



Targeting the Johns in Sex Trade

Police arrest women for prostitution all the time, but almost never their customers. There’s a growing awareness that sex trafficking is one of the most serious human rights abuses around, with some 100,000 juveniles estimated to be trafficked into the sex trade in the United States each year. Some women sell sex on their own, but coercion, beatings and recruitment of underage girls are central to the business as well. Many young girls run away from home and end up locked up by pimps and sold for sex. Police in Jackson County increasingly recognize that the simplest way to reduce the scale of human trafficking is to arrest men who buy sex. They see that a starting point is to stop making excuses for the men who perpetuate it. According to Nicholas Kristof, New York Times Columnist quoted in the Kansas City Star, police in Chicago are going undercover in neighboring rooms at local hotels prepared to raid a room when a customer enters. The john is given a \$500.00 ticket, handcuffed, and taken to a room in the hotel to watch videos about health and the impact their behavior has on society. Men’s cars are also towed, which costs them another \$700. Married men are told they can avoid the tow if they call their wives to pick them up. Most johns pay the fines immediately.

Friends of the Willow Tree

Who regularly brings beauty, celebration, make-up, music and yummy treats to our Willow Tree community? The Friends Of The Willow Tree, that’s who! They are a group of wonderful volunteers that provide joy, conversation, holiday sacks, fun, fashion and surprises during our Tuesday night gatherings, periodically. The secret of their success is that they join and unite with our guests, remember their stories and enjoy trading secrets. The Friends are always looking for new members. We welcome everyone with open arms and there is no judgment here.



Thank you to ALL of our dedicated friends of the willow tree. For info, call Kay at 913-710-0305.

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Img. Friends of the Willow Tree, (1) Nancy Cacomo (2) Kay Sipple bringing treats on a Tuesday evening

A Welcoming Willow Tree Room

Agnes (sic) came into the Tuesday evening dinner with a huge smile, carrying her meal tray of dressing and turkey, returning to the group, after a six-week break. The other guests waved and greeted her, stating how much they missed her. As conversation continued, the door opened and Josie (sic) entered. Silence fell in the room now. Josie had been released from prison three days prior. She glanced at Agnes and many tears flowed as they embraced again. For years, the two had “worked the streets” together, and here they were, beginning new lives on this night, in the midst of this community of women. What an amazing space this is, available to empower these women. These opportunities for fellowship and encouragement take place on Tuesday evenings at St. James’ Place, in the back of the large dining room, and currently average feeding about 200 people on weeknights. Just like the Willow Tree, this space and these gatherings are always safe and comforting.

PARTNERSHIPS IN JUSTICE WITH FBI

The FBI is required to implement a national “sting” on a regular basis, performing unannounced raids on women involved with prostitution. As the women are found, they are taken to an FBI site for questioning and documentation. On the weekend of June 19th, 20th, 21st, The Justice Project partnered with the FBI in Kansas City; offering a safe space with support, food and healthy conversations as women were brought in by the FBI throughout the night. Each woman was provided with much needed care by The Justice Project staff in the weeks following.



Elmer Jean Wilson, guest of the Willow Tree, shown at her last Christmas party with her friends.

She died June 30th 2014, shown with **Donna Ryan, RSM** and **Kris Wade**, executive director of the Justice Project

NEEDED CARE PACKAGES FOR GUESTS

This season in our outreach packages, we need:

Flip-flops (sandals)
Underwear
Razors
Deodorant

Bring to St. James Place, 3936 Troost, marked Justice Project. Donations are always needed.

Checks made to the Justice Project
PO Box 32804, Kansas City, MO 64171 Thank you!

OUR GOALS

To encourage system challenged women in poverty to address criminal justice and social service system obstacles standing in the way of their recovery and independence, and to become accountable, responsible partners in their restoration. To act as a liaison between the women and police, courts, corrections, social services, and the community. To promote an understanding of this challenged population through education of police, courts, corrections, social service providers, businesses, and the community, and to affect system change through training and interaction of system actors.

OUR MISSION

The mission of The Justice Project, a peer based nonprofit human rights organization, is to provide criminal justice and social systems advocacy and navigation for women (and transgenders that are identifying as female) in poverty who may be suffering from a multitude of challenges, including homelessness, discrimination, addiction, mental illness, domestic violence, prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation.