

The Center Project Update (TCP) - *January, February & March 2007*

Update highlights ...

1. It's that time again...ADP II
2. TCP in the News: Making Art at "Spark in the Park"
3. Making Lemons Out of Lemonade!
4. Connecting the Dots...
5. Out and About
6. Join a committee!

Monthly Feature:

7. Spark Story: Meet board member Julie Ditmars!

Please read more about these activities below and find out how you can get involved!
If you are a member our list serve, you can also download board meeting minutes and our approved business plan for review--look for these under the "files" section at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/thecenterproject/files/>.

1.

It's that time again...

Can you believe it? There's only 65 days until ADP II, the hottest summer dance party in mid-Missouri ...with video production and dance music that will inspire you to shake your groove thing all night long...you know you want to...and don't forget about our fabulous raffle and door prizes!

WHAT: **2nd Annual Atomic Dance Party: Community Fusion!**
WHEN: Saturday, June 9th, 8:00 -1:00 p.m. (after PrideFest <http://www.midmopride.org/>)
WHERE: The Blue Note, Downtown Columbia (17 N 9th St, Columbia, 65201).
COST: \$5-10 (Sliding Scale)
RAFFLE: Information about prizes and how to get tickets will be available in April!

2.

TCP in the News: Making Art at "Spark in the Park":

On Saturday, March 10th from noon to 5:00 p.m., TCP joined many other Columbia organizations at "Spark in the Park", a community event in Douglas Park that celebrated the diversity of Columbia during the same time period the Neo-Nazis were filling downtown Columbia with hate. It was inspiring to see community residents of all different ages, ethnocultural/ racial identities, religions, sexual orientations, income, etc. joining together to celebrate our community.

At TCP's table, youth and adults gathered to make images in response to the activities unfolding around them. This activity was based on other social justice art making experiences such as The Clothesline Project (to educate about domestic violence), the AIDS quilt, and art making done after 9-11 in Central park. Some drew stylized versions of the event slogan "Not in Our Town" while others wrote and drew images of their hometown pride, expressing gratitude for how Columbia responded to the Nazi's presence. Many of the adults drew symbolic images while the smaller children made spontaneous and colorful designs- glitter glue was a huge hit! TCP decorated a nearby tree with the 200 drawings that afternoon. While we were focused our attention on the art making activity, lots of folks stopped by our table to ask about TCP, pick up an

"I support TCP" button, and thank us for being there. All in all, it was a very important day to build bridges and make new friends- one we will not soon forget. Thanks to those who volunteered, stopped by to make art, or offered a word of support. Soon you will be able to view photos of this event at our website: www.thecenterproject.org

For additional information about this community event and the march, please see the following new stories.

<http://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/story.php?ID=24678>

<http://www.columbiatribune.com/2007/Mar/20070310News051.asp>

<http://www.columbiatribune.com/2007/Mar/20070311News001.asp>

3.

Making Lemonade Out of Lemons!

The Center Project (TCP) is very proud to have been selected as was one of only four local groups named on the Columbia Acceptance Project (<http://tolerance.homestead.com/>) webpage as recipients of the money collected in resistance to the Neo-Nazi march in downtown Columbia. The Columbia Acceptance Project was created by MU Jewish Student Organization and Hillel, the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life (<http://students.missouri.edu/~jsol/>). This innovative website was modeled after Project Lemonade, model for raising money to promote tolerance by collecting pledges for every minute of a hate-group event. Ironically, during their 1 hour march the National Socialist Movement helped to raise almost \$3000 for a variety of groups that oppose the ideas the Nazis represent.

4.

Connecting the Dots...

We want to get to know YOU better! So...TCP will be hosting several "meet and greet" social events during the upcoming year. In January and February we held two social events--a New Year Brunch on Saturday, January 27th with Unitarian Universalist Interweave members and "TCP Connections", a volunteer fair on February 18th at the Columbia Public Library. Keep an eye out for information about the next social event. Soon you will be able to view photos of these events at our website: www.thecenterproject.org

5.

Out and About

Visit TCP at the following upcoming events:

- Earth Day (<http://columbiaearthday.org/index.html>) in Downtown Columbia on Sunday, April 22nd! We will have our scrumptious dog and cat treats available for a small donation along with Atomic Dance Party raffle tickets and other fun pet items.
- PrideFest (<http://www.midmopride.org/>) Stephens Lake Park on Saturday, June 9th.
- Twilight Festival (<http://www.discoverthedistrict.com/>) in Downtown Columbia, Thursdays in June. We'll have an informational table on 10th Street-- June 7th, 14th, 21st, & 28th.

6.

Join a committee!

TCP committees need YOUR help to accomplish our goals! Committee meeting date & times are posted on our web site calendar at: <http://www.thecenterproject.org>

Fundraising – Donors Committee:

This committee is working to develop the donor program for TCP. Some of the activities that will be worked on include performing various forms of donor solicitation, creating

media (handouts and web) to educate potential donors, and maintaining the TCP donor database. For information about this committee, email: Carols_tcp@hotmail.com

Fundraising – Events Committee:

This committee plans fundraising events for TCP, including: carwashes, dog/cat treat sales, and special events such as the Atomic Dance Party and Raffle. For information about this committee, email: centerproject@hotmail.com

Grants Committee:

This committee researches, writes and submits grants that will support starting costs and fund programs provided by the center. For information about this committee, email: centerproject@hotmail.com

Outreach & Education Committee:

This committee educates the general community about TCP and its mission. They organize the TCP informational booth for events like the Twilight Festival, the Jefferson City Multicultural Festival, Earth Day, Pride Festival and the Luna Fair. Other activities for this committee include participating in the Speakers Bureau, organizing coverage for attendance at community meetings with ally groups, and creating/maintaining the TCP Event Calendar web site. For information about this committee, email:

Julie_tcp@hotmail.com

Volunteer Coordination Committee:

This committee identifies and coordinates people who want to volunteer for The Center Project, whether it involves staffing a table at an event, doing behind the scenes work such as making dog and cat treats, or volunteering on TCP committees. Activities for this group include recruiting volunteers, tracking volunteer hours, creating volunteer appreciation communications and events, and creating/maintaining a volunteer database. For information about this committee, email: Kim_tcp@hotmail.com

Don't see a committee you want to join, but you KNOW you have ideas and talents to share? No problem! There are tasks that we will need help with that might not be assigned by a specific committee. For instance, we might need help gathering donations for the TCP library that will be housed within the Center. Or, we might need help posting fliers around town for an event, or even folding brochures for our community events in the spring. We have tasks of all kinds waiting for you if you'd like to help!

7.

Spark Stories: Meet board member Julie Ditmars !

In 2006 we began sharing our "spark stories", personal accounts of what inspires board members and volunteers to get involved with TCP. In past updates we have highlighted 4 board members and one long-time volunteer. Below is Julie's spark story. She was elected to the TCP Board on June 16, 2005 but has been volunteering with TCP since Fall 2003.

Once upon a time some super community activists thought about creating a physical space to collaborate on the work of social justice organizations before them...it was the Center Project! Although I wasn't there for the great meeting of the minds I have been a part of the center project for several years now. As my life has shifted over the years, I have been able to find different ways to be a part of the Center Project. My roles over this time have included: advocate, baker, backup dancer, cheerleader, fundraiser, car washer, printer, to name a few! One of the reasons why I enjoy working on The Center Project is the great ideas and energy put into it. I am really excited about this upcoming year and to see the vision become a reality!

8.

Get Involved!

There are lots of ways to get involved with TCP...we need and want your help! We need help staffing our booth at 2007 community events, cutting and folding brochures, and making our famous dog & cat treats...don't worry! This is fun work and someone from the group will help guide you through your first volunteer experience. If you don't want to volunteer publicly we have other jobs that entail online research and writing. Just let us know what your interests are and we'll find the right job for you!

Join us at one of our upcoming meetings...

Thursday, March 15

Board Meeting, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church (2615 Shepard Blvd-Just off Old Hwy 63)

Wednesday, March 21

Atomic Dance Party Planning meeting, 7:00 p.m. Boone Tavern & Restaurant, 811 E Walnut St, Downtown Columbia

- Please visit us regularly at: www.thecenterproject.org to learn more about our progress in establishing a community center and to find a list of upcoming events.
- Keep up-to-date about The Center Project through our discussion list which you can join at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/thecenterproject> . Don't worry, you won't get a lot of random messages, just great info about the progress we're making and notifications of upcoming events.