

34TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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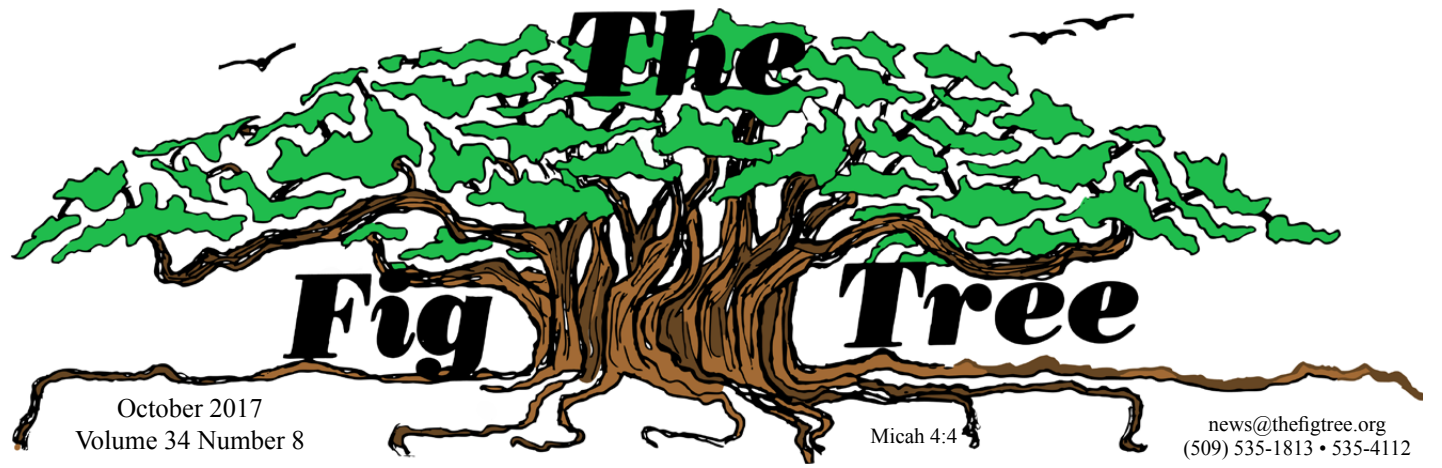
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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest
online at www.thefigtree.org • check The Fig Tree Facebook page daily for news and links

The Arc both serves and advocates

By Mary Stamp

Advocacy is at the heart of Sima Thorpe's role as executive director of The Arc of Spokane.

After spending many of the 21 years she worked at Gonzaga University as director and volunteer service coordinator at the Center for Community Action and Service Learning (CCASL), she chose to come to The Arc because it ties direct service and social action.

Sima believes it's important to know the people for whom one advocates.

At The Arc, Sima fits her thirst for justice, civil rights and advocacy with her work to build respect for and integrate people with intellectual and developmental disabilities into the community.

That often means influencing public policies, so during a legislative session, she will call offices of legislators.

Advocacy is also integral to her everyday effort of building awareness of and respect for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Arc helps clients gain access to and be integrated into the community so they can live full lives, she said.

Advocacy is part of coordinating 250 employees running 12 support-



Sima Thorpe is executive director of The Arc of Spokane.

ive living homes with 24/7 care, a community center, a thrift store and 12 programs that include financial management, individual and group employment, family support and community access.

The Arc of Spokane is Washington's largest Arc agency and one of 730 agencies known as The Arc in the United States. It serves about 3,000 people a year in Eastern Washington.

Sima, who began in 2015, is just the third executive director of The Arc of Spokane in its 40 years.

The Arc works with civic leaders locally, statewide and nationally to develop public policy for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

It works collaboratively on a task force to make public education available for children with developmental disabilities, to help adults succeed in the workplace and to establish community living as an alternative to institutionalization.

She spends time in Olympia working to prevent cuts to programs for people with special needs. Prior to the last legislative session, she took a bus with constituents and families to Olympia to meet with legislators.

Continued on page 4

Area Lutherans mark Reformation's 500th anniversary with hymn festival

As Lutherans throughout the world will be observing the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation this fall, Spokane area Lutheran churches are joining in this observance with a Hymn Festival with the theme, "Remembering History, Celebrating Diversity, and Anticipating Unity."

The hymn festival is at 3 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 29, at Central Lutheran Church, 512 S. Bernard.

The festival is an opportunity for Lutheran and other Christians to join in singing hymns of the faith from Luther's "A Mighty Fortress" to contemporary and

ethnic hymns reaching into the future, said Carolyn Payne, event coordinator, a member of St. Mark's and organist/choir director at Salem Lutheran.

Singers from local choirs will form a massed choir under the direction of Paul Brueggemeier and Debbie Hansen to sing three concertatas, including "God Alone Be Praised."

Based on Psalm 46, it was written specifically for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Reformation 500 by Susan Briehl, a Lutheran pastor, and composer of hymns and worship

materials, currently interim pastor at St. Mark's Lutheran, and composer-conductor Zebulon Highbon who teaches at Muskingum University's Music Department in Ohio. Both are members of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, which commissioned the work.

Organists, instrumentalists, singers and readers are from All Saints, Central, Messiah, St. Marks, Salem, Zion (Spokane Valley) and Zion (Deer Park) Lutheran churches.

Susan has written liturgical reflections that weave the hymns together around three themes, "the Word and Sacrament," "God hears our cries for mercy and pours out abundant grace" and "the Spirit leads us into Christ's Future."

Central Lutheran Church, which traditionally holds a fall hymn festival, is hosting the event. Before the festival begins, the carillon, purchased in memory of Janice Newell, organist at St. Augustine Catholic Church and Central Lutheran, will ring.

For information, call 535-7145, email thepaynes@comcast.net.

Musician links Luther, Bach, music, theology

Donivan Johnson, with guest performers soprano Randi Lithgow and Jennifer Goodnight on the keyboard, will offer a presentation for Reformation 500 on "A Mighty Fortress: Martin Luther, Musical Theologian, and J.S. Bach, Theological Musician" at 2 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 28, at the Northwest Museum for Arts and Culture, 2316 W. 1st Ave.

Donivan, composer and retired music teacher for the Selkirk School District, will discuss the theological and musical works of Luther and Bach. He will share Luther's hymns and how Bach used them in his cantatas and organ chorale preludes.

Among the excerpts they will present and comment on are Bach's Cantatas No. 4, "Christ lay in death's grim prison," and No. 80, "A mighty fortress is our God."

Donivan will explore the importance of Luther's "reformation" of the Roman Catholic liturgy and will share how Bach, who was born, raised and educated in the heart of "Lutherland," became an influential composer and church musician, as well as being versed in Lutheran theology.

The event features Randi and Jennifer performing Spokane's premiere of Donivan's setting of Luther's family Christmas carol, "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come."

Since 2011, Donivan has given seven lecture-concerts at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture in conjunction with exhibits and programs. In 2009, he and the museum received the Humanities Washington Award.

For 26 years, Donivan taught music, band, choir and orchestra for the Selkirk School District. He was organist for a year at the American Lutheran Church in Newport and pianist at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Metaline Falls.

For information, call 446-3505.

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Religion News Briefs

Around the World

World Council of Churches News, PO Box 2100
 CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111
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WCC-Catholic group focuses on migrants

Meeting recently in Lisbon, Portugal, the Joint Working Group (JWG) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) focused on peace-building and migrants.

The 20-member group issued a communique after exploring the role of culture, religion and dialogue in peace-building, and challenges and opportunities for ecumenical cooperation on migrants and refugees. They identified possibilities for more partnership.

"The peace-building group's goal is to identify contributions churches can make to resolve conflicts and prevent violence," said the communique. "They know culture, religion and dialogue can be misused to spark violence and conflict. It is important to build on ecumenical cooperation and identify new ways churches can witness to just peace."

On migrants and refugees, the JWG acknowledged the current situation requires a common response by all churches and others.

"Churches are to strengthen their collaboration in welcoming, protecting, integrating and empowering refugees and migrants," it said. "While migration has always been part of human history, the current forced migration, the rejection of refugees and racist attitudes in many places are of growing concern for churches."

The JWG was established in 1965 to monitor and strengthen cooperation of the RCC and the WCC.

National Council reports 49 sign nuclear ban

On September 20 at the United Nations in New York, the historic July treaty to ban nuclear weapons was formally opened for signature. At publication time, 49 states had signed.

This treaty, adopted by two-thirds of the 193 UN member states after months of talks, bans the manufacture, possession and use of nuclear weapons and provides pathways for their eventual elimination. It not only prohibits nuclear weapons, but also requires aid to victims and environmental remediation. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will enter into force 90 days after 50 countries have ratified it, the final step after signature. Already three nations – the Holy See, Thailand and Guyana – ratified the treaty the day it opened for signature.

"By signing the treaty, nations have taken a lead in protecting all countries and the planet that is our home," said WCC General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit, urging national leaders to quickly ratify and sign the treaty that "has the potential to save millions of lives, and creation itself, from the most destructive and indiscriminate weapons ever developed by human beings."

Advocate for nuclear ban says there's more to do

Emily Welty, assistant professor in Peace and Justice Studies at Pace University in New York City and vice moderator of the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, believes in a world free from nuclear weapons and offers strategic thinking toward that goal. She was among many advocates who have worked toward the new UN treaty banning nuclear weapons. As she celebrates the milestone, she knows of work still to be done.

Since the signing of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, WCC news asked her to give a vision for a nuclear-free world. With the WCC Commission, she has worked years to bring justice for those affected by the use and testing of nuclear weapons.

While it feels unbelievable that the treaty passed, "it feels so obvious: of course nuclear weapons should be illegal. For so many people, it's common sense," said Emily, who thinks the natural disasters, climate change, racial tension, conflict and other challenges in today's world intersect with nuclear issues.

"The devastation of the climate is connected to nuclear weapons, when we look at how nuclear testing decimates soil and water. Nuclear weapons relate to de-colonization and racial justice with the impact of nuclear testing disproportionately affecting the South Pacific and indigenous populations in Australia," she said.

Emily challenged the idea that nuclear weapons make people safe. As of 2017, the U.S. has 6,800 nuclear warheads. One can wreak unimaginable destruction and suffering.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Plans begin for 2018 advocacy, benefit events

Plans are underway for 2018 events The Fig Tree coordinates.

The annual Eastern Washington Legislative Conference will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 27, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, organized by The Fig Tree, Catholic Charities of Spokane, the Faith Action Network of Washington, the Washington State Catholic Conference, the Spokane NAACP, the Spokane

District of the Pacific Northwest United Methodist Conference and representatives of other area faith groups.

Presenters will address the theme, "Framing Faithful Discourse for the Common Good."

For The Fig Tree's 2018 benefits in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University, speakers will address the theme, "Including Everyone: We Need Each Other."

The Benefit Lunch buffet begins at 11:45 a.m., Friday, March 9, and the Benefit Breakfast buffet begins at 7:15 a.m.

The Fig Tree will be recruiting hosts to invite guests to participate, as well as volunteers interested in helping organize either event or helping with deliveries, mailings and displays.

For information, call 535-1813 or email mary@thefigtree.org.

Faith Action Network holds area meetings

Among fall Eastern Washington Events, the Faith Action Network and Community Congregational United Church of Christ are co-sponsoring a legislative advocacy workshop on "Engaging the Political Power Brokers: A Push for Social Justice" from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 7, at the church, 525 NE Campus St. in Pullman.

There will be presentations on how to engage and advocate for change with state representatives. FAN also plans two-hour meetings to discuss advocacy and build relationships.

The Spokane and Eastern Washington gathering is at 2:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 8, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W Fort Wright Dr.

A Central Washington event begins at 10 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 14, at Grace Lutheran Church, 1408 Washington St. in Wenatchee.

A Yakima and Tri-Cities meeting starts at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 28, at First Lutheran, 530 W. Bonneville St. in Pasco.

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

Saturday closes with a keynote address at 7 p.m. by Rabbi Francine Roston of the Glacier Jewish Community B'nai Shalom of Flathead, Mont., speaking on "Responding to Hate and Cyber-Terrorism: Lessons from Whitefish, Mont."

Whitefish responded to harassment of and threats to several Jewish residents by a neo-Nazi website with a campaign of "Love Lives Here" signs and a "Love Not Hate" rally.

The evening will close with a community prayer for peace and call to action.

On Friday and Saturday, there will be workshops at 10:15 a.m., 1:30 and 3:15 p.m. Friday's sessions will present internship opportunities with community partners.

In addition, Gonzaga's Center for Public Humanities is sponsoring a lecture by scholar, author and activist Angela Davis at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 25, also at the Hemmingson Center.

Faculty and students also will give presentations from mid-October leading into International Education Week, Nov. 13 to 17.

For information, call 313-3662 or email gihs@gonzaga.edu.

For the 5 to 7 p.m. Friday Banquet, Idaho Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb (D-Boise) will discuss "With Liberty and Justice for All." She was elected to the Idaho House of Representatives in 2010, and the Senate in 2012, 2014 and 2016.

Joe will speak on "Then and Now: History of the Southern Poverty Law Center," addressing the relationship of today's politics and culture to hate. He has helped the SPLC shut down some violent white supremacist groups, reformed juvenile justice practices, shattered barriers to equality for women, children, the LGBT community and the disabled, and protected low-wage immigrant workers from exploitation.

Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. is Community Partner Day, focusing on needs of community partners related to human rights.

There are four keynote speakers plus workshops.

On Friday, Jennifer Schweppe of Limerick, Ireland, co-director of the International Network on Hate Studies, will speak from 9 to 9:30 a.m., and Joe Leven, co-founder of the Southern Poverty

International Conference will be Oct. 19 to 21

"Engaging with Communities for Justice" is the focus for the fourth interdisciplinary International Conference on Hate Studies from Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 19 to 21, in the Hemmingson Center at Gonzaga University, the location for other related events.

To combat hate, the event will analyze its manifestations and build community committed to peace, human rights and justice, said Kristine Hoover, director of Gonzaga's Institute for Hate Studies, which is sponsoring the event with Gonzaga Center for Global Engagement, the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force and Gonzaga's Center for Global Engagement.

The conference opens at 6 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 19, with the film, "13th," exploring intersection of race, justice and mass incarceration related to the 13th Amendment that prohibits slavery.

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There are four keynote speakers plus workshops.

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Law Center (SPLC) in 1971, from 9:30 to 10 a.m.

Jennifer, a law lecturer at the University of Limerick since 2004, does research funded by the Irish Research Council, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties and the European Union. Working with civil organizations in Ireland, she is a member of the National Steering Group Against Hate Crime and has presented to the Irish Parliament on the need for hate crime legislation.

Joe will speak on "Then and Now: History of the Southern Poverty Law Center," addressing the relationship of today's politics and culture to hate. He has helped the SPLC shut down some violent white supremacist groups, reformed juvenile justice practices, shattered barriers to equality for women, children, the LGBT community and the disabled, and protected low-wage immigrant workers from exploitation.

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Lutherans hold Latino Ministry workshops

Alexia Salvatierra, a Lutheran pastor with 35 years of experience in community ministry, community development, community organizing, and legislative advocacy, will lead two Latino Ministry workshops, "Mision Integral," for Lutherans and ecumenical partners. They will offer spiritual and practical tools for the crisis and suffering resulting from the broken U.S. immigration system

One will be from 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 21, at First Lutheran Church in Pasco, and the other is from 2 to 5 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 22, at Celebration Lutheran in East Wenatchee.

Alexia, a national leader in working on poverty and immigration, coordinates Welcoming Congregations for the Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

"Mision Integral in the Kairos Moment: Best Practices for Responding to the Immigration Crisis" is a movement in Latin America to express Christ's love in evangelism, mercy and justice.

For information, call 509-380-7122 or visit alexiasalvatierra.com/bio.html.

Dialogue looks at building partnerships

Next Steps, Spokane! Community Dialogue at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 25, at Unity Spiritual Center, 2900 S. Bernard, will discuss "Building Partnerships: Creating a Sustainable and Compassionate Community Together."

One Peace, Many Paths, Sisters of the Holy Names and Unity Spiritual Center invite people to explore building networks to create a more compassionate and sustainable community, said Sister Ann Bosserman, SNJM. Future dialogues will address community issues tied to the 15 United Nations' Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

"With a contemplative dimension to the dialogues, we hope to reach a depth of insight and understanding that is sometimes missing in efforts to address justice issues," Sr. Ann said. "For example, Spokane has a wealth of organizations and people working on addressing poverty, but could we be more effective by coming together to find the transformative power of our collective wisdom and integrated efforts?"

Organizers will also help identify and link Spokane's networks and partnerships to make them more visible and more effective.

For information, email selahcentered@hotmail.com or sallykduffy@gmail.com.

Biogerontologist presents science and aging

The Weyerhaeuser Center for Faith and Learning at Whitworth is presenting its second annual Bioethics Symposium from 7 to 8:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 16, at the Weyerhaeuser Center. It will focus on "Aging in America: What Does the Science Say?"

"Every year, we learn more about how our bodies age, and science is now learning how to make simpler organisms like worms and flies live longer," said Daniel Promislow, biogerontologist at the University of Washington in Seattle, who is the speaker.

"Can we extend the human life span significantly? Should we? What would consequences be to our bodies? Our society?" asks Daniel, who uses genetics, epidemiology and bioinformatics to study aging in fruit flies, dogs, marmosets and humans.

He will present some research findings, implications of studying human aging and make some predictions for the future. For information, call 777-4433.

Event benefits Healing the Culture

The second annual "Stand up for Life" Gala and Auction, benefitting Healing the Culture, begins at 5 p.m., Monday, Oct. 23, at the Davenport Hotel, 10 S. Post in downtown Spokane. Fr. Robert Spitzer, SJ, philosopher, author and former president of Gonzaga University from 1998 to 2009, is the keynote speaker. Bishop Thomas Daly of the Catholic Diocese of Spokane will be present as a special guest.

Mark Cerasuolo, program director for Healing the Culture (HTC) in Snohomish, Wash., said HTC focuses on pro-life education and cultural change, rather than political change. It networks advocates to respect, defend and protect innocent life. It was co-founded in 2003 to elevate dialogue on abortion and euthanasia with reason, ethics and justice. It provides educational resources to change hearts.

Fr. Robert, author of nine books and founder of the Magis Center and Spitzer Center, previously taught at Georgetown University and Seattle University.

For information, call 360-243-3811 or see healingtheculture.com.

Baha'is mark 200th anniversary of founder's birth

The Baha'is of Spokane mark the 200th anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í faith, with a Light of Unity Festival from 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 22, at CenterPlace in Spokane Valley.

David Gregory, public information officer for Spokane Baha'is, said their spiritual leader Bahá'u'lláh (1817 to 1892), whose name means "The Glory of God," said in 1863 that he was the bearer of a new revelation from God.

His teachings spread globally, bringing social transformation and community building among diverse cultures. The Light of Unity Festival celebrates the impact of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings.

"His vision of the oneness of humanity is an antidote to the racial prejudice and materialism that corrode American society," David said. "Now more than ever we need positive models of social change that bring people together rather than divide them."

The festival is a series of grassroots activities around the country

to reinforce Bahá'u'lláh's vision of the oneness of humanity. Activities include drama, music, art exhibits, storytelling, service projects, prayer and devotions.

Nationally, the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Ill., began nine weeks of programs in early September, applying the principle of humanity's oneness to today's challenges of environmental justice, race relations, indigenous peoples, human rights, and the harmony of science and religion.

David said Bahá'u'lláh's coming was heralded by the Báb (1819 to 1844), whose name means "the Gate." He declared his mission in 1844, which is considered the beginning of the Bahá'í Era.

"Called by different names through the ages, the one eternal God, Creator of the universe, is limitless, all-knowing, all-powerful and all-loving. The reality of God is beyond human understanding, though we may find expressions of God's attributes in every created thing," David said, adding that beyond diverse cultures,

classes, customs, opinions and temperaments, each individual is a member of one human family.

Baha'is believe humanity's spiritual, intellectual and moral capacities were previously cultivated by founders of religions—Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus Christ and Muhammad. David said each religion originates from God for its age and locale, so religion progressively unfolds.

In less than 200 years since the Bahá'í Faith began in Iran, it spread to every country and has more than 5 million adherents.

Bahá'is consider service to humanity the highest form of worship, he said. Private and corporate prayer are considered essential spiritual nourishment.

The faith, which has no clergy or sacraments, has simple practices for such transitions as marriage and funerals.

For information, call or text 270-9210, email dhngregory@comcast.net or visit spokanebahais.org.

CELEBRATING
the 200th Anniversary
of the BIRTH of
Bahá'u'lláh

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2017
2 to 4 p.m.,
CenterPlace Event Center
2426 N. Discovery Pl. - Spokane Valley

*The earth is but one country
and mankind it's citizens.*

Bazaars
Bake, Craft and Book Sales, Auctions & Meals
The Fig Tree will run another event section in Nov & Dec issues

Audubon Park United Methodist Women's Annual Bazaar
Sat. Nov. 4 - 9 am-3 pm
3908 N. Driscoll Blvd.
Wheelchair Friendly • Drawing • Apple Dumplings

A Completely Bazaar Day in Cheney
Saturday, Nov. 4
Loads of craft and baked goods
Come for breakfast, stay for lunch
Raffle prizes, White Elephant gifts
Visit all four churches!!!

SCANDINAVIAN BAZAAR
Proceeds benefit local charities
SATURDAY, Nov. 4
Kaffe Stua 9 - 11 am
Bazaar 9:30 am - 1 pm
Central Lutheran Church
512 S. Bernard (5th & Bernard)
Lefse,
Scandinavian Cookies & Crafts
Pre-order at church - 624-9233

Come Visit Our Christmas Bazaar!!
Cheney United Methodist Church
crafts, baked goods and a gift shop designed for children
Saturday, Nov. 4 • 9 am-3 pm
4th & G St. - Cheney WA

Cheney Congregational Church Bazaar
Saturday, Nov 4
9 am - 2 pm • 11 am - 1 pm lunch
Crafts, Silent Auction, Raffle
423 N. 6th - Cheney

FALL FESTIVAL BAZAAR
Saturday, Nov. 4
9 am - 2 pm
lelse, bean soup mix, plants,
baked goods, crafts,
Grannie's Attic & more
Prince of Peace Lutheran
8441 N. Indian Trail Rd.
Spokane

Holiday Bazaar & Luncheon
Saturday, Nov 4 • 9 am -3 pm
Crafts, Baked Goods, Raffle Basket,
Holiday Decorating & White Elephant

St. Paul's Episcopal Bazaar
Saturday, Nov 4
9 am - 3 pm • 625 C St. - Cheney
Christmas block quilt raffle • crafts
baked goods • gently used collectibles

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Annual Bazaar
Sat. Nov. 4 - 9 am-3 pm
2733 W Northwest Blvd
Country Store with baked goods,
lots of unique and handcrafted items,
and Peanut Butter Peanut Brittle

Bazaar & Bake Sale
St. Mark's Lutheran
316 E. 24th Ave.
Grand Blvd. & 24th
9 am - 2 pm
Saturday, Nov. 4
Coffee bar, bake sale,
quality seconds and crafts

Christmas Faire & Bazaar
Saturday, Nov. 11
9:30 am - 3 pm
Cathedral of St. John
127 E. 12th Ave.
Free admission
Champagne mustard,
jam & cookies, ornaments
gifts for everyone.
Vintage treasures
Lunch: soup, sandwich, pie
Visit with St. Nicholas
Child care & crafts

JUBILEE
INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE

Supporting fair trade for over 25 years

Join the celebration of
Fairly Traded Handcrafts
from around the world

Friday, November 3 & Saturday, November 4
10am-7pm & 9am-4pm

First Presbyterian Church | 318 S. Cedar
(located at the Maple St. exit from 1-90, downtown Spokane)

For more information, visit the Jubilee page at www.spokanefpc.org

The Arc director advocates to open doors for people with disabilities

Continued from page 1

Sima also joins The Arc's national efforts to resist cuts to Medicaid that would make it harder for people with developmental disabilities to access services.

"Access is better under the Affordable Care Act, which planned Medicaid expansion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who rely on Medicaid and the social services safety net," she said.

While Sima supports the state's increase in the minimum wage to pay people what they deserve, it makes the cost of operating non-profits higher. Unless legislatively mandated, there are no increases in state funding to mitigate the impact, and few nonprofits can increase fees.

"It's a heavy responsibility for our workers to care for people with disabilities so they can live in the community," she said. "It's hard to find people who will work for \$11.40/hour to do that work."

The Arc's supported-living residential workers cook meals, clean homes, take care of intimate needs, provide transportation and offer other support services. They need training to work effectively to help clients with autism or other disabilities manage their behavior.

"Fortunately, advocacy efforts

by The Arc and others paid off, with an increase in funding for supported living programs approved by the state's legislature in July," she said.

Before working at Gonzaga, Sima started as a paralegal advocate for the Northwest Justice Project. In service learning at Gonzaga, she interacted with people at more than 100 nonprofits, including The Arc of Spokane.

She founded CCASL and other programs to support students' parents, LGBT students, veterans and non-traditional students, and students studying abroad in Zambia.

"Appreciating the Jesuit mission, I was involved with social justice and diversity initiatives at Gonzaga, so I bring that perspective to The Arc, as well as my connections with higher education," she said.

"The Arc is not a faith-based organization, but I bring a faith-based approach," added Sima, who grew up Lutheran and now attends congregations of different faiths. Her father was a non-practicing Muslim.

"I grew up with a dual faith awareness of Christianity and Islam, so I feel comfortable with different traditions," she said.

Being of Iranian descent, she experienced the Persian culture

in her home in Oregon and was brought up to respect diversity, equity and inclusion. Her father immigrated from the Middle East. Her mother was Scotch-Irish.

Sima earned a bachelor's degree in 1985 in English and education at the University of Oregon, where her father taught math. She also has a master's in organizational leadership from Gonzaga and teaches in its undergraduate leadership program, helping students understand how philosophy integrates into daily work.

After she participated in a protest with Students for a Nuclear Free Future at the University of Oregon, the university ordered her to do community service in a food bank.

"There I saw the value of direct service, as well as social action, and learned that we need to see the faces of people for whom we advocate," Sima said.

She also encourages that connection in a 12-student Gonzaga class she teaches Thursdays at the House of Charity. That class and work-study/intern program reflect her belief in integrating students into the community.

Students bring hotboxes with food from GU's campus kitchen program to serve to about 200 people from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. at

the House of Charity. Then the class discusses leadership and community involvement. Activist, military, nonprofit, philanthropic and other leaders speak to expose students to different community service approaches.

"I see 'aha' moments for students at the end of the month when House of Charity patrons have fewer resources and food stamps run out," she said.

In September 2016, Sima start-

ed a project at The Arc for unpaid college interns or paid work-study students help high school students with disabilities succeed in school, learn about jobs and gain skills to live independently.

In the program's Explorers Project, students learn about The Arc's goal for individuals to be included and be able to choose what they want to do in life, Sima said.

For information, call 328-6326 or email sthorpe@arc-spokane.org.

Judge speaks at NAACP Spokane banquet

The Hon. Donald Haley is the keynote speaker for Spokane NAACP's 98th Freedom Fund Banquet from 6 to 10 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 14, at the Kalispel Tribe of Indians Northern Quest Casino and Resort, 100 N. Hayford Rd., in Airway Heights.

Beginning in Louisiana where he helped his father pick cotton from the age of eight through serving the King County Superior Court Bench, the judge has conquered many stereotypes to pursue his dreams.

He seeks to empower young people to be all they can be, to be a role model as others were for him.

The Freedom Fund Banquet, Spokane NAACP's annual benefit, provides money for scholarships for youth, as well as for the local unit's operating expenses.

Because his father told him, "No one can take knowledge away from you," Donald believed he would do more than work in the cotton field. His black teachers at Jefferson Davis Parish Training Colored School also gave him self-esteem and understanding of his African-American roots.

The example of African-Americans who succeeded despite odds showed him he could succeed.

In 1958, he graduated from the University of Washington's Law School, and from 1968 to 1982 he practiced law with Lundin, Estep, Sindell, Haley & Hanson.

He served on the King County Superior Court bench from 1983 until his recent retirement.

While practicing law, Donald engaged in bar activities and committees, serving as chair of the Public Information Committee and on nominating, client relations, human relations and other committees of the Seattle-King County Bar Association.

He also served on the Washington State Bar Association's Rules and Instructions and Trial Practice Seminar Committees, and the Seattle County Bar Association

Criminal Law Section.

He was president of the Loren Miller Bar Association (LMBA) from 1982 to 1983. The association is the Washington affiliate of the National Bar Association (NBA), the oldest minority bar and the largest organization of African American attorneys and judges in the United States.

Formed in 1925, the NBA formed when the American Bar Association (ABA) was segregated and excluded persons of color.

Although the ABA changed its policies several decades later, the NBA continues to address social, economic and legal issues for the African American community.

The LMBA history reflects the birth, growth and maturation of the African American legal community in Washington.

It is a civil rights organization, confronting institutional racism,

and social and economic disparities affecting African Americans—in employment, housing, education, public contracting and more.

While on the King County Superior Court, he was on the Board of Trustees of the Superior Court Judges' Association of Washington beginning in 1992 and in leadership roles from 1990 to 1995.

At the 1998 annual meeting of the ABA, Donald was installed chair of the National Conference of State Trial Judges.

He continues to serve the judicial community and community groups because he knows how fortunate he is and knows the need to continue to be vigilant so others have the same opportunities.

(Biographical information compiled from online.)

For information, call 209-2425 or email info@naacpspokane.org.

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Interfaith enthusiast spreads opportunities to understand diverse faiths

Referring to the Spokane Interfaith Council, Skyler Oberst cupped his hands as if holding a small plant ready to grow and bloom.

The council, he said, is re-emerging as an independent non-profit corporation.

Originally it grew out of the Spokane Council of Ecumenical Ministries and underwent a period with volunteer leaders and losing its nonprofit status.

Skyler began to volunteer with and became president of the Interfaith Council in 2015, bringing his commitment to interfaith interaction.

The council began to offer educational events, particularly "Meet the Neighbors" gatherings with the Sikh Temple, the Spokane Islamic Center, Temple Beth Shalom, the Spokane Buddhist Church, the Buddhist Sravasti Abbey, Bethel African American Episcopal Church, the Spokane Tribe and St. John's Episcopal Cathedral.

More than 600 came to the Spokane Islamic Center last spring, and recently many gathered at the new Sikh Temple Gurdwara Shree Guru Nanak Darbar in Spokane Valley.

The next Meet the Neighbors is at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 7, at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, a second visit there to learn more about the Jewish faith.

Skyler, who grew up in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Portland, now belongs to the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John.

"The cathedral and Episcopal Diocese of Spokane understand, as U.S. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said recently, that God said for us to love all, so 'love all, y'all.' Our diocese is committed to serve and walk with people of other faiths," Skyler said.

"Faith can change how we relate to others, inviting us to meet and love others," he said.

At Eastern Washington University, Skyler studied anthropology and philosophy with a focus on religion, graduating in 2012. On that campus, he helped start an interfaith student organization.

In 2011, he did an internship with Harvard Divinity School's Pluralism Project in Boston and studied millennial values at Georgetown University. When he returned to finish at EWU, he worked two years at its Office for Global Initiatives.

Since 2013, he has worked as the legislative assistant and policy analyst for Spokane City Council member Karen Stratton.

Skyler also participated in the North American Interfaith Network and in the 2016 Parliament



Skyler Oberst connects local and global interfaith involvement.

of World Religions.

After assuming leadership of the Interfaith Council, he learned in a survey of members that they wanted interfaith encounters, so he explored ways to do that.

From the Pluralism Project, he knew about the Odyssey Network (interfaith broadcasting) and the World Religions of Greater Boston, but he did not know how to guide interfaith encounters.

Realizing people did not know how to visit a mosque, he made a video to introduce people to the Spokane Islamic Center and provide sensitivity for a visit.

"I work with a community to have them tell their own story. My role is as an advocate and ally," Skyler said.

He has since produced videos to introduce faiths in Spokane before Meet the Neighbor visits. Each video is an introductory presentation, giving background on the faith, its history in Spokane, asking questions and giving answers, introducing food and other cultural aspects.

Before a visit to a faith community, a video is available for people to view through Facebook and YouTube, using social media to reach millennials and others.

"Each community hosts a gathering and tells its story," he said.

Last spring, the Spokane Hindu Society, for example, had an afternoon event that included chants,

drumming, a Hindu ceremony, a children's presentation, a Powerpoint on Hinduism, and a time for food and fellowship.

Skyler invites guests to mingle with members of the faith community and make at least one new friend.

Hoping others will replicate this model across the United States, he has the videos archived with the State Department.

He also worked a bit with a Department of Justice and White House-initiated project, "Know Your Neighbor," for national groups interested in multi-faith encounters on a grassroots level.

"I'm honored that our program is an example for others," he said.

"I see the Spokane Interfaith Council connecting with the World Council of Churches, National Buddhist Council, National Council of Churches, Interfaith Youth Core, United Religions Initiative and more," he said.

"I hope to build better understanding. I love meeting neighbors, hearing stories, exploring the faith communities in Spokane," he said. "I love learning that the Sikh and Buddhist communities have been in Spokane more than 100 years. They have shaped Spokane's history and will shape its future."

Skyler believes people are reconnecting with spiritual elements of life.

"It's not important where we sit on Sunday but what we do with our faith on week days," he said. "St. Francis said faith is not about words but about putting our faith into practice."

"It's easy in Spokane to be siloed in our congregations or nonprofits," he said.

Skyler also keeps learning through travels. In the past year, he met with leaders in Israel and Palestine last October; did research on indigenous Afro-Caribbean faith traditions during a visit to Havana, Cuba, last January/February, and gave a presentation on Meet the Neighbors at the G20 Interfaith Summit during the G20 meeting of world leaders at Potsdam, Germany, in June.

He will visit Capetown, South Africa, in December to learn about apartheid and how to keep literal and figurative walls from being built.

His experience of walls dividing people in places like Israel/Palestine, Berlin and Havana confirms his desire to build community in Spokane, noting that "we can help build community before walls are constructed."

"Walls limit our ability to work as good neighbors," he said. "In some places with walls, people do not meet their neighbors. If we are to have a healthy community, we need to meet our neighbors, to break bread, to meet people with no fixed agenda, to tell and hear stories, and to create the stories we want for our future."

"There is power in sharing stories," he said.

As a next-generation interfaith leader, Skyler is also helping plan the Parliament of World Reli-

gions, which will be Nov. 1 to 8, 2018, in Toronto.

"I see a shift in how interfaith work is done, moving from celebrating to community building," he said. "We need to work with neighbors if we are to brighten our tomorrow."

"I am curious about our brothers and sisters across the world and different ways they do things," he said. "I want to develop tools to build community and test ideas."

"Given the rise of hate, interfaith, multi-faith and pluralism work needs to be done with discipline, so stories empower and compel," he said. "The larger interfaith movement needs to avoid tokenism."

"The Interfaith Council's work ebbs and flows, sensitive to community needs and its own capacity to promote religious literacy and interreligious engagement," Skyler said, reminding himself and others that "the arc of history bends to justice, but it's not a straight line."

"We are called to heal a broken world," he said.


For information, call 360-989-8217 or visit spokaneinterfaith-council.org.

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Ministry of Benedictine sister has had impact on area outreach centers

By Theresa Henson of the Monastery of St. Gertrude

Forty friends, family and ministry partners gathered recently in Boise to celebrate the birthday, monastic profession and ministries of Sister Meg Sass of the Benedictine community of the Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho.

At the event, Mary Schmidt, St. Gertrude's CEO of external ministries, announced the creation of the Sister Meg Sass Honorary Fund to help sustain the Monastery of St. Gertrude.

"Sister Meg has made a difference for many people," she said, telling how she has lifted people up, inspired them by her example and reminded them of God's love.

The fund will help sustain her home at St. Gertrude's, which is a spiritual home to nearly 20,000 who visit each year to seek spiritual inspiration and growth.

Raised in Twin Falls, she began to explore her vocation, completing her junior and senior years of high school and starting college as a novice. After finishing a bachelor's degree at Gonzaga University and the University of Idaho, she made her first monastic profession in 1962. Then Sister Meg taught school for 13 years before heading to Chicago's Loyola University for a master's degree in pastoral studies.

In Chicago, she experienced different cultures and had her first engagement with social organization.

Back in Lewiston, Idaho, Sister Meg began working with an ecumenical team of ministers, focused on improving care of the elderly.

Soon she was the head of parish social ministries for the Diocese of Spokane.

In that role, she helped found an outreach services center called Our Place in 1987. Our Place still serves the West Central neighborhood.



Sr. Meg Sass visits with friends at recent event honoring her.

Sr. Meg developed it after going with a team from neighborhood churches to visit homes and learn about the needs of people.

She carried on that model to develop ecumenical community outreach ministry centers in Medical Lake, Cheney, Spokane Valley Outreach (now Spokane Valley Partners), Caritas in North Spokane now at the Spokane Friends Church, Omega for the Garfield neighborhood at Emmanuel Presbyterian Church (now closed), and the North Spokane Community Outreach Project, which first served Mead and Riverside School districts, and is now part of the New Hope Center beside Colbert Presbyterian Church.

After 13 years in Spokane, Sister Meg was called to the monastery to be assistant prioress to work with Sister Jean Lalande.

In this role, she was involved in building the Spirit Center, a retreat center that now serves more than 3,000 people a year. They come to retreats in Benedictine spirituality, in spirituality and the arts and for individual or group retreats. Recent and upcoming ones are on iconography, living as a monk in everyday life, a writers' contemplative retreat and an inward

journey in life's second half.

Its two conference rooms and 22 guest rooms use partial solar power, and geothermal heating and cooling.

"Like everyone else in the world, even the monastery is challenged to walk in uncertainty, but we make a commitment and whatever the future brings, God is already there," Sister Meg said.

From 2006 until 2014, she served at the Boise diocesan center as regional coordinator for parish life and faith formation, working with the northern part of the state from Riggins to Canada.

Then she moved back to St. Gertrude's where she is taking an active role in liturgy, especially in playing the organ for Mass and prayer.

Sister Meg said she has an enduring call to prayer in service to the wider world.

"There is so much that we really can do and believe that we can do. We are that leaven. We are that access to God's grace," she said.

"Our prayers and our actions do matter," she said, adding that "if we can all pray together for one thing: that gift of peace, I do believe God hears us."

In comments on the St. Ger-

trude Monastery website, Sister Meg said she has pondered how a monastic community in rural Idaho can change the world.

"There are so many problems in the world we can't even imagine," she said. "Many people don't even have a cup of water. The monastery says maybe we can't fix these problems, but can keep our

commitment to prayer. We can tap into the power of God for whom nothing is impossible.

"I wake up every morning and make a commitment to what God is asking. I promise to listen and then to say yes. There is such a power in commitment," she said.

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UN Day dinner speaker looks at 'Sport and Development'

Bill Smith of the University of Idaho will speak on "Sport and Development" for Spokane's United Nations Day Dinner from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 24, in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga. The Gonzaga University Model UN students will also tell

of their experiences at conferences in 2017.

At the University of Idaho (UI), he chairs the international studies program and teaches on sport and international affairs, international policy and the United Nations. He leads the UI and Washington State

University Model UN programs.

He earned a bachelor's in history at California State University Chico in 1993, a master's in history at WSU in 1996 and a doctoral degree in history at WSU in 2000.

For information, call 313-3610 or email taninchev@gonzaga.edu.

Corazon Scarves holds Nia dancing benefit in Spokane

Corazon Scarves, a fair trade outlet for hand-woven Guatemalan scarves, will hold a "Nia" dancing event, "Strength, Courage and Wisdom," from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 14, at the Women's Club of Spokane,

1428 W. 9th Ave., to raise funds and tell of its programs.

Debbie DuPey, who started Corazon Scarves as a fair-trade outlet for weavers, will teach Nia dancing, which is movement that promotes health, wellness and fitness.

Debbie learned Nia dance at an empowerment program for teenage girls in Guatemala.

For information, call 714-8928 or email info@corazonscarves.com.

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Reformation 500th invites reflection on church life, Christian unity

In tune with Reformer Martin Luther's belief that "next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world," David Kappus, pastor of Central Lutheran, and Paul Bruggemeier, the choir director, recently reflected on the importance of recognizing the 500 years since German theologian Martin Luther posted 95 Theses on the door of the Wittenberg Cathedral.



Paul Bruggemeier and David Kappus

Their church is the venue for the community Lutheran Reformation 500 Hymn Festival on Oct. 29, a musical recognition that honors Luther, who wrote many hymns.

Paul, who has been chancel choir director at Central for 25 years, said the church usually holds a hymn festival in the fall.

This year, it coincides with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, so they joined area Lutheran churches to plan the festival on the Sunday closest to Reformation Day, which is Oct. 31.

Over the 500 years, the Protestant and Catholic relationship has improved since Luther posted the theses in 1517 to challenge practices in the Roman Catholic Church at that time, like the sale of indulgences to buy forgiveness for sin.

"The 500th year of anything is something to note," said David, who comes from German roots in North Dakota and lived many years in Minnesota.

Ordained in 1990 after studying at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, he served Lutheran churches in Kendrick and Julietta, Idaho, Reardan and Coeur d'Alene before coming to Central Lutheran.

"The break brought by the Reformation was harsh and painful on both sides, but over the years, we continued to communicate," he said. "In 1999, the Catholic Church's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation issued the Joint Declaration on Justification by Faith, which resolved many issues that sparked the Reformation, including the role of 'works in salvation.'"

"For Lutherans, good works are the result of gratitude for gifts God has freely given," David said. "In the Catholic tradition, good works often played a more direct

role in the path to salvation."

People then did not know the Scriptures because they were in Latin and Greek, Paul said. Luther translated them into German, and, with the invention of the Gutenberg printing press, the Scriptures were spread so people could read them.

"Other reformers disagreed with Luther, and other churches have continued to split off," said Paul, who grew up in Emmanuel Lutheran in Walla Walla, where his mother was choir director.

In 1968, he earned a degree in music at Eastern Washington University (EWU), and then taught band 11 years at Sacajawea Junior High, chorus 20 years at Ferris High School, EWU and Whitworth as adjunct instructor.

Speaking on the impact of the Reformation, David said that in any religious tradition, people gather and there are disagreements.

"Luther said the Church is always to be about reforming. God always is at work in the church to create something new," he added. "The Church continues to reform and change itself to model itself more closely to God in Christ revealed to us in Scriptures."

David said Catholic and Protestant churches have come a long way. Pope Francis celebrated a service of prayer with the Lutheran World Federation on Reformation Day 2016 in Lund, Sweden.

"We still do not celebrate communion together," he said, "but it is remarkable how we have grown closer out of more than 50 years of intentional dialogue to find common points in life and ministry."

For example, a year ago, the choir from The Madeleine, Paul's

sister's Catholic church in Portland, Ore., brought their choir to sing anthems with Central Lutheran's choir. Paul's sister, who also grew up Lutheran, became Catholic because she taught many years at St. Joseph Catholic School.

Luther wanted to move people in congregations from being spectators, simply listening to trained professionals sing and preach, Paul said.

"There used to be screens in German churches, separating the congregation from the celebrants," said Paul. "Luther believed in the priesthood of all believers. So he wrote many hymns using tunes familiar to the common folk and easy for everyone to sing."

"Vatican II moved the altar to the transept in the midst of the

people, rather than against the east wall," said Paul.

David credits Pope Francis, as a Jesuit out in the world responding to human needs, with moving forward the unity of the Christian Church.

He pointed to some of the ways the Christian Church is finding unity.

Presbyterians, Reformed Churches, the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal, Moravian and Lutheran churches have signed Full Communion Documents in recent years.

A Lutheran pastor serves St. David's Episcopal, and there are joint Lutheran-Presbyterian ministries in Fairfield and Potlatch.

In 1988, the ELCA formed when the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church united.

"Although we are new as a denomination, we had deep roots in German, Swedish, Norwegian and other culturally based churches," he said.

One way churches find unity is through outreach, David added. For example, Central Lutheran houses a Clothes Closet,

and serves with other churches through Meals on Wheels and Crosswalk. Wednesdays from June through August, it has barbecues with homeless neighbors.

For information, call 624-9233 or email office@clspokane.org.

National Lutherans plan Oct. 31 commemoration

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton co-hosts a commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation on Tuesday, Oct. 31, at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The event will be available online via livestream.

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Jolie Monasterio's ministries are a progression rooted in faith

By Sr. Sue Orłowski, SP

As Jolie Monasterio's life twists and turns, she asks for God's help. Her Catholic roots motivate her to use her gifts in ministry.

After serving parishes in youth ministry and sacred dance, her ministry is now as a case manager at The Women's Hearth, a day center in downtown Spokane where homeless and low-income women find safety, community and services, including referrals, recovery support, activities, art, music, hygiene supplies, showers, computer access and more.

The Hearth is one of five Transitions Programs, started by the Sisters of Providence, the Sisters of the Holy Names, the Sinsinawa Dominicans and the Franciscan Sisters of Philadelphia. The other programs are Transitional Living Center, Miryam's House, the New Leaf Bakery Café and EduCare.

The Hearth gives a respectful, positive atmosphere for women who come during the day. It creates community and gives women skills to succeed in life, Jolie said. It engages them where they are in their lives with few demands and accepts them where they are, be it homeless, addicted or mentally ill. It celebrates their successes.

"Every day I start with prayer time so I can be centered and open to whomever or whatever crosses my path," said Jolie. "I pray for strength to encounter everyone I meet with compassion and I ask the Spirit to bless me with wisdom to know what to say or how to deal with a situation. The prayer feeds me all day.

"I try to be in God's presence throughout the day," said Jolie. "I often take a few minutes in my office to meditate and try to make prayer a part of everything I do."

At the end of the day, she closes with an Ignatian examen, or prayerful reflection.

"I thank God for the women who have been put in my path and for the situations I encountered. I ask Jesus for forgiveness for my failings during the day, and thank God for the spirit of wisdom and guidance that has helped me be with and for others," she said.

Jolie finds her ministries and skills interconnected.

"I did retreats, worked in a parish, the diocese and campus ministry while working on a master's degree in spirituality and spiritual direction," said Jolie, who took classes at Gonzaga University in the school year and worked on the arts and liturgical dance in Berkeley in the summer.

At Gonzaga, she started Revelations, a sacred dance group for students to express God's Word artistically. People from Spokane, including some from her parish,



Jolie Monasterio's ministry is now with the Hearth.

St. Ann's, joined the group.

At Gonzaga, she also did an internship in campus ministry with Fr. Sev Westbrook, pastor of St. Rose Church in Cheney and campus minister at Eastern Washington University.

After graduating from Gonzaga in 1998 with a master's in spirituality with an emphasis on dance, Jolie worked with the Ministry Institute's sabbatical program. In 2003, she worked at Kaufer's to have time to care for her three children, Sean, Liam and Ciara.

Having a special needs child, Liam, led to her work in 2008 as coordinator for L'arche Spokane. She also worked with The Arc.

Over the years, she has done a variety of ministries.

"When I leave a ministry, I trust the Spirit is calling me to use my gifts somewhere else," she said.

In 2012, a St. Ann's parishioner told her Transitions needed a case worker at the Women's Hearth, where she uses her many skills.

Because of her facility with languages and knowledge of countries where they are spoken, she teaches classes at the Hearth on world cultures.

Because of her skill in liturgical dance, she teaches classes there on movement and meditation.

She has also facilitated classes on emotions to help Hearth clients accept their emotions "as a beautiful part of themselves."

Along with working at The Women's Hearth full-time, Jolie works 10 hours a week as the director of religious education at St. Ann's, planning programs for children and teens, and intergenerational programs for families.

Being open to God's lead, she said her life is filled with life-giving experiences and challenges.

Her family moved from Wisconsin to Los Angeles, then to Idaho for her high school years. When her father, with whom she was close, died, she was put in foster care. Two older siblings were on their own. A younger brother was with her mother.

She was the only child in her family baptized Catholic. When her father's family immigrated to the United States, they raised him and his siblings Catholic outside the home but retained Jewish traditions in the home.

After high school, Jolie attended Carroll College in Helena, Mont., majoring in international relations. She studied Latin, Greek and French.

Because Carroll was Catholic, she had to take theology classes. Halfway through her studies, she said "the ministry bug bit me, so I changed my major to theology and ministry."

Jolie still loves languages. She is "fairly fluent" in French and has a working understanding of Spanish, German, Hebrew, Latin and Greek. She has also studied Chinese and Arabic, and is studying Swahili.

At Carroll, her love of liturgical dance was born when she worked at Legendary Lodge, a diocesan summer camp, in Seeley Lake, Mont., with youth who wanted to express themselves with movement and dance.

Two priests there introduced her to social services in nursing homes, shelters, soup kitchens, youth ministry and with transients living under a bridge. Because Helena was a small town, her mother learned about it, gave her blessing and supported her giving away clothing to people in need.

While at Carroll, she spent a week with the Benedictines of Cottonwood, Idaho, and felt a call to religious life. She started the process for admission, but one day at a retreat went up the hill behind the monastery and heard God say, "Not yet." Although she did not enter the Benedictines, she continues to visit the sisters.

From being a campus ministry intern at Carroll, she became director of religious education at St. Francis Xavier parish in Helena. A year later, she worked in Missoula at Christ the King parish, which housed the University of Mon-


tana campus ministry. There, she studied dance and connected to a sacred dance guild in Berkeley.

Conversing with professors and staff at Missoula, she was able to deal with her life, faith and issues in her past.

Jolie said the Maryknoll Community charism, "to go where you are needed but not necessarily wanted, and stay there until you are wanted but no longer needed" is her motto.

For information, call 688-5465 or email Joliese99202@gmail.com.

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Camp for childhood cancer survivors engages them in typical activities

By Kaye Hult

Childhood cancer survivors can participate in a typical week of camp activities—swimming, archery, a climbing wall, boating and more—and their families can rest assured that the camp is medically supervised with trained oncology staff on site every day.

In 2005, Kari Allen began volunteering at Camp Journey, an outdoor camp experience tailored expressly to needs of these children. In 2009, she became director of this program, which has been held at Ross Point Camp and Conference Center in Post Falls, Idaho, since 2005.

This year, it was held the first week of August. The camp usually has 120 campers from Eastern Washington, North Idaho, and Western Montana.

Kari, who grew up in Spokane and went to camp as a child, completed a two-year program in recreation at Green River Community College in Auburn, Wash. She spent much of her life involved with Camp Fire.

Directing Camp Journey allows her to use her love of camping to provide children with the opportunity not only to camp, but also to develop independence and confidence, learn new skills and make memories to last a lifetime. “Meals are family-style,” she said.

A couple of staff members sit with campers at each table and make sure help is there for those needing it. They teach manners for family-style eating, such as how to pass the food platters and how to make conversation.

The theme for Camp Journey this year was “Medieval Times,” so campers had three outdoor cooking sessions, learning to cook pizza on a stick, to make a tepee fire and to use fire safely.

They also learned about the history of compasses, which were invented in medieval times. They learned how to use one and then used it to find objects hidden around the camp.

Pediatric cancer children are surviving longer, Kari said. Some suffer from cognitive delays and other physical issues. They may look healthy, but they live with limits.

The children have much in common because of having similar experiences, whether they are actively receiving cancer therapy, have completed it, or have received a bone marrow transplant or stem cell therapy.

The campers can bring one

SNAP has funds

SNAP has extra funds for essential home repairs, said Craig Howard, community relations manager with SNAP, Spokane County’s nonprofit community action program.

It has been allotted more funds for repairs for safety or accessibility needs. Repairs must be completed by the end of 2017.

Repairs may include furnaces, electrical or plumbing issues, broken doors and windows, wheelchair ramps and modifications to bathrooms and kitchens for accessibility. SNAP also has free smoke detectors, said Craig.

For information, call 456-7627, ext. 2434 (repairs) or ext 5242 (smoke detectors), or visit www.snapwa.org.



Kari Allen

other person with them—a sibling or a buddy. In addition, siblings who have lost a brother or sister to cancer in the past two years also come to the camp.

“**The mix ends up** being about 60 percent cancer survivors and 40 percent others,” she said.

The camp includes two sessions: a four-day day camp for children aged five through seven and a week-long resident camp for those from seven to 17.

For 16-and-17-year-olds, there is a leader-in-training (LIT) program so they can return as counselors.

Camp Journey is free to campers and their families because of donations and because they use an all-volunteer staff, Kari explained.

The staff includes 75 to 80 volunteers, from ages 18 to 75.

“We recruit from universities,” Kari said. “The wisdom of older counselors blends with energy of younger ones.”

One young man who attended camp brought two buddies. One was a quiet boy. It was difficult to tell how much of the Camp Journey experience he was taking in. This year, all three of them came back. The quiet one has become an engineer, she said.

“**We become a family**,” Kari explained. “If I hear that a child who had been at camp is having health issues, I’ll contact the volunteers. They will send cards or get in touch to offer their support. We work with families.”

Kari has learned that parents are so connected to that child that it’s

hard to let them go to the camp.

“Having a cell phone is a bonus. I tell the parents they can contact me. I’ll text them a picture so they can see how their child is settling in,” she said.

“**Because of an illness**, I have a scarred leg. A camper noticed and wanted to know what kind of cancer I had. That scar had bothered me. I felt humbled when I realized it was nothing compared to the experiences of these cancer survivors,” said Kari.

She herself became a cancer survivor a few years ago.

“The relationships I had with my cancer campers helped me not feel helpless. They made my experience easier,” she said.

Camp Journey’s roots go back to 1985, when an all-volunteer camp for children diagnosed with cancer called Camp Betchacan was created.

They met in varying campgrounds over the years, including N-Sid-Sen, Lutherhaven and the YMCA camp.

Eventually, the American Cancer Society (ACS) took over the funding and programming.

The American Camp Association (ACA) brought the camp to the Ross Point Baptist Camp in 2005, the year Kari began volunteering there.

Abby Wadlow was the camp director then. Her mother had been Kari’s counselor when she was a young camper. That friendship led to Kari becoming a volunteer counselor when she returned to the Spokane area from near Cincinnati, Ohio.

When the camp moved to Ross Point, they decided to use volunteers again. It allowed staff to focus on the specific needs of campers and to adapt the program to the clientele.

Kari filled in for Abby as director during one of her absences and then became director.

In 2014, the ACA decided to withdraw its funding from the camp. Those involved locally did not want to see it close, so they recreated it as Camp Journey.

The camp continues to be ACA-accredited. It also belongs to the Children’s Oncology Camping Association (COCA).

“Ross Point Camp works well,” she said. The site is fairly level,



Camper experiences more than face painting.

and they have golf carts to take the more fragile campers around.

“Because the camp often rents their space, they know how to make it welcoming for us,” she said.

For example, the cleaning crew helps keep the place as sterile as possible, including disinfecting doorknobs.

While many camps are in the middle of nowhere, Ross Point is in the middle of a development, just off the freeway.

“One day, when a session was

beginning, a young boy from Seattle obviously was not well when he arrived. His father was distraught. John Batchelder, the Ross Point director, suggested I call 911,” Kari said.

The ambulance, which came right away, turned off its siren so as not to disturb other campers, who were at supper. The ambulance took him to the hospital to stabilize him.

“Firemen who came suggested the other campers might want to explore the fire truck. This allowed us to suggest that the truck was there as a special treat for the children,” said Kari.

She appreciates that Camp Journey is a non-denominational camp. She thinks that her growing up Lutheran helped her to be a “God believer” open to accepting more than one way to believe.

When she married, she moved to Ohio, near her husband’s family. Her children were born and mostly raised there. Now she is glad to return to the Spokane area, where her children can come to know her family.

For information, call 509-863-7379 or email kari@rosspoint.org.

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Disasters may overwhelm, but we need to keep attentive and to act

Wow! Wow! Wow!

The onslaught of multiple hurricanes, multiple earthquakes, slaughter of Rohingya, monsoon flooding killing thousands in South Asia, massive U.S. wild fires, shootings at the Freeman school and a Tennessee church, terrorism on the London metro, nonviolent protest during the national anthem, the PBS reminder of the Vietnam war and talk of redistributing more wealth to the most wealthy via tax code changes...

Will all that silence and disempower us?

Amid these mind-numbing traumas, two world leaders engage in verbal warfare, threatening everyone with apocalyptic devastation, as if nature hasn't done that in the Caribbean, Mexico, South Asia, Texas and Florida. We don't need more trauma.

Hurricane Harvey destruction and response disappeared as Irma cut a swath through the Caribbean and Florida, followed by Hurricane Maria.

In Puerto Rico, power is out. Generators are coming. Roads are blocked. Chain saws are buzzing. Houses are demolished. Shelters are open. Neighbors who never spoke are sharing what they have. One is using a car battery to charge cell phones so people can call family. Trucks are filled with supplies, but need drivers.

We hear of scores killed by hurricanes,

hundreds by earthquakes and have barely registered the 1,200 lost in floods in India, Nepal and Bangladesh after the worst monsoon floods in years.

In Mexico, rescue workers who dug through collapsed buildings were soon joined by Japanese rescuers, strangers from half a world away.

FEMA's declaring wildfire damage in northwestern Montana a disaster will mean help to restore destroyed homes, businesses, bridges, power and phone lines, cell towers, a gas pipeline and watersheds.

Those interconnected through the network of faith communities know funds they give are directed to people in need, especially after the immediate response of the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) ends.

Those agencies' first response is water, blankets, hygiene, temporary housing, search and rescue, meals, health services and emotional support. Military ships and planes are delivering supplies.

Hundreds of thousands of homes, businesses, schools and hospitals were destroyed in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Dominica, Cuba. Most of Barbuda's 1,800 people were evacuated to neighboring Antigua.

Still, tens of thousands of people struggle to meet basic needs in the Caribbean since

images of the cycling storms and video of the winds lashing and rains pummeling are off our screens. Now we see heaps of unimaginable damage. We sense the trauma.

Beyond prayers, many in faith communities seek ways to respond. Most congregations have taken offerings, the seeds for long-term recovery. Will the deflection of news from one political storm to another slow response?

We must keep a focus on our responsibility to respond for the long term, to donate and eventually to go to help rebuild from the devastation.

The various faith relief agencies respond immediately with water, food cleanup supplies and hygiene supplies. Then they assess needs of survivors and offer direct assistance, home repair, home rebuilding, health care and more.

It's easy to be overwhelmed about what to do and how to respond in the "eye" of the disasters and immediate devastation. It's helpful to remember that there are infrastructures for disaster response even when local infrastructures have been devastated.

What's important is to find avenues for action, ways to give funds and use talents to meet ongoing needs.

There's much to do once media attention dissipates. We must keep up communica-

tion through the faith and NGO agencies.

If we're overwhelmed, it's easy to give in to inaction and feel hopeless. That's where our faith communities are also vital in reminding us of our call to act and care as expressions of God's love.

Our faith communities also remind us to do what we do best. Amid disasters we need to carry on the struggle for justice and peace, to challenge racism, to end violence, to welcome strangers, to feed the hungry, to shelter the homeless and more.

So some other good news might help:

- Africans are planting a 10-mile-wide green wall of acacia, drought-resistant trees across 5,000 miles of Africa to halt desertification so people can have shade, plant gardens and conserve water.

- Earth Ministry has announced that the challenges to the proposed coal export terminal in Longview to protect the air, water and communities along the rail line have been paid off. The Department of Ecology (DOE) has denied the water quality permit, so the largest coal export terminal in North America cannot be built.

So it's up to each of us to find our niche and keep up the faithful challenges, while we also respond to the dire emergencies that have recently devastated so many.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Bishop sees church, world are at a turning point, receiving God's love

Reflections summarized from the sermon of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at the Sept. 16 installation of Kristen Kuempel as Bishop of the Eastern Washington Idaho Synod:

A common thread in the scriptures chosen for the installation is the theme of a turning point. In Isaiah 43, the Israelites are languishing in Babylon. The people at the Texas Gulf Coast know what it is to be in exile and need a word of promise. Isaiah said the Israelites would return to their land.

In Ephesians, the people find that in God there is breadth, depth and height. God's imagination is greater than ours.

In the Gospel of John, we read of the

turning point of Jesus' resurrection with Mary Magdalene, in the liminal time between night and morning. In the in-between time, she learns what God has in store. There are times we need to get out of the way and let God be God.

We are at a turning point for the Eastern Washington Idaho Synod and the world.

While people are flooded in Texas, I stepped off the plane here in the Northwest to the smell of smoke.

I was in Charlottesville, Va., and it was wonderful to see the church at work there to bring the Good News in all contexts.

Now I'm here in an area some people may refer to as the "godless" Northwest, but I see that God is here.

We are called by name, known and loved by the Lord of life. When we recognize Jesus in others, it's an Easter moment. We are freed by love to serve our neighbor.

Ephesians talks of the breadth, depth and height of God's love.

God loves everyone, the poor, vulnerable and persecuted, and the rich, powerful and persecuting. Nothing is outside the reach of God's love that extends beyond the foundation of the earth, beyond history. God's love was higher than the uprising in the Garden and God's love brought us back into the fold. God's love is deeper than all.

There is no God-forsaken place or people.

God claims us and promises the depth,

breadth and height of God's love. God is relentless in searching for us.

Today, when whatever the conditions, God lavishes love. It's hard for us to believe God could love that completely.

God's love is complete and sufficient for all of us. There's nothing we can do to earn it.

We look at the world and it's frightening. Isaiah says do not fear, don't worry, I'm here by you. Don't be afraid.

We all need pray to support our new bishop. No human can do this job alone.

**Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America**

Full sermon at ewaidsynod.org/home.html

Newsletter Excerpts

Sounding Board

Letter to Editor

Reflecting on events in Charlottesville, Virginia, it seems the torch-bearing marchers clearly intended to evoke memories of Klan rallies from the past.

Listening to some rally leaders describe their beliefs ... is disturbing. Even more disturbing is the fact that there are groups like these in Washington, even in Spokane. Racist posters have appeared in different parts of town in the last year and racist graffiti has appeared recently on the campus of WSU, and even an elementary school. This is not just a problem in the deep South.

Recently researching how many hold such views, I could not find any conclusive data. According to one study, 10 percent of whites were sympathetic. I don't know if that is low or high. What I do know is that ideas like this spread when the 90 percent remain silent.

It is important that people speak up to articulate clearly that the views of these groups do not reflect our values as Americans nor as Christians. Our nation's founding documents note that "all men are created equal," and the Bible is clear that all humanity are children of God, and, as we learned as children, "red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight."

It is particularly important to those who are in the majority population—to those who are Anglo—that we speak up when someone in a minority population is being harassed or threatened, whether by torches and marches, or inappropriate jokes or other comments.

Scripture calls us to "speak up for those who cannot speak up for themselves."

That includes speaking up for those in minority populations faced with bigotry or

activities that instill fear.

It's not enough to simply tweet opposition to racism, post something on Facebook, or write an e-note and think we've addressed the problem. We have to do more. I encourage you, in your sphere of influence, to actively express your belief in racial justice, and to work towards it. I'll be encouraging our church leadership to consider what we should do to both learn more and actively work against hate and toward racial justice.

**The Rev. Geoff Helton
Audubon Park United Methodist**

As one hurricane has followed another, the message from leaders of most cities has been, "The cost of a disaster will be less than the cost to minimize disaster."

The value of lost property plus lost work equals the cost of a disaster. Much is not included such as the cost of 1) human mental and physical damage that shows up later, 2) volunteer hours, equipment and health, 3) lost land and sea animal life and habitat, 4) pollution from sewage, household chemicals, factory and hospital waste, and 5) giving fatigue.

Most people know this joke: a person stands in a flood and prays, "God save me!" Three rescuers are refused because "God will save me." The person dies and confronts God only to learn that the three refused were the answer.

We have engineers, meteorologists, climatologists, insurance analysts, geologists, and more who warn us of disasters ahead. If we continue ignoring their predictions, be prepared to do some explaining to God about refusing the sent help.

Do not accept any politician or community leader's assurance that the cost of doing work to minimize disaster is too high. They speak only of material loss. The cost is far higher. When we love children, our neighbor, and our planet, we make the necessary changes. If we don't, will God speak to us as God spoke to Cain? "What have you done? Listen, your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground!" Genesis 4:10.

Let us do what we can, where we are, with what we've got. Require an answer of our leaders and of ourselves to the question of how prepared we are for disaster. Don't accept the common response that it costs less to rebuild than to prepare.

**The Rev. Gen Heywood
Veradale United Church of Christ**

In Romans 12, Paul reminds us that "lip service" is not enough. A vibrant and living faith means acting all week long as though we believe what we say on Sunday morning. Whether in the church (our church needs each of us to take an active part in worship, study, and service) or in our communities (from volunteering, to caring for neighbors, to remembering that we "re-present" Christ in every single interaction with another person), this is our primary work as followers of Jesus. I can think of nothing more vital to the healing of our world than this.

**The Rev. Jane Schmoetzer, rector
All Saints Episcopal, Richland**

We are outraged and express deep sadness and disappointment that the President recently chose to discontinue protec-

tion of our 800,000 Dreamers through Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). While we understand Congress has many tasks to attend to this session, because the window of opportunity is limited to six months, we urge Congress to pass the bipartisan Dream Act of 2017.

The Dreamers are integral to our society as members of our families, our neighbors, our students and friends. How can we stand by and watch them be expelled, banished to countries foreign to them?

They are talented teachers in our schools, competent and compassionate caregivers in our retirement communities, our colleagues and employees. It is impossible to imagine our schools, local hotels, restaurants and businesses, our healthcare systems, armed services and first responders in emergencies without their leadership and skilled commitment.

Will we simply turn our heads in the face of another blatant decision supporting racism?

We encourage people committed to justice, respect for and love of neighbor—to contact Congress to urge them to ensure the Dream Act of 2017 becomes law, to write letters to editors and to join with others in prayer services and in local demonstrations in support of the 800,000 Dreamers and the Dream Act of 2017.

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Calendar of Events

- Oct 4** • **Jer Swigart Lecture:** "Waging Peace in a Divided World," Weyerhaeuser at Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-3275, 838-7870
- Oct 4-Nov 15** • **"Spirituality 101,"** Kathy Finley, author of eight books on practical spirituality and former Gonzaga Religious Studies teacher of Christian spirituality, Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, 12:30 to 2 p.m., kathymitchfinley@gmail.com
- Oct 5** • **Caffe Affogato Community Day Benefit,** 10 percent of proceeds go to the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 19 W. Main, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., 838-7870, • **Town Hall Meetings on Alzheimer/Dementia plans,** East Central Community Center, 500 S. Stone, 9:30 to 11 a.m., 1912 Center, 412 E. 3rd, Moscow, 3 to 4:30 p.m. • **Roberto Mendoza Perez Lecture,** "Human Rights in Mexico: How U.S. Policies Affect State Violence, Militarization and Displacement," Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 6:30 to 9 p.m., 777-4765
- Oct 5, 19** • **Peace & Justice Action Committee,** 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7879
- Oct 6** • **Town Hall Meetings on Alzheimer/Dementia state plans,** Community Action Partnership, 124 New 6th in Lewiston, 9:30 to 11 a.m., Lake City Center, 1916 N. Lakewood in Coeur d'Alene, 2 to 3:30 p.m.
- Oct 7** • **Spokane Coalition of Color Candidate Forum** for City of Spokane Valley, Spokane Community College, Lair, 1810 N. Greene St., 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. • **Veradale Harvest Dinner,** Veradale United Church of Christ, 611 N. Progress Rd., 5 to 6 p.m., 926-7173 or cmleadingham@gmail.com • **Partnering for Progress' Annual Into Africa Auction,** Mirabeau Park Hotel, 5:30 p.m., 720-8404, partneringforprogress.org • **"Sangeetha Lahari – A Musical Wave,"** South Asia Cultural Association, Unity Spiritual Center, 2900 S. Bernard, 6:30 to 9 p.m., sacaspokane@gmail.com • **Art @ Origin Festival,** Origin Church, 5115 S. Freya St., 12 noon to 4 p.m., 448-1311
- Oct 7-8** • **Turner Lectures,** "Indian Land, Cosmic Balance and Individual Salvation," George Tinker, professor of American Indian cultures and religions at Iliff Seminary, Denver, Englewood Christian, 511 N 44th Ave, Yakima
- Oct 10** • **Town Hall Meetings on Alzheimer/Dementia state plans,** Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate in Richland, 2 to 3:30 p.m., Harmon Center, 101 N. 65th Ave., Yakima, 3 to 4:30 p.m. • **Exploring Privilege,** Gonzaga's Hemmingson Center 312, 2 to 4 p.m., gihs@gonzaga.edu
- Oct 10-11** • **Kathy Nieto,** Inspiration, Catholicism and Humor, St. Joseph Parish, 4521 N. Arden Rd., Otis Orchards, 9:15 a.m. and 7 p.m., 926-7153
- Oct 11** • **"Miracle of the Sun: 100 Years of Fatima,"** Silent Day of Prayer, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S. Ben Burr, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 448-1224, ihrc.net • **"West Side Story,"** Civic Theatre, benefit for The Ministry Institute, 313-5763
- Oct 12** • **"Difficult Decisions and Document Organization: Getting It Together Before You Go,"** IHRC, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., 448-1224, ihrc.net • **Documentary Screening,** "Free Angela and All Political Prisoners," Gonzaga's Hemmingson Auditorium, 6 p.m., gonzaga.edu/justice
- Oct 13** • **"Spoken River,"** Spokane Riverkeeper benefit, readings by Shawn Vestal, Maya Jewell Zeller and Jack Nisbet, and a River Hero award, Mukogawa Institute, 4000 W. Randolph, 6 to 8 p.m., 835-5211, latisha@cforjustice.org
- Oct 13-16, 20-22** • **"The Elephant Man,"** Cowles Auditorium, Whitworth, 777-4374, kdawson@whitworth.edu
- Oct 14** • **"Strength, Courage and Wisdom,"** Nia dancing and benefit for Corazon Scarves, Women's Club of Spokane, 1428 W. 9th, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 714-8928 • **NAACP Spokane Freedom Fund Banquet,** Northern Quest Casino, Airway Heights, 6 p.m., spokanenaacp@gmail.com, 209-2425 • **KYRS Silent Auction Gala,** Hamilton Studios, 1427 W. Dean, 7 p.m., 747-3012
- Oct 15** • **NAACP Spokane membership meeting,** 35 W. Main, 7 p.m., 209-2425
- Oct 17** • **Spokane Native-Non-Native Talking Circle,** Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 6 p.m., 795-4910, onepeacemanypaths@gmail.com • **Showing Up for Racial Justice,** 35 W. Main, 6:30 p.m., 838-7870
- Oct 19** • **"13th,"** Documentary Screening, Hemmingson Auditorium, 6 p.m., gihs@gonzaga.edu • **NAACP Spokane Freedom Fund Banquet,** Northern Quest Casino, 100 N. Hayford, Airway Heights, 6 p.m., info@naacpspokane.org
- Oct 19-21** • **"Engaging with Communities for Justice Conference,"** Institute of Hate Studies, Gonzaga University, Hemmingson Center, gonzaga.edu/Academics/hate-studies/conferences-events/
- Oct 20-22** • **Beginning Experience,** Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6910 S. Ben Burr Rd., 534-1797, 230-2091
- Oct 21** • **Greater Spokane Progress Organizing Workshop,** "Mobilizing for Equity, Justice and Community Power," SNAP, 3102 W. Fort Wright Dr., 1 to 5 p.m., 624-5657, anne@spokaneprogress.org • **"Mision Integral," Latino Ministry Workshop,** First Lutheran in Pasco, 9 a.m. to noon, 509-380-7122 • **"Mision Integral," Latino Ministry Workshop,** Celebration Lutheran, East Wenatchee, 2 to 5 p.m., 509-380-7122 • **200th Anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh,** Center Place Event Center, 2426 N. Discovery Pl., 2 to 4 p.m., 270-9210, dhgregory@comcast.net
- Oct 22** • **"Mision Integral," Latino Ministry Workshop,** Celebration Lutheran, East Wenatchee, 2 to 5 p.m., 509-380-7122 • **200th Anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh,** Center Place Event Center, 2426 N. Discovery Pl., 2 to 4 p.m., 270-9210, dhgregory@comcast.net
- Oct 23** • **Healing the Culture,** "Stand Up for Life" Gala and Auction, Fr. Robert Spitzer, SJ, Historic Davenport Hotel, 10 S. Post, 5 p.m., 360-243-3811
- Oct 24** • **United Nations Day Dinner,** "Sport and Development," Bill Smith from the University of Idaho, and Gonzaga Model UN, Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga, 5:30 p.m., 313-3610
- Oct 25** • **Next Steps, Spokane!** "Building Partnerships: Creating a Sustainable and Compassionate Community Together," Unity Spiritual Center, 2900 S. Bernard, 7 p.m., sehalcentered@hotmail.com
- **Spokane Police Accountability and Reform Coalition,** 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- Oct 28** • **Great Pumpkin Race,** Meals on Wheels Spokane, Madison & 18th, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., mowspokane.org/freat-pumpkin-race • **Fall Compost Fair,** Finch Arboretum, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 625-6580, spokaneregionalsolidwaste.org
- Oct 29** • **Reformation 500 Hymn Festival,** Central Lutheran, 512 S. Bernard, 2 p.m., 624-9233 or visit
- Oct 31** • **Spokane Budget Matters Summit,** Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, Gonzaga's Hemmingson Center Ballroom, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 206-262-0973 or visit budgetandpolicy.org
- Nov 1** • **Fig Tree mailing and delivery,** St. Mark's Lutheran, 24th and Grand, 9 a.m., 535-1813
- Nov 2** • **Benefit/Development,** Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon, **Fig Tree Board,** 1 p.m., 535-1813
- Nov 7** • **Meet the Neighbors,** Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave., 7 p.m., 747-3304

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Group plans 'The Washing' to mark the Reformation

For the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Spokane Fatherhood Initiative (SPOFI) and 10:31 Ministries are sponsoring "The Washing - Reformation 2017," which will entail 90 hours of reading God's word in the Bible cover-to-cover and praying for churches and the community, said Mark Andresen of SPOFI.

Eph. 5:26 speaks of washing by the word.

The Washing is planned to create a new spiritual climate in Spokane, said Mark, bringing a season of fruitfulness and unity for ministries in the city.

The Washing starts with a Prayer and Proclamation Rally at 6:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 27,

at New Covenant Fellowship, 5109 N. Adams. It concludes on Tuesday, Oct. 31.

Churches, groups and ministries can sign up to bring three to eight participants to read scriptures and pray for a two-hour session.

For information, call 934-5836 or email gr8prayr@gmail.com.

United Nations Day Dinner

Tuesday, Oct. 24
 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

'Sport and Development'

featuring

Bill L. Smith

University of Idaho

GU Model UN students

Model UN Conferences in 2017

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Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga

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Council facilitates substance abuse education and prevention to save lives

By Deidre Jacobson

When Linda Thompson facilitates a DUI (driving under the influence) Victims Panel and sees lights come on as someone understands consequences of impaired driving, she feels empowered in her work of substance abuse prevention and education.

Linda, the executive director of the Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council (GSSAC) since 1993, said the driving force behind her commitment to help people make positive choices is her wish to honor the life of Trevor, her three-year-old son who was hit and killed by an incapacitated driver in 1986. The driver, who had 17 arrests for driving under the influence (DUI), served only 13 months of a 27-month sentence.

She decided to work on the system, not focus on that person.

GSSAC began in 1982, created by community leaders concerned about the impact of drugs and alcohol. It offers substance abuse prevention, education and advocacy, and awareness of the role of media literacy in prevention.

The legalization of marijuana made her work more difficult because of downsides few see.

"It has not turned out the way it was marketed. Societal costs may outweigh revenue generated by taxes on marijuana," Linda said.

Today, media are saturated with ads and articles that normalize its use, said Linda, a 1971 graduate of Central Valley High School, who attended college two years and was an administrative assistant before going into banking.

Since working at GSSAC, she earned a general studies degree at Eastern Washington University in 1995 and a master's in educational leadership at Gonzaga in 2002. She is also on the board of the Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media for media education.

Linda listed expectations about legalizing marijuana and what has happened.

• People thought the illegal market would end, but it still operates.



Linda Thompson shows display of awards GSSAC has.

• **People thought jails** would be emptied of minor marijuana offenders, but there's no significant reduction in jail population because few minor marijuana offenders were previously jailed.

• **People thought youth access** would be reduced by moving marijuana from black market to a regulated system. While the 2016 Washington State Healthy Youth survey showed no increased use, it showed a decrease in the perception of harm among eighth graders. Social norms and adult role models also affect youth attitudes.

• **People thought production,** processing and retail would be "appropriately sited," but 94 percent of the county is licensed for marijuana processing. Many operations are in neighborhoods.

• **People thought taxes** would generate revenue for prevention, law enforcement and treatment. While funds have been channeled toward substance abuse treatment for targeted groups, public health and research, it is still difficult for many to access treatment, and prevention funds have been cut.

GSSAC struggles to meet needs for education and prevention. Its staff, once 12, is now three because of funding cuts. Its office is now at 200 N. Mullan Rd., Ste. 102, in Spokane Valley.

"While marijuana sales are more than \$4 million per day, GSSAC receives only \$12,000 annually from marijuana tax revenues for prevention education. Of \$336 million in marijuana

tax revenues, \$184 million was moved to the general fund and to help fund schools," said Linda. "It's frustrating because we know what works but don't have resources to make it happen."

Schools, emergency departments and parents see harmful effects of youth usage, she said.

"Marketing shows marijuana use as popular. Marketers know how to attract youth and adults," said Linda, who was glad the recent legislature passed changes to marijuana advertising laws, restricting business signs, outdoor advertising and billboards.

Signs must say only persons 21 years or older may purchase or possess marijuana products, and signs cannot depict plants or products, or use movie or cartoon characters to appeal to children. Ads are also prohibited on public or private vehicles.

Another new law authorizes retail marijuana outlets to give a free lockable drug box to adults and qualifying patients aged 18 to reduce access to youth.

Other new laws include one on impaired driving and one making a fourth (instead of fifth) DUI offense a felony.

Linda, who grew up Presbyterian, said her faith helps her persevere.

She would like more faith groups to be involved.

"Congregations help people in recovery and help people whose lives are impacted by addiction, but they can do more," she said.

They can challenge some proposals, such as a Washington State University in Pullman plan to sell alcohol in its stadium, a bill to expand alcohol service in movie theaters and a bill to expand free alcohol tasting in grocery stores and farmer's markets.

More alcohol consumption locales means alcohol is more accessible to people in recovery. It leads youth to think they can't have a good time without it, she said.

Washington Drug Free Youth (WDFY) is a voluntary drug testing program of GSSAC's Prevention Center. Washington is the 22nd state to offer a Drug-Free Youth Program. There are now 24 chapters in county schools.

WDFY offers youth, in grades six to 12, an incentive to become or remain drug-free. Businesses benefit from drug free youth programs. Members prove they are drug free by voluntarily submitting to random drug tests.

Linda, who served several years on the Governor's Council for Substance Abuse, said impaired driving is on the rise with cell phones. Studies also show one in three drivers has prescribed medications (with potential for impairment), illegal drugs, marijuana or alcohol in their systems as they drive, she said.

"We are not trying to stop le-

galized marijuana, but to keep it away from youth and help them make good choices," Linda said.

"We need programs like Guiding Good Choices, placing professionals in all schools. East Valley and West Central neighborhood coalitions receive funds from the Washington State Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery for student assistants," she said.

Linda envisions a future with churches, schools, businesses and families working together to help youth and adults understand the consequences of their choices.

"I want recovery destigmatized, so people have education and support to live successful lives. I became involved because of my son. I continue for my children, grandchildren and all children," she said. "Lives can be saved."

"Our goal is to reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors," she said. "Nurturing by families, schools, communities and peers leads to commitment and bonding so healthy relationships lead to healthy behaviors."

GSSAC informs people so they can talk their children about their expectations and be role models.

It has resources for families, schools and congregations. Staff are available to do presentations.

For information, call 922-8383 or email lthompson@gssac.org.

November is for writers...



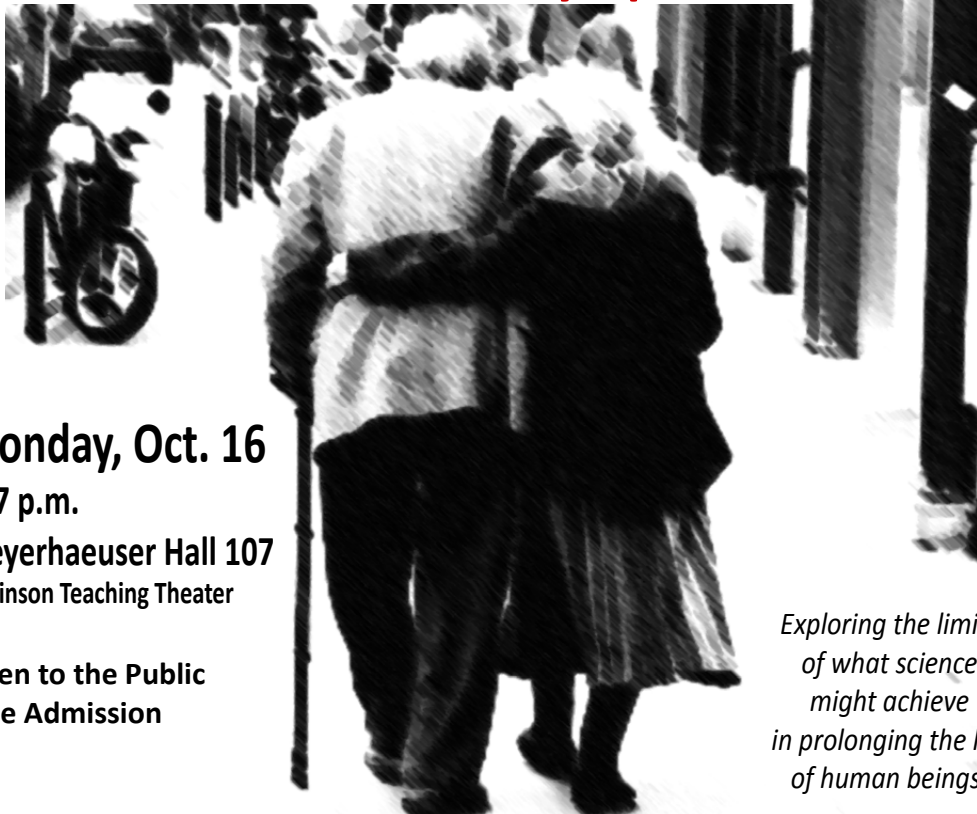
The Creative Word: A Contemplative Retreat for Writers, Nov. 6-10, 2017, Monday 7:30 pm to Friday 1:30 pm

Poetry for the Spiritual Journey, November 17-19, 2017, Friday 7:30 pm to Sunday 1:30 pm

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34th Annual Fundraising Luncheon

Sunday November 5th, 2017

Mukogawa Ft. Wright Commons
4000 W Randolph Rd., Spokane, WA 99224

Social Hour: 12:30 PM • Lunch & Program: 1:30 PM

Program Spotlight:
Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program
Shelly Hahn, Program Director
Rev Ronald & Yvonne Rentner, Foster Parents

There is no cost to attend. You will be invited to give gifts and pledges to support the programs of LCSNW:

Sexual Assault & Family Trauma Response Program
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