



INSIGHT

A Newsletter for the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

Spring/Summer 2013, Volume 2, Issue 1

From the Chair – Marlene Jehs

I would first like to say THANK YOU to all that contributed their time, hard work, ideas and encouragement to making the “Day at the Capitol” and all its events successful. A lot of work went on behind the scenes and I really appreciate it. The Coalition came together and met with legislative offices to present our points for Suicide Prevention. I can say with confidence that they know we were there. My heartfelt thanks also to our College Students who were invited by Lisa Zeller, our Vice President; they wasted no time in delivering a stellar amount of packets to Legislative Offices. They definitely contributed to the reason we delivered every packet. We have a big job to thank those offices for receiving us and to remind them to share the information with their legislators. Thank you also to all the new people that attended this year, we hope they continue and join FSPC as active members.

Thank you to Gene Cash, Jackie Rosen, John Bryant, Jackie Beck, Melissa Witmeier and also those that contributed information to our legislative packets and / or copied material for us. The articles were great and completely explained our concerns to the legislators at this time. Thank you also for giving us talking points to convey to the legislative assistants. They were well thought out and presented with compassion. Thank you also to Marshall Knudson for his service on the Office of Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council. He has been a much valued part of the Council.

To Pam Mezzina – what a wonderful “Lighting the Darkness” Pam you have become an important part of our “Day at the Capitol” by meeting the needs of our survivors and allowing them to remember their loved ones and also to allow them to connect with other survivors and know that they are not alone in their journey. Thank you for a job well done and we look forward to many more.

Thank you also for the dedicated team of people that came to the “Stuff the Legislative Packet Party” which was a great success and a lot of fun getting to know everyone. We worked late into the evening but we got it done.

To Jackie Beck for leading the Office of Suicide Prevention Council Meeting which was well attended by new and current council members and visitors. There was a great amount of material discussed and we have much to follow up on. Also at the meeting I presented a certificate to Judy Broward our past Chair thanking her for her service as Chair of the Coalition. Her plaque will be delivered to her home.

I take responsibility for being late to a couple of meetings and misspelling Melissa’s name on the press release and for anything else that might have gone wrong. I have learned and decided for next year I will bring more young people with us to set up banners and quilts and to help remind me of things to be done. I attempted well more than I was able to accomplish and I will learn from my mistakes.

Recently I traveled to Jacksonville to meet with Roberta Zipperer our Regional Director for that area and to attend a Summit on Suicide Awareness and Prevention for Veterans. The summit was very informative and was just the beginning of what they expect to accomplish in the next year. Roberta and I are planning a meeting in August for the Northeast Regional Directors, Coalition Members and those involved in Suicide Prevention. I hope to get the Northeast Quadrant started with quarterly meetings.

Betsey Westuba and I attended a meeting with Donna, a survivor of her 13 year old daughter's suicide following bullying and cyber bullying. She spoke to middle school and graduating seniors of a Charter School in Riverview Florida. She spoke passionately about her daughter and challenged the students to be proactive in situations of bullying and asked them to promise not to consider suicide as the answer but to talk with someone and get help.

Betsey Westuba, Regional Director for Hillsborough, traveled with me to University of South Florida (Tampa) to speak to students of professor and coalition member Stephen Roggenbaum's class about suicide prevention, display of survivor quilts, tell our stories of loss and answer questions.

I also traveled to Miami for two private schools that asked the Coalition to be their sponsor of a volleyball event for Suicide Prevention. Rene Favreau and your Chair Marlene Jehs attended the game and the Coalition was able to receive a substantial amount of funds from both games. This might give you another idea to think about in your areas for a fund raiser for the Coalition to help fund all the things we want to accomplish this year.

As Chair this year, my mission is to grow the Coalition, move forward, and recover from our cuts at the Capitol. I also want to get to know each Regional Director, go to them, instead of making them travel. I have met

personally with several of the Regionals so far. I would like to divide the state into four quadrants and have Regional Directors and members meeting together regularly and share best practices within their quadrant as well as throughout the state.

Please check your email for future events as I post them. There is much to do. I need volunteers for committee chairs, for example: Veterans and Armed Forces Suicide, Youth Suicide, Survivor Support Groups, Police Suicide, Suicide of middle age 35 – 54 and any other committees you would like to suggest.

Please use the attached application form on the last page of the newsletter to either renew or join the Coalition. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Marlene Jehs, Chair

Coordinating Council meeting

The Florida Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council meeting led by Jackie Beck of DCF was held on April 22. At the meeting, Marlene Jehs, Chair Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition discussed the Day at the Capital activities to be held on the 23, Pam Mezzina, Manager, Bereavement Services of Big Bend Hospice talked about the Lighting the Darkness event to be held that evening, there was a presentation by Melissa Witmeier, Program Director at Florida Council for Community Mental Health on the Florida Youth Suicide Prevention Project, Jackie Rosen, Executive Director, Florida Initiative for Suicide Prevention presented information regarding increased rate of suicide among 35 – 55 year olds and training physicians to recognize patients who might be suicidal and Dan Reidenberg of SAVE presented national information, including talk of the updated national goals.

4th Annual Lighting the Darkness, An Evening to Remember Lives Lost to Suicide sponsored by Big Bend Hospice.

There was lovely music, including FSPC Region Director Raela Villeneuve singing two songs



Region Director Jason Zauder spoke and read names with Big Bend Hospice Caring Tree Counselor Caitlin.



10th Annual Day at the Capital started with Marlene explaining to the volunteers the talking points for the day.



For the first time ever, all packets got delivered to legislators!

Below are John Bryant, Florida Council for Community Mental Health and Jackie Beck, Coordinator, Florida Suicide Prevention Statewide office.



The press conference was well attended. Below, Region Director Betsy Westuba and Marlene Jehs, Chair speaking.



Judy Broward read names of those lost to suicide and Raela and friends sang “The Dream”. Lyrics by Raela.



Many thanks go to all the work that Marlene Jehs put in to make the Day at the Capital a successful day.

Asking the Question Why?

Tracy T. Dean, M.S.

Asking “Why did my loved one do this?” is the question that haunts most survivors of suicide. The outside world demands to know from us, and we don’t know ourselves. For some of us there were definite clues that our loved ones were depressed or that something was wrong. We either knew that they were in pain and did not know the extent of it, or we did know and tried everything we knew to get help for them. For others the suicide was completely out of character. Many people who end their lives are extremely good actors and actresses. They only allow us to see what they want us to see. In either instance, for many, we never thought it could really happen to us, to our loved ones, and to our families. It doesn’t make sense.

So we search, trying to put the pieces of the puzzle together. Hindsight is 20x20, and sometimes we find bits and pieces, clues to what might have happened to allow our loved ones to lose hope and give up on life. We often want a specific reason, a direct cause and effect. If we can understand exactly why our loved ones ended their lives, maybe we can keep it from happening again to someone else we love.

For years I struggled with this question myself, following the suicide of my boyfriend. The best explanation was described to me by Iris Bolton, the Executive Director of The Link Counselor Center in Atlanta, Georgia and a survivor of her son’s suicide. Iris went to Emory University and received a Masters in Suicidology in an attempt to answer this question for herself. She did not find it. Later, Iris found as close to an answer as she will have. It did not come from a Doctor, Professor, or a Therapist. It came from another mother who had lost her son by suicide. This is how it was described to me, and I share it with you.

The Cup Analogy - There is a cup of water sitting on a table. It is so full, it is rounded at the top. One or two drops of water are added to the cup and it spills over. What caused the water to spill? We want to blame the last one or two drops, but in an empty cup it would not spill. It was not the water in the cup prior to the drops being added, because if left alone, it would not have spilled. It was a combination of all the drops of water in

the cup that came before and the last one or two drops that caused the water to spill.

In a person’s life, the water in the cup is symbolic of all the hurt, pain, shame, humiliation, and loss not dealt with along the way. The last couple of drops symbolize the “trigger events,” “the last straw,” the event or situation that preceded the final act of taking one’s own life. Often we want to blame the trigger event, but this does not make sense to us. Like the water, these events all by themselves would not cause someone to end their life. It is the combination of everything in that person’s life not dealt with and the last one or two things that caused our loved ones to lose hope.

For us, we must find a way to pour out the water along the way. This may be through talking it out, writing it out, sometimes yelling it out, whatever works for you. We must learn to deal with our pain in a way our loved ones could not.

This analogy does not give us the concrete answer many of us are looking for, but I know it made sense for me and has been helpful for many survivors. It allowed me to let go of the search for “why,” and to find a different way of dealing with my pain.

©Tracy Dean is a Program Coordinator at the National Resource Center for Suicide, Prevention and Aftercare

“Now death has shaken your faith, ‘Why?’ ‘Why must life be one of sorrow?’ ‘Why?’ There are no pat answers. No one completely understands the mystery of death. Even if the question were answered, Would your pain be eased, your loneliness less terrible?

‘Why’ may be more than a question. It may be an agonizing cry for a heart-breaking loss, an expression of distress, disappointment, bewilderment, alienation, and betrayal. There is no answer that bridges the chasm of irreparable separation. There is no satisfactory response for an unresolvable dilemma. Not all questions have complete answers. Unanswered ‘Why’s’ are part of life. The search may continue but the real question might be ‘How [do I] pick up the pieces and go on living as meaningful as possible?’” Rabbi Earl Grollman

Region News

Region 1:

In Support of National Suicide Prevention Week, Students for Suicide Awareness, the Gay Straight Alliance, To Write Love on Her Arms, and Suicide Outreach and Support present:

Down in the Dumps

An Interactive Theater Performance on Depression, Suicidal Ideation and Coming Out

Date: Monday September 9,, 2013

Time: 6pm

Location: UWF Conference Center

Region 3: Ten years ago, land was donated to the City of Gainesville for a park and with the stipulation that a portion be set aside for a suicide survivor memory garden. It has taken this long to get landscape plans, clear the area and start work, but the garden is well under way. Below, girl scouts plant wildflower garden. There will be two areas in the garden where memorial bricks will be placed. We have began selling bricks for the labyrinth center and in a trellis seating area. A plan is taking shape for a basalt column memorial circle. This is the only suicide survivor garden in Florida. There are plans for a dedication ceremony Sept 12, during Suicide Prevention Week.



Please distribute the link below to survivor groups. Someone may want to purchase a memorial brick
<http://sosgarden.donationbricks.com/>

State News

Governor Rick Scott Appoints Two to Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council

Tallahassee, Fla. —Governor Rick Scott announced the appointment of John M. Popson and the reappointment of Stephen D. Roggenbaum to the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council.

Popson, 70, of Palm Harbor, is retired and was previously a senior attorney for Ceridian Corporation from 2001 to 2010. He succeeds Marshall Knudson and is appointed for a term beginning May 16, 2013, and ending July 1, 2015.

Roggenbaum, 56, of Lutz, is a faculty member at the University of South Florida's Department of Child and Family Sciences, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences. He is reappointed for a term beginning May 16, 2013, and ending July 1, 2015.

National News

39th Annual National Suicide Prevention Week

September 8th - 14th, 2013

National Suicide Prevention Week is the Sunday through Saturday surrounding World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th.

View National and world activities at

<http://www.suicidology.org/about-aas/nspw/activities>

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/national-strategy-suicide-prevention/full-report.pdf>

Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

Mission Statement:

Collaborate to develop and implement suicide prevention, intervention and postvention strategies and programs.

Officers of the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

Chair.....Marlene Jehs
Vice Chair.....Lisa Zeller
Secretary.....Laura Meyer
Treasurer.....Rene' Favreau
Newsletter Editor.....Judy Broward

Region 1 - Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton,
Region Director - Raela M. Villanueva. 850-554-1827
(cell), ms.raela@gmail.com

Region 2 - Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla and Washington, Region Director - Jason Zauder, 850-617-6303, outreach@211bigbend.org ,
<http://www.211bigbend.org/>

Region 3 - Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Putnam, Suwannee & Union,
Region Director - Marshall Knudson, Director
352-264-6792, mlk@alachuacounty.us ,
www.alachua.fl.us/government/depts/css/crisis/

Region 4 - Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau & St Johns, Region Director - Roberta Zipperer, 904-742-6403,
rczipperer@aol.com

Region 5 - Pasco & Pinellas, Region Director Marlene Jehs
Phone: 727-254-3743, Email: mj6pelican@aol.com

Region 6 - DeSoto, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota,
Region Director Betsey Westuba, Cell: 813-951-1271,

ewestuba@yahoo.com, Suncoast Kid's Place
www.suncoastkidsplace.org

Region 7 - Brevard, Orange, Osceola & Seminole, Region Director - Libby Donoghue, Executive Director, 2-1-1 Brevard Inc., 321.631.9290 ext. 202
321.631.9291 fax, ldonoghue@211brevard.org

Region 8 - Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry & Lee,
Region Director Vicki Snyder Clark, 239-850-1159
vsnyderclark@gmail.com

Region 9 – Palm Beach, Region Director - Rene Favreau,
The Center for Information & Crisis Services (211), PO Box 3588, Lantana, FL 33465-3588, 561-818-3856 c,
rene.favreau@gmail.com

Region 10 – Broward, Region Director - Rene Barrett, 954 257-4568. 954 927-1124 – Fax. myadvocate@bellsouth.net

Region 11 – Dade and Monroe. Region Director - Diana Flores, Switchboard Of Miami, 190 NE 3rd Street, Miami FL 33132, Tel: (305) 358-1640 x162, Fax: (305) 377-2269
24-Hour HELPLine: (305) 358-4357 or 211, TTY: (305) 644-9449 or 211, opt 4
<http://www.switchboardmiami.org>

Region 12 - Flagler & Volusia, Region Director - Lisa Grubbs, 386-767-2883
heavyhittercharters@cfl.rr.com

Region 13 - Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion & Sumter,
Region Director - Vacant

Region 14 - Hardee, Highlands & Polk, Region Director – Vacant

Region 15 - Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee & St Lucie,
Region Director – Vacant

If you or someone you know is suicidal, in crisis or emotional distress, please reach out for help by calling:

1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

<http://www.floridasuicideprevention.org/>

In order for FSPC to survive and thrive, it needs funds to pay for travel for the Directors and Chair.
Please consider reviewing your membership using the form below.



Membership Form:

(Print this from)

Individual (\$25)

Corporate/Organization (\$100)

Name: _____

In Memory of: (_____)

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

FL County: _____

Phone (home): _____

Phone (cell): _____

Phone (work): _____

Email: _____

Which committee(s) would you be interesting in serving on?

Youth Suicide _____

Middle Age Suicide 35 – 54 _____

Elder Suicide _____

Support Groups _____

Police Suicide _____

Veterans & Armed Forces Suicide _____

Bullying & Cyber Bullying _____

Work Place Suicide _____

Other: _____

Send to:

Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

Attn: Mr. Rene' Favreau

710 Valley Forge Rd

West Palm Beach, FL 33405

561-818-3856c

561-547-1195h

Email: rene.favreau@gmail.com