



Bridge Rail Foundation Newsletter

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BRF Whose Shoes? Exhibit at AFSP Walk Out of Darkness--Saturday 9/26

Once again, this year's *AFSP Walk Out of Darkness* at Crissy Field will feature 1,300 pairs of shoes and boots stacked together, symbolizing the confirmed suicides at the bridge. BRF volunteers are organizing the display and will attend the walk at the invitation of AFSP and local organizers.

The annual AFSP fundraiser is **Saturday, September 26**. Registration starts at 8:30 am while the walk starts at 10 am and concludes at noon.

On line registration is open until noon on Friday. [Click Here](#) to register or for directions to Crissy Field.

Funding the Net--a Slow Summer, But Progress Still

In June we got word that the effort to amend the new transportation act--and allow funding of suicide prevention rails and nets--had stalled. The bill itself was put on an 18-month cycle for consideration while congress and the administration tended to other matters.



But things change--by the end of summer an aggressive House committee chairman--with the direct support of most committee members--had changed some minds and consideration of the bill is now expected to progress over the next year.

Meanwhile support for the suicide prevention amendment has grown. Survivor advocates have visited all Bay Area House members' offices and begun reaching members in the Central Valley. California Assemblyman Tom Ammiano was recently in Washington and spoke with the House committee chair, Rep James Oberstar of Minnesota.

Stay Tuned.



EIR update--look for action in October

Our last newsletter suggested the Environmental Impact Report on the suicide deterrent net would be out in June. No such luck. It appears CalTrans--which recently took over EIR reviews from the Feds--required more time. Word is the EIR should now be out in October.

Once the EIR is complete, advocates will look for funds to take the preliminary designs into finished form. This step is independent of the funding proposal before Congress and can proceed while the effort before Congress is ongoing.

Book Watch

Two journalists who have played a key role in describing and expanding the public's knowledge of the GGB suicide problem have recently published books. They are:

Tad Friend. Tad's 2003 essay on the bridge suicide problem and GGB's years of inaction was published in *The New Yorker*. He is directly responsible for kick-starting the movement for a GGB suicide barrier this decade. His writing inspired Eric Steel to capture a full year of the problem in his film *The Bridge*. In addition, a group of local psychiatrists and suicide prevention advocates began pushing the Bridge District to act after Friend's article was published.

His new book is a family memoir, *Cheerful Money: Me, My Family and the Last Days of Wasp Splendor*.

Joan Ryan. Joan was a popular writer and columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. She covered the early hearings on the bridge suicide problem with a unique insight into the impact of suicide on surviving friends and family members.

Her recent book, *The Water Giver: The Story of a Mother, a Son and Their Second Chance*, is a reflection on her own family experience.



BRF & Coroner Release New Stats

The Bridge Rail Foundation in conjunction with the Marin Coroner's office has released an updated statistical profile of bridge suicides. Covering 15 years, this data is the most extensive ever presented--detailing the demographics of over 300 jumpers. One unexpected finding: over 70 % of all bridge jumps are witnessed--by tourists, bridge workers, even boaters sailing under the bridge.

The full report is on our website; [Click Here](#) for the link. There are two documents under the "Fifteen-Year Study on Golden Gate Bridge Suicides" which may interest you.

Help Us Fight to Install the Net

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