

“Belknap County is a safe community where children and families can live with dignity and respect.”

Director's Report #12 ...08/17/02 02 – 08/31/02

Looking Back ~

Outreach

The *Evolving Community Justice* begins on Wednesday, September 4th and enrollments are slowly coming in. It would be great if folks would continue to recruit people to attend. It is extremely important that people understand this is a rolling enrollment type of series. People can enter at any time as each session is a stand-alone workshop. Please keep the push on. This is an important public education tool.

The *coordinating team* for the series will be Andre Paquette, Tom Goulette, Vice-President of the Community Technical College and me so we should be able to convene a good series. As a reminder, this series as an excellent opportunity for Council members, volunteers and other agencies' Board members to get comprehensive exposure to the juvenile justice system. At \$10/session it's a great deal.

Attended during the past two weeks were meetings of the *Community Technical College System Board of Trustees, the NH Rural Development Council and Laconia Rotary.*

Mary Alice Warner hosted a meeting with Center Harbor Chief of Police, Andy Faller, Inter-Lakes School Board member, Diane Drenkhahn and me. This meeting set the stage for upcoming *community planning* forums and other collaborative opportunities between the town and the Council. Thank you Mary Alice for opening up your beautiful home for our meeting.

The Council facilitated a meeting of *Foster Care* agencies in order to develop a working partnership for recruiting new foster care homes for teenagers. Three of five invited agencies participated along with representatives of the local and state Department of Health & Human Services and District DJJS office. The group agreed to work together to create a coalition of foster care agencies and homes in Belknap County.

Administration

The Planning Committee met and began work on the Council's *strategic plan*. Peter Michaud had developed a framework for the committee to review and Susan Smith led the discussion in Peter's absence. The framework looks great and the meeting will begin to put some flesh on the bones. The Planning Committee will be looking at possible tasks to be assigned to various other committees of the Council. Thanks Peter and Sue for taking the lead on this project. It's a big one!

I attended a *Communication* meeting of the Reclaiming Futures project. Mac Prichard of the National Partnership Office of the Robert Johnson Foundation's Reclaiming Futures project visited the NH site to give and gain insight into the communication plan for the grant.

Also, a session was held by Reclaiming Futures on Best Practice by *substance abuse programs* across the nation. Ros Brannigan of Drug Strategies presented the findings of her organization's research on best practice. It is somewhat disconcerting to know that there are very few programs, nationwide, that have a good deal of outcome data to support the efficacy of their programs. Ros did mention about three that do a good job in these areas but unfortunately they are not in New Hampshire. Miami Blake, Site Coordinator for Belknap County was also in attendance for these meetings.

Judy Bush of the UNH Cooperative Extension Services met with me to set the stage for implementing *community planning forums* in Belknap County. All Council members have received information relative to what must occur in order to complete these forums before the holiday session of late November. Lead Council representatives have been contacted to recruit local *steering committee chairs and members*. Much work needs to be accomplished in a short period of time, so we need everyone's full cooperation and spirit as this takes shape. Thank you to all of our Council members who have accepted this role. You have earned one wing into heaven. Wait 'til you see what you have to do to earn the other one! Just kidding. Your generosity knows no bounds. Please stay tuned for additional information about the community forums.

Final arrangements are being made for *Julie Lyche's* visit on September 13th. Julie will attend the Council meeting on September 13 from 8:00 to 10:00 AM. She will spend the rest of the morning meeting with Council members who wish to ask her questions about Deschutes County programs. She will meet with staff from 12:00 to 2:00. An orientation session for providers who have been invited to join the Professional Providers Advisory Council (PPAC) will be held at 2:30 and Julie will present information about the Deschutes County PPAC and Prevention services from 3:00 to 4:30 PM at the County Complex Multi-Purpose Room. Council members are invited to attend any of the group sessions throughout the day.

The Council convened the first meeting of the *Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee* on 8/23. The meeting was well attended and brought back some familiar faces from the BJJ days (e.g. Deb Guyer, Rick Batstone, Holly DeWald and Jacqui Abikoff) as well as some new folks e.g. Dena McPhetres (Unitarian Universalist Society), Sheriff Dan Collis, Chief Dave Nielsen (Belmont), Jim Sawyer (Laconia City Prosecutor), Chief Tom Oetinger (Laconia). It was great to have Judge Martin join us again as well as long time associate, Jay Apicelli and Council members Leo Sanfacon and John Irwin.

This group will be action-oriented and the committee will represent the second leg of the Community Justice stool: Balanced and Restorative Justice. Minutes of this and all meetings convened by the Council are available on request.

Final steps are being taken to initiate the *Professional Providers Advisory Committee*. Letters will be going out within the next day or two inviting representatives of the various sectors for which the Council elicited interest. The sectors include education, health, mental health, substance abuse, juvenile crime, community and family support, family violence and vocational services. Invitations to attend Julie Lyche's presentation on September 13 will be extended to the prospective PPAC candidates with letters of interest requested from them by September 20. It will be important to have the PPAC in place to assist during the forums and prioritization of issues and activities later this fall.

Judy has been away for the past week enjoying a much deserved vacation. So, now you know why your emails and other communications have been so messed up! Sorry about that. Should all be back to normal soon!☺

Looking Ahead ~

The next two weeks look like all the rest...BUSY! We have the *Community Justice* series starting up, *community steering committees* to form and train (Judy Bush is actually in Deschutes County as I write this. Small world huh?), and conducting *Council committee meetings*? Our own Council panel consisting of Leo, Gil, Sue and Mark will be presenting Session 2 of the Community Justice series on the 11th as well. Knock 'em dead gang! Oops...no violence! Good luck folks!

Holly DeWald (Youth Services Bureau) will be holding a meeting on Thursday evening, September 5 to stimulate action toward starting the *Mediation* program.

The *Courthouse Exploratory Committee* meets again on Friday, September 6 at 8:00 AM.

The Finance and Grants Committee will begin planning for next years *budget* at their meeting on September 9 and the Executive Committee will be addressing the *recruitment of new Council members* issues at their meeting on September 11th.

The full Council meets on September 13 at 8:00 AM. Julie Lyche will be featured presenter. The meeting will be held at the Council's office, River Level Conference Room.

I have been invited to attend the *Reclaiming Futures Grantee Meeting* in Chicago from October 3rd to 5th. This will give me an opportunity to meet project directors and coordinators from across the country.

Special Mentions

We would like to welcome back to good health, Council member Dave Russell. Dave recently received by-pass surgery and we wish him the very best health from now on. Good luck Dave.

Also, best of luck to Council members Dave Russell and Jim Pilliod in their re-election bids for the NH House of Representatives; to Alida Millham for her courageous run for the NH Senate; and to Mark Condodemetrakey for going for the gold ring. No folks...he's not getting married (are you Mark), he's running for the House too. Rumor has it that Mary Alice's husband Kent is also in the running for the House. Best of luck one and all! We are proud of all of you for your leadership in democracy and commitment to the people of Belknap County. Through your representation and voice in the legislature, children and families find hope in a healthier future.

Thought to Ponder ~

I went into a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "Where's the self-help section?" She said if she told me, it would defeat the whole purpose. ☺

Respectfully,

Alan

"The Mission of the Citizens Council is to promote Community Justice in Belknap County so children and families can live safely with dignity and respect."