Relationships boost effectiveness of humanitarian aid after disaster

On two three-month visits to Nepal in 2015 and 2016, Cameron Conner found that relationships made a difference in the effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

“Relationships make ‘fair aid’ possible,” he said.

He and friend Grant Gallagher went before beginning study at Whitman College to evaluate relief efforts of the nonprofit Concos Connections Foundation (CCF) after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake there in April 2015. CCF grew out of relationships with crafters in Nepal, and their desire to support a clinic in the village of Baseri and provide scholarships to educate girls.

After graduating from West Valley High School in June 2015, Cameron and Grant took a 10-week course on how to evaluate aid and wrote evaluation guidelines and the proposal. They hiked at Mt. Rainier to prepare for hiking in the Himalayas.

They spent October to December 2015 and then February to May 2016 in Nepal, working with large- and small-scale relief organizations. Then they spent three weeks working at refugee camps in Northern Greece.

Their fall tasks were to evaluate use of CCF aid, interview representatives of large aid organizations, survey relief in remote villages and learn earthquake-resistant building for the clinic, school and housing in Baseri.

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Lent is time to think about water justice

Lent is a time to think about justice, particularly water justice, said Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Tveit was a speaker at a sermon in March at the Ecumenical Centre chapel in Geneva, Switzerland.

“Water is a service at the heart of the Lenten campaign of the WCC’s Ecumenical Water Network,” “Seven Weeks for Water,” which is focusing on “Thirst for Justice: A pilgrimage of justice and peace in Africa.”

“A basic lesson for us as human beings is about water,” reflected Olav. “When you play with or try to swim in it as a child, you have to learn about the power in the waves and the depth of the sea, or the power in the stream of the river. You cannot cheat water. It is always showing the power of gravity, it is going downwards. Whether it rolls or flows or only drops, it will find its way.”

Lent is a time for justice to roll down like water, he added. “It is time for us who are here and all human beings to stop resisting justice. We cannot in the long run stop justice, as we cannot stop the water.”

Now is not the time to give up on justice, Olav continued. In fact, just the opposite, since Christians are called to transformation, to transform the image of God as purveyor of justice and peace who can be those who bring justice, those who let it roll down, like waters.

“This can happen because it is not our efforts for justice. It is God’s plan for justice,” he said.

Lent is not given to us to be self-critical with the purpose of being depressed or losing our hope, he added.

“The period of Lent is given to us for focus on what can be changed by listening carefully to the word of God. The word of God brings the change about injustices, but also how we are given a new opportunity to change injustices to justice. God has given that we in the death of Jesus Christ have been liberated from our trespasses as he was raised for our justification,” he said.

“We simply cannot live without water,” Olav concluded. “We cannot live without drinking clean, accessible, affordable water. We cannot be healthy without access to water to wash ourselves, our clothes and our homes. We cannot be strong to work and to do their work. They will help with projects to help nonprofits, to transformative discipleship as pilgrims of justice and peace who can be those who bring justice, those who let it roll down, like waters.”

Pope Francis celebrates fourth anniversary

As Pope Francis marks the fourth anniversary of his election, the latest issue of The Ecumenical Review, the quarterly journal of the World Council of Churches (WCC), opens with an article discussing the ecumenical gestures that have marked his pontificate, one of the most striking being his presence at the joint Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I, to mark the 25th anniversary of the 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Entitled “Ecumenical Recognition, Ecumenical Upheaval,” the issue includes key documents from the Lund event. Several articles focus on approaches to ecumenical recognition between churches that lead to reconciliation, and the need for “utopian” thinking to transcend obstacles to ecumenical progress. Other articles deal with new challenges to what it means to be the church arising from the encounter of established and migrant churches, and from the increasing digital nature of society.

The issue also contains articles related to the WCC’s Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, including contributions from a panel on “Religion: Way of War or Path to Peace?” held during the WCC’s Pilgrim Council in Nanjing and Shanghai, the first meeting of a WCC working committee in the People’s Republic of China.

The Ecumenical Review is published by Wiley on behalf of the World Council of Churches and is on Wileyonlineibrary.wiley.com.
March for Science events coincide with D.C. march

Adjacent to the Earth Day festivities in Riverfront Park, there will be a March for Science in the Central Meadow. The March for Science is selling merchandise to raise funds for education in STEM, science, technology, engineering and math.

There are also March for Science events on Earth Day in Pullman-Moscow and in Yakima, among 429 satellite marches globally.

The events coincide with a rally and teach-in on the National Mall in Washington D.C., with speeches, music and marches defending the role science plays in the world by protecting air and water, preserving the planet, saving lives and safeguarding the future.

For information, visit https://www.marchforscience.com/satellite-marches.

April 2017 - The Fig Tree - Page 3

Area communities organize festivities, education to mark Earth Day

Continued from page 1

Tara believes recent protests and marches are a sign people want to be involved. For information, call 208-9368, email tara@earthdayfair.org, site, check the Facebook page, book event listing, or visit earthdayspokane.info.

In Cheney, Eastern Washington University (EWU) will celebrate Earth Week, before Earth Day, Saturday, April 22. The festivities include “Sustainability Talks,” a film festival and EWU’s Earth Day Fair at the Campus Mall.

For information, visit sites.ewu.edu/sustainability/earth-day.

The Coeur d’Alene Public Library, “Literacy,” will be held from noon to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 22, at the Coeur d’Alene Public Library, 702 E. Front. It will include educational vendors, music, arts and crafts, a one-mile fun run, a yoga mob, birds of prey demonstrations and more.

Organizers with the Kootenai Environmental Alliance say it’s a day to learn how to take steps to protect and preserve the environment 365 days a year.

For information, call 208-667-9093, email kea@kkealliance.org or visit http://kkealliance.org/earthdayfair.

In Pullman, the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute and the City of Pullman host their annual stream clean-up beginning at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 22, rain or shine, at Spring Street Park.

Participants will walk along streams in Pullman to clean and beautify them. The first 100 people will receive Stream Clean-up tee shirts. The day will end with music, food and beverages donated by local business partners.

For information, call Amanda Argona at (208) 882-1444 or email serving@pcei.org.

The Chelan Earth Day Fair from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 15, at Riverwalk Park will include gardening demonstrations, educational displays, hybrid and electric vehicles, solar power, recycling, green building, emergency preparedness, conservation and more.

For information, visit chelanearthdayfair.org.

In Kittitas County, the Earth Day Family Festival and Salmon Run 5K and 10K will take place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 22, at Central Washington University, Dean Hall and Dean Lawn.

Co-sponsored by the Museum of Culture and Environment, the Yakama Nation Fisheries and the Kittitas County Solid Waste, activities and booths will feature student groups and community organizations that focus on the environment and sustainability.

For information, call Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce at 509-925-2002.

The Earth Day Fair at Moses Lake runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 22, at Jamison’s Event Center, 605 E. Nelson Rd. The Chelan Fair will feature organic/grown goods and produce, green services and information on saving the planet, children’s activities and more.

For information, call 509-371-5703 or email jamisonseventcenter@gmail.com.

In Lewiston, Lewis Clark Recyc- er’s 12th Annual Earth Day Celebration will be from 4 to 7 p.m., Thursday, April 20, at the corner of Capitol and 3rd St. It is geared to educate the neighborhood about the earth’s natural resources and what people can do to help preserve them. There will be food, fun, live music and educational activities for children and adults.

For information, email epri- lnappearances@gmail.com.

Ripples Thrift Store will fund anti-human trafficking effort

Prompted by spring cleaning and minimalism to reduce clutter, a local group invites people to join in “Purging for a Purpose” to raise funds for The Jonah Project, a Spokane anti-human trafficking organization.

They are starting Ripples, a thrift store, where purchases will help rescue, house, advocate for and rehabilitate survivors of teen sex trafficking in the Spokane area.

Ginger Lyons, owner of Buffalo Girls Salvage, a Spokane business, has donated rent to cover Ripples Thrift at Monroe and

Express Employment Professionals has a Power Edge Tower Chasis server to donate to a nonprofit CALL 747-6011

Ripples Thrift is set to open in April.

Drop off locations for donations are at True North Empire, 319 W. Hastings Rd., and Rainmaker Creative, 107 S. Cedar St.

For information, call 994-3341, email b@therainlab.com, visit jonahproject.org or connect with social media hashtags #RipplesThrift, #StopTraffickingStartAct- ing or #PurgeForAPurpose.

RIPPLES THRIFT STORE

Sukiyaki Dinner 2017

Saturday, April 29

noon to 6 p.m.

$15/meal

(Take Out available)

Highland Park United Methodist Church

611 S. Garfield St. - Spokane

A Benefit Auction

In Celebration Of Pastor Happy Watkins

PROCEEDS TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF THE NEW HOME FOR NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

SATURDAY MAY 6TH, 2017

Doors open at 4:00, silent auction closes at 8:00

For information, call Amanda Argona at (208) 882-1444 or email serving@pcei.org.

EAU CLAIRE 4004

4004 1st St. N. - Pullman

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For information, visit https://www.marchforscience.com/satellite-marches.

APRIL IS NATIONAL VOLUNTEER MONTH!

YOU CAN VOLUNTEER TO HELP HOMELESS FAMILIES IN SPOKANE AT WWW.FAMILYPROMISEOFSPokane.org/VOLUNTEERS

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Teachers of Salish languages often are learning it as they teach it

Continued from page 1

As a child, LaRae visited cousins on the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation a few times a year. Her mother was non-native. Her father, an enrolled member of the Colville Confederated Tribes, grew up in Chewelah. His mother was Colville, and his father was of Scottish heritage.

LaRae didn’t know that Salish languages were endangered until the funeral of a great uncle, who was one of a few fluent speakers. At the service, an elder said the tribe was losing language speakers and asked people to step up to learn and teach it.

Then 30 years old, she began thinking about ways to connect herself and her children with the language, people and heritage.

Now LaRae, who previously taught history, English and music, and her husband Chris Parkin, who has taught Spanish, have developed curricula, textbooks, videos and other educational materials.

She learned and taught the Spokane language first, then Colville. The Spokane, Colville, Kalispel and Coeur d’Alene languages are part of the Salish language family. Like the Romance language family of French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, they share similar words and sounds.

LaRae met Chris, who grew up in Deer Park, while studying at Western Washington University. She earned a degree in teaching at Eastern Washington University in 1990. Chris taught two years in Bridgesport, and, in 1992, they moved to Wenatchee, where they added Federal funds, but knows that “lemlemets.” In Spokane, they are “a’” and “way’” and thank you is “limlim.” As Mireya, now 9, grew older, LaRae asked Chris to help her write a curriculum for the Spokane language to provide a plan to follow. She recorded Ann McCrea, a fluent elder with the tribe. They created a 45-lesson textbook and audio recordings.

Now there are just a handful of fluent speakers of the Spokane language.

“Learning language and culture empowers me to know where I come from,” said LaRae.

After Danica, now a nurse practitioner, graduated from high school, the Colville Confederated Tribes received a grant to help preserve the language.

LaRae applied to be one of nine people to work with elders to become fluent in one of the three languages used by the 12 bands on that reservation: 1) Colville-Okanogan, spoken from Colville to Revelstoke, B.C., 2) Columbia-Moses or Columbia-Wenatchi, a Salish language spoken from Wenatchee to Moses Lake, and 3) Nez Perce, a Sahaptian language.

From 2003 to 2005, Sarah Peterson, an elder from Kettle Mees, B.C., drove to Omak twice a week to meet 10 hours a day with LaRae, who drove from Chewelah.

Together with Chris, they created a modern language curriculum with audio discs and lessons, beginning with learning “hello,” “goodbye” and other practical phrases. They now have six textbooks to help people build fluency sequentially.

While there are only 15 fluent Colville-Okanogan speakers in the U.S., there are more than 100 in Canada. So after Graham graduated from high school, Chris and LaRae sold their house in Chewelah and moved to live with Sarah in B.C. From 2006 to 2008, they learned language and created new materials.

When Danica began nursing school at Washington State University-Spokane and had their first granddaughter, Mireya, Chris and LaRae moved to Deer Park to provide child care. They decided not to speak English to Mireya and their other grandchildren, so they could be fluent. The children are bilingual, because English is all around them.

“For a language to stick, you have to use it,” LaRae said.

As Mireya, now 9, grew older, she needed to speak Colville-Okanagan with other children.

LaRae and her sister, Michelle, gathered several children and families and started a “language nest” in Michelle’s base- ment. They began with four girls, her sister’s daughter and a friend’s grandchildren. They paid LaRae to be the teacher.

Knowing the success of “language nests” among New Zealand’s Maori and native Hawaiians, they gathered mothers, grandparents and children to learn together, too.

Meanwhile, Chris contracted with the Kalispel Tribe to create a Kalispel language curriculum.

After six months, LaRae, Danica, Michelle, Stevie Seymour, her mother Shelly Boyd and Trina Rae decided to incorporate as a nonprofit so they could apply for grants. When others heard they were teaching language, singing and drumming, they wanted that for their children.

Chris and LaRae rented a house on N. Cedar to open a daycare for five children. In 2008, they were incorporated as the Salish School of Spokane and could raise funds.

The second year, 12 students paid for child care. They hired a teacher and staff, and offered evening classes for parents. LaRae volunteered as executive director.

Lacking space for the demand, they leased their current site at 4125 N. Maple, where they add module units as they grow.

Most of the teachers learn to teach through immersion and learn the language by on-the-job training.

Beyond the Salish communities, LaRae hopes people in the Spokane area can connect with other languages used by the 12 bands through shelter, we empower.

For more information, visit www.salishschoolofspokane.org.

Spring Compost Fair & Arbor Day Celebration

Saturday, April 29, 2017
11 am-2 pm
John A. Finch Arboretum
Learn how to compost at home from Master Composter/Recycler

Sppokane County residents from jurisdictions participating in the County’s Regional Solid Waste System may take home a free compost bin. Limit one per household. Bins provided by a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Please arrive no later than 1:30 pm and bring proof of residency.

For more information call 625-6580 or go to www.sppokanecountywaste.org

through shelter, we empower.

We’ll Open Doors for You.
22 years of providing human resource services. How can we help you to promote your mission for our shared community?! Locally owned and operated by Susan and Ira Amstadter.

Certified women-owned business (509) 534-2552
www.habitat-spokane.org
While there is no admission charge, attendees will be asked to donate.

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For a language to stick, you have to use it,” LaRae said.

As Mireya, now 9, grew older, she needed to speak Colville-Okanagan with other children.

LaRae and her sister, Michelle, gathered several children and families and started a “language nest” in Michelle’s basement. They began with four girls, her sister’s daughter and a friend’s grandchildren. They paid LaRae to be the teacher.

Knowing the success of “language nests” among New Zealand’s Maori and native Hawaiians, they gathered mothers, grandparents and children to learn together, too.

Meanwhile, Chris contracted with the Kalispel Tribe to create a Kalispel language curriculum.

After six months, LaRae, Danica, Michelle, Stevie Seymour, her mother Shelly Boyd and Trina Rae decided to incorporate as a nonprofit so they could apply for grants. When others heard they were teaching language, singing and drumming, they wanted that for their children.

Chris and LaRae rented a house on N. Cedar to open a daycare for five children. In 2008, they were incorporated as the Salish School of Spokane and could raise funds.

The second year, 12 students paid for child care. They hired a teacher and staff, and offered evening classes for parents. LaRae volunteered as executive director.

Lacking space for the demand, they leased their current site at 4125 N. Maple, where they add module units as they grow.

Most of the teachers learn to teach through immersion and learn the language by on-the-job training.

Beyond the Salish communities, LaRae hopes people in the Spokane area can connect with other languages used by the 12 bands through shelter, we empower.

For more information, visit www.salishschoolofspokane.org.
Engaging in education to prevent genocide generates allies, solidarity

Over his 22 years of helping organize Temple Beth Shalom’s annual commemoration of the Holocaust, Yom Hashoah, Hershel Zellman said his perspective has changed from seeing Jews as victims of the Holocaust to seeing that Jews have a responsibility to teach the world how to prevent genocide.

His wife, Mary Noble, gathered people to plan the first Community Observance of the Holocaust in 1995. The 14 organizers of this year’s observance seek to involve and inspire the community to be proactive in preventing genocide.

The Observance will be at 7 p.m., Sunday, April 23, at Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th.

Elements of the observance are designed with education in mind.

• Someone lights a candle to honor “the righteous among the nations,” non-Jews who saved Jews.

The candle lighter is someone local who promotes human rights.

• Since 2008, one candle lighter is a local person—usually a refugee—expressing genocide in his/her homeland.

• Organizers have invited local young musicians to provide music for the observances.

• In 2006, they began the Eva Lassman Memorial Writing Contest, and recently added an Art Contest. Both engage middle school and high school students to write or create art on a theme.

The theme for the 11th Annual Writing and third annual Art Contest is “And the World Watched.”

“We ask students to reflect on the most premeditated genocide in history. From 1933 to 1945, Nazis and their collaborators exterminated 6 million Jews and 5 million others they deemed unsuitable—including the Roma, Jehovah’s Witnesses, homosexuals, people with disabilities and political dissenters,” Hershel said. “World leaders knew about the Holocaust, but chose not to act.”

The essay prompt reads: “Based on what you have learned from resources provided and others, choose one country that failed to come to the aid of the millions of Jews in the Holocaust. Identify and discuss the social, economic and political forces existing in the country at the time that contributed to its inaction. How could that country have responded differently in order to change the course of history?”

The art contest prompt reads: “Art has the potential to evoke action because imagery affects us on an emotional level. Based on what you have learned using resources provided and others, design a piece of art that you feel might have motivated world leaders and their citizens to intervene in the Holocaust.” The art is on display until April 19 in Gonzaga University’s Hemmingson Center.

Hershel believes it’s important that the contests introduce students to the Holocaust and challenge them to dig deeper.

Hershel came to Spokane 39 years ago to start his career in medicine, having just completed a family medicine residency in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

He grew up near Los Angeles, attending a synagogue that was comprised half of German Jews who came to the United States before World War II and half who came as survivors of the Holocaust after the war.

“I heard stories of camps and people in hiding,” he said. “My best friend’s family were survivors. I was aware that 6 million Jews were massacred. I felt like Jews were victims.”

While the world has not stopped genocide, there has not been anything as systematic as the Holocaust, he said.

At the Yom Hashoah Observance, Hershel presides over the candle-lighting ceremony, which includes recognizing survivors, their children and grandchildren, the liberators, the righteous and genocide survivors. He tells stories of the lives of each, like those fleeing genocide in Sudan, Rwanda, Burma and Bosnia as refugees and coming to Spokane.

“I tell their stories so they are more than a name and face,” he said.

This year, the committee tried to find a Syrian refugee to light the candle for victims of a genocide or a mass civilian casualty event.

The person they invited was afraid to appear in public.

“We may find someone or have an empty seat,” he said.

Interest grew in commemorating the Holocaust as Eva Lassman and other local Holocaust survivors started talking about their experiences. Like most, Eva said little about being a survivor, not even to her children. In the early 1990s, she went to a convention of Holocaust survivors, and Ilie Wiesel implored them to speak out and not be silent, Hershel said.

Eva spoke at area schools. Since her death, Cara Peperazak now speaks at schools and is on the Speakers Bureau for the Seattle Holocaust Center for Humanity.

“For many years, people here, Jews included, did not want to hear about the Holocaust, even when Eva was willing to talk. It was too awful, too unbelievable,” he said. “Some just wanted to put it behind us, but the Jewish community came around to wanting information out for people to learn the lessons.”

Hershel, who is gratified that Yom Hashoah is now an institution, said this year the candle honors “the righteous” will be lit by Skyler Oberst for his leadership of the Interfaith Council, educating people about local faith communities and working for human rights.

“In selecting the ‘righteous,’” he said, “I learned that people who care about human rights do exist in Spokane. They challenged the anti-Semitism of the Aryan Nations in the 1980s and 1990s. It’s wonderful to reveal people doing good work and the organizations they are involved in.”

“The nicest revelation is that our region stands for caring, inclusiveness and support of people threatened by hate,” said Hershel, who represents the Jewish community on the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force.

Now retired three years from practicing family medicine, he volunteers to treat homeless people at the House of Charity clinic, where he hears “the amazing stories of people who are survivors in their own ways.”

In today’s atmosphere of hate, Hershel said the 2017 Yom Hashoah theme, “And the World Watched,” speaks to the lack of reaction from Allied powers to mass killings in Europe.

An example of the rejection was 900 Jewish refugees who left Hamburg in 1939 on the SS St. Louis. They expected to disembark in Cuba and find a way to the U.S., but Cuba rescinded their visas. They had to go back to Europe where half found refuge in friendly countries in Scandinavia, England and France, and half went back to Germany. Of those, half perished in the Holocaust.

“While we as a society don’t make the same mistakes about today’s immigration ban,” he said, “How can we now say we do not want those people?” he asked.

While an Anti-Semitism, Holocaust-denying message spray painted on a Seattle synagogue once would have made him feel a victim, today he knows there are many local allies in solidarity with the Jewish community.

For information, call 747-3304 or email neveragain-spokane@comcast.net.
Conscious Connections Foundations gains insights for future aid

Continued from page 1
viewed friends to whom CCF had wired funds for immediate aid for food, clothing and temporary shelters, and 3) they investigated earthquake-resistant building techniques, including earthbag construction using sturdy sacks filled with local soil.

Then they trekked three weeks to mountain villages in areas with no roads. Their guides were long-time friends, Ram Karki, and his son Pradeep Karki, 19. They acted as cultural and linguistic interpreters from Tamang to Nepali to English.

Cameron grew up with Pradeep and considers him a brother. They often chat on Facebook. Denise and Ric helped pay for his education.

Cameron and Grant interviewed village leaders to learn what aid reached them and what they still needed. Back in Kathmandu, they wrote reports for the CCF board before going to Baseri for two weeks to introduce earthbag-building to two homes as a trial. It was hard to do in the remote area because some materials had to be transported in and India had a blockade on oil and building materials. They also had to train unskilled local labor. Families now live in the two earth-bag test homes on the clinic land.

Returning to Spokane Dec. 18, they spent two months finishing their report and raising funds to rebuild a school and the CCF clinic. With presentations to five Rotary chapters in Spokane, they raised $8,000, adding to what raised $53,000 for earthquake relief. As a new nonprofit, they were limited to mountain villages in areas filled with local soil.

“Our report evaluated impacts, and 4) having more data to understand community dynamics and cultivate more relationships. “Reconstruction after the quake took decades. Villagers’ lives were transformed and we needed to rebuild a school and clinic. Rotary funds covered the $7,000 it cost to build a four-room K-3 school, which was rebuilt by last April.

To rebuild a seven-room clinic on the site near the old clinic, they used pre-fabricated Styrofoam/concrete panels over a reinforced steel frame. It resists up to a 9.0 earthquake, has thermal insulation and is fire-resistant. Costs included building a new road so trucks could deliver materials from Kathmandu.

While Cameron and Grant were in Baseri, they helped a local contractor lay the clinic’s foundation and contracted with villagers to build it. Building land, and building the clinic and road cost $53,000. The building was completed by June 2016. CCF raised $193,400 since Dec. 2015 for earthquake relief. As a nonprofit, they were limited to $50,000, but IRS granted an exception for relief. After immediate aid, rebuilding the school and clinic, and other projects, CCF has $76,482 left, including a $50,000 endowment for future clinic expansion and expenses. The rest is being held some for clinic expansion and expenses.

When Cameron and Grant focused on rebuilding the school and clinic. Rotary funds covered the $7,000 it cost to build a four-room K-3 school, which was rebuilt by last April.

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ects, supplementing teachers’ salaries, community earthquake preparedness and post-quake re-
sidual problems from landslides during the monsoon season.

“Recovery has a long way to go. Some villages rebuilt more than others,” Cameron said. “Six months after the quake, people were still in shock and living at a subsistence level. They needed to plant crops and rebuild waterways. “Reconstruction after the quake will take decades. Villagers’ lives

will be hard for a long time, while Kathmandu is nearly back to nor-
mal,” he said.

On May 3, Cameron and Grant went to northeastern Greece to help Third Wave Volunteers at a refugee camp for people fleeing violence in Syria. They knew of the program, because it had supplied CCF 1,000 solar lights to distribute in Nepal.

“For five weeks, we helped build 600 wooden tent platforms, so flooding wouldn’t destroy refu-
gees’ belongings and to protect them from rats and snakes on the ground,” Cameron said. “We also helped build community shelters.”

Over the years, he has traveled with his parents to places “off the beaten track” in Eastern, Central and Western Europe, Peru, Morocco, Turkey, Australia and Mexico where they have con-

nected with local people.

These travels gave him “an appreciation for how to help people in need” and “how to walk in the world with empathy as I interact with people outside my culture.”

At Whitman, Cameron is studying communication, soci-
ology and rhetoric, and awaiting future adventures and opportuni-
ties to engage with people.

For information, call 499-3320 or email commcon@whitman.edu.

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Spokane Hindu Society introduces basics of their faith in Meet the Neighbors

Interfaith Council Faith and Values launched its second season of Meet the Neighbors with a March 25 program that included a Hindu service of hymns, a ceremony of cleansing, a children’s presentation on faith and culture, an overview on Hinduism, a meal and fellowship.

The goals were to impart information on the faith and have an opportunity for people to make new friends.

The Spokane Hindu Society, which started in 2016, organized this event with the council as one of their monthly gatherings at the Southside Senior Community Center.

The gatherings help parents teach children about the roots, teachings and culture of Hinduism. Each month, they celebrate a Hindu festival. In March, they celebrated Holi, the Hindu spring festival, also known as the festival of colors or the festival of love.

People frolic and smear each other with colored powder or toss it in the air over each other.

Nishant Puri, a physician who was emcee, introduced a presentation by 12 children, saying that for Hindus, like all traditions, it’s important to transmit the religion to the next generations.

The children explained their names and some of the beliefs and traditions.

Chanting “Om” or “Aum” in meditation is a sacred syllable in nature, said one.

Life, nature said Hindus have 33 million gods and then explained that Hindus worship or respect everyone and everything in nature.

Still another child said, “Hinduism teaches us to be tolerant of all religions and the goal of all religions is to be one with God.”

In his presentation, Nishant explained, “We believe in one God with endless aspects and names. The deepest spirit is Truth, which is about divine reality present in all life. We have a divine responsibility for all creation.”

The different gods and goddesses represent different ways of connecting with the Divine, he said.

“We believe in Karma, that every action in our past or past lives produces an effect,” he said.

“There are consequences to our actions. Karma—our deeds—create our destiny.”

“We also believe in Dharma, our ethical duty, which determines reincarnation or rebirth after this life in the cycle of birth and rebirth. What we do creates good or bad,” Nishant said.

He addressed “the popular notion” that Hindus believe in idol worship, explaining that “Murti,” the word for idol, translates to mean that an image Hindus focus on for meditation and prayer embodies a value.

As part of Gonzaga University’s “Mission: Possible,” more than 100 students, plus staff and faculty, spent spring break in March at nine sites to serve neighbors.

Mission: Possible, a program started in the 1990s by Gonzaga’s Center for Community Action and Service-Learning, focuses on student-learning and community impact.

The projects were refugee resettlement in Denver, accessible housing in Knoxville, Tenn., underrepresented communities in Montgomery, Makah Reservation support in Neah Bay, women and children impacted by incarceration in New York City, homeless services in Portland, Ore., habitat restoration in San Francisco, and adults with developmental disabilities in Tacoma.

Another 16 students had immersion opportunities with previously incarcerated people in East Los Angeles.

Through the professional services firm Deloitte, four Gonzaga students joined a national team of accounting majors to network with professionals to do community service in Atlanta.

For information, call 313-6396 gonzaga.edu/tobecontinued.

More than 100 students serve around nation

Nishant also said Hindus have contributed to math (zero and the value of pi), chemistry, metallurgy, medicine (surgery and anesthesia), chess and the practice of yoga.

A panel of four then answered questions: Prakash Bhuta, an EWU biology teacher, and Aruna Bhuta, a social worker, who have been in Spokane 34 years; Jayesh Modha who has been here 10 years and works in computer science, and Rahul Sharma, who has been in business here for seven years.

Rahul said Hindus practice faith by being good every day.

“It’s the human thing to be kind to family and care for neighbors and community. Hinduism is a way of life,” he said, suggesting that it’s more about relationships than rules.

Aruna, a social worker, who sang hymns at the opening of the service, briefly explained the altar with a picture of Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity. The other picture is the wise, elephant-head-ed Ganesha, the Lord of success and remover of obstacles.

“In the ceremony after the hymns, we lit a lamp on the altar for enlightenment, which comes by looking at our shortcomings and seeing our true selves,” Aruna said.

For information, email spokan.hindusocietyshs@gmail.com.

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More than 100 students serve around nation

SALT LAKE CITY, UT — The Interfaith Council for Salt Lake will launch its annual Summit this March. This year’s theme is “Faith in Work: Champions for Social Justice.” The Summit features leaders, faith advocates and organizers who will share stories and strategies for community organizing and advocacy.

It is the second year of the Regional Faith Action Network, which brings together faith organizers and leaders from throughout the Intermountain West to develop strategies and build a movement for social justice.

The Summit offers opportunities for people to learn from faith leaders, interfaith organizers, and advocates about strategies to create change in their communities. It is designed to be an interdisciplinary, multi-faith event with an emphasis on connecting faith, community, and effective advocacy.

The Summit features keynote speakers, workshops, and networking opportunities.

The event is open to anyone who wants to learn about faith in action and the role of faith leaders in advocating for social justice.

SAVE THE DATE

Yakima Summit Sunday, May 1, 3-5pm
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To conserve energy, church replaces incandescent lights with LED

Bob Palrud helps Gib Domínguez replace lighting in St. Mark’s Lutheran Church’s entry.

As the Washington State legislative agenda progresses and hate crimes emerge, the Faith Action Network (FAN) voices concerns of the faith community.

“Our state budget is a moral document that reflects our values and priorities for state government. FAN supports investments that fund education and strengthen our safety net programs for the poor and vulnerable,” said Paul Benz, co-director of FAN.

Co-director Elise DeGouyer said FAN prepared statements of solidarity related to recent hate crimes. “FAN’s interfaith leaders are committed to stand in solidarity for our neighbors,” he said.

Bob Palrud, who moved to Spokane four years ago with his wife to be near her sons in the Silver Valley, earned a bachelor’s degree in 1970 at St. Olaf College to be a physicist and earned another degree in 1973 in forensic science.

He applied skills from that training to look in detail in order to understand how heat, light and energy can be conserved.

Small stuff adds up to make a difference,” he said, offering ideas that other churches might use to increase energy efficiency and save funds.

Bob, who grew up Lutheran, lived many years in Minnesota, where he applied those skills to energy conservation and opened an energy program in several suburbs of Minneapolis and other communities of Minnesota.

For several years, he worked with a local nonprofit and the local utility, Northern States Power, which is now part of Avista. They funded him doing energy audits beginning in Richfield, Minn., and moving on to other Twin Cities suburbs.

In the 1980s, he taught chemistry and physics at a Laney High School in Atlanta, Ga., and taught about energy audits and use of caulk, weather stripping and compact fluorescent lights to save energy.

“We can help change the world by screwing in an energy efficient light bulb,” he said.

Bob married in 2000 and moved to Wyoming, where his wife had taught school for 32 years. He was there three years until she retired. Now semi-retired, he continues to work painting houses inside and outside.

Concerned about climate change, he has sought to be proactive every day, ranging from what car he drives to making his house energy efficient.

The light-bulb replacement project emerged when he was sitting in choir and noticed the lights in the sanctuary. He realized there might be savings for the church if they changed their lighting.

He learned about the Avista rebate program and sent in information on the number of Energy Star rated bulbs and number of fixtures. Certain lights were eligible and the program awarded the highest impact changes with the best rebates, Bob said.

It was an energy saving solution that was easy to do.

Working with advice from a local lighting supplier on details such as dimmer compatibility, St. Mark’s changed 170 bulbs and expects to reduce peak lighting by about 7,000 watts, Bob said.

“We are ignorant of how most of the world functions and struggles with or without energy,” he said. “Those benefits include enhanced lighting quality, energy savings, energy cost savings and reduced maintenance costs.”

The program includes incentives for lighting retrofits, including occupancy sensors and lighting upgrades. Some common lighting upgrades include changing from fluorescent and incandescent to LED—light-emitting diode—lights.

For information, call 747-6635 or 495-2099, or visit avistautilities.com/business/rebates/Washington/Pages/default.aspx.

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Elements of the March 19 service to ordain and consecrate the Right Rev. Canon Gretchen Rehberg as the ninth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane reflected the church’s scope—from care about individuals to a call to work for justice—and its diversity—from African to Taizé to traditional organ-accompanied hymns. Banners representing the diocese’s congregations and several organizations led the procession of diocesan and interfaith clergy, regional leaders, and choristers from congregations around the diocese. The choir of more than 100 voices joined carillon, brass, and pipe organ music before, during and after the service.

More than 650 people attended and 6,850 joined it by live-streaming video, according to Cate Wetherald, diocesan communications director. Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael B. Curry led the service as chief consecrator.

During the service, the new bishop received gifts, including a pectoral cross, ring, stole, miter and crozier, and was “seated” in the “cathedra” or bishop’s chair, symbolic of the bishop’s office. Gretchen is the 59th woman to be elected as a bishop in the Anglican Communion and the first woman to be the bishop for Spokane’s diocese.

The Right Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, former presiding bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church, was the preacher for the service. In her sermon, she expressed Gretchen’s commitment to proclaim God’s inclusive love and equipping God’s people for transformation and growth. Katharine, who is now visiting professor of women in ministry at the Church School of the Pacific Seminary and a doctoral degree from Wesley Divinity from General Seminary, said, “It’s everywhere where we love our neighbors as ourselves and where we allow beloved community to emerge.”

“Baptism calls us all to transform,” she said, adding that the task of leaders of the diocese is to see “the structures and put flesh on the bones of the possible.”

“We are here to shape a new world, to create a song of gladness for all creation so we can counter hate with love,” she continued, calling for creating communities where gladness abounds in living God’s will of shalom and harmony.

“We discover that the House of the Lord is around us, within us and among us,” she said. “It is everywhere where we love our neighbors as ourselves and where we allow beloved community to emerge.”

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Bishops Katharine Jefferts Schori, Michael Curry, Gretchen Rehberg and James Waggoner Jr. pointed out that the diocese of Spokane is vast: “We live on the bones of the possible.”

One of the myriad of ways of doing that in this diocese, she suggested, is through reconciling relations with the first people in this region, the Coeur d’Alene, Colville, Kalispel and Spokane. Katharine offered other challenges: to live in right relationship with non-human beings, to welcome strangers because “we may find angels among them,” to teach respect for life, to pray for peace of all creation and to marvel at the variety of humanity. Gretchen was elected bishop of the Spokane diocese on Oct. 18, 2016, at the diocese’s 52nd Annual Convention in Lewiston, Idaho. Before her election, she had served since 2006 as rector of the Episcopal Church of the Nativity in Lewiston.

Before being elected, she served the diocese as chair of the Commission on Ministry, a canon for regional mission and a trainer for the College for Congregational Development, said Cate. In these ministries, she combined her passion for equipping people for ministry and assisting congregations in becoming more faithful, healthy and effective communities of faith. Now she will do that as she serves the diocese’s 39 congregations.

Gretchen has a master of divinity from General Seminary, a doctor of ministry from Wesley Seminary and a doctoral degree in chemistry. Previously, she was a professor of organic chemistry at Bucknell University. She has also served communities where she has lived as a volunteer emergency medical technician and firefighter.

Gretchen succeeds the Right Rev. James Waggoner, Jr., who was the eighth bishop of the diocese for more than 16 years. The Episcopal Diocese of Spokane is the Episcopal Church in Eastern Washington and North Idaho.

For information, call 624-3191 or visit spokanediocese.org. The entire service may be viewed on the diocesan website at http://www.spokanediocese.org/digital_faithlive.
Stepping out of silence to stand in solidarity crucial to countering hate

What do we when hate rears its ugly head and we see graffiti spray painted on a synagouge or Martin Luther King Jr. Center, or anti-refugee posters plastered on the Community Building with the intent of stirring fear? The Spokane County Human Rights Task Force is in the midst of the NAACP, along with faith, peace, justice, civic and business communities to say, “No!” to hate and “Yes!” to love, building alliances and solidarity to raise challenges.

The faith community gains resilience through its regular gatherings that remind us we are to love our neighbors and enemies, and we are to work for justice, equality, human rights and respect.

For the second year, the Interfaith Council continues “Meet the Neighbors,” op-ed columns to have become institutions, like the Observance of the Holocaust.

Women religious, like the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and Dominican Sisters and Sisters of Providence, recently issued statements joining with other faith groups to voice support for the humane treatment of refugees fleeing political justities and inhumane conditions.

It's stories are about you and me. It’s stories are about people who do good work. It’s stories are about you and me. It promotes agencies, causes and missions, helping people know who we are.

The Resource Directory covers social service agencies and helps social service workers connect with other resources. It is so needed to have it in print, not just everyone connects to internet.

Freda Gandy - Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center

When I began as executive director of St. Joseph’s Family Outreach Center, I was determined to hear about what prepared me for the ministry. When I was interviewed, I was interested in the Fig Tree’s mission is to network and inspire people. It shares who we are, who we serve and what we do.

It promotes agencies, causes and missions, helping people know who we are.

The Resource Directory is outstanding.

It provides updated public service, connect- ing people in faith and nonprofit agencies.

St. Joseph’s used it to look up and call to connect people who came to us needing services we did not offer.

Pat Milten, OSF - Fig Tree Board

Sisters of Providence. “We cannot stand in silence when government policies violate our beliefs about the dignity and rights of each person.”

Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia said the recent “anti-immigrant and anti-refugee executive orders are inhumane and do not reflect the values of our faith community, coming to our borders seeking asylum or who have lived here as asylum seekers, contributing to our society in many ways.

They acknowledge that fear and sus- picion are common in dealing with the newcomer. They know they have to be a communi- cation people, we try to place ourselves in the shoes of migrants” and then act to walk in solidarity.

Challenging hate means acting on words.

Mary Stamp - Editor

Benefit speakers express why they value The Fig Tree’s news approach

I have attended Fig Tree benefits for years and I always look forward. Last year, when the Spokane County Hu- man Rights Task Force’s founding was announced March 8, Mary Stamp was there to hear about our efforts in confronting hateful behavior.

When she interviewed me for a story about it, I was concerned the article might be about me. She reassured me that I was the canvas through which the message of the task force would be told. I think she nailed it. Within a week after the article ran in April 2016, I had three inquiries.

When I saw my first copy of The Fig Tree, but I remember the sense of reading about someone making a difference. I took the paper home, re-read the “above the fold” article and then read the entire paper.

In a world where we are bombarded with information, it is not always easy to sepa- rate the “noise” and the “fake news.” That is not a concern with this publication. The articles are well researched and well written.

By reading The Fig Tree, I get a slice of religious news internationally as well as in the city’s commitment to protect human rights.

I look forward to the interesting articles about people who are doing the things that really matter. I look forward to the inspiration and encouragement I receive by reading the paper from cover to cover.

I also look forward to passing my copy on to someone else after I have finished.

Dear Lynch – Spokane County Human Rights Task Force

I have a technique for reading The Fig Tree. I read one article a day and put a check mark on it.

Fig Tree stories energize me. Commercial media can be dreary.

In the Fig Tree, I read of “real” people doing good. That’s important because we are imitators. Stories make us hopeful and provide us with inspiration. They align with my better nature.

My eyes are not as good, so I began reading just two to three stories a month, but I use the political index, my spine wanes, I again read it stem to stern. I deliver the Fig Tree in churches and community events.

I find that the copies are going faster and are running out earlier, so I’m not the only one taking care of myself.

Anne Salisbury

Fig Tree delivery volunteer

I thank The Fig Tree for telling our story and other stories that would otherwise go untold. It provides ordinary people doing extraordinary things, people trying to make a difference because they are trying to do God’s will and help people in need.

We need people to reach out, connect and help. I get phone calls and emails after stories about us.

I thank The Fig Tree for portraying young people in a positive light. I watched a 14-year-old pick up the newspaper with a story about her. When I saw my first copy of The Fig Tree, but I remember the sense of reading about someone making a difference. I took the paper home, re-read the “above the fold” article and then read the entire paper.

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We love what we do. We love shar- ing news, faith and voices in action. We love sharing news of people building community with strength and resiliency. We are grateful for all who make the monthly newspaper and annual resource directory happen: staff, volunteers, adver- tisers, sponsors and underwriters.

We need you to continue to support our work. Do you already give financially? Can you give more? If you are a fan and willing to encourage exploration, learning and compassion.

Please share extra copies of The Fig Tree and Resource Directory with others.

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April 11, 2017 • Showing Up for Racial Justice

April 10-13 • EWU Pride Week

April 3-6 • Spring Break Cooking Camp

April 8 • YWCA Spring Fling

April 16 • Easter Sunrise Service, EWU Cheney, sites.ewu.edu, 35 W. Main, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., 455-8722, myeapecoffee.org

April 4 • Panel on Martin Luther King Jr’s "Beyond Vietnam" speech

April 5 • Diversity’s Challenge to Democracy, "Management of Cultural Resources"

April 15 • Reject Trump’s Budget

April 16 • 20th Anniversary Growing Hope Fundraiser, Project Hope, 429 E. Boone, 5 p.m., 724-0139

April 21 • "Stand Up, Stand Out," The NATIVE Project’s Indian Youth Leadership Camp, 325-5503, nativedproject.org/leadership

April 22 • Vietnamese Heritage Day, Service Station, 9315 N. Nenana, 2 to 4:30 p.m., 496-1696

April 23 • Yom Hashoah

April 26 • Spokane Police Accountability

April 28 • 20th Annual Human Rights Banquet and Annual Gala, Gאז ld of Avenues, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 208-292-2359, idahohumanrights.org

April 29 • Givapaloosa

April 30 • Washington Nonprofit Conference

May 3 • Fig Tree Mailing and Deliveries, 932 W. Main, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., 455-8722

May 4 • Fig Tree Meetings, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon, Board, 1 to 3 p.m., 535-1813

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Fundraising for March of Dimes

March, Rally & Teach-In to connect the dots between Trump’s proposed $54 billion increase in military spending and cuts to many vital social and environmental programs.

838-7870 • ljmoore@pjals.org • www.pjals.org

May 4 • Fig Tree Meetings, 631 S. Richard Allen Ct., noon, Board, 1 to 3 p.m., 535-1813

Passion of the Earth

April 28-30, 2017

We are called to a new relationship with God’s Earth. Join in a retreat that explores this on-going creation journey through art, music, prayer, and sharing. Suggested donation: $195 single / $145 each shared. Learn more and register at www.Spirit-Center.com

Spirit Center retreats at the Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, ID 83619-0620

The NATIVE Project’s Indian Youth Leadership Camp, 325-5503, nativeproject.org/leadership

April 23 • Yom Hashoah Celebration of the Holocaust, Temple Beth Shalom, 1202 E. 33rd Ave., 7 p.m., 747-3304

April 25 • Paper Tigers Film on Lincoln High School in Walla Walla, Magic Laren, 29 W. Main, 7 p.m., ourkidsidspokane.org/events/

April 20 • Simpson-Oourt Lecture by Ronald White on "Lifestyles Grant: A Fresh Look at American Leadership"

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The story of Habitat for Humanity is one of drawing people out of poverty, said Michelle Girardot, executive director of the Spokane Habitat for Humanity affiliate, which is beginning its 30th year.

From its beginnings, meeting in the choir room at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in 1988, Habitat for Humanity Spokane has built more than 270 homes in Spokane County.

Many grassroots people, like Spokane’s Habitat founder Grace Harriss, have seen the need over the years, Michelle said.

At first, it operated out of a house on N. Napa and then an office. The Habitat-Spokane store, which opened on Hamilton and Trent, later moved to an industrial park on Sullivan Rd.

Since last summer, both the office and store have been in one building at 1805 E. Trent, said Michelle.

The affiliate will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a luncheon at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 27, at the Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd. The featured speaker is Clive Rainey, the first volunteer at Habitat for Humanity in the late 1970s in America, Ga., where it was founded.

“From there, it spread like wildfire as people caught ‘Habituitin’,” as Habitat for Humanity connects people from different walks of life to see how to make a difference,” said Michelle.

Habitat now speaks of the number of “families served” rather than the number of homes built, she pointed out, because some of its work is rehabilitation and some is water purification.

“We provide a range of housing solutions worldwide,” she said. One accomplishment has been that Habitat-Spokane’s practice of tithing has meant it has sent $1 million to affiliates worldwide.

“Tithing has meant it has sent $1 million to affiliates worldwide,” she said. “Our tithing is a reminder that our mission calls us to do and allowing us to serve more families in Spokane,” Michelle said.

“We have 8,000 to 12,000 volunteers a year. They help in different capacities on job sites, upcycle—creatively reusing—items in the store, advocate for affordable housing or do community relations. If people want to volunteer, we find a niche,” she said. Habitat-Spokane, one of 2,000 Habitat for Humanity affiliates across the nation and 31 in Washington, now has 18 staff.

Michelle has worked with Habitat-Spokane for seven years and has been its executive director for two years.

“I’m passionate about connecting people with generous hearts to our mission,” she said, telling how her love for the mission has grown as she has brought new people into the ministry to serve more families and invite more donors.

Habitat empowers families who are hard workers and have a strong work ethic, she said. “I also have a passion to help pull families out of dire circumstances,” she said. “Some volunteers maintain some contact with families, but, because it’s an empowering program, once a family has gone through the steps, they fly off like birds leaving a nest.” Volunteers move on to help other families.

So far, Habitat Spokane has built more than 270 homes over its 30 years.