

CITY OF YAKIMA PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, at any given time there are an estimated 100,000 active missing persons cases in the United States – The National Institute of Justice has called it “The Nations Silent Mass Disaster”; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 800 families in the State with a loved one that is missing with 35 active missing persons cases being from Yakima County and 25 of those cases are missing from the City of Yakima; and

WHEREAS, there are an estimated 40,000 sets of unidentified human remains being held in the offices of coroners/medical examiners across the United States. In the State of Washington, there are 159 sets of unidentified human remains, 3 are from Yakima County and 1 of those is from the City of Yakima for a woman that was found deceased on July 25, 1977 – almost 46 years ago; and

WHEREAS, anyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, education or social status could someday have a loved one go missing or even go missing themselves; and

WHEREAS, the circumstances leading to a disappearance are varied (i.e. by their own decision, runaway, suicide, foul play/murder, kidnapping, sex trafficking, or a national disaster or catastrophe); and

WHEREAS, missing persons that are homeless, gang affiliated, suffering from mental illness or addicted to drugs or alcohol often receive very little attention from law enforcement and very little sympathy from the public; and

WHEREAS, when a person goes missing they should be searched for regardless of age or if they are homeless, suffering from mental disorders, or addicted to drugs or alcohol – it is important that they not become merely a statistic; and

WHEREAS, if you are concerned for someone’s safety and welfare and do not know their whereabouts or if they are alive or dead you should file a missing person’s report with your local law enforcement agency as soon as possible, there is no waiting period; and

WHEREAS, every missing person is someone’s child regardless of the age they were when they went missing and the families left behind both need and deserve to have closure. Lack of closure is extremely painful and can have long lasting effects that can make it difficult to move forward in life because you don’t know if you should continue to hope or if you should grieve.

NOW, THEREFORE, I Janice Deccio, Mayor of the City of Yakima and on behalf of the Yakima City Council, do hereby proclaim May 2023 as

“MISSING & UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS AWARENESS MONTH”

in the City of Yakima and ask all people to join me in this observance.

Dated this 16th day of May, 2023

Janice Deccio, Mayor