

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center. Don't forget to add outreach@whatcomdrc.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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Spring 2013  
Volume 9, Issue 2

# The Mediator

## Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center Newsletter

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**Contribute to the  
WDRC**

**Would you consider  
including the  
WDRC in your  
annual giving?**

*The Mediator* is the WDRC quarterly newsletter conveying and communicating to you all that's going on at the Center. We'll give you updates on our successes, the skinny on trainings and events coming up, and introductions to our mediators, staff, and volunteers.

### Director's Report

*Notes from the desk of Moonwater*

When it comes to communication, the message sent is rarely the message received. This simple reminder represents a vast network of misfires, discordant perspectives, and myriad other barriers we rarely take the time to examine. The resulting miscommunication often leaves us feeling anxious, frustrated, and at a loss for how to move forward. This can be one of the most uncomfortable places to find ourselves.

I feel fortunate to work in an environment that not only helps people navigate through this discomfort, but that requires me to constantly reflect personally on what leads to these barriers and how I can help myself and others to overcome them effectively.

Not long ago I did a presentation on the three P's: paradigm, physiology, and patterns. The "P" for Paradigm addresses the lens through which we view conflict. Many of us have negative associations with conflict which subsequently impact how we approach it, the questions we pose, how we receive what the other person has to hear, and ultimately how it is resolved. Instead, shifting our paradigm positively to view conflict as an opportunity



Make a tax-deductible donation today through JustGive.

## Ways to Stay in Touch

Check out our website:



Follow us on **twitter**

Like us on **Facebook**

## Upcoming Events

### Compete for a Cause Bellingham Bay Bocce Tournament

Saturday, April 20, 2013  
9:00 Check-in  
All day fun!



For more info:

[www.whatcomdrc.org](http://www.whatcomdrc.org)  
[www.boccemon.com](http://www.boccemon.com)

### Volunteer Info Session

Wednesday, April 10, 2013  
12:00-1:00 p.m. at WDRC

can shift the way we carry ourselves in the midst of these difficult conversations. This new lens helps us to stay present, minimize assumptions, and expand our creativity and awareness.

The "P" for Physiology focuses on understanding both the physiological responses we have to our triggers (our hot buttons), and how those escalate us into a state of crisis, as well as the neurobiology of conflict and how the chemicals and hormones produced when we are triggered impact our pre-frontal and pre-motor cortex - minimizing our ability to respond to conflict productively.

The "P" for Patterns focuses on some common tendencies we have when we feel attacked. We often get defensive, run away, get stubborn and refuse to budge, blame others, or counterattack. None of these behavioral patterns move us towards collaboration or resolution. Rather, they often escalate our conflict unnecessarily. Identifying these patterns helps us to make changes, and choose responses that invite reflection, introspection, and collaboration.

...Food for thought as you move into the year ahead and toward all of the conversations it will hold. The next time I feel some heat in a conversation, I'll do my best to ask myself, "What is important to this person? And what can I learn from this interaction that may help us communicate more effectively in the moment and in the future?"  
*What question(s) will you ask yourself?*

*Moonwater*

## WDRC 2012 Annual Report is Available

*20th anniversary year was most active year yet!*

*By the numbers, we had a record year:*

**The WDRC mediated 244 cases last year,  
trained 1175 adults and 931 youth!**

## Volunteer Info Session

Wednesday, May 22, 2013  
12:00-1:00 p.m. at WDRC

## Human Race

Saturday, June 1, 2013

More info coming soon!  
Check out the [Whatcom Volunteer Center](#) site for more info.

## WDRC Open House

Thursday, October 3, 2013  
More info coming soon!

## Peace Builder Awards Gala

Friday, November 15, 2013  
More info coming soon!

For more event info, email:  
[outreach@whatcomdrc.org](mailto:outreach@whatcomdrc.org).

## Upcoming Trainings

### Understanding Conflict Workshop

Tuesday/Thursday, May 14 and 16, 2013  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Pre-registration required!

### Understanding Conflict Workshop

Wednesdays, August 20 and 27, 2013  
5:30-8:30 p.m.  
Pre-registration required!

### Professional Mediation Training



## Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center

360.676.0122 | [whatcomdrc.org](http://whatcomdrc.org) | 13 Prospect Street, Ste. 201 | Bellingham, WA 98225

## 2012 Annual Report

Empowering community members to resolve conflict peacefully

February, 2013

### Executive Director's Report



**Our Mission**  
To provide and promote constructive and collaborative approaches to conflict through mediation, training, facilitation and community education.

**Our Vision**  
For Whatcom County to be a community in which people approach conflict in creative and healthy ways.

This past year we marked the 20th anniversary of the WDRC. In doing so, we celebrated two decades of listening, learning, empowering and resolving. We had the opportunity to both focus on some exciting internal activities in which the staff and Board engaged, as well as external activities—allowing us to use our creativity to design and strengthen new and existing programs to better serve the community. Some highlights from the past twelve months include:

- In tandem with Resolution Washington, the statewide association of Dispute Resolution Centers, we aligned our practicum program and continuing education requirements to meet the newly revised and rigorous best practices.
- In partnership with District Court, we piloted a new program with a restorative justice focus—the District Court Sentencing Alternative Conflict Class. This conflict resolution and communication workshop gives offenders the opportunity to build helpful skills and reflect upon their actions. Paired with community service and a form of probation, it serves as an alternative to jail.
- We collaborated with Current Media Productions to develop a video highlighting our programs and services.
- We hired a new Youth Program Coordinator to run our youth program.
- Our Board of Directors refined our strategic plan, working with staff to create a shared values statement.
- We trained a record number of youth and adults, 53% more than in 2011.
- We mediated a record number of cases, a 13% increase over 2011.

As I shared at our anniversary luncheon, I believe in this organization. I believe in the work we do and the people who are doing it. I believe in our community and its ability to create a culture of healthy conflict and dialogue. And I know that while over the past 20 years we have touched many lives, we have only just begun. For as long as there are differing opinions and contentious issues, unique personalities and divergent perspectives, and so long as we are committed to living, working, and simply being in this beautiful space we call Whatcom County, there will be a need to focus on working collaboratively together to solve our collective challenges.

The WDRC is here to help do just that. I am honored to be a part of this organization and truly believe that together we can bring this vision to fruition.

In recognition of this special year, and the significant needs our community has, I am especially appreciative of all of the support that individuals, foundations, and businesses have dedicated to the WDRC. These contributions help ensure the continuation of our programs and enable us to meet emerging needs with flexibility and responsiveness. I look forward to engaging each and every one of you in the myriad ways that exist to help the WDRC continue to thrive.

With warmth,  
Moonwater

[Our annual report is available through this link.](#) Read on for more info about our 20th year of conflict resolution in Whatcom County.

## Daytime Understanding Conflict Workshop draws employers

HR professionals, managers, employees, and more are welcome to take our workshop in May



We're offering our Understanding Conflict Workshop once again this May. This time, it's scheduled for work hours. If you're interested in taking the course for professional development, [this flyer](#) details payment options and info, and [this flyer](#) has more details on class content and times. Send it to your supervisor!

### Understanding Conflict Workshop

May 14 and 16, 2013

Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Course fee: \$75

**Pre-registration required! To register, call 360-676-0122.**

October 16-18 and 23-25,  
2013

Pre-registration  
required!

**EARLY BIRD**

**DEADLINE: September  
17, 2013**



Check out [our website](#)  
for more info. Call 360-  
676-0122 to register.

## Our Board

Kacey Alleman, President  
Joan Cervisi  
Jacie DeLaruelle  
David Doll  
Randy Doucet  
Alan Gardner  
Dave Grant  
Margo Hammond  
Andrew Olive  
Raymond Pelletti  
Mary Sass  
Debra Young

## Our Advisory Board

Nancy Blume  
Marian Exall  
Betsy Gross  
Leon Henley  
Carlton Nathon  
Mark Rogers

## Our Staff

**Moonwater**  
Executive Director

Erin Corday

## Our first quarter participants have this to say about the training:

- "The tips and tools for dealing with conflict would help anyone."
- "This class will be one of the most useful things I will be able to use out in the world my entire life."
- "Mary's passion for teaching dispute resolution makes her class exciting and her personality makes it fun!"

Questions? Contact WDRC Office Coordinator Erin Corday at [wdrc@whatcomdrc.org](mailto:wdrc@whatcomdrc.org) or 360-676-0122 x118.

## Reaching Resolution

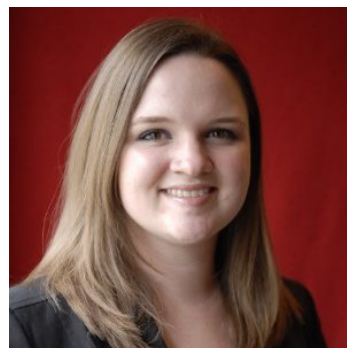
*A peek into a mediation at the WDRC*

*Last year we mediated 244 cases. Of those mediations, 80-85% reached resolution. While those numbers are impressive, the stories are even more telling. Here's one example of our work in Whatcom County. Names and details have been shifted so as to protect and honor the confidentiality of the participants.*

A father called us wanting to change his parenting plan; He and his son were hoping to spend more time together. In the intake conversations with both parents, we found that the son wanted to have a voice in the mediation. To appropriately involve his needs in the process, we came up with a plan to try a parent-teen mediation for Mom and son to talk about their challenges, followed by a mediation between parents to work on their parenting plan. At the meeting between Mom and son, great conversations resulted in agreements about how they'd interact in the future. They talked about some potential changes in amount of time the son and Dad got to spend together. After such a successful mediation between Mom and son, the parents were able to collaboratively create a new parenting plan before they even came to mediation. The outcome was exactly balanced time for both parents with their son.

## Welcome to New Staff and Board Members

*Vanessa Roebuck, our new Case Manager:*





*Office Coordinator*

**Cynthia Moore**  
*Lead Case Manager*

**Calhan Ring**  
*Program Manager*

Vanessa Roebuck  
*Case Manager*

**Ellie Rogers**  
*Program Assistant*

**Brittany Sullateskee**  
*Youth Program Coordinator*

**Rosanna Wadkins**  
*Fiscal Support*

**Emily Wilson**  
*Youth Program AmeriCorps*

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Hello! I am so pleased to be joining the wonderful team at the WDRC as the new small claims and foreclosure mediation case manager. My husband and I recently returned to Whatcom County from Eugene, Oregon where I earned concurrent masters' degrees at the UO in Conflict & Dispute Resolution and Public Administration. For fun I love to hike, bike, run, play racquet ball and soccer, and be near the water; I especially love a good book, and spending time with friends and family over coffee or a great meal. My husband and I are so excited to be back in the area, and I am personally thrilled to be doing work I am passionate about right here in my community.

*Alan Gardner, our newest Board Member:*



I was born and raised in West Los Angeles, California. After high school I relocated to San Francisco to attend college and began a career in Broadcast Engineering, working in various television and radio stations in the Bay Area. Eventually I ended up back in Hollywood, California where television production has its roots. My wife Barbara and I fell in love with Bellingham Washington, while here on a vacation in 1992.

After a few days visiting this beautiful city, we decided to try to relocate here. When we returned to Southern California, we began working on a business plan. After a year of hard work we made the move, quitting our jobs that took years to get, and moved to Bellingham. We opened a retail store in 1993 and never looked back. In late in 2000 we had a daughter, Emmy, and decided we could bring in some additional staff to be able to spend more time with her in those early years.

Now that she is older I am fortunate enough to be able to devote some time to a community effort. A few years ago I became acquainted with the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center during a small claims court matter. Fast forward to last year when Board Member David Doll approached me asking for a donation to an

upcoming event. From David I learned more about what the WDRC does. It seemed like a good fit to my interests, and the inherent local nature of the organization's work is exactly what I would like to become involved with.

## Notes from the Youth Program

*WDRC Youth Program works with Whatcom Prevention Coalition*



One of my favorite things about serving in a non-profit agency is the opportunity to partner with other organizations with like-minded missions and goals. One partnership that has grown stronger this year has been with the [Whatcom Prevention Coalition](#) whose mission is: "To build safe and healthy communities by providing leadership, promoting prevention, and building partnerships that mobilize youth, families, and neighborhoods to reduce substance abuse and other destructive behaviors among youth and the broader community." This January, our program collaborated on a new project with the Whatcom Prevention Coalition, as well as teachers from Bellingham High School and AmeriCorps members to create a leadership development day for the high school students involved in the "Inspire a Movement" Club. This club (referred to as "IAM" for short) is dedicated to creating a space where students who might otherwise be on the fringes of the school are brought together and engaged in service activities, leadership development, and critical thinking.

The club members are diverse in ethnicity, background, and their talent, and what started as a small group has grown into a large club with over 80 active members. The club also has a group dedicated to preventing youth suicide by educating and empowering students and community members to know the signs and to take action. The level of leadership, passion, and organization these young people exhibit is inspiring. In November of 2012, I attended the Washington State Prevention Summit as a chaperone for 33 youth from various prevention teams in Bellingham and Ferndale. The summit was an incredible opportunity for the students to meet teens from all over

the state (over 950 youth attended!) as well as adults who are all working toward advancing prevention strategies in their communities. After the summit, the program coordinator of the WPC, Amy Hockenberry, suggested that we start meeting to plan an event that would further build leadership skills by providing a training session on conflict resolution to one of the prevention teams.

On January 30th, we got our chance. The "IAM CLIMBS: Inspiring A Movement - Changing Lives Inspires Mind & Body Strength" day started off with a morning of complimentary rock climbing at the YMCA coordinated by Will Cameron, an AmeriCorps member serving with Communities in Schools, where students got to try their hand at scaling a rock wall with the assistance of volunteer belayers. They had a blast and for many of the students it was their first experience climbing. They continued to challenge themselves and to build teamwork as they participated in a low ropes course activity. After a pizza lunch we hosted a two-hour conflict resolution training. We started off with a game where students tried to convince their partner to cross a line of tape set on the ground. The rule is: if you get your partner to cross the taped line, you win! The "trick" of the game is that both partners get to win if they agree to step over the line at the same time, however because it's framed as a competition, most of the time neither participant is willing to move from their side because it would mean losing. We discussed the differences between collaboration and competition and related it to how people act in conflict. As we moved through the training, we used the game as a symbol for being "stuck on your own side". Another metaphor we use in our trainings is the image of an iceberg. In a conflict, a person's positions or main arguments are really only the surface of what is important to them, just as you can only see the tip of the iceberg above the water. The bulk of an iceberg lies below the water just as in a conflict, the reasons why a person supports their argument are below the surface the values, fears, beliefs, needs, past experiences, and hopes just to name a few (In mediation we refer to these as interests).

To explore this idea, we asked to students to create their own icebergs by looking at comic strips and identifying the character's main argument and what is under the surface. The final part of the activity was to find which interests (or below the surface items) were on both character's lists to demonstrate that there is common ground, even between characters in conflict. We rounded out our session with communication activities and at the end turned the focus more inward as we asked the students to create an identity

mask. The outside of the mask had images and words that represented how others view them, and the inside of the mask represented how they see themselves. The event was quite a success and now Amy is planning on working with us to create a replicable training that would combine the low ropes course with conflict resolution activities in a thoughtful and impactful way. As I reflect on that day, I am so honored to have been a part of what I hope was a memorable day for these inspiring young people, and I am looking forward to continuing to find new and creative ways to help build valuable learning opportunities for others as we move forward.

*-Emily Wilson, Youth Program AmeriCorps*

## Book Nook

*Vanessa Roebuck reviews Be Quiet, Be Heard: The Paradox of Persuasion*



*"Trust is not a pre-requisite for communication, it is a byproduct of communication." -Glaser and Glaser*

*Be Quiet, Be Heard* is one of the most easily accessible, yet comprehensive books I have read in the communication and conflict resolution field. It covers several levels of communication including one-on-one relationships, team and work dynamics, and public speaking, all in fewer than 200 pages, making it a quick read. At each level the authors highlight the natural responses we have which can work against us when we are trying to communicate.

The most obvious paradox is in the title: be quiet, be heard. As the authors have stated, when they say be quiet, they mean, "Quiet your mind's conversation. Stop planning your next response. Stop defending yourself against what your critic is saying. Be still, on every level - and just listen!" (p. 15). Truly hearing the content and tone of the person you are listening to will help you understand not only how to respond, but also how you can preserve or enhance



your relationship with them. The challenge is to acknowledge our body's response (increased heartbeat, dry mouth, and so on) and stay in the conversation anyway.

Other paradoxes the authors address include potentially awkward interactions like asking for *more* information when being criticized, or the most effective way to give criticism; how to show and receive gratitude; and facing our anxiety-even using it to our advantage-when public speaking. These and other elements contribute to the "Culture of Communication" for which Glaser and Glaser strive. This book is a must read for anyone hoping to better understand how they communicate, and how to help themselves be heard when it matters most.

*-Vanessa Roebuck, Case Manager*

*This book is available from the Whatcom County Library System. [Check it out!](#)*

## FUNdraising and Outreach Report

*Upcoming WDRC events*

### 11th Bellingham Bay Bocce Tournament

Saturday, April 20, 2013

[Sportsplex](#) in Bellingham

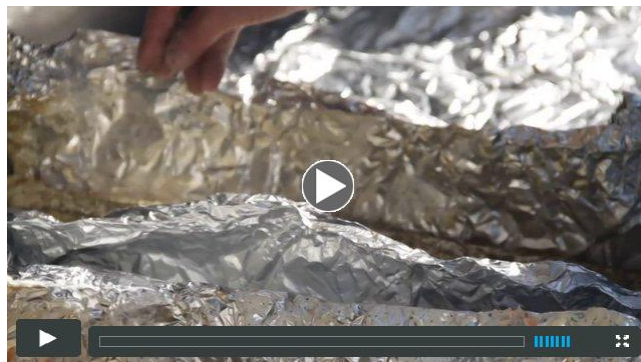
Want to play on a local business' team?

**We need volunteers and players! \$25 to enter**

Register early by emailing [outreach@whatcomdrc.org](mailto:outreach@whatcomdrc.org) or calling 360-676-0122 for Ellie

*We've sold out on sponsorships! Thanks to our wonderful supporters.*

[Current Media](#) created a fabulous video about our ongoing relationship with [Boccemon](#) for the annual Bellingham Bay Bocce Tournament. We hope it inspires you to want to play this year!



## BOCCE BALL TOURNAMENT - SPORTSPLEX 2012

### **June 1: Human Race**

Walk or run with the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center.

### **October 3: WDRC Open House**

Save the date!

### **November 15: Peace Builder Awards Gala**

Save the date!

Have you noticed that we're not holding our annual Scrabble and Cribbage tournaments this year? Don't worry! The tournaments are still in the hopper as we transition them to volunteer-run events. If you'd like to be on the mailing list for either tournament, let Ellie know.

*For events and outreach information, contact Ellie*

*([outreach@whatcomdrc.org](mailto:outreach@whatcomdrc.org) or 360-676-0122 x115) for more details.*

## **Thanks to Our Volunteers!**

### **Ongoing office and event support:**

Chris Beers, Kris Buettner, David Donohue, Patti Drews, Jaina Gemin, Ryan Goelzenleuchter, Kristin Jager, Leon James, Sarah Jenkins, Tom McNutt, Judy Osmundson, Bernice Rappaport, Wyatt Shedd-Stewart, Justin Therrien, Dave Thorngren, Wes Withrow

### **Youth Program support:**

Jaina Gemin, Wyatt Shedd-Stewart

### **Mediators:**

Joel Bergsbaken, Rachel Brown, Jeanne Chadwick, Sophia Davies, Kaitlin Davis, Randy Doucet, Mary Dumas, Rose Anne Featherston, Doug Fenton, Deborah Forgays, Kathy Hilmoe, David Imburgia, Robert Kelly, Michael Kleps, Jessica Lee, Michael Light, Don Lotze, Howard Lowe, Jean MacGregor, K. Ann McCartney, Moonwater, Cynthia Moore, Mark Ortman, Bill Paleck, Mark Polin, Calhan Ring, Barbara Rofkar, Mark Rogers, Sheri Russell, Felicia Staub, Nancy Waters, Irene Wysocki

Thanks for your support in helping Whatcom County become a community that values communication and creative conflict resolution.

Sincerely,

WDRC Staff

[Forward this email](#)



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