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"FOUR WALLS: SAYING GOODBYE TO MY OFFICE OF THIRTY YEARS"

BY: FRANKLIN ABBOTT, LCSW

The Court of Karma sentenced me to thirty years with two months off for good behavior. I never heard the verdict and thirty years passed far more quickly than I ever could imagine. I came to the unassuming, unadorned, two story brick office building when I was thirty-four. I had practiced in a tiny room above Finlay's Hardware Store in Little Five Points for the previous five years. I sat on pillows on the floor with my clients. The only "furniture" was a white enamel sink left over from the days when the office suite had been a doctor's office. My co-therapist was a large aloe plant that lived in said sink. I shared office space with women, always women. One of them, Jane DeMore, was a clinical nurse specialist. She was unhappy with our hip-pie digs in L5P and pressed her partner-in-life, our other suitemate, Martha Lou Brock, and I to pull up stakes and move to a more respectable space. I obliged though I might still be there had it not been for her prodding. Jane had a good-ole-boy friend, one of those Southern gentlemen with two names like "Jim Bob," she had gone to college with. He was a commercial real estate broker and found us space at



1904 Monroe Drive. It was inexpensive and well located with free parking and handicap access. The price was right and so we moved. I moved all my pillows and the aloe plant.

Martha, Jane, and I had one of those hard-to-understand special connections. We all met in an ongoing long-term therapy group lead by two of the best psychotherapists on the planet, Earl Brown and Irma Lee Sheppard. Earl was experiential and Irma Lee was Gestalt and together they suffered a group of ten fools who wanted to be better than their wounds. Martha Lou and I bonded over wanting to replicate the group therapy experience we shared. Jane and I bonded over having the exact same birthday, 12/8/50. This freaked Martha out in a good way. We had dinner once a week after one of our therapy groups in Martha and Jane's

home on Kay Lane. Jane was a superb cook and we had many a fine discussion about psychotherapy over one of Jane's many splendid recipes. I can still taste her crab au gratin.

The floor plan of the office was altered a number of times over the decades but my room stayed the same. It is the only space in the suite that never had a wall or a door moved. I sat in the same spot looking out the same window. After a few years, Martha put her foot down and took me to Macy's where I bought a salmon colored sofa and a matching love seat. Though their springs have given way to gravity and their velour has been worn smooth in places, they are still in the office having served a quarter of a century. They have held so much grief and absorbed so much angst that they almost touch the ground. I napped on the sofa for the last time this afternoon. Though it is an inanimate object I feel it felt my last sigh when the alarm sounded and I pushed myself up for my final quartet of sessions.

The office has always been a bit of a labyrinth. You enter through an exterior foyer and turn left down a hall to the waiting room. Another hall takes you left or right to the individual offices. If you walk right my office is the second and if you walk further there is the water cooler. Let us pause for a moment at the water cooler. We first subscribed to bottled spring water in the '80's when many of our clients were HIV positive or had AIDS. They couldn't drink tap water because it might contain microorganisms that would make them sick given their compromised immune systems. We went through a variety of vendors over the years and a variety of machines. The variable in common was the forty pound bottle of water that had to be hoisted onto the top of the water cooler. The last time I tried to do the trick a few months ago I banged up one of my thumbs and nearly lost the jug of water. It was a sign.

Last summer was a particularly slow one business-wise. There are ebbs and flows in any

CALENDER

May 15th, Joint Conference with NASW-GA and GSCSW. See page 9 for more details. EARLY BIRD RATE EXTENDED TO MAY 14th!! Register now.

Renewals begin June 1st. Look for your renewal email.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear GSCSW Members,

It is hard to believe that two years has passed and I am writing my last President's letter. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve and work with such a dedicated, committed, and dynamic group. It has been my privilege and one of the proudest moments in my career. A deep thanks to our Board of Directors and Committees for their hard work and loyalty to GSCSW.

I am very excited about our President-Elect Stacie Fitzgerald. Stacie is thoughtful, intelligent, deeply kind and enthusiastic, and I am certain she will do a fantastic job in her new role as President come July 1st. It is a wonderful feeling to know the organization so dear to me will be put in capable hands.

It has been a big year for GSCSW. Our membership is at a record high, and our members are engaged and eager to continue to grow in their knowledge and hone their clinical skills. In reflecting on our past year we have presented: Teletherapy, Theraplay, Business Skills in Private Practice, Exploration of Self-Destructive Tendencies in a Psychoanalytic Framework, Holistic Health, Hypnotherapy and Mindfulness. We are weeks away from offering our Joint NASW/GSCSW Spring Conference with Terry Real, LICSW. He is a nationally recognized family therapist, author, and teacher and we are very excited to have him present. GSCSW is a leader in offering diverse and stimulating clinical programming. Also, our Sunday salons and ethics dinners have created more intimate opportunities to impart information and share ideas that shape our profession. A big thanks to everyone for your time, energy and contribution to each of our events. Please watch the website for our end of year party, held in June (exact location and date TBA). **YOU ARE ALL INVITED!**

I wanted to also share that it was not until this year that I fully recognized the importance of our involvement in the Legislative process. As part of our organization's mission statement, the value of this process is intellectually understood; however, it is in the experience that the true meaning is garnered. This past session, we had the opportunity to craft language to be put forth in a bill, one that if not for our oversight, could have severely limited the scope of our social work practice in Georgia. Representing GSCSW was an honor, and my heart filled with pride throughout the process as I was reminded of how vital a role LCSW's play in the lives of thousands. It is crucial that our collective voices be heard to advocate for ourselves as exceedingly qualified Professionals AND be recognized as such by the community at large in order to continue to advocate for our clients. The law is the foundation of our social work practice – and we must value and maintain our seat at the proverbial table. My thanks to our outstanding Legislative committee who rejuvenated my joy of advocacy and to our Public Relations committee, who present us as a group to the community through our continued growth in technology and social media.

Recently, at a GSCSW luncheon, several past Presidents shared their experiences as leaders. There had been tumultuous times: creation in 1980 as a separate entity from NASW, the onset of Licensure in Georgia and thus the necessary merging of professionals on the Composite Board, the former involvement and eventual disentanglement with the National Federation of Clinical Social Workers, to name a few. It was understood that we are part of a legacy that keeps paying forward, and that while a President comes to the role with a vision, some goals are accomplished quickly while others take longer to be fulfilled. Yet each was an important step in creating the vibrant, creative and inspiring GSCSW of today. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts. My primary goal in becoming a social worker was to make a difference, and GSCSW has made my goals reality, and my hope is the same for you all.

Thank you so much for such a terrific two years and I look forward to seeing you all at our party!!!

With great fondness,

Annie M. Garry, LCSW

President

Annie Garry maintains a private practice in Smyrna and Sandy Springs. She works with both adolescents and adults, providing individual, couples and family therapy specializing in addiction and eating disorder recovery, mood disorders and relationship issues. She can be reached at 770-598-0496 or anniegarry@comcast.net

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear fellow GSCSW members,

Many of us enjoy springtime as a chance to reflect on new life, rebirth, and renewal. We watch buds blossom into flowers, nests awaken with new life, and the pollen count rise. After a long, cold winter – spring has sprung!

And yet this issue of the *Clinical Page* reminds us that with new life often comes goodbyes, letting-go's, and the willingness to embrace something new. This issue takes on a contemplative tone, with our GSCSW clinicians sharing thoughtful reflections. Franklin Abbott shares his process of saying goodbye to his office after 30 years of practice, Alyce Wellons recaps the bi-annual President's Luncheon, and Christopher Stebbins reflects on the role of emotions. Our GSCSW committees, too, are busy with new projects and transitions; I encourage you to read the committee reports they have shared with us.

We sincerely thank Annie Garry for her leadership, energy, competence, advocacy, and presence in these last two years as our President. We can all agree that her time as President has been a fruitful time for our organization, and we look forward to her continued work as a dedicated clinical social worker. Thank you, Annie! We also join Annie in welcoming Stacie Fitzgerald as our incoming President-Elect, who will begin her term July 1. Welcome, Stacie! Our organization continues to be guided by outstanding leadership.

It is my hope that the *Clinical Page* continues to publish thoughtful articles and diverse opinions with intentionality and rigor. Thank you for your contributions to benefit our membership, and I look forward to our future work together! Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or ideas about the *Clinical Page*.

Elizabeth Eiland Figueroa, LMSW

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Let's be in conversation about the articles we publish!

Letters to the Editor is a new section of the Clinical Page. With this feature, the GSCSW membership will be able to continue the many conversations that authors begin with our Clinical Page articles. If you have any feedback, questions, follow-up commentary, or additional notes from a previous edition's article, email Elizabeth at clinicalpage@gscsw.org for your letter to be considered for this new feature. We look forward to this way of being in dialogue!

2015 President's Luncheon

By: Alyce E. Wellons, LCSW



On Friday, March 17, ten Presidents from the Georgia Society for Clinical Social Work gathered. The 2015 President's Luncheon was on!

In attendance this year were: Incoming President Stacie Fitzgerald (2015-2017), Current President Annie Garry (2013-2015), and Past Presidents Jeanne Bedell, Barbara Emmanuel (2011-2013), Elizabeth Mauldin (2001-2003), Sara Page (2003-2005), Marty Wakeland (1989-2001), Linda Weiskoff (1999-2001), Alyce Wellons (2007-2011), and Gail Mullinax (1984-1985).

This luncheon tradition began in 2011 as a way to welcome the Incoming President and have her or him meet the Past Presidents. The event occurs at the end of a current President's term and the beginning of the President-Elect's term, resulting in a gathering every 2 years. During the luncheon, everyone in attendance talks for a bit and tells what was going on in GSCSW during their term. It is a truly a special time to hear the full and long history of GSCSW since its founding in 1980. It is so inspiring to be reminded that two of the founding goals were to obtain licensure (yes, folks in 2015, licensure!) as well as provide continuing education for clinical social workers.

These pioneers in the 1980's came together, formed Georgia Society for Clinical Social Work and fought for social workers to be licensed professionals. These early professionals spent time at the Capitol and started our newsletter. After years of hard work, licensure was obtained in 1986-1987 due to the efforts of those first Presidents and their Boards. Our newsletter, *The Clinical Page*, was so named by Gail Mullinax (1984-1985). We have SO much for which to be grateful, due to their vision, passion, dedication, and hard work! Just like a true social worker in action!

Some of the fun facts we discussed were that many Past Presidents had some of the first distributed licenses, including license numbers 193, 268, and 433! Also, GSCSW currently has over 300 members. In the early days, the membership was robust at 30-50!

We thank all the Past Presidents for their dedication and hard work to our organization. We thank President Annie Garry for her years of service, and we welcome, on July 1, 2015, Incoming President Stacie Fitzgerald!



SPRING THOUGHTS ON BEING HUMAN

BY: Christopher Stebbins, LCSW

When the acuity of the ordeal passed, my tense and tenuous acquaintance with despair had manifested into a weird and comfortable friendship...

The false malignancy of emotional pain has always been an actualized facet of the human existence. Verily, emotional pain is as part of our condition as violence, lust, the need for power, and the nose on our face. No one can doubt those emotions of shame, fear, insecurity, anxiety, humiliation, sadness, and anger, that have the propensity to elicit a vast array of discomfort and distress. What is being purported here is that we too often and are too quick to label our emotional reactions and experiences as "bad," "negative," "wrong," or "unhealthy." There is no such thing as a "good" or "bad" emotion. Do we not live with a constant judgment and reckoning of self? This is the confounding, odious, and terrifying axe-man that lives in the dark corner of our awareness waiting to lower the boom as soon as we perceive in our field of consciousness that something is awry. There is not any insinuation here that we should not examine or imagine ourselves. "An unexamined life is not a life worth living." So sayeth dear Socrates. And he is right, of course, as we cannot grow, heal, or accept without our beloved ability to contemplate or meditate upon our life and selves. The "false malignancy" is not emotions in themselves but in our reactions and interpretations to them. The axe-man awaits with grim and salacious gaiety to drop his blade upon the neck so as to fulfill his desire and promise. His wont is to reinforce his purpose in relaying his desire to correct our deeper and more profound purpose in manifesting that which every soul craves and covets: love. The axe-man cares naught about love, but about power and control, which makes him an offspring of a great and powerful family line called, Fear.

The false malignancy lies not in emotions but in the belief that there is "something wrong" with them and, ultimately, us. Emotions are not malignant. Our ideas, beliefs, and values certainly can be at the forefront of our spiritual demise. As the axe-man creates and reinforces turmoil, chaos, self-doubt, and a bastardization of power, we end up wilted if not torn asunder. Therefore, the malignancy in our desire to live as human beings lies fully within the axe-man. There is nothing wrong with us. There may be fault with our thoughts and actions, but not with our emotional self. Leo Tolstoy once said, "Emotions are nothing but a candlelight in the dark. They are there to illuminate the room in which you are in." Our job is to be with, to watch, to sit with our emotions, and watch the storm pass within us while we ride the tumultuous waves or spend time in dark waters. Using the water analogy, when people ask what they need during times of distress, I ask that they invest in courage and a good surfboard. And then watch. We cannot always control the storm. That's just life. But maybe sometimes we can find that peaceful eye of the hurricane.

When we can accept these basic tenets of our humanism then we become enlightened. The Greek author, Nikos Kazantzakis once asserted, "the real meaning of enlightenment is to gaze with undimmed eyes on all darkness." So many people think that enlightenment can only be attained by sporting an orange toga and levitating on a mountaintop in Tibet. Enlightenment (wisdom, love, acceptance) is to gaze (openness, humility) with undimmed eyes (honesty) on all darkness (courage). And let us please not forget the grand lubricant for our quest for inner peace: levity...*As the maelstrom ascends, may I be so bold as to request that my efforts are touched with shades of grace and gallantry.*

Four Walls: Saying Goodbye To My Office Of Thirty Years

Continued from page 1

was more sustained and the flow a long time coming. When I saw a note on the office log that our lease was up at the end of February 2015, something clicked in my brain. The culture of the office was much more individualized than when I began thirty years before. I had shared the office with three of my officemates for twenty-five, twenty and fifteen years but our practices did not overlap and only one of them was there much at all. I was often there alone at night and the very private parking lot seemed menacing to me three hours after dark when I went to my car with no one in shouting distance.

Ultimately it was not the water cooler or the lack of interaction or the slow summer or the dark parking lot that led me to the decision to move. In early summer one of my dearest friends and long-time colleagues, Russell Brooker, died of a heart attack at seventy-four. He had retired just six months prior having spent the last ten years working to pay for a condo, a mountain house and an expensive midtown office. Had all of that been different he still might have died. Death always gives us more questions than answers. My question was simply, *How do I want to spend my days?* Not working to pay to work was part of my answer.

Before this office and the one in Little Five Points I practiced out of my home on Iverson Street in Candler Park. I had two chairs in front of an old fashioned gas space heater and a quilt I could throw under an ancient apple tree in the back yard as my places to see clients. Bringing my practice to my home in Decatur thirty-six years later feels like coming full circle. All that is left to do now is to deconstruct my office on Monroe Drive.

I'm giving away the sofas, the chair and the desk to a younger friend who will be happy to have furniture. What's left is a lamp and a heater, a few books, the jumble of the desk drawers, tchotchkes (what would life be without tchotchkes?) and what hangs on those four walls. There is a clock with a swinging fob, my diplomas from Mercer University and The University of Georgia, a small Buddha head by the door and the central objects on the four walls. The walls have been a pink-salmon tinted white to match the color of the sofas. The name of the different paints has always been amusing and absurd, "angel blush" or "cotton candy delight." If I were beginning a new career, given my love of whimsy, I would aspire to be a labeler of paints, cars or even pharmaceuticals.

Coming into the office on the wall to the left is an offering bowl made of palm fronds with the bottom stitched in white and red thread in a star pattern around a circle. The circle is made out of mica and reflects like a mirror. It was a gift from my friend Raven and I seem to remember him telling me that it came from one of the South Sea islands.

Directly in front of the door is my window. It is a large window with a marble sill. It looks out onto a wild green space that is actually the bank of a hill that goes up to a railroad track barely visible behind the bamboo and brambles that grow in front of it. Wisteria adds to the density and blooms in luscious lavender clusters every spring. Birds fly in and out of the underbrush and I often see the red of the male cardinal, the orange of a robin's breast and the occasional swoop of a red-tailed hawk. I will miss the window and the play of light in the foliage. And of course, I will miss the birds.

On the wall by the window is an African mask from the Senofu people of the Ivory Coast. I bought it from an African vendor at a flea market. It is typical of Senofu masks, a combination of human and animal features, a bird atop a stylized horned face, hemp string dangling down to make a beard. Mask makers are elevated in Senofu society. Masks are used in rituals to mediate between the living and the ancestors. Through the ancestors prayers are offered to Kolotyolo, The Great Mother.

On the wall to the right of the window and door is a lithograph by Rick Hill, a Macon artist I went to college with. It was a gift from my dear friend Stebbo, his brother. The print is of the entrance to the earthlodge at the Ocumulgee Indian Mounds in Macon. The lodge is almost a thousand years old. The entrance is in the side of a mound framed by timbers. Inside one descends to a chamber that seats forty-seven people in the round with a raised platform in the shape of an eagle for the chief.

And on the other wall across from the window, the wall where the door opens onto the hallway, beside the clock is print of a Chinese painting, "Children at Play in an Autumnal Garden" by Su Han-ch'en. The painting is from the Song Dynasty and was painted in the 1100's. The painter was noted for his Buddhist paintings and given the name "The Gentleman of Trust." He was also esteemed for his paintings of children who were considered the most difficult subjects to paint because of "the elusive quality of naiveté." I saw the painting at the Palace Museum in Taipei in the early '80's and brought back the print, had it framed and hung it in my office.

The office is not laid out square to the four directions but basically the window is in the West and the door is in the East. I did not consider the directions when I decorated the office. The placement of objects was aesthetic and functional. Still over thirty years they formed a grid that I sat in with my clients. The four walls and their holdings became our four directions.

While ritual fascinates me I practice little of it in my everyday life. I tease when I say I have failed at all my attempts at religion. I come from

Four Walls: Saying Goodbye To My Office Of Thirty Years

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a simple Protestant background and grew up in simple homes with simple people. The prayer before meals was quick and the prayer before bedtime faded after childhood. I never thought to begin my sessions with anything but a greeting and a question, "How are you?" I can't remember a single time during thirty years of practice with hundreds of clients that any one of them asked about the objects and pictures on the wall except on rare occasion to inquire if it was new. Thinking about it now I suppose I could have used the contents of my office to tell stories that might have had a healing impact. I certainly told a lot of stories. Some were well-worn chestnuts told over and over again. Others were drawn from my life experience without regard to the orthodox injunctions for a therapist not to self-reveal. But none began with a Senofu mask or children playing in an autumn garden.

I was conscious of selecting those four items for my office. The offering bowl with the mica star reminded me that we are stardust and that each of us is an offering to and from the universe. The Senofu mask reminded me that the ancestors are always with us and that they carry our prayers to a divinity that is beyond our human knowing. The print of the entrance to the earthlodge reminded me that there is always a deeper to dig. Under our story is an older story and an older story yet. And the children reminded me that the only way we can get to the deeper self is through the younger self whose language is play.

When I take these icons off my four walls, I will not perform a formal ritual. I will approach the task in a practical manner and carefully take them down and pack them for transport. They will find new places in my home and bring with them all they saw and heard in their years of silent watching and listening. In a few weeks even the walls of the office will be taken down as the space is reconfigured into another office suite. I will never be able to return to these four walls again except in memory or dreams.

Many humans know a longing to go back to a place that is no more. For some of us it is the scene of happy childhood memories or a place where romance blossomed. For me as a psychotherapist it includes the places where I have sat with my clients, listened to their stories and told them mine.

Once upon a time the bowl of heaven was so full of stars

she tilted to one side and overflowed into a garden

where children in easy play watched over by ancient ones

deeper down and deeper down

than once upon a, once upon a time.

Franklin Abbott

Midway Woods

30 Dec 2014

With fondness for the women who were my colleagues on Monroe Drive: Martha Lou Brock, the late Jane DeMore, Elaine Mueller, Phyllis Glass, Sharon Sanders, Barbara Burns, Ginny Buzzell, Linda Weiskoff, Rae Lynne Mattis, Stephanie Swann, Jessi Heneghan, Catharine Wirth, Sharon Harp and Mica Davis.

JOINT CONFERENCE WITH NASW-GA and GSCSW

Joining Through The Truth

Presenter: Terry Real

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2015 - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Marriott Century Center, 2000 Century Blvd., NE, Atlanta, GA 30345

Terry Real, is a nationally recognized family therapist author, and teacher. He is particularly known for his groundbreaking work on men and male psychology as well as his work on gender and couples; he has been in private practice for over twenty-five years. Terry has appeared often as the relationship expert for Good Morning America and ABC News. His work has been featured in numerous academic articles as well as media venues such as Oprah, 20/20, The Today Show, CNN, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Psychology Today and many others.

In 1997 he published the national bestseller: *I Don't Want To Talk About It*, the first book ever written on the topic of male depression. That was followed by *How Can I Get Through To You?* an exploration of the role of patriarchy in relationships and most recently, *The New Rules of Marriage: What You Need to Know to Make Love Work*, a practical guide for couples and couples therapists.

Terry founded The Relational Life Institute, in Arlington, Massachusetts, dedicated to working with the general population to help women reclaim their voices and men open their hearts. The Institute offers a training program which begins with an introductory level practicum as well as workshops and trainings throughout the US and Canada.

OVERVIEW:

Most of us were trained to believe that when it comes to having clients face the really difficult truths in their lives, especially their own obnoxious, selfish, or self-defeating behavior, we need to be extremely careful. In contrast, this workshop presents Relationship Life Therapy (RLT), an approach based on the premise that it's disrespectful to clients to not let them in on the ways they keep shooting themselves in the foot by how they deal with their partner. We'll explore two essential aspects of RLT's method of truth-telling: holding the mirror up to our clients to help them see their part in the dysfunctional dance of their relationship and --the trickier part--showing them difficult truths about themselves in a way that lets them feel that we're on their side, and are actually rooting for them.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

Discuss an active therapeutic use of self. Review and demonstrate how to "join through the truth" with clients. Discuss and demonstrate how to identify, trust, and use one's own feelings.

5 Hours of Core CEU's

FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER ON LINE - (Early Bird Rate has been extended to May 14th)

http://www.naswga.org/store/view_product.asp?id=4103115

COMMITTEE REPORTS

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

"The Only Thing That Is Constant Is Change" - Heraclitus

In the past year we've seen some major changes in NASW-GA and our GSCSW Legislative Committee. We have had the pleasure and opportunity to work with our new NASW-GA Executive Director, Cheryl Bonneau, JD, ACSW, MSW, who has been extremely engaging and instrumental in making positive changes for social workers in GA. Ms. Bonneau has worked diligently to accomplish several initiatives to support our profession and has updated the NASW-GA website with a lot of helpful information. The GSCSW Legislative Committee and GSCSW President, Annie Garry, LCSW have been working with NASW-GA to accomplish a few goals this session:

1) We successfully collaborated with the Georgia Psychological Association (GPA) to modify the initial language proposed in HB 395, the psychological testing bill (so as not to restrict our scope of practice), which allowed us to be in a position of not having to oppose this bill. However, the bill did not pass this session, and stopped in the House second readers on Feb 20, 2015.

2) We are also currently in the process of working to educate the GA legislators regarding the difference between Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) and Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), who are lobbying for the right to diagnose in GA. This has been a wonderful opportunity for us to learn more about the legislative process, to learn more about the education and training of LPCs, to collaborate with the Licensed Professional Counselor Association (LPCA) of GA, and to advocate for our profession. As their bill did not pass this session and stopped in the House second readers on March 2, 2015, this will be an area of legislation that we will continue to watch next session.

3) We are currently collaborating with NASW-GA regarding a professional marketing initiative to promote and define the practice of social work. Social workers tend to need encouragement in this area, as many of us are humble and not so assertive with marketing ourselves. Our new NASW-GA Executive Director, Cheryl Bonneau, is available and prepared to help all social workers tremendously in this area. I encourage you to think about how you would describe yourself, as a social worker to someone you meet who is curious, or who might benefit from more education.

We would like to thank Katherine Thyne, LCSW and Alexandra Pajak for their contributions and time served on the GSCSW Legislative Committee. We are sorry to see them leave, however; it is with great pleasure that we welcome Mr. Antwan Aiken, MPA, LMSW onto the committee. Antwan holds licensure in both Georgia and South Carolina, and is currently the Director of Family Services at Our House, Incorporated, an agency that provides comprehensive supportive services to homeless families and children. Antwan is also a Therapist for New Beginnings Today, LLC where he does a lot of individual and family therapy with adolescents. While practicing as a Social Worker in South Carolina, Antwan was part of the Governmental Affairs committee for the SC-NASW, where work alongside several advocates to bring awareness and legislation on the issue of human/sex trafficking. Antwan is interested in serving on GSCSW Legislative Committee because he enjoys making large, macro-level impact promote positive change for Social Workers and the clients that we serve.

Here is the final 2015 Final Legislative Update from our lobbyist, Wendi Clifton, Esq., via NASW-GA:

On Thursday, April 2nd, the Georgia General Assembly reconvened for the 40th and final legislative day of the 2015 legislative session. The day is also known as Sine Die, Latin for "the end" and is widely regarded by those in and around the Capitol as the busiest legislative day of the year. This Sine Die proved no different, as dozens of bills were debated and passed back and forth between the House and Senate before receiving a final vote.

The following bills are those we have been tracking that received a favorable vote and will be sent to Governor Nathan Deal's desk to be signed into law:

HB 72 - "Crimes and offenses; protection of disabled adults and elder persons; expand and clarify," sponsored by Rep. Wendell Willard (R-Sandy Springs, 51). The bill relates to crimes and offenses against disabled adults and the elderly by expanding and clarifying the definitions in the Georgia Code relating to their protection.

HB 86 - "Social services; provide for transfer of the Division of Aging Services to the Georgia Adult and Aging Services Agency; provisions," sponsored by Tommy Benton (R-Jefferson, 31), received passage on the final legislative day. The bill would transfer the Division of Aging Services to the Georgia Adult and Aging Services Agency.

HB 131 - "The End to Cyberbullying Act, enact," was passed by the Senate. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Pam Dickerson (D-Conyers, 113) would expand the statutory definition of 'bullying' to include acts done through electronic means. The expansion of this definition would include acts of cyberbullying done on school property, at school events, on school vehicles, and at bus stops or any acts committed while using a school computer, school network, or any other electronic school technology.

HB 177 - "Social services; school personnel required to report child abuse shall be notified by child protective agency upon receipt of report and completion of investigation; provide," sponsored by Rep. David Wilkerson (D-Austell, 38), passed on Sine Die. It requires that certain school personnel who are required to report suspected child abuse be notified by the receiving agency upon the receipt of such

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Extending gratitude to our clinical community for a successful 2014 / 2015 workshop season! Each Thursday night program was well-attended, as our clinical society continues to grow. We've received some wonderful feedback regarding topics for the future so we invite you to reach out to us with any ideas you might have. As always, our intention is to offer workshops exploring new frontiers in our field in addition to topics that reflect core social work values. Please send questions or inquiries directly to Lena@LenaFranklin.com or KAli-oto@hside.org.

ETHICS

There have been two requests for consultation from the Ethics Committee during the past quarter. It's been nice having a full committee. Those currently serving on the committee are: Carla Baer, Katherine Hall, Shirley McCleod, Susan Vanous and Jacey Yunker. After serving one year as a member and two years as co-chair, Stephanie Cook is moving into another GSCSW role. She was a valuable contributor to the Ethics Committee and now serves as chair of the PR Committee. We also will miss have Staci Fitzgerald as a member of this committee. We wish her great success as the new President of The Georgia Society for Clinical Social Work beginning in the fall.

The LMSW and Ethics Committees co-sponsored a Spring Salon Event on March 29th. The topic focused on "The Ethical Social Worker: Practicing Within the Scope of Your Education, Experience and Expertise." Our esteemed panelists had much to contribute, and there was lively participation from the attendees. We are grateful to Tricia Anbinder for opening her home to us. Contact the Ethics co-chairs, Carol Finkelstein, LCSW, and Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW, at ethics@gscsw.org.

LOW COST SUPERVISION COMMITTEE

We continue to expand the pool of supervisors and to assist those seeking a supervisor. There are several supervision groups available through our low cost supervisors, as well as many opportunities to obtain individual or shared individual supervision. We will be looking for a new chair of the Low Cost Supervision committee beginning in the fall. I have enjoyed the last 4 years on the board, and will of course, remain active in the organization. For those of you interested in reading more about supervision, check out a site on the web: Adelphi University. They offer symposiums regularly and internationally. Happy Spring!

Contact Committee Chair— Jamie Bray at supervision@gscsw.org.

LMSW COMMITTEE

2015 has continued to be a productive year for LMSW Committee. We had a fantastic turn out for our second salon "The Ethical Social Worker: Practicing within your education, experience and expertise." We were very thankful to our panelists, Jamie Bray LCSW, Stephanie Swann LCSW, Anna Sonoda LCSW, and Carla Bauer LCSW for sharing their knowledge and wisdom.

LMSW Committee Chairs had the pleasure of visiting a MSW class at UGA Gwinnett in January to share about GSCSW and our experiences with LMSW licensure and employment. The LMSW Committee continues student outreach projects with local universities with the goal of inspiring and encouraging involvement of the next generation of professional social workers. If you are affiliated with a GA social work program and wish to inquire about bringing one of our committee members to speak at your location, please contact us at LMSW@GSCSW.org. We are also seeking student representatives to help us connect with MSW students.

Jessica Alexander, LMSW and Allison Sweeney, LCSW

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Stephanie Cook, Trisha Clymore, and Hannah Kimbrough attended a training on Wordpress and website development in order to gain technical skill in order to make changes to the GSCSW website. The "Day in the Life of a Social Worker" series has officially begun, with one new social worker being featured at a time. We launched this series by driving out to see people in their offices. We will continue the series remotely; LCSWs are invited to continue to volunteer their experience and wisdom to new social workers via electronic submissions (answering our guided questions via email), along with a photo of themselves for the website.

All the board members' photos have been taken and are in the process of being edited and posted to the website. The Facebook page continues to be managed by the PR committee, with a very active participation by both members and future members of GSCSW. The PR committee created and shared a video celebrating the National Social Workers' Day through the listserv and Facebook.

The first webinar on Teletherapy is in the process of being edited for beta testing before being available electronically to GSCSW members. Future lectures will continue to be recorded for webinar availability to members. The steep learning curve as the first PR committee has been an arduous process. As with any organizational growth and transformation, our new ideas have created large projects. These ideas have great potential, but also require a sizable startup investment. The webinar project has involved self-education (thank you, YouTube and Internet), technical involvement (new equipment and software) and most of all, lots of time (at least a part time job!). Thankfully, I have been privileged to be in private practice with enough flexibility to be able to give the amount time and effort required for such large goals. However, due to the technical detail, long hours, and broad and deep scope of such work (probably beyond what a volunteer board can sustainably do when I'm no longer chair), it may probably be in our best interest to hire a paid technical staff member in the future for many of these PR projects, particularly the webinar and video components. This should be a conversation we discuss when budgeting for next year. Most of all, we hope that the final outcome of a newly active volunteer PR committee will change GSCSW for the better. We hope that having our lectures available online will be open the doors to a new age of access to continued education and involvement for our membership, whether they live in Atlanta or anywhere in Georgia.

Finally, the PR committee is in the process of recruiting new members for the committee. If you know anyone interested in getting involved, please have them contact Stephanie Cook at 678-644-5248 or socialmedia@gscsw.org.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT (CONTINUED)

report and upon completion of the subsequent investigation.

HB 198 - "Jason Flatt Act-Georgia; enact," sponsored by Rep. Katie Dempsey (R-Rome, 13). The bill, so-named after the young man who took his own life in 1997, Jason Flatt, requires two hours of annual suicide prevention training for certified school system personnel, including school social workers. The bill is part of a nationwide effort aimed at fostering awareness and prevention of youth suicide, also called the "Silent Epidemic."

HB 268 - "Child abuse; mandatory reporters; change provisions," sponsored by Rep. Mandi Ballinger (R-Canton, 23). The bill seeks to modify the requirements for the mandatory reporting of child abuse in an effort to protect and enhance the welfare of Georgia's children. Under the guidelines of the bill, a person receiving reliable information that child abuse has occurred would have a duty to report such abuse to the Division of Family and Child Services.

HB 512 - "Mental health; governing and regulation; change certain terminology and provisions," sponsored by Rep. Rick Jasperse (R-Jasper, 11). This bill changes the governing, regulation, and administration of mental health services by establishing an "advisory council" to create the policy and direction for disability services by assessing local needs and priorities and providing support to local facilities.

SB 8 - "Crimes and Offenses: children who have been sexually exploited; make provisions; create Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission," sponsored by Sen. Renee Untermann (R-45). This bill saw final adoption as part of a significant effort by the General Assembly to address the growing problem of human sex trafficking in Georgia. This bill seeks to increase the criminal penalties for people convicted of sexual trafficking and requires that they register on the Sex Offender Registry. More importantly, however, the bill increases the mental and physical health services offered by the state to these children to help them recover and rehabilitate their lives.

SB 53 - "Mental Health; authorizing licensed professional counselor to perform certain acts; revise sunset prov.; repeal in its entirety June 30, 2018," sponsored by Sen. Greg Kirk (R-13), extends the sunset provision on licensed professional counselors to perform 1013s. Governor Deal signed the bill into law on March 10th.

Unrelated to our social work legislative agenda, the medical cannabis legislation **HB 1, "Haleigh's Hope Act; enact,"** sponsored by Rep. Allen Peake (R-Macon), a bill for physicians, acupuncture, physician assistants, cancer and glaucoma treatment, respiratory care, clinical perfusionists, and orthotics and prosthetics practice; changes certain provisions relating to the use of "low THC oil" for treatment of cancer and glaucoma; to provide for regulated medicinal use of cannabis and derivatives thereof to treat certain conditions." The conditions defined are: Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Seizure disorders, Multiple sclerosis, Crohn's disease, Mitochondrial disease, Parkinson's disease, and

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

Sickle cell disease, with certain provisions and requirements for permits, and registry, etc. This bill also defines legal consequences for unauthorized possession.

If you would like to review any of these bills, please go to the Georgia General Assembly's website at: <http://www.legis.ga.gov>

- 1) Enter in the type of bill at the top left "HB, for House Bill," or "SB," for Senate Bill."
- 2) Enter the number of the bill in the blank space, and
- 3) Click "search" to obtain the full text.

Although the legislative process involving the General Assembly has concluded and the bills have been sent to the Governor, he still has 40 days in which to consider the bills. For each bill, the Governor has three options: he can sign the bill into law, veto the bill (at which point it will be returned to the General Assembly for veto override consideration) or do nothing, in which case the bill will automatically become law at the end of the 40 day period.

Finally, it has been a pleasure to report all of the legislation that has been active during the 2014-2015 Legislative Session. Thank you so much for your interest and support of the legislative issues and changes that are so important to our profession and our clients!

Barbara Lewison, LMSW, GSCSW Legislative Chair

Antwan Aiken, MPA, LMSW, GSCSW Legislative Committee Member

Legislative Committee; legislative@gscsw.org

"The views and opinions expressed in the Clinical Page are those of the individual authors alone, and do not necessarily reflect the position, practices, or policies of the Georgia Society for Clinical Social Work membership or Board as a whole."

JOIN THE GSCSW LISTSERV

We are continuing to encourage everyone to be a member of the GSCSW online community through the listserv. The benefits include:

- Giving and obtaining referrals and resources
- Jobs and workshop postings
- Office space announcements

If you are not a member, please send an email requesting an invitation to join the GSCSW listserv to: admin@gscsw.org

Someone will respond to you regarding the status of your request. We look forward to hearing from you online!

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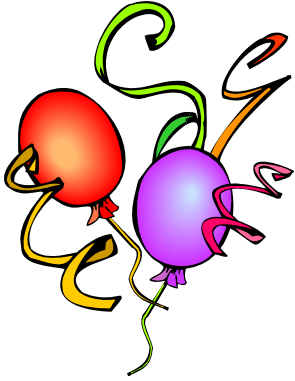
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END OF THE YEAR PARTY!!



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