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

# Next generation assumes roles

## Police chief apologizes for 'unfortunate' acts

By Mary Stamp

Both at the Martin Luther King Jr. commemorative service and at the unity rally and march on Jan. 21, Spokane's Police Chief Frank Straub Jr. apologized for the unfortunate role people in uniform played in the civil rights campaign, using German shepherds and fire hoses on crowds. He also apologized for acts of police in unfortunate incidents in the City of Spokane.

He observed that police abuses viewed on TV news may have helped ramp up the civil rights movement.

The new city police chief also pledged his commitment and the commitment of more than 270 police officers "to respond to crime with respect for everyone in the city. We must continue to seek equality and justice for all," he said.

"We will strive to serve the whole community and work with you," Frank said. "We encourage your children to join the police department."

At each occasion, Ivan Bush, retired school district equity officer



Kahlil Wilson Moore of Lewis and Clark shares essay on Martin Luther King on page 14.

and member of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Planning Committee for Spokane, commented that it "takes a big person to say 'I'm sorry.'" Ivan also expressed his hope that "the words will become deeds that meet needs."

Spokane Mayor David Condon offered a reminder that King led the civil rights movement and an education movement to build awareness that "injustice has no home here or anywhere" and that the day is a time to come together and celebrate the diverse backgrounds in Spokane.

Spokane City Council president Ben Stuckart said he has fond memories of 20 years of Martin Luther King Jr. Day marches, each year reminding him that "we have work to do" and that "we must strive to be better and see each other as brothers and sisters," as those who gather work for love and peace each day, not just one day a year.

Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich called King "a true hero," on par with Jesus and Gandhi, who addressed evil and who promoted three areas: education, justice and peace.

"King believed in education for  
*Continued on page 7, 8, 14*

## Faith community's long-term response to Hurricane Sandy recovery begins

As part of the response to Hurricane Sandy damage in the Northeast, the humanitarian agency Church World Service began coordinating recovery trainings in New Jersey and New York during January.

Presbyterian Disaster Response and local New York and New Jersey presbyteries are also helping facilitate and host several of the events.

Six workshops are providing those helping communities rebuild and recover with "an overview of long-term recovery, lessons learned and best prac-

tices gathered from decades of experience in large and small disasters," said Barry Shade, associate director for domestic emergency response. "Recovery from a disaster event requires a whole-community approach."

Church World Service (CWS) is working with several agencies to conduct the training. In addition to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), these include the New Jersey Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD), Lutheran Disaster Response, World Renew, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the New

Jersey Emergency Management Agency, United Methodist Committee on Relief and the United Church of Christ.

Among those participating are people involved in long-term recovery leadership, faith-based groups, religious leaders, community leaders, social-service organizations, disaster case managers and other persons concerned about recovery. CWS emergency response specialists Joann Hale and Sandra Kennedy-Owes coordinated sessions.

Along with providing emergency relief supplies, CWS makes local level long-term recovery assistance a priority. In recent years, it has used training seminars to share its expertise.

Building grassroots recovery infrastructure to help the poorest—those who are uninsured, under-insured or yet unserved by other sources—is part of CWS's emergency response work.

For information, call Lesley Crosson at 212-870-2676, email [media@churchworldservice.org](mailto:media@churchworldservice.org) or visit [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org).

## Video contest promotes media literacy for youth

Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media (NW-ARM) seeks to bring awareness to media literacy through the eyes of youth by sponsoring a spring video contest, "Our Media, YOUR Business," as part of the April Our Kids: Our Business events.

There will be cash prizes for high school and college students in the Inland Northwest to inspire young adults to "be part of the solution in raising awareness of the impact of media on children and youth," said Dawn Bayman, president of the NW-ARM board.

"This video contest is a fun, creative way to involve young adults in using media to comment on the media's influence on the well-being of young people. We're excited to see their perspective as critical users of media," she commented.

The Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media, sponsored by Gonzaga University's master's in communication and leadership studies program, monitors the influence of news and entertainment media on society, educating the community about this influence and working with media professionals to influence the industry to act responsibly.

Our Kids: Our Business is a community and media response to the needs of the Inland Northwest children, especially those who are neglected and abused. It began in 2007 as a way to help unite service agencies, nonprofits, business and the media in highlighting protection of children.

Competition rules and deadlines for the 2013 Our Media, YOUR Business video contest are at [nwaresponsiblemedia.org](http://nwaresponsiblemedia.org). For information, call 313-3819 or email [nwaresponsible-media@gmail.com](mailto:nwaresponsible-media@gmail.com).

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### Ecumenical delegation delivers statement on global economy to Bolivian government

An ecumenical delegation delivered to Bolivian government officials in La Paz a statement on ethical principles for a new global economic system. Bolivian minister of the presidency Juan Ramon Quintana received the statement at the government palace in early January.

The Rev. Walter Altmann, a Brazilian pastor and moderator of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Central Committee, led the ecumenical delegation.

"We share the commitment to work in favor of the future of humankind," said Juan Ramon, while receiving the document titled "São Paulo Statement: International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life." "We have to work on a common agenda of cooperation," he added.

Participants of a 2012 conference produced the statement, promoted by the WCC, the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the Council for World Mission in Guarulhos, Brazil.

Speaking to the delegates, Juan Ramon stressed the importance of working in partnership with different global actors. "Churches can be effective in sharing and promoting gifts that encourage the good living of all people. We work to defend and promote peoples' dignity, which is also one of your mandates," he said.

As a country struggling to elevate its economy, Bolivia is a key participant in the debate on development, especially initiated by the United Nations. Evo Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous president, is implementing balance within power structures, introducing a process for fair distribution of the natural resources.

The delegation also met with Ambassador Fernando Huanacuni, vice-minister for interreligious affairs at the Ministry of External Affairs in Bolivia. In the meeting, Fernando expressed appreciation for the statement.

"This document can be an important piece in the upcoming dialogue among different segments of our society," he said. The ambassador also received a copy of the regional ecumenical proposal for the establishment of an agency of cooperation under the Union of South American Nations.

Humberto Martin Shikiya, who is among those who drafted the proposal, said, "The Bolivian government can play a decisive role in the debate about the concept of development taking place between the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the European Union."

Humberto, a delegate, is executive director of the Regional Ecumenical Centre for Advisory and Service, member organization of the ACT (Action of Churches Together) Alliance.

"In the ecumenical movement we are advocating for a wider understanding of development inspired by the concept of good living," Humberto said. "The Andean concept of Sumak Kawsay—'good life'—is more holistic than the current basic idea of development."

As WCC Central Committee moderator, Walter shared his views about possible avenues of cooperation among churches and governments. "Most of the leaders currently in charge in Latin America once took part in processes promoted by the civil society," he reported.

He said that such processes include the "World Social Forum and the People's Summit, which are spaces where we are present side by side with other civil society movements."

While explaining to the ambassador the scope of action for the ecumenical movement, Walter mentioned work of the WCC and the ACT Alliance. "The cooperation between these two organizations is a concrete example of the synergy between spirituality and action," he said.

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

### Benefit breakfast, lunch plans underway

Eight people whose stories were published during the past year will share how The Fig Tree media help people by "Making Connections."

Four will speak at the "Deepening Our Roots" Benefit Breakfast, beginning at 7:15 a.m., Wednesday, March 13, and four at the Benefit Lunch, beginning

at 11:45 a.m., Friday, March 15. Both events are at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University.

The planning committee is recruiting people to host tables that seat eight people. Guests hear how Fig Tree stories about people who make a difference—people promoting human rights and acting on behalf of vulnerable

people as they live their faith and values—make a difference in the region.

Guests are invited to donate to build The Fig Tree's ability to share more stories.

For information on hosting a table, attending or volunteering, call 535-4112 or email mary@thefigtree.org.

### Our Kids: Our Business reaches out to faiths

Seven years ago, Our Kids: Our Business began as a community call to action to protect and nurture the community's children.

It takes place every year during April, which is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Several local agencies and community volunteers come together each year in an effort to strengthen and grow community awareness

and support for all children in Spokane, said Dena Chappell, one of the 2012 organizers.

"We have identified a few important groups in our community who are missing from the table, one of which is the faith based community," she said. "We recognize the far-reaching impact that congregations can have on children and families."

So for the 2013 Our Kids: Our Business program they want to involve the faith community.

Planners are holding an informational meeting for people to learn how their congregations can be involved at 6 p.m., Monday, Feb. 28, at St. Anne's Child and Family Center, 25 W. Fifth Ave.

For information, call 475-7841 or visit www.ourkidsspokane.org.

### Our Place Ministries plans comedy benefit

Our Place Ministries will hold a Comedy Preview Night Fund Raiser, "The Force of Habit" by Guillen de Castro, directed by Kathleen Jeffs at 6 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 21, in the Magnuson Theatre at Gonzaga University.

The comedy is the story of a brother and sister, separated at birth. Felix is brought up by his mother to speak softly, to sew and to be afraid, while Hipolita grows up with her father in a war zone,

learning to wield a sword.

When they are thrown together when their parents reunite, they are shocked by each other's ways.

Through the power of love, Felix's for Leonor and Hipolita's for Don Luis, the siblings begin to drift into more conventional gender roles, overcoming "the force of habit" from the way they were raised.

Development director Tracie Swanson said that tickets are

\$25 in honor of Our Place's 25 years of service in West Central Spokane, helping neighbors improve their quality of life through serving as an emergency services center, providing food, clothing, blankets, sleeping bags, coats, hats, gloves, socks, bus passes, bedding, hygiene products and other emergency needs, including utility assistance and classes.

For information, call 326-7267 or visit ourplacespokane.org.

### Winter Waters honors environmental efforts

The Sierra Club and the Center for Environmental Law and Policy invite the community to their annual Winter Waters event to celebrate the region's rivers and help support their work to protect rivers and drinking water, honor Watershed Heroes and present an Environmental Justice Award.

The 2013 Winter Waters awards evening from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 23, at the Patsy Clark Mansion, 2208 W. 2nd Ave. in Spokane, will honor the Colville Confederate Tribes as Watershed Heroes for their work to clean up Columbia River pollution from Teck Corporation's lead smelter in Trail, B.C.

Patty Martin, former mayor of Quincy, will be given the Envi-

ronmental Justice Award for her work to protect the mostly Hispanic community of Quincy from pollution from new data centers.

The event benefits local water protection work of the Upper Columbia River Group Sierra Club and the Center for Environmental Law and Policy.

For information, call 939-1290 or email john@waterplanet.ws.



**A call to action to protect & nurture our children**  
Visit us year round at [ourkidsspokane.org](http://ourkidsspokane.org)



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Lorna Kropp - Website Developer

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**72nd Annual Kosher Dinner**  
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*South Perry & 30th*

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Adults \$16 at door/\$14 in advance, children 3-11 \$9 at door/\$7 in advance

**Menu**  
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Potato Knishes  
Carrot Tzimmes  
Challah (Egg Bread)  
Mediterranean Spiced Apples  
Chocolate Rugelach

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11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**For information, call 509-747-3304**  
Internet Ticket Sales at [www.spokanetbs.org](http://www.spokanetbs.org)



**Leaders present advocacy issues, tools, updates**

Twenty leaders will share information on issues, tools for advocacy, updates on action and opportunities for interaction during the 2013 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference from 8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 2, at the Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave.

They will help participants understand dynamics of lobbying for justice, racial justice in legislative decisions, cost saving options in criminal justice, environmental concerns before the session, how to run effective campaigns, how to be effective change agents and more.

For information, call 535-4112 or email [mary@thefigtree.org](mailto:mary@thefigtree.org).

**CBS correspondent gives Great Decisions Lecture**

Long-time CBS Middle East correspondent Lawrence Pintak will lead a Great Decisions Lecture on "The U.S. and the Muslim World" at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 7, at Whitworth University's Weyerhaeuser Hall. The founding dean of the Edward R. Murrow School of Communication at Washington State University, is also known for reporting on the interaction between Arab and Western media. Before his work at WSU, he served as director of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research at The American University in Cairo.

For information, call 777-4937.

**Cinn-A-Grams raise funds for Mid-City Concerns**

Mid-City Concerns' Meals on Wheels and Senior Center at 1222 W. 2nd will gain funding during February as people purchase Cinn-A-Grams to share messages of love with loved ones on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. Participants may fill out an order online at [www.mowsokane.org](http://www.mowsokane.org) to order two Cinnabons, coffee, chocolates, a handmade napkin and a special message to the person or people they choose. For a \$25 donation, there is free delivery in the Spokane/Coeur d'Alene area. With 750 volunteers, the nonprofit serves 500 meals daily and more than 116,000 a year. For information, call 232-0864.

**County program sponsors two March for Meals**

The Greater Spokane County Meals on Wheels (GSMOW) will sponsor two benefit walks as part of the national March for Meals. One will be from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., Friday, March 1, doing laps at the Spokane Valley Mall. The second will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Friday, March 8, beginning at River Park Square and doing laps through downtown sky bridges.

Participants raise funds and awareness for GSMOW. Walkers may seek sponsors or make donations. From its office at 12101 E. Sprague in Spokane Valley, the program has more than 350 volunteers serving and delivering 25,000 meals a month to seniors in Spokane County. It takes \$25 to feed a senior for a week and \$100 feeds a senior for a month. For information, call 924-6976.

**Providence funds elder refugee directory reprints**

The Fig Tree has received a \$10,000 grant to reprint 10,000 copies of the Elder Refugee Resource Directory. It worked with World Relief and Refugee Connections in 2012 to translate and publish it in Russian, Arabic, Karen, Chin and Nepali.

Providence Health Care awarded the Community Benefit Fund-ing grant from 2012 funds.

After the initial 500 copies were produced, response in the refugee and senior communities was enthusiastic. Many felt 500 copies were not enough to meet the needs of the region's 30,000 refugees and 60,000 immigrants,

said Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp.

Spokane's Refugee Elder Summit Partnership decided in 2011 to compile resources to improve living standards and education for senior refugees. They approached The Fig Tree about partnering to translate selections from the senior section of its Resource Directory: Guide to Congregations and Community Resources.

The goal is to meet the refugees' desire to be more self-sufficient by giving them access to information on government and non-governmental agencies, civic organizations and businesses that provide services and interact with

refugee elders to address needs.

Refugee elders for years have sought ways to be more independent and navigate the sometimes confusing system of accessing services, complicated by their limited English skills.

The Fig Tree plans to add space for eight pages of advertising and ads on the inside and outside back cover to help cover their costs beyond the \$9,075 printing costs for the project.

Malcolm Haworth, directory editor, is also working with a Russian translator to make improvements in that translation.

For information, call 535-4112.

**PJALS event examines culture of violence**

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) has organized a panel and discussion, "Pulling at the Threads: Examining Our Culture of Violence," at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 7, at the Community Building Lobby, 35 W. Main.

Five speakers will introduce threads of physical and structural violence through the culture and society for half an hour, followed by discussion until 8 p.m. They will address gun regulations, mental health, masculinity expectations, the Second Amendment, militarism, race and privilege, media and more.

The panel is presented in response to the Sandy Hook tragedy, the Sikh temple shooting, the Aurora, Colorado shooting and the realities of violence in our culture, said PJALS director Liz Moore.

She said the central question will be: "In preventing future tragedies, what are the threads that we

should unravel and what actions should we take?" Panelists are:

- Jakob Camp, board certified psychiatrist for 23 years and 10 years working as a forensics expert in California, Colorado, Nevada, Illinois and New Zealand, consults in courts and treating violent mentally ill offenders in secure institutions.
- Bill Morlin, Spokesman-Review reporter covering extremist and hate groups, now writes for the Southern Poverty Law Center's blog, Hatewatch <http://www.splcenter.org/blog/>.
- Sandra Williams, an activist, writer and filmmaker, with a background in addressing discrimination, oppression, equity and social justice, is the coordinator of the Pride Center at Eastern Washington University

and former executive director of Odyssey Youth Center. She is field coordinator for the Youth Suicide Prevention Program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth.

• Victoria Redstarr is a trainer with The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, a national and international collective of anti-racist, multicultural community organizers and educators dedicated to building a movement for social transformation.

• Tim Connor, communications director with the Center for Justice, as a journalist won national and regional investigative reporting awards including the Washington State Bar Association's Excellence in Legal Journalism.

For information, call 838-7870 or email [lmoore@pjals.org](mailto:lmoore@pjals.org).

**YWCA names its new executive director**

The YWCA of Spokane has named Regina Malveaux as its executive director.

She previously served as executive director of the YWCA South Hampton Roads in Norfolk, Va., and as a legal advocate for the YWCA San Diego. She is founding director of the Women's Legal Center in San Diego.

Regina, who is recognized as an advocate for women, youth and children, has served on boards aimed at advancing racial justice and economic empowerment including the San Diego NAACP, San Diego Dress for Success and Second Chance.

She has also trained a new generation of advocates as an



**Regina Malveaux**

adjunct professor in political, women's and African-American studies at La Sierra University,

San Diego State University and at the Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Old Dominion University.

Her undergraduate degree in social policy is from San Diego State University and her law degree from Howard University School of Law. During law school, Regina served as both a White House and a Congressional intern, first for First Lady Hillary Clinton and then the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Honorable Maxine Waters.

She replaces Trish McFarland who retired in December.

For information, call 326-1190 or email [reginam@ywcaspokane.org](mailto:reginam@ywcaspokane.org).

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**Wednesday, March 13**  
 Buffet begins 7:15 a.m. • Program is 7:30-8:30 a.m.

**Benefit Lunch**  
**Friday, March 15**  
 Buffet begins 11:45 a.m. • Program 12-1 p.m.  
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**FAITH ACTION NETWORK**  
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# German teacher uplifts German heritage of region in books on Dominicans

To counter silence to prejudice and to challenge bigotry, Inga Jablonsky fostered cross-cultural exchanges and sharing in 20 years of teaching at Spokane Falls Community College, and now has written books about the positive contributions of German Dominican sisters in the Northwest.

**"My motivation is that** we are to love our neighbors," she said.

When some hear her German accent or learn she teaches German, they mistakenly link her with Germany's Nazi past or with being a U.S. enemy in World War II.

Inga was born in 1946, after the war, and her parents did not join the Nazi Party nor comply with Nazi expectations. They were in the Social Democratic Party. They told her during her teen years about the time under Nazi rule.

**Many her age did not learn** about that until they were in their 20s, in the late 1960s, when there was an opening up to talking about the war and Nazism. There were many books telling personal stories and revealing the history of oppression, concentration camps and genocide.

In presenting the history of German sisters, who came to the Inland Northwest as pioneers to serve as nurses and teachers, Inga identifies with them as a woman, a German, a pioneer and a teacher.

She was the first in her family to leave Germany.

"Just as they left everything and everyone they knew to come to the United States, I left everything and everyone I knew in Germany," she said.

**During 2013, she plans to visit** Catholic schools in the communities where the sisters served—Chewelah, Colville, Kettle Falls, Omak, Tonasket, Oroville and Spokane.

She does readings from her two books about the sisters, *Pioneer German Sisters: The Real Missionaries of the Pacific "Wild" West*, a history published in 2008, based on five years of archival research and interviews, and *Daughters of Hope and Fear*, a young adult historical novel published in 2012.

**Through sharing the content** of these books, Inga hopes to dispel prejudices about Germans and nuns, to let students know about the German heritage of their communities, such as knowing the fact that the German sisters built their hospitals and taught in their schools.

She also wants them to understand—in this time with few entering religious vocations—what it meant for these women to enter a vocation as sisters, leave their homeland and come here to serve.

"While I can't identify with the sisters as holy women who took a vow of poverty, I admire what they did for others through teaching, nursing, building hospitals



Inga Jablonsky's home office has posters of Germany.

and schools," Inga said. "I feel close to them when I drive to Chewelah and Colville to speak, and wonder if they, too, felt so foreign in the landscapes of the area."

**Sharing the sisters' stories** is a form of ministry and a way to understand her own story.

Growing up in Wuppertal, Germany, she married at 22 and lived with the family of her husband, Hans, in Emlichheim. She worked as secretary at a Lutheran church. When her son Heiko was four, the church encouraged her to go to college to study to become a deacon.

She earned the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in religion and German at Carl von Ossietzky University in nearby Oldenburg. While the university meshed with views of her parents, the congregation voted not to accept her as deacon, because the university had a reputation for socialist leanings.

**So Inga began teaching religion** and German to 12 to 14 year olds in Oldenburg. The curriculum was less about a relationship with God and more about how people should live and address problems.

After she taught two years, she

and her husband divorced. Three years later, Inga met an American serviceman, Tom Jablonsky, stationed at Cloppenburg near Oldenburg. When he had to return to Tuscon, Ariz., and her job ended, she went with him. They married in 1984.

**In Tuscon, she earned a master's** degree in second language acquisition, pedagogic and German literature at the University of Arizona. Inga then taught at an Episcopal parochial elementary school run by Episcopal sisters. She spent her summers from 1984 to 1988 at a satellite campus on Long Island, NY.

In 1988, Spokane Falls Community College hired her to teach German didactics, language and literature. She organized a German club, conversation group and study abroad program. From 1994 to 2004, Inga took 200 students for four-week stays in Lübeck, Germany, which was then Spokane's Sister City. During the academic year, she also had student teachers come from Germany to assist with her classes.

**"Study abroad programs help** students see their own country with different eyes," Inga said.

In 2001, she started the Interlingua Language School in a classroom in her home. She teaches individually-paced German classes to four or five people, does private tutoring and consults on translations.

**On the school's Facebook page,** Inga expresses her vision about cultural exchanges: "Through learning language, we learn about culture. Through learning about culture, we learn respect for others. Through learning respect for others, we can hope for peace."

As a teacher, she believes she is equal to—not above—students. Rather than just conveying information to them, she also learns from them, believing, "I know something. They know something else."

After 20 years teaching at SFCC, she retired in 2008. She continues to advise students and continues to run the Interlingua Language School.

Her son, Heiko, who joined her in 1991 to study at SFCC and Eastern Washington University—going on to earn master's and doctoral degrees in linguistics—encouraged her to write. So did colleagues at SFCC and her husband, Bill Curtiss, a member of the Spokane Tribe and construction contractor, whom she met in 2001 and married in 2007.

**The seed for her book** was planted on Feb. 25, 1995. Inga saw an article on the German roots of the Dominican order in

Spokane. Dominicans, known as the Poor School Sisters in Speyer, Germany, began coming to the United States in 1925 to build hospitals and schools.

Eleven sisters came to Helena, Mont., in 1925 to run Carroll College. In 1929, they expanded their ministry and built a hospital in Conrad, Mont..

In 1930, they built St. Joseph's Hospital in Chewelah. In 1934, they took over an old mission at Kettle Falls. For 12 years, they ran a small Indian school at St. Mary's Mission near Omak—now the Paschal Sherman School.

**From 1925 to 1937, 76 young** sisters came from Germany, many to escape Nazism. They continued to come until 1957.

On Feb. 26, after reading the article, Inga visited the Dominican Convent next door to Spokane Falls Community College to talk with sisters.

"I went to Mass, had a meal and made friends," she said.

She began going on weekends to talk with older German women, even though many no longer spoke much German.

When they celebrated their 75th year in the United States in 2000, they had an exhibition that told of their coming to the region.

When Lady of the Valley Convent in Kettle Falls dissolved, the sisters came to St. Dominic's Convent, which opened in 1945 in Spokane. By the 1960s, the

*Continued on page 6*

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# As bishop discovers area, he spreads blessing and the call for justice

In a listening and discerning mode, Bishop Blase Cupich travels the Diocese of Spokane to learn about the people, schools, parishes and ministries.

As he preaches and speaks, he begins with the Word of God, particularly with the Beatitudes in Matthew 5.

"Jesus gave the beatitudes standing on a hill overlooking the people," he said. "A bishop oversees the people. He sees the people and says, 'Blessed are you.'"

So as Bishop Cupich goes throughout the diocese and sees the many things going on in communities, he helps the people identify their blessings in order to encourage them.

"I see many things that are overlooked and go unrecognized," he said.

Over his 38 years as a priest, he said his starting point for preaching has consistently been what the Word of God has to say to people in today's time and circumstances.

He brings that Word to people in parishes and ministries, and to those engaged in government and political debates about budgets. In a recent interview, he shared concerns about the world, based on perspectives from God's Word.

"I look at what the Word is saying, rather than what the world is saying. In doing that, there is a freshness to preaching God's Word, which has something to say in every situation in any era," Bishop Cupich said. "The Word brings light to a situation. It's too easy to explain a situation of the world based on what we know."

He finds God's Word a point of reference for whatever he's called on to do or giving meaning to whatever is going on in his life.

When he came to Spokane in June 2010, he left 12 years of experience as bishop in Western South Dakota to come to an area where he had never lived. He asked what God's Word had to say to him with that change, not knowing how he would deal with issues or serve people.

He said his starting point in Spokane has not been his experience but what God wants him to do in the new situation.

"The Word is my barometer helping me focus on what I should be doing," he said. "God says for me to open my eyes and see what good is happening."



Bishop Blase Cupich stands beside the letter from the Pope appointing him to the See of Spokane.

For example, in August, Bishop Cupich ordained 18 new Anglo and Hispanic deacons to serve in urban and rural settings.

"They represent the pluralistic nature of this area," he said.

He also worked with youth initiatives to bring together Hispanic youth for a rally last spring, a weekend for development of youth ministry leaders.

With many Catholics in the diocese being Hispanic, the diocese distributed information on the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) for youth.

With his emphasis on education, he sees the Nazareth Guild as a blessing in its work to help Catholic schools build sustainable finances so they are viable for the future and provide quality education.

In 2012, the diocese supported Catholic Charities' effort to reach its goal of raising \$1 million through appeals to parishes.

"We need that funding because of federal, state and local cutbacks in funding for disadvantaged people," Bishop Cupich said. "The House of Charity, for example, is operating on a shoestring budget. We wanted to be sure people would not be on the streets this winter, but the emergency shelter program is now scaled back.

"The people are not invisible. They have to go someplace. We can't ignore them or there are consequences for all of us: People will die on the streets, and there

may be an increase in crime.

"I sympathize with the demands on elected officials about budget needs, but they also need to be aware that churches and charities cannot carry all the weight of caring for people," said Bishop Cupich.

"There is a role for the government to provide a safety net for disadvantaged people," he explained, reminding that many on the streets are veterans. "We as a society have a role in meeting needs of people who are impoverished."

The bishop called for "soul searching" in this time when budgets are tight.

"Cutbacks should not be without awareness that when diminishing government funds affect the quality of life of those most in need, it also affects the whole community," he said.

Bishop Cupich calls on churches and the government to look for new ways of partnering to serve the poor.

The Washington State Catholic Conference is looking for ways to bring to the legislators an awareness of the problems the community of faith faces in meeting people's needs, he said.

"We know from great tragedies that the state care for those who are mentally ill is in the worst shape it has been for decades," he said. "There are consequences to ignoring care for the mentally ill. We see it in society in the tragedy

their civil rights by caring for them, he said.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' policy and teachings promote partnership in all of society for the common good.

"We are all in it together. Our responsibility is to shed light on the need to care for people," he said.

Visiting around Eastern Washington, Bishop Cupich said he sees the gap between rich and poor growing as he sees "disturbing pockets of poverty with people living on a subsistence level.

"We cannot ignore the pockets of deep poverty in our midst. Those pockets do not have the headlines, nor are they in the news or talked about much," he said.

Meanwhile, he observes that the world of entertainment is a diversion as it focuses "on sensational crime, military enterprises and salacious romantic scenes. Dramas dealing and struggling with human relationships or people living in poverty are rarely presented in entertainment on TV or in movies."

Bishop Cupich said people want to turn their eyes away from the problems.

Many prefer to watch sitcoms, in which people are young, good looking and funny because they are irresponsible, but they live

*Continued on page 6*

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# German Dominican sisters built schools and hospitals in Inland NW

*Continued from page 4*  
convent included 69 American-born women.

They built Holy Family Nursing home in 1960 and Holy Family Hospital in 1964.

In 1965, they moved the convent to land beside the Spokane River near Fort Wright.

In 1995, they merged with the Sinsinawa Dominicans. In 2010, the Spokane Dominican Center closed, and the sisters moved to Wisconsin.

Over the years, Inga learned the archives held English-language audiotapes from their 50th anniversary and materials from before 1942 in German.

She asked to put the informa-

tion in chronological order and write about them. The prioress was hesitant to give her access to the archives, because no one knew what was in the German papers.

That prioress left. Another came and left. The third let her photograph information—letters and journals. She also transcribed the audiotapes and translated many documents.

Inga visited the convent for five years to compile Pioneer German Sisters.

Quoting diaries, letters and the tapes, the book tells of the women leaving their families from 1925 to 1937 as Germany began its downward spiral into “disaster and the Holocaust.” It re-

ords their work in the Northwest, especially with Native Americans.

When the archives and some sisters moved to Sinsinawa, Wis., Inga went there for four days to interview Sister Consuelo, who had taught at St. Mary’s Mission.

Every day for a year, Inga also interviewed Sr. Antonia Stare, the first American to join the Poor School Sisters. They became good friends. She has since died.

In 2005, Inga wrote the book. Since 2009, she has done book tours to places the sisters worked and taught.

*Daughters of Hope and Fear*, a historical novel, shares the life of a 16-year-old German girl, Nilla, who enters the Dominican order.

Her story is based on information from the hand-written German diaries of Sister Bonaventura, who came to the United States in 1925 and died in 1942.

Nilla escapes Nazi Germany in the 1930s by becoming a missionary and going to the Colville Indian Mission in Kettle Falls. There, she befriends a young Indian woman, Tanik, and learns about a new culture.

Inga knows that when people hear her speak they hear her German accent.

She assumes that when the sisters spoke, their accent identified them as German, when Germany was an enemy. Even though they were fleeing Nazism, the sisters

were fingerprinted upon arriving in the United States.

Some still are unable to set aside that connection. So Inga teaches about German culture and history along with language.

She knows there is reason for concern about Nazism. When the Berlin Wall fell, she hesitated to rejoice, knowing some who wanted to reunite Germany had Nazi aspirations. Similarly, she was disturbed in the 1990s by the Nazis in North Idaho.

Inga wants people to know about Germany so they can distinguish between the Nazi years and the overall culture.

For information, call 624-0717 or email [inga8j@comcast.net](mailto:inga8j@comcast.net).

# Catholic bishop appreciates diverse population of the diocesan parishes

*Continued from page 5*  
middle-class lives.

“In reality, people living in poverty feel hopeless,” Bishop Cupich said. “They know their children will not go to college because they lack the resources and also the nutrition they need to study and learn.”

The bishop noted that the way some people compensate for their lives in squalor is through abuse of drugs and alcohol.

“That’s the hidden reality,” he said. “Society will be weaker if we do not address that, if people do not feel the system is fair for them.”

He’s aware that politicians’ talk of budget is complex because there are legitimate concerns about health care and retirement programs, so people in need do not fall through the cracks.

“The military budget is huge,” he said of an element overlooked in budget-cutting discussions.

“We are paying interest on a debt of \$16 trillion,” he said. “Right now, we are fortunate that rates are low.”

“We need to put everything on the table. People are frustrated that there is no cooperation and collaboration among the elected officials. The officials need to check their egos at the door.”

Ecumenically, Bishop Cupich seeks to draw area bishops and church leaders together so communities of faith pray together, beginning with organizing a Good Friday Service for the past two years, held at Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral.

The 2013 Tenebrae service will be at 7 p.m., Friday, March 29, at Lourdes, 1115 W. Riverside.

“We need to look for ways to come together to pray. It’s important for church leaders to socialize and know each other, but the communities also need to come together,” he said.

“Christian communities need to come together to pray, give testimony to what good is happening in our midst and do community service,” Bishop Cupich said.

“My hope is that we work together not only to build up disciples to Jesus, but also to give the community witness to social justice for everyone, the vulnerable and all human life from conception to natural death. We need to respect all life, the unborn, the vulnerable and those on death row.”

“We need a common witness to the spectrum,” he said. “We need to witness to all of society and to

welcome people to join us in that.”

Visiting the 80 parishes, he has put many miles on the road. He appreciates the diversity of rural communities and landscapes—wheat fields, vineyards, orchards and recreation areas.

“People’s lives here are tied to the ground, to the earth,” Bishop Cupich said. “The diversity in terrains is beautiful.”

He also appreciates the ethnic diversity, with parishes that encompass Hispanic and Vietnamese, as well as Anglo, people.

St. Patrick’s parish in Pasco is the largest in the diocese, with 6,000 predominantly Hispanic people attending services on Sunday.

Last year he confirmed 600 children there.

There is a sizeable Vietnamese presence among the faithful at St.

Anthony’s parish in Spokane.

He is also aware that immigrant and refugee constituencies and their second and third generations often face limited circumstances, heightened by children growing up and learning English as their first language.

While a third of parishioners in South Dakota are Native Americans, here only three percent are Native Americans.

“How can families keep their ethnic identity when the Anglo culture has such a grip on their children?” he said. “They should be proud of their heritage and keep their languages and cultures. That will benefit the young as they grow up in a bilingual culture, living in two worlds without effort.”

For information, call 358-7344 email [mcole@dioceseofspokane.org](mailto:mcole@dioceseofspokane.org) or visit [dioceseofspokane.org](http://dioceseofspokane.org).

# Whitworth focuses on African-American heritage

The theme for Whitworth University’s Heritage Month focuses on Whitworth and the African-American cultural experience with the Gospel Explosion, the Simpson-Duvall Lecture and the Heritage Month Lecture.

At 7 p.m., Friday, Feb. 8, the Gospel Explosion evening of spiritual praise will begin at the Seeley Mudd Chapel. The celebration of Black History Month with Whitworth students and choirs from around Spokane is presented by Whitworth’s Black Student Union. For information, call 777-4568.

The Simpson-Duvall lecture on “The Spirituality of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement: An Enduring Legacy” will be given by Lewis Baldwin, a professor in religious studies at Vanderbilt University.

It will be at 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 14, at Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth University.

Lewis is the author of several books, including *Invisible Strands in African Methodism: A History of the African Union Methodist Protestant and Union American Methodist Episcopal Churches, 1805-1980*, which won the American Theological Library Association Award, and *There Is a Balm in Gilead: The Cultural Roots of Martin Luther King Jr.*, which won the Midwest Book Achievement Award of the Midwest Independent Publishers Association. For information, call

777-3270.

Chair of the history department at the University of Colorado, Paul Harvey, will speak on “Jesus in Red, White and Black” for the Heritage Month Lecture at 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 28, at Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth.

He is an author and editor of eight books, including most recently *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2012). After receiving a doctorate, Paul became a Lilly fellow at Valparaiso University. For information, call 777-4250.

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# Sharon Cowan and Freda Gandy will co-chair 2014 Martin Luther King Day

*Continued from page 1*  
all. How would he see the current dropout rate of 30 to 50 percent in Spokane?" he said. "King fought for education. We blame teachers, but we need to look at ourselves as parents."

"There is one community in Spokane that graduates 100 percent of its people and 85 percent go on to college," Ozzie said, pausing before revealing, "We need to shoot for the goals of the Hmong community."

He said King also fought for justice, because the nation was formed to have "justice and liberty for all," and has shed much blood for them. "Justice is the car and the way we treat people is the road the car rides on," he said, sad that he has to go to community centers to talk about bullying. "The way we treat other people reflects on us as a society."

**King also wanted peace**, Ozzie said.

"He knew he would not see the end of the journey, but he had the courage to stand alone and dream of the day we would treat one another with respect," he said. "When I talk with youth, I say that the most important things are to learn to read and write, and to have a dream, because if we have a dream we have hope."

He also informed people of a bill before the state legislature that says police officers are not to commit crimes while on duty and are not to lie. He urged people to call their legislators to support that bill.

**Another newcomer also spoke** at the rally, Spokane School Superintendent Shelley Redinger, who said that King believed in a strong public education system.

"We seek to promote that," she said, announcing that Rogers High School has worked to reduce its drop out rate, and as a result of efforts will graduate nearly 85 percent in June. The principal's goal is to graduate 95 to 100 percent.

King believed in education, pointing out that the function of education is to teach people to think intensively and critically, to "sift and weigh evidence" to decide if something is truth or fiction.

"We are to be critical consumers of what we hear and see," she said. "I pledge that will happen in Spokane Public Schools."

**Bishop Blase Cupich** of the Catholic Church of Eastern Washington pointed out at the service that 2013 is a landmark year for racial equality and justice, because 150 years ago in January President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation and 50 years ago in August



**Police Chief Frank Straub, Jr.**



**Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich**



**Ivan Bush introduces Sharon Cowan and Freda Gandy as co-chairs of planning.**



**Thousands again joined in rally at Convention Center and march in Spokane.**

Martin Luther King gave his "I Have a Dream" speech at the march on Washington.

"We will continue to promote human dignity in our world and will honor the voice of the prophet in our midst," he said, expressing the call for everyone to accept responsibility.

**James Wilburn**, the new president of the Spokane Chapter of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) said that the NAACP was the largest and most influential civil rights organization in 1929, when King Sr. was born. King Sr. headed the NAACP in Atlanta, and in 1944 King Jr. chaired the youth membership committee of the Atlanta NAACP Youth Council.

King Jr. was on the executive committee of the Montgomery branch in 1955 when the secretary of the NAACP was arrested for not giving up her seat on a bus. He formed the Montgomery Improvement Association, which organized a successful bus boycott. In 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court declared racial segregation on busses unconstitutional.

"**King Sr. involved his son** in the NAACP when he was 15. I appeal to you to do the same," James said. "If you want change, we need to speak with one voice."

The NAACP is the oldest civil rights organization, formed 104

years ago, he said. Frank Stokes founded the Spokane chapter 94 years ago in 1919.

"Bring your sons, daughters, nieces, nephews and neighbor's children. We need to open their minds so they see where they fit in society and that they can have hope to rise out of the despair I see in many of our children," said James of his work as achievement gap specialist at Lewis and Clark High School.

**In 1963, he was 11 years old** when he saw King speaking to thousands about his dream. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act passed, ending local and state Jim Crow laws that segregated restrooms, drinking fountains, restaurants, schools and more. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act passed.

April 3, 1968, a severe thunderstorm meant James had to cancel his 16th birthday party. That evening, King gave his "I've Been to the Mountaintop and I've Seen the Promised Land" speech. On April 4, 1968, King was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel, 16 minutes from James's doorstep in nearby Sunset, Ark.

**With everyone crying** around him, it was as if the dream and hope died on the balcony, James said.

"I look out among you gathered to celebrate Martin Luther King Day, and I see the dream is alive,"

*Continued on page 8*

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# Speakers call for improving education and involving young people

*Continued from page 7*  
he said. "This is a new day for the Spokane NAACP. I hope we will build bridges so walls will no longer divide and build partnerships so we can assure equality and justice for all.

"We need to go out with bold determination to stick together and work together to make a difference," he said of the NAACP's commitment to partner with educators, the school system, schools, churches and businesses to work so there will be justice and equality for all, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, economic status or sexual orientation.

**Freda Gandy, who has worked** at the Martin Luther King Family Outreach Center for 14 years, the last three as executive director, said the recent years have been tumultuous times and last year she thought the center might close.

It's still open, and she anticipates it will continue for another 40 years.

**At the recent meeting** of Spokane's Martin Luther King Day Planning Committee, members elected Freda and Spokane Community Choir director Sharon Cowan co-chairs.

Freda, who moved to Spokane 20 years ago from a small town in Mississippi to attend Eastern Washington University, rarely saw students who looked like her. Instead of having extended family live in her house, next door and across the street, she was alone when she became pregnant and a single mother.

Holy Temple Church of God in Christ became her family, helping her cope and understand that God was there for her then. Today she knows God is with her in her work at the center.

"The center also had a huge role in my success, so I work to make sure the doors stay open for vulnerable children and youth," said Freda, who has two degrees.

"King dedicated his life to work for justice and equal society. We are still working to realize his dream and the best way is to educate children here," she said, challenging women to find their worth through education and challenging everyone to help children succeed through education and on-time graduation. "Everyone has the power to uplift the community through service."

**Ivan Bush, who was** executive director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center in the late 1970s, had thought when he completed graduate studies at Eastern Washington University, he'd move to California.

He shared the center's history, starting in 1970, when seven African Americans from different



Multiple generations march side-by-side between Jim Burford, who marched in Selma in 1965, and James Watkins, right, emcee for Sunday's service, a role his father, Happy Watkins, often fills.



LaRae Wiley sings an honor song at the rally.



Crowd gathers for drumming, resource fair at River Park Square.

churches and seven white laymen from First Presbyterian Church agreed there was need to care for children. First Presbyterian opened a day care center in the Bryant Arms Apartments, and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which relocated and built Richard Allen Enterprises, opened and for 12 years housed the Martin Luther King Center in its basement.

At first, the Presbyterian Church was the primary donor, along with African-American churches and pastors, and supporters who had fund-raising spaghetti dinners and fun walks.


Ivan's mentor, the Rev. James Sims, a former pastor at New Hope Baptist Church, counseled him to know that "how we treat our children is how we treat Jesus. He imparted to me a desire

to serve young people."

He called for preachers and congregations in the African-American and wider community to take responsibility to provide financial support for the center, which is like a mini-United Nations with African-American, Native American, European American children, and children from the many immigrant and refugee families in the neighborhood.

"In 43 years the center has been open, how far have we come? How well have we taken care of the children?" Ivan asked, concerned with the high dropout rate and the lack of jobs.

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**Saturday, March 9**  
*Meeting the 'Other' with Jesus*

Dr. Fernando Ortiz - Gonzaga University

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# New NAACP president intervenes in teens' lives so more graduate

To assure that more African-American young people are educated than incarcerated is James Wilburn Jr.'s priority as achievement gap intervention specialist at Lewis and Clark High School and as the new president of the NAACP's Spokane Branch #1137.

He wants to stem the dropout rate among African-American students.

"He brings an unwavering dedication to combating racism and hatred," said Spokane Mayor David Condon in introducing him at the NAACP's Inauguration Gala in January.

**The NAACP enters a new era** as it transfers leadership from V. Anne Smith, who was president for nine years to James.

Soon after moving to Spokane six months after his wife, Roberta, became director of graduate studies in education at Whitworth University in 2007, he became multicultural supervisor of student support services at Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC). He became involved with the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and was chair of its education committee.

James has been a member of the NAACP since the 1980s and received an Image Award for his civil rights work in Sunset, Ark., originally an unincorporated community where plantation owners sent old and injured farm workers.

**For James, "education is** knowing who you are and who others are, so you can apply what you know to life."

"I'm a product of the South," he said, telling of being born in the Black Cat Hotel his father ran in Marion, Ark., serving traveling blues musicians.

When interstate 55 was being built, whites forced blacks to move. The hotel was burned down when his father refused to sell. His family moved to nearby Sunset, where his father established a house where musicians could stay. It was also burned down. He built another house. When it was burned down, James and family members were injured. A burning rafter fell on him.

He would have missed school, but the first grade teacher brought class to his bedside periodically during his four months recuperating.

Six years later when he was 12, Jim Crow laws that segregated water fountains, restrooms, schools and more, were outlawed.

After James graduated from an all-black high school, his parents insisted he go to college. That experience helps him identify with African-American students, struggling in Spokane's predominantly



**James Wilburn Jr. promotes education in NAACP and at school.**

European-American culture.

He went one year to Arkansas State University, a school of 600 with just 13 African Americans.

Never having been in school with European Americans, he did not know how to deal with the "N" word and bullying. His parents were crushed that he refused to go back.

After Sunset incorporated as a city, James went on the city council and started a youth leadership development program.

**In 1984, he began four years** as mayor, but was voted out for sticking rigidly to his campaign planks, even though the people changed.

Later he was re-elected, and served two terms until 2001.

He met Roberta, a University of Memphis professor, in 1995 when she wrote grants for Sunset. They married in 1997.

When she was diagnosed with cancer a second time, he withdrew as mayor to be with her.

**James then worked** at Le-Moyne-Owen College (LOC), a historic black college in Memphis, Tenn. In 2005, he earned a bachelor's degree in humanities with a focus in religion and music.

Although his father died in 1996, his mother knew he entered LOC, but did not live to see him graduate. He taught music at LOC and became a high school in-school suspension assistant.

Seeing Spokane's demograph-

ics made James hesitant at first, until he was hired at SFCC.

While there, he worked on a master's in education at Whitworth and did an internship with Northwest Fair Housing Alliance. Attending the South Hill Leadership Group, he met Lewis and Clark (LC) High School principal Shawn Jordan and expressed interest in doing an internship to help close LC's achievement gap, then 50 percent dropout rate for African-American students. James graduated from Whitworth in 2010.

**With Jordan, he developed** the achievement gap intervention specialist position, and was hired to work half time at LC and half time at Ferris High School.

Now he works full time at LC, and there are 12 other achievement gap specialists in Spokane Public Schools.

At Lewis and Clark, he meets regularly with his official caseload of 50 students, but 167 others connect with him. He checks their attendance, behavior and grades, and contacts them if there's a problem. He talks with them to learn about their struggles.

James has seen an increase to a 74 percent on-time graduation rate for African American students.

**Beyond what he does,** teachers deal with students of color in a different way, students are connecting with counselors, and the principal backs him up, he said.

James has a network among

LC's 182 African-American students and strengthened a Black Student Union, organized in 1990. It plans a Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month events.

Students also meet with mentors, African-American men in the community, who share their struggles and successes to inspire students to know they can rise above poverty or broken families.

**"Children need to see people** working and caring for their families, providing for them and paying bills," James said. "In many families, the father is in prison, and the mother is young and acts young. Children come to school carrying their family struggles."

Culturally competent teachers are sensitive to student's feelings, he said, changing the way schools' curricula Europeanize all students with one-size-fits-all thinking.

**"Human culture requires us** to be culturally competent and teach individual students, rather than classes. It involves parental participation, mentoring and participating in our children's education," said James.

He attributes much of the dropout rate to African-American children not seeing themselves or contributions of African Americans in history and other textbooks. They wonder where they fit in, and then "their dreams die."

"If gangs entice our children to drop out of school, there's a straight line to the jail house," James said. "Students need a sense of themselves, more than Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X or Rosa Parks. They need to see African-American administrators and teachers. Latino and Native American dropout rates are high for the same reasons.

James said parents should not

expect school to raise their children. He advises them to volunteer and mentor their children to keep them in school.

**"It's our responsibility** to be involved in every aspect of our children's development," he said.

James sees students gaining self confidence and pride.

"I teach them that, although conditions they come from may shape their thinking, it matters more where they see themselves going in a positive way," he said.

"Scriptures say we are to put away things that beset us and push forward to a higher calling," said James, who attends Jesus Is the Answer church in Spokane. While his faith influences what he does, he does not teach religion, but applies the same message.

As an adjunct at Whitworth, teaching a film class and African American history and culture, he gains information to share with the high school students.

**He wants them to know** about ancestors who fought for African Americans to have equal rights in society and education, such as William E.B. DuBois, a sociologist, historian, civil rights activist and a co-founder of the NAACP in 1909, or Thurgood Marshall, the 96th U.S. Supreme Court justice and first African-American.

He wants students to realize: "I am the reason they ever existed. Our ancestors struggled and died for us to have rights.

"God charges us as parents with responsibility for our children. We need to care for our children. We need to change, so our children know who they are, know their roots," he said.

For information, call 443-3253, email [jawwilburn@yahoo.com](mailto:jawwilburn@yahoo.com) or visit [naacpspokane.org](http://naacpspokane.org)



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# Report Card on Racial Equity confirms experiences of inequities

With Washington state legislators having been rated on average “D” in the “Report Card on Racial Equity” by the Washington Community Action Network (WACAN) released in December, it’s no wonder that Spokane Leadership Team volunteer Tia Griffin feels the area has slid back in race relations since she was growing up in the 1970s in Spokane.

Leaders from the state’s African American, Latino, Asian, Native American and Middle Eastern communities presented the report on the 2011 and 2012 State Legislatures’ performance on racial and economic equity.

The 52 organizations endorsing the report represent the changing demographics—with 30 percent of residents being people of color. Washington is home to more than 886,000 immigrants.

Disparities based on race are often the result of the legislative policy decisions on education, housing, taxes, health care, civil rights and tribal sovereignty.

“Legislators have a choice,” said Marley Hochendoner, executive director of the Northwest Fair Housing Alliance and speaker during the release of the report in Seattle. “Their votes can either increase access and opportunities, or reinforce barriers that deny some families the opportunities they need to thrive.”

Forty-one percent of legislators received failing grades, presenters said, challenging the next session to open the path to equity by expanding Medicaid, implementing the Basic Health Option, adopting the Washington Voting Rights Act, prohibiting mandatory instant online verification of eligibility to work in the United States, abolishing the death penalty, protecting worker safety and stability, expanding access to dental care and broadening access to early learning.

“We can’t afford to let the Legislature avoid our revenue crisis by passing yet another all-cuts budget in the upcoming session,” said Tia, a Gonzaga graduate and Spokane mother of four. “Closing corporate tax loopholes and hav-



Tia Griffin speaks out based on her experiences.

ing the state’s wealthiest pay their fair share will allow us to preserve vital investments in education, health care and other programs that are necessary to providing more equal opportunity and prosperity for all people in Washington.”

Tia, the 16th child of a retired Air Force sergeant, graduated cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in Gonzaga University’s organizational leadership studies program in 2006.

The graduate of Mead High School spent 15 years away from Spokane, residing in Orange County, Calif., with her sister and brother-in-law. While there, she

worked and completed an associate’s degree at Fullerton Community College. She returned in 1998.

Tia has worked nights as a nursing assistant and has held other part-time jobs. Along with volunteering, she is rearing her children, seeking employment and seeking to further her education.

Meanwhile, she experiences in her own life, the lives of her teens and their friends, and life in the community some of the disparities from inequities in public policies.

Out of her experiences, she is speaking out.

Sometimes she has seen Marshall Island, Latino, Asian and African-American students from Rogers on the streets during the school day. She learned they were kicked out because they fought back when they experienced racially based taunting and bullying.

Knowing some of her children’s classmates have experienced that, she reflects on what it means for them and why it happens.

“There is need to expose issues of racism in education,” Tia said. “In Spokane, prejudice is not open, but hidden. The ‘N’ word has been used not only among students but also in some high school books.”

If students fight when bullied, they go to juvenile justice. If they don’t go back to school, the state’s truancy law is applied against them and their parents, she said.

Tia said courts do not consider racial harassment a valid reason for students to skip school, so it punishes students.

“It’s embedded in the system,” she said.

Tia has tried to organize other parents, but they fear retaliation by teachers, she said, adding that she finds that clergy want to help.

In the health care system, she said Pacific Islanders, Bosnians, Russians and African Americans find some doctors may cut corners

in their care because they use state-funded insurance.

“We need to break through bias. We need to talk with neighbors and share stories,” she said.

Having worked as a nursing assistant, she knew that, when she had an infection, the doctor should have taken a culture before prescribing an antibiotic that was not effective. Because he did not do the culture, which costs \$300, she had to take a second round of antibiotics.

Taking antibiotics for 14 days is not good for anyone’s body, Tia said, adding that skipping the step of doing a culture could lead to a kidney infection if a person is not knowledgeable and persistent.

If people do not know what treatment they should have, they may have complications. They need to challenge doctors on matters that affect their lives and health, she said. “When medical professionals cut corners, supra infections can be released in the body, further weighing down state medical care costs.”

Tia has found bias in employment with some retailers not hiring people of color.

“If youth of color cannot find jobs they may turn to selling drugs or stealing,” she said. “As they get older and have no job experience, their opportunities decline.”

Tia finds it hard to find work.

“The ‘No Blacks Allowed’ signs today are hidden, but the lack of people of color working can be seen all around us,” she said, telling of going into a store that had a sign in the window saying they were hiring. When she asked for an application, they said they were not hiring.

“If people do not have a job, they cannot pay mortgages, feed their families nor meet any basic needs. This may lead to homelessness. Today families are forced to double up with several generations living together.

“Business needs to give people a chance to work,” she said.

In addition, for those who find

a job, “at-will” firing is another opportunity for racism, because an employer does not have to say why a person is fired, she said.

“It’s better for me to work than live on welfare. I’m willing to work hard,” said Tia, who grew up in Morningstar Baptist Church in Spokane and now attends Calvary Chapel.

“We need to expose and uncover these issues that are part of the new civil rights era in Spokane,” Tia said. “We want something better.”

She said there is limited legal aid assistance for low-income people to challenge discrimination in work, health care and education.

Volunteering with the Washington Community Action Network, she has assisted behind the scenes and gives presentations on the racial justice report card.

When direct approaches do not work, she has another talent to renew her spirit. She sings and writes gospel music. One song she has written deals with being a single parent and trusting God.

While Washington CAN’s report card on racial justice looks at legislators’ votes on issues related to race, it does not look at why the inequities are happening.

“We need to talk about why there are inequities,” Tia said, who became involved with Washington CAN through a message online from MoveOn.org.

She went to a meeting at Salem Lutheran and was excited that people cared about issues she cared about. They went to representatives’ offices to say what changes they want to see.

They did phone banking and trainings to learn to advocate for the community, and have presented Washington CAN displays to provide information and networking.

The racial justice report card is at [washingtoncan.org](http://washingtoncan.org).

For information, call 206-389-0050 or email Tia at [seadvocacy@hotmail.com](mailto:seadvocacy@hotmail.com).

### The 25 bills reviewed in the Racial Justice Report Card met at least one of six criteria:

- Does it explicitly address racial outcomes and work to eliminate racial inequities?
- Will it increase access to public benefits and institutions for communities of color?
- Does it advance enfranchisement and full civic participation for everyone in the state?
- Will it protect against racial violence, racial profiling, and discrimination?
- Is it enforceable? Are adequately funded mechanisms in place to ensure accountability?
- Will it exacerbate existing racial inequities, or have unintended consequences on communities of color?

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## Pastor's ministry in Elmore gives her insights to share with others

As a rural pastor living in Tekoa, Wash., and serving the Elmore United Methodist Church (UMC), in the woods 10 miles north of Potlatch, Idaho, on Highway 95, Kathy Kramer delights in her ministry in the Palouse.

A quick stop at a Latah or Whitman County grocery, hardware, café, pharmacy, post office, bank or hospital often evolves into hours, because she enjoys spending time listening to the people she meets.

If people sense she's on the run somewhere, they may call out to her, "I'll pray for you and the people you're going to see."

"They know I would normally stop and chat, because I love people," she said.

Kathy brings appreciation of rural America from Iowa roots to her ministry both as pastor of the Elmore church and as co-director of Rural Ministry Resources (RMR) in the Pacific Northwest.

In a recent interview, she described her background, ministry and Rural Ministry Resources.

Born in 1947 in Ames, Iowa, where her father resumed studies at Iowa State College after he was in World War II, she was two when he graduated and they moved to Mapleton, Iowa. He taught vocational agriculture at the high school. Her mother played organ and was church secretary at the Methodist church.

"Faith and love of the land made their imprint on me there," said Kathy, who played in her father's shop after school, accompanied him visiting his Future Farmers of America students, sat on the organ bench listening to her mother practice or watched her crank out Sunday's bulletin on a mimeograph machine.

Occasionally, she stood tiptoe behind the pulpit "practicing" her Sunday sermons. At St. John's and at Tonic Methodist churches, Kathy at 16 gave her first sermon on Student Sunday.

Rhythms of living faith, organ crescendos, mimeo machines, grazing cattle, and seasons of planting and harvest blended for her growing up in a nurturing rural farm community.

"I was surrounded by good, hard-working, faithful people who tilled the land and loved the Lord," Kathy said.

After high school, she attended the United Methodist Morning-side College in nearby Sioux City, Iowa. After graduating, she taught elementary education a few years, married, raised two sons, Matt and John, took lay speaking classes and was active in churches each place they lived.

A family move to the Pacific Northwest opened opportunities that led Kathy into rural ministry.

"In the 1970s, clergy realized anew the essential, viable role small, rural, familial churches were to ministry," she said.

Representatives from the East-



Kathy Kramer appreciates doing ministry in a rural setting.

ern Washington Idaho Synod of the Evangelical Church in America, the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest, Presbyterian Church (USA)—in conjunction with Cooperative Extension offices of Washington State University (WSU) in Pullman and the University of Idaho (UI) in Moscow—started Rural Ministry Resources. The first director was the Rev. King Rockhill, who served Garfield UMC.

"RMR was instrumental in beginning a training program for lay persons to serve churches that could not afford full-time ordained clergy," Kathy said.

In 1986, when she was living in Kennewick, she told the United Methodist district superintendent she had always felt God was calling her to be a pastor.

With need for pastors "in areas of limited and declining populations" (LIMPOP) Rural Ministry Resources had a training program for people who grew up in church and wanted to be pastors.

After training in that July, Kathy came to the Elmore church as pulpit supply. That gave the congregation and her a chance to see if they liked one another.

"When I drove down Highway 95 to Elmore, I felt like I was coming home," she said.

Along with her family, she moved into the parsonage, a double-wide trailer beside the church. Although the Elmore area once had a sawmill and country school, now the church is in the countryside just off Highway 95. Originally Evangelical United Brethren, the church merged with Methodists in the 1960s to form the United Methodist Church. Its rural setting and familial tone draws people from many churches.

In the spirit of Rural Ministry Resources' blending needs and ministries, while serving as Elmore's pastor, Kathy also worked with students at the UI Campus Christian Center in Moscow from 1986 to 1996.

While the Elmore United Meth-

odist Church has 44 members on the rolls, 22 live too far away to come, but they choose to remain members. An average of 35 to 45 attend worship on Sunday, with about 180 different people attending over a year.

While the church is rural, drawing from nearby farms and ranches, Potlatch and Tensed, teachers from Latah and Whitman County schools, professors from the UI and WSU, loggers, health care workers, forest service families and retired people are among those who may gather Sundays.

"The congregation ranges in age from toddlers to people in their 90s. PhD's sit next to folks who had to drop out of school to run family farms," Kathy said. "No one can tell the difference, because common sense reigns."

She finds Elmore a caring, supportive, earthy, loving, fun congregation of people who accept humorous exchanges, sometimes even during worship.

"Our people love the Lord, have deep and abiding faith, and live it out, looking to Jesus as their guide in their daily lives," she said.

Along with worship, the church offers Sunday school, a men's Bible study, a daytime women's Bible study and a United Methodist Women group.

Its outreach includes supporting UNICEF, Potlatch's food bank, clothing closet and community Christmas baskets.

"Our members focus on our young people, celebrating their interests and activities. They also reach out to help and support others," Kathy said. "Members seek to live within their means, to love the land and to be good stewards of it and the resources God has entrusted to us."

They listen, care, give, worship, pray, cry and laugh together.

"They help each other when they have problems," Kathy said. "If someone is ill or needs a ride, chores done, wood chopped, a walk or driveway shoveled, others step up to lend a hand. If a farmer has a health problem and can't plant or harvest, the neighbors

help, doing that farmer's work before their own.

Kathy and Robert Kramer, who married in 2000, experienced this support as Elmore folks and community helped them through her cancer diagnosis, surgery, chemo and radiation treatments.

Sunday mornings, she shares what the Word of God says about how Jesus lived his life and how God's people should live their lives by loving God and others.

She said this is the spirit of Methodism's founder John Wesley: "We are asked what we do with the resources God has entrusted to us. The answer in sermons and discussions: 'We should earn all we can, save all we can, and give all we can of our time, talents and money.'"

After worship, people stay around and chat—in the yard in the summer or around the wood stove in the winter. Children play ball or hide-and-seek in the yard, or throw snowballs and build snowmen in the winter.

Kathy finds the rhythms of Elmore UMC heartwarming: The organ and piano play hymns in sync. Children sit still with lit Advent candles. Garbed as shepherds and angels, people of all ages tell the story of Jesus. Parents rock little ones as they fall asleep in the pews. Fiddlers tune up instruments. An errant snow or soccer ball plops against the side of the church.

Those rhythms and memories would not have been part of her life without Rural Ministry Resources having the vision that viable ministry is about more than a church's size or location.

RMR's ecumenical rural church and community team and board have served the Pacific Northwest for more than 35 years. It consists of clergy working together, "loving the Lord, the land and its people," she said.

RMR's board members in Washington and Idaho include co-director Cindy Wuts, a Presbyterian pastor serving Harrington and Rocklyn Zion United Meth-

odist churches; Paul Anderson, a Lutheran (ELCA) pastor serving Zion Lutheran and First Presbyterian in Fairfield; Roger Barr, a United Methodist pastor serving the Des Moines UMC; Mary Daniels, a ELCA pastor serving St. John's Lutheran in Sprague and Good Hope Lutheran in Lind; Dave McCue, a United Methodist pastor serving St. John and Colfax UMC churches, Gary Foster, retired Presbyterian pastor living in St. Maries, and King Rockhill, retired UMC pastor now living in Harvard.

RMR clergy visit pastors and small churches to listen to their needs, gifts and graces, Kathy said.

Incorporated in Idaho, RMR explores how to support small rural and urban churches through education.

"It helps pastors, lay people, churches and communities 'realize their potential for ministry' by evaluating their resources using 'assets-based' rather than 'needs-based' assessments," she said. "We support the distinctiveness of each local church setting and seek to help each church find appropriate ways of doing ministry within its own setting."

Its programs include continuing education, parish development, direct services and special contracts to connect with mission programs of rural churches and communities.

"Our programs reflect challenges of ministry in our times of rapid change," Kathy said.

RMR also offers several 24-hour retreats throughout the year, gathering pastors and friends of small, familial churches for support, worship, education, information and relaxation, often involving Cooperative Extension.

An October retreat surveyed both "Ministry in Multicultural Settings" and "Embracing Rural Strengths to Create Thriving Communities."

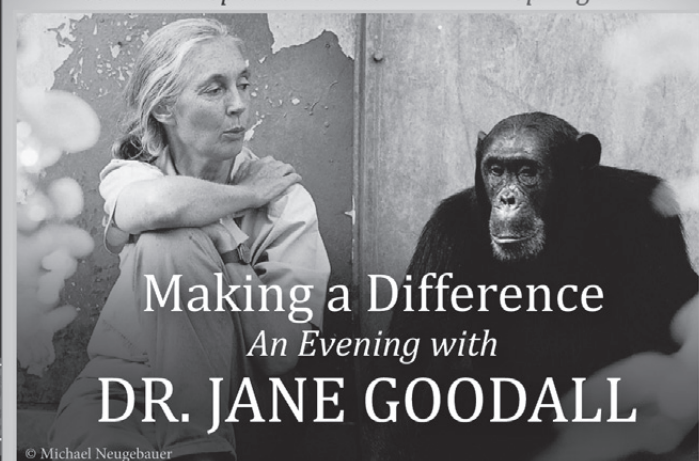
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# Author immerses readers in Balkan culture during another era

By Deidre Jacobson

For people who cannot be enriched by travel to other countries that immerses them in another culture and gives them a new perspective on the world, Barbara Filo, who retired in 2007 as art history teacher at Whitworth University, takes people into another time, culture and people through her novel, *Return to Budapest*.

"America is not the center of the world. We need to be more aware and more considerate of other cultures," said Barbara, a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Spokane since 1975.

"My southern background has had impact on my Christian beliefs and on my philosophy about human nature. I believe that all prejudice, especially racial prejudice is insidious and whether one is prejudiced or not, living in that environment holds all of us hostage," Barbara said.

Her own travels have included taking students for a semester abroad in England, Scotland and Wales and visiting family of her husband, Robert, in Slovakia and Budapest. Both have influenced the development of three fictional families in her novel.

"Some of my deep values seem to be ingrained in my psyche and come alive in the characters," she said. "I did not set out to write the story, I began the story and the characters told it to me."

Barbara's faith and values were shaped by her experiences growing up in the South. Growing up Methodist in Little Rock, Ark., she experienced as a seventh grader the forced integration of Little Rock Central High School, where nine black students were recruited to attend with 2000 white students.

An armed military was sent by President Dwight Eisenhower to surround the school to protect the students. The second year, the Governor of Arkansas closed the school, rather than allowing it to be integrated.

The Methodist Church Barbara attended formed a private school for white students, and church members voted to form a human fence, locking arms to keep black students out.

As a teen, Barbara chose to leave the Methodist church and join the Episcopal Church, which is open to all people.

"I still feel it is important to belong to a congregation where all are welcome," she said.

Barbara taught art history at Whitworth University for 28 years. For many years, she participated in the semester-long interdisciplinary British Isles Study Program. Her part of the program included London, North-

ern England and Scotland, where the students studied art history, architecture and painting.

Her students stayed in the homes of Presbyterians in various cities, in addition to colleges and bed and breakfasts.

Other Whitworth professors continued the semester through Western England, Wales and Ireland.

Her writing journey began when she traveled to Slovakia in 1992 and 1995 with her husband to meet members on both sides of his family. His grandparents were born in Slovakia and came to the United States as teenagers.

She met and married her husband in Pittsburgh, Pa. His grandmother's siblings' children remain in Viničné, Slovakia, while his grandfather's relatives live in Bratislava, a city of half a million people on the Danube River.

In 1999, Barbara spent a two-month spring sabbatical as an art historian from Whitworth University at Galeria mesta Bratislavy—the Bratislava City Galleries. From there, she toured Budapest with Robert's cousin and did research for an art history book.

On her second trip to Budapest in 2001, as she walked along Andrassy Ave., a street lined with mansions, characters seemed to come out of the buildings into her mind.

During these early visits, the once-beautiful mansions were in disrepair, but when she returned to the region in 2004 and 2011, most had been restored, and many had been converted into embassies.

Writing *Return to Budapest* took seven years, with much of that time spent in research.

It follows the lives of three fictional Hungarian families from the waning days of the great Austro-Hungarian Empire to the end of World War II.

Although the *Return to Budapest* characters are fictional, some of them are named for Robert's relatives in Slovakia. His large family of cousins are wine makers, and Barbara's experience with their vineyards and wine making business influenced her depiction of one primary family in the novel.

Barbara became engaged in the lives of her characters, writing ideas on napkins at restaurants and rushing home to capture vignettes that were unfolding in her imagination. The vignettes were then woven into the historical timeline



Barbara Filo addresses history, cultural biases in novel.

previously created.

She is fond of her characters, who are good people, believe strongly in relationship, live with integrity and are motivated by love of their family. They practice their Catholic faith, celebrating every life event in the church. They are tolerant, with great compassion for their Jewish friends. As the Nazi movement invades Hungary, the characters show their integrity and courage as they choose to risk their own safety to help others.

"I visualized the whole book—the houses, the villa at the lake, everything. I could see the characters in my mind, what they were wearing, what they were saying and doing, and all the details. I could open the doors of their houses and see them inside," said Barbara.

"As the characters' lives unfolded, I could delve into my research of the region's history and fit them into the events. The fictional characters interact with characters who are real people from history."

Three themes emerged as Barbara wrote the book:

- The first is Magyarization,

which sought to unite ethnic minorities in Hungary under one

language and culture, that of the ancient Magyar race.

- The second theme centers on history and politics—real events that happened and how the people living in that context responded and coped with them.

- The third theme involves relationships, both good and bad and how they sustain people.

After the completion of *Return to Budapest*, Barbara became discouraged with the process of finding a publisher.

She was encouraged by friends to contact Mike McCloskey in Seattle, but he told her that he did not publish fiction, especially not historical fiction.

After a year of frustration and disappointment, she called him back and he reluctantly agreed to look at it. She sent the manuscript and he changed his mind.

The book was published by San Juan Publishing in the fall of 2012. Elizabeth Ward, a member of First Presbyterian in Spokane, designed the book's cover.

Barbara is excited to see where her novel will go, marketing to Hungarian Societies, and attending book signings throughout the Northwest. *Return to Budapest* is available at Auntie's bookstore and through the author.

For information, email [brfilo@comcast.net](mailto:brfilo@comcast.net)

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Trainer Victoria Redstarr • Journalist Tim Connor

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# Judge develops Mental Health Court to address needs jails cannot meet

By Kaye Hult

When the Honorable John Mitchell, District Court Judge in Kootenai County, Idaho, calls a defendant to approach the bench, the person comes forward to stand in front him in an informal setting. People in the room applaud.

The judge asks: How have things gone for the past week? What issues have come up? Why didn't the person show up at the probation office?

He also asks defendants if they tested positive for drugs, earned their G.E.D. (General Education Diploma) or are ready to move up to a new phase in their program.

When they are ready, they receive a certificate of achievement, and others in the courtroom give them a standing ovation.

This is Mental Health Court (MHC), a program that began in Kootenai County in 2004. Judge Mitchell was appointed to the district in 2001. In 2003, Marcy Black, a probation officer assigned to mental health cases, suggested he do special work with the mentally ill.

He knew that about half of the people he saw in the criminal justice system had mental illness.

"I realized I had to be more patient with them," he said.

John and Marcy went to observe the original Mental Health Court program, created by Judge Brent Moss in Idaho Falls. They were impressed.

Six months later in September 2004, they began their program with five people. Now there are 47, and a waiting list. The MHC is budgeted for only 40 individuals. It can take a few extra people using money from drug forfeiture.

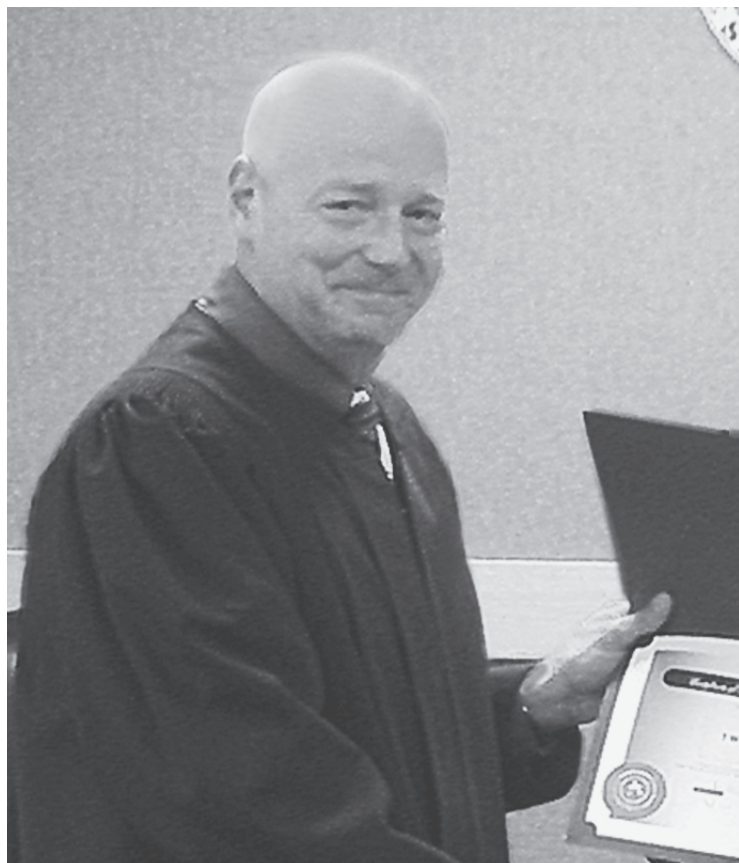
"Everyone in the program has a drug or alcohol problem plus a mental illness," he said.

They have been charged with a low-level felony.

"Eight years ago, individuals wouldn't be managed for mental illness," John said. "Jails or prisons took them off their medications, then often gave them lithium. That was no solution. Our prison system is better now. There are 13 mental health courts of 44 districts in Idaho.

"Most people in court—more than 50 percent of men and most women—have suffered a significant trauma," he said. "They've been sexually molested, physically abused, neglected or have seen someone close to them killed."

A sentencing judge may give defendants a choice to enter the



Judge John Mitchell presents awards to graduates of Mental Health Court program.

Photo courtesy of Mental Health Court office

MHC program or may order them in—rare for a first offense. It takes a probation violation, coupled with mental illness.

There is usually a triggering event. Some defendants come from other counties, but must move to Kootenai County to enter the program. The program helps participants come clean and admit what they have done.

"Treatment providers with whom we work are good with this," John said.

As the MHC reduces recidivism, it protects the community. It holds defendants accountable and helps them achieve long-term stability, become law-abiding citizens, and be successful family and community members. Continuation in the program is voluntary.

According to the MHC Participant Handbook, "The four-phase program consists of intensive supervision of clients by a mental health professional, frequent appearances before the judge, mandatory counseling, regular attendance at cognitive—self-awareness—change classes, and mental health substance abuse treatment and testing."

When people complete one phase, they receive a certificate and move to the next, which is less strict. The full program can take as little as 14 months. Usually, it takes longer, depending on the

participant's progress.

"I appreciate options when dealing with addictions," John said. "The first 90 days of the program focus on chemical dependency. The next six months focus on thinking errors, cognitive restructuring. Participants spend another year focusing on both."

The MHC staff offers incentives when participants do well and sanctions when they backslide.

When they appear in MHC—at first weekly—John encourages them: "You can do this!" and challenges: "Only you can do this."

John also continually works to make the program clear to the defendants in court on a given day.

Speaking to everyone, he may say, "This program is about honesty. If you are honest about messing up, your sanction is less than if you lie. We are trying to change your conduct. You have made bad choices. Honesty helps with better choices. We expect accountability from you. We expect consistency in a good attitude from you—in court, in treatment and in the community."

He believes the strength of the MHC is the 15-member team, a group that has changed little since it was established.

The team includes a public defender, the MHC clerk and coordinator, representatives from Health and Welfare and a private

mental health treatment facility (ACES, Inc.), someone from felony probation, a prosecutor and the sheriff's department.

A forensic peer support specialist, who has been to prison, can identify with participants. Some sit with the team from time to time. The team meets at 6:30 a.m., Thursdays, to review files of defendants to appear at 8 a.m. They review how well they have performed through the week and what incentives or sanctions would be good to offer.

Sometimes they decide a participant is not right for the program and vote to terminate his or her involvement. That person has to fulfill what their original sentence required. Often, the team puts a recalcitrant person on probation or sends them to jail for a day or two.

"We use jail sparingly," John said. "Jails have no mental health programs."

The team strives to keep participants in the program if possible.

"The watchword, the standard," he said, "is whether they are making progress, even if ever so slight. If yes, we'll stick with them. If no, we'll still try for a while. At some point, they have to be humble. Until then, I don't think they can change.

Motivating people to quit smoking doubles the chance they will stay clean and off drugs for the rest of their lives, he added.

Reflecting on early days of the program, John said one of the first people in the program wrote an essay. When she read it, the people in court clapped. She dissolved into tears, saying, "No one has ever clapped for me before."

Others tell him, "I never had a judge shake my hand, show me respect or talk to me. You're the first authority figure I've met who acts in a non-traditional way."

One anti-social person evolved into someone who could lead support groups to help others.

Before they can leave the Mental Health Court, candidates must be clean and sober for five months, be employed if possible, have a sponsor, a place to stay and a high school diploma or GED, and pay all fines and fees.

John said MHC is cost-effective. It's success rate is 80 per-

cent, compared with 60 percent of people who go to prison without addressing mental illness.

Someone in prison costs Idaho about \$25,000 for six months. Someone in the MHC program costs the state about \$16,000 for a year and a half.

In 2012, the team began a Juvenile MHC with four participants. They cap participation at 15 people. There is no budget.

"I do this because I see results. I believe this is what God calls me to do. I can't imagine not doing this. I see people do things they've never done before. I see people be Christ to others," said John, who attends St. Thomas Catholic Church and occasionally St. Pius, the church in which he grew up.

At a retreat, he made a commitment to do something for others each week. A men's accountability group he has attended for 14 years also helps him in this work.

"I care deeply about these people. I'm proud of how far some have come," he said. "I love challenges. In formal court, I have control. Here, I don't know what's going to happen from second to second."

The son of a lawyer in North Idaho, John attended the University of Idaho in Boise.

"As an undergraduate, I didn't think about being a lawyer. After earning a master's degree in law, I worked as a law clerk for three federal judges in Boise," he said.

John worked with his father for 12 years until his father retired in 1996. He worked on his own for five years. In 2001, he applied for District Judge and was appointed to Kootenai County.

"There's less stress, but I'm busy, working 60-hour weeks and volunteering 10 hours," he said.

John is discerning about entering a four-year training to become a deacon: "I believe God has a plan for me. I don't have a clear vision of it except in hindsight," he said.

"I want a 100 percent success rate with the MHC program. As more people graduate, there will be an unknown ripple effect in the community," he said.

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## Can we take action for today, knowing our work will be imperfect?

Violence, unemployment, homelessness, the economy, full civil rights for gays, education, medical and mental health care, the deficit, deteriorated infrastructure and immigration reform are complex problems. Each intertwines with others, but they all demand our attention.

Violence, particularly gun violence, has claimed much of our attention since the horrors of Newtown, Conn. Gang shootings and other armed criminal activities have not engrossed us. Maybe they seemed too separate from our daily lives.

The number of suicides with guns has crept up and now outnumbers murders with guns in areas where guns are readily available, but that receives little attention. Our military now has an alarming suicide rate.

Children should not be shot. News stories about drive-by or accidental shootings resulting from loaded guns not being locked up sadden us. Newtown horrified us with its blatant needlessness and brutality. We think about it again whenever we have children around us.

We would like a simple solution to gun

violence, the kind that demands a straightforward modification of someone else's behavior. Life doesn't work that way.

We have heard the usual voices from both extremes of the gun question, expressing opinions that range from variations of "Do nothing!" to "Do everything!" We are bombarded with opinions and statistics that conflict and require sorting.

This sorting requires careful attention to small details demonstrated in a recent PolitiFact.com article about a Facebook posting by the National Rifle Association.

The posting states, accurately, that rifles are not the most-used weapons in murders. They are even outnumbered by hands and feet used as weapons. The catch is that statistics on handguns have been left out—no small omission. The article says, "Handguns were used in 6,220 cases, or 72 percent of all firearm murders in 2011 and slightly under half of all murders using any kind of weapon that year."

Guns have played a part in American lives and lore throughout our history. Schoolchildren sometimes memorize the

poem about embattled farmers at Concord Bridge in 1775 who fired "the shot heard 'round the world." Guns made the Wild West wild. They are not going to disappear. They are part of too many lives.

I was raised in a home where there were guns. One was mine—a .22 calibre rifle.

My father, most of his friends and male members of his family hunted. Hunting seems partly male bonding, but it also put food on the table during the Depression. Hunting had not yet been dubbed a sport.

I enjoyed target shooting. Speed wasn't important. Accuracy was. The target was a traditional bull's eye, not shaped like an animal or person. Putting two consecutive shots into the center circle would be a real high. Three was once-in-a-lifetime.

We were living in a rural area, and the rifle team provided a challenging activity. Library services were slender. I had read my way through the local library.

At that time, the NRA emphasized training for gun safety. They provided educational materials and rifles both to high school rifle teams and to teen teams

sponsored by gun clubs. At meetings, there was instruction on gun safety and maintenance. I don't remember mention of the Second Amendment. The focus changed in the mid-50s.

There is no simple solution—not mine and not yours. We can agree that children should not be shot. Depressed and disturbed people need appropriate treatment, not a carelessly stored firearm.

As I read and listen it seems that grounds for debate are shifting. Reliable polls show gradual shifts in opinion with growth in the middle ground. Compromise might stop being unpopular. Maybe the shift is to discuss rather than debate. Maybe we can begin with the question, "How are we going to keep our children safe?" That is a complicated question that is part of a number of problems we face.

The President's inaugural address encourages us to take action for today, "knowing that our work will be imperfect." Can we live with that?

Nancy Minard  
Editorial Team

## Freshman shares his essay about the contributions of Martin Luther King Jr.

I am here to talk about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s role as a civil rights leader through the many things he achieved for the African-American community.

He was one of the great civil rights leaders in the movement. His name was so important to the movement, that he was assassinated by white supremacists as a final act of desperation to bring the movement down.

While King himself was killed, his dream lived on in the spirits of others as they continued to fight for the equality of African Americans. He was only a symbol for people to follow, he was not the movement by himself, but part of the movement—someone to inspire people through speeches and to wow people through actions that demonstrated what the movement was all about.

He led many marches and boycotts,

forms of nonviolent protest, to get his points across, such as his famous "I Have a Dream" speech after the march on Washington that talked about wanting the equality of everyone or the Montgomery bus boycott, which helped change the bus system so blacks could sit wherever they wanted on the bus, just like whites, instead of in the back.

King led the civil rights movement through nonviolent protesting. He got the idea by observing Mahatma Gandhi and his work to free India from Britain's grasp through the same nonviolent protest King used in the civil rights movement. Gandhi was the leader for the Indian independence movement. He mixed principles of Buddhism and Jainism to form his concepts on nonviolence. So, unlike Malcolm X, who said to become free by any means necessary, King and Gandhi believed that

nonviolence was the way to go.

The civil rights activists who followed King had fire hoses turned on them and had dogs attack them, were taken to jail and had many other things used against them to discourage their protesting, yet they marched on.

Another thing King and many other civil rights leaders crafted the movement on was civil disobedience. This concept came from Henry David Thoreau, who graduated from Harvard and wrote an essay on civil disobedience that is widely known throughout many colleges. "Civil Disobedience," the essay, was debating whether it is moral to disobey laws that are wrong. The phrase itself means to disobey a law in peaceful ways, such as disobeying the law that segregated buses in the 1950s in the way Rosa Parks did, rather than lashing out and attacking people to keep your seat.

King reflected on the essay in his autobiography. He said that whether expressed in a sit-in at lunch counters, a freedom ride into Mississippi, a peaceful protest in Albany, Ga., a bus boycott in Montgomery, Ala., these are outgrowths of Thoreau's insistence evil must be resisted and that no moral man can patiently adjust to injustice.

King used civil disobedience as one of his main focal points. Not only did he use it, but also other people who were willing to speak out against injustice would do things like go into a restaurant, sit in the whites-only section—unless it was a whites only bar—wait to be served with the full knowledge that they would be taken to jail.

To conclude, King was a good man who believed in the equality of all people. His dream has finally been realized.

Kahlil Wilson Moore - Freshman at  
Lewis and Clark High School

Letters to the Editor

## Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

**The atrocity of 28 people**, including 20 children, shot and killed at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., is part of a pattern of violence in our country. A timeline of the most deadly mass shootings from 1989 to the present—[timelines.latimes.com/deadliest-shooting-rampages/](http://timelines.latimes.com/deadliest-shooting-rampages/)—is a shocking and saddening set of information, showing increasing frequency in recent years.

**At the same time, 47 percent** of our national budget goes for past and current Pentagon spending, comprising 40 percent of the entire world's military spending. Our drones and weapons kill children and adults in Pakistan, Gaza, Afghanistan and Yemen. Our bases surround Iran.

**Looking at the threads** that make this tapestry, one is our cultural and political fetishization of weapons and of our Second Amendment. Arms now are hardly the same thing as those around the time the Second Amendment was written. It took a minute then to manually load every shot. Now, semiautomatic guns pump out rounds. The problem isn't just access to guns, but certainly easy access to these massively destructive weapons is a tragic thread.

**Another element is how we show** weaponry to children, and they clearly understand it as a pathway to power. Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp shared seeing toy assault weapons offered for Christmas gifts in local stores and suggests one action is to ask stores to choose not to sell them.

**Fictional media glorify tough guys** and their weapons. This thread reinforces the myth of redemptive violence, telling us

that we can create justice or access power through violence and aggression, which is okay if it's used for the right purposes. The creative human mind can justify horrible deeds with the "right" reasons.

**These threads are tightly twisted** with our patriarchal cultural understanding of manhood and masculinity. The "be tough like a man" script has specific expectations for participating in violence and aggression, including dominating others. These expectations of masculinity erase the reality of men as nurturing, full human beings, just as much as patriarchal expectations of femininity erase women's full humanity.

**Concepts of whiteness** and who is entitled to power are interwoven as well and show in the pattern of who commits mass shootings and which nation feels entitled to trumpet being "the greatest nation on earth," more worthy than others of supernatural blessings and material control.

**The horrible irony** is that our fetishization of violence makes us more vulnerable, not more secure. We provide so many motives for retaliation when we bomb wedding parties or attack responders to a drone strike.

**Our fetish of individualism** affects how we care for people with developmental disorders, mental illness or disabilities of any kind—or anyone who needs mental health assistance. It makes us all more isolated and scared to reveal a need for help.

Violence is best defined as "any physical, emotional, verbal, institutional, structural or spiritual behavior, attitude, policy or condition that diminishes, dominates or

destroys ourselves or others." The "spiral of retaliatory violence is often propelled by social or personal scripts that are enacted in situations of conflict."

Our discussion nationally and in our own communities must name and examine all the threads that make this tapestry of violence in our culture, our politics, our world domination and economic exploitation.

Liz Moore, executive director  
Peace and Justice Action League of  
Spokane - Handful of Salt newsletter

**On Dec. 19, I came close to dying**, as close as I have ever come. My chart said "massive bi-lateral pulmonary embolisms," which is often diagnosed in an autopsy. I didn't "see the light," but this was for me a big deal, and I've been thinking about it, feeling it and living with it since. How has this experience changed me?

Perhaps the strongest initial awareness is a profound sense of gratitude simply to be alive. I have such an amazingly blessed life, surrounded by so many wonderful, loving, supportive family and friends. I engage in meaningful work with a creative, faithful, diverse congregation. I have been given gifts and an opportunity to share them in ways which may make a positive contribution in the lives of others and in the world around me. In the first moments when I became aware all of that might come to an end, I was overcome with a deep sadness, because I was not ready to say goodbye.

As hard, challenging, frustrating and confusing as it can be sometimes, I love

my life. I love the people in my life, and I am deeply grateful for it all.

The other awareness is a strong sense of what's really important in this life and an equally strong unwillingness to put up with the "crap," which so often seems to occupy our time and emotional energy instead of what's really important.

What's important is loving, caring about and connecting with the people we share this life with. This is the moment we have in which to experience the fullness of life. I want to spend each of the precious, unique moments I've been given in such a way that my life is enriched by the connections I share, and the lives of others are enriched because they have shared life with me.

It calls for honesty, depth of sharing, taking risks. We can play it safe, but what will that gain us? I want to share the fullness of my heart and to taste the fullness of your heart. I have less tolerance for trivialities, pointless arguments, petty and useless differences, which we have somehow allowed to take center stage in our lives and in our world. I want to feast on what is Real. What is Real is Love, Light and Sacred Mystery, which connect us all.

This is already how I have been seeking to live, but at the same time, I have a strong sense this experience has moved me more firmly and deeply in that direction. It may be that from here on we simply experience more of what was already happening—more honesty, reality, love, present moment and less crap. Time will tell.

Roger Lynn - Veradale  
United Church of Christ newsletter



# Calendar of Events

- Feb • **Black History Month**, "At the Crossroads of Freedom and Equality: The Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington," www.asalh.org
- Feb 1-10 • **Spokane International Film Festival**, The Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main, or The Bing Crosby Theatre, 901 W. Sprague, www.spokanefilmfestival.org
- Feb 2 • **Eastern Washington Legislative Conference**, "Money: Grace and Justice," workshops, discussion and speakers on issues and advocacy, The Fig Tree and the Faith Action Network, at the Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 535-4112 or www.thefigtree.org
- Feb 6 • **"Empowering Malawians to Achieve their Goals,"** Sylvia Gentili, community health nurse volunteer in Malawi, 207 Monroe Hall, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, noon, 359-2898, cvines@ewu.edu
- Feb 6, 20 • **Inland Northwest Death Penalty Abolition Group**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m.
- Feb 7 • **"Former Governor Chris Gregoire: "24 Years Leading Washington's Fight for Hanford Cleanup,"** Erika Holms, community outreach and environmental education specialist, Department of Ecology Nuclear Waste Team, 207 Monroe Hall, EWU, Cheney, noon, 369-2898, cvines@ewu.edu
- Feb 7 • **Great Decisions Lecture**, "The U.S. and the Muslim World," Lawrence Pintak, former CBS Middle East correspondent, 7:30 p.m., Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University, 777-4937
- Feb 8 • **"Pulling at the Threads: Examining Our Culture of Violence"** panel discussion, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., speakers: 6 to 8 p.m., discussion, 838-7870
- Feb 8 • **Gospel Explosion**, Black History Month, Whitworth's Black Student Union, Seeley Mudd Chapel, 7 p.m., 777-4568
- Feb 8 • **Music for Double Chorus**, Spokane Choral Artists and Mid-Columbia Mastersingers, St. Aloysius Church, 330 E. Boone, www.spokanechoralartists.com
- Feb 9 • **"What Is a Truly Secure Community?"** Faith Action Network Legislative Workshop, Toppenish United Methodist Church, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., 206-625-9790
- Feb 10 • **Chinese New Year Celebration** – Year of the Snake, Spokane Chinese Association, Cultural Fair and Stage Show, Central Valley High School, 821 S. Sullivan, 3:30 p.m. cultural fair; 5:30 p.m. dinner/stage show, 720-8825, spokaneca@gmail.com
- Feb 12 • **Spokane Special Election** ballots due
- Feb 12 • **Jazz Mass**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 7 p.m.
- Feb 12 • **"More Than a Month" screening** and discussion, African-American filmmaker Shukree Hassan Tilghman, Jepson Wolff Auditorium, Gonzaga University, 6 p.m., 313-4105, www.gonzaga.edu/Student-Life/UMEC/UMECEvent.asp
- Feb 13 • **Veterans for Peace**, 35 W. Main, 6:45 p.m.
- Feb 13 • **Spokane Police Accountability and Reform Committee**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m.
- Feb 14 • **"Business Ethics Education as Transformative: The Jesuit Tradition,"** Gonzaga Professor Brian Steverson, Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga University, 6:30 p.m., 313-3419 or leithauser@gonzaga.edu
- Feb 14 • **Simpson-Duvall Lecture**, "Spirituality of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Civil Rights Movement: An Enduring Legacy," Lewis Baldwin, Vanderbilt University, 7 p.m., Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 777-3270
- Feb 14, 28 • **Palestine-Israel Human Rights Committee**, 35 W. Main, 3 p.m.
- Feb 16 • **"Create in Me a Clean Heart O God,"** Lenten Day of Reflection, Sr. Patricia Novak, OSF, The Franciscan Place, 1016 N. Superior St., 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 483-6495, sjfconline.org
- Feb 19 • **Thomas Merton's Bridges to Contemplative Living Lenten Series**, "Receiving the Gift of God's Mercy," The Franciscan Place, 6 p.m., 483-6495, sjfconline.org
- Feb 20 • **NAACP Meeting**, East Central Community Center, 500 S. Stone, 7 p.m.
- Feb 20 • **"Do No Harm: Invest in People!"** Faith Action Network's Interfaith Advocacy Day, United Churches of Olympia, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 206-625-9790, www.fanwa.org
- Feb 21 • **Our Place Benefit**, "The Force of Habit, Comedy Preview Night," Magnuson Theatre, Gonzaga, 6 p.m., 326-7267
- Feb 21-23 • **Leonard Oakland Film Festival**, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth University, 7 and 10 p.m., whitworth.edu/oaklandfestival
- Feb 22 • **"Connecting Learning and Experience: Your Role as a Co-educator,"** DOVIA workshop with Christine Cress, expert on service learning and civic engagement, The Lodge, Spokane Falls Community College, 9 a.m. to noon, jcarroll@spokanehumansociety.org
- Feb 22 • **Women in Agriculture Conference**, Trina Campbell of River Dog Farm in Guinda, Calif., Washington State University Spokane County Extension, 222 N. Havana, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 745-8531, WomenInAg.wsu.edu
- Feb 22 • **21st Annual Friendship Dance** (Pow Wow), Northern Quest Resort and Casino, Pend Oreille Pavilion, 100 N. Hayford Rd., Airway Heights, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., northwestmuseum.org
- Feb 22 • **"Does Faith Have a Future?"** Marvin Cain Lecture Series, Shalom United Church of Christ, 505 McMurray, Richland, 7 p.m.
- Feb 28 • **Heritage Month Lecture**, "Jesus in Red, White and Black," Paul Harvey, University of Colorado history department, 7 p.m., Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 777-4250
- Mar 3 • **Jam for Bread**, Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington, 3 p.m., 624-1366
- Mar 6 • **The Fig Tree distribution**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
- Mar 7 • **The Fig Tree Board**, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 1 p.m.

Many of the cultural events are from the monthly cultural calendar prepared by Yvonne Montoya-Zamora, human resource analyst at Washington State University

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By Beth Henley

February 8th thru 24th

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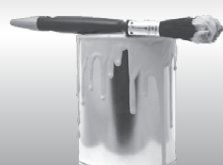
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# Firefighter immersed in lives of people facing loss, homelessness, death

**By Michael Neary**  
 Lance Jacobson's work as a firefighter immerses him in lives of residents and issues they face each day: loss from fires, homeless people on the streets in the cold and a person needing consolation as she faces imminent death.

Firefighting simmered in Lance Jacobson's imagination for a long time. His father, George Jacobson, spent his career working as a Spokane firefighter at the same station, Engine Company Seven, where his son now works.

Lance recalls the admiration he had for his dad's work, fused with an infatuation with the trappings of a firefighter's life.

"I always thought, like most children, that the fire trucks and station were pretty neat," he said.

So, when he was pondering a career choice some three decades ago, his father's profession presented a likely place to turn.

Once he began working in the field, it quickly became his own. As Lance, 55, talked about his work recently, he described the excitement of going out on a call—along with the relief of helping someone discover that everything was going to be all right.

"They give you a hug and say, 'Thank you, thank you,'" said Lance, a fire lieutenant who has worked for the Spokane Fire Department for 32 years.

Engine Company Seven covers Southeast Spokane. One of his responsibilities involves helping people who are homeless, a phenomenon he's seen swell since rough economic times hit a few years ago. He said the homeless have been hit particularly hard by funding cuts.

Firefighters can connect people who are intoxicated and on the street with detoxification services, but only when the van that takes people to the city's detox center is running. The hours are limited.

Lance said Brian Schaeffer, assistant chief of the fire department, has reported that the fire and police departments don't have the staffing to provide transportation to the city's detox center.

"We don't have time that we can take out of service to transport people to the detox center," he said. "Often when we're on a call, there's another call waiting."

That poses a tough problem for a firefighter who's trying to help someone who's on the street in the winter and who's inebriated.

"He may not be having a medi-



Lieutenant Lance Jacobson serves same firehouse his father served.

cal situation that warrants sending him to the hospital, but I worry that he'll wander off, staggering, and pass out again," he said. "I worry he's going to freeze to death, and there's a good likelihood he could."

Lance said firefighters from Engine Company Seven discover about two people each month in this sort of situation.

"I worry that with the lack of funding, this will become more prevalent," he said. Sometimes the solution is to improvise.

He recalls finding a man on the street and drunk at a time no transportation services were running. In this case, he and other firefighters found identification and learned the man was not homeless. He lived only a few

blocks away.

"We actually snuck him on the fire truck and took him home," Lance said. "I wasn't going to come back the next morning and find him dead."

In other instances, he explained, he's walked people home who were drunk and on the streets.

Lance said he encounters other problems that make life rough for homeless people, especially during the winter.

The city's warming centers open up only when it's below 15 degrees Fahrenheit, creating limited options during cold weather that doesn't quite reach that threshold.

"If it's 20 degrees and they're not open, a person can freeze pretty fast," he said.

said, is access to medical care. "They don't have transportation," he said, "and they have not been able to get to regular appointments."

Lance, who is a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, said his faith can bolster his ability to continue working in the face of the obstacles he encounters.

"Maybe God is my counselor in some ways," he said.

He passes that counseling spirit along to others.

Lance remembers answering a call where a woman's health was declining quickly, and he felt a kind of spiritual connection as he comforted her.

"While everyone was talking, I just reached my hand out and held her hand," he said. "I felt it was a God thing. It just seemed to give her so much reassurance."

For information, call 328-0822.

A frequent problem, too, Lance

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