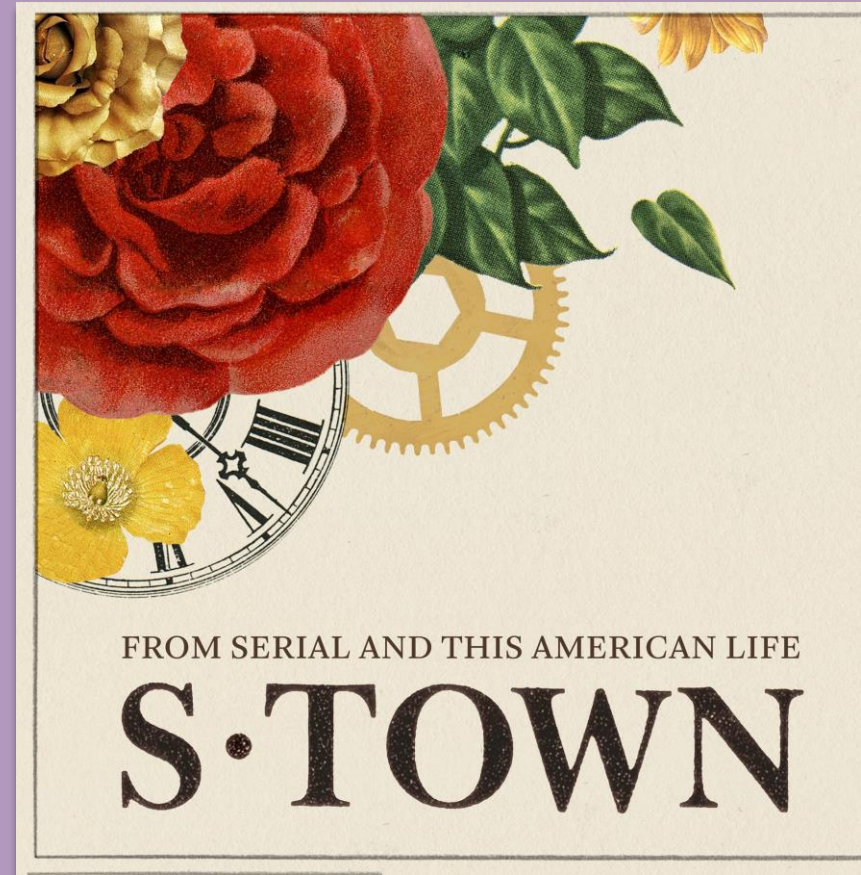


# S-Town and Social Media: Suicide Prevention in the Age of Podcast Fame

Cheryl Dodson,  
Angela Sullivan, and  
Katie Beaugez

9-13-24





1. Social Media and Viral Fame
2. The Power of Connection
3. What's Next?



Our work with suicide prevention began with a story...



It all began with a  
friendship...







# APRIL 3, 2017

S-TOWN SETS A NEW RECORD FOR PODCASTS, BEING DOWNLOADED MORE THAN **10 MILLION** TIMES IN THE FIRST **4 DAYS** OF ITS RELEASE

The screenshot shows a news article from Variety. At the top, the Variety logo is on the left, and a "Read Next" link for "Patreon May Start Providing Loans to Creators, Among Other N" is on the right. Below the logo, the breadcrumb "HOME > DIGITAL > NEWS" is on the left, and the date "MARCH 31, 2017 12:52PM PT" is on the right. The main headline reads "The 'Serial' Team's New Podcast, 'S-Town,' Tops 10 Million Downloads in Four Days". Below the headline, the author is listed as "By TODD SPANGLER". To the right of the author's name are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, Email, and a plus sign for more options. Below the text is a decorative image featuring a clock face, gears, and various flowers. At the bottom of the image is a gold-colored box with the text "FROM SERIAL AND THIS AMERICAN LIFE" and "S·TOWN" in a large, bold font.





APRIL 7  
2017

S-TOWN SETS  
ANOTHER RECORD.  
DOWNLOADED  
**16 MILLION**  
TIMES IN THE FIRST  
**WEEK**  
OF ITS RELEASE

# Going Viral

The New York Times



The Sydney Morning Herald

The Washington Post

[www.al.com](#) › news › 2017

'S-Town' brings unwanted attention to Bibb County to

(But McLemore spelled it out.) "**S-Town**" tells the story of an alleged murder and another death, and winds up focusing on McLemore's tortured relationship with the **town** of **Woodstock**, his own...

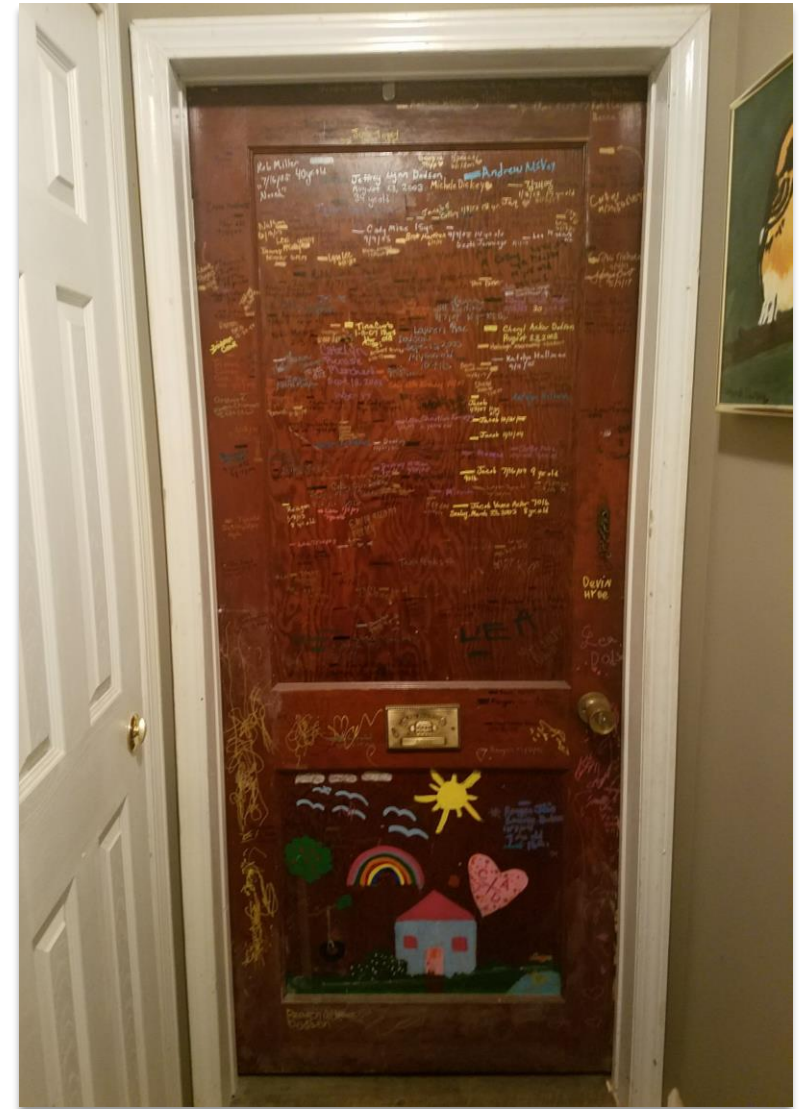
[www.advocate.com](#) › arts-entertainment › 2017/4/25

[John B. McLemore Finally Escaped S-Town - Advocate.com](#) ✓

Apr 25, 2017 · Some **Woodstock** residents openly air **racist** and homophobic statements in the series, but it's more muted than one might imagine (of course, people act differently when they're...

“We had all these negative headlines, then one day, the conversation changed.”

Staying positive was one of the hardest parts of this publicly. I made a promise that I would not argue with people online.



John B. McLemore  
Antiquarian Horologist  
☎ (205)938-2544



*mailing*  
P.O. Box 40  
Green Pond AL 35074

*shipping*  
3584 Old Woodstock Road  
West Blocton, AL 35184

**J. McLemore**

*Specializing in the conservation of fine timepieces.  
Restorations performed using traditional techniques with emphasis on  
originality and authenticity.*

Meanwhile...



Goal: Help prevent  
others from feeling  
what I had felt

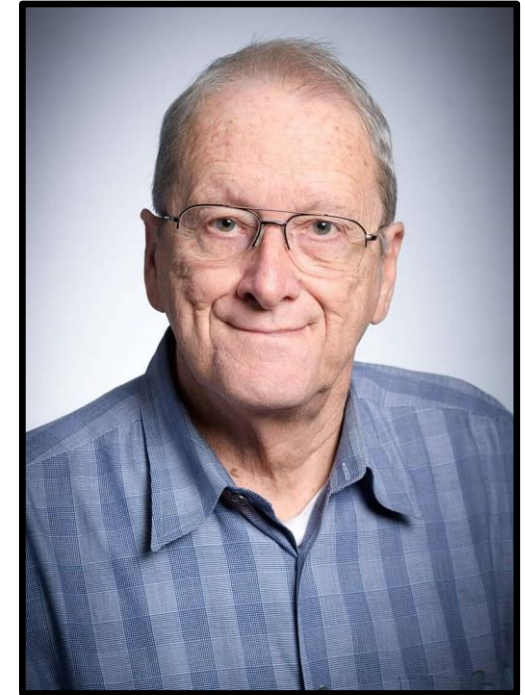




Judith Harrington, Phd



**ASPARC**



David Coombs, Phd





**Garrett Lee Smith**

*9.9.1981 ~ 9.8.2003*

The son of U.S. Senator Gordon Smith, J.D. (D-OR), Garrett Lee Smith loved the outdoors and spending time with family and friends. Garrett also suffered from depression. He died by suicide the day before his 22nd birthday.

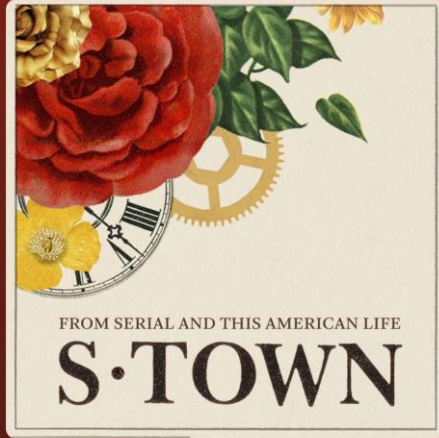


*Question. Persuade. Refer.*

9:59



S-Town



### Chapter VII

S-Town



1x



About the podcast



Jul 13, 2017 at 12:45 PM



Look what walked into the office today

Whoa omg!!!! Did you save it???????

Yeah I'm keeping one

Can you get me one? Where are they from???

Some woman that knew him, it's for a memorial I think

Oh wow cool

Jul 14, 2017 at 1:53 PM



Our Work Began



Where we  
started...

The location of the  
first Wildflower Walk  
was a borrowed field  
of a family member  
close to my home.













Connection



# **JUNE 1, 2018** **ASPARC ANNUAL** **CONFERENCE:**

## **Stigma Across the Stages of Suicide Prevention**

Homewood Public Library. Sign-in begins at 9:00 AM.



**To Register, Visit  
Our Website At  
[www.asparc.org](http://www.asparc.org)**

**Join ASPARC  
Today! Members  
Receive A  
Discounted Rate**

**6.0 Continuing  
Education Hours  
Approved**

**Lunch Provided**

**For More  
Information,  
Contact Us At  
[info@asparc.org](mailto:info@asparc.org)**

Alabama Suicide Prevention  
and Resources Coalition  
PO Box 360244  
Hoover, AL 35236  
(205) 677-6116



# Town of Woodstock Memorial Garden

People made pilgrimages to our town and a common experience was loss.

We now have a dedicated public space to honor grief and support suicide prevention.



**ASPARC**

The Alabama Suicide  
Prevention And  
Resources Coalition



**ASPARC**

**1971**

**ALABAMIANS AND  
BEYOND:  
1971 INDIVIDUALS  
EDUCATED SINCE 2020**

- ASPARC projects over 3,000 Alabamians will be reached by December 2022

**MILESTONES**

- Provided 87 QPR Trainings in 2021
- 2022 QPR trainings completed: 18
- 2022 QPR Trainings Scheduled as of March 2022: 65

**152**

**WHO WE PARTNER  
WITH**

- Alabama Dept. of Mental Health
- Alabama Dept. of Veterans Affairs
- Alabama Dept. of Agriculture and Industry
- Town of Woodstock
- Council on Substance Abuse
- Suicide Prevention Network of Alabama
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Alabama
- Alabama Power
- Bibb Medical Center
- Cahaba Medical Care





# Networking and Thinking Outside of the Box

Wildflower Walk and Wellness Fair

Tourism Grant

Brochures and Marketing

Community Event to Raise Awareness and Reduce Mental Health Stigma

TOWN OF WOODSTOCK  
A Town For All People  
Established 1796  
ALABAMA

SEPTEMBER 10

ASPARC  
ALABAMA SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESOURCES COALITION

2022 Legislative Event Grant Award Winner  
#SweetHomeAlabama

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
THANK YOU SENATOR APRIL WEAVER & REPRESENTATIVE RUSSELL BEDSOLE!

5th Annual Woodstock Wildflower Wellness Walk  
#suicideprevention

# Where's My Casserole?

TRUE STORIES OF ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS  
WITH COMPASSION & COMFORT FOOD





We are very proud to say that since 2018, we have trained over 11,000 people in QPR!





The University of Alabama at Birmingham now has a Suicide Prevention Course taught by our President Dr. Angela Sullivan



**MAKE AN  
IMPACT**

**57TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA  
MAY 5-10, 2024**

cherylackerdodson  
Las Vegas, Nevada



Liked by woodstockalmusicfestival and others  
cherylackerdodson Hello from the @aasuicidology  
Conference! #AAS24 #QPR #988Lifeline  
#SuicidePrevention #youmatter  
#mentalhealthawareness ❤️🐝🌻

View all 2 comments  
May 9

cherylackerdodson



Don't be afraid to  
ask for help-



# How can you help?

Complete your survey so that we can continue to provide this training at no cost to participants.

You can host a training to help us reach more individuals

Follow us on social media and share information

Include ASPARC in your grant applications and/or inform ASPARC of grant funds

Share your story

Buy a Woodstock Music Festival T-shirt

Donate and recommend us for donations

Join ASPARC! You can intern with us & volunteer.

# Contact Us:

## Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resources Coalition

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- [info@asparc.org](mailto:info@asparc.org)

## Cheryl Dodson

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## Katie Beaugez

- 205-340-8565
- [Katie.Beaugez@gmail.com](mailto:Katie.Beaugez@gmail.com)



Remember:  
There is a  
wonderful statistic  
that we will never  
know—that is the  
lives we save!

