



March/April 2012



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

There have been times when I have been accused of using language that is "politically correct." But I've always thought of my choice of words as being an act of politeness and common courtesy. If someone preferred to be called something other than how I was referring to him, then to abide by his wishes seemed only the right thing to do.

For instance, when I was kid, everyone who lived in my neighborhood described the nice man who delivered our mail as being "colored." Then as I paid attention to what was going on in the civil rights movement, I understood that the proper term to use was "Negro." In time, that evolved into "black"—and some preferred "African-American." It was no big deal for me to change my vocabulary if that's what the people who were being affected wanted. After all, what did adopting new words personally cost me?

Similarly, I learned that some adult female friends of mine rebelled against being referred to in the collective as "girls," or even as "ladies." If adult males aren't normally called "boys" or "gents" but "men," then adult females should correspondingly be called "women." And I also learned that those who were homosexual preferred to be referenced as "gay." Okay. Why would I persist in using old nomenclature, when I was aware that by doing so I was only irritating or offending them? Relationships don't get built that way.

There now seems to be a movement afoot to adopt a new "politically correct" term for those living on the streets. Instead of calling them "homeless," we are now apparently supposed to refer to them as "the unhoused." But while I appreciate the argument behind adopting this new term, I'm digging in my heels against it. I have a counterargument to make.

The argument in favor of using the referent, "the unhoused," is that the term "homeless" has come to carry a definite stigma with it. When many hear the word, "homeless," they find a stereotype triggered in their minds of shiftless panhandlers, alcoholics, and drug abusers, of people who are dirty, dangerous, and a burden to society. Their knee-jerk reaction is like that of [a Washington state legislator who recently said that folks sleeping in their cars might not be a bad thing](#) because it might lead them to better themselves; why, they "might even think about going to a place of worship"! Huh? Who's to say that many of these folks aren't *already* going to a place of worship? Who's to say that they aren't extremely industrious people (I'd like to see that legislator himself go out along the roadside picking up cans all day) who just don't have the advantages many of the rest of us have?

I certainly recognize that many people do attach a stigma to the word "homeless." And I also recognize that a certain select folks might properly be referred to as "unhoused"—e.g. families who have been wrested from their communities because of foreclosure. But to use "unhoused" as a generally descriptive term? Here's why I would object:

It's because the word "home" means so much more than the word "house." And by calling someone "homeless" we are therefore recognizing that those on the streets

suffer from much more than simply the lack of a roof over their heads. "Home" connotes a sense of roots, of connection, of relationship. To be "home"-less means therefore that one is missing something so much more than simply a spot where they can be protected from the elements. To recognize a person's "home"-lessness is to acknowledge an existential condition as much as a physical one.

Think, for example, what it means to be "home"-sick. In all likelihood, when you've had this feeling, it's not because you're in a place where you lack shelter. Neither, when you think of "home," is it likely the physical structure in your old neighborhood that prompts those feelings of homesickness within you. Rather, it's the *relationships* you're missing. The people who have affirmed you and given you your identity. Their love.

My fear is that if we now adopt the new vocabulary of simply calling our friends on the streets "the unhoused," we'll also lose this point—that the answer to all our streetfriends' needs will not be addressed by merely getting them into a house. Indeed, human beings have always found that they can weather all sorts of storms if they find that they have those who care for them, if they have the relationships to uphold them, if they are bolstered by love. To find a webwork of those who care is to find a home.

Besides, I haven't found a single one of our guests at Nightwatch who refers to himself as being "unhoused." They know the truth. They know their needs go much beyond the need for shelter. That's why they come to us. What I hope Nightwatch provides for them, at least for a few hours a few evenings a week, is a "home."

Otherwise, they seem to have no problem referring to themselves as "homeless." And that's good enough for me.

Gary L. Davis

ONW ANNOUNCES FIRST ANNUAL LAMPLIGHTERS OF THE YEAR!

Operation Nightwatch will present its first “Lamplighter of the Year Awards” at its next benefit concert at St. Stephen’s, Saturday, April 21, at 8:00 p.m.

The ONW Lamplighter of the Year awards are designed to honor individuals within the wider community who have made particular contributions toward issues relating to homelessness.

Our Board of Directors has decided to honor two people this year, the Rev. Paul Schroeder and the Rev. Kate Lore.

Paul is the coordinator of Faith-Based Resources at JOIN and the founder of the New City Initiative. In his work through both, Paul has promoted the concept

(not unfamiliar to Nightwatch) that “the key to ending homelessness lies in rebuilding relationships and community.”

Paul has also authored a 6-week curriculum, “Building the New City: A Curriculum on Homelessness for Congregations.”

Kate is the Social Justice Minister at Portland’s First Unitarian Church. Prior to her current position, Kate directed the social outreach program at First United Methodist Church.

Among the Methodists, she helped open the Goose Hollow Family Shelter; while serving at First Unitarian, she started the Thirteen Salmon Family Center for homeless families. In her work seeking to end homelessness in the community, she has received the Cecil Smith Community Award from Multnomah County, and the Achievement Award from the city’s Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness (CCEH).

Tickets for the concert are

available for purchase, either directly through Nightwatch, or by going to brownpapertickets.com. The price for the benefit is \$20/person (\$5 for students and low-income).

FROM THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

One of the four core values of Jesuit Volunteer Corps is *intentional community* (the others being *spirituality*, *simple lifestyle*, and *social and ecological justice*). I live in a community of 7 other Jesuit Volunteers, and we all work in local non-profit agencies. Community living is very different from having “roommates.” It is more like being married to 7 other people! Adding Nightwatch to the mix, I feel I get my dose of community at work also. Fostering community is in fact part of my job: when I’m not telling volunteers what to do or setting up the projector for jukebox night, I’m playing Risk with David or Cribbage with Mike.

For me, the other three values of Jesuit Volunteer Corps naturally stem from the value of community because we never act alone. So much of my own formation has been on the account of others – especially the guests at Nightwatch. I have learned to be more patient, empathetic, and friendly. But beyond those, I’ve learned simple things like value of looking someone in the eye and smiling. Most of the time, just looking someone in the eye and smiling has more effect than small talk or offering someone a cupcake.

Every community is unique. At Nightwatch, the community is constantly changing, as new guests show up and not-so-new guests take a hiatus from coming in. This requires flexibility. As with every community, each member has expectations and desires. Responding to those expectations and desires can either be healthy or unhealthy for the wider life of the community. That is why non-violent and open communication is an important tool. In my home community, we ensure this through regular community check-ins, while at Nightwatch we do it by offering non-violent crisis intervention training for long-term volunteers,

and host an advisory council of guests every month.

It feels very good to be part of the ONW community. I don’t feel like I’m different than anybody I serve because of my status as a housed person. I also don’t feel any different although I hold a position of authority at Nightwatch. My authority as program coordinator only extends to the hours of Nightwatch and the boundaries of St. Stephen’s. On the streets, I’m just Jimbo. That’s been the most fulfilling aspect of my job. I’m greeted by guests frequently on the streets of Portland. I literally have friends everywhere!

James

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN IS COMING

Since the new Nightwatch fiscal year begins in June, our big annual fundraising campaign is a springtime event, rather than one that occurs in the latter part of the year. So watch for it. You’ll be hearing a lot about it just as we’ll all be enjoying warmth and longer days, and thoughts of vacation.

We’ll especially be encouraging more people this year to become Lamplighters. A Lamplighter is a donor to Nightwatch who commits him/herself to contributing to Nightwatch on a regular ongoing basis, e.g. monthly, quarterly, etc. The amount of those regular donations doesn’t matter; they could be as little as \$5 at a time. One becomes a Lamplighter simply by making the donations steady. This helps us by providing us with a dependable cash-flow and predictable income throughout the year.

Look for more information in April-May.



January 2012 outing

SOME 2012 OUTINGS STILL WITHOUT SPONSORS

We would like to thank those donors who have become sponsors for 2012 outings.

A few remain unfunded. Our outings are treasured events for our guests. They have been the highlight of each month for some of them.

If you find it difficult to afford becoming a full sponsor for an event, we certainly welcome co-sponsors. Two or more individuals may make partial contributions toward the funding of a single event. We welcome any who can help.

Here is our current listing:

MONTH	OUTING	SPONSORS
January	Shopping Spree	Leah Hollingshead
February	Bowling	Al Bowen
March	Oregon Zoo	David Groff
April	Miniature Golf	David Slocum
May	Mt. Hood	Leah Hollingshead
June	Spiritual Retreat	Tim & Mary Shamrell
July	Mount St. Helens	Kenneth & Frances Grillo
August	Cape Lookout State Park	Madeline Grimm
September	Corn Maze (\$175)	
October	OMSI (\$200)	
November	Camp Adams Day Trip	Gary & Mary Fischer
December	Christmas lights (\$175)	

CELEBRATIONS

We are happy to report that due to the generosity of our supporters, we proved up to the task of raising the necessary matching funds to meet our share of the Murdock Charitable Trust Matching Grant. Thanks to all who contributed extra to help us meet our goal!

Jesuit Volunteer Corps NW has approved our application for another Jesuit Volunteer to serve our staff. That means when James' one-year term expires at the end of July, we'll have someone to take his place.

Since the publication of our last newsletter, we received these contributions given to celebrate the lives of others:

GIVEN BY:	
Diane Kern	In memory of Clinton Kern
Tom and Kate Petke	In honor of Roger Fuchs
Steven and Kelly Moore	In honor of David & Ginny Gaines

CHAPLAIN'S NOTES

Already Blessed

Stop asking God to bless what you are doing. Get involved with what God is doing because it's already blessed.

--- Irish singer Bono, from the documentary film "*Lord Save Us From Your Followers*"

During the month of February, ONW Bible study took time out from the written word of God to look at some late "word of God" installments in the 2008 film "Lord Save Us..." Well, OK. It's not in the Christian canon and it's not even film. It's 101 minutes of digital video edited out of 90 hours of on-the-street conversations with people all across the country. From Times Square in New York, to Katrina-flattened Biloxi, Mississippi, to the Burnside Bridge in downtown PDX, the film shows people of faith at work in ways that don't fit bumper stickers or labels.

It's been interesting to hear comments as we discussed the film that we broke up into three segments. It's a reminder of the importance of bringing people together who might not ordinarily be together. Electronic media and appliances don't do that. But taking time together over food, fellowship, coffee and conversation, *that* brings people together. That activity is blessed because God is there.

No matter what kind of night it's been, I drive home feeling blessed. I drive home hoping and praying that someone else feels blessed half as much. The film is an artful reminder that our work is not about labels and sound bites. In this election year, as always, it's about showing up where Jesus has already walked. It's already blessed.

--Pastor Roger

MEMORIAL SERVICE, APRIL 4

Our annual memorial service to remember our friends on the streets whom we lost over the past year will be held on Wednesday, April 4, at Downtown Chapel (St. Andre Bessette Catholic Church), 601 W. Burnside, beginning at 2 p.m.

All are welcome to attend.

OPERATION NIGHTWATCH BOARD

David Groff - Chair
Retired College Administrator

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Leah Hollingshead
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Worker

Curtis Thompson
Skin Pathologist

CATLIN GABEL STUDENTS PRODUCING NIGHTWATCH VIDEO

Trevor Tompkins and Andrew Li are sophomores in the video production program at Catlin Gabel School. Each year the program chooses several community partners with which it works to develop a promotional video for the partners use. Operation Nightwatch has been chosen as one of the school's partners this year, and Trevor and Andrew will be producing a video for our use that we may be able to post on our Web site, on YouTube, or in various other venues. Andrew and Trevor's contribution will help to present Nightwatch's story to a wider audience.

Keep your eyes on upcoming newsletters as to when you might be able to view the final product!

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**NEWSLETTER
PRODUCTION TEAM**
Al & Gloria Bowen
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OPERATION NIGHTWATCH

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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