

WORD ON THE STREET

a paper for the people

♡♡♡

SPRING CLEANING

ILLANA RUBEL TALKS WITH WOTS ABOUT CLEAN SLATE BILL

SPRING FORWARD WITH WOTS!

SAVE THE DATE

INTERFAITH SANCTUARY'S GROUND BREAKING BUILDING HOPE ONE BRICK AT A TIME
 APRIL 18, 2023
 10AM
 4308 W. STATE ST.

Ostara

By Molly Nunamaker

Tomorrow's sorrows melt away, along with the pains of yesterday. A new leaf is turning, a renewed heart yearning for every tomorrow that is here to stay.

As the days grow longer and our ambitions grow stronger, we release our need to replay the old memories and narratives.

Flipping the record, to play the other side Along for this crazy and humbling ride.

Living freely and fearlessly. The old self reborn, the last stitch torn, breaking free from the chains that bind us. Leaving the old behind us.



Home Is Where The Art Is

By Molly Nunamaker
(Photo Credit: Gypsy Wind)

Home is where the heart is, or at least so they say...

To me home is where the ART is. Where self-expression comes to lie. Where dreams and imagination frolic and play, where joy and amusement build daisy chains.

Where art takes center stage, you can feel at home in any place. Your expression of self, an impression of internal wealth. Free to let your wings take flight, with this small but very meaningful delight.



Vulnerability

By Molly Nunamaker
(Photo Credit: Sam Caplat)

Who are you when you dare to push your own boundaries? When you push past your own jaded insecurities?

Do you find freedom in the newfound expression? Do you become unbound through these past recollections?

Separating yourself from the emotional bias, allowing yourself different freedoms in trying. Being vulnerable and open, not to persuade others, but to live in your own authenticity.



Brick by Brick

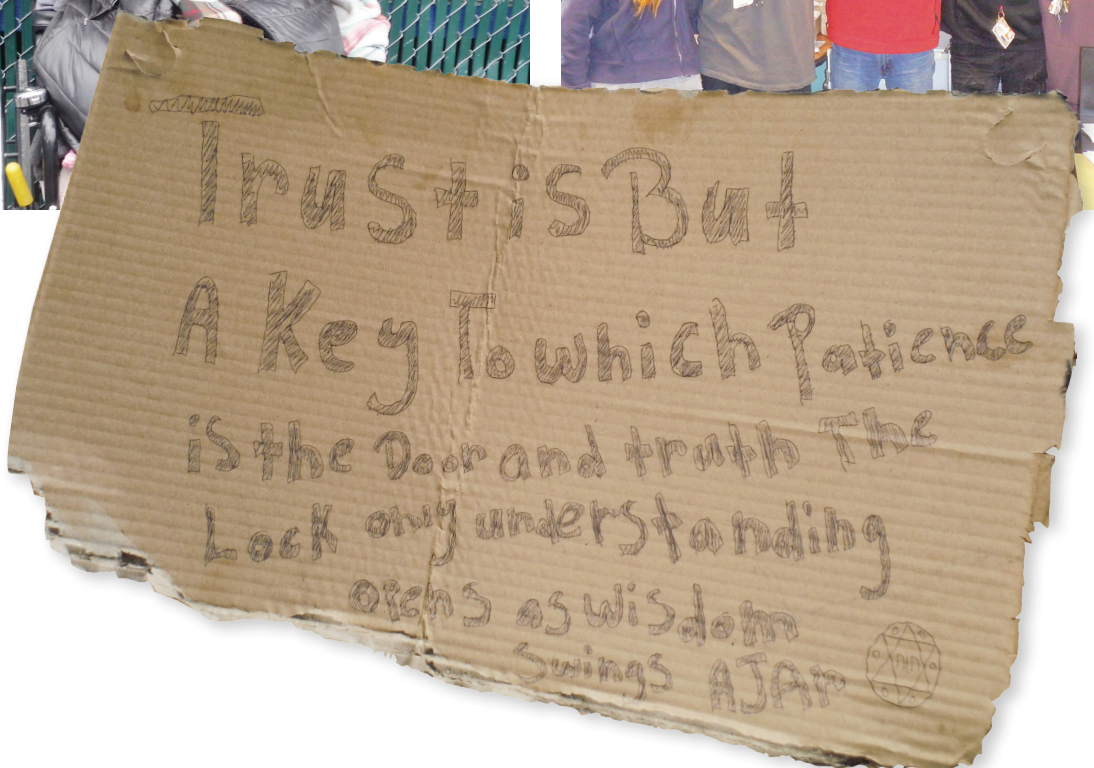
By Molly Nunamaker

A cry for help. A cry for hope. Brick by brick we broaden our scope. Trading fear for freedom and scarcity for faith.

A beautiful trade, new visions for the future.

A light in the darkness, a new place for nurturing.

No room for spite or the heartless, we leave room for only love here. Cherishing each other today and everyday onward.



BUILDING HOPE

ONE BRICK AT A TIME...

YOUR NAME HERE

"INTERFAITH SANCTUARY
CLEARS LAST HURDLE TO BEGIN
CONSTRUCTION AT THEIR
NEW SHELTER LOCATION!"

YOU'RE INVITED TO
THE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY
04/18/2023 AT 10AM
4308 W. STATE ST

DONATE A BRICK TO HELP US BUILD HOPE!
DETAILS AT INTERFAITHSANCTUARY.ORG



The Power of Music

By Davis Ohman

I believe in the power of music.

Since I was young, music has always been ingrained into my consciousness and being. Although I was young and did not fully conceptualize the meaning of the words being said, the sound was appealing, and that's all that mattered. Hearing the beating of the drums, the crashing of the cymbal and the thumping of the bass guitar was enough to keep me coming back for more. A feeling that was never forgotten was instilled in me at this point in my life. I came back to the music for the sound and the feeling that came with it. A method of finding comfort, although for different reasons at this younger point compared to later on. Hearing Kings of Leon on my way up the windy, sickening road to Brundage Mountain helped to ease my nausea and sickness because I had something to focus on other than the horrible drive. The crooning of the Followil Brothers (Kings of Leon) became associated with the high that was skiing for me. Everytime I went skiing, I thought of listening to Kings of Leon and the slow rotation of the volume dial by my dad.

With age comes new skills, like the ability to understand at a heightened level. Once I was older, I began to seek out this music again. With new struggles, hardships and inconsistencies that had entered my life, one thing I knew had consistency: music. I

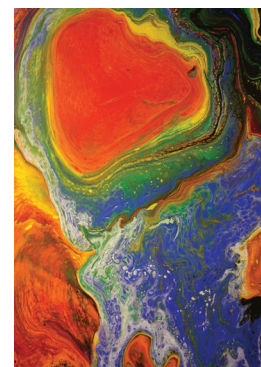
scoured my parents' media cabinet at home, frivolously searching for this disc that served as my pathway to distraction and comfort.

This new listen almost seemed like the first time. The lyrics added an entirely new layer to a song I thought I had known like the back of my hand. My CD player seemed like a minister, preaching the song's gospel to the weary ears that are looking to listen and be healed. It seemed as if I found a new group of friends who all were seeking peace with themselves and their lives. My struggle was no longer solely mine, it was theirs. Their struggles were mine. We were not a lonesome group of heavy hearted travelers anymore, we were a band: a family. All there for each other to balance out our struggles with sympathy and support.

I believe in the power of music. An outlet for distraction that does not distract, but rather invites. As a young man, the words from the lonesome but welcoming Man on the Moon, the ambition filled but cautious College Dropout and the heavy hearted but hopeful Bob Dylan, connected me to those who were in similar situations as I. The mind is a complicated and overwhelming maze that sometimes cannot be navigated alone and it was because of these artists and their timeless works that I was able to rechart my course and continue pushing forward through the unexpected turbulence of my young life.

Paintings by Jonathan

Jonathan Asher is a member of Interfaith Sanctuary's Homeless Art Collective. He's a multimedia artist who plays around with different materials, focusing on the natural world and art that reflects different periods in his life.



Legacy

By Gerri Graves

I've been struggling with something lately.

My son and I attended a panel on MLK's birthday. The speaker was Ibram X. Kendi on being Anti-racist. He was thoughtful, charismatic and incredibly insightful. He's connecting the planet again with truths. Painful truths not all of us are ready to embrace, but truth nonetheless.

I'm truly glad we went. However.....it opened a window into my own personal history.

One of the avenues of discussion was a sort of subtle racism. Words, phrases, leanings that we pass down to our own children.....and they to theirs. Inherited racism.

It never occurred to me. I can understand the sort of racism that is overtly in your face, but the subtle? Never occurred to me.

I thought of my grandma. Five foot four-ish, scrawny, country cook extraordinaire..... bada**. Dressed like a 1930's meemaw...she took no guff. She feared no one. Tough as nails.

I have so many stories and memories.....like

that time hundreds of Hells Angels (yes, the real deal) rode into a Zody's parking lot. One came a little too close to hitting my sister and I.....and she chased him down! Told him off every which way. Finger wagging, spittle flying...hell hath no fury than someone who messes with my grandchildren!!

He was gobsmacked. Speechless.

Perhaps, he wasn't responding the way she wanted him to, or perhaps to drive her point home..... she KICKED his motorcycle.

Silence.

My sister and I, standing there in our matching Sunday dresses, knee high stockings, shiny shoes and flaxen ponytails with chunky yarn bows....."We're too cute to die!!" I grabbed my sister's hand and prepared to run as fast as our little legs could carry us. I was five.....but I knew these dudes could cart us all away and make us sleep with the fishes.

Imagine my relief, when the silence was cut with laughter. Yes, laughter. He apologized and grandma went on her way.

I'm not sure why they laughed. Perhaps because she was so tiny and unafraid? They made huge men quake in their boots.....but

not my granny.

She made full breakfasts every morning. Complete with grapefruit slices and serrated spoons. We had pie after every evening meal. Served at 5:00 on the dot.

She was all the things that make a great childhood: Strawberry rhubarb pie. Home churned, banana-walnut ice cream. Biscuits and gravy. Caste iron pans. Washing tub complete with a crank to wring out your wet clothes. Butter churn filled with walnuts and pecans. Aprons that criss-crossed in the back. Sewing room. Garden with fresh veggies. Wildflowers and caves. Watermelon preserves. Angled mirrors on the back porch....so us shorties could see the babes in the nests. Crisp, white linens. Mod, blue, hanging lamps that made my skin a tinge of blueberry. Rosebud salve in a pretty blue tin. Summers at the cabin in the desert - lizard catching. Rock hounding. Cactus prickly first aid.

One thing I truly loved her for? She was genuinely patient and understanding to little girl me. I cried over dying birds and dead flowers. I cried over commercials that showed children starving in other countries. I cried when a mean old man compared my huge feet

to a battleship.

I was sweet and sensitive. Where others embarrassed/punished me for my sensitivity, she made her lap available. She let me explain my pain.

She was all these things.....and she was a racist.

Perhaps she was just a product of her strict, southern upbringing? Nah. She had the ability to choose right from wrong. She chose wrong. But, how do you separate the love from the hateful bits? I have real love for my grandma. She's been gone for years now.....but I can still taste the sweet tea.

It occurred to me only just this morning that I can carry on her legacy of all the things that I loved about her.....and in her honor, change our family legacy going forward.

Thank you, Grandma Daisy, for showing me the parts that I cherish.....and for showing me what not to be. She was an example of both. Her legacy to our lineage going forward? Change can start any day of the year, anytime in your life.

It's never too late to cease the hate.

→ Dear Gabby

Life can be challenging, funny, frustrating, enlightening, ridiculous, lovely, and everything in between! Would you like advice from Gabby, our Word on the Street advice columnist? Ask and you shall receive! Send your questions to erin@interfaithsanctuary.org and our WOTS staff will convene with Gabby to provide the answers you need most.

Clean Slate Act Signed Into Law



By Erin Sheridan

Governor Brad Little signed the Clean Slate Act into law in March, making it possible for people with low-level criminal offenses to petition the court system to seal their records if they haven't committed a crime in the past five years. The bill applies mostly to misdemeanors and doesn't expunge criminal records, but rather seals them from public view, allowing people to move forward in life, said Senator Ilana Rubel, D-Boise.

Rubel worked with prosecutors and community partners on the bill for over three years. "Idaho was a real outlier in not having any mechanism whatsoever for people with even very minor offenses to seal or expunge your records," Rubel said. "I started doing research into collateral

consequences, or extrajudicial consequences that come with a criminal record – the fact that you now can't get a job, or you're not eligible for public housing, or you can't attend your kids' school activity trips, can't be a foster parent...there are thousands of collateral consequences. That struck me as so profoundly unfair."

Rubel began developing the bill after a woman from her district emailed her telling the story of her son, who had a seven-year-old old marijuana conviction from when he was a freshman in college. He became a straight A student but couldn't get into medical school because of the conviction on his record. Another man from Idaho called Rubel from South Korea, where he had met the love of his life but couldn't get a work visa due to an old marijuana conviction. There are countless stories like this, she said.

The Clean Slate bill helps Idaho join 41 other states in having a legal mechanism to seal or expunge records. Idaho's bill covers nonviolent, nonsexual offenses, but also includes first time DUI convictions and felony

drug possession for personal use, the lowest level felony possession charge that exists. Creating collateral consequences is "a huge driver, frankly, from a public safety perspective of recidivism," Rubel said. "Ironically, by over punishing people, we are endangering the public."

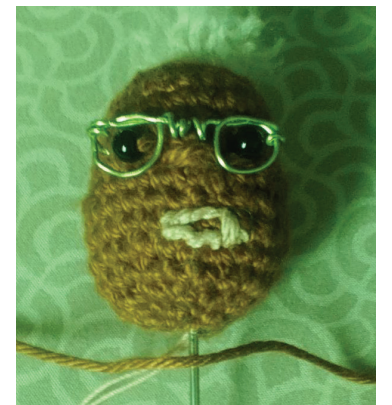
Interfaith Sanctuary Executive Director Jodi Peterson-Stigers testified in support of the bill in March, emphasizing that past convictions create barriers to housing and employment and frequently force people into the shelter system. "We're looking to set up clinics to help people file petitions. We have so many people we're going to have to inform about the opportunity," she said.

Idaho's bill did not successfully include by-right access to public defenders to help people petition the courts to seal these convictions, but Rubel said a pro bono clinic with the University of Idaho Law School is in the works to help people navigate the legal process.

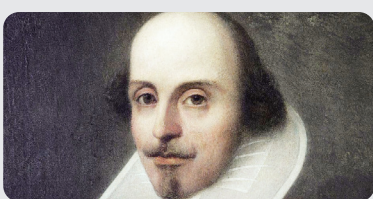


Supportive Spuds

Sherry Watring, a graduate of Interfaith Sanctuary's Project Well-Being, crochets these Supportive Spuds. Keep one at home, at work, or gift one to a friend to lighten someone's mood! Look out for them at Interfaith Sanctuary's Homeless Art Collective Retail Space at St. Vincent de Paul's State Street Thrift Store in Boise.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH



“ If of life you keep a care, Shake off slumber and beware – Ariel (The Tempest) ”

Crimes of Circumstance

By dAni Drake
(Photo Credit: Erin Sheridan)

We often don't stop to think that some things in our daily routines, done in the security and privacy of our own homes, could be considered "crimes of circumstance" for people who don't

have a home.

Examples of this include, but are not limited to, vagrants, sleeping, drinking in public, "disorderly conduct", urinating in public, and even public indecency.

All of these things almost always go unnoticed behind the safety and privacy of four walls, but for ones without a house get put on blast for all to see, and become easy targets for law enforcement trying to pick up easy tickets for their quota.



Shining Star of the Month: Diane Tipton

Diane Tipton has been a part of Interfaith Sanctuary since the organization was founded in 2005. That year, a group of community members joined together to found our shelter after the city of Boise took over leadership of an existing low barrier shelter called Community House and eventually leased it to a religious organization. This decision led to the eviction of over 200 people based on a new policy allowing the building to house only single men.

Diane, who for years worked as a janitor in Boise's downtown, was familiar with Boise's unhoused community and wanted to help. Also a congregant at Liberating Spirit MCC, she got involved. Tipton has volunteered ever since, first hauling laundry to and from St. Luke's to the buildings where the Interfaith Alliance hosted guests temporarily each winter, then volunteering around the River Street shelter after Interfaith Sanctuary obtained the building in 2007, then advocating for the shelter's ability to move to State Street, and this year coming

up with the idea to start the new Furnishing Hope in partnership with the Boise Faith Group.

Diane is awesome!! Liberating Spirit MCC stepped up to adopt a family on Thanksgiving to help furnish their new home. The congregants supplied them with all essentials for the kitchen and bathroom, found them couches and tables, and a mattress, then provided them with Thanksgiving dinner, Tipton said. Just before Christmas, one of the church's members donated \$200 to buy presents for one of the family's five children. Tipton then partnered with Interfaith Sanctuary and the Boise Faith Group to form the Furnishing Hope program to continue this work to help other families. Tipton has continued to help coordinate deliveries and help pick up donations and belongings during move-ins. "I appreciate Interfaith Sanctuary for all they do for our most vulnerable population in this city. I look forward to our new facility and will continue to do what I can to help," Tipton said.



The Night of Terror at Interfaith Sanctuary

By Gypsy Wind
(Photo Credit: David Stang)

It all started one spring morning when a very odd looking fellow appeared one day as people were planting a huge garden for the Sanctuary. He was tall and slender, dressed in full Native American attire, authentic in every detail. When he heard the volunteers mention they ran out of funds and did not have any bean or pepper seeds to plant, he reached into his pouch and removed two smaller pouches with bean seeds in one and pepper seeds in the other. He said to the volunteers, these are the Black Cave Beans of Doom. They are by far the best tasting of any bean and a sacred treasure of my people, and then he pointed at the peppers he said, these are the Black Ghost Peppers of Death. They are hotter and sweeter than any other pepper and by far the best tasting pepper you will ever find, a sacred treasure of my people. I will give you these seeds to plant and I am sure you will get a bountiful harvest but you must promise me one thing. You must never cook the peppers and beans together or you risk unleashing an evil upon this world, an evil that caused my people to disappear. The volunteers jokingly agreed to never cook them together, he then gave them the seeds and seemingly disappeared as quickly as he seemed to appear. The volunteers planted the Black Ghost Peppers of Death and The Cave Beans of Doom.

A few days passed and when the beans and peppers sprouted the leaves and stems were pure black, even the peppers and beans were pure black, they grew faster and larger than anything else in the garden and by fall there was a huge harvest. Just as the man predicted, not only was the harvest huge but the flavor of the beans and peppers was better than any other.

About that time the Interfaith Sanctuary had a chili cook off with the grand prize



of \$1000, one of the volunteers said that he was going to cook the black ghost peppers of death and the Cave Beans of Doom together to make the best chili ever and win the \$1000. One of the other volunteers reminded him of the native man's warning, he laughed and said what's the worst that could happen?

The day of the chili cook-off arrived and the volunteer that was using the Cave Beans of Doom and the Black Ghost Peppers of Death made a huge pot of pure black chili that everyone agreed was the best chili any of them had ever tasted. Soon, a line formed and all 20 gallons of chili was eagerly devoured by the people staying at Interfaith. As evening approached, there was a strange rumbling sound that began to reverberate through the building as everyone's stomach started rumbling with a sound like a distant thunder storm approaching. The growling stomachs soon fell silent as everyone settled into their cots before lights out, like a calm before the storm. Nobody was prepared for what happened next. In the darkness it started with one fart, followed by another and then another. Soon the entire bunk room of 100 men erupted into a symphony of flatulence, with cries and screams as every man writhed in pain flailing on their cots as pure evil escaped our bodies with such force it shook the walls and floor like an earthquake. No backside was spared the savage expelling of pure evil. Soon, everyone on top bunks had to drop down to the floor as the farts coalesced to form this black swirling cloud of

death above the bunks, with each wave growing bigger and bigger. A young man with his pants down to his knees and boxers hanging out took a can of Axe body spray and charged this unholy abomination. It took him several tries because he kept falling down, because his pants were down to his knees, but on the fifth or so try, he got close enough to throw an entire can of Axe body spray, which only seemed to anger it. We armed ourselves the best we could and with cologne, body spray, and deodorant we were able to get everyone out of the bunk room when suddenly, Billy Joe Bob said, "I have an idea!" Before anyone could ask what that idea was, Billy Joe Bob grabbed a scented candle and headed into the heart of darkness. We didn't realize what he was doing until we saw the spark of the lighter.

It was like, "Click...click..NOOO!!! Click - BOOM," as this evil being exploded into a blue-green ball of flame that took off the roof, along with Billy Joe Bob's hair, beard and mustache. The women didn't fare much better. The trailer they were in was a complete write off, along with the two steel shipping containers next to it.

You know there must be some kind of moral to the story or lessons learned that we are definitely going to try to figure out, but only after we win the national chili cook-off in New York City. There are going to be over 100,000 participants and they want us to make 5,000 gallons of our grim reaper chili. What could go wrong?

Angel at the Airport

By Jodi Peterson-Stigers

On March 10, 2023, Interfaith Sanctuary's Shelter Director Maranda Jay was notified that her beloved father had passed away. She was devastated by this loss and immediately headed to Missouri, to her father's hometown, to help manage the needs for her family. She arrived in the small town that her dad called home and began the process of sorting through her dad's possessions with her family, and meeting up with her dad's best friends (which included the whole town) to reminisce and share memories of the life and heart of Larry Gene Jay.

Larry was a music man and had a collection of very special guitars, one of which he left to Maranda - an autographed Stevie Ray Vaughan Stratocaster. Maranda wanted to make sure she could get this precious cargo home safely to Boise, so she reached out to Interfaith Sanctuary Executive Director Jodi Peterson-Stigers and her husband Curtis Stigers to get some advice. Curtis did some research, found a local music shop in Missouri to help guide Maranda, and off she went to the airport. The concern was that the guitar needed to stay with Maranda and go in the overhead bin, but the airline was giving her some grief and saying that she may need to check the guitar.



Well, that was not going to happen. Maranda headed to the gate and as she was talking with the staff, she saw a man that looked familiar to her walk up and begin talking with one of the airline employees. Suddenly, she was told that she would be able to bring the guitar on the flight. It turned out that the familiar man was none other than Kenny G, the famous smooth jazz saxophonist, who had a word with the staff regarding our Maranda's guitar. Needless to say, Maranda had no trouble taking her daddy's Stratocaster on the plane and storing it in the overhead compartment.

The love of a father for his daughter is so very strong and we have no doubt that Larry Gene Jay played a role in getting Kenny G to that gate to help his little girl get her guitar home. Angels come in many forms, in this case it was a legendary sax player with wings!



In Loving Memory of Larry Gene Jay 12/4/53 to 3/10/23

Bringing Nature Indoors

Ashley Parks is a macrame artist and member of Interfaith Sanctuary's Homeless Art Collective. She collects sticks on the Boise River and uses them to weave dream catchers and macrame plant holders. She also makes nature-centered jewelry. She finds peace in the outdoors and hopes to bring the same experience to others through art.



Jose's Portraits

Jose Miguel Bocanegra Jorge has been doing art for as long as he can remember. These portraits focus on members of Boise's homeless community. "I'm leaving something behind that will last many years after I am gone," he said of his work



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SCAN ME