

Handful of Salt

Volume XXXVI, Number 3

July-August 2012

Our Young Activist Leaders program has graduated its first class! This, as you know, is PJALS' re-launched youth leadership development program, which introduced me to social justice work when I was a high school student. Because of passionate support from members like you, we re-launched this program last fall to build the skills and support the leadership of wonderful young people.

Director's Report from Liz Moore



Enjoying the weather at Pride

organizing it this year too); **Molly Fitzgerald**, head of EWU Scary Feminists and Eagle Pride (now in a summer fellowship with WA Bus); PJALS intern **Alyssa Henderson**; **Ryan Weech** with Food Not Bombs; East Valley school district PRIDE leader **Shea Gorman** (now interning with Sen. Cantwell); PJALS interns **Regina Steele** and **Amanda Hunt** (now working for WA CAN!); SFCC glbt Alliance leader **Jessica Jahn** (not pictured); and **Alyx Franz** with Youth Sustainability Council (not pictured). It's a super-impressive bunch whom I feel so privileged to have gotten to work with, some of the most passionate and accomplished young progressive leaders in Spokane.

Congratulations especially to Regina, Alyssa, and Amanda who graduated from EWU with their Social Work degrees! We wish you the best! Thank you for all you've done!

The graduating class includes (l-r) **Taylor Malone** who organized SlutWalk (Fighting Victim Blaming) last year (and is



In their own words: *"This program has been incredibly helpful and enjoyable. It helps young*

(Continued on page 10)

Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane

Affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation

35 W. Main, Ste 120M, Spokane, WA 99201 • 509-838-7870 • www.pjals.org

The Handful of Salt

is published six times a year by the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane. Its name comes from Mohandas Gandhi's salt tax protest in India, a successful, nonviolent, grassroots action that created significant social change against overwhelming resource advantages.

Steering Committee

David Brookbank, Megan Cuilla, Justin Ellenbecker, Linda Greene, Garrett Havens, Linda Krogh, Rebecca Lamb, Mike Nuess, Avery Rendon, Suzy Vennard, Ken Isserlis (Steering Committee Advisor)

Staff

Liz Moore, Director; Shar Lichty, Organizer; Alyssa Henderson, Amanda Hunt, and Regina Steele, Interns

Volunteers

Avery Rendon, Brock Baker, Chuck Fisk, Darlene McCarty, Dean Ellerbusch, Elizabeth Walsh, Gerry Kniseley, Greg Jacobson, Greg Lahti, Greg Youmans, Holly Ellenbecker, Jamia Jameson, Jaydra Cope, Jenny Polek, Jerry Mueller, Jessica Jahn, Joanna Gear, Justin Filla, Justin Mauger, Kendra Dane Hanson, Kezza McIntosh, Laura Phillips, Lee Chilberg, Lorri Hanson, Marian Hennings, Mary Naber, Maurina Ladich, Mia Bohn, Michelle Little, Molly Fitzpatrick, Pamela Frost, Pat Manners, Rick Lupton, Steve Smith, Tara Williamson, Taylor Malone, Tony Dellwo, Valerie Waley, and Victoria Thorpe

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Contact PJALS: 509-838-7870, www.pjals.org, pjals@pjals.org

Volunteers Make It Happen

Contact Shar at 838-7870 to share your time and talents.

Volunteer Opportunities,

Contact Shar at 838-7870

or slichty@pjals.org

- **Volunteers and performers needed** to help organize and entertain at our Picnic and Talent Show on July 28 (see insert).
- **Set up and clean up crew needed** for Honoring Life: Abolishing the Death Penalty, on July 21 (see insert).
- **Introduce your friends to PJALS** by joining the host committee for our Rooftop Party on August 25 (see insert).
- **Make our Rooftop Party a smash** by joining the food team or the set up or clean up crews!
- **Help us keep functioning without interns** this summer: help make reminder calls for upcoming meetings and events.

Wish List

- Donate your gently used (and not too old) monitor or desktop computer for use by our fantastic interns and volunteers.
- Copy paper for fliers etc: case for \$48
- Printer ink: \$45
- Office Angel to help keep our supplies organized and tidy: Priceless!
- Young Activist Leaders program materials (binders, training materials, etc) for 2012-2013: \$460
- Young Activist Leaders bus passes at \$22.50/month for 7 months: \$157.50 each

Become a Handful Contributor.

We welcome your articles, subject to editing for space and appropriateness of content.

Contact slichty@pjals.org

Snapshots from the Ruins

Rusty Nelson on Peace and War

After weeks of gawking at genuine antiquities, I returned to my native state and spent a few

hours looking at an archive of 20th Century Georgia history. I don't know whether the contrast or the similarity is more striking.

A massive, new Richard Russell Building for special collections of the University of Georgia libraries holds papers and records from most of Georgia's significant politicians and political characters from the past century. Far above files for serious researchers, political campaigns and policy struggles involving Georgians are in interactive venues down the hall from a museum of the Peabody Awards, presented for excellence in electronic media by the university since 1940.

As a nephew of the late Senator Russell, a former gopher and receptionist in his office, and a radio news reporter during the administrations of Governors Lester Maddox and Jimmy Carter, I find this library to be part candy store. To the university's credit, there are items that are more embarrassing than sweet, but I also found statements, questions and declarations which fit 21st Century situations, sometimes in surprising contexts.

Speaking of contexts, Nancy and I were doing our gawking in Spain, with a trip planned around Granada and the Alhambra. The history there and in Seville has too many fascinating layers, stories and contradictions to fit into fewer than 7 or 8 centuries, and it's no surprise that legends abound, along with distortions and fantasies of three of the world's great religions.

In Spokane and the 21st Century, we still say those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it, but having acquired a little history of my own, I find dozens of ways to observe history and the present. Seeing what passes for current economic and political choices through a 15th Century lens and a mid-20th Century mirror, I'm horrified by the pervasive absence of important truths learned and re-learned across the ages. These truths have to be found archaeologically while the fallacies which continue to devastate us are presented on pedestals, palaces and stained glass windows. In Georgia, there are monuments to Martin Luther King, but it takes diligence to uncover his hatred of war and corporate greed. In Spain, one need not dig to find veneration for San Francisco (or Francis of Assisi), but his passion for peace and justice is obscured by images of flashier saints wielding bloody swords or be-decked in gold. It is hardly a wonder that most of us were taught history through the stories of generals and wars, but it is tragic that we were denied access to historic and creative acts of peace and justice.

In the 21st Century, we can be overwhelmed by available information, but with a little initiative, we find instructive chinks in the armor of the institutional story. In Georgia, I found a 1964 television interview in which the Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee said he did not buy the domino theory on Vietnam. He said the only justification for U.S. involvement was that we were invited and therefore obligated by treaty. I somehow missed that information in the year I cast my first vote in a presidential election and obligated myself to become an army officer. The domino propaganda made me believe it was appropriate, just and urgent for me to go to Vietnam and protect my country.

(Continued on page 5)

PJALS Success Story!

Clean Water For The Children Of Gaza

by Sheila Fox

Last December, the Palestine-Israeli Human Rights Committee (PIHRC) figured out a fun way to raise money for a very serious problem: A bowl-a-thon called “Bowling For Water!” **With this event and contributions from members like you, we successfully raised the \$4,000 needed to purchase a purification and desalination unit for Attfal Al-Ghad (Children of Tomorrow) pre-school and kindergarten in the city of Khan Younis, a refugee camp and village in Gaza!**

The Middle East Children Alliance (MECA) coordinates health and healing projects for children in Palestine, Iraq & Lebanon. They helped to hold an election for Gazan children and asked them to choose the one thing they most wanted for their UN school. They chose clean drinking water. And so the *Maia* water project was created. *Maia* is water in Arabic.

The Palestinian Water Authority’s January 2011 report stated that 90% of water in the Gaza Strip was polluted from untreated sewage, agricultural chemicals and dangerous wastes that were discarded by Israeli settlements before their departure from Gaza. The report stressed the severity and urgency of the water crisis. Water levels are dangerously low due to the seizure and control of water by the Israeli Occupation and because of low rainfall.

MECA’s Maia Water Project is a grassroots effort conceived by the school children of Gaza. The purification and desalination units are built and installed by Palestinian companies and made with 80%

local materials. This is a critical point for MECA and Afaq Jadeeda, a Palestinian NGO who jointly created the project and shares the same vision of strengthening Palestinian communities.

The units are installed in United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools in Palestinian refugee camps and in kindergartens run by community organizations. There are now 38 units spread throughout the Gaza Strip. This decentralization means they are not as easily destroyed by

Israeli attacks on infrastructure.

MECA is an active member of the EWASH coalition which runs the Thirsting For Justice Campaign and

have endorsed the Marseille Declaration in support of Palestinian water rights that came out of the 2012 Alternative Water Forum.

MECA is working for the day when Palestinian rights, including the right to water, are realized. But in the interim, the Maia Project meets a vital need and provides tens of thousands of children with safe, clean drinking water.

PIRHC is grateful for the financial support that PJALS members showed and would like to raise another \$4000 for an additional water unit for the children of Gaza and their families. There is still great need. To contribute to this worthy effort, please send your checks made out to MECA and note they are for the Maia Project and send to the PJALS office here in Spokane.



Snapshots from the Ruins, continued from page 3

In Spain, I found a remnant of a stand for peace between Moors and Christians, a shred of sanity easily overlooked among the vaunted artifacts used to recall the glory of the Christian "reconquest" of southern Spain. The evidence was hardly hidden. It has been the motto of Seville, Spain's 4th largest city, for centuries. It is, however, quite cryptic if you don't have an explanation like the one I found in a widely-used guide book.

It looks like this: "NO 8 DO". It appears on contemporary banners; time-worn cornerstones and walls; sewer covers; and city vehicles. It's shorthand for a statement of gratitude to the people of Seville from King Alphonso the Wise, an abbreviation for, "You did not abandon me." It seems the people of Seville were among the few Spaniards who did not turn against the king when he decided not to pursue war with the Moors, but to try to come to a point of peace and reconciliation and build upon the contributions Muslims had made to the country. It was a stunning commitment to peace, although the Moors were ultimately vanquished, and Ferdinand and Isabella reaped the glory eschewed by Alphonso.

The royal couple's glory grew as Spain became the leading military power in Europe, but it eventually led the country to ruin as the expenses of the armada, the violent quests for riches in the New World, and the lavish maintenance of churches, nobles and institutions destroyed the economy and facilitated widespread corruption.

In Spokane, we are encouraged to believe that our prosperity depends upon Fairchild Air Force Base, although a closer look shows Fairchild gets more money from our taxes than the Air Force brings into our economic region. Today's considerable economic woes in Spain and in Spokane are

sometimes blamed upon workers who insist upon jobs, or even decent wages, but they come from the failure of moneyed institutions and governments to look after the interests of working people and their families. Of course the public often goes along as individuals anticipate having their own treasure ship return with plunder from an updated El Dorado. Meanwhile, those fighting for economic justice feel like we've been riding with Spain's most iconic literary figure, Don Quixote.

Being conservative is not all bad, as long as one conserves something of value. It's quite another thing to insist upon policy or planning as it's always been done, all the way back to the 1300s, and beyond. I'm talking about war, institutional violence. We also have the disturbing, ultra-conservative idea that people of another faith, Muslims in fact, pose a threat to a "Christian culture" upon which we cannot improve.

If you are becoming more interested in history as you age, look for some of these minority reports behind the gilded facades of ruinous wars. Then look for some of the bright spots and hopeful signs that empire is an obsolete concept. The EU may be in big trouble, but I surely do like to travel in countries in which I'm not treated like a criminal for leaving one or entering another.

Don't expect perfection, or even a better place to live than the U.S. But I think our country loses a piece of its soul each time we codify paranoia, justify a war or refuse to walk away from a fight, each time we have legislative competitions to make an entity the toughest, most patriotic, or most conservative. Civilization as we know it has survived, not because of concentrations of power and wealth, but in spite of it. And when we say nonviolence works, we are not re-writing history. We are revealing it. - RN

21st Annual Pride Parade and Rainbow Festival

By Shar Lichty

This year marked the 21st Pride Parade in Spokane! As always, PJALS participated with a delegation in the parade and provided peacekeepers to ensure a safe and fun-filled day for all. Mother nature's cold and rain didn't dampen the spirit or turnout (there were rainbows galore!) for what "my favorite day in Spokane."

I recently caught a video clip from the first Pride Parade and am so pleased to see how much it has grown. I feel this is in part to the LGBTQ community feeling more secure to come



out (pun intended) and freely express themselves in the Spokane community. Our increased visibility helps create what I see as a circular affect, with the community realizing we are just "the people in your neighborhood" and not the villains some like to portray us as, thus creating a more inclusive atmosphere in Spokane. This past year, I have also witnessed more collaboration among the LGBTQA organizations and members with our work on GSA's and marriage equality. This warms my organizer heart--we are so much stronger and effective when we work together toward our common goals. This year's theme was **Stand Up! Speak Out! Spark Change!** which I feel sums up our work over the past year and reminds us of the need to continue moving forward together for equality for all.

The peacekeepers had a busier day than usual with the one guy and his giant sign growing to six anti-gay zealots and their attempts to instill the fear of their god on the crowds. Most Pride participants are familiar

with these folks and go on their way to celebrate who they are regardless of others' judgment of them.

Thank you to all of this year's peacekeepers for your time and dedication to once again provide a safe environment for all, and thank you to all of the volunteers who braved the cold, wet day with me to staff PJALS' outreach table at the Rainbow Festival. And, thank you to OutSpokane for once again organizing this fantastic event and giving us a day of Pride in Spokane!

2012 Rainbow Awards

By Shar Lichty

The Rainbow Awards bring the LGBTQ community to celebrate the contributions of some of its leaders and kick off Pride Week in Spokane. I attended to celebrate with my LGBTQ family and honor the award recipients. I was surprised and honored to learn of the several nominations PJALS had received: Liz Moore (Director), Suzy Vennard and Justin Ellenbecker (Steering Committee members) for the Ally Award; PJALS for the Group Award; and myself for the Individual Award. Our work with the LGBTQ community is part of our human rights work and driven by our values of equal rights and opportunities for all. It is a terrific honor to be recognized for that work.

This year's winners were: **Blaine Stum**, Individual Award; **Jon Snyder**, Ally Award; **Spokane Trans* People**, Group Award; **Mark Garrett**, Over the Rainbow Award; and a Special Outreach Award went to **Anne Martin** with **Greater Spokane Progress**. I have been fortunate to work with and get to know almost all of these individuals over the past year and they are truly well-deserving of this honor. Congratulations to all the recipients and thank you to the Inland NW LGBTQ Center for sponsoring this year's event.

APPROVE Referendum 74

By Shar Lichty

The marriage equality law that was passed by the legislation and signed into law by the Governor on Feb. 13, 2012 was set to go into effect on June 7th permitting civil marriage for same-sex couples.

Unfortunately, the folks who don't believe in equal rights for same-sex couples were successful in gathering enough signatures by the June 6th deadline to challenge this law at the ballot in Nov.

The Referendum process is confusing and many folks signed the petitions to put it on the ballot thinking they were supporting marriage equality, they were mislead and misinformed. The opposition is counting on this to also be the case in November as folks are asked to vote on marriage equality in Washington. The game is on, it is time to talk to everyone you know about why marriage equality matters to you. The message is now clear, **Vote APPROVE on Referendum 74**, to secure marriage equality. To clarify the confusing process as simply as possible, an **APPROVE** vote means that you **APPROVE** of the law that was passed by the legislation and signed by the Governor permitting civil marriage for same-sex couples.

I find it unconstitutional that same-sex couples don't already have this civil right and reason enough to vote **APPROVE**. In addition, this law will strengthen Washington's communities and families as all loving, committed couples are able to marry, grow old together and enjoy all the benefits of marriage. The law values freedom and equality, values we want expressed in our community and State. **Sign the Pledge to APPROVE Ref 74 now** at <http://bit.ly/LSAtUc!>

I am on the Steering and Voter Contact committees of the local group, Marriage Equality Spokane. We are working in direct coordination with the state campaign, Washington United for Marriage, to secure marriage equality at the ballot and make

history by becoming the first state to do so. We are looking for folks who would like to volunteer locally with one of the sub-committees. Are you one of those folks who would like to be more actively involved in this campaign? Would you like to help at an event, phone bank voters, canvass, host a fundraising event? If yes, than we need you! Please contact me at slichty@pjals.org with your volunteer interests and I will plug you in to the right person. Let's make history together folks...**APPROVE!**



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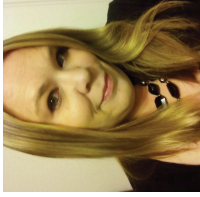


PJALS Success Story!

Our Work for Economic Justice

by Amanda Hunt, BSW

Since September, I have had the pleasure of working with the Peace and Justice Action Committee. In this committee, we set our 2012 legislative priorities: fighting to raise revenue in



the state by closing corporate tax loopholes and rejecting cuts that will disproportionately affect low-income children, families, and people of color. This has been a difficult year in the legislature, as our lawmakers were struggling with another almost billion dollar revenue short fall.

Many unethical budget cuts were proposed by Governor Gregoire that would have disproportionately hurt the most vulnerable populations in our state. She proposed the elimination of disability lifeline, severe cuts to K-12 and Higher Education, the Basic Health Program, and other programs and services. Senator Joesph Zarelli (R-Ridgefield) forced a vote on an all-cuts budget which was passed by the Senate. The House couldn't agree and the legislature went into another Special Session.

We worked hard to protect education and the social safety net in partnership with Washington CAN! and Our Economic Future Coalition. We organized legislative coffees with our local legislators to share our personal stories of how the budget cuts have affected or would affect our community. Alyssa, Regina and I organized a Legislative Panel at EWU to address the budget cuts and encouraged legislators to raise revenue in our state by closing corporate tax loopholes. We co-sponsored WA CAN!'s report "Facing Race: How Budget Cuts Are Increasing Racial

Disparities" and helped with its Spokane release. We held trainings to become more effective conveying our message, wrote letters to our legislators, participated in rallies and lobby days in Olympia, and even canvassed the neighborhood of Senator Michael Baumgartner, who supported and voted for the all-cuts budget in the Senate. Many PJALS members took action.

During the Special Session, a people-powered miracle happened. **Because of our hard work and determination, the majority of programs were**

preserved! No cuts were made to K-12,

Higher Education,

Temporary Assistance

for Need Families, the

State Food Assistance

Program, State Family

Assistance, and Apple Health for Kids, and

Maternity Support Services. Disability

Lifeline and Basic Health were saved from

complete elimination. **And, after escalating**

public pressure, lawmakers finally closed

one of the most worst loopholes in our state

budget: a lucrative giveaway for out-of-

state big banks worth tens of millions a

year. It is a good start and it would not have happened without public pressure, but we still have a fight on our hands to make our tax system fair and ensure we have adequate resources to fund the public services we need.

This has been my first introduction to how advocacy can have an impact on our legislators. If we share our stories and voices, together we can create change to protect our families and neighbors in our communities! Thanks to all of you for the inspiration you have given me at every meeting and every event!



ORGANIZE!



Reflection

by Regina Steele, BSW

The past nine months at PJALS have been an unforgettable journey with new friendships and skills built. I truly have engaged individuals and local



communities in building a just and nonviolent world. I want to thank PJALS for giving me the opportunity to serve as an intern during my practicum. I have gained valuable insight into the macro professional field of social work.

Starting as an intern at PJALS, I was extremely nervous because I did not know what to expect, especially since I have stage fright and activism is a very stand up and speak out kind of work. PJALS has taken me outside of my comfort zone, and I've succeeded. I took on one of PJALS' goals and helped raise \$4,000 for the Palestine-Israel Human Rights Committee's Maia Project. Bowling for Water was a huge success with great turnout; it raised half the money needed for the clean water unit for children in Gaza.

I also helped established the Peace and Justice Action League of EWU, a club on campus. Through this club our members have held a Legislative Panel and an "Aspire to Inspire" Week of Action on Eastern's campus. PJALS staff and members were extremely welcoming and helpful and offered me terrific advice when planning and organizing events.

This internship has definitely increased my interest in pursuing a career in organizing and advocacy. The biggest thing I am taking away from PJALS is confidence. I now have the confidence to stand up and speak out for the things I believe are just. I appreciate the opportunities I have been given here, and I wish PJALS much success in the future. Once again, thank you for a terrific nine months.

An Invitation to Share Your Story

The **Smart Justice Coalition** is about to launch, to persuade the County to fully implement comprehensive alternatives to incarceration for non-violent and low-level offenders. We need elected officials to understand how the current system affects individuals and families. *Have you been impacted by the criminal justice system? Contact Julie Schaffer at the Center for Justice to share your story.*

With your permission and any desired anonymity, we will share powerful stories through radio, video, writing, and/or live

speaking events. Reach Julie at jschaffer@cfjorjustice.org or 835-5211.

The Smart Justice coalition believes that our County's current criminal justice system relies too heavily on incarceration, which is the most expensive and least effective means to prevent criminal behavior and to create a safer community. Too many non-violent and low-level offenders are incarcerated, and this practice

disproportionately impacts people of color, people with disabilities (cognitive, mental and/or physical), and people who have low incomes. Incarceration of non-violent and low-risk people also unnecessarily disrupts employment, school, housing, medical care, health care coverage and other benefits, as well as family responsibilities.

It doesn't have to be that way. There are proven alternatives to incarceration for non-violent and low-level offenders that can save money, reduce crime, and keep people in their jobs and with their families, while preserving jail beds for high-risk violent offenders who actually pose a danger to our community. We will be urging the County to fully implement these alternatives.

**YOUR
STORY
MATTERS!**

*Director's Report, continued from page 1
activists realize and utilize their own
power and promotes their autonomy as
leaders and organizers."*

*"Not only did this program give me
numerous, explicitly useful tools for my
activism, it refueled my spirit every month
and encouraged me immensely to stay
involved and active. I was treated like my
work really mattered."*

For all the program info, please visit
www.pjals.org/yalp. Spread the word!

*Because of the efforts and support of people
like you, we had a fantastic time at our
Spring Soiree and Benefit Auction, and it
was our best fundraising event ever. Deep
thanks to all our fantastic volunteers and
generous donors!*

Spring Soiree and Benefit Auction Highlights



Auctioneer Rick Eichstadt from Center for Justice classed up the joint in his vintage tux.



Donna Hollister's beautiful handmade quilt was just one of the unique items in our Benefit Auction.



Creative themed food stations made mouths water!



Lonesome Lyle Morse provided a great atmosphere with his acoustic blues.

Peace & Justice Action League of Spokane
35 W Main, Suite 120M
Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 888-7870



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PJALS 37th Anniversary Potluck Picnic and Talent Show

Saturday July 28 11:00 am—2:00 pm

Spokane's Mission Park, 1200 E. Mission

Bring family, friends, food to share, & your own plates and utensils.

No Talent Too Small!

Sing, dance, recite, amaze your friends! Sign up for the talent show: pjals@pjals.org

Please support PJALS!

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane depends upon gifts and dues from members to continue to work for peace and justice, locally and globally. We welcome anyone who favors free exchange of ideas and nonviolent action to war or to inaction and ignorance. PJALS, 35 W Main, Suite 120M, Spokane, WA 99201.

You determine your own level of support and participation. Members also determine issues and projects that get the most attention and effort. PJALS is a 501©3 nonprofit corporation.

Call 838-7870 to discuss the by-the-month options, or visit www.pjals.org and click "Contribute" in upper right corner.

Other membership options:

Name(s) _____

Essential/Vintage members \$60/year

Address _____

Phone/email _____

Living Lightly (low income) \$20/year