



Cultivating Justice,
Nonviolence & Well-being

612 N. Main
Newton, KS 67114

316-284-0000
info@peaceconnections.org
www.peaceconnections.org

A nonprofit organization

Store Hours

Monday-Thursday
10 a.m.-5 p.m.

closed Fridays

Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

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October-November-December 2011

PEACE CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

Getting Ahead Class Graduation

Well over a hundred people turned out on August 30 to celebrate the accomplishments of the most recent Getting Ahead class. Graduates, along with family members, friends, class facilitators, Circle Leaders & Allies, Peace Connections board members and other supporters, gathered for a potluck dinner before the graduation ceremony at First United Methodist Church.



Getting Ahead graduates celebrate August 30, 2011

Executive Director of the Newton Area Chamber of Commerce, Jim Schwarzenberger, was the Community Speaker for the event.

In his remarks, Jim offered two life lessons for the graduates: *learn to like yourself and give yourself away*. He stressed that his remarks were useful for everyone, not just the Getting Ahead class members. Quoting from a book by Bob Burg and John David Mann, *The Go-Giver*, he shared five key points that invite us to radically shift focus from getting to giving:

1. Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than you take in payment.
2. Your income is determined by how many people you serve and how well you serve them.
3. Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people's interests first.
4. The most valuable gift you have to offer is yourself.
5. The key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving.

Using examples from his own life, Jim illustrated that giving of ourselves can be as simple as offering a smile or a compliment. He closed with a final word of advice, which he said was also a reminder to himself: "Work each day at appreciating yourself and your gifts and...then...give yourself away."

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Graduates

■ Continued from page 1

Remarks by graduates as they accepted their certificates brought both laughter and tears from recipients and audience alike. A consistent theme among graduates was how the group had given them a sense of community. Several also mentioned the value of the self-assessment and goal-setting exercises that allowed them to recognize and change self-defeating patterns. "Circles of Hope has the right name," said one grateful graduate. "That's what it's done for me; it gave me hope...and...a place to learn to trust."

This is the largest Getting Ahead class so far, with 13 graduates, each of whom received a certificate of completion. Thanks to the generosity of donors and the hard work of Circle Leader Trianna Jones, graduates also received a variety of gifts and certificates provided by Central National Bank, Cottonwood Pediatrics, Dairy Queen, Delta Dental, Dillon's, First Bank of Newton, BeautiControl, Health Ministries, Hendrickson Chiropractic, Midland National Bank, Newton Chamber of Commerce, PINNACLE, Prudential Real Estate and Terrance, Trianna & kids.

Getting Ahead Facilitators are Denise Rhoades, Mark Rhoades and Bill Reynolds.

Circles Update

Circles of Hope continues to meet every Tuesday, 6-8 pm, at the First United Methodist Church in Newton for an evening meal and presentations, conversation, the Getting Ahead class and various meetings.

The BIG View meeting continued to focus on housing issues throughout the summer, with several informative presentations:

- Tips for Being a Good Tenant was given by Sylvia Bartel, Realtor.
- A panel discussion on housing issues was facilitated by Laurie Oswald-Robinson and included Barbara Martin/Housing Authority; T. Walton/Sheriff; Sylvia Bartel/Realtor; Brad Schmidt/Prairie View; Jason Mitchell/Landlord; Ron Harder/Landlord & Realtor; Iris Malone/Tenant
- Presentation by Laurie Oswald-Robinson, Sylvia Bartel, Roger Ratzlaff, Steve Richards and Roy Pumphrey summarized the main issues identified in the housing discussion and explained that it will be moved to a "round-table" format in September, so it can transition out to the community for discussion and implementation.

Other education meetings have focused on Healthy Eating without Overspending with Bev Nickel and on "Telling Your Story: Tips on communicating to groups" with Don Swender. Also we had an opportunity for Circle Leaders to teach us what they learned in Getting Ahead about assessing resources and setting SMART goals.



The group from Kansas who attended Circles Hands on Training in Indiana, July 2011

Bill & Glenda Reynolds, Circles Coaches, Judy Hawk, PC Board member, and Candie Coutts, Circle Leader, attended Hands on Training for Circles in Indiana in July, which proved to be a very positive experience. Bill & Glenda also attended a Bridges Training in Colorado.

Several Ally Trainings were held during the summer months. More recently Ally Trainings were offered as "break-out" sessions from evening Circles meetings. We now have a number of new Allies to be matched with our Getting Ahead graduates.

An upcoming poverty simulation is planned for October at Bethel College. We are excited about the opportunity these simulations offer students and the community to learn about what living in poverty is like.

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Circles Update

■ Continued from page 2

Circles is continuing to work on sharing information with the community. Recent groups include the Newton Senior Center, Newton Medical Center Employee Health Fair, Hope Fest, Western District Conference of MCUSA Women's Retreat, Bethel College convocation, and the United Methodist Health Ministries Fund board in Hutchinson. We also had booths at South-Central and Western District Conferences of the Mennonite Church. Communication with a Hutchinson group starting Circles has been ongoing.

Circles was grateful to receive a grant from Excel Industries for paper goods for Circles meals.

As always, we welcome you to learn more about Circles and become involved in this community-changing endeavor. See calendar for meetings open to the public or stop by!



Kansas State SRS Secretary Bob Siedlecki heard about Circles of Hope when our group went to Topeka in February to speak to the Appropriations Committee. He was sufficiently intrigued to bring three colleagues to the August 16 Circles meeting in Newton.

Three Circles of Hope Groups Meet

Representatives from the three Circles of Hope in Kansas (Harvey, Reno and McPherson Counties) met in McPherson on September 5 to discuss ways of expanding Circles in Kansas and increasing our fund-raising capacity. The special speaker was Alan Rice, Executive Director of the North Carolina Circles Initiative.

Christmas Giving Tradition Benefits Peace Connections

Last December, Peace Connections was the recipient of an envelope of checks all donated by the Dick and Mary Rempel family. Following their annual custom of giving to a charity instead of buying gifts, one family member suggested Peace Connections as the focus of giving for Christmas 2010. The checks were gathered without any of the family members knowing each other's check amounts or the total value of the contributions.



This family custom has been going on for 20 years or more and provides a great example of how families can consciously choose to focus their giving where resources are needed most. The adults of the three families feel that they don't need gifts, but still like to shop for their children. Occasionally token gifts with a \$5 limit or a gift containing a service are exchanged between adults.

Dick noted that organizations like Peace Connections provide an avenue of service expressing the gospel at the points where the pain is. Because of this, they were especially attracted to the Circles of Hope program. The family has a long-standing habit of giving, including foster parenting for over 20 children, humanitarian work, and relief efforts through the Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service. We are so pleased they have also often included Peace Connections in this list.

Imagine how the world might change if more families joined in honoring Christmas as a time to extend giving beyond their own families! If you decide to adopt this idea, please keep Peace Connections in mind.

BOOK & GIFT SHOP

2012 calendars coming soon!

"Iconic. Indispensable. Feisty. Venerable. Educational. Revolutionary. Heartwrenching. Stunning." All these



words and many more have been used to describe the Peace Calendar, now in its 41st year! It is a celebration of people around the world taking charge of the daunting task of making the world a

more just place for their communities ... and for ours. Full color, 14 x 22. Over 200 people's history annotations. Holidays for many faiths. Lunar cycles, 13 native moons. **\$14.95**

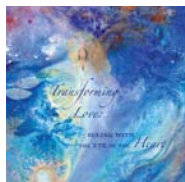
The Dream of Peace – **2011 Cat Lovers Against the BOMB** – For the cat lover in your

life who is also committed to peace. With terrific photos every month,

plus tidbits of world history almost every day and great quotes about peace and social justice, this calendar is the purrrrrfect for the home or office. The calendar supports Nebraskans for Peace. Black and white, 8½"x 11" **\$8.95**



Transforming Love: Seeing With the Eye of the Heart - a 2012 wall calendar. The path to transformation is pure



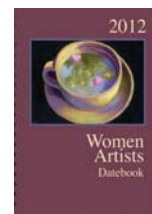
Love, the "Love One Another" – "Love of Neighbor" – "Self-Emptying" kind of Love . . . When we view the world through the lens of our heart, there is a richness, an essence that flows from our soul . . .

Published by the Ministry of the Arts.

Color, 11"x11" **\$12.95**. *Monthly Planner also available for \$15.95.*

With art and poetry by 30 women, the **Women Artists**

Datebook testifies to the beauty and fullness of contemporary women's lives. This special edition of the datebook features women artists taking women as their subject as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. Spiral-bound w/ smudge-free stock. Full color and black/white art. 5"x7" **\$13.95**



Christmas is coming... give a gift that expresses peace and supports Peace Connections! We have ideas for...

- Babies & Children: *stocking stuffers, picture books*
- Teens: *"Advice from" t-shirts, bookmarks, bumper stickers*
- Women: *jewelry, figurines, candles*
- Men: *windmills, CDs, "Advice from" sweatshirts*
- Anyone: *therapeutic pillows, wind chimes, gift of a tree, calendars, books*

Can't decide? Give a **gift certificate** in the amount of your choice from Peace Connections.

Also see our selection of **Christmas cards** and **picture books** – filled with messages of peace!



Giving Garden

About 600 lbs of produce this year has been harvested, which was distributed between the Salvation Army and Agape Resources. With the lack of rainfall and record heat the garden has not been as productive as in the past. A fall gardening workshop was conducted on August 13, with a very good turnout at the garden. As always, Peace Connections' contribution in paying the water bill for the garden is very appreciated, especially during such a hot, dry summer.

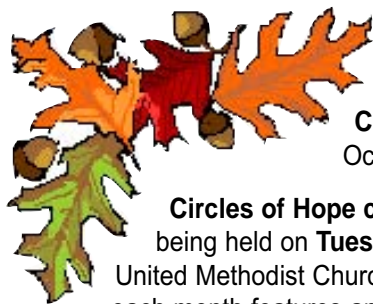
Facebook Users! We invite you to follow both Peace Connections and Circles of Hope on Facebook.



Find us on
Facebook

FALL CALENDAR

All events are held at Peace Connections unless otherwise noted



OCTOBER

Harvey Co. United Way
Chili Cook-Off will be Sat.,
Oct. 1, 11:30 am-1:30 pm.

Circles of Hope community meetings are being held on **Tuesdays**, 6:30-8 pm at the First United Methodist Church. The first Tuesday of each month features an educational topic, and the fourth Tuesday is the Big View meeting, which explores and works on barriers that keep people right here in Harvey County from having enough resources. (The second Tuesday is reserved for Ally and Circle Leader meetings and the third Tuesday is reserved for the Guiding Coalition meeting.)

Peace Connections Board meeting will be **October 6**, 7 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

Bethel College Fall Festival, Saturday, October 8, 9 am-3 pm. Stop by the Peace Connections booth located outside of the Fine Arts Center for a sampling of store products and information. A great time to pick up your sweatshirt order if you placed one in September!

Be the Peace Monthly Meditation continues on **Monday, October 4**. Join Marva Weigelt from 12:10-12:50 for a time of meditative/prayerful silence in which we'll hold an intention for the peace and well-being of our community. Absolutely no experience is necessary. Whatever your faith affiliation, style of prayer or meditation, experience or qualifications, if you are willing to try sitting quietly for 30 minutes with the intention to be peaceful for the good of yourself and your neighbors, we welcome your contribution.

International Eradication of Poverty Day is October 17. This is a day designated by the United Nations to "promote awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution in all countries, particularly in developing countries." It has taken place every year since 1993 on October 17 to commemorate the day in 1987 that over a hundred thousand people in Paris gathered to honor victims of violence, poverty, and hunger at the site where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948. Find out more on the web at www.un.org/en/events/povertyday/. This would be a great day to make a donation to our Circles of Hope program, which is working to end poverty one family at a time in Harvey County.

Come & get your hand tattooed with a colorful rubber stamp at Peace Connections during the 17th annual downtown **Halloween Walk** on Saturday, **October 29**, 5:00-6:30 pm. You're also invited to assist with stamping, which is tons of fun! Give us a call if you're interested.

NOVEMBER

Circles community meetings will be held on **Tuesdays**, 6:30-8 pm at the First United Methodist Church. See info under October.

Circles of Hope presentation at Life Enrichment, **November 2**, 9:30 am, Krehbiel Auditorium, Bethel College, N. Newton

Peace Connections Board meeting will be **November 3**, 7 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

Be the Peace Monthly Meditation on Monday, **November 7**. Join Marva Weigelt from 12:10-12:50.

Experience the **Taste of Christmas in downtown Newton** on **Thurs., November 10, 10 am – 8 pm, Fri., November 11, 10 am – 5:30 pm & Sat., November 12, 10 am – 5:30 pm**. Stop by Peace Connections to see our Christmas specials and sample our refreshments.

Weekend Vigil for the School of Americas (SOA) will be held **November 18-20**. Keep participants in your thoughts and prayers.

DECEMBER

Circles community meetings will be held on **Tuesdays**, 6:30-8 pm at the First United Methodist Church. See info. under October.

No Board meeting in December.

We hope to have the Peace Connections **Gift Shop open late until 8 pm on Thursdays** throughout December (need to line up volunteers to do so). Stop by on **December 1, 8, 15, or 22** to find gifts that reflect peace for those on your list!



Board Notes

Voths team up to contribute to the Peace Connections Board

We welcome Mel and Mary Sue Voth who are sharing a position on the Peace Connections board. We asked them to share a little bit about themselves and their thoughts on joining us.



Mary Sue & Mel Voth

Mary Sue grew up on a farm southeast of Newton near McLain. Following graduation from Newton High School, she began her banking career in Newton and since then has held executive bank management positions in Kansas City; Phoenix, AZ; Spirit Lake, IA; and Denver and Colorado Springs, CO. She retired in December, 2008 after 49 years.

Mel grew up on a farm near Walton and graduated from Walton High School. He graduated from Bethel College in 1955; later he received a Doctor of Business Administration Degree from Indiana University. Mel taught at Kansas State, Wichita State and the American Graduate School of International Management in Glendale, AZ. He held Chief Financial Officer positions in several companies including 15 years at Hesston Corporation. Mel served on the Bethel College Board of Directors for twelve years. He retired in December, 2008.

Since retirement we spent six months volunteering for Evangelical Mission Ministries in Pharr, TX. We have also volunteered with MCC—SWAP in Whitesburg, KY deep in the Appalachian Mountains. After recently moving to Kidron Bethel Retirement Community in North Newton, we were introduced to Peace Connections by residents at Kidron. Hearing about the activities and mission of the Circles of Hope, we immediately became interested and attended an 'introductory meeting.' Each of us is presently in training to become an Ally for Circles of Hope.

Visiting further with Myrna Krehbiel, Executive Director at Peace Connections, we developed an interest in all of the initiatives supported by Peace Connections and look forward to participating in the further development of these initiatives.

Welcome to Marva Weigelt – New Peace Connections Administrative Associate

After seven-and-a-half years as part-time Administrative Associate for Peace Connections, Amy Schmidt is following her dream to return to the classroom and has taken a teaching position with the Newton district. According to Myrna Krehbiel, this is cause for both celebration and tears, as she wishes the best for Amy and will also greatly miss her caring, generous spirit and their fruitful working relationship.

Serendipitously, a person with surprisingly similar skills to Amy's walked in the door and asked how she might be of service to Peace Connections the day before Amy got her job offer!

Marva Weigelt moved to Newton from Matfield Green, Kansas this March and wandered into Peace Connections to ask about its mission not long afterward. She enjoyed volunteering in the Summer Food Program, started the monthly *Be the Peace* meditation at Peace Connections and took the Circles of Hope Ally training in August. In her own words, she has a heart for service and is excited about working and volunteering in an organization with such life-changing programs, a place where boundaries disappear in the light of love. Marva has a colorful and varied work background with a central passion for writing. If you want to know more, she says you can drop by Peace Connections and ask her anything you like, no matter how seemingly impertinent. As a general rule, Marva will be in the office Tuesday - Thursday.



Amy Schmidt and Marva Weigelt

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

- Mother Teresa

We are grateful to the following people for their gift of time during July, August & September, 2011:



- ◆ Marlene Smucker, Leann Toews, Stan Bohn, Jeanette Stucky, Cathy Anderson, Ruby Moore, Vernon Lohrentz, Kathy Randall, Cay Siebert, & Gloria Rediger for help on Saturdays and other times when staff was out of the office in July, August, & September
- ◆ Craig Jaworski, Candie Coutts, Michelle Bosworth, Debra Anderson, Ruby Moore, Carol Ann Adair, Teresa Froese and Trianna Jones for helping staff host a Circles booth at Hope Fest
- ◆ The enthusiastic response to our fall Phonathon – your gifts are especially appreciated at this time of year!

Words of thanks. . .

I want to thank Peace Connections for the past seven years of employment. I have learned so much through my work here and have been inspired by many of the volunteers, board members, constituents, and others who share in the work of Peace Connections. In addition I have been inspired by and blessed to work with such a wonderful Director, Myrna Krehbiel, who gives her heart daily to the mission of compassion and justice. I am truly grateful for the opportunity I have had to be a part of an organization that makes such a difference in our community and beyond! *Amy Schmidt*

It is with tears in my eyes and joy in my heart that I say thank you and God bless to Amy. There have been times in the last few years that I have said quietly to myself, “When Amy leaves Peace Connections, I’m leaving too.” That’s to say how much I value Amy as a colleague and friend. Amy is one of the kindest and most competent persons I know—wise too. It has been a joy to partner with her in bringing the vision and mission of Peace Connections to life. With DEEP, DEEP appreciation and respect, *Myrna Krehbiel*



Phonathon thanks!

The Peace Connections board & staff express our gratitude for the generous responses to our recent phonathon! In answer to our call for your contributions, many of you sent donations and words of thanks. Your encouragement in the work for peace and justice matters! As we near the end of our fiscal year in December and approach a new year of challenges and opportunities ahead, we rely on your continued support to make a difference in the lives of those in our community and beyond.

Please let us know if we missed you.

To end the year with a balanced budget, Peace Connections will continue to be in need of your contributions throughout the fall. Please stop by, give us a call or send us a note! Shopping at the PC gift shop also helps Peace Connections – be sure to see what we have for you or for those on your gift lists!



We appreciate your patience when you’ve tried to visit our website lately. We are facing technical challenges and decisions about future hosting and design for our site; we apologize for any inconvenience. We hope to have the glitches ironed out before the end of October.



612 N. Main
Newton, Kansas 67114-2230

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

If you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter,
check here () and place in return mail.

Vision: Thriving communities sustained by social justice and compassion.

Humility is the highest blessing
of Life;
Through it the great serve the
lowly
And the lowly serve the great.
In this way the Universe ever
uplifts itself:
The endless nativity of Light.

-Hugh Trevino

Mission:

Peace Connections partners with others to:

- ▶ **build resources within families and communities**
- ▶ **teach and practice nonviolence**
- ▶ **nurture personal and spiritual well-being**

This newsletter is published four times per year by Peace Connections, an ecumenical non-profit.

Contributors to this issue: Marva Weigelt, Amy Schmidt, and Myrna Krehbiel

Peace Connections Director: Myrna Krehbiel.
Administrative Associate & Newsletter Editor: Marva Weigelt
Newsletter Design and Layout: Kathy Randall.

Board Members: Cathy Anderson, Stan Bohn, Margaret Goering, Shafiq Hasan, Judy Hawk, Gary Rediger, Jeanette Stucky, Justin Thaw and Mel & Mary Sue Voth.

The Board of Directors meets monthly at 612 N. Main, Newton, KS. Meetings are open to the public.

