

## ROTARY ACTION GROUP AGAINST SLAVERY

# RAGAS NEWSLETTER

<https://ragas.online/>

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## RI CONVENTION 2023



RAGAS members and friends are invited to visit the RAGAS booth 376 in the House of Friendship, which is in the center of the hall, adjacent to the large Peace Exhibit, booth 341. You will have the opportunity to meet some RAGAS Directors, other members and friends on various shifts. If you are available to volunteer for a shift, that would be most welcome. The Convention and booth are seen as an opportunity to promote the RAGAS Community Awareness and Prevention Education Strategy, distribute information brochures, promote interest in membership and develop mutual relationships for more Rotary Projects.

This is right up our alley as we strive to Imagine a world without human trafficking/modern-slavery. Our booth in the House of Friendship (Booth 376) will be very prominent. It is a corner booth in the center of the Hall right across from the large Peace Exhibit. Please plan on visiting as we will be there from Saturday, May 27th to Wednesday May 31st. The RAGAS Breakout session "Unleash Your Super Power to End Slavery", is on Wed, May 31st at 9:00 a.m. for a 90 minute breakout, Plenary Centre doors 9 & 10, where we will discuss projects that you, your club or your district may undertake to help solidify the rights every individual has to not be held in bondage or groomed for another person's profit.

Prevention is the key and we will discuss RAGAS's Community Awareness & Education Plan (CAPE) and how you and Rotary can be a super power in your community. We will have experts there to answer your questions and plenty of time will be made available. There will be a general meeting on Saturday the 27th @ 3.30pm to 4.30pm in breakout room 209, where aspects of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking will be outlined.

RAGAS Directors, booth volunteers and members are having or are invited to join a dinner on Tues 30th approx. 6.30pm, walking distance from the Convention centre - numbers are limited, please advise early to join this social occasion. If you are able to be a booth volunteer for a few hrs from 27 - 31 May or join us for dinner on 30th please email [malcolmbaird@gmail.com](mailto:malcolmbaird@gmail.com) and /or [tonywstokes544@gmail.com](mailto:tonywstokes544@gmail.com).



## BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA PEACE CONFERENCE 2023

What an amazing and inspiring Rotary International Peace Conference in Birmingham Al. Thank You Will and Carolyn Ratliff for Chairing the event and thank you to your incredible team. I was truly honored to Chair the Human Trafficking Tracks we had such an amazing line up.

A special Thanks to RI President Jennifer Jones for being there and your leadership and inspiration. Thank you also to Past RI President Mark Maloney. Thank you to my Amazing Roract friends for your help, Gregor and Delfina. Thanks to Tuckers Against Trafficking for bringing their truck. Thank you to the following Speakers and Friends for being part of the historic event. Keynote Speakers, Bernice King, Ambassador John Cotton Richmond and Rev. Becca Stevens, Thistle Farms.

### Amazing Panel discussions:

Survivor Services; featuring Jessica Munoz, Founder & CEO, Ho'ola Nā Pua Pua (HNP); Carolyn Potter, CEO, WellHouse; Rachel Fischer, Survivor Leader; and Tammy Bitanga, Advocate Community Outreach Coordinator and CSEC Specialist, Ho'ola Nā Pua Pua (HNP) Law Enforcement and Legislation Combatting Human Trafficking featuring, Dave McCleary, Rotary, Ambassador John Richmond, State Department TIP Office; Doug Gilmer, Department of Human Services of Alabama; Chris Lim, Coordinator, Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Alliance

Mobilizing Against Human Trafficking featuring, Laura Ellsworth, Partner-in-charge of Global Community Service Initiatives, Renata Parras, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Counsel, Paul Hastings; Heather Fischer, Senior Advisor for Human Rights Crimes, Thomson Reuters Special Services; Boris Kusovski, Anti-Human Trafficking Intelligence Initiative (ATII)

Educating to Prevent Human Trafficking featuring Ashlie Bryant, Founder and CEO, 3 Strands Global Foundation; Valerie Ellery, A21, Educator & Best-Selling Author; Veronica McDaniel, FREEST Executive Director, Teacher, Atlanta International School. Fighting Human Trafficking Business: Hospitality, Transportation and Commerce featuring, Dave McCleary, Rotary, Mark VanBeest, VP External Affairs, Motel 6; Erica Sarkissian, Delta Airlines, Healthcare and Human Trafficking featuring, Bethany Biesenthal, Partner, Jones Day, Dr. Hanni Stoklosa, Founder, Heal Trafficking; Rachel Fischer, Survivor & Activist; and Laura Castellanos, Hospitals Against Violence, AHA, Trafficking of Children, Dave McCleary, RAGAS, Preston Findlay (NCMEC), Wendy (Survivor), Kelly Locher (Associate Jones Day)

Truly inspiring and hopeful....the future is bright





# IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT SLAVERY ROTARY IS THRIVING IN SOUTH AMERICA



Very exciting news Board of Director for RAGAS Cinthia Chediak share the amazing work of RAGAS in South America with Ri Magazine Peru - Ecuador "Imagine A World Without Slavery Rotary is Thriving in South America"

<https://online.fliphtml5.com/pqlez/gcza/?p1683175295133#p=1>

## Imagina un mundo sin esclavitud moderna y trata

La lucha contra la trata de personas, un mal que afecta a unos 50 millones de personas en todo el mundo, es el objetivo del Grupo de Acción Rotaria contra la Esclavitud (RAGAS) y varios clubes rotarios.

**Cinthia Chediak**  
Club Rotario de Quito  
RAGAS  
Coordinadora de Latinoamérica RAGAS

Se estima que más de 50 millones de personas son traficadas en todo el mundo. Probablemente sea la contradicción más grande de derechos humanos que existe en la actualidad. La esclavitud moderna es una de las tres industrias legales más grandes, que genera alrededor de 150 150 mil millones en ingresos cada año después del tráfico de armas y el narcotráfico.

Existen varios tipos de esclavitud moderna, el tráfico sexual es una forma, sin embargo hay otros que se incluyen en esta lista: trabajo en condiciones de servidumbre y pago de deudas, trabajos forzados forjados de menores de edad o adultos, sobre todo migrantes, menores de edad en conflictos armados, matrimonios forzados en menores de edad con adultos, tráfico y comercialización de órganos.

Mark Little, miembro del club rotario de Norwich 28 (Edmund), Inglaterra, no sabía nada del tema hasta que su esposa lo convenció de ver un documental de la BBC. El periodo, ¿Esclavitud en las Islas Británicas? Seguro que no, ¿Esclavitud en el Reino Unido? Nunca. (Millones de esclavos en la India?)

Para efectivamente, allí estaban. Era realmente la comercialización de la India. Cuatro meses después, estaba en India visitando dos de los centros de rehabilitación de niños esclavos que aparecen en ese documental. Escuchó el testimonio de algunos de los sobrevivientes que conoció en esa primera visita, quienes estaban en

proceso de reconstrucción de sus vidas. Pense: "Dios mío, ¿qué está pasando en el mundo? ¿Tenemos que hacer algo al respecto?"

Mark Little fundó el Grupo de Acción Rotaria contra la Esclavitud (RAGAS) en el 2013.

Dave McCleary escuchó por primera vez sobre la esclavitud moderna y trata. Pense: algo que suceda muy lejos, probablemente en el extranjero, pero no en los Estados Unidos y peor aún en su ciudad natal.

Fue un día, siendo presidente de su club rotario de Roswell (GA), cuando invitó a una audiencia. Su nombre era Melissa. Ella era originaria de Atlanta, Georgia, incluida hasta de la misma escuela secundaria a la que habían asistido los dos hijos de Dave.

Melissa dejó el colegio a los 16 años a causa de un hombre que resultó ser un traficante sexual, quien le ofreció un trabajo de modelo.

Durante dos años estuvo atrapada y

traficada en el centro de Atlanta antes de que la policía y una organización local la ayudaran a escapar.

Después de la reunión, otro rotario se acercó a Melissa y le dio un gran abrazo. Dave McCleary le preguntó, como conocido a la joven, el respondió que ella solo quería ir a sus hijos cuando tenía 32 años y que se había preguntado qué le había pasado.

Fue entonces cuando Dave ahora past presidente del Grupo de Acción Rotaria contra la Esclavitud Moderna (RAGAS) abrió los ojos sobre esta realidad.

En ese momento ya no era el problema de otro extranjero recordándole pasado en Rotary. Estábamos en 2003 países, con más de 48 000 clubes y 1.57 millones de rotarios y rotarionas, abordamos problemas difíciles en la humanidad a nivel extremo, ¿por qué no proteger a la población de la esclavitud?"

De los muchos problemas globales, la esclavitud moderna es uno de los más difíciles de combatir por rotarios de

traficantes violentos, que no dudan en infringir dolor humano ni en eliminar a sus víctimas.

RAGAS en la actualidad opera en todos los continentes, con socios rotarios tomando acción día a día, formando alianzas empresariales y gubernamentales para educar, prevenir y concientizar, tanto dentro de Rotary como en la sociedad sobre la lucha contra este crimen.

En el mundo se han formado siete nuevos clubes basados en la causa de "Luchar Contra la Esclavitud Moderna y Trata". Rotary e-club to End Human Trafficking (Distrito 5900), Rotary e-club of Community Action Against Human Trafficking (Distrito 5701), Rotarians Fighting Human Trafficking (Distrito 5580), Rotary sostiene club Greenville to End Human Trafficking (Distrito 5452), Share Rotary sostiene club Rotary for Slave Free Communities (Distrito 5385), True Pacific Northwest Ending Sex Trafficking (Distrito 5030), Rotary club to Combat Human Trafficking (Distrito 5443).

### Tipos de Explotación

**Explotación Sexual**  
Una persona víctima de la trata por fines sexuales puede ser comercializada mediante internet, en reuniones, abuso de su confianza, engaño o explotación, con extrema intimidación física o psicológica.

**Trabajo Forzado**  
El trabajo forzado es el que se realiza bajo la amenaza de una sanción como la violencia o el daño a la familia, las víctimas suelen ser comunidades enteras por los servidumbre por deudas.

**Servidumbre doméstica**  
Se obliga a una persona a prestar servicios por un periodo de un año o más en un entorno privado, a cambio de un pago de deudas o de un pago de deudas.

**Servidumbre por deudas**  
La servidumbre por deudas, también conocida como trabajo en régimen de servidumbre, es un modo por el que las víctimas modernas son personas y se ven obligadas a trabajar para pagar de las deudas.

## MATT FRIEDMAN RECEIVES "HERO AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING COURAGE"

The "Hero Award for Outstanding Courage" is awarded to a humanitarian who has demonstrated strong leadership and made outstanding contributions and collaborative efforts to ending modern slavery/human trafficking (HT/MS). RAGAS Board Chair, Bob Deering recently presented this award (pictured here) to Matt Friedman. Matt Friedman is a true anti-trafficking hero who has made a tangible global impact on the eradication of HT/MS. He has been a leader in the anti-slavery movement for 35 years and has written and spoken worldwide from the very beginning of the global fight against modern slavery.

Matt Friedman is currently CEO of the Mekong Club, an organization of Hong Kong's leading businesses that have joined forces to help end all forms of modern slavery. Matt previously worked for USAID and the United Nations in over 40 countries. Matt offers technical advice to numerous governments, banks, and corporations working to eliminate all forms of modern slavery and is the author of 12 books. His recent Penguin/Random House book entitled, *Where Were You: A Profile of Modern Slavery*, is being used as a human trafficking textbook. In 2017, Matt won Asia's prestigious "Communicator of the Year" Gold Award.

Mark Little, founding chair of RAGAS, nominated Matt Friedman for the "Hero Award" and writes that Matt has been an inspiration to him and an advisor to RAGAS since 2012 when they first met at the Bangkok RI Convention. During that conference, Matt provided "a packed audience of Rotarians with a thought-providing and deeply analytical insight to the causes and nature of modern slavery and the measures required to eradicate it." That lecture helped serve as a springboard for the founding of RAGAS.

Matt is currently an active member of the RAGAS Board of Directors and the e-Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking based out of Eden Prairie, Minnesota.





## HUMAN RIGHTS - A POLITICAL OR A HUMANITARIAN ISSUE FOR ROTARIANS ?

“Whether or not the ethical climate in business is higher or lower today, each of us has an opportunity to speak up for higher standards. And for each person willing to voice his conviction, there are others who are willing to follow and be influenced by that kind of leadership”. (RI President Robert A Manchester 1976)

The global reverberations following the unlawful killing a few years ago, of George Floyd in the USA, poses a particular predicament for Rotarians. That is to say, if we do publicly comment on that unfortunate situation, would we be guilty of contravening Rotary’s policy of political neutrality. If public servants appear to be violating basic human rights and we adopt former RI President Robert Manchester’s exhortation of speaking up for higher standards, would we be seen to be crossing the line. This article offers a few thoughts on this dilemma, touches upon Rotarians’ implied human rights responsibilities and informs readers of a Petition submitted by the Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund, England, to the Board of Rotary International (RI) asking for the reinstatement of previously recorded exhortations for Rotarians to make every effort to ensure that peoples basic human rights are protected.

The former RI President, Kalyan Banerjee proffered this question at the RI Convention in New Orleans – Why are we in Rotary ? He answered his own question. “I believe we are here because we care, and because we see both what’s wrong in the world and what is right”. He stressed that we should take a hard look at what needs to be changed and then do our best to change it. In reminding us of his favorite Gandhi quote (you must be the change you wish to see in the world), he declared “I believe we are in Rotary to change the world – for why else would we be Rotarians ? We are not here to listen to the naysayers, the doom mongers, those who say the world can be no better than it is, so why even try to change ? We are here because we believe in change.”

So, if we believe in certain values, such as the equality of all human beings, fairness in their treatment etc, we should not be afraid to proclaim our beliefs from the rooftops and stand up for them. If we can act in this way, we will influence others with the same leadership skills that Rotarians have used for more than 100 years to uplift the human condition. If we don’t or won’t speak up for higher standards, or condemn practices which are clearly wrong, how can we say that we are true Rotarians. A few years ago, the Walk Free Foundation expressed its concerns about an ongoing situation in Uzbekistan where hundreds of thousands of adults and children were being forced each year under threat of punishment, to pick cotton for no pay over a three month period in the summer.

## HUMAN RIGHTS - POLITICAL OR HUMANITARIAN?

The Foundation approached me as the Chair of the Rotary Action Group against Slavery for some support on this issue. Needless to say, I agreed to the Foundation's request. We sent a joint letter to the World Bank asking them to stop funding Uzbekistan until that Government ceased to exploit their own people. This action was not, in my view, a political act but a humanitarian one because its main aim was to help preserve the liberty and human rights of Uzbekistan's citizens. We were proud to follow the sentiments expressed by former Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon who stated that "It is up to each of us to raise our voice against crimes that deprive countless victims of their liberty, dignity and human rights"

There are of course other ways in which we Rotarians can demonstrate our support for the work of organizations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Anti-Slavery International, whose main aims are upholding the principles enshrined in the United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Supporting the work of these organizations is important because they are so few in numbers. They are like mice fighting a herd of elephants. What they often find difficult is mobilizing the funds to extend their work further. This is where we Rotarians can help. If we can mobilize millions of dollars to almost eradicate the polio virus, we can do the same by providing the necessary funds for these activists to continue protecting individuals wherever justice, fairness, freedom and truth are denied. To be effective partners of these human rights organizations, Rotarians need to be made aware, not only of our ethical responsibilities which are clearly set out in Part 2 of the Object of Rotary and the 4-Way Test, but also of our humanitarian responsibilities in respect of everyone's basic human rights. These responsibilities which previously were included in RI's Code of Policies and its Manual of Procedure, were stated as follows,

Rotarians should

- 1) Look beyond national patriotism and share responsibility for the advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace
- 2) Resist any tendency to act in terms of national or racial superiority
- 3) Seek and develop common grounds for agreement with peoples of other lands
- 4) Defend the rule of law and order to preserve liberty of the individual so that all may enjoy freedom of thought, speech and assembly; freedom from persecution and aggression; and freedom from want and fear
- 5) Support action directed towards improving standards of living for all peoples, realizing that poverty anywhere endangers prosperity elsewhere
- 6) Uphold the principles of justice for humankind, realizing that these are fundamental and must be worldwide
- 7) Strive always to promote peace between nations and be prepared to make personal sacrifices for that ideal
- 8) Urge and practice a spirit of understanding of every person's beliefs as a step towards international goodwill, recognizing that there are certain basic moral and spiritual standards that, if practiced, will ensure a richer, fuller life
- 9) Exercise appropriate caution in conducting activities and programs where international tensions exist between countries. (RCP 8.050.3)



## HUMAN RIGHTS - POLITICAL OR HUMANITARIAN?

The omission of the above responsibilities does not mean that RI has changed its mind about these obligations because we know that they are implied. However, it would be preferable if these responsibilities in respect of human rights were spelt out in writing so that Rotarians are able to know precisely the extent of their obligations. With that objective in mind, the Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund submitted a legal document known as a "Petition" to Evanston in 2020 requesting the RI Board to reinstate at least some of the above responsibilities. The one's specifically mentioned in the Petition were numbers 4 and 6 above.

In October 2020, the RI Board agreed that the recommendation in the Club's petition would be considered by a newly appointed Task Force, which would meet regularly to ensure that Rotary's future principles, policies and actions would take into account issues relating to such matters adversity, equity and inclusion. Sadly we are still awaiting the reintroduction of those original human rights responsibilities in Rotary's Code of Policies.

For each Rotarian, the ethical and basic human rights responsibilities have been the cornerstone of all our actions. It has been for years and it will be in the future. The unlawful killing of George Floyd reminds us now more than ever before that we need a vision and a knowledge of what is happening around us, what is our joint responsibility to humankind, what is fair, what is acceptable, what is the right thing to do. If we firmly believe in certain values, such as the equality of all human beings regardless of colour, race or gender, then we should not be afraid to stand up for them. As Albert Einstein stated "the world is a dangerous place not because of people who do evil, but because of good people who look on and do nothing".

Mark Little  
Founder Chair  
Rotarian  
Action Group against Slavery  
5th April 2023



## RAGAS SOCIAL MEDIA

RAGAS communication

You can receive the information by following us on social media!

- [RAGAS Facebook](#)
- [RAGAS LinkedIn](#)
- [RAGAS Twitter](#)
- [RAGAS Instagram](#)
- [RAGAS YouTube](#)



**LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT?**  
帮助您找方法 ¿ESTÁS BUSCANDO UNA SALIDA? ¿NECESITAS AYUDA?  
**STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING**  
NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE  
**888-3737-888**  
or Text "Help" to 233733 (BeFree)  
IOWA VICTIM SERVICE CALL CENTER  
**800-770-1650**  
IT HAPPENS HERE IN IOWA or Text "iowaahelp" to 20121  
Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking & Slavery  
www.iwanaht.org Rotary

## TAKE ACTION

We are not defined by who we are, but by our actions. To contribute to ending modern slavery, you can:

- Become a RAGAS member from [here](#).
- Donate to RAGAS, or organisations working on ending modern slavery.
- [Contact your local Coordinator](#) to volunteer for RAGAS.
- Invite a RAGAS speaker to your local club meeting to talk about modern slavery.
- Initiate a Global Grant project to fight against modern slavery.

Engage with Rotary clubs that dedicates to ending modern slavery, including:

- District 5950 [Rotary eClub to End Human Trafficking](#),
- District 5710 [Rotary eClub of Community Action Against Human Trafficking](#),
- District 5280 [Rotarians Fighting Human Trafficking](#),
- District 5810 [Rotary Satellite Club of Greenville to End Human Trafficking](#)
- District 1260 [Ware Rotary Satellite Club Rotary for Slave Free Communities](#)
- District 5030 [The Pacific Northwest Ending Sex Trafficking](#)
- District 5840 [To Combat Human Trafficking](#).