



## Bridge Rail Foundation Newsletter

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### Raise the Rail—Stop the Suicides

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#### EIR Out in June—Hearings in July—Stay Tuned

The long delayed hearings on an Environmental Impact Report for the new safety rail—or in district lingo "suicide deterrent"—on the Golden Gate Bridge will be held this July, bridge officials have told BRF supporters. The Draft EIR itself should be out in June.

Engineering tests were completed last year—demonstrating that it was possible to provide a taller safety rail on the bridge and *improve* the ability of the bridge to withstand high winds. The EIR is the next step and these hearings will be an important opportunity to impress upon all concerned the urgency of this matter.

Dates and locations are to be announced—we will have a special bulletin out as soon as the dates are made public. Plan to come and **make your voice heard**.

#### Get updates directly from GGB

The bridge district has an email system that will send updates and announcements from time to time—including the dates and locations of the EIR hearings.

[Click here to sign up for bridge district email announcements](#)



#### Families to Meet

In preparation for the upcoming release of an EIR on the bridge district's "suicide deterrent" proposals, the subsequent hearings and to report on recent BRF activities, President Dave Hull has called a **May 17 special meeting** of surviving family members. For more information, click [here](#) to send a note and request the details.

#### Organizing Support in the North Bay

Marin and Sonoma County supporters of BRF have moved forward to secure endorsements for Raising the Rail in the North Bay. Spurred on in large part by the death in January of Marin teenager Casey Brooks, a committee has formed and started outreach to cities and towns in the two counties. "I believe we can demonstrate powerful support for raising the rail," said committee chair Ken Holmes.

If you would like to join in this effort—tell us. [Click here](#) to send us a note.



#### Fighting Back

Last month we reported that a UCSB professor had sent the bridge district a long academic paper challenging the idea that suicide barriers save lives. Since then we have word that a number of substantial challenges to his assertions will be in soon. Researchers from UCSF and USC are writing specific responses and we anticipate a formal response from both the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). In addition, two noted authors on the subject of suicide have expressed interest in responding. Outside the US, we have review and comment from two Canadian organizations concerned with suicide prevention and a researcher in the UK. The Bridge Rail Foundation will, of course post a complete formal response, and there may be more.

#### Press Notes

##### Sound Familiar?

. . . its low guardrails notoriously accessible to anyone with an inclination to climb over them. . .



##### Sound Unfamiliar?

. . . project to be completed by 2009 will increase the height of the side barriers and make it much harder to jump from the bridge.

Excerpts from a *New York Times* article by Peter Applabome, April 6 2008.

There have been thirty suicides from New York's Tappan Zee Bridge in the last decade—the Golden Gate Bridge has that many in a single year.

##### The Horror Lingers

--It's been three years since Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Deputy Ken Rushing watched 18-year-old Andrew Popp lean

The image pops into the veteran deputy's mind at odd moments, including when he was driving his children to Disneyland recently.

"It got quiet in the car and I saw him again, right before he jumped," Rushing said.

. . . his experience made him realize he couldn't save everyone. But if barriers deter some suicidal people, he said, that would mean fewer traumatized people left behind. "Every time I hear someone is on the bridge, my heart just sinks" Rushing said. "Sometimes we seem calloused in the way we do our job. But believe me, no cop wants to see what I saw that morning"

--Catherine Saillant's 4/21/08 article in the *Los Angeles Times*. Deputy Sheriff Rushing is active in the effort to raise the safety rail on the Cold Spring Bridge.

#### We Need Your Support

The next few months are absolutely essential to the effort to raise the rail and stop the suicides from the Golden Gate Bridge. Critically important the hearings and bridge district decisions are all to take place within the next year. In addition there will be a number of public events to push for raising the rail on the bridge. We are working hard—but this all takes money—and we need your support. If you have not already done so, please consider a contribution to the Bridge Rail Foundation. **Contribute on-line**—our on-line contribution link is in the box below, please go there now and donate what you can.

#### Help Us Fight to Raise the Rail

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**Volunteer**—Click [here](#) to send us a note.

**Request a Speaker**—Click [here](#) to tell us of a venue for a speaker.

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**Contribute**—Click below to donate online (deductible for federal tax purposes)

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