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**From the President**  
**AAMFT Bylaws Vote**

In June, just a few short weeks away, AAMFT will ask each of us to vote on the proposed bylaws change. I cannot remember a vote more critical to the future of our Association. Many of you have followed this issue and the discussion around it. Others have not. This article is intended to outline the positives and negatives to each choice before us and for the Tennessee Division.

**Rationale:** After many years of careful assessment of the strengths, weaknesses and the overall health of the Association, the AAMFT Board of Directors came up with some vital perspectives that called for change in order to create the most **sustainable future** possible.

Some of the factors considered were:

- A number of the State/Provincial **Divisions are in economic distress** while others are heading in that direction. We are in good financial order but is that sustainable?
- The Boomer generation (of which I am a part) is moving off of the stage. Between 5 and 8 thousand of us will depart over the next 15 years. Given that void there is a need for **inviting the youngest generation of members (Millennials) into the process.**
- **AAMFT fee structure is the highest of our peers. Millennials are driven by choices and value for their investment.** Given that perspective, a lowered fee arrangement for AAMFT membership and adding options for voluntary participation would be a critical move in inviting them into, and keeping them a part of, the AAMFT family.
- **There is a need to allow members and potential members around the world to join in Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that would focus on a particular area of interest in Family Therapy.** Examples of such groups might be Narrative Therapy, Treating Military Families, Addressing LB GT issues, etc.

**Conclusion:** The AAMFT Board, understanding these and other factors, formed a group to study the options and then report back to the Board. After much deliberation, study, research and struggle the Board has recommended that we pursue a bylaws change. In essence the change would be to:

- **Make the AAMFT portion of dues the only mandatory fee.**
- **Allow for the creation of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) for affinity**

**purposes and for geographical regions. Both would require an additional fee but would be voluntary.**

- **The divisions might reconstitute in a variety of ways for vitality and sustainability as Geographical SIGs. Again membership would be voluntary and for a fee.**

**Pros and Cons:**

**1. Staying the same (Voting NO).** Pros: We would not have to face any form of change. We could pretend that all is well and that AAMFT will always be as healthy as it is today. We could continue as a Division knowing that the fees of Tennessee members will fund the Divisional efforts. That would be the case only so far as we do not see the exodus of the baby boomers. When they begin to retire from membership, the division will need to make changes to deal with the loss of revenue.

Cons: We lose traction with the millennial population for a sustainable future. We also would miss the opportunity to connect with MFT's around the world in any affinity group. We open the door for the end of AAMFT as a viable entity in the mental health arena. We begin a reactive position that will eventually need to deal with the baby boomer exodus.

**2. Moving Forward (Voting Yes).** Pros: We invite the Millennials to the table. We open the doorway for Divisions to re-form in much more viable and sustainable ways. We open the possibility for international connection with other MFTs around affinity issues. We reposition the Association to grow and take a rightful place at the table with other disciplines. The division would be in a preventative position rather than waiting to react to demographic changes.

Cons: Change would be forced upon us as a Division. We would have to court each of you as a potential member. We would have to create value-added scenarios to both connect initially and subsequently with you to sustain ourselves as a Geographical SIG. Potentially, our small family might be altered and enlarged. (this could also be a Pro). The division would need to engage in creative/entrepreneurial business planning, understanding and accounting for demographic shifts (this is simply good management).

**3. Forming a New Entity:** (Leaving AAMFT) Pros: We could chart our own future. We could keep things as they are (if we could afford to do so).

Cons: We would be in competition with AAMFT. We would have to fund ALL our efforts on all levels. We would no longer have the benefit of AAMFT's legal department or the support of Central if we were ever faced by expensive legal challenges to our scope of practice as MFTs in Texas are. We would be starting from ground level financially, relationally and functionally. We would have all of the Cons from #2. We would not have access to such things as liability insurance (the division would need to locate and contract with a separate vendor – not CPH), and the Approved Supervisor designation which is solely owned and franchised by AAMFT.

Based on a thorough dialog and represented by a unanimous vote, your **Tennessee Division Board of Directors has recommended that you vote "Yes" on the upcoming Bylaws issue.** We recognize that this will mean more work for us, more intentional effort in the coming days for connection and for providing resources and benefits and yet there is a renewed hope that AAMFT has a bright future given the proposed changes are enacted. Most importantly, AAMFT and members are best positioned to meet the known and unknown challenges in the coming years.

Barney Self, Ed.D, LMFT  
President, TNAMFT

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## Regional Reports



### West Tennessee Update

Keith Fussell, LMFT, LPC-MHSP  
West Tennessee Representative

#### Continuing Education in Memphis

Spring is flying by with our Memphis/West TN TNAMFT group. In April, Linda Oxford gave us an overview of the brand new AAMFT Code of Ethics. Linda is on the national board for AAMFT and is a great resource for us in Tennessee. In May, Tyler Rogers, Ph.D. gave us a very interesting presentation to a large group (over 30!) on Pragmatic/Experiential Marital Therapy including some very helpful worksheets from Dr. John Gottman. By the way Tyler Rogers is a new TNAMFT board member from West TN working with our student and pre-clinical members - see separate article in this newsletter.! We're taking June and July off for our continuing education meetings but on August 3 we will be back at Harding School of Theology with a presentation from Bobby Scott, LMFT from Addiction Campuses/Turning Point Recovery. Bobby will present on Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. Turning Point will also provide lunch for us on that day so we'll be doing RSVP's closer to August. We are scheduling the rest of our fall continuing education meetings so please give me any prospective presenters or let me know if you would to present a topic to our group.

#### Supervision in West TN

I've had questions about approved supervisors in the west TN area. In Memphis, Dr. Ed Gray at Harding School of Theology is available for LMFT supervision and Betty Shadish, LCSW with the VA is also an approved supervisor. Johnnie Welch, LMFT is an approved supervisor in Dyersburg. We do have at least two supervisors-in-training in the Memphis area who are actively doing approved supervision. George Tsirgiotis, LMFT, LPC-MHSP with the Christian Psychological Center is available. Also Britt Palmer, LMFT with the Transformation Center is also doing supervision. I would like to know if anyone else is doing approved supervision in the west TN area. This would be helpful for me to get the right information to LMFT candidates.

#### Welcome Tyler Rogers, Ph.D.

We welcome Tyler Rogers to the TNAMFT Board of Directors. Tyler was elected in December as one of our two Student/Pre-Clinical Representatives. Dr. Rogers is originally from Jackson, Mississippi. Tyler is under clinical supervision with Dr. Ed Gray at Harding School of Theology where he is also an adjunct professor of counseling. He is also on staff with Christ City Church in Memphis and has a private practice. Tyler has his MMFT from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS and his Ph.D. in counselor education from the University of Mississippi.

"As a counselor, Tyler seeks to thoughtfully integrate his Christian faith with his clinical practice to serve his clients a highly ethical and professional standard of care in an affordable manner. When he is not working with his clients, you can usually find Tyler having his faith tested by the Ole Miss Rebels, discussing wine, or building something in his backyard."

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## Middle Tennessee Update

Sara M. Hopkins, Ph.D., LMFT  
Middle Tennessee Representative

Things are going well in Middle Tennessee. Summer is here and that means long days and warm weather. We were happy to have David Hall and Anna Claire Lowder speak May 1<sup>st</sup> at Trevecca Nazarene University. This gave members an opportunity to spend time together and learn about professional boundaries and QPR a suicide prevention program.

We will be having our monthly meeting May 22<sup>nd</sup> at Tennessee Voices for Children. Dr. Julie Barnes will be speaking on "How to Create a Safety Plan Adolescents Will Follow".

Elizabeth Streight graciously offered to create a regular newsletter for our area. She will feature a local member, upcoming trainings, groups, and other opportunities of interest. Thank you Elizabeth for your time and effort on this.

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## East Tennessee Update

S. David Hall, PsyD, LMFT, LPC

Our last East TN regional meeting was a great time. David Hall presented on the dynamics of technology, addiction, and anxiety for teens and young adults. It was a day long CE seminar that we had in Knoxville on April 24, 2015. We had 25 different professionals joining us for the full day.

### Introducing the new East TN Regional Rep, Adam York

Adam York is a Licensed Marital and Family Therapist (LMFT) and work as the Facilitator and Community Liaison for the Relationship Rx Program, a free program with the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, that uses surveys and interviews with couples to provide a check-up for relationships that helps determine areas of concern that couples might want to focus and helps develop an action plan for doing so. Adam also has a practice with Ebenezer Counseling Services in Knoxville, TN. Adam received his M.A. from Johnson University in Marriage and Family/Professional Counseling. He enjoys going to the zoo with his amazing son or going out for some late night dessert with his even more amazing wife.

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## TNAMFT 2015 Annual Conference - Register Now!

Registrations are now being accepted for the 2015 TNAMFT Annual Conference. The conference was rescheduled from February. The new dates are October 30-31, 2015 at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs located at 700 Cool Springs Blvd., Franklin, TN.

Please use this link to register <http://tnamft.org/ohana/website/?p=95002393>



*Tennessee Association for Marriage and Family Therapy*

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