

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

VORP of the Central Valley, Inc. News August 1988

"The service gap in the Juvenile Division alone is about 1500 cases. Last year VORP worked with just over 400 cases and we would have liked to have referred closer to 2,000." These were the challenging words of Joe Walden, Juvenile Division Director at a meeting of church leaders gathered at the probation department. In a cooperative effort between the probation department and VORP, church leaders were invited to hear about the value and work of VORP and invited to get involved.

Judge Caeton, Presiding Juvenile Court Judge said, "The Victim Offender Reconciliation Program sounds like poetry to me and I am wholeheartedly supportive." He laid out the problem of juvenile crime and the value of the VORP process for both victims and offenders and invited church leaders to do what they could to get more volunteer participation.

One of the results of this meeting is that a volunteer mediator training is now scheduled for volunteers at Peoples Church for early this fall. Our mission statement says that our primary purpose is "to encourage and assist the church in its mission of peacemaking in the conflict between victims and offenders of crime."

Virginia Daily, a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, has worked with many victims and offenders over the last couple of years and has agreed to share a recent experience with us. Some names and details have been changed to protect the identities of the participants.

When I first got the case and saw that the theft involved the taking of one case of beer, I wondered if ABC Mini Mart would even want to put forth the effort of going through the VORP process! Here goes a try, I thought as the phone was ringing. The victim's daughter answered and said that her mother, Marge (owner of the Mini Mart), would have to call me back due to her irregular and busy schedule. I thanked her. Later that afternoon Marge called. When we talked she said that she would like to meet with the offender. She said that each year they lose a lot of money (a little at a time) due to just this type of theft. She'd like to have a chance to let maybe just one person hear her side, since her family is dependent on the money she brings home after the losses each month. She also shared with me the fact that her son had been in a lot of trouble as a teenager and would have liked this chance for him in the beginning. I thought, "Thank you Lord for her eagerness!"

John (18 years old) was harder to reach. He had moved since the referral had been made. He lives with several different relatives from time to time. I was finally able to reach his sister and she seem most eager to help him and to be there for him if he needed her in the future. In talking to John, he said this had been his first time in trouble and that it had been done on a dare by friends. He said he'd like to meet with and repay the owner of the store.

The VORP process and goals had been explained to both and I felt that it would be a good meeting. The night for the meeting was agreed to by both and the place for the meeting was going to be at the ABC Mini Mart where the theft occurred.

I arrived early. Marge arrived about 10 minutes later and John just after that. Introductions were completed and we went into the office.

After introductory comments and agreement to the groundrules for the meeting, Marge went first. She told of her feelings and frustrations with this type of problem whether it be a prank, or whatever the



Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

2529 Willow Avenue • Clovis, CA 93612

2529 Willow Promose is a Charles Carter Cart

Math ca completely being caults of that selfort when the cape completely selfort of a mathematical and an absence of the cape of the cape

Before oclosing this newsletter is want to thank bon Hogner, Fresno County Chief Probation Officer, for all of the encouragement and support that he shad given to me and to VORP. Don has resigned as Chief Probation Officer here and will be assuming the position of Chief Probation of Chief Probatio

newsletter are giving and we thank you. In order to meet the service gap referred to the beginning of others who have the weight house of your who said to begin. Regular monthly contributions are continue, and no amount is too small. Some prefer giving once a year and that are things year, helpful and no amount is too small. Some prefer giving once a year and that it is the right between them, please let us know by sending a contribution. Last month it is tight between them, please let us know by sending a contribution. Last month it is tight between them, please let us know by sending a contribution. Last month it is not the right between them, please let us know by gending a contribution. Last month it is not the month we would not meet our expenses by quite a bit but on the last day of the month we received a check for just out and support of the month we received a check for just of the month we received a check for just of the month we received a check for just of the month we would not meet our expenses by quite a bit but on the last day of the month we would not meet our expenses by quite a bit but on the last day of the month we would not meet our expenses by quite a bit but on the last day of the month we would not meet our expenses by quite a bit but on the last day of the month when the month of the

Our next regular training event for volunteer mediators will be September SO and SN: This training is volunteer mediators will be in being a volunteer mediator; We request that volunteers be prepared to work with approximately one case per month (5-8 hours). If during the training you decide being a mediator in this setting is not for you, we will respect that decision. I'm sure that the training will benefit you and those you work with in many other settings. For more information and pre-registration, please call Todd or Gretchen at S91-11SO.

Why way the solely on donations for than apport. Many of you who receive this work depends solely on donations for the search of you who receive this

And we thank you Ginny for giving your time and for sharing your experience with us!

I felt that a^{ve}real recondiliation had happened and this always makes in thank vorp for that feeling!

the end of the meeting, John repaid the cost of the peer and the the cost of the peer and the the cost of the peer and thanked Marge and myself for the meeting. He had thought I was peing being paid for doing this, and was surprised that there are people actually bout there who give up their time to help other people try to make better choices in the future. He thanked me again and said he'd let us know how things are going in the future. He is going into the military later this summer.

John apologized, He said he was sorry first of all for being so in the totat of all for being so in the totat of all not just a small hurt caused, actually seeing a face to the crime, not just a small not the crime, not just a small item that would hardly be noticed as missing from a minimate type.

John also shared with Marge some sadness in his childhood

reason. She showed John all of the money spent trying to prevent this type of theft: camera equipment, burglar, alarms, intercom, etc. She said that said that she works hard just trying to make a living. She said that said that that onlichood had been tragic, and that she had worked very hard from the childhood to be able to give her children a better life.