

"When community people come together we all need to check our official capacity at the door."

*Dick Stanley
Stanley Foundation*

Community is all the loyalties we have; family, church, work, recreation. We must not limit our thinking to geography.

Convening of Leaders in Grassroots Efforts Held in August

The National Civility Center hosted its second convening of individuals who share in the common experience and passion of improving communities. The first gathering involved individuals who were academics, recognized national leaders in community building, corporate leaders and our Board and staff. The second gathering attracted community leaders who are practitioners within their communities and members of our Board and staff. The communities represented were Columbus, Indiana; Branson, Missouri; Tupelo, Mississippi; Kansas City, Missouri; St. Joseph County, Michigan and Muscatine, Iowa. As with the first convening the second convening produced interesting and thought provoking ideas and concepts.

The expectations of this event were outlined but also open ended to allow for the individuals representation of a wide range of experience and ideas on how to improve communities.

There were common threads



Enjoyable discussions were the order of the day. Pictured here left to right: Elizabeth O'Dell, Morgan Baldwin, Joe Bippus, Marcia Saunders, Tom Miller, Peggy Voelz, Beth Morris

that tied all of the communities together. Relationship building is at the center of everyone's success. Even during the coverage of our recent national tragedy a young girl not understanding how anyone could have that

much hate towards us gave the simple solution to the problem as "start by telling them our names." How we do this varies between communities but its importance cannot be argued.

As with the first convening, we look to these events to help define our purpose in the community improvement arena. The suggestions that came forward are in alignment with our previous convening.

- Be the hub for a network of communities that can help each other.
- Create a "Community Certification Program."
- Think of the National Civility

Center as a global organization.

- Civility as the #1 product.
- Design a model, sell it, and become a teaching center.

Thank you to all of our participants. Our network of friends continues to grow as does our belief that we are on the right track. May peace be with you!

Participants From Around the Country

Morgan Baldwin—CREATE Foundation, Tupelo, Mississippi
John Baltes—Silver Dollar City Foundation, Branson, Missouri
Joe Bippus—City of Three Rivers, Michigan
Kas Kelly—Safe Streets, Muscatine, Iowa
Dick Maeglin—The Support Fund, Muscatine, Iowa
Tom Miller—HON Industries, Muscatine, Iowa
Beth Morris—Healthy Communities, Columbus, Indiana
Jay Newman—St. Joseph County Schools, Michigan
Elizabeth O'Dell—St. Joseph County Human Services Comm., Michigan
Marcia Saunders—City of Three Rivers, Michigan
Dick Stanley—Stanley Foundation, Muscatine, Iowa
Alice Wadsworth—Wadsworth & Associates, Kansas City, Missouri

VISIT US
www.civilitycenter.org

CONTACT US
info@civilitycenter.org
563-263-2891

STAFF
Ann Meeker
Beth Crookham
Kent Roberts

Response to Recent Tragedy: Community Action Against Terrorism

"We are coming to the point in this country where doing what is right is merging with what we need to do to save our national skins."
Marian Wright Edelman

There is not a better way to address our current emotions, than by looking in the mirror and trying to make our local communities better places to live. Reaction to the tragic events that took place on Tuesday, September the 11th, have been varied and often run the full gamut of human emotion. Many have shared feelings of anger, sadness, and hopelessness. People have responded through the opening of their pocketbooks as well as their hearts in giving money, food, clothing, empathy and blood. We have also responded by supporting our government leaders in their attempt to secure our safety and seek justice for this unthinkable act of terror. In this time of crisis, once again the American people have demonstrated the character that has made us a great nation and a leader of the free world.

We will continue to need this character in the years ahead. This event serves as a reminder of the world in which we now live. Unlike centuries of the past where enemies were well defined, the enemies of today are undefined and can be found anywhere in the world. Our country alone cannot defeat this enemy. We will need the cooperation of the nations of the civilized world. Never before have we been so interconnected and interdependent. We can control our own destiny by leading the call for all people to join together regardless of our individual differences and ideologies. We do not need to agree on every issue but we can unite against organized terrorism. Civilized people can

join forces in combating terrorism wherever it exists.

Within our neighborhoods and communities the same holds true. We need to localize this crisis in our everyday lives to impact the global picture. As civilized nations combine resources so must communities and neighborhoods. Wherever we live we must combat hatred and indifference. In small and sometimes large ways terrorism manifests itself in every community and neighborhood within America. We must meet this challenge and no longer turn away. We cannot afford to have individuals feel isolated from the larger society. At the local level we need to have a strategic plan to engage all citizens, accept their unique gifts and look upon all people as resources and agents of change.

This is not touchy feely or pie-in-the-sky rhetoric. We can do more in making our communities better places to live. Over the last decade we have learned much about what makes communities successful. Creating a process for civil dialogue is possible. Leveraging local resources is being done. Communities are instituting pockets of this comprehensive approach across this great nation. We are learning more and more each day. This community improvement idea is not only the smart thing to do but also the right thing to do.

As the world tries to come together as one against hatred and terrorism, we should also try in our daily lives, to work together at the local level to create a better



living environment for all citizens. Secretary of State Colin Powell said we need to cut off the supply of oxygen to the environments and individuals that support terrorism. We need to do the same to the isolation and evil that exists within our communities and neighborhoods. This is something we can do; this is something we must do. If every community in the world would address hatred at the local level we would take great strides in reducing the threat of organized terrorism.

We believe that the free world will win in this battle and we believe America will continue to be strong. We also believe that each of us can contribute in this victory through our relationships one-to-one and the dialogues we are a part of each day.

"Let's start by telling them our names."

6-year-old girl in response to overcoming hate

"Process is building relationships. Start neighbor to neighbor. Then bring neighborhoods together."

Alice Wadsworth
Wadsworth & Assoc

Consensus: The support of those who care and the concurrence of those who don't.

Director on the Move by Kent Roberts

The initial year of the National Civility Center has been exciting, challenging and busy. We continue to be encouraged in our quest to help improve communities. We are thankful for the support and response we have received. We have formulated an evolving framework of key elements of process and principles of engagement that can assist people in making their communities better places to live.

We are very proud of our soon to be released book Bring a Dish to Pass. If you are interested in receiving a copy

or copies of this book please give us a call. You can also contact us at our website www.civilitycenter.org. The design and format of our website is to inform and keep people up to date with the activities and discoveries of the Civility Center.

Travels. Travels. Travels... three trips to St. Joseph County to work with their innovative approach. Freddye Webb-Petett, Program Director of the Kellogg Foundation, has invited me to attend the Fall Conference of their Mid-South Delta Project in Jackson, Mississippi. I'll join community leaders from Tupelo as they take a bus ride to Morrilton, Arkansas, and Branson, Missouri.

These promise to be great learning opportunities.

Our small but highly-energized staff is busy making plans for the upcoming year... organizing our next gathering (corporate leaders) with the assistance of Marty Carver...distribution of our book...other publications that will soon be available... Board of Directors meeting... creating a business plan for our next year of development... upgrading our website... networking and gathering knowledge on the community improvement process. These are challenges and tasks we welcome in our goal to be effective in bringing positive change to our communities.



John Baltes and Jay Newman listen intently as the dialogue continues.

Board of Directors to Meet in November

The Board of Director will convene for a strategic planning time on November 11th in Muscatine. We are looking forward to this time as we review the successes we have had to-date and look to the future and the role the Center can play in advancing the work and dialogues around community improvement. Watch our website for a summary of this event and our plans for the future.

Planning Begins for Next Convening

With two successful convenings completed it is time to start thinking about the third. In our inaugural convening we discussed the importance of having corporate people at the community table. Not merely for the financial resources they can potentially bring but also for the knowledge that many organizations carry with regard to culture shift and continuous improvement methods.

Most corporations have spent significant dollars to train individuals in some form of

continuous improvement process. These employees can be a tremendous resource as members of a community working to sustain long-term change efforts. The possibilities for learning and sharing are endless.

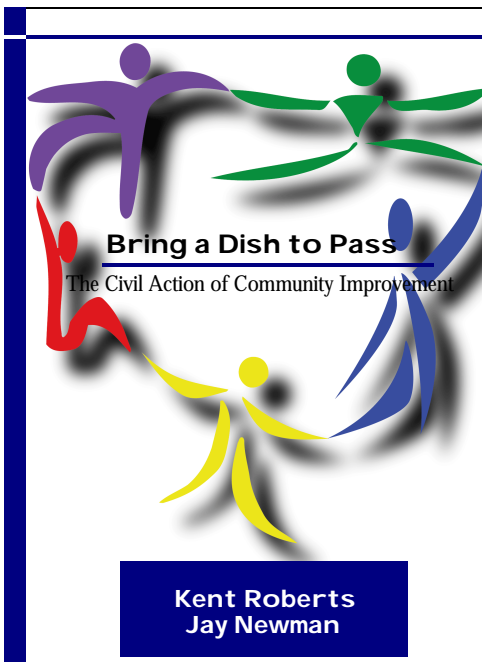
In the first convening, many saw the National Civility Center in a unique position to facilitate this dialogue. Our third convening will bring together members of corporate America who understand this benefit and are using it successfully in their

own communities. We hope to find models to share as we work to promote the dialogue between community improvement and corporations. We truly believe that the potential for win-win efforts when communities and corporations partner is high.

If you would like to suggest a corporate person to be involved in this dialogue please contact our office at 563-263-2891.

If you would like a full summary of the August convening or a transcript of the dialogue from April or August please contact the National Civility Center staff.

National Civility Center
PO Box 497
Muscatine, IA 52761



First Book to be Released in October

We are pleased to announce the release of our book Bring a Dish to Pass: The Civil Action of Community Improvement. We feel this book clearly captures the voice of the Center and its many partners in the area of community improvement. We look forward to getting copies of the book in your hands.

Many thanks go to the goddess of Gotham, Anne Kubisch, of The Aspen Institute for her encouragement and the introduction she gave us to the word-smithing goddess of Harpers Ferry, our wonderful editor, Leila Feister, without whom we could not have created the clear voice that will ring forth from the pages of this book.

Our hope is this publication will be a catalyst for increased civil dialogue within communities. The intent of the book is to introduce people to the topic of initiating community action and provide a framework that makes sense. If you are interested in receiving a copy or copies of this book please give us a call. You can also contact us at our website www.civilitycenter.org.

We encourage you to visit our website. The design and format of our website is to inform and keep people up to date with the activities and discoveries of the National Civility Center.