

Church concert leads the way in combatting hunger

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



When Carey Buerk tickles the ivories at the Seaside United Methodist Church at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 6, he'll be continuing a six-year tradition of reaching out to fighting hunger in the community.

Hosted by Pastor John Tindell and Seaside's Mary Blake, the event is more important than ever as the number of hungry and living with food insecurity grows.

"Not only is there a greater need, but also a need that goes deeper to kids and families, and also people who are transient or homeless," Blake said. "I walk twice a day in one of our parks. If it wasn't for the food pantries, a lot of people wouldn't have access to food other than what they can buy with the cans they collect."

Funds from the concert will go to the South County Food Bank, one of several partner agencies to participate in Clatsop Community Action, the regional food bank.

Other partner agencies — about a dozen in Clatsop County — include Helping Hands Re-entry Outreach Center, the Cannon Beach Food Center and St. Vincent De Paul in Gearhart.

Buerk, who began piano lessons at the age of six, plays show tunes, classic music and more. "Anything I hear, I play it," Buerk said.

After reading of the need to support the food bank, Buerk volunteered in 2014 to play the first concert.



Mary Blake, Carey Buerk and Pastor John Tindell want to help fight hunger in the region.

"We had a lot of momentum to get the capital money to build the building," Blake recalled. "We wanted to tap into people, whether it was talent, time and treasures. Yes, we needed money, but we really needed commitment of people to do things on a sustainable year-round basis that could bring attention and awareness to the food pantry." Carey said, "I can do that."

After Buerk connected with the church, the choir got involved and the community turned out.

The event evolved into more than a concert, but about "building a relationship, this shared community feeling where people are having fun but they understand the deep reason they are there," Blake said.

When the concept for the event emerged, Tindell added, it was an extension of what church mem-

IF YOU GO

On Sunday, Oct. 6, at 2 p.m., the United Methodist hosts local pianist Carey Buerk. Proceeds go to the South County Community Food Bank. The event is free, donations appreciated; 241 N. Holladay Drive, Seaside.

bers already been doing. "They had long supported the community food bank. This was another way of supporting it."

The South County Food Bank's mission is to provide three-to-five days of nutritious emergency food to low-income families living in South Clatsop County.

With a monthly average of 28 volunteers, the food pantry serves 250 households a month, 618 individuals and 42 homeless.



File photo

Concerts have raised more than \$6,000 so far, Blake said.

What is happening in Clatsop County is an expression of what's going on in the wider world, Tindell said. "Locally, this is an expression of what's going on in the wider world. Homelessness is an expression of poverty, which includes food hunger."

The coming holiday season is especially important for local food pantries, Blake said, with a call for not only canned foods but fresh produce, "what you would call 'real' food."

"Real food is essentially from the garden," Blake said. "It has more nutrients. Instead of just calories other than just trying to fill a person's stomach, you're trying to be nutritious as well."

Food insecurity affects all aspects of a person's life, she continued, "because not only are they

hungry, they don't know where their next meal is coming from. It's really hard to laugh and play and be light-hearted when you're hungry. Fighting food insecurity is that idea of how can we make that more accessible. It's paying attention to the larger issue of not only when your stomach growls, but also what that does to you."

Along with local food pantries, meal programs in the schools, Meals on Wheels and food drives are designed to meet the growing need.

For church members, helping the hungry is not only a once-a-year concert.

"We encourage people to come every Sunday and bring food," Tindell said. "The bottom line, if you don't have food to eat, everything is negatively affected. It's just a basic thought, a premise of how to help people."

Celebrating local artists and authors

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



A few months ago I was pleased to make the acquaintance of local artist Josh Fry whose stencil art I found very eye-catching. Josh probably gets a little weary of hearing his work compared to the work of Roy Lichtenstein, but the comparison is inevitable. Lichtenstein pioneered pop art along with his peers, Andy Warhol, James Rosenquist, and Jasper Johns. Josh Fry's work, in my opinion, is just as captivating. It's also easy to see right now as 19 pieces of it are hanging in the main hall lobby area and the community room of the Seaside Public Library.

"It's a real honor to have my artwork in my local library," Fry said in an email when I said I planned mentioning it in this column. "It's excellent to get these paintings in front of eyes!" He said he's been working as an artist in Seaside for many years and this exhibit is another way to introduce his work to the community.

Fry's medium is spray paint. The show, called "Comics and Pop Culture in Spray Paint" is comic art, done in the style of comics.

I liked every piece so much, it's impossible to name a favorite.

I was also delighted to attend last week's "Lunch in the Loft" at Beach Books featuring the novelist Linda B. Myers. Her most recent book, "Fog Coast Runaway" is set in Seaside and Astoria in the 1890s.

Over chicken sandwiches, cucumber salad and yummy cookies, Myers shared with about a dozen people that even though "Fog Coast Runaway" is technically historical fiction, she is primarily a murder mystery writer.

"You've got to have a murder!" she exclaimed.

I think the audience was surprised to learn that once upon a time, Seaside drew a wealthy crowd of visitors, not just from Portland, but also San Francisco. Myers said the heroine of her



Eve Marx

Linda B. Myers enjoyed herself at Beach Books. Her historical novel, "Fog Coast Runaway" takes place in Seaside.

story, a 13-year-old girl named Adelia, was drawn along the lines of another strong and determined girl, Mattie Ross, in the novel "True Grit," published in 1968 by Charles Portis.

"The motto of my book, like his, is if you don't like the family you were born into, create another one," Myers said.

Seaside has long been regarded a vacation town but, more recently, a good place for artists. And writers. Literary writers, in my opinion, are artists. Their medium is language. The surge of interest in things artistic, including Art Walk and events like Lunch in the Loft, is inspiring. Also, you can't beat the lunch itself catered by none other than Beach Books' most immediate neighbor, Dough Dough Bakery.

I spoke with Karen Emmerling, the proprietor of Beach Books, about upcoming events. On October 23 Jackie Shannon Hollis, author of "This Particular Happiness: A Childless Love Story" will be reading and giving a talk. Hollis, a lifelong Oregonian, once dreamed of being either a June Taylor dancer or a race car driver. Her memoir explores the complexities of being a wife, daughter, friend, and sister and, as a woman who didn't have children herself, her important role supporting the children in her life.

My personal joy lately is alerting others about the great work of the artists and writers all around me even if I'm not doing much in the way of creativity these days myself.

October 30, by the way, is Small Business Saturday.

Get out there to support local business — and artists.

County Commissioner addresses AFL-CIO

County Commissioner Lianne Thompson delivered these remarks to the 2019 AFL-CIO Convention at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center on Sept. 20.

Thank you to the union leadership that honored me with their invitation to welcome you here to Seaside.

I'm welcoming you today on behalf of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, who serve as the governing body of Clatsop County.

I welcome you, I honor you, and I'm grateful for the work you do. You are the salt of the Earth.

You already know this, but let me say it out loud: It is your work that supports the world. Your work provides the foundation of our world.

Let's hear it for the working people!

I am third-generation trade union. My granddads came off the farms of mid-Michigan to go to work in the auto factories as UAW members.

My dad was a Teamster; he drove a beer truck.

I was an AFSCME union steward and an NEA member when I taught at the community college in Astoria.

And who is a working person? You are. I am. Every one of us who throws their heart and mind and body into our work, we are the working people.

I've been thinking long and hard and deep about what to say to you today, ever since Debbie told me about being able to have a few words with you.

What could I say? What would make a difference to you, make you understand how important you are, how much your work matters, how essential it is that you provide grass roots leadership for a world that shifting and lurching off course in too many ways.

So, I asked a guy who was giving me a ride back to the car dealership, where I was getting some work done. "I get to address the AFL-CIO Convention," I told him. "What do you think I should say to them?"

Eric didn't miss a beat.

TUNNEL ECHOES

LIANNE THOMPSON



He answered right to the point, and here's his advice, as a fellow working-class guy:

1. Take personal responsibility.
2. Do your own research, don't accept anybody's version of reality as the whole truth, and don't be afraid to change your mind.
3. Treat other people the way you want to be treated.

Working class wisdom, from a working-class guy. Makes very good sense to me.

I'd add something to what he said.

My dad, that Teamster beer truck driver used to say, "Let your conscience be your guide." Let me say it again: "Let your conscience be your guide."

What that means for me is

'DEMAND LEADERS WHO LIFT YOU UP, WHO SEE YOUR BEST SELF, AND HELP YOU BE THAT BEST SELF.'

that I have to look for the best in myself and do it. Say the kind thing to somebody, do the kind act for somebody. Be sweet. Be generous.

I also have to deal with the worst in myself and own up to it. I have to listen to what I'm saying and watch what I'm doing.

When I'm a cranky heifer, I have to own it and apologize. Some days I do a lot of apologizing.

I also have to be kind to myself, compassionate and forgiving when I'm not doing right. Beating up on myself doesn't help.

Sometimes I do that anyway. Do right, be kind to myself so I can be kind to others.

When I give Grandma's advice to my grandson, I say, "Do good,

have fun, make money."

"Do good; let your conscience be your guide."

"Have fun, because a life without joy isn't worth living. Have fun. Give yourself joy."

"Make money, because somebody has to pay the bills."

Which brings me back around to you, working people. You create the wealth. You make it possible for everything else to happen, because you do the work that creates the wealth.

Rejoice in the power that rises in you.

You can turn this country and this world around by feeling the power of doing good, feeling joy, and making this world better by your work.

At the meeting of the Association of Oregon Counties, I gave feedback to the Governor through her energy policy advisor about HB 2020. "Everyone wants to save the planet. Everyone. But don't do it through top-down policies imposed on people. Do it through grass-roots efforts. Listen to the people who will pay for it."

I know people who have adequate and stable income from trust funds, pensions, inherited wealth, or reliable jobs. Adequate and stable income. And if you're someone who does have adequate and stable income, and you don't care about people who don't enjoy adequate and stable income, shame on you!

Now. Leaders. There are leaders who want to feed you fear and anger. They want you scared and mean. Don't do it.

Use your strength and your courage to create and maintain positive leadership. This is the power of grass-roots, working people to shift things for the good.

Don't settle for leaders who want you mean and stupid. Demand leaders who lift you up, who see your best self, and help you be that best self.

And when you fail, when I fail, we raise each other back up with courage, kindness, and compassion to live out the promise of the Country we love.

Thank you for coming to Seaside, thank you for welcoming me, and thank you for your work.



PUBLISHER
Kari Borgen

EDITOR
R.J. Marx

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Jeremy Feldman

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Sarah Silver-Tecza

MULTIMEDIA ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE
Kim McCaw

PRODUCTION MANAGER
John D. Bruijn

SYSTEMS MANAGER
Carl Earl

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Skyler Archibald
Darren Gooch
Joshua Heineman
Rain Jordan
Katherine Lacaze
Eve Marx
Cara Mico
Esther Moberg

Seaside Signal

The Seaside Signal is published every other week by EO Media Group, 1555 N. Roosevelt, Seaside, OR 97138. 503-738-5561 seasidejournal.com Copyright © 2019 Seaside Signal. Nothing can be reprinted or copied without consent of the owners.

Letter policy

The Seaside Signal welcomes letters to the editor. The deadline is noon Monday prior to publication. Letters must be 400 words or less and must be signed by the author and include a phone number for verification. We also request that submissions be limited to one letter per month. Send to 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive, Seaside, OR 97138, drop them off at 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive or fax to 503-738-9285, or email rmarx@seasidejournal.com

Subscriptions

Annually: \$40.50 in county - \$58.00 in and out of county - e-Edition: only \$30.00

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Seaside Signal, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103. Postage Paid at Seaside, OR 97138 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 2019 by the Seaside Signal. No portion of this newspaper may be reproduced without written permission. All rights reserved.