



# The City Gate

To Reclaim, Rebuild and Restore, Lost and Broken Lives

## Little Did I Know...

By: Meg Stewart

I first walked into The City Gate 10 years ago. I had no idea what to expect. Don't get me wrong, I had the general idea as to the goal of the organization, but I was motivated to visit solely because the day camp that had just become part of my "job" had visited The City Gate since the camp's inception in 1999. I'd been told that, in the past, the day these fifth and sixth grade campers visited The City Gate was, without question, the "most impacting" experience of the kids' service focused week. At the time I remember being fairly skeptical about taking preteens to work with the homeless. Was it safe? What would these kids be exposed to? Would they hear or see something that would scar them? Nonetheless, with all of my heavily preconceived notions deeply rooted in my head, I made the call and arranged the visit.

When the time came, the kids packed a hundred brown bag lunches, as was tradition, and we walked the short distance to The City Gate. I'll not lie—they were visibly nervous and so was I. Like so many of us, I had made some fairly large assumptions about the "homeless" and I was feeling more than a little uncomfortable about having a conversation with "one of THOSE people." We arrived and immediately the kind and helpful staff showed us the ropes and I felt more at ease. That is when it happened; that is when God showed up.

What I saw that first visit stays in my mind as clearly as if I was standing there now. The kids were huddled in a corner looking scared to death. With courage I did not own, I told them to go introduce themselves to one of the guests, ask them their name and if they'd like to play a game. Then, I encouraged my campers, take some time to have a conversation—to *listen and learn*. I watched as some of the hardened faces of the guests in the room that day politely engaged with the campers. It took no time before "THOSE people" and my kids cheered and laughed heartily over a game of Uno, while others intently focused on a strategic game of Battleship. And as they

played, they talked and shared and listened, and in the middle of it all, young lives were changed. Was it all perfect...no...but it was unbelievably impacting.

I was standing on the peripheral watching these interactions and as I watched, my stereotypes come crashing down. A woman walked by I thanked her for taking time to play a game with a camper. The woman smiled and said she hadn't played a game in years and that she felt happy for the first time in a long time. That woman shared her story with me, and though I'm sure she did not know it, she became the mouthpiece for God to open my eyes of my heart. The kids and I left The City Gate that day with new perspectives.

It turned out to be true, of all of the non-profit organizations we visit, The City Gate is the "mission" that is most impacting for my camp kids. Over the past 10 years I have happily gone back each summer with a new group of students. Over those years we've found ways to become more involved like adding a "Just 4 The City Gate" canned food collection all year long or helping out at the neighborhood BBQ. The preteen kids become Jr. and Sr. high students that come to serve meals here once a month. These kids "grow up" with this organization and feel comfortable in the walls and find a reason to be passionate about social issues.

**Little did I know, walking into The City Gate all those years ago, that I wasn't showing up to "help out"—I was showing up to be helped.**



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## Who Are You?

Submitted by: Rich Paulsen, A Persistent Sinner & Member of The City Gate Board of Trustees

Like the rest of you, I am asked this question on occasion. I usually respond with, "I'm Rich!" The reaction is often, "Oh, really?" To which I reply, "Yes, I was born Rich, and I will die Rich no matter what happens in between!" It can be fun to play with my name, but this also highlights a very important question, "Who am I really?"

Too often our identity is defined as **WHAT WE DO**: I am a student, a plumber, an administrative assistant, a bus driver, etc. This view leads us to a real problem. What happens to "Who I Am" when I am no longer a "doer" who is acceptable to others. Then I become a bum, a drug addict, a homeless person, a prostitute, a thief, etc. And yet, when we stand before God, none of these "doing" labels define who we really are to Him. Without Christ going to the cross for all of us, we would indeed be trapped in the consequences of our own "doing" for all eternity. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for loving us so much.

All who come through the doors of The City Gate need Christ. All who volunteer and work at The City Gate need Christ. All are welcome at The City Gate where they can find the cleansing source for sin-filled lives, as well as a pair of socks or a hot meal. Please support this inner-city ministry with your prayers, your volunteer support, your donations of needed items, and especially your financial support during these very challenging times. It takes all of us locking arms in this battle to make the narrow gate visible to all who will hear.

### DID YOU KNOW...? Fun facts for Thanksgiving!

- ◆ The first Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1621
  - ◆ The first Thanksgiving celebration lasted 3 days
  - ◆ Californians are the largest consumers of turkey in the United States
  - ◆ 91% of Americans eat Turkey on Thanksgiving day
  - ◆ Thomas Jefferson thought that Thanksgiving was "the most ridiculous idea I've ever heard."
  - ◆ AND...a funny Thanksgiving fact...turkeys have heart attacks. When the Air Force was conducting test runs and breaking the sound barrier, fields of turkeys would drop dead.
- 



*I will praise God's name in song  
and glorify him with thanksgiving.*

*Psalm 69:30*



SUPPORT our homeless community and struggling inner-city families by starting your shopping at  
[smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to The City Gate when you shop  
[smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

Type in: **The City Gate** & SHOP!

Same products  
Same prices  
Same service



### Help us to be good stewards of our finances

Please consider receiving our **IN COLOR** newsletter by email. Simply email us at:  
[thecitygate@qwestoffice.net](mailto:thecitygate@qwestoffice.net) with your name and "email newsletter" in the subject line.

We are honored to welcome students from the WSU nursing program each year. They are available to our guests for a variety of nursing needs and questions. Every fall, they bring and administer flu vaccines to anyone interested including our staff and volunteers. They visit multiple sites to reach as many people as possible. This year, just at The City Gate, **42 flu shots** were administered. Even Pastor John got his!

Thank you, to this years nurses, who have a heart to serve!



Pastor John getting his flu shot

## Please Pray For:

- COATS, BOOTS & SLEEPING BAGS
- Don
- Jimmy & Vickie
- Jolynn
- Brenda

## & The City Gate Staff

- John Murinko, pastor
- Shirley Murinko co-director / office mgr.
- Bonnie Murinko co-director / food bank
- Donny Saunders, food bank
- Buffie Harmon, clothing bank
- Don Lanegan, dining room
- Jimmy Hahn, coffee station
- Jim Horton , cook
- Brenda Gulbranson, kitchen
- Glory Phelps, kitchen
- Wes Heimbecker, social services
- James Gulbranson, security & maint.
- Elisha Shelton, Alberta House mgr.

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As time has marched on my heart has grown more attached to this place, to the staff and to the people here. This past summer my 11 year old son and I volunteered together—outside of the “work” arena. It was one of the best things I have done in my life to this point! There are no words to describe the joy that I feel when my son spontaneously breaks into prayer for one of his “friends at The City Gate” who’ll be sleeping in the cold or the genuine gratefulness I feel toward the City Gate guest who is kind enough to let a kid share the basketball court with the “guys.” Our time at The City Gate together has taught my son the same lesson that I’ve personally watched hundreds of other kids learn there: the homeless are people, just like you and I—they’ve made mistakes just like you and I. They’ve faced hardships and their worries are not much different than ours. They are no one to be afraid of and no one to be looked down upon. They deserve our compassion and our help; not our judgment.

**Little did I know**, walking into The City Gate all those years ago, that I wasn't showing up to “help out”—I was showing up to be *helped*. I've received a more complete understanding of Christ's call to “...do for one of the least of these.” (Matthew 25:31-46) I am deeply blessed by these amazing people and the fantastic work they do. It is an honor to serve along side you.

## Time to think about Christmas!

We will be serving our Christmas Eve meal on 12/24 from 4pm-7pm. Want to volunteer? Want to donate? Call 455-9670 Tues-Fri 10am-3pm and talk to Shirley or Bonnie.

Stay tuned AND follow us on Facebook (Thecitygate Spokane) to see other ways you can help us celebrate.





To Reclaim, Rebuild, and Restore Lost and Broken Lives

## The City Gate

**"A Gathering Place"**

**Matthew 11:28**

170 S Madison  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509.455.9670  
E-mail - [thecitygate@qwestoffice.net](mailto:thecitygate@qwestoffice.net)

LIKE us on  
**facebook**

See MORE of what your  
prayers, financial support, and  
donations are doing for the  
inner-city poor and homeless of  
Spokane.

[www.thecitygatespokane.org](http://www.thecitygatespokane.org)

**WE are almost  
completely out of  
MENS JEANS!**

*Now that fall is here,  
we are looking for*

**COATS/BOOTS**

**HATS/GLOVES**  
& warmer clothing.

**NO**

**summer clothes**

**at this time.**

## THANKSGIVING NEEDS:

**Onion**

**Celery**

**Shelled Pecans- 14#**

**Brown sugar- 5#**

**Butter- 10#**

**Frozen corn- 30#**

**Yams 5- #10 cans**

**Butter pats- 300**

**Coffee- 1 can**

**Ginger ale- 12 2 L bottles**

**Orange juice- 15 Gallons**



**To make a contribution to our  
meal, please contact Shirley or  
Bonnie @ 455-9670 Tues-Fri 10-3**

Do you shop on  
Amazon.com? Would you  
like a percentage of your  
purchase to go directly to  
THE CITY GATE? It is so  
easy! See page 3 for  
instructions to participate  
in the AMAZON SMILE  
program, where your  
purchase can lead to  
money for The City Gate.



Without the support of volunteers who give their time and energy to this ministry, The City Gate would not be the haven it is to so many people. Whether you come once a week or once a year, you have contributed to keeping this place up and running. Your donations, regardless of time, money, food, prayers or clothing, have done so much to help the people who walk through our doors everyday. As pastors and as Christians, we want to thank you for heeding the voice of the Lord and ask you to keep us in your prayers as we continue this journey.

Love, Pastor John & Shirley