



INTERFAITH CONNECTION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS CAN CHANGE LIVES

Jenn, a mom with three children, had addiction issues for much of her life and struggled with self-worth because of the dysfunctional family she grew up in. She was told, and began to believe, that she wasn't good enough, she wasn't lovable or loved, and she didn't deserve love. Jenn lived in a very dark place for a long time. She tried detox several times until after having her children removed again, she stuck with it. She tells us, *"I went and started to peel the onion layer of damage and brokenness over the years, and I reached out to God and started going to church again..."* But leaving detox and starting again was another mountain to climb and she faced homelessness and the threat of losing her family.

Jenn's family was welcomed into Interfaith Coalition housing. She says *"...because of Interfaith taking a chance on me, we have a safe home and feel secure... I don't have to worry about what or where we're going to eat, if we're going to be warm enough, or be a burden on somebody..."* She got a job and started back to school and is working towards a degree so she can work as a counselor for others struggling with addictions. *"...There was a long time when I felt that my past defined me, but it didn't have to. I've been able to see that I have worth because somebody took that chance on me."*

The work of Interfaith in helping families stay together and transition from homelessness to stability, gives an even more important message to these children and adults:

"It's absolutely amazing how people that don't even know me have given and been kind, so I could have a better life. And if that doesn't show me that I'm loveable, I don't know what does!"



YOU are those *"people that don't even know me"* that Jenn speaks of. YOU are making a difference and sending a message that the children and their families we shelter and support are worthy of love and are loveable. You are truly transforming lives – thank you.

We want to serve more families like Jenn's by bringing Family Promise to Whatcom County. This program shelters children and parents in local congregations. During the day, families go to a day center and work with a case manager who helps them regain their self-sufficiency. Congregations find inspiration through personal connections. Please consider helping us by providing leadership on our fund development or communications team, learning about being a host congregation, donating funds, or sharing your ideas for a day center – a home, extra space in your congregation or business.



TICKETS!

Buy your tickets now to participate in the fun. Our auction is a sell-out year after year! For more fun, put together a table of friends or congregation members. Please complete and return the form below, or go online at interfaith-coalition.org to order your tickets.

DONATE!

Here's another way to participate: donate an auction item and encourage your congregation to do the same. Professional services, vacation getaways, gourmet dinners, sports tickets, pampering, tickets to live music or theater productions, gift certificates – they all make fabulous donations. Please contact us at info@interfaith-coalition.org with your ideas and donations.

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON

714 LAKEWAY DRIVE, BELLINGHAM

Tickets \$55 -includes plated dinner

TO BUY TICKETS, DONATE OR VOLUNTEER

call (360) 734-3983
or visit us at www.interfaith-coalition.org

SPONSORS!

We're proud to welcome and thank the following businesses and individuals as partners in our work and sponsors of our 2017 Hope Auction. We look forward to welcoming more as we get closer to our event.

- Robert and Diane Becker
- Carmichael Clark Attorneys
- Cascade Dafo
- John and Karen Fasler
- Laura and James Harker
- HUB International Northwest
- IMCO Construction
- McEvoy Oil
- PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center
- Brenda and John Riseland
- RMC Architects
- Barbara Mathers-Schmidt and Bob Schmidt
- Totally Chocolate
- SPIE
- Doug and Lynn Wight

Join us for a fun and inspirational evening. Our annual Hope auction is the biggest fundraiser of the year for Interfaith Coalition. It features one of our community's largest silent and live auctions, among friends who believe in the potential of every child and family in our community.

With you as a partner, we can transform the lives of people in need of a fresh start. Together, we can offer emergency and transitional housing, meals, warm clothing and faith in a brighter day.

.....
INTERFAITH COALITION HOPE AUCTION TICKET ORDER FORM - PLEASE COMPLETE ALL OF THE INFORMATION BELOW.

\$55 - INDIVIDUAL \$100 - GOLD LEVEL - includes additional contribution to Interfaith Coalition. Please indicate the desired number of tickets in the appropriate box above. Please mail or return your check for the total amount (no cash please) to the Interfaith Coalition office at **910 14TH STREET, BELLINGHAM, WA 98225**

Phone:

Name:

Email:

Address:

Preferred Seating:

City:

Zip:

Standard Dinner (GF) Vegetarian Dinner

PROGRAMS WARM UP LITTLE BODIES, HEARTS, AND MINDS

“Warmth” can mean the sensation of heat on the physical body. It can also be the quality of feeling valued or cared for. Two Interfaith programs that provide warmth of both kinds wound up working together this winter.

Kids Need Books (KNB) hands out new and gently-used books to low-income families each week. KNB was developed in June to help bridge the “summer slide,” the academic decline low-income students face during summer months away from school and books. The program proved so successful—particularly with very young children and their parents—it evolved into a year-round effort with plans to expand throughout the county. KNB’s book distribution takes place two evenings a week at the Cordata and Alderwood Elementary School pop-up Food Banks. The program has handed out more than 3,000 books and, in the words of a local school volunteer, *“It has fundamentally changed the reading culture of our neighborhood.”*

KNB volunteer coordinator, Joe Nolting, has seen many interactions at the distributions: a young mother watching her two young children select books from the table and begging *“Mama, may we read in the car or do we have to wait until we get home? Please may we read in the car?!”* An eight-year-old boy picks out a book for himself but returns a moment later to select books for his two younger sisters. Still later he comes back. *“May I get a book for my grandmother? She loves to read.”* Told “yes,” the boy grabs a book and exclaims, *“She really wants this book.”* The book’s title? [Captain Underpants and the Wrath of the Wicked Wedgie Woman](#).

Project Warm Up (PWU) coordinates knitters/crocheters to craft hats and scarves to be distributed through Interfaith’s Winter Coat Drive, CAST program, and many other agencies. Donated yarn is provided to those who will knit. Several thousand hats and scarves have already been distributed throughout the county, and scores of dedicated knitters/crocheters work steadily year-round to keep the items coming.

This winter, PWU volunteer coordinator Ronalee Kinkaid and Joe distributed handknit items along with books at the two schools. The first distribution

night was the beginning of the bitter cold spell. About 50 heads – mostly children – went out into the freezing night with warm hats on. Many families ask who made the items, and are pleased when they hear that people all over the county created and donated them so that everyone can be warm. *“Tell them thank you”* they say.



WANT TO HELP?

KNB needs books ranging from toddler board books to contemporary, young adult novels. Gently-used books, knitted hats and donated yarn may be dropped off at the Interfaith office. PWU items can also be dropped off at NW Yarns in Bellingham, 1401 Commercial Street. You can also come and knit at NW yarns with their Knitting-For-A-Cause night: Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m.



**INTERFAITH COALITION
OF WHATCOM COUNTY**

910 14th St.
Bellingham, WA 98225

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Bellingham, WA 98226
Permit No. 212



BECAUSE OF YOUR COMMITMENT

Because of you, we are an example of how powerful love can be when we focus on what unites us and work together.

By the Numbers in 2016

- Forty-one Whatcom County faith communities, PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center, numerous organizations, businesses and individuals united to share resources and volunteer to help those in need in our community.
- Sixty-three children and 41 adults left cars, tents, or other unsafe living situation and moved to stability through Interfaith housing.
- Over 2,500 coats, 900 hats and 300 scarves distributed through our Winter Coat Drive. Hundreds of

additional handknit items made by Project Warm Up crafters distributed throughout the community.

- Over 10,400 meals were served by CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together) volunteers to people on the street on a total of 208 nights.
- Seventy-five homeless families received gifts to brighten their holidays through the sponsorship of individuals, congregations and businesses.
- Over 3,000 children's books were distributed through Kids Needs Books program.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST INTERFAITH COALITION CONGREGATION MEMBER!

Bellingham's Birchwood Presbyterian Church congregation, with Pastor Greg Ellis and congregational representative Lori Jump.

**LIKE INTERFAITH COALITION
OF WHATCOM COUNTY
ON FACEBOOK!**

