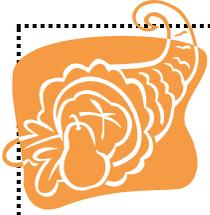


VORP News

Volume 24, Issue 11, November 2006



Administrator's Corner

Thanks to each of you for your help in keeping VORP the dynamic organization that it is. We have been through a number of changes this year, all of them good. The \$100,000

matching grant, the opportunity to serve hundreds more people, and the hiring of a second full time staff person are all important milestones for us. For the first time VORP staff people will receive benefits, something we are very happy about. We are looking forward to completing the match, critical to maintain this momentum, and invite you to continue participating with us as we reach for that goal.

Fresno is one of the hotbeds of restorative justice activity, and it all stems from almost twenty-five years of faithfully bringing together individual victims and offenders. Without that base our other activities would go nowhere. Without our volunteers and contributors we would not have been able to do it. This is truly a community program that draws on all segments of the community. We are diverse and committed. Thanks for your commitment to us.

In 2007 we look forward to establishing more church-based VORPs, helping to start other restorative justice initiatives, and

Follow-up Story

I will always remember VORP as being a big part of my life for the pure fact that it changed my way of being. I learned from my mistakes as well as the people who taught me the value of my freedom. I realized that being in the system does not allow you to have as many privileges and that even though no one has the right to judge you, having a record, they unfortunately will. I would also like take a moment to thank the people who helped me in the whole process at VORP because without these people I probably wouldn't be the same person I am now. I would first of all like to thank my mother for all her support, Richard, who introduced me to VORP in the first place, VORP who introduced me to people who were willing to help me such as Bruce the manager of Manchester Mall and Heidi Briggs the manager of the City of Fresno who gave me the opportunity to pay off my debt to society. I will very strongly admit I was scared of the whole situation, but I am very glad I went through this experience because it showed me that mistakes have consequences. I also thank God for providing me with a program such as VORP because they not only helped me along the way, but have impacted me to become a better person and understand the value of respect.

Maxx Lopez

My experience with VORP as a mother was very rewarding because I was able to see my son accept responsibility for his mistakes and unwise decisions. It has taught my son to see the value of others, also the value of a dollar. It has showed him how to use his leadership skills for good. It has also helped me financially as being the head of a household is tough. Thank you VORP.

Dora Lopez

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

of the Central Valley, Inc.

4882 E. Townsend Ave., Fresno, CA 93727

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Happy Thanksgiving!

Season of Thanks -Noelle Daoudian

Why do we give thanks? Is it because we are told to do so, or do we do it because we truly are grateful for the life we have been given? The way you answer this question depends on how you view your life. During Thanksgiving many people gather with their family and friends and share a wonderful meal together. They all look forward to sharing time with the people they love and at least once in the year take the time to reflect on the blessings which God has bestowed on them. However, there are people who are in the midst of pain and suffering, who feel that God has not dealt them a fair hand and the situation which they find themselves leaves them with seemingly little to be thankful for. How are they supposed to be grateful for a life of distress? I believe the words of H. U. Westermayer speak to this:

"The Pilgrims made seven times more graves than huts. No Americans have been more impoverished than these who, nevertheless, set aside a day of thanksgiving."

During the time of the first Thanksgiving the Pilgrims were in the midst of distress, but they were thankful for what God had done for them in spite of it. They knew that God was in control of their lives and would not leave them in their suffering. God understands our suffering, Jesus Christ, the son of God, suffered on a cross for all of us because He loves us so much. The forgiveness and salvation that God offers through Jesus is the ultimate reason we should be thankful this season. We can be blessed materially in this world, but without the death and resurrection of Christ we would be lost with no hope.

This year as we look for something to be thankful for, focus on God who is the giver of all good things, who gave us the opportunity to be made right with Himself, and who is the only one truly deserving our thanksgiving and praise today and always.

Volunteer Mediator Training

January 12-13, 2007

Friday 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Saturday 8:30am - 3:30pm

Call 455-9803 to reserve a spot.

Intern

Raymond Carrillo

Hello, my name is Raymond (Ray) Carrillo. I was born and raised in Visalia, California. After graduating high school, I joined the Marine Corps and served five honorable years and because of my commitment to duty, I am able to attend college. I am in my senior year at CSU Fresno. My major is Criminology with an option in Victimology. I chose the Victimology option because I truly feel that as a prospective criminal justice practitioner, my experiences in and out of college will better help those in need.

I volunteered with the VORP organization because it gives me the opportunity to affect the lives of those in and around the communities of Fresno. One of the positive ways I am able to accomplish this is through the Graffiti Abatement program (G.A). The G. A. program allows juvenile offenders the opportunity to give back to the community by providing their time on Saturday mornings. On Saturday mornings, usually from 11:00am to 2:00pm, the juvenile offenders remove graffiti along the streets of Blackstone, First, Dakota, and Gettysburg. It is my job as G. A. Coordinator to walk with the offenders while making sure they are actually removing the graffiti. Walking with the offenders also enables me to witness them express how they really feel about removing the tagging which they had participated in at one point, that has them now lending their time on Saturday mornings.

Thanksgiving Humor

A man in Phoenix calls his son in New York the day before Thanksgiving and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough."

"Dad, what are you talking about?" the son screams. "We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the father says, "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Chicago and tell her."

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like heck they're getting divorced," she shouts, "I'll take care of this."

She calls Phoenix immediately, and screams at her father, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?!" and she hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. "Okay," he says, "they're coming for Thanksgiving and paying their own way."

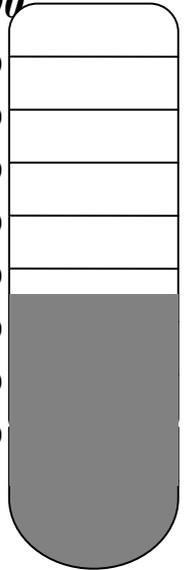
Q: Why did the turkey cross the road?

A: The chicken was on vacation.

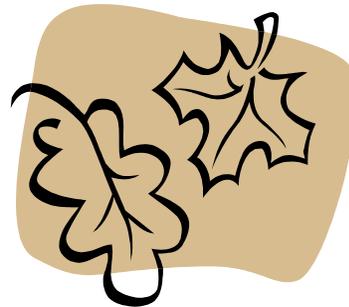
Growing VORP

\$100,000

90,000
80,000
70,000
60,000
50,000
40,000
30,000
20,000
10,000



**\$ 45,586
Matching Grant
October 2006**



VORP Fundraising

PLEASE CALL VORP AT 455-9803 IF:

- You would like to donate money for our VORP youth and have them help you with any projects around the house such as: housekeeping, cleaning out the garage, yard work, washing the car, or anything else you can think of.
- You would like to have VORP kids pick up your recyclables on a regular basis.
- You have fundraising experience and would be willing to share any ideas with us.
- You have time to volunteer helping coordinate projects and supervising kids while they work.

VORP Staff

Duane Ruth-Heffelbower	Administrator
Johnny Phouthachack	Agreement Manager
Noelle Daoudian	Mediation Manager
Barry Guenther	Finance Manager

VORP Board Members

Michael Blue, Chair	Arthur Wint
Dave Purvis, Secretary/Treasurer	José Chaparro
Ron Blalack	

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