Lutheran Community Services guides people from trauma to healing, justice

Along with guiding people who have experienced trauma to healing, safety, hope and justice, Lutheran Community Services (LCS) Northwest has started two new programs for elders in the Spokane area and is now implementing Washington State’s Integrated Managed Care (IMC). As executive director of the Inland Northwest districts of LCS, Erin Williams Huerter coordinates the work of 90 staff who, she said, “plant seeds to help people grow.”

LCS offers behavioral health and community support services primarily for troubled youth, struggling families, unaccompained minor refugees and victims of sexual assault and other crimes. Now it is also addressing elder health care and elder abuse in partnership with the Community Health Association of Spokane (CHAS), which has opened the North Central Clinic, and through the Elder Justice Project, which has started the Elder Abuse Task Force.

LCS is involved with the clinic because Christ Clinic donated its facilities at 914 W. Carlisle Ave. to LCS when it closed in 2017 after 25 years of serving low-income people. The CHAS clinic opened Dec. 10 to provide coordinated primary care—with physicians, nurses, nutritionists, social workers and a pharmacy—for people 60 years and older.

Erin said that for people experiencing elder abuse, such as parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles or others, it’s hard to find help because they often are not legally considered victims of domestic violence and frequently do not qualify as disabled for Adult Protective Services.

Elder abuse includes interpersonal intimidation, financial control or theft, or physical violence. Elders can be overwhelmed by being referred to places that can’t help them,” Erin said.

The Elder Abuse Task Force hopes to identify people when they first seek help, such as through the North Central Clinic and senior centers.

Another new dynamic for LCS staff is implementing Integrated Managed Care. It began Jan. 1 for people who have Medicaid health insurance in Spokane County.

Regional, local leaders link faith and advocacy

Sixteen regional and local faith and advocacy leaders will speak and lead workshops for the 2019 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019, at Spokane Valley United Methodist Church, 115 N. Raymond.

Focusing discussion on the theme for the gathering, “Inform, Inspire, Involve,” the Rev. Jim Castrol, Eastern Washington representative on the Faith Action Network (FAN) Board and member of the planning committee, will moderate a panel discussion on how religious grounding helps generate policies that improve live and society.

Panelists are Bishop Gretchen Rehberg of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane since March 2017, the Rev. Walter Kendrick, pastor of Morningstar Baptist Church since 2013 and president of the Spokane Ministers’ Fellowship, Dr. Michael, a member of the Colville Confederated Tribes who is executive director of the Upper Columbia United Tribes, and Bishop Emeritus William Skyldstad of the Catholic Diocese of Spokane.

Workshops will deal with issues of health care, the environment, gun safety, immigration, taxes and homelessness.

• Paul Benz, co-director of the Faith Action Network, will discuss health care and nutrition.

• Jessica Zimmerle, program and outreach director of Earth Ministry Washington Interfaith Power and Light, will offer insights on environmental issues coming before the Washington State Legislature. She supports the Greening Congregations and Colleague Connection programs, engaging the
Faith communities challenge leaders on climate

Faith leaders challenged leaders at the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24).

“We know what we need to do and how to do it. Now is the time to do it,” he said.

On Dec. 13, Henriette Weber, coordinator of the WCC’s Working Group on Climate Change, read a statement of faith communities: “Humanity stands today in front of the largest global challenge we have ever known, and a huge transition may be necessary if we want to overcome it. We come together from different faith communities at COP24 to underline that climate change cannot be business as usual,” she said.

The faith communities said the urgency of the situation gives humanity only a decade to turn emissions down to keep the temperature rise under 1.5°C, but that requires a huge, fast transition away from just and human rights.

“Many communities are at the forefront of destructive climate change impacts—losing livelihoods, homes, lands, identities, cultures and lives. Our faiths demand that we act to protect the vulnerable and as caretakers of Mother Earth, says the statement.

The document also urges “radical mitigation and adaptation measures, technological and profound lifestyle changes, supportive and well-coordinated national and local policies and institutional arrangements, as well as deep transformations in the way we invest, produce and consume.”

In Katowice, the WCC Working Group on Climate Change worked with ecumenical and interfaith partners to stress the moral and ethical dimension of climate change.

Respect is key to peace education

Respect for others lies at the heart of peace education and was a key thread through a debate entitled “Education for Peace in a multi-religious world” held Dec. 10, the 2018 World Human Rights Day at the United Nations Office in Geneva.

The Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue and the WCC held the debate on the impact of peace education to promote mutual understanding and cooperative relations between people and societies. The event focused on how education for peace can engage different stakeholders to counter violent, extremist narratives, build peaceful and inclusive societies.

The event is designed for parents, students, and teachers.

A multi-racial team facilitating the “Why Race Matters” workshop uses the three-part documentary “The Why Race Matters” and presents the “Why Race Matters” workshops three-part document, “Race: The Power of an Illusion” to frame discussion. Participants will look at the common beliefs about race, advantage and justice; define explicit and implicit biases, uncover the roots of the race concept in North America and discuss local examples of institutional racism.

The interactive workshop offers participants a collective understanding of the difference between structural, institutional and individual racism. It discusses the difference between equity and equality, shares examples of institutional racism in the Spokane region, and suggests solutions and next steps.

The “Why Race Matters” workshops are facilitated through Greater Spokane Progress for regional organizations to develop collective understanding and common language around institutional and structural racism.

Greater Spokane Progress’ Racial Equity Committee offers eight-hour trainings and two-day, four-hour trainings.

For information, call 624-5657 or email aine@spokaneprogress.org.

The Fig Tree is recruiting hosts for benefit tables

The Fig Tree is signing up volunteers to host tables with eight guests each for the annual Benefit Lunch and Benefit Breakfast.

The goal is to have 35 tables, because this year is the 35th anniversary of The Fig Tree newsletter—founded in the spring of 1984 under the former Spokane Faith Action Network (FAN), and the work will also give a presentation on effective advocacy.

Ryan Murphy, from Save the Children Action Network, will offer the presentation.

Mike Denton, conference minister of the Pacific Northwest United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR). Recalling its historic role in formulating the “foundational instrument of international human rights law,” the WCC reasserts standing of the difference between equity and equality, shares examples of institutional racism in the Spokane Region, and suggests solutions and next steps.

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Families against Bigotry and the Faith Leaders and Conscience of Spokane are planning a workshop on “Why Race Matters” from 1 to 8 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 10, at Veradale United Church of Christ, 620 W. Broadway, Veradale.

The event is designed for parents, students, and teachers.

A multi-racial team facilitating the “Why Race Matters” workshop uses the three-part documentary, “Race: The Power of an Illusion” to frame discussion. Participants will look at the common beliefs about race, advantage and justice; define explicit and implicit biases, uncover the roots of the race concept in North America and discuss local examples of institutional racism.

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A new 24/7 Regional Behavioral Health Crisis Line was activated on January 1. The toll free number is (877) 266-1818. It replaces First Call for Help, which was deactivated the same date. Callers who dial First Call for Help will hear a message that allows them to select the new crisis line for immediate assistance or form publicly-funded healthcare.

For information, call 838-4651 or visit fbhwa.org.
Lands Council’s collaboration elicits mutual solutions for interest groups

Continued from page 1

the Forest Service to increase its oversight of the timber industry.

“We told agencies that sediment in creeks increased costs for fisheries and that old-growth-dependent species such as the fisher, goshawk and spotted owls, were important,” he added.

“Because of challenges in the 1980s, timber cuts dropped 80 percent in the region by the late 1990s. In court, we won some and lost some,” said Mike, who joined the staff in 1991.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering in 1980 at Colorado State University, Mike worked from 1980-1982 with Boeing, but he knew that was not for him. He wanted to live in the woods with back-to-the-landers. He found land near Republic, where he and his former wife settled with Tim and Sue Coleman. Tim now heads the Kettle Range Conservation Group.

Mike completed a master’s in 1987 in Colorado, but came back to Republic. He was involved with Earth First, a national environmental group engaged in protests, tree sits and road blockades.

Mike, who became director of the Lands Council in 2002, described their different projects and approaches.

• Restoration ecologist Joe Cannon works on the beaver dam project.

The Department of Ecology (DEQ) planned to build three dams to store water from the Colville River.

“Concerned about the impact on climate change and losing several beautiful waterfalls and canyons, we suggested the ‘beaver solution’ to store water in hundreds of places, by relocating 125 beavers to build dozens of beaver dams,” he said.

“For eight years, we have trapped beaver families and re-located them, rather than having the Washington State Fish and Wildlife kill them as pests. The legislators passed a law to make it easier to relocate beavers,” Mike said.

Beaver dams restore water-sheds, which hold water more evenly than large dams, filtering toxins and mitigating floods and fires, he explained. They also increase flood plains, raise the water table and bring back natural vegetation, amphibians and birds.

• Amanda Parrish oversees river restoration along with Joe, Kat Hall and Jeff Johnson.

For 12 years, the Lands Council has worked to restore the Spokane River. The Lands Council wanted to plant trees and native vegetation along Hangingman Creek and the Little Spokane River, using funds from the DOE and members.

Each year, volunteers plant thousands of Ponderosa pine trees and hardwood trees next to creeks, putting cones around them to protect them from rodents and deer. Volunteers water them every two weeks in the summer.

Amanda has started the River Restoration Project with the Colville National Forest, placing 400 big trees to put meanders back in Leck Creek, which had been straightened when a mill drove logs down it.

• Through Project Sustain, Kat teaches environmental education in four middle and high schools each year. The Lands Council rents a bus to take students outdoors to teach about water quality, trees and plants.

• Laura Ackerman uses activism to address climate change.

Over the last four years, she has involved people in challenging oil and coal terminals in Western Washington. In Spokane, she has organized hearings, meetings and visits to Olympia to stop the terminals.

“Every oil and coal terminal has been stopped. Only one is pending,” Mike said.

With 350 Spokane, Laura promoted the Clean Energy Resolution that the Spokane City Council passed this year.

Recently, she organized people to go to Olympia to advocate for restoring the solar rebate, which is about to expire. Meanwhile, she urges people to use it before it expires.

• In its wildlife protection program, Chris Bachman seeks alternatives for wolves and cattle.

Once killed off, gray wolves returned naturally to Washington 12 years ago. Cattle wandered everywhere, from meadows into woods where wolves killed them.

Chris proposed a solution, recognizing open plains were the native environment for cows. To create more open areas for cattle to graze and more fire breaks, Chris suggested logging trees growing into meadows and in forest areas near communi- ties, power lines and roads. One rancher is doing a pilot project.

• To protect wilderness and old growth, Mike has worked with local environmentalists, including Tim Coleman, to collaborate with the timber industry by forming the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition in 2002.

For 16 years, the Colville, Idaho Panhandle and Kootenai National Forests stopped logging old growth and roadless areas. In Idaho, the Idaho-panhandle and Kootenai National Forests stopped logging old growth and roadless areas. One rancher is doing a pilot project.

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• John Mabey at the Spokane Natural Resources Conservation District has worked to plant trees and native vegetation along Hangingman Creek and the Little Spokane River.

It’s fascinating to be part of a science project that could clean contaminated sites,” said Mike. The Lands Council continues to be called on to offer its insights and advice on environmental concerns as they emerge, such as on the stormwater drainage in Spokane and on the proposed silicon plant in Newport.

“We recognize that environmental issues are multifaceted,” he said, “and it’s possible to find innovative solutions to protect the health of people and nature.”

For information, call 838-4912, email mpe tersen@lands council.org or visit landscouncil.org.

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The Opioid Crisis in America

Dr. David Tauben
University of Washington

Monday, Feb. 11 | 7 p.m.
Robinson Teaching Theatre | Weyerhaeuser Hall
Whittworth University

Dr. David Tauben, M.D., is a board-certified physician at the Center for Pain Relief at UWMC-Roosevelt and chief of pain medicine for UW Medicine. He is a UW professor of anesthesiology and pain medicine. He is also director of medical student education in pain medicine and medical director for UW TelePain.

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Two weeks after Calvary Baptist Church started a Soup Kitchen on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2009, in the former parsonage beside the church, Betty Dumas, a church member and elementary school teacher, received a call from its founder Peggie Troutt, “How can you call it a soup kitchen if you don’t make soup?”

By the next month, Betty was making the soup and then became assistant manager. She continued teaching full time.

“I decided to be the soup lady, but I didn’t know how to make soup,” she said. “I went home and looked in some cookbooks to learn how to make it.”

The Soup Kitchen started with six guests, but now an average of 130 are served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays.

That means there is need for more soup, especially given that some guests may eat six bowls.

Betty is continually learning and finding recipes based on the food they have or ingredients she buys.

“Sometimes I make medley soup from whatever is left over. I put it in a blender,” she said. “It’s different all the time. It may be potato soup, corn soup, bean soup, chicken rice or chicken noodle soup. If they like it and rave, I make it again.”

She also depends on what food we have in storage. We have plenty of beans. Sometimes I go to the store and buy some cream of mushroom soup to add to what I make,” she said.

When she goes on a one-week vacation, she makes soup ahead.

Both Betty and her late husband had worked in restaurants when they were younger. At one point, she suggested they open a restaurant. He said no, so “this is my restaurant, working as a volunteer.”

Betty comes at 7:30 a.m., to open the soup kitchen and then was offered a position at Sheridan Elementary School and then was offered a position at Finz.

“Now as a volunteer who is working one-on-one in an office with children teachers send, Betty continues her love of teaching and passion for children.

Recently, she helped a kindergartner child who did not want to come to school. After she met with a while, he said he loved school.

“Some students need attention... They do not get in the classroom in teachers. Move the classes along so to keep up with the classes,” said Betty, recalling that she used to work with children in small groups. Some who were more able could do assignments on their own. She worked with low-performing children until they were at grade level.

“Now teachers send children to me for ‘the Duman touch.’” The students ask us to come to them, not the district, the teachers or their parents,” she said. She was teaching with about 16 children a week.

“I want to be a light for the Lord. I want to tell people, ‘Jesus loves me through you. Jesus light shines through me and leads me to people. I want to feel in my spirit what God wants me to do and say,’ ” said Betty, who previously directed Calvary’s youth, the church, a Sunday School, and the main choir, which is now called The Voices of Calvary.

“If we can help a brother or sister, we are to do it,” she said, whether it’s with hungry people at the soup kitchen, with children needing help to improve learning skills or anywhere in the community.

For information, call 747-8793.
Healing through justice in court. Trauma may mean they want to societal problems that led to their quietly on their own. For others, and adults. Some want to heal community issues for children, youth -at safety, justice and commu move through the healing process. ing to talk through difficult things. weekly commitment to counsel -gust," she said.  “However, we are not the first region to adopt Integrated Managed Care. Early adopters were Southwest and North Central Washington, so we can learn from the experiences of those regions,” she said.

Erin said LCS’ ongoing programs provide people in crisis means to restore their hope, health and safety. “Hopes comes as LCS embraces people in the midst of their ad- porters with physical health front 1999 and worked with a domestic violence action to get back to Spokane in 1999 support for partners with Families with Children, Goodwill and the state, and her mother, now at Community-Minded En- dures awareness,” said Erin, who meets with the Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council, which includes the YWCA, prosecutors, victims and witnesses. “We urge the criminal justice system to hear victims’ voices. Growing up in the Mead area of Spokane, Erin had “a social- justice oriented childhood” with both parents being social work- ers—her father for Partners with Families with Children, Goodwill and the state, and her mother, now at Community-Minded En- dures awareness,” said Erin, who teaches at Pennsylvania State University, hears their stories and connects with people where she can share their stories as she connects with poli- ce.“Victim advocacy is grass- roots, meeting with people where they are and helping them grow and flower,” she said. “Human services in Spokane have many loving people who want to make Spokane better.” Although now in administra-

Erin Williams Hueter promoted to executive director of Lutheran Community Services

LCS has helped people for years in a variety of ways, including working with victims of sexual assault. Erin said LCS has been “the go to place when they check in at the hospital, file police reports, meet with detectives, go to trial and make victim impact statements.”

At the macro level, we help the system better respond to victims through advocacy to change poli- cies and public education to in- crease awareness,” said Erin, who meets with the Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council, which includes the YWCA, prosecutors, victims and witnesses. “We urge the criminal justice system to hear victims’ voices. Growing up in the Mead area of Spokane, Erin had “a social- justice oriented childhood” with both parents being social work- ers—her father for Partners with Families with Children, Goodwill and the state, and her mother, now at Community-Minded En- dures awareness,” said Erin, who teaches at Pennsylvania State University, hears their stories and connects with people where she can share their stories as she connects with poli- ce.“Victim advocacy is grass- roots, meeting with people where they are and helping them grow and flower,” she said. “Human services in Spokane have many loving people who want to make Spokane better.” Although now in administra-

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Three Providence Health Care staff from Spokane joined 44 other Providence staff to provide health care to poor people in Guatemala from Sept. 21 to 29.

They came from around the United States to provide services through a Faith in Practice short-term medical mission.

Oscar Haupt, business manager of the Providence Adult Day Center near Holy Family Hospital, Annalee Goetzman, a surgical nurse, and Darryl Duvall, a certified registered nurse anesthetist, volunteered at Hospital Hilario Galindo in Retalhuleu, Guatemala.

In 2019, Faith in Practice is offering 40 short-term mission trips to Guatemala. Each year, 1,300 medical professionals and support personnel from across the United States and the world pay their own expenses to travel to Guatemala.

Teams work beside 12,000 Guatemalan volunteers and treat more than 25,009 patients a year, people who would otherwise have no access to medical care.

Oscar, who went to translate, grew up and earned a degree in marketing in Santiago, Chile, came to the United States for further studies, including a bachelor’s in psychology from Weber State University and master's in social work from the University of Utah in 1990.

He moved to Spokane in 1992, worked for seven years with Spokane Mental Health and was a social worker several years with the Providence Visiting Nurses Association, before starting as manager at the Adult Day Health Center in 2012.

Annalee, who worked in Coeur d’Alene, went to nursing school at Boise State University and was a nurse for 13 years in Boise. She then joined a travel nurse company for a couple of assignments, spent two years at Kootenai Health in Coeur d’Alene and one year at Bonner General in Sandpoint.

For the past three years, she has been a circulating nurse at the Sacred Heart Doctors Building day surgery area in Spokane.

Previously, she has helped build a 10-bed humanitarian home in Tijuana with a church team and one in Coeur d’Alene during her high school years.

Darryl, who grew up in Wisconsin, trained and worked in New York City and Boston before moving to Spokane in 2014.

Providence has worked with the Faith in Practice program in Guatemala for 23 years. Retalhuleu is one of several places teams go. It’s a remote village 120 miles southwest of Antigua, Guatemala.

“Providence encourages caregivers to participate in mission trips,” said Oscar. “It also has programs in Mexico, where people go to build homes.”

He said Providence facilitates these missions because of its ties to the Sisters of Providence. A group of sisters left Montreal 175 years ago on a mission to serve in Vancouver. They wound up serving in Valparaiso, Chile. Later, five sisters came on a mission to the Washington Territories and founded the Mother Joseph Province.

Annalee, who attends Community United Methodist Church in Coeur d’Alene, said she met staff of Providence Health Services, she tries to follow the mission statement, which is “to reveal God’s love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through compassionate service.”

“The mission of the Sisters of Providence was to serve where there was a need,” said Oscar. “It is to serve in ministry where the need is, especially among the poor and vulnerable.

Both Oscar and Annalee learned about the opportunity on the Providence website and applied. They did not know each other previously, but met at the airport, identifying each other because they wore blue “Faith in Practice” T-shirts.

Oscar said they were on a team with physicians, nurses, nurses anesthetists, anesthesiologist, lab technicians, physical and occupational therapists, pharmacists and translators from Alaska, Washington, Oregon and California.

Ten volunteers went to do wheelchair assembly. Darryl screened patients prior to administering anesthesia in the operating room—asking about smoking history, body weight and allergies, and verifying any underlying conditions such as diabetes, long or heart disease—so that they would do well in the surgery and have a safe recovery. He then administered anesthetics to the screened patients.

“Everyone on the team was essential to be sure the patient would be safe,” Oscar said.

One young man came in confident. When he saw the IV needle, he stiffened. Oscar helped him do breathing and self-hypnosis to relax.

Some nurses prepared patients for surgery, some were with them in surgery, and some were with them afterwards.

“In translating for the team, I saw the continuum of care,” he said.

Annalee was impressed with how grateful patients and their families were.

They came at 6 a.m. and waited all day in a cold room in paper-thin nightgowns to be seen by the doctor and have their surgeries. They had no food or drink all day while they waited, but did not complain.

Annalee said operating rooms are cold in the U.S. and in Guatemala because the big operating room lights get hot to prevent bacterial growth.

“It is so comforting to be able to offer a warm blanket here, but this wasn’t available in Guatemala,” she said.

“Patients carried their own linens from the pre-op holding area to the operating room. They would lay on a cold bed with no warm blanket, and still remained grateful. No one complained,” she said.

Darryl added, “I will never forget how appreciative the patients in Guatemala were for the care we were administering to them in the OR. They put their utmost trust in our hands, quite a different perspective than what we as caregivers experience in the U.S.

“I have worked in a number of different health care settings as a nurse anesthetist, but this was the most challenging and rewarding,” he said.

Two girls who waited much of the day were happy after the chaplain gave them stuffed animals, said Oscar, who also translated the chaplain’s prayers and blessings.

The team did 89 surgeries—such as laparoscopic hernia repairs, gall bladder removals, lipoma removals, adenoids, tonsillectomies, facial mass removals, nasal reconstructions, hysterectomies, ovarian cyst removals and bladder repairs.

They did 92 other procedures, such as wound care, physical therapy and providing much needed wheelchairs.

They also did assessments to prepare other patients for another team that would be coming two weeks later.

“We are each a piece in a chain of medical care that continues,” said Oscar, who sees such mission service as a part of his faith.

He had not done such volunteer service previously, but was glad to help by translating.

“It changed my life. It really seemed to be about health care,” he said.

Oscar was surprised that he was not the only one on the team who was born outside the U.S.

One young woman was born in Kashmir and practices in California, spoke with families in a caring, compassionate way, giving them hope,” Oscar said.

On Sunday, when they were not to do surgeries, a Korean-born surgeon saw a woman who needed surgery right away and took her into the operating room.

Others on the team were born in South Africa, Iraq, Ecuador, Uruguay and Guatemala.

“All were willing to give of their time. Each paid $1,000 for airfare and raised $1,000 for supplies needed for the surgeries,” Oscar said.

“I always wanted to be involved in a medical mission, so I’m glad to be working for a hospital that supports these teams,” said Annalee.

Neither Annalee nor Oscar had been on a medical mission before. Both would like to go again.

For information, visit faithinpractice.org.
A community’s art events is good for culture and for business

By Kaye Hult

“Music is more than intellect,” Ali said. “It has with 25 nonprofits, she said. “As executive director, Ali brings together understanding of working with nonprofits and running a small business.”

“The response it elicits may not be the response that is desired, but getting a response means success,” Ali said.

When she was 19, she moved to Coeur d’Alene with $15 in her pocket. She came because a friend lived here.

Ali attended North Idaho College and received a commercial art degree in 1996. She has been a graphic designer for 25 years.

For information, call 208-292-1629 or email ali@artsandculture. reda.org.

Wide Open Panel
Conversations about Israel

Sundays, Jan. 6, Feb. 24 & March 24

You have heard the joke about two Jews and three opinions? Panel participants will vary and represent a wide range of political perspectives on the history and current events of Israel. Moderated by Rabbi Tamar Malino and Education Director Iris Berenstein 10 a.m. to noon

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Skyler Oberst, who founded the Meet the Neighbors programs for interfaith understanding in Spokane, killed a year off with global travel, interfaith encounters and networking with young people. He attended the Parliament of World Religions from Nov. 1 to 7 in Toronto. Several others from Spokane also attended—Irene Simons, Hank and Joan Boeckling of Unity Spiritual Center, and Emily Coggeshall of Spokane’s Jewish Services. The program covers religion news online.

With the Next Generation Task Force, Oberst helped plan the 2018 gathering. Three years ago, he recruited, trained and led a group of 200 from Spokane to the Parliament of World Religions in Lake City. About 8,000 attended this year, and 10,000 in 2015.

“By Germany” and “Shoelaces” were the number of young people attending. Skyler was charged to involve youth. During the Next Generation plenary on the last day, leaders passed the baton to the next generation,” he said.

Second, the Parliament is traditionally a place where people seek like-minded individuals. Interfaith leaders celebrate and name the community-building potential of the Parliament as a place for engaging people. Two things stood out to him at the Parliament this year.

“While it’s in vogue for young people to do interfaith work and while young people are ready to do it, the Parliament of World Religions is also a place for intergenerational encounters,” he said. “We do not want to miss the wisdom of true interfaith work that has been developed in some of our forums established in earlier years.”

“It’s about the importance of human life and human connection. It’s not about delegates but is open to everyone, Skyler said. “At plenaries, there may be a few resolutions or position papers that go to the board to be read and approved to be taken as living breathing challenges for people to discern and affirm in their lives and actions,” he said.

While it was 1993, also in Chicago, followed by a Parliament of World Religions in 1999 at Capetown, South Africa, led by Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It’s been held every few years since—2004 in Barcelona, 2009 in Melbourne, 2015 in Salt Lake City and 2018 in Toronto.

“It’s not about delegates but is open to everyone, Skyler said. “At plenaries, there may be a few resolutions or position papers that go to the board to be read and approved to be taken as living breathing challenges for people to discern and affirm in their lives and actions,” he said.

One 2018 resolution was on the environment and one, directed at divisive leadership, called for civil and equal rights in one, and education in the Neighbors program he began in 2018 in partnership with the Next Generation Task Force. Oberst said he would work between Parliament and the Next Generation Task Force.

“While the Next Generation Task Force is charged to involve youth, Skyler will work with the Next Generation Global Project to facilitate conversations among middle school, high school and college students on contemporary faith and life issues.

“The Parliament of World Religions was held to create global networks on resources. It’s a way to meet people and see the world from different vantage points. I converse every day online with friends I make,” he said.

“Technology at its best is a tool to bring people together. I like to use the Internet to get people off the Internet. It’s crucial in today’s world and must be applied to faith communities. Most people want to meet, not just sit behind a screen and communicate through a keyboard,” Skyler said.

“Some, however, it’s easier to send an idea on the Internet than to take a plate of cookies across the street to a family of another faith or political party. Encountering the other opens new ways of living and calls us to find ways to be involved, breaking down barriers in our corner of the world,” he said.

On interfaith work in Spokane, Skyler said that the Interfaith Council he coordinated is continuing to evolve with the needs of the community, but “interfaith work is not going away.”

As more people are involved, he expects a new model to emerge. For information, call 360-489-8217 or email r.s.oberst@gmail.com.

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Festival features Jewish films

The 15th Annual Spokane Jewish Cultural Film Festival, Jan. 24, 26 and 27 at Wolff Auditorium in Jepson Center at Gonzaga University, gives a glimpse of Jewish experience in a diverse world.

The films, “Heading Home: The Tale of Team Israel,” “I Beye Germany” and “Shoelaces,” showcase themes of Jewish resilience, perseverance in the face of challenges and overcoming odds.

“Heading Home,” in English at 7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 24, is a David-and-Goliath story of Israel’s national baseball team competing in the World Baseball Classic after years of defeat.

“I Beye Germany,” in English and German, at 7 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 26, is the story of David Birmann and his Jewish friends in 1946 in Frankfurt. They have escaped the Nazi regime and dream of leaving for America but need money and more. It explores wartime trauma and survivor guilt with playfulness and wit.

“Shoelaces,” in Hebrew with English subtitles, at 2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 27, tells of the compli- cated relationship between an aging father and the special needs son he abandoned as a young boy. The father’s kidneys are failing and the son wants to donate one of his. It’s about the importance of human life and human connection. Since 2005, the Spokane Jewish Cultural Film Festival has brought international films to Spokane to share Jewish life and culture, said Neil Schindler, director of the Spokane Area Jewish Family Services.

For information, call 509-7394, email director@sajfs.org or visit sajfs.org/ourprograms/sjff.

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Saying ‘yes’ to sheltering people and being sheltered is a first step

Opportunities to serve the homeless are abundant and need attention to the tasks at hand. My task one day was to take a three-year-old boy with Down Syndrome to downtown Spokane to meet his mom. I was anxious about this. This child is independent and strong willed. I was concerned that he might take something from my car into Starbucks where we were meeting. I parked the street one and a half blocks away, locked the car seat, and braced for the challenge.

Immediately, he showed me my worry was justified. He took the scattered sidewalk, he was smiling and waving to everyone he encountered. The cold walk to Starbucks was full of wonder, warmth and excitement. My child was profound, but that was only the beginning.

We walked into Starbucks and searched for a place to sit. The only available seating were on how I would keep my little friend occupied in the busy coffee shop. We found an empty table by ourselves that had a window overlooking the sidewalk, he was curious about the man sitting to our left and sat down on the bench. He then got up and ran back and forth, and begging practically sitting in his lap, began to grab things from his table and “talk” to him.

The man smiled. I apologized. The man turned to me with joy in his smile and said, “It’s true. I have a four-year-old who I miss very, very much. This is nice.

For a moment, he told me about his little boy and what he was working on, hoping to be able to see him again someday. About this time, mom arrived. We offered our boy a photo of his food and then sat back down at the table. The man sitting to our right was captivated by what he saw. The boy then got up and ran back and forth. Then I noticed the men we were sitting among were homeless. In fact, they had a new place and they were sprang up outside the city hall to protest Spokane’s sit-and-leave law. Our conversa-
tion then turned to the struggles of living outside in冰冷.

For 45 minutes, we talked about shelters and snowing, staying warm, looking for food and work, family and support, what challenges Spokane created.

The man told me that just a few months ago he had a girlfriend who called to see her son. Then things went bad, and here he was. He had friends in the Tri-Cities and wanted to move there. But he was homeless, and so he sat down on the sidewalk. He was excited. We talked about Sisters’ Haven and the sit-and-leave ordinance that criminalizes homelessness. As more temporary shel-

er opened in December, it was shut down for violating that law. The effort continues.

Those spaces, plus 40 at Cannon St., 60 at Salem Lutheran as emergency warming stations, provide services to help people from the streets to education, health care, jobs and permanent housing.

Frontier Behavioral Health also provides teams to help people find housing.

The temporary shelters are at least a safe, warm place to be and connect with resources,” Tija said. “While the City of Spokane is supporting the temporary shelters this winter, it seeks long-term solutions, including 100 to 150 more beds in a 24/7 permanent shelter space by summer.

Spokane County’s “Point in Time Count” is the last Sunday of January. This year, volunteers will ask about circumstances that led people to be homeless, she said.

People interested in volunteering may email everydaycounts@spokanecounty.org, or call (509) 477-4165.

In one place, Homeless Connect, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 30, at the Spokane Community Center, offers a full menu of resources, and DSHS, family, veterans, housing, medical and dental services, clothing and food banks, warrant quashing and more.

People interested in volunteering may email everydaycounts@spokanecounty.org, or call (509) 477-4165.

The effort continues.

Meanwhile, Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington continues its commitment to build 800 permanent housing units for chronically homeless people—with $525.5 million

Near the shelter is the Salvation Army, which helps people out of city jail to challenge the sit-and-lie ordinance that criminalizes homelessness.

People interested in volunteering may email everydaycounts@spokanecounty.org, or call (509) 477-4165.

Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington continues its commitment to build 800 permanent housing units for chronically homeless people—with $525.5 million

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Peace and Justice Action Committee. Community Building, 35 W. Main St., 5:30 p.m., 838-9701, gaian.org.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 6</td>
<td>“Wide Open Panel Conversations about Israel,” Temple Beth Shalom, 1322 E. 30th Ave., 10 a.m. 473-3404, spokanews.org.</td>
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<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>Women’s March on Spokane, 5:30 p.m. 509-353-0000, women’smarch.com.</td>
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<td>Jan 17, 24, 31</td>
<td>Taizé Prayer Service. The Inland Northwest’s 16th-century Catholic monastery on fate of millions ihrc.net.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Program. Spokane Public Radio. 23 – 24 2 pm $47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration and Speaker, Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, 806 W. Indiana, 5:30 p.m. 509-353-0000, women’smarch.com.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 15</td>
<td>The Black History 101 Mobile Museum. The Inland Northwest’s 16th-century Catholic monastery on fate of millions ihrc.net.</td>
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<td>Jan 11-12</td>
<td>24-Hour Retreat, St. Mark’s Lutheran, Cottonwood, ID, 208-965-2000, spirit-center.org.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 10</td>
<td>Open Door Event and Bake Sale, Transitions (New Leaf Bakery-Café). 3014 W. Fort Wright Dr., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 509-353-0000, women’smarch.com.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Register for Exploring the Mystery of the Creative Arts Experience. 3014 W. Fort Wright Dr., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 509-353-0000, women’smarch.com.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 1-3</td>
<td>Scholar in Residence Program. 3014 W. Fort Wright Dr., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 509-353-0000, women’smarch.com.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>“Embracing the Artistic Call,” a cohort program for Exploring the Mystery of the Creative Experience. 3014 W. Fort Wright Dr., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 509-353-0000, women’smarch.com.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Three members of the Orellana family, who came to Spokane from El Salvador in 1985 and lived in sanctuary at St. Ann’s Catholic Church, sat in the front row for the Oct. 24 ceremony at the Vatican in Rome canonizing the martyred Archbishop Oscar Romero as a saint.

They were Transito, her daughter Ana and son Tanis. For the interview, another daughter, Milagros, translated for Transito, who has 10 children and 30 grandchildren.

“In 1977, I first met the bishop of El Salvador when he visited Ateos, the village where we went to church,” Transito said. “My husband and I went to work on the radio. My brother was working with Archbishop Romero there and in the city of Ciudad Arce. Our village, Canton Serrano de Plata Province of San Salvador, was between them.

Transito and his brother Jose, had a coffee farm. Tanis was a volunteer village pastor because there were too few priests. He led liturgies, Bible studies and music. He and Transito were members of the Third Order of St. Francis. Their children sang in the choir. Transito helped support the family by selling food. She also took food to people needing medicine to sick people.

“Archbishop Romero worked on behalf of the poor. He suffered with them and taught them to live by the gospel,” she said. “After he died, soldiers killed and injured many people. Many, like us, had to leave the country.”

“I never imagined he would one day be a saint,” she said. “Then, we just saw the need and felt responsible to help people.”

St. Ana entered religious life when she was 15 with the Mother of the Orphans. Because she spent 24 years in Italy, she knew Archbishop Romero for only a short time. In 2003, she joined her family in Spokane and became a Sister of Providence in 2005.

Since then, she served a year in El Salvador; three years in Yakima and seven years in Portland before moving to Spokane in 2016. Tanis, who was eight years old when his family left El Salvador, did not understand then what was happening politically and did not know Archbishop Romero.

He remembers, however, that his father asked him each evening to go to a spot where he had buried a box with a Bible and a Walkman radio, and return it there later. They would listen to a radio station called, “We Shall Overcome.” That was forbidden. In the Bible, his father had a bookmark with the picture of Martin Luther King, Jr.

When Tanis asked who that was, his father said it was “someone who spoke up for people.”

In May 2015, Sr. Ana and Transi- to were at Archbishop Romero’s beatification in El Salvador.

At the moment of his beatification, many were among who sang, “We shall overcome in the sky.”

“We felt his presence and the presence of the martyrs, and felt empowered to live with God and help people become holy,” said Sr. Ana. “I have a strong passion to follow the way of Archbishop Romero and raise the voices of the poor.”

“It was healing to see my father’s name on the hall of martyrs,” she said. “Our family members had gone twice to El Salvador to follow the way of Archbishop Romero.”

Many still suffer and flee from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. Parents do not want their boys taken to be soldiers or gangsters,” said Milagros.

“They are like the people of Israel fleeing in the exodus because of poverty and persecution.”

The Orellanas know about fleeing out of fear of being killed.

“We feel safe here,” said Milagros. “We are all citizens. Some of them have depression or PTSD, but it’s reassuring now to know Archbishop Romero is a saint.”

Sr. Ana said St. Romero “called us to do as he did, to raise our voices for the poor and take risks. We feel his presence. He is living with us and with all who suffer. Where there is injustice, St. Romero is present.”

In 2014 and 2016, also found it applying.

When Transito’s participation in St. Ann’s was limited by her English, she continues to help people in Spokane and in El Salvador, raising funds after selling papus- sas (rice flour stuffed with pork, cheese, beans and chopped vegetables) and tamales.

One of Milagros’ three daughters helps her raise funds to start a medical clinic on land that Tanis had.

The Salvadoran government has sold much of the land to corporations, because it is rich in gold and diamonds, said Sr. Ana, adding that “companies are glad that people emigrate, so they can take more land.”

Many still suffer and flee from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico.

“The land is not yours or mine. It’s everyone’s. Why build a wall? All people need a chance to live in dignity,” she said.

People are ‘not the other.’ We need to open our hearts and be responsible to take care of each other,” Tanis said.

Tanis Orellana went to Rome to connect more with St. Romero.

Tanis Orellana went to Rome to connect more with St. Romero. John Paul II was also canonized a saint on the same day as St. Romero.

The Orellanas, who were in Rome seven days, visited many of sights, including the tomb of St. Francis of Assisi in Assisi.

Tanis said he went to the canonization to feel more attached to Archbishop Romero, beyond stories his family told.

“I wanted to connect and thank him for what he did and what he taught us,” Tanis said. “I now feel connected to him.”

Being there also reconfirmed the importance of social justice to him.

“It’s important to share faith with my children. Faith should help us distinguish between right and wrong, and speak against injustice,” he said.

“I tell my six children about my experiences as a child in a war zone. I identify with people I see in similar circumstances on TV news. Sometimes I have flashbacks, including images of fleeing and hiding. People are not ‘the other.’ We need to open our hearts and be responsible to take care of each other,” Tanis said.

Tanis Orellana went to Rome to connect more with St. Romero.