

Rotarian Action Group against Slavery

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Action Group Breakout Session in Seoul, South Korea



*Dave McCleary
RAGAS Vice Chair*



Editor: Mark Little – Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund, England

“I am only one, but I am still one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something I can do”

(Edward Everett Hale)



RAGAS Breakout Session at Atlanta RI Convention

For those of you who will be attending the RI Convention in Atlanta next June, please make a note in your diary that there will be a Breakout Session entitled “Rotarians Combating Human Trafficking and Slavery” on Monday 12th June between 15.30 hrs and 17.00 hrs in Room B304-305. This will be the third Breakout Session organized by the Action Group.

The aims of the Session are to raise awareness that people are being

used and exploited on a global basis and to encourage more Rotarians to take positive action against this evil practice.

Delegates attending will learn about the extent of people exploitation, its root causes, how human trafficking and modern slavery affects us all, how Rotarians are already taking action and how we can work together with anti-slavery organizations to protect people from being exploited, trafficked and enslaved through

violence or the threat of violence.

The Moderator for the Session will be RAGAS Chairman, Mark Little and there will be two speakers, ie Vice Chairman, Dave McCleary from the Rotary Club of Rosewell (District 6900, USA) and Carol Metzker, author of “Facing the Monster – How One Person Can Fight Child Slavery” and a member of the One World Rotary e-Club (see photo on the next page)

“Power of One” Candlelight Vigil in Atlanta

In the evening of the first day of the Convention on 10th June, there will be a “Power of One Candlelight Vigil” in Centennial Olympic Park at 9.00pm. This initiative is being masterminded by Dave McCleary, RAGAS Vice Chair.

We are calling it the “Power of One” because each one of us, has the power to make a difference. Together, we can make a bigger impact to end slavery around the world, one life at a time.

So if you are attending the Atlanta RI Convention, please register right now to join us for this Candlelight Vigil at: <http://www.rotaryconvention2017.org/festival-events/candlelight-end-human-trafficking>

Even if you are not able to attend the Convention in person, we still want to invite all Rotarians to participate in the Power of One Candlelight with us.

Here’s how....either individually or as a club, raise

your own lit candle(s) to ending modern day slavery some time during the month of April and May and take a picture or video of it. Then email it by May 15th so it can be displayed on screens during the Candlelight Vigil in Atlanta. For videos, please upload the video to Youtube and email the link to dave@endhtnow.com.

For pictures, please email to dave@endhtnow.com.



RAGAS Annual Meeting in Atlanta



Caleb LaPlante (Above)

Carol Metzker (Below)



Prior to our Breakout session, why not join us in Room A407 at the Georgia World Congress Centre on 12th June 2017. We will kick off sharp at 12.30 hrs and close by 14.00 hrs.

This, our 5th annual meeting will, as usual provide Members with the opportunity to comment on earlier circulated Director's reports, and be stimulated by some evocative presentations.

There is no scheduled voting. The AGM will probably last 20 minutes leaving good time to hear

from, and engage with our inspiring speakers.

[Caleb LaPlante](#), One of our leading USA Coordinators and activists, will evoke ideas for you to create awareness through community art, based on the Award nominated "*More than A Survivor Exhibit*". Later he will introduce you to an opportunity to help support a Global Grant to challenge child cyber-sex trafficking in Manila (Philippines) in his talk entitled "Slavery: A Worldwide Problem. Rotary: A Worldwide Solution"

[Carol Metzker](#), a Founder Member, author, and RAGAS 'on-the-ground' Champion will enlighten us on a major RAGAS supported project she engineered in India. Carol styles her talk :

"*School4Freedom Update*": Prepare for Goosebumps.

Editor's Note: *This event and the Breakout Session (see page 1) are also posted on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/racsrag/events/>, and our Twitter Page <https://twitter.com/racsrag>.*

Please use either to let us know you will be joining us

RAGAS booth in the House of Friendship

Please note that our RAGAS booth will be number 2926 in the House of Friendship. The booth opening times will be as follows:-



We were pleased to welcome Gary Haugen (IJM) to our booth in Seoul last year

<u>Date</u>	<u>Exhibit Hours</u>
Sat 10 June	09.00 – 18.00
Sun 11 June	09.00 – 18.00
Mon 12 June	09.00 – 18.00
Tue 13 June	09.00 – 18.00
Wed 14 June	09.00 – 16.00

As we have to staff the booth at all times during the core hours of the Convention (12.00 – 18.00), please let Mark Little know if you are willing to help on the booth. His email address is littlebmark@gmail.com.



Recent slavery reports from abroad

West Africans sold in Libyan Slave Markets

West African migrants are being bought and sold openly in modern-day slave markets in Libya, survivors have told a UN agency helping them return home. New testimony from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) suggests that the trade in human beings has become so normalised that people are being traded in public.

The north African nation is a major exit point for refugees from Africa trying to take boats to Europe. But since the overthrow of autocratic leader Muammar Gaddafi, the vast, sparsely populated country has slid into violent chaos and migrants with little cash and usually no papers are particularly vulnerable.

IOM is working to spread awareness across West Africa of the horrors of the journey through the personal stories of those who return. One survivor from Senegal, explained that he was part of a group who had paid to be taken to the coast where they planned to risk a boat trip to Europe. The group were driven to a dusty lot in the south Libyan city of Sabha, but when they arrived the driver suddenly said that middlemen had not passed on his fees so instead he put his passengers up for sale in one of the slave markets..

Though most migrants know the boat trips to Europe are extremely risky, fewer realise they may face even worse dangers in Libya before even reaching the coast. IOM also have had credible reports of criminals posing as aid workers helping migrants but in fact working to lure them into slavery



Above: Gambian migrants return home from Libya carrying bags from IOM (UN Agency)

Below: 74 bodies found on the beach a Zawiya, Libya.



Slavery in Dagestan, Russia

More than 1 million people are believed to be trapped as modern-day slaves in Russia, many in the brick factories and *kosharas* (small farms) of Dagestan, a restive republic in the North Caucasus. Vagrants, soldiers and even entire families claim they have been drugged, kidnapped and forced to work against their will.

People often arrive in Dagestan under unusual circumstances. They tend to be migrants from Russia's impoverished regions, or from former Soviet satellites, who initially head towards Moscow to find work. There, at the capital's train stations, they are approached by recruiters who pose as employers. Well-paid jobs are touted over lunch or a drink – which the recruiters spike.

Hours later, the migrants wake up in a bus or on a train headed to a remote region like Dagestan, from where they have no means of escape.

"There are millions of people who go [to Moscow] looking for a job," said Alexey, 31. "Tens of thousands then disappear."

Forced labour is big in Dagestan. Recruiters earn 20,000 roubles (£285) for every person they sell into slavery, while brick-factory owners boost profits by using workers they will never have to pay. (Source: Guardian)



"We are the doers of our communities, the leaders, the ones who are most involved, who see the problems and have the means to find the solution. We are a worldwide network of inspired individuals who translate their passions into relevant social causes to change lives in communities"

Kalyan Banerjee

RI President 2011/12

I have always liked the Rotary theme selected by Frank Devlin when he became President of our great organization in 2000, ie "Create Awareness-Take Action".

So it was no coincidence that our Action Group's original Mission Statement replicated Frank's theme when we submitted our Action Plan to Rotary International in 2012 for approval as a Rotarian Action Group against Child Slavery.

Since then the Mission Statement has had to be slightly altered because of our change of name. So we now aim

- to raise awareness that millions are held captive and illegally forced to work

Editorial

for commercial gain, and

- to encourage Rotarians to participate in projects which help to protect people from slavery and its consequences.

Talking about raising awareness, on page 5 of this Newsletter, there is an Australian (not a Rotarian... as yet) who is proposing to raise awareness of human trafficking and slavery, on a national scale in Australia, by means of a painting competition. Let's hope that our Australian members and supporters will lend their weight to this wonderful initiative.

As far as taking action is concerned, this Newsletter has over the last few editions, provided several

opportunities for Rotarians and their Clubs to support and participate in the work of anti-slavery organizations. But sadly there has been very few offers of financial support recently.

Please do have a look at back editions of the Newsletter and see if you can persuade your club and/or other clubs in your District, to provide some financial help for these proposed projects and items. I would particularly draw your attention to the plea (see below) by "YouCanFreeUs" for funds to purchase a vehicle to take survivors from the organization's safe houses in Mumbai, India to their training centre..

YouCanFreeUs

Our most pressing need: Force Traveler26 Seater



YouCanFreeUs Training Centre in Mumbai, India



Background: Every day, 25 women in our rehabilitation program have to be taken from our safe houses to the training center. Presently, we are using a 6 seater Toyota Innova which has to make multiple trips resulting in delays in classes and loss of efficiency. Alternative public transport brings security issues to these vulnerable women and is not recommended. We also have weekly trips planned which include movies, industry visits, museums, parks, etc. Every quarter we also take them out of town. This is a necessary approach in their recovery process to enable them to fully re-enter society.

Cost – INR 14,50,000: US\$ 22,000 £17,800



Paint4Freedom – National Art Competition Australians to tackle Slavery with Artists Brushes & Creativity

by Doug Malcolm

I am in the planning stages of an exciting initiative - a National Art Competition, Paint4Freedom to help inform the Australian public about the scourge of human trafficking and slavery.

The outcomes of this idea are to:

- 1) Raise awareness and to help educate Australians about human trafficking and modern-day slavery, both here in Australia and around the world.
- 2) Raise funds to support key organisations specifically focussed on both eradicating these trades globally and helping to support the victims of slavery.
- 3) Encourage countries at a government, national and local level to eradicate these trades.

My aim is that the competition will bring together all Australians to get involved and actively fight this problem. To raise awareness that prompts consumers to demand that CEO's investigate their own corporation's existing supply-chain to ensure they are slave free. The project will also offer some clarity as to how all Australians can take part in changing the world.

The art competition will be open to children from the age of 10 years old through to amateur artists, emerging and established artists and is also looking to attract many entries from indigenous Australians across the country. The art competition will have a sound media coverage which will coincide with the Australian Federal Government's inquiry into establishing a Modern Slavery Act and the associated media following that inquiry followed then by the Federal Government's actions to establish the new Act.

It is planned that we will run four levels of competition in total with the finals being our National Competition where emerging and established artists will also enter the competition. The children's winners and runners-up will be chosen from each age category to progress to each next stage through to the final National Competition.

The competition is currently planned to be running during the first quarter of 2018 with the launch and associated publicity during the last quarter of 2017. At this early stage, I believe the competition will start at the local government (Local Council) area/district with some level of local government support.

I am hoping the competition will be supported by Rotarians and will be calling for volunteers in the near future to help in attending and managing the many competition entry points across Australia. I would be asking that the Rotarians be responsible for the art student activities and our face to face relationship with our local competition partners. Art student activities are likely to include speaking at the various local schools and also attending the different levels of competition.

Consultation with State and Federal Government departments is also being sought with timing of the competition's public launch as a possible opportunity for other media and government human trafficking and slavery focus. I have started discussions with numerous organisations including local, regional and state galleries, art societies and state education departments. I am seeking to have the various education departments and schools themselves provide support for those many children we hope to attract from both government and non-government schools.



*"Boy in Slavery" by Jasmine Chiu.
1st place in Florida International Art Show
(January 2017)*



Above: Painting by Christie Wu (9 years old) of Panda Abolitionist breaking the chains of slavery and bringing happiness and hope to those suffering.

Below: Painting entitled "Trample with Dignity". Little girls and young ladies forced to be sex slaves with inhuman treatment and with their souls utterly ripped off.



Paint4Freedom – National Art Competition (Cont'd)

(by Doug Malcolm)

“It is not easy to crush a human mind but with enough brutality, time, and indifference to suffering it can be done. Around the world it is being done ”

(Kevin Bales)



Painting entitled “Brokenness” – the effect of brutality and enslavement,



I am presently looking at what type of not-for-profit structure the organisation should take on including discussions with potential board members. I invite Australian Rotarians who also have a heart to help fix this problem locally and globally to think about how you can assist.

Stay tuned for more information, a website will be launched soon and ready to take volunteer registrations by the end of May.

In the meantime, please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestions or want to know more.

Doug Malcolm
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Editors Note: *The idea of Paint4Freedom came about when a friend asked Doug for some help with a small not-for-profit organisation, ie “The Freedom Project”, which he and his wife had started some years earlier. His friend explained that the two most challenging aspects of this work were a) to help educate the general public about slavery and human trafficking and b) to raise sufficient funds to assist their work. After some deliberation and a few prayers, he came up with the idea of a national art competition which he is now hell bent on establishing.*

The real impact of slavery

A few reflections by Mark Little

Definition of slavery....I am often asked for a definition of a slave. Quite simply, it is someone who is forced to work without pay, who is unable to leave and who is controlled by violence or the merely threat of violence. For these people their free will is taken away. Their labour, their lives and their minds are being consumed by someone else’s greed. But there is another dimension to slavery which is often forgotten.

It eliminates identity.....My visits to Child Slave Rehabilitation Centres in India, Nepal and Thailand these last 16 years have made me realise that one of the great crimes of slavery is that it goes beyond “servitude”. It goes to the point of eliminating the identity of the individual and the younger someone is taken into slavery the less likely they are able to repossess their own identity. In effect they become like zombies. Let me explain.,

Keshar Nankar was a slave who was born into bonded labour in India but he was eventually freed after 16 years of servitude. Some years after his release, whilst talking to the presenters of a documentary film on slavery, he expressed his feelings thus:

“You people who are free, who were born free and who have always lived free, can never understand what it is like to be a slave. When I was a slave, I could never have dreamt that one day I would be standing here talking to you as a



The real impact of slavery (Cont'd)

free man. My whole world was the farm where I was in bondage, and I simply could not have imagined anything else. Because someone, somewhere felt that I should not be a slave, and then did something about that, I am now a free man. But I could never have freed myself". He went on to explain, "You must understand that when someone tells you, year after year that you have no rights to think, you stop thinking. If they say you must not cry, you stop crying"

That is what I mean when I say slavery eliminates the identity of the individual. This is the essential ingredient of modern day slavery, ie the total control of one person by another for the purpose of economic exploitation.

Liberation is not enough....For the countless numbers of children and adults who are rescued from their factory prisons, fields, homes, quarries, restaurants etc, liberation is not enough. In Europe or in the United States, a child kidnapped and held in captivity for a number of years would automatically be given counselling. It would be assumed that the child or adult would need help for years to come. The trauma of slavery is just as bad and the need for rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community, is just as important.

The need for rehabilitationChildren (and the same applies for adults) when rescued are usually broken in body, mind and spirit and if taken directly back to their homes, would undoubtedly remain traumatised and withdrawn for the rest of their lives. They therefore need to go through a physical, mental and spiritual rehabilitation process. For the lucky few, this process is undertaken wherever there is a place available at a Safe House, Rehabilitation Centre or Trafficking Shelter. Sadly, there are not enough of these in the developing countries I have visited.

Rehabilitation is not an easy task....For the freed slave, freedom is not the end, only the beginning of the road back to normality. Rehabilitating traumatised minds is not an easy task. There is no body of knowledge and expertise built up by doctors and psychologists about how to help the freed slave. When slavery is the only life you have ever known or can ever remember, when your identity is wrapped up in your subjugation, finding a way through to a new life is very difficult, without the right kind of support

The Rehabilitation process... At some of the Rehabilitation Centres I have visited in India, the rescued children are re-educated a) to believe that they are worthwhile, not worthless, b) to learn to love themselves again and c) to play and mix with other children. Also because the majority of these children are from the lowest caste (the dalits) and are illiterate, they are taught to read and to write and to acquire trade skills such as welding, weaving, electronics, screen printing, tailoring, bicycle repairs, sewing etc. Acquiring these skills will enable them to more easily reintegrate back into their own villages..

How can Rotary help.....Only a very small percentage of the number of people who are rescued from slavery are rehabilitated because of the paucity of Rehabilitation Centres. If freed slaves are given no support (both psychologically and financially) to rebuild their lives they will inevitably fall back into slavery. Some may even return to slavery by choice. So it is essential that the existing Rehabilitation Centres continue to receive support and that new ones are built to maximise the number of freed slaves who do receive the rehabilitation which they need to rebuild their lives. This is one area where Rotarians and Rotary Clubs can help. So if you want to help, look through the back numbers of previous Newsletters.



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