

From: "Center for Justice" <info@cforjustice.org>
Subject: **Justice Calling, Issue 6, Vol. 1, October 2009**
Date: October 26, 2009 4:16:11 PM PDT
To: "Tim" <tjccamas@comcast.net>
Reply-To: "Center for Justice" <info@cforjustice.org>

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

JUSTICE CALLING

Issue 6, Volume 1, October 2009



[Make a donation](#)

[About Us](#)

[Programs](#)

[Our Cases](#)

[Events](#)

[Join Us](#)

[Resources](#)

[Help Us](#)

[News Stories](#)

[The Kitchen Table](#)

Features

[Kind of Like Beauty](#)

[Eyes on the Water](#)

[Resurrection with a Cause](#)

Citizens Arrest?

How Pressure for Police Oversight is Mounting at City Hall

It is now thirty years since Mary Ann Tripp began organizing the first citizen group in Spokane to address the problem of police brutality. Initially, her interest was personal. In 1979, her son had been beaten by officers who'd run him down on foot after he made the youthful mistake of fleeing the scene of a vehicle accident in which he was a passenger. But as Mary Ann collected and filed one story of police abuse after another, the depth of the problem became much clearer to her and others. It wasn't just that the SPD had nurtured a culture where police brutality was tolerated. A culture of avoidance and denial infected City Hall as well.

The Center for Justice is among the local organizations who now walk in Mary Ann's footsteps to try to enact the reforms necessary for Spokane to begin--as CFJ's Chief Catalyst Breean Beggs puts it--"healing the relationship between our community and its police department." Increasingly, it looks as though 2010 will be a pivotal year in this long-running drama. In June, a federal grand jury indicted Spokane police officer Karl Thompson, Jr. in connection with the March 2006 death of Otto Zehm, a mentally disabled janitor who'd been violently subdued by Thompson and other officers in a north Spokane convenience store. But the dimensions of the Zehm story got much broader a few weeks ago when the federal prosecutors filed a motion in federal court. The Justice Department not only complained about the city undermining the government's investigation, but alerted the court that there was an ongoing federal criminal probe into whether others, besides Thompson, had obstructed justice in the case. (Here, we should note, the Center for Justice has separately [filed](#) a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of Otto Zehm's estate against the City of Spokane, Thompson, and several other police officers.) Among other things, the government's September 15th

[EPA Takes the Bullet](#)

[Police Rules](#)

[Singularly Suellen](#)

[Stuck in the Membrane](#)

[Every Breath He Takes](#)

[Remembering Otto Zehm](#)

[Safe at Home](#)

[Holly Cork's Unforgettable Day](#)

[Notes for the Medicine Wheels](#)

Commentary

[Obama and the Pirates](#)

[Confessions of a Soap Sample Boy](#)

[Kelli's View from the Trenches](#)

[Farewell to N Reactor](#)

[Drea Trauemer, Vindicated](#)

[One World, Bon Appetite](#)

[How the Flecktones Kill the Blues](#)

[Good on Ya Barry](#)

[Who Would Jesus Waterboard?](#)



filing exposed a serious rift between Assistant U.S. Attorney Tim Durkin and Spokane Assistant City Attorney Rocky Treppiedi who, for years, has been both praised and criticized for his zealous defense of Spokane police officers.

You can read about the government's unusual September 15th court filing [here](#), and read subsequent stories about the controversy and developing criminal case [here](#) and [here](#). You can also download the Justice Department's most recent timeline of the key events in the Otto Zehm case [here](#).

Bill Morlin's Special Report

To read award-winning investigative reporter Bill Morlin's October 7th special report on Officer Thompson's new duties, click [here](#).

Teeth for the Ombudsman?

Meanwhile, citizen organizations led by the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) and including the Center for Justice, continue to push reforms for independent oversight of the Spokane Police Department. Most recently, the Spokane City Council voted unanimously on October 19th for a resolution requesting that the Mayor, in her negotiations with police unions on a new contract, pursue an agreement which would give the unions' consent to give independent investigative authority to the city's new police ombudsman. To be frank about it, this whole subject causes enormous political heartburn in City Hall and it's all but impossible, in words, to do justice to the raw emotion and body language. But we try. You can read Tim Connor's account of the October 19th meeting [here](#).

Breean's Ballot

By Breean Beggs, Chief Catalyst

Many of you have asked my opinion on Referendum 71, Initiative 1033 and Spokane's Proposition 4. All three touch on the Center's work in giving voice to the voiceless and creating the experience of justice. Not surprisingly, millions of dollars are being spent in an attempt to preserve a status quo that by any measure does not appear to serve the greater good and the social progress that so many are committed to achieving.

A yes vote for Referendum 71 would provide substantial rights to Washington couples who register as domestic partners. Domestic partnership rights were created for same sex couples in response to the Washington Supreme Court's narrow denial of the right to marry. It also applies to older opposite sex couples whose financial benefit programs preclude them from marrying. The Center is committed to marriage as a civil right for all consenting adults. Until that day is realized in Washington, expanding the rights of same sex couples is a step in the right direction, especially for those couples raising families together.

A no vote on Initiative 1033 preserves the ability of local government to address the critical problems that face us today in education, health care, criminal justice and climate change. The proponents of I-1033 seek to restrict future government spending so that we are unable to remake our economy and community into a sustainable future. This would have the effect of locking in the current beneficiaries of the status quo and limit the innovative programs that could provide us a way out of the multiple crises that are facing us. Wasteful government spending is always a bad idea, but government's ability to harness resources and widespread collaboration create a vibrant transportation and educational infrastructure that will create a sustainable economy while solving the exploding costs of health care and criminal justice. The Center is engaged in supporting efforts to reform Spokane's criminal justice system and healing our local environment- both causes that would be hurt by the passage of I-1033. Government still needs to do the right thing, but limiting its resources will only preserve a dangerous status quo for the environment and the poorest of the poor.

A yes vote on Proposition 4 would insert rights into the Spokane's Constitution (also known as the "City Charter.") that would set the foundation for a healthy, democratic and sustainable community. Like most constitutional rights, they are phrased as community values, which the city government is then charged with realizing. Proposition 4's rights include renewable energy, a healthy local economy, healthy ecosystems, local control over zoning changes, access to fee for service preventable health care and employment fairness. The particular phrasing of these rights was created by hundreds of Spokane citizens at dozens of meetings over a two year period. Perhaps not surprisingly, this attempt to define Spokane's future by everyday people has been rejected by most government leaders and the opposition has received well over a hundred thousand dollars from out of state business groups. The opposition first tried to keep the proposition off the ballot despite almost double the needed signatures. The Center is strongly committed to the democratic process and provided legal advice during this process so that voters would have the right to choose their future. The political gridlock in Washington D.C. has left local governments as the most effective innovators in solving today's problems and Proposition 4's approach has put Spokane on the political map.

A River (still) Runs Through This

The thorny scientific and regulatory complexities of the Spokane River's dissolved oxygen problem can be a little mind-numbing at times. The culprits are dams and nutrients, primarily phosphorous pollution. But nature waits for no one and that's the message that Suncrest-area resident Scott Chaney was sending in late September when he discovered toxic blue-green algae forming on the stretch of Lake Spokane (a.k.a Long Lake) near his home. You

can read about what Scott found and hear him talk to Spokane Riverkeeper Rick Eichstaedt about it [here](#). And while we've often taken issue with Avista Corp. in our work on Spokane River water quality, it's well worth [noting](#) that, this time, the Spokane-based utility moved quickly to respond to Scott's concerns with an offer to partner in a future monitoring effort.

News you can use.

In addition to using phosphorous free dishwasher soap, another way to help the river is to look for ways to reduce domestic water use. This is the subject of a new video [tutorial](#) featuring Rick Eichstaedt and Steve Llewellyn, a volunteer lawyer at CFJ who explains how he replaced his back lawn with drought resistant native plants. It's a great idea and the link to the videos also includes an article on where you can find and buy native plants, plus information on a city program that can help offset the cost of switching from turf to plants.

A Trip into the Market, A Trip into the World.



To celebrate Fair Trade Month, our friends at [Kizuri](#) are donating 1% of receipts to selected non-profits, and the week of October 26 to Nov. 1 sales at Kizuri will also benefit the Center for Justice. Kizuri is located just off the lobby in the Community Building at 35 W. Main Avenue.

Our further travels this month come from the [Kitchen Table](#) where, among other keenly crafted organic items, we have an [informative visit](#) with Save Our Wild Salmon's Sam Mace, [find out](#) how Tim Connor nearly got swept away swimming at Hanford, of all places, and [find out](#) why Edmonds's Carol Schillios chose to dance in the rain after the weather disrupted her ongoing vigil to try to raise money for vulnerable young women in Mali. We also get a [sample](#) of one of Spokane's best new writers, Mariah McKay, from her Spovangelist blog.

--CFJ

You are receiving this email because you asked the Center for Justice to send you emails about our programs, projects and/or events.

[Unsubscribe tjccamas@comcast.net](#) from this list.

Our mailing address is:
Center for Justice
Community Building
35 West Main, Suite 300
Spokane, Washington 99201

[Add us to your address book](#)

Copyright (C) 2009 Center for Justice All rights reserved.

[Forward](#) this email to a friend
[Update your profile](#)