



Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition (RCADC)

May 5, 2021

Members/Guests Present: Beth Sams, Jeanna Steele-Mack, Nathan Wray, Leonora Spangler, Ashley Freeberg, Sarah Harrison, LaDonna Booker, Catherine Brunson, Laura Conner, Charles Stallings, John Mayes, Robert Woody, Sherry Samples, Patsy Dockery, Lisa McMahan, Courtney Briley, Ben Briley, Suzanne Horsfall, Liz Higbie, Nancy Steele, Empathy Guerin, Brad Goss, Cheryl Sanders and three watched on Facebook

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), our May coalition meeting was held via Zoom.

Catherine Brunson with ASAP of Anderson reported an increase in nonfatal overdoses in Roane County, and over 40 overdoses were recently sent in by the Harriman Fire Department. Heroin with fentanyl is causing the majority of the overdoses. Catherine reminded coalition members that Narcan can be picked up at the RCADC office.

Sarah Harrison, RCADC Executive Director, advised that RCADC took part in the DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back on Saturday, April 24th. The Kingston Police Department were at Kingston City Hall and the Harriman Police Department were at Walgreens. We collected a total of 197 pounds of unused, unwanted and expired medication for safe disposal. Sarah also informed coalition members that RCADC has been awarded correctional careers pathway funding through East Tennessee State University (ETSU) and the Appalachian Regional Commission. RCADC is working with the Roane County Sheriff's Office to implement a program to utilize the funds.

Ashley Freeberg informed coalition members that RCADC is facilitating a giving back event for the Roane County schools. All of the donations are from local businesses and the winners will be announced on May 19th.

Nathan Wray reminded everyone that Trooper Woody has been visiting the elementary schools with RCADC, Ollie Otter and Teny C. Bear. RCADC thanks Trooper Woody, Trooper Jarnigan, and Trooper Hatfield for all their help!

Our presenter was Cheryl Sanders who recently retired as a Major with the East Bureau at the Tennessee Highway Patrol. Cheryl was born and raised in East Tennessee and became a Road Trooper in 1983 where she was 1 of 3 females on the force. She was the first female Lieutenant in 2002 and the first female Captain in 2006. She became Major in 2016 and covered all of the areas East of Nashville. She worked undercover for three years in narcotics working with informants and engaging in undercover drug buys. She stated that when individuals were stopped for DUI's during the 80's they were primarily drinking alcohol and the stops often occurred at night and on the weekends. She stated that now DUI's are occurring at all times of the day and it is primarily opioids that people are being pulled over for. She escorted visiting dignitaries to include: President Bill Clinton, President Ronald Reagan, President Jimmy Carter, and President George W. Bush as well as Paul McCartney and many Tennessee Governors. She stated that there are now 48 women on the force. She reminded young officers that helping people outweighs any negatives, but also be vigilant to not let your guard down. Ben Briley thanked Cheryl for being a trailblazer and stated that her work encouraged him to become a Board Member for RCADC.

The meeting closed with updates from our community partners. The updates are listed below.

John Mayes with the Roane County Sheriff's Office stated that they are staying busy with an influx of overdoses. He reported that they welcome intel from community members to help prevent overdose. He also said that they are currently training officers on field sobriety testing for impaired driving. Beth Sams with the Roane County Sheriff's Office advised that she has a calendar with monthly events for anyone who would like it. She stated that Narramore Farms has an event on May 15th, that the Expo Center at Roane State Community College is open, and that Pirate Fest is the last two weekends of May. She also stated that there is a senior guide in the Roane County News.

Brad Goss with the Office of Emergency Services and Homeland Security advised that they are open, and Sparky is ready to visit.

Laura Conner with the Roane County Health Department advised that COVID-19 vaccines are available for anyone 16 and older, and no appointment is necessary. They are traveling to various businesses and festivals to administer the vaccine as transportation to the Health Department has been a barrier for access. She believes that the vaccine may be available for children as young as 12 beginning next week. The Health Department is going to hire a Substance Use Disorder Coordinator.

LaDonna Booker with Village Behavioral Health stated that they have beds available for boys ages 13-17 and a small waiting list (approximately one week) for girls ages 13-17.

Empathy Guerin with the Tennessee National Guard Counterdrug Task Force stated that they will be bringing their "Stashed Away" trailer to Roane County for the next coalition meeting and they will need a power source for the trailer.

Lisa McMahan with UT Extension Office started a walking group which will walk each Tuesday, and it will be a live walking tour of Roane and Loudon Counties. The next event will be Tuesday, May 11th at 5:30pm at the Roane County Park. Their food preservation program has also restarted.

Courtney Briley with the Michael Dunn Center stated that their golf tournament is June 7th at 1:00pm. They are still looking for hole sponsors and volunteers for the event.

Liz Higbie with the Tennessee Highway Safety Office stated that this is National Travel and Tourism Week, so Ollie Otter is working those events. She stated that Ollie Otter will be helping with the Summer Nutrition program next month. The Ollie Otter Program is a public-private partnership supported by state and local agencies as well as private businesses.

This meeting is available on the RCADC Facebook page. Our next coalition meeting will be Wednesday, June 2nd from 11am-2pm. Empathy Guerin with the Tennessee National Guard Counterdrug Task Force will have the "Stashed Away" trailer at the Kingston Gravel Pit. We have extended our usual meeting time to allow for social distancing by having groups of 5 people or less enter the trailer at a time.