



Finger Lakes Restorative Justice Center

Spring 2007

Victim Voices: The Heart of RJ 4th Annual WNY Restorative Justice Conference

FLRJC Mission

The mission of the Finger Lakes Restorative Justice Center is to transform

- individuals,
- organizations,
- communities

Through

- education,
- advocacy,
- implementation of restorative justice principles and practices,

Thereby

- redressing harm,
- restoring peace,
- improving relationships,
- reducing violence,
- promoting healing,
- building better communities.

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Join us on **Friday, September 28 at Niagara University in Niagara Falls, NY**, for a dynamic conference with keynote speaker Dr. Marlene Young.


Dr. Young is President of the International Association for Victim Assistance (IOVA). She has been an outstanding leader in the Victim Assistance movement since 1979, when she was a founding Board member and first President of NOVA (National Organization for Victim Assistance). She has been the primary organizer and a frequent participant on NOVA's volunteer National Response Teams. These

have responded to the Oklahoma City and 9/11 terrorism attacks, as well as over 200 nationally recognized and local catastrophes.

Dr. Young has published over 150 articles, chapters and monographs. Her monograph on "Restorative Community Justice" is renowned for its insightful understanding of both victims and offenders.

Dr. Young has traveled throughout the United States, and to Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin-America speaking on victim-related issues at over 2000 conferences and training seminars.

Our 4th Annual Western New York Restorative Justice Conference, "Victim Voices: The Heart of RJ," will feature Dr. Young as keynote speaker and leader of several breakout sessions. Breakout sessions by other RJ leaders will cover a wide range of topics targeted at victim advocates, lawyers, police, educators, social workers, and faith-based and community members.

Visit our website (www.flrjc.org) now, for the **Call for Presenters** and throughout the summer for conference updates and registration forms. 

See article by Dr. Young on p.5



Dr. Marlene Young, President of IOVA, the International Organization for Victim Assistance, will present the keynote address and several breakout sessions at the September 28th Restorative Justice Conference

Fulbright Scholar Visits School Based On Restorative Practices

by Sue Klassen

Imagine a school where students routinely lead circles of their peers, set up and clean the lunch room calmly, almost never have physical fights, and hold each other accountable to norms they set as a class. Sound privileged?

Less than a month after her March 27 arrival, Sandie Hastings, FLRJC's Fulbright Scholar—a police officer from Leicestershire, England—joined me and 28 others from around the world for a two-day immersion in CFS Buxmont Academy schools based on Restorative Practices. The schools are affiliated with the IIRP (International Institute of Restorative Practices) in

Bethlehem, PA, which offered the immersion training. After an orientation session at the IIRP, we were divided into smaller groups for our school immersion.

The 70 students in the school Sandie and I visited are referred by probation, mental health or educational services when regular schools are no longer able to accommodate them.

Students in the halls greeted us warmly. Following a student-led school tour, we were free to observe any classes we chose, and talk to students and staff. For both Sandie and

Restorative Schools, continued on page 5



30 people from around the world participated in a Restorative Schools immersion April 16-17

Recent Presentations, Trainings, Outreach

We have been busy recently sharing the concepts of restorative justice. Sue Klassen and Becky Hollenberg led an adult Sunday School discussion at **Webster Presbyterian Church**. Then Jeanne Carlivati and Joan Mitchell presented to a class at MCC. The following day, Jim Termotto, Sandie Hastings and Becky Hollenberg taught another **criminal justice class at MCC**. One week later, Jim, Sandie and Becky also presented at **St. John Fisher College** and a few weeks after that, at the **RIT Expressions of Diversity Conference**. We participated in the **Crime Victim's Rights March** and had an **Op Ed** published in the D&C entitled "Justice System should remedy wrongs done to crime victims."

In May, we will be training volunteers in **Community Conferencing**, and will present at the **Monroe County Probation Officer's Association**. We are excited to be sharing about restorative justice with the community and we are always looking for more opportunities to do so.

National RJ Conference

The Finger Lakes Restorative Justice Center Newsletter is published quarterly.

Design Editor:
Sylvia Klassen

Send mailing updates and corrections, and submissions to:
FLRJC
111 Hillside Ave.,
Rochester, NY 14610.

Deadline for the Summer issue:
July 15, 2007.

The National Conference on Restorative Justice will convene on Sunday afternoon, **June 24, 2007**.

Over thirty-three workshops and panel discussions are scheduled Monday through Wednesday, in addition to major keynote addresses each day. Scholars and researchers will make more than eighteen presentations of new research on restorative practices

U.S. **Congressman Danny K. Davis** of Chicago (co-sponsor of the Second Chance Act) and law professor and former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice **Janine P. Geske** are among our keynote presenters.

Restorative justice pioneers **Dr. Mark Umbreit** and **Dr. Howard Zehr** join them, peacemaking circles advocate **Kay Pranis**, juvenile justice authority **Dr. Gordon Bazemore**, church and social justice leaders **Elaine Enns** and **Ched Myers**, Australian practitioner and criminal justice leader **Leigh Garrett**, and a host of other participants.

Costs ranges from \$30.00 to \$650.00 depending on the time passes are purchased and what events you will be attending.

For more information, go to <http://www.restorativejusticenow.org/>.



\$4000 from Unitarians Kicks Off Avon School District Project

by Jeanne Carlivati

A Peacemaking Circle is a process that brings together individuals who wish to engage in conflict resolution, healing, support, decision making or other activities in which honest communications, relationship development and community building are core desired outcomes. When used in a school setting, they provide a wonderful opportunity for building community in a classroom setting between the students and the teacher and with each other. Last summer, FLRJC conducted a Peace Circle training geared toward educators. Five staff members from Avon Central School attended and have continued to dialogue with us throughout this school year as to how we could help them institute Peace Circles in their district.


This year, the First Unitarian Church in Rochester, which has funded five other FLRJC restorative justice initiatives in past years, offered a three-year grant in the area of social justice through the **Helen L. Morris Foundation**. At a fundraising committee meeting in February, we decided that we would apply for this grant to help us fund our Avon project. In late March, it was announced that we were awarded a grant for \$12,000 over a three-year period from the church.

Members of our Education Committee (Joan Mitchell, Dr. Mary Reed, Cheryl Gavenda and Jeanne Carlivati) have met several times with a team of Avon staff members to begin planning our initiatives. The Avon team is comprised of the elementary principal, a social worker, a psychologist, an instructional support teacher, a classroom teacher and a representative from Livingston County's Department of Social Services. Soon to be added to this planning team are Dr. Leigh O'Brien, a professor at SUNY

Geneseo and a parent from the Avon community.

Our **first phase** will be to train selected teachers this July from the elementary school in the techniques of using Peace Circles and then to provide on-going coaching throughout the 2007-2008 school year. Our **second year** will include additional trainings for the middle school staff in the use of Peace Circles, as well as conferencing training for any interested staff. Our **third year** will conclude with the training of the high school staff and any other individuals who are interested in being trained, including the necessary coaching and support.

Throughout the three years, our planning team will continue to meet and develop a **comprehensive evaluation process** that will measure the effectiveness of the restorative justice practices being used. The benchmarks to be used will include looking at the number of classroom disruptions, student conflicts, referrals to the office, suspensions, as well as more subjective areas like perceptions of climate and safety.

We are very excited about this project and grateful to the Unitarian Church for helping us to launch this major school initiative. We are also looking for additional grant money to help strengthen the coaching and evaluation components. This pilot could develop into a significant researched based program that could become a model for use in other districts. There is no question in our minds, that the use of Peacemaking Circles in a school setting is the way to build a respectful, sane, safe environment. 

Jeanne Carlivati is the Vice-President of the FLRJC Board of Directors, and a retired school counselor.

Open House

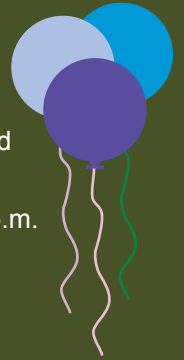
We've moved to our permanent office!

Come see us in our new location, and meet our Fulbright Scholar, Sandie Hastings. Visit over refreshments. We'd be delighted to see you!

Thursday, May 24, 5-7 p.m.

111 Hillside Avenue,
Rochester, NY 14610

R.S.V.P. to 473-0970



FLRJC's New Home

Peacemaking Circle Training


Peacemaking Circles are an excellent tool for building community and trust, for problem solving, and for improving communication and conflict resolution skills. This three-day training prepares participants to facilitate Peacemaking Circles in a classroom or community setting.

July 25-27, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Roberts Wesleyan College

Who Should Attend? Teachers, Administrators, Social Workers, School Counselors & Psychologists

Cost: \$65

Download the brochure from our website (www.flrjc.org) or call 585-473-0970 for more information. 

Faith and Justice: Roberts Professors Trask and Hallman Pursue Both

For many Christians, their understanding of justice is limited to “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.” Many citizens, on the other hand, are content with “three strikes and you’re out,” the famous California law which places an offender in jail for life after three felony convictions. Kirby Trask and Ron Hallman, criminal justice professors at Roberts Wesleyan College, have a different notion. They are among those championing “restorative justice,” a concept rooted in reconciliation and restitution rather than vengeful punishment. To tell the story of restorative justice is hard to do apart from this extraordinary team of instructors.

Hallman is a native of the Rochester area, who attended Grove City College in Pennsylvania, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in political science and history. A stint as a sheriff’s deputy in Monroe County was followed by graduate work in Washington State (he earned an M.A. at Washington State University), and then a period teaching at Genesee Community College, where he was coordinator of criminal justice from 1974 to 1980. Hallman then joined the Genesee County Sheriff’s department as under-sheriff, working with an innovative and somewhat legendary sheriff named Doug Call during the 1980s. He began teaching at Roberts part time in 1987, and joined the faculty full time in 1988. It was in those first years at Roberts that he taught a young Kirby Trask.

Trask was originally thinking about the Christian ministry as a vocation, but comments by Hallman in class about restorative justice directed his interests into criminal justice. After

Trask graduated from Roberts in 1991, he earned as master’s degree focusing on public policy and law from Regent University in Virginia. He returned to the area and went to work in Genesee County at the Sheriff’s department. In Trask’s tenure there, the concept and program that would come to be known as Genesee Justice was developed, with a focus on restorative justice.



Kirby Trask

The concept behind restorative justice is that all crimes have a human dimension. There is a victim and an offender who are real people, and part of a network of real people, with pain and grief and anger that may last for years. The traditional justice system in the United States has an impersonal approach, with clear winners and losers. Restorative justice works at bringing the people into relationship with one another, rather than simply “locking them up and throwing away the key.” For example, suppose someone is arrested for driving while intoxicated for the first time. That person may have a shock jail sentence, which disrupts his or her life for 30 or 60 days. Then, however, there are terms and conditions, which focus on helping the offender come to grips with the crime, its possible cause and effects.

The person might be required to pay restitution (to the victim, if there are bills or damages) or reparations (to the legal system for costs incurred).

The person may undergo assessment of alcohol addiction. Community service might be required. It might be mandated that the person has to attend a panel of victims who share what difficulties those driving while intoxicated have brought into their lives. If there is a victim, through a mediation process, the offender might meet with the victim and a mediator, apologize, and hear first-hand about the effects of driving while intoxicated. Support groups and counseling and work with peers are offered to victims.

In many ways, restorative justice is harder work for the offender than the traditional justice system, where an offender might simply be given a sentence and be sent to a “school of crime,” also known as a jail. Restorative justice works first-hand at change, examining and working at healing the personal dimensions of a crime. While incarceration may be necessary at times, it is a last resort,

and one that is looked at with great care for all its implications (think of how much it costs the tax payer to keep someone in jail for 20 years at a cost of \$30,000 a year, and multiply that by the number of inmates in, say, New York or California).

It was after 11 years at the Genesee County Sheriff’s department, working with Genesee Justice, that Trask came back to his alma mater to teach, in 2004. His first-hand experience in restorative justice is a tremendous asset in his classroom teaching, as is his partnership with Hallman, his former teacher and present mentor.



Ron Hallman

Restorative Schools, continued from p. 2
me, it was an amazing experience to see Restorative Practices lived out fully—not only did classes and the school day begin and end in Circle, but the staff hold their daily staff meeting in Circle, holding each other accountable in a context of high support.

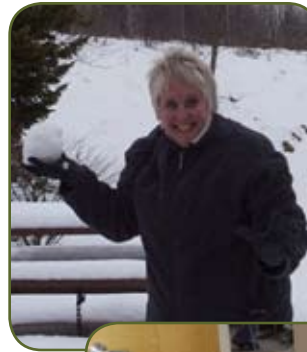
In an English class I observed, a violent verbal dispute broke out between two girls. Immediately, the teacher halted class and called up counselors. The class formed a Circle. Students each owned their part in the problem, identified who was affected, and made amends. Students followed up with written behavior plans to avoid future problems. At lunch, the class

quickly caught up work missed during Circle.

We were inspired by the ready smiles of the students and the sense of calm and respect between staff and students. Restorative practices work. If they work with this population, they can work anywhere.

For more about CSF Buxmont schools, visit www.restorativepractices.org/library/dayatcsf-buxmont.html

Sue Klassen is President of FLRJC.



Sandie Hastings acclimates to New York weather en route to Bethlehem, PA



Student-lettered posters of school rules and norms
A student completes a behavior contract

Justice System Should Remedy Wrongs Done to Crime Victims

By Marlene Young

A criminal defense attorney recently was quoted in The Washington Post criticizing the victims' rights movement: "I sympathize with individuals victimized by criminals. ... But the criminal justice system cannot focus on the victim, rather, it must follow its rich tradition of protecting society as a whole, ensuring that justice is achieved in accordance with the Constitution."

His narrow vision would once more reduce the victim's role to that of witness, not participant. It also would put the defendant back in the posture of fighting back, proclaiming his innocence until, as almost always happens, he cops a guilty plea to what he hopes is a reduced charge. This is often an unsatisfying charade for both parties.

However, if the defendant is willing to explore his guilt up front, in an informal process that looks for ways to transform his guilt into some form of payback to his victim along with a just sanction, that process may give greater satisfaction to the victim and lead the offender to feel true remorse.

Many in the victim rights community have been skeptical about this concept and practice of "restorative justice"

since some projects in the past were so focused on offender rehabilitation that they gave insufficient attention to victim satisfaction in the process.


This week, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, is an appropriate time to examine what the foundations of restorative justice should be. I believe they involve three basic elements:

Restorative justice should be victim-centered, ensuring that the victims' traumas and harm, their needs and desires are brought out. The victim must be involved in all discussions, probe the offender's view of just deserts in the case, and approve the final disposition. In fact, the true test of a good restorative justice system is one in which victims seek what they hope is a just resolution — and sometimes, in the end, fail to reach one. That means that the mutual search for justice had been an honest one.

A restorative system should be community-driven — the whole community directly or through representation should be involved in constructing any solutions that are fashioned to restore the victim and the offender. Often that community is one the two parties share — often a neighborhood.

The offender should be held accountable for his actions. The commu-

nity as well as the victim should expect that the offender expresses and demonstrates remorse. The offender should be liable for full restitution to the victim and to the community. If those steps are taken and are acceptable to the victim, then the community has an obligation to help restore the offender to community life through education, job opportunities and support in a re-entry to everyday life.

There are many programs that focus on restorative justice around the globe. One of the most innovative is the Gacaca system in Rwanda, which literally brings the whole community together to try to address the horrible crimes of the 1994 genocide and allows both offender and victim to speak in cases brought before the Gacaca courts. The proceedings are conducted before the whole town and with community members as judges. If this can be done in a country torn apart by a genocide that killed more than 800,000 people, surely we can fashion programs that address a single crime or even multiple crimes committed by one or two criminals. 

Young is president, International Organization for Victim Assistance based in Newberg, Ore.

From the Democrat and Chronicle, April 26, 2007.
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Membership benefits:

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- Notice of trainings and educational conferences

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Check one: (make checks payable to FLRJC)

\$15 Student/Senior membership

\$25 Individual membership

\$50 Agency membership

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\$ _____ Limited income

\$ _____ Donation

Membership fees and donations are 100% tax deductible

I agree to support the mission of FLRJC

Signature _____

For more information contact FLRJC at (585)473-0970



Faith and Justice, continued from page 4

The two share many things in common, and while many teachers simply co-exist with others in their departments, it is clearly evident that these two are a team. It is not only their shared love of hockey (both are huge Buffalo Sabres fans), or their shared fatherhood (Ron's two daughters and son are older; Kirby's sons are five and nine), or their faith (Ron and his wife attend First Presbyterian Church of Batavia; Kirby and his wife and sons attend Pearce Memorial Free Methodist Church next to the Roberts campus) which unites these two men.

Perhaps it is that their faith and experience in the criminal justice system that points them in the same direction in their focus on restorative justice as part of the mission of Roberts Wesleyan College. After all, since Roberts pursues education for character, what could be more fitting than restoring and healing, as appropriate, those whose lives intersect in the criminal justice system? Kirby Trask and Ron Hallman serve as prime examples of those whose faith and experience and expertise make the world a little better place, and bring blessing to Roberts and the community in the process.

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111 Hillside Avenue,
Rochester, NY 14610



Time to Renew!
FLRJC Membership Year
Begins June 1. Renew Today!