

# People to People Newsletter

Greater Kansas City Chapter

November 2012

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**Calendar Nov 2012**

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
11/14/12	Know Your World: Liberia	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
11/16/12	12-02 Holiday Dinner Dance, By invitation only; RSVP required	Frontier Conference Center , Fort Leavenworth	6:30 p.m.
11/30/12	12-02 Sponsor Recognition Ceremony, RSVP required	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	7:00 p.m.
12/07/12	13-01 Holiday Dinner Dance, By invitation only; RSVP required	Frontier Conference Center, Fort Leavenworth	6:30 p.m.
12/12/12	Know Your World: Afghanistan	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
12/13/12	12-02 Badge Ceremony	TBD	TBD
12/14/12	12-02 Graduation	TBD	TBD
01/23/13	Know Your World: Sri Lanka	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
01/26/13	Operation International, Children Workday	OIC Warehouse, North Kansas City, MO	12 - 2:00 p.m.

Note: 12-02 class graduates December, 2012; 13-01 class graduates June, 2013.

## President's Letter

Dear Members,

Greater Kansas City People to People has been very busy these last few months! In addition to our normal activities primarily associated with the international military officers at Fort Leavenworth, nine members traveled to Bogotá, Colombia; many of us were involved in another successful and fun afternoon at the Deanna Rose Farmstead with absolutely perfect weather; and about 50 members and friends heard Robert Pavlovic's moving story of being a refugee in the Balkans in the 1990s. You will read about each of these later in the newsletter, but I want to emphasize that I have immensely enjoyed all three experiences and that I am very appreciative of those involved in the planning and implementation of our chapter's activities.

We have a new board member, Randy Pace, who has joined us after John McCreadie needed to retire from his board duty. Be sure to read about Randy later in this newsletter. I want to thank John and Hilda McCreadie for their long-time involvement in our chapter and wish them all the best. I also want to thank Randy Pace for volunteering to serve on the board and for jumping right in to help in many ways.

We are gearing up for the next class of international officers (13-02) who will arrive in early January. As veteran sponsors and new ones begin this journey, we encourage you to make contact with your officer as soon as you get their e-mail address and to meet them at the airport if at all possible. The sooner you make a connection with your officer and his/her family, the better the relationship usually will be.

A few weeks after the officers arrive, they are presented with a short survey by the fort. They are asked the same four questions about each of their sponsors: Kansas City, Leavenworth/Lansing, and Fort Leavenworth. The questions pertaining to their Kansas City sponsors are:

How many times have you met with your Kansas City Sponsor? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your Kansas City Sponsor contact you regularly? Yes/No

I would rate my Kansas City Sponsor as: (Circle one)

Excellent      Good                  Fair                  Poor

If you rated your Kansas City Sponsor as poor, do you want IMSD (International Military Student Division) to investigate their lack of sponsorship? Yes/No

If at any time, you need help with a sponsoring situation or if you are unable to continue as a sponsor, please contact me at prez@gkcptp.org or Sharon Valasek at

svalasek@kc.rr.com. We want you and your officer to have our support in order to have the best year possible.

Warm regards,  
Karen Haber

### **My hour with Robert Pavlovic**

By Randy Pace

I didn't know what to expect when I attended Robert Pavlovic's talk on October 11, 2012, about his family's incredible journey through the Balkans as refugees. The presentation was a part of the GKCPTP "Circle of Knowledge" series. Sure, initially I thought I'd just sit through a little talk, smile and go home. However, what I heard, what I saw, and what I got, from this really interesting guy re-focused my thought processes!

In my own mind, I'm a realist. I've been through lots of things in my life... I carried a gun for someone, or for some jurisdiction, for more than 43 years. I've worked over a hundred fatal vehicle accidents; I've seen small children's bodies overcome by smoke and crispy because of a fire in their home. I've worked homicides, burglaries, aggravated assaults and arsons nearly all over the world. But, what I heard last Thursday night nearly stopped me cold in my comfortable seat. And for the rest of the evening, I was on the edge of that seat and INVOLVED with Robert's presentation.

Very few of us have experienced the unbelievable scenario of going from a homeland with property that's been in the family for 150 years to the status of refugee in less than 10 minutes.

I was spellbound through his entire presentation. With his great smile and confidence, Robert carefully and expertly took me with him as he went from family son to refugee, to fleeing for his life, dodging checkpoints, and nearly starving after not eating for 10 days.

It seemed the audience was nearly in shock as Robert described his rough indoctrination as a "non-person." After listening to his words, I realized he became a human being that had no name, no identification, no address, no phone number and nowhere to go. Police and security people have no use for a refugee. With no identification, Robert, at age 16, was on the run of his life and for his life.

The remaining story of his incredible journey left me in awe of his perseverance, stamina and quickly-learned survival techniques. With assumed identities, language barriers to overcome, he made it through border checkpoints, met up with his family, made it to Germany and eventually to the United States of America.

Robert has been a Kansas City, Missouri police officer for more than six years. He is about to be a newly commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army Reserve, and is married to Irina Kobzeva-Pavlovic, a vivacious lady. It would seem all is well...finally...with Robert's life. It is! He told me he wakes up every morning with a huge smile on his face, because he is in the United States of America. For him, truly, the United States is the very best place in the world to be.

### **Meet New Board Member Clyde W. "Randy" Pace, III**

Randy, as he prefers friends to call him, and his wife, Marquita, have been members of GKCPTP and sponsors of International Military Students (IMS) for more than 8 years and have sponsored 17 officers during that time. Randy is retired from the Kansas City Missouri Police Department as an Accident Reconstructionist. He holds a BS in Criminal Justice Administration from University of Central Missouri with hours toward a Master's in Safety. He is also retired with nearly 37 years from the United States Army Reserve as a Chief Warrant Officer-4, Operations Officer and Special Agent with the US Army's Criminal Investigation Command. In retirement, Randy is a tour director, and he and Marquita escort tour groups world-wide, traveling by air, cruise ship and motor coach. He is involved in his church, where he is chair of the administration commission, sings in the choir and has served as president of the church council.

Randy has been excited to be involved with the IMS since sponsoring their first officer, and feels as though he is "giving back" what he experienced from a wonderful German family nearly 50 years ago when he was a young soldier overseas. Randy is humbled with this opportunity to serve on the GKCPTP Board, as he sees this as another level of giving back. He and Marquita are members of BRAT, a rescue organization for the Basenji breed of dogs, and have recently welcomed 7-year old "Benny" into their family. Both he and Marquita are involved with the annual Kansas City Air Show, where he volunteers as the Security Coordinator and she volunteers as the Director of Administration. They have lived "north of the river" for more than 30 years. Randy enjoys sailing, boating and photography.

### **International Military Students: January Class Signup**

GKCPTP is looking forward to the arrival of the 2013-2 class of International Military Students (IMS). You should have received an email notice of the list of countries that are participating. Current or recent sponsors need only fill out the country selection form and indicate your 6 choices (one in each category). New sponsors will have an additional form to complete. You should have replied to Pamela Felton by October 28, but if you have not, please do so as soon as possible. If

you have questions or require additional information, go to our website at [www.gkcptp.org](http://www.gkcptp.org) or contact Pamela by email at [pjf@feltonassoc.com](mailto:pjf@feltonassoc.com) or 913-226-5607 Cell, 913-322-6379 Home.

### **Sponsor Briefing: December 5, 2012**

A sponsor briefing designed to answer questions regarding the sponsorship program is being scheduled for Wednesday, December 5, 2012, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Though this briefing is particularly useful to new sponsors, all sponsors are welcome and encouraged to attend. Light refreshments will be served. The meeting will be held at the following location:

Kauffman Foundation Center  
4801 Rockhill Road  
Kansas City, MO

It is a requirement that all sponsors be GKCPTP members in good standing, which includes having paid your dues. You may pay your dues at the sponsor briefing.

### **GKCPTP Delegations Says "Howdy, Partner" in South America**

By Gene (Jake) Jacobs

On September 1, 2012, nine members of Greater Kansas City People to People traveled to Colombia to lend a personal touch to the establishment of a PTPI Partner Chapter relationship with PTPI Bogotá.

President Karen Haber and her husband, Chuck, headed the local group that included Gene and Linda Jacobs, Dak and Pat Burnett, Paul and Maggi Choplin, and Jim Malouff.

Arriving a few minutes early after nearly missing their connecting flight in Atlanta, group members were warmly welcomed by members of Colombia's military and their families with noise-makers, signs and lots (and lots) of confetti. Expedited accomplishment of immigration procedures was spearheaded by the army, bags were collected, and the group quickly was on a special minivan provided by the Colombian Army and on its way to the Club Militar to check into its new home for the coming days.

Claudia Farfán, wife of BG Rubén Alzate, was the prime planner and facilitator for most of the accommodations and activities that awaited the Kansas City crew. She also was the primary liaison with the Bogotá chapter in arranging the meetings between the two PTPI groups.

Members of the Colombian Army who had attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth were eager to show their former sponsors and the other GKCPTP members everything that is good about their home and wasted no time by hosting a barbeque atop a hill on the military base the first full day in

country. BG Andrés Bernal along with his wife, Martha, and their three sons; COL Juan Correa, his wife, Paola, and their son, and COL Gonzalo Herrera and his wife, Claudia along with their son and daughter were key participants along with BG Alzate and Claudia.

Kansas City chapter members met with their Bogotá counterparts on Monday, where mementos were exchanged including a plaque commemorating the meeting presented to Bogotá chapter president Claudia Chona by Karen Haber. There were live entertainment, home-cooked Colombian treats, and libation that cleared the sinuses.

President Chona reported that her chapter listed 35 members, which was a larger number than anticipated. A large portion of that total was on hand for the initial meeting, and again the next day, when the GKCPTP group joined the Bogotá members in a poor section of the city to distribute nourishment to a large number of homeless people and then at a local nursing home for aging indigents supported by the chapter.

The warmth of the newly established relationship between the PTPI members from two separate continents became rather quickly apparent. The number of Bogotá members who originally had signed up to attend the concert later in the week with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá, under the baton of Andrés Franco, former conductor of The Philharmonia of Greater Kansas City, more than tripled after the initial meeting.

Sumptuous dinners and great tours of local attractions were on the agenda. Then there was an unbelievable trip to a picturesque village called Villa de Leyva, where celebratory dancing in the streets to the Latin American rhythms amplified by power-draining speakers resulted in the death of the party bus battery. Finger snapping, laughter, and libation did not abate at all while a replacement vehicle was summoned to transport all those who “smile in the same language” on to a midnight repast.

In addition to getting to know members of the Partner Chapter, a tour of the President’s Palace, Mass at the Military Academy, and a “quiet dinner” with 2,500 salsa-dancing Colombians at a place called Andres’ Carne de Res ranked high on the lists of favorites during conversations as the week progressed. “I just couldn’t stop smiling,” confessed Pat Burnett when reporting her favorite activity.

To say that those who signed on for the excursion had a good time would be the largest understatement in the chapter’s history. All members were seasoned travelers; and comments like, “The best trip EVER!” and “How could we ever top this?” became litany among those who shared in the experience.

The group already has reunited once since its return to host Claudia Farfán, who currently is visiting her daughter, María Paula, a student at Park University. Such was the camaraderie that future reunions are in the discussion stages. Could it be

that these sorts of travel opportunities for chapter members might find a place in future chapter planning?

### **Membership Report Third Quarter**

by Betty Olberding

#### **New Members Are:**

Bill and Barbara Nelson  
Jeremiah Morgan  
Frank & Catherine Moussa  
Frank & Ginny Garver  
Pex Kotz & family  
Lisa Liem  
Doug and Laura Lange  
Judy Vogelsang

#### **Recruited By:**

IMSD  
IMSD  
Karen Haber and Sharon Valasek  
Jan Pishny  
Dorinda Nicholson  
Siew Lau  
Nelson Markel  
Sharon Valasek

Welcome to our organization! It's truly wonderful to have these new members join through referrals from current members. To reach our membership goal by year's end, we need to add an additional 8 new members! Can you recommend a friend? It was exciting to see some of our new sponsors at the Deanna Rose Homestead on Sunday, September 23. There are several "Know Your World" presentations coming up, which are excellent opportunities to invite your friends who might want to have a glimpse of sponsorship.

For additional information please contact me at: [betty\\_olberding@yahoo.com](mailto:betty_olberding@yahoo.com) , or telephone: 913-772-8684.

### **Flags, flag stands and t-shirts are available on our website!**

As soon as you find out what country you're sponsoring in the January or June class of international officers, jump onto the GKCPTP website, [www.gkcptp.org](http://www.gkcptp.org), to order your new country's flag. What a welcome sight you'll be waving the national flag of that officer (alongside our own flag, of course). You can't beat the price (\$3.75 per flag) or the quick delivery!

We have a large selection of flags and flag stands available. We also have gray t-shirts with our chapter's name and logo and the saying "Everybody smiles in the same language." Order yours today!