

40TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Stories inside

Students prepare for complex world - p. 5

Retirement community has Green Team - p. 9

Pet partner visits lighten people's days - p. 11

Spiritual directors do holy listening - p. 16

CALENDAR ON PAGE 15
FEATURES 80 EVENTS



40th Anniversary

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

FAN organizer aligns actions, faith

By Mary Stamp

As the Eastern Washington organizer with Faith Action Network (FAN) of Washington since May 2023, Brianna Dilts is attending worship services and meetings at many of the region's faith communities to build relationships based on shared values and inform people how they can be involved in influencing policy.

She started with FAN quarter-time in 2023 while completing full-time work with Transitions through AmeriCorps Vista.

Brianna remembers being concerned at a young age when the church she attended closed its food pantry, its only outlet for helping neighbors.

"What does it say about our faith if what we are committed to do as a faith community does not line up with our beliefs?" she asked. "I wanted my actions to line up with my faith."

Growing up in the Spokane Valley, where voices of Christian nationalists have received much attention, she now knows from working with FAN that "there are many Christians and people of other faiths who are inclusive, welcoming and loving, and who strive for peace and justice,"



Brianna Dilts builds relationships and awareness of advocacy.

Brianna said.

"It gives me hope to see churches involved in social justice," she said. "In coordinating congregations with FAN, I'm doing multi-faith organizing among Christian, Unitarian Universalist, Jewish and Muslim communities and individuals."

Brianna earned a bachelor's degree in social work in 2022 at Eastern Washington University (EWU), with a goal of working in public policy.

"During school, I developed a passion for housing justice and affordable housing through connecting with the Spokane Alliance at my practicum site. With them, I learned the basics of organizing," Brianna said. "It gave me a new lens for seeing policy change and advocacy."

While doing anti-poverty work with Transitions for a year through AmeriCorps Vista, she experienced social work with women and families that had experienced homelessness and learned more about the many barriers that people face when trying to find housing, including multi-year-long wait lists.

"With Transitions, we wanted
Continued on page 4

Venezuelan immigrant educates newcomers to help them adjust

By Emma Maple

Since June 2022, Morella Pérez Suels has been education services manager at World Relief Spokane, a resettlement agency that serves immigrants and refugees from many communities, countries and cultures.

"When they come, they don't know the system or the culture," said Morella, who arrived as an immigrant seven years ago from Venezuela.

Newcomers have to learn to live in a new culture, she said,

noting that the adjustment process is more difficult for those who had traumatic experiences in the country they left.

The World Relief Spokane Education Center, which moved to the City Covenant Church building at 512 S. Bernard in December, helps break down barriers that clients may experience when adjusting to life in the United States.

Morella said the first barrier immigrants experience is learning a new language. Other

barriers include learning about the financial systems and technology.

When immigrants first come, they are with the World Relief resettlement department for three months.

During this time, individuals and families are helped to find housing, process paperwork for social security and employment cards, and are accompanied through the health system.

The goal is for them to be self-sufficient, even though Morella acknowledges "it's a great goal" that takes time to achieve.

Halfway through the three-month resettlement process, Morella said, clients have the opportunity to participate in education services, which include classes in finances, computers, sewing, driving, English conversation and housing.

The World Relief Education Center has two types of classes.

First, there are six-to-nine-week courses that delve into material. From 30 to 40 clients participate every quarter. Each

Continued on page 6

Fig Tree receives award for series of fall issues

At the April 4 to 6 Religion Communicators Council (RCC) annual convention in Louisville, Ky., The Fig Tree received a DeRose-Hinkhouse Award in the periodicals class newspaper series category for four issues—September to December 2023.

There were nine periodical awards among 90 awards in 60 categories including books, websites, specialty publications, news magazines, broadcasts, video shorts and features, podcasts, social media, periodical writing, specialized writing, photography, videography, illustration, design and campaigns.

The awards are given annually to RCC members who demonstrate excellence in religious communications. The notice is at religioncommunicators.org/derose-hinkhouse-awards, click 2024.

Previously The Fig Tree and its editors received the following awards and recognitions:

- In 2008, the Washington Association of Churches recognized The Fig Tree ecumenical leadership for spreading the news on ecumenical activities.
- In 2010, the Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media Award went to The Fig Tree for responsible media practices.
- In 2011, the Eva Lassman "Take Action Against Hate" Award was presented to Mary Stamp for working to overcome hate by modeling peace and justice journalism.
- In 2012, Jo Hendricks, editorial writer, received the NW Alliance for Responsible Media award for media excellence.
- In 2014, Mary Stamp lit the fifth candle for the Righteous Among the Nations during the Spokane Observance of the Holocaust for promotion of human rights in media.
- In 2018, the Faith Action Network of Washington recognized The Fig Tree as an interfaith leader for bringing interfaith voices to the public square.

For information, call 535-4112 or email mary@thefigtree.org.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID SPOKANE WA Permit No. 1044

The Fig Tree
1323 S. Perry St.
Spokane, WA 99202-3571

Religion News Briefs

Around the World

World Council of Churches News, PO Box 2100
CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111
Fax: +41-22 788 7244 www.oikoumene.org

WCC head addresses Global Christian Forum

On the opening day of the fourth Global Christian Forum, World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Jerry Pillay told participants that they share a vocation "to participate in the prophetic mission of Christ."

The forum was held April 16 to 19 in Accra, Ghana, under the theme, "That the World May Know."

With a current focus on including youth, women and leaders of migrant and megachurches, the Global Christian Forum brings together Christians from all major streams of world Christianity for ecumenical encounter, prayer and faith sharing to contribute to the vision of visible Christian unity.

"As we gather, we are reminded of the profound significance of our shared commitment to Christian unity and cooperation," Jerry said, noting that the Global Christian Forum is marking its 25th anniversary this year.

"As we recall the appearances of the resurrected Christ, we are confident that Christ is continuously with us—loving, forgiving, feeding, healing and empowering us to becoming his visible signs of peace and reconciliation. As Christians, we carry this great calling with humbleness and responsibility, working for and encouraging a sustained dialogue for peace while building bridges of reconciliation between people and churches. It is our shared vocation to participate in the prophetic mission of Christ, proclaiming the kingdom of God, which is made visible by the testimony of our lives and in our work for justice and reconciliation," he said.

As he welcomed the diverse group, Global Christian Forum secretary Casely Essamuah rejoiced that "we come from a hundred different places, and we come here first to listen, so that we can discover Christ in one another, and one another in Christ."

In the opening prayer's sermon, more than 200 participants heard the Rt. Rev. Lydia Neshangwe, president of the All Africa Conference of Churches, reflect on the importance of engaging in work together with people not always similar to themselves.

"This is the witness the world needs," she said. "For people who are different, who may even seem incompatible at first, to work together, not because it is easy, but precisely so that the world may know."

During the week, participants explored through daily themes what it means for the world's Christians today to be "ONE in God," to be "BROKEN in humanity," to be "HEALED through Christ" and to be "SENT by God."

The WCC participated with 15 delegates and staff and other representatives from WCC member churches and partners.

World faith leaders enhance collaboration

World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Jerry Pillay and WCC central committee moderator Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm held talks April 8 and 9 with the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Anglican Communion leaders on pertinent global issues and avenues for enhanced collaboration between the WCC and the Anglican Communion.

Also attending was Vasile-Octavian Mihoc, program executive for Ecumenical Relations and Faith and Order.

Issues included new developments within the Anglican Communion, such as the Anglican Primates Meeting scheduled in May in Rome, the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Israel, and ecumenical events surrounding the celebration of the Council of Nicaea in 2025. The discussion also focused on intensifying the engagement of the Anglican Church with the WCC and identifying areas for deepened collaboration to further the cause of Christian unity.

Pillay expressed the WCC's commitment to fostering closer ties and collaboration with the Anglican Communion towards common goals of justice, reconciliation and unity.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Resource Directory deadline approaches

The Fig Tree is contacting advertisers and community partners to secure the support of the 51st annual Resource Directory: Guide to Congregations and Community Resources by May 31.

The directory will go to the

printer in late June.

Agencies with changes in their names, addresses, phone numbers, emails, websites and services should send the information now to resourcedirectory@thefigtree.org.

"We have received many updates already, but seek to keep current," said Malcolm Haworth, directory editor. "Advertisers should confirm their ad sizes and copy as soon as possible."

For information, call 535-4112.

Opening ceremonies for Expo 50th is May 4

Opening Ceremonies for the Expo '74 50th Anniversary from 3 to 9 p.m., Saturday, May 4, in the Central Plaza of Riverfront Park begin nine weeks of events.

From May 4 to July 4 the City of Spokane will recreate the spirit of Expo '74 with events in five categories mirroring the original key pillars: Expo Legacy, Environmental Stewardship, Tribal Culture, Recreation and Sport, and Arts and Culture.

The Native Pillar from 4:45 to

5:15 p.m. at the Spokane Pavilion will open with songs of resilience by the Native American Youth Drum Colville Peak. Traditionally used for Native American gatherings and ceremonies, the Powwow Drum is known as the heartbeat of the people.

Warren Seyler, a Spokane Tribal Member, historian and presenter, will share his people's history. In a live interview, he will discuss the impact of the 1974 World Expo on the area's

indigenous people, the City of Spokane and the land itself.

Aspects of tribal culture are woven into the other pillars.

The ceremony kicks off at 6 p.m. with the Pillar Procession and will continue with the Kalimba Band, celebrating the spirit of Earth, Wind and Fire, and culminating with a Drone Show displaying images celebrating the region and the legacy of Expo.

For information, see visitspokane.com.

Riverkeeper announces River Watch

The Spokane Riverkeeper begins a citizen river monitoring effort, River Watch, to be eyes, ears and noses in the Spokane River basin to report and document pollution events.

Riverkeeper will hold three trainings to introduce the effort and ways to help. The workshops will teach people to identify

and report different kinds of pollution.

The first was April 30. The next workshops with the same information are 4 to 5 p.m., Thursday, May 9, at the Shadle Park Library and 4 to 5 p.m., Wednesday, May 15, online.

After training, volunteers will join the River Watch program to

share observations.

Volunteers will watch for pollution related to storm water drainage, agriculture and shoreline destruction, land spills or illicit discharges.

For information, call 464-7614, email hello@spokaneriverkeeper.org or visit spokaneriverkeeper.org.

Nonprofit Association plans conference

Nonprofit Association of Washington's 30th anniversary Statewide Nonprofit Conference will be online from Tuesday to Thursday, May 14 to 16, with keynote speakers, block sessions,

partner showcases, an interactive community board, exhibitors, on-demand learning and ask-me-anything sessions. Regional celebrations are from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Tri Cities on Friday, May

17, and in Spokane, from 2 to 5 p.m., Monday, May 20, at Gonzaga University's Cataldo Hall.

For information, visit nonprofitwa.org/washington-state-nonprofit-conference.

Valley Connect offers practical services

Spokane Valley Connect offers free community services from 12 to 4 p.m., Thursday, May 30, at Opportunity Presbyterian Church, 202 N. Pines in

Spokane Valley.

Vendors offering practical help to Spokane Valley families include Sandy Williams Justice Center, CHAS Medical Services,

DSHS Mobile Services, a clothing bank, a warrant fest, a food bank, haircuts and a free meal.

For information, visit spokan-econnect.org.

Veterans for Peace host interfaith dialogue

Veterans for Peace Spokane and Shalom Mennonite/United Church of Christ host a talk on Peace and Truth Heals (PATH) and an interfaith dialogue on Gaza and Iran from 5 to 8:30 p.m., Sunday, May 5, at the Com-

munity Building, 35 W. Main.

The speaker is Brother Moji Agha, a Muslim Sufi "monk" with a vow of service and poverty, who left an academic and clinical career 20 years ago to focus on "intersectional" healing of "Grandmother Earth."

He expresses his peace, justice and ecological activism through Historians for Peace and Democ-

racy and as an Iranian-American Sufi Muslim member of the Jewish Voice for Peace. He is an associate member of Veterans for Peace and a former member of Psychologists for Social Responsibility.

For information, email rustereo@hotmail.com or visit justwa.org/speakers-and-presenters/brother-moji-agma.

The Fig Tree is published 10 months each year, September through June.

Deadlines:
COPY - 3rd Wednesdays
ADS - 3rd Fridays

It is published by The Fig Tree, 1323 S. Perry St., Spokane, WA 99202, a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

Editorial Team
Editor/Publisher/Photos - Mary Stamp
Directory Editor - Malcolm Haworth
Website Developer - Lorna Kropp
Volunteer Coordinator - Kaye Hult
Development & Editing Associate - Marijke Fakasiieiki
Editing - Erin Endres, Catherine Ferguson SNJM, Mary Mackay, Emma Maple, Jill Redl, Nancy Roth, Pava Young

Fig Tree Board
Nick Beamer, Lauri Clark-Strait, Marijke Fakasiieiki, Catherine Ferguson SNJM, David Gortner, Malcolm Haworth, Kaye Hult, Gary Jewell, Betty Krafft, Raymond Reyes, Wade Schwartz, Dale Soden, Mary Stamp, Tracey Waring, Anastasia Wendlinger

Copyright © 2024
(509) 535-4112 or 535-1813
Email: news@thefigtree.org



FAITH ACTION NETWORK
A Partnership for the Common Good

FAN SUNDAY SPRING SUMMITS
MAY 5, 3:00-4:30PM & JUNE 9, 3:00-4:30PM

Join us online to celebrate our collective advocacy from this past legislative session and strategize towards statewide policy together!

Register at: [FANWA.org/spring-summits](https://www.fanwa.org/spring-summits)




The Fig Tree is reader supported
BECOME A SPONSOR!

☐ \$20-50 Sponsor ☐ \$75-250 Friend
☐ \$300-\$1,200 Underwriter

☐ \$45 for bulk order of 10
☐ \$300/year pledge for five years

SEND YOUR DONATION TO
The Fig Tree, 1323 S. Perry St., Spokane, WA 99202

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
PHONE _____

Center teaches ‘Wake Up World’ curriculum

Unity Spiritual Center Spokane has been holding Anita Dygert-Gearheart’s six-week “Wake Up World” at 6 p.m., Mondays, at Unity Center, 2900 S. Bernard. It began in April and continues with sessions on May 6 and 13.

The interactive class increases understanding of climate change issues and supports attitude shifts and actions that can make a difference and overcome hopelessness in the context of one’s beliefs.

The class is co-facilitated by members of Unity’s Earthcare team, including Jim McCurdy, retired environmental attorney, Susanne Croft, former city employee working on sustainability issues, and Cheryl Miller-Armdt, group facilitator and former school psychologist.

For information, email selahcentered@hotmail.com.

LCSNW coordinates foster care program

Foster Care Day—sponsored by Lutheran Community Services Northwest along with Alliance Cares, Coordinated Care, Spokane Angels, Spokane Falls Community College, Spokane Public Schools and Treehouse—will hold a panel discussion with Spokane’s foster care organizations from 4 to 6 p.m., Tuesday, May 7, at Shadle Park Library.

This is an opportunity to learn about the foster care organizations and programs in Spokane aiding foster families and youth.

For information, visit lcsnw.org.

Refugee and Immigrant Connections hosts benefit

Refugee and Immigrant Connections Spokane (RICS) will hold its Mother’s Across Cultures Fundraiser from 6 to 8:30 p.m., Friday, May 10, at The Philanthropy Center, 1020 W. Riverside.

The event includes a photography exhibit, silent auction, raffle prizes and an international dinner from Emran Restaurant to support RICS’ work within Spokane refugees and immigrants.

For information, email rics@ricspokane.org.

NE Family Youth System holds Self-Care Fair

Northeast Family Youth System Partner Roundtable will host a Resource and Self-Care Fair, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, May 16 at Passages Family Support, 1700 S. Assembly. Resources include Second Harvest mobile market, beauty products, healthcare information, raffles and prizes, outdoor games and refreshments.

For information, call 892-9241.

Human Rights Spokane seeks nominees for award

Human Rights Spokane, along with the City of Spokane Human Rights Commission and Gonzaga University, is accepting nominations for the 2024 Spokane Human Rights Champions Awards through May 31.

The awards are an opportunity to recognize and honor individuals and groups who are protecting and advancing human rights.

The Spokane Human Rights Champions will be honored by Human Rights Spokane and the City of Spokane Human Rights Commission at its annual banquet on Nov. 14, along with the Gonzaga Center for Hate Studies Eva Lassman “Take Action Against Hate” awards recipients.

For information, visit form.jotform.com/240847688876176.

NAMI holds fundraising Walkathon

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Spokane will hold a fundraising Walkathon, NAMI Walks, from 7:30 to 10 a.m., Saturday, June 1, starting at the Rotary Fountain in Riverfront Park, 507 N. Howard.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. The walk kickoff is at 7:45 a.m. There will be a warmup with Eclipse Power Yoga at 7:50 a.m., and the one-mile walk starts at 8 a.m. and ends at 10 a.m.

NAMI Walks is “about people who think nothing of giving everything—their time, their stories, their heartfelt dedication to the cause of Mental Health for All,” said Chauntelle Lieske, NAMI Spokane executive director.

For information, call 838-5515 or chauntelle@namispokane.org.

Fresh Start receiving applications for summer

The new cohort that started job training program at Fresh Soul in April includes teens from Nigeria, Congo, Egypt and Afghanistan. They shadowed peer mentors, who graduated from the Fresh Start job training program, two days to learn what to do.

They work eight to 15 hours a week at Fresh Soul, do 15 hours of community service for a nonprofit and learn life skills like budgeting, credit scores, interest rates, online and social media safety. After graduating, they are eligible for scholarships or jobs with Fresh Start business partners.

Fresh Start offers three 12-week cohorts a year. Fresh Start is receiving applications for the summer crew now.

For information, visit spokaneeastsidereunionassociation.com/job-training-program.

Many agencies join in water symposium

The Spokane River Forum is offering an Expo 50 H2O Water Symposium, “Calibrating Water Solutions in the Era of Climate Change,” from 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Thursday, May 30, at the Spokane Convention Center.

John Matthews, executive director of the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, will discuss a framework and common-sense, practical meaning to terms like resilience, sustainability and adaptation. He will share national and international examples of what communities and nations are doing to meet water demands.

The region’s Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie sole source aquifer has provided area com-

munities with water. Over time, wells were drilled and fortified with land use, education and protection measures. Water rights administered by Idaho and Washington give guides on allocation, and in Washington, an in-stream flow rule assures that aquifer use does not impede water flows in the Spokane River.

John Porcello, groundwater hydrologist for GSI Water Solutions, will report on what’s occurring and who’s doing what regionally as climate change, population growth and land-use patterns affect groundwater levels at wells.

His presentation will be followed by updates from the City of Spokane, the Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative, the

Spokane Aquifer Joint Board and Spokane County. Other presenters are the Kootenai County Aquifer Protection District, the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, Eastern Washington University, the Washington Department of Ecology, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Upper Columbia United Tribes and Spokane Riverkeeper.

They will discuss how communities are adapting water solutions for climate change, affecting the aquifer, water supply, stormwater, toxics, comprehensive planning and protecting lakes and streams.

For information, visit spokane-river.net/events/expo-50-h2o-2024-symposium.

Holocaust observance will hear essays

The Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust is Monday, May 6, at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave.

The theme for the 2024 writing and art contests is “Young Heroes of the Holocaust,” with Holocaust educator Carla Peperzak as the role model.

The Art Contest artwork will be displayed and winners will be honored.

Because the Writing Contest deadline is after the observance, the 2024 keynote speakers are the 2023 high school and middle

school winners, speaking on “The Dangers of Indifference.”

They are Lorelai Taylor of East Valley High School and Bella Buckner, who is now at Gonzaga Prep.

The 2024 prompt for the art and writing contests said, “the Holocaust was a manifestation of the worst of humankind, but the best of humanity was also

evident. There were people who dared to try to help Jews.”

One hero was Carla, who was 16 when Nazis invaded the Netherlands. She worked with the Dutch Underground to save more than 40 people. Now, a Spokane middle school bears her name.

For information, email neveragain-spokane@comcast.net.

Unity in Community celebrates 30th year

Unity in the Community, the region’s largest multicultural event, will celebrate its 30th year from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 17, in Riverfront Park.

The organizers with NW Unity invite vendors and sponsors to join in celebrating diversity.

“It’s a special day for our children and their families to honor and enjoy the rich heritages that make our community great,” said co-organizer April Anderson. “This is a day where our children can hear dozens of languages and meet others who have come to our region from communities all over the world. Playing games and sharing different cultures is a great learning and growing experience for all.”

This day-long festival will feature diverse entertainment, cultural village displays, games, arts, food and other activities for children and adults, including a job/career fair and health screening, added co-organizer Mareesa Henderson.

Proceeds after costs help provide school supplies and children’s activities. The event is run and operated by an all-volunteer committee.

For information, call 599-6669 or visit nwunity.org.



73rd Sukiyaki Take-Out Dinner - \$19
May 11 from 12 to 4:30
Highland Park United Methodist
 611 S. Garfield St. - Spokane
 Up to 400 plates or until sold out
HPAdCouncil@gmail.com
 Bake Sale • Crafts • Inarizushi • Musubi • Collectibles • Senbei



main market Food Co-op
EVERYONE CAN JOIN
ANYONE CAN SHOP
 Community-owned Grocery Store Everyone Welcome!
 Fresh. Healthy. Local. **main market** local food co-op
 44 W. MAIN AVE • SPOKANE (509) 458-COOP (2667) www.mainmarket.coop



World Refugee Day
 Spokane, WA
 Home Away From Home

Join us for a free, family friendly event celebrating refugee communities in Spokane!

Saturday, June 15th
11am-3pm
Nevada Playfield at Garry Middle School

Traditional foods, international crafts, performances, activities, a citizenship ceremony and more!

ADVERTISE • PARTNER • DONATE
UPDATE LISTING • ORDER COPIES

There is still time to be part of the **2024-25 Resource Directory!**

CALL 509-535-4112 • 535-1813
development@thefigtree.org
mary@thefigtree.org




Hope for Creation Spirituality in Environmental Care
May 29 - 7 p.m.
St. John's Episcopal Cathedral
 127 E. 12th Ave
 A joint offering by the Environmental and Tribal Committees

expo'74
 50th Celebration
visitspokane.com/expo-50

FAN incorporates its constituents' ideas

Continued from page 1
our participants to be meaningfully included in decisions at the organization and also about housing policy, because they have lived experience and need a voice in those decisions," she said.

While continuing to work with FAN, Brianna plans to go back to EWU in the fall to complete a master's degree in social work and public administration.

Before joining FAN, she had little experience with the state legislature or advocacy. COVID and geography previously had cut people off from sharing their opinions on bills with legislators.

"It was discouraging," she said. "With technology since COVID, the legislature has become more accessible to people across the state. Now people in Eastern Washington can give remote testimony, rather than traveling to Olympia to give it in person.

"They can go online and express if they are 'pro' or 'con' on a bill from their homes," she said. "Previously, only those in Olympia, usually lobbyists, could say if they were for or against a bill."

Given the divisiveness of national politics, Brianna has been pleasantly surprised to discover that many bills in the state legislature pass with bipartisan support. Of the 369 bills that were sent to the Governor's desk in the 2024 session, 234 passed unanimously. Others were passed by a majority, mostly on party lines.

Brianna has attended most of the telephone or virtual town halls hosted by the state legislators of this area.

"Meeting with legislators virtually is a good way to learn about the issues," she said.

On behalf of FAN, she also participates on the planning committee for the annual Eastern Washington Legislative Conference, which was held this year on Jan. 27, and which is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 25, in 2025.

"To build more and deeper relations with faith communities in the region, I go to faith and community events to inform people how they can be involved in legislative advocacy and develop their leadership skills. I also go to listen to what they care about," said Brianna, who also helped plan the Spokane FAN dinner with FAN board member Jim CastroLang.

On Feb. 9, Brianna helped organize and participated in FAN's Interfaith Advocacy Day (IFAD) in Olympia. She had the opportunity to advocate for 15 minutes for two bills on housing with her 3rd District legislators' offices.

The Governor's budget proposal held a \$10 million space for the projected \$70 million budget shortfall from document recording fees that fund homeless services, shelters and transitional housing, she said. The final budget that passed included \$60 million.

"Knowing of the lack of housing and shelter space and, from working with Transitions, some of the limits of transitional housing funding, I knew that budget shortfall would have been detrimental," Brianna said.

At IFAD, Brianna also appreciated learning from Sen. Yasmin Trudeau, who represents the 27th legislative district and who is the first Muslim American elected to the Washington State Legislature. She said, "Faith is one of few opportunities to connect above party lines. When people advocate because of their faith, it reminds others what it means to represent their faiths."

FAN will hold its Spring Summits from 3 to 4:30 p.m., Sundays, May 5 and June 9. Both are on Zoom to connect people statewide. Registration is at fanwa.org/spring-summits.

During this year's summits, participants will celebrate legislative wins, learn about stalled legislation and hear what is needed to move it forward next session. FAN will also give an overview on how three initiatives on the upcoming ballot will have an impact on advocacy.

There will also be a chance to connect with other advocates of faith and conscience in issue breakout groups.

FAN decided to host these summits online to allow more people to join and to enable advocates from across the state to hear from each other.

In addition, the spring summits are an opportunity for FAN to hear what issues are of concern to those who attend. That helps them focus their advocacy.

Brianna summarized some 2024 legislative wins for FAN:

- \$500,000 was allocated in 2024 for physical security for nonprofits and faith communities, with an additional \$1.5 million in 2025 in response to

increased reports of hate and vandalism.

- Families on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) can keep 100 percent of child support payments by 2026 with \$16.3 million allocated in the budget to make this possible.

- HB 1541 "Nothing about Us without Us" ensures the meaningful participation of people with direct lived experience on statutorily created or mandated state committees.

Brianna works with other FAN organizers, Jess Ingman in North Central Washington and Elizabeth Dickinson the FAN partnership coordinator in Seattle.

Brianna listed Spokane, Spokane Valley and Pullman faith communities in FAN's Eastern Washington Network: All Saints Gather Lutheran Church, Bethany Presbyterian Church, Inland NW Unitarian Universalist Community, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Salem Lutheran Church, Spokane Friends Meeting, St. John's Cathedral, Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane and Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ in Spokane; Veradale United Church of Christ and Community Congregational United Church of Christ.

Brianna told of other budget wins.

- \$127.5 million was approved for the Housing Trust Fund, adding to \$400 million in the 2023 biennial budget to build affordable homes.

- \$25.25 million passed for the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance for services to new immigrants who do not qualify for federal programs.

- \$400,000 was allotted for a Police Pursuits Study and report on policy suggestions for the legislature by June 2025.

- \$12.23 million will go for additional Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) food benefits to eligible children when school meals are not available.

- \$40 million from the transportation budget to replace more than 10,000 diesel school buses with zero-emission alternatives.

For information, email dilts@fanwa.org.

JS
Jacquelyne Sandoval
Real Estate

The Key to Homeownership is to "Trust The Plan"

Windermere REAL ESTATE

Jacquelyne Sandoval
509-460-8197

Have a Conflict?
We can help you work it out.
Book a mediation today!

Mediation is for everyone. We can mediate many types of disputes.

- Divorce
- Parenting
- Neighbor
- Tenant-Landlord
- Business
- and many more

NMC
509-456-0103
nwmediationcenter.com
info@nwmediationcenter.com

Inland Northwest Unitarian Universalist Community

THE INLAND NORTHWEST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY

We are an intergenerational, progressive, and socially responsible congregation.

Multiplatform services at 10:30 a.m. Sundays.
Visit our website for locations and Zoom links.

You are welcome here!
inuuc.org

STRONGER TOGETHER

Aging doesn't have to mean losing independence.

One number connects you to all the services you need to age at home... **help starts here.**

Aging & LONG TERM CARE
OF EASTERN WASHINGTON

509 . 960 . 7281
ALTCEW . ORG

GONZAGA Institute for Climate, Water, and the Environment

SPOKANE BEAT THE HEAT

Summer is coming!
Explore our research and what Spokane can do to be more prepared for upcoming extreme heat events.

Learn more:
gonzaga.edu/BeatTheHeat

YOUTH 18 & UNDER RIDE FREE ON STA!

SCAN ME

Spokane Transit

spokanetransit.com/youth

SPOKANE WILL END THE VIOLENCE

(509) 481-0794
info@srdvc.org
@spokaneregionaldvcoalition
www.endtheviolencespokane.org

SRDVC
Spokane Regional Domestic Violence Coalition

Whitworth president values preparing students to live in complex world

By Mary Stamp

Scott McQuilkin, Whitworth University's president since January 2022, appreciates leading a school with a diverse student body that prepares students to live in a complex changing world.

The diversity of students on the campus has increased so that in the 2023-24 academic year, 32 percent of the students self-identified as being from diverse racial and ethnic populations. In addition, about 50 percent of incoming classes have been BIPOC, first-generation or international students, he said.

"Increased diversity brings challenges and opportunities," said Scott, aware that "we can always do more to create a place where all students feel welcome."

Students, many of whom are from Spokane, come to Whitworth looking for a quality education that will make them employable. Beyond academics, the goal is to prepare students to live in a diverse world. Whitworth's study abroad programs in more than 60 countries also build cross-cultural awareness.

To promote justice, diversity, equity and inclusion, faculty and staff keep aware of institutional culture, policies and practices so diverse communities can flourish and students can develop cultural competency that will be useful in the world, he pointed out.

"Our role is to help students feel like Whitworth is their home, a place where they are seen, loved, known and valued," he said. "Families want these things for their students."

"We currently have a 10:1 student to faculty ratio. Roughly 10 percent of our faculty are persons of color, Scott said. "Whitworth has been challenged in recruiting and retaining faculty of color in a region that is predominantly white."

So, Whitworth stresses training and programming for faculty and staff, and funds programs in student life and campus ministry to build intercultural competencies.

"We need to be attuned in our search process to what biases we bring to that process," he said.

Because Whitworth is a Christian university, our faculty are connected to a breadth of churches—Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Mennonite, Catholic, Four Square, ecumenical and nondenominational.

"Our ongoing intention is to help students grow spiritually



Scott McQuilkin's career has been centered at Whitworth. Photo courtesy of Whitworth University

and lead relational lives attentive to the way we are with one another and with people different from us," Scott said.

Students are Christian and non-Christian.

"We offer a place where we desire that everyone flourishes," he said.

Although tuition, room and board are expensive, a large number of students have Pell grants and Washington college grants.

"We provide substantial and generous institutional financial aid and work to remove barriers to access. We also have many opportunities for students to have on-campus jobs to help defray costs," Scott said.

In June 2023, the board approved an institutional statement to add sexual orientation to the protected class list for employees.

Whitworth has a Statement on Statements, noting why it makes few statements at a time that there is much demand for the university to make public statements and take stances on different issues of the world.

"During my tenure as president, I have issued only four of what I would define as institutional statements," he said.

"We added sexual orientation as a protected class in employment. Whitworth has no doubt had gay and lesbian staff members at the institution for many years," he said.

Whitworth is facing the same headwinds as other institutions of higher education with fewer high school graduates interested in going to college.

With the high cost of a university education, Scott said it is important to promote education as an investment.

"The pandemic caused more

young people to decide not to go to college or to take a gap year," he said.

Another development has been the increased need for counseling for students suffering from mental health challenges.

"We seek to help students become who they are meant to be, developing their minds and hearts, combining faith and reason, and curiosity and convictions," Scott said.

"We equip students to enter the workforce, community service, family and faith communities," he continued. "That means equipping them relationally, intellectually and spiritually to move into the many different communities they will occupy."

Scott said many graduates go on to do further studies, enter financial firms, become teachers, join nonprofits and more—the full gamut of vocations available.

Most elementary, middle and high schools in Spokane have Whitworth graduates among their teachers, principals and superintendents.

"The Inland Northwest relies on Whitworth to train and equip teachers," he said.

"Our challenge is to help shape students' minds and hearts in the short time they are here," he said.

"I appreciate our focus on education of mind and heart to equip students to honor God, follow Christ and serve humanity, combining faith and learning," he said.

In 1980, Scott came to Whitworth University as a student interested in being an engineer. He left planning to be a high school math teacher and coach.

The coach role materialized when he was 22 and was hired in 1985 as Whitworth's head

baseball coach. After six years, he went to Pennsylvania State University for doctoral studies in sport history.

He returned to teach Whitworth's core curriculum on Christian and Jewish traditions for 10 years. Then, he was athletic director for 14 years.

From Scott's involvement on faculty committees, in the fall of 2009, Bill Robinson, who was then president of Whitworth, asked him to be vice president of institutional advancement. Scott served 12 years until he became interim president for seven months and then was appointed president.

Scott's father had a 48-year career as a sales manager with J.M. Smucker Co., so his family moved often, living in Cleveland, Ohio, Salinas and Danville, Calif., and then Bellevue, Wash.

While his father traveled, his mother was chauffeur, tutor, disciplinarian and counselor. His family attended church until they left Cleveland.

When he first came to Whitworth, he attended First Presby-

terian Church but since returning from Pennsylvania, he and his family have attended Whitworth Presbyterian where he was an elder and Sunday school teacher.

Scott's wife, Janice, is a first-generation Norwegian American whose family first settled in Brooklyn, N.Y. In 1978, they moved to Sandpoint. She earned a degree in English literature at Whitworth, a master's degree in literature from Eastern Washington University and was a first-grade teacher at Midway Elementary School in the Mead School District until retiring a year ago to perform the tasks of a president's spouse.

Their three grown children are Whitworth graduates. Morgan teaches kindergarten at Regal Elementary School. Kelsey is a nurse practitioner, living in Bend, Ore. Tyler is a pastor in Bend.

"Although I did not aspire to be Whitworth president, there is no place I would rather serve," Scott said.

For information, visit whitworth.edu.

Northeast FYSPRT
FAMILY • YOUTH • SYSTEM PARTNER • ROUNDTABLE
NE FYSPRT IS FUNDED BY THE WASHINGTON STATE HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

RESOURCE & SELF-CARE FAIR
THURSDAY MAY 16TH

1700 S. Assembly SPOKANE 892-9241

FREE 2nd Harvest Mobile Market Range Clinic Healthcare Info Gift Basket Raffle Snacks & Refreshments

HOSTED AT Passages

1:30-4:30

EXPAND YOUR WORLD WHILE IMPACTING THEIRS

Host Japanese students for just ONE WEEKEND!

QR code

Homestay@Mukogawa.edu

Mukogawa U.S. Campus Homestay Program

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Gala 2024

Friday, May 10th at the Davenport Grand

Purchase your tickets today by scanning the QR code or visiting cceasterwna.org/gala

QR code

Questions? Please contact us at ccevents@cceasterwna.org

Join us for the 29th Annual

UNITY in the COMMUNITY

Region's Largest Multi-Cultural Celebration

Senior Resource Area

Career, Education and Health Fair

Cultural Village

Activities for All Ages

Live Entertainment

Free K-8 School Supplies

Free Kids Helmets (while supplies last)

Saturday, August 17 • 10 am to 4 pm • Riverfront Park

nwunity.org

30th Year

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **stcu**

World Relief now has two locations to be closer to refugees' homes

Continued from page 1
client has the opportunity to take one to three courses at a time.

Second, there are one- or two-hour workshops that provide synthesized information, often in partnership with other organizations.

The courses fluctuate based on clients' needs.

World Relief employs community ambassadors for each language group they serve.

These ambassadors help the education center translate classes into a language the clients can understand, so the center provides the class in both English and the client's native language. This also helps clients learn English, because they can compare the material and learn new vocabulary, Morella said.

The Education Center provides resources clients need for the classes, such as sewing machines or computers.

Thus, the center moves refugees beyond the welcoming and resettling services.

"We want clients to know we are here to protect them," she said.

To meet client needs, Morella coordinates resources to create curricula and also relies on the curriculum of the national cultural orientation program the government provides.

Morella's background is in teaching. She received a bachelor's degree in teaching and a master's in management education while living in Venezuela.

She emigrated from Venezuela to the U.S. in 2016. Before that, she visited her sister in New Jersey every year for 20 years.

Morella said Venezuela's economic and political struggles have resulted in around 8 million Venezuelan immigrants who are now spread out around the world.

"I'm not an exception," she said, "I'm another immigrant."

When she came to the U.S. seven years ago, her plan was just to visit her sister for the holidays, but then the situation



Morella Pérez-Suels applies her skills to meet needs of

in Venezuela deteriorated.

For two years, she wanted to return. Her heart remained in Venezuela, but the situation in Venezuela kept getting "worse and worse and worse."

Eventually Morella recognized that she had to make a decision.

She had never considered herself an immigrant, but finally she accepted that she was.

Morella was then in her 50s. "Being an immigrant when one is in their 20s and when one is in their 50s are radically different experiences," she said, thinking she could not start a career at her age.

Reviewing personal and professional skills, she realized she had 30 years of experience teaching she could use. She also ran her own business in Venezuela and had directed a nonprofit, La Salle de Ciencias Naturales.

After evaluating her life and skills, she first decided to write a book about mental health, because of her own mental health struggles during her first two years in the U.S.

"I didn't want to be here," she

said. "I wanted to be in my own country, doing what I had done for many years."

Morella now realizes she was suffering from depression but didn't know it at the time.

Aware she had the skills to recognize she had been experiencing depression, she began wondering what it would be like for people who aren't able to figure that out and lose focus on what they want in life. So she wrote about it, because she understood that with the social stigma, no one wants to talk about it.

She also wrote the book, *Depresión: Estigma Social*, to help make herself known in a country where no one knew her. She felt it was the best way to say who she was.

Once she finished the book, Morella was ready to find the kind of job she wanted to do, something like World Relief.

A friend called her and told

her about a position in Spokane that was exactly what Morella was hoping for. So, she went to Spokane for a few days.

She returned to New Jersey and applied for the position with World Relief. She did an interview online, and they asked her to come to Spokane.

Although she had two other job offers, Morella said she was drawn to World Relief's vision and mission.

Three months after she published her book, she got the "job that I was wishing for in my life."

Morella now feels she is working in an organization that can use her professional experience and where she can find fulfillment in helping others. Although she had worked with nonprofits before, she had never worked with immigrants.

"For me, to learn what it means to work with immigrants and refugees filled my heart because I can compare the situation they come from and the situation I was in," she said.

World Relief's mission also matched her Christian faith. She said they pray Monday mornings and try to be the best people they can be.

Morella grew up in a Catholic family but wasn't in the habit of going to church.

During the dark time of her life, she said, "I just started to pray and pray and pray." She went to a church in New Jersey every Sunday, where she would pray while crying, asking for peace and for answers to her questions.

"I just wanted peace," she said. "I didn't have peace, because I'd left behind everything in my life and was doubtful about my future."

This experience helped her recognize that people can't do everything on their own. They

sometimes need support and help from other people. Morella became more involved with the church and, "one day, I started to feel peace in my soul and began to understand I was anointed with the presence of the Holy Spirit."

After that, Morella said she told God "Hey, God, I'm here. Use me in the best way possible to serve people. I think it's my mission in life to serve people."

A year later, Morella was at World Relief.

Recently World Relief moved from its former location at 1522 N. Washington to two locations, 512 S. Bernard in the church and 11707 E. Sprague Ave., Suite 106, in the Redwood Plaza.

Both locations offer the same services near where refugees live. The S. Bernard location is near The Imperial Apartments at 120 W. 3rd Ave., a home where newcomers stay six months to a year.

World Relief expects to re-settle 700 refugees in 2024.

For information, call 484-9829 or email mperez-suels@wr.org.

Come join us.
People living out their faith of inclusiveness and justice together.

Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
806 W. Knox (temporarily)

Bethany
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BethanySpokane.org

509-534-0066
Whether you are a Believer, a Seeker, or a Doubter . . .
You are Welcome Here.

Community holds tool drive

By Bon Wakabayashi

The Oregon Rd. fire devastated the lives of 126 families, their friends and neighbors.

With official help slow and sporadic, and in some cases nonexistent, community members have stepped up and donated items for those who have lost everything.

To compound the tragedy, many lost not only their homes but also the tools they need for a livelihood, so people are donating tools to fire victims.

The tools will be available at North Riverside Storage, 4225 E. Bailey Rd., one mile north of Riverside High School on Hwy.

2 and Bailey Rd. on Saturdays starting May 4.

Donations will be accepted from 9 to 10 a.m. and tool distribution will be from 10 a.m. to noon for those with an ID. Those wishing to donate at other times may call or text 469-5455.

Along with tools for people to earn a living, tools for daily tasks—hammers and screwdrivers—and tools for gardening—shovels and hoes—are also needed or money to buy them.

Congregations and organizations can help by having a Tool Drive to collect tools to bring.

For information, email bonwaka@live.com.

Make a Lasting Difference in Our Community at Parkview!

JOIN A TEAM OF EARLY LEARNING PROFESSIONALS AND HAVE FUN WHILE MAKING A TRUE IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WE SERVE IN NORTHEAST SPOKANE.

Why Apply?

- ✓ Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance
- ✓ \$100 towards individual Self Care Plans & Savings each month. Mental Health Days.
- ✓ Parkview caters at least 2 meals each month from locally owned restaurants
- ✓ A focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in our daily work and interactions with children, youth, families, and Parkview employees.
- ✓ Early Achievers scholarship plan for continuing education.
- ✓ Administration is made up of team players who have been hands-on in the classes and who are understanding of the teacher's experience.
- ✓ Plus love and validation from a team of hardworking, diverse, and caring individuals intent on caring for the children in our community.

How to Apply!

email or in person:
5122 N Division St.
Spokane, WA 99207
509.326.5610
parkviewelc@gmail.com
www.parkviewelc.com

Emmanuel Family Life Center
"People Matter and We Care"

We Rent Space
Office Spaces/Meeting Rooms
Gymnasium Usage
Weddings/Parties/Receptions

631 S. Richard Allen Ct., Spokane, WA 99202
Call (509) 443-4884 for additional information
Email: pbenjamin.eflc@gmail.com

The Lands Council partners to plant trees in SpoCanopy Project

The Lands Council is partnering with the City of Spokane and Spokane Conservation District in the SpoCanopy Project from May 7 to 11 to plant trees during the Expo 50th Celebration.

"Trees are our partners in maintaining the equilibrium of our planet's environment," said Amanda Parrish, executive director of The Lands Council. "Trees will help the city be cooler to counter climate change."

The trees will be tagged as part of the "Expo Forest," leaving a legacy just as the World's Fair in 1974 left a legacy for its environmental theme.

"It's the first tree planting using funds from the Inflation Reduction Act of 2023," she said.

That act provides \$1 billion in grants to increase "access to trees and green spaces in urban and community forests where more than 84 percent of Americans live, work and play."

The city and conservation district received \$6 million each for planting, maintenance and workforce development to expand urban forests. Both are partnering with The Lands Council for the next five years to plant 1,000 trees a year—500 in the spring and 500 in the fall. The goal is for every neighborhood to have 30 percent canopy cover by 2030.

While the spring 2024 effort with the Expo 50th celebration will be volunteer, the Spokane Conservation District is working with Community Colleges of Spokane to develop apprenticeships as workforce development.

"We will always have volunteer opportunities, because we want to connect people to the project, but much of the planting will be done by apprentices," Amanda said.

Many of the trees are ponderosa pine, a native species. In the city planting strips, there will be approved street trees bred for disease resistance and root structure, like ginkgo and elm.

"For planting, we are targeting low-income neighborhoods where canopy cover is below average and there are environmental disparities. Much is in Northeast Spokane," she said.

According to The Lands Council, street trees benefits include stormwater mitigation, keeping the Spokane River clean, providing habitat for urban wildlife, increasing property values, providing shade, decreasing energy use and lowering the temperature on the streets, sidewalks and



Amanda Parrish says trees maintain planet's equilibrium.

Photo courtesy of The Lands Council

overall. Trees also help boost immune systems by reducing pollution and air-borne particles.

In addition, studies show that time in nature and around trees can reduce stress.

Volunteers will help for two to four hours, meeting at sites in a park or along the Appleway Trail for instructions in tool use and safety. Shovels and gloves are provided. Volunteers are to wear appropriate clothing and closed-toe shoes. Each group will be trained and have a captain.

"It takes two hours for one person to plant a 10-foot tree, so volunteers work in teams," said Amanda, adding there are opportunities to sponsor, because the funding covers only trees and staff time.

Amanda, who grew up in San Diego and earned a degree in environmental studies from the University of San Francisco in 2008, has worked with The Lands Council for 15 years.

She came to the Inland Northwest after graduation to do seasonal work in forestry with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe before starting at The Lands Council, where she has worked on beaver relocation, watershed restoration and planning, and operations.

and fall, and pruning as the trees mature.

The funds for SpoCanopy come through the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program, administered through the state Department of Natural Resources Urban and

Community Forestry Program.

Amanda believes people play an important role in transforming society as they reconnect to their natural home.

For information, email tlc@thelandsCouncil.org or visiting landscouncil.org/urban-canopy.

SAVE THE DATE
STAGE LIGHTS FOR OUR PLACE
May 9, 2024
APPETIZERS • AUCTION
ENTERTAINMENT • \$40
For tickets, scan QR code
ourplacespokane.org
509-326-7267
Salem Lutheran Gym
1428 W. Broadway
6 PM
Help us support your community!

"WE DO JUSTICE."
DRIVER'S RELICENSING
&
POST-CONVICTION RELIEF,
INCLUDING STATE V. BLAKE

THE WAY
THE WAY TO JUSTICE
321 W. BOONE AVE.
SPOKANE, WA 99201
(509)822-7514
MAILING/DONATIONS:
P.O. BOX 7503
SPOKANE, WA 99207
WWW.THEWAYTOJUSTICE.COM

Dan the Piano Man is now... DAN the MOVING MAN
• Household Moving
• Piano Tuning & Repair
• Piano Moving & Storage
Licensed & Insured
509.922.1085
www.DanTheMovingManWA.com
Free in-home estimates

TAIZÉ PRAYER
via Zoom
Thursdays at 4:15 p.m.
For more information, contact: Shonna Bartlett
at bartletts@gonzaga.edu

Opportunity Christian Church
708 N. Pines
Spokane Valley, WA 99206
509-926-3691
occoffice@yahoo.com
Sunday Service 10:30 am
Live streaming available:
opportunitychristian.org

"IT'S THE LAW!"

Click or Call Two Business Days
Before You Plan To Dig in Washington

811
Safety is in Your Hands.
Every Dig. Every Time.

www.CallBeforeYouDig.org
 800-424-5555 or dial 811

Inland Empire Utility Coordinating Council www.ieucc811.org

Spokane Valley CONNECT 2024

MAY 30, 2024
12 PM - 4 PM

OPPORTUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
202 N PINES RD
SPOKANE VALLEY, WA 99206

A **free** community services event designed to offer practical help to Spokane Valley families

Available Services Will Include:

- Sandy Williams Justice Center
- CHAS Medical Services
- DSHS Mobile Services
- Clothing Bank
- Warrant Fest
- Food Bank
- Haircuts
- Free Meal and More!

SpokaneConnect.org
spokanehomelessconnect.org
Spokane Homeless Connect

Local Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage was one of 173 held in 19 countries

More than 100 people participated in a Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage on Saturday, March 30, from Gateway Park in Liberty Lake along the Centennial Trail to First Presbyterian Church in downtown Spokane, a walk of about 25 miles, equivalent to the length of the Gaza Strip.

Held on Holy Saturday at the end of Lent, the group joined a global movement walking in prayerful solidarity with the Palestinian people of Gaza.

At a time Christians wait with grief, lament and hope, participants walked to dismantle antisemitism and islamophobia, which are on the rise in the U.S.

The pilgrimage was organized with the goal of a lasting, just

peace for Israelis and Palestinians. It mirrors the journey many in Gaza have been forced by violence to take.

Along the way in the local walk, there were sacred pauses.

“Emmaus Church chose to sponsor and participate in the Gaza ceasefire pilgrimage because we believe Jesus has called us to walk the way of peace,” said Mark Finney, pastor of Emmaus and executive director of Thrive Center in Spokane.

“As millions suffer and starve in Gaza and increasing violence threatens the safety of people across the Middle East, we stand in solidarity with all those who grieve, and we call on our government leaders to use their

influence to end the bloodshed and free all hostages.”

Pilgrimages were held in 173 cities in 19 countries. The idea was started in February at the start of Lent by an Australian, James Harris, who walked the distance of Gaza and raised \$5,000 for relief through Palestinian Christians in Australia. The idea spread.

Jer Swigart, director of Global Immersion, a faith-based peace organization, was lead organizer of Spokane’s walk.

The walks’ goals were a cease fire in the Israel-Hamas war, more humanitarian aid, an end to Israel’s occupation of Gaza and the West Bank and secure regional peace through release of

hostages and political prisoners. For information, call 925-324-

2950, email jer@globalimmerse.org or visit globalimmerse.org.

GRANTS FOR
SPOKANE ARTISTS
AND ARTS PROGRAMMING
REQUESTS UP TO \$10,000



SAGA
SPOKANE ARTS GRANT AWARDS

WHAT Grants for performance, literary, musical, craft, traditional, visual arts, educational programming...

WHO Local individuals, non-profits, and businesses for operational costs, projects, and programs can apply.

WHEN Applications are due online FEBRUARY 1, JUNE 1, and OCTOBER 1 every year.

APPLY NOW!
www.spokanearts.org/grants

Sometimes we get stuck feeling sad, hopeless, or angry.

This happens to many people, and with a little help, they find hope again.

Call 988 to talk to somebody who is trained to help.

988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE



When you take your child (ages 0-18 years) to a health clinic in Washington state, you might have to pay a small charge for getting the shot and for the office visit, but you will not be charged for the vaccine itself. Spokane Regional Health District assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. To file a complaint or to request more information, reasonable accommodations, or language translations, contact 509.324.1501 or visit srhd.org. Created: May 2024

Retirement community has its own Green Team with residents, staff

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

The Rockwood South Hill Retirement Community made a big deal about Earth Day 2024 on April 22, as they do each year. They had an extensive celebration with 300 attending, largely because of the efforts of a unique group of its residents and staff—the Green Team.

The group guides Rockwood’s plans for recycling, water and energy conservation and preservation of its green spaces. In short, it guides Rockwood’s concern for the care of the environment.

The celebration of Earth Day began in 1970, particularly among students, to mobilize the environmental movement when industrial pollution was still taken for granted. Today it is celebrated around the world.

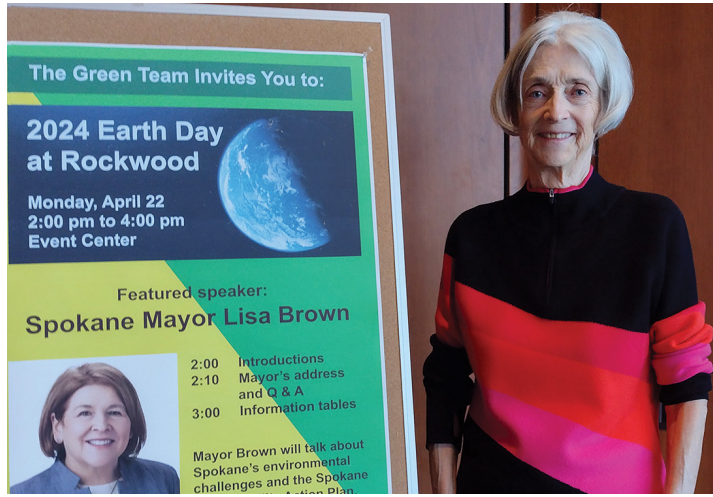
This year Rockwood’s Earth Day celebration featured Spokane Mayor Lisa Brown talking about the Spokane Sustainability Action Plan and the city’s commitment to implement environmental programs.

In the two-hour event for present and wait-listed residents, the day provided 16 educational tables on such topics as ways to save energy, green cleaning supplies, electric cars and the City of Spokane Waste and Recycling program.

Other agencies in the city that collaborate with Rockwood’s Green Team, also provided educational tables to make the event informative. Among the presenters were Gonzaga University’s Institute for Climate, Water and Environment, the Inland Northwest Land Conservancy, the Spokane Riverkeeper and Spokane Zero Waste.

Rockwood’s Green Team, made up of residents and two staff members, was formed in 2007, 43 years after the retirement complex was founded and after its second major building was constructed. It then seemed important to have ongoing oversight of recycling and other conservation efforts. It still serves as a think tank for ways Rockwood can develop with more sustainable designs for expansions or renovations.

Lisa VanMansum, the corporate communications manager for Rockwood Retirement Communities, describes the impact of the Green Team for their South Hill campus: “The Green Team has been instrumental in the campus becoming a Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary, in changing all to-go food containers to either



Mary Beth Shinn, a farmer, leads the Green Team.

reusable or compostable and, just recently, assuring that we start recycling food waste. They have an impact on our community.”

Mary Beth Shinn, the president of the Green Team, is passionate about the contribution the group makes to assure that Rockwood is earth friendly.

It has about 25 resident members and two staff who provide environmental oversight for the 90-acre campus of 250 staff members and 500 residents in independent and assisted living apartments in two buildings and stand-alone homes and duplexes.

She said the group functions as a partnership of residents and staff and she praised the general manager, Andy Gorton, who comes to meetings to inform members of action.

“He supports our efforts,” she added. Rockwood gives us a budget for our activities.”

Mary Beth’s passion for the environment comes from being a farmer and master gardener.

She wasn’t always a country girl. She grew up near Olympia and taught economics at North Idaho College. When her husband decided to become a farmer and move near Moses Lake to farm 200 acres in the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, she resisted at first and stayed in North Idaho.

Eventually she joined him

on the farm and learned what it takes to farm. This became more necessary when her husband died about 15 years ago, and she chose not to hire a farm manager but took on the task herself.

As part of her research, she became a master gardener.

“I learned a lot from the Washington State University (WSU) program,” Mary Beth affirmed.

The program involved horticulture training, completing a WSU online training and a willingness to volunteer 40 hours or more each year.

Because of that program and other research, she asserts that on the farm they have not plowed the soil in the last 10 years. They use a type of seeder and a technique that is less harmful to the soil than traditional plowing and makes for a more uniform crop.

“We plant all kinds of crops,” she explained, mentioning alfalfa, field corn and sweet corn. “We don’t grow potatoes. They are too hard on the soil. Healthy soil is my passion!”

A few years ago, she contracted her land to Willow Drive Nursery to plant 1.8 million rootstocks onto which different varieties of apples were grafted

and sold to commercial orchards.

Mary Beth’s research, exploration and action has a foundation in her faith.

“I hear people talking about the incarnation of Jesus and how important that is but what we don’t talk about enough is the first incarnation—creation,” she said.

“I have a Trinitarian view of the world, understanding God as the creator of heaven and earth, the Holy Spirit as the Lord and Giver of life,” she explained. “It is a Franciscan understanding as explained by Father Richard Rohr of the Center for Creation and Contemplation in New Mexico and underlies my work for the earth and our environment.

“We don’t honor creation enough in our society,” she said.

Mary Beth, who moved to Rockwood four years ago, is proud of the accomplishments of the Green Team. One of

their most effective activities was partnering with the City of Spokane in a review of their older irrigation system, which had poorly functioning sprinkler heads and leaky pipes. Because of their efforts, all sprinkler heads were replaced, and Rockwood became a Water Wise Spokane community contributing towards Spokane’s transition to sustainable urban water use.

“Almost immediately we could see the result in conservation of water and a decrease in the water bill for the complex,” said Mary Beth.

Besides the activities they initiate at Rockwood, the Green Team members also submit articles to Rockwood’s monthly newsletter to inform the community of ways they can all be better stewards.

For information, email marybeth.shinn@gmail.com.

Saturday, June 1 - 8AM
Learn more at namiwalks.org/spokane

Looking for a place to donate your gently used clothing? You are in luck, because we need clothing donations. All clothing is given out to individuals and families in Spokane for FREE.

Donation Drop Off Hours
Monday 1:00-4:00pm
Wednesday 10:00am-1:00pm
Thursday 1:00pm-4:00pm
Please contact us if you would like to set up an alternative time to drop off donations!

1906 E. Mission Ave.
509-536-1084 - www.4mission.org

Join us Sundays
at 9:15 & 11 a.m.
or watch our live stream www.uuspokane.org
We are an LGBTQ welcoming liberal religious congregation
All are welcome



OUR COMMUNITY’S
LONGSTANDING
NONPROFIT HOSPICE,
SERVING PATIENTS
AND THEIR FAMILIES
SINCE 1977.

Hospice of Spokane offers care and support to patients with terminal illness and their loved ones. Through in-home skilled nursing care, home health aides for personal care, grief and bereavement counseling services, you and your loved one will be assured of the best possible quality of life to the end of life.

DIGNITY. RESPECT. COMPASSION.
509.456.0438 | hospiceofspokane.org

May 17
Tri-Cities
Columbia Basin College:
Gjerde Center 2600 N.
20th Ave. Pasco, WA

Featured Session:
Report it Out!
Building Trust with
Newsmakers to
Amplify Your Future
Story

May 20
Spokane
Featured Session:
Nonprofit Boards in a
Changing World
Gonzaga University: The Globe Room at Cataldo
429 East Boone Avenue Spokane, WA

LEARN MORE AT NONPROFITWA.ORG

Hope for Creation draws national, local speakers for environmental panel

The 2024 Hope for Creation conference joins with the EXPO '74's 50th anniversary to host a panel discussion on "Spirituality and Environmental Care" at 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 29, at St John's Cathedral, 127 E 12th Ave. The session is co-sponsored by the cathedral's Environmental Stewardship Committee and Tribal Culture pillars of EXPO.

Leaders from five spiritual and creation-care traditions will offer their thoughts and respond to questions.

They are Marqus Cole from Georgia Interfaith Power and Light, Page Checketts from the Mormon Environmental Stewardship Alliance, Yoshi Silverstein from Mitsui Collective, Barry Moses from the Spokane Tribe and Melanie Mullen from the national Episcopal Church.

Warren Seyler from the Spokane Tribe and John Wallingford from St. John's Episcopal Cathedral will moderate the session.

There will also be a speaker's coffee reception at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, May 30, at St. John's, followed at 11:30 a.m. at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave., by the speakers joining Adam Bartholomew of Gonzaga University for a discussion on "The Meaning of Jubilee: The 50th Year," in the context of celebrating Expo.

That afternoon at Riverfront Park, there will be a presentation on "The Embodiment of Faith" by Yoshi, with Erin Heyamoto from Eclipse Yoga.

The annual Healing of the Earth Vigil will follow this session at 5:30 p.m., in the Lilac Bowl. It is organized by the Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience.

At 7:30 p.m., Thursday, a discussion of priorities of Interfaith Power and Light will be led by Marqus and Melanie, joined by AC Churchill, executive director of Washington State Interfaith Power and Light.

On Friday, May 31, Inland Northwest Lands Conservancy docent Andi Chatburn will lead a hike up Steven's Creek so visitors can experience Spokane's natural environment.

On Saturday, June 1, Dri Chatburn will lead a walk at the James Slavin Conservation area to teach about the Lake Missoula floods.

Marqus will preach at an environmental worship service at St. John's at 5:30 p.m., Friday, May 31. Sunday, June 2, he will preach at Immanuel Spokane, Melanie will preach at St. John's, and Page will speak at an evening gathering of the Church of



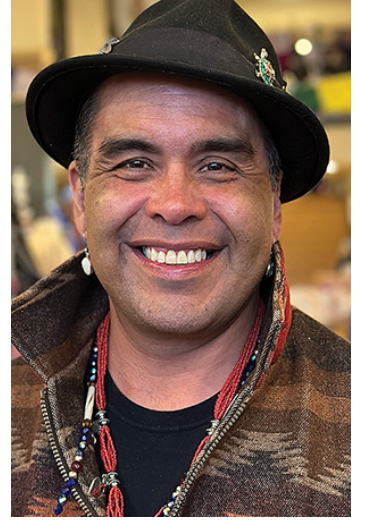
Page Checketts



Marqus Cole



Yoshi Silverstein



Barry Moses

Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints.

Page is chair for the Mormon Environmental Stewardship Alliance, co-founder of the Utah Childcare Cooperative, secretary of the Utah Public Health Association and president of a local women's organization in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

She graduated from Brigham Young University in nursing and worked at Utah Valley Regional Medical Center in medical oncology before moving to the Bay area, where she shifted to liver and kidney transplants. She holds master's degrees from the University of Utah in public health and public policy.

Marqus is a Public Voices Fellow with the Op-Ed Project in partnership with the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, a Grist 50 Fixer and organizing director with Georgia Interfaith Power & Light.

As an attorney, he promotes racial, environmental and biblical justice by organizing people and communities for reconciliation and restoration.

Marqus lives and works in a hinge community at a historic moment for climate action. He shares stories and teaches others to share stories to bridge the gap between stakeholder communities and the policies they need. He engages communities from his experience as a Black, millennial, professional of faith working in the civic arena in the Bible Belt.

Yoshi is founder and executive director of Mitsui Collective, a nonprofit that cultivates pathways towards Jewish embodiment with a vision of activating thriving, resilient, healthy and diverse communities that embody Jewish values of equity, justice, compassion and belonging.

A Chinese-Ashkenazi-Ameri-

can Jew and a multidisciplinary practitioner of embodied creative expression and spiritual exploration, Yoshi is a 2022 Pomegranate Prize recipient from The Covenant Foundation, and a 2021 "Grist 50 Fixer" who seeks to build a more just and equitable future.

Yoshi, who grew up in Spokane and now lives in Cleveland, earned a master's degree in landscape architecture at the University of Maryland with a thesis on Jewish landscape journey and experience. He has certificates in spiritual and social entrepreneurship, permaculture design and environmental education.

Melanie has been director of reconciliation, justice and creation care in the office of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church USA in Washington, D.C., since 2017. She works on domestic poverty, racial reconciliation, justice, stewardship and the church's United Thank Offering.

A community organizer and an ordained Episcopal priest, she holds a masters of divinity from Virginia Theological Seminary and a bachelor's degree in history from the University of North

Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Barry Moses co-founded Spokane Language House, a native-led nonprofit, in 2015 to increase the number of speakers of Salish. The program is one of immersion learning. His bachelor's degree in Spanish and secondary education is from Eastern Washington University and his master's degree in education is from Whitworth University.

He worked to gain proficiency in Spokane Salish, Kalispel Salish and Spanish, while teaching secondary and college courses in English, Spokane Salish and Spanish.

For information, email jwallingford@gmail.com.



Melanie Mullen

Race Amity Chat

1 p.m., Friday, May 31, 2024

A sacred space to offer prayers, converse, make plans for action and reflect on action

Spokane Public Library - Liberty Park Branch
402 S. Pittsburg St., Spokane 99202

Call Deb (509) 863-4461 for Zoom info

Everyone is welcome. Contact Deb to request accommodation.



SEPT 20-22

Mirabeau Point Park
CenterPlace Regional Event Center
Plantes Ferry Park

Parade • Car Show • Vendor Booths
Live Entertainment • Beer & Wine • Science & Technology
Family Fun • Multi-Sport Sunday

PLUS
Culturefest



www.valleyfest.org



Rockwood
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Rockwood South Hill:
2903 E. 25th Ave.
509-536-6650

Rockwood at Whitworth
10322 N. Middleton Dr.
509-466-0411

www.rockwoodretirement.org

independent • assisted • skilled nursing • memory care

‘Therapy’ pets with handlers bring joy to vets and hospital patients

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

Ruth Safranek, a long-time dog owner who has visited the Spokane Veterans Home for nearly 15 years, confirms that when she enters a room and her dog is with her, the eyes of the person she is visiting brighten immediately and their smile gets bigger.

Ruth’s experience attests to statistics about the value for people of interacting with pets.

People who have dogs and cats believe that life is better with their companionship, finding that dogs offer unconditional love, devoted companionship and constant entertainment.

Statistics show that the many people in Washington and Idaho who have dogs or cats as part of their households support this contention.

According to a survey by the American Medical Veterinary Association, 62.7 percent of households in Washington State and 69.9 percent in Idaho have some kind of animal as a pet.

Overall, dogs predominate as the household pet of choice, with approximately 40 percent of U.S. households owning a dog, while only about 25 percent have a cat, the next most common pet.

According to the American Kennel Club, scientific studies have identified 10 benefits of having a dog: 1) Dogs make one feel less alone. 2) Dogs are good for one’s heart. 3) Dogs help reduce stress. 4) Dogs can assist in times of crisis. 5) Dogs encourage physical activity. 6) Dogs enhance attractiveness. 7) Dogs promote socialization. 8) Dogs have an irresistible charm. 9) Dogs increase happiness. 10) Dogs can positively affect seniors, including those suffering from dementia.

Cats offer similar benefits in their interaction with humans.

Petting cats, like petting dogs, reduces stress, and studies show that interaction with cats helps people with autism to socialize. Having a cat can contribute to a healthier heart, help stave off depression and improve the physical activity of their owners.

With these benefits from a person’s relationship with a dog or a cat, the American Kennel Club affirms that it makes sense to bring these animals into situations to interact with people who love them and can benefit from their support.

This is what a pet therapy program—more properly called an animal-assisted intervention program because no professional therapist is part of the interaction—offers, where animals with certain temperaments receive training to provide comfort to individuals in difficult situations.

Therapy animals accompany their handlers to volunteer in potentially stressful settings, such as schools, hospitals and nursing homes.



Keith Jones and Colt, above.
Ruth Safranek and Trev, below



In schools, they may accompany a child who is learning to read. In hospitals, they visit with patients and staff, both benefiting from interaction with the animal. In nursing homes, assisted living or rehabilitation centers, they visit seniors.

Regardless, therapy animals and their handlers work together as a team to bring moments of joy to people’s lives.

What does it take to have a therapy animal team help those who, like the animal’s owners, can benefit from interacting with a therapy animal?

Spokane has all four of the elements needed for a therapy animal program.

First, it has dogs and cats with owners who desire to share their presence with those who can benefit from them but are unable to have their own dog or cat or cannot have the animal

with them at the time.

Ruth Safranek, a long-time resident of Spokane Valley, has been part of therapy dog teams for about 15 years. Her pet therapy experiences were with two different dogs at different times, both Spinone Italianos, a fairly large breed described as sociable, docile and patient, sometimes stubborn but always endearing.

However, any breed or mix of breeds can be trained to be a therapy dog if it has qualities like gentleness, patience, sociability and responsiveness to commands.

Ruth’s dogs, Vinnie and Trev, had different personalities, but both were friendly around people.

“Vinnie was gentle and patient. If people wanted to pet him, he was willing to stand there and be petted. If they

didn’t, that was okay, too. A pet therapy dog must be friendly, but he doesn’t have to be the most outgoing dog. He can be quieter,” she said.

“Trev was more outgoing. He was glad to be petted. He loved deep petting, and he tended to lean into people to be petted. If the person was standing or unsteady on their feet, I had to be careful that he didn’t knock them down,” Ruth continued.

A second requirement is a training program, concluding with an evaluation to ensure that both dogs and handlers know and can meet the requirements for visiting people.

In Spokane, Pet Partners (petpartners.org) has an active program.

In the Tri-Cities and Yakima areas, Love on a Leash provides a program (loveonaleash.org).

A third requirement is to have evaluators who can assess the skills of the teams to ensure they have the skills and aptitude for visiting.

For 22 years, Debbie Wing has worked with others to evaluate potential pet therapy teams in the Spokane area. She started in this service when she was working as a recreational therapist at Eastern State Hospital and suffered a severe assault from one of the patients. While on medical leave, she realized that her own dogs offered her so much comfort that she wanted to be able to share this with others.

She shares an experience to show how profound the connections can be.

“While I was working at Eastern, I was in the geriatric ward, and there was an elderly woman patient who would just sit slumped over in her wheelchair with her head in her lap, never responding—just sitting there slumped over,” Debbie described. “When the nurses fed her, they would have to prop her up, feed her and, as soon as they let go, she would slump down again with her head in her lap.”

“One day I approached her with my therapy cat, and this woman came alive. She sat up and exclaimed, ‘Rascal, where have you been? I have been looking all over for you...’ and she

carried on a delighted conversation with Rascal.

“Finally, I said to her, ‘Rascal is hungry now, and I need to take him to get some food and water. Is that okay?’

She agreed, and as soon as I left with my cat, she slumped back down in the chair again with her head in her lap,” Debbie related.

Relationships between people and their animals go deep, as the studies cited above attest.

Finally, a fourth requirement is to have community partners who want pet therapy teams to come and visit.

In the Spokane area, there are many such partners.

One of them is Deaconess Hospital, whose Director of Volunteer Services, Jennifer Tucker, describes the value of these visits as she has experienced it.

“A visit from a therapy dog can mean a lot, especially for those who are away from their own animals while in the hospital. It is so fun to see people’s faces light up when our pet therapy dogs walk the halls of the hospital. They bring a few minutes of joy to visitors, patients and staff alike,” she said.

At another community partner, Spokane’s Veterans Home, where Ruth visited with each of her dogs over many years, she comments on the joy that she would see when they would come in the room.

“So often the conversation would begin with, ‘When I was young, I used to have a dog named...’ or ‘my dog... is at home, but I can’t have him here,’ and then they would enjoy telling happy memories with that dog,” Ruth said.

According to Pet Partners, visiting with a pet can deepen the connection the visitor has with the people they are visiting and with the staff there too.

Pet owners and handlers can share the joy their pets bring them with people in need and have an impact on lives in the community.

For information, visit petpartners.org or for a class in pet therapy skills, see diamondsinthetheruff.com/advanced-class-descriptions.

You are not alone.

NAMI Spokane is dedicated to empowering all those affected by mental health conditions (together with their loved ones) to live their most fulfilling lives. We do this through education, advocacy and support. All our programs are free and peer-led by those who have been there.

Learn more at NAMIspokane.org.

152 S Jefferson St, Suite 100, Spokane

NAMI Spokane

National Alliance on Mental Illness

509.838.5515
namispokane.org

Wake Up World Curriculum

on the climate crisis
available free
for congregations

REQUEST AT
541 951 2897

wakeupworld.earth@gmail.com

**Personal or legal problems? DUI?
In need of alcohol and drug treatment?**

SPARC
SPOKANE ADDICTION RECOVERY CENTERS

SPARC has highly trained qualified staff to assist you.
For more information and to schedule an appointment, call:

624-5228

or visit us at 1508 W. 6th Ave.
8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Monday through Friday
Confidential, discreet services. Public funding available

Past is key for peer counselor helping others out of substance use

By Kaye Hult

Despite numerous encounters with the law from her teens until she was 38, Tess Reasor, now 44, has become a symbol of resilience and transformation in her community.

Locked in a cycle of trouble, Tess had a moment of reckoning as she felt the handcuffs tighten around her wrists for the last time.

“Enough is enough! I’ve been through this so many times. It’s time to do something different,” she declared to herself, a switch flipping within her.

Imprisoned for a felony charge in 2017, that has since been dismissed, Tess had six months to reflect in the South Boise Women’s Correction Facility.

She delved into memories of her grandmother, a beacon of unconditional love and acceptance. Inspired by her grandmother’s legacy, Tess made a vow: to return to her community as a force for good.

“I made it my mission to return to my community to help people and be of service,” she said.

With her last arrest in 2017, Tess embraced sobriety from all substances.

Driven by her personal journey, she resolved to assist others struggling with substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders.

After her release in 2018, she pursued a license in real estate and certifications in peer support and recovery coaching. She is currently working to earn a community health worker certification to lay the groundwork for her future endeavors.

In 2019, she received an award of Who’s Who in Recovery from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.

In 2022, Tess began a non-profit, 208 Recovery North. The 208 Recovery website explains that this is a community of people in North Idaho who have lived experience with substance use and/or co-occurring disorders.

They are invested in and committed to the well-being of their communities. They genuinely care about helping others overcome the challenges and barriers associated with substance use and co-occurring disorders.

208 Recovery serves North Idaho’s Region 1, consisting of the five counties of Kootenai, Shoshone, Bonner, Benewah and Boundary.

Like Tess, the other recovery advocates are state certified peer recovery support specialists. They provide person-centered care and focus on empowering individuals to work toward their own recovery goals by leveraging their strengths and motivations.

Aligned with 208 Recovery North’s mission to provide re-



Tess Reasor expresses gratitude by giving to others.

sources, recovery plans and a supportive community for individuals navigating their journey to wellness, Tess and her team of recovery advocates offer person-centered care empowering individuals to reclaim control of their lives.

“We exist to create a culture of wellness and positivity that supports long-term recovery,” she said, articulating the organization’s vision.

Through education, collaboration and the wisdom of lived experiences, 208 Recovery North strives to dissolve stigma and foster hope, acceptance and connection within the community.

In 2022, the National Association of Alcohol and Drug Addiction presented Tess an award as an emerging leader in recovery.

“People who contact 208 Recovery often need housing,” said Tess. “Some of the houses available now have two- to eight-month waiting periods.”

So in 2023, she joined the nonprofit HomeShare Kootenai County as the executive director.

“Housing and helping individuals with substance use can at times go hand-in-hand,” she said.

Recently, the Bureau of Justice Administration chose 208 Recovery to be mentored by one of the biggest recovery organizations in the area. The idea is to duplicate and tailor the program to fit the needs of the community in North Idaho.

“Few of the people who have applied to HomeShare have challenges with substance use disorder. This gives our program the opportunity to provide the local resources and housing options they need,” Tess said.

HomeShare Kootenai County is focused on not only local workers and employed individuals who need housing but also on people who have been priced out of the local rental market.

HomeShare was launched out of the Housing Solutions Partnership in May 2022. HomeShare KC aims to increase the number of available and affordable housing options in Kootenai County by connecting home providers with home seekers.

“Homesharing is a mutually beneficial arrangement,” Tess said. “It provides extra income for one party and affordable housing for another.

“With HomeShare, the clients usually are single individuals who are employed,” she continued. “Few are homeless, but those who are homeless, I can refer to St Vincent de Paul’s for shelter options and Access Point for transitional housing. We are trying to house as many people as we can.

“At 16, I became pregnant and married,” she shared. “I moved out of my parents’ house into an apartment with my then-husband. The marriage didn’t last. It became abusive.

“My Grandma stepped in, saying, ‘Stay with me.’ She was my saving grace,” said Tess.

Her grandmother babysat while she worked. Her family was not religious, but her grandmother attended a Baptist church, where some of her best friends

also went. Faith became more important to her as she aged.

“Grandma helped me raise my son. It was a joy to see that relationship grow,” she said. “She was my role model.”

“I was on a whirlwind while finding my direction,” she said, noting that some good jobs and solid support from family and friends helped “tremendously.”

Because a lack of housing and substance use often go hand-in-hand, Tess has learned to look at more options than homesharing, such as permanent supportive housing through communal living.

In the last three months, she facilitated starting two sober communal living facilities, one for women and one for women with children.

“My mission is to assist in opening communal living houses, until we have enough to meet the need,” Tess said.

“I’m seeking harm reduction for high-risk substance users minimizing use or using a substance that’s less harmful, like heroin or fentanyl users changing to medically-assisted treatment. Not everyone agrees with this, but I have seen it make a difference.

“If the change is monitored, it can allow people to hold a job and live a normal life, including building back their family relationships. Before judging some-

one for using Narcan, we need to realize how it has helped thousands of people,” she suggested.

Tess gave a talk to a group of juvenile detention officers a year ago. This included people from juvenile probation, the Kootenai County Substance Use Task Force and several Panhandle Health representatives.

One probation officer thanked her after the talk and invited her to talk to some of the young women in the juvenile detention center.

She asked if Tess recognized her and informed her that she formerly was Tess’ probation officer. She said, “I’m proud of you!”

“I try to help people identify what they enjoy and what they would like help with,” Tess said.

“My life is balanced today,” said Tess who has been married 22 years. “I’m so grateful. I have everything I need and want.

“I’m going to keep on keeping on, seeking to bring community members together to accomplish their goals,” she said. “My message is: Don’t ever underestimate others. Give people opportunities to grow and be compassionate.”

For information on HomeShare, call 208-215-2269 or email info@homesharekc.org.

For information on 208 Recovery, call 208-755-1445 or email info@208recovery.org.

A Vigil For
HEALING THE EARTH

Organized by
Faith Leaders &
Leaders of Conscience

Thursday, May 30
5:45 to 6:45 p.m.

At The Lilac Bowl
Riverfront Park

Meet here in Riverfront Park
West of King Cole Bridge, East of the Clock Tower

SPOKANE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

World Cooking:
Lebanese Food

Follow along at home as Chef Madolin Haddad of Café Lebanon shows us how to prepare a traditional Lebanese dish in this online presentation.

ONLINE
Tuesday, May 7, 6:30pm

Sign up today at
www.sclcd.org/world-cooking

SCLD

www.sclcd.org

Host Homes, Housing,
Employment,
www.mhaspeakoutspeakup.org
418 E Pacific Ste #102
Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 385-5286

NORTHWEST FAIR HOUSING ALLIANCE
Working to Ensure Equal Housing Opportunity for All

35 W Main, Suite 250, Spokane, WA 99201
Tel: 509-325-2665 • Fax: 866-376-6308 • nwfairhousing.org

Federal and state laws prohibit housing discrimination based on:

Race • Color • Religion • Gender • Disability
National Origin • Familial Status • Marital Status
Sexual Orientation • Military/Veteran Status
Citizenship or Immigration Status

Our services include: fair housing counseling, advocacy and education

This ad is supported in part by funds from a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD. NWFHA is solely responsible for the accuracy of statements and interpretations in this ad.

Extra computer lying around?
Donate it!
For information, visit
ko-fi.com/equityelectronics

The Fig Tree helped spread fair trade movement locally, says fair trader

“We have a strong fair-trade community and the reason for that is The Fig Tree and editor Mary Stamp,” said Denise Attwood, who, with her husband Ric Conner, co-founded the fair-trade business, Ganesh Himal Trading Co. in Spokane in 1984 to work with producers in Nepal.

They also founded the non-profit Conscious Connections Foundation, which works to remove more than economic barriers for women in Nepal.

“In all our work, our goal has been to connect people who wanted a place at the economic table with access to a market that could support them,” she said.

“Fair trade helps North American consumers understand the impact of what we buy, while bringing economic security to people working in a country that is incredibly insecure and poor,” she said.

“The Fig Tree has been a great proponent of social justice. Mary immediately understood that at the root of fair trade is economic justice,” said Denise, telling of Mary also sharing her interest in creating cross-cultural connections to have an impact.

Because The Fig Tree educates and focuses on solutions, they helped build understanding of fair trade, she added.

“In interviews, Mary kept asking questions. She didn’t stop with one article. She knew this was an evolutionary process, so she wrote one article and another and another to help people in this community understand that our buying choices impact lives,” Denise commented.

“When we first started in 1984, there was no fair-trade movement. We engaged with people around the world to help create that movement. Mary covered Global Folk Art, when we started the volunteer-run fair-trade store. As others became involved, it grew into a movement. “She interviewed Ric and me, Felipe Gonzales, Maria Cuc, Oscar Haupt, Mary and John Frankhauser and other people in the community involved in fair trade,” Denise said.

“When Global Folk Art closed, she covered Kim Harmson starting Kizuri. She strengthened the fair-trade community by writing articles that helped people understand that fair-trade is about long-term relationships.”

Mary has also interviewed the daughters of women Denise first worked with when the young women came to the U.S. to attend college, which was possible because of their parents’ income from fair trade. Now they are going back to continue their



Denise Attwood of Ganesh Himal appreciated education effort.

parents’ businesses.

As earthquakes and revolutions happened in Nepal, The Fig Tree followed the stories.

“That’s why Spokane has a strong fair-trade community,” she said. “There wouldn’t be the kind of depth of understanding in this community without what Mary has done. She has provided a thread connecting developments, so people have seen the beautiful flowerings that have happened as this movement has grown.”

The Fig Tree gives voice and visibility to fair trade.

“It matters that the stories have been told. It has made a huge difference,” Denise said.

“The beauty of The Fig Tree’s journalism is that it’s intuitive. Mary called when we were forming our nonprofit as we began to understand women faced more than economic barriers. They needed access to education and menstrual hygiene training to experience social justice.

“Mary wrote articles and helped make things happen,” Denise said. “Most reporters that I’ve talked to write just one article and may get much of it wrong. Mary checks to be sure it’s accurate.

“It’s about long-term relationships, because fair trade is complex. It’s not that you’re going to buy a pillow and everybody’s going to be well,” Denise said.

The Fig Tree has educated consumers about their responsibility as they make choices when they walk into a store, she explained. For example,

some chocolate is produced using child or slave labor. Buying fair-trade chocolate is a way to allow kids to go to school and not support slavery. It’s a choice. That choice helps form the world we want to live in.

“When we educate people like The Fig Tree has done, people become more mindful about how they spend their money because they understand their money has an impact,” she said.

The fair-trade movement has also grown through churches and social justice movements.

“Every time I read The Fig

Tree, I learn about the organizations and people doing good work in this community. I value that because I feel connected to people and know the positive things that are going on in this community,” Denise continued.

“I feel uplifted. I feel unexpectedly joyous about what is happening in the world because there is so much good happening in the world. There is so much ferocious goodness out there, but those stories don’t make the normal media,” she said.

“Mary has relationships that are deep in this community. She knows who to follow. The Fig Tree tells us about the people who need to be seen so we can

create a more just, sustainable, mindful world,” Denise concluded.

For information, call 499-3320 or visit ganeshhimaltrading.com and consciousconnectionsfoundation.org.

DONATE GENEROUSLY TO THE FIG TREE
at thefigtree.org

think globally. eat locally.
Feast
WORLD KITCHEN
Learn more and order takeout: feastworldkitchen.org

kizuri
Fair Trade, Local Earth Friendly
Curbside pickup, delivery and shipping available
35 W. Main, Spokane
509-464-7677
www.kizurispokane.com

HAMILTON STUDIO
is proud to support the local journalism of The Fig Tree

Discovery Counseling Group Gala Dinner
MAY 10TH, 2024
6:00PM - 9:00PM
4705 N FRUIT HILL RD, SPOKANE WA 99217
Celebrate Mental health with a night of elegance at our 2nd annual Mental Health Awareness gala and silent auction.
Full course meals • Live Music • Guest Speaker
RESERVE YOUR SPOT AT DISCOVERY-COUNSELING-GROUP.SQUARE.SITE

Annual Mother’s Day Champagne Brunch
Sunday, May 12
9:00am - 2:00pm
Tickets: \$40 per adult
\$18 ages 6-12
(kids under 6 eat free)

A Favorite Is Back! Join us for a delightful celebration of Mother’s Day at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center’s Annual Champagne Brunch! Indulge in a sumptuous all-you-can-eat buffet featuring carving stations, made-to-order omelets, delectable side dishes, and a tempting array of desserts. Enhance your brunch experience with optional Bloody Marys available for purchase. Each mom will also receive a special gift to make her day extra memorable.

After enjoying the delightful brunch, take a leisurely stroll through our picturesque grounds, reveling in the breathtaking views and the presence of abundant wildlife. Come early and join us for Mass at 8:00 a.m.

Secure your spot at this popular annual tradition by making reservations today!

Treat the special moms in your life to a day of culinary delights and scenic beauty at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center!

Register: ihrc.net or (509) 448-1224

Immaculate Heart Retreat Center
A Peaceful Place to Pray and Ponder
6910 South Ben Burr Road, Spokane, Washington 99223 • ihrc@ihrc.net

Living the good life with good food!

We offer the best food within the Spokane Assisted Living community!
509-482-8174
www.RiverviewRetirement.org

Adam Bodhi
Artist / Business Owner
509-590-9174
email: AdamBodhi@diamondartworkscollective.com
diamondartworkscollective.com

Organizing undid the foundations of South African apartheid system

Stories of communities organizing
Column by Cameron Conner

For decades, apartheid South Africa seemed unshakable. Trevor Noah, former host of the Daily Show and native South African, described it as “perfect racism”—a system of subjugation based on the color of one’s skin that had been scientifically honed over centuries to maintain power over the country’s rising, restless black majority.

Against all odds in 1990, however, Nelson Mandela, the face of the anti-apartheid liberation movement, was released from prison and four years later was elected South Africa’s first black President. In his inaugural address, he proclaimed, “We enter into a covenant that we shall build a society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity.”

I am in South Africa because this story of democracy is a compelling parable for the potential and promise of community organizing. South Africans transformed their country not through civil war or a military coup, but by organizing in bold, creative ways that developed popular power to improve the conditions of everyday people. They did not topple a government, they revolutionized it.

This story holds lessons for us. In an apartheid state: What do we do when opposed by an overwhelmingly powerful foe?

How do we tear down a brick wall? Using our fists or shouting at it doesn’t work. Either we increase our strength — by finding a hammer or some friends — or we strategically weaken the structural integrity of the wall by chipping out a few bricks at the bottom. Preferably we do both at the same time. This is what they did in South Africa.

After the announcement of a new draconian apartheid law, on Aug. 20, 1983, 12,000 activists from 400 community organizations across the nation crowded into the Rocklands Civic Centre on the outskirts of Cape Town. They included a black civic organization, a rugby union, student organizations, churches, neighborhood associations and other community groups.

This mass meeting was to form a new “organization of organizations” that would be powerful enough to draw the apartheid government to the negotiating table.

Many had been on the front lines of fighting the apartheid system for years. Most had first-hand experience picking up the pieces and pushing back when the government failed to provide basic services like water, sanitation, electricity or police protection.

Civic Associations, or “civics,” were particularly important. Small, local, democratic organizations, civics were most often built by the residents of black townships as a way to make their voice heard. They were built one street at a time by residents who provided services the government should have. Civics often implemented safety procedures, created sanitation systems or held mass rent strikes.

The 12,000 in Cape Town voted to create a new united front of organizations to bring their collective power to bear against the regime. They formed the United Democratic Front (UDF), with the slogan: “UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides.”

Within months, membership swelled to more than 600 organizations and the UDF began to hold large rent boycotts, school walkouts and worker strikes.

In addition, South Africa’s unions and churches united local, isolated groups into strong national federations. Together, the UDF, national unions and the new South African Council of Churches (SACC)

led by Archbishop Desmond Tutu drew millions of people into organized struggle.

The success of the UDF, unions and SACC was only possible because they linked the fight for national liberation to bread-and-butter issues. They knew there would be no constituency to fight for national liberation without addressing material conditions. Political freedom is abstract. Starvation is not.

Violence by the state and between everyday people was overwhelming, but labor, faith and civic groups built popular power at such an unprecedented scale that it pushed the apartheid state into a stalemate. Even if people then had strength, they were still far from being able to win. They needed to target the foundations.

Two pillars were used to justify apartheid: It 1) ensured social stability and 2) achieved economic growth.

So, the UDF, SACC and unions—often coordinated through the African National Congress (ANC)—sought to undermine these pillars.

In April 1984, Tutu led the charge by calling on the international community to apply punitive sanctions.

To encourage the U.S., EU and UN to impose sanctions, organizers offered concrete, humanitarian asks: release Mandela and other political prisoners, unban popular organizations, and stop the forced relocation of black families to reservation style “homelands.”

As pressure from sanctions mounted, the President of South Africa, F.W. de Klerk, gave in. In 1990, he authorized Mandela’s release and legalized the ANC. In 1991, he repealed the Forced Removals Program.

Meanwhile, mass action with protests, strikes, walkouts and marches across the country had a similar impact.

In 1992, the government called a

“whites-only” referendum on dismantling apartheid. The results demonstrated how effective the opposition had been in taking out the foundations so the government could no longer deliver economic growth and social stability. Nearly 69 percent of voters voted to abandon the old system.

De Klerk announced: “Today we have closed the book on apartheid.”

This is a complicated story. Millions of people were involved. Organizations waxed and waned. Leaders came and went. Not all were “good guys.”

The point is not good versus evil, but how people overcame remarkable odds to create change. Too many political movements think they will win if they are morally right or think someone will listen if enough people shout in unison.

That is not how to tear down walls.

The lesson from the struggle against apartheid is to bring as much cunning and strategy to the table as the rival. Build strong, federated alliances rooted in the issues of everyday people, not high-minded ideals. Understand where the rival’s strength comes from. Most important is to build organizations that will last for years to continue the fight.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., taught us the same thing:

“Mass nonviolent demonstrations will not be enough,” he argued. The civil rights movement must engage in organizing “people into permanent groups to protect their own interests and produce change on their behalf.”

To make some progress on the hard road ahead, we need to resurrect a popular organization in the present.

Cameron Conner’s columns for The Fig Tree are from blogs he is writing during his Watkins Fellowship in Spain, the UK, South Africa and Mongolia. His blogs are at cameronnorbuconner.com/blog.

Letters to the Editor

Sounding Board

Commentaries

Supporters celebrate The Fig Tree’s 40th by sharing power of stories

On the DeRose-Hinkhouse 2024 Award for Periodicals: Wow!!! Congratulations, Mary, for piloting the Fig Tree ship across this finish line. It reminds me of the University of Washington’s 1936 rowing team, with a crew of hard working, skilled, dedicated, undervalued, unsung heroes winning the gold medal in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. This is a signature recognition and long overdue honor. We shower the Fig Tree crew with congratulatory confetti.

Darrel and Joanne Lundby

I rejoice with you as you celebrate the 40th anniversary of The Fig Tree. When we studied together at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey in Switzerland, we learned how wide the Church is and how broad the world is. We called that “ecumenism.” A few of us have taken that message with us to our respective countries and tried to make it real in our own contexts.

The Fig Tree has done just that. It has made ecumenism real to its readers by connecting us across oceans and great lands.

I send my good wishes to you and all who work for The Fig Tree. May you continue your good work for many more years.

With Prayers and Blessings

Bishop Kenneth Fernando, retired Bishop of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Great historical review article in April about your vision and implementation of the Fig Tree. You have grown so much, but stayed steady, for a long time. Wonderful story. Many blessings.

Jim Halfaker - retired Conference Minister of the Washington North Idaho / Pacific Northwest United Church of Christ

“The Fig Tree provides a forum to give voice and visibility for activities in the



community, city, valley and beyond. What people do would not be visible to the community if it weren’t for The Fig Tree.

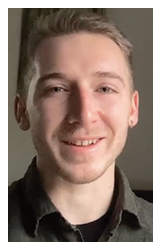
It changes our mental picture of what our community is like if we know there are churches opening their doors for warming shelters or joining in pride festivals. We start thinking in broader terms. It’s critical for the community’s self-understanding or self-awareness if we know that there are people out there doing things.

If we think we live in isolation and don’t understand what is going on, we may feel powerless or think that nothing we can do will change the situation. We might assume there will always be homeless people downtown and look the other way. If we hear of people doing things, we may ask, “What can I do?” Then we may realize we can donate some clothes, drop a check in the mail and make a difference.

Being able to make a difference makes people feel powerful.

Bart Preecs – The Fig Tree delivery volunteer

I have been a lifelong reader of The Fig Tree. I remember coming down as a kid to the kitchen table seeing a copy of The Fig Tree lying there. I read stories about people in Spokane I didn’t know. I felt, my gosh, there are many



amazing people in my community. I want to be like those people someday.

I love The Fig Tree because for as long as I can remember, it has given me hope in the world, in the community and the people of Spokane. When I need inspiration, I turn to The Fig Tree to see that there are people doing good work, living out the values and faith they hold dear.

Cameron Conner Fig Tree Columnist

I’ve enjoyed watching it grow. I read The Fig Tree faithfully every month cover to cover. The first thing I do is go to the



back and look at the calendar to find what I want to do this month.

The Fig Tree covers every religious institution. It’s ecumenical and interfaith.

It empowers people by the stories, enabling us to know that other people think the same things, want to do the same things or need people to help out. It gives me encouragement to know I’m not alone. It helps us join together. It says there are good and positive things happening in this chaotic world. There is hope.

Flora Bowers – retired United Methodist pastor who was on the Spokane Christian Coalition when it started The Fig Tree in 1984

The Fig Tree covers diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice. I have read it for almost 30 years I have been in Spokane.

I’m inspired by the wonderful narratives by people and about people who are

passionate about their faith, values, goals and activism.



I came on the board this year because I value the stories about the multifaceted, multicultural and multiracial communities. While our community highlights Native American Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month

and African American History Month, that’s just three months. I like that The Fig Tree highlights these stories and honors diverse ethnicities all year round, despite the low percentage of people of color in Spokane.

Gloria Aston Baynes Eastern Washington University Africana Studies and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

I can open a copy of The Fig Tree and there is something about Sravasti Abbey or something happening in the Jewish community. There’s also a list of all the faith festivals. It is non-judgmental and inclusive. The Fig Tree creates understanding of the larger community and the little people that are not in the mainstream.

The Fig Tree goes in depth and connects with people on a different level. For me, it fosters understanding about what my community looks like outside of my faith and circle of friends.

Naghmana Sherazi - Muslims for Community Action and Support and The Lands Council



Calendar of Events

- May 1** • **The Power of Connection**, SNAP Fundraiser, Spokane Central Library, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., snapwa.org
- **May Day with Nuestras Raices, MECHA at EWU** and Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane at Riverfront Park Red Wagon, 3 p.m., 557-0566
- **May Day March**, Celebrating Workers, Latinos en Spokane, Riverfront Clocktower, 5 p.m., 558-9359 or info@latinosenspokane.org
- May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29** • **Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR)** Meeting, Saranac Commons, 19 W. Main, 12 noon, scarspokane.org
- May 2** • **Medicare 1:1 Counseling**, Aging & Long Term Care (ALTCEW), 316 W. Boone, Ste 260, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 625-4801
- **The Fig Tree Development Committee**, Zoom, 12 to 1 p.m., development@thefigtree.org
- **The Fig Tree Board**, Zoom 1 to 3 p.m., mary@thefigtree.org
- **Lawyer in the Library**, Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, Coeur d'Alene Library, 4 to 6 p.m., cdalibrary.org/library-events/lawyer
- May 2, 3** • **Oscar Harris Book Signing**, Untangling Knots in our Past, Ready 2 Serve Ministries, 8104 E. Sprague, 5 p.m.
- May 3-4** • **Lead in the Feminine**, Historic Davenport Hotel, 10 S. Post, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., 208-946-8141
- May 3, 10** • **Fair Housing Followup Training – Deep Dive**, Northwest Fair Housing Alliance, Better Health Together, Zoom, 11:30 a.m., eventbrite.com/e/fair-housing-training-tickets-857197198897
- May 4** • **Spring Fling Bazaar**, Millwood Presbyterian, 3223 N. Marguerite, 924-2350, sfetho2000@yahoo.com
- **Pauline Flett Pow Wow**, Flett Middle School, 5020 W. Wellesley, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. 824-8004
- **Peace Walk at the Labyrinth**, Unity Spiritual Center, 4465 N. 15th, Coeur d'Alene, 208-664-1125
- **Expo '74: 50th Anniversary** Opening Celebration, Pavilion at Riverfront Park, 3 to 9 p.m., 625-6000
- **Tapestry Women's Choir**: Beautiful World, St. James Episcopal, 1410 NE Stadium Way, Pullman, 7:30 p.m., 332-1742
- May 4, 5** • **Spokane Symphony**: Screening of Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, The Fox Theater, 1001 W. Sprague, Sat 7:30, Sun 3 p.m., 624-1200
- May 4-June 2** • **Expo Revival**: Searching for Trent Alley, Art & Historical Exhibits on Asian/Asian Americans in the Pacific NW, Opening 11 a.m. with speakers, artists, vendors, performance, fmortel@aclspokane.org
- May 5** • **Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Festival**, Spokane Community College, 1810 N. Greene, 2 to 6 p.m., 590-6613
- **African Movement Showcase**, Teresa Brooks reports on travels in Africa, Carl Maxey Center, 3114 E. 5th, 5 p.m.
- May 5, June 9** • **Faith Action Network Spring Summits**, Zoom, 3 to 4:30 p.m. fanwa.org/springsummits
- May 5, 12, 19, 26** • **SCAR Coffee**, Saranac Commons, 19 W. Main, 9 a.m., scarspokane.org
- May 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 29, June 3** • **Prevent Falls: A Matter of Balance**, Cathedral Plaza, 1120 W. Sprague, 1 to 3 p.m., 777-1571, philip.healean@dshs.wa.gov
- May 7** • **Foster Care Day**: A Panel Discussion, Shadle Library, 2111 W. Wellesley, 4 to 6 p.m., 496-0343
- May 7 to 11** • **SpoCanopy** plants 500 trees as part of the "Expo Forest," landscouncil.org/urban-canopy
- May 8** • **Boba Breaks**, SFCC Mosaic Center, Asians for Collective Liberation discussion of identities and mental health, 12 to 2 p.m., fmortel@aclspokane.org
- **Asian Kitchen** with Chef Suwanee, Second Harvest Kitchen, 1234 E. Front, 4 to 6 p.m., fmortel@aclspokane.org
- **Essential Skills, The Zone**, Gonzaga Family Haven, 975 E. North Foothills, 5:30 p.m.
- **Ed Pulaski and the Big Burn** – History Hour Lecture, Coeur d'Alene Library, 5:30 p.m.
- **Welcome to Medicare Workshop**, Zoom, 6 to 7:45 p.m., register.tinyurl.com/evspz62c
- **Expo '74: 50 Years of Environmental Awareness**, Spokane Valley Library, 22 N. Herald, 6:30 to 8 p.m., 893-8400
- May 8-June 12** • **Powerful Tools for Caregivers**, ALTCEW on Zoom with YMCA, nmanus@ymcainw.org
- May 9** • **Free Immigration Clinic**, Latinos En Spokane, 1502 N. Monroe, 5 to 7 p.m., latinosenspokane.org
- **Spokane NAACP** General Meeting, Location TBA, 6 p.m., spokanenaacp@gmail.com
- **Strategizing Against Liberal White Supremacy**: A Community Workshop, Angie Beeman, Carl Maxey Center and Virtual (hybrid), 6 to 8 p.m., fmortel@aclspokane.org
- **Stage Lights for Our Place**, Fundraiser, Salem Lutheran Church Gym, 1428 W. Broadway, 6 p.m., ourplacespokane.org
- May 9, 23** • **Showing Up for Racial Justice**, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS), Zoom, 5:30 p.m., slicity@pjals.org
- May 10** • **Vietnamese Heritage Day Celebration**, Pavilion at Riverfront, 574 N. Howard, 5 to 7:30 p.m., 899-5058
- **Mental Health Awareness Silent Auction** and Expo, Discovery Counseling Group, 413-1193
- May 10-11** • **CdA Symphony**: Vive La France, Kroc Center, 1765 W. Golf Course, Fri 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sat 2 & 7:30 p.m., 208-667-1865
- May 11** • **Adam Bodhi Meet and Greet**, The Jonah Project, Shadle Park Library, 2111 W. Wellesley, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., diamondartworkscollective.com
- **Let's Get Mental Health**, Lutheran Community Services Northwest's Youth Advisory Board, connect adolescents to mental health resources, Saranac Commons, 1 to 3 p.m., lcsnw.org
- **Creating Space Within**: A Journey of Inward Transformation, Harmony Woods Retreat Center, 11507 S. Keeney, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 993-2968
- May 11, 12** • **Spokane Symphony Masterworks 9: Exp '74**, The Fox Theater, 1001 W. Sprague, Sat 7:30 p.m., Sun 3 p.m., 624-1200
- May 12** • **Annual Mother's Day Champagne Brunch**, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center (IHRC), 6910 S. Ben Burr, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 448-1224
- **Sharing the Dharma Day**, Sravasti Abbey, 692 Country Ln, Newport, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 447-5549
- **Listen to Your Mother**, benefit for Embrace Washington, supporting foster care, Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, 7 to 9 p.m., 227-7638
- May 13** • **Mindful Movements and Mental Health**, Coeur d'Alene Library, 5:30 p.m.
- May 14** • **Essential Skills**, The Zone, Northeast Community center, 4001 N. Cook, 11 a.m.
- Peace and Justice Action Committee, Zoom, 5:30 p.m. ucarter@pjals.org
- May 14-16** • **Washington State Nonprofit Conference**, Nonprofit Association of Washington, online, learning@nonprofitwa.org
- May 15** • **Caregiver Support Program's Annual Caregiver Summit**, 412 E. Spokane Falls, spokanecaregivers@va.gov
- **Grand Opening of World Relief's** new offices, 5 p.m., City Covenant, 512 S. Bernard, 6 p.m., Dessert, Redwood Plaza, 11707 E. Sprague, Spokane Valley, wrsokane@wr.org
- May 16** • **Medicare 1:1 Counseling**, ALTCEW, Spokane Valley Library, 22 N. Herald, 1 to 4 p.m., 625-4801
- **Resource and Self-Care Fair**, NE Family Youth System Partner Roundtable, Passages Family Support, 1700 S. Assembly, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., 892-9241
- **Resisting Erasure through Storytelling**, Humanities WA, with Putsata Reang, Liberty Park Public Library, 5:30 p.m., fmortel@aclspokane.org
- May 18** • **Alternative Education Fair**, The Woman's Club, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., spokanelearningcoop.org
- **Spokane Symphony**: Beethoven and Crews, The Fox Theater, 1001 W. Sprague, 7:30 p.m., 624-1200
- May 18, 25** • **Expo '74: 50th Anniversary** Community Stage & Vendor Village, Riverfront Park, 11 a.m., 625-6600
- May 19** • **Spokane String Quartet**, Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, 3 to 5 p.m., 227-7638
- **Taizé Evening Hour of Prayer**, Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 6:30 p.m., ihrc.net
- May 20** • **Become an ECO Artist**: Ecology and Economy are Connected, Spokane Art School, 503 E. Second Ste B, 12 to 4 p.m., 325-1500
- **Spokane Nonprofit Conference**, Gonzaga University, Globe Room, Cataldo Hall 2 to 5 p.m., learning@nonprofitwa.org
- May 21-Dec 17** • **Caregiver Training Series**, Colfax Library, 102 S. Main, Third Tuesdays, 1 p.m., 777-1629, dementia@altcew.org
- May 22** • **Experiences of Asian Muslims** in the U.S., EWU PUB 317-319 and virtual, 12 to 1:30 p.m., fmortel@aclspokane.org
- **Give Like a Woman** with Sean Astin on mental health, fundraiser for Women Helping Women Fund, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd, 3 to 5 p.m.
- **Medicare Getting Started**, SHIBA, Zoom, 6 p.m., 893-8350 or scl.d.evanced.info/signup/calendar
- May 23** • **Estate Planning Basics**, Argonne Library, 4322 N. Argonne, Millwood, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., 893-8200
- May 24** • **Wine, Women & Dementia**, North Spokane Library, 44 E. Hawthorne, 9:30 to 12 p.m., 893-8350
- May 25** • **El Mercadito**, Latinos En Spokane, A.M. Cannon Park, 1920 W. Maxwell, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., latinosenspokane.org
- **Expo '74 50th Celebration Powwow** at the Falls, Spokane Convention Center, 8 p.m., 208-818-1832
- May 29** • **Hope for Creation Keynote**: Spirituality of Creation Care, St. John's Cathedral, 127 E. 12th, 7 p.m.
- May 30** • **Hope for Creation Speaker's Reception**, St. John's Cathedral, 9:30 a.m.
- **Jubilee – Hope for Creation Week**, Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th, 11:30 a.m.
- **Spokane Valley Connect**, Opportunity Presbyterian, 202 N. Pines, 12 to 4 p.m., spokaneconnect.org
- **Asian American Heritage Month** Closing, Garland Theater, 5 to 7:30 p.m., fmortel@aclspokane.org
- **Healing the Earth Vigil**, Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, Lilac Bowl, Riverfront Park, 5:30 p.m.
- **Interfaith Power and Light**, St. John's Cathedral, 127 E. 12th, 7 p.m.
- May 31** • **Hike with Andi Chatburn**, Inland NW Lands Conservancy, Slavin Conservation Area, 8 a.m.
- June 1** • **NAMI Walks Spokane**, Riverfront Park, 1 mile walk, 7:30 to 10 a.m. namiwalks.org/index.cfm
- **Care for Creation Worship Service**, St. John's, 127 E. 12th, 5:30 p.m.
- Tues to Sun** • **It Happened Here**: Expo '74 Fifty Years Later, Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, 2316 W. First, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Jan 26, 456-3931
- Thurs** • **Taizé Prayer**, Zoom, 4:15 p.m., bartletts@gonzaga.edu

C & H Foreign Auto Repair

E. 620 North Foothills Dr. Spokane, WA 99207
SCOTT M. CUSHMAN 487-9683 OR 484-5221

SATURDAY NIGHT CINEMA

www.kspns.org/stc KSPNS PBS

FAIRWOOD MEANS TOGETHER.

Independent Living Apartments, Condos, and Meadow Homes
Assisted Living • Memory Support Care

Watch our guided video tour at www.fairwoodretirement.com
call 509.467.2365 for tours and pricing

FAIRWOOD
Retirement Village & Assisted Living
412 W. Hastings Road • Spokane, Washington 99216

wishing tree
books
Books
Gifts
Storytimes
Events
So. Perry

WishingTreeBookstore.com
1410 E. 11th Ave. Spokane, WA

Express
EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS

Respecting People. Impacting Business.™
Owned by Susan and Ira Amstadter

30 years of serving Spokane helping area non-profits grow & prosper

SPOKANE PUBLIC RADIO PRESENTS
FIREHOUSE SESSIONS
LIVE CONCERT

FEATURING CONTEST WINNERS
ANNE CHRISTINE THE RED BOOKS TIME BABY

MAY 10TH SHOW 7:30
THE BING CROSBY THEATER

LAUNCH COLLABORATORS
T.S THE SOLUTION OLIVIA BROWNLEE

SPOKANE PUBLIC RADIO
KPXB 91.1 | KSPC 91.9 | KPZB 90.3
SPOKANEPUBLICRADIO.ORG

Spiritual direction is about ‘holy listening,’ pointing people to God

For spiritual director Kathy Villemure, spiritual direction is more about holy listening and presence than about offering “direction” or advice. It’s about accompanying people on their sacred journey.

The paths on that journey may be wonderful or treacherous—steep, rocky or slippery. Sometimes people may feel lost on the journey.

She likened it to a time she and her husband, Dave, became lost in a village on their pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago in Spain five years ago. They were saved by the local police who pointed the way and accompanied them out of town.

“Instead of directing people, we accompany them and point them to God, who is the real director,” she said. “We do not tell people what to do. Instead, spiritual direction focuses on how God is present and active in a person’s life.

“In contrast, counseling is more about problem solving, and life coaching is more goal oriented,” she explained. “If someone is in a dark, scary cave, they may want counseling to get out of the cave. Spiritual direction can help them explore the cave.

“Spiritual direction creates a safe, sacred, confidential space for people to bring their deepest and highest selves and entrust us with their sacred story. We provide a compassionate presence and witness the unfolding of their story,” she continued.

When clients tell her their story, it is often the first time they have shared it. When she hears



Kathy Villemure has served as chaplain to Holy Names sisters.

their stories, she holds them in confidence. She listens and lets them articulate their stories. Spiritual direction enhances self-awareness.

Kathy grew up in Spokane and attended Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ as a child. When she married her first husband, who was Catholic, she converted to Catholicism. After living in may places with the military, she moved back to Spokane in the early 1990s where she worked at Gonzaga in student accounts, admissions and university relations while her children were in school.

In 1998, she went to Maui to

help her father, who had Alzheimer’s and brought him back to Spokane where he died in 1999.

Then she went back to school to finish her studies at Gonzaga, earning a bachelor’s degree in religious studies at the age of 50.

Wondering what to do with the degree, she learned Gonzaga was starting a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program.

After she finished CPE and earned a master’s in pastoral ministry, Kathy was hired as a hospice chaplain in 2001 in Tri Cities. Two years later, she returned to Spokane and worked as a hospital chaplain with Deaconess Hospital. In 2010, Kathy

was hired by Holy Names Sister Mary Ann Farley as chaplain for the Holy Names sisters at their convent. When their convent closed in 2014, they moved to assisted living apartments at what is now South Hill Village. Employees had been given a year’s notice that their jobs would be ending.

Kathy then decided to start her own business and went to SNAP’s Women’s Business Center for training to do that.

She started Inner Spirit, through which she does spiritual direction, drum circles for memory care, retreats, reiki and funeral services, which she saw

as a necessary service when she worked for hospice because so many people have no faith community.

Kathy’s sees clients in her home office or by Zoom.

In 2015, Sister Mary Ann hired Kathy’s business to provide chaplain services one day a week for the sisters who had moved to what is now South Hill Village.

“As a spiritual director, most of what I do is to be present and listen, and reflect back to them what I’ve heard them say,” she explained, adding that clients’ journeys often inspire her.

“The sisters are amazing,” she said. “They cope well with their limitations, and that makes me less afraid as I begin to face limitations as I age. They are teaching me to age gracefully.

“Their life stories are awe-inspiring,” she said, finding a mutual tie. “They are spiritual directors to me.”

For information, call 868-9877 or email villemure7@gmail.com.

Need advice finding accessible or affordable transportation?

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

“we’ll steer you right”
509-499-4810

Four spiritual directors team up for a retreat May 11

Spiritual director Kathy Villemure, is teaming up with three other spiritual directors to offer a retreat from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, May 11, at Harmony Woods Retreat Center, 11507 S Keeney Rd. in Spokane.

“We’re offering it both to introduce people to spiritual direction and to bring attention to the Harmony Woods Retreat Center. Now that other local retreat centers—the Ministry Institute, Kairos and St. Joseph Family Center—have closed, Harmony Woods is a much-needed resource in our area,” she said.

Helping her lead the retreat on “Creating Space Within: A Journey of Inward Transforma-

tion,” are spiritual directors Kathy McFaul, Christi Ortiz and Andrea Nelson-LeRoy.

Kathy Villemure, who is also a certified healthcare chaplain, will discuss spiritual journaling and pilgrimage—not “to a sacred site in Spain but to the temple within,” said Kathy who walked on the Camino de Santiago in May 2019.

Kathy McFaul, who works at Transitions, a nonprofit that works to end poverty and homelessness for women and children in Spokane, provides spiritual direction and assists with spiritual direction training programs. She has also worked as an attorney specializing in poverty law.

Her walk will be on discerning one’s path.

Christi, who owns the retreat house with her husband Fernando, is a counselor and does spiritual direction through Gonzaga.

She will share about starting the retreat center.

Andrea, who has background in social work and spiritual direction through the Dominican Center in Grand Rapids, Mich., will take people on a Terra Divina walk—prayer while walking on and interacting with the earth.

There will be a time of Taizé with Ben Brody, professor of music at Whitworth University.

The four facilitators will be available for half-hour spiritual direction sessions during and after the retreat.

For information, call 993-2968 or visit harmonywoods.org.

Project Inspiration
Earthworks Recycling
Junxtore

723 N. Napa St.
Mon-Fri 10:00-2:30

COME FIND YOUR TREASURE

Thousands of items for your projects
535-3020

Meals on Wheels
GREATER SPOKANE COUNTY

Be a part of **Something Greater.**

Donate

Contribute to our mission to help seniors stay in their own homes by providing them with a warm meal, daily.

Take Action.

We are in need of volunteers to deliver meals to seniors in the Greater Spokane County region!

Volunteer

GSCMealsOnWheels.org | (509) 924-6976
12101 E. Sprague Ave, Spokane WA 99206

Community Colleges of Spokane

Be a Bigfoot Among Cougars

Start Here, Transfer There

spokane.edu/next #BigfootBigFuture

“It changed my life forever.”

Community Colleges of Spokane does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation or age in its programs, activities or employment. Marketing and Public Relations. 21-690 - AS