



COPKA

Citizens for Respectful Policing

NEWSLETTER #16 Summer 2015



Restorative Principles at COPKA

Our work at COPKA over the years has led us to ask: What actually works to resolve conflicts between people? We have learned that restorative principles such as respect, equality, inclusion, fairness, honesty, compassion, accountability, etc... are highly effective.

We choose to adopt these restorative principles in our work at COPKA, as we support all people in our community, including police officers, in finding good solutions, in taking responsibility and going forward in a good way.

COPKA's board is currently developing a full policy manual based on restorative principles. This will change the tone of our publications and the language we use when working with people harmed by police officers and policies. Restorative principles have already made COPKA's own internal meetings much more respectful, effective and enjoyable.

New: Management Team Meetings:

Originally called Volunteer Action meetings, Management Team meetings allow people who work on COPKA projects to plan and report on projects, and to support each other in their work. We met weekly throughout May and June to get over the hump of restructuring COPKA, getting our files and accounts in order and redistributing tasks... Now we will meet monthly. All COPKA

members interested in helping out are welcome to attend Management Team meetings. Just contact the office (see below) to get on the notice list. Minutes are available by email.

Community Outreach Genevieve Way and Brian Tyrrell have begun meeting with community members, businesses, community agencies and police to hear what they have to say about local policing problems, and what they want COPKA to do. Community members tell us that they have serious concerns about policing problems, and they appreciate COPKA's work. Genevieve met with OPP Staff Sergeant Paul Dowdall to hear his concerns and discuss how COPKA and the police can work together in a positive way to help resolve community problems.



OPP Slowing Down? COPKA has received several reports from community members saying that the OPP are not speeding as much this year. We would like your feedback; is this true in your area? Let us know. If police driving has widely improved, we would like to thank the OPP for responding to the concerns of the community.

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613-757-3104
info@copka.ca

From "Complainant Support" to "Community Support"

Terms like "complainant" and "victim" are negative labels, so the management team reached out to advisors for ideas on changing the name of our service. Thanks to members who shared ideas on this question. We chose "Community Support Team", since COPKA supports everyone in the community, including police, when people are harmed by police or police policies.



June COPKA Social: What a great turnout! 14 people from Whitney to Renfrew attended. We began by sharing personal concerns about policing and ideas on how COPKA can help the community. Board members answered questions about recent upheavals at COPKA, and explained the new structure (less board, more action). Genevieve spoke about investing in a culture of respect, cooperation and problem solving, especially at COPKA's leadership level. Then we shared lovely potluck food and social time together. Thanks to everyone who came out!

THANK YOU to Our Great Team!

Big thanks to the folks who keep COPKA going:
Genevieve Way (President, Executive Director, Secretary, Membership Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, promotion, research, writing, outreach, Management Team, Community Support Coordinator)

Brian Tyrrell (Vice President, Management Team, membership sales, writing, outreach)

Nathalie Warmerdam (Treasurer)

Evan Bloom (Accountant)

Doug DeLaMatter (Website Manager)

Candace Wooley (Brochure distribution)

Leslie Rivers Garrett: (Brochure distribution)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have a great team in place, and we can keep the lights on: keep the bills paid, keep the billboard and website up, take care of members... and we will always support people harmed by police.

But COPKA is only as active as our volunteers. Consider lending a hand:

- Are you calm and compassionate? Join our Community Support Team.
- Know how to raise money? With some fundraising we could put up another billboard, serving as a constant reminder that the community cares about respectful policing.
- Are you friendly and organized? How about hosting a COPKA Social in your area this winter? Or helping Brian with the membership drive next year?
- Want an excuse to go for a drive? You could keep COPKA's brochure holders full in your area.
- Would you or someone you know be a great Executive Director? Give us a call.

You can pitch in for an hour or two once a year, or take on an ongoing project that matches your skills.

BONUS: Volunteers giving 10hrs + per year receive the next year's membership free as a token of our appreciation (Board members excluded).

COPKA is Vulnerable: You can see from our team list (left) that Genevieve and Brian are doing too many jobs. While this is normal with small organizations, it isn't healthy. They cannot carry this workload forever. Without a bigger team, COPKA may close when they retire. Also, when a person wears too many hats there are conflict of interest risks, so we are implementing rigorous oversight at every level. We look forward to resolving these problems as more volunteers join the team.

*"Be the change
that you wish to see in the world."*

-Mahatma Gandhi