



Just for this month we're going to depart from our usual circle tale format. Instead, our office manager, Debbie Dix, reflects on the past year.

## **Circle Tale, December 2011 Reflecting on 2011 as the Year Draws to a Close**

Hello Everyone,

First of all, thank you for all the ways you have supported PeerSpirit this past year. I have contact with most of you who attend seminars, and I also enjoy interfacing with you through these newsletters, emails, book orders, and telephone calls. I've even had the privilege of meeting some of you who've come to Whidbey Island for a seminar.

2011 has been an amazing and busy year for PeerSpirit, with many teaching trips for Christina and Ann. Australia, Belgium, Germany, British Columbia, New York, Louisiana - whew! Gracie (their corgi dog) and I have enjoyed holding down the fort here, and keeping tabs on all the various house/dog sitters who've come to stay and enjoy Whidbey Island while Christina and Ann are away. Gracie acts as the "inn-keeper," keeping the housesitters entertained and well exercised!

Meanwhile, I'm out working in the office - "PeerSpirit World Headquarters" - which is a small building behind Ann and Christina's house. I enjoy the casual island atmosphere combined with the sense of how this movement to incorporate our circle process into collaborative conversation and leadership is growing.

For this end-of-the-year letter, I wanted to let you know of an honor being bestowed on Ann and Christina by Calling the Circle Foundation.

As many of you know, Calling the Circle Foundation ( <http://www.callingthecircle.org> ) is a nonprofit organization 501[c]3 which is the source of many partial-pay scholarships that help people get to PeerSpirit and other circle-based trainings and seminars. If you've been to a PeerSpirit Circle in the past five+ years, one or more of your fellow participants was likely attending with the aid of this Foundation. Calling the Circle Foundation has also funded participants in other circle-based organizations, such as The Grandmothers Council annual conferences and the International Wilderness Guides Council (where the foundation sponsored a young guide from South Africa who is re-instituting rites of passage in his Xhosa tribe).

Calling the Circle Foundation is aware that the intentional reintroduction of circle into modern culture has come from a number of sources. Each lineage has focused on certain areas of impact: The Ojai Foundation, based on the Way of Council, has focused on circle in the education system; as has Parker Palmer's Center for Courage and Renewal. The Ehama Institute and Timeless Earth Wisdom, based on a 3,000-year-old oral tradition, have released indigenous teachings into broader use. Restorative Justice circles (Peacemaking Circles: From Crime to Community) are occurring in both Canada and the U.S. And PeerSpirit has focused on bringing The Circle Way into mainstream settings.

For several years, Calling the Circle Foundation has been exploring how to share the gifts and presence of these lineages, particularly of the teachers who have founded them - all of whom are still actively teaching, and all of whom are in the years of "eldership." This year, the board has chosen to focus on Ann and Christina and the legacy of PeerSpirit Circle Process, to create a multi-media, multi-dimensional capturing of their presence and teaching that can be preserved digitally and offered globally. See their website ( <http://www.callingthecircle.org> ) to see the 4-minute VIDEO that explains the plan.



The Foundation has always been funded through personal donation. The Foundation's plan is to work with Ann and Christina in 2012 to develop the prototype and be able to approach other foundations and larger nonprofits for the kind of support needed to fulfill this vision in its entirety. As the circled community that benefits from, engages in, and practices PeerSpirit Circle, I invite you to consider making a donation to Calling the Circle Foundation to support both this Legacy project and the scholarship fund. Donations of any size are welcome.\*

In the last few days before we close the PeerSpirit office for our winter break, we're tackling some 2012 scheduling, trying to keep up with the email, and tending to a myriad of details. But we've also taken time to think about all the good work of the past year and the people we've had the privilege to meet. Thank you again for your support of our work. We appreciate everyone who signs up for a seminar, buys a book, or takes the time to write us a note or an email.

Gracie and I are both happy to have Ann and Christina home for a few months before the next teaching trip. Gracie is determined to get her full measure of beach walks, night soccer and slimeball games. And we 3 human PeerSpirits are all looking forward to some rest and renewal, and having time for thinking, wondering, imagining...

Enjoy your holidays!

\*Checks can be sent directly to Calling the Circle Foundation at their address: P.O. Box 1480, Freeland, WA 98249; or you can donate via credit card on their website, <http://www.callingthecircle.org>.

*If you have a tale to tell, contact the PeerSpirit office and we'll help you share it.*

*For more information on many applications of circle, visit our web site at [www.peerspirit.com](http://www.peerspirit.com) and subscribe to our monthly Circle Tale newsletter. Your e-mail address will **not** be shared or used by anyone other than PeerSpirit, and you can unsubscribe yourself at any time.*