



## Grandparents Against Gun Violence Virtual Meeting Minutes January 25, 2021

### **Our Mission:**

*We work to reduce gun violence to keep all children safe at home, at school and in our community.*

Judy Sherry called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm via Zoom. 71 people in attendance. Judy announced that the meeting was being recorded and posted on the website [www.moksgagv.org](http://www.moksgagv.org).

Judy advised that all GAGV committees are meeting on Zoom. Three advocacy actions have been initiated:

- Marilyn Cohen is distributing Acts of Kindness Now packets: candy with GAGV stickers on the back and the quote, "In a world where you can be anything, be kind." These packets can be given to front line workers, fire departments, city workers, postal workers, etc. Contact Marilyn to order packets at [ccohen@kc.rr.com](mailto:ccohen@kc.rr.com).
- Carol Gee read the names of the Kansas City victims of homicide by gun violence since January 1. GAGV member Rusty Leffel called to our attention that this is a practice of St. Andrews Episcopal Church at their Sunday service, and Father John Spicer consulted with Carol. In 2020, 182 people were killed by gun violence in Kansas City, an all-time high. "Say Their Names" will be repeated at each monthly meeting.
- In 2019 GAGV members wrote to the chief executive and chairman of Dick's Sporting Goods to express appreciation for Dick's removing guns from their stores. Dick's recently reiterated its commitment to end gun violence. Advocacy Chair Carla Oppenheimer is asking GAGV members to again write notes of appreciation, and when shopping at Dicks, thank and tell the store manager why you've chosen to shop there.

John Ussery introduced today's program, *Listening to Other Voices*, presented by Cecil Wattlee and Cynthia Corn, both social workers and veterans of the Hickman Mills School District. Cecil is the current president of the District's Board of Directors and Cynthia was previously principal of the Burke Academy, the District's alternative high school. They discussed ways to have courageous, difficult conversations. See PowerPoint.

Cynthia told us how to take the emotion out of a conversation:

- Breathe
- Outline what you want to say – use bullet point
- Keep it fact based
- Keep it about the conversation; don't bring in other issues
- Recognize your triggers
- Find common ground rather than prove a point

The next GAGV meeting is Monday, February 22 at 4 pm on Zoom. Speakers will be from The National African American Gun Association.

Judy adjourned the meeting at 5:23 pm.

Minutes submitted by Charlotte Davison, Secretary