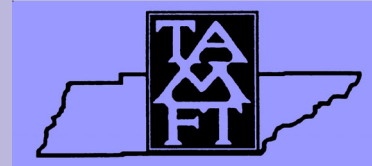


The TAMFT Marriage and Family NEWS

April 2008



Tennessee Division of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

From the President . . .

By: Linda Oxford, LCSW, LMFT

As songwriter **Johnny Rivers** observed, "The only thing that's permanent is change." As marriage and family therapists, that truth can be both our greatest source of hope and our greatest challenge. We strive to balance the necessity for change with the desire for stability, seek to open up new possibilities without compromising integrity, and honor our history while embracing our future.

The members of the TAMFT Board are very much involved in the dance of change and stability. At the TAMFT Board meeting on February 21st, the board reviewed and updated the division's Strategic Plan, began the process of developing action steps for implementation of

the division priorities identified through use of the Division balanced Scorecard in our October 2007 Board meeting, and began revision of our division's by-laws to better serve our association's present and future needs. TAMFT has specifically targeted 1) membership recruitment, engagement and retention, 2) leadership recruitment and development, 3) having well-defined annual advocacy agendas, and 4) ensuring the financial health and viability of the division as targets for focused attention in 2008.

At the AAMFT Spring Leadership Conference and legislative meetings in Washington, DC on April 3-6, 2008, I met with the health and education legislative assistants of

couples. We would like to thank everyone who attended the conference in February. It is the energy of the participants that makes our conference a success every year. In terms of participants, we had a very good turnout, ending the weekend with 88 participants. If you didn't get a chance to come, mark your calendar for next year. The dates are February 27-28, 2009. James Alexander, Ph.D. will be delivering the plenary address.

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Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker and Representative Steve Cohen to advocate for the federal policy priorities of AAMFT. AAMFT's 2008 legislative priorities remain the same as last year's: inclusion of MFTs as approved service providers in Medicare and NCLB (No Child Left Behind) legislation.

This year's Spring Leadership Conference featured presentations on division level staffing issues, budget and financial concerns, legal issues, program priorities, and website support. The focus was on having an infrastructure adequate to promoting the health and growth of the state divisions, which is currently a major focus of the TAMFT Board and a critical agenda item for our division's June 13 Board meeting.

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2008 Annual Conference Report and Looking Ahead to 2009

As usual, the conference was a wonderful chance to meet new colleagues and to catch up on old ones. Our workshop presenters did a great job. Brent Atkinson was an engaging and energetic presenter, whose plenary address was full of valuable information in working with

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Annual Conference Report

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He will speak on Functional Family Therapy. He is developer of Functional Family Therapy. Functional Family Therapy is an empirically- validated, family based intervention program for at-risk and juvenile justice involved youth. Its effectiveness in treating delinquent youth has been recognized by The Office of Juvenile Justice, The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, The Center for Disease Control and Prevention; and the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence.

We would like to take this opportunity to once again honor our award recipients:

Dedicated Service to the Division:

Richard Gillespie

Distinguished Service to Families:

Youth Villages

Legislator of the Year: **Roy Herron**

Lifetime Achievement Award: **Judith Roney**

TAMFT is proud to honor each of these recipients for their tireless and energetic work on the behalf of Tennessee's families and our profession. ■

Legislative News

By: Richard Gillespie, M.Div.

The Legislative Committee welcomes new members from across the state. You may contact them with any legislative concerns you may have. They are Linda Conrad (Middle Tennessee), Brad Bull (East Tennessee), Polly Coe (Middle Tennessee), Robert Harrison (East Tennessee), Robbie Hutchens (Middle Tennessee), Deborah Martin (Middle Tennessee), and Terry Browning (West Tennessee).

One of the jobs of this committee is to monitor legislation at the federal and state level which might affect our profession and the families we serve. We advocate for the needs of families and our profession. We are currently involved in a number of projects, including the following:

1) The 2008 TAMFT Legislative Priority is to create a state government job classification for licensed marriage and family therapists. We are coordinating with national AAMFT legislative office in this regard. We are already advocating for this with the

Departments of Mental Health, Corrections, and Children's Services.

2) We are coordinating with the national AAMFT office in the effort to get licensed marriage and family therapists credentialed as providers with Medicare. We have focused on advocating with our federal representatives to co-sponsor this legislation. At this point, Congressman Bart Gordon and Tanner of Tennessee co-sponsor this legislation.

3) We have strongly advocated with our Senators to be approved providers for mental health services for school children in the renewal of the "No Child Left Behind" legislation.

4) We have advocated for parity for mental health coverage in insurance. Most of our Congresspersons and both Tennessee Senators have co-sponsored this legislation.

5) On the state level, we have taken part in the Children's Mental Health Study of the Select Committee on Children and Youth of the Tennessee legislature. We have completed the needs survey for this study and have

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AAMFT Request

AAMFT Requests Member Stories

AAMFT has asked the Tennessee division to do some "ground level" data gathering to help inform the Council of Division Presidents' Task Forces that are currently in place. Specifically, we would like member stories from our membership regarding two strategic issues.

1) Members planning to retire in the next 5-10 years.

2) Members working in employed

settings rather than private practice.

If you are planning on retiring in the next 5-10 years or you work in any employment setting other than private practice, TAMFT would like to hear from you. Please email Catherine Robbins, TAMFT Administrative Coordinator at admincoord@tnamft.org with your answers to the survey questions. We need to have these stories by **May 8, 2008**.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this.

For your convenience, we have placed the survey questions on TAMFT's website. Please go to

www.tnamft.org and look in the "quick links" section on the right hand side of the home page. ■

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East Tennessee

By: Ron Schumann, M.A.

Greetings from East Tennessee

The year 2008 started at a record-setting pace and has maintained that speed ever since! I can still remember people telling me when I was a kid not to grow up too fast. That really made no sense to me at all. I'm not sure I fully comprehend the meaning even still, but I have realized how fast time passes and how quickly things can change. Sometimes we want certain times to pass quickly and we are ready for change. Other times we just have to hold on because time is passing us by and change is too hard. We all know that in our culture, there is a high value on efficiency, action, speed – and results! Those who do, do. And those who don't? Sometimes they get trampled.

As I hurriedly write this newsletter article before the deadline, I find myself in the 'don't get trampled' mode. Like most of us, it seems like there is more to do than time to do it! A piece of advice I read once says, "When things are in chaos and you are in a frenzy, ask yourself, 'What is RIGHT about now?' Chances are you already know what is wrong!"

We all know that if we focus on what is wrong, then that's what we'll see! So... what is RIGHT about now? Our Tennessee Association is poised for great things. There have been many members who have stepped up and are willing to serve in leadership positions on the board and who are leading and serving in great ways throughout our state. Also, we will be the host state for the annual AAMFT conference in October in Memphis. What a great opportunity for TAMFT to show our volunteer spirit!

At the other end of the state, we are pleased to welcome home a native

Tennessean, Linda High, who has been serving AAMFT as the former Staff Attorney. Linda is back home in East Tennessee and will be leading some of our East Tennessee Networking Luncheons with an ethics presentation entitled, "Stump the Lawyer". We are pleased to have Linda with us, and I am sure we will benefit from her expertise.

I heard a story about the days when transportation was mostly limited to buying tickets for a stagecoach. The interesting part of the story was the little known fact that there were 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class tickets available for purchase. I wondered what the difference could be... after all, it was a stagecoach! Apparently, a 3rd class ticket meant that when the stagecoach reached a hill, you would have to get out and help push the stagecoach up the hill. A 2nd class ticket meant you had to get out and walk up the hill (no pushing required). A 1st class ticket meant something altogether different. With a 1st class ticket it was not about what you had to do; it was about what you didn't have to do! You didn't have to get out of the stagecoach and certainly didn't have to push.

At this point in the life of TAMFT, I have realized that a 1st class ticket is not really the best ticket. Yes, you do get to stay on-board and don't have to push. A 2nd class ticket is not really ideal in terms of the work to be done. I would submit that a 3rd class ticket is what can take TAMFT to great places. All that is in place this year can be a bit overwhelming, but not if we all get out and push. Yes, the pace of the world may seem to take us over and pass our little stagecoach. It's easy to see all that is against us. As for me, I plan to push. See you on the trail!

News and Noteworthy

Tutorial on Legislative Advocacy

We are asking our members to be more active on issues that affect families and our MFT profession. We will let you know when issues come up about which the AAMFT legislative office would like us to contact our representatives. On the federal level, this includes initiatives on Medicare, parity for mental health in insurance, and "No Child Left Behind" legislation that would make LMFTs accredited providers.

There are several ways to contact your representative. Your state and federal representatives will take much more notice of letters, emails, and phone calls from someone in their own district. They will generally ignore anyone from outside their district. On the Internet, you can use www.Congress.org and the www.aamft.org to contact your representative. When using www.Congress.org, you put in your zip code and address and it will locate your representatives. You can then email them about your concerns, giving your contact information. Another way is to go on the website of your Congresspersons and Senators. They usually have an email link that allows you to leave a message for them. You can also go by the local district office of your federal and state representative and let them know how you feel about issues.

Another way to contact your federal representative is to go to the www.aamft.org website and go to the political portion that mentions Medicare. The website will help you find your representatives and also provides sample emails, sample letters, and material for phone calls to legislators on specific issues.

When you contact your representatives on Medicare specifically, it is important to ask them to support and co-sponsor our federal legislation that would allow LMFTs to be credentialed as mental health providers under Medicare. It is important to refer to the specific bill numbers that we are asking our representative to co-sponsor. It is S921 in the Senate. Currently neither

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AAMFT Guidelines for Elections

AAMFT has asked the divisions to publish the national rules governing elections. Candidates for AAMFT Elections are currently on the AAMFT website and ballots will be mailed in June.

7.00 Campaigning

7.01 Campaigning. AAMFT wishes to encourage wide membership participation in elections, and therefore does not prohibit organized efforts of campaigning. However, the following rules pertain regarding campaigning.

7.011 Endorsements. The Board affirms the right of individual members and groups of individuals to write personal letters or make other personal contacts on behalf of specific candidates for elections to association office. However, endorsements are prohibited by any governance unit at the Central or Divisional level. For example:

7.0111 Endorsements by divisional officers. Divisional officers may endorse only as long as they identify themselves as an individual member, not as a representative of the division.

7.0112 Endorsements by members of governance units. Any AAMFT or divisional governance unit member may endorse a candidate as long as he or she identifies him or herself only as an individual AAMFT member, not as a member of the governance unit (for example, a member of the board or a commission, committee, council or task force).

7.0113 Endorsements by special interest groups. AAMFT does not have jurisdiction over any group of members that is not funded by AAMFT and has no official status in governance (such as a caucus or specific interest group) and hence, such groups may endorse candidates.

7.012 Defamation. Candidates are prohibited from making derogatory or defamatory statements about their opponents.

7.013 False, Fraudulent, or Misleading Statements. Candidates are prohibited from making false, fraudulent, or misleading statements about themselves or their opponents.

7.02 AAMFT-Related Communication Vehicles: Central, Divisional and Chapter newsletters, list serves, web pages, and other electronic media are AAMFT related communication vehicles, and therefore must make every effort to be fair. Candidate web pages may not be linked to any AAMFT or divisional communication vehicle.

7.021 Fairness Guidelines. Coverage of nominees for an office must be timely, equal and fair. (For example, the same questions must be put to each nominee). Elections coverage may include questions put to candidates and their responses, biographies, pictures, and statements by the candidates.

7.022 Publication prohibitions. Examples of prohibited activities in AAMFT publications include:

7.0221 President's column. A divisional president's column cannot support a candidate.

7.0222 Letters to the editor. Letters to the editor in support of any

candidate or slate of candidates will not be published or disseminated.

7.0223 Paid advertisements. Paid campaign advertisements for candidates are prohibited in these publications.

7.0224 Editorial endorsements. Editorial endorsements of individual candidates are prohibited.

7.03 Dissemination of Campaigning and Publications Rules and Alleged Violations of Such Rules

7.031 Dissemination. As a pro-active effort on the part of the Association and the Elections Council to prevent complaints about violating campaign rules, the following dissemination efforts will be undertaken annually:

7.0311 Dissemination to divisions and governance units. The Elections Council will ensure that prior to each election, the rules regarding campaigning and publications are put out over the divlist on the web to division leaders, which will also remind them that it is their responsibility to notify their division newsletter editors of these rules. Further, the editor Family Therapy News will be asked to include the rules regarding campaigning in the annual story which highlights the candidates.

7.0312 Dissemination to candidates. The AAMFT Elections Council will send to each candidate a copy of the Elections Council's Policies and Procedures pertaining to campaigning and publications rules. Candidates will be asked to sign an agreement to abide by these rules.

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From the President..

(Continued from page 1)

A very real concern for our association at both national and divisional levels is that, as an organization, we are growing older with the majority of our clinical members in their forties and fifties, and many nearing retirement age. Another major shift that has occurred over the past decade or so is that the majority of our members now are employed by an agency rather than being in private practice.

AAMFT has asked the state divisions for help in determining member retirement

trends and how the priorities and needs of MFTs working in agency and other employment settings differ from those of those in private practice. In response, TAMFT is soliciting your help in determining 1) the number of our members planning to retire within the next ten years, and 2) how the needs of employed members differ from those of members in private practice. Please provide feedback to us either by completing the survey questions on www.tnamft.org or responding to the survey earlier sent to you via e-mail.

Change is good; but it's also good to have a plan to accommodate it. As always, I and the other members of the TAMFT

Board welcome your input and participation as we seek to advance the practice and profession of marriage and family therapy in Tennessee.

Finally, don't forget to make plans now to attend the 2008 AAMFT Annual Conference, which will be held in Memphis, Tennessee, on October 30-November 2. Our division will have a hospitality booth at the conference and our members will assist in hosting the event. Essentially, our contribution to the event will be to make everyone feel welcome and show them a good time!

Student/Associate Representative

By: Elizabeth Lashower, M.M.F.T.

Every year the TAMFT sponsors a student paper competition. All entries into the competition receive ½ off of registration fees to the TAMFT Annual Conference. The first and second place winners of the competition will receive free registration for the 2008 TAMFT conference and will be awarded a certificate and the opportunity to read a brief abstract of their paper at the conference. Papers may be written about a topic of the student's choosing. Students do not need to be enrolled in a marital and family therapy program; however, their papers must include the family systemic perspective which is characteristic of the Marriage and Family Therapy approach. Judging these entries are three AAMFT clinical members representing East, Middle and West Tennessee. This year the number of papers entered was doubled that of last year.

The judges unanimously recognized Mary Allison Cates's paper on Marital Therapy with Chronically Ill Couples as the winning paper. Placing second in the competition was Supportive Marital Therapy for Parents of Special-Needs Children by Angela K. Bath. The following is an abstract of the winning paper, Marital Therapy with Chronically Ill Couples:

"Marital therapy with couples facing chronic illness has the power to bring order out of chaos, renewal out of pain,

and healing out of brokenness. It is worth risking the pain that is inevitably tied to intimacy. This paper provides a review of current literature on the sparsely examined topic of therapy with couples facing one partner's chronic physical illness (Rolland, 1994, p. 327-328). Key issues confronting such couples include emotional and sexual intimacy, the search for spirituality and meaning, patients' levels of compliance with doctors' orders, life-cycle interruptions, cognitive impairment, extra-marital affairs, and the unique concerns of chronic illness gay and lesbian couples. Therapeutic concerns such as counter-transference and the importance of empathy are presented as well as an array of methods used to facilitate difficult discussions such as cognitive-behavioral, emotionally focused, existential, and social constructionist therapies. The paper concludes with a suggestion of an integrated model for therapy with those who face chronic illness."

Congratulations to both Mary Allison Cates and Angela K. Bath for their winning papers.

TAMFT Newsletter
Editor:
Catherine C. Robbins,
M.Ed.
newsletter@tnamft.org

Elections Committee

By: Carole Webb, M.S.

Nominations for TAMFT Board Sought

The TAMFT Elections Committee is looking for a few good MFTs to join the TAMFT leadership. Nominations are being accepted for candidates to run for the following positions:

President-Elect: The President-elect will serve for a two-year term, succeeding to the office of President upon completion of the term. The President-elect serves in the absence of the President, and serves as the liaison with the conference committee. Candidate must be an AAMFT Clinical Member in good standing.

West Tennessee Representative: The West Tennessee representative is one of three Directors serving on the Board, supporting the membership of the division in that area of the state. The directors serve for 2 years, with staggered terms. Candidate must be an AAMFT Clinical Member from West Tennessee.

Student-Associate Representative: The Student Associate Representative is the only member of the board with a vote who is not a clinical member. He or she serves as a liaison between the board and the student/associate members of the division. This representative serves on the membership committee, and manages

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West Tennessee

By: Terry Browning, Ph. D.

It is great to have completed another successful conference. I don't think there is a friendlier, more relaxed conference anywhere. It was confirming to hear this from our speaker Dr. Brent Atkinson.

Here in West Tennessee, we are ending the year of monthly brown bag lunches on Monday, April 7 with speaker Michael McDonald, LCSW from the Adoption Center of the Mid-

South. He will be speaking on Attachment and Family Therapy. We continue to have a good turnout with each meeting. The meetings will resume in August 2008 at Harding University Graduate School of Religion. Keith Fussell has done a great job of facilitating our meetings and we are grateful for his work in this area.

I was part of several encouraging discussions about our growth potential in Marriage and Family therapy in Tennessee. Several initiatives were discussed during the

town hall meeting including seeking a state classification for MFT positions. If you are interested in getting more involved in the workings of TAMFT, opportunities exist within several committees including Legislative, Ethics and Elections. Please contact a TAMFT board member if you have a desire to serve on a committee or other opportunities within your organization.

This is a great time to serve and contribute to a stronger presence of MFT in Tennessee.

News and Noteworthy

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Over the six month period that we met, the boys opened up about their struggles, frustrations, and fears. It was in this setting that I saw how fragile yet resilient boys can be in the absence of a biological father. The group could have easily been a weekly pity party, but instead we utilized it as a chance to learn about manhood and locate assets important for success.

Hopefully the work we do as counselors, and the influences of other positive adults, will help these children and teens grow into productive, well-balanced adults as well as committed parents.

Dale Sadler is an LPCA, MHSP, as well as a Certified School Counselor. He lives in White House, TN and can be reached via email at dalesadler@yahoo.com.

Legislative Committee Request

As detailed in Richard Gillespie's legislative report, TAMFT is working with the Department of Education on the issue of school violence. To this end, we would like to identify a list of licensed marriage and family therapists across the state that are willing to work with their local school districts on this area in an advisory or contractual way. If this is an area of potential interest please contact Terry Browning at westTNrep@tnamft.org or Richard Gillespie at legislative@tnamft.org as soon as possible. This information would help determine how we may proceed in this area. You will be updated as it progresses.

Thanks,
Terry Browning
West Tennessee Representative
Legislative Committee Member

Elections Committee

(Continued from Page 5)

the student paper competition for the Annual Conference. Candidate must be an AAMFT Student or Associate Member in good standing.

Middle Tennessee Elections Committee Representative: The Middle Tennessee representative serves

Legislative News

(Continued from Page 2)

attended the committee meetings. This legislation would set up a well-coordinated, family centered, public mental health system for children and their families. We have presented research on the effectiveness of MFT and advocated for marriage and family therapists to be qualified providers in this system. I have attended these meetings as well as Robbie Hutchens.

6) We have started to collaborate with the Tennessee Department of Education about ways we can be of service to Tennessee in their effort to reduce school violence. Some of this involves grants and identifying marriage and family therapists near school systems who will help in this. We want to thank Brenda Dew for starting this project out and Terry Browning for carrying it forward.

7) We continue to work with the Department of Children's Services on implementing the Multi-response system to help children avoid state's custody through evaluation and treatment. We have also been able to present evidence to the Department of the effectiveness of marriage and family therapy in helping their families. Deborah Martin will be helping us further with this in the future. Randal Lea, Assistant Commissioner of DCS for Emerging Best Practices, spoke at our Town Hall Breakfast at the TAMFT 2008 Conference and is working with us on these concerns. ■

for a 3-year term, taking the chair of the committee and serving as a non-voting member of the board in the last year of the term. The Elections Committee conducts the elections for all the elected members of the board. Candidate must be an AAMFT Clinical Member in good standing.

Nominations are due to the elections committee by May 15. Send an email to Carole Webb, Elections Committee Chair at cresilience@bellsouth.net. ■

Elections Guidelines

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7.032 Alleged Violations. If alleged violations come to the attention of the Elections Council, the Council may choose to take the following actions:

7.0321 Complaints about individual AAMFT members. The Elections Council may choose to forward to the AAMFT Ethics Committee allegations of behavior by members which violate these rules, or also may choose to act as a complainant regarding such alleged violations to the AAMFT Ethics Committee.

7.0322 Complaints about AAMFT divisions. The Elections Council may choose to forward to the CDP Chair allegations of violations of these campaigning and publications rules by AAMFT divisions.

7.033 Contested Elections: If a candidate contests an election due to an alleged violation of elections procedures, the Elections Council will make a determination about the alleged violation via conference call with a majority of Elections Council Members within 4 working days. This conference call will be convened by the Elections Council Chair. The Elections Council will decide on a case by case basis: 1) if there has been a violation; 2) the effect(s) of the violation; 3) the effect(s) on the elections process; 4) the consequences for the violator(s) or whether a referral is necessary to the appropriate committee to determine the consequences for the violator(s) (e.g., the Ethics Committee or Judicial Committee); and 5) the elections procedures that will follow the violation, if any.

8.00 Violations of Campaign Rules.

8.01 Complaints. Complaints of alleged violation(s) of the policies and procedures contained in section 7.00 will be referred to the AAMFT Judicial Committee.

8.02 Consideration of Complaints by the Judicial Committee. The Judicial Committee shall consider complaints of alleged violations of campaign policies according to its established procedures. ■



Mark Your Calendars Now for TAMFT Lunches

Nashville Networking Lunches

11:00a.m. – 1:00p.m. (4th Fridays of every other month), The Middle Tennessee network meetings are now being held the fourth Friday of every second month. Record these in your day timer and plan to attend at Lipscomb University. If you are not on the email notification list, send a note to Cathy.Lincoln@lipscomb.edu and request to be added.

East Tennessee Networking Lunches

May 14, 2008, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m., Speaker: Linda High, former legal counsel for AAMFT presenting on “Stump the Lawyer - Ethics for MFT’s”. Contact Ron Schumann, Ball Camp Baptist Church, 2412 Ball Camp-Byington Road, Knoxville, TN 37931 Email at: ronbcbc@bellsouth.net or FAX at 865-693-2110 or phone at 865-693-1641x26 for more details.

Memphis Networking Lunches

First Monday, 11:45a.m. -1:00p.m., at Harding University Graduate School of Religion, 1000 Cherry Road, Memphis. Keith Fussell Coordinator, kfussell@sycamoreview.org. These Brown Bag Lunch and Networking opportunities offer excellent programs and CEUs.