



Grandparents Against Gun Violence Virtual Meeting Minutes April 26, 2021

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 meeting to order at 4:02 pm via Zoom. In attendance: 61

LIFL Chair Barb McNeile announced in-person events are being scheduled (masks, social distancing). A captain is needed for the 1:30 – 4:00 pm shift at the KC Wellness Event sponsored by ACTS Ministry at Sycamore Park in south Kansas City. This event will be outdoors and with a police officer present. In addition, a volunteer is needed for the second shift of the outdoor Juneteenth Heritage Festival on Saturday, June 14th, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm, at the 18th & Vine Historic Jazz District. Check your email for SignUpGenius to volunteer.

Chair Carla Oppenheimer announced this year's Heartland Community Forum has been scheduled for Monday, October 11 and will be virtual. The theme is *Gun Violence: Strategies to Curb This Public Health Epidemic* Dr. Megan Ranney is the keynote speaker. A panel will be moderated by Robyn Thomas, Executive Director of Giffords Law Center; panelists will represent education, homelessness, unemployment, mental health, and improving neighborhoods. The Executive Director of States United to Prevent Gun Violence, Clai Lasher-Sommers, will introduce the program.

Advocacy Action: Carla reminded attendees there is a drive-through event Tuesday, April 27 at Colonial Church where post cards can be picked up to be sent to U. S. Senators asking their support for the two background check bills currently in the Senate. Blank cards will be available to send to President Biden. Swag will also be available.

Say Their Names: Charlotte Davison read the names of the Kansas Citizens who lost their lives to homicide in April as a part of the "Say their Names" initiative. Charlotte has also been reading the names during the monthly meeting of Village Church's Social Witness and Advocacy Task Force.

Al Frisby, John Ussery and Jerry Stogsdill moderated the program featuring KU Political Science Professor Mark Joslyn who studies behavior and attitudes. The political divide between Americans who own guns and Americans who don't has widened over the last 40 years, according to a study out of the University of Kansas that also found gun owners are more likely to support Republican candidates than their non-gun-owning counterparts.

Professor Joslyn became interested in attitudes toward gun violence during the 2016 election campaign which was preceded by the Pulse Night Club shooting in Orlando. Guns then became an issue in the election campaign. As the debates unfolded, he noticed he did not hear what gun owners thought, exit polls did not mention them; there was no data about understanding the mind of the average gun owner. He decided to study how guns shape our political identity.

Professor Joslyn presented a series of findings:

1. Very few studies consider the political behavior of gun owners instead focusing on the relationship between gun access and gun violence or examining the factors that lead to gun purchases.
2. Gun ownership used to be bipartisan.
3. There is a growing gun gap in voter choice.
4. The gun gap is larger and more consistent compared to other well-known gaps.
5. More than one gun – distinctiveness of voter choice – increases with the number of guns owned.
6. There is a gun gap in voter turnout. In 2016 75% of gun owners reported voting while 64% of non-gun owners voted.
7. More guns mean a greater likelihood to vote.
8. Gun owners' friends frequently own guns; non-owner friends do not.
9. Gun owners feel safer with a gun than without one.
10. Most people over-estimate the percentage of Americans who own guns.

Professor Joslyn said is alright to be ambivalent about a complex problem like guns, but we must understand the minds of gun owners and non-gun owners so we can compromise. A statistic like 90% of Americans support universal background checks, which includes gun owners, indicates there is room for compromise.

The meeting was recorded and can be accessed at

<https://moksgagv.org/april-26-2021-zoom-meeting-recording-and-notes/>

Next meeting:

Monday, May 24, 4 pm, Zoom, Behind the Badge, Struggles Our Police Partners Face. Prairie Village Chief of Police Bryan Roberson will head a panel of professionals describing their work to help officers deal with the stress of their job.

June Meeting: GAGV gathers outside!

Judy Sherry adjourned the meeting at 5:12 pm.

Minutes submitted by Charlotte Davison, Secretary