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# Water needs protection

By Mary Stamp

Protecting water resources from over-consumption and pollution is on the World Council of Churches' agenda.

At the 9th Assembly during February in Porto Alegre, Brazil, several workshops, a worship service and a public policy guideline were on the theme, "Water for Life."

The goal is for churches and ecumenical partners to advocate recognition of water as a human right, to promote local control over water resources, to prevent exploitation of water for commercial purposes, to join the Ecumenical Water Network and to explore ethical and spiritual dimensions of the global water crisis.

While bottled water has brought clean, safe water to many, as a product of private, for-profit corporations, it is often too expensive for some people.

Many communities in Brazil had their community water systems taken over by profit-making corporations. Inefficiencies and high prices led many of those communities, including Porto Alegre, to restore control to local government.

*Continued on page 4*



Two young adults at 9th Assembly help with symbolic action in worship.

## More stories are available at thefigtree.org

Several articles this month are online at [www.thefigtree.org](http://www.thefigtree.org), along with additional photos related to the stories featured in this issue.

One article is on Pax Christi's honoring Al Mangan with its 2006 Peacemaker Award for his years of nonviolent war protests and his use of legal knowledge to educate others.

A second article is a summary by Father Charles Skok of Gonzaga University and St. John Vianney Catholic Church on the history of church attitudes on war.

A third is on a recent local peace rally and die-in, tied in with rallies around the nation and world, calling for an end to the war in Iraq. About 50 people participated in the die-in, lying on the ground motionless in memory of U.S. soldiers and Iraqi civilians, whose names were read.

Website design improvements continue to be implemented with equipment now available at the Unity House office, thanks to about \$6,700 raised at the March 8 Benefit Breakfast. The Fig Tree seeks volunteers to help with office tasks and website design.

For information, call 535-1813.

## Yom HaShoah service adds liturgy for ongoing remembrance of genocide

Yom HaShoah is more than a remembrance of a historical event. For Mary Noble, it's about life.

As the daughter of Holocaust survivors, growing up in a community of Holocaust survivors in Toronto, Mary often heard those survivors saying, "Never again!"

Aware genocides keep happening, she believes it is crucial to remember, tell stories and create a faith commitment that will make "never again" a reality.

Jewish communities have been observing Yom HaShoah since 1975.

For the 2006 Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust, Mary has worked with Temple

Beth Shalom to introduce the Shoah Scroll, a liturgy intended for annual use.

The observance of "Let There Be Light Again: Sixty Years after Nuremberg" will be held at 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 25, at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave.

George Critchlow, associate

professor at Gonzaga Law School and a founder and former director of the Gonzaga Institute for Action Against Hate, will be the featured speaker as part of the commemoration of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg.

There will also be music, reflections by survivors and a candle-lighting ceremony remembering the Holocaust, the murder of

6 million Jews in Eastern Europe and 5 million other people Nazis deemed unworthy of life.

"The liturgy is a service with the same words and components celebrated in many places," said Mary, who believes that it is critical to in-

stitute something that will endure beyond the survivors' lives.

The Rabbinical Assembly and Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies developed the liturgy in 2003.

"Jewish people have a memory of history thousands of years old and a tradition of commemorating

that history," she said.

Most Jews know about the Hebrews leaving slavery in Egypt through celebrating Pesah—the Passover—each year. They remember and relive the Exodus through rituals.

The Yom HaShoah liturgy was designed to create a similar fixed ritual to remind people what happened in the Shoah, when survivors are no longer alive to tell their personal stories.

The Shoah Scroll liturgy includes six three-minute readings of stories of people's experiences in the Holocaust.

The readers will include Garry Oliver of Lincoln Heights Congregational Church; Dan Kleckner of KHQ, reading a journalist's observation of life in the ghetto; Carla Peperzak, a survivor who worked with the Dutch underground in Holland, sharing the words of a woman, Gertrude, about life in the barracks, and Ron Klein, a psychologist, reading the account of a 25-year-old man who survived when he should have died with others.

*Continued on page 7*

## Churches, faiths voice concerns about violence

Marking the midpoint of the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV), participants at the 9th Assembly wondered if churches were abandoning people in Northern Uganda and if church leaders were engaging in "sterile" debates about when violence is permissible.

"Since the decade started in 2001," said Tale Hungnes Lucas, a leader in the Church of Norway, "Sept. 11 and the war on terror arose, creating a new context."

Speakers at a press conference and the plenary on the decade raised challenges and questions for churches worldwide.

"When adults wage war, children pay the highest price," asserted Olara Otunnu of Uganda, former United Nations undersecretary general and representative for the UN's Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC).

He said children are both targets and instruments of war—killed, maimed, orphaned, abducted, deprived of education and health care, left with deep emotional scars and trauma, recruited as soldiers, uprooted from homes, sexually exploited and indoctrinated by terrorist entrepreneurs.

"The worst place to be a child today is in Northern Uganda where society has broken down," Olara said. "Where are the people of God when a population is being decimated by a genocide? With the enormity and nature of the humanitarian crisis, churches must intervene."

"In 20 years of war and 10 years of concentration camps, about 2 million people—80 percent women and children—have been herded like animals to live in squalor, disease, despair, humiliation, overcrowding and malnutrition in about 200 concentration camps. Infant mortality is twice that in Darfur."

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## Religion News Briefs

# Around the World

Ecumenical News International, PO Box 2100  
 CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111  
 Fax: +41-22 788 7244 Email: eni@eni.ch

### Peacemakers' role vital after Iraq hostages freed

Geneva (ENI). Church leaders in many parts of the world expressed relief and joy at the release of three members of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) held hostage in Iraq. Members of churches supporting the group said attention should also continue to be paid to the thousands of Iraqi detainees and captives, a British think tank and advocacy group stated.

### Polish church asks forgiveness for collaborators

Warsaw (ENI). Poland's Roman Catholic bishops requested "mercy and forgiveness" for priests who informed for secret police under communist rule. They condemn "media sensationalism" and urge sensitivity on the issue. "Polish history testifies that, in a system that broke consciences, church people also betrayed trust. We are pained by this and apologize to those who experienced distress and harm," Poland's bishops said.

### HIV-positive priest sees AIDS-free world by 2025

Nairobi (ENI). Canon Gideon Byamugisha, the Ugandan Anglican priest who became the first African church leader to declare he was HIV-positive, says the world could be free of AIDS by 2025 if it confronts hurdles like stigma and inaction in dealing with the pandemic. He said: "With partnerships we can defeat stigma by 2009. The epidemic can level off by 2015. We will then be talking of a world free of AIDS by 2025."

### Presbyterians invest \$1 million in church 'bank'

New York (ENI). The Presbyterian Church (USA) has invested \$1 million in Oikocredit, an organization established by the World Council of Churches that helps people in poor countries start small businesses. The investment is the largest in Oikocredit for more than a decade, making the 2.4-million-member denomination the second-largest investor in the institution set up in 1975. The largest is the Church of Sweden.

### Married couple share work as bishop in Bavaria

Bielefeld, Germany (ENI). The Bavarian Lutheran church has for the first time appointed a married couple to share the post of a regional bishop, despite fears that this might harm relations with the Roman Catholic Church. Elisabeth Hann von Weyhern, aged 43, and Stefan Ark Nitsche, 50, have been installed in the post of regional bishop for Nuremberg, one of six districts within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria.

### Indian church reverses trend, sends missionaries

London (ENI). Mizos hill people of Northeast India, converted to Christianity by Welsh Presbyterians in the 19th century, are now sending missionaries to help their mother church in Wales. The Rev. Hmar Sangkhuma, from the Mizoram synod of the Presbyterian Church of India, has been a "mission enabler" for the Indian denomination's counterpart in Wales.

### Churches, mosques shelter for flood victims

Blantyre, Malawi (ENI). Flooding in Malawi's southern lake district and central region, triggered by the heaviest rains in 28 years, left more than 40,000 people homeless, seeking refuge in churches, mosques and schools. Four days of rains washed away maize fields, domestic animals and hundreds of houses. At least four people died.

### Finnish Lutherans ask why people leave

Helsinki (ENI). The number of people leaving Finland's majority Evangelical Lutheran Church has increased in recent years. Many young adults feel the church lacks relevance to their lives, a study found. More than 33,000 people left the Church of Finland in 2005, about 70 percent of them from 20 to 39 years old. Older people who left said they had experienced personal disappointment with the institution.

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

# CROP Walks aid Water for Life program

As CROP Walk plans are underway in the region, Church World Service, the national agency providing resources for CROP Walks and distributing funds raised for relief and development, celebrates its 60th anniversary.

In the Pacific Northwest, there are now 50 CROP Walks, with 1,800 around the United States.

"Because CROP Walks rely heavily on volunteers, administrative costs ran at 4.4 percent in 2005," said Lynn Magnusen, regional director of Church World Service/CROP Walks in Seattle.

She was in Spokane March 6 at Mission Community Presbyterian Church for a presentation to volunteers who will recruit walkers for the Spokane CROP Walk, which begins at noon, Sunday, April 30, at Martin Centre on the campus of Gonzaga University.

In 2005, she said, walkers from Spokane and Cheney raised nearly \$32,000 total, the highest in its 27-year history, over which walkers have raised \$502,363, with

\$125,000 coming back to local hunger agencies.

Of the 25 percent that stayed locally in 2005, \$1,989 each went to Second Harvest, Mid-City Concerns/Meals on Wheels, the Interfaith Hospitality Network and Spokane Valley Meals on Wheels, plus \$112.50 for the Cheney Food Bank—from \$450 raised by Cheney walkers.

Support of CROP Walks provides meals for vulnerable Americans while it helps people achieve food security around the world, Lynn said.

Other area spring CROP Walks include one in Sunnyside on Saturday, April 22, and one in Milton-Freewater on Sunday, May 21.

With the 2006 focus on "Water for Life and Africa," Lynn said global projects will bring clean water and teach sanitation.

"We live in a country with immediate access to water as a seeming unending resource," she said. "On the average, U.S. resi-

dents use two gallons of water to brush their teeth. In other countries, women walk miles to bring a five-gallon container of water for their family's use for the day for drinking, cooking, washing and bathing."

In Gambia, for example, Church World Service works through the Association of Farmers, Educators and Traders to improve agriculture, income generation, and nutrition, by improved well-digging technology. Wells are productive year-round.

CWS's yearly goals for the Water for Life program there are to provide 2.5 acres for each village garden, fencing, water for irrigation, tools and seeds, and training in vegetable cultivation, storage, nutrition, food processing and preservation, she said.

Walkers have a new resource with "Walk On the Web." Through it, they can email friends and family to ask for their sponsorship.

For information, call (888) 297-2767.

## Earth Day celebrations planned for April 22

Spokane's observance of Earth Day from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 22, includes a world music and dance festival at Riverfront Park's Gondola Meadows, an environmental film festival in the Spokane City Hall and a clean transportation and technology fair in the City Hall parking lot.

In addition, there will be more than 40 information and food booths, and children's activities.

The theme, "Sustaining the Earth: Our Choices Make a World of Difference," expresses the need to increase public awareness to protect the earth, said Mike Petersen of the Earth Day Committee and The Lands Council.

Procession of the Species participants can bring a costume or make one at a booth. They meet at noon by the Earth Day stage to walk through Riverfront Park with the "Tread Lightly Bike Ride."

There will be performances of West African and Native American drummers, Brazilian music, Mexican, South Indian, Japanese and Argentine dancers and the Ferris High School Band.

Films include "Man Belongs to the Earth," at 11 a.m.; "Anima Mundi," 11:30 a.m.; "BBC Blue Planet Series: The Deep," noon; "BBC Life of Mammals Series: Social Climbers," 1 p.m., and "Jane Goodall's Wild Chimpanzees," 2 p.m.

The Clean Transportation and Technology Fair will show clean transportation and technology.

For the Reuse-A-Shoe Collection, people may bring old athletic shoes to the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System booth. Shoes will be recycled as surfaces for athletic fields.

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance and ECO-CELL will collect used cell phones to raise funds to protect endangered species in the Selkirk Region. Most of the phones collected will be used by first-time, low-income users abroad or local organizations, such as Battered Women's Programs for 911 emergency calls.

For information, call 838-4912.

The Coeur d'Alene Earth Day Fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Harding Family Center, 411 N. 15th St., offers games, face painting, art and juggling for children, plus exhibits and demonstrations on environmental topics.

There will be educational events on predators—both raptors and wolves—on Thursday afternoon

and evening at the North Idaho College Christianson Gym.

For information, call coordinator Karen Lamb at (208) 661-2031.

The Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute will host its annual Paradise Creek stream clean-up from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., April 22, followed by educational programs and exhibits at the Palouse Science Discovery Center and the Washinton State University Recycling Center.

In Pullman, WSU's Springfest plans music, activities, food and fun to promote environmental awareness 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., April 22, at WSU's Grimes Field.

In Moscow, the University of Idaho Environmental Club plans events all week, Alternative Transportation Day on Monday; Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Day on Tuesday; Food Day on Wednesday; Live Sustainably on Thursday and Earth Week Celebration on Friday.

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## CROP Hunger Walk '06

SUNDAY, April 30



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 Church World Service  
 & the Interfaith Council  
 of the Inland Northwest



**Women's Justice Circle plans PSA on housing**

The Women's Justice Circle held at the Women's Hearth Feb. 8 to March 29 involved eight to 20 women in each two-hour session. With KXLY's help, participants developed a public-service announcement to promote affordable housing in downtown Spokane. Women's Justice Circles bring together low-income women, people from faith communities and other partners to work for systemic change. For information, call 455-4249.

**AHANA holds 7th anniversary dinner**

AHANA celebrates its seventh anniversary with a speaker on "Pathways to the Future" and recognition of its Youth Leadership Entrepreneurs at a dinner at 5:30 p.m., Friday, April 7, at the Northern Quest Pavilion, 100 N. Hayford Rd in Airway Heights. AHANA is the African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American business and professional organization in Spokane. For information, call 838-1881.

**UNA hears talk on environmental issues**

Mike Petersen, director of the Lands Council, will tell the United Nations Association of local efforts to protect the region's forests and rivers related to the UN's Millennium Development Goal on environmental sustainability, at 7 p.m., Monday, April 10, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Fort George Wright Dr. For information, call 624-3608.

**American young men venture into Africa**

Three American young men who ventured independently to Africa in 2003 to find stories of life will give a presentation and show their video, "Invisible Children," at 7:30 p.m., Friday, April 11, at the Moot Courtroom of the Gonzaga University Law School. Their story tells how children are used as weapons and are victims of the 20-year-war in Northern Uganda.

**West Central holds stations of the cross**

Jubilee Ministries and West Central Christian Ministries plan a Good Friday Stations of the Cross Remembrance to highlight various social problems affecting the West Central neighborhood, beginning at 5:10 p.m., Friday, April 14, at 1848 W. Bridge. The problems include incarceration, powerlessness, child abuse, violence, loneliness, environmental decay, prejudice, addiction, domestic violence, oppression, pornography, suffering and death. The last two are on anointment and hope.

**African-American poet speaks at Gonzaga**

African-American poet Yusef Komunyakaa of Bogalusa, La., will present a program at 11 a.m., Friday, April 21, at the Russell Theatre at Gonzaga University. His poetry and short stories sum up his family relationships, life in a Southern community, his love of jazz, his military experience in Vietnam and life in New Orleans—lending insight where others find chaos.

**JustFaith director will lead workshop**

Jack Jezreel, director of JustFaith Ministries, will facilitate a workshop from 6:30 to 9 p.m., Thursday, April 27, at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes O'Connor Hall. The 30-week JustFaith program has changed hundreds of U.S. Catholic parishes, said Scott Cooper, director of Parish Social Services in Spokane. It involves participants in learning experiences that stir personal transformation and commitment to compassion, justice and social ministry. For information, call 358-4273.

**La Fiesta Cinco de Mayo planned in Post Falls**

La Fiesta-Cinco de Mayo is from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday, April 29, at the Greyhound Park Center, 5100 Riverbend Ave., in Post Falls. The third annual nonprofit fund raiser highlights talents from the region, arts and crafts, music and dancers, food and family activities, and a car show on the theme, "Education Is the Way." For information, call 483-2523.

**Faith leaders share teachings on genocide**

As part of a nationwide campaign to end genocide in Darfur, the Interfaith Council of the Inland Northwest is collecting postcards for the Million Voices for Darfur campaign, and the national Genocide Prevention Day on Sunday, April 30 in Washington, D.C.

Through interfaith events and congregational efforts, the council seeks to collect 1,200 postcards by April 15 and send them to the Save Darfur Coalition for its the Rally to Stop Genocide.

Coinciding with the national rally, the Interfaith Council will have speakers on famine and displacement in Darfur at the Spokane CROP Walk on April 30.

At an interfaith service on March 19 at Country Homes Christian Church, Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders shared teachings of their faiths that denounce genocide.

Howard Glass of Temple Beth Shalom said Jews have been targets of genocide in ancient history as well as in the Holocaust.

"Our memories are fresh because we have Holocaust survivors in the community and hold a Yom HaShoah memorial," he said. "In the Purim holiday, we read in the book of Esther about thwarting a plot to kill Jews in Persia."



**Howard Glass**



**The Rev. John Bristow**



**Mamdouh El-Aarag**

He said that after Moses led Jews from slavery he went to Mt. Sinai and received the Torah, which teaches not to stand idly by when a neighbor's blood is shed.

"We are to preserve and protect human life as precious," he said.

"We are not to let disagreements fester to the point of hatred, but to love our neighbors as ourselves.

"We shouldn't need a reason to care for our neighbors as ourselves," Howard said. "Given that we can do things to save lives in Darfur, we should do them."

The Rev. John Bristow, pastor of Country Homes Christian, reminded that Jesus blessed those who make peace and called them children of God: "We are called not just to be peace lovers but peacemakers," he said.

Mamdouh El-Aarag said the Quran, which defines Muslim faith, practice, wisdom, law and life has detailed teachings on social justice, human relationships and economic justice.

"We are created equal, distinct in piety, not in wealth and power," he said. "Islam is a religion of justice. God commands trust. God (Allah) judges with justice.

"Allah loves justice and does not want us to let hatred by others cause us to become unjust," Mamdouh said.

For information, call 329-1410.



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# Churches promote water as a basic human right, not a commodity

*Continued from page 1*

Argentinian Methodist Bishop Fredrico Jose Natalio Pagura, a former president of the WCC, said the Ecumenical Water Network includes Water Development in Germany, Church World Service and the National Council of Churches in the United States, Kairos Canada, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Lutheran World Federation.

Believing that water is basic for life, its participants seek to assure that all people have access to water, the bishop said.

The network supports community-based initiatives for people to manage and protect water, and advocates for water as a human right.

"I have witnessed the seriousness of the issue in our continent and around the world," the bishop said. "Churches and ecumenical groups should study contemporary concerns and engage with each other to find solutions."

He advises churches to develop expertise from biblical and theological perspectives, as well as on practical dimensions.

**Biblical and theological** reflections in the "Water for Life" the WCC's public policy guideline, include: "Water is a symbol of life. The Bible affirms water as the cradle of life, an expression of God's grace in perpetuity for the whole of creation. It is a basic condition for life to exist on earth and is to be preserved and shared for the benefit of all creatures and all creation."

The guideline also points out that "water is the source of health and wellbeing, and requires responsible action from us as human beings, as partners and priests of creation. As churches, we are called to participate in the mission of God to bring about a new creation where life in abundance is assured to all."

With threat to freshwater supplies across the planet, conflicts among people, communities, regions and nations have arisen over water, undermining biodiversity and balance in the ecosystem.

"Water scarcity is a growing source of conflict related to international watercourses and river basins," says the document, which expresses concern about access to freshwater and sanitation.

**In a workshop** on "Water for Life," speakers raised issues.

Marcello Varos, an educator with the Catholic Diocese of Sao Paulo, Brazil, relates Benedictine spirituality to water.

He is concerned about birds disappearing from a nearby river and about children, old people and marginalized people who suffer from a lack of water.



**Naidison Batista and Marcel Achkar share practical stories.**

Marcello lives in Rosalio, where a European company administered water and then left, leaving a debt and no one to purify the water. Now the community has a public water system.

He also told of conflict among people of Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay about paper-making companies in one country contaminating the river that flows through the other countries.

Marcello calls churches to study water rights and access because "everything on earth and all living beings are from God, who cares for the earth and puts us in administrative care of the waters, rivers and lakes. We should not destroy what God created."

He urges churches to study their religious heritage on the environment and accept protection of creation as a priority, so they do not destroy life.

**Offering another theological** perspective, Bishop Barbel Wartenberg-Potter of the Northelbian Evangelical Church in Germany, reminded that "every human life begins for nine months in a small sac of water inside a mother's womb."

After living in the water in the womb, she said, "coming to dry land is a shock, according to psychologists and psychiatrists. Similarly, we begin our Christian life with the water of baptism—drowned in water and emerging as new human beings, immersed and nurtured by the water."

"Water is close to the origins of life in the creation story," she said. "After separation of dark from light, came separation of water and land. Beside water in a pond or seaside, we can meditate on our origins in water."

**Barbel helped Brot für die Welt** (Bread for the World) prepare a theological document on water.

She added that the WCC through Justice, Peace and Creation work is committed to address water.

"Water disagreements are a

source of violence, greed and selfishness," she observed. "We are renewed from those human attitudes by baptism, washing us into new life."

"I see God at work in nature and experience God's goodness in creation. I am dedicated to preserving water, especially after the World Economic Forum two weeks before the assembly."

"Economically, water is a more important resource than oil. The scarcity of water has incredible impact," Barbel said.

"Women walk hours to fetch enough water for their families to live for one day," she said, telling of an African woman challenging people at the World Economic Forum to put a heavy pot of water on their heads and walk around a tent, making sure no water spilled.

That exercise strengthened Barbel's commitment.

"We can change life when we pipe water into rural African communities," she said.

"We have seen from the tsunami and recent floods how destructive water can be," she added. "We also know that Lake Geneva and the Rhine River were once threatened, but decisive measures by communities brought fish and other life resources back."

"We can make a difference for ourselves and future generations," Barbel said.

Other speakers told what is being done in Latin America.

**Marcel Achkar** of a Uruguayan commission working for an amendment to the national constitution to prohibit the privatization of water and Naidison Batista of the Movement of Community Organizations helping establish the One Million Cistern Program in arid Northeast Brazil, told of concrete solutions of local communities and of advocacy for water as a resource for the common good and a human right.

Marcel described Uruguay as a small country with a civic

tradition of public cooperatives for social services. In 1952, a public cooperative provided water solutions, reaching 90 percent of urban areas with drinking water and 60 percent with sewers.

In 1992, he said, interests considered "neo-liberals" there privatized services for profit, transferring water resources to a Swiss French organization and, in 2000, to a Spanish company.

"After Uruguay experienced privatization, we formed the National Organization in Defense of Life and Water."

"To stop privatization and prevent it in our constitution, we established that water is a human right," Marcel said. "That principle is important for defending water resources. From it, we establish water as a public domain in property conflict."

**Religious and grassroots** organizations across Uruguay collected signatures to change the constitution by initiative. In 2004, they educated and organized people through cultural and religious groups, holding debates on social, cultural, political, environmental, economic and religious perspectives. Passing it with 65 percent of the popular vote also brought in new government leadership.

"Recently, the state of Uruguay bought buildings and equipment from a private firm and established a national price on water through a stable, sustainable management of sewage and water resources," Marcel said.

**Naidison described** community projects in Northeast Brazil where 24 million people live in a semiarid area with little water or rain.

People held back by the lack of water now have cisterns, cement containers that can store up to

16,000 liters of rainwater drained from rooftops, enough to supply a family for six to eight months.

By mobilizing community organizations, the movement helped people develop policies that promote health care and agrarian reform to fit the region's realities by providing access to land and water, technical assistance for family farms, natural seed production, democratic communication and education programs.

"People want a voice in making policies, because they have experience in the area where they struggle against drought as a natural part of life," Naidison said.

**The cistern program** is based on respecting, involving and engaging people, so they know how to make cisterns, evaluate contractors' bids, do the construction, determine labor and materials, and make policies," he said.

"For the first time, Brazil experienced resource allocation in the federal budget," he said. "A farmer in my region said before the cistern system, he had to sell his vote in order to have water. Now he is free."

"People learn from little things we do in civil society to create the common good," Naidison said.

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# Face-to-face discussion opens possibilities for new solutions

Environmental, timber, Forest Service, local business and recreation interests in the region have turned from conflict and litigation to dialogue and collaboration to resolve some issues.

In face-to-face meetings, group discussions and dialogue, the parties are establishing relationships to deal with once-contentious divisions.

As Forest Watch director with The Lands Council in Spokane, Tania Ellersick attends these meetings through the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition.

**Discussing concerns** from an ecological standpoint adds perspective about dynamics such as tree species and age variation, soil quality, hydrology and erosion.

That helps the group recognize areas in need of restoration and helps communicate concern about old growth, road density and maintaining nutrients on the landscape.

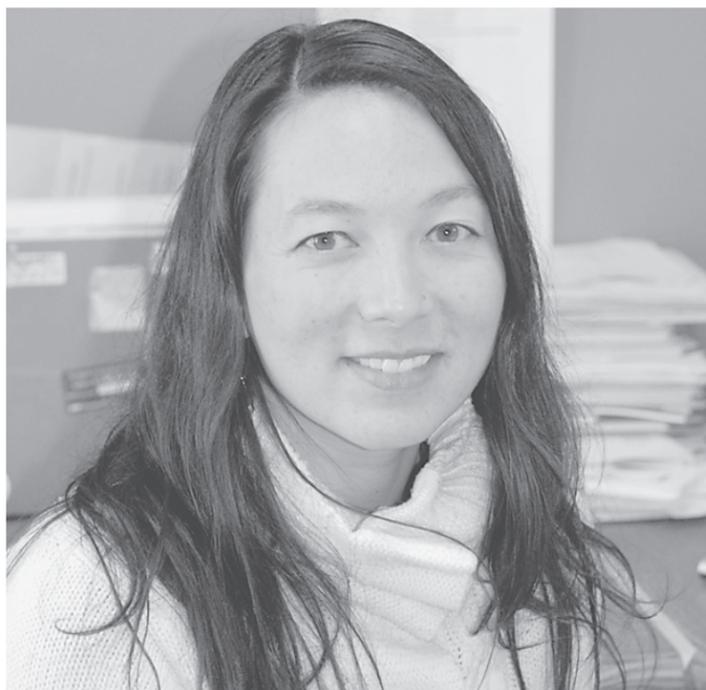
Tania, a 1993 graduate of Lewis and Clark High School, earned a bachelor of science degree in forest management, with a minor in conservation of wild-land resources in 1998, and completed a certificate in wetlands science and management in 2004.

**Accompanying her parents** hiking and camping in the region and traveling with them as a child instilled an appreciation for forests and wild areas, and an appetite for travel.

She developed her fascination about the natural world in work and volunteer opportunities. With the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, she compared functional assessments for wetland and habitat restoration projects. As a volunteer neuropathology lab associate with the UW Medical Center for two years, she learned about hippocampus tissue from patients with chronic and severe epilepsy. For a while, she lived in Hawaii, researching and restoring habitat for hawksbill sea turtles that nest there.

**She also traveled to** Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria, England, Italy, Switzerland, Mexico, Costa Rica and Bolivia, hiking and adventuring. She has traveled with family numerous times to Indonesia, where her mother's family lives.

In Bolivia, she volunteered at a wildlife refuge rehabilitation center, working with capuchin monkeys and birds. The center helps



Tania Ellersick

endangered animals that have been stolen or sold illegally, and become pets or circus animals.

"Most had poor diets, had been beaten, had atrophied muscles and were stressed. I worked with those animals post quarantine, introducing them to members of their own species and their new habitat, making sure they were disease free, eating a nutritious diet and learning to forage and nest on their own," she said.

**Tania is fascinated** by natural processes that existed long ago, like the transitions from simple to complex plants, or the interaction of natural fire and changes across the landscape.

"I enjoy feeling insignificant in a valley carved by glaciers centuries ago. I like the morphology of feathers and the structure of flowers, or just observing the social dynamics of capuchin and spider monkeys in Bolivia," she said.

**In the year Tania has been** at the Lands Council, she has been active on the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition Board, a coalition of environmentalists, mill owners, loggers and local business owners.

"We encourage people in the communities to join us and help us find common ground. We hope to provide an example of positive collaboration and move forward in solving points of contention about forest usage. As we work on the forest revision process for the Colville National Forest, we hope more members of the community will become involved.

"We are finding new solutions

integral part of the ecosystem," Tania said.

Chewelah and Lower Kettle River have wildfire plans. A plan is in process in Stevens County.

Since 2002, the coalition has worked to create common ground and find innovative approaches to forestry.

**"Previously, interests** in the Colville National Forest had a divisive disconnect," she said.

"Now that we sit across the table from one another, we can minimize miscommunication, establish trust and find common solutions," she said.

"In person, we are able to be direct and try to mitigate litigation," she said.

"A request to decommission a road in a project area is much easier to communicate face-to-face," she said. "By speaking with Forest Service staff, I gain a better understanding of their concerns and time constraints.

**"This process makes it evident** to participants that there are many types of solutions to these issues across the nation," she added. "The Lands Council is still active in litigation as an important tool, too."

In the Colville National Forest, the coalition came to agreement on a fuel reduction project, because all parties had input at the inception and each reflected

on concerns of the larger community.

One committee focuses on stewardship contracting, small local timber company input and a commitment to restore areas in the Colville National Forest.

The coalition includes a Forest Planning Committee, a Stewardship Contracting Committee, a Community Wildfire Protection Committee, a Project Committee, and an Education and Outreach Committee.

The Northeast Washington Forestry website, [www.newcommunityforestry.org](http://www.newcommunityforestry.org), publishes minutes, decisions, meeting schedules and locations.

**To advocate for wild areas,** Tania and a coalition of Eastern Washington groups will take people on hikes into surrounding natural areas this summer and early fall.

She will share with others what her father, an avid hunter, hiker and outdoor person who grew up in Bonners Ferry, taught her about the outdoors, as well as her insights from the dialogues and study of nature.

"It's important to be attentive, still and conscientious in the natural environment, so we can be moved and inspired by the ecosystems and open to respect and protect the areas," she said.

For information, call 838-4912.

to issues that have plagued our organization, the forest industry and the federal government for years," Tania said.

**One example of a solution** is that the coalition has developed community wildfire plans for two communities to address protection and educate people on how to create defensible space on their own property.

"We help people understand that wildfire is natural and an

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Registration is limited to 25. Please register by April 24. You must attend both trainings.

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## Woman finds her voice in writing spiritual poetry

By Deidre Jacobson

When Michelle Schlienger, participant in the Women's Hearsh writers' workshop, lost the "voices of schizophrenia" she found her own voice.

Adopted at three days old, Michelle lived her first 10 years in Caracas, Venezuela. She moved to Spokane at age 13.

"I remember my childhood as happy, traveling with my parents, swimming and riding bikes. I read voraciously—Walt Whitman, Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe—and at 13 I began writing



Michelle Schlienger

spiritual poetry and keeping a personal journal," Michelle said.

At 19, she married her childhood sweetheart. They lived in Scotland for two years while he served as a North Sea diver.

Back in Spokane at age 21 and divorced, Michelle's life changed forever. She began with paranoia, living in the dark, the house filled with garbage, shades pulled.

Voices began by speaking through the TV. Michelle started pacing, pacing, pacing and pacing.

Her three-year-old daughter called her grandmother on the phone: "Please come, mommy needs help."

A neighbor also called for help. Michelle spent two weeks at Sacred Heart Medical Center.

Diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, Michelle began her 30-year experience with the mind-twisting disorder.

"The first medicines I received made me almost catatonic. They did help with the pacing. I could sleep but the voices did not go away," she said.

"There were three voices. I assumed the personality of each voice for periods of time—a four-year-old girl, a man and "a protector." The man helped me survive

on the streets," Michelle said.

"Some memories are patchy. I had periods of extreme paranoia and was suicidal. Through it all I prayed. I think that is how I survived. God watched over me. Maybe I had a guardian angel. At one point I was ready to end my life. A voice, different from 'the voices,' commanded me to stop. I did."

Michelle suffered a stroke while living on her own.

"I heard a 'pop' and thought I was dead. It was a brain aneurysm. I was hospitalized for a long time, but remember little. I saw a bright light, the room was aglow, and I heard a voice say it was not time to go. I was paralyzed, and the voice told me to stand up."

In 2005, Michelle started a new medication that has taken away the voices and paranoia.

"It makes me feel like I'm back to age 19 and picking up where I left off. I have been writing, playing the guitar and singing," she said.

Michelle hopes to use her writing to be a voice for schizophrenics.

"I don't hear the voices, but I remember them," she said.

She has a journal she kept throughout her illness that she hopes to make into a book of her life. She also has poems published in "Coming Together, an Anthology of Poetry, Prose and Art from the Women of Transitions." Michelle and others from the Writers' Workshop have read their poems at Auntie's Bookstore, at the Empyrean, and the Women's Club on International Women's Day.

The group will read their poetry at noon, Wednesday, April 26, in Monroe Hall at Eastern Washington University's Women's Center.

For information, call 710-0204.

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## Speakers discuss nonviolent intervention in Middle East

Jerry Levin, a hostage in Lebanon in 1984 and now a volunteer with Christian Peacemaker Teams, and his wife, Lucille "Sis" Levin, will give a presentation at 7 p.m., Friday, April 28, at Bethany Presbyterian Church, 301 S. Freya, sponsored by the Inland Northwest Presbytery and Pilgrims of Ibillin.

The couple, who live in the Middle East, promote nonviolence and peacemaking in the Holy Land and elsewhere.

Jerry was CNN Middle East Bureau Chief in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1984 when he was kidnapped. He escaped nearly a year later through the efforts of Sis' Children of Abraham Interfaith Education for Peace Project in Bethlehem. The project teaches Palestinian teachers how to infuse principles of peace and nonviolence into pre-K-12 classrooms.

Sis drew international attention related to her nonviolent effort to create the conditions for Jerry to escape in *Beirut Diary*, her account of the experience. It was later made into an ABC-TV documentary, *Held Hostage*.

In early 2003 the Levins led a delegation into Baghdad as the U.S. invasion began. They were there through bombings of the Iraqi capital and several weeks after its occupation.

Jerry will share his experiences

of nonviolent intervention with CPT in the West Bank, published from his email accounts as "From the Inside Looking Out."

The Levins' home base is Birmingham, Ala. They have five children and 11 grandchildren.

For information, call 534-0066.



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# Local physician's family story inspires her activism against genocide

*Continued from page 1*

Sam Schnall, rabbinic assistant at Temple Beth Shalom, will lead the responsive reading with the refrain, "For those do I weep," to Eicha, the melody of Lamentations sung in Hebrew by Kimberly Bernhardt.

Joan Leeds, pastoral assistant at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church, just down the street from Temple Beth Shalom, will read the sixth reading, "Let There Be Light Again."

Mary said that the liturgy moves people from the past, telling of survivors' return to their homes, of their marriages, of the formation of Israel and of Jewish life flourishing.

"The generations that succeed the Holocaust survivors need a liturgy to keep remembering in a meaningful way," she said. "We need to recount the atrocities, so we do not forget what humans have the potential to do to each other. I hope it moves more people to speak out about what is happening in Darfur and to prevent other Rwandas from happening."

**Mary remembers** and keeps alive her parents' stories.

That her parents had talked about their experiences was unusual. Many kept their stories secret. In Toronto, many of her parents' friends were survivors. She overheard them talking about it when they came for coffee or to play cards.

"My parents told me stories when they tucked me in for bed," she said. "Those stories became part of the fabric of my life."

**Her mother, Shifra**, grew up in Lelov, Poland. When she was 16, the war broke out. She was sent to a work camp in Czenstochow, where bullets were made for the Nazi war effort.

The people in the camp were carefully watched to prevent sabotage as they sorted and checked shells in inhuman conditions, Mary said. Her mother never knew if she would be there the next day, because each day, some were sent away and did not return.

"She did not dream of freedom or a future," Mary said, "but kept alive by sharing memories of happier days."

She was there with one of three sisters and two of four brothers.

On Jan. 16, 1945, Shifra's brothers, Zalman and Machal, were selected and put on a train to Germany. As the train left, Germans ran out of the work camp. The Russian army was coming.



Mary Noble

Grounds around the camp were mined. The prisoners feared that food was poisoned. People ran out of the camp in panic, afraid the Germans might come back and not knowing what to expect of the Russians.

"After years of starvation, deprivation, terror and humiliation, it was hard to know whom to fear and whom to welcome," she said. "They did not know if the Russians would shoot them, rape them or treat them well. Eventually, they began to trust, as the Russians helped people find shelter and food."

In January 1945 when Shifra was 21, she and her sister were the only survivors of a family of 10.

**Mary's father, Nechemia** Knobel, who died three years ago in his early 90s, wrote journals on his family and war experiences.

"While some did not talk about or want to remember their experiences, he remembered dates and events," she said.

Her grandfather had died in Bogria, Poland, when her father was 12, and his family moved to Lodz. In September 1939, when he was 30 and Nazis invaded Poland, he and his brothers headed to Warsaw. Polish men from 16 to 50 were ordered to go there to defend the country.

His writings tell of walking through fields because roads were bombed and full of corpses. The only light was from burning houses in Lovicz. They stayed in a barn in Grodzisk, in open fields or bushes, only to find that Nazis had already surrounded Warsaw.

Later in the war, he spent time in a prison camp, where he survived by using his tailoring skills to make coats for soldiers.

After returning to Lodz to find people at the end of the war, he became a Zionist organizer. While working in a fishing community near Hamburg, he met Shifra, who was caring for orphans. Both lived in a displaced persons camp. They married in 1947 and lived in Zeilsheim, a suburb of Frankfurt, where Mary's brother was born.

Mary has visited places her parents lived in Germany and Israel, where they lived for two years and where her sister was born.

**In 1952, two uncles** in Toronto sponsored them to come to Canada, where she was born.

"Survivors in Canada valued family and community, aware they were a remnant," she said, "but for years, few talked about their experiences or went to a synagogue."

So in high school, Mary thought she was the only student whose

parents were survivors.

She decided to become a doctor when she was young because she was fascinated with biology, physiology and "the wonder of how the human body works," she said. "That's an awe-inspiring religious experience for me."

She relished learning how molecules and cells make muscles work for functions as simple as making an eye blink.

In addition, she is intrigued by how people deal with what happens in their lives and how that affects healing.

**For her, healing is** in the context of respecting people. She knew experiences of her immigrant parents and their friends, navigating the medical system when they spoke little English.

So when Mary sees Russian-speaking patients, she is aware of language barriers—communicating through interpreters—and worldviews of different cultures.

"I try to envision my patients as people who could be my family and neighbors, not as strangers," Mary said.

Her husband, Hershel Zellman, studied medicine at the University of California in Irvine. He came to Spokane for an externship at Deaconess in the summer of 1974, during Expo, and loved it.

After completing his residency in family practice at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, where Mary studied, he came to Spokane to work with the Cooperative Health Plan. After her internship in Hamilton, she joined him, and they were married in 1979.

**Sometimes her personal** connection with the Holocaust makes Mary teary when talking about it. Their sons have made trips to Poland and visited concentration camps, but Mary has not.

However, she has connected with survivors of the genocide in Rwanda and is involved in the campaign to educate people about the atrocities in Darfur.

"It's terrible that as humanity we have not learned. Although I grew up saying, 'never again,' it keeps happening. Governments stand by. It's not politically expedient to intervene. As individuals, we do not feel we have power. We feel bad about it but go on with what we are doing. Few are activists.

"We hope that by participating in the Holocaust commemoration, our community will be moved to confront genocide and injustice anywhere it may occur," Mary said.

For information, call 747-3304.

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# Decade to Overcome Violence raises concerns of children, complacency

*Continued from page 1*

About 1,000 children die each week because of conditions. HIV/AIDS is used as a weapon. HIV-positive soldiers are sent to camps to infect women and children," Olara said.

"The situation requires prophetic action," he said.

For several years, he led the UN's CAAC campaign to mobilize international action on behalf of children exposed to war, promoting their protection during war, and their healing and social reintegration after war.

Olara said the Children and Armed Conflict Campaign requires 1) awareness and advocacy, 2) concrete action and responses, 3) naming and shaming offenders, and 4) formal monitoring and reporting.

He asked the WCC assembly to become "Friends of 1612," a UN Security Council resolution on children and armed conflict that holds accountable those who violate the basic rights of children.

He also appealed to the WCC to be a "prophetic voice" in Uganda, where he said people are victims of genocide.

### Center promotes peaceful ties

Alfred Rock, a Catholic Palestinian refugee and law student in Bethlehem, sees how violence in his region undermines the future for youth.

Through the Wi'Am (Cordial Relationships) Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center, part of the DOV Peace to the Cities program, he trains youth from 18 to 25 in nonviolence to counter violence in the region.

"A two-hour trip from Bethlehem to Jerusalem takes nine hours, with checkpoints every five minutes. It's a humiliating and frightening trip," Alfred said. "The Palestinian community would like a tribunal to resolve such conflicts, bringing both sides together to reduce violence."

To create hope, he dissuades children from considering violence a solution to conflicts.

"Children are traumatized by the violence in their daily lives," he said. "We need to show them how to break chains of violence with nonviolence and peace."

### Stories communicate options

Janice Love, a leader with the DOV, hopes the decade will communicate stories to demonstrate how Christians, out of their faith, engage in peace and justice.

She wonders what circumstances might make churches shift from "sterile debates" on when violence is permitted to a theology and examples of Christians proactively intervening to promote peace, giving life and hope in the midst of brutality.



**Olara Otunnu**

Janice said for world leaders to argue that there is no alternative to war "is a profound failure of imagination," because there are always alternative ways to pressure parties to change behaviors in conflicts so they do not resort to weapons.

"Rather than thinkers debating what conditions justify going to war, I would like Christians to shift attention from what would make people commit violence to what would make people devote their lives to peace and justice.

"We need to train church leaders to move beyond judging if an act of violence justifies a violent response," Janice said. "It's about moving religious communities from blessing violence."

Janice, executive for the U.S. United Methodist Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, said the Decade to Overcome Violence also builds on the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women and is responsible to address violence against women—pervasive worldwide and also often justified by churches.

"Women say, 'No more!' to violence against women. Training programs and theology are creating intolerance to violence. Our mission is to exchange stories," said Janice, who seeks to create networks and empowerment.

She is also heartened that the WCC's decade coincides with the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence.

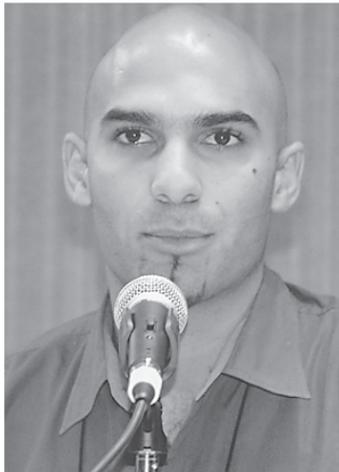
### Muslim leader calls for peace

In the plenary, several speakers called for reconciliation.

Indonesian Muslim leader Hasyim Muzadi conveyed "a message of peace" to the Assembly and expressed regret about the Danish cartoon that opened the door to religious violence.

In Indonesia, the Communion of Churches, with Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists, Muslims and followers of Confucius, is forming an interfaith movement to overcome violent response to crises.

Hasyim believes all religions



**Alfred Rock**

need to cleanse their names and symbols from misuse by people who promote violence.

On the cartoon about Muhammad and similar incidents, he recommends: 1) seeing political and economic roots of religious conflicts; 2) knowing that poverty and ethnicity often lead to violence, 3) having religions be in relationship, so they understand their similarities and differences; 4) having national policies to protect all religions in a country, and 5) inviting religious leaders to join efforts to prevent conflicts among nations.

### Labor leader seeks justice

Juan Somavia of the International Labor Organization said the ILO works to create a world in which work creates just relationships, resources and respect, so people can earn incomes sufficient to support their families.

The ILO is educating youth to overcome violence, recognizing that child labor interferes with their innate creativity.

"People can overcome poverty by having decent work that gives them dignity," he said.

### U.S. leaders apologize

The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, moderator of the U.S. Conference for the WCC, read a letter to the Assembly from U.S. church leaders, confessing their lack of success in turning American policy from pre-emptive war in Iraq, in stopping environmental pollution and in ending economic injustice.

The confession acknowledged their shame about abuses done in their name and their failure to raise "a prophetic voice loud enough and persistent enough to deter our leaders from the path of pre-emptive war, and to call our nation to be responsible for creation and to seek just economic



**Janice Love**

structures so sharing by all means scarcity for none.

"From a place seduced by the lure of empire, we come in penitence, eager for grace to transform spirits grown weary from the violence, degradation and poverty our nation has sown, grace sufficient to transform the world."

In a press conference on the confession, the Rev. Sharon Watkins, president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), said that in coming to the assembly, she was aware that along with parents, family and neighbors who honor sons and daughters in the U.S. military, there would be, in the global gathering, parents, family and neighbors of other sons and daughters whose lives are also torn by war.

Aware of "internal anguish and division" on the war, Father Leonid, also the ecumenical officer of the Orthodox Church in America, hopes churches will wrestle with the statement in coming weeks and months.

He said the White House has not welcomed the voice of these religious leaders.

Media reports of some Christian

voices have given people around the world the impression that most U.S. Christians support the war in Iraq and U.S. policies.

"In the ecumenical family we need to be aware of the struggle in churches," he said.

The Rev. John Thomas, president of the United Church of Christ, said the church leaders chose to confess their complicity because they pay taxes, vote and consume.

Visiting partners in churches around the world, he finds that many consider the United States dangerous because of its pre-emptive war policy. He said the U.S. Conference of the WCC is aware of conflicts within churches, but felt responsible to bring "a prophetic and pastoral word."

John said the confession is not one part of any strategy beyond what churches already do—prophetic statements, public witness, civil disobedience, pastoral care and education.

"Our hope is that the statement will provide a healthy context for leaders around the world to discuss violence, environment and poverty," he said.

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# Prayers help lost hunter and wife in Idaho trust God for rescue

By Derinda Moerer

David Hess packed an apple for sustenance the afternoon he left to scout some hunting places, but Bible verses and hymns sustained him through his next 24 hours.

The brisk November afternoon began like any other afternoon scouting trip. He stopped for a burger for lunch, ate his apple and lumbered up the road in his 1988 two-door Bronco utility vehicle, hunting for deer.

Instead of taking the northern approach to 20 Mile Creek Road that divides the Katka Ridge hunting area, he chose to explore a new route, entering from the south. That decision led to a long, lonely night.

The 67-year-old pastor of Sagle Baptist Church suspected trouble after he ended up on a narrow, slush-covered off-shoot with his wheels spinning out. Trying to back down the steep, winding road in low-range four-wheel drive, he ended up in a rut. There, near the top of Black Mountain, he spent the night and most of the next day waiting for rescue.

About 3 p.m. he shot three quick shots, the hunters' signal for help. Before darkness consumed his daylight, he wrote a goodbye note on the back of a receipt along with insurance information.

"I recognized the danger I was in," David said, "so I wrote a note to my wife, family, friends and church members in case this didn't come out with a good ending. I told them, 'I love you all. I don't want to leave you but I have no choice in the matter.'"

Watching the clouds overhead, he remained in his vehicle to keep dry. After the sun went down, his fleece shirt and wool hunting jacket kept his upper torso warm, but his legs were cold. He found a tarp and a windshield's sun cover to lay across his lower extremities, and then settled in for the night. Every hour he ran his car engine for about 10 minutes to warm up.

Although he was fairly comfortable, sleep eluded him. So he prayed, meditated on scriptures and sang his favorite hymns. Around dinnertime, when his wife, Sharon, would expect him home, he remembered she was at their daughter's house for the day, babysitting their new granddaughter, and might not have missed him yet.

"About 6 p.m., I started praying that God would help her realize something was wrong," David said.

"I asked God to jog her memory of where I told her I'd be and then



David Hess

to call the appropriate people."

Meanwhile, Sharon returned home and thought it strange that David's powder blue vehicle wasn't in the driveway.

At 7 p.m. she decided to eat dinner alone and keep his dinner warm. Two hours later he still wasn't home. She was worried.

"At 9 p.m., I called Billy Lovelace, a member of the church who would know the area because they'd hunted there together," Sharon said. "He told me to call search and rescue immediately."

She called them, gave the necessary information and waited.

As the night wore on, Sharon wasn't able to sleep any better than David.

She opened her Bible to the Psalms, and found verses of assurance, and she prayed.

"It was a long night. I was alone," Sharon said. "I prayed, 'Lord, you know where he is. It's big country up there, but you know where he is.'"

Boundary County Sheriff and Boundary Search, Dive and Rescue Team searched until almost 4 a.m. when they called the search off because of snow and slush on the roads.

As Veteran's Day dawned, search planes joined the ground hunt and flew over the forest-covered land looking for clues. David's son Tom, son-in-law Will Puller and friend Dale Rohland rode with the pilot directing him to areas the men had hunted before.

"I saw the planes in the distance, but they never flew over me," David said. "It snowed some through the night. Then in the morning the wind was blowing hard and the cloud formations were zipping by. I walked up to the ridge, but saw no one. Nine o'clock, 10, 11, noon—no one came. It was one o'clock, then two o'clock. At 2 p.m. I prepared to spend another

night behind the wheel."

Having brought no provisions, he was nearing a full day without water or food.

With the dawn also came people to support Sharon. Her daughter Angela Lindsay, daughter-in-law Joy Hess and her parents, Doug and Barbara Puller took calls and welcomed other friends and church members throughout the day. Their children living in other states were notified. Corners in the living room hosted individual and group prayer gatherings.

"It was a test of faith," Sharon said. "It didn't matter that I'm a pastor's wife, I had to trust God. Being alone through the night was the hardest test. I drew strength from people through the day."

The prayer vigil expanded to neighboring towns, through southern Idaho and eastward to Ohio, Vermont and Iowa, as church prayer chains were called.

The miracle happened before 3 p.m., Friday, after David settled into the driver's seat, preparing for a second night.

"I looked into my side view mirror and saw a white jeep pull up," David said. "I got out and said, 'Boy am I glad to see you. I've been praying God would send someone. I need to be rescued.'"

The jeep driver was Jan-Michael Kline, who was hunting with his father, Alan. The two men were unaware that a search was in progress to find David. After hearing his story, they gave him a soft drink, some venison sausage, crackers and cheese to eat while they hooked David's utility vehicle up to their winch and pulled him out of the ditch. Through conversation, David found that Alan was an elder in the nearby Cocolalla Cowboy Church.

"We had made a variation to go up there," Alan said. "I'd said to my son, 'Let's turn around, but he said no, let's go to the top.' We'd been in several places when we found him. He was pretty frazzled, so we shared some food and pulled him out. I believe God sent us there."

The hunters continued on their hunt, and David began his slow descent, driving down the mountain. In the meantime, the search and rescue teams were mobilizing snowmobiles, four wheelers and horses to help with the search.

Sharon's concerns mounted. "I had a sinking feeling as dark set in," she said. "They were planning to send out more searchers."

Then they the call came. He had been found.

"It was a time of rejoicing," Sharon said. "Everyone shared in a piece of the joy. I kept repeating the verse that says, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'"

While they were celebrating,

David walked through the back door, curious about the TV news van parked in his driveway. He was surprised so many people were looking for him.

"I realized that many people care for me," David said. "People called the next week to say how much they love me, people with whom we have little contact."

David and Sharon survived a 24-hour ordeal that tested their faith and refocused their priorities. Neither gave in to despair or lost hope. They trusted God for the outcome.

"I didn't know if he'd be found, but I accepted what God's will would be," Sharon said.

"The rescue was a miracle," David said. "The people who found me were not looking for me. They went up that road on a whim. I believe God directed them."

David plans to hunt again next fall, but his friends and family have rules for him: He has to take a canteen of water, his new cell phone and a new emergency kit with a map and compass, and he isn't to go alone.

For information, call (208) 263-6029.

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## Sometimes ecumenical sensibilities balance journalistic decisions

Sometimes journalism sensibilities conflict with realities of editing an ecumenical, interfaith, nonprofit publication.

"Where truth and falsehood meet, truth will prevail," is a quote embedded from early training. Equal access to voices on both sides of issues is also an inherent journalistic standard. Both may miss the many perspectives and innuendos on issues.

In the reality of ecumenical and interfaith relations, however, those philosophies can be counterproductive to progress in dialogue, respect and mutual understanding. They can unwittingly foment arguments, rather than fostering a search for common understandings.

Our role would be no different than that of mass media if we acted on the journalistic principles alone, rather than balancing them with principles for ecumenical dialogue.

We do cover controversial issues, but within the context of editorial content seeking to share stories of people and articulate voices not heard in other venues in an effort to seek new areas of collaboration.

For example, on issues of human sexuality and morality, churches and faiths can be bitterly divided in ways that undermine the credibility, support, voice, power, relevance and role of churches and faiths. Those issues tear apart families and communities, and have even resulted in violence by the most adamant.

For The Fig Tree to cover an issue such as abortion, we would seek to offer new ground for dialogue to forge a basis for common solutions. We seek to avoid polarized soundbytes that alienate, so people of faith might emerge with a common concern for life and rights, responsibilities and health, pressures and possibilities, justice and reconciliation.

People differ in language, values, faith, culture, rules, expectations, philosophies and even assumptions about what genetics, decisions or behaviors may be behind divisive issues on sexuality.

March reports in Ecumenical News International point to Anglicans and Lutherans worldwide facing institutional divisions as a result of differing stands within their

communions on homosexuality.

All churches, not just the media-chased Roman Catholic Church in the United States, are torn—whether overtly or subtly—by past and present clergy sexual misconduct. Ecumenically, churches continue to refine guidelines on abuse of power and require ethics training for clergy.

People of faith seem to be progressing to common views on domestic violence—although advice to women still varies as faith leaders balance the desire for stable marriages and families, with the threat to that stability—and to lives—violence brings.

We would like safe congregations and communities to nurture healthy faith, and the love God would have us share in our relationships with each other, love that embodies respect, responsibility and rights.

As Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu commented in a press conference during the 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in February in Porto Alegre, Brazil, that "God has a dream of a time when all God's children will know they belong to one human family."

Brothers and sisters, parents and children, extended family may disagree, argue, hurt, compete, even fight, but a family is the basic unit for survival. To have no rules, respect, rights or responsibility undermines family relationships and ultimately undermines survival.

As families and the human family, we cannot resolve our differences by hitting each other head on with our truths, right though we may know and believe them to be.

Love affords us with patience, hope, trust and other avenues to influence, reaching hearts and minds.

Because of the wedge issues in faith, politics and society, media ignored even healthy coverage of religion for many years—not wishing to step on toes.

The danger of the hot-button issues is that they cut off presence, relevance, voice and communication outlets entirely.

They cut off discussion on wider ramifications of issues that could lead to common ground for common action.

Mary Stamp - Editor

## An investment in people as they age will reap benefits for society

As the nation prepares to celebrate Older Americans Month in May 2006, the Washington Senior Centers Association has chosen the theme, "Invest in Aging."

How strange? Isn't "old age" an aphorism we didn't want to talk about? Fighting the process is a losing battle. So what does investing in it mean?

Investing in aging may be the most important decision 21st-century Americans will make in our communities and nation, especially with the growing number of "oldies" counted in the current census.

It has been human nature to fight old age. Aging is not always pleasant. Irritations accumulate like a stack of dirty dishes: There are buttonholes that won't button, frequent scorched saucepans, too frequent runs to the bathroom. Our mirrors are a telltale revelation, and our gait often stumbles.

Why invest? Other realities make invest-

ment in older people significant.

First and foremost, Americans in general are living longer—10 years longer, from a 60s to 70s age span to the 80s and 90s and beyond. In the Rockwood Retirement complex, we are proud to report that a resident is 105 and busy writing his history. This investment in productive aging is a blessing and a challenge.

Second, the economic scene has changed dramatically, making it necessary to tap old people—parents and grandparents—when possible.

Two-working-adult households are mandatory, changing family patterns and the role of seniors in a household. This is a far cry from the 1950s when a housewife chatted with a neighbor as she hung diapers on a clothesline in the back yard. Notwithstanding the absence of clotheslines or diapers, to pay the bills with increased

energy costs requires that both parents work in most families.

The investment in aging is a foregone conclusion. Parents and grandparents with their past experience have become caregivers, health providers, education monitors and coordinators of sports, musical and other cultural programs including youth participation in church groups. Often, the grandparents rear the child, even more so in single-parent families.

In senior centers and retirement centers, oldies are a vital component. They assist with arranging crafts, programs, tours, parties, card games and the all-important wellness programs.

One recent birthday celebration suggested giving checks to the hunger program of Second Harvest in lieu of personal gifts. What an investment in altruism!

Sharing concerns and even active com-

munity involvement was evident recently as seniors called the Olympia Legislative Hotline, supporting a bill to clean up the pollution in the Spokane River, which is affecting our aquifer, the sole source of drinking water for thousands in Washington and Idaho. The bill passed in March.

The longevity bonus in the senior lifespan provides a positive investment in our future. It enhances the trend of social-welfare awareness for human needs locally and worldwide.

This investment in old-age wisdom, talent and social concern for community involvement contributes to the spiritual wholeness of both the senior and the surrounding community.

There is a mutual benefit—personal and outgoing. God bless this generation of seniors.

Jo Hendricks – contributing editor

Letter to the Editor

## Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

**The journey of Lent is one** that never shies away from a consideration of who we are in our fullness—warts and all. The journey of this 40-day period is one that embraces both the healing and the brokenness of human life as critical moments along the way to the rebirth of our potential—our wholeness—that we celebrate in the story of resurrection on Easter Sunday.

The brief encounter between Jesus and the man at the pool offers a wonderful if unsettling question to carry with us during this season. Jesus begins by asking, "Do you want to be healed?" The man's reply focuses on why his problem is everyone else's fault. It morphs into our own excuses.

Jesus offers this man, and continues to offer us, a compassionate space in which loving accountability for healing and wholeness can occur. We all have the potential to live in a state of wellness and to create some degree of wellness in our own lives, our relationships, our community, our nation and our world. We all leave our mark, for better or for worse. The first step to healing is to answer Jesus' question, "Do you want to be healed?" with a spirited "Yes."

**The Rev. Kristine Zakarison**  
Community Congregational United  
Church of Christ - Pullman

**Lent is the great truth-telling time** of the church. Lent is a time to admit how far we all are from God. It is a time to acknowledge just how Jesus was led to the

cross. It is a time to use the words "sin" and "repentance." The season of Lent prepares us for the Lent times of our lives, so we are less surprised by grief and disappointment, and a little better at truth-telling and repentance. We need the cleansing truth of Lent. Without being honest about human sin, without being honest about how far our world has wandered, we cannot be truthful about the work of Jesus Christ, the power of the cross, the "yes" of the resurrection. Easter would degenerate into a spring ritual no better than the pagan ceremonies it replaced.

**Pastor Elizabeth Larsen**  
Troy and Zion Lutheran Churches

**I say a prayer before I turn on** the news these days, a prayer for keeping judgment in check, for holding mercy close to my heart, for not throwing anything through the picture tube. That prayer, "O Lord..." often changes into simply, "O Lord!" as I watch rioting, bombing and wanton destruction that is breaking out in so many places around the world.

I pray for the victims, especially children, and I pray for the safety and success of those trying to restore law, order and sanity. If I keep my emotions in check, I pray for the people who do these terrible things. They are my enemies.

Jesus never said to "have no enemies," but to "love your enemies." God knows the human heart. We have strife. We have evil in our midst.

Our enemies come into our lives in many guises—polluters, bullies, liars and exploit-

ers of every form.

Jesus says, "Love your enemies." It is the only hope for the world and the only hope for me.

In the short term, armies and armaments save, defend towns, overthrow tyrants, but there are always new tyrants. Only infusion of love and its by-products—freedom, dignity, health and creativity—defends a community against the seeds of evil.

In the name of our Creator, we are to be builders, not destroyers; to love, not to hate; to be light in the darkness for a world walking in the valley of the shadow of death.

**The Rev. Jan Griffin**  
All Saints Episcopal  
Richland

**Bad news is easy to find** on newspaper front pages, television news or an Oprah or Dr. Phil show. Government corruption, telephone tapping, people going into debt to buy luxuries they don't need, road rage, global warming, bird flu, murder, rape, child abuse. I could go on. It's depressing.

Maybe we seem helpless to change this. Some is far away and on a massive scale. The little we could do here in Creston won't make much difference. As for the local, small-scale evils, they usually require cooperation from other people to change them. We read the news and listen to the stories and feel little, helpless and inadequate. "Nobody will listen," we say. "Why can't they do something?" Our feelings of depression and helplessness and our blaming are part of the bad news.

As Christians, we are part of the world's Good News team. We are supposed to be messengers—angels—of Good News.

The first step involves our wallets, being "angels" to send children to camp, fund education, support outreach, give to disaster relief, provide blankets, build Habitat houses. It also involves how we spend money outside church, avoiding conspicuous over-consumption.

Other ways to be angels include bringing peace where we go, treating the earth and its creatures with kindness, being Good Samaritans, standing up against violence and oppression, forgiving our enemies, looking out for the interests of others. We owe our allegiance to a Lord who expects better behavior from us. We can be the Good News.

**The Rev Don Hoffman**  
Creston Christian

**Lent is a time to focus our busy lives** on God. In the days and weeks before Easter, we are invited to reflect on our priorities, choices and lifestyles. We are to consider how we are with God—the places in our lives that bring us close to God and the spaces in our lives where we feel the absence of God. To slow down, to find silence, to listen to our spirits telling us where we have too much and where we need more. We seek balance, forgiveness, reconciliation and possibility. We look for inspiration, hope, joy, love and peace in the deepest sense of the words.

**The Rev. Debi Hasdorff**  
Cheney United Church of Christ

## Lecture series looks at terrorism, trafficking

The Rev. Carol Rose, co-director of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT)—three of whose four volunteers taken hostage in Iraq in November were freed in March—will discuss terrorism and human rights at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 6, in Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth College in the 2006 Great Decisions Series.

The 1981 Whitworth graduate

will speak on "Getting in the Way: Nonviolent Action in the Face of War and Terror."

Founded in 1984 by Mennonites, Brethren and Quakers, CPT sends unarmed, violence-reduction teams—willing to risk their lives for peace—to crisis and militarized areas at the request of local peace workers.

Carol has worked on CPT projects in for a decade in Latin Amer-

ica, Asia and North America.

The final Great Decisions lecture is by Michele Clark, head of the Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, at 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 18.

Great Decisions lectures feature speakers on current international political, cultural and economic affairs.

For information, call 777-3270.

## Caritas Center expands borders

More than 100 volunteers from 14 neighborhood churches supporting the Caritas Center, plus several from churches formerly in the OMEGA Center, will assist with the 9th annual Caritas Rummage Sale from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday and Saturday, May 5 and 6, at St. David's Episcopal Church, 7315 N. Wall.

Those who have helped for several years have formed a close-knit group across the denominations, said Marcia O'Leary, sale coordinator from St. David's. Each year they donate more than 1,000 volunteer hours for the sale, which in 2005 raised \$6,279 for Caritas, a Christian outreach ministry in Northwest Spokane.

The center meets emergency needs of residents—such as utility bills, bus passes, gas and food vouchers, personal hygiene items, transportation and chore services—for people living west of Division, north of Montgomery and into Nine Mile Falls.

Recently the northern area was switched to the Mead area outreach center at the Colbert Presbyterian Church. The southern boundary changed in January 2006 from Wellesley to Montgomery, when OMEGA at Emmanuel Presbyterian closed.

Caritas Center, at Immanuel Baptist, 5109 N. Cedar, is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

For information, call 326-2249.

## Habitat completes 150th

Habitat for Humanity-Spokane dedicated its 150th home and three other homes on March 29 at 1008 N. Cochran.

A comparable home would cost \$72,000, said Dennis Reed, community relations director.

Three more homes are planned with a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, which commits 70 percent of the cost.

Remaining funds will be raised through local Thrivent chapters, Lutheran churches and the Habitat affiliate.

For information, call 534-2552.

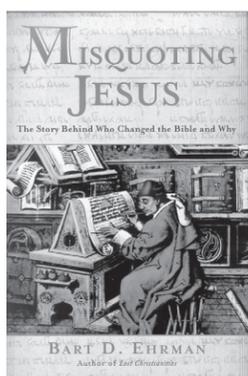
## Calendar of Events

- Apr 6** • Great Decisions, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 7:30 p.m.  
• "Plight of Women in Afghanistan," Ann Jones, World Affairs Council, Auntie's Bookstore, 7 p.m.  
• "Stem-Cell Debate: Science, Ethics and Public Policy," Lisa Sardinia, Whitworth Science Center, 7 p.m.
- Apr 7** • AHANA Recognition Dinner, Northern Quest Pavilion, Airway Heights, 5:30 a.m. - call 838-1881
- Apr 9** • Handel's "Messiah," Whitworth Choir, professional soloists, Chamber Orchestra, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th, 3 p.m.
- Apr 10** • "Environmental Sustainability," United Nations Association, Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Fort Wright Blvd., 7 p.m.
- Apr 10-14** • American Indian Awareness Week with lectures April 10 to 12 on "Environmental Justice," "Historical Trauma" and "Land Recovery," Monroe Hall Eastern Washington University, noon - call 359-2441
- Apr 11** • Women's Leadership Conference, "Multicultural Democracy: A Woman's Perspective," Winona LaDuke, Spokane Community College Lair, 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. - call 279-6000  
• "Invisible Children," film on children in Uganda, Moot Courtroom Gonzaga Law School, 7:30 p.m.
- Apr 12** • Rebecca Nappi, "Women of Spokane for Community, Justice and Success," Spring Luncheon for Professional Women, Lutheran Community Services, Gilkely Room at Museum of Arts and Culture, 2316 W. First, noon - call 343-5075
- Apr 14** • Good Friday Stations of the Cross, Jubilee Ministries and West Central Christian Ministries, 1848 W. Bridge, 5:10 p.m.
- Apr 16** • Easter Sunrise Service, Lofty Cross of Inspiration, Greenwood Memorial Terrace, 211 N. Government Way
- Apr 18** • "Human Trafficking," Michele Clark, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth College, 7:30 p.m. - call 777-3270
- Apr 19** • Spokane City Forum, "Your Health Equals Spokane's Health," First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 11:45 a.m.
- Apr 20** • VOICES, Emmanuel Lutheran, 314 S. Spruce, 5:30 p.m.
- Apr 21** • Poet Yusef Komunyakaa, Russell Theatre, Gonzaga, 11 a.m.  
• Justice through Poetry, 1620 N. Monroe, 8 p.m.
- Apr 22** • Earth Day in Coeur d'Alene, Moscow, Pullman, Spokane, see p. 2
- Ar 22-29** • Japan Week: Museum of Arts and Clutures adds highlights of 120 years of Japanese regional history and culture to its "Personal Voices" exhibit, 2316 W. First St.
- Apr 23** • Holy Names Music Center recital, McNalley Hall, 2 p.m.
- Apr 25** • Yom HaShoah: Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 7 p.m.
- Apr 26** • Women's Hearth Poetry Reading, Monroe Hall EWU, noon
- Apr 26, 28** • Film: "Weapons of Mass Deception," Danny Schechter, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 7 p.m.
- Apr 27** • JustFaith, Our Lady of Lourdes-Spokane, 6:30 p.m.
- Apr 28** • Christian Peacemakers Teams, Jerry and Sis Levin, Bethany Presbyterian, 301 S Freya, 7 p.m.
- Apr 29** • La Fiesta-Cinco de Mayo, "Education Is the Way," Greyhound Park Center, 5100 Riverbend, Post Falls, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
• CROP Walk, Martin Centre, Gonzaga University, noon
- Apr 30** • Fig Tree distribution, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
- May 3** • Fig Tree Board, Manito United Methodist, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
- May 4** • Habitat-Spokane work days - call 534-2552
- Tues-Sat** • Colville Peace Vigil - call 675-4554
- Fridays** • Ministers' Fellowship Union - call 624-0522
- 1st Sat** • Taizé service, Community Congregational, 525 NE Campus, Pullman, 7 p.m.
- Sundays** • 2nd, 4th Weds • Pax Christi, St. Joseph's Catholic, 1503 W. Dean, noon

## Don A. Barlow, EdD

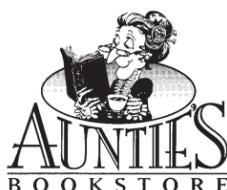
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# Crisis nursery plants seeds for healthy family relationships

By Sarah Marken

Every day, Heidi Cook sees children leave the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery better than when they arrived, because they were given love and a seed of knowledge about family life through games, attention from volunteers and staff, and mealtime structure.

This nonprofit provides a refuge to children and resources to strengthen families as it offers emergency respite care for children from birth through age six when they may be abused or neglected because of family crises.

As director, Heidi's priority is just to make sure one more child is safe and loved.

"Each moment is a gift to make that difference," she said.

Children can stay up to 72 hours per visit. The nursery provides support—such as diapers and formula to families who cannot afford them—along with parenting support and education.

Heidi said her experience growing up outside of Grand Coulee, where she attended the Church of the Nazarene, introduced her to lessons of neighborly love and a commitment to community.

Her career has evolved through community involvement from childhood, working in her church and school.

Family and church experiences guided her to study at Eastern Washington University and eventually to a bachelor of general studies degree in organizational leadership and communication in 2004 at Gonzaga University.

Excited to work in "the real world," Heidi stepped out of the classroom in Cheney early to work in public relations and fund raising with the American Heart Association and American Red Cross. She was executive director of the Cheney Chamber of Commerce, the Inland Northwest Electrical League and Cancer Patient Care.

In September 2004, she started at Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery, drawn by its mission to provide a safe haven to children and to build up families.

"Children deserve a safe place in this world," she said.

Through 2004, with the help of volunteers and donors, the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery has helped about 42,000 children since it was started in 1987 in a house at 1004 E. 8th Ave. In 2000, a new building and expanded facility was completed at the same location.

"Poverty, homelessness and domestic violence are just a few reasons parents seek our help," she said. "Overall, we are here to support families who have no



Heidi Cook said a bronze sculpture, "Loving Care," by Spokane artist Dorothy Fowler, shows a house parent and children.

safety net when they need it."

The crisis nursery raised funds to care for more than 3,100 children in 2005, but the need is greater than the funding, so the nursery had to turn away 1,348 children in 2005.

The nursery models a way of life for both children and parents.

Each day staff and volunteers introduce children to fundamental aspects of community life as they play and share with each other, eat dinner as a "family" and experience love and encouragement.

There are also classes in basic parenting skills.

Without role models or support groups, parents might lack understanding about caring for a child, Heidi said.

In the midst of daily stresses, parents needing respite can find at this nursery a safe community for their children, so the stress doesn't lead to abuse or neglect.

Both at the nursery and in volunteer positions, Heidi has learned to work with people who have different personality and leadership styles, but share a passion and mission she finds prevalent in the nonprofit world.

"Volunteers come with their own skill sets which allow the organization to run fluidly," she said. "Not everyone wants to play with children. Some mow the lawn, organize the parents' shelf or ensure our fund-raising efforts are successful.

"Jesus did not isolate himself with the people of means but rather spent his time with those who were without hope. Through Jesus' love they found hope and acceptance," Heidi said. "The Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery is

a place where parents and children find acceptance and hope.

"We live in a world that can be self-centered. I love working with people who put that aside to make others feel better," she said.

"I see my role as developing people," she said.

As a result of needing more house parents to prevent turning children away, the crisis nursery is launching a certified house-parent program, which will train volunteers to work as house parents.

"We have beds available for more children, but not the financial resources. Filling to capacity means taking in 23 children instead of 12, so more children can be at the crisis nursery when they need to be there," she said. "The certified house-parent program provides us with the ability to staff for additional children without needing additional funding."

Congregations that provide volunteers help extend funding.

Heidi said, for example, that interested members of a women's group may be trained as certified house parents and commit as a group to swing shift on Tuesdays, taking turns on a rotating basis to provide extra staffing.

Opportunity Fellowship's men's group recently volunteered to do janitorial work once a week, saving the crisis nursery the cost of hiring janitorial staff.

Each Wednesday, two men in a Bible study group will come—again taking turns on a rotating basis—and clean the building.

Youth groups have diaper, food and formula drives. Women's groups often make quilts to give to families.

Church groups also help with fund-raising drives.

Not receiving government funds or fees for service, the nursery is a "gift from the community," relying on individual, business and foundation giving.

"Our food budget would skyrocket without donations from the community," she said.

The nursery's needs list at [vanessabehan.org](http://vanessabehan.org) suggests tangible gifts such as canned or fresh fruits and vegetables, snack foods, peanut butter and jam, cereals,

bread, meats, cheese, milk, infant food items, arts and crafts supplies, household items, clothing and office supplies.

Heidi hopes to improve the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery one step at a time.

For her, success often comes by taking responsibility when things go wrong and giving praise when things go right.

For information, call 535-3155 or email [heidi@vanessabehan.org](mailto:heidi@vanessabehan.org).

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An Anglican priest, Celtic educator and percussionist, Philip leads workshops and retreats in the UK and USA. In 1992, he established The Quiet Garden Movement, a ministry of hospitality and prayer with more than 260 affiliated homes and centers on five continents. He is founder/director of Contemplative Fire: Journey in Presence, a network growing in the USA that draws from mystical, contemplative/active Christian tradition.

For information and registration forms, contact:  
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