



Talking Circles

WCCC
Washington County Community Circles

"Repairing harm to victims, holding clients accountable and building a better community."

www.peacemakingcircles.org
Contact@peacemakingcircles.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Cheers to 2015

Greetings circle participants, volunteers, partners and friends! While many new-year newsletters talk about what is new for the coming year, I hope to focus on what WCCC has been doing and will continue to do.

We continue to operate in three communities – Cottage Grove, Stillwater and Woodbury, but take cases originating in cities across Washington County. Check out our Annual Report. You'll see that we performed over 160 circles in those three communities alone in 2014. We added over 20 new volunteers last year, due in part to our continued partnership with the Minnesota Justice Foundation and our program placing law students as volunteers on Sentencing Circles.

We also continue partnering with organizations in the community, including Gerten's Nursery for our Spring flower fundraiser, Tubman's screening and referral of appropriate domestic violence cases, and participating in the Minnesota Restorative Services Coalition's Growing the Connections conference to connect with RJ practitioners around the state, to name a few.

We continue to be amazed at the dedication of our volunteers! Our volunteers put in over 2,000 hours this year. WCCC is grateful for the community members who take time away from their loved ones, jobs, and other responsibilities to offer compassion, honesty and respect to our clients through the Circle process. We frequently say our volunteers may not be experts or professionals, but they give of their time. Our volunteers were very generous this year!

Please contact us at any time at contact@peacemakingcircles.org.

Also, feel free to contact me directly at katie.schurrer@peacemakingcircles.org

Cheers to 2015!

Katie Schurrer
 Chair of the Board



Upcoming Events

- February 6 @4:00 pm
 - TPT Channel 2.2 Re-Airing of "Family Matters Restorative Justice"
- February 22 @9:30 am
 - Trinity Lutheran Church Discussion of Circles
- April 25
 - Cottage Grove Annual Spring Business Showcase Booth Participation
 - Woodbury Community Expo Booth Participation
- May
 - Gerten's Fundraising Spring Flower Sale

[Washington County Community Circles 2014 Annual Report](#)

Click on the above link to view our 2014 Annual Report. It is also located on our website at www.peacemakingcircles.org

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

WCCC values their volunteers so much. We wouldn't exist without them! Our volunteers also help in one of WCCC's goal of "Building a Better Community." We want to spotlight our volunteers to show how kind, generous and meaningful their work is.

In our first spotlight, Mary Harcey is a longtime volunteer with the Stillwater Community Circles. Her wisdom is truly worth cherishing.



Mary Harcey is a retired educator in the Stillwater School District in Early Childhood and Family Education. Mary and her husband Dennis have lived in Stillwater since 1968 and raised three children. Dennis was also an educator as a teacher and coach in high school.

Mary is active in her Church and finds that there are always volunteer opportunities in whatever a person's interests are.

Five years ago, after having coffee with a former boss, Mary learned of the WCCC Circle Program. She explains that, "I joined the Stillwater group shortly after that and have been active since."

Mary shared three things that she has learned along the way of volunteering for WCCC in Circles.

1. I've learned that every human being has a story that involves hurt somewhere in their lives. Most of those who cause it have experienced it from others.
2. I've learned that forgiveness can happen. Forgiveness is very hard to happen and is a process.
3. I've learned that some of our offenders have felt comfortable enough and trust the system enough to come back as a community member and serve others.

Further, Mary commented on her involvement with WCCC Circles. "I feel fortunate to have found the Circle program and have been able to be part of a group that helps people, one person at a time. Each person deserves to be respected and helped in a non-judgmental atmosphere and that is what our Circle program is all about."

If you're interested in learning more about volunteering for WCCC, please email us at: contact@peacemakingcircles.org

Volunteer Opportunities are always available through WCCC.

For more information or to learn how you can join a Circle, please contact us at contact@peacemakingcircles.org





Keeping Up With the Board...

WCCC would like to introduce two new board members. Their skills and experience are a great contribution to the board.

Jen Lenander is a new member of the Washington County Community Circles, Inc. Board. She currently is the Office Administrator for Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak, & Stewart, P.C., an Employment and Labor Defense Law Firm in Minneapolis.

Jen is the current Co-President of GenYWCA, a young professionals group that supports the mission of the YWCA of Minneapolis, eliminating racism and empowering women and girls. Additionally, Jen is the co-chair of the Membership Development Committee for the ALAMN, the Minnesota chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators.

Jen received her J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law in January 2013. She also received her B.A., magna cum laude, from the University of Minnesota where she majored in Communication Studies and minored in Sociology.



Jennifer Lenander



Rob Noirjean

Rob Noirjean recently retired from 3M in June of 2014 after a 33 year career in Sales and Marketing positions. Rob has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Politic Science and prior to working for 3M, he was a Police Officer for three years, where he first was exposed to restorative justice, through a juvenile intake program that he felt was an effective alternative.

He was introduced to WCCC through Judy Nelson, the current Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair for WCCC and quickly realized that this was a good fit.

Rob has been a resident of Woodbury since 1988 and serves on other non-profit boards including Trout Unlimited and Woodbury United Methodist Church.

Partners in (Repairing the harm of) Crime



Each year Tubman helps almost 40,000 women, men, youth and families struggling with relationship violence, elder abuse, addiction, sexual exploitation or other forms of trauma. With a strong focus on research and innovation, building efficiencies, and creating partnerships, Tubman is a trailblazer in best-practice models of mental and chemical health services for women, as well as family violence and elder abuse prevention and intervention.

As the state's largest provider of domestic violence services, Tubman offers a full complement of services including family violence shelter and transitional housing; mental and chemical health assessment, treatment, and support; legal services; parenting education and child care; youth programs and in-school violence prevention; resource counseling, financial literacy and job readiness education; caregiver support and elder abuse resources; and community education and professional training.

Tubman's Legal Program provides advocacy to victims of domestic violence by helping clients navigate the complex processes of the court and legal system. Tubman addresses a variety of domestic abuse and family law issues by providing criminal and civil court advocacy; assistance in obtaining Orders for Protection; pro bono representation for family law matters and people seeking Orders for Protection; legal clinics regarding divorce, custody, child support, child protection, and LGBT issues; legal information sessions regarding family law issues, as well as assistance to people representing themselves in family law cases.

Legal advocates assist clients throughout the criminal court process by contacting victims when police intervention occurs, discussing the incident, their safety concerns, and needs; by ensuring access to information, support and resources; safety planning; explaining court processes; discussing possible court outcomes; attending criminal court appearances; and by relaying crucial information and victim input to prosecutors and judges. Legal advocates develop and cultivate positive professional relationships with law enforcement, court administration, probation officers, prosecutors, public defenders, private attorneys, prosecutors, and judges in order to educate criminal justice partners on the complex dynamics of domestic violence.

As a partner to Washington County Community Circles (WCCC), Tubman's legal advocates discuss the possibility of restorative justice being utilized as a resolution component in appropriate criminal court matters with victims in Washington County. To respect and ensure the safety, needs, and wishes of victims, legal advocates discuss restorative justice privately and discreetly with victims prior to the option being presented to defense counsel or to the defendant. Legal advocates explain the referral process, discuss safety issues, and provide WCCC information, in addition to providing information on traditional criminal court sentencing to victims so they can make the best decision for themselves and their family. Tubman's legal advocates continue to communicate and consult with WCCC and victims throughout the restorative justice process to address any issues or concerns that may arise, creating a safe and supported environment for victims, as well as providing services for victims, defendants, and families.

For more information, please visit www.tubman.org or call our 24-hour helpline at 612.825.0000.

phi·lan·thro·py

Every dollar makes a difference. And that's true whether it's Warren Buffet's remarkable \$31 billion pledge to the Gates Foundation or my late father's \$25 check to the NAACP. ~Michael Bloomberg~

Send a check...



Washington County Community Circles
7064 S. West Point Douglas Rd.
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

Or Contribute via
www.givemn.org

