



EASTERN WASHINGTON
& NORTHERN IDAHO

SPRING 2010

working wonders

A NEWSLETTER OF VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA

OF EASTERN WASHINGTON & NORTHERN IDAHO



I Remember Mama: your Mother's Day gift can change a life

Alice waits all year for this day. She even called three times just to make sure we had her name on the list. She used to spend Mother's Day alone watching television and missing all the loved ones she's outlived. But this year, she will wake up early and carefully dress in her Sunday best.

Why? Because you sponsored her to attend the *I Remember Mama* luncheon. Thanks to you, it's the best day she's had in a long time.

In the past eleven years, you have changed the lives of hundreds of low-income and disabled senior women as you have sponsored them, one by one, to come to a special Mother's Day luncheon we call *I Remember Mama*.

When you sponsor a Mama for just \$25, you make sure she feels like royalty all day. First, a volunteer driver chauffeurs her from her apartment to the Red Lion Hotel where dozens of volunteers are waiting for her, ready with gifts, hugs, flowers and candies. She enjoys a delicious lunch with wonderful entertainment and much-needed companionship.

Your sponsorship not only changes the life of a local senior, but can also brighten Mother's Day for your mother, grandmother or loved one.

That's because when you sponsor a mama, we'll send a beautiful card

"I can't think of a Mother's Day gift I have loved more. Knowing that my kids did something like this in my honor makes me feel like I raised them right."

on your behalf, telling your loved one that you gave this wonderful gift in her honor. It's an easy, inexpensive and incredibly meaningful gift.

To learn more or to sponsor a mama call Kasi at 509.624.2378 or visit www.voaspokane.org.



We take our stewardship—and your generosity—seriously. And we're not the only ones paying attention to our care and commitment.

Charity Navigator has given us their highest rating.



Did You Know?

Ten estate items that can go farther than you thought

You may not realize it, but because certain assets can be subject to both income taxes and estate taxes your heirs may be left with no more 35 cents on the dollar from the following:

1. U.S. savings bonds
2. IRAs and other retirement accounts
3. Accounts receivable
4. Installment payments on land contracts
5. Patent royalties
6. Commercial annuities
7. Deferred compensation
8. Last salary check
9. Unpaid income from partnerships
10. Renewal commissions of insurance agents

However, when you leave these assets to a charity like Volunteers of America every hard-earned penny goes to work helping your neighbors in need. Please consider a bequest for our programs whenever you make or revise your estate plans and ask your adviser about leaving tax-burdened assets. *Call Edie at 509.624.2378 ext. 104 for more information.*



FINDING THE RIGHT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

When it comes to finding the perfect volunteer experience, starting with a clear picture of your needs and expectations can make all the difference—both for you and for those you serve. Here are five basic questions to help you get started:

• WHO DO YOU WANT TO HELP?

There are certain issues that really light you up, get you talking and make you want to take action—often, that's the best place to start. Maybe you are particularly passionate about kids or want to make a difference in the lives of veterans or domestic violence victims.

• WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU PREFER?

One volunteer might feel more comfortable planting a garden or using a paintbrush than another who might prefer building a database or lending accounting expertise. Would you rather work indoors or outdoors, alone or with a team, directly with those in need or behind the scenes? Is there anything you absolutely don't want to do? Maybe there is an activity you have always wanted to try or an area where you can lend years of expertise (for an example, see the article at the far right).

• WHEN ARE YOU AVAILABLE?

You will be happiest in your volunteer role if you take a moment to really look at your schedule before making a commitment. Your schedule and interests may be better suited to a one-time project than to an ongoing project with a weekly or monthly commitment. You may want to participate in something you can join last minute or a position where you can stay for long enough to learn and grow over time.

• WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE?

Maybe you need to volunteer at a site with access to your bus route or with good wheelchair accessibility. One person might prefer to volunteer downtown, another in north Spokane and another in Coeur d'Alene. Getting the right fit means finding just the right spot.

• WHY DO YOU WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Some volunteers just want to make a difference in their community. But many also want to build their résumés or do some networking. Thinking about your personal and professional goals before you choose a position can help us make sure you get everything you need from your volunteer experience.

For more help finding the right volunteer opportunity, contact Linsey Strader, our volunteer coordinator, at 509.624.2378 ext. 111 or lstrader@voaspokane.org.



Easy ways to make local kids your business

What happens to local kids is your business. At least, that's the idea behind this April's fourth annual *Our Kids: Our Business* campaign—an unprecedented collaboration between the *Spokesman-Review*, other local media, businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, schools and individuals like you—all participating in a community-wide effort to end child abuse and neglect plus increase the high-school graduation rate.

Each of us doing a little bit adds up to a lot of change—and getting involved is simple:

- **INVEST YOUR TIME**
volunteer or attend an event
- **INVEST YOUR TALENT**
offer your skills to the campaign
- **INVEST YOUR VOICE**
tell your friends and neighbors
- **INVEST YOUR VOTE**
visit www.ourchildrenfirstspokane.com

Volunteer opportunities and events—including a capstone luncheon on April 21st, Honoring Gary Livingston and Bill

Robinson for their lifetime of investing in kids —will be listed in the *Spokesman-Review* throughout the month of April.



**Our kids:
Our business**

During the month of April, thousands of Spokane organizations and individuals will join forces for the fourth annual *Our Kids: Our Business* campaign.

Homeless vet turns volunteer, rebuilds bikes for others in need

Dan spent more than a decade moving from one shelter to another—until a new start at our Rest & Recoup House for homeless veterans helped him rebuild his life. Now he's found a way to use his unique skills to give something back. He might just inspire you to do the same.

When Dan arrived at our Rest & Recoup House for homeless veterans, he was missing most of his teeth, didn't have any identification and was generally in bad health. Not surprising, considering he had been homeless for nearly fifteen years—riding his bike across the country and surviving one day at a time for as long as he could remember.

But all that changed in a few short months. At the R & R House, Dan put his life back together. He found steady income, got healthy, even got new dentures and identification. It wasn't long before he realized he could help the other veterans in the house as well.

"He really embraced being part of a community in the house," says Dan's case manager Jon Carollo. "He is always helping clean and make repairs around the house—he even helped put in a therapeutic garden out back. He's a real giver."

Dan's giving spirit quickly spread beyond the walls of the R & R House. He had noticed other veterans in the house often lacked reliable transportation. So he offered his expert bike repair skills to benefit any of Volunteers of America's programs.

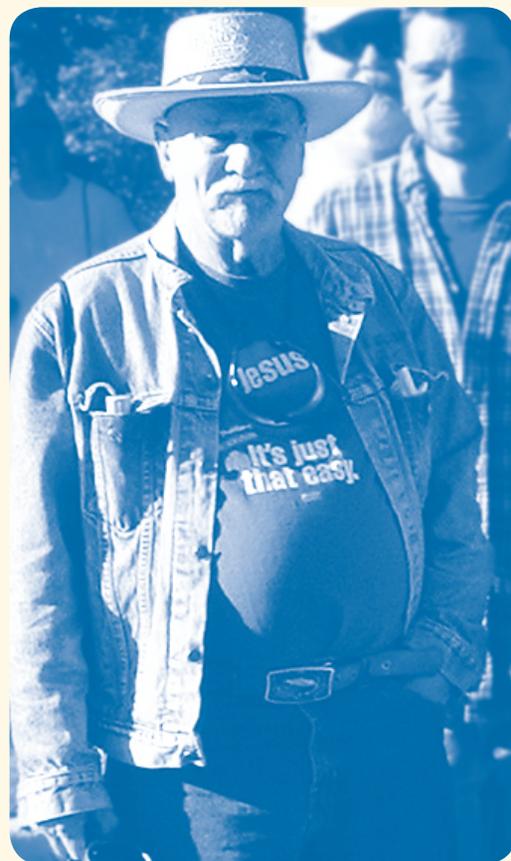
"For someone who is homeless, having a bicycle is critical," says Dan. "When you can go grocery shopping or get to the doctor on your own—especially if you can't afford a vehicle or bus ticket—it frees you up."

Fortunately, we had just received a donation of 20 bikes from the Tyler Boys Ranch. Dan went straight to work in the garage at the R & R House—giving each bike his careful attention and each recipient a shining new chance at independence.

The bikes were distributed to homeless youth at Crosswalk, formerly homeless young men at Flaherty House and veterans at both the R & R House and the Eagles' Rest, our other veterans' home.

What's next for Dan? Not only is he about to move into his own apartment, he is working with the staff at Crosswalk to start teaching bicycle repair classes at the shelter.

"Dan is transformed," says Carollo. "He isn't just stable. He's flourishing." *Have a skill or talent that could help others? Contact volunteer coordinator Linsey Strader at 509.624.2378 ext. 111 or lstrader@voaspokane.org.*



After fifteen years on the streets, moving from shelter to shelter across the country, Dan is ready to move into his own apartment. His new stability means he'll have more time to share his bike-repair skills with others.



Volunteers
of America®

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It's okay to feel good



Especially when you know that 90 cents out of every dollar that you give to Volunteers of America goes directly to services for people in need—right here in the Inland Northwest.

Donate securely online at
www.VOAspokane.org



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WORKING WONDERS

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