



# Talking Circles

**WCCC**  
**Washington County Community Circles**

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

[www.peacemakingcircles.org](http://www.peacemakingcircles.org)  
[Contact@peacemakingcircles.org](mailto:Contact@peacemakingcircles.org)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## New Year, New Role?

While we all settle into the New Year (and our New Year's resolutions perhaps expire!), WCCC hopes that some of our current volunteers consider taking on a new role with the organization.

We are offering a Circle Keeper training to those interested in potentially taking on new roles in the organization on Saturday, March 25th. Our Circle Keeper training is a one-day training that builds on our Circle 101 training. We discuss setting the tone for Circle, the differences between facilitating and keeping Circle, key roles of the Circle Keeper, personal preparation for Circle, and advanced training on restorative justice practices.

The training is open to anyone who has had Circle 101 Training, with WCCC or another restorative justice Circle organization, even if you are not sure whether you want to be a Circle Keeper.

The training is \$125.00 for non-Washington County Residents, \$50.00 for non-Washington County Students, and \$25.00 for Washington County Residents.

To register for the training, [click here](#):

Please contact me with any questions about the training. We hope to see you there!

Katie Schurrer  
 Chair of the WCCC Board



## Upcoming Events

- March 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Gerten's Fundraising Spring Flower Sale Begins
- March 25<sup>th</sup>
  - Circle Keeper Training
- May 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Gerten's Fundraising Spring Flower Sale Delivery

## Volunteer Spotlight

WCCC values all of their volunteers, whether they've been a volunteer since the beginning of WCCC or if they are just beginning their volunteer experience. New volunteers ensure the continuation of WCCC and help bring new perspectives to the circle process. This edition spotlights a newer volunteer that joined WCCC Stillwater Circles in February. His name is Tom Olson.

Tom is new to the state of Minnesota. He moved from Santa Fe, New Mexico and is currently a first year with the Mitchell | Hamline weekend program pursuing his Juris Doctor (JD). When he's not busy with his course work and volunteering, you can find Tom staying active by running, swimming, or biking by any of the countless lakes in the Metro.



When asked what led him to volunteer for circles, his response is worth citing verbatim. "As a student at Mitchell | Hamline, we are encouraged to get involved in volunteer legal work and I learned the Minnesota Justice Foundation had an opportunity to participate in a restorative justice program at the WCCC. I was eager to become involved because as a sociologist, I learned that restorative justice was an antidote to some of the adverse effects occurring in our current criminal justice process.

According to labeling theory--the way an individual develops an identity--the traditional criminal justice system is a formal process that labels offenders based on the harm they committed and may lead to a person adopting a criminal identity as a result. Additionally, once a person identifies themselves as a criminal, that person becomes at odds with mainstream society, and that label pushes them into the criminal society that welcomes their new criminal identity. However, the study claimed that getting the harm-doer engaged with the community may dissolve the criminal identity and welcomes them back into mainstream society, which dissolves the harm-doer's association to that identity. A process that I believe decreases recidivism and promotes rehabilitation."

Tom also wanted to include an endorsement to Susan Morrow and the Minnesota Justice Foundation for the great job they do connecting students with interesting volunteer opportunities that get them engaged in the community.

WCCC greatly appreciates the Minnesota Justice Foundation as well for sending over treasured volunteers like Tom Olson.

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](mailto:contact@peacemakingcircles.org)



## Partners in (Repairing the harm of) Crime



From left to right in photo: Brent Wartner, First Assistant County Attorney; Bob Storlie, WCCC Board Member and Circle Keeper; Joe Spolidoro, WCCC Board Member and Circle Keeper; Pete Orput, Washington County Attorney; Katie Schurrer, WCCC Board Member and Circle Keeper; and Kevin Mueller, Assistant County Attorney.

On November 29, 2016, WCCC board members and Circle Keepers, Katie Schurrer, Joe Spolidoro, and Bob Storlie met with the Washington County Attorney's Office attorneys and staff.

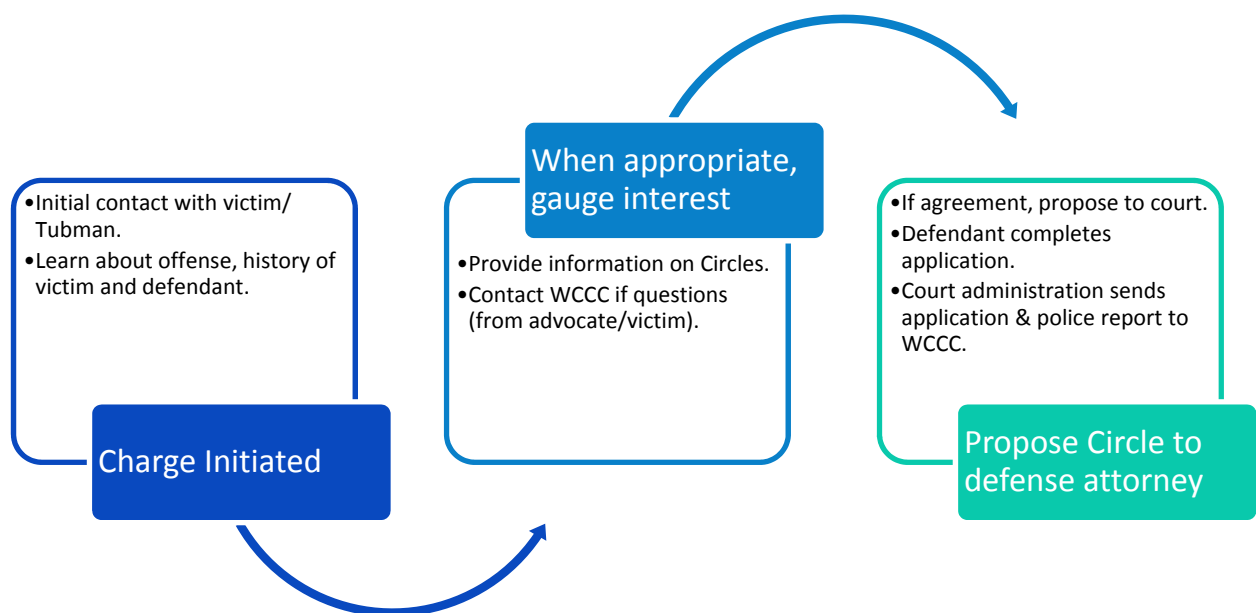
The meeting included an overview of WCCC, what types of cases might be good for Circle, and what the process is to refer cases.

Additionally, WCCC gave summaries of the cases referred to Circle from the County Attorney's Office in the past and the lessons learned.

Judge Gary Schurrer also attended the meeting and answered questions about the referral process and shared his experiences with WCCC

and the Circle process. Since the meeting, attorneys in the office have already referred two new cases and WCCC has been in discussions with the office about partnership opportunities.

WCCC thanks Pete Orput and the attorneys in his office for their partnership and their continued interest in referring cases to Circle when appropriate.



## Gerten's Annual Flower Sale!

With spring right around the corner the thought of beautiful planters full of bright and vibrant colors definitely adds some warmth to the days.

As many of you know, each year we hold a fundraiser to help WCCC pay for operational expenses. This year marks our Eighth Annual Gerten's Fundraiser. We have started accepting orders for flowers and plants and all orders must be placed by April 1st. Flowers will be delivered on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Like last year, in addition to selling flowers and plants, we will also be selling plant cards! The plant cards can be used to purchase plants (annuals, perennials, trees, shrubs, etc.) at Gerten's Inver Grove Heights location.

Online ordering is once again available this year!

The following website is accepting orders:

[WCCC Spring Flower Sale Order Form.](#)

We thank you in advance for your support of our fundraiser and Washington County Community Circles.

If you have any questions about ordering flowers, plants, or a plant card, please feel free to reach out to Jen Lenander at [jen.lenander@peacemakingcircles.org](mailto:jen.lenander@peacemakingcircles.org).

## phi·lan·thro·py

*Charity begins at home, but should not end there. -Thomas Fuller -*

Send a check...



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