

Best of the NETWORKER

Feature Articles from Past Issues

The Northwest Youth Networker; newsletter of the [Northwest Network for Youth](#), edited by [Jerry Fest](#) of the [InterNetwork for Youth](#)

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Happy Independence Day! Don't Forget to Thank a Young Person.

Op-Ed by Jerry Fest



As we're grilling our hot dogs and Gardenburgers (for those of you who have evolved beyond meat), let's not forget to take a moment to remember the role of young people in the American Revolution. We tend to think of everyone involved as Founding Fathers, old white guys who were grumpy about paying taxes. The truth is that it was a fairly young movement, and it was a revolution in *thought*. As John Adams said; "The war was no part of the revolution. It was only an effect and consequence of it. The revolution was in the hearts and minds of the people."

So who were these people? Of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, only Ben Franklin could be considered "old." 18 of them were under the age of 40, and 3 were in their 20's. Jefferson himself, the author of the declaration, was only 33, and other major players in the revolution were considerably younger. Molly "Pitcher" was only 24 when she took her husband's post at his cannon after he was killed at the battle of Monmouth. The Marquis De Lafayette, a Frenchman and friend of George Washington's, was appointed by Congress to serve as a Major-General in the Continental Army at the age of 19.

And, while I could go on and give more examples of youth among the major and known players, let's not forget that the suffering and heavy lifting in the "effect and consequence" of the fighting, as in all wars, was done by adolescents. Over *half* of the colonial population at the time was under the age of 16. It was *young* men and women who fought and died for our freedom. It only seems fair that young people should enjoy the freedoms for which we sacrifice their lives. Food for thought on this issue can be found [here](#). For more insight on the role of teenagers in the revolution, [read this book](#).

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RHYTTAC Comes to Seattle

by [Mel Jordan](#), [Harry's Mother: Janus Youth Programs](#), Portland, Oregon

The first week of June, RHYTTAC provided a Train the Trainer certification course for the [Residential Child and Youth Care Professional Curriculum](#). We had youth workers travel as far as New Jersey to attend this three day training.

Our trainers, Sue Barton (the new Assistant Director at [NRCYS](#)) and Jean Carpenter Williams (one of the authors of the curriculum), were not easy on us. It was a full 3-day's of training -- with homework! Each of the 24 participants had to blindly sign up for a chunk of the curriculum, break down a 40 minute exercise into 20 minutes, and present it to our peers. Then we had to get into teams of 2 and sign up for another 30 minute presentation for the final day.

Sue and Jean split the group and videotaped our presentations, then had our peers give us constructive feedback before offering their own gentle feedback. The whole process was intimidating at first, but these skilled trainers set the stage to make everyone feel comfortable presenting the material.

The goal of this curriculum and training series is to start certifying our staff. Once I train my staff in all 4 areas, they can take a test to receive a nationally recognized certification well founded in the [Youth Development approach](#). I can't tell you how timely this is for my staff, who are itching for more training!

In addition to becoming a certified trainer, I got to spend time with other youth care professionals from our region and beyond. I would like to extend a special thank you to the Seattle crew from [Youth Care](#) who took us on a tour of their many services, another thank you to Judith Wood for attending all three days of the training just to support the NW Network, and to the staff from [Looking Glass](#) in Eugene whom I will be contacting to help me out with some of these trainings!



WE'RE TEN!

Well, ten *weeks*, anyway. And since the Northwest Network has always been associated with the number 10 (being as we were established to serve federal Region X), it seems a good time to stop and check in with all of our subscribers. We'd like to hear your impressions of this newsletter. What do you like? What do you dislike? How can it be improved? Are there things we're not including that you'd like to see included? Any comments, criticisms, or suggestions of any kind are invited and welcomed ... so, right now, while you're thinking about it, why don't you [CLICK HERE](#) and send us a quick note -- or a lengthy dissertation. We're going to be making a few changes in the coming weeks, so your feedback is extremely valued.

Thank you for being part of the Northwest Network for Youth audience and, for those of you in youthwork direct service, thank you for all you do. We hope to hear from you soon!

SAILING AS SELF CARE

By Gary Hammons

As some of you noted from a previous Northwest Youth Networker edition, I participated in a sailboat race from Victoria BC to Maui. It took 18+ days (over 2400 miles). I was on Seeker, the smallest of the nine boats; yet we finished third overall. While this was a fun and rewarding experience, it also renewed a conviction that it is extremely important for those of us in the helping professions to take care of ourselves while we try to help



others. The vicarious traumas, confrontational episodes, and bleak prospects, particularly for many youth populations, take their toll on our minds and our bodies. Additionally, there is often an internal feeling of inadequacy or guilt that we could do more to help young people in such tragic circumstances, even though we sometimes work countless extra hours with little or no compensation.

Emotional or physical burnout (or worse) is too often the consequence of the situation. Learning to pace ourselves and to engage in activities or interests that renew or expand our perspectives are vital to long term effectiveness with the young people/programs we serve. Taking time off for recreation, family, and

friends can, and should, strengthen our ability to sustain our professional commitment and to help others as well. Assuring balance in our lives is just as important as working 18 hour days. Keep this in mind the next time you are faced with whether to participate in a weekend conference or a sailboat race.