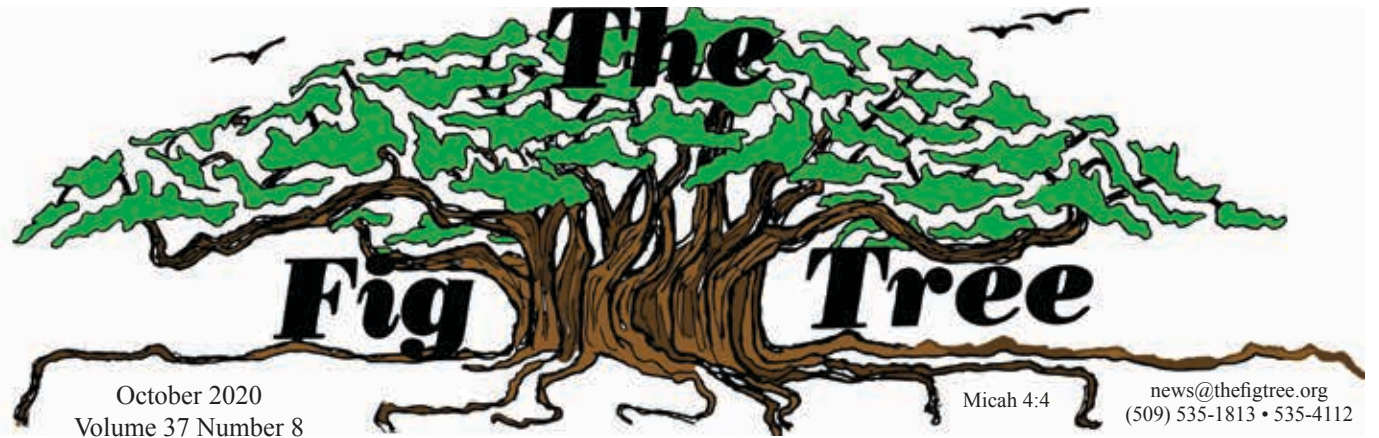


36TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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FEATURES 40 EVENTS



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

League project translates 2020 ballots

By Mary Stamp

Susan Hales' love of engaging with people of many cultures led her to spearhead an effort with the League of Women Voters (LWV) in Spokane to translate 2020 ballots into six languages.

She arranged with Spokane International Translations to translate ballots into Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Chinese and Swahili, so citizens who speak those languages can use a translated ballot to guide them in filling out the official ballot in English.

Susan learned about the league and joined it three years ago when she found she could register newly naturalized citizens to vote. She was hooked on voter outreach

"I have helped the league expand outreach with the library, Spokane's Community Court and people who are houseless," she said.

She also helped Jewels Helping Hands' voter outreach, producing LWV voter registration kits for people who are houseless.

At a community meeting last summer with Rep. Andy Billig and Lucy Barefoot of the Secretary of State office on engaging people with disabilities, a man from South Sudan asked about translating ballots. Lucy said the Secretary of State



Susan Hales values learning about and serving people of diverse cultures.

does not translate them for people if their language is spoken by less than five percent of the county population, and they cannot use state funds, but then Vicky Dalton, county auditor, stepped up to say a community group could do translations and she would post them on the Elections Office website.

Last spring, Susan did a needs assessment contacting formal and informal leaders of groups. Six languages emerged as most needing translations, and she began working with Spokane International Translations, which does translations for schools, businesses and nonprofits.

They estimated it would cost \$4,365 to do the translations. The League of Women Voters provided part of the funds and the Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund gave a grant of nearly \$4,000.

In mid-August, the Spokane County Elections Office provided a sample ballot.

In posting translated ballots on the website, Vicky makes it clear it's not an official ballot, but one people can use side-by-side with an official ballot to help people understand what they are voting for.

Susan collaborated with the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition

Continued on page 4

Whitworth professor uncovers history of how people of faith influence policies

Dale Soden, history professor at Whitworth University for 36 years, recently received recognition for his research and publications on the political and social influence of Pacific Northwest individuals motivated by their faith.

For his contributions to the study and teaching of Pacific Northwest history, the Washington State Historical Society awarded him the Robert Gray Medal—named for the first recorded American to navigate into the Columbia River.

A focus of his current work is

on the role of African-American pastors and churches in civil rights on the West Coast.

Dale is campus historian. He wrote *An Enduring Venture of Mind and Heart: An Illustrated History of Whitworth University*. He also helped establish a special collection for Protestant materials in the Pacific Northwest at the Whitworth University Library.

His classes have covered American intellectual history, religious history, popular culture, great trials, history after the Civil War, history of financial collapse, history of the Vietnam

War and Northwest history.

For a January 2019 class, Dale had a 1973 Whitworth graduate and Vietnam veteran to meet with and embrace a Vietnamese soldier he may have fought against. His 10 students said the encounter was a life-changing lesson.

His teaching style includes sharing his love of folk-protest songs from the 1960s.

Growing up Lutheran in Seattle, while studying history at Pacific Lutheran University, he realized how his opposition to the Vietnam War differed from his grandfather, who fought in World War I, and father, who fought in World War II. His father linked his belief in country and conservative politics with patriotism.

"I considered myself liberal, not radical," Dale said. "I believed we were in Vietnam for the wrong reasons and should have withdrawn earlier. Most of my peers who were Christian differed from their parents, too. Religious impulses led to protest against the war.

"Lutherans are not pacifists, but
Continued on page 6

2020 Census count nears end, but when?

The response rate for the 2020 Census is low in some areas, but there is still time for faith communities and nonprofits to help increase participation to make sure everyone is counted.

Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. Census Bureau earlier this year adjusted the 2020 Census operations timeline. Pending court decisions, the official Census 2020 count may continue through October 31, which means it's not too late for people to respond, said Meg Lindsay, director of education programs at Innovia Foundation in Spokane. Innovia, the community foundation serving Eastern Washington and North Idaho, has been working since last fall on Census outreach efforts to ensure a complete and accurate count of all communities

A complete count is critical, Meg said, because over the next 10 years, census data will be the basis for distributing hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funds each year for education, health care, emergency services, housing programs, food assistance and more. A community can lose \$30,000 in funding—\$3,000/year for 10 years—for each individual who is not counted.

"This election year highlights the importance of apportionment," she said, noting that the Constitution sets population as the basis for political power, not wealth or land. The census is the basis for allocating seats in the House of Representatives."

While the census count is going well in some counties of the region, Meg said, many households have not responded. Spokane County and Kootenai County have self-response rates of more than 70 percent, but some rural counties are below 45 percent. Census takers worked on non-response follow-ups in September.

If Census 2020 continues in October, faith communities can:

Continued on page 3

Non-Profit
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Cameroon churches lead crusade for peace

In the face of despair, churches lead a growing "crusade for peace" in Cameroon, where hundreds of people are praying for peace. They are also singing, dancing, marching and listening to reflections led by people of faith who are calling for a ceasefire now.

Archbishop urges churches to help refugees

Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece said, "Welcoming the stranger is an integral part of Christian heritage." He offers reflections from an Orthodox perspective on the plight of refugees, both in Greece and beyond, and how churches can help with both relief efforts and long-term wellbeing.

WCC assembly will now be in 2022.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly Planning Committee met in late September, its fourth preparatory meeting and its first meeting online. It is focusing on the theme "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity" in the context of COVID-19.

Plans for the 11th Assembly from Aug. 31 to Sept. 8, 2022, in Karlsruhe, Germany continue to unfold in the midst of the global realities of COVID-19 and growing social unrest in response to racism and other inequalities. The committee offers advice on ecumenical conversations to engage delegates in dialogue on issues that affect the unity, mission and witness of the churches.

Churches join in solidarity for migrants

Europe is again faced with a rise in migrants and refugees seeking a better life with some similarities to the crisis five years ago in a mass movement triggered by the Syrian War and extreme hardships in other countries.

Migrants and refugees drew on resources of societies and their churches then and seem set to do so again as the war continues, and the COVID-19 crisis and economic hardship force people away from their homes. Many on the move come from war-torn countries like Syria and Libya, or flee places such as Eritrea and Ethiopia. Recently a fire destroyed the Moira camp on Greece's Lesbos island, leaving 13,000 migrants with no home.

European church organizations, concerned with the plight of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, call for joining hands to work in solidarity for human rights and dignity.

The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, warned on Sept. 19 that millions of displaced people needing protection and their host communities are feeling the pinch of massive underfunding, as the COVID-19 pandemic increases humanitarian needs.

WCC celebrates partnership with UNICEF

Five years ago, on Sept. 18, the World Council of Churches (WCC) and UNICEF signed a partnership that created a network of over 1,500 influential supporters and over 100 practical tools and strategies to strengthen the work for children.

Webinar explores effects of COVID-19

During a webinar on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Church of Norway fielded reflections from pastors and church leaders in diverse corners of the world. The presentation is part of a new webinar series on the local and global realities of COVID-19, produced by the Rev. Einar Tjelle, who is head of ecumenism and interfaith dialogue for the Church of Norway and the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations.

Study addresses church identity in pandemic

Among the massive social dislocations caused by the coronavirus pandemic, perhaps none is as plaintive as those to churches. Around the world, church gatherings, liturgies, fellowship and service projects have been canceled or postponed or migrated online, precisely when Christian communities and those who rely on them need them most.

REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

Fig Tree opts for smaller column width

The width of columns in The Fig Tree are about .09 of an inch narrower than the traditional 11 pica width for newspapers, because The Fig Tree is now being printed by TCP Holdings, Inc., the parent company of the Lewiston Tribune.

In September 2019, they purchased Griffin Publishing in

Spokane Valley, which published The Fig Tree since George Griffin, Jr., founded it in 2002. Prior to that, The Fig Tree's printer was Spokane Print and Mail, owned by George's father. Previous printers include the Cheney Free Press and Spokane Valley Herald.

"We published three issues with them in 2019, and then

chose Northwest Offset Printing, a subsidiary of the Spokesman-Review, to maintain the column width," said Mary Stamp, editor. "After the September issue, we returned to TPC Holdings because they are more geared to runs under 10,000."

For information, call 535-1813 or visit thefigtree.org.

'Beyond Words: Doing Justice' is theme

"Beyond Words: Doing Justice" is the theme for the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference and for The Fig Tree's annual Benefit Lunch and Breakfast.

The legislative conference, planned by a team from The Fig Tree, Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, Earth Ministry-

Washington Interfaith Power and Light, and the Faith Action Network and local denominations, will be presented virtually from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30.

The committee is currently planning for a keynote speaker, panel response, workshops and a legislative briefing to address issues coming before the Wash-

ington State Legislature that convenes Jan. 11 for a 60-day session.

The benefit planning committee is in the process of deciding if the benefits will be virtual and the timeline. A lunch is planned March 5 and breakfast March 10.

For information, call 535-1813 or visit thefigtree.org.

Fair traders set up for online shopping

Ganesh Himal Trading Co is collaborating with Kizuri to set up a website where people can shop if they want to purchase and support fair trade without being exposed to COVID-19.

"We will set up a permanent online presence not only for Kizuri but also for fall Festival of Fair Trade," said Denise Attwood, co-owner of Ganesh Himal.

The online presence will include long-time Festival of Fair Trade vendors Conosur Imports with Penny and Oscar Haupt and Maya Color with Maria Cuc and Felipe Gonzales.

"We hope this will give wider access to fair trade items, given that the Festival of Fair Trade after Thanksgiving and Jubilee

in early November at First Presbyterian Church cannot be held as usual because of COVID-19.

In the long term, it will give Kizuri an online presence for selling fair trade regionally and nationally in case of any future lockdowns and give communities without fair trade stores access to fairly traded items.

Consumers can shop online and do curbside pickup. There may be some delivery for those who can't drive or are vulnerable, Denise said.

In addition, Ganesh Himal Trading, Conosur Imports and Maya Color are considering doing pop up events at the Community Building on Saturdays throughout the fall.

They will offer smaller dis-

plays of two or three tables for one to three vendors—spread out and limiting the number of people coming into the building, while giving people a sense of the community that is usually a part of the Festival of Fair Trade.

"We hope to encourage shoppers to spread out their shopping throughout the fall and not congregate in large groups but still have a little fun," she said.

"It will give some 'retail therapy,' for shoppers, some community and a way to support fair trade and Kizuri while keeping people safe by allowing only five or six in at a time, all wearing masks," Denise said.

For information, call 464-7677 (Kizuri) or email info@ganeshhimaltrading.com.

Fall Folk Fest plans re-broadcasts on KPBX

The Spokane Folklore Society's 25th Annual Fall Folk Festival, celebrating diversity through music, dance and the arts, will be held virtually Nov. 14 and 15.

The Steering Committee decided to bring the festival to the safety of everyone's homes with a virtual program.

Spokane Public Radio (KPBX 91.1 FM), which is celebrating its 40th anniversary, will present a retrospective of festival broad-

casts from 2000 to 2019, and "Best of the Festival Broadcasts" with KPBX's Verne Windham as host from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 14, and from 1 to 3 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 15.

The Fall Folk Festival will also stream pre-recorded performances selected from 2020 applicants on its website and Facebook. Details will be on its website and Facebook at www.facebook.com/Fall-Folk-Festival-Spokane.

In 2021, organizers plan a live festival celebrating its 25 years.

Vicki Ball, Carla Carnegie, Dave Noble and Leone Peterson organized the first Fall Folk Festival in 1996 at the Unitarian Universalist Church with a

dozen groups performing.

Because it occurred during a severe ice storm and the church was one of the few places in town with power and hot food, more than 350 people attended.

The festival grew rapidly, outgrowing the church and moving to Glover Middle School. In 2003, it moved to its current location, Spokane Community College.

By 2005, for its 10th anniversary, it had expanded to two days and showcased more than 100 groups. The festival draws about 5,000 attendees a year.

For information, call 838-3683, email dgraham@spokane-folkfestival.org or visit spokanepublicradio.org.

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senior director of UNA-USA and the UN Foundation

For Virtual via Zoom
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Faith leaders hold ‘Grieving Together’ vigils

Inspired by the national Mourning Project, the Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience (FLLC) will hold weekly vigils for “Grieving Together” Tuesdays, Oct. 6, 13, 20 and 27.

The Mourning Project, “Mourning into Unity: United We Stand, Divided We Fall,” is a nationwide, interfaith series of four weekly candlelight vigils to mourn the more than 200,000 dead from COVID-19, and other losses from the pandemic: unsafe schools, unsafe workplaces, unemployment. The goal is to reclaim commitment to peaceful elections and defuse rising violence.

Led by faith and healthcare leaders, the vigils are held outdoors with social distancing and masks. Some will join in parked cars or from home via social media.

The local vigils will be from 6 to 6:30 p.m.—with masks and distancing—in the parking lot or front lawn of Veradale United Church of Christ, 611 N. Progress, and virtually on the FLLC Facebook page.

Participants may tie purple—the traditional color of mourning and a mix of red and blue—ribbons on trees and bushes with messages about their grief. They are to bring their own flameless candle (cell phone), purple ribbons and messages, said Gen Heywood, pastor at Veradale UCC and convener of FLLC.

For information, email genheywood@att.net.

Center holds webinar on lead contamination

The Silver Valley Community Resource Center (SVCRC) will hold a webinar on “Any Lead Is Too Much” at noon, Tuesday, Oct 13. Panelists are Steve Gilbert, director and founder of the Institute of Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders, an expert on the impact of lead on children; Rhonda Kaetzel, regional director of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and Barbara Miller, director of the SVCRC and the Children Run Better Unleaded Project.

Panelists will explore lead health exposure and seek solutions in the nation’s largest lead Superfund site, Bunker Hill in Idaho’s Silver Valley. They will also speak about successes and failures in cleaning up the area and protecting Idaho’s children from lead exposure.

The SVCRC focuses on environmental issues, advocates for human health interventions, grassroots organizing, leadership development and educational outreach.

For information, call 208-784-8891, email svcommunityresourcecenter@gmail.com or register at silvervalleyaction.org.

Create schedules virtual performance

Create in Newport has re-scheduled an April performance of “May’s Vote” to a virtual performance at 7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 24.

“May’s Vote,” a play by Toni Douglass, is about the prim and proper professional women’s suffrage organizer Emma Smith DeVoe in Western Washington and the outrageous, flamboyant May Arkwright Hutton, a Spokane millionaire who struck it rich in Idaho silver mines. In their different styles, they worked side-by-side to lead the campaign that won the vote for women in Washington in 1910.

Funded by the Washington State Women’s Commission and Washington State Historical Society’s Votes for Women Centennial Grant Program, “May’s Vote” toured the state in 1998 for the 150th anniversary of the first U.S. Women’s Rights Convention.

The two-woman performance is produced by Key City Public Theatre in Port Townsend and performed by Barbara Callander and Denise Winter. They will give a live introduction before the performance and answer questions in a post-play discussion.

It is being offered virtually by Create, a volunteer community center for the arts in Newport, on a donation basis.

Joyce Weir, coordinator for Create, added that Create participates in The River Arts Alliance, 11 arts and humanities organizations serving communities from Elk to Metaline Falls. They meet quarterly by Zoom to share activities and promote each other’s programs and education opportunities.

Washington Nonprofits recently helped connect nonprofits there with learning opportunities. Gabriel Cruden of Kettle Falls hosts the One River Nonprofit Network.

For information on the program and how to RSVP, call 447-9277, email create@createarts.org or visit www.createarts.org.

‘Dignity of a Shower’ is latest documentary

“The Dignity of a Shower,” the latest installment in the “My Road Leads Home” documentary series on homelessness in Spokane, was released in September during a week of broadcasts on Community-Minded Television (Comcast 14) and on the myroadleadshome.org documentary YouTube Channel.

“Simple math shows the need for showers among Spokane’s homeless,” said Maurice Smith, executive producer. “The January 2020 Point in Time Count showed 1,559 people in various stages of homelessness, an increase of 18 percent over 2019, which was pre-COVID.

Spokane’s city-wide shelter system has only 648 beds, leaving 58 percent of the known-and-counted homeless in Spokane with no access to a shelter, bed, shower, toilet or basic services shelters offer.

“The Dignity of a Shower” highlights and humanizes this reality.” He said the documentary has already had an impact.

“It has increased conversation about the need for showers in the homeless. Shortly after the premiere, I received an email from a nonprofit in Poulso in Western Washington, telling me they are setting up a mobile shower outreach and our documentary convinced their Board to green-light the project. That was a ‘Wow!’ moment for me,” he said.

“Good documentary filmmaking should not only educate viewers about an issue, but also motivate them to get involved and make a difference, and it did,” he said.

In addition to making one-hour documentaries on homelessness in Spokane—three in the past 18 months, which air locally on Community-Minded Television and Rising River Media, the “My Road Leads Home” series is creating documentary shorts.

These are of 10- to 15-minute “mini-docs” that focus on a particular issue for the homeless community, like the need for showers.

“The Dignity of a Shower” is the first in this series of at least six.

Rising River Media’s next full-length documentary project is in planning. “And Justice for Some” will look at the intersection of homelessness and the justice system, focusing on “Sit & Lie” and “No Camping” ordinances in light of recent federal court decisions. It will explore how the homeless are treated by law enforcement and the courts.

“We’re in conversations with possible participants. This one will take more pre-production planning than the others,” he said.

Rising River Media is a nonprofit media and publishing company in Spokane Valley. Maurice is also a co-founder of Feed Spokane and recently served as media liaison for the Leadership Team of the Spokane Homeless Coalition.

For information, call 475-8797, email risingrivermedia@gmail.com or visit myroadleadshome.org.

Faiths can still assist in promoting the census

continued from page 1

- Offer computers for people to complete the census online.
- Urge members during worship to participate in the census.
- Post messages from the 2020 Census Digital Action Guide on reader boards, social media, websites and blogs.
- Announce it in newsletters.
- Use 2020 Census graphics on their social media with the hashtag #2020Census. There are materials saying: “Time is running out. Please respond now at <https://2020census.gov/en/partners/outreach-materials.html>.”

People may respond to the census online, by phone or by mail.

Information is confidential and used only to produce statistics.

“When people knock, it’s important to answer,” said Meg, aware some are hesitant during COVID-19 and elections.

Because churches know their members, they have the trust to make the contacts, she said.

On Sept. 5, a federal judge in California ordered the U.S. administration to temporarily stop winding down in-person

counting in a legal challenge to ending the census Sept. 30 instead of Oct. 31, the original time set by the Census Bureau.


On Sept. 24, a federal court ruled the count is to continue. That ruling is being appealed. Meg urges people to watch the news for updates on the Census completion deadline in coming weeks.

For information, visit 2020census.gov.

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Susan Hales learns from, stands in solidarity with people of diverse cultures

Continued from page 1
 (APIC), which hired a student intern, Tia Moua. Her phone survey revealed there was also a need for translated general voter information, such as how to register and vote, and descriptions of the offices on the ballot, like the Governor and President. Providence Health Services has underwritten these translations through a grant to Refugee Connections, which is partnering with the league.

“When immigrants and refugees study for the U.S. citizenship exam, the materials do not prepare them to vote because the voting rules differ in every state,” she said. “Some English as a Second Language classes include citizenship information with basic information on how to connect their votes with what is important to them.

“The Secretary of State’s Voters Guide is long and hard to read in English, but too much to translate,” Susan said.

With two college students, Tia also did videos in different languages on how to register to vote and why it’s important to vote.

“The League of Women Voters focuses on long term civic engagement, registering people to vote and engaging them as voters. They have connected with APIC, Latinos in Spokane and the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) to develop collaborative voter events, as well as voter registration kits for voters who are houseless,” said Susan, who has been in Spokane for 30 years.

When she was 16, she began working with other cultures, going from her home town of Guilford, Conn., to New Haven to volunteer at a Head Start that had all African-American children and staff.

“The staff took me under their

wings, even inviting me home,” she said. “Later, for my college work term, I tutored Inuit students at an Alaska Native Boarding School in Nome, Alaska.

“I also traveled to Europe with a high school teacher who introduced U.S. students to different cultures,” she said.

“My parents often talked about the importance of learning about other cultures,” she said. “I realized that awareness of different cultures makes the world bigger.”

After graduating from Bennington College in Vermont in cultural anthropology in 1971, she followed her first husband to Washington State University.

In Washington, she found work in archaeology on the tip of the Olympic Peninsula, excavating with hoses the Makah Tribe’s early Ozette village buried in mud slides 400 years ago. The goals were to affirm the Makah’s rich cultural history and to create a cultural museum.

Wanting to learn about nonprofits, she earned an interdisciplinary master’s degree in managing nonprofits that combined coursework at Eastern Washington University (EWU) and Gonzaga University in 1991.

After years in arts nonprofits, Susan sought work with people of other cultures. Leading a multicultural demonstration project for Head Start and then later directing a family literacy program for refugees through the Community Colleges and District 81, she began to get to know Spokane’s many refugee communities.

Susan lived a year in Russia with her husband, Larry Luton—who taught public administration at EWU—when he was an international Fulbright scholar teaching at Novosibirsk State University and she taught quali-

tative research methods.

“I went to experience being in another country, where I did not know the language or culture,” she said. “That helped me understand the experience of refugees. I experienced culture shock as I learned about the culture and country, often broke social norms and felt like a child.”

She and Larry studied the Russian language three days a week, not enough to be fluent.

“I had only studied French in high school and basic Inuit in college,” Susan said, commenting that knowing other languages opens understanding.

Back in the U.S. after Russia, she taught a course on refugee experience at EWU and completed her doctoral degree at Gonzaga with a dissertation on resilience among Hmong refugee women, graduating in 2004.

With there being no jobs with refugees after 9/11, she went to Dickinson State University to direct international education for two years.

Returning to Spokane from Dickinson in 2006, Susan was director of international education for three years at Eastern Washington University. For both Dickinson State and EWU,

she traveled widely in China and other countries, developing agreements and recruiting students.

“I loved working with international students, but I really wanted to work with refugees and immigrants again, so I researched what they needed here in Spokane. I realized that the agencies contracting with the U.S. State Department to resettle refugees were only funded to help them resettle for the first three months.

“Adapting to the new culture does not happen that fast. Many needs arise and continue long after three months,” said Susan.

So she started Refugee Connections Spokane in 2010, and it became recognized as a nonprofit in 2011.

After many years of travel, now because of the COVID-19 pandemic, she misses getting off a plane and stepping into another country.

“Stepping off a plane is a first step to understanding,” she said.

“As a child, I was told often in words and actions by my mother that privilege carries an obligation,” Susan added.

“I have benefitted from so many unearned privileges. They have given me an education and access to resources that allow me to be useful to others, if I listen to what people tell me they and their communities need,” she said. “This is what gives me purpose and gives me joy.”

For information, call 220-1875 or email susanhales2015@gmail.com.

SIDS holds benefit run Oct. 11

The Northwest Infant Survival and SIDS Alliance ninth annual Run for the Angels begins at 2:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct 11, at McKuen Park in Coeur d’Alene.

The run provides funds to

support families affected by a sudden infant death or lost pregnancy. It also provides safe sleep training, sleep sacks, car seats and safety checks.

For information, call 206-582-6191 or email info@nwsids.org.

HBPA promotes Hispanic businesses, education and cultural events

As president of the Hispanic Business and Professional Association (HBPA) since 2018, Isabel Mazcot de Torres understands the struggles and cultures of many Hispanic people in the region.

She was born in Mexico and emigrated when she was eight with her family who came in the late 1980s to Wenatchee seeking opportunities. Her father worked in the fields and orchards. Her mother worked in a warehouse.

Crossing the border without documents, they were granted amnesty and filed to be residents. She and her two sisters are citizens and are helping their mother become a citizen. Her family moved for a few years to Arizona where her father worked in construction. He died there in 2011.

In Arizona, Isabel worked with a school district, enrolling Spanish speaking students and interpreting for parents. She began working with a credit union.

In 2009, she moved to Spokane with her two children to work with a credit union as the point of contact for Spanish speakers. She earned a degree in human services in 2017 at Spokane Falls Community College. Her two sisters and mother now live in Spokane, too.

"I volunteer with the HBPA because I understand the struggles of many Latinx people. I know where they are coming from," Isabel said.

When she first came to Spokane in 2009, she met only a few Hispanic people, including her husband, until HBPA invited her to participate. She volunteered to represent Mexico in the Unity in the Community "Cultural Village."

"When I did that, I had a sense of connection and felt involved, seeing people from other countries who were part of the cultural village," she said.

After that, she became a member of HBPA. Now as she volunteers, she learns about what it offers and what she can offer.

"Since I found HBPA, I have felt better living in Spokane. We are seeing the Hispanic population in Spokane grow and the need to provide services," said Isabel.

HBPA, which was started in the 1980s under a different name,



Isabel Mazcot heads Hispanic Business Professional Assn.

is an association and a foundation that has offered scholarships since 1993. It also does a Hispanic graduation ceremony.

"That's big for me. We are underrepresented in higher education because it's hard for parents to help pay for their children to go to college," said Isabel, who is one of eight officers for the association and foundation, along with two foundation directors.

HBPA's mission is to promote Hispanic/Latinx cultural, business, professional, educational and social justice interests in the area. It works to connect members to build professional and personal relationships, offer professional development, provide access to resources, develop cultural education and increase community involvement.

In a recent statement, it said it stands with the Black community against racism and inequality, supporting Black Lives Matter, recognizing that communities of color have been victims of a system that oppresses people.

This year, HBPA established an office at the Lorraine Building, at 308 W. First Ave., at the invitation of the building's owner.

The office has become a Latinx resource center, offering different services. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays, staffed by a receptionist who is a student at Eastern Washington University.

During COVID-19, HBPA has been helping families with food, health kits and financial services with funds from a grant.

to resources.

"Hispanic business people trust us," said Isabel, who has visited several and chatted with them to learn of their struggles and to tell them of the Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans and the Paycheck Protection Programs, offering small loans and grants during COVID-19. By informing them of their rights and helping them apply, Isabel enabled eight businesses to receive funds.

Member meetings on second Wednesdays are for anyone and have guest speakers. They are now virtual, announced to their email list of 310 and in their bimonthly newsletter.

One annual cultural event they sponsor is Dia de los Muertos, a Latin American holiday remembering and celebrating people who have died. It will be on Sunday, Nov. 1. Last year, 400 came to Spokane Valley Hazen & Jaeger Funeral Home.

"We plan a virtual ceremony with a video production featuring interviews with people in the community who tell the history of Dia de los Muertos. A mariachi band from Eastern Washington University will play. The video feed will last about four hours," Isabel said.

In addition, families will set up altars in the Hazen & Jaeger parking lot with objects related to those who died. Some will set up altars virtually. There will be a drive through to see the altars from noon to 5:30 p.m., Nov. 1.

Isabel said it's a family event, but open for anyone to come to learn about the culture. Information will be at hbpa-spokane.net and on Facebook.

HBPA has also drawn 400 people to its Viva Vino and Brew event raising funds for scholarships. Usually in February, it was moved to April 2021 because of

COVID, and may be virtual.

Many in the business community support scholarships. HBPA granted \$15,500 in 2020 and \$12,000 last year.

In social justice work, HBPA collaborates with other organizations, like the Spokane Immigrant Rights Coalition, RAIZ and others working on policies and issues affecting communities of color.

HBPA helped start the Spokane Coalition of Color four years ago with the Asia Pacific Islander Coalition and the NAACP. It holds nonpartisan candidate forums and forums on issues which impact communities of color.

"I'm proud HBPA is growing because of the work of previous and current board, the members and supporters. I thank my family in the U.S., many who were undocumented, needed resources, and now are citizens," said Isabel, who grew up Catholic.

She also is bookkeeper five hours a week at a local parish. For her, the Spanish Mass is a way to connect with the Latinx community. The church allows workshops on immigrant rights and business practices.

"Faith is part of my commitment to work with Hispanic people. It's in my heart, guiding me in what I should do," she said. "My father told me to give and not expect to receive. I pass that on to my children. Challenges come. At times I question if I am doing the right thing or doing enough. I turn to my faith and pray, talking to the Creator. That helps me continue.

"Faith and hope are important," she said, adding, "Jesus accepted people regardless of their faith. Without faith and religion, I would not be who I am."

For information, call 655-1753 or email hbpa-spokane@gmail.com.

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Historian is sensitive as he selects what to include on black churches

Continued from page 1
we read about Dietrich Bonhoefer's resistance to Nazism and were concerned that most Germans acquiesced," Dale said. "I realized we could not be passive."

In 1973, he earned a bachelor's in history, then a master's in 1976 and a doctoral degree in 1980 at the University of Washington. After teaching five years at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla., he came to Whitworth in 1985.

"My interest is explaining the impact of social, political, economic and religious forces on American culture and life in the Northwest before and during the last 100 years," he said. "I teach history of the late 19th and the 20th century through the prism of the present. How did we get to where we are?"

Interest in integrating faith and learning led him to help form Whitworth's Weyerhaeuser Center for Christian Faith and Learning in 1998.

Dale is fascinated that the Northwest—the "least-churched" area of the U.S.—has been significantly influenced by people with religious convictions.

"While threads of Christianity have evolved away from mainline Protestants and Catholics toward non-denominational and evangelical churches, mainline churches have had a strong influence in public policy on social justice through the Faith Action Network in Olympia and the Oregon Council of Ecumenical Ministries in Salem," he said, adding that nondenominational



Dale Soden receives honor for his work in history.

and evangelical churches have recently addressed human trafficking, poverty and homelessness.

In his first book, *The Rev. Mark Matthews: Activist in the Progressive Era*, published by the University of Washington Press, Dale discusses how the pastor of one of Seattle's biggest churches reached thousands through a radio ministry, a new media then.

Today Dale believes that after the pandemic, tech media will impact the ways people worship.

"It will not destroy individual congregations but will affect them," he said.

On the intersection of economics and politics, he said an ongoing challenge is to make sure capitalism, which overwhelmingly benefits those with resources, does not make it too difficult for people to move up the ladder.

"The wealth gap is a challenge we have tried to manage for

more than 100 years. The church works to prevent the economy from overly benefitting the few at the expense of the many," he said. "There is no question our economic system has provided opportunity for people to rise, but from the late 19th century to the present, we have seen capitalism increase the gap and so we needed to create a safety net.

"Racism, sexism, discrimination against gays and lesbians are ongoing challenges," Dale continued. "We live in a culture struggling with white supremacy, male power and homophobia. Christians are not of one mind on those issues."

He said some pastors, preachers and theologians use the Bible to justify their previous views.

"Religion can provide critique of or reinforcement of beliefs," he said. "Many do not develop a critical religious view until they have

adopted a political, economic or social view. Children learn Bible stories. Later they use religion as a lens to affirm or critique social or political values."

While Dale sees this era as different from the 1960s when there was an unpopular war and an anti-war movement, he sees comparisons of the civil rights/black power movements then with today's Black Lives Matters protests after the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, recasting the focus to policing.

In both times, protests stirred politicians to call for "law and order." A difference is more white people are involved now, he said.

"Sadly, even with the election of Barack Obama, social and political changes have been exceedingly slow. In the early 1960s, there was hope Americans could change attitudes, practices and policies on race because of the Civil Rights Act, the War on Poverty and housing laws. Many feel we did not change hearts and minds, because black people still experience more fear than whites."

From studying the Northwest's history of race, Dale advocates for racial justice and supports Whitworth's move to have more diverse faculty, students and classes.

He wrote on black churches and pastors on the West Coast from 1850 to 2000 in Seattle and Portland in *Outsiders in a Promised Land: Religious Activists in Pacific Northwest History* by Oregon State University Press.

Next, he will focus on churches in the Bay area and Los Angeles.

"I discuss activism among black pastors and churches, and how religious leaders influence issues to make the world a better place," he said. "In early days, black pastors fought laws restricting blacks. Oregon attempted to exclude blacks, so few settled there."

In 1890, Calvary Baptist and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal churches formed in Spokane. Because there were few African Americans here, churches were havens for them. Early incidents led the NAACP to form in Spokane in 1919.

From World War II to the mid-1950s, Dale said West Coast black pastors were activists, setting the stage for the mid-1960s to 1970s civil rights movement. The drug war in the 1980s and 1990s took a toll on black communities, he said.

"Since the 1960s, many black pastors have navigated between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. on black empowerment, depending less on white liberals and government to address justice issues," Dale said.

As a white history professor at a white Christian university identifying documents and facts to tell the story, he said history is about making selections.

Despite that, Dale said a black pastor friend in Oakland and black pastors he has interviewed keep encouraging him to tell the story.

For information, call 777-4433 or email dsoden@whitworth.edu.

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NAACP increases participation to address emerging, ongoing racism

As president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Spokane since 2017, Kurtis Robinson has implemented changes that have increased participation, resulting in record meeting attendance on numerous occasions.

The organization's membership and executive committee membership have grown.

"People are hungry for champions who will get out in front on issues," said Kurtis, who calls members to be the change that is needed. "We have set in motion 'boots on the ground' advocacy, moving people into spaces so those in power may no longer be comfortable to have conversations about us without us."

The history of Spokane is full of disparities in access socially, economically, politically, educationally and in health.

"We do not want to continue that historic trend. We need to be consulted before decisions are made, not after," he said.

Kurtis said NAACP Spokane represents multiple communities of color interested in addressing police accountability, criminal justice, transparency and accountability in addressing racial disparities in health care, political, private and educational systems.

"People are ready to participate in real work," he said, adding that NAACP Spokane is connecting with other community of color organizations, like the Spokane Coalition of Color, the Hispanic Business and Professional Association,



Kurtis Robinson has been branch president since 2017.

the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition and the Muslims for Community Action.

"We see who our allies are," he said. "We may disagree on philosophy, but by working together there can be real solutions."

Kurtis calls for challenging power structures that maintain systemic and institutional racism because what happened historically and still goes on is harmful to communities of color.

"Some are so embedded in the system that even though they voice opposition, they may be inept or inert to challenge or change it. It has been clear with protests of George Floyd's murder and COVID-19," he said.

"Just because you stand next to me does not make you my ally. Just because I don't agree with something you have done, does not make you my enemy.

People's actions are the marker to show where they are at in the struggle for racial equity and justice for our communities of color," he said.

One effort in motion is the push for an Office for Civil Rights for the city and county.

For now, Kurtis said NAACP Spokane is working with the Human Rights Commission to submit a proposal to the city and county by the end of the year. Included are a list of 136 civil rights complaints made to the task force since 2019, in addition to the 100 letters and phone calls

related to concerns at the Spokane County Jail, Kurtis said.

"Systemic racism is real here, and Spokane has made significant progress in exposing that reality through organizing to draw more media coverage, and through stronger relationships among the Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, Latinx and black communities," he said. "We are poised to address historic trends that have gone on for too long."

Kurtis said NAACP Spokane is in a better financial position than in previous years. It is also on the verge of drawing in new leaders.

He attributes that to more visibility gained through sustained meaningful engagement and recent virtual forums as part of their monthly General Membership Meetings on third Mondays.

The virtual gatherings have included panels and education on mass incarceration, native issues, police accountability, racism in the American church and mentoring youth.

"We will continue to carry on meaningful conversations and high level community engagement," he said. "The forums give voice to multiple community members sharing their institutional expertise, lived experiences

and organizational programs."

The September meeting program was conversations about NAACP Spokane's mission and organization.

The meeting at 7 p.m., Monday, Oct. 19, will continue the focus on 2020 branch elections.

While the fall convention will not be held, the branch will award the Michael P. Anderson scholarship and a new scholarship for finance and business majors.

Before school started, NAACP Spokane administered COVID funds to provide internet access and IT support for students and families of color in collaboration with Spokane Public Schools.

It also entered into a cultural audit of the sheriff's office with Eastern Washington University.

Its mission is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of all citizens, engaging youth, removing barriers to voting and political representation, addressing environmental and climate justice, and seeking enactment of laws securing civil rights.

For information, call 209-2425 x 1141, email presidentspokaneaacc@gmail.com or message on Facebook.

NAACP panel explores issues in mentoring youth in Spokane

Devon Wilson, NAACP Spokane Criminal Justice Committee outgoing chair, moderated the Aug. 17 NAACP Spokane panel on "Mentoring Solutions for Youth in Spokane."

Panelists were Curtis Hampton, a youth mentor who is on the Carl Maxey Center Board and involved with Smart Justice; Jerrell Haynes, a small business owner and president of the Spokane School Board who mentors youth as a way to pay back for growing up in a family with a single mother; Walter Kendricks, who mentors youth as pastor of Morningstar Baptist Church and is a member of the Washington Commission on African American Affairs, and William Davis, who mentors with Spokane Public Schools, beginning as a volunteer coming from gang experience and who has turned his life around.

They spoke of the need for patience in building relationships, non-judgmental listening, long-

term commitment, and openness to address systemic change and racism. They also said that the schools continually seek volunteer mentors.

Devon asked each to share how long they have been mentoring, how the mentorship has impacted youth, how mentoring has impacted them as mentors, what mistakes they have made, how COVID-19 has affected their mentoring, how mentoring helps the public health mental health crisis, and how mentoring helps youth face racism in a diverse culture.

To hear the full panel discussion, listen to the NAACP Spokane panel on mentoring youth on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/spokane.naacp/>.

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Naturopathic doctor serves community as well as his clinic clients

By Kaye Hult

During the time naturopathic doctor Toby Hallowitz has practiced in Coeur d'Alene, he has reached out to the community to introduce people—besides his clients—to the reality that nature plays a crucial part in keeping people healthy.

One opportunity was on a mid-August Wednesday when he offered a presentation on "Nature Immersion and Immune Enhancement" to about 20 people at the Shared Harvest Community Garden in Coeur d'Alene.

The lecture was a joint program of Shared Harvest, Pilgrim's Market and Toby's practice, Coeur d'Alene Acupuncture and Holistic Healing.

Toby described himself as a proponent of "ecotherapy," which teaches "how focusing on being in nature affects our immune system and our health," he said.

He said connecting with nature can affect a person's immune response to the COVID-19 virus, citing research and a video from Harvard Medical School.

Toby's calling came shortly after he married Brigitte and was ill with Crohn's disease. He was fresh out of college, where he had studied pre-med, hoping to follow in his father's footsteps and become a doctor.

During his junior year, however, he did not like what he learned about where the medical profession was going. Suddenly, he lost his purpose.

He tried conventional therapies from his gastroenterologist, which did not help. He was very sick with vomiting, diarrhea and pain.

About that time, Brigitte's parents asked them to come to Austria, where Brigitte had grown up, high in the Tyrol mountains, to help on their Alm—seasonal mountain pasture—high in an Alpine valley for two or three weeks.

"I had not been in nature like that before," he said.

From their grass-fed cows, they collected milk, from which they made cheese and other products. They made spelt bread. They drank mountain spring water, which was alive with vital energy. They breathed fresh air.

One day, Toby took a walk on his own, which he hadn't done there before. It was meditative.

"My senses became alive," he remembered. "The nature was so intense. I felt the sun warm-

ing my arms. The colors were brighter. My eyes were drawn to every passing bush and boulder. I smelled the sweetness of the forest. I tasted the dried dirt kicked up by my boots.

"My mind quieted, hearing the sounds—the chatter of birds, the crackle and babble of the stream," he continued. "Then came the realization that I no longer felt sick. I wasn't sick. I had forgotten what health felt like. I remembered living."

As he walked up the trail, Toby found new purpose.

"It was my calling," he said. "It spoke to me with all my senses. It was my voice deep inside my chest and my head, and it was also the voice of the mountain and the trees in front of me. It was strong and powerful, and it said, matter-of-factly, 'This is me. This is how I need to live my life. I want to live in tune with nature, I want to help people, everyone—not just the sick—to learn how to live healthy. I want to learn this and I want to teach this'."

Toby returned to the U.S. with a focus, but no knowledge of how to bring it to pass. He learned about nature medicine, which led him to study at the National College of Natural Medicine in Portland, Ore. He graduated in 2004 with a doctor of naturopathic medicine and master of science in Oriental medicine degrees.

While studying, he and Brigitte took in his grandmother, who suffered from dementia. She had been in an assisted living facility. During the years she lived with them, Toby took her off her medications. While she still dealt with dementia, she came alive, he said. They took her with them everywhere. When they left the Northwest for western New York, she came. He saw once again in her the healing power of nature.

Toby built a practice in a small, rural community in an area depressed because Welch's Grape Juice, its main employer, had moved out.

While there, he reached out to the community to offer classes in Qi Gong, generally outside in a park, but inside in the winter.

He and Brigitte had loved living in the Northwest, so in 2011, they returned, this time to the Spokane/Coeur d'Alene area.

In Coeur d'Alene, Pilgrim's Market owner Joe Hamilton built a clinic. Toby agreed to run it.

"I was drawn to how I would not only see patients in the clinic, but also serve the community, such as at school," he said.

"In addition to clinic work, I gave talks on topics, such as what foods help improve health. I offered advice on how to cope when a person can't eat bread, cheese or eggs for breakfast. I taught Qi Gong. I offered lectures on how to make bone broth soup, baking with alternative flours and sweeteners, and benefits of black seed oil," Toby said.

Brigitte, Toby and their son Lukas shared Austrian recipes for people on dietary restrictions.

"I was available in the natural healing department for an hour at 4:30 p.m., Wednesdays, to answer questions, and to be a resource for people to test the waters about what natural medicine can do for them," he said.

After working in the Pilgrim's Market clinic for five years, he realized he wanted to practice medicine in his own location, so he moved to an office just off Third St for three years while he regrouped.

With his move to larger quarters at 810 E Sherman Ave. this spring, Toby has room to expand not only his practice but also his community engagements.

He still consults with customers at Pilgrim's Market for a small stipend.

Now he has a community room for teaching Qi Gong, for book clubs, lectures, meditations and more.

Toby plans to connect with the Coeur d'Alene Art Association to display local artwork in the clinic and to be part of the monthly Artwalk.

He still feels called to engage with the community.

"I'm making the clinic about nature medicine," he said. "It's important to connect with nature on a deeper level in different ways. I want my practice to be about offering myself and the clinic as a community resource."

Toby hopes his lectures will inspire a passion to heal the community through integration and immersion with nature. They will include forestry, environment, recycling and art therapy.

His practice gives him the infrastructure to support community events to improve lives.

"We can be in nature here," he said. "Just living here versus living in an urban area, we're healthier. When we slow walk

and tune into nature with all five senses, our health parameters improve, and even more when we practice Qi Gong in nature.

"We all know our assets here are our beaches, the lake and the trails. Our health as a community is much stronger because of the environment in which we live," Toby said.

He believes COVID numbers are higher where people are not in nature.

"This pandemic shows how essential it is for us to participate and actively engage in this, our

prized foundation of who we are here," he said. "Ultimately, the more involved my patients are in nature, the more healing occurs on both the individual and community level.

He will offer the community opportunities to tune in to "our bodies and spirits through nature," and is bringing in a counselor who focuses on ecotherapy, helping the community reconnect with nature.



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350 Spokane's poster lists 12 steps individuals and groups can take

The 350 Spokane Interfaith Committee on Climate Change recently developed a poster listing 12 actions individuals, faith communities and businesses can take to challenge climate change.

To invite action, steps are verb forms ending with "-ate": facilitate, motivate, educate, advocate, reallocate, detoxicate, anticipate, accentuate, eliminate, contemplate, rejuvenate and activate.

One column lists practical ideas for individuals. The second column is for faith communities, the third is for advocating government action, the fourth lists organizations to join and the fifth column gives websites.

"People of faith have reason to care about creation," said Patrick McCormick, professor of religious studies at Gonzaga University since 1994 and leader of the 350 Spokane Interfaith Committee.

It includes people from Catholic, Episcopal, Jewish, Methodist, Buddhist and other traditions.

"We educate people on the environment. 350 Spokane advocates in the city and state for legislation to reduce carbon emissions and clean the air," he said.

"Many people feel paralyzed by the size of the task to address climate change. It's hard to know where to start. The chart offers bite-sized actions," he said.

"Joining groups helps multiply and sustain energy, as Bill McKibben, co-founder of 350.org said. If I act as an individual, it's harder for me to sustain action than in a group," Pat said.

"We will be working to reduce climate change the rest of our lives. We need intergenerational commitment and energy to sustain us. That comes from spiritual resources of prayer, meditation, reading and studying.

"I came into environmental issues through teaching a class on eating and Eucharist," he said. "Reading about the industrial agricultural system piqued my interest in environment."

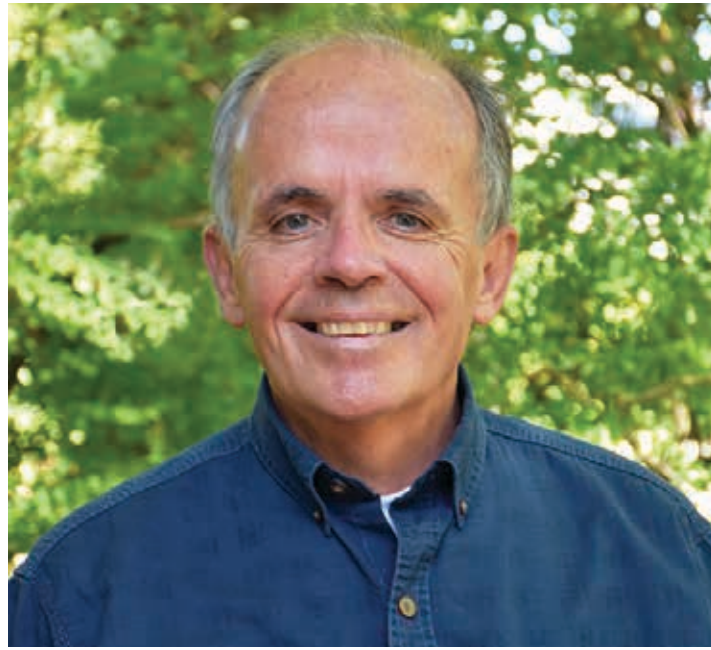
Pat's wife, Guay Tippett, a retired therapist, took a class on environment from Brian Henning at Gonzaga, who helped start 350 Spokane in 2017 as part of the international 350 group. Pat joined in 2018. Motivation for Pat and Guay also came from the birth of their first grandchild, a grandson, in June.

"His future will be shaped by how we address climate change," he said.

Two members of 350 Spokane on the City of Spokane's Sustainable Action Committee are working on the Fossil Free Spokane Campaign.

In 2018, they had success when the City Council passed a 100 percent renewable electricity ordinance.

Pat lived in various communities on the East Coast as



Pat McCormick leads Interfaith Committee of 350 Spokane.

his father moved around in the Air Force. In studies at the Gregorian University in Rome, Pat earned a doctoral degree in moral theology in the 1980s. He taught ethics and Catholic social teachings at Mary Immaculate Seminary in Allentown, Penn., for five years, and taught at St. John's University in the 1990s.

"I am interested in social justice questions related to the environment, because the burdens of climate change are uneven, mostly suffered by poor communities and nations. In the U.S., climate change is disproportionately felt by minorities and communities of color, especially with COVID-19 and many living near refineries, waste plants and toxic waste dumps.

"Climate change is also an economic and social justice issue. Recently, Christians have been rethinking our relationship to nature, especially in documents from the World Council of Churches and Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*," he said, noting that modern capitalistic societies have lost their relationship to creation.

Pat said Genesis 1 stories speak of creation's glory, grandeur and harmony. The picture of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2 shows different life forms cohabitating and interrelated. For him, that contrasts to "the western monoculture of the industrial

plantation," Pat said.

Many theological documents address climate change as an issue of environment and systematic theology.

The 350 Spokane Interfaith Committee seeks to reach faith groups with online resources and its blog at <https://360spokane.org/350spokane-blog>, but it's hard to reach new people because of COVID.

350 Spokane has open monthly meetings at 6:30 p.m. on 2nd Tuesday evenings, often with speakers.

Pat said COVID has taught him several things:

- Communities and societies can make significant changes easily and quickly. Congress passed trillion-dollar packages to help people.
- Many people are social distancing and wearing masks.
- Good leaders can make a difference. Some communities and nations have responded well.
- COVID has reinforced existing demographic inequities. He questions a lawn sign, "We Are All in This Together," saying, "We are not in it together. Some neighborhoods are overcrowded, economically insecure and lack housing. Structural inequities and injustices affect comorbidity to disease, so some people are more susceptible to contract or die from COVID."
- COVID shows "we have to

respond to a threat before we see it," Pat said. "If we wait until it is in our neighborhood or water is lapping on our doorstep from climate change, it's too late."

"Science informs us of things we can't see, like the exponential growth of COVID from two cases to one million," said Pat. "While the virus is too small to see with our eyes, science can help us see its effects.

"Climate change and COVID are both threats," he added. "Science moves us beyond anecdotal or personal threat. We need to think long-term how to reach those who think COVID or climate change are hoaxes. Statistics and numbers persuade few. Personal connection is more important.

"Faith communities' responsibility is for the poor, widow, orphan and stranger. We need to tap into the call to be compassionate," he said. "We need to reach out to both the stranger in need and the stranger with whom we disagree. We need to aid those overlooked by society and communicate with those who think differently. People watching MSNBC and Fox disagree and do not talk with each other, but need to."

Pat listed factors in climate change denial:

- 1) Economic interests of the fossil fuel industry operate by the playbook the tobacco industry used when it denied smoking caused cancer. They try to confuse, obfuscate and muddy the waters to deny, deceive and delay.
 - 2) People's economic self-interests mean those who use fossil fuels want the industry to continue to sell fuel.
 - 3) Many who work for and invest in energy companies are afraid of losing jobs and income.
 - 4) Ordinary people realize their lives have to change to reduce their carbon footprint: flying and driving less, eating less meat. It calls for sacrifices.
- "At the heart of denial of climate change is the fear that it is too hard a problem to address," he said.
- Already COVID has had** major impact on people, and they have made changes. Millions are

no longer flying. People in the airline industry face massive layoffs with fewer flights, said Pat, who did not teach in London this summer or in Florence this fall, and did not visit his grandson in Atlanta.

Of the 12 action steps on the 350 Spokane poster, Pat said his focus is "educate," step #3. For him, that means reading, advocating and talking to people.

He has also looked at his lifestyle. Before COVID, he biked and used GU's free bus pass. Now he is considering renewable energy for his house, is turning off appliances and reducing water use.

"We are also deciding what candidates to support," he said.

He writes letters each month to representatives, donates to advocacy groups and reads about legislation on climate issues, like drilling, pipelines and oil trains.

"What I learn creeps into my conversations. I have spoken at City Council meetings and written a guest opinion in the Spokesman-Review on 'What Religion Has to Say about Climate Change'," Pat said.

"It's inspiring to go to 350 Spokane's meetings and hear what others are doing," he said.

For information, call 230-5018 or email mccormick@gonzaga.edu, info@350spokane.org, or download the chart at 350spokane.org.

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May we arise from the deluge of discouragement to save democracy

I'm overwhelmed and discouraged—deluged by 205,000+ COVID-19 deaths, more police killings of African Americans, media covering violent extremists more than peaceful protestors, Ruth Bader Ginsberg's death creating a vacancy on the Supreme Court, devastation from flames of West Coast wildfires, flooding and winds from one hurricane after another, and a President unwilling to commit to a peaceful transition of power.

Uncertainty generated by the nation's leader on the election tops them all. His debunking voting by mail raises questions about who owns voting machines and what tampering in-person voters may face. More media need to ask about that.

Who owns the three companies that have a monopoly on voting machines? What is the record of errors in elections from these private vendors? Does a member of the President's family hold a trademark for machines? Why are the companies so secretive? What's the potential for Russian, Chinese or even

U.S. tampering and hacking? Do these machines have a paper trail?

While Washington votes by mail, most states rely on voting machines, voter registration systems and election reporting tools from these companies. Some in the computer security industry have voiced concern since voting machines were adopted after the 2000 punch-card fiasco in Florida.

Compounding that, as our leader talks of the election being rigged, he asks state legislatures to "free" electors from their commitment to reflect the popular vote.

We need to keep asking questions and urge media to ask questions that do more than chase the latest tweet. After 20,000+ lies, might talk of a rigged election be true? Do post office changes deflect media from asking other questions?

We must not let confusion discourage some to think their vote won't count.

Democracy takes work—persistent work, perseverance in challenging corruption, propaganda, power grabbers and those wanting one-party rule.

Was it ever this bad? I remember Communist baiting in Congress, assassination of leaders, water cannons used as weapons to disperse protestors, devastating disasters, election corruption, protests of unjust wars, and racist exclusion and oppression.

Has democracy ever been so overtly threatened? Yes, all around the world. Those who don't want a dictator to divert attention from the widening wealth gap know they must rise out of their despair and act, using their unique insights and skills to improve the community, society and world.

This issue's stories are examples of how people are doing that:

- A woman arranges to translate ballots for refugees and immigrants.
- A history professor records the influence of black pastors on the West Coast.
- A Hispanic group supports businesses, celebrates their culture and opens doors.
- The NAACP continues more than a century of challenges, uniting people to identify and undo systemic racism.
- Naturopathic doctor encourages people

to find health and renewal in nature.

- 350 Spokane lists 12 steps of action, believing its possible to halt climate change.

- A mother's struggles motivate her to form a nonprofit to mentor youth at risk.

- Frustrated by the wildfires in the region, many set in motion the organizations geared to engage in the recovery efforts.

- The news stories, ads and the calendar also share opportunities for involvement.

Listing that content, I sighed. I'm not alone. I'm overwhelmed by so many being concerned—people with a history of taking action that brings change.

May we be encouraged and renewed by the caring and calls for justice in live-stream sermons, Zoom meetings, webinar forums, Facebook posts, email exchanges, personal conversations, newspaper-radio-TV news and feet moving on streets.

Yes, vote. Then continue to act, raise voices and walk humbly, walk on and on and on—faithful, hopeful and resilient.

Mary Stamp
Editor

Reports

Sounding Board

Responses

Faith and nonprofit communities respond to area's recent wildfires

Faith communities, volunteer organizations and the Red Cross have been responding to providing relief following wildfires in August and particularly after Labor Day winds in Central and Eastern Washington and North Idaho. Now they prepare for next steps for phases of immediate and long term recovery using structures in place with national, regional and local faith communities.

Ongoing giving provides resources for immediate response. Appeals for donations continue. Congregation members and individuals also provide tangible ways to respond. The following is a sampling of actions.

Volunteer Organizations

Active in Disaster (VOADS), other faith groups, the American Red Cross, Spokane County Emergency Management, Whitman County Community Management, the United Methodist Church, Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, VOAD NW and WAVOAD coordinated a Multi-Agency Resource Center, setting up a tent Friday and Saturday, Sept. 25 and, in Malden for people needing help.

The Episcopal Diocese of Spokane is collecting Disaster Relief Funds for those affected by fires within our communities.

The diocese is also working with volunteer organizations and Episcopal Relief and Development, organizing to assist communities, neighbors and friends.

"Our community and many others across the western United States and Canada are experiencing devastation to their communities by wildfires," said Mallory Davis, bishop's executive assistant.

"We have members in Malden, Davenport and friends in the Omak and Chelan areas affected by the devastation there, and we have teams responding throughout our communities to discern the needs of those people.

"We hold everyone affected by these terrible fires in our prayers," she said.

For information, call 624-3191 or visit <https://www.spokanedioocese.org> to donate.

The Northern Lights Region

of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) work through Week of Compassion, its disaster relief organization to respond to wildfire and hurricane damage.

This group works ecumenically with other relief organizations and Church World Service, said Sandy Messick,

Northern Lights region minister.

"They have already been in touch with me and are reaching out to affected Disciples in the region," she said. "We have only had a couple who actually lost homes, more that had to be evacuated but thankfully their homes were not lost."

For information, visit weekofcompassion.org.

United Methodist leaders

from across the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Alaska and parts of Montana and Canada have been meeting to respond to the wildfires of the region as people are evacuated, damage has spread and people face loss of lives, homes, other property and livelihoods.

"People of faith want to do good in the face of danger, but we need to work to ensure that the good we intend does not accidentally do harm," said Bishop Elaine Stanovsky of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area in an online message.

"As we seek to respond to these wildfires, I acknowledge how weary everyone is right now from these demands, on top of coronavirus, on top of dismantling racism, on top of escalating partisanship that is eroding our ability to work together for the common good," she said.

Disaster response teams in the Greater Northwest Area act "as the hands and feet of Jesus in communities across the area and in partnership with local churches," she said.

"These wildfires show how devastating these disasters can be," Elaine said, "yet this year it seems like one crisis erupts on top of the next. So, we call out to God, seeking mercy. Seeking relief. Seeking just one day when we do not feel danger near at hand and it doesn't feel like the weight of the world is on each of our shoulders."

She called for prayers for the safety of friends and neighbors, for those who have already suffered loss of life, for the first responders and wild land firefighters.

"Join me in praying for God's good creation, that we may tend to her more carefully," she continued. "Join me, also, in a call to action through our gifts of financial resources."

The Pacific Northwest and Oregon-Idaho Conferences have each received emergency grants of \$10,000 from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to support response efforts, not enough to meet needs.

Ministry settings planning to provide relief support in their communities work

with their district superintendents and local churches or director of connectional ministries with other ministry settings to address community needs and requests from local government authorities and established disaster response agencies such as the Red Cross for relief support. Some churches designated to be used for wildfire relief support activities.

For information, visit <https://greater-nw.org/responding-to-wildfires-across-the-greater-northwest-area/>

Michelle Mitchell, a Disciples of Christ pastor serving Trinity United Methodist in Ritzville and Harrington United Methodist, has found in her four years at Harrington that most people in the congregation take care of each other.

Members have had losses because of the fire than ranged from Rockland to Davenport along Hwy. 28. Some have lost pastures and seek places to graze their cattle. Some had cattle they had to put down because their hooves had been so badly burned. One farmer lost fences, which will take \$10,000 to replace.

"Members of the congregation are helping each other as they usually do," she said, telling how other farmers helped a farmer who was hospitalized complete his harvest.

Wildfires inspired action

of individuals. In a posting on Facebook, one woman shared what she was able to do by contacting a congregation in Coeur d'Alene that helped deliver meat to Malden.

Even though she has no car and can barely walk, she made phone calls from her couch and arranged collection of donations of meat and a driver to deliver to victims of fires in Inchelium.

In a comment on Facebook, a friend reported that Omak stores were out of meat because of losing freezers full of food with the power outages.

She added that many of the tribe were out fighting fires and there was need for some backup cowboys to help round up cows that were roaming and start fence repairs.

Fueled by a heat wave and winds, wildfires in California, Oregon and Washington have killed at least 20 people and led to evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people as more than 3.5 million acres have burned.

Lutheran Disaster Response of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

is engaging with three Lutheran social service agencies and five synods to assess the situation and determine response. Immediate needs response will include food and necessities, plus emotional and spiritual care.

Lutheran Disaster Response is receiving donations at elca.org/wildfires.

Locally, Cathy Steiner of the Northwest Intermountain Synod said that the synod is assessing the damage from a dozen fires in the area so it can direct funds to areas of most need.

For information, call 838-9871.

Scott Cooper, director

of Parish Social Ministries with Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, said Catholic Charities is responding to needs from the Cold Springs fire in the Okanogan, the Pearl Hill Fire in Douglas County and the Babb Rd. Fire in Malden and Pine City in Whitman County.

Steps toward recovery began with two North Central Washington groups through response of the Okanogan County Long Term Recovery Group, which had helped after the Carlton Complex Fire in 2014, and the Unmet Needs Round Table.

They have case managers in conversation with people and are acting as a clearing house for agencies and congregations to come together and coordinate efforts to reduce duplication and assure efficient use of resources, Scott said.

The Red Cross housed 20 households from Malden at the Ramada Inn in Spokane, he added.

Catholic Charities has some funds in restricted accounts available and sent appeals to its donors for the wildfires.

There is also response to the Palmer Hill Fire in August and a small fire on Custom Hill Rd north of Curlew that destroyed some primary residences.

"I'm waiting for referrals for specific needs requests. We provided bottled water when Brewster High School was an evacuation center. It's closed now. About 17 evacuees from Bridgeport lost their homes. Most were agricultural workers on H-2 visas to work six months. Orchard owners negotiated to house them.

"The wildfire disasters entered the medium term phase of recovery by early September," said Scott.

For the Babb Rd. Fire, the Red Cross and United Way of Whitman County arranged for Rosalia churches to receive donations. Scott said they were overwhelmed and had to turn away donations.

For information, call 358-4372.

Calendar of Events

- Oct 1**
 - **“Respect for Human Dignity,”** People Who Care Online Transitions Fundraiser, 12 to 12:30 p.m., help4women.ejoinme.org/pwcregister
 - **YWCA Women of Achievement 2020** Virtual Spotlight celebration, 6 p.m., [rsvp at ywcaspokane.org](http://rsvp.at.ywcaspokane.org); to Oct 31 YWCA One Mission Campaign, online to raise awareness of domestic violence and \$275,000 for 17,000 women, children and families, 326-1190, ywcaspokane.org, event.gives/woa2020
 - **Greater Spokane County Meals on Wheels,** annual gala and auction, online silent auction, live bidding and virtual celebration of 41 years of service. 8 p.m., 924-6976
 - **“She Traveled Solo: Strong Women in the Early 20th Century,”** Tessa Hulls, intrepid female adventurers at the turn of the 20th century before the right to vote or to own property, 7 p.m., info@humanities.org or 206-682-1770
- Oct 3**
 - **“Living in a Time of Fear,”** Coffee Talk, Spokane F&VS, panelists Gen Heywood of Veradale UCC; Steven Smith, retired journalism professor, and Roger Hudson of Covenant UMC, Zoom, 10 a.m., spokanefav.com
- Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31** • **Southside Community Center,** Estate Sale Fundraiser Auction, 3151 E 27th Ave. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 535-0803
- Oct 4**
 - **“Listen God is Calling,”** Companion Live Zoom Worship Service, Northwest Intermountain Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its companion Ulanga Kilombero Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, nwimsynod.org
 - **Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience** of Eastern Washington and North Idaho, Virtual Vigil for the Healing of the Earth, 5 to 6:30 p.m., <https://www.facebook.com/Faith-Leaders-and-Leaders-of-Conscience-Eastern-Washington-and-North-Idaho-2065038930200180>
- Oct 6**
 - **Virtual Housing Washington** Conference, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., housing.wa.org
 - **“Victim Justice: Cancel Culture and Alternatives for Victims,”** Lutheran Community Services NW, 4:30 to 6 p.m., lcsnw.org
- Oct 6, 13, 20, 27** • **The Mourning Project,** Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, Veradale United Church of Christ, 611 N. Progress, in its parking lot and front yard, 6 to 6:30 p.m.
- Oct 7**
 - **Spokane Candidates Climate Change** Forum, Gonzaga’s Environmental Studies Department, 350 Spokane, the Lands Council, Spokane Riverkeeper, Sunrise Movement Spokane, Community Building, Futurewise, Brian Henning as moderator, 7 p.m., environmentalstudies@gonzaga.edu or gonzaga.edu/envsevents
 - **Police Brutality Die In,** Human Rights Activist Coterie of Spokane, Spokane County, 1116 W Broadway, 6 p.m.
- Oct 8, 21** • **“Who Was Chief Seattle?”** David Buerge, biographer and historian to the Duwamish Tribe, noon the 8th, 10:30 a.m., the 21st, humanities.org/event/who-was-chief-seattle-36
- Oct 10**
 - **Spokane AIDS Network (SAN)** 35th Anniversary Celebration, nYne Bar & Bistro, 7 to 9 p.m., sannw.org.san35
 - **National Tribal Leadership Climate Change Summit:** Virtual Session 1 on “Tribal Climate Change Policy,” Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., <https://bit.ly/atni-climatechange>
 - **Reforest Spokane Day** at Marshall Creek, The Lands Council and Avista, planting trees in small groups and different shifts, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 209-2407
- Oct 11**
 - **Northwest Infant Survival** and SIDS Alliance, ninth annual Run for the Angels, McKuen Park in Coeur d’Alene, 2:30 p.m.
- Oct 13**
 - **Eastern Washington Legislative Conference** virtual planning, 1 p.m., kaye@thefigtree.org.
- Oct 14**
 - **Silver Valley Community Resource Center (SVCRC).** “Any Lead Is Too Much Webinar,” noon, svresourcecenter.org
 - **“Heating Up: The Ethics of Climate Change,”** Brian Henning, global warming as a symptom of self-concept and relationship to the natural world, 6 p.m., humanities.org/event/online-heating-up-the-ethics-of-climate-change-5
 - **Virtual Northwest Passages Forum,** “Can’t Even: How Millennials Became the Burnout Generation,” author Anne Helen Peterson, NW Passages Book Club, Aunties Bookstore and The Spokesman Review 7 to 8 p.m.
 - **Immaculate Heart Retreat Center** Morning of Prayer with Sr. Mary Eucharista, SMMC, “Catholic Church Reflections on Bishop Daly’s Pastoral Letter, The Most Holy Eucharist,” St. Peter’s Parish, 9 a.m. to noon
- Oct 15**
 - **Virtual Job Fair,** Community Colleges of Spokane, scc.spokane.edu/career-services, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Oct 17**
 - **Spokane Pride Parade** and Festival, Pavilion at Riverfront Park, noon to 6 p.m., 720-7609
- Oct 19**
 - **“Civil Conversation in an Angry Age,”** Humanities Washington, Spokane Public Library, philosopher David Smith on tools for thoughtful, fruitful discussions, 19 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., 444-5300, events/spokanelibrary.org/event/4492763
- Oct 19-21** • **“For Such a Time As This,”** 2020 Bishop’s Convocation, Zoom for rostered leaders, Lenny Duncan, Ross Murray and Ryan Panzer
- Oct 21**
 - **Climate Action Committee Meeting,** Kootenai Environmental Alliance, 206 E. Indiana Ave., Coeur d’Alene, 6:30 p.m., 208-667-9093
 - **The Sound of Spokane:** A History of the Spokane Symphony, Zoom webinar from the MAC’s “Music Finds a Way: The Spokane Symphony” exhibit, and panel with author and historian Jim Kershner, principal trumpet Larry Jess and concertmaster/lead violin Mateusz Wolski discuss the Symphony’s 75th birthday, 6:30 p.m., 456-3931
- Oct 21-Nov 29** • **Fig Tree Fall Fundraiser** on Facebook
- Oct 22**
 - **“Eye Contact: Homeless Art Exhibit and Fundraiser,”** Volunteers of America of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho, online event, 6 p.m., eyecontact2020
 - **Ignite Annual Fundraiser and Auction,** “Ignite Compassion,” 6607 N Havana St., www.generationlive.org
- Oct 24**
 - **Create in Newport,** “May’s Vote” virtual performance, 7 p.m., jweir@povn.com
- Oct 27**
 - **United Nations Day Celebration,** “The UN: Combatting Injustice for 75 Years,” Farah Eck, senior director of United Nations Association and UN Foundation, virtual via Zoom, 6:30 to 8 p.m., taninchev@gonzaga.edu
- Oct 28**
 - **“Spoken River 2020,”** Spokane Riverkeeper Livestream Fundraiser with stories connecting the watershed’s people, communities and the river, 6:30 p.m., facebook.com/events/339207877456158
- Nov 1**
 - **“The Power of Community,”** Inland Northwest Virtual Fundraising Luncheon, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, 1 to 1:45 p.m., lcsnw.org
 - **Dia de los Muertos,** Hispanic Business and Professional Association, virtual and drive-by altars at Spokane Valley Hazen & Jaeger Funeral Home, noon to 5:30 p.m., hbpaspokane.org
- Nov 4**
 - **The Fig Tree mailing/distribution,** Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., east entrance, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., 535-4112
- Nov 5**
 - **The Fig Tree,** Benefit/Development, noon, Board 1 to 3 p.m., on Zoom, 535-4112

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A mother's experience leads her to start a nonprofit to mentor youth

By Catherine Ferguson

"I was just a mom with a missing kid and an idea!" Natalia Gutierrez, the founder of the nonprofit If You Could Save Just One, introduces herself.

Fortunately, her son is no longer missing and her idea of helping fill the gap from a lack of programs for at-risk youth and parents who struggle with youth from 12 and 18 is a reality.

Natalia's vision is to provide activities and resources that help youth and parents of the Hillyard community and surrounding area create their own path to success.

Her response to the need she experienced when she was unable to access court-ordered services for her son, was to learn how to set up a nonprofit with the help of Rich Wallis, a volunteer nonprofit consultant and mentor with SCORE, and a former CEO of the YMCA of the Inland Northwest.

She partnered with Lidgerwood Presbyterian Church to transform their garage into a space for activities that permit her and others to mentor youth and adults.

"We are always looking for adults to mentor youth as every teen is different," Natalia said,



Natalia Gutierrez

noting research showing four out of 10 youth in the juvenile justice system have learning disabilities.

Just One volunteers, mentors and participants take part in service projects and activities such as music, art, cosmetology, fashion or robotics, according to the interests of each person.

"As part of the Just One team, our mentors help young people meet the challenges and overcome barriers to become resilient adults in today's world," she said.

At the Aug. 17 general meeting of the NAACP, a panel discussed "Mentoring Solutions for Youth

in Spokane." William Davis, a gang expert who mentors in the Spokane public schools, describes qualifications to be a mentor based on his experience: "My gift to those I mentor is my change. I started gang-banging in the 1960s in Los Angeles. When they realize the change I had made, that was my in. The 12-step program says it takes one to teach one."

When Natalia shares her life story, it's clear what experiences and insights shaped her ability to be a mentor. Her insights were hard won through a life journey full of trauma.

As a child, drugs were common in her family. Her grandfather was murdered. She had to defend herself in school with gang rivalry. She experienced trauma in the foster care system. She was put into a detention center/school identified as a "charlatan behavior modification facility" in the lawsuit that closed it. She hooked up with a man to get out of the system before she turned 18, and she experienced homelessness.

In describing these experiences, Natalia often highlights her sense of feeling lost or ignorant. "I felt I didn't know what was

going on. My family thought I was too sensitive to explain things to and they were bad role models," she said.

After the murder she said, "I felt like people did not explain things to me. My life became upside down. Reporters asked me things I couldn't explain and that weren't appropriate to ask a 12-year-old who just lost her family. I didn't know who to trust, what was true and what wasn't."

"When I was homeless, I didn't know anything about food stamps or welfare, because no school or system teaches about that—at least nobody taught me," she said.

So Natalia started a nonprofit to provide youth and adults with real time resources, mentors who have gone through what youth are going through now and provide the opportunities the youth desire.

If You Could Save Just One started in 2018. Before COVID, it welcomed neighborhood youth and others who heard about it by word of mouth to participate in activities that interest them, taught by community members.

Activities became the setting for relationship building, in which participants could talk. Staff and

volunteers listen and seek to develop positive relationships.

"At first, conversation is about the activity but, in time, it's about more personal things," Natalia said.

If You Could Save Just One has changed how it works since COVID, no longer able to offer classes onsite for 60 youth.

She created Projects in a Bag, which are delivered to 120 youth each month. They would have done the projects with mentors. Natalia gives youth a gift card as an incentive to finish a project.

They used to reuse materials, but now she buys new things, so it's more expensive.

Staff and volunteers also do projects by live streaming, which allows mentoring to continue.

She said the projects make a difference in the community.

"I see kids coming back, which is hopeful. Changes in behavior take time because teens need consistency and adults willing to listen. The youth who participate in the activities are not far from falling through the cracks," Natalia said.

For information, visit www.ifyoucouldsavejustone.org.

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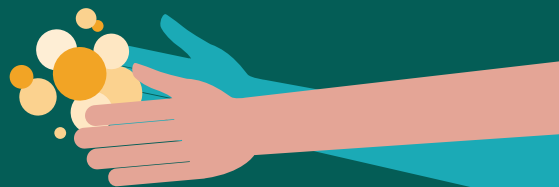
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