

Traveling VOM & Conference Training Advances Restorative Justice in Russia

By Marian Liebmann



Currently, there is great dissatisfaction with the criminal justice system in Russia. Although the crime rate is high, about 60% of victims of violent crimes do not go to the police - their experiences tell them it will be of no help (Maksudov, Fliamer and Grasenkova 1998).

Over the last couple of years, the Centre for Legal and Judicial Reforms in Moscow (a voluntary organization), and its co-directors Rustem Maksudov and Mikhail Fliamer, have been trying to introduce mediation into the criminal justice system to help both victims and offenders.

In Russia, mediation is legal. Article 9 of the Criminal Proceedings Code allows a case to be withdrawn if it is a first offense, the crime is petty, and the offender has reconciled him/herself with the victim and has restored the victim's losses. However, the lack of clear procedures for this can sometimes lead to abuse of the situation. The introduction of a mediation scheme has been seen as a way of protecting victims and offenders rights.

Because restorative justice roots are present in the Russian customary law called *obshchina* (in which village elders helped to resolve conflict in the community based on the fact that people need to live together for the rest of their lives), the

Marian Liebmann was formerly director of Mediation UK and is now a freelance mediation trainer and consultant.

Centre in Moscow does not feel that Restorative Justice is an "import" imposed from the West.

In 1997, Eric Shanks, with considerable help from Marty Price (both from the USA), ran a short workshop on victim/offender mediation in Russia. Also, the Centre translated Howard Zehrs' *Changing Lenses* into Russian and invited Zehr over to celebrate its publication in Russia. Since then, the group has been practicing victim/offender mediation in a small way in the Tagansky district of Moscow and is hoping to expand to other areas.

Last year, the Centre asked Friends House Moscow (a Quaker group which promotes and fundraises for projects promoting human rights and peace in the new situation in Russia) for funding and a suitable trainer for their next stage, and I was asked if I could do it. The course took place in July 1999.

As participants' knowledge and experience of the topic ranged from considerable to none at all, I prepared a five-day course on victim/offender mediation skills and conference methods (especially the New Zealand Family Group Conference techniques), prefaced by a one-day overview of theory.

The course itself was held in a semi-basement room of a youth club called Stimul (stimulation). Most of the participants were social workers or psychologists working with young people in youth clubs or in the courts. This meant they were inclined to be offender-centered, a common failing of new mediation services worldwide. Thinking about victims of crime seemed to be new to them.

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This issue of the VOMA Connections features news from around the world. VOMA welcomes Russia, New Zealand, Australia, Northern Ireland, Canada, Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, the Nordic countries, and the United Kingdom to our pages!

The first role-play demonstrated that the British case studies I had brought were not going to be useful. I made efforts to get details of some cases that Rustem and Mikhail had actually mediated, and turned these into role plays, which worked well.

In addition, the Russian tradition of negative criticism was hard for me to cope with, as it meant I was only aware of the failings of the training (some of which I could do little about), and had no idea during the course what was working well.

VOMA Connections

VOMA Connections is published by the International Victim Offender Mediation Association. VOMA's mission is to provide inspiration, leadership and information-sharing in the development and support of various models of justice which create opportunities for dialogue between victims, offenders, and their communities for the purpose of healing and restoration.

VOMA welcomes contributions, including short articles, literature reviews, case studies, program news and other interesting info. Photos and graphics are also needed. Views expressed within the VOMA Connections are those of the authors and not necessarily those of VOMA.

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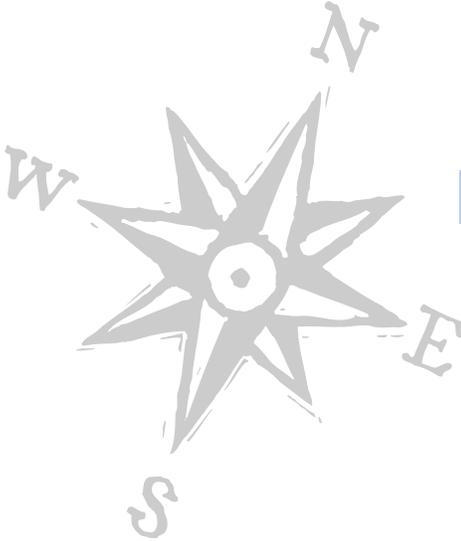
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VOMA by Region

VOMA has developed regional networks to better serve its members. Following is the United States, Canada and the world divided into seven Regions. After each Board member's name in the Directory on the preceding page, the assigned Region is listed. For information on issues of interest to VOMA members, please contact the Regional Board Representative.

Region I

Saskatchewan, Manitoba, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Minnesota

Region II

Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee

Region III

Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

Region IV

Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida

Region V

Arkansas, Louisiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona

Region VI

California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii, Alberta, and British Columbia

Region VII

International Members



Welcome to New Members

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

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- ◇ Tim Dueck, Mediation Services for Conflict Resolution, IN
- ◇ Ron Flickinger, IN
- ◇ W. John Glass, NC
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- ◇ Lisa Singh, OH
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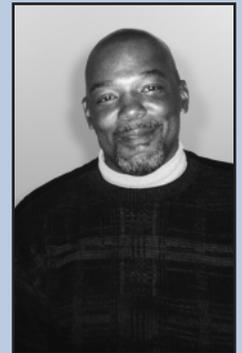
VOMA Administrators



Bill and Wendy have served as VOMA's Administrators for a combined 4 years. With 20 years of experience in law and restorative justice, Bill developed the first course curriculum on restorative justice at the university level within the United States; developed and drafted the "Victim Offender Mediation/Dialogue Resolution" with the Criminal Justice Section of the American Bar Association; prepared and delivered presentations and written reports for legislative hearings and briefings; and trained mediators and program administrators in criminal mediation matters. VOMA and the field of Restorative Justice are honored to have Bill and Wendy working with us. We are grateful for their support.

VOMA Welcomes New Board Member

Dale Landry is a training and technical assistance consultant with the Balanced and Restorative Justice Project (BARJ) at Florida Atlantic University. BARJ is supported by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. His previous positions include directing a police community relations department in Fort Bliss, Texas, and managing domestic violence intervention training at the US Army Military Police Academy.



VOMA Receives Generous Hewlett Grant for Strategic Planning and Action Plan

by Kathy Elton and David Doerfler
Board Co-Chairs

The new millennium is a time for change and a time for growth. Thanks to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the immediate future will bring both for VOMA. The Hewlett Foundation has approved a three year grant to VOMA. The grant will be used to create a strategic plan that guides VOMA in specific areas of focus. Those areas targeted for growth and expansion are:

- Membership;
- Diversity;
- Leadership development;
- Best practices.

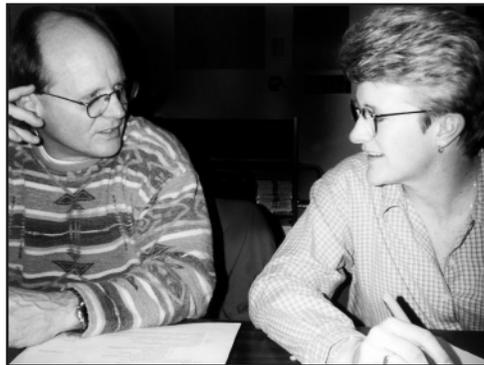
During the first year of the grant the VOMA Board of Directors will devote their efforts to examining VOMA's role in the field of restorative justice and how VOMA can best complement and collaborate with other organizations and entities consistent with our purpose and mission. The board will use these findings along with additional information and experiences to develop a strategic plan. This plan will be communicated to the general membership with opportunities for input encouraged and facilitated during the nine-month planning process (January to September 2000).

Basic objectives the Board of Directors are committed to achieve during the next three years are as follows:

- 1) Increase in VOMA membership;
- 2) Increase in Training Institute and Conference participation;
- 3) Increase in VOMA diversity within the membership and of the presenters and participants in the Training Institute and Conference.

We are excited to embark on the establishment of a strategic plan which will help identify VOMA's strengths and opportunities for

growth. Planning carefully and yet with vision and passion for our mission will allow us to further clarify, enhance and fulfill our stated objectives while assisting and supporting VOMA members world-wide in the creative implementation of the victim offender mediation/dialogue process and related restorative justice initiatives.



Co-Chairs Dave Doerfler and Kathy Elton chat during the mid-year board meeting.



VOMA Board of Directors take a break at the mid-year meeting and strategic planning session.

Consultants Able Assist VOMA Board During 2-day Planning Session



VOMA Board members extended their mid-year board meeting an extra day in order to participate in a strategic planning process with Gary Stern and Barbara Raye. Gary is president of an international consulting firm specializing in strategy, marketing, and organizational performance. Barbara is founding president of the Center for Policy, Planning, and Performance, an international consulting network enhancing the effectiveness of nonprofit and public sector organizations. With their able presence in the room at the Mennonite Central Committee in Pennsylvania the first week of March, Gary and Barbara assisted VOMA in looking into the 21st Century. We thank them heartily!

VOMA Announces 17th Annual International Training Institute and Conference

Mark Umbreit and Mary Sam Will Be Keynote Speakers

This year, Minnesota will be hosting VOMA's 17th Annual International Training Institute and Conference titled "Innovative Practices in Victim Offender Mediation and Conferencing."

The VOMA Conference Committee is happy to announce that Mark Umbreit, Ph.D. and Mary Sam, MSW, will be the keynote speakers for this year's Conference in Minnesota, September 12-16, 2000.

Mary Sam is Director of the Indigenous Justice Project at the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking. Mary's heritage is part Canadian Ojibwe. She is a respected trainer and practitioner in the circle process. Mary is also the Chemical Health and Multi-cultural Coordinator at the Robbinsdale Armstrong High School.

Mark Umbreit is Director of the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking and the National Restorative Training Institute. Dr. Umbreit is a professor at the University of Minnesota School of Social Work and is an internationally recognized trainer, mediator, author and researcher, with over twenty-eight years of experience as a practitioner.

Given the unprecedented number of proposals for trainings and workshops for the Conference, the Conference Committee has expanded the trainings to include 8 half-day courses (compared to 2 in previous years) as well as an additional 2 day training. Workshop offerings have also increased to offer a total of 42 rather than 30 as offered in the past.

Advanced trainings will be offered in crimes of severe violence, deepening our practice, as well as mediation for domestic violence cases. Conference workshops will include starting up a program, case tracking methods, maintaining a healthy volunteer program, and multi-party conferencing, the role of ritual in opening/closing a conference, forgiveness and its role in the process as well as workshops on cultural bias and oppression in restorative justice. We will also look at crimes of severe violence as it is being conducted in British Columbia by a program with a lengthy history and extensive experience in this field.

The Conference will be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel (soon to be the Sheraton Minneapolis West). The hotel is conveniently located 10 miles west of downtown Minneapolis. It is surrounded by the natural beauty of Crane Lane Wildlife Preserve, and nearby Beautiful Lake Minnetonka offers beaches, boating and dining.

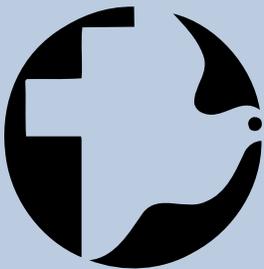


VOMA On-Line

VOMA has three different ways members can electronically communicate and acquire information using e-mail and the internet:

1. VOMA maintains a web site at www.voma.org. The web site contains information on the Association, upcoming training and conferences, current and past issues of VOMA newsletters, and links to related sites. If you join VOMA as an agency, you are entitled to a free web page on the VOMA web page. To take advantage of this benefit send your agency information to duanerh@fresno.edu.
2. VOMA provides a list-serve, intended to provide a medium for networking and sharing of relevant information, resources, and diverse ideas between VOMA members. The list-serve is an e-mail-based discussion group in which list-serve subscribers receive messages sent to all subscribers. This forum allows VOMA members to discuss issues related to victim offender mediation/conferencing, restorative justice, and activities of VOMA. The VOMA list-serve is a benefit for members only. To subscribe to the VOMA list-serve, send an e-mail to duanerh@fresno.edu with the message: subscribe vomalist.
3. VOMA offers members with e-mail addresses the opportunity to receive announcements and information from the Association and Board of Directors via e-mail. To subscribe to the e-mail announcement list send e-mail to duanerh@fresno.edu with the message: subscribe VOMA e-mail announcement list.

Thanks to Mennonite Central Committee



A special thanks to the Mennonite Central Committee and Lorraine Amstutz-Stutzman for housing the VOMA Board and Strategic Planners during the March mid-year meeting. We enjoyed your warm and generous hospitality, cozy rooms and peaceful neighborhood.

European VOM Forum Draws Participants From 27 Countries

Members of Coordinating Group Continue to Network

by Katrien Lauwaert and Ivo Aertsen

Editor's Note: Approximately 150 participants attended the first conference of the European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice titled "Victim-Offender Mediation in Europe: Making Restorative Justice Work." The event was held in October, 1999, in the beautiful and historic town of Leuven, Belgium (located 1/2 hour by train from Brussels).

Both the Faculty of Law at the Catholic University of Leuven and the European Commission provided support for this landmark event. In addition to the countries mentioned in the article, participants came from Latvia, Hungary, Portugal, New Zealand, Canada and the United States, making a total of 27 countries represented. A wide variety of plenary sessions and workshops covered topics on practice, policy and research issues.

After a rather slow start in the 1980s, victim offender mediation is now developing fast in countries all over Europe. Mediation is practiced significantly in Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom. In other countries (Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia and Slovenia) mediation is still in the early stages of development. In Albania, a special mediation approach has developed. It is estimated that there are about 700 victim offender mediation projects in Europe.

Until recently, European victim-offender mediation had seldom established contacts beyond national borders. Informal contacts nevertheless showed that practitioners and researchers were keen on both finding out what colleagues abroad are doing and exchanging experience and knowledge.

A small group of people with a strong commitment to mediation and restorative justice

obtained one-time funding from the European Union (Grotius Programme) to establish a European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice. This group of dedicated people became the provisional co-coordinating group of the Forum, and consists of mediation experts (practitioners, policy makers and academics) from eight European countries. They are assisted by the Leuven-based secretariat (contact info listed below).

For the current year the immediate objectives are:

- Create a European Association for Victim Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice;
- Start a European newsletter;
- Publish a book on the Forum titled "Making Restorative Justice Work" (about 450 pages). The book will contain overviews of VOM in 8 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Poland, UK). The book will appear in April with the Leuven University Press: European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice (ed.), Victim Offender Mediation in Europe. Information on how to order will soon be available.
- In June 2000, a "technical meeting" with a limited group of people (approx. 30) will be organized in Leuven, in order to prepare the constitution and the further functioning of the European Forum as a formal organization. Prior to the meeting, a broad consultation in several countries will be held on the draft constitution and principles of the Forum.
- By the end of 2000, we will present the first General Assembly and the official launching of the European Forum. Place and date are still to be decided on.

In the longer term, the Forum wants to stimulate and enable the exchange of information,

knowledge and experience, consultation and discussion concerning victim-offender mediation in the framework of a restorative approach to criminal justice. This means that the main focus is on mediation in criminal matters and related restorative developments such as group conferencing. Nevertheless links will be made with other fields of mediation (e.g. family mediation, school mediation). The Forum will be concerned with both juveniles and adults. It will be for Europe, but contacts will be further developed with North America and other countries.

See Forum on page 11

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New Zealand Restorative Justice Manual Available

The New Zealand Restorative Justice Practice Manual has recently been published. The 181-page manual is essentially a facilitator's guide to conferencing, and arrangements have now been made for its wider distribution.

As a step-by-step guide for those operating or intending to operate restorative justice facilitations, the New Zealand Restorative Justice Practice Manual has contributions from diverse New Zealand ethnic communities. It offers suggested ways of setting up, convening and monitoring restorative justice conferences.

The authors - Jim Boyack, Stephen Hooper and Helen Bowen - have been involved in conferencing in Australia and New Zealand over the last five years.

The manual is available at a cost of NZ\$24.50, A\$21.00, US\$16.00 and UK14.00 pounds. Please forward your order to Restorative Justice Trust, PO Box 105-410, Auckland, New Zealand, together with your money order or bank cheque.

Restorative Justice Trust can be contacted at restore@clear.net.nz



Canadian Discussion Paper Will Inform Report to Parliament

The Law Commission of Canada has recently released a discussion paper on Restorative Justice titled "From Restorative Justice to Transformative Justice."

The discussion paper was developed through the Transformative Justice Project, the first stage of

the work of the Law Commission of Canada under their Social Relationships theme. They believe there is much to be learned about how to handle complex relationships involving several competing interests from the way restorative justice is practiced in Canada and around the world. In exploring how restorative justice can be developed within the criminal justice system, they also seek to test whether its framework and principles can be used to establish new understandings of processes for resolving civil disputes.

The discussion paper provides background information on the issues, and poses several questions for discussion. It is the Commission's hope that the discussion paper will generate an extensive debate that will both inform further research under their Social Relationships theme, and assist them in preparing a Report on Transformative Justice for submission to the Parliament of Canada.

The discussion paper is available at www.lcc.gc.ca/en/forum/rj/index.html



Oslo Conference Provides Commonality Among Nordic Mediators

By Hans Boserup

Over 300 participants at the Oslo Mediation Conference, held in November, 1999, spent an intense 3 days trying to contain the swarm of information that was shared by 40 presenters on a variety of areas in conflict resolution. The number of participants would have been higher if not for a lack of space, making it necessary to stop further registrations.

For many of the participants, their comprehension of mediation (and related subjects) increased as a result of attendance. School mediators found issues in common with corporate mediators. Family mediators found common ground with victim offender mediators. People in general saw - what ever they named what they were doing - that the quality of the mediation process and the behavior of the mediators are two very key issues in the field.

The Conference included workshops on community mediation, VOM, family mediation, school mediation, and corporate mediation. Following are some of the highlights that emerged from the Conference:

- The development of peer-mediation in Norwegian schools works well with the program against bullying that was developed by the well-known Professor Dan Olweus, Bergen, Norway. Peer mediation is part of the governmental policy in Norway and part of the policy-making in Finland. In Denmark and Sweden, peer-mediation develops on a grassroots level.
- The Nordic countries are known for their long winters and cold-blooded inhabitants. It is no wonder that intellectual means of conflict resolution are traditionally preferred over emotional means. When mediation (the principled form) was introduced in the early nineties, free storytelling and using emotions as a shortcut to unmet needs and real problems was a central focus. Because many mediators in Norden use a systems approach to mediation, focusing on the intellectual part of the mediation process has never been neglected.

See Oslo on page 11

Northern Ireland Case Studies

Victims Appreciate Opportunities to Express Feelings

by Martin McAnallen

Northern Ireland Bomb Hoax at Town Shopping Centre

One Saturday afternoon, a 17-year old male made a hoax call, claiming that there was a bomb in the town shopping centre. This happened one week after a bomb had exploded in the centre of another nearby town. Because of the hoax, the shopping centre was closed for 2 hours resulting in the loss of an estimated £150,000 worth of business.

This was the offender's first offense, and he attributed his actions to boredom. At sentence, he was placed on probation.

A meeting was arranged between the offender, his parents, the manager of the shopping centre, and two of the tenants. During the meeting one of the tenants explained that another tenant had been in the vicinity of the blast the previous week. Following these two events occurring so close together, she had decided to move to England. Though quiet in the meeting, the offender was visibly moved by what was being said and both he and his parents apologized.

It was agreed that a nominal payment would be made to the Company that manages the centre and that the offender would personally apologize to each of the tenants.

Later evaluation reported that all of the victims had appreciated the opportunity to express their feelings, and found it beneficial.

Martin McAnallen is Youth Justice Specialist with the Probation Board for N. Ireland (by day!) and Chair of the Mediation Network for N. Ireland (by night!).

Northern Ireland Burglary at Therapeutic Community and Support Centre

The offender in this case is a 17-year-old male who was responsible for three burglaries over six months. All the burglaries were of the same premises, a therapeutic community and support centre for people recovering from stress related mental illness. Though only a small number of items were stolen, there had been substantial "trashing" of the premises on each occasion. At sentence, the offender had been placed on probation but with an intensive supervision requirement.

A (resolution conference) was arranged by the probation service after the initial interview meeting established that the offender was willing to take part in a conference, and a subsequent meeting with the victims found that they would like to meet the offender. The victims particularly wanted the offender to appreciate the full extent of harm caused by the offense.

The conference was attended by the offender and his parents and two victims, both workers from the centre. They declined the opportunity to bring other supporters. The conference lasted for an hour and a half and was very emotional. Though they stated that they had not known what they wanted to say prior to the actual meeting, both victims spoke at length about the full effects of the burglaries on the staff and clients at the centre. A brief and mumbled apology was given by the offender, prompting one of the victims to state that he did not believe the apology to be sincere, and to again talk at length about all of the people who had been affected by the offense. Following this, the parents of the offender stated that they did think he was remorseful and explained why they thought that.

The victims asked that the offender come and do 3 days work at the centre as an act of reparation, which was agreed to by the offender and his parents. The victims asked that the work be delayed until after the offender has completed his school exams.

Accompanying the evaluation form from the offender was a two page hand-written letter thanking the probation service for arranging the meeting. The letter went on to state that hearing the victims had made a significant impact on him and had brought him to his senses.



VOM Case Studies Provide Heart and Soul

Real-life stories are what "sells" victim offender mediation and restorative justice. Sharing these stories with other VOMA members reminds us about the heart and soul of our work. Short case studies (250-750 words) are particularly needed. Also, consider going out on a limb by submitting those "partial" success stories; often we can learn as much from what doesn't work as what does. Please remember to change the names and other identifying details for confidentiality. See VOMA Connections submission guidelines on page 2.

Imaginary Symposium Provides a Good Look at Restorative Justice

by: Russ Immarigeon

A Book Review of “Restoring Respect for Justice: A Symposium” by Martin Wright, Waterside Press (1999), 224 pages

Martin Wright, former director of the Howard League and once the chief policy advisor for the National Association of Victim Support Schemes, is one of the more prolific British writers on restorative justice. Previously, Wright has written such classic works as *Making Good: Prisons, Punishment and Beyond* (1982) and *Justice for Victims and Offenders: A Restorative Approach to Crime* (1991).

In his latest contribution to this growing field, Wright explores various aspects of restorative justice through the device of reporting an imaginary symposium on *Restoring Respect for Justice* from the perspectives (all written by him) of a politician, a psychologist, a probation officer, a victim assistance worker, a judge, a philosopher, and a mediator. In the process, Wright is able to explore different dimensions of restorative justice. This approach to restorative justice works very well, as it turns out, because he gives more attention to the substance of various arguments than to the device he has chosen to use in presenting the many keen insights he has to offer in this volume.

Wright's overall perspective encapsulates the hopelessness of punishment, as well as a pragmatic (not utopian) optimism for restorative justice. At the Symposium, the politician addresses the concept that prison works, the psychologist considers the matter of individual deterrence, the probation officer examines the strengths and weaknesses of rehabilitation, the victim assistance worker reviews recent changes in the criminal justice systems approach toward crime victims, the judge describes the tensions and pressures felt in

sanctioning offenders, the philosopher assesses proportionate just desserts, and the mediator gives a report on the use of restorative justice. The volume ends with an informative series of questions and answers on restorative justice and a call for a Citizens Commission on Crime and Justice.

One of the advantages of this volume, as indicated not just by the use of different perspectives, but also by the exploration of a range of issues and concerns, is that it gives resonance to restorative justice. Restorative justice, unlike many reform measures, is not a simple matter. Over its brief history, restorative justice has been considered as an individual as well as a systematic response to crime. In fact, it is both, but too often the systematic dimension is lost. This is unfortunate because

restorative justice, I suspect, will be most valuable to practitioners and policy makers alike when it is applied not just as a sanction in one case or another, but also as the foundation for the criminal justice response to all crime behavior and victimization. In this thoughtful volume, Wright reports an imaginary discussion that, one hopes, will become more common in many local and national debates on what to do about crime.

Copies of this volume can be obtained directly from:

Waterside Press, Domum Rd.
Winchester SO23 9NN, England
e-mail: watersidepress@compuserve.com



Here are Three Restorative Justice Videos That are a Must for any RJ Library

- ◇ “Restoring Justice” (51 min.), produced by the Presbyterian Church, USA for the National Council of Churches. A thorough overview of RJ philosophy and sample practices in Oregon, Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania. Divided into three sections, looking at victims, offenders, and communities. A good combination of theory and practice. Interviews with Howard Zehr, Mark Umbreit, Kay Pranis, Dennis Maloney, among others. May be long for audiences with short attention spans, but worth it to get the big picture of RJ. Cost: \$5 plus shipping and handling, from PC-USA, 800/524-2612 (PDS#72-630-96-720)
- ◇ “Restorative Justice: Making Things Right” (22 minutes), produced by the Mennonite Central Committee. A short, powerful explanation of the philosophical and Biblical underpinnings of restorative justice, and contrasted to the goals

of retributive justice. Interviews with Howard Zehr, Dave Worth, Dave Gustafson, Ron Claassen, state officials, among others. A great primer for explaining the concept of RJ to those who know little about it. Cost: \$20, from MCC, 717/859-3889 or mcs@mccus.org.

- ◇ “Restorative Justice: For Victims, Communities, and Offenders” (25 minutes), adapted from the longer PC-USA video, by the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking, University of Minnesota. Still a good combination of theory and sample practices, although not as comprehensive as the 51-minute video. Great for an introduction to RJ. Cost: \$50, plus shipping and handling, from the Center for Restorative Justice & Peacemaking, 612/624-4923 or rjp@tlcmail.che.umn.edu.

Russ Immarigeon is Editor of “Offender Programs Report” and “The Interdisciplinary Report on At-Risk Children and Families.”

Restorative Justice and VOM Conferences and Trainings Calendar

“Just Peace” Conference, an International Peace Conference at Massey University, Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand, **April 24th-28th**. For registration and additional information contact:

Dr. Warwick Tie
School of Sociology and Women’s Studies
Massey University (at Albany)
Private Bag 102 904, North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland, New Zealand
tel: 64 9 443 9700 ext. 9843
fax: 64 9 443 8716
E-mail: WJ.Tie@massey.ac.nz

The Community Justice Institute at Florida Atlantic University will host the first **Restorative Justice Academy May 1-12, 2000**. The RJ Academy will include a wide variety of one to five-day introductory and advanced courses and workshops as well as a ten-day Basic Training for RJ Trainers. For more information, contact:

Phyllis Bebko
Community Justice Inst., Florida Atlantic Univ.
PO Box 3091, Boca Raton, FL 33431
tel: 954/762-5330 fax: 954/762-5693
e-mail: pbebko@fau.edu
www.fau.edu

Justice Fellowship’s **2nd Annual National Forum on Restorative Justice** will be held **May 5-7, 2000**, in Reston, VA. Sessions include “Why isn’t the Church Taking the Leadership Role in Restoring Communities?” and “How Faith-Based Organizations are Helping to Restore Those Impacted by Crime.” For further information or to register on-line contact:

www.justicefellowship.org
PO Box 16069, Washington, DC 20041-6069,
tel: 703/904-7312; fax 703/478-9679

2000 National Restorative Justice Training Institute, April-July, at the University of Minnesota offers one-day, three-day and four-day classes, and includes Victims of Severe Violence Meet the Offender. For more information, contact:

Center for Restorative Justice & Peacemaking
School of Social Work, U. of Minnesota
105 Peters Hall, 1404 Gortner
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-6160
tel: (612) 624-4923
fax: (612) 625-8244
e-mail: rjp@tlcmail.che.umn.edu
http://ssw.che.umn.edu/rjp

The **Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI)** at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, is again offering training courses in restorative justice, peacebuilding, conflict transformation. SPI 2000, which runs from **May 8 to June 30**, will have five sessions, each with three 7-day intensive courses running concurrently. These may be taken for academic credit or as professional training (non-credit). For more information contact:

Summer Peacebuilding Institute
Eastern Mennonite University
1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2462
tel: 540/432-4490 fax: 540/432-4449
e-mail: ctpprogram@emu.edu
www.emu.edu/ctp/ctp.htm

Restorative Justice and Family Violence, A Conference of the Reshaping Australian Institutions Project, Australian National University, Canberra, **July 11-13, 2000**. Many Restorative justice programs specifically exclude family violence as an offense suitable for circles or conferences. The Conference will focus on the issues in family violence that may warrant special caution, and will explore ways of designing restorative justice interventions that respond to specifically feminist and indigenous concerns. For more details contact:

Heather Strang
Australian National University
e-mail: heathers@coombs.anu.edu.au

Paid Summer Internships in Peace Activism

Friends for a Non-Violent World (FNVW) in Minneapolis, Minnesota offers paid summer internships in peace activism. Each summer FNVW hires 2-3 interns to work on a variety of peacemaking tasks and a project of their choice. With the support of Twin Cities meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, FNVW is able to provide an excellent educational experience in organizing for peace and justice. If interested contact before April:

Friends for a Non-Violent World
(612) 321-9787
www.fnvw.org

Restorative Justice Jobs Page

Seeking a job? Have a job to announce? You can access the job page through Fresno Pacific University’s web site. As Duane Ruth-Heffelbower (who is able to maintain the site from his temporary assignment on the island of Java,

Indonesia) says, “the key to a useful jobs bank is for people to send the information when a position is available and let me know when the job is filled.” To access job page: www.fresno.edu/pacs/rjjobs.html

Research and Resource Review Provides Overview of Empirical Studies

A comprehensive overview of forty victim/offender mediation studies and six family group conferencing studies can be found in the Research & Resource Review (RRR), developed by the University of Minnesota Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking. The RRR is available in the Autumn/Winter 1999, Issue #4 of VOMA Connections. For additional information on the RRR contact:

The Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking
School of Social Work, U. of Minnesota
105 Peters Hall, 1404 Gortner
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-6160
tel: 612/624-4923
e-mail: rjp@tlcmail.che.umn.edu
http://ssw.che.umn.edu/rjp

Russia

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As if the course and circumstances were not challenging enough, we worked through interpreters. I met with both translators the day before the course started and we developed a plan for working together. They also wrote out headings and main points in Russian on wallpaper charts. They had some trouble with the technical language of mediation, and at times we needed help from the one or two participants who were bilingual.

Things got easier towards the end of the training as participants became more familiar with the ideas and concepts. Participants' evaluations showed they had learned a great deal about

Restorative Justice, victim/offender mediation and conferencing, and had enjoyed the practical exercises and the good atmosphere. They still felt the need for much more practice in the different skills they had sampled.

One of the most heartening moments towards the end of the course came in an exercise where people placed themselves along a line of agreement with certain statements read aloud. In response to "There is a good future for Restorative Justice in Russia," the whole group moved immediately to the totally agree end of the room. As elsewhere, it may be an idea whose time has come.

Reference

Maksudov, R., Fliamer, M. and Grasenikova, A. (1998) Mediation: Needs Assessment and an Introduction into the Russian Criminal Justice System. Unpublished paper.

Note: The Centre for Legal and Judicial Reforms in Moscow is hoping to find a partnership organization in the UK for a joint project involving bail support and social work with young people involved with the courts, and to continue its' involvement in mediation and conferencing as part of this.



Forum

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The Forum wants to reach mediation services (practitioners, their local networks and national organizations), policy makers, researchers and criminal justice practitioners. It considers other European and international organizations working in the field of victim assistance, offender care and restorative justice as important partners in realizing its' objectives.



Oslo

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- Family Group Conferencing (FGC) has been introduced to Sweden in cases of child care protection and juvenile crime. The Swedes pay close attention to the FGC model developed in New Zealand. At the Conference, it was inspiring to listen to their experiences coming from a country where a big price for their welfare state is the un-empowering of their citizens. It was good to hear that when the families had been through the information stage of FGC, and were left to develop their own plan, they demonstrated competence. FGC is still in its infancy in Sweden, but is rapidly becoming the model preferred by many.
- Where commercial or corporate mediation is concerned, the development is still very slow. In Finland these types of mediation are almost nonexistent.

The purpose of the Conference was to provide participants with an experience of commonality of the mediation process across different areas of conflict resolution. Participants were encouraged to transfer their skills from one area to another, and to learn as many variations of the process as possible in order to provide the most useful service to their parties. Though the Conference gathered on the subject of mediation, it was obvious that mediation has many interesting and useful collaborators. There is so much more to explore for the ambitious mediator.



VOMA Membership

- Agency membership is available to any organization that has an interest in the mediation and conferencing process, the philosophy of restorative justice, or the criminal justice system. Annual agency dues are \$150.00.
- Individual membership is available to those persons interested and/or involved in victim offender mediation and conferencing programs. Annual individual dues are \$40.00.
- Student membership is available to full-time students. Annual student dues are \$25.00.
- Library and educational institution membership are available, which consists of a subscription to the newsletter. Annual library and educational institution dues are \$30.00.

VOMA membership benefits include the VOMA Connections, the Annual Directory of Members, access to VOMA resources, and agency discounts on the Annual Conference.

Membership Application

Name/Contact Person _____

Title _____

Program Name _____

Mailing Address _____ e-mail _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Postal Code _____ Country _____

Tel _____ Fax _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Type of Membership (Full-time student membership, please list school name) _____

Agency Members: Would you like your agency contact information listed on the VOMA web page? Yes No



Victim Offender Mediation Association

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