

## Help!! Cases referrals are up but expenses have exceeded income in both April and May. Our small reserve is gone. If you believe that VORP is worth having in our community, now is the time to say so with a contribution.

If we value volunteer mediator hours at \$25/hour and add in kind contributions of rent, printing, and computer assistance, our total budget is \$175,000. But it requires only \$50,000 in cash contributions. Therefore, because of a cooperative effort, your \$100 contribution has the impact of \$350, a great investment.

Our society can't solve all of our problems by separation and distance. VORP is a wonderful and growing demonstration plot showing that it is possible to cooperatively resolve significant problems. If cooperation works in problems as emotionally charged as this, surely it will work in other settings too. VORP mediators report that they use their training in many settings beyond VORP such as helping resolve conflicts at home, work, and church. So, your investment actually multiplies even more than indicated above.

Because we think that any organization will be influenced by their funding source, VORP prefers to be supported by those individuals, churches, and other groups who want to encourage and support God's vision of peace due to right relations between people and with God. VORP wants to be accountable for operating an efficient and effective program that recognizes the dignity of each victim and offender and values accountability, responsibility, and forgiveness as the way of repairing the breach.

One of the reasons that VORP is so efficient and effective is our dedicated staff who are serving through Mennonite Voluntary Service. Linda Olthoff is our restitution manager. She follows up on every case and asks those who forget their agreements if they intend to keep their word and live up to their agreement. Barbara Toews is our case manager. She is responsible for getting cases out to volunteer mediators, providing support, maintaining contact with the referral source, and doing all of this in a constructive manner within a limited time frame. In addition to these tasks they do many other things. Both Linda and Barbara accomplish their tasks through a wonder blend of assertiveness and caring. Please remember them in your prayers.

## Regretful Store Clerk Repays \$3,000

■ In addition to their other tasks, both Barbara and Linda do some case work. This month our story is from Barbara. Although most cases are with juvenile offenders, more cases are being referred where the offender is an adult. Some names and details have been changed to protect identities.

Trevor had worked as a manager in a store. He was responsible for the daily deposits at the bank which often included thousands of dollars. At the end of one of his shifts he did not make the full deposit and kept close to \$3,000 for himself. It was discovered some time later. He was questioned and finally arrested for embezzlement.

Trevor was formally referred to VORP from the Alternative Sentencing Program. But he called our office before we had even received the referral. During the initial meeting with Trevor, he indicated how he stole the money because there were things that he wanted and felt he needed the money to get those things. "Basically it was greed," he said. He said that since that time he had gotten his life in order, was seeing a counselor and had found other work. He wanted to pay back the money and had already come up with a plan to do it at \$300 a month until all the money was returned.

Trevor had given me some names of people to contact from the regional department and the risk man-

agement department and who were familiar with his case. When I met with Marc, the risk management supervisor, and Erik, the district supervisor, they were reluctant to participate because of concerns that working with VORP would interfere with the court proceedings. When they were assured that the agreement would become part of Trevor's probation or sentence conditions, they were interested. Even with the initial concerns, they commented that they did want to help Trevor clear the offense up. Marc and Erik also spoke highly of the work Trevor had done, despite this offense.

Everyone was on time for the meeting. Trevor started by describing exactly what he had done and that he knew it was wrong. He explained his desire to have lots of material things and talked about how he was getting help and how his life was getting back on track. Marc and Erik listened and summarized what Trevor had said. Then Marc and Erik described the impact on the company. The included how Trevor was a good worker, dependable, and always got the job done. With the affirmation also was the recognition that he had done something wrong and needed to make that right. Trevor summarized what Marc and Erik said. Then Trevor presented his plan for repayment. Because Trevor

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had been let go at work and had not received his final paycheck and vacation check, he suggested signing them over to the store as part of his restitution. The three men came to agreement on the restitution plan and further talked about the future. Trevor said that this is something he would not do again and with the help that he had been receiving, he was learning to control his desires. He also said

that he would not be taking jobs soon where he would have to handle large amounts of money.

Since the meeting, Trevor has made regular payments and has only the final \$400 (approximately) of his agreement left which he plans to pay off this month.

Thanks Barbara!!

You could become a VORP mediator!! The next training sessions are scheduled for July 22 and 23; Sept. 8, 15, and 22; Oct. 14 and 15; and Nov. 15, 22, and 29. The materials fee is \$15 for those who plan to work with at least 3 cases. The training fee is \$75 for others. Call Barbara or Linda (291-1120) to Register.

One Volunteer Mediator said recently, "I have already found the listening skills I learned to be very helpful in my own life." "The actual practice of the steps in a VORP case was invaluable. The training was excellent." AS

**VORP RELIES ENTIRELY ON YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!! IF YOU HAVE NEVER MADE A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO VORP BEFORE, NOW IS A VERY GOOD TIME TO WRITE A CHECK AND RETURN IT IN THE ATTACHED ENVELOPE!!!!**

Shalom

Ron Claassen, Director

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