

Kairos E-News #17 - Current News for Kairos Volunteers - 2/1/13

Here's a first for us. This month's E-News will primarily focus on information for Weekend Leaders. (This issue is geared primarily toward Inside in several topics, but we plan on providing information for KO and KI leaders in the future. Yes, this is a request for your input KO and KI family members.) If you aren't a current or future Weekend Leader, please don't ignore this one. It may give you some information that you can pass on to Weekend Leaders in your community. It may have been a while since they have gone to AKT and hopefully you will find this information useful. Special Thanks to those who contributed to this edition - **Evelyn Lemly, Ed Keefer, Jo Chapman, Sukey Di Cesare, Dan Preston, John Kennell, Mary Sogan, David Ross, and Chuck Costolo.**

Weekend Leaders - A Key Role in Kairos Ministry - Evelyn Lemly - The Weekend Leader is a critical role in the success of each Kairos Weekend. This leader is responsible for all aspects of the weekend, from inviting the volunteers, prepping the teams for months, to ensuring all the activities are taking place accurately and on time, to running the actual Weekend. It is a huge responsibility and extremely important to Kairos.

This is why we focus on training for the leaders and provide the tools to implement the weekends from start to finish. It not only takes time and effort, but a great deal of PRAYER is needed.

From talking to Weekend Leaders, it not only takes great effort but more importantly it is very rewarding. As the scripture says: 'In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Acts 20:34-36

We truly know the Weekend Leaders along with the team they assemble to implement the Kairos programs are key aspects of the success for Kairos. Thank you Weekend Leaders of the past, present, and the future!

You are the Weekend Leader. Sometimes, it may seem that the weight of the world is on your shoulders. From the physical formation of the team, the spiritual formation of the team, the content for all of the meetings, mailings, team training, security training, special requirements from the warden, a long list of "to do lists". To top it all off, it strikes you that you are a few inside team members short. What should you do? You go to the Kairos manual where the instruction is – "Recruit harder". Gee, thanks for that advice..... First – DO NOT DESPAIR. You are not alone. One of the foundations of Kairos is prayer. You have taken the leap of faith to lead a team of warriors to do God's work in the prison. HE will never let you down. PRAY without ceasing. As the team leader, the ultimate responsibility for recruiting does NOT rest solely on your shoulders. Do not be hesitant to ask for help. Challenge your Advisory Council. Go to your team for help. The sense of community among team members can be greatly enhanced when all are involved. Refer to previous team rosters for past veteran volunteers who might be available. As a last resort, have the courage to reduce the number of participant tables. For those who feel it absolutely necessary to minister to 42, regardless of team size, this can be a painful decision. But as the team leader, it is your decision to make. It is likely that, in that event, it is a decision that will be made only once. Similar experiences indicate that recruitment activity will rebound significantly for subsequent weekends. John 14:1, Jesus tells us "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me." God has your back. One final note: **Shepherds don't create sheep. Sheep create sheep.**

What If You Are the Observing Leader - When do you start recruiting for the weekend YOU will be leading? It is probably not good protocol to start fishing for team members in the same pond as the current Weekend Leader at the same time. Assuming your Weekend Leader has

completed the team selection process, what is stopping you from starting your own Team Recruiting "fishing expedition"? Nothing! What if you could fish in a brand new pond, with brand new, recruitable volunteers. Know where your 4th Day Communities are located. Know when they are completing their weekends. Get in touch with the leadership of that community and start working on getting those brand new, excited, committed volunteers exposed to Kairos. Use the EZRA Team Recruiting Database. You don't have EZRA yet, no problem. Ask the Weekend Leader to print a copy for you and send it to you. It will give you a head start. This data is not a national secret and you'll get it anyway. Better sooner than later.

You're Leading a Weekend...Really? - One of your first steps should be to tell the world about it. You wouldn't stick a mailbox out in the middle of the woods and expect to start receiving mail. You have to tell us. In some cases, your state or country may do that for you. Verify it. Look on the Kairos Kalendar. If your confirmed Weekend date is not there, then use the link on the Kalendar page to report it. <http://www.mykairos.org/kalendar.html>

AKT and EZRA - What are these and how are these connected? First you have to have attended an Advanced Kairos Training (AKT) leadership training event BEFORE you order EZRA. What's EZRA? EZRA is the software package that helps you organize and prepare for your weekend and is available for both Kairos Inside and Outside weekends. Bottom Line: Future Leaders need to get to AKT early so you can get your copy of EZRA early enough to use it to its fullest capacity. There are so many helpful sections of EZRA that will keep you organized and focus as you move toward being a KI or KO Leader. Try it, you'll like it!!

Prayer Vigil - We have been asked numerous times about creating a section of the website that would support Prayer Vigils. We are real big fans of doing something that someone else has already done...and done better. <http://www.3dayo1.org> is a great website for creating an online Prayer Vigil, signing up for agape and promoting your weekend. When you get your Prayer Vigil registered, prayer partners all over the world can sign up. You will get a notice that a time slot has been filled. They will get a reminder for their use in praying for your weekend at the appropriate time.

Agape - Many communities, states and international affiliates have active, established means of sending and receiving agape. But what if you don't and don't have time to establish those connections? We have created web space storage for Agape Coordinators to post their agape for Weekend teams to download. So where is all this agape? Simply go to the Ministry Map page for your State/Country (start here <http://www.mykairos.org/directory5.html>) and scroll to the bottom of your page. You'll find specific directed agape and general agape. You also see a link to send your agape to us so we can post it for others.

Agape Fundamentals - Agape is the offering of love to another person with no expectation of receiving anything in return. It is wanting the very best for another person and being willing to try to be God's servant to move that person toward that "best" without regard to personal cost. Agape is an essential tool for helping communicate God's love through the family of Christ. Prayer is the most important aspect of Agape. It is not an afterthought for those who can't do any other form of Agape. The power of agape is not the "items" we call agape. The power comes from the spiritual significance behind the gifts. Pray for the outside community of believers to become part of God's message of love in Kairos.

Team members help the larger Christian community participate by requesting agape. Team members are not bothering people by asking them for support. They are providing people a mechanism through which to respond to Christ's call to visit prisoner on Christ's behalf. It's a spiritual invitation! Be bold

in your loving offers to help fellow Christians respond to Christ's calling to "visit those in prison". Participating in Kairos agape opens the door for Christians to pass on Christ's love to inmates. Visible signs and expressions of agape come to us in the form of letters, posters, food and other acts of kindness and gentleness. Posters and placemats "put a face" on the body of Christ, i.e. the Christian Community. Residents see the reality of the love of the family of God.

No tracts or other printed material are to be used. No gifts of any kind are ever to be distributed in Kairos. Team members do not have to buy the affection of the residents and neither do we want the residents to think we are trying to buy their affection. Each team member needs to remember that the greatest gift God gives to the resident is God's love, manifest in the team member.

God uses Kairos' need for financial support as a way to empower the body of Christ. It is the team's responsibility to raise the funds need for this Kairos weekend. Asking for financial support for a Kairos weekend provides Christians an opportunity to respond to Christ's call to "visit prisoners" and provide the gospel message to prisoners. Rather than automatically write a personal check, look around at your friends, family, church treasury and church groups and consider inviting others to financially support this great mission for Christ.

Kairos Excellence Initiative - Ok, you have been selected as a leader for a Kairos weekend and you have only heard of the Excellence Initiative. You may ask "What is it and how does that affect me and the weekend I have been chosen to lead?" Good question. I'm glad you asked.

First the Excellence Initiative (EI) is **NOT** a report card. It is a tool to measure how the program is working so that improvements may be made. Nothing can be corrected if problems are not identified. And that my friends is what the EI is for, to help you identify previous areas of concern and avoid repeating them if possible.

Your Advisory Council (AC) Chair should have copies of EI Reports for the last two or three weekends. Set up a meeting with the AC Chair and your chosen Advising and Observing Leaders. Go over the past reports to see what the problems may have been and what can be done to correct them. For example, are people serving too many times consecutively? Is this a very recent anomaly or is it a longer term problem? The past EI reports will show you this. Your Advising Leader and AC Chair should assist in helping you correct these. Other problems that are a one time anomaly would be a good warning of something to be careful of and not repeat. Some may be totally out of your hands. For example, some institutions do not allow ANY photographs at all that include residents.

For Inside and Torch, the Advising Leader is normally the person conducting the EI during the weekend. For KO, the EI person is chosen by the Advisory Council. In either situation, the person conducting the EI will be contacted by either the State Committee Chair or their Designee approximately four (4) weeks after the weekend to conduct a final EI report. What is done with the information contained in this report is the subject of another article, but suffice it to say, one copy of this final report from the SCC Chair, or Designee, will be sent to your AC Chair.

Kairos Inside Program Manual Changes - Last year, there were a couple of changes approved to the Kairos Inside Program Manual. For approximately the last year, those changes have been distributed at AKT. Since about May 2012, those changes have been incorporated in the Program Manual. If you are in doubt whether or not you have the changes, go to the MyKairos.org Downloads page. Look under Kairos Inside, Program Manual Changes.

2013 Winter Conference Information! - 2013 Kairos Prison Ministry International Winter Conference, February 6-9, 2013 at the Orlando-International Airport - Holiday Inn, Orlando, FL

The tentative schedule is available on the website. Click on the "2013 Winter Conference Info" link or go to http://www.mykairos.org/conference_registration.html

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The IC Communications Improvement Ad-hoc Committee