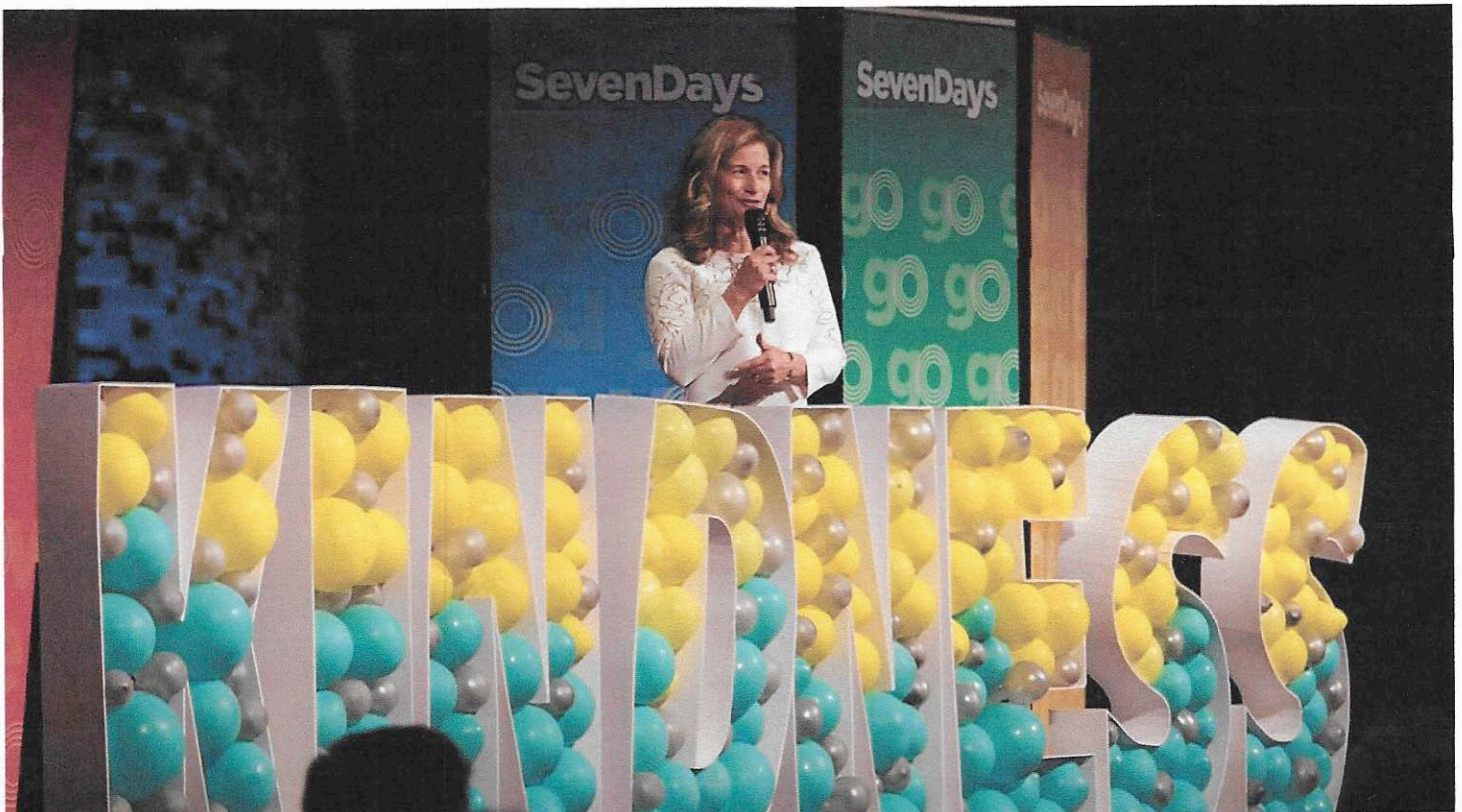




JOHNSON COUNTY

# SevenDays leaders mark 10th anniversary of tragic shooting with two ‘Kindness’ events

BY BETH LIPOFF *SPECIAL TO THE STAR*  
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Mindy Corporon speaks to the crowd at the SevenDays kindness breakfast at Church of the Resurrection April 5. BETH LIPOFF *File photo*

Ten years after a [white supremacist murdered three people](#) outside the Jewish Community Center in Overland Park, a nonprofit that aims to shine light in the face of darkness hopes to expand the message of kindness and connection in the community. SevenDays will commemorate the sad anniversary with its first [Community Kindness Festival](#) April 14.

And as the community has come to expect, the annual [SevenDays Kindness Breakfast](#) will be held from 7:30-9:30 a.m. April 10 at the Church of the Resurrection, 13720 Roe Ave., Leawood. Highlights of that event will include the Ripple of Kindness Award, scholarship and art competition awards, and a speech by Mindy Corporon, who started the organization after her father and son were killed in the 2014 tragedy.

To carry the message SevenDays represents, the Kindness Festival will feature activity tables based on each of its themes. One area will have representatives from Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism who will answer basic questions about the faiths.

Another will have art supplies for people to make images of what kindness means to them. A cake walk will give winners two items: one to keep and one to share with someone else.

Those successful at the ring toss game will get a card that offers an idea for an act of kindness.

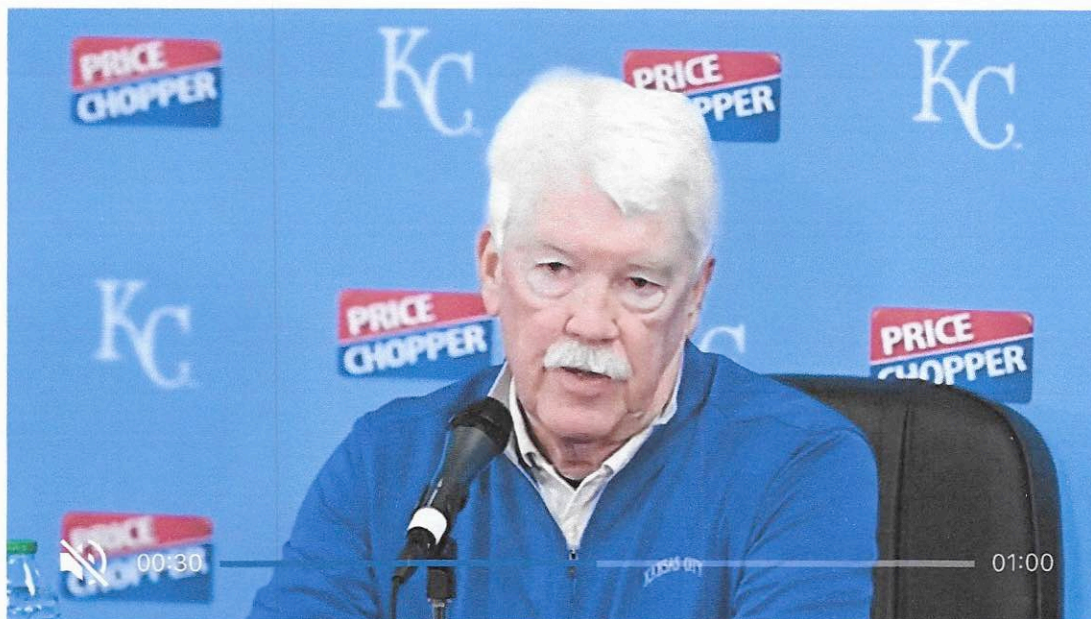
And for anyone feeling introspective, another activity will focus on writing. Activities here include composing an appreciation letter to someone, sharing something good that has happened or writing yourself a postcard with ideas for three acts of kindness you intend to do over the next few months.

For the latter, SevenDays will hold onto the cards and mail them back to you later in

the year.

The group's youth leadership team designed all the activities.

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Jill Andersen, director of youth engagement, hopes the event gives a broader

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their own lives and what understanding can look like, and that it creates more kindness and understanding in our community so that tragedies that we hear about all over the country — even in Kansas City just a few weeks ago — quit happening,” she said.

Visitors to the festival will enjoy food trucks and a performance by the Blue Valley North drum line.



Kansas City native Kate Cosentino, who won a SevenDays song competition in 2015 and competed on “The Voice” last year, will also perform. Cosentino’s cousin, Terri LaManno, was one of the 2014 victims.

Andersen said she hopes the festival will become an annual event, but she and other organizers are waiting to see how this one goes before making future plans.

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Also part of the SevenDays events are a button art competition, scholarships for high school seniors who have done kindness projects and an adult Ripple of Kindness Award.







Lisa Ginter, CEO of CommunityAmerica Credit Union, receives the Ripple of Kindness award last year from Trent Green at the SevenDays kindness breakfast at Church of the Resurrection. This year's recipient will receive the award at an April 10 breakfast. Beth Lipoff *File photo*

In the past, five \$1,000 scholarships have been offered. This year, 10 people will receive them. The adult award also has 10 nominees from around the community who will all get some recognition at the group's annual breakfast.

SevenDays leaders encourage schools, organizations and business to hold their own kindness events to complement the official SevenDays events. They provide educational material to support that mission.

"It is really hard to measure the impact of kindness other than personal stories," Andersen said.

However, the number of people across the country downloading and ordering the educational material has increased over the years as SevenDays has expanded from just buttons and stickers to bookmarks, posters and lessons plans.

"We know we're creating what we call 'kindness influencers' in our kindness youth leadership team members. Our goal is for them to truly become leaders in kindness, and teaching them how to spread kindness within their own communities makes



exactly what we teach, which is ripples of kindness,” Andersen said.

*The Community Kindness Festival will be held from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. April 14 at the Jewish Community Center, 5801 W. 115th St., in Overland Park. Entrance is free, but SevenDays organizers ask you to register on a Give [SevenDays Facebook page](#) so they have an idea of how many people to expect.*

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