



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

Harnessing the Energy



Last time I wrote to you, I discussed how spring was breathing new life into our organization. We've continued to harness this energy and are excited to discuss some exciting developments and upcoming opportunities.

On August 1, 2015 our Board completed the official transition to a new technical infrastructure. Based in part on legal research done by Minnesota Justice Foundation volunteer, Julie Matucheski and technology consultation from Duane Lenander, we selected Microsoft Office365 for our technology solution. This ensures that we have secure

storage and email for our organization. As a bonus, through a Microsoft grant, we are able to maintain the software at no cost to our organization. We are thankful for all the support in getting this done, and are pleased that we now have a safe and secure option for storing client, volunteer, and contact information.

We also recently completed a grant application for a Community Crime Prevention grant funding an Administrative Coordinator to support our current strategic tactics in the areas of Partnerships, Sustainability, and Expansion. We envision an Administrative Coordinator assisting WCCC in forming and maintaining partnerships, increasing the volunteer base, maintaining our current communities, and creating new Circle communities, thus creating greater access to Circles in Washington County. A special note of appreciation is due for Kylie LaFontaine, who led the grant-submission process, as well as Jen Lenander, who also assisted in the grant-writing process. Perhaps you saw some of our brainstorming process on [Facebook](#) (and no, we couldn't finish all the donuts).

We are launching a new training initiative for current and potential volunteers with an event on Thursday, October 8, 2015. We intend to have ongoing training and networking sessions for all WCCC volunteers in Cottage Grove, Stillwater, and Woodbury. Our first session will be a training by Les Butler from Haven Chemical Health that will provide an overview on Chemical Health. For more information about the Networking and Training Event, read ahead.

Sadly, the news is not all good. Long-time Cottage Grove Circle volunteer Art McKusick passed away on June 25, 2015. You will learn more about Art in our Volunteer Spotlight. His passing provides us with an opportunity to reflect on how generous, caring, and important our volunteers are to not just our volunteers and clients, but our entire community. On behalf of the WCCC Board, I would like to thank Art for his generous service and the impact he made on the lives of clients, victims, community volunteers, and their families.

Enjoy the last glimpse of summer,

Katie Schurrer
 Chair of the Board



Upcoming Events

- **October 8, 2015**
 - Training & Network Working Event for WCCC Volunteers
 - 6 pm to 8 pm
- **October 2015**
 - Circle 101 Training (Exact Dates TBD)
- **May 4, 2016**
 - Gerten's Spring Flower Fundraiser
 - Pickup at King of Kings Church (Woodbury)
 - 5 pm to 7pm

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

In Memory



The world lost a hero on June 25, 2015. Circle keeper and long-time WCCC-volunteer, Art McKusick, succumbed to cancer.

Art was one WCCC's earliest volunteers in Cottage Grove. Mark LaPointe, another lost hero, worked with Art and talked him into coming to Circle training. After the training, Art was hooked. Art would volunteer on many on-going circles and was always willing to help WCCC clients. He was willing to have people call him, help with job information and other various tasks. Art also took on responsibility from other circle keepers if they were away. He would make sure the circles were held, new circles scheduled and gave a synopsis of what went on for the circle records.

Art also volunteered at the Dakota County Juvenile Center for many years. Art was an asset to Cottage Grove Circle community, as well as the WCCC community. He will be greatly missed.

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





re·stor·a·tive jus·tice

A system of criminal justice that focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large.

There are many different definitions of Restorative Justice, choosing the best one would be a challenge in itself. That also rings true with the applications of Restorative Justice. It can exist in so many different contexts and levels. The most encouraging aspect of Restorative Justice is that it's flexible. The best quality is that it's healing.

The word in itself, *Restorative Justice*, offers those that participate, offender and victim alike, the opportunity to *restore*. Restore trust, restore respect, restore faith or restore "insert your desired value." In the end, it creates an opportunity for wrong doing to be healed and hopefully a chance for those that were involved to move on from the experience with more wisdom and a restoration in the values that were compromised during the wrong doing.

Explore some of the links below and see how Restorative Justice is utilized in different communities and in different contexts. The question we ask is, "***How can you use Restorative Justice in your life?***"

[Number of Restorative Justice Cases Doubles- New Zealand](#)

[Keeping Kids in Schools: A Spotlight on Fresno and Restorative Justice- California, US](#)

[A Restorative Promise Inside a Prison- Massachusetts, US](#)

[This Cop Used Empathy Instead of Force, and It Worked- Vancouver, BC](#)

[Minneapolis Moves towards restorative justice, deemphasizes punishment- Minnesota, US](#)

[Sexual assault, domestic violence victims could soon confront attackers in expansion of ACT restorative justice- Australia](#)

Fall Networking & Training Event

WCCC will be holding a Networking and Training Event to allow current Circle volunteers an opportunity to discuss our challenges and successes in Circle across the communities, learn from each other, and of course, build community and support each other. Each session will include a short Circle for volunteers and a special topic presentation.

The upcoming Networking and Training Event will be held on October 8, 2015 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Family Means in Stillwater. The topic will be “Signs, Strategies, & Support: Chemical Health Overview & Resources” and presented by Les Butler.

Les will discuss signs of addictions, describe the interventions available, and discuss how Circle volunteers, in particular, can support an individual’s recovery plan. We will also hold a Community Circle to connect about our Circle experiences in Cottage Grove, Stillwater, and Woodbury.

Les Butler has been trained in Circle, participates in the Washington County Offender Recovery Program (ORP), and is Program Director of the Woodbury Haven Chemical Health Systems site.

More information about the event can be found on our website [here](#).

Please RSVP for the event (so we can ensure we have enough space, food, and refreshments) at contact@peacemakingcircles.org.

Please RSVP by Thursday, September 24.



phi·lan·thro·py

“We can all make a difference in the lives of someone in need, because it is the most simple of gestures that make the most significant of differences.” ~Miya Yamanouchi~

Send a check...



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Or Contribute via
www.givemn.org

