



PRESSRELEASE

The Glendon Association ■ 5383 Hollister Ave., Suite 270 ■ Santa Barbara, CA 93111

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Death on Cold Spring Bridge *Local Organization Answers Questions about Suicide*

Three days after Valentine's Day, a 60 year old man died after jumping from the Cold Spring Bridge.

Dr. Lisa Firestone states, "I am very sad to hear about this most recent suicide. It is especially sad due to the fact that a committee is working diligently to restrict this possibility in the future. However, this does not help this individual who ended his life, nor his family who will surely grieve this loss for the rest of their lives. My thoughts and wishes go out to them. There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that this was impulsive and could most likely have been prevented." This loss highlights the need for increased prevention efforts, including constructing barriers on bridges known to attract people in crisis, such as the Cold Spring Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge.

The Glendon Association Violence & Suicide Prevention Alliance is one of organizations involved with the committee established to erect a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge. This effort was initiated in response to the death of a 17 year old boy in 2005 and the other 42 suicides from the Cold Spring Bridge. The bridge is the leading site for fatalities in five counties.

Barriers on bridges are part of the national strategy to prevent suicide. Research has demonstrated that restriction of means is one of the most effective strategies to prevent loss of life. This is why this strategy is one of National Strategies approved by State of California. "A barrier serves as restricting an individual who is in crisis, impulsive, not thinking clearly, a clear stop sign which states, this is not a solution, we care about you", states Dr Lisa Firestone. Numerous studies have shown that individuals who survive a very serious suicide attempt are glad they did.

The last person known to attempt suicide from the Cold Spring Bridge was Russell Polan whom the Sheriffs Department successfully stopped. Russell stated, "I am happy to be alive today and grateful to the Sheriffs Department and the deputies who saved my life." Studies have shown that individuals who make very serious suicide attempts do not go on to die by suicide and go on to live.

"When someone is in crisis they have difficulty seeing solutions to their problems. This distress, combined with access to a means for committing suicide, creates a hazardous situation. As a society we need to invest ourselves in becoming more involved by learning how to identify signs and symptoms of individuals & families in crisis and how to help them," states Dr. Jamie Rotnofsky, Consultant to The Glendon Association.

Dr. Jamie Rotnofsky is a clinical/forensic psychologist and consultant who has worked with individuals in crisis for the past 20 years including working with the community of New York after 9/11/01. She is

a consultant to The Glendon Association and Pacifica Graduate Institute and works with the Santa Barbara Police Department Crisis & Hostage Negotiation Team.

Dr. Firestone is a world renowned expert in suicide and violence prevention and has developed suicide & violence assessment instruments, including the Firestone Assessment of Suicidal Intent (FASI) and the Firestone Assessment of Self Destructive Thoughts (FAST); she is in the process of publishing the Firestone Assessment of Violent Thoughts (FAVT).

The Glendon Association has served the Santa Barbara Community for 25 years, helping people create more meaningful lives through research, education and outreach. For more information, please go to www.glendon.org. For direct services, call 2-1-1.

For interviews please contact Dr. Rotnofsky directly at (805) 451-7035 or e-mail jrotnofsky@glendon.org

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