

LENEXA ROTARY PEACEBUILDER CLUB – PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Taking stock in our past to understand where we are and where we may want to head.

PAST

1. RAGAS – Rotary Action Group Against Slavery – Lenet Compton, Jerry Henson and JC Burcham joined in **2019**. This Rotary, global interest group focuses on both labor and sex trafficking. There are monthly online meetings and email bulletin where clubs around the world share information about their efforts as well as government interventions. Action groups are open to all Rotarians.
2. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **August 8, 2019** SMSD Educator Fair – We organized Jennifer Montgomery from the KS Attorney General’s office and Lucy Bloom, Director of Veronica’s Voice to speak in separate morning/afternoon sessions. Estimated educators reached: **200**
3. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **August 28, 2019** SMSC Community Liaison – JC Burcham, Lenet Compton and John Vanderwalle (**Ambassador RC**) met with Dr. John McKinney. He was open to us providing Red Flag information (provided through the KS Attorney General’s office) to school nurses and counselors. It may have also been possible to put signs (provided through the KS Attorney General’s office) up on the back of bathroom stall doors. This was not pursued as we thought the opportunity would have more impact if packaged properly with a program for sustainability. This ultimately did not occur.
4. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **March 6, 2020** Conference – We helped **Leawood RC** organize and staff an awareness and action conference from 7:30 – 11:30 at Church of the Resurrection, Leawood. Estimated audience of public, government and police force reached: **100**
5. PEACE – Purple Heart City – **July 21, 2020** Lenexa was proclaimed a Purple Heart City. Other partners include The Purple Heart Trail Society, Quivira Crossing DAR and **Western Johnson County RC**. City Proclamation was signed by Mayor Boehm, a plaque provided by the Purple Heart Trail Society hangs in City Hall bearing our organization names, and a Purple Heart road sign is located at 95th and Pflumm - VFW hall. Estimated annual audience: **2000**

PRESENT

1. PEACE – Peace Pole – **Community Engagement** – Working with Lenexa Parks Department, Lenexa Arts Council and **Western Johnson County RC** to erect a peace pole in Lenexa’s parks or public spaces. Project has been approved by both City groups and

will be expanded to include an artist's contest. There may end up being multiple poles located in several parks, an App to locate each pole, as well as a permanent (or annual rotation) pole located on the Green at City Center. Estimated annual audience of general public depends greatly on where, and how many, poles are placed: **5000**

2. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **Awareness / Education / Engagement** – JC Burcham and Lenet Compton are part of District 5710 Human Trafficking Committee. All are encouraged to join the monthly, online meetings. Some times there are speakers, discussion of District projects, work being done by other Rotary Districts or active Kansas legislation.
3. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **Awareness / Education** – Lenet Compton working with John Vanderwalle, Lumen Touch (**Ambassador RC**), Lucy Bloom, Veronica's Voice (**Leawood RC**) and Anthony Palmisano, SMSD, to develop a project-based, student awareness campaign. Students "speaking" to students since they are the largest effected population. There will be three phases. First, develop the campaign contest. Second, develop the plan to deploy the winning idea(s). And third, solution deployment. District 5710 DG Faron and Anti-Human Trafficking Chair, Patti Mellard, are aware and support this effort. As are both the KS and MO Attorney General's offices. Estimated annual audience of school employees and students greatly depends on how many schools participate: **7000**

FUTURE

1. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **Awareness / Education** – Lenet Compton working with Made for Freedom to host DEEP Parties. DEEP stands for Dignified Employment Empowers & Protects. *"This is not your typical home party. We are going to dive into some tough topics and hear stories of hope. Each piece sold is providing Dignified Employment which really does Empower and Protect."* 1) You gather in person or online with friends. 2) Learn the 5 Key Components of Exploitation and how the issue of human trafficking impacts our world today. 3) Each piece sold represents Dignified Employment and services for survivors of trafficking and those coming out of marginalized situations. Our part would be to organize the first set of parties. Perhaps begin with our club, then ask club members to host a party with their friends and possibly encourage parties throughout the District. **In discussions with Made for Freedom and Veronica's Voice on how to move forward.**
2. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **Activism with community** – March 25, 2020 Lenet, along with Chuck Udell and Agnes Bartholf (both of **Leawood RC**) attended an exploratory session with the Johnson County Coalition Against Human Trafficking. These are like-minded individuals representing a wide breath of the community. Activist, police force, massage therapists, clergy, lawyers, etc. They would like to engage Rotarians because

we have a large, connected, network to help in the fight against human trafficking in Johnson County. Specifically, they would like “us” to take on the Community Engagement Sector which consists of education, media, faith community, transportation, local business, armed services and neighborhood. Or, just the Education sub-sector.

- a. Work to identify key areas which represent large groups of individuals, companies/organizations
- b. Map sector component map (template exists – fairly straight forward)
- c. Brainstorm possible representatives of those sub-sector components to serve on the committee
- d. Recruit 10-20 representatives to develop a sub-sector awareness and action plan
- e. Plan and execute one sub-sector awareness event/activity within the first year of operation
- f. Considering our activity with the SMSD and the HT Conference, this might not be that difficult to accomplish. And, we could recruit other Rotary clubs to assist.

No further action has been taken to get involved.

3. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **Awareness / Activism for foster care kids** – Foster care children are prime targets for human traffickers. March 12, 2020 Lenet Compton met with Linda Gallagher, Kansas Strategic Initiatives Administration. Linda was heavily involved in a children’s task force when she was a Representative in the Kansas Legislature. Linda provided many statistics on why children are taken from their home and put in foster care. **Portable cribs, car seats and blankets are often needed emergency items.** Tim Gay, with YouThrive, was our club speaker March 6, 2020. YouThrive focuses on foster care “children” aging out of the system.

April 24, 2020, Lenet spoke to Tim Gay. Very limited data available to show any direct connection between foster care and HT. California did a study a few years back that indicated 50% of rescued HT women were, or had been in foster care. Running away is common in foster care so disappearing isn’t that odd. Sometimes there is even a “mule” in foster care group homes to groom kids for trafficking. Tim suggested speaking to Lucy Bloom, Director of Veronica’s Voice, since she used to work for Department for Children and Families (DCF) with an emphasis on foster care.

May 22, 2020, Lenet spoke to Lucy Bloom. Sixty % of US and KS law and social worker effort focuses on kids that “run” “frequently”. Social workers are assigned by region. A social worker’s biggest job is to build relationships to help engage the child in a meaningful way. Lucy suggested I speak with Kristen Tebow in KS or Joe Cantulous in MO. They are both highly trained social workers in this area. Most foster kids do not finish school because they move frequently. is a great deal of drama / trauma in their life. Mental illness and open to traffickers offering a place to stay, a job and provide drugs to further control the person’s life. **Providing mentoring and transportation are services the community can offer to help stabilize a foster child’s life.** Avenue of Life, group home in KCK is for kids that have aged out of the foster care system. Cornerstone

of Care is a similar group home. **Our club could partner / adopt a group home or foster family.**

June 3, 2020. Lenet spoke to social worker, Kristen (Kris) Tebow (913-230-6554). Kris works mostly with foster girls. Her partner is Denise Johnson who works mostly with foster boys. Technically, Kris and Denise are Missing Youth Team Investigators for Kaw Valley Health System, ww.KVC.org. Their supervisor is Kelly Young who is also in charge of all human trafficking and parent management for the agency. Kris and Denise specialize in foster kids that run away. Typically, a child will run because they don't feel safe in the foster home or they don't feel they are part of the family. Some challenges of the foster parents are their motivation for fostering, the two-week training isn't enough, or they don't have the temperament (skill set) necessary. The training program is trying to improve preparedness by incorporating role play. Another source of trauma for runaway foster kids is violence by police or police dogs that are sic'd on them. Kris mentioned police departments in Lenexa, Shawnee and the Johnson County Sheriff office are all good to work with. Overland Park is pretty good but Olathe is more of a problem in how they handle the kids. When kids run away, they typically do not bring anything with them. Therefore, Kris thought the **emergency duffle bag (Fresh Start Kit) program our District did during District Conference in Topeka would be very helpful for both the boys and girls.**

4. ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING – **Activism / Rotary Grants** – Work with Rotary District 5710 Global Grant for Rended Heart. Rended Heart in Kansas City, Missouri services victims and survivors of human trafficking that are currently in crisis situations in the Greater Kansas City Metro area and across the states. This project would expand the services of Rended Heart by establishing services in Kansas for the integration of survivors of human trafficking into society.

This project may not get funded so it is purely speculative. The district would not be starting this project right away. They would not even be submitting the grant application until sometime after July 1. Then, if approved, the project would be implemented during 2020-2021, Faron Barr's District Governor year, and more than likely spill over into Vern's year. The district is not asking for a commitment right now, but just an expression of interest in looking at it further.

July 22, 2020, an effort was launched to create the District's first **Cause** club and it would be for Anti-Human Trafficking. Leawood RC agreed to be the sponsor. It is hoped that, if chartered, their first project will be Rended Heart.