Rev. Norm and the stories of Nightwatch
By Rev. Rick Reynolds

Bowser ran away from a homeless camp in Shoreline. It was hard on everyone in the camp, but especially “Jacob” the owner. It was a serious crisis. But hooray, the pooch turned up in Seattle, and with a minimum of wrangling, the recovery was affordable for the Director. This is a happier dog story than a previous Nightwatch dog story!

Rev. Norm Riggins passed away recently at age 90. And with his passing, we lost so many of his untold stories. He was the first paid director of Nightwatch, having started as a volunteer in 1969.

Norm told the story of a young street kid, “Suzie.” There were lots of working girls downtown in the 1970s. As her friend, Norm loved her with the Father’s love. Suzie was inspired to move beyond drugs and street life. She left her old life, married, raised three kids and works as a nurse. A potentially tragic story of one life has been transformed, thanks to Norm.

So many other stories are lost with Norm’s passing; stories of bar fights mediated, homeless people sheltered, God’s grace and love shown in dramatic fashion. But we have this assurance. Even the cup of cold water given in His name will be remembered and rewarded. The end of the story will be glorious, for Rev. Norm Riggins and for Operation Nightwatch — and for all of us, we pray.

Thank you Lord for your loving care through the decades, and for your gift of Norm Riggins to Nightwatch and to his city. May you find us faithful.

Generosity is contagious
By Ben Curtis

A few nights ago, we were standing by some of our friends who were getting ready to bed down for the night in their usual spot, outside. They have a deal worked out with the manager to stay in the doorway of his shop. He likes that there is someone he knows near his business overnight; our friends can sleep without being hassled, as long as they keep it clean.

It’s a win-win. The view’s not bad either. They can pass the time people-watching until they doze off.

As we were standing there chatting, a young woman came up and offered a bagful of goodies from Starbucks. Four sandwiches, a couple fruit cups and a yogurt parfait; our friends hit the jackpot!

I’m always amazed at the kindness that seems to follow the volunteers and me when we’re out on the street. We give a pair of socks, then a stranger will appear with a Dick’s burger to share. Someone busking nearby will receive a five dollar bill in their guitar case.

The generosity is contagious.

The gifts that we give — the socks, water, food, gloves, hats, our very presence — seem to spur generosity in others. Something shifts in the atmosphere. Generosity begets generosity. And it starts with you, our supporters. Your generosity is multiplied on the streets of Seattle. Thank you.
By Ann Sakaguchi

My father passed away in December. I miss him; I miss listening to him and talking with him. I miss his quiet presence. It feels like there’s a hole in my heart.

In December, Nightwatch lost a father, too, in Norm Riggins, our first Executive Director. I’ve heard Rick say he misses talking with him and hearing his wisdom. We all came from somebody. Every one of our homeless friends and senior residents had a father, too. Maybe they are separated by distance or broken relationships. Maybe they never knew them.

When I look into the faces of our homeless friends, I wonder “Do you still have your father around? Or are you like me, with a hole in your heart?” No one answers my unasked question, but I’ll bet there are more like me than not. Whether homeless and poor or not, there are some things we all share. We’re more alike, really, than we are different.