



COMMUNITIES FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

RESPONDING TO CRIME IN WAYS THAT HEAL, HOLD ACCOUNTABLE, AND PUT RIGHT

A REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Well, not quite. Our big in-office news is the birth of Zane Sawin, the son of our ED, Jennifer Larson Sawin (see page 3). During her maternity leave, the Board and I are doing what we can to hold down the fort. Please feel free to call me, Christy Barbee, 978.318.3467 or email cbarbee@c4rj.com with any questions.

RJ's importance to relationships

Crime harms relationships. Even when an offender doesn't know the person he or she has harmed, relationships suffer: between offenders and their loved ones, between families, between members of a community. Unwittingly perhaps, the offender has also started a relationship, a negative one, with the person he or she has harmed.

In our work with offenders, even adults, we often find that they've made no connection between their behavior and the people they've harmed. Often we find shoplifters have no idea of the extent of damage they do to shopkeepers and their employees, or that the harm can be more than financial. Recently, a store owner told a circle, "Everyone who works in the shop feels dirty when something like this happens. And then there are the customers. I'm going to have to install a more intrusive security system, and I know it's going to make customers feel uncomfortable, like we don't trust them."

To this shoplifter, it was impersonal. She was wrapped up in her own troubles.

After the circle, the owner was grateful he'd had a chance to look the offender in the eye and describe what her acts had done, something unlikely to have happened in a courtroom.

Of course, we see cases in which wrongdoing is quite intentionally directed at another person. In most such instances, the motivation is a problem with a relationship, the crime an attempt to "even the score" or to right a perceived wrong. Restorative justice can help here, too.

Some of the hardest cases we encounter are those in which we try to help offenders grasp the harms they've done to community interests—as with trespassing, damage to public property, or failure to obey traffic laws. Often offenders simply do not feel they have any relationship with public institutions. We're always very grateful to public employees who are willing to come to circles to describe the consequences in these cases. In so doing, they actually establish new relationships and help us help the offenders make these important connections.

— Christy Barbee, *chief case coordinator for C4RJ*



Just for Laughs Comic Jimmy Tingle to Perform at C4RJ Benefit

Jimmy Tingle, the nationally known social and political comedian from Somerville, will headline a benefit for C4RJ Sunday, September 13, 2009, at 5 p.m. at the Concord-Carlisle High School Auditorium, 500 Walden Street, Concord, MA.

The New York Times described Jimmy as "so cheerfully intelligent he makes his audience optimistic in the face of appalling reality. It takes a serious and well intentioned man to make one laugh to such good effect."

Jimmy has appeared on 60 Minutes II, the Tonight Show, Larry King Weekend, the Late Show with Conan O'Brien, the American Comedy Awards, and his own HBO comedy special.

Tickets for the performance are \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door. Visit www.C4RJ.com to find tickets locations or to purchase online.

For more information about Communities for Restorative Justice, please visit www.C4RJ.com, or call 978-318-3467.

The Policeman's View

Fifteen years ago, when Matthew Pinard became a police officer, he went to work thinking his job was clear-cut; it was about "arresting the bad guys."

"But you start to see things in a different light when you've been to court a few times," he says. There he could see the nuances, the complexities in the lives of offenders and victims. He could see that victims didn't always get what they needed and that offenders often left without learning much.

This year, Detective Pinard, now with the Littleton Police Department, brought Littleton's first two cases to restorative circles. Each of six young people had his or her own circle, sitting with parents in some instances, C4RJ volunteers, school officials, and/or victims of wrongdoing. Each offender carried out a restorative agreement customized to address the offender's part in the wrongdoing and to what he or she needed to learn.

Victim's wishes were an important part of the agreements. Pinard was very pleased with the outcomes.

"What I really like about the circle is that it makes [offenders] think," he said. "Think about when you go to court. Your attorney does all the thinking for you, along with your parents. With restorative justice, you have to think for yourself and really take responsibility."

Each of these offenders avoided a criminal record because they completed the process. Had they failed to carry out each measure they had agreed to, the police could have taken their cases to court.

The circle process is not an easy ride for offenders, Pinard said, noting that instead of one appearance before a judge or magistrate, an offender attends several meetings—the opening and closing



circles, as well as regular meetings and phone contacts with facilitators assigned to help them stay on track in fulfilling their agreements.

Littleton will continue to refer selected cases to C4RJ, including, cases involving adult offenders, when the department deems it appropriate. Chief John Kelly is fully behind the program.

Pinard is also the school resource officer for the Littleton public schools. He values his relationships with students, administrators, and guidance counselors. It's hard when he sees kids get into trouble, and sometimes harder still when the only choice is between court and doing nothing. "Restorative justice is another tool that's been added to my collection. This gives us an advantage to help those who want to be helped."

Westford Police to Refer to C4RJ

C4RJ welcomes the Westford community to our partnership! The Westford Police Department has announced it will begin partnering with C4RJ on criminal cases. "This gives people in the community a voice and input" when wrongdoing occurs, said Westford Police Sgt. William Luppold.

"Often we find offenders aren't fazed by going to a judge. But it's much harder—and a lot more meaningful—to face the people in the community when you've done something wrong," Luppold said.

The point person for the department will be Officer Mike Croteau, who was recently named the department's community service officer, a post in which he serves as liaison to the community and municipal institutions.

Cases to be referred will include offenses such as vandalism and underage drinking, when the department believes both victim and offender will benefit from the program.

Westford residents will participate in training this fall to become circles volunteers.

C4RJ Annual Meeting

All volunteers and police personnel are invited to C4RJ's Annual Meeting, Thursday, November 5, 2009, at 7 p.m., at the brand new Littleton Public Safety Building, at 500 Great Road. Just before the meeting, the C4RJ Board of Advisors will vote on officers for the year starting that evening. The slate of officers includes:

- President — Barbara Howland (Carlisle)
- Vice president — Jeff Campbell (Concord)
- Treasurer — Beth Railsback (Concord)
- Clerk — Sue Curtin (Concord)

Howland has served on the board since its inception in 2006 and as chair of the Development Committee. She will assume the presidency from Barb Chase, who has championed restorative justice since 1999. Campbell is currently vice president and will also assume the role of Development chair. Railsback succeeds Keith Man, who has served as treasurer since 2006. Curtin has been clerk since 2006.

If you can help with set-up and refreshments for the meeting, please contact Christy Barbee, 978-318-3467 or cbarbee@c4rj.com.



News of Our Own



Welcome to the world, **Zane Karabo Sawin**, born July 7 to C4RJ Executive Director Jennifer Larson Sawin and her husband, Dr. Greg Sawin! Zane made his first visit to C4RJ's office at the ripe old age of 10 days, resplendent in a bright green Bob Marley onesie.

C4RJ Board of Advisors President **Barb Chase** will deliver a guest sermon at the UCC Congregational Church of Boxborough on September 27. Barb was invited by the **Rev. Dr. Ute Molitor**, who herself recently trained as a C4RJ volunteer. The topic: The Spiritual Basis of Restorative Justice. A group of C4RJ volunteers will present a mock circle as an after-sermon forum for members of the congregation.

Ellen Hutt, longtime C4RJ volunteer and now a facilitator with the Gold team, recently addressed the Federation for Children with Special Needs about legal issues facing educational advocates. Ellen herself works as an advocate for special-needs youth, helping them and their families secure the educational accommodations they need in school.

Linda Minkoff, a member of the C4RJ Board of Advisors, has been elected president of her synagogue, Congregation Beth Elohim in Acton. She will serve for two years.

Congratulations and best wishes to C4RJ teen volunteers **Austin Bamford** (Concord),

Sam Carrao-Clannon (Concord), **Grant McCandless** (Carlisle), **Miranda Morrison** (Carlisle), **Avery Newton** (Concord), and **Jesse Pearlman** (Carlisle) on their graduations from high school. We hope you'll all remain in touch.

C4RJ volunteer **Miranda Morrison** was awarded the John F. Donovan Memorial Flag in recognition as the "best all-round young woman" in the 2010 class at Concord-Carlisle High School. The criteria for the award are dependability, leadership, service, and patriotism.

Special thanks to:

- **Barbara Smith Moran** of Concord and **Bob McGowan** of Acton. Barbara has joined Keith Man as a coordinator of the Blue team, and Bob McGowan stepped in for the summer to lead the Green team.
- **Carolyn Gold** of Concord, a longtime facilitator and now a member of the Gold team. Carolyn, who does career and personal coaching, recently conducted a special training for new facilitators, sharing tips for communicating with offenders and for helping them carry out restorative agreement measures.
- Youth volunteer **Avery Newton** and Silver team member **Sally Bull** for their help populating a donor database.
- **Lloyd** and **Lisa Resnick** for publicity and design help.

Police Veteran to Discuss RJ Webster to speak at breakfast

Ken Webster, a retired police officer in the UK and an early advisor to C4RJ, will visit September 11 to speak with police officers about restorative practices. Webster was a police officer for 30 years and brought restorative justice principles and practices to the Thames Valley, where he lived and worked. Today he is managing director of KW Consultancy & Training Ltd and consults with agencies and organizations wishing to start or improve restorative practices.

Ken consulted with local organizers five years ago, and those discussions led to the formation of Communities for Restorative Justice.

At a 9 a.m. breakfast meeting on September 11, he will meet with officers from participating C4RJ and other interested police departments. For more information about location and to RSVP, please contact Christy Barbee, 978-318-3467 or cbarbee@c4rj.com.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Community Chest, United Way, Youth in Philanthropy Fund C4RJ

Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ) is delighted to have the support of Concord-Carlisle Community Chest, the Acton-Boxborough United Way, and Acton-Boxborough Youth in Philanthropy.

The Community Chest, one of C4RJ's earliest supporters, recently awarded us a 10th one-year grant. ABUW, which began funding us in 2008, awarded another grant for 2009–2010. Both grants will support training of C4RJ volunteers and police officers in cultural competency and motivational interviewing techniques.

The YIP program, administered by youth at Acton-Boxborough High School, awarded funds to support C4RJ's extension into Acton and Boxborough.

Joining these generous organizations in supporting our work are faith groups, civic and health organizations, foundations, and businesses including:

First Parish Church of Concord; Trinitarian Congregational Church of Concord; West Concord Union Church; Karem Shalom in Concord; Grace Episcopal Church of Everett; Alcott School PTG; CHNA 15: Northwest Suburban Health Alliance; Regional Center for Healthy Communities; Concord Carlisle Human Rights Council; Concord Cultural Council; Acton Community Policing Fund; Carlisle Community Policing Fund; Concord Community Policing Fund; Willard School PTG; Middlesex Savings Charitable Foundation; Sudbury Foundation; J.E. and Z.B. Butler Foundation, Boston Law Collaborative, LLC; Law Offices of Friend & Reinhardt; N.P. James Insurance Agency; Braver PC and Associates; Concord Mobil; Concord Optical; Debra's Natural Gourmet; Law Cooperative, LLC; Phillips Fine Paint and Wallcoverings; and The Westford Group.

Thank you to all of our supporters—including individual contributors far too numerous to mention here. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our work and extend it to new communities.





Check out our new website!

We recently launched a new website. It's still *www.C4RJ.com*, but vastly enhanced. It's an excellent resource for victims, offenders, volunteers, police departments, and all who are interested in restorative justice and C4RJ in particular. It contains the latest news about what we are doing as well as links to research and other organizations.

For the first time, we have portals for both offenders and victims that contain important materials about participating in restorative justice. Offenders are given a passcode when they enter the program so that they can view the contract for participation and other key documents.

For victims, there is information about what to expect when attending a circle. "Often, victims, offenders and their families are unable to comprehend the program while experiencing the stress induced by the criminal incident; the website will provide helpful resources at a later time," said Jennifer Larson Sawin, C4RJ Executive Director.

C4RJ will track how the website is used as a way of evaluating its usefulness and guiding future decisions about content.

Donors can make pledges on the site. In fact, on our home page, you can click to buy tickets to the Jimmy Tingle benefit for C4RJ.

Jennifer Larson Sawin authored the content and chose images, and David Gerratt of DG Communications designed the site. The effort was funded by the Northwest Suburban Health Alliance/CHNA 15 DoN funds from Lahey Clinic.



Restorative justice extended to adult cases

Recently the Concord Police Department has referred two cases involving adult criminal offenses to restorative justice circles. These are C4RJ's first such referrals. Since 2000, we have focused on cases involving juveniles and young adults.

These adult cases, one involving an assault and one involving shoplifting, proceeded very well. In both instances, victims participated fully, sharing with offenders the harms they had suffered. "All parties in the process can benefit from the program, regardless of the age of the offender," said Concord Police Chief Leonard Wetherbee. "It would be wrong to deny a victim the option of restorative justice just because an offender has reached a certain age."

C4RJ Executive Director Jennifer Larson Sawin agrees: "If I were a victim who'd been downtrodden by an offender, I'd feel doubly victimized by a system that refused me access to restorative justice," she said.

Many restorative justice programs around the world routinely address cases stemming from adult wrongdoing.

Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ) is a community-police partnership that offers restorative justice to those affected by crime. Restorative justice recognizes that crime is a violation of people and relationships, not just a violation of law. Police refer cases to us. In the aftermath of wrongdoing, our "circle" process includes in the decision-making those affected by crime: victims, offenders, loved ones, supporters, community members, and law enforcement officials.