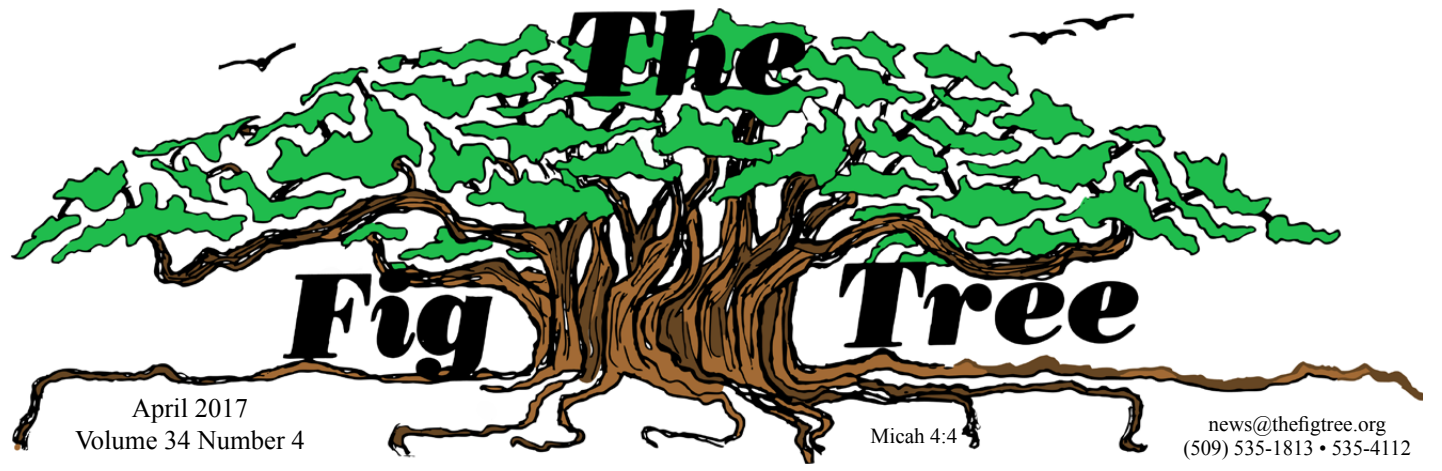


33ND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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FEATURES 55 EVENTS



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Language fluency instills resilience

By Mary Stamp

Realizing she missed out on connecting with her Colville-Okanogan Tribal heritage as a child in Cheney, LaRae Wiley immerses her children, grandchildren and other urban Indian children in Salish languages and culture.

From its beginnings as a daycare, the Salish School of Spokane now has a staff of 33 and serves 69 students from ages one to 11 years old in two licensed child care programs, an ECEAP preschool and a private K-5 elementary school.

Three classes are in the Colville language and one in Kalispel.

In April, the school begins accepting applications to enroll 15 students in 8th to 12th grades for September.

In October 2016, the school received a five-year, \$1 million Administration for Native Americans I-LEAD grant for their Native Youth Empowerment Project to start a secondary school. The grant is seed money, so the school must raise matching funds of \$50,000 a year.

By the fifth year, it will serve at least 25 Native youth in immersion language, culture and mentoring experiences with “elders and knowledge keepers.” Teachers will also give students individual academic



LaRae Wiley takes a moment to visit in Colville-Okanogan with several of the children who are immersed in the language at the Salish School of Spokane.

support to complete a high school diploma and leadership training.

The students, who enroll in Spokane Public Schools’ online learning, spend 90 minutes a day learning language and doing such cultural activities as making drums and regalia, powwow dancing and going out on the land to gather traditional food and medicine.

The Salish School of Spokane also has 50 in adult classes Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and Saturdays. For their children to be enrolled, parents are required to learn Salish four hours a month. The goal is to bring back intergenerational transmission of language, LaRae said. There are also tuition breaks for parents who study more than 40 hours.

“Language and culture are preventative medicine,” she said. “If people feel disconnected from who they are, they may fill themselves with drugs and alcohol. Culture and language create a foundation for being whole and building resiliency so they see a future full of promise.”

Spokane has a large urban Indian population with people from many tribes, mixed tribal backgrounds, and mixed European-American and Native American, she said.

Continued on page 4

Relationships boost effectiveness of humanitarian aid after disaster

On two three-month visits to Nepal in 2015 and 2016, Cameron Conner found that relationships make a difference in the effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

“Relationships make ‘fair aid’ possible,” he said.

He and friend Grant Gallagher went before beginning study at Whitman College to evaluate relief efforts of the nonprofit Conscious Connections Foundation (CCF) after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake there in April 2015.

As co-founder and vice president of CCF, Cameron wanted to know if the immediate aid they

sent had been effective and how to spend remaining funds for recovery. They also initiated and participated in some long-term recovery projects.

“We did the evaluation to ensure transparency and accountability to donors and beneficiaries,” he said.

In his 19 years, he has visited Nepal nine times since he was five months old. He went with his parents, Denise Attwood and Ric Conner, co-owners of Ganesh Himal Trading Co., a wholesale fair-trade business that sells to about 300 U.S. and Canadian companies.

CCF grew out of relationships with crafters in Nepal, and their desire to support a clinic in the village of Baseri and provide scholarships to educate girls.

After graduating from West Valley High School in June 2015, Cameron and Grant took a 10-week course on how to evaluate aid and wrote evaluation guidelines and the proposal. They hiked at Mt. Rainier to prepare for hiking in the Himalayas.

They spent October to December 2015 and then February to May 2016 in Nepal, working with large- and small-scale relief organizations. Then they spent three weeks working at refugee camps in Northern Greece.

Their fall tasks were to evaluate use of CCF aid, interview representatives of large aid organizations, survey relief in remote villages and learn earthquake-resistant building for the clinic, school and housing in Baseri.

In Kathmandu, 1) they interviewed workers with Mercy Corps, U.S. AID, IsrAID and Global Giving; 2) they inter-

Continued on page 6

Earth Day Spokane will display art on the elements

“Come Together: It’s Elemental” is the theme for the two-day Earth Day 2017 in Spokane. It will be held from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Saturday, April 22, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 23, at Riverfront Park Pavilion, which will be removed as part of the new plans for Riverfront Park.

EarthNight Spokane will feature performances from 5 to 10 p.m., Saturday.

Artists will bring pieces and prepare installations on the elements—earth, wind, water and air.

Entertainment will include musicians, children’s groups and comedians. The Procession of the Species begins at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, after face painting by the Shriners beforehand.

Past organizers asked Tara Williamson and friends to coordinate Earth Day.

Tara, who was a preschool teacher at the Blueprints for Learning Child Care Center at the Community Building and has volunteered with the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, was stage manager the past three years for Earth Day.

The mission of Earth Day is to raise environmental awareness, celebrate the planet and its natural resources and promote sustainable, healthy living for people, said Tara.

There will also be electric cars, vendors and workshops on gardening, eating naturally, early learning, yoga, body philosophy and more.

Since 2007, the Lands Council has helped plan Earth Day.

“We need to come together to talk, find solutions and join efforts. The goal is to empower ordinary people to do something,” said Tara.

Continued on page 3

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Lent is time to think about water justice

Lent is a time to think about justice, particularly water justice, said World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit during a sermon in March at the Ecumenical Centre chapel in Geneva, Switzerland.

He preached at a service reflecting on the Lenten campaign of the WCC's Ecumenical Water Network, "Seven Weeks for Water," which is focusing on "Thirst for Justice: A pilgrimage of justice and peace in Africa."

"A basic lesson for us as human beings is about water," reflected Olav. "When you play with it or try to swim in it as a child, you have to learn about the power in the waves and the depth of the sea, or the power in the stream of the river. You cannot cheat water. It is always showing the power of gravity, it is going downwards. Whether it rolls or flows or only drops, it will find its way."

Lent is a time for justice to roll down like water, he added. "It is time for us who are here and all human beings to stop resisting justice. We cannot in the long run stop justice, as we cannot stop the water."

Now is not the time to give up on justice, Olav continued. In fact just the opposite, since Christians are called to transformation, to transformative discipleship as pilgrims of justice and peace who can be those who bring justice, those who let it roll down, like waters.

"This can happen because it is not our efforts for justice. It is God's plan for justice," he said.

Lent is not given to us to be self-critical with the purpose of being depressed or losing our energy, he added.

"The period of Lent is given us to focus on what can be changed by listening carefully to the word of God. The word of God brings the clarity about injustices, but also how we are given a new opportunity to change injustices to justice. God has given that we in the death of Jesus Christ have been liberated from our trespasses as he was raised for our justification," he said.

"We simply cannot live without water," Olav concluded. "We cannot live without drinking clean, accessible, affordable water. We cannot be healthy without access to water to wash ourselves, our clothes and our homes. We cannot be strong to work and to love without the refreshing drops of water. Every day, many times a day, we need access to water."

Pope Francis celebrates fourth anniversary

As Pope Francis marks the fourth anniversary of his election, the latest issue of *The Ecumenical Review*, the quarterly journal of the World Council of Churches (WCC), opens with an article discussing the ecumenical gestures that have marked his pontificate, one of the most striking being his presence at the joint Catholic-Lutheran Reformation commemoration in Lund in 2016.

Entitled "Ecumenical Recognition, Ecumenical Utopia," the issue includes key documents from the Lund event. Several articles focus on approaches to ecumenical recognition between churches that lead to reconciliation, and the need for "utopian" thinking to transcend obstacles to ecumenical progress. Other articles deal with new challenges to what it means to be the church arising from the encounter of established and migrant churches, and from the increasing digital nature of society.

The issue also contains articles related to the WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, including contributions from a panel on "Religion: Way of War or Path to Peace?" held during the WCC central committee meeting at Trondheim, Norway, in 2016.

The Ecumenical Chronicle includes a WCC interview with the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of his election, and key texts from the WCC executive committee in Nanjing and Shanghai, the first meeting of a WCC governing body in the People's Republic of China.

The Ecumenical Review is published by Wiley on behalf of the World Council of Churches and is online at wiley.com.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Fig Tree staff grateful for gifts and volunteers

The Fig Tree's 2017 Benefit Lunch and Benefit Breakfast on March 10 and 15 in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University drew nearly 400 supporters and people curious to learn more about The Fig Tree and Resource Directory.

Framing comments around the theme, "Beyond the News: Reflecting Community," people who were interviewed during 2016-17 shared why they value these media. Their comments are summarized on page 10.

Whitworth intern Austriauna Brooks prepared the promotional

video, which will soon be online at thefigtree.org, interviewing Roberta Wilburn of Whitworth, Phil Tyler of the NAACP Spokane, Jim McPherson of Whitworth, Liz Moore of the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, and Roger Hudson of Covenant United Methodist Church.

Fifty friends of The Fig Tree hosted tables of eight guests. Underwriters included Gonzaga University, the Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province and Mark Kinney/Thrivent Financial.

About 250 donors—including

58 new sponsors—have given \$25,220 as of March 31, plus there are more than \$2,000 in pledges toward the goal of \$30,000.

"Many thanks to the planning committee, the hosts, the board, the volunteers, the donors, the underwriters and those providing door prizes for making the events a success," said editor Mary Stamp.

Those interested in making donations can make them online at thefigtree.org/donate or by mail.

For information, call 535-1813 or visit thefigtree.org.

Food for All hosts its annual plant sale

Catholic Charities Food for All is hosting their annual "Buy One-Supply One" plant sale this spring so families, individuals and community gardens can start gardens earlier and have access to healthy, local and affordable food.

By donating one plant to community gardens for each plant

purchased during the sale, Food For All enables plant sale customers and their purchases to go further in supporting local access to healthy food for individuals and communities throughout Spokane, said Connor Beck, community food resource specialist and Jesuit volunteer.

Customers can visit the online store at Food For All's website, catholiccharitiesfoodforall.org. They can pick up plants May 6 or May 14 at the Food For All Greenhouse at 820 N. Summit.

For information, call 952-288-5370 or email foodforall@ccspokane.org.

Spokane Gives month recruits volunteers

April is Spokane Gives month, a time to support what Spokane County United Way says is "already impressive volunteerism and compassion in our community." Spokane Gives month establishes a network of volunteer opportunities on VolunteerSpokane.org.

Since it was founded in 2014, more than 34,000 volunteers have given nearly 170,000 hours of their time, which has an estimated impact that is valued at more than \$4 million.

Designating a month means there are more volunteers doing more projects with more impact.

A service is anything from donating clothing to a local shelter to mowing a neighbor's lawn.

Those interested in volunteering can browse options, sign up for Spokane Gives Projects at volunteerspokane.org and then share their action on Facebook.

For information, call 838-6581.

Workshop tell how to craft proposal stories

Washington Nonprofits and Spokane County United Way will present a workshop on "How to Craft a Creative and Successful Proposal Story" from 2 to 4 p.m., Monday, May 15, at Spokane County United Way, 920 N. Washington.

In today's challenging grant-seeking environment, presenter

Cheryl Clark, author, trainer and fund-raising consultant, will help nonprofit leaders become effective in telling their stories to potential grant makers.

She said it's not necessary to be a novelist to adapt storytelling techniques to proposal writing.

Cheryl held development positions at the University of San

Francisco and its law school. She is the author of *Storytelling for Grantseekers: A Guide to Creative Nonprofit Fundraising* and co-author with Susan Fox of *Grant Proposal Makeover: Transform Your Request from No to Yes*.

For information, call 855-299-2922 or email info@washington-nonprofits.org.

Whitworth students give back to Spokane

GIVEAPALOOZA! is a project of Beyond the Pines, Whitworth College's student-run public relations agency, in partnership with the Spokane County United Way.

In 12 hours on Saturday, April 29, students seek to give back to the greater Spokane community with projects to help nonprofits do their work. They will help with

brochures, logos, social media and other PR projects.

For information, email Erica Salkin, sealskin@whitworth.edu.

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Please join in the Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust Yom HaShoah

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- Exhibit of artistic entries themed for the Observance
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- Music by the Mead High School Chamber Orchestra

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 Temple Beth Shalom
 1322 East 30th Ave. • Spokane WA

Area communities organize festivities, education to mark Earth Day

Continued from page 1

Tara believes recent protests and marches are a sign people want to be involved.



Tara Williamson

For information, call 202-9368, email tara@earthday.org, check the Facebook event listing, or visit earthdayspokane.info.

In **Cheney**, Eastern Washington University (EWU) will celebrate Earth Week, before Earth Day, Saturday, April 22. The festivities include "Sustainability Talks," a film festival and EWU's Earth Day Fair at the Campus Mall.

For information, visit sites.ewu.edu/sustainability/earth-day.

The **Coeur d'Alene** Earth Day Fair, "Environment and Climate Literacy," will be held from noon to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 22, at the Coeur d'Alene Public Library, 702 E. Front. It will include edu-

cational vendors, music, arts and crafts, a one-mile fun run, a yoga mob, birds of prey demonstrations and more.

Organizers with the Kootenai Environmental Alliance say it's a day to learn how to take steps to protect and preserve the environment 365 days a year.

For information, call 208-667-9093, email kea@kealliance.org or visit <http://kealliance.org/earthdayfair/>.

In **Pullman**, the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute and the City of Pullman host their annual stream clean-up beginning at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 22, rain or shine, at Spring Street Park.

Participants will walk along streams in Pullman to clean and beautify them. The first 100 people will receive Stream Clean-up tee shirts. The day will end with music, food and beverages donated by local business partners.

For information, call Amanda Argona at (208) 882-1444 or email serving@pcei.org.

The **Chelan** Earth Day Fair from 9 a.m. To 4 p.m., Saturday, April 15, at Riverwalk Park will include gardening demonstra-

tions, educational displays, hybrid and electric vehicles, solar power, recycling, green building, emergency preparedness, conservation and more.

For information, visit chelanearthdayfair.org.

In **Kittitas County**, the Earth Day Family Festival and Salmon Run 5K and 10K will take place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 22, at Central Washington University, Dean Hall and Dean Lawn.

Co-sponsored by the Museum of Culture and Environment, the Yakama Nation Fisheries and the Kittitas County Solid Waste, activities and booths will feature student groups and community organizations that focus on the environment and sustainability.

For information, call Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce at 509-925-2002.

The Earth Day Fair at **Moses Lake** runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 22, at Jamison's Event Center, 605 E. Nelson Rd.

It will feature organic/natural goods and produce, green services and information on saving the planet, children's activities

and more.

For information, call 509-361-3703 or email jamisonseventcenter@gmail.com.

In **Lewiston**, Lewis Clark Recycler's 12th Annual Earth Day Celebration will be from 4 to 7 p.m., Thursday, April 20, at the corner of Capitol and 3rd St. It is

geared to educate the neighborhood about the earth's natural resources and what people can do to help preserve them. There will be food, fun, live music and educational activities for children and adults.

For information, email eprasilappearances@gmail.com.

March for Science events coincide with D.C. march

Adjacent to the Earth Day festivities in Riverfront Park, there will be a March for Science in the Central Meadow. The March for Science is selling merchandise to raise funds for education in STEM, science, technology, engineering and math.

There are also March for Science events on Earth Day in Pullman-Moscow and in Yakima, among 429 satellite marches globally.

The events coincide with a rally and teach-in on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., with speeches, music and marches defending the role science plays in the world by protecting air and water, preserving the planet, saving lives with medicine, creating new industries, putting food on tables and safeguarding the future.

For information, visit <https://www.marchforscience.com/satellite-marches>.

Ripples Thrift Store will fund anti-human trafficking effort

Prompted by spring cleaning and minimalism to reduce clutter, a local group invites people to join in "Purging for a Purpose" to raise funds for The Jonah Project, a Spokane anti-human trafficking organization.

They are starting Ripples, a thrift store, where purchases will help rescue, house, advocate for and rehabilitate survivors of teen sex trafficking in the Spokane area.

Ginger Lyons, owner of Buffalo Girls Salvage, a Spokane business, has donated rent to cover Ripples Thrift at Monroe and

Euclid during 2017.

Ripples Thrift is set to open in April.

Drop off locations for donations are at True North Empire, 319 W. Hastings Rd., and Rainmaker Creative, 107 S. Cedar St.

For information, call 994-3341, email b@therainlab.com, visit jonahproject.org or connect with social media hashtags #Ripples-Thrift, #StopTraffickingStartActing or #PurgeForaPurpose.

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Teachers of Salish languages often are learning it as they teach it

Continued from page 1

As a child, LaRae visited cousins on the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation a few times a year. Her mother was non-native. Her father, an enrolled member of the Colville Confederated Tribes, grew up in Chewelah. His mother was Colville, and his father was of Scottish heritage.

LaRae didn't know that Salish languages were endangered until the funeral of a great uncle, who was one of a few fluent speakers. At the service, an elder said the tribe was losing language speakers and asked people to step up to learn and teach it.

Then 30 years old, she began thinking about ways to connect herself and her children with the language, people and heritage.

Now LaRae, who previously taught history, English and music, and her husband Chris Parkin, who has taught Spanish, have developed curricula, textbooks, videos and other educational materials.

She learned and taught the Spokane language first, then Colville. The Spokane, Colville, Kalispel and Coeur d'Alene languages are part of the Salish language family. Like the Romance language family of French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, they share similar words and sounds.

LaRae met Chris, who grew up in Deer Park, while studying at Western Washington University. She earned a degree in teaching at Eastern Washington University in 1990. Chris taught two years in Bridgeport, and, in 1992, they moved to Wenatchee, where he taught Spanish and she taught in middle school.

Wanting to raise their children, Danica and Graham, near family, they moved to Chewelah, where her grandmother had lived. LaRae taught eight years in the middle and high schools there. Chris taught at Gonzaga Prep and commuted for five years.

In 2002, LaRae began going to Wellpinit to study the Spokane language. She quit teaching in Chewelah and volunteered for three years at the Wellpinit language program, teaching Headstart, elementary and middle school.

"I felt connected as I both learned and taught the language," she said.

Chris, whose heritage is Irish, continued teaching at Gonzaga Prep while they stayed in Chewelah until their children

finished high school.

LaRae was frustrated not to have the tools Chris had for teaching Spanish: "I was learning the language, teaching it and creating materials. It was an oral language until linguists introduced the international phonetic alphabet to write words," she said.

LaRae asked Chris to help her write a curriculum for the Spokane language to provide a plan to follow. She recorded Ann McCrea, a fluent elder with the tribe. They created a 45-lesson textbook and audio recordings.

Now there are just a handful of fluent speakers of the Spokane language.

"Learning language and culture empowers me to know where I come from," said LaRae.

After Danica, now a nurse practitioner, graduated from high school, the Colville Confederated Tribes received a grant to help preserve the language.

LaRae applied to be one of nine people to work with elders to become fluent in one of the three languages used by the 12 bands on that reservation: 1) Colville-Okanogan, spoken from Colville to Revelstoke, B.C., 2) Columbia-Moses or Columbia-Wenatchi, a Salish language spoken from Wenatchee to Moses Lake, and 3) Nez Perce, a Sahaptian language.

From 2003 to 2005, Sarah Peterson, an elder from Kere-meos, B.C., drove to Omak twice a week to meet 10 hours a day with LaRae, who drove from Chewelah.

Together with Chris, they created a modern language curriculum with audio discs and lessons, beginning with learning "hello," "goodbye" and other practical phrases. They now have six textbooks to help people build fluency sequentially.

While there are only 10 to 15 fluent Colville-Okanogan speakers in the U.S., there are more than 100 in Canada. So after Graham graduated from high school, Chris and LaRae sold their house in Chewelah and moved to live with Sarah in B.C. From 2006 to 2008, they learned language and created language books.

When Danica began nursing school at Washington State University-Spokane and had their first granddaughter, Mireya, Chris and LaRae moved to Deer Park to provide child care. They decided not to speak English to Mireya and their other grandchildren, so they could be fluent. The children

are bilingual, because English is all around them.

"For a language to stick, you have to use it," LaRae said.

As Mireya, now 9, grew older, she needed to speak Colville-Okanogan with other children.

LaRae and her sister, Michelle, gathered several children and families and started a "language nest" in Michelle's basement. They began with four girls, her sister's daughter and a friend's granddaughters. They paid LaRae to be the teacher.

Knowing the success of "language nests" among New Zealand's Maori and native Hawaiians, they gathered mothers, grandparents and children to learn together, too.

Meanwhile, Chris contracted with the Kalispel Tribe to create a Kalispel language curriculum.

After six months, LaRae, Danica, Michelle, Stevie Seymour, her mother Shelly Boyd and Trina Rae decided to incorporate as a nonprofit so they could apply for grants. When others heard they were teaching language, singing and drumming, they wanted that for their children.

Chris and LaRae rented a house on N. Cedar to open a daycare for six children. In 2008, they were incorporated as the Salish School of Spokane and could raise funds.

The second year, 12 students paid for child care. They hired a teacher and staff, and offered evening classes for parents. LaRae volunteered as executive director.

Lacking space for the demand, they leased their current site at 4125 N. Maple, where they add module units as they grow.

Most of the teachers learn to teach and learn the language by on-the-job training.

Beyond the Salish communities, LaRae hopes people in the region will want to learn to say hello and thank you—as Hawaiians and tourists learn "aloha" and "mahalo." In Colville, hello is "way" and thank you is "limlmtx." In Spokane, they are "a" and "lemlemts."

LaRae is concerned about federal funds, but knows that when they started, they relied on neighbors and friends. Now they also have support from the wider community.

LaRae, who sang original music at folk concerts and coffee houses from 2000 to 2002, recently recorded a Christmas album in the Colville language to raise funds, and is now preparing a fundrais-

ing show with classic country hits in Salish.

"I believe we are all connected. I feel guided by the Spirit and my ancestors," said LaRae, who believes, as her father taught her, that God is everywhere.

"Every day when I wake up I give thanks for my life," she said. "Every day at the school, we greet the day with a song and drum cer-

emony to express gratitude for our lives, our families and the day."

For information, call 325-2018 or email larae@salishschoolof-spokane.org.

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Engaging in education to prevent genocide generates allies, solidarity

Over his 22 years of helping organize Temple Beth Shalom's annual commemoration of the Holocaust, Yom Hashoah, Hershel Zellman said his perspective has changed from seeing Jews as victims of the Holocaust to seeing that Jews have a responsibility to teach the world how to prevent genocide.

His wife, Mary Noble, gathered people to plan the first Community Observance of the Holocaust in 1995. The 14 organizers of this year's observance seek to involve and inspire the community to be proactive in preventing genocide.

The Observance will be at 7 p.m., Sunday, April 23, at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th.

Elements of the observance are designed with education in mind.

- Someone lights a candle to honor "the righteous among the nations," non-Jews who saved Jews. The candle lighter is someone local who promotes human rights.

- Since 2008, one candle lighter is a local person—usually a refugee—who has experienced genocide in his/her homeland.

- Organizers have invited local young musicians to provide music for the observances.

- In 2006, they began the Eva Lassman Memorial Writing Contest, and recently added an Art Contest. Both engage middle school and high school students to write or create art on a theme.

The theme for the 11th Annual Writing and third annual Art Contest is "And the World Watched."

"We ask students to reflect on the most premeditated genocide in history. From 1933 to 1945, Nazis and their collaborators exterminated 6 million Jews and 5 million others they deemed unsuitable—including the Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, people with disabilities and political dissenters," Hershel said. "World leaders knew about the Holocaust, but chose not to act."

The essay prompt reads: "Based on what you have learned from resources provided and others, choose one country that failed to come to the aid of the millions of Jews in the Holocaust. Identify and discuss the social, economic and political forces existing in the country at the time that contributed to its inaction. How could that country have responded differently in order to change the course of history?"

The art contest prompt reads: "Art has the potential to evoke action because imagery affects us on an emotional level. Based on what you have learned using resources provided and others, design a piece of art that you feel might have motivated world leaders and their citizens to intervene



Hershel Zellman is one of Yom Hashoah organizers.

in the Holocaust." The art is on display until April 19 in Gonzaga University's Hemmingson Center.

Hershel believes it's important that the contests introduce students to the Holocaust and challenge them to dig deeper.

Hershel came to Spokane 39 years ago to start his career in medicine, having just completed a family medicine residency in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

He grew up near Los Angeles, attending a synagogue that was comprised half of German Jews who came to the United States before World War II and half who came as survivors of the Holocaust after the war.

"I heard stories of camps and people in hiding," he said. "My best friend's family were survivors. I was aware that 6 million Jews were massacred. I felt like Jews were victims."

While the world has not stopped genocide, there has not been anything as systematic as the Holocaust, he said.

At the Yom Hashoah Observance, Hershel presides over the candle-lighting ceremony, which includes recognizing survivors, their children and grandchildren, the liberators, the righteous and genocide survivors. He tells stories of the lives of each, like those fleeing genocide in Sudan, Rwanda, Burma and Bosnia as refugees and coming to Spokane. "I tell their stories so they are more than a name and face," he said.

This year, the committee tried to find a Syrian refugee to light the candle for victims of a genocide or a mass civilian casualty event. The person they invited was afraid to appear in public.

"We may find someone or have

an empty seat," he said.

Interest grew in commemorating the Holocaust as Eva Lassman and other local Holocaust survivors started talking about their experiences. Like most, Eva said little about being a survivor, not even to her children. In the early 1990s, she went to a convention of Holocaust survivors, and Elie Wiesel implored them to speak out and not be silent, Hershel said.

Eva spoke at area schools. Since her death, Carla Peperzak now speaks at schools and is on the Speakers Bureau for the Seattle Holocaust Center for Humanity.

"For many years, people here, Jews included, did not want to hear about the Holocaust, even when Eva was willing to talk. It was too awful, too unbelievable," he said. "Some just wanted to put it behind us, but the Jewish community came around to wanting information out for people to learn the lessons."

Hershel, who is gratified that Yom Hashoah is now an institution, said this year the candle honoring "the righteous" will be lit by Skyler Oberst for his leadership of the Interfaith Council, educating people about local faith communities and working for human rights.

"In selecting 'the righteous,' I have learned that people who care about human rights do exist in Spokane. They challenged the anti-Semitism of the Aryan Nations in the 1980s and 1990s. It's wonderful to reveal people doing good work and the organizations they are involved in," he said.

"The nicest revelation is that our region stands for caring, inclusiveness and support of people

threatened by hate," said Hershel, who represents the Jewish community on the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force.

Now retired three years from practicing family medicine, he volunteers to treat homeless people at the House of Charity clinic, where he hears "the amazing stories of people who are survivors in their own ways."

In today's atmosphere of hate, Hershel said the 2017 Yom Hashoah theme, "And the World Watched," speaks to the lack of reaction from Allied powers to mass killings in Europe.

An example of the rejection was 900 Jewish refugees who left Hamburg in 1939 on the SS St. Louis. They expected to disembark in Cuba and find a way to the U.S., but Cuba rescinded their visas. They had to go back to Europe where half found refuge in friendly countries in Scandinavia, England and France, and half went back to Germany. Of those, half perished in the Holocaust.

Hershel is concerned about today's immigration ban.

The Statue of Liberty says, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses." How can we now say we do not want those people?" he asked.

While an Anti-Semitic, Holocaust-denying message spray painted on a Seattle synagogue once would have made him feel a victim, today he knows there are many local allies in solidarity with the Jewish community.

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Conscious Connections Foundations gains insights for future aid

Continued from page 1

viewed friends to whom CCF had wired funds for immediate aid for food, clothing and temporary shelters, and 3) they investigated earthquake-resistant building techniques, including earth-bag construction using sturdy sacks filled with local soil.

Then they trekked three weeks to mountain villages in areas with no roads. Their guides were long-time friends, Ram Karki, and his son Pradeep Karki, 19. They acted as cultural and linguistic interpreters—from Tamang to Nepali to English.

Cameron grew up with Pradeep and considers him a brother. They often chat on Facebook. Denise and Ric helped pay for his education.

Cameron and Grant interviewed village leaders to learn what aid reached them and what they still needed. Back in Kathmandu, they wrote reports for the CCF board before going to Baseri for two weeks to introduce earth-bag building with two homes as a trial.

It was hard to do in the remote area because some materials had to be transported in and India had a blockade on oil and building materials. They also had to train unskilled local labor. Families now live in the two earth-bag test homes on the clinic land.

Returning to Spokane Dec. 18, they spent two months finishing their report and raising funds to rebuild a school and the CCF clinic. With presentations to five Rotary chapters in Spokane, they raised \$8,000, adding to what remained of nearly \$200,000 CCF has raised for immediate relief and rebuilding.

From December to mid-February 2016, Cameron and Grant visited by Skype with friends in Baseri to follow progress on the earth-bag homes.

“Our report evaluated projects in each village and analyzed future steps. We looked at how CCF could proceed as an aid organization,” Cameron said. “Our strength is in long-term community development, rather than distributing blankets and materials, because relationships are our greatest strength.”

Their 52-page report is now online at consciousconnections-foundation.org.

They report that key needs in earthquake relief are for warmth, shelter, food, community infrastructure and emergency com-



Cameron Connor is now studying at Whitman College.

munication.

“Beneficiaries said aid was equitable and effective,” Cameron said. “CCF arrived and supplied aid often before other aid groups came. We provided for needs of those most at risk.”

CCF leaders progressed from immediate needs to long-term reconstruction and recovery, working with trusted local NGOs.

“Long-term assistance encourages capacity building,” they added. “CCF selected communities based on who could best use resources and on relationships to ensure responsible partnerships. Relationships are key to ownership of and responsibility for projects in local beneficiary communities and among CCF leaders.”

Cameron believes aid may be flawed if it gives something for nothing, and a business model gives ownership, so people have a stake in it.

In both Nepal and Greece, they learned how effective fair trade and relationships are “in bringing mutual benefits and a power dynamic beyond one person giving to another,” he said.

They listed areas to improve in the need for 1) consistency in ownership of projects; 2) understanding CCF’s role in relief to avoid duplicating other NGOs; 3) awareness of potential negative impacts, and 4) having more data for selecting communities.

They recommend that as a new aid organization CCF needs to learn international guidelines, coordinate with other NGOs, understand community dynamics and cultivate more relationships.

In the spring, Cameron and Grant focused on rebuilding the

school and clinic. Rotary funds covered the \$7,000 it cost to build a four-room K-3 school, which was rebuilt by last April.

To rebuild a seven-room clinic on the site near the old clinic, they used pre-fabricated Styrofoam/concrete panels over a reinforced steel frame. It resists up to a 9.0 earthquake, has thermal insulation and is fire-resistant. Costs included building a new road so trucks could deliver materials from Kathmandu.

While Cameron and Grant were in Baseri, they helped a local contractor lay the clinic’s foundation and contracted with villagers to build it. Buying land, and building the clinic and road cost \$53,000. The building was completed by June 2016.

CCF raised \$193,400 since 2015 for earthquake relief. As a new nonprofit, they were limited to \$50,000, but IRS granted an exception for relief. After immediate aid, rebuilding the school and clinic, and other projects, CCF has \$70,482 left, including a \$30,000 endowment for future clinic expansion and expenses. The rest is being held some for commitments to rebuilding projects, supplementing teachers’ salaries, community earthquake preparedness and post-quake residual problems from landslides during the monsoon season.

“Recovery has a long way to go. Some villages rebuilt more than others,” Cameron said. “Six months after the quake, people were still in shock and living at a subsistence level. They needed to plant crops and rebuild waterways.

“Reconstruction after the quake will take decades. Villagers’ lives

will be hard for a long time, while Kathmandu is nearly back to normal,” he said.

On May 3, Cameron and Grant went to northeastern Greece to help Third Wave Volunteers at a refugee camp for people fleeing violence in Syria. They knew of the program, because it had supplied CCF 1,000 solar lights to distribute in Nepal.

“For five weeks, we helped build 600 wooden tent platforms, so flooding wouldn’t destroy refugees’ belongings and to protect them from rats and snakes on the ground,” Cameron said. “We also helped build community shelters.”

Over the years, he has traveled with his parents to places “off the beaten track” in Eastern, Central and Western Europe, Peru, Morocco, Turkey, Australia and Mexico where they have connected with local people.

These travels gave him “an appreciation for how to help people in need” and “how to walk in the world with empathy as I interact with people outside my culture.”

At Whitman, Cameron is studying communication, sociology and rhetoric, and awaiting future adventures and opportunities to engage with people.

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Spokane Hindu Society introduces basics of their faith in Meet the Neighbors

Interfaith Council Faith and Values launched its second season of Meet the Neighbors with a March 25 program that included a Hindu service of hymns, a ceremony of cleansing, a children's presentation on faith and culture, an overview on Hinduism, a meal and fellowship.

The goals were to impart information on the faith and have an opportunity for people to make new friends.

The Spokane Hindu Society, which started in 2016, organized this event with the council as one of their monthly gatherings at the Southside Senior Community Center.

The gatherings help parents teach children about the roots, teachings and culture of Hinduism. Each month, they celebrate a Hindu festival. In March, they celebrated Holi, the Hindu spring festival, also known as the festival of colors or the festival of love. People frolic and smear each other with colored powder or toss it in the air over each other.

Nishant Puri, a physician who was emcee, introduced a presentation by 12 children, saying that for Hinduism, like all traditions, it's important to transmit the religion to the next generations.

The children explained their names and some of the beliefs and traditions.

Chanting "Om" or "Aum" in meditation is a sacred syllable in nature, said one.

Another said Hindus have 33 million gods and then explained that Hindus worship or respect everyone and everything in nature.

Still another child said, "Hinduism teaches us to be tolerant of all religions, and the goal of all religions is to be one with God."

In his presentation, Nishant explained, "We believe in one God



Children explain the "namaste" greeting. Panelists answer questions about Hinduism. An altar set up for the occasion.

with endless aspects and names. The deepest spirit is Truth, which is about divine reality present in all life. We have a divine responsibility for all creation."

The different gods and goddesses represent different ways of connecting with the Divine, he said.

"We believe in Karma, that every action in our past or past lives produces an effect," he said. "There are consequences to our actions. Karma—our deeds—cre-

ates our destiny.

"We also believe in Dharma, our ethical duty, which determines reincarnation or rebirth after this life in the cycle of birth and rebirth. What we do creates good or bad," Nishant said.

He addressed "the popular notion" that Hindus believe in idol worship, explaining that "Murti," the word for idol, translates to mean that an image Hindus focus on for meditation and prayer embodies a value.

More than 100 students serve around nation

As part of Gonzaga University's "Mission: Possible," more than 100 students, plus staff and faculty, spent spring break in March at nine sites to serve nonprofits.

Mission: Possible, a program started in the 1990s by Gonzaga's Center for Community Action and Service-Learning, focuses on student-learning and community impact.

The projects were refugee resettlement in Denver, accessible housing in Knoxville, Tenn., underrepresented communities in Montgomery, Makah Reservation support in Neah Bay, women and children impacted by incarceration in New York City, homeless-

ness services in Portland, Ore., habitat restoration in San Francisco, and adults with developmental disabilities in Tacoma.

Another 16 students had immersion opportunities with previously incarcerated people in East Los Angeles.

Through the professional services firm Deloitte, four Gonzaga students joined a national team of accounting majors to network with professionals to do community service in Atlanta.

For information, call 313-6396 gonzaga.edu/tobecontinued.

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Nishant also said Hindus have contributed to math (zero and the value of pi), chemistry, metallurgy, medicine (surgery and anesthesia), chess and the practice of yoga.

A panel of four then answered questions: Prakash Bhuta, an EWU biology teacher, and Aruna Bhuta, a social worker, who have been in Spokane 34 years; Jayesh Modha who has been here 10 years and works in computer science, and Rahul Sharma, who has been in business here for seven years.

Rahul said Hindus practice faith by being good every day.

"It's the human thing to be kind to family and care for neighbors

and community. Hinduism is a way of life," he said, suggesting that it's more about relationships than rules.

Aruna, a social worker, who sang hymns at the opening of the service, briefly explained the altar with a picture of Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity. The other picture is the wise, elephant-headed Ganesha, the Lord of success and remover of obstacles.

"In the ceremony after the hymns, we lit a lamp on the altar for enlightenment, which comes by looking at our shortcomings and seeing our true selves," Aruna said.

For information, email spokan-chindusocietyshs@gmail.com.

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To conserve energy, church replaces incandescent lights with LED

To conserve energy, St. Mark's Lutheran Church removed its old incandescent lighting and installed new LED lighting. By doing that in late 2016, it benefited from a rebate program with Avista Utilities.

Sexton Gib Dominguez climbed a tall ladder in the sanctuary and replaced 122 light bulbs through the entrance hall, hallways and sanctuary, and 20 bulbs lighting the cross, pulpit and choir area in December and January, plus others around the building.

The lights provide as much illumination at the same quality as the previous light bulbs, plus they are dimmable and last ten times longer, meaning fewer trips up the ladder for Gib.

Avista is offering a similar program for 2017, said Rachele Humphrey of Avista.

At the start of this winter's extreme cold, St. Mark's member Bob Palrud, who had developed a program to test for air leakage in buildings and did more than 3,000 energy audits in homes in the 1970s and 1980s, noticed a one-eighth-inch gap above the hand-carved entry doors at St. Marks.

That was a simple fix. Gib replaced the weather stripping.

Bob, who moved to Spokane four years ago with his wife to be near her sons in the Silver Valley, earned a bachelor's degree in 1970 at St. Olaf College to be a physicist and earned another degree in 1973 in forensic science. He applied skills from that training to look at details in order to understand how heat, light and energy can be conserved.

"Small stuff adds up to make



Bob Palrud helps Gib Dominguez replace lighting in St. Mark's Lutheran Church's entry.

a difference," he said, offering ideas that other churches might use to increase energy efficiency and save funds.

Bob, who grew up Lutheran, lived many years in Minnesota, where he applied those skills to energy conservation and opened an energy program in several suburbs of Minneapolis and other communities of Minnesota.

For several years, he worked with a local nonprofit and the local utility, Northern States Power, which is now part of Avista. They funded him doing energy audits, beginning in Richfield, Minn., and moving on to other Twin Cities suburbs. In the 1980s, he had taught chemistry and physics at a Lansing, Mich., community college. He also taught about energy audits and use of caulk, weather stripping and compact fluorescent lights to save energy.

"We can help change the world by screwing in an energy efficient

light bulb," he said.

Bob married in 2000 and moved to Wyoming, where his wife had taught school for 32 years. He was there three years until she retired. Now semi-retired, he continues to work painting houses inside and outside.

Concerned about climate change, he has sought to be proactive every day, ranging from what car he drives to making his house energy efficient.

The light-bulb replacement project emerged when he was sitting in choir and noticed the lights in the sanctuary. He realized there might be savings for the church if they changed their lighting.

He learned about the Avista rebate program and sent in information on the number of Energy Star rated bulbs and number of fixtures. Certain lights were eligible and the program awarded the highest impact changes with the best rebates, Bob said.

It was an energy saving solution

that was easy to do.

Working with advice from a local lighting supplier on details such as dimmer compatibility, St. Mark's changed 170 bulbs and expects to reduce peak lighting by about 7,000 watts, Bob said.

"While not all of the changes were rebate-eligible, the substantial Avista rebate made it easier to ignore the technical payback periods and cut waste immediately," he said.

Bob believes energy conservation is important and can prevent wars over resources.

"There are many ways to move the powers of civilization around, and we have a moral obligation to pay attention and do what we can," Bob said. "There are different ways to address the world's

problems and energy conservation is one. We have a moral obligation to find positive ways to affect the world.

"So screwing in an energy efficient light bulb can become a moral act. Wasting energy can be a sin, paired with obvious consequences of climate change that affects the world," he said.

"I hope people in other Spokane congregations will see the simplicity and beauty of changing their light bulbs," Bob said.

"We are ignorant of how most of the world functions and struggles with or without energy," he said.

The application for Avista's commercial lighting exchange program for 2017, which is available online at avista.com, spells out eligibility and incentives Rachele at Avista explained.

"There are many benefits to changing out old, inefficient lights with more efficient lights," she said. "Those benefits include enhanced lighting quality, energy savings, energy cost savings and reduced maintenance costs."

The program includes incentives for lighting retrofits, installing occupancy sensors and lighting upgrades. Some common lighting upgrades include changing from fluorescent and incandescent to LED—light-emitting diode—lights.

For information, call 747-6677 or 495-2099, or visit avistautilities.com/business/rebates/Washington/Pages/default.aspx.

Faith Action Network voices concerns in Olympia

As the Washington State legislative agenda progresses and hate crimes emerge, the Faith Action Network (FAN) voices concerns of the faith community.

"Our state budget is a moral document that reflects our values and priorities for state government. FAN supports investments that fund education and strengthen our safety net programs for the poor and vulnerable," said Paul Benz, co-director of FAN.

Co-director Elise DeGooyer said FAN prepared statements of solidarity related to recent hate crimes. "FAN's interfaith leaders are creating circles of protection around neighbors who have been targeted by hate crimes and executive orders. Faith communities across our state are saying: hate

has no place here," she said.

Rabbi Aaron Meyer, a member of FAN's board and associate rabbi at Temple de Hirsch Sinai in Seattle, calls for people of faith to "maintain constant vigilance toward the array of fires before us."

He is concerned about the new executive order banning refugees and immigrants from six Muslim countries; the shooting of a Sikh in Kent; nationwide threats to Jewish communities, including a bomb threat at the Stroum Jewish Community Center on Mercer Island, and the hanging of an African-American Muslim teen in Lake Stevens.

"The common thread uniting us is our vigilance, decrying these injustices, and offering care and solidarity for our neighbors," he

said. "We need to come together to address the problems leading to such acts of violence on our streets and in our places of worship."

FAN's Interfaith Leaders Council has prepared statements and collected 635 signatures to challenge the rise of hate, xenophobia, racism and white nationalism.

Considering a threat to one group a threat to all, the leaders are committed to stand in solidarity in the face of threats to Sikhs, Jews, Muslims, immigrants, refugees, African-Americans and LGBTQ communities.

Elise added people can keep up with status of bills on FAN's bill tracker at fanwa.org/advocacy/2017-bill-tracker.

For information, call 206-625-9790 or visit fanwa.org.



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Service weaves in music, banners, prayers, Scriptures and a call to love and justice

Elements of the March 19 service to ordain and consecrate the Right Rev. Canon Gretchen Rehberg as the ninth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane reflected the church's scope—from care about individuals to a call to work for justice—and its diversity—from African to Taizé to traditional organ-accompanied hymns.

Banners representing the diocese's congregations and several organizations led the procession of diocesan and interfaith clergy, regional dignitaries, and choristers from congregations around the diocese. The choir of more than 100 voices joined carillon, brass, and pipe organ music before, during and after the service.

More than 650 people attended and 6,850 joined it by live-streaming video, according to Cate Weatherald, diocesan communications director.

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael B. Curry led the service as chief consecrator.

During the service, the new bishop received gifts, including a pectoral cross, ring, stole, miter and crozier, and she was "seated" in the "cathedra" or bishop's chair, symbolic of the bishop's office.

Gretchen is the 59th woman to be elected as a bishop in the Anglican Communion and the first woman to be the bishop for Spokane's diocese.

The Right Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, former presiding bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church, was the preacher for the service. In her sermon, she expressed Gretchen's commitment to proclaim God's inclusive love and equip God's people for transformation and growth.

Katharine, who is now visiting professor of women in ministry at the Church School of the Pacific in Berkeley, affirmed that hope is found "in God's love for each of us."

She pointed out that the diocese may not be able to be in complete agreement on everything, but "our common goal is the Kingdom of God, the kindom of God, shalom and the new Jerusalem."

Katharine said Gretchen's perspective from working in synthetic organic chemistry is to work backward from a conclusion and create an order to "discern the steps" needed to arrive there. She said it will work well for her as a bishop to know where she wants to go, so she can overcome obstacles.

By living like Jesus, "we turn and return to God," and live in the harmony of creation and nature, "as we see summer flow into fall, fall into winter, winter into spring," said Katharine. "In



Bishops Katharine Jefferts Schori, Michael Curry, Gretchen Rehberg and James Waggoner Jr.

the universe, "we see that stars are born and die," and in the process human life incubated on this planet.

"We can create a song of gladness for all creation so we can counter hate with love," she continued, calling for creating communities where gladness abounds in living God's will of shalom and harmony.

"We discover that the House of the Lord is around us, within us and among us," she said. "It is everywhere when we love our neighbors as ourselves and where we allow beloved community to emerge."

"Baptism calls us all to transform," she said, adding that the task of leaders of the diocese is to see "the structures and put flesh on the bones of the possible."

"We are here to shape a new future that reflects God's eternal love by creating loving relationships and seeking justice for every part of God's creation," she said.

One of the myriad of ways of doing that in this diocese, she suggested, is through reconciling relations with the first people in this region, the Coeur d'Alene, Colville, Kalispel and Spokane.

Katharine offered other challenges: to live in right relation-

ship with non-human beings, to welcome strangers because "we may find angels among them," to teach respect for life, to pray for peace of all creation and to marvel at the variety of humanity.

Gretchen was elected bishop of the Spokane diocese on October 18, 2016, at the diocese's 52nd Annual Convention in Lewiston, Idaho. Before her election, she had served since 2006 as rector of the Episcopal Church of the Nativity in Lewiston.

Before being elected, she served the diocese as chair of the Commission on Ministry, a canon for regional mission and a trainer for the College for Congregational Development, said Cate. In these ministries, she combined her passion for equipping people for ministry and assisting congregations in becoming more faithful, healthy and effective communities of faith. Now she will do that as she serves the diocese's 39 congregations.

Gretchen has a master of divinity from General Seminary, a doctor of ministry from Wesley Seminary and a doctoral degree in chemistry.

Previously, she was a professor of organic chemistry at Bucknell

University. She has also served communities where she has lived as a volunteer emergency medical technician and firefighter.

Gretchen succeeds the Right Rev. James Waggoner, Jr., who was the eighth bishop of the di-

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Stepping out of silence to stand in solidarity crucial to countering hate

What do we do when hate rears its ugly head and we see graffiti spray painted on a synagogue or Martin Luther King Jr. Center, or anti-refugee posters plastered on the Community Building with the intent of stirring fear?

The Spokane County Human Rights Task Force is now in place to join with the NAACP, along with faith, peace, justice, civic and business communities to say, "No!" to hate and "Yes!" to building alliances and solidarity to raise challenges.

The faith community gains resilience through its regular gatherings that remind us we are to love our neighbors and enemies, and we are to work for justice, equality, human rights and respect.

For the second year, the Interfaith Council continues "Meet the Neighbors," op-

portunities to learn about faiths by meeting with people in their settings, sharing food and making new friends.

The Spokane City Council recently enacted a Title 18 ordinance to bring together human rights protections scattered in the municipal code as a reaffirmation of the city's commitment to protect human rights for people in Spokane. It names discrimination based on race, religion, creed, color, sex, age, disability, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity; marital, familial, domestic violence, refugee, military or veteran status; or the receipt of housing choice or other subsidies for rent.

The ordinance says the city values "the dignity and worth of all human beings and is committed to promoting justice, equity and an inclusive environment for all." It

affirms "equal opportunity" to participate in employment, housing and public accommodations and ensures the city "is a workplace free from bias and discrimination." It outlines means of enforcement related to complaints, appeals and review.

The Spokane Valley City Council also adopted an anti-discrimination resolution.

People from a coalition of organizations testified to promote those resolutions.

Some responses have become institutions, like the Observance of the Holocaust.

Women religious, like the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Dominican Sisters and Sisters of Providence, recently issued statements joining with other faith groups to voice support for the humane treatment of refugees fleeing from violence, said Judith Desmarais, provincial superior for the

Sisters of Providence. "We cannot stand in silence when government policies violate our beliefs about the dignity and rights of each human person.

Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia said the recent "anti-immigrant and anti-refugee executive orders are inhumane and do not respect the rights and dignity of those coming to our borders seeking asylum or who have lived here as aspiring citizens, contributing to our society in many ways.

They acknowledge that fear and suspicion are common in dealing with the unknown, but "desiring to be a compassionate people, we try to place ourselves in the shoes of migrants" and then act to walk in solidarity.

Challenging hate means acting on words.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Benefit Events

Sounding Board

Excerpts of Speakers

Benefit speakers express why they value The Fig Tree's news approach

Sounding Board includes excerpts from comments of speakers at the 2017 Benefit Lunch and Benefit Breakfast. Full speeches are at www.thefigtree.org and in a video.

I have a long history with The Fig Tree. The values it has given me over the years include resources, community and hope.



In the 1990s, Mary covered many of our builds while I was executive director of Habitat for Humanity.

I was new to the non-profit world. The Fig Tree and Resource Directory were my "go-to" resources to figure out who was doing what in Spokane.

The Fig Tree builds community not just in the Inland Northwest but also around the world. I now serve Partnering for Progress, which works with villages in southwest Kenya to help them improve their water quality, education, health and economic development. A recent article about the water testing project we implemented with high school students led to hundreds of people knowing about our work.

The Fig Tree mission is to cover people of faith and nonprofit communities to break through divisions, and promote unity and action for the common good, which is especially needed in these divisive times. By doing that, The Fig Tree brings hope. When I read of good work being done, I find reassurance that there are wonderful, caring people throughout the Inland Northwest.

Dia Maurer
Partnering for Progress

News is packaged by journalists for television, radio, online and newspapers to help people make decisions. The criteria



for deciding what is news include: It's new, unusual, interesting and significant. It arouses curiosity and engages.

News is about people, people doing things to change the world.

The Fig Tree moves people beyond the news by sharing stories of people who make a difference in a society where religion, values and faith are suppressed.

The Fig Tree builds understanding, stirs compassion and supports ecumenical, interfaith and community activities. It inspires us to act to build community so we work together for the common good.

The Fig Tree has covered our organization and workshops. Because of The Fig Tree, we have more help and more people attending our events.

Mable Dunbar
Women's Empowerment Network

I have attended Fig Tree benefits for years and have always left inspired. Last year, when the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force's founding was announced March 8, Mary Stamp was there to hear about our goals in confronting hateful behavior.



When she interviewed me for a story about it, I was concerned the article might be about me. She reassured me that I was the canvas through which the message of the task force would be told. I think she nailed it. Within a week after the article ran in April 2016, I had three inquiries.

I don't remember when I saw my first copy of The Fig Tree, but I remember the sense of reading about someone making a difference. I took the paper home, reread the "above the fold" article and then read the entire paper.

In a world where we are bombarded with information, it is not always easy to separate out the "noise" and the "fake news." That is not a concern with this publication. The articles are well researched and well written.

By reading The Fig Tree, I get a slice of religious news internationally as well as regionally. I gain a glimpse into the lives of modern day heroes providing good work in and for our community.

I look forward to the interesting articles about people who are doing the things that really matter.

I look forward to the inspiration and encouragement I receive by reading the paper from cover to cover.

I also look forward to passing my copy on to someone else after I have finished.

Dean Lynch - Spokane County
Human Rights Task Force

I have a technique for reading The Fig Tree. I read one article a day and put a check mark on it.



Fig Tree stories energize me. Commercial media can be dreary.

In the Fig Tree, I read of local people doing good.

That's important because we are imitators. Stories make me hopeful and inspired to copy people. They refresh. They align me with my better nature.

My eyes are not as good, so I began reading just two to three stories a month, but with the political climate, my spirit wanes. I again read it stem to stern.

I deliver the Fig Tree in churches and public spaces in Coeur d'Alene.

I find that the copies are going faster and are running out earlier, so I'm not the only one taking care of myself.

Anne Salisbury
Fig Tree delivery volunteer

I thank The Fig Tree for telling our story and other stories that would otherwise go untold. It covers ordinary people doing extraordinary things, people trying to make a difference because they are trying to do God's will and help people in need. Stories inspire us to reach out, connect and help. I get phone calls and emails after stories about us.



I thank The Fig Tree for portraying young people in a positive light. I watched a 14-year-old pick up the newspaper with a story about her. The next month, she read The Fig Tree again, impressed that it covered local people who do good work.

The Resource Directory covers social service agencies and helps social service workers connect with other resources. It is so needed to have it in print, because not everyone connects to internet.

Freda Gandy - Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center

When I began as executive director of St. Joseph's Family Center, Mary wanted to hear about what prepared me for my ministry. When St. Joseph's was closing, she was interested again.

The Fig Tree's mission is to network and inspire people. It shares who we are, who we serve and what we do. It promotes agencies, causes and missions, helping people know who we are.

The Resource Directory is outstanding. It provides updated public service, connecting people in faith and nonprofit agencies.

St. Joseph's used it to look up and call to connect people who came to us needing services we did not offer.

Pat Millen, OSF - Fig Tree Board
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

I lift up the value of sharing stories. Stories are about you and me.

Hallah from Iraq arrived in the U.S. last year. In Spokane, she translates for and helps other Iraqis navigate the system. She longed to reunite with her 12-year-old son, who was 9 when she left. As the date of her son's arrival came, she was all smiles. Then it was delayed, and she was uncertain if he would be allowed to come, but finally he is here. I am impressed by her gratitude, patience and mercy.

When we share stories, I hope they show us at our most vulnerable and at our best. The Fig Tree includes storytellers and story

keepers. It occupies a sacred space. We read of a person of faith, of the healing of a community and of speaking truth to power. Its stories are about you and me.

Scott Cooper
Director of Parish Social Ministries
with Catholic Charities of Spokane

About 40 years ago, trying to land a news job in Minnesota, I came up with a definition of what news is. Today, I'm well beyond that definition, because it's about what's wrong with "The News."

My first Spokane job was in radio news. Soon it was apparent I could not continue, because I was learning about engaged advocacy, or peace journalism. My former objectivity felt like a leash or a muzzle. I learned my faith development depended on social justice. Eventually, I found meaningful, community-building work with the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane.

My church, the Spokane Mennonite Fellowship, merged into Shalom Church. That helped prepare us for interfaith understandings represented by The Fig Tree. My little faith community supports The Fig Tree as a public facet of our inclusiveness and our insistence that love will overcome fear and hatred. We also support it as *the news* that transcends potholes and puppies, politics and scandals to reveal stories of our neighbors, our fellow travelers on the journey toward truth and community.

I rely upon The Fig Tree to keep me grounded in local interfaith activity.

Rusty Nelson - Veterans for Peace

We love what we do. We love sharing news of faith and values in action. We love sharing news of people building community with strength and resiliency. We love partnering with you to encourage exploration, learning and compassion.

Please share extra copies of The Fig Tree and Resource Directory with others.

We are grateful for all who make the monthly newspaper and annual resource directory happen: staff, volunteers, advertisers, sponsors and underwriters.

We need you to continue to support our work. Do you already give financially? Can you give more? If you are a fan and reader, will you volunteer with us and be part of the team that is partnering to make this media possible? Will you pray for us? For any and all support - volunteer, financial, advertising - we thank you!

The Rev. Kimberle Meinecke - Fig Tree Board and St. David's Episcopal

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Earth Day Celebration Calendar of Events

Apr 3-6 • **Spring Break Cooking Camp** for children 8 to 12, Second Harvest Kitchen, 1234 E. Front, 2 to 4 p.m., 534-6678

• **Clothesline Project: Break the Silence** - Healthy U Campaign - survivors of intimate partner violence, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., SAC Lobby, Washington State University (WSU) Spokane Health Sciences, 358-7514

Apr 4 • **Panel on Martin Luther King Jr's** "Beyond Vietnam" speech, 35 W. Main, 838-7870

Apr 5 • **Diversity's Challenge to Democracy**, Boston College Law School Dean Vincent Rougeau, Gonzaga School of Law, Barbieri Courtroom, noon, 313-3741

• **Bias Busters - East Asian Culture**, SAC Student Diversity Center at WSU Spokane, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 358-7514, dion.crommarty@wsu.edu

• **Management of Cultural Resources** on the Spokane Indian Reservation, Christopher Casserino, investigator for Spokane Tribe Preservation, Museum of Arts and Culture, 2316 W. First, 6:30 p.m., 464-2070

Apr 6 • **Red Flag Campaign** - Healthy U Campaign, YWCA, Domestic Violence Unit of Spokane, Lutheran Community Services, SAC Lobby-WSU Spokane, 11:30 a.m., 358-7514

Apr 6, 20 • **Peace and Justice Action Committee**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870

Apr 8 • **YWCA Spring Fling**, Champagne Brunch and Silent Auction, Anthony's Restaurant, 510 N. Lincoln, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 789-9307, ywcaspokane.org

• **Planting Small Fruits and Berries**, Spokane Etable Tree Project and WSU Extension, 222 N. Havana, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., 477-2195

• **"April Showers,"** The Lands Council Annual Dinner and Auction, The Grand Hotel, 333 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 5 to 9 p.m., 209-2407, cupdegrove@landscouncil.org

Apr 9 • **Japanese Spring Food Festival**, "Haru Matsuri," Spokane Buddhist Temple, 927 S. Perry, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., pre-order, 534-7954, spokanebuddhisttemple.org

Apr 10-12 • **Holy Week Retreats** for women and men with Fr. Michael Maher, SJ, at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 448-1224, ihrc.net

Apr 10-13 • **EWU Pride Week**, EWU Cheney, sites.ewu.edu/pridecenter/events/pride-week2017.

Apr 11 • **Unity in the Community Committee**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 5:30 p.m., nwunity.org

Apr 11, 23 • **Showing Up for Racial Justice**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7879

Apr 12 • **Cards Against Humanity Fundraiser**, OutSpokane Pride Fundraiser, nYne Bar, 232 W. Sprague, 7 p.m., 720-7609

• **Inland Northwest Death Penalty Abolition Group**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870

• **Veterans for Peace**, 35 W. Main, 6:45 p.m., 838-7870

• **"Noises Off,"** Spokane Valley Partners Benefit Performance, Spokane Civic Theatre, 1020 N. Howard, 6:30 p.m., devdir@svpart.org

Apr 14 • **"Good Morning Greater Spokane: Let Freedom Ring,"** Brig. Gen. Roger Watkins of the Joint Warfare Center, Northern Quest Resort & Casino, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., 321-3630

• **Seniors Resource and International Fair**, CenterPlace, 2426 N. Discovery Pl., Spokane Valley, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 926-1937 or email centerplace@spokanevalley.org

Apr 15 • **Reject Trump's Budget: Tax Day March, Rally and Teach-in**, 35 W. Main, noon to 2 p.m., pjals.org

• **Dishman Hills Conservancy Dinner and Auction**, Barrister Winery, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., dshmanhills.org

Apr 16 • **Easter Sunrise Service**, Cross of Inspiration, Greenwood Memorial Terrace, 211 N. Government Way, 6:30 a.m., 838-8900

Apr 17 • **NAACP General Membership Meeting**, 35

W. Main, 7 p.m., spokanenaacp@gmail.com, spokanenaacp.com

Apr 17-23 • **Get Lit**, "Celebrating Reading and Writing for All Ages," many venues, http://getlitfestival.org

Apr 18 • **Simpson-Duvall Lecture** by Ronald White on "Ulysses Grant: A Fresh Look at American Leadership," Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-4452

Apr 19 • **Conference for the Greater Good in Yakima**, washingtonnonprofits.org

• **Coffee and Contemplation**, "Crossing the Threshold with SoulCollage," IHRC, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 9 to 11 a.m., 448-1224, ihrc.net

• **"Our Kids: Our Business,"** Reception, Program and Networking, Hemmingson Center Ballroom, Gonzaga, 702 E. Desmet, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., ourkidsspokane.org/events

• **Diversity Recruitment Committee** - Meet the Employers, WorkSource, 130 S. Arthur, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., 532-3133

Apr 20 • **10th Anniversary Growing Hope Fundraiser**, Project Hope, 429 E. Boone, 5 p.m., 724-0139

• **Steven Spielberg's film**, "Lincoln," Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 7 p.m.

Apr 21-23 • **"Stand Up, Stand Out,"** The NATIVE Project's Indian Youth Leadership Camp, 325-5503, nativeproject.org/leadership

Apr 22 • **Vietnamese Heritage Day**, Service Station, 9315 N. Nevada, 2 to 4:30 p.m., 466-1696

• **African American Graduation**, Hemmingson Center, Gonzaga University, 3 p.m., 533-3743

• **Chocolate & Champagne Gala**, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Historic Davenport Hotel, 6 p.m., 747-8224

• **Feed the Hungry Benefit Concert**, Bodhi Bill Miller, All Saints Lutheran, 314 S. Spruce, 7 p.m., bodhibill.com

Apr 22-23 • **Earth Day Celebrations** - see pages 1 and 3, Spokane: Riverfront Park, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, 202-9368

Apr 23 • **Yom Hashoah** Commemoration of the Holocaust, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave., 7 p.m., 747-3304

Apr 25 • **Paper Tigers Film** on Lincoln High School in Walla Walla, Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, 7 p.m., ourkidsspokane.org/events/

• **Lutheran Community Services** and EWU Women & Gender Studies film, "Audrie and Daisy," EWU Spokane, 6 p.m., 747-1224

Apr 26 • **Spokane Police Accountability and Reform Coalition**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870

Apr 28 • **20th Annual Human Rights Banquet and Annual Gala**, Coeur d'Alene Inn, 414 W. Appleway, Coeur d'Alene, 5 p.m., 208-292-2359, idahohumanrights.org

• **Stand Against Racism Day**, YWCA, 930 N. Monroe, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., ericas@ywcaspokane.org or 358-7554, montoyazamora@wsu.edu.org

• **"Cheers for Kids,"** Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery Dinner, Washington Cracker Company, 304 W. Pacific, 6 to 9 p.m., 340-0479, amber@vanessabehan.org

Apr 28-30 • **Passion of the Earth**, Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, Idaho, 208-962-2000

Apr 29 • **Givapaloosa**, Whitworth PR students help nonprofits, sealskin@whitworth.edu

• **Spring Compost Fair & Arbor Day Celebration**, John A. Finch Arboretum, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 625-6580, spokanecounty solidwaste.org

• **People's Climate Rally**, Spokane Tribal Gathering Place, 367 N. Post, noon to 2 p.m.

• **Sukiyaki Dinner**, Highland Park United Methodist Church, 611 S. Garfield, noon to 6 p.m., 535-2687, hp-spokane.org

• **Dinner and Silent Auction**, Martin Luther King Jr Family Outreach Center, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., 455-8722, mlkspokane.org

May 3 • **Fig Tree Mailing and Deliveries**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th Ave., 9 a.m., 535-1813

May 4 • **Fig Tree Meetings**, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., Benefit, noon, Board, 1 to 3 p.m., 535-1813

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Habitat-Spokane has built more than 270 homes over its 30 years

The story of Habitat for Humanity is one of drawing people out of poverty, said Michelle Girardot, executive director of the Spokane Habitat for Humanity affiliate, which is beginning its 30th year.

From its beginnings, meeting in the choir room at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in 1988, Habitat for Humanity Spokane has built more than 270 homes in Spokane County.

Many grassroots people, like Spokane's Habitat founder Grace Harris, have seen the need over the years, Michelle said.

At first, it operated out of a house on N. Napa and then an office. The Habitat-Spokane store, which opened on Hamilton and Trent, later moved to an industrial park on Sullivan Rd.

Since last summer, both the office and store have been in one building at 1805 E Trent, said Michelle.

The affiliate will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a luncheon at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 27, at the Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd. The featured speaker is Clive Rainey, the first volunteer at Habitat for Humanity in the late 1970s in Americus, Ga., where it was founded.

"From there, it spread like wildfire as people caught 'Habitatitis,' as Habitat for Humanity connects people from different walks of life to see how to make a difference," said Michelle.

Habitat now speaks of the number of "families served" rather than the number of homes built, she pointed out, because some of its work is new construction, some is rehabilitation and some is water purification.

"We provide a range of housing solutions worldwide," she said.

One accomplishment has been that Habitat-Spokane's practice of tithing has meant it has sent \$1 million to affiliates worldwide. When it reached that level last June, it received Habitat's Sam Mompongo Award.



Michelle Girardot tells how the tithe multiplies impact abroad.

The 10 percent that goes abroad goes to areas of the most need, including areas after natural disasters such as in Haiti, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Ten percent of a \$120,000 to \$140,000 two-bedroom house here translates into many more houses and a major impact in countries where costs of building are lower, Michelle said.

"Our tithing is a reminder that our neighbors in need are everywhere, she said. "Our board has a vision and commitment to be sure to build homes for all God's people in need, both in Spokane and around the world.

"**Our move into one** building has had a dramatic impact," she said. "We have been able to increase the revenue from our Habitat Store, which generates enough income—\$20,000 to \$40,000 a month—to build homes, so that two homes can be built through store revenue each year."

The store sells reclaimed wood, appliances, paint, tile, furniture and other items. The store may accept a rundown dresser, and volunteers remove the paint and make it "shabby chic." Volunteers learn to reclaim items and turn them to treasures.

The move of the store and affiliate offices nearer to the city makes

it more connected and visible to the community, and more accessible for volunteers.

"Our staff can work as a cohesive team, remembering what our mission calls us to do and allowing us to serve more families in Spokane," Michelle said.

"**We have 8,000 to 12,000** volunteers a year. They help in different capacities on job sites,

upcycle—creatively reusing—items in the store, advocate for affordable housing or do community relations. If people want to volunteer, we find a niche," she said.

Habitat-Spokane, one of 2,000 Habitat for Humanity affiliates across the nation and 31 in Washington, now has 18 staff.

Michelle has worked with Habitat-Spokane for seven years and has been its executive director for two years.

"I'm passionate about connecting people with generous hearts to our mission," she said, telling how her love for the mission has grown as she has brought new people into the ministry to serve more families and invite more donors.

Habitat empowers families who are hard workers and have a strong work ethic, she said.

"I also have a passion to help pull families out of dire circumstances," she said. "Some volunteers maintain some contact with families, but, because it's an empowerment program, once a family has gone through the steps, they fly off like birds leaving a nest."

Volunteers move on to help

transform the lives of the next families by giving them the tools they need. Many volunteers have worked with Habitat for years.

A group of retirees works on Thursdays. They previously came with company teams, and then dedicated themselves to continue building on Thursdays at job sites.

Along with individuals who volunteer, many groups volunteer year after year, such as Umpqua Bank. Some build for a certain month, and some build all year.

"It's hard to build in the winter, but Umpqua employees will step up in that season," she said.

Some faith groups have also been coming for years.

"**For congregations**, it's a strategic investment of their time, responding to the call to be like Jesus, doing team building and partnering in a Christian mission," Michelle said.

During Lent, five congregations come. Over a given year, about 30 faith groups or congregations support the program through volunteering or other means.

For information, call 534-2552 or email michelle@habitat-spokane.org.



Contemplative Evening Prayer in Taizé Style

THURSDAY at 4:15 PM

The Ministry Institute
405 E. Sinto

two blocks North of St. Aloysius Church

The Ministry Institute invites you to pray with music, readings and silence in the style of Taizé prayer. (No evening prayer on April 13 or May 18.)

For more information, contact Shonna Bartlett at 313-5765 or bartletts@gonzaga.edu.

We invite you to join us for reflection and contemplation.

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