

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2018

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FACILITIES: 785-354-1744

Hope Center for Women & Families #8
Men's Shelter #0
Distribution Center x366
Thrift Store 785-235-9094
TRM Boutique on the Blvd 785-478-5744
Children's Palace 785-730-8810

PROGRAMS: 785-354-1744

Dining Services x322
Food Distribution x366
Education & Mentoring x338
Volunteer Services x393

COMMUNITY:

NET Reach 785-783-2535 x106
Operation Street Reach 785-230-8237

DONATIONS:

Monetary: 785-354-1744 x316
Material: 785-357-4285
Food: 785-357-4285

website: TRMonline.org
email: trm@trmonline.org



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AMERICAN
PRE-SORT INC

GIRL IN THE ATTIC

BY LIZZI FEAKER



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It started when she was twelve and her stepfather told her she had bright, pretty hair, and was becoming a beautiful young woman. She knew she was supposed to like hearing it; didn't every girl want to become a beautiful young woman? But something in his eyes made her skin crawl.

As her mother began working more and more hours to afford the bills, leaving her alone with her stepfather who never seemed to be able to hold down a job, her uneasiness grew. Several weeks later, during one of her mother's overnight shifts, her stepfather threw her to the freezing basement floor. She experienced physical, mental and emotional destruction that changed the course of her life and repeated in the following years.

In high school other men noticed her hair, blonde and long - swinging while she walked, until she snuck into the bathroom one morning and cut it all off. She cut it as short as a boy's, but it didn't matter. They still stared. She focused next on trying to make herself as small as possible, trying not to attract attention in her movements or voice, trying to disappear from her stepfather's gaze reflected in the eyes of men all around her.

When she was 18 she met a man who looked at her with another expression. He seemed to see right

into her soul. When he told her he loved her and would protect her, she thought she was the luckiest girl in the world, until she once again endured the same destruction she experienced at age twelve.

In the years after high school, she attempted to further her education and find employment, but met versions of her stepfather over and over. Their eyes looked at her with that same look she experienced at age twelve and she started drinking more. She drank away her paychecks and spent her nights in

bars, trying to forget the reality she couldn't escape.

At her lowest point she met a couple online. They asked for photographs in exchange for money, wanting to spice up their marriage. She was wary. She built a friendship with them online for months before agreeing to meet one afternoon in a public parking lot. She brought a friend with her for protection, just in case.

Her friend loved them instantly, and so did she - the couple was good-looking, funny, charming, and offered to buy her drinks at a

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new club that night. It was a club she could never afford to get into on her own. Her friend stumbled home around midnight and she continued drinking with the couple, having a long heart-to-heart about all the things she had never told anyone else, going back to age twelve. They drew it out of her with care, and when she was too shy to continue they gently encouraged her to go on.

She woke the next morning in the attic of a strange three-story house, disoriented and alone. The attic was sparsely furnished with a bed that took up half the room. In the attached bathroom was a huge marble vanity with a light-up mirror. The couple told her in a few weeks, if she did what was asked, they'd let her go. Just a few more weeks. They just needed her long enough to build their business, get repeat clients, and help recruit other girls. They gave her a list of reasons why she owed them, why this was fair. They'd been saying they would let her go "in a few weeks" for months, but time was now measured in doses and withdrawals. She can't remember the last time she felt mentally or physically clear.

The air around her smelled rancid when she moved. When was the last time she showered or ate? Her vision swam as fear flared through her, breaths came in gasps and her heart felt like it would burst. She smeared on makeup with shaking hands and climbed on the bed to wait. She listened for the car that would roar up the driveway, the footsteps on the stairs and watched as the door opened and a stranger

walked in. When he left, the couple gave her another dose of the drugs and the withdrawals that were killing her stopped.

Later, she moved to the window and watched the world outside through a crack in the curtains. Since she arrived, she had never left her third floor prison. A delivery driver on the street below carried a package to the house next door. She learned long ago screaming was not effective; she's too far up. She banged on the window once but got no attention from the people on the street below - the only one who heard was her captor. She nearly died from the beating he delivered. He withheld food and water until she was too weak to move from the bed to the bathroom.

She watched the truck pull away. Two women out for a walk paused underneath her window. One of them was telling a story to the other, making exaggerated gestures and laughing. A door opened across the street and several children spilled out, jumping in the sunshine. The golden retriever in the yard next door ran across the street to join them.

She let the curtains close and laid on the bed, out of breath from the exertion of moving to the window. She faded back into herself, back into the space she exists now; entirely inside her mind, her body; and the world outside foreign, strange, disconnected. In that space she returned to a memory of herself at eleven, before her stepfather entered her life. She was in a church, listening to someone

playing a song on the guitar, singing to the ceiling with their eyes closed. She remembered it being a song about rescue. Hope for the ones imprisoned. She played it in her head several times a day now, making up words where she couldn't remember the real ones, singing the song to anything - anything in heaven or earth - that might hear her, find her, help her. She repeats the questions that have become her mantra since waking up in this attic, all those months ago: Is anyone out there? Does anyone care? Was I created only to endure this and die?

This scenario of the girl in the attic plays out over and over throughout our nation, every victim enduring similar abuse, destruction and devastation. Every victim asking the same questions: is anyone out there? Is this what I was created for? Will anyone ever find me? Will I be rescued, or will I die?

Knowing this occurs an untold number of times in neighborhoods possibly not far from yours - knowing that this is the reality of our world, our nation, our cities, and even our own community - we must ask ourselves the question: Is this ok or not? Is it okay to turn a blind eye to the destruction of people like the girl in the attic? Is she on her own, or are we going to be there for her? Will we hear her cry, or is this simply someone else's concern? We cannot "unsee" what we've seen, we cannot unlearn what we've learned. Our conscience has called us to action. May God guide us as we stand together to rescue the girl in the attic. †



COMMUNITY STABILIZATION

RESTORE HOPE *by Terry Hund*

The shocking reality is that human trafficking truly exists in Kansas and is sadly considered a “supplier” state by traffickers across the nation. Many of our seemingly “safe” Topeka neighborhoods and those in rural communities are not exempt. Traffickers (spotters, groomers and recruiters) have been found in our schools, churches, shopping areas and also in our homes with those having unguarded cell phone access. Most of our trafficked victims share multiple stories of childhood physical and sexual abuse, many having lived within the foster system and experienced multiple runaways. The Girl in the Attic depicts an all too common story of a vulnerable young woman within our city today.

So where can we find the answer to such tragedies? In Isaiah 61, “... because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners...to comfort all who mourn, ...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.” Restore Hope, the human trafficking division of the Topeka Rescue Mission, brings help and hope through collaborating efforts of community and faith-based groups. These groups focus on victim interventions and stabilization to build bridges for life changing restorations in the promise of what God has planned for their lives. †

Freedom *Now* USA

Uniting Efforts to Eradicate Human Trafficking

by *Amber Cunningham*

Why, in the 21st Century, is there a girl in the attic to save? That is the question Freedom Now USA (FNUSA) is asking and encouraging others to ask. Our country was founded on the principle that all individuals are created equal and should be free. While slavery involving race was abolished 150 years ago, sex and labor slavery exists today in communities across America. It hides in plain sight, exploits the most vulnerable, and is eroding the health of our nation. We must stand together to declare war on all forms of slavery and advance freedom for all people.

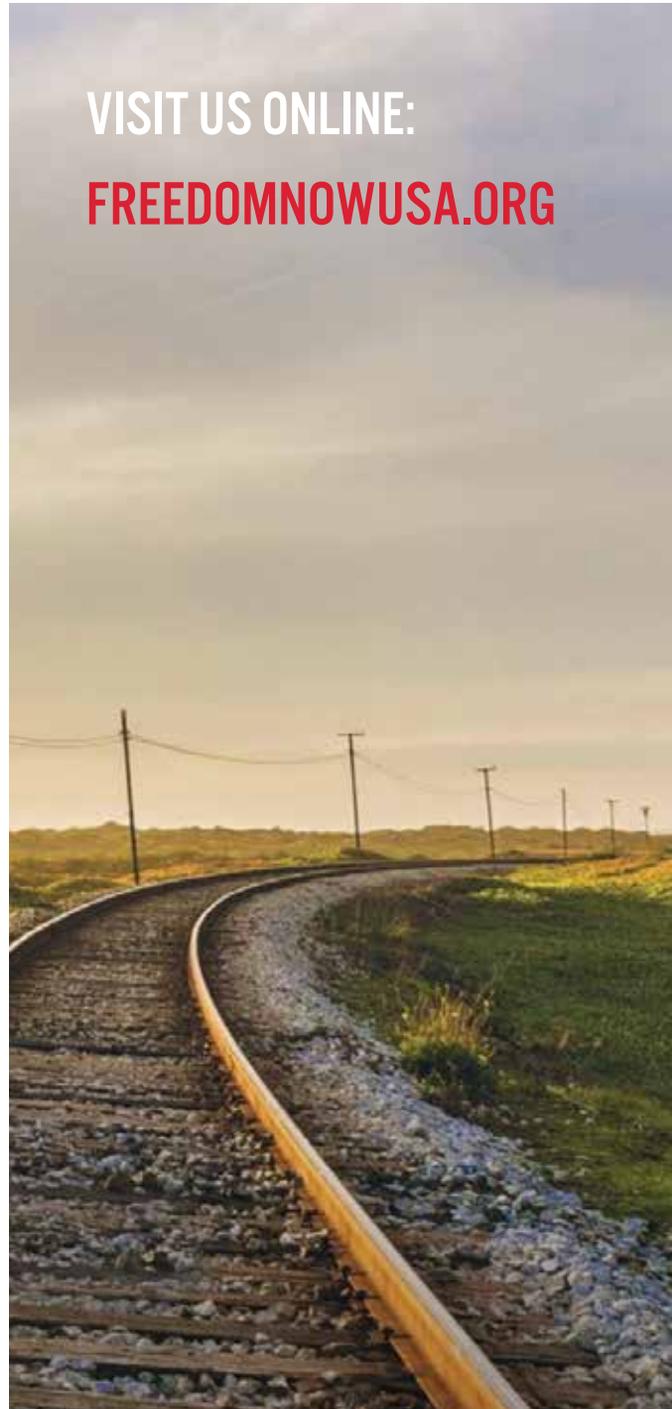
FNUSA exists to unite efforts within communities to eradicate human trafficking from the United States. In order to eradicate something, you first have to understand it - in its entirety. That is why FNUSA is working with local communities to discover how human trafficking intersects all areas of the community, assist community leaders to understand the full picture and craft an action plan and unite all individuals and organizations needed to fight the war.

How does a community discover the 12-year-olds being raped and ensure they have wrap-around trauma services? Or, discover the 18-year-olds before they are tricked into relationships where they are sold for sex. How does a community discover the 24-year-olds who drink away their pain and sell pictures to the “nice couple” they meet at a bar or online? Better yet, how does a community prevent these atrocities from happening to vulnerable children and adults?

To address these concerns, Topeka Rescue Mission launched FNUSA, piloting a model in Topeka/ Shawnee County that, if successful, could shape our nation and turn the tide in a war most Americans don't even know we are fighting. Join the movement and help FNUSA work alongside communities to both prevent and rescue those in the attic. †

VISIT US ONLINE:

FREEDOMNOWUSA.ORG



THRIFTY AND SPICE AND EVERYTHING NICE AT THE TRM BOUTIQUE.

HELLO, FALL.



FIND US
ON FACEBOOK!

3400 SW TOPEKA BLVD. • MONDAY – SATURDAY 10AM-5PM



CURRENT NEEDS LIST

* DENOTES CRITICAL NEED ITEMS

FOOD ITEMS:

Peanut Butter / Jelly / Ravioli / Canned Tuna / Chicken / Cereal / Spaghetti Sauce / Soup
Baby Formula (Similac Advanced & Similac Sensitive) / Gallon Cans of Vegetables & Fruits / Coffee*
Sack lunch items (*i.e. granola bars, fruit cups, pudding cups, snack crackers*)

SUPPLY ITEMS:

Arm & Hammer Super Washing Soda / 20 Mule Team Borax / Fels Naptha Laundry Soap

HYGIENE/HEALTH ITEMS:

Diapers size 5 & 6 / Men's Deodorant* / Foot Powder / Toothpaste (small & large)* / Shampoo* & Conditioner*
Shower Gel (Hotel size & larger)* / Razors (Men's and Women's) / Hair Brushes

CLOTHING:

Fall Clothing for Men, Women & Children (clothing and shoes can all be used) / Shoes – All Sizes

FURNITURE *(in good condition):*

Furniture – *i.e.* Couches, Recliners, Loveseats, Dressers, Tables, Mattresses, etc.

Large & Small Appliances – *i.e.* Washers, Dryers, Ranges, Freezers, Refrigerators & Microwaves