By Mary Stamp

As chief diversity officer (CDO) in charge of Gonzaga University’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Robin Kelley believes that an atmosphere of diversity, equity and inclusion is important for faculty, staff and students to experience not only on campus but also in the community.

So community members are invited to campus programs, such as events of the Center for Hate Studies, and Robin meets with people in the community, NAACP Spokane and area tribes.

“I want both the campus and community to be welcoming,” said Robin.

“Gonzaga is less diverse, so that requires more relationship building to be influential and collaboration to create buy-in,” she commented.

Robin’s job is to promote diversity as part of what the university community is and part of its commitment to social justice and service.

Gonzaga was already committed to improving its diversity, equity and inclusion environment before Robin came in July 2020 as associate chief diversity officer. She has worked with Raymond Reyes, who was associate vice president and chief diversity officer for 22 of his 33 years at Gonzaga.

Robin became CDO in April 2021. Raymond is now associate vice president for cultural initiatives, so they continue to collaborate.

Her responsibilities span the departments as she helps the university include diversity, equity and inclusion in its strategic plan.

She developed and now works with Gonzaga’s Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which advises the president, provosts, academic deans, student affairs and the Gonzaga Council.

To increase and retain diversity among students, faculty and staff, Robin said, it’s important to recognize that racism occurs both on campus and in the community—such as the desecration of a Black Lives Matter exhibit, racist stickers on campus, Zoom bombing of a Black Student Union meeting and nationwide incidents toward Asians, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

In announcing her appointment, GU President Thane McCulloh

Continued on page 4

Spokane’s Yom Hashoah Committee announces winners of art contest

For the 2022 Yom Hashoah art and essay contest, middle and high school students prepared entries on the theme, “Why Holocaust Education?”

In April, the Committee for the Spokane Community Observance of the Holocaust chose the art contest winners. Their pieces are on display through May in the Liberty Park Public Library at 402 S. Pittsburg.

Students were asked to read history, view videos and gather survivors’ stories to learn about the Holocaust from 1933 to 1945, when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party cultivated fear and hatred of “non-Aryans” to rally the German people to war.

The goal of Nazis was to rid the world of people they considered inferior or a threat—Roma, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Communists, homosexuals, people with disabilities and particularly Jews. They exterminated 11 million people, including 6 million Jews—two-thirds of Europe’s and one-third of the world’s Jewish population, said the contest prompt.

Study of the Holocaust provides an opportunity to learn how hatred and intolerance can progress to genocide. The contest raised awareness in area schools.

Along with their art pieces, students wrote comments on lessons they learned about the Holocaust.

First place winners were Na-Jahna Smith, senior at On Track Academy, and Hayden Brewer, seventh grader at the Virtual Academy.

Second place winners were Anna Francesca Quintero-Cas tenada, sophomore at University High School, and Teagan Schroeder, eighth grader at Salk Middle School.

Third place winners were Ethan Smith, senior at University High School, and Zariya Alexander, eighth grader at Salk Middle School.

Honorable mention awards went to Garrett Collins and Yarezy Juarroz-Rodrigues, eighth graders at Salk Middle School; Fauge Bedow and Stephanie Thoenton, juniors at East Valley High School, and

Continued on page 6

House of Charities relocates, plans to build new 24/7 shelter

Catholic Charities has proposed to the City of Spokane and Spokane County a way to help address homelessness for single adults called House of Charity 2.0 (HOC 2.0). It relocates House of Charity and builds a new state-of-the-art facility for a larger low-barrier shelter outside the downtown core.

It would expand 24/7 shelter services to men and women and support vulnerable people in a facility on a site already secured outside downtown.

The idea is to create a new comprehensive homeless shelter solution in a new location, not related to the city’s proposed shelter on Trent Ave.

The HOC 2.0 project has been in discussion with the City of Spokane since November 2021.

The project continues Catholic Charities’ principles of more than 50 years: “Every person is made in the image and likeness of God and demands basic dignity, respect and compassion. Anyone experiencing homelessness should be able to eat, sleep and go to the bathroom indoors in a safe, welcoming space. The space should include behavioral health services people need to stabilize their lives and so they can be placed on a path to permanent supportive housing,” said Sarah Verden, director of marketing and communication.

HOC 2.0 will offer models for people to move on the stability continuum and will have a potential capacity up to 250 to 300 people, depending on the identified community need and architectural design.

While HOC 2.0 will be low-barrier, clients ready to move forward will have access to other services, including mental health counseling and care, substance abuse counseling, medical respite, permanent housing services, vocational training,
Orthodox theologian praises human rights witness

Orthodox theologian and human rights lawyer Natalia Vasilevich prefers to speak of the role of Christians rather than of a Christian society because, in the current context, institutional churches often fail to stand up for human rights, while individual Christians at the grassroots are bringing about positive changes.

“Many Christians are more motivated, taking the consequences when they join the democratic movement for fair elections,” Vasilevich said, noting that recent actions. An Orthodox priest from Minsk stood with flowers at a government station a day after the war started and was imprisoned for 13 days. Another priest was imprisoned for posting profile pictures on Facebook with Ukrainian symbols. A mother, who had a sticker on her car that read “Forgive us, Ukraine,” was imprisoned.

“Even in the shrunken public space, it is difficult for churches to witness,” said Natalia. “Orthodox women, mothers came together to pray to the Mother of God at a Minsk icon in the Orthodox cathedral. While entering, they were filmed. After the service, four were taken to the police station and asked why they were praying to the Mother of God against the war. Even if the message of institutional churches is unable to be strong, the message of individual Christians is shining, she said, showing Christians have a unique motivation inspired by the gospel. “They do not fear. They try to be messengers of justice and peace in Belarusian society,” she said. Too often, these individual leaders try to suppress priests and parish- ioners who protest. Some are allied with the oppressive gov- ernment, manipulating religion to silence the prophetic voice.

World needs the love of the world “Christians do. At grassroots levels, they find their voice to speak as the voice of the churches and the voice of the gospel in the society,” said Natalia, who believes these Christians can make a change, not only for church but for the churches, so they renew their commitment, mission and responsibility for justice and peace in a political crisis and in the whole world.

These actions have the benefit of giving signs of hope, but hope is a seed which grows. It starts to grow and bear fruits,” she said: “Small signs of hope, but therein lies the hope, there is even more of a challenge, and a nutritious meal can be a challenge, and a nutritious meal is even more of a challenge, said Melissa Johnson, a nutrition educator on staff at Second Harvest. “Second Harvest doesn’t just feed people. We work to feed them well,” she said. “This means providing as many fresh, whole foods as possible. It also means teaching them how to cook with ingredients and shar- ing simple recipes so they can make nutritious health into their own hands.”

For one in eight people, putting a meal on the table can be a challenge, and a nutritious meal is even more of a challenge, said Melissa Johnson, a nutrition educator on staff at Second Harvest. “Second Harvest doesn’t just feed people. We work to feed them well,” she said. “This means providing as many fresh, whole foods as possible. It also means teaching them how to cook with ingredients and shar- ing simple recipes so they can make nutritious health into their own hands.”

After a pause in the pandemic, Second Harvest’s Kitchen re- opened on-site cooking classes to teach healthy eating, she said. Its “nutrition ambassadors” donate time to help with cooking classes. They also prepare and hand out nutritious food samples and recipes at Mobile Markets. “With community support, World Relief Spokane has received all scheduled arrivals from the U.S. Afghan Placement and Assistance Program, said Justin Li, communications director. “If more refugees arrive from Afghanistan, we are ready to help them,” he said.

As for Ukraine, there are still many unknowns, he said. “World Relief’s offices have received Ukrainian refuge- ees, but World Relief Spokane has not received any yet. Second Harvest makes nutrition part of its mission to help our community,” said Melissa, reflecting how food is a shared experience that connects people and how nutrition education gives families in need access to nutritious meals. Melissa said people like new recipes and trying cuisine from different cultures.

For information, call 534- 6678 or visit 2 harvest.org.

Second Harvest restarts The Kitchen

Second Harvest Spokane has received all scheduled arrivals from the U.S. Afghan Placement and Assistance Program, said Justin Li, communications director. “If more refugees arrive from Afghanistan, we are ready to help them,” he said.

As for Ukraine, there are still many unknowns, he said. “World Relief’s offices have received Ukrainian refuge- ees, but World Relief Spokane has not received any yet.

Ukrainians living in Spokane can apply via the Lautenberg program to bring family mem- bers, Justin explained. This is a refugee program and is limited to certain religious minorities that faced persecution under the Soviet Union.

For information, call 534- 6678 or visit 2 harvest.org.
**Riverkeeper Jerry White, adding that advocates will talk on the connection to magnificence of the Spokane River," said Spokane Riverkeeper from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 6, in "Spokane and Coeur d'Alene Tribes, salmon might be able to return and recover, said Spokane Riverkeeper Jerry White.**

"The river is a creative force that keeps me coming back to paint its beauty and magic," he said.

**The Community Building Lobby at 35 W. Main Ave. Spokane Riverkeeper from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 6, in "as Muse," an evening of friends, food and art celebrating LR’s work shows his affection for the Spokane River, which formalized the interdisciplinary field of hate studies in 1997, marks its 25th year by announcing the Gonzaga Institute of Hate Studies.**

The name doesn’t change the mission of what was formerly called the Gonzaga Institute of Hate Studies. **"We continue to support research and education on the human capacity to dehumanize people as ‘other’ and processes to counter that capacity," said Kristine Hoover, professor of organizational leadership and director since 2016, citing national and global support for the center.**

"Consistent with GU’s commitment to courageous conversations, productive discomfort, and other diversity initiatives, the advisory and editorial board will not back away or back down from discomfort that studying hate may create," she said.

"Expanding awareness of oppression and marginalization is the first step in moving toward safety, more inclusive communities," she said. "The center focuses on the antecedents of hate so we can better address root causes and encourage effective strategies to counter it.**

**Women Helping Women Fund marks 30th year**

Women Helping Women Fund is holding its 30th anniversary celebration from 3 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, with an "Iconic Night" at the Fox, 1001 W. Sprague Ave.

**Notorious RPY authors Iris Carmon, a journalist with New York magazine and CNN, and Shana Knizhnik, a lawyer and author from Philadelphia, will speak on their book on Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s life from becoming a lawyer to serving on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1993 to 2020.**

The event includes discussion of issues affecting women and children in Spokane, information on organizations and a performance of Spokane Symphony musicians.

For information, call 328-8285 or visit whwspokane.org/an-iconic-night.

**United Way co-sponsors learning event**

As part of its Excelerate Success program, United Way, along with Better Health Together, Providence and Smith-Barbierjerg, sponsored a community learning session and virtual conversation at noon, Wednesday, May 18, with Reshma Menaker, author of My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies.

Reshma, a healer, coach, therapist and social worker, founded the Cultural Somatics Institute to help people heal from racialized trauma. His new book, The Quaking of America, surveys the deteriorating political climate.

For information, call 952-0936 or email andreamy@unit edwayspokane.org.

**The River as Muse** features Northwest artist

Northwest artist LR Montgomery will have his oil paintings featured at a First Friday Art Walk event, "The River as Muse," an evening of food, food and art celebrating Spokane Riverkeeper from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 6, in the Community Building Lobby at 35 W. Main Ave.

LR’s work shows his affection for the Spokane River, tributaries and shoreline and is available to view and purchase.

"The river is a creative force that keeps me coming back to paint its beauty and magic," he said.

"Spokane Riverkeeper believes his art provides a direct connection to hate studies and our community," said Kristine Hoover, professor of organizational leadership and director since 2016, citing national and global support for the center.

"Consistent with GU’s commitment to courageous conversations, productive discomfort, and other diversity initiatives, the advisory and editorial board will not back away or back down from discomfort that studying hate may create," she said.

"Expanding awareness of oppression and marginalization is the first step in moving toward safety, more inclusive communities," she said. "The center focuses on the antecedents of hate so we can better address root causes and encourage effective strategies to counter it."

**APIC Spokane plans events during May**

"Amplify and Diversify" is the theme for APIC Spokane’s Asian/American Heritage Month activities in May in Spokane. APIC Spokane is organizing a graduation celebration, workshops, film screenings and art events from May 1 to 22.

APIC Spokane and Pacific Islander Community Association of Washington will host an Asian, Asian American and Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander Student Graduation for college, university and high school students from 6 to 8 p.m., Sunday, May 1, at the Hemmingson Ballroom at Gonzaga.

The Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) and APIC will hold a meeting on "Asian Americans 101: Complexity and Diversity" with Pui-Yan Lam and Ryanne Louise speaking at 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 11, at Niche Coworking at 25 W Main Ave.

A panel on "Uncovering the Umbrella Term: AAPI" begins at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4, on Zoom at bit.ly/UncoveringAAPI. A "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Visual Anthology on the Complexities of Asian Identities" exhibit with photos from Margaret Albaugh’s "Indivisible" and Frances Grace Mortel’s multimedia installation, " Diaspora Recipes," will be on display from 9 a.m. Monday, May 2, to 2 p.m. Friday, May 27, at Terrain Gallery, 601 N. Monroe. There is a satellite program at the Eastern Washington University Women’s and Gender Education (WAGE) Center in Monroe 207 in Cheney.

"The quaking of America" is the title of a short film to be presented at the Magic Lantern Theater at 6 p.m. on Thursday, May 12.

Spokane and Coeur d’Alene Tribal biologists and Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) leaders will respond to the Gonzaga Institute of Hate Studies and stand against hate."
Jasmin Associates, and more.

from local leaders and resource

Union, Children’s Home Society,

hunt and more! Check out visits

filled day of food, local vendors,

Come join

from 9am-4pm for our Family

Spring Market.

Join us for a fun-

19 E Queen Ave. - Spokane, WA 99207

Page 4 - The Fig Tree - March 2022

---

UCUT members hand carve canoes at MAC

Through the end of May, the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) is hand carving two traditional dugout canoes from cedar logs at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture’s (MAC) outdoor amphitheater.

The canoeing began on April 21. Visitors can watch and learn about the tools, techniques and historical significance of the canoes. UCUT members will share about recent canoe voyages on area rivers, said Marc Gauthier, UCUT wildlife program manager.

The canoes will become part of the MAC’s permanent collection. “Canoe carving is a rare skill,” said Tisa Matheson, American Indian Collection curator at the MAC and a Nizette Pierce member.

The canoe carving coincides with the MAC exhibit, “Awakenings: Traditional Canoes and Bringing the Salmon Home,” on display through August 2022.

The exhibit explores the history and recent revival of the Columbia River Canoe Journey and First Salmon Ceremony, from buying old growth cedar logs and carving dugout canoes to the annual launch and landing at Kettle Falls, Tisa said.

Tisa said that some elders have been wanting to bring canoe building back into their cultures and salmon back to the Columbia River.

When the canoe is completed this summer, one canoe will be launched into an area river. It will be available for future programs on the importance of salmon to tribes and the revitalization of traditional water transportation.

For information, call 842-2943 or 363-5325.

Another effort is an underrep-resented minority post-doctoral fellowship program for recent doctoral graduates who need ad-ditional development as teachers to prepare them for tenure track to assure retention, Robin said.

Robin has also overseen racial equity climate surveys of under-graduates and staff.

“We hope to find what stu-dents, staff and faculty think of the campus climate, what we do well, where there are gaps and what we need to do to cre-ate an inclusive climate,” she said, adding that they are also asked about the climate in the surrounding community, “so inclusion does not end when they step off campus.”

That’s also important if we want to know: “why people stay and why people leave,” she said. “I meet with faculty members who are leaving to gain anecdotal information.”

The racial and cultural “di-versity” figure is 29 percent of students and 11.5 percent of faculty. It includes international and domestic nonwhite students.

Gonzaga offers several cultural clubs: the Asian American Pacific Islander Club, a LGBTQ Club, International Student Affairs, the Tribal Relations Group and a Black Student Union for students.

Gonzaga groups for faculty in-clude the IMPACT Affinity Group for Allies on Campus; the International and Transnational Faculty and Staff Affinity Group formed in 2021; Colleagues of Color formed two years ago, and a group called - Productive Discomfort, Robin said.

“Inclusion in classrooms is about both the environment and the pedagogy,” she pointed out.

Robin said her work is about improving and transforming lives by dismantling structures, systems, policies and practices, and creating new structures, infrastructures, policies and programs so things will change.

“I do not want students to recount that they persisted with their studies, in spite of some-thing in the climate or how they were treated,” she said, quoting Maya Angelou: “You may not remember what was said or done, but you remember how it made you feel.”

“I do not want students to recount that they persisted with their studies, in spite of some-thing in the climate or how they were treated,” she said, quoting Maya Angelou: “You may not remember what was said or done, but you remember how it made you feel.”

A fun-filled day of food, local vendors, musicians, family games, an Egg Hunt and more.

Visits from local leaders and resource centers, including Tax services provided by Carl Maxey, Produce donated by Second Harvest, plus HBPA, Mujeres in Action, Latinos en Spokane, Canopy Credit Union, Children’s Home Society, Jasmin Associates.

Puppies available for adoptions from Spokane Humane Society.

The family-focused Farmers’ Market and Community Resource Fair is an opportunity to connect our local families and organizations to support a network of shared resources and an opportunity to enjoy locally grown and handmade products.

To reserve a booth, contact neyfs.coordinator@gmail.com
By Emma Maple - Intern

A virtual visit to Guatemala may help individuals reconnect with their own community roots, as well as expand their understanding of what exists beyond their borders.

The Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) has a history of partnership with the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA). On April 20, CEDEPCA hosted a “Virtual Journey to Guatemala: Confronting Climate Change with Actions of Faith.”

The Presbyterian of the Inland Northwest, which has a long-time partnership with Guatemalan churches, invited participation. They will be hosting a pastors trip to Guatemala in January 2023.

This event is the 11th virtual visit CEDEPCA has held the past two years. The Zoom visits have focused on such topics as migration, deportation, gender equity and COVID-19.

The virtual visits are in English but are open to people around the globe. According to Betsey Moe, a mission coworker with Presbyterian Church USA and an intercultural encounters facilitator with CEDEPCA, the visits usually have around 100 participants.

As part of her role, she lives in Guatemala with her husband, Eric, and two children.

Betsey has long loved Central America—specifically Guatemala. Her love for it began in 1993, when she spent a semester in Central America and spent more than a month in Guatemala as part of her studies at Whitworth University.

“The trip opened my eyes to the painful history of U.S. involvement there,” Betsey said. “This knowledge haunted me for years and affected how I saw faith and politics.”

After she graduated in 1995 with an English major and Spanish minor, she was ordained as a Presbyterian pastor. She worked as a pastor for five years in Denver and then 12 years at Hamblen Park Presbyterian Church in Spokane.

In 2019, she participated in a mission trip to Guatemala with Hamblen Park.

“The trip reminded me how important it is for U.S. Christians to know their country’s history in international politics so they may make faithful, informed decisions about our international relations,” she said.

When Betsey came back, she saw the PC(USA) mission coworker position in Guatemala was open.

“When I traveled, I felt part of me came alive,” she said. “I wanted to know more and to enter into global justice issues more deeply.”

Although she began working with CEDEPCA in 2020, Betsey and her family did not move to Guatemala until January 2022.

The virtual visits to Guatemala were a direct result of COVID’s shutdowns. “For four months, there weren’t even flights going to Guatemala,” Betsey said. “The Intercultural Encounters Team had to start thinking differently. We wanted to maintain the relationships already established with churches, presbyteries and university groups in North America. We wanted to support them and let them know that we were committed during the pandemic to keep them connected.”

The PC (USA) decided to offer the virtual journeys so people could still “come to Guatemala” in some sense.

“The response we received from people in the U.S. was surprising,” Betsey said. “Many expressed joy at being able to ‘go’ to Guatemala from their own living room.”

“Many people could never come to Guatemala in the first place because of mobility issues, work schedules or limited finances,” Betsey said. “Virtual journeys have been a way to expand the reach of Intercultural Encounters. We’re reaching people who may still come to Guatemala in the future, and people who will never set foot in Guatemala but care about it and want to learn about global issues.”

The virtual visits attempt to make people feel like they are traveling. For example, Betsey said use of a drone gives the impression of flying over the country or videos taken from a car that simulate driving along a bumpy road.

When participants go to break-out rooms, Betsey often frames them as “imagine you’re on a bus, and you’re sitting with a seat partner that you’ve never met before.”

“During the pandemic, it’s been so easy to become ac- customed to the four walls of our homes. A virtual journey to Guatemala helps people open their eyes to what’s going on in the world, and how people around the world are connected and working together for justice. It’s not only refreshing, but it also helps reframe our view of who we are, wherever we are and our own role in our local community,” Betsey said.

“The Zoom participants might also be a chance for people to meet people from different parts of North America. ‘The Zoom participants might be in a break out room with one person from Arizona and another from New York. They discover what the others are thinking, and how they’re seeing and experiencing the virtual journey,’” Betsey said.

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

For information, visit www.fanwa.org/regional-spring-summits/
Art contest is a way to invite students to study impact of the Holocaust

Continued from page 1

Rachel Barney, senior at Central Valley High School, created the Fig Tree logo for the school's new magazine. The Fig Tree is covering details on the first, second and third place winners.

Erin Bangle, art teacher at On Track Academy, said in her 20 years of teaching, Najhana’s stained glass window is one of her favorites.

While Najhana was working on it, she started talking with a classmate about “why we have to keep studying about the Holocaust,” Erin said.

The classmate knew little about it, so Najhana, who Erin said is usually quiet, told what she was learning.

“The two worked on their stained-glass panels, discussing the Holocaust and why we must never forget it,” she said.

In her comments, Najhana, who named her piece “Faded,” said Holocaust education is important because, as time goes by, people forget the horrible acts that happened.

She hears false comparisons today, such as, “I don’t want to clean my room. This is like Nazi Germany!” Some people liken mandating immunizations or masks to Nazi Germany. Some want to ban books, but say they oppose Nazism, Najhana said, concerned that many people today don’t know what Nazism is, while survivors who can give first-hand testimony are dying and won’t be here much longer.

Her piece grew from the meaning of “Birkenau” in the name of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

“Birkenau is German for birch grove. Some believe they planted the fast-growing birch trees to hide the camp,” she said, explaining that when people see beauty, strength, hope and peace, opposites of what the Nazis hid behind the trees. The birch trees in my piece begin as bright and colorful and fade to clear.

“At the left side of my piece, the textures in the clear glass tell the story as people’s memories and knowledge of what happened behind those trees are fading,” Najhana said. “The smokestack fades from memory behind the trees and the hint of the wire on the walls trail through. We must study the Holocaust, so no one forgets and repeats the mistakes.”

Describing her first-place piece, Hayden said she focused on children during the Holocaust and the theme, “I’m Still Here,” from a 2013 documentary telling of the Holocaust through diaries of Jewish teens.

In the middle section with cracks in the background is a child’s hand raised in a closed fist and the message, “I’m Still Here.”

On the lower left is an almost empty cupboard with one slice of bread, the amount of food people in concentration camps were allowed in a day.

The lower right depicts the hands of a child and parent being separated, as many children were torn from families and never saw them again.

The top left has a Nazi flag with cracks in it, “signifying the corrupt minds of the Nazis,” Hayden said.

The top right shows a Star of David patch Jews had to wear so people could identify they were Jews.

It also shows an arm with numbers, 62034. Concentration camps tattooed numbers on arms of those imprisoned. The “620” in the number comes from Arik Cohen, a Holocaust speaker at Hayden’s school, who told students that 6/20 was the day his grandparents were married, the day they reunited after the war and the date his father was born.

In the piece, Hayden used the theme of cracks to say that the Holocaust was filled with horrible moments that made people’s lives crack, and in some cases fall apart.

For her piece, “I Am With You,” Anna Francesca looked at historical photos of children and young people in concentration camps, then painted their distraught faces behind barbed wire.

“I imagined that it could have been me,” she said, telling of feeling both horror and empathy, and then feeling solidarity to prevent it from ever happening again.

Continued on page 7

SAVE THE DATE
WSQ Annual Quilt Show
‘Extravaganza 2022’
Spokane County Fair & Expo Center

Interested in being a better communicator to have a more fulfilling life? Visit a Toastmasters meeting
CLICK the ‘Find A Club’ tab at toastmasters.org
Find open houses at: d9.toastmastersdistrict9.org
or facebook.com/groups.ToastmastersDistrict9

Unitarian Universalist.
Multi-Religious.
Counter-Opressive.
This is 21st century spiritual leadership.
Teagan upholds victims in “Never Again.”

Ethan also wondered why people didn’t stop Nazis when they dehumanized people, and why they turned a blind eye. He called his piece “Blind to Humanity.”

“When I hear that some people want to prevent children from learning about history, it feels the same as turning a blind eye. It is wrong,” he said.

He made his piece to show “how bad it was and can get, how many people could do such horrible things.”

Ethan urges people never to turn a blind eye to evil—whether it’s near or far. To show both the inhumanity and the complexity of ignoring it, he depicts a Nazi soldier facing away from a mother who is losing her child. He shows a mirror representing the mother’s world shattering as she loses her baby and the collapse of humanity that began for Jews with Kristallnacht—losing everything and everyone they loved. A second theme is families and children forcibly separated before being sent to incinerators or shot.

Ethan wants people to see the sad, sickening truth of what happened and to learn from the past, so they do not repeat it.

“Actively learning history keeps people from turning a blind eye and collects us together to stand against it happening again,” he said. “Stand Together as One.”

Agency offers text app for clients in recovery

The Recovery Services program of Community-Minded Enterprises (CME) has a new tool, an enhanced text communication application that helps clients at Recovery Café Spokane and complement traditional therapeutic activities.

Founded in 2017, the Recovery Café helps people in recovery reduce relapses, realize their potential and reclaim their lives.

Christine McMackin, manager of Recovery Café Spokane, said members can access assistance 24 hours a day with a few clicks on a smartphone.

CME added the app for recovery clients with a $50,000 grant from Coordinated Care’s Community Investment Fund. “Technology in behavioral health offers innovative opportunities to remove barriers for treatment, enhance convenience and complement traditional therapy models,” said Beth Johnson, CEO of Coordinated Care. “An app addressing those matters can impact equity and engagement in one’s health.”

Quiq, a digital customer service company in Bozeman, Montana, developed the platform working with CME on an app for parents with young children to access resources and support at the start of the pandemic.

“That app helps CME connect with parents and caregivers, guiding them to educational materials, activities and resources when in-person opportunities are hard to access,” said Jan Thoemke, CME’s interim CEO.

The recovery app uses artificial intelligence so clients can connect with a CME staff member and find resources based on answers they give.

Because of its growth, the Café relocated Feb. 1 to CME’s new 7,000-square-foot Recovery Services building at 622 E. 2nd Ave.

It is now also home to other CME programs: State Opioid Response, Substance Abuse Block Grant, Child Care Assistance Program and Foundational Community Support.

For information, call 822-3304 or visit spokanerbs.com.

The Recovery Services program of Community-Minded Enterprises (CME) has a new tool, an enhanced text communication application that helps clients at Recovery Café Spokane and complement traditional therapeutic activities.

Founded in 2017, the Recovery Café helps people in recovery reduce relapses, realize their potential and reclaim their lives.

Christine McMackin, manager of Recovery Café Spokane, said members can access assistance 24 hours a day with a few clicks on a smartphone.

CME added the app for recovery clients with a $50,000 grant from Coordinated Care’s Community Investment Fund. “Technology in behavioral health offers innovative opportunities to remove barriers for treatment, enhance convenience and complement traditional therapy models,” said Beth Johnson, CEO of Coordinated Care. “An app addressing those matters can impact equity and engagement in one’s health.”

Quiq, a digital customer service company in Bozeman, Montana, developed the platform working with CME on an app for parents with young children to access resources and support at the start of the pandemic.

“That app helps CME connect with parents and caregivers, guiding them to educational materials, activities and resources when in-person opportunities are hard to access,” said Jan Thoemke, CME’s interim CEO.

The recovery app uses artificial intelligence so clients can connect with a CME staff member and find resources based on answers they give.

Because of its growth, the Café relocated Feb. 1 to CME’s new 7,000-square-foot Recovery Services building at 622 E. 2nd Ave.

It is now also home to other CME programs: State Opioid Response, Substance Abuse Block Grant, Child Care Assistance Program and Foundational Community Support.

For information, call 822-3304 or visit spokanerbs.com.
Goodwill brings digital equity

Inland Northwest and other Northwest Goodwill agencies are partnering to bring digital equity to Washington with a pilot program called Goodwill® Connect.

The state digital inclusion system will bring digital literacy, access and training to 39 counties with funds from the Washington State Department of Commerce’s Broadband Office. Goodwill hired 17 digital navigators to give tech support in basic digital skills and connect callers with online information on jobs, housing, social services and state resources.

They train on how to turn on a computer, use a mouse, set up a cloud account and navigate the internet. They can point callers to other digital skills and jobs. Goodwill® Connect reaches people at risk of digital exclusion in rural areas, low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, tribal communities, seniors, people with disabilities and non-English speakers.

Tech support is available on the Digital Resource Hotline, 844-492-6663, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays to Fridays, and at goodwillconnect.com.

The program, which ends June 30, will provide 1,350 people with Chromebooks and internet access, plus connection to Goodwill for job training, case management and wrap-around services.

For information, call 444-4383 or visit goodwill.org.

New plans announced for House of Charity

Continued from page 1

Child abuse prevention starts with each one of us.

Page 8 • The Fig Tree • March 2022

The pandemic strained many protective factors for children and families, but together, we can make sure our community is still supportive and safe.

Take the first step by visiting srhd.org/pinwheel to learn how we can all make it easier for families to access support services and how we can identify and build on family strengths.

Take the first step by visiting srhd.org/pinwheel to learn how we can all make it easier for families to access support services and how we can identify and build on family strengths.
Professors link ‘militant masculinity’ with rise of Christian nationalism

By Gary Jewell / Dale Soden

Kristin Kobes Du Mez from Calvin University recently spoke at Whitworth University how the history of militant masculinity relates to the rise of Christian nationalism within the largely white evangelical church.

That’s the focus of her book, Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted the Faith and Fractured a Nation.

Kristin detailed numerous examples featured in her book of the way many evangelicals have gravitated to strong, white men and to a message of patriotism supported by a particular reading of the Bible.

Speaking to 200 on April 11, she suggested that many commentators across the country have wondered why so many evangelicals (roughly 80 percent) supported Donald Trump in 2020 when on the face of it his personal life and many of his policies seem at odds with Christianity.

Kristin contends, however, that evangelicals support Trump because he embodies the core values of the majority of evangelicals.

Her assertion of this has made her a frequent commentator in major media circles across the country.

Her journey to something of a celebrity status has been an unlikely one. Born in northwestern Iowa, she grew up in a conservative religious culture shaped by the Christian Reformed Church.

She went to graduate school at the University of Notre Dame, where Kristin attended as an undergraduate.

Her interest in studying American culture arose the year when she studied in Germany as an exchange student. She came back wanting to know more about the literature, she decided to major in history.

Kristin remembers how her colleagues at Dordt challenged one another to think critically about their own assumptions and the world around them.

After graduating from Dordt, she went to graduate school at the University of Notre Dame and studied under a leading historian of American religion, George Marsden.

Her studies of American history included specialties in women’s history and religious history.

In a class on gender history, she shifted her focus. A book by Kathleen Brown introduced her to the significance of gender in history and from that point, Kristin took a keen interest in the intersection of gender, religion and American culture.

After graduate school she spent time at Williams College and the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center at Mt. Holyoke, before teaching at Calvin.


The biography, published in 2015, focused on the relationship between Christianity and feminism in American Protestantism.

That project launched Kristin on exploring the history of masculinity in American culture.

After she gave a lecture on Theodore Roosevelt, two students approached her after including she read John Eldredge’s 2001 book, Wild at Heart. After reading that, she began to explore masculinity in a more contemporary context.

Wild at Heart provided a window into the importance of gendered issues in American evangelical culture.

From her research on the intersection of gender, religion and politics in recent U.S. history, Kristin wrote Jesus and John Wayne in 2020. It is an analysis of the culture through the lens of Evangelical leaders like Billy Graham, James Dobson, Bill Gothard and Jerry Falwell.

The consequence of much of that history, Kristin said, is the election of Trump who, while not constrained by Christian virtue, was seen to champion certain “muscular Christian values and concerns.”

Kristin pointed out that the American understanding of masculinity, prior to the early 20th century, tended to promote virtues of restraint and gentleness.

This understanding started to shift with Roosevelt and his projection of manly strength, she said.

After Theodore Roosevelt’s influence and the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in 1942, notions of faith, whiteness, militancy and masculinity were given a stronger cultural voice, she said.

The NAE and other Christian Bible colleges, bookstores, publishers, programs and magazines to speak with much more consolidated power to the broader culture, Kristin explained.

The cultural fear of communitarianism, the strong assured voice of preachers like Billy Graham, and “manly Christian military officers like Oliver North promoted in Christian bookstores found cultural influence for continuing to define what Christian masculinity was to look like,” she added.

About 15 years ago when she started the research, Kristin began to wonder if maybe she was focusing on a fringe issue. She said much of what she was discovering seemed extreme and disturbing. So she put the work aside.

In 2016 she took out that research and decided to write the book, because several scandals in evangelical communities led her to realize that it wasn’t “fringe.”

She published it in 2020.

After her Spokane lecture, she responded to several questions.

When asked how her book has been received by the evangelical community, Kristin reported that there are always critics, but by far the vast majority—99 percent of those who reach out to her—are grateful, saying, “You are describing the story of my life.”

When she has received criticisms, she added, it has often been the effect, “You should be kinder”—making critical voices less powerful.

For Kristin’s book, Jesus and John Wayne, one reviewer suggested there was a lack of “robust economic examination” in this book. This was a point she would have wanted to explore, had there been the time and space.

One questioner, noting that Kristin’s work is a thorough, factual examination on “masculinity” of a conservative interpretation of a particular group—white evangelicals—she asked, “What is the biblical view of masculinity?”

Her response was, “Perhaps we should look at the ‘fruits of the Spirit as described in Galatians 5: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, gentleness and self-control’.”

Another asked if she had hope after writing the book, she paused for a moment and replied, “I have more hope now than when I finished the book, given the response to it among so many evangelicals. I see change happening at the individual level, but not so much on the institutional level.”

A final note in her book, Jesus and John Wayne, reminds the reader that “What was once done, can be undone.”

For information, email kkd@calvin.edu or see kristindumez.com.

Think globally. Eat locally.

---

Worried about Eviction?

We can help you talk with your landlord.

Book a resolution appointment today!

NWMediationCenter.com

509 456 0103

Housing@fulcrumdispute.com

Our Community’s only Nonprofit Hospice, Serving Patients and Their Families since 1977.

“I love singing with clients and just remembering to do the little things that make it special for each of them. It’s my passion and honor to do this work.”

-Kathleen Gordon

Hospice Nurse Aide

South Hospice House

Dignity. Compassion. Life.

Hospice of Spokane

March 2022 - The Fig Tree - Page 9
The church’s quilters make and donate thousands of quilts and more

By Anna Crigger - Intern

Linda Harris and Arline Whitney, members of Opportunity Presbyterian Church (OPC) in Spokane Valley, have spent countless hours designing, sewing, cutting and threading to create quilts for local groups and individuals.

Between 2003 and 2022, OPC Quilters have made and donated 4,690 quilts.

They have donated to such organizations as the YMCA Project Warm Up, Deaconess Hospital NICU, Spokane Police Chaplains, Valley Partners, Spokane Veterans’ Home, Family Promise, Victims Service Unit in Post Falls, Crosswalk and Partners with Families and Children.

In addition, they give quilts to deacons to take to shut-ins.

Quilting donations have been given to victims of the 2020 Malden fire and to the victims of the bus drivers impacted by the 2017 shooting at Freeman High School.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, 45 quilts were donated to the children of OPC.

“I love thinking about where our creations go and hope people have as much joy using them as I had fun making them,” Arline said.

“Giving this beautiful fabric a new home to be loved is what makes me happy.”

Both Linda and Arline regularly attend OPC and are members of the church’s quilting group, OPC Quilters.

Linda, who is the OPC Quilters coordinator, started the quilting group in 2003.

She enjoys experimenting with various donated sewing supplies and fabrics to create something new.

“It’s reminiscent of when I was learning how to sew,” she said.

“I view my work with OPC Quilters as a mission project because we are reaching out to people in the community,” Linda said.

“Our goal is to keep what we make in the community.”

Arline researched OPC when she moved to Spokane in 2007 and “saw that they had a quilt group,” she said. During her first Sunday at OPC, she met one of the quilters and quickly felt a sense of community.

“I knew it was meant to be a place for me,” she said.

Arline found the quilting group was “a wonderful way to get acquainted with the women of the church.”

Through quilting, she could learn about them as she listened to them talk about their families and history.

Linda and Arline have both developed friendships through the OPC quilting group. For many it is a “support group.” They support one another at church and when they have surgeries, experience difficulties and celebrate successes.

“We work with eight to 12 women and one man on third Thursdays of the months of September through May,” Arline said.

“The man who sews for us is paralyzed from the waist down. He uses a sewing machine with a push on/off switch.”

In addition to quilts, members of the group create homemade table runners, tote bags, placemats, bowl cozies, aprons and more.

Using donated materials such as drapery material and zippers, “we have created tote bags we give to the Valley Center so people can use them to haul their food,” Linda said.

“We gave out more than 100 tote bags there before Christmas,” Arline said.

Since 2014, the group has also donated $20,000 from quilt sales at the church’s annual fall bazaars to the church for the Children’s Christmas Toy Store.

They earned that much because the bazaars draw people from the wider community, as well as church members.

OPC uses the money to purchase new toys for children. This year they served more than 300 children.

The school district selects parents to come and pay 20 percent of the retail price for new toys for their children.

OPC Quilters rely on the community for donations of fabric, thread, buttons and more to create new quilting projects.

Individuals, The Quilting Bee and YMCA Project Warm Up have donated fabric and sewing supplies to OPC Quilters.

“When people donate to the YMCA, we use it to make the quilts,” Arline said. “We then donate completed quilts back to the YMCA’s Project Warm Up.”

She said they use scraps from projects to make sure fabric and supplies are used and not wasted.

For example, OPC Quilters share fabric and supplies with other “quilt groups that use materials a little differently than we do,” she said.

They also share with Peace Lutheran Church in Otis Orchards, which takes the materials the OPC group doesn’t use.

For information, call 924-9750.

To be a part of the Kizuri Fair Trade, Local Earth Friendly Curbside pickup, delivery and shipping available 35 W. Main, Spokane 509-464-7677 www.kizurispokane.com

Totem Journey builds awareness

Lummi tribal members, the House of Tears Carvers and the intertribal Lummi Traditional Council invite the region’s faith communities to witness the Snake River in the Pacific Northwest as part of the annual Totem Pole Journey as it visits in Washington, Oregon and Idaho in May.

The journey, one of 12 in the last 20 years, will include ceremony, art, science, spirituality and cross-cultural collaboration to support the movement to restore the free flow of the Lower Snake River and the health of its salmon and orca.

Events begin Thursday, May 5, in Bellingham and end May 20 in Tacoma. Eastern Oregon and Washington stops include 1) 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 11, at the Longhouse in Cello Falls; 2) Thursday to Saturday, May 12 to 14, at the Whole Protectors Exhibit at Tomatskitlki Center in Pendleton, and 3) from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday, May 16, at Hell’s Gate State Park, in Lewiston/Clarkston.

Crashes are NOT Accidents! Have you been impacted by an impaired driving crash? Are you willing to share your story to help save lives?

Become a Spokane County DUID Victims Panel speaker

Contact the Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council (509) 922-8383 or Lthompson@gsacc.org • www.gsacc.org

We’re Hiring! Community Organizer to lead organizing for the common good in Spokane.

Deadline to apply May 9, 2022

See posting on website: www.SpokaneAlliance.org

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

SAGA SAGA Spokane Artist Grant Awards

Local individuals, non-profits, and businesses for operational costs, projects, and programs can apply. Applications are due online FEBRUARY 1, JUNE 1, and OCTOBER 1 every year.

Apply Now!

www.spokanearts.org/grants

SEPT 23-25 Mirabeau Park Center Place Regional Event Center Plantas Ferry Park Valleyfest 2022

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

PLUS

New Multicultural Events!

ValleyFest.org
By Kaye Hult

In 2008, when Cindy Wood moved to Coeur d’Alene from Bozeman, Mont., to be executive director of the newly formed Family Promise of North Idaho (FPNI), her goal was to do a good job of sheltering families with children.

“Now, it’s about housing stability. Shelter is just one piece of that,” said Cindy, who volunteered two years with Family Promise in Bozeman before coming to Idaho.

On March 31, the anniversary of her move, Cindy reflected on her 14 years at FPNI, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other changes.

In its offices and day center on the lower level of St. Luke’s Episcopal at Wallace and 5th, FPNI offers a safety net of food, shelter and support services for homeless children and families.

That safety net allows Family Promise guests to focus on finding work and affordable housing, knowing their children are safe while they deal with temporary difficulties. About 80 percent of families find housing.

“We returned to the rotation model,” Cindy said. “They are tighter now. In some ways, going forward right now seems dismal, but people are finding ways to stop and help them.”

The nonprofit provides a hospitality network of hosting and supporting congregations. Host communities provide temporary housing and meals to guest families on a weekly basis at no cost.

With support and accommodations provided, parents can focus on rebuilding their lives.

Family Promise of North Idaho offers counseling, job search assistance and other services at their professionally staffed day center, with supplemental support by trained volunteers.

“Those who work with guests meet their needs with a spirit of warmth and compassion,” Cindy said.

“At the beginning of COVID, it was harrowing when everything was shutting down,” she recalled. “My plan B was that we could stay in the day center at the church. Then St. Luke’s and other churches closed. We housed families in motels for two to four weeks at a time. Volunteers dropped off meals. We worried about exposure to COVID-19 and keeping volunteers and guest families safe. It was hard to connect families with resources.”

One family was at the day center for a case management meeting when a renter called saying, “I have 15 minutes to give in half an hour when I can offer a contactless meeting when no one else is in the office.”

Key pick-up would be scheduled in a similar fashion. That stress was typical, Cindy said.

The national Family Promise in 2021 introduced FPNI to the Prevention Program for families given a three-day eviction notice.

“We called landlords and worked with families, asking how much money they could raise to avoid being evicted to prevent them from becoming homeless,” she said.

Cindy said it reduced trauma and pressure for families from “the tyranny of the moment” when facing eviction.

“Families we have worked with in the Prevention Program have had better success gaining jobs and education,” she said.

Shelter families continue with aftercare, working on goals for at least three months, meeting timelines and having financial incentives when they graduate.

Prevention families, with expanded case manager assistance, receive at least six months of aftercare, depending on the funding source.

“We returned to the rotation program with host and support congregations in June 2021,” said Cindy, noting that national support increased efficiency.

Now a board-led team is investigating expanding FPNI’s reach by having a static site, along with using churches.

This model shortens the time families are sheltered by offering immediate incentives to reach goals, adding to the number of families that can be sheltered at one time, she said.

Cindy sees networking hosts and volunteers as “the secret sauce,” because “for guests, there’s a transformational component to walking through doors of a congregation, and being welcomed and embraced as worthy by those who don’t even know them. Churches are a place of hospitality.

“Our hospitality gives a face to people rooting for guests,” she said. “Guests experience generosity as people provide food. They know volunteers leave their own beds, come to be hosts and sleep in roll-away beds in the church just like them.”

“Volunteers are a blessing. In the midst of FPNI’s growing pains, they see needs and act on them. They offer ideas we may want to think about,” she added.

One regular volunteer who helps with transportation ensures the FPNI vans are running. There are many opportunities for volunteers to use their skills.

One regular volunteer who helped provide new mattresses for families said Cindy new mattresses were needed for the roll-away beds the families use. Mattresses had last been replaced in 2015.

Jill Dougherty procured $250 as seed money from Advent Lutheran Church in Spokane. She found other gifts from Coldwell Banker and from Dougherty and Associates CPAs.

Dan LaVine, a member of Trinity Lutheran, and co-owner of the Coeur d’Alene company, National Mattress and Furniture, thought they could purchase mattresses locally for less.

He had a thicker prototype made with extra padding in the middle. It was hypoallergenic, waterproof, easy to sanitize and had stronger stitching. They were less expensive and “made locally with love,” Cindy said.

In March, they brought new mattresses to the church to bless.

Another Trinity Lutheran volunteer, Bob Rehnborg, checks the beds when Trinity hosts. He makes sure springs work, screws are in place and beds are rotated.

Charity Imagined, a resource agency in Coeur d’Alene, helps FPNI with major expenses for guests, such as replacing some one’s dentures or financing dental work, services that help guests to move ahead with their goals.

Cindy quoted a Family Promise director who said, “People don’t become homeless because of lack of money, but because of a lack of relationships. One of our goals is to help them rebuild a network of relationships.”

Families gain strength through the network of congregations and businesses.

Cindy said she felt called to Family Promise North Idaho.

“When the pandemic came, it all came to a head. Everything we’d been fighting for in providing help for families in crisis became active,” she said.

“I gained confidence over the years and was prepared for such a time as this.”

“When I become discouraged, I remind myself that the best thing we can do is love our guests where they’re at,” she said. “Our goal is to provide the help people need without becoming too caught up in programs that we forget the power of love. The pandemic accentuated that. We couldn’t do programs. All we had was love.

“It’s incredible the opportunities that have come to our families,” she said. “I believe it’s by God’s grace.”

For information, call 208-777-4190 or visit familypromiseni.org.
Shalom United Church of Christ in Richland has a niche to support and welcome Afghan refugees since October.

“Our church chose not to sponsor a family because we recognized there was a need to coordinate donations,” said Marsha Stipe of the Mission and Social Action Committee and the Tri-Cities Immigrant Coalition.

Shalom’s church secretary, Lauralre Sorenson, developed a spreadsheet of items and services to match people in the church and community with Afghan refugees with those needs.

Services offered and needed include furniture, bedding, household items, clothing, driver’s licenses, English tutoring, training to use the bus, or transportation to buy coats, grocery shop or go to a prayer service.

“Having the spreadsheet has allowed us to match items and services to needs without stockpiling items at the church or giving unneeded items to families,” said Marsha. “Our members work with families as they need it, rather than focusing on one family.”

People can email or call the church office for information. Potential donations are entered onto the spreadsheet and then matched with families’ needs.

The first four families came to Richland in September, followed by seven families on Nov. 16 and four by Dec. 20. Two individuals came in February.

The families range in size from one man to a family of 12—a mother, father and 10 children. While the children range in age from newborns to 18 years, most are young children.

To date, 17 Afghan families totaling 50 activities, including learning about bugs, pollinators, composting and eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables for health.

For Market Gift, Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce from a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.

For Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produces for the pantries.

Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produces for the pantries.

Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce from a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.

Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produces for the pantries.

Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce from a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.

Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produces for the pantries.

Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce from a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.

Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produces for the pantries.

Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce from a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.

Food for All installs garden beds and provides plants and seeds at Head Start programs and housing sites. It has a curriculum and supports Head Start healthy eating and produces for the pantries.

Food for All partners with Spokane Edible Tree Project. Volunteers pick up produce from a farmers’ market. Food For All delivers it to 25 CCEW low-income housing sites and eight food pantries.

The Spokane County Farm to Food Pantry works with food pantries to buy produce and proteins from local farmers for the pantries.
Five days at border were ‘life-changing’ for two in team from St. Als

By Catherine Ferguson SNNM

“Life-changing” was how Pat and Mary Jo Sweeney described their five-day sojourn from March 14 to 19 in the United States: Mexican border near Nogales and Douglas, Arizona.

They were part of a delegation of seven from St. Aloysius Catholic Parish in Spokane, which had been planning the opportunity for two and a half years.

The others on the team were George Waldfred, Rita Amb- berg Waldfred, Mary Ann Shane, Kathy Dauer and Tom Dauer.

The first borderlands trip occurred in 2019, with another planned for 2023.

Pat and Mary Jo moved to Spokane from the Seattle area about four years ago, after Pat retired from work as an ac- countant for a telecom.

Mary Jo had worked part-time as a para- educator. They were drawn to St. Aloysius by its Jesuit affiliation and its social justice programs.

The Sweeneys met while at- tending a retreat at Camps Sanders near South of CDA.

“Looking for something beyond our own,” Pat said.

Both were influenced by their Jesuit education.

That education involves a “transformational” learning model, drawing on one’s past and new learnings, reflecting on the experience, with action and evaluation following from the learning.

As a couple, they became active in Seattle area parishes, volunteering in youth and mu- sic ministry and other areas of leading.

Their interest in social justice grew out of Jesuit values of caring for each person as a child of God and taking responsible ac- tion on moral issues.

Friendships with Maryknoll priests who had served in developing nations further impacted their concern for people living in poverty.

They have three grown daughters, one who lives in Spo- kane, and eight grandchildren. A granddaughter previously worked in Guatemala and El Salvador.

When the opportunity for a visit to the borderlands presented itself prior to COVID, they be- gan planning to go.

This year it became possible.

As she began the journey, Mary Jo questioned: “How do you prepare for a journey that is guaranteed to break your heart?”

She and Pat knew what they hoped to learn from the journey, especially given their understand- ing of the contrast between the Gospel of Jesus and what they had read about the situa- tion of immigrants and asylum seekers at the southern border of the U.S.

Two School Sisters of Notre Dame, Sister Lucy Nigh and Sis- ter Judy Bourg, who were their hosts in Douglas, Ariz., de- veloped the Mission Awareness Program (MAP) as a compre- hensive program that addresses what their group sought for an experience.

It is a program for those who want to understand first-hand why migrants decide to cross the Mexico-U.S. border, to meet those who live and work on the border, to understand stories of migrants who crossed or planned to cross the border, to meet people involved in immigra- tion policy, and to promote dialogue and advocacy on imme- diate action.

“Even though we were a day late arriving because of airline cancellations, we filled already packed days with visits to shel- ters on both sides of the border, projects for providing people a sustainable livelihood and talking with many people who served the migrants, migrants themselves and a border patrol agent.

We even had a little time for reflection on our experiences each day,” said Mary Jo.

These days brought them face to face with realities they had read about, but which can turn them away.

They came to know concrete ways what an enemy pov- erty and violence are for people who live in poverty and fear where you are. Step out of your comfort and take a small step to make it right.”

Since returning, the seven par- ticipants have shared reflections about their experiences with the St. Aloysius community through powerpoint presentations, in the newsletter and on the blog.

They are now meeting to discuss what they want to do now, such as ways to work with the Café Justo co-op.

“We are now keeping in- formed on immigration policy and current activities at the border,” Pat said. “We will continue to contact our elected representatives in Washington, D.C., to urge them to work for humane immigration laws.”

For information, email pups-weensey526@gmail.com or visit stalschurch.org/?s=borderland.

Just Trade
fairly-traded crafts from around the world

Brused Books
235 E. Main
Pullman, WA
509-334-7898

Wed. - Mon. 11-5
Closed Tuesdays

Introducing a new UK presence in Spokane!
THE INLAND NORTHWEST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY
We are intergenerational, progressive, and socially responsible congregation
Zoom services at 10:30 a.m. Sundays
You are welcome here!
lnmu.org

CAMP SANDERS
Camps Retreats Weddings Reunions
Special Events
Just 55 miles
of CDA
Visit our Website:
campsanders.net

For further details or a tour of the campgrounds
Contact Christy at
208-892-4842 or
campsanders@gmail.com

MAKE YOUR HEALTH A PRIORITY.
DON’T SKIP YOUR ANNUAL MAMMOGRAM.

New research suggests delays in screening mammography during the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to increased deaths.

Over the past couple of years, many women put their annual screening mammograms on hold. Data tells us that about 50% of women who were scheduled missed their appointment. In addition, a large number of women put off realities of their breast cancer symptoms, resulting in delayed diagnosis and treatment. That could mean thousands of unnecessary deaths and many advanced and difficult breast cancer cases as a result.

Don’t skip your mammogram. Call (509) 455-4545 to make your appointment, or visit inlandimaging.com/schedule.

INLAND IMAGING
owned and operated by a family of healthcare professionals

March 2022 - The Fig Tree - Page 13

Mary Jo and Pat Sweeney learned about borderlands.

Photo courtesy of St. Aloysius Parish
The ‘San Pedro Syndrome’ raises questions about mission approaches

When consulting 15 years ago with a church in what was then called “a developing country,” its leader asked me to meet with a group of mission personnel. Based on her skills, he had no idea how she could contribute meaningfully to any of their current needs. After chatting with her, I too was at a loss; beside her enthusiasm, she brought nothing the church needed; and I didn’t know what to suggest. Nor did I know how she and the church should deal with this mutually frustrating situation.

A decade later, I served as the interim principal at a small Christian school in Puebla, Mexico. Their new principal had pulled out at the last minute — I was happy to be free for the fall semester even though I had no K-12 experience. I had taught only for the urban church, but I brought a Christian commitment, administrative experience and a passion for education. That combination met their needs.

The school’s missionary teachers and administrators knew what they were doing and brought training that admirably served the school.

These contrasting experiences set me thinking about the mission trip phenomena. The result is a satirical novel: The Mission Trip to San Pedro 2, published last November. It pokes fun at an approach I call “parachute missions,” where a church group makes a week-long pilgrimage to a country whose language they don’t speak and whose culture they don’t understand.

The book tells of one such group, because of their travel agent’s error, and up in the wrong San Pedro. That’s just the beginning of the woes facing the youth pastor and nine high-schoolers. They poke fun at an all-too common situation when guests instead need help from two local churches—evangelical and Catholic—to get them in the right place.

The novel is not an anti-mission diatribe. On the contrary, Christians need to take seriously Jesus’ Great Commission to share the Good News.

The history of Christian missions is a mixed bag, however. During the colonial era, European monarchs sent explorers, soldiers and missionaries into uncharted territory, claiming land, the souls and bodies of the king and queen—and claiming souls for God.

Recently many Christians in the West have thought more carefully about missions and evangelism. Having distanced themselves from the imperial, colonial approach and culturally superior mindset, most missionaries today serve with greater cultural sensitivity and humility.

That’s not always the case.

Each summer, some U.S. churches still send high schoolers to paint churches or do other unskilled tasks that could easily be done by locals who would welcome the employment. Typically, these groups go to places where things are bad or need to be done, at least none that are urgently needed.

Do these week-long trips, which I call San Pedro Syndrome trips, accomplish anything worthwhile, such as raising awareness of the importance of missions? Sometimes they do, but Robert Lupton, in his book Toxic Charity, cites research by academics at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School that “suggests service trips and mission trips do not have a lasting change. Within six to eight weeks after a mission trip, most short-term mission participants have not even discussed the assumptions and behaviors they had prior to the trip.”

Should we end all short-term mission trips? No, but books like Toxic Charity and When Helping Hurts—resources for anyone considering international mission trips—suggest that we need wiser ways of responding to Jesus’ Great Commission, respecting those whom we serve with respect and standing” and avoiding the San Pedro Syndrome.

Gordon Jackson* Guest Editorial

* Gordon Jackson, who grew up in South Africa, taught journalism for 32 years at Whitworth University. Since retiring in 2015, he has written five books, including three satirical novels.

For Jewish and African-American Communities

Panelists consider “Separate Histories, Common Challenges”

By Catherine Ferguson SNJM

On the last Sunday of February, Black History Month, Temple Beth Shalom, the Spokane Jewish Community and Area Jewish Family Services sponsored a virtual panel, “Separate Histories, Common Challenges.”

The event brought together members of the Spokane Jewish Community and representatives of the African American community to reflect on current realities and linkages between anti-Semitism and anti-black racism.

The hope of panel sponsors was to create a greater understanding of historical and contemporary differences and common struggles of the two communities and explore opportunities for greater solidarity in the region.

In explaining how the concept for the panel arose, Diana Koorkkanian-Sauders, president of Congregational Emanuel-El and Spokane Area Jewish Family Services, mentioned the “San Pedro Syndrome” raises questions about mission approaches.

But Michael, the right-hander, has a stick shift. It is not that right-handers when they open a notebook. They don’t set up structurally to favor right-handed people. They were created as “systemic” or “structural”? Scott Finnie thought when they heard racism described as “systemic” or “structural”?

Kiantha Duncan responded. “It tickles me when I hear people talking about getting at the root of systemic racism. These structures, these systems didn’t just happen. They were created and what is at their root is power and the value this has in our country,” she said.

To help people understand this, Scott used the metaphor of how the world is set up structurally to favor right-handed people, and what is at their root is power and what is at our root is power and the value this has in our country,“ she said.

The full discussion and resources are at spokanetbs.org/learn/lifelong-learning-

Sounding Board

Gordon Jackson* Guest Editorial

* Gordon Jackson, who grew up in South Africa, taught journalism for 32 years at Whitworth University. Since retiring in 2015, he has written five books, including three satirical novels.
May 2-27 • Hidden in Plain Sight: A Visual Anthology on the Complexities of Asian Identities exhibit, APIC Spokane, Terran Gallery at 628 N. Monroe, and at Eastern Washington University’s Women’s and Gender Studies Center (WAGE), Monday noon – 3 p.m. in Cherry, 338-4861, remelisacullitan@gmail.com

May 3 • SCAR Spokane Meeting with APC Spokane, Carl Maxey Center, 3114 E. 9th, 9 to 7:30 p.m., by appointment.

May 4 • The Art of Rebellion: Social Justice and Chican@ Art, Holy Art Visual Art, 1:30 p.m., humanaresources@gmail.com

May 5 • South Perry Thursday Market, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 320 W. 9th, thursdaymarket.org

May 6 • UL Montgomery Art Show, Spokane River Keeper art sale and exhibit, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., spokaneriverkeeper.org

May 7 • North Idaho Veterans Stand Down, Kootenai County Farmers’ Market, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 284-6888, marketmanager@kootenaifarmersmarkets.org

May 7 • Hats and Hooeys, Derby Day Brunch, for Children’s Advocacy Center to Safe Passage Violence Prevention, Hayden Country Club, 240 E. Bcorma, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 284-6888, marketmanager@kootenaifarmersmarkets.org

May 10 • Washington Nonprofit Network Workshop – Lunch and Learn, 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., centralwashingtonnonprofit@gmail.com

May 11 • Peace and Justice Action Committee, PULS, 5:30 p.m., pjmichaux@gmail.com

May 11 • Climate Action Meeting, 330 Spokane, 6:30 to 8 p.m., pianist@kootenay.net

May 13 • Earth Ministry/ Washington Interfaith Power and Light Tree Tour fundraiser, 7 to 9 p.m., zoom, earthministry.org/earthministry-waip-powerlight寄托于Light

May 14 • Kootenai County Farmers’ Market, Downtown Coeur d’Alene, 5th Ave, Wednesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m, 284-6888, marketmanager@kootenaifarmersmarkets.org

May 15 • Babes O’Queer! Speaker Series and Monthly Meeting, Hispanic Business Professionals Association, 6 p.m., association.hispanapro@gmail.com

May 17 • Women Helping Women Fund: “Hidden in Plain Sight,” Terrain Gallery, 5 to 8 p.m.

May 18 • Goodland Summer Market, Tuesdays to Sept. 13, 4 to 8 p.m.

May 18 • Double Crossed – “Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us,” Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., pjals.org

May 18 • Saturday with the Symphony: A Children’s Concert, Spokane Symphony, 2120 W. Perry, 12 noon, $12, cofteater.com/events

May 19 • Bloom in the Rain, benefit for Spokane Symphony Orchestra, Judy’s Enchanted Garden, 2629 W. Northern Blvd., 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., mccloody@gmail.com

May 20 • SCORE Workshop: Building a Sustainable Nonprofit, 12 p.m., add advanced info@score.org

May 22 • 4:30 p.m., ihrc.net

May 23 • One on a Time Lunchtime, benefiting Our Own Christ Church, True Hope, 1361 N. Lincoln, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., hostelchistory.org

May 25 • Double Crossed – “Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us,” Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., pjals.org

May 25 • Saturday with the Symphony: A Children’s Concert, Spokane Symphony, 2120 W. Perry, 12 noon, $12, cofteater.com/events

May 26 • “Hidden in Plain Sight,” Terrain Gallery, 5 to 8 p.m.

May 28 • Spokane Garry: A Historical Expedition, Great Northern University, 611 E. Indiana, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 348-7100

June 1 • The Fig Tree Food Distribution and Mailbox, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., development@thefigtree.org

June 2 • The Fig Tree Board Annual Meeting, 12:30 p.m., 335-4112, mary@thefigtree.org

June 3 • Blue Jean Ball, Communities in Schools of Spokane, Rosario Beach, 5:30 p.m., 535-4112, bluejeanball@thefigtree.org

June 4 • Opening of Millwood Farmers’ Market, Millwood Park, Wednesdays to Oct. 13, 3 to 7 p.m.

June 8 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

June 11 • Annual Benefit – “Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us,” Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., pjals.org

June 12 • Closing Reception/Solidarity Event, “Hidden in Plain Sight,” Terrain Gallery, 5 to 8 p.m.

June 25 • Spokane Garry: A Historical Expedition, Great Northern University, 611 E. Indiana, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 348-7100

June 26 • Opening of Millwood Farmers’ Market, Millwood Park, Wednesdays to Oct. 13, 3 to 7 p.m.

June 28 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

June 29 • Annual Benefit – “Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us,” Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., pjals.org

July 2 • Blue Jean Ball, Communities in Schools of Spokane, Rosario Beach, 5:30 p.m., 535-4112, bluejeanball@thefigtree.org

July 3 • Opening of Millwood Farmers’ Market, Millwood Park, Wednesdays to Oct. 13, 3 to 7 p.m.

July 5 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

July 10 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

July 11 • Annual Benefit – “Solidarity: Building a Just Future for All of Us,” Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., pjals.org

July 17 • Closing Reception/Solidarity Event, “Hidden in Plain Sight,” Terrain Gallery, 5 to 8 p.m.

July 22 • Spokane Garry: A Historical Expedition, Great Northern University, 611 E. Indiana, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 348-7100

July 23 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

July 24 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

July 25 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.

July 31 • Kendall Yards Night Market, Wednesday to Sept. 22, 4 to 7 p.m.
Each day that Our Place food bank is open, Tracie Swanson says she sees and serves Jesus as Christ comes down the line of tables filled with food for hungry individuals and families. The tables are set up in the parking lot, under tents if necessary, outside Our Place Community Outreach at 1509 W. College Ave. in West Central Spokane. In March 2020, Our Place took their food bank outside, and continued to offer a free shopping opportunity for people to select from a choice of food.

“Since then, we only closed one day for smoke, one day because it was too cold and one day because it was 106 degrees,” said Tracie, the part-time executive director for 14 years.

“We make sure the most vulnerable members of the community are not overlooked, judged or discriminated against but treated with dignity and respect as they choose food to feed their families,” she said.

Our clients are volunteers who sense people’s fear, depression and uncertainty about the future with rising costs for rent, utilities and food. Many of those helping know fear and uncertainty because they have been on the other side of the tables, picking up food rather than keeping their tables supplied and answering questions about how to use jicama or artichokes.

One day there was an over-supply of bananas, so volunteers made sure people took as many as they wanted. Another day there were few tomatoes, so they limited them to two per person.

“We are seeing more Afghan refugees and other immigrants, seniors on fixed incomes, and intergenerational families with aunts, uncles, cousins, parents, children and grandparents in one household because of the outrageous rents,” Tracie said.

“Prices are going up and up,” she said, “so people are happy when Second Harvest and Northwest Harvest provide cases of tuna, peanut butter, grape jelly, scalloped potatoes, refried beans, black beans or other canned goods we can give people.”

The head of development director Kat Hartsell stocks shelves at a grocery store and keeps them informed on what items are hard to get.

Tracie appreciates Our Place’s 35-year history of staff and volunteers giving people hope by offering a bounty of food to feed their families.

Since COVID, Our Place’s outdoor food distribution has been open from 4 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Thursdays.

Samples of food items sit at the check-in desk so people can see the items and volunteers can explain what they are.

“It helps overcome language barriers,” Tracie said.

Clothing, blankets, bedding, sleeping bags and other household items are available inside, depending on donations.

The clothing bank, which includes men’s clothing, is open for 15-minute periods to five people wearing masks during food bank hours.

Laundry facilities are available on a first-come, first-served basis 9:30 to 11:15 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 2 to 4:30 p.m., Wednesdays.

“We are low barrier, meaning we do not ask many questions and receive people from the entire community,” she said.

“We only have boundaries for hygiene products—like toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper and items purchased with grants. Anyone can pick up feminine hygiene items and diapers.”

Each day 25 to 30 of Our Place’s 80 volunteers help set up the tables, keep food supplied and then put the tables away. Tuesdays, staff and volunteers come in to do administrative work and restock.

Donations are received during office hours, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 2 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays.

When Our Place is closed, they keep 21 crates stacked three high in a covered area outside the front doors stocked with food as their Little Pantry. It is used by homeless people and those needing food other days of the week, as well as by people stock- ing their own Little Pantries, which are like Little Libraries in neighborhoods.

Our Place also invites those who have Little Pantries to come by at the end of the food distributions on Wednesdays and Thursdays to pick up extra food. Volunteers and staff guide people who come into the food bank to other resources and services. Previously, Our Place served about 1,000 a month. Now it serves 3,000 to 5,000 a month.

On Wednesdays about 300 come and Thursdays about 500.

Much food is supplied from Second Harvest, Northwest Harvest and grocery rescue twice a week from My Fresh Basket, Safeway and Natural Grocers.

They offer yogurt, dairy, bread, mac and cheese, canned goods, produce and proteins, soup, chili and peanut butter.

In 2020-2021, the program provided 611,536 pounds of food, 29,034 articles of clothing, 24,020 hygiene products, 179 loads of laundry and 1,053 household items.

Our Place also provides bus passes and utility assistance. This year their budget jumped from $265,000 in 2018-19 to $280,000 to meet rising costs.

“We have to raise more funds to serve more people,” she said.

“Fortunately, we own the building.”

Benedictine Sister Meg Sues, who helped canvas the neighborhood and recruited churches to start Our Place in 1987, will speak at the 2022 Stage Lights Fundraiser at 6 p.m., Thursday, June 23, at Salem Lutheran Church, 1428 W. Broadway.

Now living at the Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho, St. Meg will reflect on the history of the program, started as an ecumenical ministry drawing together churches to pool their resources and serve the community.

Our Place continues to receive the support of community churches, including St. Augustine, St. Joseph on Dean and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic; Emmanuel, Westminster and Knox Presbyterian; Salem Lutheran, Christ Central, St. John’s Episcopal Cathedral and the Sisters of St. Mary Names.

Faith communities provide not only financial support, but also board members and volunteers. The largest support is from grants, and second largest from individuals. Other sources include other churches, organiza- tions and the board fundraiser.

“Church support provides the structure to keep us going,” Tracie said.

While the churches are still integral, in 2018 the organiza- tion changed its name from Our Place Community Ministries to Our Place Community Outreach.

“We are more about outreach services than ministry,” she said.

“From the beginning, staff and volunteers gathered for prayer at the start of each day,” she said.

“For a while, we got away from that, but now are back to praying.”

“Few nonprofits continue as long as we have,” continued Tracie, who earned a degree in journalism in 1993 from the Uni- versity of Idaho. “In recent years, we have been more effective at making our presence known in the community through Face- book and Instagram.

At a recent conference of 500 nonprofit leaders in Yakima, the speaker asked how many had been with their nonprofit for two years and five years. Many raised their hands. She was among nine who had been executive directors more than 10 years.

“There is high burnout because of the stress among those working in social services,” said Tracie, explaining that she works part time, so she has time off with her family to rejuvenate.

For information, call 326-7267, email office@ourplacespokane. org or visit ourplacespokane.org.