



## Grandparents Against Gun Violence Meeting Minutes February 24, 2020

### **Our Mission:**

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

President Judy Sherry called the monthly meeting of Grandparents Against Gun Violence to order at Colonial Church in Prairie Village at 4:05 pm. Sixty-one people were in attendance.

Judy announced GAGV now has office space at Colonial Church which includes meeting and storage space. In addition, volunteer Jan Brunks is providing administrative assistance.

Barb McNeile presented the latest Lock It For Love report:

- 117 LIFL events
- 13 events planned in 2020 so far
- 2,793 free gun locks have been given to community members

Interested in volunteering? Contact Jan Brunks: [jmbrunks@gmail.com](mailto:jmbrunks@gmail.com)

Joan Jacobson encouraged attendees to become members of GAGV and to keep their memberships up to date. The more members we have, the more voices we have in the community, and the more influence we have in local conversations and with legislators.

Julie Young tested our knowledge on gun facts. The test with answers will be in the March newsletter.

Joy Koesten, Ph.D., a lecturer at KU in the Communication Studies department and a former Kansas State Representative (currently running for Kansas Senate District 11) shared communication tips about how we can discuss important facts with people who don't share our views.

- Dr. Koesten told us of German philosopher Martin Buber's "I am Thou," the humanity of relational conversations. When talking to someone who disagrees with you, speak like you are talking to God. The conversation is kinder and more thoughtful.
- Listen, don't say a word. Be empathetic and curious about the person's point of view. Ask, "Why do you believe what you believe?" Restate what you hear. Validate fears.
- Create space through constructive confrontation. Challenge the individuals on their beliefs to the point that they can tolerate a new idea. Find common ground. How can I frame this topic/conversation so it is more palatable to this particular person? The end goal is that we want the person to move closer to where we are. That takes time as we have to move forward one interaction at a time.

Mary Gay Rogers and Don White, GAGV supporters and local thespians, role-played some effective ways to share facts in loving, non-confrontational ways.

Helen Thompson and Mary Dees explained the 3-month Advocacy Action, a marketing campaign to legislators, governors and mayors. Each attendee signed postcards to elected officials informing them of three compelling facts about gun violence. February's fact is about the need for background checks. March is about the resulting economics of gun violence. April is on the fatal impact of gun violence in Kansas and Missouri. The call to action is asking the elected officials to GET IT DONE.

**Upcoming meetings:**

- The March meeting will be moved to the 5<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, **March 30**, to allow for spring break. The program, "The Blue Line is in Trouble," will inform us of the stresses law enforcement personnel face, and what is being done to address them.
- April 27 – How views on guns differ in urban and rural communities.
- May 18 – (NOTE date change due to Memorial Day)  
Nadine Johnson, Executive Director of ACLU KS.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by  
Charlotte Davison, Secretary