

CHANGE

PIP PRINTING IS CHANGING IT'S NAME APRIL 4th 2009!



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Owner

EDITOR'S LETTER



Tippy Canoe

I LOVE CANOEING. GROWING up, I spent several weeks of every summer at Camp Cross, on Lake Coeur d'Alene, where one of my favorite activities was canoeing.

My best friend, Kathleen, and I would get into a canoe and paddle out and around the point and into an open bay where we would laugh and soak in the beauty of the surroundings. Taking turns paddling, the other would stretch out in the front of the canoe and let an occasional hand or toe dip into the water, dragging it across the glass-like surface.

Before we were allowed to venture out in the waters alone, we had to pass the "Tippy Canoe" test on the first night of camp. We would clamber into a canoe, push off from shore and paddle out to a point where we could no longer touch the bottom of the lake, and then we had to purposefully tip our canoe. With the canoe upside down, or half-submerged in the water, and the two of us treading water, we had to successfully lift the canoe, empty any water it had taken on, flip it into an upright position and manage to get ourselves back into the canoe so we could regain control and start paddling again, navigating ourselves to safety. Until we were able to do this, we were not allowed to take the canoes out. The camp staff knew that in order to be safe out in open waters we had to be capable of handling ourselves in the event of an emergency or unexpected troubles.

We had to understand that, though we had many times of smooth sailing, during which time we enjoyed

our rides on the water, smooth sailing isn't guaranteed, and we needed to be prepared to handle the situation. This is true in all of life.

It was good advice because there did come a time when our canoe tipped. While we were in the midst of dealing with our struggle – an overturned canoe that needed to be righted – there was still much for which to be thankful. The beautiful surroundings that we enjoyed so much when we were floating upright were still there, as were the refreshing cool waters, the companionship of my friend, and the fact that we had the skill and ability given to us through our training to turn the situation around, get back in and paddle again.

The day we tipped, it was not the canoe trip we had hoped for when we set out, but there we were upside down in the water and we had two options: to focus either on the unfortunate turn of events, or on the many wonderful things that continued to surround us even when we were in the water with a tipped canoe.

Life is a lot like one of those summer camp canoe rides. We've had smooth sailing for many years, soaking in all the beauty of the ride. Suddenly though, the economy is rocky, and hard times have settled upon many of our friends and family and it is like we have been flipped upside down.

Now is the time to draw on our strengths, our skills and our knowledge as we try to flip those canoes of life over. As we work to straighten our situation and climb back in for what may now be a wet and slightly rocky canoe ride, we will paddle strong, keeping our eye on the goal of reaching the shore.

Here is the good news. During this rocky ride, we can still focus on the wonderful things around us—the same things that were surrounding us and brought us joy during days of smoother sailing. That is my goal in this issue: to draw your attention to the wonderful things in our community that make living in Spokane and the surrounding area so wonderful, whether during smooth sailing or rocky rides. Things like the spirit of our community during St. Patrick's Day, the rich history of our city, and the wonderful stories of people who serve to make this a great place to live.

As you flip through these pages and read the stories within, be reminded what a great place this is to live, and keep in mind, though rough waters are sure to find us, we've got the skill to flip the canoe of life over and paddle onward, enjoying the surroundings while we do it.

Happy reading and happy paddling!

Blythe