



Bridge Rail Foundation Newsletter

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October 2009
Vol 3 #4

Stop the Suicides at the Golden Gate Bridge

Spread the word—send this on to a friend.



2009 Voice Award to Kevin Hines

Last night in Los Angeles, The 2009 national **Spotlight Voice Award** for efforts to educate the public about suicide and its prevention was given to John Kevin Hines. Kevin is well known to many of us in the fight to stop suicides at the bridge. Since surviving his own jump, he has been a loud and aggressive voice pushing the district to action.

Kevin has taken his work far beyond the bridge struggle. As a national speaker on suicide prevention, Kevin has traveled the country with his message of hope and survival. He has been before hundreds of colleges campuses and addressed assemblies of combat veterans in every branch of the service. Always frank about his own mental illness and suicide attempt, his voice is one that has been heard by many. Congratulations Kevin.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Mental Health Services, sponsor the Voice awards.

Media Coverage and Copycat Suicides--New Data



Bertrand Roehner, a researcher at the University of Paris recently looked for links between media coverage of the Golden Gate Bridge suicide problem and actual suicides. We know there is a link between sensationalistic coverage or media accounts that glorify suicide--and subsequent imitation or copycat suicides. However a review of suicide death patterns against other media coverage had not been done.

Roehner looked at the individual dates of suicide from the Bridge--based on data from the Marin Coroner's office and information developed by BRF volunteer Dayna Whitmer. These data were run against two distinct media events--the San Francisco Chronicle's fall 2005 series on bridge suicides and the 2006 release of Eric Steel's film "The Bridge". The data shows **no evidence of an imitation effect.**

Roehner also looked at overall trends in suicide from the bridge and the Bay Area. Since 1980 the average yearly number of Bay Area suicides has gone down, while the **deaths at the bridge have remained about the same.**



EIR-- Still Waiting

Our last update suggested the Environmental Impact Report on the suicide deterrent net would be out this month. However, it appears negotiations between the bridge and CalTrans continue and the document is not yet ready. Once this document is complete it will be made public and then go before the GGB board--perhaps in November.

Updates are posted to the GGB web site--[Click Here](#) for the link or to sign up for the GGB's email notification service.

The EIR is one step in a three remaining steps to build the net. Advocates are also working to securing funds for the final design and to fund the actual construction.

Successful "Whose Shoes?" Exhibit-- Thank You AFSP



On Saturday September 26, 1,300 pairs of shoes were laid out in an orderly display to commemorate the lives lost to Golden Gate Bridge suicides. For the second year now, volunteers from the Bridge Rail Foundation organized "Whose Shoes?" as part of the "Out of Darkness Community Walk"—an annual fundraiser for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

Shoes from every walk of life were on display, representing the occupations of individuals lost to bridge suicides. Donated shoes have been collected from many individuals, including family and friends of persons who jumped from the bridge. As with last year, the WWI soldier's boots were there to represent the first known suicide, while survivor family members added shoes to memorialize the most recent deaths.

"Whose Shoes?" is a flexible exhibit and arrangements can be made for additional displays. To send us ideas for suggested venues -- [Click Here.](#)

Delay in Transportation Bill



Many of our supporters were dismayed to hear of the delay in the Federal Transportation bill-- which we hoped might allow funds for the safety net on the Golden Gate Bridge. So, FYI--

"Everybody wants to spend \$400 billion or \$500 billion on a new bill. James Oberstar's bill costs \$450 billion. There's no way we're going to find that money now. Eighteen months gives us the opportunity to help the economy get a little better so we can pass a very comprehensive bill."

--US Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood
in the October 2009 issue of the AARP Bulletin

Marin Deficit

Word is **Marin Suicide Prevention and Community Counseling** is facing a large deficit next fiscal year. They have formed a steering committee to look at options to keep the services going. To request more information, email MSPCC by [Clicking Here.](#)

Help Us Fight to Install the Net

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