

September 11, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Change Your Mind, Find the Humanity in Others
at Sedona's First Human Library Event**

What if you could change a prejudice, bias, or an entrenched point of view you have about someone like a homeless person, an illegal alien, a felon, a cop or an LGBT person? And what if you could gain greater understanding and appreciation for that person in a few minutes by sitting with them and dialoguing in a safe and open environment?

On Thursday, **Sept. 21, 2017, the International Day of Peace**, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., the public is invited to attend a free community event to take place at the Sedona Public library, titled the Human Library Event (www.humanlibrary.org). Instead of taking out a book you are invited to (take out and) sit with a "human book" in different stations throughout the library. This event is part of a global movement that has the potential to alter our hearts and minds as to how we regard those in our community who struggle with all kinds of societal judgments and stigmas.

In four, 30-minute sessions participants are invited to become "readers," selecting up to four "human books," listening to their short presentations, and engaging in dialogue with them to gain understanding. These live human books will courageously share their stories of being marginalized, categorized, or stigmatized for their differences. In the process, stigmas or judgments around such things as religion, sexuality, mental or physical challenges, immigration, police, lifestyle conditions from poverty, war, trauma, end-of-life choices are explored.

Organized by the Sedona International City of Peace, the Rotary Club of Sedona and Sedona Public Library, the event affords a special opportunity for everyone to make a difference in a heartwarming peaceful manner! As a community, we can illuminate and perhaps dissolve these prejudices, gain new understanding, and even come to new ways of relating to people that we may avoid, dismiss, resent, or generally judge unfairly.

"The polarizing climate that exists in our country and our local community today begs for open dialogue and compassionate understanding on this International Day of Peace. We can learn this together. There are few transformational events like this that occur in one's life, where in a matter of minutes, we can be taken to a new level of collective consciousness and deep connection. That is how peace comes to our life and world," says Margaret Joy Weaver, one of the founders of the Sedona International City of Peace and an organizer of the event.

Some Human Books include: Police Chief; Psychic Pedicurist; Medical Marijuana Baker; Pipsqueak Animal Communicator; Ex-Catholic Nun; Non-Indigenous Shaman; Political Conservative, Orthodox Sikh Attorney; Homeless Mentally Ill Veteran; Combat Veteran; Prisoner; Spiritual Crazy; Stateless and Illegal Aliens; and various targets of Body Shaming.

Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the 4:45, 5:30, 6:15 and 7:00 p.m. sessions to select and be guided to your book. If you have any questions, please call the Sedona Public Library at 928-282-7714.

The Sedona International City of Peace was recognized and established as the 35th city of now over 200 International Cities of Peace in 2012. Rotary is an organization of community leaders who meet regularly to exchange ideas and take action to make their community and the world a better place. The partnership between the three community organizations aligns us all in our commitment in expanding our reach and impact in creating a culture of peace in Sedona.