

Every month since February 1987 the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has produced one-hour TV programs on issues related to peace, social justice, economics, the environment, and nonviolence.

The Olympia FOR's program airs several times every week for the entire month on Thurston Community Television (TCTV), channel 22 for Thurston County's cable TV subscribers. You can see TCTV's schedule at www.tctv.net.

You can also watch the program described below (and more than 90 of our previous interview programs and special programs) at the Olympia FOR's website, www.olympiafor.org. Simply click the TV programs link to reach www.olympiafor.org/tv_programs.htm, scroll down, and click the program you want to watch.

Many of our website's TV program listings also include a .pdf document describing the program.

MAY 2010

“EMPOWERING OURSELVES FOR PROFOUND DEMOCRACY”

by GLEN ANDERSON, PRODUCER AND HOST OF THIS TV SERIES

- Oppression by big business and powerful political forces
- Unresponsive government
- Homogenous, mind-numbing mass media
- Environmental degradation
- Serious crises – but a frustrating culture of denial
- This is true in the **COMMUNITY** realm: The Dispute Resolution Center trains mediators to help people learn how to resolve conflicts with each other in mutually agreeable ways instead of giving up our power to police or courts.
- This is true in the **MEDIA** realm: Thurston Community Television (TCTV) offers training, equipment, and air time at low cost to empower people of all ages and income levels to create their own media.
- This is true in the **CULTURAL** realm: The Procession of the Species provides satisfying and environmentally respectful entertainment for people of all ages without any commercialism or exploitation of live animals. Furthermore, the Procession inspires and cultivates the creativity of people of all ages as they use the Procession's art studio to design and create their own images, costumes, and musical and dance performances.
- This is true in the **ECONOMIC** realm: The Olympia Food Co-Op is owned by the consumers and managed by the staff through consensus. The TULIP Credit Union also is owned by its members to serve their economic needs locally without succumbing to exploitation by big banks.

All of the problems we face seem so huge, but we seem so powerless. People have tried to promote peace, social justice, the environment, and progressive issues. But for decades the conservative presidents and Congresses have pushed us backward.

As a result, many progressives feel frustration, anger, powerlessness, despair, and depression. The general public also seems demoralized and immobilized. Why bother?

However, when we look around our local community we find that many people have been successfully organizing ways to meet our political, social, economic, cultural and environmental needs. Some of these solutions are 15-25 years old, such as the Procession of the Species (which has been copied in communities around the world), the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) of Thurston County, Thurston Community Television (TCTV), and the Olympia Food Co-Op (which is more than 30 years old).

All of these are working successfully and thriving!

It turns out we **really can empower ourselves and organize from the grassroots up to meet our various needs directly**. We don't need to wait for governments or other big, formal systems to impose top-down solutions upon us. **We can empower ourselves to meet our needs!**

The net result of this is that **ordinary people really are empowering themselves and building a new culture of profound democracy – from the bottom up!** We're doing it ourselves!

The Olympia FOR's May 2010 TCTV program features interviews with people from several of these grassroots success stories. (See list on next page.) The guests attest to

the multi-faceted power of grassroots empowerment for profound democracy.

Our May 2010 TV guests are:

- **Deb Vinsel from Thurston Community Television:** Deb is TCTV's Executive Director. She has 27 years of experience in community TV, and she has helped TCTV become much more strong and active. Welcome, Deb!
- **Mark Stojak from the TULIP Co-Op Credit Union:** Mark is Vice-Chair of TULIP's board of directors. Mark has experience as a community organizer, mentor, and policy advocate. He recognizes that access to financial services is a human right. Welcome, Mark!
- **Mike Coday from Works in Progress:** Mike has participated for several years in the collective that produces our local community's alternative monthly newspaper, *Works in Progress*. Mike contributes fresh insights and a lot of skill to keep *Works in Progress* a vital part of our community. Welcome, Mike!
- **Adrienne Stuart from the Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County:** Adrienne volunteers as a mediator for the Dispute Resolution Center (the DRC), and she also serves as president of the DRC's Board of Directors. She understands and practices the DRC's values, and she helps the DRC serve our community.