



Cultivating Justice,  
Nonviolence & Well-being

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A nonprofit organization

### Store Hours

Monday-Thursday  
10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
closed Fridays  
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July-August-September 2011

# PEACE CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

## Volunteers & 2nd Site Add to Summer Food Program

The Kids Summer Food & Activities Program is off and running as of June 13! Free breakfasts and lunches are being served daily to children and youth in Newton through July 22. Two locations for the program are being offered this year, one at Sunset Elementary and one at Cooper Early Education Center. This was made possible due to generous donations from the community and the willingness on the part of USD #373.

The Activity component of the program has moved from Sunset to Cooper this year. Approximately 35 children have signed up to take part in activities between meals. They are enjoying PE activities like the parachute, reading books, presentations from community organizations (see page 2), arts and crafts, and more. Sue Elder is coordinating this program once again, along with Angela Altum, who is also serves as the volunteer coordinator.



Angela Altum, volunteer coordinator and Sue Elder, activity program coordinator



Long-time volunteer Norm Lichti

Volunteers who share their time daily are so important to this program. They help supervise set-up, clean-up, handwashing, etc. and assist and interact with the kids that come for meals. The schedule is very flexible, and volunteers sign up for as many or as few days and times that fit their schedules. Norm Lichti, who has volunteered for a number of years, says, "I volunteer because I like being with kids. This program allows me to be with kids and help out with an important service at the same time."

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**First-time volunteer  
James Goertzen**

New daily volunteer, James Goertzen, is excited to be part of the program for the first time and comments, "I believe serving children food is an excellent way to spread peace. I am volunteering with the summer food program because I think serving food is a great way to serve people."

We are grateful to everyone who is involved once again this year, with a special thanks to USD #373 for their partnership. Contributions to the program have been key in providing a second site this year

**Donations to the 2011 Program were made by:**

Book Reviews, Greater Newton Community Foundation - Kids FUNd, Women's Community Fund, Midland National Bank, First Presbyterian Church of Newton, Citizen's State Bank, First Bank, Sunday School & Women's Mission Circle - First Mennonite Church of Halstead, Carol Kirchmer, Red Bird Circle - Salem United Methodist Church, USDA, and USD #373.

**Presentations by Community Groups for the Activity Program:**

Kevin Stubbs – Caring Hands Humane Society; Susan Lammers and Amie Busenitz – Harvey County Extension Office; Vicki Scheuermann – Newton Pool; Mark Willis – Newton Fire Department; Bonnie Krehbiel; Martin Norris – Druber's Donuts; Amy Bayes – Newton Public Library; Newton Police Department; Kauffman Museum.



**Miss Esther, who works with the foster grandparent program; this is her 3rd year helping with the Summer Food Program**

*There is enough in the world for everyone's need,  
but not enough for everyone's greed.*

**--Ghandi**

## Running for Circles

When local pastor Eric Massanari, of Shalom Mennonite Church in Newton, chose combine his love of running with his enthusiasm about Circles of Hope, Peace Connections was thrilled! We asked Eric to tell us a bit about his experience – his comments follow:



**Eric Massanari**

The Lawrence Trail Hawks' Hawk 50 mile trail ultramarathon took place on May 14 on the north shore trails of Clinton Lake State Park. This was my first 50-mile race. Up until this point my longest run had been a 50-kilometer (31 mile) trail run. The run went well. The cool and overcast day was perfect for running, and I enjoyed the challenge and adventure of a full day moving along the trails. People often ask how long it took, so I'll share that it took almost exactly ten hours.

I decided I wanted to do this run as a fundraiser for a local not-for-profit program, and Circles of Hope is a program that I see as a particular gift to the Newton community for the way it brings people together across different kinds of boundaries that too often keep us apart. I asked individuals to sponsor my run by making a per mile pledge in support of Circles of Hope. More than \$2,225.00 was pledged for the program. Knowing those pledges had been made was a great motivator during the run when the inevitable low points came! I am grateful to the staff, volunteers, Circle Leaders and Allies who make this program such a shining light in our community!

*To-date over \$2,500 has been received for Circles of Hope - many thanks to everyone who chose to contribute through Eric's run!*



## Promotes IDAs

By Denise Rhoades

**C**ircles of Hope brings together social services, faith organizations, businesses, government, and the community to seek solutions for people moving out of poverty permanently. Relationship-building is at the heart of Circles. Each Tuesday night in the basement of First United Methodist Church, Newton, you will see Circles Leaders discussing their individual goals with Allies, overseeing the evening's agenda, or making plans for public education happening every 1st and 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The whole community is invited to attend these free, informative sessions.

At a recent community meeting, Circles invited Lorna Moore of Interfaith Housing Services in Hutchinson to discuss Individual Development Accounts (IDA). IDAs are savings accounts available to low- to moderate-income families who put money aside to acquire a high-return asset. Income-qualified households saving \$1 in an IDA receive a \$2 match from the Kansas IDA program.

Where traditional poverty efforts have focused on transfers of money or benefits for short-term consumption needs, IDAs take a long-term, asset-building approach that encourages financial stability and independence. For IDA purposes, assets include first-time home ownership, owner-occupied home repairs, post-secondary education, specialized skills training, and small business ventures.

IDA accounts are held in local banks. The program is overseen by Interfaith Housing Services and administered in partnership with Circles in Harvey County. The Schowalter Foundation and Bank of the West in Newton have shown their support for the Harvey County IDA Program by making monetary donations to the program. Midland National Bank has agreed to host the IDA accounts.

Private donations, along with support from a federal grant, Assets for Independence, provide funding for the match. Individuals and businesses donating to the IDA program receive a refundable 75 percent Kansas State tax credit; a donor investing \$1000 receives a \$750 Kansas tax credit. In addition to the tax benefit, donors receive the satisfaction of knowing their gifts support the County's economic development, since home purchases and repairs must take place in the county of IDA origin. In other words, a Harvey County family saving to buy a home would have to purchase that home in Harvey County; the same with home repairs: "What's saved in Harvey County, stays in Harvey County."

An important piece of the IDA program is hands-on life skills training. Anyone enrolled in the IDA program is required to participate in preliminary financial education and some additional workshops such as "Communicating with Your Spouse about Money"; Dave Ramsey's Debt Elimination workshop; "Financial Decision Making," "Getting a Job and Keeping It Too," "Banking 101," and "That's a Crock"—a three-week, hands-on workshop where participants learn how inexpensive, healthy and easy it is to use a crock pot at home, rather than eating off the "dollar-menu" at a fast-food restaurant.

For questions regarding the IDA program or tax credits, contact Interfaith Housing Services 620.662.8370, [ih@ih-housing.org](mailto:ih@ih-housing.org), or visit their website at [www.ih-housing.org](http://www.ih-housing.org).

### We are grateful to:

- ◆ Those who are volunteering at the Kids Summer Food & Activities Program
- ◆ Marlene Smucker, Leann Toews, Stan Bohn, Cay Siebert, George Dyck, Jeanette Stucky, Cathy Anderson, Ruby Moore, Vernon Lohrentz & Gloria Rediger for help on Saturdays and other times when staff was out of the office in April, May & June
- ◆ Board members who helped with PC spring cleaning
- ◆ Arnita Haury, Jeanette Stucky, and Marjean Harris for organizing an appreciation luncheon for organizations contributing to Peace Connections over the past year
- ◆ Karen Dickson, who has taken over as a volunteer bookkeeper at Peace Connections





# Partnerships Change Middle Class Myths

by Stan Bohn, PC Board Member

from the Camp Mennoscah Retirees Retreat, April 25, 2011

**M**y education in how to be a Circles Ally began while pastoring a church across the street from the KU medical center in Kansas City:

1. Our middle class church was able to reach medical students, teachers, accountants, doctors.
2. But the minimum wage workers that a med center employs in food service, housekeeping, laundry, and stock room, which we invited to our church, didn't stay with us. The two groups couldn't relate and we helped form a second church operated by low income or no-income folks a few blocks away meeting in a store front. I was not the preacher; I worked with youth and transportation. We all lived in Rosedale neighborhood, all spoke English, all were white – but it was as if we were different countries...in conflict and blaming each other.

Example:

The minimum wage group had jail experience, was in conflict with school staff, was treated disrespectfully by police, and had bad experiences with churches. To survive they felt that in emergencies they had to lie to landlords, utility companies, welfare workers, courts, schools, etc.

The middle class group had never been in jail, never had to put jail time on their resume, were friends with their children's school staff, had churches made up of their friends, and were treated respectfully by police. The BIG LIE the middle class told themselves was that they had earned their status and income and deserved their privileges. They had achieved it all on their own. They believed that "if I can get a good paying job others can too."

That lie was so big and so accepted, that even the minimum wage folks believed it and were apologetic about their poverty. They didn't feel they should stand up to the disrespect...maybe it WAS all their fault. After all, there were some who wrote books about their escape from poverty, so unless they escape, they should be ashamed.

Ruby Payne's book, *Bridges Out of Poverty*, put into writing what we experienced in Kansas City. We learned to respect the survival skills of people without enough money. We learned to admire their jail terms when they stood up to police officers who treated them with disrespect. We learned we didn't know what was right for others and that we HAD NO CLUE to the complicated problems they were dealing with.

We "allies" are so saturated with middle class myths, that we are still learning. The myth that we know the answers and can be judges of others is easy to slip into.

BUT, NOW, as Circles of Hope Allies, we have a low income person to partner with to help us find a way for everyone to live as fully as possible. That's why I am a Circles Ally: to work against poverty with those who coped with it and know the most about it.



Ally Stan Bohn, participating in a Circle meeting

## Free/Low-cost Summer Activities Guide



**A**gain this year, Peace Connections has compiled and published a listing of Free/Low-cost Activities in the area this summer, including a number of Bible school programs. This was sent via email to a number of organizations. If you know someone who needs this information, stop by Peace Connections, or call 284-0000. We hope this is a useful resource for children and families!

# BOOK & GIFT SHOP

**NEW: Advice from a FIREFLY T-shirt - Glows in the dark!**

“Be full of bright ideas ♦ Pulse with excitement ♦ Have a healthy glow ♦ Delight in summer evenings ♦ Keep a childlike sense of wonder ♦ Set a shining example ♦ Lighten up!” **Adult sizes - \$16.95**



**Angel Cards** have been delighting and uplifting people for many years. Use them for support, guidance, or gifts. Each set of 72 playfully illustrated cards depicts a unique angelic quality. Meditation and instructions included. The **Angel Card Book** is a guide to working with the cards with inspirational messages for each key word and visualizations - included are suggestions for use in a group setting. **Cards \$11.95, Book \$7.95, Set \$18.95**



**The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger** Stronger by Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett.

Mental illness is three times more common in more unequal countries. Obesity rates are twice as high. Rates of imprisonment are eight times higher. Teenage births increased tenfold.



“The Spirit Level will change the way you think about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, especially if you live in the US. You will reexamine what it means to be successful, how you will seek and achieve personal satisfaction, and what you owe your fellow citizen.”—Jo Perry, BookBrowse.com **\$18**

**“ADVICE FROM” SWEATSHIRT SALE COMING IN SEPTEMBER!!!!**

**All of the “Advice from Nature” sweatshirts will be on sale for \$20**

**Order the design and size of your choice!**

**Orders placed by Sept. 15 will be here by Bethel College Fall Festival.**

**Orders placed by Sept. 30 available in mid-late October.**

## Did You Know?

**B**oard President Margaret Goering received a “Certificate of Excellence” from the KDHE in late April. She was recognized for her “outstanding commitment to families and children served in the Kansas MCH Program as the Health Start Home Visitor” for Harvey County Health Department. We congratulate Margaret and are so pleased to have her expertise at Peace Connections as well!



## Giving Garden

**T**he Giving Garden is in full swing. Peppers, tomatoes, watermelons, cucumbers, and annual flowers for the test trial have been planted. This Master Gardeners will also be mulching, planting squash and sweet corn and sweet potatoes.

This will be the 10th season for the Giving Garden! We give thanks for the gifts that the Garden has produced in the community.



# SUMMER CALENDAR

## JULY

**Be the Peace Monthly Meditation** begins on Tuesday, **July 5**, (normally the 1st Monday of the month, but moved due to July 4 holiday). Join Marva Weigelt from 12:10-12:50.

**Circles 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 **July 14**, 7 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

## AUGUST

**Be the Peace Monthly Meditation** on **Monday, August 1**. Join Marva Weigelt from 12:10-12:50.

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

**Peace Connections Board** meeting will be **August 4**, 7 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

## SEPTEMBER

**Be the Peace Monthly Meditation** on **Tuesday, Sept. 5**. (normally the 1st Monday of the month, but moved due to Labor Day holiday). Join Marva Weigelt from 12:10-12:50.

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

**Peace Connections Board** meeting will be **September 1**, 7 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

## BE THE PEACE

### Monthly Meditation at Peace Connections

by Marva Weigelt

**D**o you find yourself wishing you could do more to make a difference in the world, but already have a full load of commitments for your energy and money? What if you could have a positive impact on the people of Harvey County and even the whole planet by sitting quietly and focusing on peace? What if this modest investment actually made you feel calmer and more optimistic yourself?

Mounting evidence indicates what many of us already sense intuitively: people making time to “be at peace” actually influence everything from physical well-being to mental health, from the crime rate to the economy. There’s even a measure of this effect, the Global Peace Index (GPI). In addition, other studies suggest that a group purposely holding the same intention exponentially increases its impact.

A time and place to give this concept a try is being offered on the first Monday of every month at Peace Connections. This mid-day meditation (12:10-12:50 pm) is a great way to start your month. Join us 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 heartily welcome your contribution.

There’s no need to RSVP or make a commitment. Just mark your calendar for the first Monday of every month and join us from 12:10-12:50 pm whenever you are able. (If Monday is a holiday, we’ll meet on Tues. of that week.) We’ll spend the first and last 5 minutes getting into a quiet state of mind and then preparing to take that peace back out into our busy lives. If you aren’t able to join us in person, please consider taking that time period to focus on peace and well-being from wherever you are at the time.

If you care about peace, don’t miss this opportunity to “let it begin with me.”

Contact Marva Weigelt at [marva.weigelt@gmail.com](mailto:marva.weigelt@gmail.com) if you have questions.





# Peace Connections welcomes new board members

In June, Peace Connections welcomed three new board members: Judy Hawk, Justin Thaw, and Gary Rediger. We are excited about the gifts and skills they bring to share with Peace Connections. Their thoughts on joining the Board of Directors follow:

## Judy Hawk:

As a member of the Bethel College social work advisory council and a long time friend of Bill Reynolds, I learned about Peace Connections and Circles of Hope. Learning that a group from Hutchinson was working to start a Circles® initiative, I boldly invited myself to a meeting to learn more. I was so inspired by what I learned, when Myrna invited me to attend a board meeting I was delighted. After doing so I was asked to join the board. My only hesitation to do so related to my ability to be actively involved in all the wonderful things PC does since I live in Hutchinson. Myrna convinced me that would be okay with the partnership developing with the Hutchinson group. I am delighted to be part of such a wonderful group of people.



I recently retired from a career as a social worker in Child Welfare. The years of working with families taught me that given the opportunity to work with knowledgeable compassionate people most are eager to help themselves improve their lives. The people on the PC board are the kind of people dedicated to make the world a better place. I hope I can be a meaningful contributor to PC. Thank you for the opportunity.

## Justin Thaw:

I grew up in Newton, KS, and attended Newton High School in Newton. I attended the University of Missouri from 1992 to 1997 on a wrestling scholarship and moved back to Newton after graduation. I took a position with Youthville working in their residential facility. I attended the University of Kansas and received my Master's degree in social work in 2004 and continued to work at Youthville, taking a position in Wichita as

the Assistant Director of Family Based Services. In this position I worked as an administrator over kinship and adoption services. I now am employed at the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare as a trainer with the Kansas Workforce Initiative grant. I am married to Angel Thaw and have one daughter, Toria, who is 8 years old.



I am excited to begin working with Peace Connections as a board member as it gives me an opportunity to be part of the great work that is being done in the Newton and surrounding communities.

## Gary Rediger:

I grew up on an Iowa farm. After high school I went to Goshen College in Indiana and then graduated from the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. I graduated from college during the Vietnam war and immediately after graduation was ordered to report for duty. I did alternative service (1-W) and worked in a hospital in Oregon for two years. I have had two careers. Twenty years were spent in computer programming and management and now another 20 years as a financial services advisor with Everence Financial, formerly MMA.



My wife is Gloria, and together we have 4 children and 7 grandchildren. We have been part of the Newton community for the past 20 years and are members of Shalom Mennonite Church. My first introduction to Peace Connections was from J. Winfield Fretz, who was a wonderful mentor for everything relating to peace and mutual aid. More recently Gloria has become involved in Circles of Hope. As I learn more about this program, the more I am an advocate. It is heartwarming to watch and hear stories of those who are learning to overcome setbacks and set goals to improve their lives. I look forward to being more involved in the mission of Peace Connections.

# The Labyrinth: A Circle for Peace

*Edited from material provided by Gerry Epp regarding the new labyrinth at Prairie View*

Labyrinths are ancient spiral patterns or symbols, which have been found in diverse cultures in many parts of the world, dating back several thousand years. Over the past 20 years, labyrinths have reemerged and are being installed at schools, churches, hospitals, hospices, public parks and retreat centers.

A labyrinth is different than a maze, in that the labyrinth has only one path, which leads inevitably from the outer edge to the center; whereas a maze has many exits and cul-de-sacs, and dead ends. A maze is designed to lose one's way. A labyrinth is designed to find one's way. You cannot get lost on a labyrinth. Within the context of the circle, a complex spiral repeatedly doubles back on itself, but inevitably takes the walker to the center.

There are many ways to walk a labyrinth. There is no "right way". Participants may choose to saunter, run, dance, crawl, twirl, or shuffle their way through the circuits of the labyrinth.

People who have walked multiple labyrinths, or the same labyrinth multiple times, have reported that each experience is unique. Participants can harness the powerful opportunities for healing provided by the labyrinth by being fully present, or fully conscious of intentions, during the course of the walk. How one uses the labyrinth is limited only by one's imagination and willingness to be open to the experience.

Research has shown that a common physiological response to meditation is slowed breathing, heart and metabolic rates. The labyrinth provides the opportunity to experience walking meditation, which produces the same results.

Benefits experienced by walking the labyrinth include:

- ◆ Insights into personal problems
- ◆ Emotional healing from abuse or trauma or loss
- ◆ An increased sense of inner peace or calm
- ◆ A sense of deeper connection with others and the universe
- ◆ Stimulation of imaginative and creative powers
- ◆ A deeper experience of spirituality



The labyrinth can be a profound vehicle for grounding, being present in the here and now. The labyrinth can offer an opportunity for the walker to set aside the outer world and move closer to one's inner world. The labyrinth walk is often referred to as being symbolic of journeying. We are all pilgrims on the journey of life.

There are several ancient patterns for labyrinths. Prairie View has recently installed a contemporary Circle of Peace labyrinth design based on a medieval labyrinth pattern found in Chartres Cathedral in France. The Circle of Peace™ was designed by labyrinth maker, Lisa Gidlow Moriarty of Stillwater, Minnesota. For more information about the Circle of Peace design, go to: <http://www.pathsofpeace.com/cirofpeace.html>

The Circle of Peace™ labyrinth at Prairie View is available at no cost to the community. Public Access Times: Weekdays – Sunrise to 8 am; Fridays – 4 pm to Sunset; Weekends & Holidays – Sunrise to Sunset. The labyrinth is located west of the Clinical Services Building on the Newton Campus of Prairie View, 1900 East First Street, Newton. Parking is available in the west parking lot.

## Finger labyrinths available at the Peace Connections Gift Shop

Use as a tool to enhance prayer, contemplation, meditation, and personal growth. Tan cloth canvas is 18"x18" with either red or cream design – easy to roll up and take along **\$16 each**



# Every Dollar an Investment

by Arnita Haury, regular volunteer and former board president

Every dollar donated to Peace Connections is an investment that spreads far into the community. The book, *Forces for Good*\*, says nonprofit organizations that have a high impact engage and mobilize many individuals, change public attitudes, collaborate, and pursue results because they are focused externally on systemic change with and through others. This is how Peace Connections works.

Many persons are involved with Circles of Hope, an initiative that is making it possible for individuals and families to gain stability in their lives. The Kids Summer Food & Activities program successfully provides free meals and activities to Newton children and youth because it is a collaborative effort of the school district, volunteers, coordinators, and Peace Connections.

Peace Connections basic operating budget for 2011 is \$48,300. This does not include special program areas, such as Circles® and the Kids Summer Food & Activities Program.

We invite you to consider how far your dollars go when you contribute to Peace Connections. Your contribution makes it possible for Peace Connections to exist, which in turn guarantees the continuation of vital work which is having a positive impact on our entire community.

\**Forces for Good*, by Leslie R. Crutchfield and Heather McLeod Grant, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2008



## Phonathon

Peace Connections' Board members will be calling everyone on our newsletter mailing list September 12-14 & 19-21 to review what Peace Connections has been doing and ask for your financial support. If the call comes at an inopportune time, feel free to ask us to call back. Efforts like the Getting Ahead classes for low income persons, the Kid's Summer Food and Activities program, and Circles of Hope are making a difference in our community. Your pledge towards the Peace Connections operating budget will help us continue our good work in the months ahead!



## LOOKING AHEAD...

**Mark your October calendar for our upcoming events:**



**Harvey Co. United Way Chili Cook-Off** will be Sat., Oct. 1, 11:30 am-1:30 pm. You're invited to send us your recipe or make chili for Peace Connections' contribution!

**Bethel College Fall Festival**, Saturday, October 8, 9-3 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 place one in Sept.!

*When you find peace within yourself,  
you become the kind of person who can live at peace with others.*

**--The Peace Pilgrim**



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**Vision: Thriving communities sustained by social justice and compassion.**



Find this Quotable Magnet, and much more,  
in the Peace Connections Gift Shop.  
See page 6 for more gift ideas.

**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.

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