



SENIOR SERVICES

A program of Catholic Charities Spokane

As I sit in my office writing this article, the warm rays of the sun are streaming through my window, and I can't help but compare it to the same warm feeling I get when I am outside working in the yard. This time of year, many seniors are calling Senior Services, looking for some assistance with yard care as they explain to our dedicated staff that the weeds seem to be growing as fast as the grass.

Senior Services became part of the ministries of Catholic Charities Spokane back in 1981, some 31 years ago. The Volunteer Chore Service program was a state wide program and Catholic Charities Spokane was chosen as the agency to serve the 13 counties of Eastern Washington because of its strong presence in each of the counties. From its humble beginning at the St. Ann's church rectory; to St. Francis of Assisi School; to the Lindeman Center; and today located at our Family Services Center, Senior Services has been there year after year helping meet the needs of our growing senior population. Our goal is to help low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities to stay connected and live independently in their own homes. Senior Services/VCS assists by finding that "just right" volunteer to assist with tasks such as housework, transportation to medical appointments, yard work, snow shoveling, minor home repairs, and moving assistance, just to name a few. Over the last three decades, volunteers have given approximately 750,000 service hours to help enrich the lives of seniors in our community.

Over the years Senior Services' Volunteer Chore Services has continued to grow. Our graying population continues to boom with 1.6 million people each year for the next 30 years turning 65...amazing! Obviously, more of our Senior Services resources will be essential to people's daily quality of living. Volunteer Chore Services, in addition to assisting with household tasks, now delivers a monthly grocery bag of food items to 375 seniors who are shut-in and have no other way to access food. In North Spokane County, Senior Services operates a senior nutrition site that serves a hot nutritional lunch meal daily providing 1/3 of the USDA recommended essential vitamins and minerals needed in senior's diets. For many seniors, this is the only meal they will have in their day.

So, today as the rays of the sun warm me, I celebrate this centennial year with all of you and remember the four pillars that make Catholic Charities strong and vital in the 21st century - **Respect, Compassion, Collaboration, and Justice.**

Tom Carroll
Director Senior Services

Catholic Charities  Spokane

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SALT & LIGHT

*A Parish Social Ministry resource for outreach, advocacy
and Catholic Social Teaching*

*Gonzaga Prep Student Review
Committee: students followed by their
year of graduation in order left to right:
Miriam Weeks (2013), Abigail Lombardo
(2013), Bianna Nikdel (2013), Maloney
Foster (2014), Robert Smoot (2013),
Sophia Nickoloff (2015), Mary Schimmels
(2015), Mallory Plaster (2015), Trevor
Doohan (2015), Ryan McCandless (2014),
John Akers (2014) and not pictured,
Sophie Anton (2014)*



A Gonzaga Prep student committee served this spring as our Operation Rice Bowl grant reviewers, evaluating grant applications from throughout the Diocese for a \$5,000 Innovation Grant. We partnered with these committed students to provide a leadership opportunity and experience with the needs around hunger and nutrition in our area. The students recommended the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center in Spokane to receive the grant for their summer program. Along with a smaller award, Bishop Cupich approved the student's recommendations, taken from the 25% of Operation Rice Bowl donations that stay in the Diocese:

• **Kids Smart Sack Food Program** at the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center in Spokane: 50 children enrolled in summer childcare will receive weekend meals for 10 weeks with easy, ready-to-eat foods sent home with the children each Friday.

• **Back Pack for Kids Program** at the Asotin County Food Bank in Clarkston: serving children during the school year with weekend meals sent home on Fridays, through the community's main food bank.

75% of Operation Rice Bowl funds support Catholic Relief Services' hunger and nutrition work in countries around the world, but a portion remains in the local communities because we are called to respond no matter where hunger threatens human dignity.



Summer 2012

My first grade son, Timmy, recently achieved one of life's greatest milestones when he finally figured out how to ride his bike. He has been trying on and off for two years and had experienced all the usual challenges – lots of falls, scrapes, tears and moments of wanting to give up. However, he stuck with it and finally glided his way into one of the biggest smiles I have ever seen on his face, as he combined balance, speed and courage to complete his first solo voyage. He was determined. He kept trying despite it all, and in the end – he did it!

That same kind of determination is at the core of our Catholic Charities agency. It is at our core because it is at the core of our clients. The homeless, the hungry, the broken and the abandoned go through impossible challenges and constant moments of wanting to give up. But they persevere. They fight. They stare down life's harshest realities and find a way to balance their lives, embrace courage and pedal their own way towards stability and hope.

A few weeks ago, many of us gathered for the first annual Steve Gleason Classic Golf event. It was a day filled with that same spirit of determination – that same willingness to fight for hope. Steve was a G-Prep and WSU alum who went on to play football for the New Orleans Saints. His determination helped the Saints win a Superbowl, but, more importantly, his determination has inspired people around the world as he fights his own diagnosis of ALS through his foundation's slogan, "No White Flags." In just one day, nearly \$300,000 was raised to help support those fighting ALS. Catholic Charities, Gonzaga Prep and Washington State University were the beneficiaries of life changing dollars to help those touched by this terrible disease.

Whether it is a truly beloved local hero fighting ALS or a truly invisible homeless mom living in her car with her three children, we are blessed to witness the courageous acts of determination here at Catholic Charities. The sight of each human person battling for dignity and compassion is what makes us all get out of bed and come to work each day at Catholic Charities. We cannot thank you enough for your support, your volunteerism and your assistance as we continue our determination to put more smiles on more people's faces!

Many prayers,



Rob McCann
Executive Director
Catholic Charities Spokane



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faithWORKS



Serious Golfers only...