

## Crossing the Bridge

August 22, 2012 is an important historical day for InterFaith Works! The InterFaith Works (IFW) Board of Directors voted unanimously to approve a new strategic business plan for the agency that moves IFW into the future while affirming the deep roots of the organization. Key strategies will be undertaken to both expand and strengthen the agency's capacity to serve the needs of the Central New York community:

### *Creation of the Center for Dialogue*

The Center for Dialogue will be created to build upon the agency's expertise in using the methodology of dialogue to address social divisions, and to further the community's ability to find common ground to solve complex issues. The new Center for Dialogue will incorporate the work of the Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism, the interfaith dialogue initiatives, and the national dialogue models of the Kettering Foundation and Everyday Democracy. Each year, the Center for Dialogue will work with community partners to establish the critical issues on which dialogue will be undertaken, and simultaneously, the Center for Dialogue will continue its important work of building bridges of understanding. In this way, the process of dialogue will become a more widely used tool for addressing community issues, leading to increased participation and stronger democracy on matters of greatest concern to the people who live here and to the institutions that serve them.

### *Expansion of the Center for New Americans (CNA)*

IFW has resettled over 10,000 refugees in Central New York since 1984. While the agency will continue to settle 400-

500 refugees in the Central New York community each year, it will increase its capacity to serve refugees beyond the initial government-sponsored resettlement period of 90-180 days. This includes extended work with English as a Second Language (ESL) literacy training, employment services, and increased capacity to serve refugees with physical and mental health needs resulting from war-related injuries and torture. Further, IFW will support the creation and development of self-governing, independent, ethnic community-based organizations and serve as a stabilizing element of the city's near north side neighborhoods by integrating refugees into housing, home ownership and small business development, and increasing public safety.

### *Relocation of IFW's two offices to one location*

An appropriate home for IFW will be secured so all administrative and program offices will be housed under one roof, increasing agency visibility while improving efficiencies.



### *Reinvigoration of relationships with faith partners*

The re-establishment of the agency's relationship to its roots in the faith communities of the region is a high priority. Primary methods to reinvigorate IFW's relationship to the faith partners are through the Round Table of Faith Leaders, the initiation of a formal faith partners program, and the initiation of an InterFaith Youth Corps.

As the agency steps forward in the above ways, it will also undertake significant internal capacity building activities in the areas of management and staffing, fundraising, governance, technology and financial systems.

Special thanks to the Gifford Foundation and our consultant, Katie Doucette, for including InterFaith Works in its ADVANS program, which has given us the ability to develop this strategic plan.

Katie Doucette (standing in both photos) leads the InterFaith Works board, staff, administration and ADVANS Committee members through strategic development exercises.



## Why We Do What We Do

It is the 5th day of Ramadan, a holy time for Muslims, and I am on a bus with twenty nine teens from Syracuse City Schools traveling to Maine for Seeds of Peace Camp. Half of our teens are Muslim, and most have been fasting since dawn. So many questions fill my mind – how do we feed half these kids while the other half are weak and tired? What is it like to see your friends chow down on pizza and bagels while you wait to pray? At 12:45 our most devout are getting nervous. We must find a place for them to pray before 2:00. The first stop is congested, and no clean space to lay down prayer mats. It is starting to rain, and the second stop is just a parking area with no place to wash. As the time to pray is ticking out, the whole bus feels tense.

So while the driver negotiates the now-torrential rain, the Community Wide Dialogue Program (CWD) Director Derrick Dorsey and I begin the dialogue. We ask two of the boys to describe Ramadan and the upcoming prayers. They are too nervous, and decline. So I explain my understanding to them – this is a time of purification, of getting closer to God, a time of forgiveness, of giving generously to charity. A time to feel what it is like to be poor, without food. They concur that I have it right, though I know the nuances are many, and I don't fully understand.

As the bus chugs through the rain, I explain what I know about Ramadan over the bus loud speaker – and that we are looking for a place to pray. We have them pair up Muslim to non-Muslim and share.

Muslims: What's great and what's hard about Ramadan fasting?

Non-Muslim: What is your faith? What's great and hard?

All: How do you pray?

I then explain about our search for a prayer site, how important it is for us to create a safe space for prayer, and that the Christians and Buddhists on the bus can stand guard as allies as the teens pray.

I have sent out requests for prayer via text email to InterFaith Works (IFW) staff and the Round Table, to help us find a spot. Rev. Bill Redfield responds – “A way will open.”

We find the New Hampshire Welcome Center, where two white women, mid-sixties, wearing crosses and American flag pins, were guarding the desk of maps and brochures. I explain who we are (from IFW and Seeds of Peace) and that the children need to wash and pray. Could we do so in here, in that corner, as the ground is soaked and it is still raining?

“There is no room” they tell me, of this stable-sized building with large open spaces. Where have we heard that before? I suggest the hearth area which is large, open, and empty. They just purse their lips, refuse eye contact. The boys and girls are washed, flowing out of the washrooms.

“Where do we go?” they ask. I am caught between a tight rock and river of children. So I point to the quiet forbidden hearth area. And the teens quickly lay down their prayer mats, and begin.

(continued bottom of page 2)

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### Emeritus Members:

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# The 10th Annual Duck Race

## **Many Thanks to the Duck Race Sponsors**

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It may have rained on the Corporate parade, but the drizzle did not dampen the celebration of Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism Program's 10th Annual Duck Race to End Racism on June 9, 2012.

Corporate sponsors, led by Presenting Sponsors National Grid and Syracuse University, demonstrated their commitment to ending racism through the decorative theme of their decoy ducks. Attendees cheered as the ducks were lowered into Onondaga Creek and raced each other to the finish line. As the sun eventually came out, Syracuse City School District Superintendent Sharon Contreras led 3rd grade classes, with the traditional rain-or-shine duck umbrellas, to the starting line with their representative ducks. Many were decked out to reflect the diverse make-up of the classroom and the lessons the students have learned through the resource kit provided by the CWD programs. The final race featured over 2,200 small plastic ducks scrambling to be the first through the finish line chute.



Syracuse City Schools Superintendent Sharon Contreras greeted Duck Race participants and awarded 3rd grade prizes

The races were just a part of an afternoon celebrating the diversity of our Central New York community.

Thousands of people of all ages, races and religions voted for their favorite corporate decorative duck, participated in craft activities, visited with non-profit organizations, enjoyed free Byrne Dairy ice cream, watched free entertainment on the main stage and cheered on the ducks. SUNY Upstate Medical University, who adopted the Duck Race as their Corporate Signature Event, provided over a dozen volunteers for the event, staffed five activity tables, and presented the Jackman Twins, who entertained as magicians and made incredible balloon hats.

Many thanks to the generosity of 35 corporate sponsors, more than 40 businesses who donated in-kind goods or services, the partnership of 27 non-profit organizations, and the labor of over 150 volunteers. The 10th annual festival raised over \$55,000 to support CWD and its important programming in the community.

## **Why We Do What We Do (continued)**

I wondered, *how would this go if Derrick, an African American man, was in here trying to negotiate this?* The complexity of the situation spoke loudly in my head.

The matron says, "I said NO!" and I smile and tell her no, she didn't quite say no, and I place my body between her and the now bowing children.

"You can't do this!" she cries. And I say "But of course we can. This is America. People can pray however they want in America." There is no stopping the prayer in motion. It will flow, this questing for God, for time with the divine, no matter the obstacles.

"Only in America," she mutters, glowering at the little feet and heads, bowed in prayer.

Yes, indeed. America for us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Beth A. Broadway".

Beth A. Broadway  
Executive Director

# Building Bridges Through Photography

*Photography can tell the story of InterFaith Works' programs and events through powerful images. Here is a sampling of the exceptional images captured at the Duck Race to End Racism and World Refugee Day.*

Photos courtesy of Dave Garrett (Duck Race), and Mindy Lee Tarry (World Refugee Day)

## World Refugee Day



# 10th Annual Duck Race to End Racism

All photos this page: Dave Garrett



# World Refugee Day Brings Communities Together

World Refugee Day (WRD) in Syracuse was observed on a beautiful Saturday afternoon in downtown Syracuse. If you were there on June 23, you saw an amazing parade of color walking from the Northside to City Hall. Former refugees from countries all over the world, who now call Syracuse their home, gathered together in traditional dress, with their home country flags (and more than a few American flags!) to walk, sing, drum and dance. Over a dozen countries were represented – from countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, South Sudan, and Bosnia



Sudanese representatives proudly display their colors at the 2012 World Refugee Day celebration

who have lived in Syracuse for many years. Refugees from other countries who have been here only a few years, such as Iraq, Burma and Bhutan were also represented.

Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli, Syracuse Mayor Stephanie Miner, a staff member from Congresswoman Ann Marie Buerkle's office, and representatives from the refugee communities spoke on the steps of City Hall. A ceremonial raising of the United Nations flag was also performed for participants.

After the ceremony, the festival in Hanover Square began, with cultural cuisine available from Burma, Bhutan, Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia and West Africa. Performers from over a dozen countries and ethnic groups shared their culture with dance and song.

## Many thanks to the World Refugee Day sponsors:

Burns Matteson Capital Management  
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Stickley, Audi & Co.  
Syracuse Glass Company  
United Health Care

As is life for people who were once refugees, observance of WRD is a mix of joyful celebration and sadness. The day was a chance to learn their stories and their culture. It was a chance to look back at their past, but also to look forward to their life in Syracuse.

This celebration is also a chance for the communities that work with new refugee families to come together, plan and organize the event. The primary WRD event coordinating organizations were InterFaith Works of Central New York, Catholic Charities of Onondaga County and the Syracuse City School District. Other organizations who joined in support were Northside Up, Hopeprint, Inc., the Onondaga County Public Library and the Syracuse Police Department's Butternut Community Police Center. The coordinating organizations would also like to recognize the support from dozens of volunteers from many different communities in Central New York.

## Matching Gifts: Share the Care

Let your employer share in your generosity! Matching gifts are a great way to double your donation by taking advantage of your company's donation programs on behalf of InterFaith Works. You may not realize your employer has a matching gift program in place.

Consult with your employee relations representative or company human resources department to find out if there is indeed an existing program. They can lead you through the procedural paperwork. The simple process usually consists of you completing a document requiring information about your donation, then sending InterFaith that same document for completion of organizational information. InterFaith Works then returns the document to your company for approval and disbursement of the matching donation funds. You and your company will be recognized as participating donors by InterFaith Works, and your organization can benefit from the donation tax deduction.

## Spiritual Care Day Features Dr. Edward Tick

Key note speaker will address military veterans' issues and needs

The InterFaith Works 22nd Annual Spiritual Care Day event will assist clergy, chaplains, pastoral care visitors and medical professionals in responding more effectively to the emotional and spiritual needs of returning soldiers and their families. As thousands of men and women return to their communities from conflicts overseas, their need for support to successfully reintegrate into civilian life requires knowledgeable understanding by those in the helping professions.

The internationally recognized educator and psychologist, Edward Tick, Ph.D. will deliver the keynote address titled, *Healing the Soldier's Heart: Ministering to Veterans and their Families*. Dr. Tick, an expert on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other combat related injuries, has lectured and trained staff at West Point, Walter Reed Medical Center, Fort Hood, Fort Knox, Altus Air Force Base and other Department of Defense facilities. He is a U.S. Army trainer for the 2012 Chaplain Sustainment Training in PTSD and the author of the book, *War and the Soul*.



Dr. Edward Tick

Save the date for Thursday, October 25th, 8:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., including a breakfast buffet, at Crouse Hospital - Marley Education Center, Syracuse. To register (\$30 fee) contact Rev. Roberta Yackel, Director of Spiritual Care, (315) 449-3552, ext.111; ryackel@interfaithworkscny.org.

## InterFaith Candle Light Vigil at the Syracuse Sikh Foundation Gurwara



Rev. Bill Redfield, Convener of InterFaith Works' Round Table of Faith Leaders, recently gave the following remarks at the August 18th candle light vigil of the Sikh Foundation Gurdwara in Liverpool. The vigil was held in support of the local Sikh communities who are mourning the loss of six people at the Oak Creek Gurdwara in Wisconsin, who died on August 5th in an attack on their place of worship:

*My Brothers and Sisters of the Sikh Community: I bring you tender and respectful greetings from the InterFaith Round Table of Faith Leaders in Central New York, and the Board and Staff of InterFaith Works. My message to you is very simple - your pain is our pain, and your grief is our grief. Speaking for all of the spiritual traditions represented at the Round Table, we cry out in protest at the treatment you have received in this fear-filled, post 9/11 period. And we pledge to stand shoulder to shoulder with you in support and solidarity.*

*Because we are all of one body, each of us must depend upon the other, and none of us can stand alone. But we are one body specifically because of our differences and our diversity. The integrity of our community is preserved and enhanced when all of our traditions have the honor and respect to freely develop themselves. Sikhs to become the best Sikhs they can be. Christians to become the best Christians they can be. Muslims, Jews, Hindus and all others similarly to have to freedom to be themselves. And then, in the richness of this wonderful diversity, we stand arm in arm, linked in mutual respect and honor. This is the oneness that rises from honored diversity. But it can only happen when each and every part of our community is respected and protected.*

*In this hour, then, my Sikh brothers and sisters, we stand with you. Please accept our heartfelt pledge of love and respect to you and to your honored tradition. And thank you for inviting us to be with you on this tender occasion.*

Narinder Bains, a local Sikh community representative responded: "The entire membership of the Sikh Foundation was very touched and this will certainly go a long way to help with the healing process and strengthening the bonds amongst many faith communities represented at the vigil last night."

# Keeping Current - Newsletter and Mailings

To help you stay current with the activities of InterFaith Works, we need your help in verifying we have the most accurate postal mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers in our database. In addition to the print Newsletter, InterFaith Works sends out invitations to our educational programs and special events throughout the year, and we don't want to leave you out!

We are also working to be more cost attentive and eco-friendly, and will take steps in the near future to make sure our mailing database is accurate to cut down on unnecessary mail waste. We will offer our constituents the option of receiving this Newsletter by email only, and in order to fulfill those requests efficiently and accurately, we will be sending out a postcard to Newsletter recipients shortly after you receive this print version of the Newsletter. This response postcard will detail how to choose your option, while also confirming current addresses.

So keep an eye on your mailbox over the next few weeks after receiving this Newsletter, and think about how you want your InterFaith Works news delivered – to your mailbox, your inbox, or even both. We appreciate your support in helping to serve you better!



## THE PROGRAMS OF INTERFAITH WORKS

**OUR MISSION:** InterFaith Works, through education, service, and dialogue, affirms the dignity of each person and every faith community and works to create relationships and understanding among us.

**Center for New Americans** - Assisting refugee individuals and families in beginning new lives in America and serving as a resource and cultural center.

**Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism** - Stimulating dialogue on racism to bring about racial justice and healing.

**InterFaith Housing and Community Initiatives** - Providing low income housing options and stabilizing neighborhoods.

**InterFaith Education & Engagement Program** - Linking city and suburban congregations to promote interfaith relationships and citizen participation.

**Senior Companion Program** - Providing friendship and compassionate care to the homebound elderly.

**Spiritual Care Program** - Offering spiritual care for hospital patients, nursing home residents, inmates, and troubled youth.

If you would like to get involved in any of these programs, visit [www.interfaithworkscnyc.org](http://www.interfaithworkscnyc.org) for more information.

Friday, September 14, 2012  
Senior Companion Volunteer Recognition Luncheon  
Electronics Parkway Holiday Inn  
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 25, 2012  
Spiritual Care Day  
Crouse Hospital - Marley Education Center  
8:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD



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