

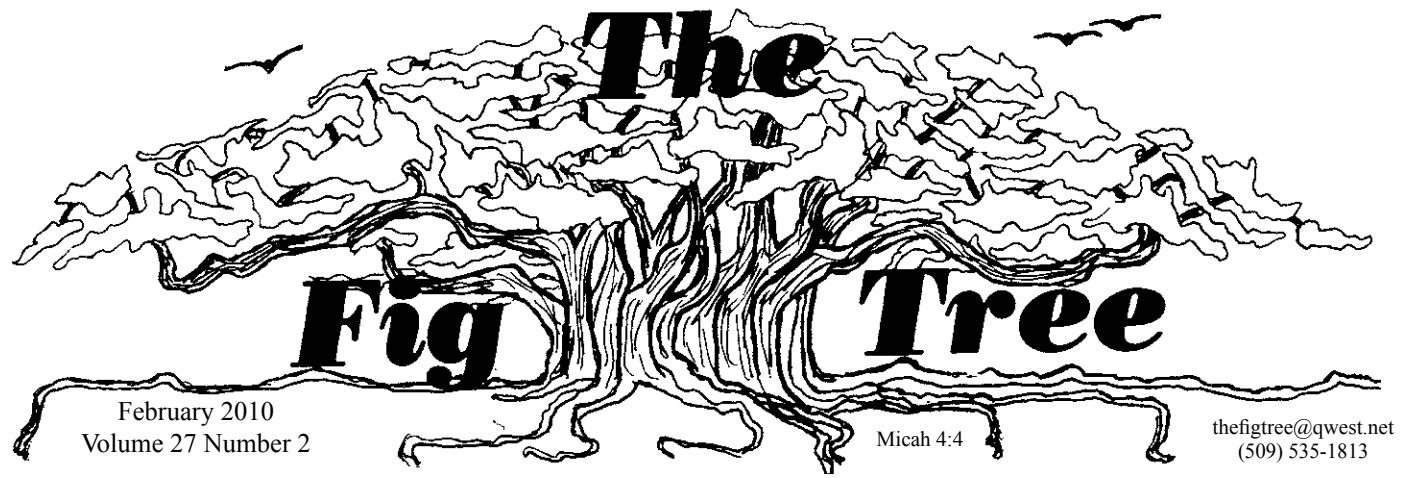
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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

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Relief groups learn to 'dance together'

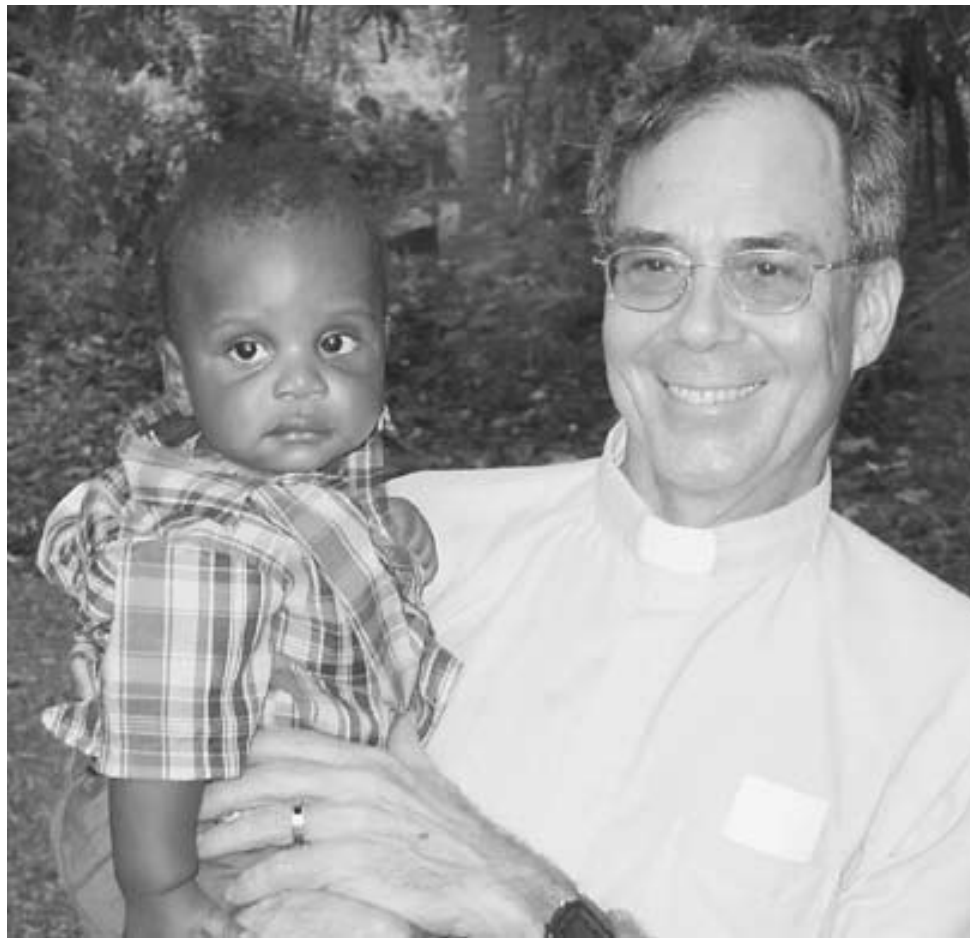
By Mary Stamp

In disaster ministry, the Rev. George Abrams of Cheney knows that faith-based, voluntary, community and government disaster groups need to work together, respecting each other's roles in the emergency, relief and recovery phases of a disaster.

"The groups need to learn to 'dance together' in the disaster response process so they don't step on each other's toes," said George, who decided in 2006, after 10 years as pastor of Cheney United Methodist Church and five years as a minister in Olympia, to enter disaster ministry.

He also brings 27 years of experience with the Washington State Patrol in Vancouver and Olympia, 25 years as an EMT and degrees in police science, education and business administration, as well as master's and doctoral degrees in theology. During his years of study and work, he was active as a lay leader with United Methodist local, regional and national ministries.

With experience responding to a tornado in Vancouver in 1975, to Mt. St. Helen's eruption in 1980 and as an EMT first responder,



The Rev. George Abrams holds a Haitian child during his 2005 visit.

George developed a sense of call to disaster ministry while in Cheney.

The church gave him time to work with the Red Cross to coordinate 750 chaplains giving spiritual care to victims, families and caregivers after the Sept. 11 destruction of the World Trade Center in New York City.

He also joined three Volunteer in Mission (VIM) teams for two-week mission trips to Haiti in 2002, 2003 and 2005, as well as six VIM trips to build homes in Mexico.

From that experience, as well as from his three roles in domestic disaster ministry, George anticipates what's ahead for long-term recovery in Haiti and offers insights into the faith community's and volunteer agencies' roles in recovery processes.

George has three roles.

- As part-time volunteer agency liaison (VAL) with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), he works with long-term recovery groups, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs) and Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COADs), which include

Continued on page 4

Education, family and faith create leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr.

To develop more leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., Elson S. Floyd, president of Washington State University, said education is key, along with strengthening families and faith.

He believes society is ready to reverse inequities that remain.

Speaking on the theme, "It Started with a Dream: Many Views, One Vision," at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Commemorative Celebration at First Presbyterian Church in Spokane, he told of his African Methodist Episcopal roots and the influence of his working-

class parents in Henderson, N.C. They instilled in him "the value of education as the path to dream and to rise."

He was the first in his family to go to college, earning a bachelor's degree in political science and speech in 1978, a master's in education in 1982 and a doctoral degree in higher and adult education in 1984 from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

After serving as vice president for student services and administration at Eastern Washington University in Cheney and as then

as executive director of the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board 1990 to 1995, he worked in administration at the University of North Carolina from 1995 to 1998.

He previously participated in Spokane's Martin Luther King, Jr., Day March in 1994, when went from the Spokane County Jail to the Federal Courthouse.

Floyd sees Spokane as a community "focused on the issues of today and tomorrow."

"It's time to reflect, renew and rededicate ourselves," he said. "We need to think beyond our limits and hope we can make a dent in society. We need to sustain ourselves so we will have a powerful impact on society.

"America's strength is in our diversity. Education opens doors to prosperity and success for people," said Floyd, who taught education and counseling, and was also president of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo and of the University of Missouri in Columbia before coming to WSU in May 2007.

Continued on page 8

Animal rescue team cares about pets in emergencies

By Simone Ramel

In case of disasters, families often wonder what may happen to Fido, Fluffy, Flipper or the farm animals. When evacuating, it's hard to take canines, felines, equines, bovines or birds along to shelters.

Nearly 30 volunteers with the local Humane Evacuation Animal Rescue Team (HEART), a cooperative effort for animals in local or national emergencies or disasters.

They are "first responders" for animals, providing medical care, evacuation, temporary shelter and identification.

When called, they meet, organize, make a plan and assign duties. Hours of pre-planning are required so they can be efficient when they are needed.

The idea for an animal support organization started after the Fire Storm in 1991 and the Ice Storm in 1996 when people could not go home to their animals.

In 2003, Dick Green, a local animal lover, emergency relief specialist and member of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, began gathering people to form an organization in support of local animals.

More than 150 people attended the initial community meeting and monthly meetings have continued since.

In 2006, with support from Spokane's Spokanimal Care and the Spokane County Regional Animal Protection Service (SCRAPS), HEART was officially formed.

For HEART's president, Janis Christensen, and vice-president, Janet Schaffer, Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was the spark that fueled their commitment to support communities and animals locally.

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New WCC head calls for canceling Haiti's debt

The World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary, the Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, has called on the international community to cancel Haiti's foreign debt. An "immediate, full cancellation" of Haiti's foreign debt would be "only an initial step," as the quake-stricken country needs a broader "plan to support recovery, poverty eradication and sustainable development," Olav said on Jan. 25.

Such a plan "must be developed with full ownership of the people of Haiti and with the support of the international community under the coordination of the United Nations," he said. "Haiti needs 'reconstruction and sustainable development in the medium and long term. Any financial assistance should come as grants, not loans that would burden the country with more debt.'"

Olav's statement coincided with a conference in Canada with foreign ministers from more than 12 countries, eight international bodies and six non-governmental organizations on rebuilding Haiti. He also told the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, that Haiti's recovery must be based on "a genuine spirit of justice and caring."

Haiti, the most impoverished nation in the western hemisphere, is heavily indebted. In spite of having had \$1.2 billion of foreign debt written off in June by international financial institutions, it still owes \$641 million to countries and development banks. This year, Haiti is to pay \$10 million to the International Monetary Fund.

Most of the debt "is patently onerous and odious," Olav said, because more than half "stemmed from loans extended to the brutal father-son dictatorship of Francois ('Papa Doc') and Jean-Claude Duvalier," and "did not benefit the people."

"Obliging Haiti to pay that debt at the expense of health care, education and critical social programs is illegitimate. Exacting payment during this time of hardship and destruction is morally untenable," said Olav. "The situation in Haiti demands nothing less than justice and care."

Reconstruction of Haiti must be based on justice

As churches and church-related organizations worldwide mobilize resources for immediate relief to the people of Port-au-Prince, they are seeking ways for building a more sustainable future. Pledges of funds, delivery of emergency aid and appeals for donations are reported from every corner of the globe, while messages of solidarity, prayers and even hymns to express the sorrow flow in from near and far.

The situation of Haiti's devastated capital justifies such mobilization, say church witnesses there: "Thousands of houses are flattened, as well as schools, ministries' buildings, the national government headquarters, the Justice Palace, churches, the Cathedral, the Parliament, the Ministry of Education and hospitals," said president of the Protestant Federation of Haiti, the Rev. Sylvain Exantus, who survived the quake but was trapped downtown. He reached his home a day later and found his family alive.

"The disaster in Haiti has brought to the fore the heavy burden its people have been carrying over decades because of political instability and poverty," said Olav.

An estimated 60 to 80 percent of buildings in Port-au-Prince were destroyed. The devastation has not spared the churches. The Roman Catholic archbishop of Port-au-Prince, Joseph Serge Miot, is among the dead, as is the Rev. Bienne L'Amérique, vice-president of the Protestant Federation of Haiti. Many other members of the clergy are reported dead, missing or wounded. Church buildings, facilities and schools are shattered.

"Many church members are homeless and starving," reported the Rev. Gedeon Eugene, vice-president of the Haitian Baptist Convention.

"There are no answers for a tragedy like this," Sylvia Raulo, a representative of Lutheran World Federation's Department of World Service, was in the city during the earthquake, "but churches share in people's suffering and help them to express their pain, playing a role of accompaniment."

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Community organizing workshops set

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane is offering two workshops on "Community Organizing: Building the Power of the People" from 6 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 25, and Thursday, March 4, at 35 W. Main.

The sessions, led by PJALS

director Liz Moore, will discuss organizing as a way "everyday people can accomplish extraordinary things, make their own decisions, take action together for shared goals, build their collective power and change the balance of power," she said.

It will explore theories and methods of great organizers, and look at tasks of organizers, conversations to inspire action, tactics to pressure decision makers, good issues and mobilizing for follow through.

For information, call 838-7870

Church hosts kit building event Feb. 20

As a follow up to the 2008 World Vision "Experience: AIDS" event, First Presbyterian Church is hosting a World Vision Caregiver Kit Build from noon to 4 p.m., on Saturday, Feb. 20, at the church, 318 S. Cedar.

The kits will be used by 77,000 community caregivers that World Vision has trained in Africa, Asia

and Latin America. They need the kits to help them administer care and first aid to people struggling with disease and illness, said organizer Cynthia Johnson.

Kits contain basic medical supplies such as medical gloves, cotton balls, bars of soap, anti-fungal creams and petroleum jelly.

Kits pre-ordered by Feb. 7 will

be assembled on Feb. 20. That day includes a video on the impact of kit-builders' efforts.

"These gifts provide comfort and dignity to people living with AIDS and other illnesses around the world," Cynthia said, adding that organizers seek to make this an annual event.

For information, call 624-9298.

International Women's Day is March 7

The 2010 celebration of International Women's Day in Spokane will feature presentations on issues facing women in the developing world and efforts to address them. It will held at 3 p.m., Sunday, March 7, at the Women's Club, 9th and Walnut.

Azra Grudic of Lutheran Com-

munity Services will speak on sexual trafficking and Karen Morrison of Odyssey International will tell about her work in Kenya.

Entertainment will emphasize diversity through dance and a readers' theater highlighting international women who are making

a difference on such issues as education, legal rights, health and economic opportunities.

Display tables will feature free-trade items, plus information on local women who are make a difference in developing nations.

For information, email lcaeter@peoplepc.com.

Gonzaga hosts board development series

The 2010 "Nonprofit Board Development Workshop Series" sessions will be offered from 8 to 10 a.m., Thursdays, Feb. 4 to March 18, at the Washington-California Room of Gonzaga University's COG.

February sessions are on the

impact of a nonprofit's vision and mission on board decision making on Feb. 4; resource development, ethics, practices and assessment, Feb. 11; board roles and responsibilities, Feb. 18, and program evaluation, Feb. 25.

March programs are on un-

derstanding legal responsibility, liability and limits of directors' and officers' insurance on March 4; review of financial issues of nonprofits, March 11, and ways to implement change, March 18.

For information, call 313-3575 or visit gonzaga.edu/ce.

Emmanuel Family Life Center cuts ribbon

The Emmanuel Family Life Center - a new community center in Spokane's South Perry neighborhood—will celebrate its completion with a ribbon cutting ceremony and tours from 1:30 to 5 p.m., Friday, Feb. 12, at 631 S. Richard Allen Court.

Spokane Mayor Mary Verner,

African Methodist Episcopal Bishop T. Larry Kirkland and children from the neighborhood will cut the ribbon. Governor Christine Gregoire will send a representative.

The center is in the South Perry neighborhood, which is home to a community of social, economic

and cultural diversity.

The facility offers a computer/technology lab, Running Start classes, a preschool, a homework help center and programs that support individual and community development.

For information, call 534-3007 or email info@eflc.org.

PEACH Farm plans seed exchange, workshops

People for Environmental Action and Community Health will offer a seed exchange and workshops from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 20, at Fresh Abundance, 2015 N. Division.

Proceeds will go to the non-

profit PEACH Community Farm at 15012 S. Short Rd., outside Cheney. The farm seeks to create a sustainable local economy and increase food security by producing fresh, local, safe food.

It is an expansion of its two-year-old community farming project that began in the Spokane Valley and now has a 10-acre farm that will be a center to train

new farmers, engage youth in agriculture and improve access to organic food for low-income people in Spokane.

The farm will give 5,000 bedding plants in the spring to low-income residents so they can grow some of their own food.

For information, call 327-7396 or email farms@peachlocal.com.

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Lecture explores media images

Bren Murphy, associate professor of communication studies and women's studies at Loyola University in Chicago, will give a lecture on "Veiled Threats: The Image of Women Religious in U.S. Popular Media" at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 17, at the Wolff Auditorium in the Jepson Building at Gonzaga University through the Master of Arts in Communication and Leadership Studies program. For information, call 313-6656.

Ambassador speaks at forum

Ryan Crocker, U.S. ambassador to Iraq from 2007 to 2009, will give "An Update on the Current Status of the Middle East" for the Spokane City Forum at 11:45, Wednesday, Feb. 17, at First Presbyterian Church, 318 S. Cedar.

Ryan, who retired in 2009 in Spokane after 37 years with the Foreign Service, will discuss impact of events in the Middle East on U.S. policy. For information, call 777-1555.

Calvary Baptist celebrates 120 years of serving African Americans and the wider community

Calvary Baptist Church celebrates its 120th anniversary with a banquet at 4 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 13, at the Whitworth University Hixon Union Building and a service on "It's Not About Us, God Is Still in Charge" at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 14.

Founders attended First Baptist Church of Spokane Falls, sitting in the balcony, until they decided after a sermon on Feb. 9, 1890 to start their own church. On Feb. 16, 1890, it became the first African-American church in Spokane and in Washington state—closely followed by Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in April 1890.

In 1895, the church moved from its first building at Pines St. and Fourth Ave. to 168 S. Howard, in 1897 to 426 E. Third and then to its present location at 213 (now 203) E. Third Ave.

Its 14 pastors range from the Rev. J. P. Brown, an early pioneer who moved from Roslyn, Wash., and presided over the founding, to the Rev. C. W. (Chet) Andrews, Sr., who has served the church since 1974.

V. Anne Smith, who joined the church when she came to Spokane in 1968, listed the pastors: P. B. Barrows, E. Hares, C. S.

Smith, I. Esters, F. Bailey, J.P. Beckham, S.H. Wilson and J. McPherson, who served from 1895 to 1919.

The Rev. Emmett Reed, who came from Butte, Mont., served 42 years from then until his death in 1961, followed by M. L. Daw, A. O. Mills and Leon Garcia, before Chet.

Emmett led efforts to build a new sanctuary. Ground was broken in 1927. Through the Great Depression, members paid off the debt by donating 25 or 50 cents at a time and by holding chicken dinners, said V. Anne. They celebrated paying off their mortgage by buying new pews.

He also helped organize the North Pacific Regional Baptist Convention.

The church, which affiliates with both the American Baptist and National Baptist USA churches, was the "mother" church for Morningstar and New Hope Baptist churches, she said.

V. Anne said Calvary has been important in the black community as a place for social gatherings, club meetings, lodges and a USO for servicemen and families.

"For many years, the church housed

the charter for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)," added V. Anne, who is local chapter president. "During the Civil Rights years, the church was the meeting place for rallies on human rights and justice."

Under Leon Garcia, she said the church opened the first HeadStart program in Spokane in Calvary's basement. He also brought the Opportunities Industrial Council federal job program to the city.

Under Chet, the church has served the poor and marginalized, starting the Storehouse in the former parsonage to provide clothing and food, and recently opening a soup kitchen for hungry, homeless people.

A supporter of the ordination of women, he ordained Rachell Williams, the first African American Baptist woman pastor in Spokane, in 1989, V. Anne reported.

The church has also been involved in building churches in Kenya, relating ecumenically with local churches and having ties to Whitworth University, where Chet teaches some classes, V. Anne said.

For information, call 838-8817.

Catholic Charities urges study of immigration law

Greg Cunningham, program director of Catholic Charities Spokane Refugee and Immigration Services, anticipates "lively discussion" of proposed changes to U.S. immigration law introduced in Congress.

"The proposals are comprehensive—with components to tighten U.S. borders, provide a path toward legalization for undocumented immigrants in the United States, and consider employers' needs," he summarized.

Greg explained that government officials have long grappled with how to tighten U.S. borders to maintain national security.

From his work in immigration with Catholic Charities, he knows that "migrants seeking better lives for themselves and their families risk peril to cross into the United States from Mexico.

"As security has increased along the southern border, so has the number of people who have died trying to enter the United States illegally as they seek more

remote areas to cross," he said.

Greg cited estimates of 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States.

"They came here not to subvert U.S. law but to provide for their families when they cannot do that at home," he said. "Many came as small children and know nothing of their homelands yet are unwelcome in the land they know best."

Adding to the mix are employers who rely on immigrant labor, even though they know employing undocumented immigrants can jeopardize their businesses.

"Undocumented immigrant laborers contribute to the U.S. economy, often working jobs that citizens and lawful immigrants are unwilling to do," he said, "yet they are not entitled to benefits the taxes they pay create."

The bills being introduced in the House of Representatives and Senate are intended to create "a more effective, responsive, humane immigration bureaucracy."

The U.S. Conference of Catho-

lic Bishops has made the reform of U.S. immigration law a legislative priority, Greg said. Through their Justice For Immigrants (JFI) campaign, the bishops promote immigration reform, which has four components:

- Educating the public about church teaching on migration and immigrants;
- Creating political will for positive immigration reform;
- Enacting legislative and administrative reforms based on the principles articulated by the bishops, and
- Organizing Catholic networks to assist qualified immigrants obtain the benefits of the reforms.

Greg said there will be educational and action-oriented events to inform and involve parishioners, looking at causes of migration and the church's response from the perspective of Scripture and Catholic social teaching.

For information, call 455-4960 or visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

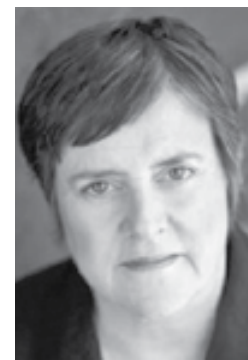
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Disaster ministry combines spiritual care and long-term recovery aid

Continued from page 1

representatives of churches and faith groups, on domestic disaster response. In 2009, he worked as a FEMA VAL—two months on Western Washington flooding and three weeks in Anchorage with destruction on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers after spring breakup.

• As United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) disaster coordinator for the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church, he is currently coordinating efforts of churches in Washington and Northern Idaho to prepare health kits to send to the UMCOR depot in Salt Lake City. From there kits will go to Haiti or be stored for other disasters.

• As chaplain for the Cheney police and fire departments, the Red Cross and Eastern Washington University since 1998, he sets aside his denominational hat and responds to people from many faiths as they face a crisis or sudden death, meeting them where they are and helping them go where they want to go.

In Haiti, George wonders about the damage in two communities he visited—Jérémie on the north side of the peninsula west of Port-au-Prince and Cayes on the south side.

Is the high ceiling of the Methodist church in Jérémie, built in 1847, still there? Did the 400-student private school, on which he helped build a third floor, survive? What about the people and their homes? What will be rebuilt? What are the spiritual-care needs of the people?

Considering long-term recovery a social-work process of



The Rev. George Abrams wonders about the fate of the school he helped expand in Jérémie, Haiti.

meeting people with unmet needs and “bringing them back to a new normal,” George said his prayer for Haiti is that “God’s amazing ability will bring good out of a bad situation.” That’s a phrase he picked up from St. Paul. It was reinforced in the book, *A Paradise Built in Hell*, by Rebecca Solnit, who went to areas that had suffered disasters and saw how lives of people who experienced them had improved.

For example, after the 1985 earthquake in Mexico City, previously exploited textile workers raised their standard of living enough that they unionized.

“Churches, faith-based groups and volunteers have been in Haiti for years and will continue to be there for the future,” he said.

George hopes that when Port-au-Prince is rebuilt it will be rebuilt with electrical, sewer and water systems that work, rather than be put back to where it was, with electricity turned off at 6:30 p.m. every day.

He knows that Volunteer in Mission teams will eventually go there to help rebuild.

Turning to his focus on domestic disaster recovery, he described how the social-work model plays out in his work with FEMA to coordinate voluntary and faith-based organizations, such as he did after Western Washington floods in 2006, 2008 and 2009.

George goes into a community after a nationally declared disaster and if there isn’t a Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG), he contacts the county emergency manager, the Red Cross, the Chamber of Commerce, United Way and the ministers’ association to help form a LTRG.

The work of the voluntary community group is to contact people after government programs and insurance claims have ended.

“We find people with unmet needs. They are usually the widow, the orphan and the immigrant, those whom our faith calls us to serve,” he said.

First, caseworkers meet with disaster victims and develop recovery plans.

Then caseworkers bring the proposals to the common table of a LTRG, which usually include representatives of United Church of Christ, Presbyterian, United Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Mennonite, Catholic Charities, Christian Reformed, Salvation Army, Evangelical, Pentecostal and Independent churches, along with Community Action Programs, United Way organizations, Amateur Radio, the Red Cross and other faith-based and volunteer organizations.

Meeting frequently to work on disaster recovery—otherwise meeting bimonthly to keep connected—the voluntary agencies and faith groups provide recovery for those who did not qualify for government aid or insurance.

George said FEMA volunteer agency liaisons are often people from the faith community, because they help the government understand how the faith community works.

From his knowledge of the faith community, he knows which church or faith group provides what service. He listed examples of some specialties:

• The United Methodist Committee on Relief specializes in training and paying caseworkers, who learn how to listen to stories and discern projects, how to help people file insurance claims and how to advocate through the state insurance commissioner when claims are denied.

• The Seventh-Day Adventist Disaster Services’ specialty is donations management, he said.

• Mennonites and the Christian Reformed World Relief Council provide volunteers with hammers and nails to put up sheetrock and repair homes.

• Lutherans have begun to offer construction teams, along with joining the United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Episcopal Church as sources of funding for recovery projects.

• The Church of the Brethren provides child-care workers, helping children respond to a death in the family or a disaster. For example, George told of going to the Los Angeles Airport with Brethren volunteers in 2000, when a plane crashed in Singapore. They helped the Red Cross provide spiritual care and child-care. While adults talked with each other, “child-care workers would sit by a child, engage the child with a stuffed animal and then give the child paper and a crayon. To help children express their feelings, they invited them to draw a picture and then asked them to describe what was in the picture and how it makes them feel,” he said.

• The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, after 2006 and 2008 floods in Western Washington, provided flood buckets and volunteers to “muck out” 10,000 mud- and water-damaged homes.

• Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army specialize “all the time in working with low-income and disadvantaged people, so they are ready to respond to unmet needs for food and basic needs,” he said.

After three years in disaster ministry, George understands that it is important for everyone who wants to help to work together so they provide the most effective response that restores and improves people’s lives.

For information, call 235-4940 or email lgrabrams@centurytel.net.

Emergency care for animals requires special training

Continued from page 1

Drawn to help rebuild after Katrina, Janis experienced firsthand the lack of rescue support for animals in the aftermath of the hurricane. Janet also experienced a shift in her thinking.

“After 9-11 and then Katrina, I questioned how we can best take care of ourselves and our pets in emergencies,” Janet said. “I knew I needed to be involved in a community effort at that point.”

“More than 60 percent of households have animal companions. For most people, animals are family,” said Janis. “To acknowledge that bond is important to me.”

Both women have dogs and cats that are rescued animals, so owning and loving animals is also behind their commitment.

Volunteers with HEART require training and commitment.

Specialty training is available for any interested volunteer and is required for those who work directly with the animals.

Not all volunteers handle animals, so there are opportunities for animal lovers to help without

going through training.

“Our volunteers bring varied skills from their diverse backgrounds,” Janet said. “In any emergency, it’s a group effort.”

Volunteers who receive training are credentialed through a number of national programs: the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA), the Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS), the American Humane Association (AHA) and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

The dedication of HEART volunteers is known in the animal rescue circles. HEART receives calls to assist both the AHA and HSUS for a variety of animal emergencies throughout the country.

For example, they recently sent three people to Missouri to deal with a pit bull ring. Volunteers took rotations in and out of Missouri to care for 500 dogs living in poor conditions.

Locally, Spokanimal and SCRAPS contact HEART for support when animals are threatened. Last May, SCRAPS con-

tacted HEART to assist with the Kennewick puppy mill incident. Sixteen volunteers were there for a week to take care of the dogs. Many were ill, malnourished and in general need of attention.

During last summer’s Valley View fire, HEART volunteers were activated to set up a shelter at the Spokane Fairgrounds, in anticipation of an evacuation. The shelter was set up in one hour and 25 volunteers came forward to assist with the emergency.

Owners dropped off animals for safe-keeping and animals found running loose were also brought in. Dogs, cats, goats and horses came through the shelter, were cared for and eventually were returned to their owners.

“During emergencies, things are complicated and our adrenaline is pumping. To help keep things simple, we have a quiet area available for those who need it,” said Janet, adding that team members are supportive of each other.

HEART also offers information to help animal owners know what to do to protect themselves and

their animals in disasters.

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Project redoubles concern about earthquake damage in Haiti

Last year, Outreach Committee supporters at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Spokane initiated a project to educate children at a village church school in Cazale, Haiti, in the mountains 30 miles northeast of Port-au-Prince.

In January, they were devastated by news of the 7.0 earthquake in Haiti and renewed in their commitment to help.

In May 2009, Trish Newton, chair of the cathedral's outreach committee, and the Very Rev. Bill Ellis visited the village and the small congregation of St. Andre Episcopal Church to explore how the two churches could work together to provide quality education to village children through the sixth grade.

"Work was underway on repairs to the school building for preschoolers through fourth graders, when the quake toppled the capital city and threw the country into chaos," Trish said. "Enrollment had reached 88 students when everything came to a halt on Jan. 12. Since then, we have not heard how much damage the current building sustained, but are thankful to know that the students and staff are alive."

The pre-quake classrooms were in what Trish described as "a dilapidated building in a space with three walls divided into areas by old chalkboards." The children had no books or other materials. Teachers were paid only when students' parents could afford to pay the tuition.

During their week in Haiti, Trish and Bill met with leaders of the Episcopal Diocese and the priest, Fr. Irenel Duveaux, and agreed to fund a long-term project to repair the current classrooms, complete a new building, install a clean water system and lavatories, and pay salaries of staff and teachers.

The Episcopal Diocese of Spokane learned that the Haitian Episcopal Church complex—its cathedral, offices, convent and school—in Port-au-Prince was destroyed, but without loss of life. The Cathedral of St. John, which has had to wait to hear what happened in Cazale, held a candlelight vigil the first Sunday



Trish Newton with children at a school in Port-au-Prince.

Photo by the Very Rev. Bill Ellis

evening after the earthquake.

The cathedral and diocese in Spokane are raising funds through the national Episcopal Relief and Development program for earthquake relief in Haiti, as well as for the cathedral's commitment to Cazale.

While there, Trish and Bill met Baptist medical missionaries who have run a clinic in Cazale since 1995. Because they have a generator and satellite so they can use their computer and cell phone, Trish said she learned that the clinic is treating people coming from Port-au-Prince and also learned that although the village suffered significant damage, there were only two deaths.

In mid January, Trish and Bill showed slides of their visit, focusing on the people with whom the cathedral is forging a relationship.

"No matter how much damage the school may have had, the outreach committee will continue to raise funds for the school because its commitment to St. Andre's and the children remains unchanged," Trish said.

The cathedral has a team of six people coordinating the relationship and efforts to raise funds.

They have about 40 regular donors so far. Since the May trip, they had raised \$6,000. Their goal is to repair or rebuild the

existing school to provide a structurally safe building. The first stage will require \$75,000. The unfinished church building also needs a roof.

"Beside funding construction, we need to provide money to pay teachers so they will stay there," Trish said.

"Early phases include adding new doors, new benches and blackboards, plus building clean water and sanitation systems, so they have latrines. We seek funds to provide a hot meal each day, vitamins and immunizations," she said.

When the cathedral was looking for a global partner connection, it became interested in Haiti after Judy Biller, an Outreach Committee member, accompanied her son to Haiti to bring his newly-adopted child home from an orphanage.

Trish, who began attending the cathedral when she and her husband came to Spokane in 2006, said she has long worked in outreach in Presbyterian churches she attended in California and New Jersey.

"I believe that involving a

church in outreach builds the congregation and changes members' perceptions of the world," she said.

Commenting on the Cathedral's response, Bill said they had raised \$2,000 for relief in addition to the fund raising for the project in Cazale.

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Local congregations find a variety of ways to respond to needs in Haiti

A disaster, such as the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, brings out the personal and organizational connections of people in the Inland Northwest with people in other parts of the globe.

Awareness of the calamity first arrives through media, but the ties lead to ongoing concern and action.

Prayers and donations are immediate ways to share in God's caring. Readiness to go to share one's skills and help heal wounds or to help rebuild is another common response.

People involved in faith communities know that the disaster response ministries of denominations and faith organizations had resources available in Haiti and ready to send. They know their donations will help resupply hygiene, health and baby kits for the next disaster.

300 Catholics Relief Services staff in Haiti continue to help

Parishes in the Catholic Diocese of Spokane and across the United States took collections during January for Haiti relief.

"That money will go through Catholic Relief Services (CRS), which is coordinating the response of several Catholic organizations, including Caritas International," said Bishop William Skylstad, who is sharing updates from CRS.

Scott Cooper, director of Parish Social Services for Catholic Charities in Spokane, said the focus was to raise money because of a limited capacity to deliver things and difficulties distributing donated goods effectively.

"Donations will support Catholic Relief Services which has been working in Haiti since 1954. It has a staff of more than 330 people working in nine program areas—including HIV/AIDS, mother-child health, rebuilding in the South after the 2007-08 hurricanes and reforestation," he said.

Scott heard of no losses to

CRS staff and its building had only slight damage, but Haitian Archbishop Joseph Serve Miot and his vicar general Charles Benoit were among those who lost their lives.

Catholic Relief Services also helped convene NGOs—non-governmental organizations—to coordinate what each church and organization would do, in order to avoid duplication of efforts, Scott said.

"In a few months after the dust has settled on emergency response, we will be there working to rebuild over the next decade and perhaps sending volunteers to help do that," he explained. "The message is that we have been there and we will continue to be there. Haiti is a challenge for many historical reasons, in which the United States has played a part."

Scott said CRS may help arrange adoptions as appropriate and will work to prevent trafficking children.

For information, call 358-4273.

Methodists gather items for hygiene kits

Manito United Methodist Church offered its building from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., weekdays, as a drop-off site for the health kits churches put together for Haiti.

The Rev. George Abrams, coordinator for disaster relief for the Pacific Northwest United Methodist Conference, will arrange transportation to the Salt Lake City Depot.

David Valera, director of connectional ministries with the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church, asked

churches to provide a dollar for every kit to cover shipping costs.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) not only provided emergency grants to the Methodist Church in Haiti and GlobalMedic to address needs of those affected by the earthquake, but also mourned the death of its national executive, the Rev. Sam Dixon, and the head of Volunteers in Mission, the Rev. Clint Rabb, who were in Haiti discussing efforts to improve medical services there when the quake demolished their hotel.

UMCOR is partnering with GlobalMedic to provide clean drinking water, treatment for severe diarrhea and medical care, as

well as helping deploy paramedics, water technicians, a doctor, clean drinking water, water purifiers, water purification tablets and oral rehydration sachets.

UMCOR, which is working in partnership with local non-government organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations' network of relief organizations, set up an emergency web page with information on its relief efforts in Haiti at umcorhaiti.org. It includes a church bulletin, a digital slide show, a poster and envelopes churches can use for special offerings.

For information, call 838-3085 or 212-870-3816 or email umcor@gbgm-umc.org.

Partners International will focus on ways to help rebuild lives

At Partners International national headquarters in Spokane, Bob Savage, director of the global learning exchange program, said the organization is working through its partnerships with local churches, organizations and schools outside of Port-au-Prince.

"Our focus is on long-term help rebuilding lives with counseling and walking beside people," Bob said. "We will stick with the people there over the years, comforting those who have lost family with counseling and spiritual care. There will not be a quick fix."

Bob, who has worked 23 years with Partners International, arranges short-term mission teams to visit in countries around the world.

For information, call 343-4037 or visit partnersinternational.org.

Presbyterians pray, donate and send kits

The Rev. Sheryl Kinder-Pyle, acting executive presbyter for the Inland Empire Presbytery since Jan. 1, said the presbytery is promoting an appeal for funds to go to Haiti through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

"Our response now is threefold: pray, send money and assemble kits," said Sheryl, who was parish associate at Latah Valley Presbyterian Church.

"It's a blessing to be a connected church, because the structures are in place for response and we had people in Haiti before the earthquake," she said.

Gary Payton, a Presbyterian Church USA mission coworker who lives in Sandpoint, said disaster response for Presbyterians

will flow through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and be used through established relationships with ecumenical partners in Haiti to provide spiritual care, food, water, shelter and medical supplies.

"The relationships, which enable us to respond in times of crisis, are nurtured by the presence of long-term missionaries who serve with partners in Haiti and around the world," he said, adding that more than 200 Presbyterian mission workers serve in 52 countries.

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance initially sent \$100,000 for immediate emergency relief to the affected people, and Presbyterian World Mission gathered information on mission personnel and ecumenical partners in the area.

Through Presbyterian World Mission, Gary said congregations that want to develop a personal relationship with a missionary in Haiti or elsewhere can arrange a long-term relationship.

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World Relief staff in Haiti lost family but help others

Linda Unseth, director of World Relief in Spokane—part of the national disaster relief arm of the Association of Evangelicals—said a World Relief doctor in Haiti had called by cell phone to say that although the World Relief office had collapsed, 40 staff members survived and doctors were doing surgeries. He requested donations

for water, food and medical aid. “Even though many staff lost family members and homes, they are helping others deal with the disaster while they deal with their own heartaches,” she said.

“Now is the first part of dealing with the disaster. After the emergency relief will come ongoing efforts,” she added. “Our role is

to answer the cry of the hungry, the poor and the oppressed.”

Aware that people may want to join in efforts to help rebuild, she said there will be opportunities to apply. Linda added that World Relief is working through www.causeup.org, a blog that is sharing information and making referrals, so everyone involved in the relief

effort will know what others are doing.

World Relief is meeting with other NGOs in Haiti.

Linda added that Haitian immigrants have been granted a temporary protective status in the United States.

For information, call 232-2814 or visit worldrelief.org.

Tri-Cities orthopedic surgeon helps Haitians in Dominican Republic

Tri-Cities surgeon John Staeheli, a 1976 graduate of Gonzaga University with an orthopedic practice in Richland, arrived in the Dominican Republic near the frontline of Haiti’s earthquake, and put his skills as an orthopedic

surgeon to work helping victims.

He and wife Marilyn left their home only one hour after the temblor struck. They were going to Santiago in the Dominican Republic as part of a 42-member team that travels annually to the

ILAC Mission Surgery Center, a Jesuit organization that provides free medical care in rural communities.

The team includes several orthopedic specialists who are helping meet the need for trauma

specialists.

John stayed in Santiago and treated some evacuated Haitian patients there.

National church/faith websites tell of relief efforts, record giving, ongoing presence and commitment

National websites of various denominations offered insights on responses in Haiti.

With online giving, plus media coverage stirring broad interest reinforced by churches’ and faith groups’ presence in Haiti before the earthquake in January, some denominations and relief groups have reported record generosity in response to a disaster.

Along with the donation process for any disaster comes advice to know and trust the organizations that will receive the funds.

News reports and faith groups’ websites have been sources to help people know what needs are.

Lutheran World Relief had an appeal online at lwr.org for \$10 donations and information on sending material aid, such as quilts and health kits.

LWR is working with partners in Haiti to ensure people had immediate access to water, food and shelter, as well as assurance of commitment to long-term recovery.

It is working in partnership with CRS, local organizations and international relief agencies, as well as through Action by Churches Together (ACT), a global aid alliance.

Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ reported that giving to the UCC’s

Haiti earthquake response “shattered previous online giving rates” six days after the quake. The total given was more than \$250,000, in contrast with \$112,000 given in 23 days after the 2005 tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

Susan Sander, the UCC’s minister for global sharing of resources, said the “unprecedented” giving was a sign that people felt comfortable giving online and being able to respond immediately.

The totals did not include gifts sent by mail or from offerings.

Funds from many churches will go to the National Spiritual Council of Churches of Haiti (CONASPEH) and the House of Hope orphanage.

Kim Bentrrott, who oversees the CONASPEH clinic in her work through the United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ Global Ministries, reported that the CONASPEH building was flattened and many of her nursing students were killed.

Members of a Disciples of Christ group from Tennessee who were visiting CONASPEH, their Haitian mission partner, were safe.

Church World Service’s Don Tatlock reported that three trauma counselors and psycho-social care specialists had arrived to provide services for victims and aid work-

ers, who were also suffering in the wake of death, injuries and loss.

She added that “our local partners know their neighborhoods,” so they have connections that make effective distribution possible. CWS is also assisting Haitians who try to enter the Dominican Republic and is part of the ACT Alliance working to build temporary water systems, provide water purification materials, tents and food packages.

ACT also sent five medical teams of eight to 10 doctors and nurses to outlying communities.



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Elson Floyd encourages programs to involve young people in their communities, to instill their dreams

Continued from page 1

"Education gives us hope and ambition," he asserted.

"Society is moving fast. We must be able to compete in the global marketplace," he said, referring to the browning and graying of America as "part of the tapestry of America."

Because of these changes, it is important to recognize the importance of each vote, he said, pointing out that "political and economic influence is not just about fairness and justice. It's also about diversity."

A few years ago, one-fourth of the state's people were racial minorities, he reported. In a few years, one-third will be racial minorities.

Floyd believes that everyone must share in the successes of the state.

That's harder as responsibility to pay for higher education shifts from the state to the individual, he said. In 2009, students paid half the tuition costs, up from previously paying one-third of costs.

"We need to renew our commitment to young people by controlling and containing education costs, welcoming them into institutions without students being hindered by cost," he said. "It's about fairness and justice, and a vision as a society of doing things in a fundamentally different way."

"As a society, we should not waste human potential. How can we put a value on research not done or teachers who are kept out of teaching for lack of education?" he challenged.

Floyd pointed out that Dr. King was about "education, hope and opportunity." He understood that education is the key to opportunities.

"We need to talk with our sons and daughters so they aspire to better opportunities than we as parents have had. That's what Dr. King's dream today is about," he said. "Education is the best investment. It creates farsighted citizens. To support education is to support Dr. King's legacy."

Floyd said that in 1963 when Dr. King came to Washington, D.C., he came to "cash the check" of the promises made in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution that all men and women, black and white, are equal and have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.



Elson S. Floyd speaks on Martin Luther King, Jr., in Spokane.

While there have been gains in equality, Floyd is concerned about statistics on societal trends that influence education: In 1966, half of children lived in two-parent households, but in 2006 only 30 percent did. Other trends are the high rate of school drop-outs and imprisonment of black men.

"We must reclaim families. Our future depends on it," Elson said.

"We are in an information revolution. The agricultural revolution made it possible to feed the population using less than two percent of the work force. The industrial revolution made the nation wealthy, but brought problems, like the Depression, that had to be addressed.

"Now business, labor and educational institutions have enabled disadvantaged citizens to move into the mainstream and made it possible to feed the entire world if we choose to," he said.

"While the income for blacks is the highest ever, unemployment for black men is higher—double—than unemployment of white men, just as the average life span for black men and women is less than for white men and women," Floyd continued.

To reverse those "daunting trends," he said schools, churches

and businesses need to recognize the value of cultural and racial diversity and the role of education in success.

"The information age transmits volumes of information faster than ever," he said. "The pace of change continues in everything."

Floyd measures the long-term success of education in long-term employment and in instilling a life-long desire to learn.

"Thousands of young people are unprepared for the rigor of today," he said, concerned that decisions are made early that categorize students so fewer take college-preparation classes.

"High-school graduation and college-entry requirements should be the same," he said.

To do that, he calls for more support to sustain teachers.

Floyd is concerned that the role of teaching is seen as a low priority and that parents use schools as babysitters.

"Teachers have become consummate social workers. We need to stop that nonsense and reclaim the schools," he said.

Rather than pointing blame, he calls for awareness that quality education begins at home, that the scales of justice need to be applied fairly, and that more African-American men need to

be directed to classrooms rather than prison cells.

Floyd also promotes development of programs that help young people become involved in their communities.

"Our sense of community and our value of family have eroded," he said, recalling how his hometown community kept him accountable in his growing years.

"Dr. King articulated our hopes and dreams. A dream is hope for a better life where people are judged by the content of their character," he said. "People are people. We need to respect everyone."

"Dr. King was a leader. We can be leaders as he was," he said, noting that for that to be possible, "we need to produce, develop and teach future leaders. Leaders are responsible, treat neighbors as themselves, do not lie or steal, are faithful to their families and nurture spiritual life," he said.

Floyd reminded that because a chain is "no stronger than its weakest link," it is essential to educate and nurture all members of the community and nation.

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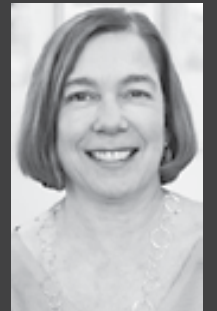


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Shalom movies and soup give reprieve from cold, opportunity to serve

By Virginia de Leon

By bringing her soup pot to Shalom Ministries, Pat Kroetch found solace in faith, food and fellowship.

After a devastating year—one in which she suffered the loss of her husband of almost 50 years, witnessed her home destroyed by fire and lost the lease for her restaurant and family business—Pat came to the downtown ministry with an open heart and a desire to give back to others.

She discovered comfort in the companionship at Shalom, she said. By cooking and serving food to the homeless and hungry, she regained a sense of purpose.

"The people here have been my saving grace," she said. "I just like to feed people and make them happy."

A Spokane native, Pat grew up working at various restaurants owned and operated by her parents, Percy and Edna Howell. For years, the Howells ran the St. John Café in the Palouse region, where Edna baked pies and Percy cooked hearty, home-style meals for folks in the community.

In 1968, they opened The Golden Hour Restaurant, a Spokane Valley landmark where the favorites included clam chowder, beef barley and other soups served family-style in a tureen.

Pat's experience in the kitchen as well as the dining area led her to follow in her parents' footsteps.

In 1974, she and her late husband, Greg, opened their own restaurant, The Bread Basket, on 29th Ave. and Grand Blvd. When her father retired in 1984, Pat and Greg took over The Golden Hour and renamed it Percy's Café Americana. Their five children worked there, and the restaurant continued as a place where people came for anniversaries and special occasions.

"I just loved being able to do customer service," Pat said.

In July 2008, while Greg was in the hospital, the couple's home of 26 years was one of 11 houses destroyed in a Spokane Valley wildfire. Greg died six days later.

A year later, Pat was forced to close Percy's when she learned the restaurant's lease at the University City Shopping Center was not renewed. In a press release that month, Pat wrote: "We are going to miss our guests and our staff who have been like family over the many years."

Before closing the restaurant, Pat planned to volunteer at Sha-



Teri Beal and Pat Kroetch share their restaurant skills at Shalom.

lom. One Sunday morning after Mass at St. Ann's Catholic Church, where she has been a member since 2005, she talked with a fellow parishioner, John "Gus" Olsen.

After retiring from his work as an optometrist, John devoted his life to volunteer work, particularly to Shalom Ministries, which has been providing a ministry of "dining with dignity" in the basement of Central United Methodist Church since 1994.

Known as "Chef Gus" to hundreds of people who come to Shalom for free hot meals, John told Pat about his work with the homeless. His stories and experience led her to visit Shalom.

Upon arrival, she immediately started serving meals in the dining room. She learned the names of the people who arrived for the meal and sat with them at dinner. Pat said she treated them with the same respect and courtesy that she gave to her customers at the restaurant. She felt at home.

"I just like the people here," she said. "They're nice guys who are simply down on their luck."

Before long, Pat decided to volunteer on a regular basis.

"John took me under his wing," she said. "He lives a life of service and inspired me."

When Percy's closed last summer, Pat had help to move the restaurant's 40-gallon stainless steel electric soup pot to Shalom Min-

istries' kitchen. The pot belonged to her father, who bought it when he opened The Golden Hour. Pat also brought the restaurant's food processor and other kitchen gadgets to share with the volunteer kitchen staff at Shalom.

Since last fall, Pat along with her daughter, Teri Beal, a few of her teen-age grandchildren and Teri's friends have been coming to Shalom every other Wednesday to cook soup for Inspirational Movie Night, which is held every Wednesday from November through February.

Shalom offers people respite from the cold, said Holly Chillinski, the program manager, who is recruiting volunteers to help cook on alternate Wednesdays.

Inspirational Movie Night begins at about 2 p.m. and provides people on the streets with a warm place to go until the nearby House of Charity opens at 6 p.m. Winter shelter from 3 to 6 p.m. is also available the rest of the week at First Covenant Church, a few blocks away on Division St. and Second Ave., she said.

About 60 to 80 people, mostly men, take part in Inspirational Movie Night.

They come to Central United Methodist Church's basement and watch films on a large, flat-screen television that was donated. Dinner is served at 4:30 p.m.

Pat and Teri usually arrive at 2 p.m. and begin cooking with help of other volunteers and some regular guests at Shalom.

Among the regular volunteers on the kitchen crew are dishwasher Jeff Naftel, sous chef Jeff Poirier and sous chef Rich Shumaker.

They usually start out using Edna Howell's old soup recipes, which also became part of the culinary repertoire at Percy's. Often, however, mother and daughter have to modify the recipes de-

pending on the ingredients they have on hand.

The menu is often dictated by the types of foods that are donated to Shalom Ministries that week. On a recent Wednesday, for instance, a supply of ham inspired the kitchen crew to cook a pot of navy bean soup.

While some of the crew leave after the soup is cooked and served, Pat usually stays to visit with the people and learn their stories. She often sticks around as late as 7 p.m. to also help with the cleaning.

"This ministry has healed my mother's heart," said Teri, a member of Garland Alliance Church.

It also has provided their family opportunities to serve and live out their faith.

"Loving Jesus by loving people is what I want to do," Teri said.

For Pat, volunteering at Shalom has given her renewed focus and great joy, she said.

She feels she receives more than she gives and adds that her contribution to this ministry is "small" compared to the work of others in the kitchen.

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Jeff Poirier, Jeff Naftel and Rich Shumaker assist in the kitchen.

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Disasters epitomize the globalization of faith communities' caring

The earthquake in Haiti reminds us we are part of the wider world. It is, as many disasters, in an area already served by church and faith organizations who have been present for years with people and who plan to continue their presence. That's globalization for the faith community.

The Action of Churches Together (ACT) Alliance website lists responses in December to other recent disasters—assisting displaced people in Darfur in Sudan, 3.5 million people uprooted by conflict in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan, earthquake and cyclone victims in Malawi, post-cyclone rebuilders in Burma (Myanmar), and survivors of Tamil Nadu floods in India and a flood in Mauritania. Globalization means awareness.

Still on ACT's agenda are responses after typhoons in Southeast Asia and the Philippines, floods and earth slides in El Salvador, a West Sumatra earthquake in Indonesia, floods in South China in 2009,

as well as the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan Province in China and 2007 cyclone relief in Madagascar. Work teams from the Northwest still go to help rebuild New Orleans, damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Globalization requires long-term presence and commitment.

The list of places where faith and voluntary communities are serving people who suffer keeps growing from human and natural disasters. Unlike media who rush to a crisis, interest and concern of people of faith does not wane in days, weeks, months or years. Faith groups encourage members to visit to establish relationships. Globalization means ongoing partnership.

People of faith find different ways to respond, using their skills to educate in their own churches and communities or going to share their skills in medical care, construction, education, engineering or other trades and professions. Most work quietly in the background, not promoting their faiths or

their way, as they work beside people of different cultures, languages, instincts and skills. Globalization respects the integrity of people in a communities and nations.

Relief and development organizations of Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Christian and other faiths or perspectives work side-by-side, learning to respect each other's insights and gifts in the process of supplying clean water, shelters, medicines and food for victims of disasters and inequities. Globalization is ecumenical and interfaith.

As lives far away are disrupted, people pray, console the grieving, rejoice for the living, find simple tasks to do and allow their lives to be disrupted to help people restore their lives, infrastructures and buildings. Globalization stirs caring.

People of faith have been present with Haitians in their suffering for decades. Their commitment was evident in the loss of lives in Haiti including many people from many nations. Globalization means

accompaniment—solidarity with people—and sharing in loss and suffering.

We are there, because we love—as family, friends, partners and strangers—knowing our lives, economies, politics and faiths are interconnected. Reports continue to flow in of people who are in or going to Haiti. Reports continue to flow in of the generosity of congregations in the region, of fund-raising concerts and special worship services. Globalization means mutual responsibility and accountability.

The far off is brought near by the many personal ties people in the region have around the world. We keep almost instantly informed thanks to today's media. Although mainstream news media may seem intrusive, they are our first sources, alerting us, raising concern, taking us there with compelling immediacy. Our global ties are possible because of both global commercial as well as faith-community media.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Martin Luther King Celebration

Sounding Board

Martin Luther King Day Rally



Mary Verner and Freda Gandy



V. Anne Smith and Karen Baker



Crowd gathered for the Rally



Spokane Community Choir

Speakers at Spokane's 2010 Community Commemorative Celebration and at the Rally before the annual March for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day challenged several thousand participants in the events with their own stories and insights, as well as with the words of Dr. King.

Elder Jimmy Pierce, the new president of the Ministers' Fellowship Union, charged those attending the celebration at First Presbyterian with "pressing the cause forward not just one day but every day."

Spokane Mayor Mary Verner expressed her gratitude to serve a community with the diversity represented in the Spokane Community Choir seated behind her at First Presbyterian Church for the celebration and the people crowded into and outside the INB Performing Arts Center for the rally.

"I see the richness of the fabric of our community every day," she said. "Our city leaders believe in and appreciate unity."

Growing up in Fitzgerald, Ga., she said her school was desegregated when she was in the sixth grade. When Dr. King became famous, she remembers he was not seen as "the Rev." King, but as "a rabble rouser."

"He changed our society with his words and deeds. I am grateful for the rabble he roused," Mary said. "It took civil disobedience and nonviolence for change to happen."

She said the cause he espoused involved sacrifices that led the country to progress in equality to the point of electing an African American President.

"We can see the progress made against intolerance," she said, quoting Dr. King: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

She called for renewing resolve to be vigilant.

"It's easy to be complacent and forget the fight and struggle," Mary said.

"Dr. King taught nonviolence and solving problems through getting together and loving one another," she said.

Citing recent examples of hate in the area—swastikas painted on a car and hate fliers—Spokane's mayor asserted calls for nonviolent commitment to overcome evil and commitment "to make life better for all, regardless of color, culture or class."

Freda Gandy, the new director of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Family Outreach Center in Spokane, told of the center's commitment to Dr. King's legacy by providing social and educational services to low-income families and children. A Saturday evening concert and the Sunday celebration raised nearly \$3,000 in donations to support participation of children in the programs.

"We develop equal respect and equal treatment," she said. "We ask our children: What is your life's blueprint? A building is not well built without a blueprint that includes deep belief in one's own dignity. We let your young people know: Don't let anyone make you feel like you are nobody."

"People need determination to achieve excellence. We tell the children and youth that doors of opportunity are open to them that were not open to their mothers, fathers and grandparents," Freda said.

Quoting from Dr. King, she said that if a child chooses to be a street sweeper, the center instills in him or her the will to sweep streets like Michelangelo painted and Shakespeare wrote.

"If you're a shrub be the best shrub you can be. Be a bush if you can't be a tree," she quoted.

V. Anne Smith, president of the Spokane Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), noted the progress made because of a man "who stood for all of us."

She challenged the audience, quoting Dr. King's mentor, Benjamin Mays, president of Morehouse College: "It isn't a calamity to die with a dream. It's a calamity not to

have a dream."

"The journey to freedom started with a dream to achieve equality, justice and freedom, dreams of Nathaniel Turner, Harriet Tubman, Fredrick Douglass and many others," V. Anne said. "You are not a man or woman until you accept your own vision."

On Dec. 1, 1955, Rosa Parks' refusal to give up a seat on the bus changed a pastor—Dr. King—and eventually a nation, moving it to ensure equality, eliminate racism, secure civil rights, educate people and achieve change through nonviolence.

"Dr. King said human progress is not automatic or inevitable. It takes time and vigorous positive action. A minute is 60 seconds. It's up to you to use it. He knew an eternity was in a tiny minute," she said.

She told of the founding of the national NAACP in 1909 by a white woman, Mary Overton and two friends. She had seen and did not accept the mistreatment and violence leveled on a race of people.

Ben Small, superintendent of the Central Valley School District, affirmed that education is "a powerful equalizer" and that school superintendents are committed to equal opportunity.

"There are still children who fail, but my colleagues and I are committed to reverse the trend and reform the system, to live up to the dream of Dr. King," he said. We believe in quality of education for all, not just for some."

Ben affirmed the importance of investing in young people so they keep their dreams alive.

He celebrated the large number of children, youth and young people among more than 2,000 participants at the rally.

"We often talk of what's wrong with young people, but look how many are here to pause and reflect on Dr. King's hopes, dreams and ideals," Ben said.

"We must not lose sight of the dream," he

said. "We must remember the example of those who came before us. A dream never dies, just the dreamer if the dream is bigger than one person."

Rich Hadley of Greater Spokane, Inc., spoke at the rally on behalf of the business community, expressing his gratitude for the leadership that has led to naming a street Martin Luther King Way on the southern border of the Riverpoint Campus.

"Business is diverse," Rich said. "We need to understand people in different cultures. We need to employ people for their abilities and treat them fairly. A broad diversified economy will help us weather the recession."

County Commissioner Mark Richard said he is reminded by Martin Luther King, Jr., Day that there is work to be done together.

"The community needs to denounce hatred and crimes against others by a small minority, so we can make the community what we want it to be," he said. "There is no victory until all are free."

County Commissioner Bonnie Mager recognizes that the most vulnerable people are struggling in a jobless recovery.

"We need the inspiration of Dr. King, rather than expecting others to change the world for us," she said. "It's up to us to make the changes, to walk and pass on the baton, and to be part of the solution. We need to take hold of the new tools of technology to organize and mobilize here and across the world."

"We cannot sit by and watch others roll back the clock on Dr. King's accomplishments. In the midst of the overwhelming budget cuts, we must be vigilant," she said, challenging people to recognize their power and abilities as children of God. "We need to be liberated from fear and let our lights shine. We have strength in the power of love."

Interfaith Advocacy Day will be Feb. 16

Interfaith Advocacy Day in Olympia will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 16. This event, sponsored by the Washington Association of Churches (WAC), gathers members and friends of faith communities to "Lift Every Voice" for compassion and justice in the deliberation of state public policies, said Alice Woldt, transitional executive director of the WAC.

"This year the advocacy day will include faith traditions that share a common vision of God's peace on earth," she said. "Though diverse in our traditions and political opinions, we are united in

our efforts to bring about a more peaceful and just world."

Given the difficult decisions facing the state and nation as the economic depression persists and state budget woes worsen, she said that the voices of people of faith are needed more than ever.

The Washington Association of Churches, Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington, Church

Council of Greater Seattle and other ecumenical agencies, ministries and representatives from other faiths are planning "inspirational and energizing" events, she said.

The attendees will meet with legislators, legislative staff and issues experts.

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

Dialogue explores wisdom and media

The Fig Tree's 2010 Dialogue will explore issues of "Wisdom and the Media" in a presentation, panel discussion and small group sharing from 7 to 9 p.m., Tuesday, April 27, at the Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave.

The session will open with Steve Blewett, journalism professor emeritus at Eastern Washington University, providing an overview of journalism and how it has dealt with key issues over the years and today.

Panelists will reflect briefly on avenues and barriers for sharing information and understanding among groups, and between groups and the media. Panelists are the Very Rev. Bill Ellis of the cathedral; the Rev. Scott Kinder-Pyle of Latah Valley Presbyterian Church; the Rev. Joyce O'Connor Magee of Manito United Methodist Church, and the Rev. Happy Watkins of New Hope Baptist Church.

Participants will have discussions around their tables about what in media presentations of faith empower and disempower them and their faith communities.

For information, call 535-1813.

Calendar of Events

- Feb 1-7 • **12th Spokane International Film Festival**, AMC Theatres, River Park Square and The Magic Lantern, 25 W. Main St., 720-7743
- Feb 1-7 • **"Weaving Together Our Sisters Voices,"** Gonzaga's Magnuson Theatre; 7:30 p.m. Fridays, 2 p.m. Sundays, 313-6553
- Feb 2 • **Ten Spokane Groups Propose** ordinance for independent investigations of police, 35 W. Main, noon, 838-7870
- Feb 4 • **Poverty Breakfast**, St. Pius X Catholic Church Auditorium, 625 E. Hoycroft Ave., Coeur d'Alene, 7 to 8:30 a.m., 208-292-2359
- Feb 4,11,18,25 • **Nonprofit Board Development Workshops**, Gonzaga University COG, 8 to 10 a.m., 313-3575
- Feb 6 • **Flu Clinic**, Trent Elementary School, 3303 N. Pines, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 324-1466
- Feb 6 • **Partner Church Dinner** for Felsorakos, Unitarian Universalist Church, 4340 W. Ft. Wright Dr., 6 p.m.
- Feb 9 • **Catholic Advocacy Day 2010**, Columbia Room, State Capitol, Olympia, Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., (206) 223-1138 or ipjc@ipjc.org
- Feb 10 • **Hispanic Business Professional Association** lunch, Luigis Restaurant, Bernard and Main, 11:30 a.m., mikeg@kxly.com
- Feb 12 • **Ribbon Cutting - Emmanuel Family Life Center**, 631 S. Newark, 1 to 5 p.m., open house, 7 p.m. worship, 534-3007
- Feb 12 • **Cinn-A-Gram Deliveries**, Meals on Wheels, 4580151Feb 13
- Feb 13 • **"How Much Should I Care?"** The Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 313-5765
- Feb 13 • **Chinese New Year Cultural Fair**, Chinese Association, Central Valley High School, 821 Sullivan Rd., 1 to 5 p.m., performance at 3:30 p.m., 720-8825
- Feb 13, 14 • **Calvary Baptist 120th Anniversary Banquet**, HUB Whitworth University, 4 p.m., Saturday; service, 203 E Third, 3 p.m., Sunday, 838-8817
- Feb 14 • **"Honky Tonk Highway,"** Shalom Ministries Benefit, Interplayers Theater, 174 S. Howard St., 2 p.m., 747-4755
- Feb 16 • **Interfaith Advocacy Day**, Olympia, 206-625-9790
- Feb 16 • **Jazz Mass**, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 24th & Grand, 7 p.m.
- Feb 17 • **Spokane City Forum**, Ambassador Ryan Crocker, "An Update on the Current Status of the Middle East," First Presbyterian, 318 S. Cedar, 11:45 a.m., 777-1555
- Feb 17 • **"Veiled Threats: The Image of Women Religious in U.S. Popular Media,"** Bren Murphy, Wolff Auditorium at Jepson Hall, Gonzaga University, 7 p.m., 313-6656
- Feb 19-21 • **"Cut, Crop, Craft and Quilt Retreat,"** Camp Lutherhaven, 3258 W. Lutherhaven Rd., Coeur d'Alene, 509-235-6552
- Feb 20 • **World Vision Caregiver Kit Build**, First Presbyterian Church, 318 S. Cedar, noon to 4 p.m., 624-9298
- Feb 20 • **"Seed Exchange and Workshops**, PEACH Farm, 2015 N. Division, 3 p.m., 327-7396
- Feb 21 • **Felsorakos Day** lunch and silent auction, Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, 411 S. Washington, noon, 624-1366
- Feb 24 • **Abraham Lincoln Wisdom for Today**, Ronald White, Jr., Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth University, 7 p.m., 777-3275
- Feb 25, Mar 4 • **"Community Organizing: Building the Power of the People"** Workshop, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 35 W. Main St., 6 to 8 p.m., 838-7870
- Feb 26 • **Lutheran Community Services SAFeT** Response Center Chocolate and Champagne Gala, Mirabeau Park Hotel, Spokane Valley, 6 p.m., 343-5052
- Mar 2 • **"Full Moon at Noontide,"** Ann Putnam, Weyerhaeuser Hall at Whitworth University, 7 p.m., 777-3275
- Mar 3 • **Fig Tree distribution**, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m., 535-1813
- Mar 4 • **Fig Tree Board**, Manito United Methodist Church, 3220 S. Grand Blvd., 1 p.m., 535-1813
- Mar 6 • **Kathleen Norris**, author at Auntie's Bookstore, Main & Washington, 2 p.m., 838-0206
- Mar 7 • **Kosher Dinner**, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., 747-3304

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Community college prepares to launch peace studies program in 2011

By Brenda Velasco

Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC) is preparing to launch a Peace Studies program that would be the first for a community college in the state of Washington.

Jim Waller, dean of social sciences and cultural studies at SFCC, said the process to establish such a program takes time and planning with task forces, committees and research. By 2011, organizers expect to choose faculty and establish classes.

Interest in establishing a Peace Studies program at SFCC emerged from faculty in his division.

"This is more than just me coming and telling faculty, we are going to have an interdisciplinary Peace Studies program here," Jim said. "The teachers here have long expressed an interest in how to connect current world issues on peace, war and human rights within the context of classroom instruction.

"There's been much sentiment to start a program focusing on peace and justice," he said.

Jim said the desire to offer Peace Studies goes beyond his division. There has been interest from faculty in the art department, humanities and deaf studies, the last hoping to focus on human rights issues dealing with the deaf community around the world.

Part of Jim's inspiration to establish a Peace Studies program at SFCC came from his research dealing with the origins of conflict.

"I have found that before we look at how to resolve a conflict, we need to find the origins of the conflict, especially asking: What causes hate and injustice? Once we find the root cause of the conflict, then we can look at ways to resolve it."

Jim hopes these are the types of questions peace studies students will ask, ponder and explore with their professors.

"Growing up in Georgia, I saw issues with racial tension. I always asked myself why people couldn't get along and why the color of one's skin caused so much hatred in the community," he said. "It didn't make sense to me and I wanted answers."

Those questions stayed with



Jim Waller heads process to plan peace studies program.

Jim over the years and became a basis for research studies in his professional career. A graduate of the University of Kentucky, he taught at Asbury College in Lexington before coming to Spokane.

He taught social psychology at Whitworth University for 18 years, leading January-term student tours on "Prejudice Across America" and writing a book on that topic and another on *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford 2007), to explain why people have perpetrated genocides such as the Holocaust.

"Historically we see that genocide usually occurs under the cover of war," he said. "They go together. It's under one context. It goes back to the origins of the conflict. We need to look at what caused the conflict that led to genocide in the first place."

These are issues he hopes the new program will cover.

Over the next year, faculty will convene to set parameters and develop a budget and funding for the program, said Jim, who took the position at SFCC two years ago. While he loves teaching, he is enjoying the new challenges of administration.

Ideas for the program include offering workshops or courses on social justice, conflict resolutions and human rights.

Currently, Jim is helping SFCC research similar programs at other community colleges around the country. One is at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland,

Ohio. Jim will visit that college in the spring to gather ideas.

"About 25 community colleges nationwide offer peace studies programs. The closest one to Spokane is in Portland, Ore.," Jim said.

"We have had calls from local people asking what we are doing and when we will offer the program. The word is out. Even though we are only in planning stages, there is excitement," he said.

Jim said community support will help implement a service-learning component to give students an opportunity to make connections and have learning experiences through area peace and justice groups.

He feels SFCC's 2009-2010 academic-year theme, "Human Rights: Dignity and Justice for All," is a good precursor to the Peace Studies Program.

He sees a depth and perseverance in students committed to peace and justice in wartime.

"Living in the current state of war, we've seen how much we have lost because of it and how costly it is both financially and emotionally," Jim said. "We have to realize that peace is a solution and a good investment. The investment is something we need to look at with this program."

He added that students in this generation have grown up hearing about the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"War is such a presence today, and there is the desire among students to look at peace," he said.

"Students understand what peace and war are and want to do something to bring peace. This is evident through the response we've had to our yearly theme. They are choosing and wanting to make a difference in this world."

He also points out that many of the current war issues center around religious conflicts.

"The role of religion in many of these world problems can be a source of tension," he said. "However in hoping for peace, religion can also bring the antidotes of healing and reconciliation. Finding this healing through faith

and peace is beneficial to those nations that have been torn apart by war. This is something we need to focus on as well."

Studying the origins of conflicts and finding solutions will be beneficial to the overall student experience.

Given that students who come to SFCC either stay in town or transfer to schools such as Eastern Washington University, Jim said that nurturing and informing their passion for peace and justice would lead to community involvement.

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