



Community Focused
Relationship Driven

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A nonprofit organization

Store Hours

Monday-Friday
10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Closed Saturday & Sunday

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Supported by



August-September-October 2015

PEACE CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

Gifts of Love Inspire Hope

By Jennifer Rose

On Tuesday, August 4th Circles of Hope celebrated another milestone, congratulating six individuals who had successfully fulfilled their 18 month Circle Leader commitment to change! As we gathered for our weekly Circles meeting, we listened as stories of despair turned to hope. From graduating college to new relationships, obtaining new jobs to the death of a loved one, these Circle Leaders had faced it all, and survived because of the support of people just like you! Thanks to the generous giving of time and resources, Circles of Hope continues to impact the lives of Harvey County families, both those experiencing poverty and the volunteer Allies who walk alongside them in their journey. A journey that is well depicted in the poem below, written by Michelle Duft -- one of our accomplished graduates.

**“How
can I be poor if I
am so loved?”**



Michelle Duft and her Allies celebrate the completion of their 18 month commitment.

“When I first heard of Circles I was unaware of how people view poverty.

Myself, I just knew I wanted equality.

The first day of class I truly had no expectations
of getting out of my current situation.

My willingness to step out of my comfort zone soon intrigued my curiosity.

With that came a new list of priorities and generosityes.

I found such qualities, at the same time novelties
about Circles and my new found friends,
that this would somehow never end.

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I will forever be grateful there is a program like Circles of Hope. Everyone has been so encouraging and supportive, no matter what happens. I may not be out of poverty however, after coming to Circles of Hope I no longer view myself as poor. After all, how can I be poor if I'm so loved, welcomed, accepted, and understood? I thought in a group this size there would be a lot of judgement; however, I would like to say that this group has been completely opposite of that. Everyone I have had the pleasure of meeting has been encouraging, willing to truly listen and try to understand my situation (as well as others'). I hope to pass on the guidance and support to others and help someone down the road. No matter what the situation, with help, they too can thrive and survive.

Let's keep Circles alive!"



How Your Giving Makes a Difference

\$10 pays for one Job Lingo workbook to help a Circle Leader become better prepared to obtain & maintain employment.

\$25 helps a Circles of Hope participant attend one week of Your Money, Your Goals financial literacy and empowerment.

\$50 enables a local child to participate in 1 month of stimulating educational activities & socialization through SEAK.

\$120 provides one month of structured childcare so parents can participate in Circles of Hope weekly meetings.

\$180 covers the cost of one free weekly meal at Circles of Hope (\$3.00 per person x 60 people)

\$250 equips one Harvey County resident with the tools to complete Circle Leader Training & begin the journey out of poverty.

\$333 sponsors one month of support for our current AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer

Board Spotlight: Peace in a Troubled World

By Deb Zeiner



For Marjean Harris, following her heart's yearning for peace during the outbreak of the first Gulf War led her to service on the Peace Connections board of directors. "There were six to eight of us who would get together to discuss the state of the world at Peace Connections," she said. "Myrna (Krehbiel) had offered space for us to meet and Dr. James Moore, who was also on the board of directors there at the time, recruited me."

Harris is serving on the board for the second time. She sees her service as a natural progression of her deep desire for peace in a troubled world. "My original interest was clearly anti-war with a pacifist's position," she said. "But with it's programs of feeding area children in the summer and Circles of Hope, Peace Connections is a source of so much that contributes to peace in our community and the world."

A retired clinical social worker, Harris has lived in the Newton area since 1977. She has two children and two grandchildren and said she relishes the time she is able to spend with her grandchildren, who live in Gossel.

She sees sustainability as the most important and challenging goal of the board of directors. "Because without sustainability, there is nothing," she said. "That balance is the primary focus for us. And by sustainability, I mean resources of all kinds – both money and people." Her wish for the future of Peace Connections/Circles of Hope? "Ideally, it is as a source that contributes to peace," she said. "Our director brings great energy and Mackala (our AmeriCorps VISTA) brings youthful energy, like Danny did before her. We have a continued expression of what I see as great potential."

SEAK Highlights

Your Contributions In Action



SEAK children enjoyed making pretzels with Bonnie Krehbiel and participating in the cha-cha dance with volunteer Leah Towles



They also gobbled up ice cream sundays after a presentation from the Mobile Dairy Unit & made thank you cards for guest presenters.



Every time you use your Dillon's Plus Shopper's Card PEACE CONNECTIONS COULD BE BENEFITTING!

Dillons plans to give away almost \$2 million to local organizations this year and it's easier than ever to designate an organization:

1. Visit www.dillons.com/communityrewards
2. Scroll down to find your location and click "Enroll Now"
3. Sign into your online account, or create an account
4. Find and select Peace Connections, and click "Save"

So far, we have 13 families participating which has resulted in \$250.00 in donations!





612 N. Main
Newton, Kansas 67114-2230

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check here () and place in return mail.

Vision: Thriving communities sustained by peace and social justice.

**SAVE THE
DATE!**

***Celebrity Servers
Fundraiser***

coming

**November 2nd,
2015**

Ways to Give

Monthly giving is a truly sustaining grace. Call or come by for details on how to set up a convenient monthly automatic gift.

Secure online donation through Paypal is available anytime through our website at www.peaceconnections.org

Volunteering is a wonderful way of giving. Our volunteers provide nearly twice the value of all other donations combined.

Thoughts and prayers are always welcome!

Peace Connections seeks to inspire transformation in people and systems by building relationships, resourcefulness and resilience.

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

Peace Connections Director: Jennifer Rose
Newsletter Design and Layout: Kathy Randall.

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



**Phone - A - Thon
is coming in September!**
Watch your mail for some exciting changes!

