

WORD ON THE STREET

a paper for the people

W
O
T
S

hope

IN THIS EDITION

RABBI DAN FINK-PEOPLE GET READY
MOLLY-SHOW ME SERENITY
JULIE- MY FRIEND MADDIE
GERRI- CANDLEMAS
REMEMBERING MARGARET STIGERS
AND MORE...



PEOPLE GET READY:

Lessons In Liberation From Moses And Motown



By Rabbi Dan Fink

Social justice work is hard even under the best of circumstances; in tough times and adverse settings, it can feel impossibly daunting. For human rights activists here in Idaho, the current landscape is extraordinarily challenging. Economic inequity deepens; hunger and homelessness strain our streets, gun violence proliferates. Racism, misogyny, antisemitism and Islamophobia poison these halls; too many of the legislators charged with protecting the rights of our most vulnerable citizens instead seem to revel in bashing immigrants, eviscerating reproductive rights, and endangering lesbian, gay, queer, and trans Idahoans. Most of the majority party is in thrall to an authoritarian ex-president who feeds on rage, foments insurrection, and despises democracy. Year after year, the

worst extremists run roughshod over common sense and decency while moderates who know better too often lack the courage to stand for their convictions. All too often, walking through the door of this statehouse feels like entering Dante's gate to hell, with its infamous inscription: *Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.*

But this is not an option. With lives on the line, we dare not surrender to futility. Instead, on this sacred day, dedicated to human rights, let us seek solace and wisdom from those who have traveled the path before us. Dr. King's vision of hope was hewn out of a mountain of despair.

And even Moses, the great liberator of the Hebrew Bible, experienced shattering dejection before leading his people out of Egypt. When he first promises to free the Israelites, they cannot hear his message of redemption, due to what Torah describes as *kotzer ruach* (Exodus 6:6-7). While the exact meaning of this phrase is open to interpretation, one prominent commentator understands it as a kind of spiritual impatience, suggesting that the Israelites briefly took heart but grew demoralized as

the plagues wore on, failing to recognize that freedom does not blossom overnight. It's a cautionary tale of how dashed expectations can quickly turn to despondency.

So how do we make our way through Idaho's howling political wilderness toward our vision of the Promised Land? Alas, I have no sure roadmap for that journey. The best I can offer this afternoon is some modest advice gleaned from a couple of my favorite teachers: Moses and Motown. I've already introduced the former; we'll approach the latter through three of the civil rights movement's most influential anthems: Sam Cooke's "A Change is Gonna Come"; Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready"; and Martha and the Vandellas' "Dancing in the Streets".

*There been times that I thought I couldn't last for long
 But now, I think I'm able to carry on
 It's been a long, a long time coming,
 but I know
 A change gonna come, oh yes, it will*
 -Sam Cook, "A Change is Gonna Come"

Through countless trials and
Continued on page 3

Serenity



By Molly Nunamaker

Show me serenity so I can find more serendipitous moments.
 Show me mercy so that I can find where my heart belongs.
 Bring me peace so that I may no longer grieve.
 Bring me harmony so my own self I can retrieve.
 Show me love so I may rise above.
 My heart now soaring like a dove.
 Joy and Hope come to me now.
 In the night I no longer have to prowl.

Cult of the Carrot

By Julian Workman

The carrot asks for your time, it asks for your submission, for your intelligence, for you.
 The carrot wants your time, it wants your submission, your intelligence, and you.
 The carrot asks if "you want food, shelter?"
 But The carrot never provides, it only wants.
 It will sway to entertain, but never give.
 The carrot exists only as long as the dangler's needs are fulfilled.

Art Collective

By Julie Loomis

I started coming to the Homeless Art Collective to give me something to do. I dabbled in painting pictures that someone else drew. I never really thought I could be a real painter. I also love photography and thought that would be my contribution. It is amazing what we can accomplish if we try.

I started trying to paint a landscape with watercolors and it wasn't bad. Then I started watching videos on watercolor painting techniques and was drawn to the Asian style. I was very pleased with how it turned out. I kept practicing different painting styles.

I was also stunned how others reacted to my paintings.

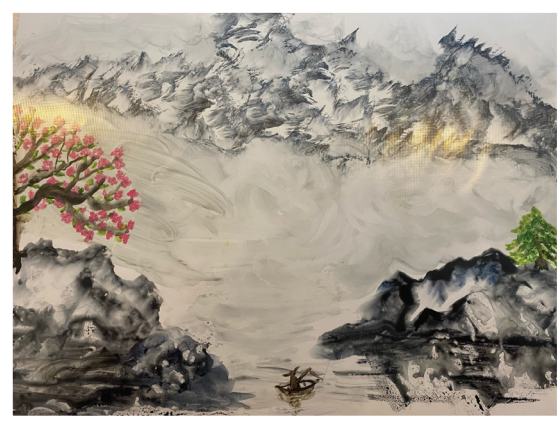
I still concentrated on my photography and I felt more confident in that. I also drew pictures on some jeans to raise money for the shelter. I was happy they sold. I even painted

some other jeans and made a little money. I was just happy that the people who purchased the jeans liked what I did.

I kept painting some better than others. The shelter wanted some art for another fundraising event and I had a picture, and a few of my Asian paintings. Boy was I surprised that it sold for \$150.00.

Now, I feel that I can try and become an artist. I am already starving, so I can only get better. I am so thankful that I have been provided the space and supplies to get started. I am even sketching some of my projects.

I hope this may inspire any person to just pick up the paint brush or camera. I am glad I finally tried and will keep working on improving. Thank you Critter (Art Collective Director) for pointing out my talent and encouraging me. I am also happy I joined Interfaith Sanctuary's Project Well-Being program because I met Nicky, who gives great encouragement too.



Shelter

By Julie Loomis

Here in the cold
I shiver and shake
I seek shelter
Out of the cold
I see a light
Out of the dark
A place to lay
Temporary a home
Not really
A home
A home
You can cook in
Have all your things
Decorate the walls
Play video games
This is a refuge
Away from the cold
Two bowls of food
A bunk to lay
And dream of a home



Fishing on the Boise River

Jonathan caught this trout on the Boise River before winter hit. He estimated that it weighed between 4-5 pounds.



What is Word on the Street?

WOTS is a collection of personal narratives, artwork, poetry, and reporting on social issues in the Treasure Valley and beyond. Readers can purchase copies of the newspaper from our vendors experiencing homelessness (look out for their official green WOTS vests) for a \$1 donation or pick up a copy for free at any of the locations listed below. Read WOTS online at interfaithsanctuary.org/the-blog or visit [facebook.com/wordonthestreetIFS](https://www.facebook.com/wordonthestreetIFS).

Word on the Street was founded by Project Well-Being, a day program at Interfaith Sanctuary focused on mental health and recovery. WOTS is printed and distributed to 30,000 Treasure Valley households once a month with the help of the Idaho Press. If you have story ideas for

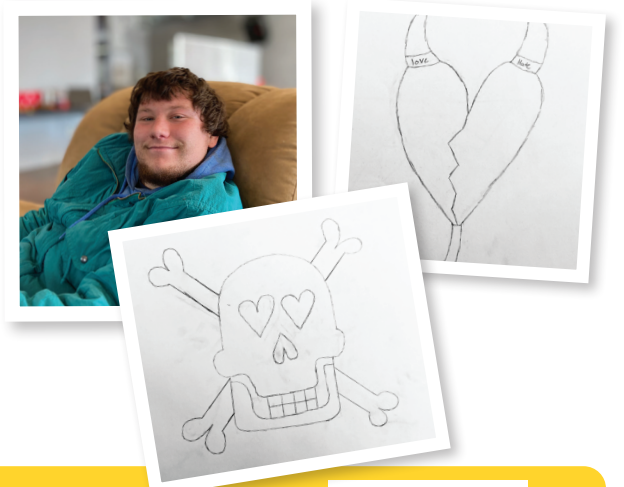
Word on the Street, would like to volunteer, or are interested in becoming a vendor, please email erin@interfaithsanctuary.org. We would love to hear from you!

- This paper is printed by Idaho Press -



Drawings by Skyler

Skyler is a new member of the Art Collective at interfaith Sanctuary."



DONATE TO WORD ON THE STREET!

Our writers, poets, artists, activists, and creatives appreciate your support! Readers can visit this link to donate: <http://bit.ly/44bySlP>



tribulations, Moses recognized that the liberation journey would extend beyond his own lifetime. So he spent forty years preparing the next generation to cross the Jordan and died gazing on the plains of Canaan from afar. Echoing that experience, Dr. King spoke prophetically the night before his own death: “We’ve got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn’t matter to me now, because I’ve been to the mountaintop.” So, too, Sam Cooke was fatally shot two weeks before his classic, “A Change is Gonna Come” hit the airwaves. Like Moses and MLK, he reminds us that the pursuit of justice is a marathon, not a sprint. It’s a long time coming, he achingly acknowledges; there are no short cuts on the road to freedom.

We forget this wisdom at our peril. Too often, understandably hungry for immediate returns after decades of electoral losses, we expend copious time and money on big ticket races only to inevitably lose badly. Sam Cooke suggests that we are better off playing a long game, creating a justice campaign that grows from the grassroots up rather than trickling down from the halls of power. We need to think bigger than two-to-four-year political cycles. Instead of pouring millions of dollars into currently futile statewide races, we can build a movement starting with PTOs, school boards, county commissions, highway districts. Home by home, neighborhood by neighborhood.

Consider the example of Reclaim Idaho, whose strategy is straightforward: *One campaign at a time, we seek to grow a movement of local leaders and volunteers with the power to demand change.* It isn’t glamorous but it works. Year after year, our legislature refused to expand Medicaid even as countless Idahoans unnecessarily sickened, died, and fell deep into debt with medical expenses. So Reclaim Idaho campaigned tirelessly behind the scenes to create a ballot initiative, and in 2018, over 60% of Idahoans voted for Medicaid expansion. Here was hard evidence for a truth I think we all knew in our hearts: Idahoans are better than the extremists we elect to represent us. When we take the long way, making our case door by door, we can accomplish great things.

My colleague, Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, teaches that we generally overestimate how much we can realize in a year, but underestimate what we can achieve in ten. Another wise teacher, Wes Jackson, takes this principle even farther. Back in the early 1970s, he recognized that contemporary agriculture is fundamentally unsustainable and set out to develop a radically new agrarian practice. For the past five decades, he has toiled at that task, breeding new perennial hybrids to feed healthy human communities. A few years ago, a journalist asked him, “How long will it take before you succeed?” Jackson replied: “I believe we’ll find our answers within the next twenty-five years.”

The questioner followed up: “But you are well into your eighties! It seems extremely unlikely that you’ll live to see that day. Isn’t it terribly frustrating, to labor so long without witnessing the fruit of your efforts?”

Wes Jackson paused for a moment, then responded: “If your life’s work can be completed within your lifetime, you’re not thinking big enough.” *It’s been a long, a long time coming, but I know a change gonna come.*

*People get ready there’s a train a-coming
You don’t need no baggage, you just get on board
All you need is faith to hear the diesels humming
Don’t need no ticket—you just thank the Lord*
– Curtis Mayfield, “People Get Ready”

Curtis Mayfield’s anthem, “People Get Ready” is a masterpiece in a long line of Black American hymns that invite the listener aboard the freedom train bound for a better world. While Mayfield pointedly denies admission to the truly malevolent who would “hurt all mankind just to save his own,” he emphasizes from start to finish that this railroad promises hope for everyone else. It’s picking up passengers from coast to coast, no baggage, no ticket required. You just get on board. That inclusive spirit of beloved community is the engine that drives the whole train down the tracks. We move forward only when—and because—we travel together.

Moses teaches the same lesson at a critical junction in his struggle with Pharaoh. With the plague of locusts devouring every growing thing in Egypt, Pharaoh’s courtiers persuade their boss to offer a compromise: he will let Moses, Aaron, and the Israelite men go and worship their God. But Moses knows better than to divide the people, whose strength lies in their unity. Without a moment’s hesitation he replies: *We will all go together, young and old, with our sons and our daughters alike.* Then, as now, our capacity to prevail depends upon our unbreakable solidarity.

Alas, too often in our contemporary human rights work, we create barriers and baggage, demanding that our fellow pilgrims pass litmus tests to earn their tickets to ride. Instead of working through our legitimate differences on assumptions and tactics, we divide into competing tribes, prioritizing ideological absolutism over consensus and compromise. In his essay, “Building Resilient Organizations: Toward Joy and Durable Power in a Time of Crisis,” activist Maurice Mitchell argues that to effectively combat rampant racist and authoritarian forces, we must nurture pragmatic partnerships. He warns against the kind of

unyielding purity that holds anything less than the most idealistic position as a betrayal of core values and evidence of corruption or cowardice. How can we move forward, he asks, if we self-righteously refuse to engage with those who do not already share all our views and values.

If this cautionary note holds true for Maurice Mitchell, who lives in deep blue New York surrounded by progressive allies, all the more so for us here in Idaho, where we can scarcely afford to alienate potential coalition partners. In our environment, unity creates possibility; division spells certain doom. As with Moses and the ancient Israelites, our liberation journey depends upon our ability to travel together. We need to march side by side: vegans with hunters in support of wilderness; socialist academics with blue collar unions for fair wages; radical queer activists with mainstream libertarians for gay rights; liberal Democrats with moderate Republicans for open primaries; Jews and Muslims and atheists and liberal Christians against white fundamentalist nationalism. For as Dr. King reminded us: *We may have come over on different ships, but we’re in the same boat now.*

We are stronger together. *You don’t need no ticket—you just get on board.*

*Callin’ out around the world
Are you ready for a brand new beat
Summer’s here and the time is right
For dancing in the street*
– Martha Reeves and the Vandellas

Emma Goldman famously proclaimed: “If I can’t dance, I don’t want to be part of your revolution”; Martha Reeves and the Vandellas’ 1964 hit “Dancing in the Street” provides the groove. Legend has it that the song’s writers, Mickey Stevenson and Marvin Gaye were driving through the streets of Detroit when they saw children of different races playing and dancing in the water of an open-fire hydrant. That image of innocent integration inspired the two men to create the song.

For the hard work of justice to endure, it must be suffused with joy. The night before the Israelites left Egypt, Moses declared a communal holiday, celebrating the Passover before it actually happened: *This day shall be to you one of remembrance; you shall rejoice in it as a festival for all time.* Though much hard labor lay both ahead and behind—though Pharaoh’s legions would soon be in furious pursuit—it was nonetheless essential to make time for gladness and thanksgiving.

Continued on page 4

Justin’s Polished Rocks

Art Collective member Justin has been polishing rocks he finds around Boise. The rocks are put in a tumbler with polish for a week at a time. Eventually, they come out looking smooth, shiny, and colorful. Check out these before and after photos!



In her article “Black Justice, Black Joy,” Lindsay Norward of the NAACP’s Legal Defense Fund writes:

For weeks following the horrific murder of George Floyd, protesters took to the streets. Brimming with passion and energy, the sounds of their despair and exhaustion at persistent injustices reverberated. At the same time, though, lively chants, speakers blasting protest anthems, rhythmic drumming, and joyous song saliently filled the air, harmonizing against the clash of tear gas and violence directed at them as they rallied for justice.

Within these sounds, despite and amid the pain, were expressions rooted in Black joy.

These simultaneous expressions of deep sorrow and hopeful elation are an enduring part of Black people’s present and past in the United States, existing in various forms throughout the long and winding fight for civil rights and racial equality... Voting rights foot soldiers in 1965 crooned “Freedom Songs” as they marched from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, despite facing unspeakable violence and harassment from law enforcement. In sharing joy amid sorrow, Black people have not only challenged injustice with triumph — they’ve

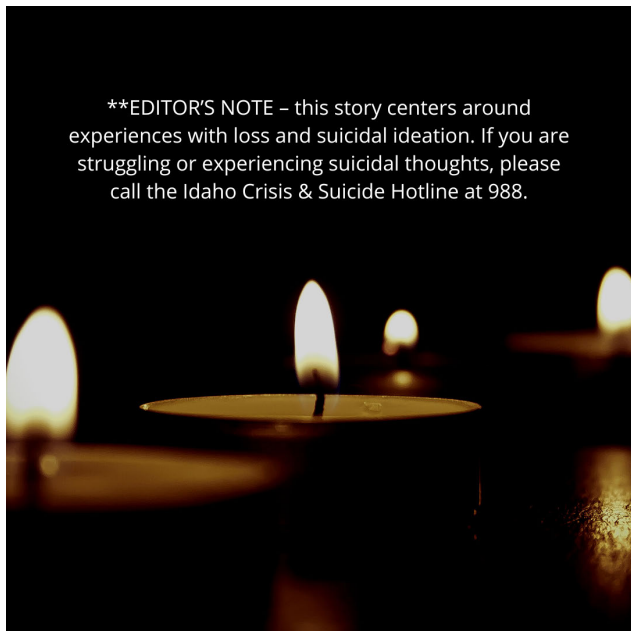
envisioned the unwritten and unseen within the future, imagining what could be possible.

Make no mistake: our demonstrations are deficient without dancing and graceless without gratitude. Even as we live amidst cruelty, suffering, and bigotry, let us remember that this world is also filled with beauty, courage, and delight. Without those precious stores to draw upon in times of trial, we would soon deplete ourselves of the holy energy we need to bend the arc toward justice. So look around this room. Celebrate the faces and look into the eyes of those who stand here, together, side by side, and smile. Take good pleasure in this soulful congregation of friends and strangers dedicated to the fulfillment of Dr. King’s dream. Savor the blessing—the unquenchable joy—of Cherie Buckner-Webb’s extraordinary voice and know: *the time is right for dancing in the street!*

My friends, I believe that a change is gonna come. I don’t expect the work to be finished within my lifetime, but I know, with all my heart and soul, that one day this Capitol dome will ring with liberty and justice for all Idahoans. So, people, get ready. There’s work to be done. Let’s dance.

Candlemas

By Gerri Graves



Let's begin. Like a story. One that goes to dark places. Subject matter we ignore until confronted with the inevitable.

Death is not a topic we discuss over coffee, but with suicide affecting our children in recent news, the subject bludgeons itself into relevance.

It's the reason I've always been so adamant about the protection of religion. ALL religions. When questions arise over our mortality and what comes after, well, there is no clear cut answer, is there? We wake up every morning not knowing what life's lottery has in store for us. We cannot predict what's coming, and if we're to be honest, it's a bit terrifying.

Faith restores, at the very least, a semblance of sanity. It softens the blow of the inevitable, and I personally am behind whatever brings solace to my fellow earthers.

However, what about those that leave us before their time? Faith can hold your hand, but it can't do the heavy lifting. It's up to those that are left behind to comprehend the incomprehensible.

I didn't want to approach this with stats, conjecture, or the sterile analyses of medical profession-

als. We've already read those articles. It made no sense to regurgitate biased opinions — oftentimes from the perspective of those who have no experience of living with the condition — nor can I offer professional advice from years of schooling, as I am neither licensed nor an expert in this field.

I'm just a woman who suffers from a lifelong dance with depression, suicidal ideation and attempts. A mom who has endured the loss of a child. A person with lived experience. What I can give you is honesty.

Depression is not what you may assume it to be: easily controlled. In my personal experience, medication not only does not work, but it cuts me off from that part of me that I love most. That creative, strong advocate. An artist. The part that



writes poetry and cries over the loss of lives she's never known. That person you can't woo or bribe into submission. A woman who thinks and feels and loves and creates and sings, and weeps..... and writes.

Depression has already taken so much from me. I will not let it take that last morsel of the me that I love.

I choose to be unmedicated. Which means I've been in my mind. I've become familiar with my symptoms. What brings it on, why it camps out in my head, and how to talk myself out of an early release.

I'm intimate with the nuances of the malady. I've become my own expert through self-evaluation and hypervigilance. It's lighting a candle in that dark dungeon to see clearly the monsters that lurk in corners. I've given them names and numbers.

Continued on page 5

Sarah's Paintings

Art Collective member Sarah made these paintings for Interfaith Sanctuary Executive Director Jodi Peterson-Stigers and Shelter Director Maranda Jay to celebrate her time at the shelter and thank them for their work.




DONATIONS NEEDED



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

PAPER BOWLS, PLATES, SPORKS NAPKINS, DRINKING CUPS AND COFFEE CUPS!

DONATIONS CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT 1620 W. RIVER ST. FROM 8AM-8PM MON.-SUN. OR ORDER OFF OUR AMAZON WISH LIST AT INTERFAITHSANCTUARY.ORG



THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT!!!!



I have a counselor that understands that unfair trade and doesn't push unwanted medication on me. I'm honest with what I'm feeling and don't hide that part of me from her. It's a fair trade and it's built on trust.

I once described it as walking a tightrope. What most people don't understand is that staying on the rope is living. That's the hard part. The fall? The decision to die? That part is soooooo easy.

It's a cancellation of every f***ing thing that hurts. It's shutting down the constant whirring in your head, revisiting everything that eats you alive. Tearing yourself apart. Self immolation. Suppressing perceived abnormalities. I don't fit in. I never will. I'm not pretty enough. Young enough. Smart enough. Skinny enough. Nice enough. Not even a good enough mother.

The ever-invasive thought that you don't matter. You never did. You're a blip on a timeline that lent no true significance.

All that comes to a halt when you commit yourself into stepping off that rope. A calm embraces you. A euphoria of sorts. You're resigned. Complacent. Peaceful.

It's not selfish. I hear that so often and it's absolute bullshit. It isn't about the ones you leave behind, it's about making the hurt stop. If you take anything from this, tuck away that last sentence to memory. It isn't about you. It never was. It is only about being mentally overwhelmed and wanting to make it stop.

I know I don't speak for everyone that suffers from this affliction, but I know from speaking openly about my own experience, that it does ring true with many.

You may look back and feel you could have done something, anything, to prevent them from going, but more often than not, the pain was just too much to bear.

I know from losing my own daughter. I blame my-

self for this very day. I've wished a million times for a do-over. I've also wished more times than can be counted to trade her place.

I mean, is there a pivotal point in time where a life can change irrevocably? That line of demarcation that denotes a 'before and after'? 'Cause, if there ever was, it surely resembles the loss of losing someone not meant to go before you. Especially if all that child ever knew was pain. It all seems so unfair that she fought for her life, and yet in the end, it was taken from her anyway.

I remember walking out of that hospital shell shocked. I had just rocked her until she took her last breath. Clinging to her still as her body began to chill. I wrapped her body in the quilt I made her and held her tighter, as if I could warm her back to life.

That cold that set in was so pervasive. It seemed impossible that I would ever feel warmth again.

My tears fell on her face as I stared and tried to remember the animation it held when she laughed, talked, cried. It seemed impossible that I would never see it again. It was only a couple of days worth of hours of witnessing it last — the incomprehension that it would be denied me the rest of my days.

To return home and find her things scattered amongst the house — things she would never use again. I locked the door to her room from the inside and closed the door. It remained just the way she left it until we moved.

The days after are a blur of, "I'm so sorry," to, "You can always have another child," to a funeral with an impossibly small coffin attended by people afraid of your pain. Like it was contagious.

People fell away and the purpose of needing them in my life went with them. I lived in my pain. Talking myself onto the rope when everything in me wanted to fall. No one knew what to say to me anymore, so they just stopped talking. My world grew quiet and black.

And all the things that were, are, and to become had come to an end. All that is tangible is, all at once, made redundant. Space, time, and thought once occupied.....empty. Silent. Shiny surfaces accumulate dust. Dates expire. The world turns. Days, weeks, and years, fall away, but the void cannot be reclaimed. It lingers there, beckoning like a wicked siren to follow.

I laid in dark rooms with the door shut to the outside world. Grief consumed me black, like a path of devastation laid waste from flame, burned so thoroughly. Completely.

The after comes in waves. Never forgetting. Most days forcing interactions, faking smiles and pretending to move on

But, I keep her room in my head. The expensive sleigh bed I saved for while pregnant. Her bed set I made, and the matching French canopy that consumed yards and yards of peach floral fabric. It glowed like a stage when she played with her colorfully lit toys. Her stuffed animals and Radio

Flyer wagon stocked with bandages, ointments, and diapers. Her dresser filled with the sweetest dresses, carefully folded, meticulously stacked and sorted by color. This room, once filled with love and laughter, gone quiet within the confines of memory. Silent...like the day she left.

There are times I open that door and pull out a memory, but it's always a double edged sword. Laced with pain.

I look forward to the days when the memories are just the sweetness of who she was, but it hasn't happened yet, and if I'm to be honest, I don't think they will ever come.

There is no parallel to the pain of losing a child. It simply is one of the worst events that can ever happen to a person. There is no fix. And it's always here, just below the green of my eyes. It's in that luggage we all cart around that contains all the events that make up a life.

People suffering from depression and loss need nothing more than someone to talk to. No advice. No judgment. No pretending to understand. No sympathetic meme on your social media with 'thoughts and prayers' written across a sparkly rose.

They need REAL human connection. They need someone to listen. A thousand times, if need be, because, there is no time limit on grief. There is no afforded grace on a loss this tragic.

Our kids are being bombarded with real world issues on their phones, sometimes live. The most empathetic of them WILL BE affected. Talk to them about their concerns. Validate them. Walk them through the hard stuff. Let them cry in your arms when things like ridicule, or politics, or death, or genocide — sometimes in real time — hurt them.

Our youth are dealing with far more than this Gen X'er did, and we lived through the Cold War with threats of being annihilated at any given moment.

We need to save the humane within our ranks. The artistic, articulate, deep-thinking, empathetic, emotionally mature, expressive, sensitive souls among us. We'll need their compassion, understanding and love as we head into an uncertain future. As the world grows more hateful and desensitized, these are the few that carry our collective humanity, and they must be cherished.

I was lucky to have a few good people in my life that happened to come into it when I needed them most, and you can be that for someone else. That someone out there who's walking that same tightrope.

This was hard to write, but I hope my honesty brought clarity. I hope it saves a life. And if that life is you, I hope I represented us fragile, bleeding hearts adequately.

You are not alone. You never were. You're just too beautiful for this mean old world. All the more reason why you need to stay. There's too few of you left, and we need you.

Find your tribe. Stay. Okay?

Relief Bed International Donates Shelter Beds

By WOTS Staff

Relief Beds International reached out to Interfaith Sanctuary in January to donate 20 inflatable beds for our guests. The shelter is full nearly every night, so we frequently uses floor spots and a heated military tent on our property to provide beds during overflow periods. The relief beds inflate and can be used on the ground, or on top of cots.

Relief Bed International founder Scott Smalling started the nonprofit in 2015 after a long career in the bedding and specialty foams market. He founded the ComforPedic® brand but felt most fulfilled when leading outreach and disaster relief projects across the United States. Recent international projects have included donating beds to support victims of the war in Ukraine and the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

Board members of Interfaith Sanctuary introduced Smalling to the shelter after mentioning our need to serve people comfortably, especially during inclement weather. The nonprofit decided that the shelter's mission fell right in line with their goal to serve people experiencing homelessness across the globe and immediately sent beds to the shelter. Our guests will sleep more comfortably with the help of our new relief beds! Thank you to all who helped!



STORMTECH DELIVERS SAFETY, WARMTH AND COMFORT DURING THE COLDEST TIME OF THE YEAR!



This winter, Interfaith Sanctuary received an amazing donation from STORMTECH, an outdoor apparel company based in Western Canada.

Right as the coldest weather began to hit our city a delivery of over 200 STORMTECH jackets and beanies were delivered to our shelter. Our guests who received these amazing donated jackets were thrilled and so very grateful!

STORMTECH has been around for 45 years. According to the company, they've been "meticulously designing and supplying quality outdoor apparel and accessories to companies throughout the globe. With design excellence, innovative fabric technologies and sustainable sourcing practices at its core, STORMTECH has been the brand of choice for premium outdoor apparel and bags in the B2B space."

When asked why they selected our shelter, here is what STORMTECH had to say: "Supporting Interfaith Sanctuary aligns with our core values of inclusivity and compassion. By contributing to an organization that provides warm meals, safe shelter, and a sanctuary for families of all backgrounds, we actively participate in fostering hope, dreams, and second chances. It is our privilege to be a part of creating a haven that welcomes everyone, transcending differences and spreading the message of care and support."

STORMTECH delivered safety, warmth and compassion and Interfaith Sanctuary is so grateful!

Beyond products, Stormtech also donates 1% of global sales to charitable initiatives focused on outdoor exploration and environmental stewardship. For more information, please visit: www.stormtechperformance.com.

By Julie Loomis

We all meet those people that are hard to forget – that is my friend Maddie. I met her when she was walking through the area where I was sitting at the shelter, and we were introduced. At 6' 4", she makes an entrance and is full of life. Maddie wasn't always Madelyn, she was once Matthew. Just like many people at the shelter, she has a compelling story.

Maddie was born male. At a young age, she was taken from her family by a man who wanted a boy. He thought he could make Maddie into some type of jock. Of course, this was not our Maddie. She grew up being told that the sex you are born with is the only way.

I can't say that I have been born in the wrong body and understand her experience. However, I do listen to Maddie and never judge. Maddie became a confused person who felt like she never fit in and drank away her pain. That is where the shelter found her – laying covered in bugs, passed out, and very ill. She spent time at the hospital with liver damage and doctors told her that she needed to quit drinking.

Maddie joined Project Recovery at Interfaith Sanctuary and had a hard time staying sober. Being sober made her see that she was a woman and not a man. She was sent to a doctor who works with transgender

people. After Maddie started taking female hormones, she finally felt she had a reason to recover.

Maddie had her name changed and began living as her true self. It is not an easy path she has taken between getting used to the hormones, not drinking, and facing life as a minority. No longer a white male, being a transgender female is a different world.

I understand being a minority female, so some of the things Maddie faces I understand. She has gotten in trouble for using a female bathroom, told to kill herself, faced job discrimination, and harassment by random men. She also has gender dysphoria, which makes her hate how she looks because she wants to see a beautiful woman with all the curves. She has severe anxiety attacks because of this. The hormones have made her have softer features and some body changes, but it takes time to work its magic.

Despite going through all this, Maddie is a beautiful woman with an amazing spirit. She is always kind, funny and sincere. She tells great stories and my life would definitely be less colorful without her. I can't understand why anyone would want to be cruel or hurt such a wonderful woman. Maddie is a success story here at the shelter. She has found herself, quit drinking, and keeps positive no matter how much the world wants to knock her down.

Limited print copies of Word on the Street are available at:

The Record Exchange.....1105 W. Idaho St.	Red Rock Christian Church1124 S Roosevelt St.
Downtown Boise Public Library.....715 S. Capitol Blvd.	Liberating Spirit Metropolitan Community Church1088 N Orchard St.
Downtown Boise YMCA1050 W. State St.	Collister United Methodist Church.....4400 W Taft St.
Corpus Christi House525 S. Americana Blvd.	First Congregational United Church of Christ2201 W Woodlawn Ave.
The District Coffee219 N. 10th St.	Once and Future Books.....1310 W State St
Laundry Haus.....222 S. Orchard St.	Jesse Tree.....1121 W Miller St
Washing Time Laundry4744 W. State St.	ã café.....109 S 10th St
Americana Pizza304 S. Americana Blvd.	St Michael's Episcopal Cathedral.....518 N 8th St
Neckar Coffee.....117 S. 10th St.	One Stone.....1151 W Miller St
Guru Donuts928 W. Main St #100	WCA.....720 W Washington St
Broadcast Coffee.....1100 W. Idaho St.	New Path Community Housing.....2200 Fairview Ave
Interfaith Sanctuary1620 W. River St.	Viking Drive-In.....3790 W State St
Hillview United Methodist Church8525 W Ustick Rd.	Library! At Collister.....4724 W State St
Cathedral of the Rockies717 N 11th St #4.	All Saints Church.....704 S Latah St

Where To Find Word On The Street



Obituary



Margaret Montrose Stigers
July 2, 1944 ~ December 20, 2023

A diva gained her wings this winter and Interfaith Sanctuary lost a wonderful advocate, friend and family member. Margaret Stigers, mom to Curtis Stigers and Mom in-law to Jodi Peterson-Stigers spent the last 17 years singing her heart out for our cause and getting the high bidders at the Xtreme Holiday Xtravaganza with her famous fudge tower. We have no doubt that heaven just became a much more entertaining place with our dear Margaret entering those pearly and no doubt bedazzled gates.

Tribute

Margaret Montrose Stigers passed away peacefully in Boise on December 20, 2023.

Born Margaret Helen Montrose in Pocatello, Idaho, on July 2, 1944, to Leola Rose Eckersley Montrose and Edwin Charles Montrose, she grew up on Colorado Street in South Boise, attended Garfield Elementary and East Junior High, and graduated from Boise High in 1962, where she was a cheerleader who loved singing, cruising main street in a hot rod, and dancing to rock n' roll, especially Little Richard. The quote accompanying Margaret's senior photo in the Boise High yearbook read: "She'd rather spend time with a man than an angel any day."

Margaret's parents moved to Southern California at the beginning of her senior year of high school but she chose to stay in Boise to graduate from Boise High. She lived with her aunt and uncle, Mildred and Eardley Glass, and their 3 children, Brad, Cheryl and Diane. After graduating, Margaret moved to Southern California to join her parents and younger sister, where she attended Pasadena City College. Her oldest son Curtis was born in 1965. As an unmarried mother-to-be with a sense of humor, she named Clint Eastwood as her "emergency contact" on the hospital maternity ward intake form.

In 1967, Margaret married Steve

Stigers and lived for a year in Pacific Beach, Washington where her husband was stationed with the Navy. They moved back to California and eventually spent a year living in the town of Santa Maria, where Margaret's younger son Jake was born, in 1972. A year later the couple divorced and in 1974 Margaret moved home to Idaho to raise her sons in Boise.

Margaret held many different jobs (from receptionist to bookkeeper to prison guard!) sometimes working two jobs at a time as a single mom raising two boys on her own. She was a longtime Albertsons employee and was proud to say she started her work career while still in high school, as a bagger and checker at the original Albertsons Market on State Street.

Margaret was a member of the LDS church and was a choir director and a beloved and unconventional Sunday school teacher (many remember her as "Sister Friend"). She touched the lives of so many young people and never lost her youthful sense of fun.

Margaret was born to be a grandma, and she adored and doted on her loving granddaughters Ruby and Stella.

Amidst the melodrama of the local musical theater scene, Margaret found a new passion in the second act of her life. With a big voice and a love of the stage she secured leading

roles in many shows including My Fair Lady, Pippin, South Pacific, Little Shop Of Horrors, Annie (Miss Hannigan!), Singin' In The Rain, Nunsense (1, 2 and 3!), Oklahoma, and Sweeney Todd, for which she won Boise Little Theater's Best Actress "Beaulah" award, for her portrayal of Mrs. Lovett. She was also a proud member, for over 35 years, of the revered (and rockin') singing group The Divas of Boise (founded by her dear friend Rocci Johnson).

Margaret had a fondness for making fudge and was something of a legend in the local medical community as she often arrived at her doctor appointments with a tin or two of fudge for the office staff.

Margaret is survived by her sons Curtis Stigers (Jodi) and Jake Stigers (Suzanne), her beloved granddaughters Ruby and Stella, her step-grandsons Sam and Max Peterson, her sisters Patricia Elam (Gene) of Moraga, CA; Pamela Montrose of Washington, DC; Rita Libbrecht (Glenn) of Reno, NV; and half-brother Ed Montrose, Jr. (Lorraine) of Sacramento, CA, and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Margaret Stigers was buried on December 26, 2023 at Dry Creek Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Interfaith Sanctuary Homeless Shelter. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Photos by Gypsy Wind

Gypsy Wind is a photographer experiencing homelessness in Boise. He snaps photos of nature and the people of Boise whenever he can!



MONTHLY GIVING PARTNERS

Thank you to these businesses who support us month after month with donations that help to sustain our operations and delight our guests!



EVERY MONTH HAPPY DAY BRAND DONATES DELICIOUS OATMEAL AND COFFEE TO ENSURE OUR GUEST ARE RECEIVING A NUTRITIOUS START TO THEIR DAY ALONG WITH SOME MUCH NEEDED COFFEE JOY!



SYSCO provides donations every month that include: fresh fruit and produce along with paper goods, cleaning supplies and other needed items to help keep our shelter fed, clean and sustained



Once a week Mai Thai prepares and donates dinner for our guests. Billy, the owner, has been doing this for several years. For those of you who may not know, Mai Thai had a fire at their downtown location in November so they are operating as pick up or delivery only. This has not stopped Billy from continuing to donate and deliver 220 meals a weekly to our shelter. Lets all support Billy and his new on-line business to show him the love he shows all of us! www.unclechaibento.com