

**Dispute Resolution Center of Yakima & Kittitas Counties**

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TO:

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Yakima, WA  
Permit # 352

**DRC Mission Statement**

The DRC of Yakima and Kittitas Counties provides mediation services, training and other ways for people to peacefully solve disputes themselves.

## DRC 2012 Event & Training Calendar

January 19, 5:30 PM	DRC Introductory Event at the DRC	July 19 5:30 PM	In-Service Training- Topic TBA
February 24-26	Advanced Family Mediation Training	August 16 5:30 PM	In-Service Training: Mediator Roundtable
March 8, 5:30 PM	DRC Introductory event at the DRC	September 14 5:30 PM	Annual DRC Jazz in the Cellar Fundraising Auction & Dance
March 15 5:30 PM	In Service Training- Topic TBA	September 20 5:30 PM	In-Service Training, Topic TBA
March 27th, 7:00 AM	DRC Annual Fundraising Breakfast	October 12-14	40 Hour Basic Mediation Training Part I
April 17-18	40 Hour Basic Mediation Training Part I	October 26-28	40 Hour Basic Mediation Training Part II
April 27-29	40 Hour Basic Mediation Training Part II	November 15 5:30 PM	In-Service Training: Mediator Roundtable
May 17 5:30 PM	In-Service Training: Mediator Roundtable		
June 14 5:00 PM	Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party		

**Interested in a workshop for your workplace or other organization? Contact Meredith to design a workshop to meet your needs at 453-8949 or [coordinator@drcyakima.org](mailto:coordinator@drcyakima.org)**

**Donate your Wedding Dress to the DRC**

Yes, that is correct, we **are** collecting wedding dresses, still. In an effort to raise funds for the DRC, Meredith and Mary are collecting wedding dresses in order to sell them and raise money for the DRC. We still need dresses. The age or era of dress does not matter, retro is in! You know you will never wear it again, so get it out of storage and bring it in! We are accepting the various accoutrement as well, such as veils, wedding jewelry, shoes, hair accessories etc.... Our goal is to raise \$5000 from this effort, and we need your help. So Spring Clean a little early, and make room in your closet, and help a bride to be to have a beautiful dress, a la you, at an affordable price! Call Mary or Meredith with any questions at 453-8949.



# D.R.C. Newsletter

Issue 10- June 2011 - January 2012

## Director's Message

Dear friends and supporters,

Thank you very much for helping make 2011 a very productive year for the Dispute Resolution Center of Yakima and Kittitas Counties. With your financial support, active referrals efforts and volunteering, we have been able to serve many families, businesses, organizations and individuals with our life affirming conflict resolution and communication work. You make the difference for our community.

In order to help more people engage with the DRC in our mediation work, we are hosting two Introductory events over the next few months. **On the Thursday evenings of January 19th and March 8th beginning at 5:30 PM here at the DRC office we'll spend about an hour demonstrating mediation**, telling people about what we do, giving them an experience on a key communication skill and answering their questions. We would love to have you and one

or two others of your friends and co-workers join us for these engaging evenings. We won't ask you for money at these events, we just want to inform and inspire you and your friends. Please let us know if you can attend by calling (509) 453-8949 or sending an e-mail to [info@drcyakima.org](mailto:info@drcyakima.org).

**Our annual "Mediation: A Path to Peace" breakfast will take place on Tuesday, March 27th at 7 AM.** Please put the date on your calendar and watch your mail box, our web site and Facebook page for details.

Speaking of Facebook, if these two images mean more to you than the letters "f" and "t", we need your help. We are working to develop a social media presence and could use your expertise to develop a strong Facebook and Twitter linkage with our supporters and friends. Drop me an e-mail, or better yet "Like" the DRC on Facebook and let me know you'd like to help. I'll be in touch to seek your assistance.



Issue 10  
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## DRC CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Meredith Bruch: coordinator  
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- Website: [www.drcyakima.org](http://www.drcyakima.org)

## Foreclosure Mediation Program Update



The DRC has 9 mediators (including 2 staff) who have been trained and approved by the Department of Commerce to mediate foreclosure cases under the new Fairness in Foreclosure Act passed by the State Legislature in 2011. Over 700 referrals to mediation have been made across the state since the program started in August. Here in Yakima and Kittitas Counties we have received a total of 13 referrals thus far. Two of these cases have been actually mediated and several more are in the process of scheduling. In some cases the parties have opted not to go forward,

and in three cases resolutions were reached prior to mediation.

But things have not been easy. In fact there have been numerous stumbling blocks along the way, and the staff time necessary to prepare the cases for mediation has been exceedingly large.

Mary Kenney, our Office Manager, is the point person for foreclosure cases in our office, handling all of the scheduling and coordinating work. On average each case takes about 10 hours of staff time to prepare for mediation. Thus far we have put in over 100 hours of staff time on the project, and we have received \$800 in client fees.

So, as you can see, we are running this program at a deficit, as are all of the other DRC's doing this work around the State.

As a result Resolution Washington, the statewide DRC organization, has approached the Department of Commerce about possibly obtaining funds to help offset the losses to DRC's for performing this public service work. Thus far only a small amount of money has been forthcoming. We are somewhat hopeful that Commerce will decide to forward some of the funding it has received under the Act to assist those actually doing the lion's share of the work.

## Asking for Help-What it can do for you and your community!

Asking for help is not an easy thing. Some of us have been raised to believe that we should be able to do things alone, without the help of others, and so we never ask for help. Others of us regularly expect help from others, and receive it often, but we don't actually ask for it.

There is something important and meaningful that happens when someone asks for help. It changes the asker, and the askee. The asker has to let down their defenses and make themselves vulnerable. Asking for help is one way we openly communicate a need, or what we in mediation call an interest, and when people are communicating about interests, they are truly communicating.

And when someone does this to the askee, lays themselves open, makes themselves vulnerable, and honestly communicates a need, it seems to trigger the innate desire in all of us,

or most of us at least, to want to help. And when we want to help, we naturally express empathy, and show compassion for others. We also put on our thinking caps, and we get creative.

This is how real change and solutions happen, people communicating on a level of fundamental needs, and others responding with compassion and ingenuity. And when people work together like this they build a bond between them, a lasting bond. These bonds build our community into a strong, productive, safe and welcoming place. Ultimately, asking for help builds community and belonging, and that is what we at the DRC are all about.

We at the DRC often have to ask for help, but we too need to learn to embrace the beauty of it. We shy away from asking for money and support. We are hesitant where we should be bold! We need help from partners and supporters, to provide us with financial support. We need help from local businesses, to use our training and mediation/facilitation services. We need help from volunteers, to mediate within the community.

We have a fervent desire to build a stronger, more cohesive and compassionate, peaceful community. We can only do that with your help, and we thank you for responding so generously to our call!

## The DRC Needs Your Help

You are NOT invited to  
Our 24<sup>th</sup> Annual DRC Don't You Dare Show Up  
Fundraising Mixed Martial Arts Sock Hop  
December 32<sup>nd</sup>, 2011  
2 3/4 AM to 2 7/8 AM

To Be Held At  
Exit 11 HWY 82-  
The Yakima Training Center Military Off Ramp  
Watch Out for Live Fire and Stryker Tanks  
Guest of Honor: General George S. Patton  
Speaking On:

*PEACE MY WAY*

Dress Code: Camo - Medals Optional  
But SERIOUSLY - Don't Show Up!  
Just Send \$ MONEY \$  
(We suggest \$25 per chuckle and we think you had about 20).

This non-event takes the place of our annual Kittitas County Fundraising event & our annual fundraising letters.

Please mail any donations to the DRC at  
303 East D Street, Suite 4  
Yakima, WA 98901

Or call us if you would like to make a donation via credit card!

## Please Help the DRC With your Financial Support!

### Top TEN Reasons to NOT Show Up:

10. I'll be out of the country
9. I don't like people and people don't like me
8. I have a meeting already scheduled at that time
7. Lassie came home!
6. I don't support non-profits
5. The Hops spontaneously combusted
4. I don't need another AK-47 as a door prize
3. I'm AWOL - Don't ask!
2. I'm currently banned from all military installations
1. I'll save the DRC money!

## The DRC Receives a \$2,000 Grant from the Yakima Valley Zonta Club

The Dispute Resolution Center is happy to announce that it has received a grant for \$2,000 from the Yakima Valley Zonta Club. This grant will be used to support our Victim Offender Meeting program, and specifically the work we do with female victims of crime and female juvenile offenders. Zonta, an international organization, works to advance the status of women worldwide through service and advocacy. The Yakima Valley Zonta Club began in 1953. They raise money to fund local programs to support the advancement of women in the Yakima Valley.

The DRC is a proud recipient of the Zonta award. Over the past two years, the percentage of female offenders served through our VOM program has increased from 20% in the '08-'09 state fiscal year, up to 43% through May 2011 for the '10-'11 fiscal year. The vast majority of cases in which female offenders are referred to the VOM program are for cases of assault (68%), with most of these being altercations within the family. For the cases with female offenders served in the current fiscal year, 73% of the victims have been women, mostly the girls' mothers.

Through the VOM Program we assist female offenders to grow into adulthood responsibly; they are helped to be accountable for their actions which have harmed others, and helped in communicating appropriately with family members around conflict issues so that they can avoid future altercations. We also help female victims of these crimes to have a strong voice, to be

## Foreclosure Mediation Update Continued (from page 1)

One major hurdle we have now mostly surmounted was the development of an agreement to mediate that the banks/lenders were willing to sign. An agreement to mediate, setting forth the ground rules of the mediation, is required by the State law governing DRC work (RCW 7.75). Statewide negotiations were necessary in order to solve this problem. Some banks are still refusing to sign the agreement, presumably in part because they believe they have the right, and want to retain the right, to sue the DRC or the mediators should the mediator make a finding of a lack of good faith on their part.

The law governing Dispute Resolution

Centers is clear that DRC's their employees, volunteers and board members are immune from suits stemming from their work. Some people within the banking industry seem to feel that this should and does not apply in foreclosure mediation cases. We, obviously, believe otherwise. This is hopefully one item that will be clarified in a clean up bill being considered in the legislature now.

A final hurdle which requires clarification surrounds the use of what is called a net present value test to determine the value to the bank of modifying a home mortgage versus the value to them of foreclosing on a

home. Not all banks have been willing to do this NPV test despite the requirements to do so in the Act. From a mediation standpoint our goal is to insure that the parties are making an informed decision, and a decision that does not evaluate the value of one action over another is not an informed decision.

We believe the Foreclose Fairness program is extremely important for our communities, and necessary to assist in improving our economic health. Our goal is to work towards a mediation program that is fair to the parties, and to the mediators. We'll keep you posted on our progress!



BACK ROW (L to R) Linda Fendell, Dispute Resolution Center, Steve Branch, CW Comprehensive Mental Health, Linda Kraft, Yakima Police Athletic League, Mary McCracken, Yakima Valley Young Lives, Margaret Filkins, Wellness House, Julia Hart, Lower Valley Crisis and Support Services, Colleen Adams-Schuppe, Yakima Arboretum, Tim Sullivan, Homeless Network of Yakima; FRONT ROW (L to R) Jheri Ketchum, Yakima Arboretum, Martha Rickey, Northwest Immigration Rights Project, Meredith Bruch, Dispute Resolution Center, Erin Black, YWCA, Beth Dannhardt, Triumph Treatment Services, Deb Ward, Yakima Valley Zonta Club (Not Pictured: Tom Gaulke, EnTrust Community Services)

heard about the impact of the crime on them, and to hold others accountable for their actions. Through the meeting process all parties learn some helpful communication skills to address conflicts with one another (particularly when the victim and offender are family members).

We are particularly thankful for this grant because the generous grant from the Yakima Valley Community Foundation has now been fully utilized. In December 2011 alone we have scheduled 12 VOM cases. In order to continue to provide this valuable and meaningful program, which has a direct impact on those committing and victimized by juvenile crime in our valley, we need the support of our community. Thank you Zonta!