

## New Members Join County Citizens Council

LACONIA: Four County residents, Christine Corrigan of New Hampton, Ruth Castonguay of Laconia, Steven Fox of Sanbornton, have recently joined the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families as their communities. Appointed and sworn in by the County Commissioners, each of the four brings unique skills and expertise that will advance the mission of this two year-old County department, which is to promote the principles of “Community Justice” so that children and families in Belknap County can live with dignity and respect.



Christine Corrigan, a resident of New Hampton for the past 21 years, says that cherishing the values found in small communities “such...as pride in our hard-earned achievements and respect for our environment and each other” is something that she can help promote as a member of the Citizens Council. A bookkeeper by profession, she holds an undergraduate degree in Hotel Administration from UNH, an MS in Accounting, and an MBA, both from Southern NH University. Christie is currently working with the Asset-based Community Development initiative, an effort of the Citizens Council.

Also a long-time resident of Belknap County, Ruth Castonguay has worked for the past 16 years in the Office of the Laconia City Clerk, affording her “first-hand knowledge on the challenges of individuals from all walks of life.” As the wife of a Naval Aviator, Ruth spent many hours in volunteer activities on behalf of military families. She organized and conducted the first Student Officers Wives Program in the Pensacola, Florida area where her husband was stationed. Currently, Ms Castonguay is a Board Member for both the NH Task Force for both the NH Task Force for

Women and Addictions and the Horizons Counseling Center. She is a member of the Belknap County Addictions Task Force, a network sponsored by the Citizens Council.



Four new members of the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families (L-R) Steve Fountain of Meredith, Sarah Fox of Sanbornton, Ruth Castonguay of Laconia, and Christie Corrigan of New Hampton met recently with Alida Millham, Council Chair, (Far R) and others for New Member Orientation training. They join 14 other Council members from around Belknap County who are currently working on the Council's Action Plan for 2004. The Citizens Council is a County Department that promotes the principles of Community Justice in Belknap County so that children and families in the County can live safely with dignity and respect. Council members assist in forming networks of citizens in each community who are interested in planning, advocacy, networking, and developing resources that support a positive environment for children and families throughout Belknap County.

Steve Fountain of Meredith who was born and raised in New York moved to New Hampshire in 1999. After earning a BS degree in Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling from Springfield College in 1989, he was a group counselor for people who have the dual challenges of mental illness and substance abuse. In this role, he worked with two New York-based non-profit organizations devoted to the treatment and prevention of chemical dependency and addictions. While Steve is now

working in the insurance field, he continues to be interested in community service and the non-profit sector. In addition to the Citizens Council, Steve is a soccer coach for Meredith youth and a volunteer mediator with the Belknap County Family Mediation Program housed at the Youth Services Bureau.

Sarah Fox has lived in the Lakes Region for much of her life and calls Franklin, Tilton, and Sanbornton “her home.” After earning a degree in elementary education from Boston University, she taught in Australia, Ecuador, and in Meredith. Sarah is now a third-year law school student at Franklin Pierce Law Center where she is pursuing a dual degree program for a JD and a Masters of Education Law. Last summer, she received a Public Interest Coalition Fellowship to work at the Children’s Alliance of New Hampshire, and this summer, she will work on a project with the NH Commission on the Status of Women and the NH Department of Education, researching and drafting guidelines for Title IX. Committed to public service, Sarah calls the Citizens Council, “an opportunity for continued involvement at the community level.”

Other Council members include Dick Wallace from Alton; Jim Pilliod and Gil Schohan from Belmont; Mary Alice Warner and Peter Michaud from Center Harbor; Alida Millham, Susan Smith, and Leo Sanfacon from Gilford; Nancy Porosky from Gilmanton; Jim Carroll and Andre Paquette from Laconia, Bob Rovella from New Hampton, Katy Kannaly-DeCarteret from Sanbornton, and Kevin Washburn from Tilton.

Says Alan Robichaud, the Executive Director, who encourages residents of Belknap County to contact their community’s representative on the Council, “Any of our 18 members will be happy to talk with folks interested in children and families. There are so many ways to get involved with what we are doing.”

Citizens Council offices are located at One Mill Plaza in downtown Laconia. For further information, visit the Council website at [www.bccj.org](http://www.bccj.org) or call 528-3185.

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