

## **UTA Retirees Club**

### **Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2016

Next meeting: April 12, 2016; 10am; Room 133 MAC

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#### **I. Announcements**

President Rita Thompson announced that all the current officers have agreed to run for their respective offices again with Harley Courtney replacing Bob Wegner who passed away, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>. Vote will be taken in April and officers installed in May. Rita stated there are some changes that need to be made to the by-laws. Bobby Edmala from UTA OIT will discuss cyber security for the April 12<sup>th</sup> program.

#### **II. Program**

Keith Owens from Homeland Security Investigations and David Stephens of the Arlington Police Department were on hand to explain the issues of human trafficking. Both men are veterans of police work and various task forces dealing with human trafficking. Human trafficking is the exploitation of a human being through force, fraud or coercion. It is the recruitment, harboring, transporting or procurement of a person for labor or services for the sole purpose of involuntary servitude or forced commercial sex acts. Force trafficking is a crime against a border and involves smuggling, crossing borders, using transportation and voluntary participation. Coercion trafficking is a crime against a person and involves exploitation, no border crossing and is involuntary. The target of most coercion trafficking are girls ages 12 to 17. Once the victims are identified, the case rests on their willingness to testify. Penalties can be 20 years to life for forced trafficking and 10-15 years for sex trafficking. Sex workers can usually be found in brothels, adult bookstores, massage parlors, bars/strip clubs, modeling studios, truck stops and even on-line. A web site such as backpage.com displays ads and links to sex workers. Forced trafficking labors can be found in sweat shops, construction sites, domestic situations, magazine sales, begging, and labor camps. The police departments need more man power to combat trafficking crimes. In the North Texas area the Homeland Security Investigations has only ten agents and are forced to target four counties (Tarrant, Dallas, Denton, Colin) instead of the 54 counties. There is no official organization to help identified sex workers and they are often lured back into the life. HOPE (Helping Others Procure Empowerment) provides back packs with helpful contents and many identified sex workers become advocates for others. Parents are urged to closely monitor the use of the internet for teens. They often become targets through web sites. The Governor has mandated that each police officer have a minimum of four hours of training in human trafficking.

#### **III. Questions**

Many people asked questions. Keith Owens offered to return for a follow up program and will send us a link to his documentary.

Submitted by Rosanne Minyard, secretary