

Interfaith 'Angel' Larry Green Awarded Volunteers with Heart Award

By Jennifer Chapman

I had the pleasure of meeting Larry Green to talk about how his creative repurposing of stained glass has grown into a consistent and continuing annual donation that benefits Interfaith programs.

Green is a modest man with a genuine smile and who speaks more openly about his desire to help than of himself. He was accompanied by his wife Barbara who is diligent in bringing up the wonderful qualities of her husband without hesitation. She smiled as he spoke and I could see the pride on her face as we talked.

The Volunteer Center of Whatcom County recently recognized Green with the Volunteers with Heart award. In her nomination, Laura Harker of Interfaith Coalition comments, "It is clear that he feels that Interfaith's work is an extension of what he believes, and that his contribution is needed and valued. His quiet and creative donation of time, talent and resources affects every life that Interfaith programs touch."

The connection between Green and Interfaith began when the nonprofit's office located at his church. Naturally, members of the congregation, like the Greens, came



Larry Green, Volunteers with Heart Award Winner & Pam Brady, Volunteer Center of Whatcom County Board of Directors

Photo Credit: Clinton James Photography

for people who are just getting back on their feet including a housing program that has a 90% permanent housing rate for the individuals and families served. From providing housing, to the basic necessities of bedding, furniture, clothing, etc., Interfaith provides these vital services for these individuals and with Larry's help they are able to do even more for these families.

When asked if there is anyone in his family or community that has inspired his giving, Green remembered a past minister named Vince with a smile.

"At the time the finances were tight and some decision makers in the church had proposed a budget that included Vince getting a raise and would have temporarily eliminated some other expenditures," Green recalls. "Well, Vince shot out of his seat and refused to take the raise. That has always stuck with me."

In addition to his stained glass endeavors, Green is an avid bird watcher, and serves on the board of directors of his housing development where he also manages maintenance needs of his neighbors. Yes, Green is that kind of retiree – always keeping busy with his family, hobbies and in service to friends and neighbors.

Sitting and talking with the Greens, it is easy to feel inspired by the beautiful simplicity of this long-term gift. Here is a man moved to make the best use of his materials that had an idea then followed that thread to create a relationship and a tangible financial gift. I'm moved to think, "What 'angel-making' materials do I have in my life and how can I put it together to benefit my neighbors like Larry did?"

to be involved with Interfaith.

After retiring as a millwright in the early '80s, Green was approached by a friend about taking a stained glass course. Soon after the class he wholeheartedly immersed himself in his stained glass hobby. In an effort to use glass trimmed from his larger projects like lamps and mobiles, he started taking left over pieces of the stained glass and making them into small angels.

That was the beginning. It turned out that people *really* like the angels. Over the years, Interfaith has sold more than 1,000 angels amounting to a significant and reliable donation to the nonprofit.

"Knowing that the angel sales support Interfaith's work in our community, including housing and clothing families, is why we do it," the Greens said.

Interfaith Coalition has many supportive programs

Interested in purchasing one of Green's angels? Contact the Interfaith Coalition at 360-734-3983 or info@interfaith-coalition.org.



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