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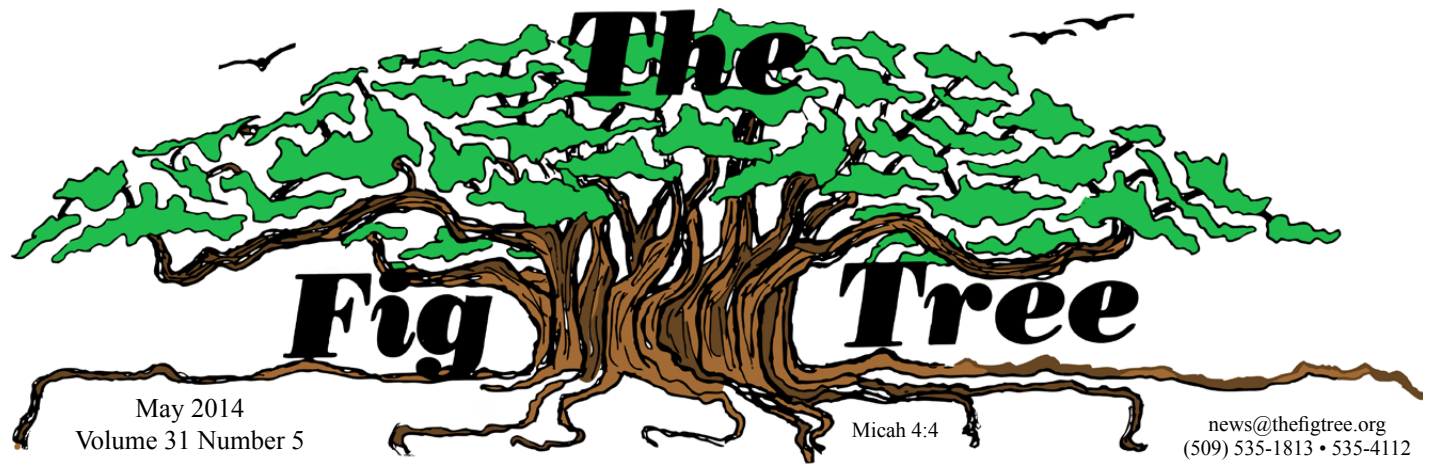
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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest
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YWCA mission empowers women

By Mary Stamp

Along a wall outside the administrative offices of the YWCA of Spokane are images of Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Pakistani girls education advocate Malala Yousafzai, and U.S. Poet Maya Angelou—women who represent the YWCA's goals of peace, justice, freedom and dignity.

Social justice is part of the reason Regina Malveaux was drawn to work with the YWCA.

As executive director for the YWCA of Spokane since last January, she works to friend-raise and fund-raise to support programs, 90 percent of which serve women and children who live in poverty.

"I hope I'm able to help women across the spectrum realize that the YWCA is a place to come to be empowered, make connections, and find hope and healing. As women volunteer, they also become empowered."

Most know the YWCA for its Alternatives to Domestic Violence program and 24-hour safe shelter, the Women's Opportunity Center, Our Sister's Closet free professional clothing bank to help women



Regina Malveaux stands by the image of Leymah Gbowee of Liberia.

enter or re-enter the work force, and its Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) at the new downtown building at 930 N. Monroe, shared with the YMCA, and in Airway Heights.

Balancing the operating budget, Regina is now helping the YWCA embark on a \$1.6 million campaign to cover a \$1.3 million shortfall that occurred when its former building at 810 N. Lincoln sold for less than anticipated because of the economic downturn.

The campaign includes funds to renovate the 100-year-old shelter and 2,200 square feet of unimproved space in the new building to use for classrooms, a possible clinic and other program needs.

"The YWCA has evolved from being a Christian organization for Protestant women to an inclusive organization working to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace and justice," she said.

"Many are familiar with our work of empowering women. Fewer are familiar with our social justice work," Regina said, "but nationally, our commitment to eliminate racism has long and deep roots in the women's and civil

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Mission Community Outreach Center's client count nearly doubles in two years

Neat racks of children's, women's and men's clothing give those who come to Mission Community Outreach Center an experience of a clothing bank that lends a sense of dignity as people "shop" for what they need and like.

"We only put out quality clothing," said executive director Mark Kinney, who was first in Spokane in 1994 as a KC135 navigator at Fairchild Air Force Base until 2000.

"The majority of clothing donations we receive is good quality," he said, "but our volunteers will wash, mend and iron donations to make them even more appealing."

After earning a degree in sociology in 1987 at South Dakota State University in Brookings, he served in the Air Force for 20 years and retired in Spokane to be near his children.

In 2009, while studying for a master's degree in administrative leadership at Whitworth University, he joined the center's board. After graduating in 2011, he was on the search committee for the first paid executive director, when someone suggested he do it.

Mark started part time and the position evolved into full time. His military retirement makes it possible for him to afford to

work there.

Mission Community Outreach Center at 1906 E. Mission is one of the largest free clothing banks in the region, he said. It is open for customers and donors from 1:30 to 4 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. All its services are free.

"Low-income working people struggle, so we provide clothing, plus hygiene items and some kitchen and household items," he said. "Everyone leaves with toothbrushes and toothpaste. They can't afford hygiene items when they are thrown a loop by unemployment, a medical emergency or a temporary need."

In 2011, the client count was 11,500. In 2013, it was 20,384. In December 2011, he sent their newsletter to 80 people. Now he sends it to more than 700.

More people are coming because of partnerships Mark has developed.

For example, the center partners with World Relief Spokane to serve refugees resettling here.

"World Relief sends clothing donations they receive to us, so we

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Christian Service Team progresses in four areas

Four months ago, Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich challenged the faith community to work together for the common good related to four areas: 1) quality of life for at-risk youth, 2) neighborhood safety and emergency preparedness, 3) homelessness, housing and economic development and 4) health and wellness inequalities.

He and others called together the Christian Service Summit, which was held at Whitworth University. Since then participants have done research on what people of faith are already doing to build a better community.

Twenty representatives met in April to share what they learned during the research phase and plan for setting goals. They also concluded that there are 1,400 agencies in the county dealing with service and systemic change.

"We need to support existing organizations, working with them to help people access resources," said Ian Robertson, who is helping coordinate the executive team of the Christian Service Team (CST) of Spokane County.

"We believe some changes in methods and communications might make the efforts more effective," he said.

Eighty congregations and 53 agencies in six regions of Spokane County have been involved in creating four projects, which will be developed over five to 10 years. Each project has a coach and team ready to share "best practices" with congregations to "bring about real community transformation."

The CST has six geographic area teams meeting monthly, accomplishing short-term projects and planning to launch four major projects later in 2014.

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Churches recognize each other's baptisms

Many European and North American church bodies are entering agreements recognizing each other's baptisms.

The day after Easter, when many Christian traditions receive catechumens through the rite of baptism, the Swiss churches—Roman Catholic, Reformed, Methodist, Old Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran—signed an agreement on the mutual recognition of baptism. The ceremony, culminating an intense ecumenical interchange sponsored by the Council of Christian Churches in Switzerland, was in Riva San Vitale, Ticino, site of the oldest Christian building in Switzerland.

Among the many divisive historical issues about baptism have been the essential elements of the rite and its sacramental character, the baptismal formula, the validity of infant baptisms and the question of rebaptism.

During the 2014 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, several Portuguese churches entered a similar pact. The Anglican Church of Portugal (the Lusitanian Church) hosted the signing with Portuguese church leaders from the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

In 2013, U.S. Reformed denominations, including the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America, the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the United Church of Christ, signed an agreement in Austin, Texas, with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, recognizing the validity of each other's baptisms.

Christians celebrated Easter April 20

In his Easter reflections, the World Council of Churches general secretary the Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit called 2014 an "opportunity for shared testimony to the Resurrection" because churches from both eastern and western traditions of Christianity celebrated Easter on the same day, Sunday, April 20.

"It ought to happen every year, for the sake of Christian unity and common witness in the world," said Olav, inviting churches to "seek a way forward to the recognition of a common date for this festival." He reminded them of the 1997 consultation in Aleppo, Syria, which warned that "by celebrating this feast of feasts on different days, churches give a divided witness to this fundamental aspect of faith, compromising their credibility and effectiveness in bringing the Gospel to the world."

WCC expresses solidarity with prisoners

Observing Palestinian Prisoners' Day on April 17, the WCC general secretary the Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit expressed solidarity with some 5,000 Palestinian men, women and children in Israeli jails.

"As people of faith, we are called to pray for, visit and tend to the needs of all prisoners, no matter the reason for their detention. For Israel and Palestine, prisoners have taken on even greater significance than in the past," he said.

Olav encouraged WCC member churches to join in calling United Nations member states to insist Israel end arbitrary detentions and torture, and provide medical care to Palestinian detainees. He also urged UN member states to persuade Israel to abide by the 1955 standard rule of prisoners' treatment, respect the 4th Geneva Convention and ratify other human right conventions.

Olav also invited churches in the Holy Land to remember the prisoners through "prayers and acts of solidarity that restore to them their freedom with justice and dignity."

"The WCC will work and pray for a just and sustainable peace for Palestine and Israel and keep up the focus whenever there are obstacles to that peace," Olav concluded.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

May and June issues celebrate past, future

For the 30th anniversary, both the May and June 2014 issues of The Fig Tree are featuring stories of the people who help produce The Fig Tree monthly from September through June.

The May issue features the editors on pages 5 to 8, plus the printer on page 3. The June issue will include stories of board members, the webmaster and North Idaho liaison.

"We also want to highlight in upcoming issues the 16 people who deliver bulk orders of The Fig

Tree to congregations, businesses, agencies and civic outlets," said Mary Stamp, editor.

"We decided to publish this issue on April 30, so we would have it for our 30th Anniversary Dinner and speech by ecumenist Michael Kinnamon," she said.

An upcoming issue will report on that event.

June will also feature summer camps.

From now into early June, ad sales continue for the 2014-15 Resource Directory: Guide to

Congregations and Community Resources. Malcolm Haworth, its editor, is working with volunteers to update the data.

More volunteers are needed to assist with the project, he said.

The directory will be published and distributed over the summer. He is still receiving updated information.

"We rejoice as we look ahead to the next decades of publication, ready to change as the media technology changes," Mary said.

For information, call 535-1813.

The Links, Inc., recognizes V. Anne Smith

Spokane's chapter of The Links, Inc., celebrates 35 years of service to the community during their annual White Rose Brunch.

The nonprofit group of women, committed to improving the culture and lives for everyone in the community, will honor the late V. Anne Smith at their annual fundraiser, the White Rose Scholarship and Awards Brunch at 11 a.m., Saturday, May 31, at the Northern Quest Resort and Casino, 100 N. Hayford Rd. in Airway Heights.

At the brunch, they honor citi-

zens for their service. This year, they will dedicate their scholarship to honor a charter member by renaming it "The V. Anne Smith Scholarship Fund."

V. Anne, a member of Calvary Baptist Church, was president of the local chapter of the NAACP for nine years, challenging and educating people on racial inequity and prejudice in the community, police force and schools.

The Links, Inc., chapter develops programs that support health and human services, said Fran

Hammond, a leader.

To promote healthy living, they offer Zumba classes at 5:30 p.m., Fridays, at the East Central Community Center.

Other services include "Keys to Success," a program to engage students in learning and exploring careers. This program for 30 children in grades three to seven meets from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. second Saturdays at the Libby Center.

For information call 413-1508 or email fran.hammond10@gmail.com.

FAN holds Yakima, Spokane spring summits

The Faith Action Network of Washington is planning Spring Summits across the state for advocating faith communities to talk about the 2014 legislative session and plan for the rest of the year.

There is a summit from 3 to 5 p.m., Sunday, May 4, at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Yakima.

The Spokane Summit will be

from 3 to 5 p.m., Sunday, June 1, at Spokane Friends Meeting, 1612 W. Dalke.

"We will share information about upcoming local and statewide campaigns that FAN is working on," said the Rev. Paul Benz, co-director of FAN with Elise DeGrooyer, who recently joined the FAN staff.

Paul will preach Sunday, June

1, at Covenant United Methodist Church. He returns to Spokane Saturday, June 7, for the Spokane Minister's Fellowship, which is hosting the quarterly meeting of the Washington Christian Leaders Coalition.

For information, call 206-625-9790, email fan@fanwa.org or visit fanwa.org/regional-spring-summits.

Friends church welcomes Red Cross shelter

Spokane Friends Church at 1612 W. Dalke Ave., opened its doors for the Red Cross to operate a temporary shelter in their lower level following an April 12 fire that destroyed apartments that housed 10 families with about 40 people in the 6500 block of N. Atlantic St.

The Red Cross set up cots each evening in the fellowship hall and used Sunday school rooms to have privacy to meet with families at the church, so its volunteers could help the people find clothing, food and housing.

Within a few days, some fami-

lies moved out to stay with extended families, and the shelter was down to housing 20 people.

"For years, we have had our facility available to be a Red Cross shelter, but previously no one came," said the Rev. Nick Block, pastor. "They will continue to provide family services out of this facility until all the families are placed."

Some people have collected used clothing and household goods, he said, but the Red Cross provides vouchers for clothing and other needs.

Having been involved in a Red Cross chapter when he was in Indiana and having helped after a hurricane in Puerto Rico, and after fires and floods, Nick knows what

is needed for operating shelters.

"I have tried to stay out of their way," he said.

Members coming to Sunday services and people coming for assistance from Caritas, which recently moved into the church, stayed upstairs.

During the day, the people went out to work, to use the vouchers to shop and to find housing.

"Our activities went smoothly," he said. "We just share the foyer. We are just glad to have one more opportunity to be of service in our neighborhood."

The only problem was that people came in smelling smoky, and the church does not have a shower," Nick noted.

For information, call 435-8053.

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Griffin has played a major role as The Fig Tree's printer since 1996

For George Griffin, Jr., who started Griffin Publishing, Inc., in January 2002, relationships are the beauty of working in a small business.

He appreciates that Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp feels the same.

Although she now sends camera-ready copy for each issue digitally and could mail payments by mail, she personally delivers checks to pay for Griffin Publishing's services, so she can talk with the staff.

Previously, she brought camera-ready black-and-white copy, printed on her 11 x 17 laser printer.

"With computers and cell phones, we are losing the personal interaction we need in society," George commented.

"When we began going directly from the digital document to the plate, it improved the print quality," he said.

George Griffin Sr., was publishing Nickel Nik in 1990 when he started Spokane Print & Mail. George Sr. sold it in 1998, and his son, George Jr., continued to work with Lee Enterprises until October 2001, after that shop moved to Airway Heights.

The Fig Tree published through Spokane Print and Mail beginning about 1996 and shifted to Griffin Publishing, at 2210 N. Dollar, soon after it opened.

When it began in 1984, The Fig Tree had the Spokane Valley News Herald set type and print the newspaper. Mary used the light



George Griffin Jr. enjoys running the presses.

table of the Catholic Diocese's newspaper, *The Inland Register* to paste galleys on layout sheets.

"Cutting and pasting was literally what we did to make the galleys fit," said Mary, who did that with the help of Holy Names Sister Bernadine Casey.

After the *Valley Herald* closed in the early 1990s, Mary took the pages to *Cheney Free Press*, which prepared the photos, until she was able to do that work on the computer.

Mary also had a darkroom in her home to print photos until she

did all that work digitally.

In 1987, Mary bought a Macintosh computer and Pagemaker software. She designed pages on the computer and printed proofs on 11 x 17 paper at KXLY and then at *The Spokane Journal of Business*, until she purchased an 11 x 17 printer in 1996.

George, born in Escondido, Calif., said his father became a printer in Oceanside when he left the Navy. They moved to Colville, where his father worked for the *Statesman-Examiner*.

After George graduated from

high school in 1986, his father began working at Thoen Publishing in Spokane, and George began helping bundle print jobs, run the press and do camera work.

His father partnered with Don Lidke, who ran Spokane Mailing, and they formed Spokane Print & Mail.

"When I started, we used a typesetter to set type," said George, who also misses the art of doing full color separations to prepare the plates for printing.

"Printing is an art and craftsman skill," he said. "It is in my blood."

He enjoys the mechanical side of printing, but as the business owner and manager, he also needs to sit at a desk, give quotes, do payroll, pay bills and do taxes.

The business side is important so the business continues, he said.

Sometimes, given that his strength is in the mechanical and technical areas, he will run presses, filling in for the print shop staff, often working evenings and weekends.

"With digital media, some print publications are declining, but *The Inlander* and *Outdoor*

Monthly are increasing circulation," George observed.

"Especially in the economic crisis and with government cuts in the last four to six years, I have sought to keep costs down, so we can keep prices down for our customers," he said, noting that digital helps reduce costs. "Mailing costs, however, continue to rise."

Griffin Publishing prints a multitude of weekly, monthly and quarterly publications.

Like The Fig Tree, Spokane Print and Mail started on nothing.

"I appreciate being part of The Fig Tree, and I hope I help contribute to its success, keeping the quality up and the costs down," he said.

From working with his father, George learned that he "needed to give the business my all and expect it to be my life," he said.

"We do not succeed in small businesses without hard work, long hours and stress," George said.

For information, call 534-3625 or email george@griffinpublishinginc.com.



Bev Downing, prepress manager, prepares digital copy for plates.

Christian Service Team seeks 80 more congregations

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Three of those teams describe their efforts:

- West County is enrolling schools in PACE (Partners Advancing Character Education) and building community gardens.

- Spokane Valley is figuring out how to help 795 homeless children registered in the West, East and Central Valley school districts.

- The downtown group is asking why life expectancy is 18 years less in the Riverside District than the Southgate neighborhood, southeast of Spokane.

So far 80 congregations are involved. Organizers seek 80 more churches in 2014 to strengthen their impact.

"The first development will be introduced on Pentecost Sunday, June 8," said Ian Robertson, who is helping coordinate the CST executive team. "When two or three percent of the population work together, the impossible becomes possible."

Along with Ian and Ozzie, others on the executive team include

Rodney McAuley, Dave Ross, Patty Marsh, and Carl Tompkins.

The team has made a commitment to seek opportunities for churches to minister in the com-

munity based on goals set by the health district, schools, police and others who know the issues.

For information, call 389-3211 or email pastorian@aol.com.



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YWCA supports abused women as they re-enter the job market

Continued from page 1
rights movements.”

The focus of local YWCA services has evolved as the needs of women have changed over time.

Nationally, the YWCA is 160 years old, and locally, it's 111 years old. It started in Spokane to provide chaperoned housing for young women moving from rural areas to the city for jobs.

During Expo 1974, a YWCA campaign warned young women to watch out for con artists who might charm them to kidnap them.

Later it became a place for social and recreational activities. Archives show photos of teas for African-American and Asian-American women. It also connected immigrant women to the community.

“Today, the YWCA is the largest provider of domestic violence services nationwide. Locally, domestic violence services are two-thirds of our \$3 million budget,” Regina said.

Last fall, driven by the overflow of people in Spokane's Alternatives to Domestic Violence shelter, a safe shelter opened in Spokane Valley. Adding that shelter saves \$30,000 in hotel bills.

Spokane's shelter in a 110-year-old home serves 500 women and children a year. The Spokane Valley shelter will serve five to six families a month.

The YWCA is remodeling the Spokane shelter, because it is a challenge to shelter 40 people in 10 bedrooms, she said. Sometimes two mothers and their children share a bedroom.

Funding from the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence includes funds for infrastructure improvements and funds to move families from a communal living style to more privacy and autonomy.

For strangers coming from difficult situations, communal living is not conducive for the best therapeutic outcome, Regina said.

“We are remodeling bedrooms to shelter one family at a time, adding a bathroom and kitchenette. Then, people can use the family room and common kitchen if they want to be with others, or they can pull back,” she said.

The YWCA seeks individuals and congregations to adopt

each of the 10 rooms—providing bedding, some furniture, paint, curtains, carpet and kitchen supplies. Those interested can sign up on the YWCA website.

After graduating in 1997 from San Diego State University with a degree in social policy, Regina—then a single mother with two children—studied law and public policy at Howard University in Washington, D.C., graduating in 2000. Her internship with the public defender's child advocacy program was hard, because many were the ages of her children.

She worked on a legal team with Jacobs Center, which sought to redevelop a community without replacing low-income housing with higher-income housing (gentrification). To build financial awareness, she formed a Women's Financial Forum and then started a Women's Legal Center.

In 2005, Regina became a legal advocate for the YWCA of San Diego and resonated with its mission of eliminating racism and empowering women.

After her daughter graduated from high school in 2010, she relocated to Norfolk, Va., to lead the YWCA of South Hampton Roads. Family needs led her to move back to San Diego, and to begin looking for a YWCA opportunity closer to home on the West Coast. Spokane fit her energy, scope and expertise, she said.

Growing up in Wyoming, Regina identifies early experiences of bigotry and a personal connection to domestic violence in an early marriage as reasons for choosing the YWCA. Its dual mission of “eliminating racism and empowering women” makes it the place she wants to invest her career.

“I understand emotionally the issues our clients face. I was fortunate to have the support from my family and resources that made it possible for me to leave,” Regina said. “Many women do not have that support.”

On average, she said, data shows that many women leave an abusive relationship seven times before deciding not to return, because of the emotional and economic issues they face.

“While many women who access our shelter services live

below the poverty line, domestic violence is an issue that crosses the economic spectrum,” said Regina, who sometimes has women in her professional network confide about what they are experiencing, when they learn she also experienced domestic violence.

“Many women of means are disempowered. It's hard to walk away from their lifestyle,” Regina said. “When people are judgmental, victims are further isolated.”

“Domestic violence has long-term physical and emotional impact,” she said.

Because many abusive spouses continue to abuse spouses and children through legal proceedings of a divorce, the Alternatives to Domestic Violence Program includes legal services to help women apply for protection orders and assist with child custody.

The Women's Opportunity Center helps “reconnect women with their spirit and power” as part of making them “job ready so they can support themselves,” said Regina. “We help women remember they have tools to support themselves.”

“When women move out, it's traumatic. They need a place of hope and healing,” she said. “The Women's Opportunity Center programs can be transformative.”

Regina has seen women looking defeated as they come off the elevator to go into Our Sister's Closet. An hour later, they look elated as they leave with two shopping bags of clothing, which helps rebuild women's self esteem for job interviews.

Most of the funding for the center goes to the job readiness

courses, which are funded as supportive services by Housing and Urban Development (HUD) only until Aug. 31. HUD funds will then be only for housing.

“If people find housing but have no jobs, they will recycle into homelessness,” she said. “So we are appealing for more funds from individuals and businesses.”

In the 1980s, most YWCA program budgets were supported by local, state and federal grants.

“Now every time Congress makes decisions that have impact on poor families, the decisions have an impact on agencies such as ours,” said Regina, who noted that the YWCA's goal is to have 20 percent of funds from individu-

als and businesses.

The YWCA has about 75 people on staff—about 50 full time—plus about 15 on-call staff at the shelter. It serves 13,000 women and children in a year.

Regina, whose roots are in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, believes that Christian faith is service based.

“My commitment is to service and social justice to assure that people have a living wage, decent housing, health care and child care,” she said. “I seek to live out those values, which I consider to be the American values, by working in the nonprofit sector.”

For information, call 326-1190, email reginam@ywcaspokane.org.



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Faces of The Fig Tree - Celebrating 30 Years - Who are our editors?

Many people collaborate to write, edit, print, distribute The Fig Tree

By Kaye Hult

Thirty years ago, Mary Stamp and Sr. Bernadine Casey of the Holy Names Sisters collaborated with the Spokane Christian Coalition to start The Fig Tree, publishing the first issue in May 1984.

The Fig Tree teaches people to believe they can make a difference by being involved in improving lives, communities, society, the nation and the world through their own actions, large and small.

Over the years, the publication has modeled “just peace” journalism—not named that until some journalism schools taught “peace journalism.” Mary also calls it “solutions-oriented” journalism.

Most media exacerbate conflict by focusing on two extreme points of view, rather than exploring multiple viewpoints and nuances.

The Fig Tree’s approach also comes from the vision in Micah 4:4 that everyone should live under their own vines and fig trees in peace and unafraid, Mary said.

Mary became interested in journalism in high school at Eugene, Ore., where she went on to study journalism at the University of Oregon, graduating in 1967.

She met Bob Haworth at the UO. They married and moved to Boston, where he entered seminary and she worked for two trade journals for two years. In 1969, they attended the graduate studies program of the World Council of Churches’ Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, near Geneva, Switzerland.

“Living for six months in that community of 60 people from 40 countries and various expressions of Christian faith, I recognized the need to listen to people to discover who they were beyond communication barriers of language, culture, nationality, economic status or religious tradition,” Mary said.

“Sometimes I’d ask a question in several ways, to be sure that I heard correctly what they meant, speaking in a second or third language,” said Mary of discovering what is possible when people really listen to each other.

Moving to Astoria, Ore., in 1970, she wrote freelance stories about that seaport city’s history and people for the *Daily Astorian*. Eventually she went on staff as features editor.

In Fresno, Calif., from 1973 to 1976, she was frustrated when freelance features she wrote for the daily were edited to point to fads or trends. So she started the bi-monthly newspaper, *Inter-Church*, with Fresno Metropolitan Ministry.

In 1976, Mary and Bob moved to Tekoa, Wash., about 45 miles south of Spokane, where she wrote freelance articles on the people, agricultural life and history of the Palouse for the weekly *Standard Register*.

“It was the roots of my interest in covering rural and urban communities of the region,” she said.

Mary also learned the entrepreneurial skills needed to start The Fig Tree. To be paid for the articles, she had to sell ads, too. She was also involved with the regional United Church of Christ (UCC). In 1988, she began editing the Pacific Northwest Conference United Church News.



Mary Stamp said The Fig Tree archive has space for more.

In 1983, a friend told the Spokane Christian Coalition about *InterChurch*. Its board invited her to start a similar publication, with no guarantees of income.

One of the first people she asked to assist in starting the publication was Sr. Bernadine. The two semi-volunteered their way into this venture of faith.

“Sr. Bernadine helped edit, write articles, sell ads and promote The Fig Tree. She served on the steering committee and after 2001, on the board,” Mary continued, “We had a great working relationship and friendship through the struggles of securing financial and reader support. Her skills as an English teacher complemented mine as we edited.”

Mary also worked part time with the coalition, which became the Spokane Council of Ecumenical Ministries. She helped with the directory, the legislative conference and fund raising.

Sr. Bernadine worked 23 years until near her death at 91 in 2007. Selected articles she wrote from 1984 to 2006 are published in a book, *Stories Give Life*.

Mary told of other founders.

The Rev. John Olson, director of the coalition/council and a Lutheran pastor, wrote editorials that challenged the faith community to care about the region, to stretch beyond their congregations’ walls and to address poverty, injustice, prejudice, isolation, alienation and loneliness. He retired in 1999 and died in 2006 at LaConner.

One of the founders, Jo Hendricks, a Presbyterian, wrote editorials from 1984 to 2006.

“She was a modern prophet, challenging people of faith about incongruities of life in society and in faith groups, uplifting a vision rooted in biblical understanding,” Mary said. “We compiled her editorials in a book, *One Woman’s Words of Wisdom: Commentaries on the Timbre of the Times*.

Carl Milton from Manito United Methodist Church was on the founding steering committee. For many years he assisted with mailings and coordinated bulk deliveries in his role as vice moderator. He served on the board until 2008.

Mary values the relationship with the Holy Names Sisters. For

many years, Rose Theresa Costello, SNJM, helped with archives and editing. She continues to help with mailings and the benefits. Ann Pizelo, SNJM, served on the board. Mary Ann Farley, SNJM is the current board moderator. Yvonne Lopez-Morton, who was associate editor from 2009 to 2012, has since become a Holy Names associate.

Throughout The Fig Tree’s life, hundreds of people in the Inland Northwest have served on the staff or as freelance writers, editors, web designers, board members, interns and volunteers. More than 1,000 individuals, congregations, nonprofits and businesses have provided support as advertisers. Some 2,000 have been sponsors.

In 1999, after John retired from the council, its board suggested that The Fig Tree be the council’s public relations voice. The steering committee knew that would undermine the its independent voice in covering religion.

In late 2000, Mary tried a job with Church Women United in New York City, continuing to be sure The Fig Tree was published. She worked long distance with Betsy Rosenberg, who had been an intern from Eastern Washington University, helping edit.

“The job in New York was not what I wanted to do. I loved doing The Fig Tree, so I came back at the end of 2000. In 2001, we applied for and established our nonprofit status as an independent publication,” Mary said.

“As an entrepreneurial effort, The Fig Tree has kept up with the times,” said Mary, who bought a computer in 1987, eliminating typesetting, and an 11 x 17 laser printer in 1996 to print camera-ready pages.

By 2004, she began developing the website, at first consulting with Lorna Kropp, who was librarian at Discovery School, and then bringing Lorna on as webmaster.

With the assistance of direc-

tory editor Malcolm Haworth and student interns, The Fig Tree has a presence on social media.

“I’ve learned to do all the aspects of the business, stepping in when someone steps out and stepping out when someone is available to do the work,” she said.

To refresh her commitment and gain ideas for The Fig Tree, Mary has attended World Council of Churches Assemblies at accredited media. She went to Vancouver, B.C., in 1983; Canberra, Australia in 1991; Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1998; Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2006, and Busan, South Korea, in 2013.

She is inspired by encounters with people who share stories of their lives and faith.

In Busan, she realized how unique The Fig Tree is. Local to national journalists and ecumenical leaders respect the credibility of The Fig Tree.

Mary often quotes BBC journalist Pauline Webb who said in 1983: “Every encounter with another human being is an encounter with the Source of all being.”

“We all have something to learn from each other,” Mary said.

Mary affirmed that The Fig Tree is always ready to move to the next level. She is focusing in this issue and June on introducing some of the many other people committed to The Fig Tree ministry.

She hopes the campaign to raise three-year and five-year pledges of significant amounts—\$300 to \$3,000, based on the 30th anniversary—beyond regular giving will generate funds to support additional staff to help broaden the base of support.

Her commitment continues, she said it’s time to recognize the many other people who edit, write, deliver papers and directories, and serve on the board. They are also committed to remain involved to build The Fig Tree.

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

In June, meet more people behind The Fig Tree.

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Congratulations Fig Tree...for celebrating 30 years!

Editors have become friends as they edit, share lunch and visit three days each month.

Sara Weaver is astounded that so many people do so many things

Sara Weaver started editing in 2007 thanks to a grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development Fund to involve people in nonprofit projects.

She had retired from working in retail in 2003 and was looking for options to supplement her income.

"I continue because I'm astounded how many people are doing so many good things," she said. "It makes me feel useful, in contrast to my years of work in retail."

Sara earned a bachelor's degree in religion and philosophy at Bridgewater College in Virginia before going on to Bethany Theological Seminary in Oakbrook, Ill., where she was the only woman in the master of divinity program at the Church of the Brethren seminary. In 1968, she earned a master of divinity.

She married a classmate, Jim Weaver, and went with him for his studies and work as a pastor and librarian in McPherson, Kans., Roanoke, Va., Bloomington, Ind., and Marion, Ohio. In 1974, they came to Spokane, where he was associate librarian at Whitworth University.

Sara worked during seminary



Sara Weaver

and over the years in retail.

In Spokane, she attends Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC) and has been involved with the Pacific Northwest Conference of the UCC, serving on worship and spiritual life, nominations, and church and ministry committees.

Sara preaches and teaches at her own church and others. In college, she had started to major in English, but changed when she felt called to study theology with the goal of teaching at a college or seminary.

Mary Mackay, a founder, returned after 20 years

Mary Mackay was involved with the initial advisory group in 1984, helping to found The Fig Tree and decide what form it would take.

In 1986, she began work on a degree in education with a minor in math at Eastern Washington University, earning a second bachelor's degree in 1989. She taught anatomy and physiology as an adjunct three years at Spokane Falls Community College and then worked for her husband, Alan, an ophthalmologist, until they both retired in 2002.

At the 20th anniversary, she came to the Benefit Breakfast and signed up to be on the board, which she did for six years, serving as secretary. During that time, she joined the editing team and continues to help edit.

"I initially became involved because of my friendship with Mary Stamp and because my father had also started his own business after World War II," she said. "My family opened me up to respecting people ecumenically."

At age 10, she asked her parents for a printing press. She set type by hand, letter-by-letter in the old-fashioned way, and printed some newsletters, which she distributed in her neighborhood in Middlebury, Vt.

Mary, who had majored in zool-



Mary Mackay

ogy at the University of Vermont, graduating in 1959, worked while Alan, whom she married in 1958, finished medical school there.

She earned a master's in biology in 1963 at the University of Rochester and worked in biochemistry research.

Alan was drafted because of changing to a medical specialty, so they spent two years in Missouri. They moved to Spokane in 1969 for Alan to practice and to be near family.

"I find remarkable the quality of writing and The Fig Tree's ability to find new stories," she said.

"Sometimes I find that I am quoting articles I'm editing before we have gone to press," Mary commented.

"I'm amazed at where people's faith takes them and at their dedication," Mary said.

She finds the editing team fun to work with, engaging in good conversations.

Eugenie Alexander finds editing a break from stresses

Eugenie Alexander, who has long enjoyed editing, finds editing for The Fig Tree a break from other stresses in life and an opportunity for good companionship.

Looking for such an opportunity, she went to a Fig Tree training for writers and editors in 2009 at Unity House at Gonzaga University, where The Fig Tree had its office for several years.

She has also helped edit the resource directory.

"Editing days are times of comfort and support for me, especially when my husband was sick and programming work with IBM was stressful," she said.

Eugenie moved with her family from Belize to California in the 1970s for junior high, high school and college.

She earned a degree in political science in 1979 at Santa Clara University and a MBA from the University of Phoenix in 1996. She knew her husband, Himes, in junior high, but they did not meet again and marry until 1980, when he was in the Navy.

While living in San Jose, IBM hired her in 1981. After leaving the Navy, Himes worked in juvenile detention part time. His sister, who attended Whitworth in the 1970s and lived in Spokane, said there were openings in juvenile corrections in Spokane.

Eugenie and Himes divorced in 1990, and she stayed in San Jose,



Eugenie Alexander

moving to Spokane in 1997, when they remarried and she was able to work from home as a mobile

employee with IBM.

Himes grew up in the Church of God in Christ, and Eugenie was Catholic. He was attending Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church when she moved to Spokane, so they continued to attend and be active in ministry.

Himes was ordained in 2000, continuing work with juvenile corrections until 2012, when he became ill. He died in 2013.

Since leaving IBM, Eugenie is now studying at Eastern Washington University to earn a post-baccalaureate degree in business and marketing education, for a career and technical education certificate.

She continues to make time to edit The Fig Tree.

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Faces of The Fig Tree - Celebrating 30 Years - Who are our editors?

Inga Jablonsky is impressed with the many ways people serve

Inga Jablonsky signed up through United Way to volunteer with The Fig Tree in 2011, drawn to help with archiving articles.

Her story of coming from Germany to Tuscon, Ariz., 30 years ago, moving to Spokane in 1988, earning a master's in German didactics and literature, and teaching German 20 years at Spokane Falls Community College is in the February 2013 Fig Tree. The article tells of her researching and writing a book on German Dominican sisters in the Northwest.

She grew up in a German family involved in the Social Democratic Party and attended the state church (Lutheran) going to Sunday school in her childhood and studying catechism before being confirmed. She saw the church as being there to marry, baptize and bury people. Inga worked as a church secretary, but saw herself as a humanist.

"We each need to do our little part to assure everyone has the same rights and access to resources," said Inga, who worked at an Episcopal school in Tuscon and its summer school on Long Island.

In 1995, she read about German



Inga Jablonsky

Dominican Sisters in Spokane. She met them and wrote a book on their history.

"Volunteering with The Fig Tree, I am again involved in church," said Inga, who edits the newspaper and directory, helps with mailings and events, and serves on the board.

"I'm impressed what people find to do, picking up on a need I may see," she said. "Now I consider myself a person of faith in terms of helping people do good, seeing need and doing something to make life better for everyone."

Diane Crow rediscovers power of faith in stories

Diane Crow joined the editing team in 2011 after signing up to help edit at a benefit breakfast.

She earned a degree in political science in 1964 at the University of California in Riverside. For her teaching credential at Fullerton, she majored in English and earned a master's degree in English at San Diego State in 1976. She taught high school for six years.

Then Diane began 20 years of working with the California Teachers Association Union, traveling throughout the state doing training and organizing with K-12, community colleges and higher education.

For seven years, she worked on political campaigns and initiatives, particularly related to property taxes and school vouchers.

In 1992, she visited Sandy Roistacher in Spokane. After retiring at 55, Diane moved here in 1997 to live with Sandy. In Spokane, she has been involved in politics, managing local, state and national campaigns.

"I became involved with The Fig Tree because I loved teaching English composition and wanted to do something that has a longer life than a six-month campaign,"



Diane Crow

said Diane, who helps edit the newspaper and directory.

Although "not a traditional reli-

gious person," Diane enjoys reading what people do "in the spirit of faith and charity." She grew up in a Congregational Church and was in campus ministry until theology/philosophy did not make sense.

"The Fig Tree does what I respond to. It tells stories," she said. "When I read a book on a religion, I don't understand it. In politics, we know the power of telling a story. In telling stories, The Fig Tree makes sense of faith."

Diane also appreciates that faith communities realize people need more than blankets to help after disasters. Faith communities are with people for long-term recovery needs and counseling, she said.

Nancy Minard finds editorials a way to continue conversations

Nancy Minard brought skills from more than 20 years working as a reference librarian in Montclair and Verona, N.J., to editing, and writing articles and editorials for The Fig Tree after she and her husband, Jim, retired and came to Spokane in 1998.

Soon after she started attending Veradale United Church of Christ, the pastor encouraged her to be involved with the Spokane Council of Ecumenical Ministries. She was there during a time of transition, choosing to be involved with The Fig Tree and serve on its board in 2001.

From childhood in northern New York, she moved with her family to Hanford, the Olympic Peninsula and Renton. She completed her bachelor's degree in journalism and education in 1958 at Whitworth College and taught two years in Bellevue, before marrying Jim, whom she met at Whitworth. His graduate studies and post-doctoral sleep research, took them to Colorado, Brooklyn, Pittsburgh and New Jersey.

Jim grew up in Spokane. Both of their mothers were in Spokane. They came to help care for them.

At Veradale UCC, Nancy regularly helped in the office. She taught basket-making during summers at N-Sid-Sen, the UCC camp on Lake Coeur d'Alene.

She delivered The Fig Tree to churches in Newport when visiting her mother in a care facility.

In 2012, Nancy and Jim moved to Portland to live near two of their grandchildren, but she still helps edit and writes editorials.

"The Fig Tree's approach is refreshing. It's not about getting saved and living happily ever after, but about what people do because of their faith," said Nancy. "People come up with ingenious ways to be of service."

She also values the friendships from The Fig Tree, appreciating interacting with Sr. Bernadine Casey, SNJM, while editing and being with her as she lived into her final moments of life. She helped edit the May issue weeks before

her death in 2007.

"I write editorials from books I read or conversations as a way to continue the conversations," said Nancy, who also appreciates covering nonprofits, which now are taking responsibility for "some of the country's biggest problems as more is being dumped on them."

"You have to have faith to work for nonprofits, even if it's not overt faith," she said. "Stories of faith in action are often about volunteer service with nonprofits."

Faces of The Fig Tree - Celebrating 30 Years - Who are our editors?

Directory editor develops partnerships to expand directory

As editor of the annual Resource Directory: Guide to Congregations and Community Resources since 2007, Malcolm Haworth is impressed with the breadth and depth of resources in Eastern Washington and North Idaho communities the directory covers.

He began by working through AmeriCorps to produce the 2007-08 and 2008-09 editions. Then he came on staff producing the editions, assisting with ad sales, updating the listings, mailing and delivery, database maintenance, website pdf files and negotiating with partners to produce the directory.

“Working with the agencies and continually updating the data, I find new resources to help people in need in the community,” said Malcolm, who earned a bachelor’s degree at Washington State University in Pullman in 2001 and a master’s degree in history at Eastern Washington University in Cheney in 2005.

He is currently working on a doctoral degree in Gonzaga University’s leadership studies program with a goal of teaching college history and working in the nonprofit sector.

Malcolm also coordinates community events for The Fig Tree, such as the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference.

“I want to make a positive difference in life and in the life of the community to have an impact that helps change the world we live in,” he said.

Malcolm has a sense of that wider world growing up in a family that welcomed international visitors from many continents.

He studied his junior year of college in Vienna, Austria, and traveled in 1993 and 1996 in Europe, participating in 1996 in the 50th anniversary of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches at Bossey in Switzerland. In his involvement with campus ministry at WSU, he was involved in urban plunge experiences and building houses in Mexico.

From his local to global experiences he observes that “there’s constant need. There is always poverty and injustice, so there is always need for an effective response to work for positive impact to build equality, justice and peace.”

From his studies and his fasci-



Malcolm Haworth loads directories to take to Earth Day display.

nation with world history, he reads extensively and has developed research skills that he puts to use to be sure that the resource directory is as detailed and accurate as possible.

Malcolm recognizes that with such a project there may always be some errors, because as soon as the directory is printed, information on agencies and congregations changes.

“Coordinating something as copious as the directory, our intent is to be as accurate as possible by using the resources available to keep it current,” he said.

Part of his role has been to work with volunteers and AmeriCorps members to help with the research by mail, phone, email and web searches.

“We rely on people with the congregations, regional churches, nonprofits, civic organizations, human services, ethnic groups, support groups, senior services, justice advocates and ecumenical/interfaith ministries to keep us informed,” he said.

“Those listed each have a responsibility to make this resource accurate and to connect people in need with their services,” Malcolm said, reminding people to send in update forms.

They can check their listings at thefigtree.org, clicking on the appropriate directory category

and doing a “find” search within the pdf file.

Updating is particularly important as The Fig Tree works to develop a database searchable online directory.

“I have learned more about the needs of people with multiple issues. They cannot go to just one place, so having the directory help them search for their specific needs will be important,” he said. “A database-driven, searchable website will help people find combinations of services that most fit their needs.”

The pdf files online, listed by general categories, can be searched, but the database-driven format will mean pastors, lay leaders, service providers, volunteers and people in need can more readily access comprehensive information.

Malcolm knows that many people in the faith, nonprofit, civic, business and human services communities keep a copy of the directory in print handy and use it regularly throughout the year. The Fig Tree publishes 10,000 copies. Online it’s the most visited part of the website.

“We are seeking the assistance of people with technological skills to help us develop the database-driven searchable online directory,” Malcolm said. “We have the information. We just need

the formatting so we can have the online directory be an effective tool for users.”

Malcolm also works to build partnerships for the Resource Directory.

In 2009, the Community Colleges of Spokane Headstart/ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program) decided to end their own publication of a resource directory and partner with The Fig Tree’s more comprehensive directory. They help sponsor it and provide some staffing assistance for updating and editing the sections on families and on children and youth.

“We are in conversation with other community agencies about partnerships so that we serve more people with our content,” he said.

“We are especially grateful for the support of about 100 advertisers and donations from many agencies and congregations listed. Along with CCS, they make the directory possible,” said Malcolm, adding that The Fig Tree also has a grant from a major donor to support the development of the online searchable directory.

For information, call 535-1813 or email resourcedirectory@the-figtree.org.

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Mama Jones passes on the power of prayer to her children and others

By Valerie Taylor

Hannah's Intercessory Prayer Ministry is named for Mama Hanna Ross-Jones, who at the age of 90 continues to live a life devoted to prayer, not only for her own family but also for many others and the nation.

Evangelist Joyce Jones, one of Mama Jones' daughters, had a vision in 2012 to begin the prayer ministry to empower and teach others about the power of prayer.

She organized the first Prayer Conference in 2013, drawing people from around the country. Hannah's Intercessory Prayer Ministry also was incorporated last year.

Mama Jones' granddaughter, Shawn Watkins, will be installed as president of the prayer ministry at the Prayer Conference 2014, which will be held May 22 to 23, at Full Gospel Mission, 1912 E. 1st Ave.

Joyce said her mother is "an unsung angel" who earned her title as "Mama Jones" because of the many lives she has touched.

"Although her body is frail and weak, her spirit is mighty and strong," she said. "She loves to pray, sing and talk about the goodness of the Lord with those who visit with her. She is a living testimony of how God is a 'keeper' and can use a life surrendered to Him. Her legacy of charity and prayer is an inspiration."

One of her favorite sayings when troubles arise is, "Let's take it to the Lord in prayer." Joyce said her mother is convinced prayer can change everything.

Mama Jones was born in 1924 in the cotton fields of St. Joseph, La., during a time of recession and racial discrimination.

When she was 12, her mother passed away, leaving behind Hanna, her siblings and father. His work was hard, and caring for girls was difficult, so he sent Hanna to live with his sister, Verlina Bass, in Los Angeles.

Overwhelmed by her mother's death and missing her father and siblings, she did not understand



Mama Hanna Ross Jones

that God had a plan for her life, but she found that prayer could heal her emotions.

Mama Jones began drawing closer to God as a refuge, source of comfort and strength. She joined the Greater Ebenezer Baptist Church in Los Angeles.

Attending church while vacationing in Spokane, she met the Rev. Jesse Jerry Jones. They later married. They founded and pastored New Hope Baptist Church, one of the oldest multicultural churches in Spokane.

The church was named New Hope, Joyce said, because of the "new hope" she found, after much grief, loss and despair. Grief and tragedy struck in 1961, when her husband died, leaving her to raise their seven young children alone.

A favorite song, said Joyce, is "I Will Trust in the Lord." It was always a part of her testimony.

Although she chose not to remarry, she knew she was never alone, and God would never leave her, Joyce said.

In addition to holding several jobs to support her children, Mama Jones was faithful to her church, worked in the Missionary Circle and supported many community outreach efforts.

Joyce said her example of raising her children in church "led many others to the Lord. Souls

were saved and filled with the Holy Ghost right in her kitchen or living room.

"Her Christian life and home were no secret. She bloomed where God had planted her," Joyce said.

People who came to her house hungry were fed.

Jesse Mae, Mama Jones' oldest daughter, said many single airmen stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base, men of many racial and cultural backgrounds, knew Mama Jones. Being away from their homes and families, they looked forward to a "home cooked meal" at Mama Jones' house.

There was always a full house for Sunday dinner, said Joyce.

"She welcomed airmen with open arms, even those she didn't know. They pulled up a chair with the rest of the children. She was an awesome baker and cook," she said. "The 'meal barrel' didn't run over every day, but God supplied her needs, and there was always enough to go around."

Jose, another daughter, who provides daily care for Mama Jones, told about the daycare she had in her home.

"Parents struggled to get their children to leave when it was time for them to go home," she said.

Parents across racial lines trusted her with their children.

Jose added that Mama Jones was also a foster parent for disabled children through Developmental Disabilities.

"She cared for them as though they were her own," Jose said.

"Her home was a mission in every sense of the word," said Jose.

"Children and young people knew they were loved by her and clung

to her for wisdom and guidance.

Many of them, now adults, come back to visit and express

their love and gratitude," Jose said.

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Church hosts authors on hell, heaven

Bill Wiese, author of New York Times bestseller *23 Minutes in Hell* will speak at 4 p.m., Saturday, June 7, at Word of Faith Christian Center, 4001 N. Cook Ave.

Mary Baxter will share insights she recorded in her books, *A Divine Revelation of Heaven* and *A Divine Revelation of Hell*.

Bill, a residential real estate broker for 35 years, will tell about his experience in 1998 of seeing Hell and what the Bible says about

Hell, said Pastor Otis Manning of Word of Faith Christian Center.

Since then he traveled around the country, studied what Scriptures say about hell and founded Soul Choice Ministries. His book was published in 2006.

Mary will tell of her experiences of Jesus appearing to her for 40 nights to show her heaven and hell.

For information, call 891-5253 or email wordoffaith13@aol.com.

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30th is time to thank predecessors and apply their message for the future

An anniversary is a time to say thank you to those who have made the milestone possible.

As Pia Hallenberg of the Spokesman-Review said when interviewing me, it's a sign of success that The Fig Tree's print circulation remains the same.

Given that many people who were part of the publication in the early years—organizers, advertisers, sponsors and readers—have passed away, moved away or directed their interest elsewhere over the 30 years, the consistency in circulation is a credit and a sign that The Fig Tree continues to reach out to be viable and valued.

Some of the original founders—Holy Names Sr. Bernadine Casey, Jo Hendricks and Carl Milton—as Mary Ann Farley, SNJM, said at the Benefit Breakfast and Benefit Lunch, are celebrating our 30th anniversary “in eternity.”

For Sr. Bernadine Casey, SNJM, work with The Fig Tree was a gift of love. Calling her “Sister” to us meant more than her vocation as a woman religious. She was a member of our family. She said when some thought she should quit editing in the last few years, that she continued, because “The

Fig Tree is life giving.”

We often recognized how each issue was ultimately the work of God, as what people said in articles she wrote and articles I wrote often intersected and interacted. That happens among articles even today.

Sr. Bernadine embodied an ecumenical spirit, aware that we have many gifts, but one spirit, God's loving presence with us. Her childhood in the only Irish Catholic family in a Seattle neighborhood with Protestant and Jewish families, and a black family embedded her ecumenical commitment. She said, “people are people,” and she valued those ethnically and religiously different from her.

On Jo Hendricks' contribution, we note that there have been some influential women journalists, but few made their debut as editorial writers at the age of 70, beginning in the first issue, and continued into their 90s, as Jo did.

She brought a consistent, resolute voice on issues people of faith hold in common. Jo didn't hesitate to connect the call to heal the world, to make peace, to eradicate poverty, to care for the vulnerable and to protect the environment with the words and

traditions of faith. Prophetically, she tied faith to paradigms, paradoxes, oxymorons and caveats of unfolding history.

Her more than 20 years of editorials provided an overview of what happened in the world, nation, state, region and community—a history of caring related to the issues of the day.

Carl Milton, a physics teacher at Lewis and Clark High School, was a teacher in his home, church, friendships, ecumenical commitments and interest in the world.

He connected ideas and issues. He questioned, listened and reflected on the relationship of science, religion and history. As a scholar, poet, artist, mathematician, professor, joker, performer, philosopher, storyteller, musician, mentor, spiritual guide and friend, he knew how to pique the curiosity of students and keep our mailing sessions lively.

For him, living a Christ-like life was what faith was about. That meant not holding in “contempt or disregard any human person for any reason at any time,” said his daughter Ruth Michaelis. His daughter, Yaya Senklip, is featured in the benefit video telling of Carl asking her to design

the logo. The video is at “The Fig Tree - Empowering People 2014” at youtube.com/user/thefigtree1323/videos.

Everywhere we go, every moment with a person here or anywhere else is a special encounter, an opportunity to learn and teach. Whether here or far away, we are called to be God's presence to make a difference in someone's life.

Some organizations continue to find ways to support our media. One is Emmanuel Family Life Center, which houses our offices at 631 S. Richard Allen Ct. Several years ago, we covered the dream of the Rev. Lonnie Mitchell, pastor at Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, to expand the Richard Allen Enterprises complex of low-income apartments and community services by building the center. We covered the dream, the progress on the dream, the ground-breaking, the construction phase, the opening and the presence of this community center in East Central Spokane. We have an affordable office there, a place for volunteers and staff to work. It helps make The Fig Tree possible!

With that base, we look to future years.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Elders' wisdom includes listening, seeing, wit and taking time

Our elders are so full of wisdom, wit and vitality that these life-giving qualities just pour out of them, even when they are not looking! This is evident in so many ways to those of us blessed to live among them!

Wisdom shows itself in many ways, some obvious, some more subtle. Sometimes, we may not even be aware that we have been touched by wisdom until long after that gift has borne fruit in us.

The wisdom of listening is a most appreciated gift to all of us, but particularly to those who have many stories to tell or thoughts that need airing. Listening, hearing and telling are all of a piece. The reciprocity turns an encounter into a wisdom experience.

To be a good listener, one is more ready to tell stories and to revisit life experiences

that have been important, maybe even formative. This sharing may be a reminder of strengths used on previous occasions, and therefore accessible again. When someone really listens, the speaker feels valued, respected, important and connected. God bless those whose gift is the wisdom of listening.

Some people are blessed with the wisdom of seeing—seeing into the whole of another person, seeing what is really there, the goodness, truth, beauty that has grown throughout a lifetime of experiences reflected upon. The wisdom seer often senses where hurt or loneliness or worry could be diminished by the offer of some “face-time,” an experience of seeing and being seen eye to eye, of recognition of worth. Blessed are those who use their

inner and outer sight.

We do not always think of wit as a wisdom gift, but I believe that it is. Connecting ideas that do not normally go together surprises, delights, lightens our spirits. A sense of humor interrupts our daily ruts and frees us of the “expected,” opening us to something new. We really don't always want the answer to “Why did the chicken cross the road?” to be “To get to the other side!” I wouldn't expect “Because the light turned green!” Blessed are those who share the funny things of life because they help us laugh at ourselves, and just maybe, keep us young at heart.

The Spirit of Wisdom

You risk guessing what
I really want from you
...and you offer it.

You remember who I am,
even if neither of us remembers
what I say

You offer me the safety to be me.

When we spend time with our elders, when our hearts are open to receive and possibly to be changed in the encounter, the richness of their wisdom “wisdoms” us and increases vitality in everyone.

Let's remember, we are all on our way to being elders. Some people just had a head start. With a heart full of gratitude...

Mary Ann Farley, SNJM
Fig Tree Board moderator
Community director for the
Convent of the Holy Names

Editor's Note: The Fig Tree is grateful for receiving such wisdom from Holy Names Sisters for 30 years!

Letter to the Editor

Sounding Board

Newsletter Excerpts

Thanks for all you do to keep an ecumenical spirit alive and embodied in all the people and good works you profile.

Marian Beaumier
Fig Tree advertiser

It would seem the mantra today is, “If it bleeds, it reads,” and that gets depressing. The Fig Tree energizes me, telling stories of ordinary people doing good things. I like to spend a month with The Fig Tree, savoring a story a day.

Anne Salisbury
Fig Tree deliveries in Coeur d'Alene

Change is normal and natural. Few things ever really stay the same. There is a normal progression of change and evolution, whether a human body (aging), the earth (slides and earthquakes), inventions (computers and cell phones), organizations or relationships.

Some change is welcome. At other times, change is resisted.

A real temptation to want to hang on to the past, or that which is comfortable, resides in most of us. This is especially true when it feels that everything around us is changing so rapidly we don't know where or how to step into the stream. We want a bastion of normalcy to which to cling in the midst of the rushing flow of change and evolution.

Some even argue today that we are in a time of “discontinuous change,” a time of rapid change that is beyond the normalcy and the expected. In such times, we want

to cling all the tighter to what has been.

In my retiring from Englewood, I am forcing the congregation to address a time of change after a number of years of “stability.” Yes, things will change some and that causes all kinds of anxiety....Yes, there is the unknown, but there is also the exciting possibility of even greater things. That means a willingness to change, to face the future and know that God is there.

The culture has changed. The church needs to change to match the message with the times. The challenge is finding the constant message and right amount of tradition to match a culture that no longer sees the church as it used to.

The culture needs the church. The message of Christ is as important today as ever. How far will the church adapt in order to be vital for today?

The Rev. David Helseth
Englewood Christian - Yakima

Editor's note: Many thanks to David for sharing insights with our readers through The Fig Tree's Sounding Board column for at least 10 of his 27 years at Englewood Christian Church. His last Sunday there will be June 29.

Pope Francis continues to challenge and inspire me. Francis especially challenges clergy to not think too highly of themselves or seek honor for themselves.

Shakespeare has one of his characters exclaim: “If it is a sin to desire honor, I am the most offending soul alive.”

Most of us are offending souls as far as

seeking honor goes.

We need to feel important and we need recognition. We work hard to earn the right degrees, to have the right kind of personality, to look good, and to excel in something.

Is Francis saying that the desire to be someone important is a sin?

All of us have experienced childhood fantasies of being someone great. What did you daydream about as a child? Those daydreams of being important have shaped a lot of who we are. They motivate many of us to work hard to be who we are today.

Seeking honor and importance has great motivational power. Where would we be without personal ambition?

Neither Jesus nor the Pope is against personal ambition. It is not sinful to have ambition and high goals for oneself. They merely want us to see what true greatness is. (I am not putting Francis on par with Jesus, but he seems to be the only voice in the world today that is promoting self-sacrifice for the good of the world—as Jesus taught).

What makes you feel important? Do you feel important when you command respect in a group and people hang on your every word? Or do you feel important when you lend your ear to someone and let them do the talking? Do you expect others to bend over backwards to help you or do you feel important when you are helping them with tasks and problems?

Everyone needs honor. Suppose that at the end of your journey on earth, your life were to be measured by how much you found honor in allowing others to have the

place of honor.

That is not the measurement that is taken in the end. In fact, there is no measurement, only grace through faith. We are not measured by the way we run our lives.

Our deepest need is not for honor but for Christ. Lutherans should be glad that it is the Catholic pope who is reminding us of that.

The Rev. Richard Finch
St. Mark's Lutheran - Spokane

In his 12 years as executive director of the Lutheran Public Policy Office and three years with the Faith Action Network of Washington, Paul Benz has found The Fig Tree fills a void in the voice of the religious community and all it does.

For people in the religious community to be aware of and know what other people in the religious community are doing is heartening. We realize that no one denomination alone could do what is being done.

The Fig Tree gives visibility to the breadth of the religious community, serving as a voice for our role in social justice. Online and in print, it provides a medium for issues to be visible and discussed so people can be personally engaged.

Mary Stamp, Malcolm Haworth and the board help give personal leadership and support for the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference.

The Rev. Paul Benz - Co-director
of the Faith Action Network of WA

Ethics and river event is May 13

Faith, tribal and environmental groups are sponsoring "Ethics and the Columbia River Treaty: Righting Historic Wrongs," a day-long exploration of moral reflections on the area's relationship with water, stories of people who lived through dam building in the Columbia Basin and a look at opportunities to modernize the Columbia River Treaty.

Gonzaga University's political science, Native American studies and environmental studies departments are hosting the event from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday, May 13, at Gonzaga's Cataldo Hall.

Bishop Emeritus William Skylstad will open with the Catholic Bishops' Columbia River Pastoral Letter. Indigenous spiritual leaders and elders will join in the dialogue on actions needed to restore the Columbia River and create a water ethic.

"Support is growing to expand the treaty's two original purposes, flood risk management and hydropower, to include ecosystem function to restore the health of the Columbia Basin and return salmon to ancestral spawning waters," said Tom Soeldner of the Faith and Environment Network.

"This conference will work to establish a water ethic as a foundation for international decisions on water," said John Osborn of the Sierra Club.

Other participants include the Upper Columbia United Tribes, the ELCA Lutheran Synod, the Columbia Institute for Water Policy, Upper Columbia River Group, the Center for Environmental Law and Policy, and Save Our Wild Salmon.

For information, call 270-6995 or 939-1290 or email waltsoe@gmail.com or john@waterplanet.ws.

Facebook event urges end of death penalty

People advocating to end the death penalty have begun a Facebook photo campaign to support the repeal of the death penalty in Washington State, said Victoria Thorpe, of Fellowship of Peace.

She is promoting the campaign, "Faces for Life," with Shar Lichty of the Inland Northwest Death Penalty Abolition Group. The "Event" on the "Faces for Life" Facebook page was launched April 4 and continues through March 2015.

People interested in participating may email a photo of themselves holding a sign for support to FacesForLife@gmail.com.

For information, call 838-7870.

Calendar of Events

Eastern Washington University (EWU), Gonzaga University (GU), Spokane Community College (SCC), Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC), Washington State University (WSU), Whitworth University (WU)

- May 1** • **Immigration Reform Rally and March**, Rotary Fountain in Riverfront Park, 2 p.m. rally, 2:45 p.m., march
- **Organizations of Northeast Spokane (ONES) Noodles for the Neighborhood**, Northeast Community Center, 4001 N. Cook, 6 p.m., with community leaders as celebrity chefs, <https://nespokane.org>
- May 1, 15** • **Peace and Justice Action Committee**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m.
- May 1, 8, 15** • **Africana Studies Community Course**, Africana Studies Program at EWU in partnership with Multicultural Student Services at SCC, SCC Lair, 1810 N. Greene, 5 to 7 p.m., 359-6150 or bjeffries@ewu.edu
- May 3** • **"Coyote Speaks"** Benefit for Spokane's First Language, Sherman Alexie, SFCC Music Building, 3410 W. Ft. Wright Dr., 7 p.m., info@salishschoolspokane.org or salishschoolspokane.org
- May 4** • **Faith Action Network Yakima Spring Summit**, St. Michael's Episcopal, 3 to 5 p.m., 206-625-9790
- May 5** • **Cinco de Mayo Celebration**, DeLeon Foods, 102 E. Francis, music, vendors, food, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., 483-3033
- May 6** • **"Leaning In or Falling Off? Why Women are Foregoing the Climb to the Very Top,"** Monroe Hall EWU, noon, 359-2898
- May 7** • **"Leaving Mesa Verde,"** William Lipe, WSU professor emeritus and archaeologist, Northwest Museum of Arts and Cultures (MAC), 2316 W. First, 6:30 to 8 p.m., 359-2236, gblazemore@ewu.edu, archaeological.org/societies/spokane
- **Spokane Business and Economic Symposium Luncheon** with Seattle entrepreneur/philanthropist Nick Hanauer, Davenport Hotel, 11:30 a.m., 993-5785
- **Jazzed for Justice** with Julia Keefe, a benefit for Center for Justice, Hamilton Studio, 1427 W. Dean, 5:30 p.m., 835-5211
- May 8** • **"Mommy's Time Out,"** Women's Power Networking Event, Silverlake Mall, 200 W. Hanley Ave., Coeur d'Alene, 5 to 8 p.m.
- May 8, 22** • **Palestine-Israel Human Rights Committee**, 35 W. Main, 3 p.m.
- May 12** • **"On Different Tracks: Race, Class and Education,"** how race affects educational access and achievement, Raymond Reyes and Shann Ray, Lindaman's Gourmet Bistro, 1235 S. Grand, 7:30 p.m., zaki@humanities.org
- May 13** • **"Ethics and the Columbia River Treaty: Righting Historic Wrongs,"** Cataldo Hall GU, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 939-1290
- **Unity in the Community Committee**, Community Minded Enterprises, 25 W. Main, Ste. 310, 5:30 p.m., mahenderson@west.com
- May 14** • **Inland Northwest Death Penalty Abolition Group**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **Spokane Police Accountability & Reform Coalition**, 35 W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870
- **Veterans for Peace**, 35 W. Main, 6:45 p.m.
- May 16** • **Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media Annual Awards Luncheon**, GU Herak Room, 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., 313-6566
- May 16-17** • **17th Annual SFCC Pow Wow**, Red Nations Student Association, SFCC Gymnasium, Grand Entry at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and at noon Saturday, free dinner 5 p.m., the cafeteria, 533-4331
- May 16-18** • **"Together by Grace,"** Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Assembly, First Christian, Kennewick, 253-893-7202, disciplesnw.org
- **"Living in Hope,"** Eastern Washington Idaho Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Synod Assembly, Doubletree by Hilton Spokane City Center, 208-755-3343, assembly@nctv.com
- May 17** • **MAC SuperSaturdays**, "Plateau Indian Culture," 363-5332, northwestmuseum.org
- May 18** • **Connecting Communities Fiesta**, La Casa Hogar, at Cascade Garden, 5704 W. Washington, Yakima, 2 to 5:30 p.m., 509-457-5058
- May 19** • **NAACP Meeting**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 7 p.m.
- **Spokane Networking Bootcamp**, Thai Bamboo, 5406 N. Division, 4:30 to 8 p.m., 928-9664, nwfamilyfun@yahoo.com
- May 20** • **Coeur d'Alene Networking Bootcamp**, Thai Bamboo, 2010 N. 4th, Coeur d'Alene, 4:30 to 8 p.m., 928-9664, nwfamilyfun@yahoo.com
- May 30-June 1** • **ArtFest 2014**, Coeur d'Alene Park in Brown's Addition, Friday noon to 10 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., lisa.diffley@northwestmuseum.org
- May 31** • **White Rose Scholarship Brunch**, The Links, Inc., Northern Quest Resort and Casino, 100 N. Hayford Rd., Airway Heights, 11 a.m., 413-1508 or email fran.hammond10@gmail.com
- June 1** • **Faith Action Network Spokane Spring Summit**, Spokane Friends Meeting, 3 to 5 p.m., 206-625-9790
- June 4** • **Fig Tree delivery**, St. Mark's Lutheran, 316 E. 24th, 9 a.m.
- June 5** • **Fig Tree Annual Board Meeting**, Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., 1 p.m., 535-1813
- June 6** • **PJALS Benefit Auction and Soiree**, Cathedral of St. John, 127 E. 12th Ave., 5:30 p.m., 838-7870

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Center partners with other agencies to exchange excess clothing

Continued from page 1
manage their clothing program," he said. "Refugees arrive with no clothing. They need the support of places like this for a while."

Marshall Islanders are now about 20 percent of the client count, said Mark, who studied that community as part of a master's degree project.

The outreach center also partners with other agencies to share clothing. The YWCA's Our Sister's Closet shares excess donations, and the center reciprocates by providing clothing appropriate for women re-entering the workforce. The center also shares donations with The City Gate and provides clothing for Family Promise clients.

Sacred Heart Hospital provides discarded thermal blankets and linens. The center distributes some to clients and gives some to quilting groups to use as batting.

"As the great recession continued, the need in Spokane grew. The center is now more well known, so we have significantly more referrals," Mark said.

The program primarily serves people living in 99202, 99203, 99207, 99212, 99217 and 99223—eastern Spokane to the Spokane Valley, but it does not turn anyone away, he said, "even though our exponential growth has strained our resources."

Along with clothing, the center provides toiletries, such as soap, razors, feminine products and diapers, things people on a limited budget cannot afford.

"Given the power of the food and beverage lobby," he commented, "people on food stamps can buy sugary drinks, but cannot buy a toothbrush and toothpaste. Our legislators decide what people can and cannot buy with food stamps. I'm amazed, because oral health is so important."

People can come every 60 days and receive two complete sets of clothing for family members—two pants, two shirts, underwear, socks, jackets and shoes, so they can have clothing appropriate for the seasons. Household goods include blankets, sheets, towels, dishes, cups and glasses. Clients also receive two hygiene items.

People can come every 30 days for 12 diapers and wipes, formula and hygiene items for children under four. The center distributed 35,000 diapers last year, costing an average of 20 cents each.

"A dozen diapers help parents through a crisis," he said. "Our goal is to offer assistance but not foster dependency."

"We serve fire victims on referral from the American Red Cross, because low-income people often don't have insurance. We also help domestic violence victims who need to escape their abusers and re-establish themselves with essentials," he said.

Led by Walt Shields, a group at Mission Community Presbyterian Church across Mission Ave. started the ecumenical nonprofit in 1996. Walt served as volunteer executive director for many years, and several church members still volunteer there.

Over the years, the center offered various programs, including tutoring by Gonzaga students, a medical clinic and a back-to-school backpack program.

The day after the church dissolved in 2012, Christ the King Anglican Church, which had been



Mark Kinney expands the clothing bank and its partners.

meeting at different locations, moved into the building as their first church home. Its members have continued involvement.

In late August each year, the center temporarily becomes a shoe store—Mark quipped about his name being Kinney—with 50 volunteers putting in 200 hours to help give an old-fashioned shoe-store experience, fitting children with 800 new pairs of back-to-

school shoes and socks.

One weekend before Christmas, the center offers parents a "Children's Christmas Joy" shopping experience to select new blue jeans, underwear, hats, gloves, mittens and scarves. Some items are donated. Some are bought.

Some of the items Mark's volunteers buy when bargain shopping in February are put in storage for Christmas. He also looks

for age-appropriate books for children. One man, Jerry Wahl, makes and donates 200 wooden toys and cars, Mark said.

The center's support comes from local churches, primarily First and Hamblen Park Presbyterian, Holy Cross and Beautiful Savior Lutheran, and St. Aloysius. Spokane Valley United Methodist helps mail the newsletter, saving costs of a mailing service.

Businesses, individuals and service groups, such as Kiwanis and Rotary, provide support. Rotary 21 helped update the sorting area, including adding standing pads for volunteers to use when they sort clothing. An Avista grant upgraded lighting to cut power bills.

Madelyn Bafus, who joined the board after retiring as director of Family Promise, recently helped the center run a benefit play and silent auction, along with helping connect with the faith and nonprofit communities.

The center can operate on a \$90,000 annual budget because it has about 35 weekly volunteers.

Sorting supervisor Connie Lee, a retired Department of Social and

Health Services worker, continues to serve low-income people by helping the center manage volunteers and by sorting clothing. She also takes clothing home to mend and works with her mother, Viola Greer of Deer Park, to make about 30 quilts a year.

Mark, who grew up Catholic and became Lutheran when he married, said, "My faith tells me to do this work. Matthew 25:35-36 says we are to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and welcome strangers."

"I believe that's what God wants us to do for our brothers and sisters," he said.

"Working with others in the faith community has deepened my faith," Mark said. "I see so many willing to help others who are less fortunate. We don't require people to be people of faith to volunteer or to be served."

He is humbled by the gratitude and joy of people the center helps.

"Many say it makes a real difference in their lives," he said.

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- Peace of mind for you, your spouse and family

To have one of our Family Service Counselors assist you or to receive a free arrangement guide please contact us at (509) 467-5496.

HOLY CROSS CEMETERY & FUNERAL CENTER FD683 7200 N. Wall Street Spokane, WA 99208 (509) 467-5496	ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY & FUNERAL CENTER FD129 17825 E. Trent Avenue Spokane Valley, WA 99216 (509) 467-5496	QUEEN OF PEACE CEMETERY & FUNERAL CENTER FD128 6910 S. Ben Burr Road Spokane, WA 99224 (509) 467-5496
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cfcs
Living Our Mission

PRAYER CONFERENCE 2014

MAY 22—24

Host: Evangelist Joyce Jones

Spiritual WARFARE

Intercessory prayer for the healing and reconciliation of all people, the nation and the world

Conference Overview Thursday & Friday 9 Opening Devotional 10 Plenary Prayer Workshop 12 Fellowship Luncheon 1 Plenary Prayer Workshop 7 Evening Power Service Saturday 9 Pastors/Leaders Breakfast 10:30 Illustrative Sermon 11 Concert of Prayer 12 Youth Explosion 4 Barbeque Dinner 7 Gospel Concert	Conference Presenters & Ministers • Pastor James Sauls • Rev. James Watkins • Pastor Lisa Macklin • Sister Sue Eller • Apostle Eugene Satterwhite
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Saturday, May 24, 2014
7:00 pm
Gospel Concert
Ms. Yvette Williams
International Gospel Recording Artist

Registration Required Hannah's Intecessory Prayer Ministry PO Box 40362 Spokane WA 99220 CALL (509) 868-4871	Location Full Gospel Mission 19112 E. 1st Ave. Spokane 99202
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MAC 100 STORIES
A CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION

Super Saturdays

at the MAC are AWESOME!

<p>May 17, 2014</p> <p>Cultural Crossroads</p> <p>Plateau Indian Culture</p> <p>Hands-on Art Making Activities with Local Artists</p> <p>Living History</p> <p>Gallery Experiences</p> <p>FREE for MAC Members!</p>	<p>June 14, 2014</p> <p>Celebrate Dad</p> <p>Planes, Trains, and Automobiles</p> <p>STCU is sponsoring FREE ADMISSION to the MAC for all visitors on June 14, 2014. STCU continues to partner with the MAC to support programs and events that engage families and children of all ages.</p> <p>Ford model "T" • Flying Drone demonstration • Model Trains • classic motorcycles • and more!</p>	<p>July 14-18, 21-25 & August 4-8, 2014</p> <p>Get Messy at the MAC!</p> <p>SUMMER ART CAMP GET MESSY at the MAC!</p> <p>Ages 7-12</p> <p>Create your own art portfolio and collection in just one week ... pottery, painting, drawing and more! Explore 100 Stories and the historic Campbell House. Discover the beauty and hidden charms of the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture [the MAC] campus! Enjoy a variety of art activities, history stories and nature walks. Camp T-shirts, photos and daily snacks are included ... bring your own picnic lunch! Pick one of three sessions soon ... space is limited.</p> <p>Questions? Call 509.363.5332</p>
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Super Saturdays

Every third Saturday of each month

Family Arts, Music, History Experiences
FREE for all MAC Members!
www.northwestmuseum.org for more information.