

Slavery alive and well in N.C.

Officials target human trafficking

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The bold white letters on the black t-shirt read "Slavery still exists." The back of the shirt completed the provocative sentence with the words "...in North Carolina."

These shirts were a common sight at an all-day program last Friday at Peace Haven Baptist Church that focused on human trafficking.

More than 60 people were in attendance, including law enforcement officials, pastors and social workers. They were trained on how to recognize the signs of modern-day slavery and on ways to combat it. The training was sponsored by The Salvation Army and Triad Ladder of Hope, a local organization that helps victims of trafficking, who are often immigrants and exploited in the commercial sex industry and for labor purposes.

The traffickers use many methods to compel men, women and children into servitude, including threats of bodily harm.

"The traffickers use various types of force. They use fraud. They use all types of coercion in order to compel these people into these situations of servitude," said Lisa Thompson, one of the presenters who took part in the Winston-Salem session and others in High Point and Greensboro last week.

As the Salvation Army's National Liaison for the Abolition of Sex Trafficking, Thompson often makes such presentations. The Salvation Army's history of combating human trafficking through advocacy, education and victim assistance dates back to



Photos by Todd Luck

This provocative t-shirt sends a strong message.

the 1880s.

Thompson said some of the trafficking red flags include employees who live with their co-workers or "employer" and/or who show an inability to leave their job.

Danielle Mitchell, executive director of Triad Ladder, also made a presentation. Mitchell used to be a photographer. She worked on a documentary exposing sex tourism in Thailand, where men come from all over the world to pay for sex with children. The experience changed her life.

"I came back and I was just like, 'How in the world can I go about my daily life knowing this is happening in the world?'"

According to the statistics, there are approximately 30 million slaves worldwide, and 80 percent of them are exploited for sex. However, Mitchell discovered she didn't have to

go far to help victims of trafficking. She said the majority of the men who engaged in "sex tourism" in Thailand had already solicited a child in the United States.

Mitchell showed slide after slide of cases in North Carolina of trafficking tied to brothels and farm labor. Nearly a quarter of the country's trafficking happens in the Southeast, and 61 percent of the victims are from Latin America.

Triad Ladder tries to bring awareness of the problem through training sessions, presentations and other events. The organization also uses reports from people in the community to identify trafficking and works closely with local law enforcement and the FBI to liberate victims. The organization provides assistance to victims, including food, shelter and legal aid. Currently, Triad Ladder is trying to raise money to open a shelter for trafficking victims.

Special Agent John Price of the FBI's Charlotte Division

investigates Civil Rights violations, including human trafficking. He said getting tips from organizations like Triad Ladder is vital because often trafficking victims won't come forward themselves.

"They're not going to self identify themselves, they're not going to come down to the police station and knock on the door and say 'I'm a victim of trafficking,'" said Price.

He said community organizations and churches are also key to helping victims get back on their feet. Victims often have nothing of their own, so providing basic needs like food, shelter and medicine is important and often requires the help of several agencies and organizations.

"One of the most important things about these cases is building your resource list," said Price.

For more information about Triad Ladder of Hope visit www.triadladderofhope.org



Thompson

Films

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dents.

Also to be screened:

• Friday, Aug. 14: Double feature Richard Lester's "A Hard Day's Night" (starring the Beatles); and Philip Kaufman's "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" (starring Donald Sutherland, Brooke Adams, Jeff Goldblum, and Leonard Nimoy).

• Friday, Aug. 21: Robert Wise's "The Sound of Music," starring Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer and Eleanor Parker.

• Friday, Aug. 28: Baz Luhrmann's "Moulin Rouge!," starring Nicole Kidman, Ewan McGregor, John Leguizamo and Jim Broadbent.

• Friday, Sept. 4: Randall Kleiser's "Grease," starring John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John and Stockard Channing.

Happy

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here or there.

"A lot of times we get so wrapped up in thinking about the future and the past that we are blind to the goodness we are steeped in already, whether it's the beauty outside the win-

dow or the kind things that people are doing for you," she said. "The better approach is to be open and flexible, to be appreciative of whatever good you do find in your daily circumstances, rather than focusing on bigger questions, such as 'Will I be happy if I move to California?' or 'Will I be happy if I get married?'"

Grant

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balance between hormones that raise blood pressure and those that lower it.

Specifically, researchers at the School of Medicine plan to use the money to continue studying the mechanisms by which the renin angiotensin system, which regulates blood pressure, contributes to hypertension, cardiac hypertrophy (a thickening of the heart muscle that results in a decrease in size of the chamber of the heart), and other conditions.

In addition, new studies to

investigate the regulation of cardiac function and hypertension are underway.

Over the course of its history, the Program Project Grant has made major contributions to hypertension research. It first began in 1974 under the leadership of Dr. Irvine H. Page at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Carlos M. Ferrario, a professor of surgical sciences and physiology/pharmacology, assumed leadership of the program in 1982 and, as principal investigator, has continued to successfully lead the research efforts.

Boards

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Brooks, president and CEO of The Executive Leadership Council. "Businesses understand the economic benefits of diversity. They talk about it, but not all of them have a plan for achieving it. We expect this report to spur meaningful progress in this important area of management and governance."

Even as many Fortune 500 organizations understand the importance of having diverse boards, gains are sometimes difficult to maintain, the Council says. Since the original report in 2004, the mix of Fortune 500 companies has changed, with some companies moving off the list and other, previously smaller organizations moving onto it.



Brooks

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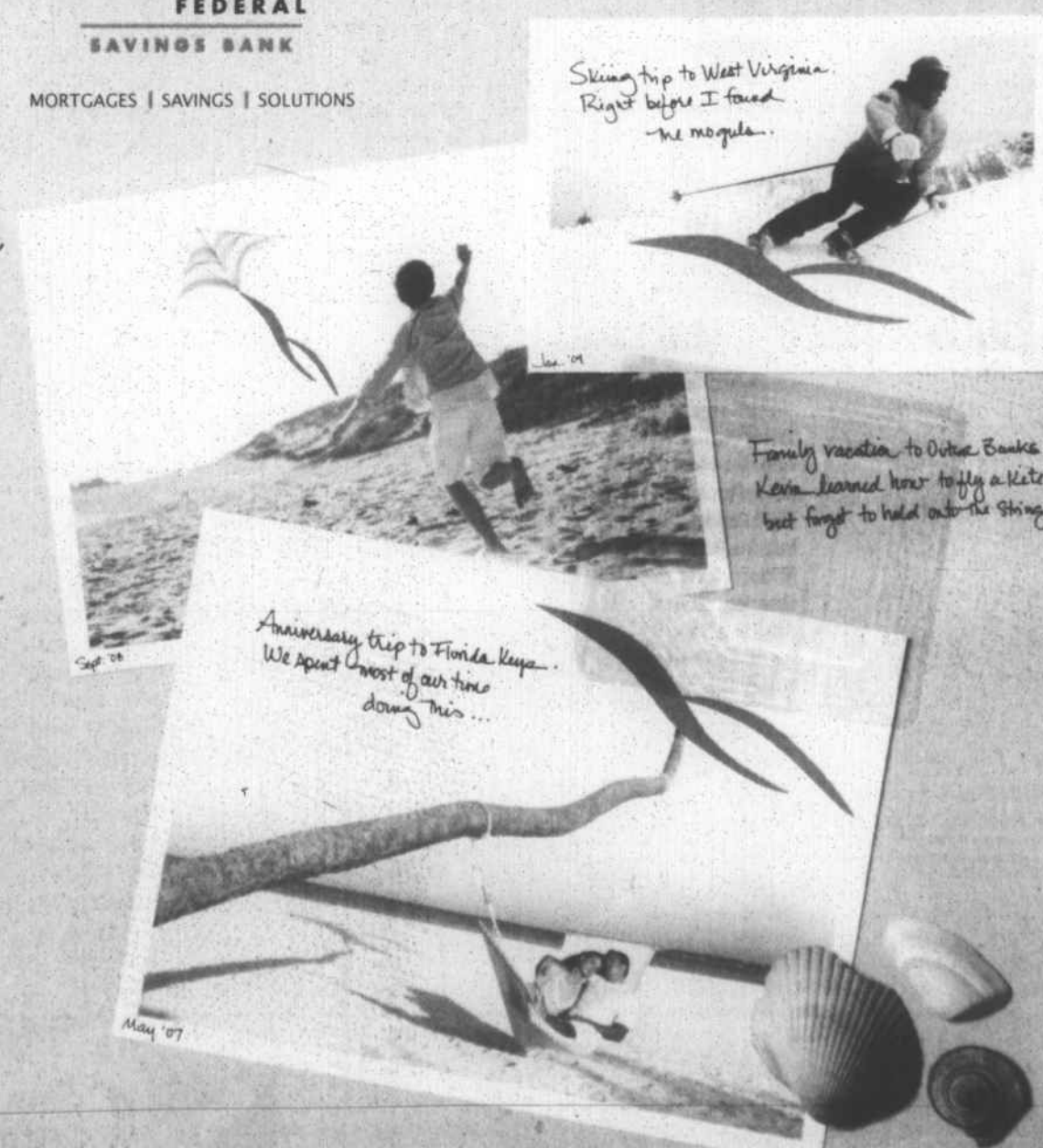
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