

## ROTARY ACTION GROUP AGAINST SLAVERY

# RAGAS NEWSLETTER

<https://ragas.online/>

This Rotary Action Group is not an agency of, or controlled by, Rotary International.



## THANK YOU

Dave McCleary, RAGAS Global Chair

On behalf of the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery Board, I want to thank you for your continued support of our mission to connect, empower and equip Rotarians to engage their communities to eradicate all forms of Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking, locally and globally.

With your support RAGAS continues to grow! Our efforts to increase connecting with you more has resulted in increasing our membership, coordinators and ambassadors in over six continents. The RAGAS Community Awareness & Prevention Education (CAPE) Strategic Action Plan and toolbox we created has helped to equip Rotarians in how to engage their own communities. Equipping and empowering our clubs and districts in applying for grants has increased diverse and successful projects all over the world.

We recognize your commitment to Rotary's purpose "Service Above Self". As leaders in the fight against modern slavery/human trafficking, we draw inspiration from your commitment, your on-going work and your willingness to stand up for humankind and the generations to come.

Your projects within your Rotary clubs/districts and your inspiring attitude bring hope to all of us know we are working together to address the most important issue of our time.

May the year 2022 illustrate a common purpose and resolve, and may each of you enjoy the joy of family, friends and colleagues as we work together in the fight to end modern slavery/human trafficking.

Save the date January 25th at 9am EST. RAGAS will be hosting a three panel webinar discussing: Education/Prevention; Health Care; and Supply Chain/ESG. More details to follow soon.

In Rotary Service,

Dave McCleary  
Global Chair Rotary Action Group Against Slavery



## RI COUNCIL ON RESOLUTIONS APPROVE HISTORIC ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOLUTION

George Belitsos, RAGAS Board Member

A historic vote was taken on November 1st, 2021, by the RI Council on Resolutions. Please see below the RI Council on Resolutions approved resolution submitted by IA District 6000.

Just over a year ago, this resolution was drafted and submitted to District 6000 by Dr. George Belitsos, Rotary Club of Ames and vice-chair of RAGAS.

Subsequently, the district resolution was voted on by all 67 District 6000 Clubs. Early this year the full Board of Directors of District 6000 approved and submitted the resolution to the RI Council on Resolutions.



**On November 1, 2021, Resolution 21R-28 (proposed by District 6000 USA) passed the RI Council on Resolutions by a margin of 318 in favor and 151 in opposition.**

This resolution is now headed to the RI Board of Directors for their April 2022 meeting. If this resolution is approved by the RI Board of Directors, it will be a major step forward in efforts to engage Rotary Clubs worldwide in the fight against human trafficking/modern slavery.

If the RI Board of Directors approves the resolution, it will be only the second time that the RI Board of Directors has made a written public policy stand in support of Rotary human trafficking/modern slavery engagement. The first such policy statement took place in 2013 when Mark Little of the United Kingdom founded the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery upon the approval of the RI Board of Directors.



RAGAS believes that Rotary is uniquely positioned to end human trafficking through its ability to pull communities together for a common humanitarian purpose.

RAGAS global chair, Dave McCleary is working hard to educate and inform the RI Board of Directors about this growing crime against humanity and thereby the importance of RI adopting resolution 21R-28, which can be found [here](#) in its entirety.



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 Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking & Slavery  
www.iowanah.org Rotary 

## UPDATED RESCUE STICKER

George Belitsos, RAGAS Board Member

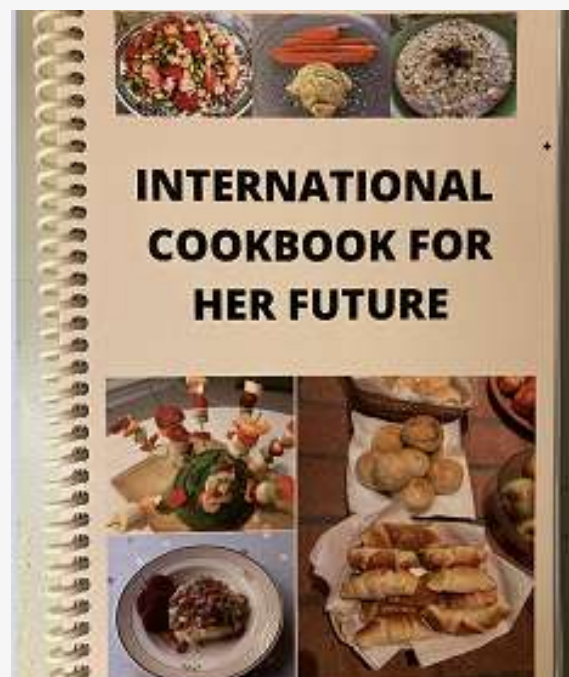
The Rotary Club of Ames, Iowa joined forces with the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking to create this rescue sticker. The 6-3 inch stickers are now being posted statewide primarily by District 6000 Rotary Clubs. There are both English and Spanish stickers.

Many countries have national hotlines for reporting suspected human trafficking and for victims to call for help. RAGAS encourages Rotarians everywhere to consider creating and distributing your own rescue stickers.

To date, over 10,000 stickers have been posted in Iowa for more information or questions, contact RAGAS Board member George Belitsos at gbelitsos55@gmail.com.

We challenge other clubs worldwide to take up similar "Rescue Sticker" projects of their own!

**¿Busca una salida? ¿Necesita ayuda?**  
Para asistencia a víctimas:  
Línea Nacional Contra la Trata de Personas  
**888-3737-888**  
O Envíe "Help" 233733  
Centro de Llamadas para Servicio a Víctimas en Iowa  
**800-770-1650**  
SUCEDE AQUÍ EN IOWA O Envíe "iowahelp" a 20121  
Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking & Slavery  
Red contra la trata de personas y la esclavitud en Iowa  
www.iowanah.org Rotary 



## INTERNATIONAL COOKBOOK FOR HER FUTURE

Robin Singer, RAGAS Member

A great gift or stocking stuffer! With proceeds all going to help trafficking survivors and at-risk girls and women.

The Rotary Club of Falmouth, Cape Cod has just sponsored the reprinting of an International cookbook which can be purchased for just \$20 to support Her Future Coalition (skills based training and education of brothel trafficking survivors in Nepal, to prevent them from being re-trafficked due to lack of employment options). The cookbook has a lot of educational material on modern slavery and ways that it is being combatted.

Follow [THIS LINK](#) to purchase one (in the USA only due to shipping costs) or Venmo to @FALMOUTHROTARYCLUBCC which is Falmouth Rotary Club of Cape Cod with a corresponding email to msrobinsinger@gmail.com to arrange for free shipping.

Checks can also be sent and arrangements for free shipping made through msrobinsinger@gmail.com





## California Rotary Human Trafficking Prevention Campaign

*Seeds of Hope*



# 2022

STATEWIDE  
AWARENESS  
CAMPAIGN

## PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month in America, dedicating the month to raising awareness about the different forms of human trafficking and educating people about this crime. Human Trafficking is a crime in which force, fraud or coercion is used to compel a person to perform labor or commercial sex. Victims are held captive through threat, often beaten or drugged into submission. The U.S. State Department reports that California is one of the top three states of reported cases of human trafficking and that San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco are three of the 10 highest child sex trafficking regions in the entire country. Seventy percent of victims are from our most vulnerable populations. The remaining thirty percent are from intact families, lured in through social media and the internet. All of our children can be targets. California Rotarians are dedicated to fighting this horrific crime!



## EVENTS HAPPENING THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA



**LOS ANGELES**  
SUN., JANUARY 16  
LAX 5K WALK/RUN

Join ultra-athlete and Rotarian Rob DeCou for a non-competitive 5K run/walk to raise awareness about the impacts of human trafficking on children throughout the Los Angeles region.



**SAN DIEGO**  
FRI., JANUARY 21  
LIBERTY STATION CONF. CTR.

Join us in showcasing the issues and collaborative solutions addressing this \$800-million illicit industry in San Diego County and focusing on solutions being coordinated by a collective force for good.



**SAN FRANCISCO**  
SAT., JANUARY 22  
LOCATION TBD

San Francisco Rotary Club #2 will host a tree-planting ceremony, "Planting of Seeds of Hope Awareness Campaign," striving to symbolize the healing, self-discovery and growth survivors undergo.



**SACRAMENTO**  
SAT., JANUARY 29  
STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

Gather with Rotary International Director Vicki Puliz at the steps of the State Capitol Building for a press conference and awareness-raising walk on the Capitol grounds.

# REGISTER BELOW

- 1/16/2022 Los Angeles Seeds of Hope 5K: Register [HERE](#)
- 1/21/2022 San Diego End Human Trafficking Summit: Register [HERE](#)
- 1/22/2022 San Francisco Planting the Seeds of Hope: Register [HERE](#)
- 1/29/2022 Sacramento Seeds of Hope Walk: Register [HERE](#)





## TRAGAST PREVENTION TRAINING

Jerry Nelson, RAGAS Board Member  
Thailand RAGAS Team (TRAGAST) is working with Dr. Sombat Tapanya and his Peace Culture Foundation to give training designed to prevent children from being trapped in sex human trafficking.

Great support has been provided by Rotary Club Henry the Lion in Germany.

On 30 and 31 October a two-day online seminar was presented to 50 participants including school administrators, Chiang Mai University psychology students, teachers, law enforcement and an attorney.

Their “homework” assignment is to create a program that will contribute to the prevention of child human trafficking. Seminars are also being conducted on 21 and 28 November. Previous trainings were conducted in May and July.

Peace Culture Foundation is working with psychology majors at Chiang Mai University. Topics covered include bullying, sexual violence, awareness of pedophiles and sociopaths. Over 120 school officials have been reached and more training is being planned.

The newly announced RAGAS Community Awareness & Prevention Education (CAPE) program is being studied and will certainly improve our ability to Community Awareness and Prevention Work in The Thailand region.

## RCEHT/TRAGAST LIBRARIES

Jerry Nelson, RAGAS Board Member

There are now 8 portable lending libraries throughout the Chiang Mai area.

Their purpose is to raise awareness in the community. TRAGAST has decided to purchase copies of the new book “Where Were You? – A Profile of Modern Slavery” by Matt Friedman for our libraries. It is the perfect introduction to the Human Trafficking situation.

Our long-term plan is to expand the idea to other communities. If you are interested, please know that all you need is a willing Rotary Club to proceed.

We are more than happy to share our experience and provide any assistance getting started. Please contact Rtn Raphael Djemal (delshar56@gmail.com) or PP Jerry Nelson (jnelson.ragas@gmail.com).





## TRAGAST PUBLIC INFORMATION / AWARENESS MEETINGS

Jerry Nelson, RAGAS Board Member

We will host a series of talks by Rotary and Human Trafficking experts, our intention is to raise awareness and hopefully gain active members.

PDG Andre Suharto will be our guest speaker on 6 December. He is the Rotary Regional Public Image Coordinator (Zone 10B & 10C) and Chairman, District 3310 Learning & Development (D-LEAD) Committee.

PDG Andre's topic will be 'New Channels, New Audiences for TRAGAST.'

Those interested in growing Rotary, RAGAS, and the TRAGAST will want to make a point of attending.

Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

Topic: TRAGAST Meeting  
Time: Dec 6, 2021, 08:30 AM Bangkok  
Meeting ID: 884 7917 0461  
Passcode: 440215

## FORWARD PLANNING

Jerry Nelson, RAGAS Board Member

TRAGAST members are working to expand the team and at the same time to gain support from Rotary Districts and Clubs outside of Thailand with the long-term goal being to provide prevention awareness campaigns and training throughout Thailand.

Please contact Thailand Coordinator PDG Chamnan Chanruang (chamnanxyz@gmail.com) or Thailand Co-Coordinator/RAGAS board member PP Jerry Nelson (jnelson.ragas@gmail.com) for further information.



**10 DECEMBER**

**WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SLAVERY IN THAILAND

Carol Acosta, Rotary Club of Mae Cham / TRAGAST Member

Anti-human trafficking and slavery is a major focus of Rotary. It is recognized as the major human disaster of our times. As polio nears eradication, the focus is centering on human trafficking and slavery, particularly as it applies to children.

Polio ravages the body but trafficking and slavery ravages both the body and the soul. We can and must put an end to this horrific crippling disease. If we do not act decisively, we will be complacent in increasing the profits of the traffickers and destroying the lives of the victims.



Here are some facts that may surprise many of you.

- Human trafficking and slavery are not “nice”. They comprise an insidious, evil, and nasty business.
- Every country in the world has human trafficking and slavery. Some people are used for sex and others as cheap labor in sweat shops. All are victims.
- There are 40,000,000 slaves in the world today, more than at any other time in history. (As reported in 2016)
- Human trafficking is the 2nd largest business in the world, second only to illicit drugs. Often the two overlap.
- The poor and disenfranchised are the most vulnerable, but trafficking does not discriminate on the basis of education, income, race, religion or age. Anyone may be ensnared.
- The cost of a slave today as compared to that of a slave in the US when slavery was legal, is vastly different. Then, the cost of a slave was approximately the equivalent of \$40,000.00. A slave was valuable property and worth keeping healthy.



- Today, a person can be purchased for next to nothing and is thus disposable. If one becomes ill, so what, he or she is easily replaceable. Those on fishing boats may be simply thrown overboard.
- Disasters such as earthquakes, fires, floods etc. always increase the availability of victims.
- The current Covid pandemic definitely has increased trafficking. Children are often separated from their parents and families during disasters and thus more vulnerable.
- The disenfranchised and those lacking Thai ID are natural targets as they have limited resources for employment and often desperate for work.
- Thailand, because of its location, is a natural hub for trafficking.
- Traffickers may be strangers, teachers and even family members.



We, in Thailand, have the opportunity of establishing a program to attack the problem. What will we do and how will we do it? Education of children as well as adults, is the key.

It will involve education departments and NGOs from Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. We will work through education departments to train teachers about trafficking. They in turn will teach children how to avoid situations where they are vulnerable to traffickers, to recognize the warning signs and what to do if approached by possible traffickers.

The NGOs will assist in the training and in providing expertise and materials for workshops. We must involve leaders in all the Tribal communities as they often have many undocumented victims.

This process must begin when children are fairly young as, unfortunately, the young are the least able to protect themselves and often, especially desirable to those seeking children for sex.





## 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](#)

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 Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking & Slavery   
www.iowanaht.org

## 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 talking 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](#) and District 5710 [Rotary eClub of Community Action Against Human Trafficking](#).

