

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

**TSPN Advisory Council Meeting
Community Assembly Room
Metro Nashville Police Department East Precinct
936 East Trinity Lane
Nashville, TN
October 28, 2009
12:00 – 3:00 PM**

Advisory Council Members and Alternates Present

Pam Arnell, MA, Arnell's Counseling Service (Advisory Council Co-Secretary)
Stephanie Barger, M. Div., Crisis Services Manager, Family and Children's Services
Jodi Bartlett, Ed.S, MCRT Director, Northern Region, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Services
Vickie Bilbrey, Oak Point Center, Livingston Regional Hospital
Jennifer Burger, LPC-MHSP, School-Based Program Manager, Centerstone
Carol Burroughs, MSCPS, Lexington High School
Karyl Chastain Beal, M.Ed., CT, Retired/Community Advocate (South Central Regional Chair)
Elizabeth Haren, LPC-MHSP, Utilization Manager, Americhoice
Jennifer Harris, MS, Hickman Community Hospital
Anne Henning-Rowan, MS, Jackson-Madison County School System, District 1
Judith Johnson, AAS, CC, Community Advocate
Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Indian Path Pavilion (Northeast Regional Chair, Advisory Council Chair)
Kandi Shearer, Youth Villages
Anna Shugart, LCSW, Director, Emotional Health & Recovery Center, Blount Memorial Hospital (Chair, Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance)
Sandy N. Smith, M.Ed, Hamilton County Department of Education
Kathy Strahan, Professional Care Services of West Tennessee
Tim Tatum, MA, Bradford Health Services (Southeast Regional Chair, Advisory Council Secretary, Advocacy Committee Chair)
Ken Tullis, MD, The Psychological Trauma & Wellness Center, Primacy Oaks (Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluation/Committee Chair)
Madge Tullis, Community Advocate (Memphis/Shelby County Regional Chair, Special Activities Committee Chair)
Misty Yarbrough, BBA, BSW, Statewide Education Coordinator, Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee (Mid-Cumberland Regional Chair)
Anne Young, MS, CAS, Whittle Springs Middle School (East Tennessee Regional Chair)

Intra-State Departmental Representatives Present

Carol Boone, Ph.D., EAP Director, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration
Nicole Cobb, Director of School Counseling, Tennessee Department of Education
Gwen Hamer, MA, Office of the Medical Director, Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities
Thom Roberts, Executive Director, Tennessee Council for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Tennessee Department of Human Services
Douglas Scanlan, Mental Health Program Specialist III, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
Lucy E. Utt, Supervisor, Community Services, Tennessee Commission on Aging & Disability
Maj. Joseph W. Varney, USA (ret.), Suicide Prevention Program Manager, Fort Campbell
Lygia Williams, MA, Office of Special Populations, Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities

Guests

Virginia Trotter Betts, RN, MSN, JD, FAAN, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
Rose Chastain
Shirley Jennings, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Services
Sarah Lingo, Office of the Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
Claudia Mays, LCSW, BCD, CM Counseling & Consulting Service
Tiffany Shaw, Executive Assistant, Suicide Prevention Program, Fort Campbell
Tom Starling, Ed.D., Executive Director, Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee

Advisory Council Members and Alternates Absent

Sam Bernard, PhD, Bernard & Associates (Advisory Council Past Chair)
Linda Ellison, Contact Concern of East Tennessee
Benjamin T. Harrington, Mental Health Association of East Tennessee (Advisory Council Past Chair)
Janna F. Herbison, MS, YWCA of Greater Memphis
Cindy P. McCroskey, M.Ed., McCallie Middle School
Linda Moran, Dale Hollow Mental Health Center
Linda Phipps Harold, Community Advocate
Micky Roberts, MBA, Director, Blount County Health Department
Kim Rush, Ed.S., LPC-MHSP, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System

Intra-State Departmental Representatives Absent

Judith Baker, BSBM/EM, Public Health Program Director, CLPPP, SIDS and CFR, Maternal and Child Health
Rose Boyd, Public Health Educator, Integrated Core Injury Surveillance, Prevention, and Control Program, Division of Emergency Medical Services
Tommy L. Brame, Mental Health Specialist, Tennessee Department of Children's Services
Sherron Brown, Director, Families First Policy Program, Tennessee Department of Human Services
Laura M. Gatrell, MA, LEAP, Director, Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program
Mike Herrmann, Director of School Safety and Learning Support Programs, Tennessee Department of Education

Yvette Mack, Director, Adolescent Health & Asthma Programs, Tennessee Department of Health

Jeanine C. Miller, PhD, PE, Director of Mental Health, Tennessee Department of Correction

Kimberly A. Moore, Program Specialist, Adult Protective Services, Tennessee Department of Human Services

Dustin Keller, Director, Council on Children's Mental Health, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

Pam Townsend, Consumer Advocate, Office of Consumer Affairs, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

Sterling van der Spuy, Division of Workforce Development, Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development,

TSPN/TLC Staff Present

Vladimir Enlow, Executive Assistant, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

Jason Padgett, MPA, Project Director, Tennessee Lives Count Project

Scott Ridgway, MS, Executive Director, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

Welcome and Introductions

- Leonard called the meeting to order at 12:14 PM.
- Introductions from members present preceded Commissioner Betts's address to the Council.
- Guests included Shirley Jennings, a Network member from the Upper Cumberland Region, and Rose Chastain, sister of Chastain Beal.

Remarks from Commissioner Betts

- Betts began by introducing Lingo, her assistant, who will play a major role in TDMHDD projects and priorities for the coming year.
- She stated that it is always a pleasure to come to Network meetings and reiterated her strong personal and professional commitment to suicide prevention. She also feels an obligation to represent TDMHDD, the state's single public authority for mental health and substance abuse services.
 - At this point she introduced Hamer, Scanlan, and Williams, all TDMHDD officials.
- She outlined the three topics of today's address:
 - The federal parity legislation and efforts to make its impact felt locally
 - The 2008 suicide statistics and a request for input on reversing current trends
 - The TDMHDD budget for this year and the next
- In regards to the parity legislation, it is an *a priori* fact that suicide is preventable by noticing behavioral cues and connecting troubled persons with the appropriate services. The question, then, is what keeps people from getting the services they need.
- We all know that mental illness and substance addiction have often been dismissed as "not real" by the general public, resulting in the unequal health benefits provided by insurance companies and private insurance plans.
- The Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, signed into law last October, now mandates equal coverage for

- medical, mental health, and substance abuse expenses, even within Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) plans.
- For many years ERISA allowed large companies to dodge state mental health parity laws (including those of Tennessee, which have been on the books since the 1980s).
 - As President of the Association of Mental Health Commissioners, Betts worked alongside her fellow members to get this legislation passed. However, she is very concerned about how the bill will be implemented.
 - The legislation goes into effect January 1, 2010. Right now is the open-enrollment plan for many corporations' health care plans.
 - Betts advised members to check and see what their corporate insurers have to say regarding changes in their mental health and substance abuse treatment coverage.
 - She notes reports from several state employees who had received no indication of any changes in their policy; next week, she is meeting with representatives of the state's benefits and insurance commission next week to correct this oversight.
 - Essentially, their argument is that the relevant U.S. Departments (Commerce, Health and Human Services, and Labor) did not provide them with the appropriate information and the commission was unsure how to proceed. She suspects they were actually just waiting to see what the federal government would compel them to do. The commission could have already been enforcing parity without the guidelines, and in fact for the past several years.
 - Effective as of January, federal law ordains that all insurance companies must cover mental health and substance abuse expenses at the same level as medical expenses, or at least make a good faith effort to do so.
 - Betts recommends that those present at this meeting check to see what changes their respective insurance companies are making and contact her office if they experience any problems.
 - Meanwhile, she will keep TSPN informed of any resolution regarding the state benefits plan. The state's existing mental health parity law is solid, and the benefits commission should have been a leader in the effort to enforce it.
 - Betts observes that the Wellstone-Domenici Act represents a true accomplishment for the field of mental health. The effort has required ten years of lobbying of the executive branch and Congress.
 - The general public should be relentless in defining what changes insurance companies will make in their plans. The legislation represents a great opportunity for people with insurance to increase the breadth and variety of their mental health and substance abuse treatment options.
 - At this point Harris recalled a recent anecdote from her work at Hickman Community Hospital: while contacting a patient's insurance company seeking preauthorization, the care manager specifically referenced the parity legislation and explained that the limit on inpatient mental health center stays was being dropped.
 - Betts then moved onto the state budget. Tennessee is one of 48 states with a state government budget shortfall. Our state is in particularly bad shape due to our reliance on sales tax for state revenue.

- Public comments from the Commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Finance have been unequivocal that after the FY 2010 budget is drawn up, state services will be greatly affected.
- TDMHDD is in an extremely precarious situation. To begin with, the Department has been chronically underfunded despite repeated lobbying to the General Assembly—especially after being forced to take over substance abuse services.
- Now TDMHDD faces a “perfect storm”:
 - the economic downturn, which has increased the need for services
 - cuts ordered by an “overzealous” CMS within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services towards the end of the Bush administration
 - a year and a half of TennCare overhaul, including changes to its business model and mass disenrollments
- Many of the expenses TennCare was created to handle were left unmanaged due to the new CMS rules. At the same time the bureau struck the presumptive eligibility category for people waiting for coverage, and dropped coverage for the state-only and judicial categories.
- The changes left TennCare unable to implement the proposed “firehouse” model for crisis intervention services. Furthermore, large numbers of people were no longer served by TennCare.
- This forced TDMHDD to resort to a series of internal budget reductions and internal reallocations to fund crisis services and cover the dropped TennCare categories.
 - It also led to the development of the Mental Health and Behavioral Health Safety Net, through which 20 local clinics provide care mental health services such as assessment, medication management, counseling, and case management.
- At this point Betts referred to the handout she had provided outlining FY 2009/10 budget changes:
 - Between \$14.5 million in budget reallocations and \$22.8 million in cuts, the TDMHDD budget was down by 23%.
 - Thanks to citizen and activist lobbying (here she referenced TSPN’s action alert earlier in the year), the Department was granted \$10 million in new recurring program funding. TDMHDD also received \$18 million in addbacks through the federal stimulus package, \$5 million in non-recurring legislative restorations, and \$1.7 in non-recurring legislative improvement.
 - All told, TDMHDD got back \$34.7 million of the \$37.3 million it stood to lose. Much of this funding went to family support and respite services.
- During the last round of budget hearings, Betts tried to demonstrate her efforts to cut unsuccessful programs and reallocate funding the programs that worked. Any further cuts made to TDMHDD will cut into truly vital services and programs.
- The most significant savings came from a reduction in the number of hospitals under state contract. Betts had planned such reductions all along as part of a plan to provide services through regional mental health centers, shifting the savings to community programs.
- When Betts started as Commissioner, the state had 990 beds under contract. Last year she had 810, and now she has 686 across 5 hospitals.

- While Betts did manage to reduce the number of beds, the savings aren't going back into the Department but are being used to make up the state budget difference.
- Even with the reduction in available beds, the Department is still providing the vast majority of clients with suitable and easily available accommodations. Like any accredited hospital, the state hospitals have solid control of the front door. Since July only eight clients have experienced any significant wait time, all less than 24 hours and all at local ERs. If there is no space at one clinic, the client is seamlessly shifted to the nearest one available.
- The critical issue here, however, is that all the state department received direct funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, with the exception of TDMHDD. In the case of mental health services, each state received funding which was passed on to the Department. The \$18 million TDMHDD received only slows down the impact of the state budget cuts, and the FY 2010-11 budget will leave the TDMHDD without those non-recurring funds—a shortfall of \$24.7 million.
- Even with the stimulus funding, community contracts are pinched; the Department only recovered 88% of the funds it originally had.
- Unless other funding sources are located, the Department will be hit with a massive shortfall event before the anticipated 9% cut directed to all state departments.
- Betts mentioned the departmental budget hearing on November 18 at 1 PM, where she will make her case against further cuts. She invited those present to attend the hearing in person or watch the live webcast.
- Ridgway commended Betts for her efforts thus far in securing funding for TDMHDD and TSPN.
- Betts explained that any improvements or reallocations within the TDMHDD budget will come internally. At this point she is unsure if the General Assembly understands the condition TDMHDD is in.
- At this point, the best TDMHDD will be able to obtain are non-recurring appropriations. She is not concerned that these are non-recurring funds, since they will allow the Department to function for the moment.
- At this point the Department will be able to fund far less than it did this year, which was not much to begin with.
- At this point Betts opened the floor to questions. Before asking his questions, Ridgway referenced a debate the week before between gubernatorial candidates in Maryville. Congressman Wamp, one of the participants, had reported to the group that his office had been in contact with the Office of the Governor regarding the mental health shortfall.
- That being said, Ridgway wanted to know if any cuts will be forthcoming at the first of the year since the state budget is predicted to fall \$1.1 billion short by January. Betts observed that \$600 million remains in the Rainy Day Fund, but current budget projections have the fund spent down to \$345 by the end of next year.
 - The cuts will probably not be enacted in January. Betts recalled that TDMHDD did not wait until April to start downsizing at state hospitals.

- She observed that the recession is complicating matters since so many people have employer-based coverage they lose along with their jobs, and few people can afford COBRA.
 - Johnson added that the psychological impact of losing a job can also increase suicide risk, leaving people in at high risk for suicide attempts and substance abuse just at the moment they are shut out of the system.
- Betts reflected on the impact on children and young adults when a parent develops a mental health or substance abuse problem. So much attention is given to matters like junk food in school vending machines, and yet the fact that 1 in 4 children have a parent with a mental health issue and 1 in 10 has a parent with a substance abuse problem is ignored.
- Data is critical to illustrating the situation at hand and circumventing further cuts.
- Betts is “thrilled” by the declining rates among teens and the elderly, a reflection on the attention given to these groups by TSPN and other mental health agencies. But at the same time, overall rates have increased, with a particularly strong rise among middle-aged adults.
- The past successes give us some idea of what to do here; now we need to figure out where exactly the increase is coming from. She alluded to a meeting with Hamer, Ridgway, and Williams to sort out this issue.
- Betts is curious about how many of the victims were receiving mental health treatment, and how many of these dropped out of their respective programs. She also wants to know how many were unemployed.
- How much do we know about the victims? What do we need to know? And where can we get this information? Betts is open to suggestions regarding what TDMHDD can do to answer these questions.
- At this point Ridgway mentioned regional analysis of the numbers and requested feedback.
 - Leonard reported that the two Northeast counties of most concern (Hancock and Johnson) are very remote with few mental health options. The relative inaccessibility of these areas has made outreach difficult.
- Betts observed that a single death in a sparsely populated community can create a jump in the suicide rate. However, the Blount County project illustrates that once people start talking about the lack of services, they take action.
- Betts wanted to know how many of those who died were actively seeking services they could not obtain, or were otherwise locked out of the mental health system.
 - Speaking on behalf of the Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance, Shugart explained that while data so detailed is not available, she meets with medical examiner David Gilliam on a regular basis for updates on current trends. Even so, the whole picture is not always apparent.
 - Betts believes it would help the Department’s efforts to help TSPN if local members would determine what they need to know and who holds this information, and if her office can facilitate the process. While a system cannot be based on mere anecdotes, she can help if a certain bloc emerges from the reports.
 - Shugart cited the need for a more structured interview process for law enforcement investigating a suicide incident. Not all officers ask the same

- questions or the questions that can give us the detailed information we need for designing potential interventions in our communities.
- Ridgway recommended looking to other states to see if there is a viable model for suicide investigation protocols, and then going forward with training offers. Many suicides are encountered by beat cops who don't have a set protocol to work with, and funding issues keep most municipalities from organizing intensive training efforts.
 - Shugart pointed out that while Blount County is covered by three different law enforcement agencies, most of the suicide investigations are run by the county's death investigation team—an avenue for possible information.
 - Betts acknowledged that while police try to rule out foul play and accidental deaths, suicide investigations have the unintended consequence of jeopardizing insurance payouts, especially among baby boomers and people whose two-year suicide limitations have not yet expired. Of course, it is the medical examiner that makes the final call rather than law enforcement.
 - Chastain Beal remembered that after her daughter's death, the police never really identified any factors leading up to the incident—she had to pay for a private psychological autopsy to find out the reasons why her daughter died.
 - Betts explains that the only alert that ever comes out during the data collection process is when a cluster is identified, suggested a contagion situation.
 - Ridgway stated that certain counties are more able to identify clusters than others. The press clipping service provided by the Tennessee Press Association keeps the central office informed on suicide deaths, but sometimes he doesn't learn about a cluster until someone approaches the Network, as was the case with the Fentress County intervention earlier this year. He concurs with Betts's earlier observation that several deaths in a small community can have a massive impact.
 - Where small counties are concerned, the Network can at least respond quickly, reaching out to the local police department and medical examiner.
 - In response to Roberts's question, deaths among people with disabilities are not actively tracked.
 - Ridgway also notes that since the Tennessee Department of Health usually breaks statistics down by "white" and "black", it is theoretically possible for the Network to miss an outbreak among the state's growing Hispanic population.
 - The age group trendline included in the meeting packet clearly shows a rise in suicide death among the 40-64 age group. It is unknown whether there is any difference between older and younger members of this group (say, 40-50 vs. 51-64), but we can say that the pattern only involves Caucasians.
 - Going back to Betts and Ridgway's earlier point, Leonard noted that Johnson County had only three suicide deaths in 2008, but a suicide rate of 45.8 per 100,000 population.
 - K. Tullis mentioned that the Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluations (SOE) Committee had discussed the midlife suicide problem during its committee meeting.
 - Tatum recalled that that Dr. Miller, the medical examiner for Bradley County, has developed specialized paperwork for suicide deaths and used this to develop a demographic profile of area suicides. One thing that stood out is that a significant number of the dead suffered from serious disability.
 - Betts is unsure how the TDOH counts or should count murder-suicides.

- Johnson recalled that when she worked crisis lines at various centers and the VA, the centers would often have a caller's full background, easily accessible if a person made repeat calls. However, she is uncertain if the police ever got this information.
- Betts knows that many suicides involve untreated mental illness combined with life complications, and that use or misuse of substances is also a common X-factor.
- Lingo commented that counties with rate decreases typically had strong media coverage of the phenomenon. She recommends increased outreach to local media outlets, in the hopes that the word will spread out to "doughnut" areas.
- Haren wondered how much of the increase could be attributed to better reporting, a point Barger had pointed out during the SOE Committee meeting. Leonard conceded that for years, counties like Hancock and Johnson reported year after year that there had been no suicides and that it simply did not happen in their community. Haren called it "amazing" that TDOH could even get statistics out of these counties, especially compared to years past.
- Accurate reporting was a major topic during the committee meeting; members considered ways to ensure that county coroners and medical examiners fulfilled their obligations to report suicide data.
- Lingo noted that while numbers may be up, "now we know what we are up against".
- Betts herself was uncertain how much of the increase was attributable to better reporting. While Yarbrough stated this point was "unknowable", Shugart stated that at some point members of the Alliance realized that the local increase was not just a product of more in-depth reporting.
 - Betts pointed out that members of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration (TDFA) may very well ask her this same question during next month's hearing.
- Ridgway pointed out that deaths in the 10-19 age groups went down 31% between 2000 and 2008, with a 38% drop since 2004.¹ But overall, the suicide rate went up 15% between 2007 and 2008. This suggests the increase is not due to more reported suicides.
 - The time and money invested in this age group has definitely paid off. It has been easy for regional members to arrange training sessions for child-serving and senior-serving agencies. But reaching the group in between is more challenging. Businesses are hard to approach because of the suicide stigma. TSPN needs to consider how to reach adults aged 20-64.
- We know that numbers are down in counties with active task forces. Ridgway expressed concern about what will happen in these counties if TSPN takes a serious funding hit.

¹ The figure cited was incorrect; there was an 18% decline in the number of suicides for 2000-08 and a 31% decrease between 2004 and 2008. In regards to rates for the 10-19 age group, the rate went down 23.1% between 2001 and 2008 (4.81 vs. 3.7). Between 2004 and 2008 the rate went down 34.2% (5.62 in 2004 vs. 3.7 in 2008).

These figures were announced in an October 30 e-mail to the Advisory Council and Intra-State Departmental Group.

- Ridgway suggested the actions of the Tennessee Lives Count project may be responsible for the drop in youth suicides, but other groups (Mental Health 101, I.C. Hope, TSPN, JFI etc.) have also been active in this field.
- Barger explained what we need is an overall picture of all the services available. While she was the program director at the Crisis Intervention Center she became aware of all the mental health resources available. But since she started with Health Assist, she is now familiar with all the medical health resources. Ideally there should be some way to integrate these two types of resources.
- Betts expressed interest in having a website where the user could click on a county and obtain all the available suicide data.
 - Barger expanded on this suggestion: a site where the user could click on a county and find not merely a resource directory, but a listing of available services. She recalled trying to obtain medical services for her father recently and not knowing where to go despite working for a social service agency.

Committee Reports

- Betts's remarks complete, the meeting continued with a report from the SOE Committee.

SOE Committee

- Committee chair K. Tullis announced that on the advent of TSPN's tenth anniversary, it may be appropriate to review the Tennessee Strategies for Suicide Prevention.
 - Before continuing his report, K. Tullis made his own observation on the reporting issue: while better reporting may be a contributing factor, the most likely cause is a genuine increase triggered by the fallout from the current recession.
- K. Tullis explained that during the committee meeting, he encouraged members to review what strategies TSPN has not properly implemented.
 - Members conceded that TSPN lacks solid evidence-based outcomes. There has been little follow-up regarding the distribution of Network materials.
 - TSPN could stand to be more creative with its approach to technology, getting information out in a faster and more systematic fashion.
 - Youth and older adults have proved easier targets. The 40-64 group, which makes up a large and growing bloc of suicide deaths, is not a "warm and fuzzy" group that inspires people to action. Significant numbers of this demographic do not make regular visits to doctor's offices and other clinics, thus missing information provided to these venues.
 - We need more focused surveying and screening mechanisms to develop an effective statewide campaign and achievable goals.
 - We also need to be careful not to overlook the youth and older adult while focusing on adults in midlife.
- K. Tullis recommends picking one relevant item from the Tennessee Strategies for Suicide Prevention and building a unified social marketing campaign. He recommends retaining the services of a public relations and/or public health expert.

- Referencing TDMHDD’s prior work with the Tennessee National Guard and local VA centers, K. Tullis brought up Project Immersion, an upcoming event in which mental health workers will participate in a simulated boot camp and set of military maneuvers to gain a better understanding of the veteran experience.
 - Handouts promoting the event, scheduled for November 5-6 at the Tennessee National Guard Training Center in Smyrna, were circulated among those present.
 - By understanding what current and former members of the armed forces experience, participants will be able to relate to clients from these backgrounds.
 - K. Tullis observed that the post-combat experience for the career soldier is far worse than that of a National Guard member—the latter has a life to go back to outside the military.
 - Operation Immersion is free to all participants outside of meals.
 - The event will be promoted through the TSPN website and in an e-mail announcement.
 - Hamer provided additional information on the event. Participants will spend a night in an Army barracks and experience a modified physical training session. Hamer herself plans to participate in at least part of the event.
 - Betts noted that many veterans fall within the 40-64 group.
- The Committee had also considered the control issue at work in youth and older adult outreach, and the lack of this factor where midlife adults are concerned. There is no centralized location where TSPN can reach this demographic.

Advocacy Committee

- Committee chair Tatum and his group were charged with developing five questions to ask gubernatorial candidates who would theoretically attend the next Advisory Council meeting.
- The Committee was also asked to consider ways to engage Tennessee’s Congressional delegation in TSPN’s suicide prevention mission, including but not limited to
 - Provision of TSPN resources and information
 - Provision of training sessions for local and/or Washington office staff
 - Other projects deemed appropriate and necessary for demonstrating the need for strong mental health policies to members of Congress and their staff
- Tatum plans to confer with Ridgway regarding which region should pursue which member of Congress.
- The rest of the Committee meeting involved general brainstorming on how to “stay on the radar” with Tennessee state legislators. Ideas included one-page bulletins on trainings and other operations in each district.
- Harris reports having e-mailed such reports to Sen. Doug Jackson (D-Dickson), Rep. David Shepard (D-Dickson), and Rep. John C. Tidwell (D-New Johnsonville). Tidwell responds to such reports every time, and Jackson will reply on occasion.
- Betts reports that the gubernatorial candidates have not yet committed to a town hall meeting location. She recommends infiltrating this event, as well as debates, to ask relevant questions.

- No one within the Network expects a massive response to the Advisory Council meeting invitation.
- The Committee considered how much impact outreach to churches and other communities of faith could have in an election year. Tatum recalled that the Suicide and the Black Church Conference was inspired by a suicide at a Memphis church.
- Young pointed out that 20,000 church bulletin inserts were distributed across the state last year, and 10,000 are at the printer.
- Yarbrough mentioned that the Mid-Cumberland Region will host a faith-based conference next calendar year. Hamer would have more information on this project and will defer to her during the regional report.

Parting Remarks from Commissioner Betts

- At this point Betts left the group to attend another meeting. She reminded the Council to watch for the budget hearing on November 18, and to start contacting legislators in January regarding the TDMHDD budget.
- Governor Bredesen will hand out a copy of the state budget at the next State of the State address, but after that point he has limited control.
- She reminded those present that department leaders can give the TDFA information and recommendations, but cannot outright order TDFA to reallocate funds.

Special Activities Committee

- The primary task for this meeting involved review of the latest version of the memorial quilt use guidelines as developed by Chastain Beal. Members reviewed version 17 and 18 of the quilt use guidelines, consolidating these into a new version (version 19) which was ratified by the Special Activities Committee.
 - Enlow will relay version 19 back to Chastain Beal and the Quilt Committee for approval.
- The guidelines were developed in order to:
 - Ease pressure on Ridgway regarding transport and pick-up of the various quilts
 - Keep better track of the location of each quilt
 - Make sure quilt borrowers understand the terms for proper use and care of the quilts and return them to the central office or a Network member in a timely manner
- The group also reviewed feedback regarding the regional SPAEs, which was overwhelmingly positive.
- Members discussed making the SPAEs an annual event, in place of or alongside the standard State Capitol observance.
- Committee chair M. Tullis recommended developing a theme for the TSPN calendar year. She suggested focus on the middle-aged group with a united and focused statewide effort to engage this group in suicide prevention activities, an idea generally supported by the other Committee members. The TSPN PAL Project was also raised as a possible option for a statewide campaign.

Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project

- Williams introduced Padgett, the new TLC Project Director.
- Padgett mentioned that the position represents a homecoming of sorts as his wife is a Tennessee native.
- He directed meeting participants to the TLC overview in the meeting packet. So far, TLC has trained 900 of the planned 3500 juvenile justice workers and youth.
- TLC currently has one trainer of staff and is conducting interviews for a second.
- The Project currently has training sessions lined up for the Development Center and six other agencies.

Intra-State Departmental Group

- Williams reports that the group has been very active during the last three months, staging QPR training sessions for state employees at Tennessee Tower and the Andrew Johnson building (Yarbrough facilitated the latter), two sessions for the Tennessee Mental Health Consumers Association, and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).
 - Williams reported that 10 TDOT employees across the state had died by suicide in the last three years.
- QPR sessions took place at all four regional offices. The trainings were videotaped for later screening to other managers and employees. All told, TSPN trainers reached 4000 TDOT employees, as well as 70 managers who participated in a special session.
- The ex-officio group also furnished information and brochures on substance abuse and suicide to Workforce Development.
- TSPN exhibits were set up in the Andrew Jackson and Cordell Hull buildings during the month of September, with 250 Suicide Prevention Awareness Month ribbon cards given out.
- Counselors within the Employee Assistance Program received copies of "TIP 50: Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in Substance Abuse Treatment"
- Articles on suicide prevention have run in most recent editions of *rEAP the Benefits*, the EAP newsletter.
- 400 veteran's brochures were given to a Tennessee Department of Veteran's Affairs employee for distribution during a recent Operation Stand Down event.
- Members of the group had been informed of Operation Immersion and planned to circulate information about it in their respective departments.
- The group is interested in the development of a flyer on "holiday blues" branded with the NSPL logo for distribution through Meals on Wheels.
- The group recommended installation of a banner ad on state websites promoting NSPL.
- Finally, members of the group continue to render assistance to TLC as necessary.
- During this morning's meeting, members considered whether ASIST or QPR is the best vehicle for reaching middle-aged adults. Some of the group activities within

- the training session seem more appropriate for youth and older adults, but not for this group.
- Padgett explained that the three groups primarily trained in the JJ curriculum so far are:
 - Community members who work with JJ youth
 - Parents of JJ youth, and
 - and college students training for child-serving careers, such as nursing students.
 - The Task Force is considering a recommendation to train managers of fast-food restaurants, since these are major employers of teenagers.
 - K. Tullis recalled encouraging SOE Committee members to think about creative ideas for reaching midlife adults—Haren had recommended outreach through unemployment offices.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Ridgway announced that the Federal Communications Commission has placed the National Hopeline Network (1-800-SUICIDE) under the permanent jurisdiction of NSPL. Hopeline owner Reese Butler has lost his final appeal to retain ownership of the hotline.
- Any calls directed to 1-800-SUICIDE will roll into NSPL, as they have done since NSPL acquired oversight of the line.
- Ridgway has filed a request for local NSPL statistics and will report the results when these come in.

TSPN Website

- The meeting packet contains a listing of Internet resources suitable for posting and regular consultation.
- The packet also includes a website statistics report for the past quarter.
- A record number of website hits (10,518) was recorded in August... and this record was again broken in September (11,723).
- The mechanics of Google Accounts prevent us from getting statistics on visitors to the SPAE website.
 - Since too many people were going directly to the SPAE site without visiting TSPN's site, Ridgway had Enlow install a link on the TSPN homepage and redirect persons interested in the regional SPAEs to the TSPN site. Ridgway believes that the figures cited above are low estimates of how many people were actually exposed to TSPN during the lead-up to the regional SPAEs.
- Ridgway reminded those present that TSPN offers a considerable amount of brochures and information on its website, all available for free download and printing. Despite this, the central office is still fielding requests for these items. Since these printings cost the central office considerably, he requests that TSPN members consult the website and try to print out what they need themselves before consulting the central office.
- Copies of the Advisory Council and Intra-State Departmental Group rosters as they appear on the website are available for review. Members should review their entries and mark any corrections on the printouts.

- Members may also write corrections on their nametags and nameplates for later updating.

New Business

Emeritus Members

- Nomination forms for Emeritus membership are included in the meeting packets, as well as vignettes outlining the contributions of three nominees:
- Sam Bernard
Clark Flatt
- Judith Johnson
- A vote will be taken at this meeting.
- Bernard was unable to attend this meeting as he is participating in a Center for Domestic Preparedness training conference.
- The Emeritus position was intended as an honor for outgoing Advisory Council members.
- Since Bernard was the one who suggested the idea in the first place, Ridgway believed it appropriate that his nomination should be the first one voted on.
- If approved, Bernard will be listed on all TSPN rosters as “Advisory Council Chair Emeritus”.
- Ridgway reviewed the nomination form, pointing out that four sitting Council members must sign off on the form before the Council can consider it.
- The nominees will be voted on individually.
 - K. Tullis moved to ratify Bernard’s nomination as an Emeritus member, Tatum seconded, and the motion carried without objection.
 - M. Tullis motioned for ratification of Johnson’s nomination, with Haren seconding and unanimous approval.
 - K. Tullis motioned to ratify Flatt’s nomination; M. Tullis seconded and there were no objections.
- In response to Johnson’s inquiry, the Emeritus guidelines were approved by the Council at the June retreat and subsequently mailed out to all members for review.
- Emeritus members who are reappointed to the Advisory Council will necessarily no longer be acknowledged as Emeritus members until and unless they again leave the Council.

Fort Campbell Suicide Prevention Program

- Varney reports that there were 10 suicides on the base within the first three months of the year, and there have been 7 since.
- Despite the opening of a new behavioral services wing, the base is “severely short” on resources.
- Varney is expecting another spike in suicides due to the upcoming overseas deployment.
- Since the initial report of the suicide cluster, the Fort Campbell Suicide Prevention Program has been able to hire additional social workers and contractors, increasing program staff from 12 to 39. Among the additions is Shaw, Varney’s personal assistant.

- The closed nature of military bases allows for a more concentrated education and awareness campaign. To date, 39,000 service personnel across the country have been trained in the ACE suicide prevention curriculum.
- Varney believes that the educational efforts are especially important where children are concerned. Children are able to tell when the adults in their lives are depressed. It is important that crisis services are available to children.
- The base has an ASIST training contract with LivingWorks; the first session is planned for November 16.
- Varney reports that despite great strides in suicide prevention on the base and a number of new assets, the situation at Fort Campbell is still problematic and will remain so for a long time to come.

Advisory Council Appointments

- Ridgway continues regular contact with the Office of the Governor to fill Council vacancies.
- Any members who might recommend potential nominees should inform the central office.
 - Ridgway reminded those present that all nominations are subject to review by the Governor's office, and that nominating someone does not ensure they will be appointed.
- Members who receive application forms in the mail should complete and return it promptly.

"Love Never Dies" Memorial Quilt

- Chastain Beal reports that there are now five quilts available; one of these is a smaller tabletop version.
- As referenced by the Special Activities Committee, there have been issues with scheduling use of the quilt, as well as the timing of drop-off, transport, and pick-up. This has prompted the Quilt Committee to develop a set of guidelines for proper quilt use, display, and care.
- From hereon out, the quilt will be primarily available from Advisory Council or ex-officio members, with the borrower responsible for pick-up and drop-off.
- The guidelines will also cover use of the quilts, specifying use consistent with their memorial aspect.
- Version 19 represents the presumably final version of the document, and the product of a lengthy development process.
- Harris added that the nature and source of the quilt should be announced in the course of the event hosting it.
- While the quilt will generally not be used for non-TSPN fundraisers, special dispensation may be invoked for certain agencies under certain circumstances.
- Ultimately, the TSPN website will have the request forms and final version of the guidelines, available for download and printout.
- Yarbrough asked if Emeritus members would serve as quilt contacts; Chastain Beal assumed this was implied. Ridgway confirmed this point, as Emeritus members are unofficially part of the Advisory Council.

- Questions have been raised regarding use of the quilts at AFSP events due to concerns over their fundraising practices. Under the new guidelines, AFSP will have to appeal to the Quilt Committee to determine if the group can use the quilt.
- Bilbrey acknowledged that TSPN has to be inclusive, but the larger issue seems to be people not picking up and returning the quilts on time. The quilts have to be available for use by everyone. Under the new guidelines, the quilt must be obtained from an Advisory Council member, ex-officio member, or central office staff member, or not at all.
- K. Tullis explained that “we have to live with AFSP in some way”, but is comfortable with the new regulations.
- Chastain Beal said that once the new guidelines were in place, TSPN will have the right to turn down any request. Any time there is a problem with a borrower, the Quilt Committee will document the incident and take it into consideration the next time said borrower places a request. Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- Ridgway outlined the problems with AFSP for the benefit of the group:
 - The recent Out of the Darkness Walk in Smithville raised roughly \$6,000 for AFSP. TSPN was persuaded to stage an exhibit at the event, incorporating the banner, the regional display board, the regional table skirt, regional resource directories and other materials... and as with almost all AFSP events, none of the money donated filters back to the local community where the event takes place. It all goes back to AFSP headquarters for research.
 - Ridgway also alluded to the incident with last year’s AFSP walk in Chattanooga.
- TSPN is not alone in its disenchantment with AFSP; several state-supported suicide prevention agencies have outright refused the use of their quilts at AFSP events.
- AFSP uses the funds it raises for research, and to access this money agencies must apply for a grant. The organization has raised over \$50,000 in Tennessee in the past five years, and to our knowledge none of it has come back to Tennessee. But TSPN wants to raise awareness and does not want to thwart the efforts of another suicide prevention agency.
- Ridgway also referenced a recent incident in Memphis where the prospective borrowers did not meet Ridgway at the appointed time. After obtaining two of the quilts with the assumption that they would be displayed together, the borrowers then took the quilts to two separate locations and then proceeded to lose track of them.
 - It should be mentioned that the borrowers in question were rather rude to Ridgway and not very appreciative of the efforts made to provide the quilt. Several people with loved ones memorialized on the quilt seem to have ownership issues, expecting the quilt to be available whenever they ask.
- The new guidelines will help prevent such incidents and ensure the quilt is provided only to people who understand the responsibilities involved. The Committee will decide whether a borrower’s previous disregard of quilt protocol is grounds for denying a request.

- K. Tullis observed without the guidelines, TSPN is opening itself up to abuse of the quilts. The guidelines should be approved at the next opportunity; they can be revised later as necessary.
- Speaking as a former SPAN USA organizer, Padgett explained that since AFSP has merged with SPAN USA, and since the Lifekeeper Program originated with SPAN USA, some AFSP officials are under the assumption that they own the quilts, or at least have the right to exhibit them at their events. But at the same time they also realize that local and state groups maintain the quilts. Therefore, he believes it is necessary to have some kind of quilt use outline so TSPN has grounds for declining AFSP quilt requests and can offer a specific reason why—namely, that AFSP is not contributing enough money to TSPN's local suicide prevention efforts.
- Padgett also noted the need for an appeals process should a prospective borrower question the denial of a request.
- At this point Chastain Beal offered full disclosure to those present: she is a member of AFSP's Survivor's Council and oversees other projects on behalf of the organization, including National Survivors of Suicide Day events. She is very involved in AFSP due to her longtime membership. The agency also endorses POS-FFOS and makes frequent referrals to the group.
- A copy of the revised guidelines will be presented at the February meeting.

Tennessee PAL Project

- Due to time constraints, the planned formal presentation on the Tennessee PAL (Prevention and Awareness for Life) Project was skipped.
- Members present were directed to the project outline provided in the meeting packet.

Executive Director's Report

- Ridgway is very pleased with the outcomes of the SPAE project, which did much to raise awareness and got the Network considerable exposure through local media outlets.
- The planned State of Suicide in Tennessee report is being pushed back in order to include 2008 figures and will come out sometime in January.
- The Older Adult Suicide Prevention Plan was formally published in September and is linked on the TSPN homepage.
- Ridgway participated in the recent TVC conference and ran a training session for its Planning Committee.
- TSPN recently established alliances with the Tennessee Federation for the Aging, Inc, and the Tennessee Association of Senior Centers, running a well-received training session for 40 members.
- The Network also established a partnership with Rolling Hills Hospital, a newly established mental health center in Franklin. The hospital was a Co-Host sponsor of the Mid-Cumberland SPAE.
- Rolling Hills is a subsidiary of Psychiatric Solutions, Inc., which also oversees Cumberland Hall. Bilbrey works for PSI in her capacity as Community Education Manager for Oak Point Center within Livingston Regional Hospital.
 - Johnson mentioned that Rolling Hills has 16 beds reserved for PTSD clients.

- Bill and Phyllis Russell, our contacts in southwest Virginia, report working with a teen theatre group on a series of suicide prevention and mental health skits.
- On a related note, the Mid-Cumberland Region worked with the PG-13 Players to present a similar series at the Belcourt Theatre in Nashville. All participants received information on suicide prevention and SPAE T-shirts.
- The central office has also provided training sessions to the Tennessee Mental Health Consumer's Association, the TCSW Veteran's Council, and the NAMI Veteran's Council.
- The planned MHAMT site move, which will include TSPN, has been pushed back until January. The relocation will provide TSPN with more office space. The greater in-house storage capacity will reduce TSPN's dependence on outside storage facilities.
- Ridgway announced plans for a monthly "volunteer day" at the central office, where TSPN members can help central office staff with various organizational and outreach projects.
- Ridgway participated in the stakeholders meeting for the crisis response redesign. An RFP should come out in December. The current plan is for a statewide model, something like the Youth Villages protocol which would use a single number for adult intake and triage. TSPN is waiting to see how this unfolds.
- SCCY is interested in testimony from children and youth, as well as family members involved in TSPN, regarding the youth suicide rate decrease. Interested parties should contact the central office.
- Ridgway continues his involvement with several committees and divisions within TDOH.

TSPN Regional Reports

Northeast Region

- Regional chair Leonard ceded the floor to Shearer for a report on the Memorial Walk at Warrior's Path State Park.
- Washington County General Sessions and Juvenile Court judge James A. Nidiffer and three representatives of the Tri-Cities Survivors of Suicide support group spoke at the event.
- Although 50 people showed up for the event itself, materials were circulated to 100 people total.
- The event was promoted by WKPT-TV, Kingsport's ABC affiliate.
- Meanwhile, the Tri-Cities Survivors of Suicide group has relocated to Boone's Creek Christian Church; the move may have played a role in the group's increased attendance.
- 3000 church bulletin inserts were distributed alongside and outside regional training sessions.
- The region's next project includes outreach to local funeral homes.
- Shearer mentioned that in addition to the regional SPAE, the local VA coordinated several Suicide Prevention Awareness Month activities in September.

East Tennessee Region

- Young announced that turnout at all three regional SPAEs was excellent.

- About 250 students attended Dr. Frese's lecture at UT-Knoxville.
- The Newport event included a QPR session and the presentation of the mayoral Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation; the event was covered in the local newspaper.
- Young observed that most participants at the Newport SPAE had not been involved with TSPN previously.
 - Newport was selected as a location due to a large increase in suicides in Cocke County.
- The region procured five Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamations, some from cities and some from counties.
- The region hosted numerous QPR training sessions and gave out a considerable number of church bulletin inserts.
- Regional members circulated Spanish-language NSPL literature and posters within Hamblen County, which has a large Hispanic population.
- The region continues to support the Suicide Grievors Support Group and is considering organizing a second one for the region outside of Blount County.

Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance

- Alliance chair Shugart provided details on the Maryville SPAE and about the regional observance of Mental Illness Awareness Week last month.
- The Alliance recently underwent a restructuring process. Typically, about 25 or 30 people attend each meeting, but only a small core group does much work on Alliance projects. To this end the group organized three smaller subgroups: Awareness, Advocacy, and Activities.

Upper Cumberland Region

- Regional chair Bartlett reported on the annual Light of Hope event, which served as the regional SPAE.
- This year the event returned to the Putnam County Courthouse.
- Shortly before the event, a local funeral home donated tents for use in the event of rain.
- 75 people attended the event, the best ever for a Light of Hope event.
- Regarding the Cookeville Chick-fil-A promotion, there has been a disagreement with the restaurant as to the percentage of profits to be donated; Ridgway is assisting regional members in resolving this issue.
- The region continues to coordinate local training sessions; all participants receive copies of the local resource directory.
- Bilbrey secured the donation of billboard space from Lamar Advertising through a contact at Livingston Regional Hospital.

Southeast Region

- Regional chair Tatum reported that effective as of November, the regional meeting would shift to the first Thursday of each month at 10 AM. The meeting venue will move to the Downtown Chattanooga YMCA, located at 301 West Sixth Street in Chattanooga.
- This location was selected due to the involvement of several YMCA staff in the regional Network.

- The regional SPAE at the Cleveland YMCA took the form of a “resource expo” inside the building due to heavy rain. Dan T’Wanda was on hand with the Lifeline truck.
- 308 people have participated in regional training sessions; all but 25 of these received training in September.
- Tatum is very excited about the upcoming follow-up session for the Chattanooga Crisis Intervention Team (CIT).

Mid-Cumberland Region

- Regional chair Yarbrough reports that 75 people were at the regional SPAE at the Centennial Park Event Shelter. She recalls the event was to include a walk which was cancelled due to pending rain. As it turned out, the rain held off until after the event.
- She acknowledged Varney’s efforts to have the Fort Campbell Honor Guard present at the event.
- The Resiliency Walk at Fort Campbell had a good turnout, also in spite of rain.
- The region’s Survivor Committee is investigating suicide jumps from two major bridges in Nashville, with the intent of installing an NSPL marker.
- The region is working on a panel discussion for survivors, to be called, “Suicide: Why Did They Do It?” The event will be promoted through local newspapers and radio.
- The region’s Law Enforcement Committee continues providing materials and training sessions to local police departments, most recently within Davidson, Rutherford, and Williamson.
- Yarbrough provided information on the “Older Lives Count” conference in May, which was followed up with mailings to senior-serving agencies.
- The region has established solid relations with the Metro Nashville Health Department.
- The Mid-Cumberland Region staged two Nashville Sounds exhibits during July and August.
- Yarbrough also referred back to the faith-based conference she mentioned earlier, deferring to Hamer on this point.
 - Hamer reports that the conference planning committee is working with twenty different community churches towards the development of an event tentatively set for March 15.
 - Efforts are being made to engage local youth in the event.
 - The auditorium at the Lentz Public Health Center in Nashville will host the event.
 - Bishop and Pastor Young of the Healing Center are involved in the planning process.
 - The Committee is currently reaching out to additional African-American houses of worship in the Nashville area and responding to their feedback regarding what they want out of the conference.
- Johnson submitted a report on her recent efforts on behalf of the Network:
 - She operated an exhibit at the St. Clair Senior Center’s Fall Health Carnival, which was attended by 310 people. She distributed several TSPN/TLC items, included the TLC hand sanitizer bottles.

- She also ran an exhibit at the October 6 VA training session at the suggestion of Leslie Murray, the center's Suicide Prevention Coordinator.
- She is also participating in "In Your Own Voice" a multi-week NAMI seminar on how to tell one's story of recovery.

South Central Region

- Chastain Beal reported that 100 people attended the regional SPAE, including three local mayors.
- These mayors and those from eight other counties signed off on Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamations; a contact in the local TDOH office was influential in this effort.
- Since the last Advisory Council meeting, 356 people participated in local training sessions coordinated by TSPN volunteers.
- Chastain Beal showed off the latest POS-FFOS cookbook, which is currently available for purchase.

Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force

- Arnell did not provide a formal report, but did provide a written account to Enlow.
- No suicides have been reported thus far for the year, although 29 attempts have been noted.
- 23 Marshall County corrections officers received training on October 8 and November 12.
- 25 students from Columbia State Community College have also received training.
- Roughly 110 students in the nursing technology program at Martin Methodist College will participate in a session on December 8 in conjunction with TLC.

Hickman County Suicide Prevention Task Force

- Harris reported on the Task Force's increasing involvement in Perry County in the wake of increased suicide numbers there.
- The group worked with the local Coordinated School Health office to refine the school system's suicide prevention training, reformatting it for small-group presentation.
- The Task Force contributed a Powerpoint presentation incorporating incorporating figures from Hickman County Middle School's 2007 Youth Behavior Risk Survey suicide. The presentation was made to all guidance counselors in the Hickman County school system on July 15. The counselors in turn assisted in making the presentation to all teachers in the system on August 8.
- The presentation was made to local guidance counselors on July 8 and received very positive feedback.
- The Task Force ran its annual depression screening exhibits at the Civitan Car Show and Hickman Community Hospital. 28 people were screened through these venues; while most were recommended for referral, none required emergency action.
- Harris noted there were several people who had participated in a screening last year who came back to see how they were doing compared to the previous year—a heartening demonstration of self-care.

Rural West Region

- Regional chair Henning-Rowan reports that rainy weather forced the relocation of the regional SPAE from Unity Park to the lobby of the Carl Perkins Civic Center.
- Steve Bowers of E Plus TV emceed the event, which included a performance by the Rose Hill Middle School Dancers.
- Most of the county mayors signed off on Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamations.
- 275 people participated in area training sessions since the last meeting, all of who received resource directories.
- Regional members have flagged several counties that need additional focus, possibly using the church bulletin inserts.
- Regional members participated in interviews with local radio station 101.5 and two local newspapers.
- The top regional priority involves reestablishing a survivor's group and increased collaboration with regional chairs.

Memphis/Shelby County Region

- Regional chair M. Tullis summarized recent collaboration with the University of Memphis (a recent GLSMA grantee and Co-Host sponsor of the regional SPAE) via the Memphis STEPS (Suicide Training, Education, and Prevention Services) program. She acknowledged the efforts of Pamela Cogdal and Theresa Okwumabua in coordinating this event.
- The observance was emceed by Kym Clark of Action News 5, who also interviewed local members after the event.
- The region participated in the regional NAMI 5K walk.
- The region provided materials at the Discovery Records Health Fair, the Senior Awareness Fair at Bethel Grove, and the Veterans Prevention Awareness Day event.
- An in-service training session was held at Houston Levee High School in August.
- Regional members, particularly Michael LaBonte, oversaw numerous QPR training sessions, which included provision of resource directories and/or church bulletin inserts.

Review of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

- Leonard asked for members to review the minutes from the June retreat for errors.
 - M. Tullis reported having already briefed Enlow on two corrections by e-mail ahead of the meeting.
 - Also, Johnson noted a minor typo ON BYU.
- Chastain Beal motioned for approval of the minutes with these changes, Arnell seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

Closing Remarks

- Ridgway and Leonard announced that shortly before today's meeting, Bernard Barton of the Upper Cumberland Region resigned in protest after learning he was not selected as the new regional chair. Barton will receive a letter from the central office confirming his intent to resign.

- Ridgway reminded those present to turn in their name tags and plates, marking any corrections for later editing.

Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:09 PM.