consider joining the board of directors of Sozo and I joined the board in September 2019.

I have served on the boards of several nonprofit organizations. I was on the board and the executive committee of the Eden, NC Family YMCA for 25 years and worked closely and became good friends with the executive director. When we moved to Florida and retired, I was interested in finding an organization I could become involved with where I could be of service to the youth in my new community. I do not think it was a coincidence I met Bishop Freeze and was given the opportunity to become a part of the Sozo family. Dwayne likes to say God sent me to Sozo, but I believe God brought Sozo to me. I believe my experiences in going to the Juvenile Detention Center has had a strong impact on me as I have had on the young men there. I believe I am different from most of the men with whom they come in contact. My message to them is that God cares about them, individually, and so do I – no matter what. They are hungry for a positive message and I try to give that to them, and it is a blessing to me when I get a positive response.

Sozo Missions takes aim at a mostly pushed aside and discouraged demographic – children who live in neighborhoods surrounded by poverty, violence, crime, substance abuse, stressful family life, and few positive adult role models – and our work is to be intentional and effective in sharing Jesus in a way they can connect with. We see hope and potential in each of these young lives and our message to them is ... **you matter** – not only to us, but to God.

Would you please prayerfully consider coming along side of me and the Sozo team with a monthly financial donation of any amount to help support our mission? These tax-deductible donations can be made online via the Sozo Missions website (www.sozomissions.com) or can be mailed in by check to the address noted below. If a monthly donation is not doable, single donations are welcome and very much appreciated. You can also join our team by becoming a committed prayer partner.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. – Philippians 2:3-4

Together we can show young people that they matter and bring hope to this generation, and the next!



SOZO MISSIONS
6th Annual Charity Banquet
2019



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3124 17th St East
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My name is Susan Pyron. I retired in 2010 after a long career in education, both as a teacher and school administrator. When my husband, Jim, and I moved to Cortez (Bradenton), I felt a strong call to volunteer in the community and waited for God to lead me where I was most needed.

After Jim took me to a breakfast meeting with Dwayne (Bishop Freeze) where I heard about the work he was doing at Sozo, I knew this was where I wanted to put my time and energy. In my 37 years working with school-age students, I learned that the kids who were more likely to succeed were those who belonged to a team, a club, or some kind of group that emphasized positive values. The first time I attended a Sozo meeting I knew that this was the kind of place that gives kids a chance to belong to a group that will teach them strong Christian values and model how to be responsible citizens of their community. As we move into bigger fundraising projects, I will be researching and writing grants for building renovations and program funding.

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