



**Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC)
Prevention Center**
(509) 922-8383 * www.gssacpreventioncenter.com



Law & Justice



*Working Together Toward
Safe Communities
Free From Substance Abuse*

THE INFORMANT

Meth Watch Member e-Letter

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**Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC) Prevention Center
Spokane County Meth Action Team (MAT)**



**PRESCRIPTION DRUG
EVENT A SUCCESS.**

253 ATTENDEES

On Tuesday, May 28th, 2009 our thoughts were reinforced about just how striking prescription drug abuse is in our community; more than 250 professionals, law enforcement and concerned community members packed into the Commons Building at Mukagowa Fort Wright Institute to become educated about how prescription drug abuse and other drugs are effecting us all.

To start off the event, Dr. Steve Freng from Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) presented a condensed version of the new [WA State Rx Watch](#) presentation, covering trends of meth and prescription drug abuse in Washington State.

Dr. Sally Aiken from the Spokane County Medical Examiner's office educated the audience on the excessive number of unintentional poisonings deaths she sees in regards to prescription drugs in our community. Dr. Aiken expressed that she hardly ever sees any illegal drug overdoses, it's mostly all prescription drugs, particularly methadone, hydrocodone & oxycontin.

Brent Hill from Teen Challenge, a local faith based and residential treatment agency for males, presented about the program and the high rate of success it has had in helping addicts get their lives back. Two program participants courageously gave their testimonies about their addiction and road to recovery.

Following lunch, Maureen Shogan, MN, RNC from Deaconess Medical Center spoke on the latest trends of prenatal drug exposure (mainly opiates) and new techniques of prenatal drug testing.

The audience then got to hear a very heart felt story of loss from a local community member and father, Ken Zigler. Mr. Zigler spoke of the loss of his son to prescription drugs and what he is doing in the community and throughout the United States to help combat this epidemic.

**THANK YOU TO ALL ATTENDEES, SPEAKERS & VOLUNTEERS
FOR MAKING THIS SUCH A GREAT EVENT!**

Plying the Pacific, Subs Surface as Key Tool of Drug Cartels

MEXICO CITY -- When anti-narcotics agents first heard that drug cartels were building an armada of submarines to transport cocaine, they thought it was a joke.

Now U.S. law enforcement officials say that more than a third of the cocaine smuggled into the United States from Colombia travels in submersibles.

The sub-builders are even trying to develop a remote-controlled model, officials say.

"That means no crew. That means just cocaine, or whatever, inside the boat," said Michael Braun, a former chief of operations at the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The subs are powered by ordinary diesel engines and built of simple fiberglass in clandestine shipyards in the Colombian jungle. U.S. officials expect 70 or more to be launched this year with a potential cargo capacity of 380 tons of cocaine, worth billions of dollars in the United States.

The submersibles are equipped with technologies that make them difficult to intercept, even though U.S. forces use state-of-the-art submarine warfare strategies against them. Authorities say most slip through their net.

Almost 60 feet long, the craft employed water-cooled exhaust mufflers to reduce its infrared heat signal. It was camouflaged in blue-gray paint. A small conning tower jutted from the deck at an angle designed to confuse radar signals.

U.S. officials and their Colombian counterparts have detected evidence of more than 115 submersible voyages since 2006. They have apprehended the crews of more than 22 submersibles at sea since 2007. Six crews have been arrested this year. The Colombian navy has intercepted or discovered 33 subs since 1993.



This 60-foot semi-submersible at the Coast Guard base in Key West, Fla., was captured by a U.S. drug interdiction task force. It carried 6.4 tons of cocaine.

Officials estimate that the subs cost about \$1 million to manufacture in Colombia. Colombian officials say some former military personnel might be helping to design, construct and direct the vessels.

Colombian navy Adm. Guillermo Barrera said the subs usually carry 4 to 10 tons of cocaine. They typically have a crew of four -- including a captain, an engineer and a seaman, known as "braceros," or "arms," who help steer and unload the cocaine. The fourth crew member is usually a representative of the owner. With cargos worth \$100 million or more, "you want to know where they're headed," Barrera said.

"The vessels are built to sink. When they open the valves, tons of water come in, and in a minute, or a minute and a half, they sink," Barrera said. "There is no evidence, and what starts as a counterdrug operation becomes a rescue operation."

U.S. and Colombian agents have been frustrated in this cat-and-mouse game. "With no drugs found, we couldn't prosecute," said Ruddy, the assistant U.S. attorney. At least eight crews have been returned to Colombia after rescue, without being charged.

The Washington Post

Upcoming Events



Washington State Rx Watch TRAIN THE TRAINER

Become educated on how prescription drug abuse is affecting your community.

Bring awareness to others by learning to conduct **WA State Rx Watch** presentations.

DATE TO BE DETERMINED

**Contact: Lacey Jones @ (509) 922-8383 or
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Conference on Prenatal Drug Exposure

Pediatric *Interim* Care Center (PICC)

PICC is honored to welcome Dr. Loretta Finnegan and author/pediatrician Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, with co-presenter Dr. Joshua Sparrow of Children's Hospital Boston as keynote speakers.

October 15, 2009

At the Seattle Airport Hilton Hotel &

Conference Center



The all-day conference will focus on the identification, management and protection of infants prenatally exposed to drugs.

PICC Co-founder and Executive Director Barbara Drennen will share the unique knowledge and perspective gained through the care of more than 2,500 drug-exposed newborns at PICC, the nation's only center devoted to the specialized care of drug-exposed and medically fragile newborns. Located in Kent, the pioneering center was founded in 1990.

To register go to: www.picc.net or contact Elaine Purchase @ (253) 852-5253