

Director's Report



4th Quarter 2007

"Promoting Community Justice in Belknap County so that children and families can live with dignity and respect."

SO THAT FAMILIES AND CHILDREN CAN LIVE SAFELY WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

As is implicit in our mission statement, so too have children and families been each time they've entered the courtroom of Judge Willard "Bud" Martin over years. As the major visionary and key architect in focusing our efforts on creating the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families, Judge tenure as Special Justice to the District Court on December 12, 2007. In statutorily mandated retirement, Judge Martin made it clear to his colleagues from public service. In tribute to this outstanding public servant and one of our our honor to dedicate this report to Judge "Bud" Martin.



dignified and respected the past thirty-five restorative justice and Martin completed his serving out the limits of that he is not "retiring" founding members, it is

COUNCIL OFFICERS AND NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED

The Council is pleased to announce its officers for 2008. At its annual meeting on December 21st, the Council elected Sarah Fox (Sanbornton) and Emily Clement (Belmont) as its Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Sarah will serve her second term as Chair of the Council while Emily makes her first foray into a Council leadership position. We wish to recognize and thank

Christie Corrigan of New Hampton for the many outstanding contributions families in Belknap County. The Council who have served with distinction for the Warner (Center

when the tenure, Susan served on the provided among Department of engraved glass



Additionally, the Council welcomes Kate Miller (Meredith) and Sandy McLaughlin (Gilford) as its newest members appointed to three year terms. [Above left, Emily Clement presents gift to retiring Council member, Mary Alice Warner while Michelle Roy reads quote on plaque awarded to outgoing Council member, Susan Smith, right photo.]



serving this past year as Vice-Chair of the Council and she continues to make on behalf of children and also said goodbye to two outstanding Council members past six years. Susan Smith (Gilford) and Mary Alice Harbor are two of our originally appointed members Council was first commissioned in 2002. During their served two terms as Council Chair while Mary Alice

Prevention Work Group and started *Parenting From the Inside Out*, a program our juvenile justice providers and the *Family Connections* program at the Corrections Lakes Region Facility. Each of these ladies was presented with an plaque with a quote indicative of their contributions to the Council's mission.

REPORT CARD ON BELKNAP COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE RELEASED TO PUBLIC

In December, the Council released its second report card to the community on juvenile justice outcomes. Based on cases closed in 2006, this report card offers personal vignettes on youth served by our providers, cost comparisons of programs along the service continuum, restitution and victim businesses and individuals engaged in community listing of programs that promote positive youth juvenile justice system. Further refinements to the being paid to victims this next year, will further our by our provider agencies. The Council makes this report possible. For the data collection Assistance Program, the Youth Services Bureau, the and the Laconia District Office of Juvenile thank Council volunteers Andre Paquette and John and Meyer Consulting. And, for writing, pre-

and distribution, we wholeheartedly thank Judy Buswell, David Stamps and Tony Limani, respectively. To access a copy of the Report Card, please click on http://www.bccj.org/PDFs/JJR/BCCJ_Report_Card_2007.pdf

[Photo: Laconia residents Jeannie and Will Malone review the report card.]



participation in restorative panels, community services performed by offending youth, a partial develop, and many more features on the data collection system and additional attention ability to report on the outcomes experienced acknowledges the collaborative work that and reporting we recognize the Youth Belknap County Restorative Justice program Probation and Parole. For data analysis, we Cook and our colleagues at Halter, McDonald production design and layout, and publication

COUNTY BUDGETING CYCLE UNDERWAY

With the Council entering its seventh year of operation, the budgeting process for fiscal year 2008 is well underway. A public hearing was held in December with [Commission Chairman Bud Daignealt](#) presenting the budget to the County Convention. A subsequent meeting with a Convention subcommittee is scheduled for January 11 at which time the Council's budget will undergo further examination with a recommendation going back to the full Convention for final vote in February.

DIVERSION PROGRAMS UNDER FIRE...UNDERFUNDED?

With the cost of court-ordered placements sky-rocketing between \$110 to close to \$400 dollars a day, less costly court diversion programs are being carefully scrutinized by municipal Select Boards and Budget Committees. Faced with increased community needs including rising fuel costs, town welfare budgets and road repairs and maintenance, local officials have put the [Youth Services Bureau](#) and the [Youth Assistance Program](#) on notice that requested funding will be substantially reduced in the 2008 fiscal year. Both programs serve youth as a deterrent to going through the court system and costing taxpayers huge sums of money. Diversion means that youth are offered a second chance to correct their behaviors and remain clear of having a juvenile record if successful in completing a contract designed to restore the harm done to victims and communities. These programs, started in the 70's, have saved taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars a year by keeping juveniles out of the court system. They offer supervised means to correct behavior, restore safety and develop positive citizenship while building on strengths of the youth and assets of the community. If this form of early intervention no longer exists, the cost to taxpayers could go up exponentially. The Citizens Council is convening the providers to review and develop a [comprehensive juvenile justice system](#) based on restorative practices, public input and an integration of other services needed to support positive youth development. We will also be conducting discussions with policy directors within the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) and [local lawmakers](#) as we prepare a plan for consideration by the [Belknap County Commissioners](#) in the year ahead. The Council welcomes all interested parties in discussing the redesign of the juvenile justice system in our county. If interested, please contact Alan Robichaud at 528-3185.

A CHAMPION OF COMMUNITY JUSTICE

At its November meeting, the Council said goodbye to one of its key community partners. Retiring Chief of the Laconia Police Department, [Tom Oetinger](#) was recognized for his commitment to policing, neighborhood empowerment and support of prevention of among youth of Belknap County. Addressing his years in law Vice-Chair [Christie Corrigan](#) read the following inscription on Tom's Council: *"The challenge of social justice is to evoke a sense of community make our nation a better place, just as we make it a safer place."* In Council, Tom remarked that *"The Belknap County Citizen's Council has invaluable partner in the development and support of multi-disciplinary benefit the at-risk youth of the Lakes Region. The Council's promotion of restorative/community justice has brought healing to the victims of crime as well as a strong, positive effect for juvenile offenders who participate in the program."* We are indebted to Tom for his leadership and wish him great success in his new career. Leaving his department in the adept hands of [Chief Mike Moyer](#), we look forward to continuing this positive and proactive partnership with the new Chief and all the fine personnel who represent the [Laconia Police Department](#). [Photo: Christie Corrigan presents Tom Oetinger with Council recognition award.]



community substance abuse enforcement, award from the *that we need to thanking the been an initiatives that of the philosophy*

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

You'll be hearing more about some recent additions to the Belknap County clan. We are pleased to welcome [Wendy Williams](#) to the [CoRe Coalition](#). As the new Assistance Director, Wendy many of the coalition's initiatives as she and CoRe Director [Jena Vincent](#) important in-roads to schools, law enforcement and other organizations as abuse prevention into public focus. The coalition is gaining momentum through broadened participation from each of our schools throughout their work being primarily focused on targeted prevention initiatives, the Frameworks we have reported on in past reports is now bringing a broad-based community assessment focus to [under-aged alcohol use](#) and [young adult binge drinking issues](#) in Belknap and Carroll Counties. We are also pleased to welcome [Colleen McDermott](#)



has immersed herself in have been making they bring substance and is developing nicely Belknap County. With Strategic Prevention

(pictured here) and [Katy Shea](#) as this project's Coordinator and Evaluator, Colleen and Katy will be conducting and analyzing community interviews on alcohol preliminary stage toward developing and implementing a comprehensive action plan this primary public health problem in our state and region. This project is being [Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health](#) (fiscal agent) and an [Oversight Board](#) the project along with a membership consortium of interested community coalitions, and individuals. For more information on how to become involved in this initiative,



please call [Lisa Morris](#) or Collen McDermott at 528-2145. For further information on the CoRe Coalition and its many activities, please contact Jena Vincent at 279-5305 or visit Core's website <http://www.interlakes.org/Core/> .

NOW HERE'S A GREAT VENTURE!

Through the innovation and generosity of the [New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund](#) and the [Pardoe Foundation](#), several Belknap County libraries are recipients of a wonderful new resource. A [Strengthening Families in Community Libraries Project](#) tool kit containing the nationally acclaimed "I Am Your Child" parenting DVD series produced by Rob Reiner has been delivered to a half dozen libraries in Belknap County. The goal is to embed a "Family Resource Information Center" in each of the state's 231 public libraries. To date there are 68 libraries that have been sponsored in the state. According to

[Diane Hastings](#) of the Children's Trust Fund, "the objective of is to provide essential information about parenting, child and child development to each of the public libraries in New and to provide each library with a portable selection of resources, selected parenting brochures, and localized available to parents within their own community." We are that so many of our community libraries now have this resource available for parents. We wish to thank Council [Micheline Roy](#) and [Deb Rosato](#) of the [Community Partners for initiative](#) of the [Belknap County Early Learning Council](#) for collaborating with the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund distributing these kits to our libraries. Special thanks to [Karen](#) and [Diane Hastings](#) of the NH Children's Trust Fund for making these kits available to families throughout the state and an



this project behavior Hampshire parenting resources fortunate important member [Children](#)

and [Carpenter](#)

and an extra special thanks to [Katie Brandt](#) who, as a Council member and staff of the Children's Trust Fund, served as our bridge between her organization and the Council. Katie and her husband Mike are expecting their first baby in the near future.

Center Barnstead is fortunate to have this family among some of its newest residents! Good luck Katie and Mike! You are about to join the world's most honorable profession...Parenting! While the pay is not so great, the rewards are the best anywhere! (Photo includes Katie Brandt, Librarian Holly Brown, Micheline Roy and Deb Rosato presenting the tool kit to the Alton Public Library.) To learn more about this exciting project, visit the following website:

<http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/services/librarians/gsl/2007/433winners.html>

VICTIMS' SATISFACTION SURVEY UNDER REVIEW

A critical component of community justice is the practice of involving victims in each step of the juvenile restorative process. To that end, the Council, in conjunction with members of the [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#), has developed a Belknap County Restitution Fund, a Victims' Rights brochure, indicators of victims' participation in juvenile offense cases and most recently is field testing the use of a [Victims' Satisfaction Survey](#). We hope to increase victim participation and improve outcomes in responding to the needs of victims of juvenile crimes by receiving direct feedback from victims at the time of case closure by each of the four juvenile service and sanction programs in the county. Based on the results of the field test of twenty surveys, we will modify our approach to surveying victims and improving our outreach and involvement with them. Surveys will be sent to victims by the program managing the juvenile case. Respondents will remain anonymous and send their responses to the Citizens Council in pre-postage paid envelopes. The Council will aggregate the responses and will report, for discussion and program improvement, the results with the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council. Victims of juvenile crimes who otherwise do not receive a survey from any of the provider agencies may contact the Citizens Council (528-3185) for further information.

HB1370 GETS FIRST READ...ASSIGNED TO COMMITTEE

"An act establishing a pilot program for an integrated juvenile justice information sharing system" is how this bill frames an issue which we hope will give Belknap County greater ability to track recidivism and improve our response to juvenile offenders. Introduced on behalf of the Council by former Council member [Rep. Alida Millham](#), this bill establishes a pilot program in Belknap County for an [integrated juvenile justice information sharing system](#). The program permits agencies in the pilot program to share otherwise confidential information about juveniles participating in their respective programs either through diversion or a delinquency proceeding. The bill directs the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families to file a report summarizing the findings and recommendations of the pilot program.

In addition to [Rep. Millham](#), other sponsors include [Rep. Pilliod](#), Belk 5; [Rep. Reeve](#), Belk 4; [Rep. Arsenault](#), Belk 4; [Rep. Bettencourt](#), Rock 4; and [Sen. Sgambati](#), Dist 4. The bill will be heard by the House [Children and Family Law Committee](#) on January 22 and may be read in its entirety on the State's legislative website through www.nh.gov .

DATA GRANT CONTINUES...NEW INITIATIVES EXPECTED

We have previously reported that the Citizens Council was awarded a second year grant by the [State Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice \(SAG\)](#). Continuing to work on implementing data enhancements, upgrading the use of the case closing data reporting process, and detailing improvements to juvenile justice through enhanced collaboration among providers and funding sources are some of the areas of interest going forward. With improved data collection, analysis and detail the Council's [Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group](#), [Data Committee](#), and [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#) will be in a better position to assess policy, funding and programmatic needs of the juvenile justice system in Belknap County. We will be conducting various forums and inviting public opinion through surveys and interviews in the months ahead.

On November 14, 2007, the Council was visited by our Division of Juvenile Justice Services contract manager [Pam Sullivan](#) and James Antal, a federal auditor for the State Relations and Assistance Division of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in regards to the SAG grant. On hand for the interview and to share the Council's multiple initiatives pertaining to the data grant, was [Andre Paquette](#) who chairs the Council's Juvenile Justice Advisory Council and the Balanced and Restorative Justice work group. Andre continues to provide the leadership and citizen oversight that epitomizes and distinguishes the work of the Council.

BROADENING THE NETWORK

Outreach to Other Regions ~ A couple of years ago, the State Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice, announced the availability of grants for [Coos and Carroll Counties](#) to investigate and apply planning processes for their regions similar to what the Citizens Council has developed in Belknap County. Since then, two major initiatives have emerged bringing together coalitions of agencies and citizens to examine approaches to the juvenile justice issues in their respective counties. The Council was asked by each group to share information on how the Council emerged and does its work. On November 8, Andre Paquette, [Leo Sanfacon](#) and [Alan Robichaud](#) attended a [Carroll County Juvenile Justice](#) meeting and met with over a dozen people who have committed to a planning process and have been meeting for the past several months. The Honorable [Judge Martin](#), who has been sitting on [Ossipee Family Court](#) bench over the past year, has been a key figure in support of this venture. Also, on November 29, Alan Robichaud met in Lancaster with *Coos Families, Connected*, the planning group under the leadership of the [Honorable James Michalik](#), Coos County Family Division judge, and [Patrick Kelly](#), to share the genesis and organizational structure of the Citizens Council. There is great enthusiasm in both of these groups to introduce change in services to youth. The Council will remain open and available to these and other groups anytime throughout their developmental process. All of our activities, documents and initiatives are reported through these reports and posted on our website for viewing and critique by any interested party.

Council Presentations and Facilitation ~ One of the roles that the Council is often asked to play is that of facilitator of community discussions relevant to issues pertaining to children and families. To that end, we were able to offer our services to the following forums during the last quarter:

- **Justice for All.** This day-long staff development workshop was presented in conjunction with [Upstream's Professional Development Committee](#). The session was held at Woodside/Taylor Community on October 3. Approximately 35 people attended.
- **Open Space Forum.** Cosponsored with the [Winnisquam Regional School District's Safe School Coalition](#), this Saturday forum was designed to stimulate discussion among youth, parents, community members and school representatives on issues that impact our youth. Held on October 13, this forum is being considered for a repeat performance on a more county scale perhaps involving the various Friends of Rachel groups throughout the region. Stay tuned!
- **New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund Annual Meeting.** Council member [Amy Hall](#) (Belmont) is credited with providing an informational and spirited exhibit at this annual meeting held at the Grappone Center in Concord on October 18. Thanks Amy, you may have found a new calling!
- **Circle of Grace.** Another Council member from Belmont, [Emily Clement](#), invited the Council to present at the fifth and final session of the [Circle of Grace](#) series conducted by the [Laconia Congregational Church](#) on November 11. With over thirty participants present, the topic centered on understanding community assets to meet local needs. Congratulations Emily for a well-organized and enlightening series on contemporary community issues and thanks to your group's members for committing their valuable time to participate in such worthy discussions.
- **Boy & Girls Club Planning Session.** The [Boys and Girls Club of the Lakes Region](#) requested that the Council facilitate discussion with a large group of community leaders in helping them to develop ideas for sustainability. Held at the Boys and Girls Club on November 21, approximately 2 dozen people representing a broad diversity of community leaders, attended a luncheon session to help the club plan funding strategies for the future.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Taking Stock in the Future ~ The Citizens Council will be conducting a retreat to revisit its mission and prevailing challenges and opportunities in the years ahead. All past and present Council members and County Commissioners have been invited to attend a one-day session which will be facilitated by [Donna Singer](#), a professional organizational development consultant from Portsmouth and Boston.

Community Sense Makes Common Sense ~ The annual [Belknap County Convocation on Children and Families](#) is again being held at the [Opechee Inn and Spa Conference Center](#) (formerly the Expo Center). This year's theme has generated substantial interest by local schools which will contribute many wonderful displays, related to the theme, throughout the convocation.

Community Needs Assessment Seeks Public Input ~ In conjunction with the [Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health](#), the Council will be one of several cosponsors of a community assessment that will be released in 2008. Stay tuned for more information and opportunities to participate in this important process.

Child Maltreatment Report ~ The Council is preparing a release of [Perspectives on Child Maltreatment, CHINS and Juvenile Delinquency in Belknap County](#). Based on data collected by the [Belknap County Human Services Department](#) and compiled by the Council's [Data Committee](#), we hope to release this report in early 2008 and conduct discussions with county and state policymakers on ways to collaborate in providing future services to children and families in Belknap County. We wish to thank [John Cook](#), MA and [Scott Meyer](#), PhD for their assistance in putting this report together.

YOUR PLACE OR OURS?

There is much more happening than any single report can hope to capture. We would like to remind our readers that the Citizens Council will go anywhere, anytime to speak about the issues impacting our children, families and communities and the work of the Citizens Council. We also convene regular committees, work groups, and various forums throughout the year. All of our activities and events are open to the public and we welcome all to become more engaged in our work. Whether you want to become a Council member, sit in on an occasional meeting, or apprise the Council of a concern you have in your community, you are welcomed at our table.

THOUGHT TO PONDER

"We make a living based on what we get, and we make a life based on what we give." ~ Winston Churchill

Respectfully,

Alan Robichaud

Executive Director

For more information on the activities, events and initiatives of the Citizens Council, or to apply to become a member of the Citizens Council, please visit our website at www.bccj.org or call us at 528-3185.