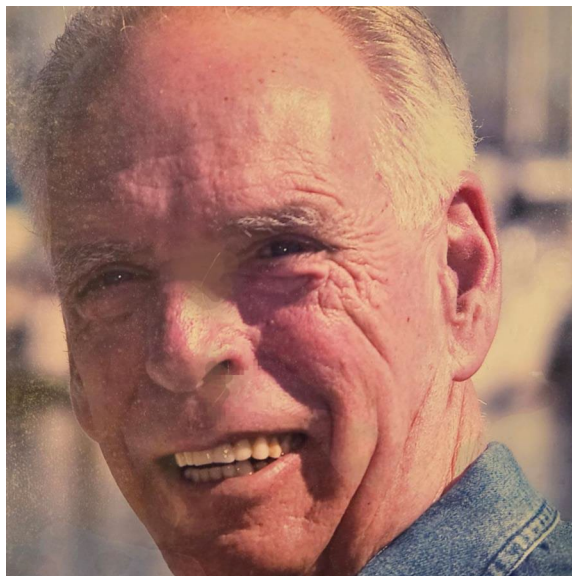


The Peer Support Post

QUARTER 1 | 2026/2027 | ISSUE 7



One Life, Lasting Impact: Honoring the Legacy of Leonard Keesee

It was with a heavy heart that we write this as this past summer Texas Nurses lost a true advocate and pioneer. Leonard Keesee lived a life of impeccable service to others. Truthfully, I wouldn't be sitting here writing this today, as this program wouldn't exist as we know it, if it were not for some of the work he did to help Texas Nurses. Leonard's life was one of giving back, as a person in recovery himself, he used this as a catalyst to assist others. Through his advocacy, guidance, and dedication, TPAPN was written into legislation in 1987 giving Texas Nurses an opportunity to get recovery support via a non-disciplinary pathway and maintain their nursing license. Leonard's work and support didn't stop at getting the legislation in place. He served TPAPN and Texas Nurses in various ways for the rest of his life. Leonard established one of the most well-respected support groups in the Dallas area, he served on the TPAPN Advisory Committee for years and throughout his life was a TPAPN Advocate then TPAPN Peer Support Partner until the day that he was taken from this world.

**To Know even one life has
breathed easier because
you have lived. This is to
have succeeded.- Ralph
Waldo Emerson**



The number of lives that Leonard impacted through his work with TPAPN and in the recovery community as an addiction counselor is awe inspiring. The ripple effect that occurs when individuals choose to lead a life, helping others, is one we could all learn from. By going onto his memorial website, it is very clear, the true lasting impact that his heart of service will have.

As a small token of ensuring that his Legacy continues, TPAPN with the support of TNF ,is thrilled to name the TNF Nursing Excellence TPAPN Lighthouse Award in his honor. This TNF award is now to be called The Leonard Keesee TPAPN Lighthouse award and will be given out annually to those that have shown outstanding commitment to advocating for and supporting TPAPN.

There is still so much work to do in continuing to support nurses in recovery from substance use disorder and other mental health conditions and we pledge to continue the efforts that Leonard put forward in ensuring that nurses have a place to go in which they feel safe, connected and supported through recovery.

I have one ask, as you come to the end of this article, take a moment and go check out Leonard's memorial page at <https://www.scottfhsj.com/obituaries/leonard-keesee/#!/Obituary>; after reading through his life story and the many wonderful memories left by those left behind, let it be a testament that one life and what we do with it, truly can shape major change and leave such a positive impact behind. Thank You will never be enough. Leonard Keesee, your life was a life well lived. To his family, who shared him with TPAPN and the recovery community, we thank you for allowing him to give the world his gift of time. To all the Peer Support Partner Volunteers reading this today, know that what you do and how you serve others matters more than you know. In my humble opinion, the greatest legacy left behind is that of Love and Service. Leonard Keesee did this effortlessly.

“To Know even on life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded”- Ralph Waldo Emerson

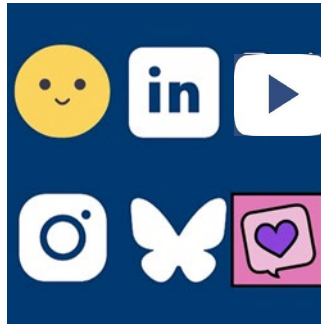
*By: Brittney Majefski, MSN, RN, PMH-BC
TPAPN Program Director*

Upcoming Events

- 10/22 Role of the PSP class
- 10/26 TPAPN @ D4 Mock Trial
- 11/2 Central Texas Nursing & Stakeholder Policy Summit
- 11/5 TNA D21 Wellness on Purpose Presentation
- 11/7 TSNO Exhibit
- 11/10 Texas A&M SON Presentation
- 11/11 Office Closed for Veteran's Day
- 11/13 Role of the PSP Class
- 11/16:PSP Round Table
- 11/26-11/27 Office closed for Thanksgiving

Check out the TNA/TPAPN events calendar for more

TPAPN NEWS



TPAPN is expanding our social media presence! Please follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), and [Bluesky](#)!



PSP Volunteer Roundtable

Join us for an informal, collaborative discussion on **building trust and rapport when you haven't shared the lived experience of the nurse you're paired with.**

Three current Peer Support Partners will join us as panelists, and we invite you to share your experiences, ask questions, or simply listen.

Save the Date: Monday, November 16, 2026 | 12-1 PM

We hope to see all our PSP Volunteers there! [Link to join meeting here!](#)

Ask TPAPN – Your Trusted Advice Column!

Have questions about navigating recovery, balancing work, or maintaining wellness? "Ask TPAPN" is here for you! Each quarter, we'll tackle your anonymous questions with thoughtful, expert advice tailored to support your journey. No topic is too big or small, if it matters to you, it matters to us.

Submit your questions today and let "Ask TPAPN" be your go-to guide for support, encouragement, and practical solutions. Together, we'll keep moving forward!



Submit questions to: asalkeld@texasnurses.org

Ask TPAPN Responses

- **Dear TPAPN,**

One of my friends keeps telling me I should be ‘over it by now.’ They don’t understand that recovery isn’t something you just finish. What can I say? – They don’t understand...

Dear They Don’t Understand,

Answer: Recovery doesn’t follow a timeline. Substance use disorder is a chronic disease, and recovery can be nonlinear. Remission doesn’t mean the past disappears or that challenges will never come up again. You might explain that your past isn’t something to be ashamed of. It’s something you can learn from as you continue moving forward. If your friend wants to better understand, consider inviting them to a support group or sharing resources that can help them learn more. And remember, you deserve people around you who respect and support your recovery. If someone continues to dismiss your experience, it may be worth taking a closer look at your support system and make sure it is filled with positive people who build you up.

- **Dear TPAPN,**

I’m doing all the things I’m supposed to do (therapy, TPAPN, meetings, talking with my partner) but I still don’t feel happy. Does that mean recovery isn’t working? –What More Can I Do

Dear What More Can I Do,

Answer: Recovery isn’t about feeling happy all the time. Especially in early recovery, your brain and emotions are adjusting, and healing takes time. Be patient and give yourself permission to experience the highs and lows without viewing difficult emotions as a sign that recovery isn’t working. However, if these feelings persist, worsen or you notice changes like an increase or decrease in sleep, eating, interest in daily activities, it is always a good idea to follow up with a mental health professional or healthcare professional. Keep using your recovery tools, stay connected with supportive people, including a medical or mental health professional as needed and talk with others who understand the journey. Progress doesn’t always feel good, but that doesn’t mean progress isn’t happening.

- **Dear TPAPN,**

I’m exhausted from constantly trying to ‘do recovery right.’ Is it okay to just be a person sometimes and not a participant in a program? –Identity Loss

Dear Identity Loss,

Answer: Absolutely. Recovery is part of your life, not your entire identity. There is no one “right” way to recover, and progress, not perfection, is the goal. Make time for the people, activities, and parts of yourself that remind you who you are beyond recovery. Focus on what you can control, give yourself grace, and remember that you’re a whole person, not just a participant in a program. At TPAPN, we see the person behind the recovery journey.