

**Tools for Peace seminar
Leavenworth Feb. 15
Kelsey Holste, scribe**

The Tools of Peace session convened with a BBQ lunch provided by Mark Jirak at the Holiday Inn Express. Following the meal, we carpoled to the Leavenworth Detention Center. The Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) owns and operates this facility among 59 other facilities across the United States. The center in Leavenworth has been operated by CCA since 1992. Leavenworth Detention facility houses both male and female inmates for the U.S. Marshalls.

Entering the facility we walked through metal detectors and were stamped with an ink invisible to the eye. We were greeted by various employees of the Center in the visitation room. The employees discussed their roles in helping to provide safe environments for the inmates. These roles varied from extensive record keeping to being on call to transport an inmate at a moment's notice. Most of the employees have spent their entire careers in the industry and have a passion for their line of work.

After the visitation we room, we were escorted to an activity room. In the room waiting for us, were seven inmates. Each of the inmates introduced themselves and briefly shared about what charges they were currently facing. This was not the first time facing criminal charges for most of them and most of them admitted that they had been in the wrong. One of the questions posed to the panel was if they could pinpoint a pivotal moment where their lives may have started down a bad path. One comment stood out more than most and that inmate who appeared to be in his mid to late 30's said that for him it started as a young boy when he was raised in a single parent home where he did not have a strong male role model in his life. The panel had to cut off because they were also on the kitchen cook crew and needed to report to their work and begin preparing the evening meal. We were all told to sit tight while the doors were locked and the inmates left the room and escorted down the hall to the kitchen.

Once the inmates had been successfully transferred to the kitchen, we were allowed to exit the room and begin our tour. We first visited the medical department. The Detention Center houses a scaled down medical facility where most medical treatments can be performed. There are private cells there to keep an inmate who may need continued medical attention. Continuing down the hall we were headed to an empty unit where we could walk into cells and sit on the cold hard beds. We also were moved into a unit that was filled with female inmates. At the time the inmates were in lockdown for their routine headcount. When we entered into the female unit eyes began to appear in the small window doors. While it was clear that our presence was a disruption to their normal routine, some inmates were merely curious to see the commotion others continued to gaze at us until we left the unit.



Retired lieutenant colonel Timothy Thomas was our guest speaker for the evening session. He currently works for the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at Fort Leavenworth. The FMSO office conducts extensive research and publishing in areas of informational wars, psychological operations and low intensity conflicts. Mr. Thomas's specialty is Russian studies. The evening's main topic was Cyber Conflict and Control. He provided us with insight on how China and Russia control the internet and information within their countries. Mr. Thomas believes that China is positioning them to appear weak while strategically aligning themselves for other motives. Russia is also utilizing resources such as the Cyber Summit in Garmisch Germany to obtain alliances with hopes to gain more cyber control. The information provided was very interesting and was a great closing segment to our day.

KARL Class XI

"Tools for Peace" – Leavenworth, KS

Scribe's Report for Feb. 16, 2012

Aaron W. Harries

The class spent the morning on a visit to the Lansing Correctional Facility. Prison staff took us on a guided tour on the outside of the maximum security section and through the medium security facility. The entire facility is basically at capacity right now with close to 1,500 prisoners.

The prison currently lacks funding for job/skills training programs. These are important to give released prisoners a new start in the outside world. It is interesting to note that the facility has not had a visit from Kansas legislators since last summer.

The medium security facility has an interesting program where dogs rescued from shelters are paired up and live with the prisoners.

We were able to speak with a couple of the medium-security prisoners. The most intriguing story came from a 37-year-old man who was a veteran of the first Iraq war. He came home from the war and got into trouble with drugs and ended up with attempted murder charges in a botched drug sale. He believes that the military did not provide enough reintegration into society for the troops when they returned home from the war. Intervention with children in high-risk environments seemed to be a common theme for preventing people from getting into prison. We heard that perspective from more than one prisoner.

The afternoon was a polar opposite as we spent several hours at Fort. Leavenworth. We were honored when five officers from different services visited with us about leadership development. It was certainly an impressive panel of men and women that represent the military very well. They are an apolitical group that knows their mission. Ironically, attending classes at Fort Leavenworth amounts to a “break” for most of these individuals as outside of classroom time, they have much more time to spend with their families than during active duty.



The class then took a bus tour of the Fort and stopped at the Buffalo Soldiers monument. From a personal perspective, Fort Leavenworth is rich in the “oldest” history of Kansas. It seems to be a hidden gem that more Kansans need to visit. I plan on returning soon.



We closed the day with dinner with KARL alumni at the historical Riverfront Community Center. Our guest speaker was Major Kirsten Garrett, a decorated helicopter pilot. She gave us her perspective on the situation in Iraq. Major Garrett is a very impressive person.

Friday, February 17, 2012 Scribe: Kris Graves

Youth Intervention – Dr. Steven Davies

The morning began back at the Riverfront Convention Center, with a presentation on Youth Intervention by Dr. Steven Davies.

Dr. Davies is currently the Superintendent for USD 430, Horton, but also a former warden at Lansing State Prison and a past Executive Director for the Koch Crime Commission. With a lifetime of career experience centering on both Education and Corrections, Dr. Davies was able to share a great deal of insight about the intersection of juveniles *and* delinquents. His experience has led him to believe that well-timed, well-intentioned intervention can prevent youth from incarceration later in life (or unfortunately, in some circumstances, sooner).

“These kids all crave *something*,” Dr. Davies explained: “Love.” The sense of belonging that Dr. Davies described tied in very well with what so many of the inmates that we spoke with in previous days at both the Lansing and Leavenworth facilities pointed to as lacking in their own lives – family and/or community support. Often, Dr. Davies lamented, kids get this emotional and physical support — somebody to help them, care for them, stick up for them, and give them a little money – from gangs in the absence of a supportive home, family, or school.



To combat this, Dr. Davies has established a number of programs and activities for youth in Horton, aimed at providing them with positive experiences and a sense of community, by identifying deficits and addressing them in a subtle, non-invasive manner. Through conversations with gang members and incarcerated youth, Dr. Davies outlined a number of potential alienating factors for schoolkids – bugs; lice; dental problems; needing glasses; bad hair; being dirty; getting sick; no access to a doctor; ill-fitting, dirty, or worn hand-me-down clothes, coats, and shoes; broken hearts; no heat or air conditioning at home; burdensome car maintenance for their family, and many, many more. As a result, Dr. Davies explained, these kids “do not feel equal.” There is a lot of psychological damage that results from the

stigma associated with coming to school in the same clothes day after day, or needing – and being unable to afford – eyeglasses.

What kind of interventions help reduce juvenile/inmate problems? Dr. Davies mentioned many organizations each of our own communities may have, that can do a lot of good – including 4H, Boy and Girl Scouts, CASA, and others – but stressed that, in his experience, a loosely, organized net of community members is often more flexible and often able to work behind the scenes in a less intrusive or embarrassing (to the recipient) manner. He related community efforts he helped organize in Horton – such as a Coat Recyclery, mending and re-gifting old coats to those in need, something done by a group of “blue hairs,” without any funds or accolades; recycling old band instruments; a local farmer who buys a pair of gloves for every kid in school each year; a program to buy soap, shampoo, underwear, etc., for those who don’t have access; a program whereby kids who want to participate in pay-to-play sports, but cant afford it, can do chores for the school in lieu of monetary contributions; a local auto shop that provides low-cost tires, and no-cost oil changes for those in need, and many, many more community-driven efforts.

Kansas Open Meetings Law – Lisa Mendoza

Kansas Assistant Attorney General Lisa Mendoza, spoke to the group about the history and importance of Kansas’ Open Meetings Laws (KOMA), before delving more into the minutia of the regulations themselves. The public policy of Kansas is that meetings be open to the public because, as Ms. Mendoza cited, “a representative government is dependent upon an informed electorate...”

First adopted in 1868, the law read that County Commissioners “shall sit with open doors, and all persons conducting in an orderly manner may attend their meetings.” KOMA provides the rules that allow members of the public to observe the nearly 4,000 units of government in Kansas making decisions – which, as Ms. Mendoza detailed, includes all legislative and administrative bodies, agencies of the state, political and taxing subdivisions and subordinate groups that receive or expend public funds.



Ms. Mendoza noted that the law was careful to define meetings in an intentionally vague manner, so as to include all manner of communication – a gathering, through any medium, for interactive communication; by a majority of the members of any subject group or agency; for the purpose of discussing relevant business. This, of course, includes face-to-face, telephone, or email communication. In fact, email, along with text- and instant messaging, falls under the definition of “serial communication,” a category of meetings that is constantly being misunderstood by relevant groups, and is thus a point of emphasis for the Attorney General’s office. When in doubt, self-reporting is always a good idea, Ms. Mendoza suggested, likening it to the difference between tripping over a dog, and kicking one.

Ms. Mendoza also covered several other aspects of the KOMA law, including Notice (an advance announcement of the time, date, and location of the meeting); Minutes (not required, except in particular cases involving the motions for executive sessions); Executive Sessions (which involve extensive discussion of both procedures and justifiable subject matter – basically, personnel matters, attorney consultation, and financial data related to trade secrets); and Enforcement (a civil, rather than criminal, statute which may result in fines and/or ouster from office).