



Burn Fund *Link*

Editor's Comment

The Burn Fund Link is your newsletter. Produced quarterly, it's designed to inform and educate BCPFFA members about the Burn Fund.

We welcome comments, story ideas, and questions.

Be sure to send listings to: pr@burnfund.org

The Burn Fund Link is at: www.burnfund.org/newsletter

Tell your friends!

We're working behind the scene for the Burn Fund.

Margo Bates

Editor

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WORLD BURN CONGRESS COMING TO VANCOUVER IN 2007

The BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund, Vancouver General Hospital and BC Children's Hospital will partner with the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors to host the World Burn Congress (WBC) from October 3 to 6, 2007 at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver.

The WBC provides an international forum to encourage and facilitate an

exchange of knowledge within the burn community. The conference provides many adult burn survivors with a first-hand opportunity to meet and discuss common concerns with other burn survivors. Burn care professionals attend the conference and gain insight and understanding about the issues that impact burn survivor's lives.

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BRIGHT NIGHTS IN STANLEY PARK!

A Joint Event of the Vancouver Park Board and the B.C. Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund

EIGHTH ANNUAL BRIGHT NIGHTS IN STANLEY PARK AIMS FOR \$1 MILLIONTH DOLLAR IN FUNDRAISING

The Vancouver Park Board and British Columbia Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund invite everyone to nights of magic and illumination for the eighth annual Bright Nights in Stanley Park. The event runs from Friday, December 2, 2005 to Monday, January 2, 2006.

More than a million twinkling lights transform the forest, the train and children's farmyard areas in the middle of the city's wondrous Stanley Park. Bright Nights is enhanced by entertainment, dozens of delightful animated displays and more — carrying on the tradition started with the first Christmas Train over twenty-five years ago.

Preventing Victims, Empowering Survivors. Partial proceeds from the train and all donations at the event help raise funds for the important work carried out by the British Columbia Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund.

The fundraising goal for this year is \$200 thousand, which will push the total amount in fundraising at Bright Nights to over the \$1 million dollar mark. The person who donates the millionth dollar will receive a gift package from the Burn Fund and Bright Nights' sponsors. For event information, please visit www.burnfund.org/brightnights

We need your help . . . continued on page three

President's Message

When the BC Professional Fire Fighters' (BCPFF) Burn & Plastic Surgery Unit approached us to offer support for the Burn and Wound Healing Research Laboratory at Vancouver General Hospital, we agreed right away.

As fire fighters, we pledge a life-long commitment to B.C.'s burn survivors and to the partnership with VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation and the BCPFF Burn & Plastic Surgery Unit— and now, we pledge support for the BCPFF Burn & Wound Healing Research Laboratory.

The work that Dr. Aziz Ghahary and his team will do offers an opportunity for the future, and the care of all burn survivors and those who are injured or suffer scars.

Through our partnership, this ultimately benefits the VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation and Vancouver General Hospital in their mandate to provide excellence and leadership in patient care, research and teaching.

Sincerely,
Al Leier
President



Secretary Treasurer's Message

We look forward to working to raise additional funds to help support the BCPFF Burn & Wound Healing Research Laboratory, which is another example of the Burn Fund's legacy to our province's citizens.

On behalf of the Executive and Board of Directors, we wish to thank our sponsors and donors for their generous contributions to the Burn Fund.

With the millionth dollar in fundraising on the horizon for the Burn Fund from the Bright Nights in Stanley Park event, we remind people to please give generously. Thank you for your support.

Yours truly,
Robert E. Hall
Secretary/Treasurer



Executive Director's Message

We encourage fire fighter locals from the Lower Mainland and other areas in B.C. to join the Bright Nights in Stanley Park Committee, and to become involved in the World Burn Congress Committee. This is a good example of the teamwork and support fire fighters give to the Burn Fund. On behalf of the Executive and Directors of the Burn Fund, we thank you for your ongoing support.

PREVENTING VICTIMS, EMPOWERING SURVIVORS!!!

Tony Burke
Executive Director



No matter what you accomplish in life, somebody helps you.

Wilma Randolph

South African Burn Survivors get a once in a lifetime chance to sleep over with Canada's Beluga Whales at the Vancouver Aquarium

The final highlight of a two-week long British Columbia vacation for four young burn survivors from the Children of Fire Trust of Johannesburg, South Africa took place at the Vancouver Aquarium on September 19th when fourteen young burn survivors from British Columbia met the children and shared in their adventure.

The children, aged 7 to 11, were accompanied by Children of Fire Trust director Bronwen Jones and her son Tristan. The BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund sponsored the overnight Aquarium adventure.

The Canadian trip was organized individually by Richmond Fire Fighter Pat Barker and Lyle Wilson, owner of Nipika Mountain Resort in the Canadian Rockies. The Resort paid for the children's entire vacation, with the assistance of a small group of supporters who believe in the cause and wish to remain anonymous. The four children and five staff traveling with them spent the week at Nipika Mountain Resort.

Richmond Fire Fighters Local 1286 worked with



Young burn survivors from British Columbia welcome the young burn survivors from South Africa for a sleep over with Canada's Beluga whales at the Vancouver Aquarium

Richmond merchants to send toys home with the children. Children of Fire Trust director Bronwen Jones had a chance to meet with Dr. Aziz Ghahary, the Head of the new BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn & Wound Healing Research Laboratory at VGH. She also toured the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn & Plastic Surgery Unit at VGH.

Bright Nights in Stanley Park

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The Bright Nights Committee is working hard to prepare for this year's event, and to ensure that the event is a great success again this year.

From November 2, 2005 until the end of January, 2006 the Burn Fund requires fire fighters to donate their time to help set up, operate and tear down the displays at Bright Nights.

The dates for the three phases of the event are as follows:

SET UP: November 2nd to 30th
Mondays – Saturdays 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

OPERATIONS: December 2nd to January 2nd
Closed Christmas Day

Hours of Operation: 3:00 PM to 10:00 PM

TEAR DOWN – January 3 until completion
Mondays – Saturdays 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Fire fighters can contact the Burn Fund office at (604) 436-5617 or Burn Fund Director Ray Boucher, Chair of the Bright Nights Committee, at 1-604-855-8581 to schedule their time to help at Bright Nights.

Thank you in advance for your support.

World Burn Congress

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GET INVOLVED ... The BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund seeks fire fighters to sit on the World Burn Congress Local Host Committee.

For more information, please contact Burn Fund Director Ken Mollan, Chair of the WBC Local Host Committee at 604-612-6517 (Cell), or call the Burn Fund office at 604-436-5617.

Members or Fire Fighter Locals are invited to submit their names and contact details to the Burn Fund at Suite 463-4800 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4J2; Fax: 604-436-3057 or Email: ken@burnfund.org

Burn Survivor's story told with eloquence and dignity at the official opening of the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn & Wound Healing Laboratory at VGH

Dr. Aziz Ghahary, a world-renowned leader in the treatment of burns and wounds, heads the research laboratory. He joins the medical team at VGH's BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn & Plastic Surgery Unit. The unit provides care for burn and trauma patients across B.C. and the Yukon. Dr. Ghahary's recruitment is a major development for VGH, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute, UBC and patients.

Dr. Ghahary and his team have discovered communication among different types of cells in the skin is crucial to successful healing. They have isolated a protein that is key to the communication. This discovery is essential to learning how to prevent formation of scar tissue after a burn, as well as understanding why other wounds fail to heal.

At the BCPFF Burn & Wound Healing Research Laboratory at VGH, Dr. Ghahary will be pioneering groundbreaking initiatives, which may be ready for clinical trials in 1-3 years, and could radically change patient care and health outcomes for burn and accident survivors, diabetics, and many others.



Three years ago, Brady Tupper realized that she was about to faint while taking a shower. She was able to turn only the cold water off before she fell into her bathtub. She lay in scalding hot water for over five minutes. The water hit her face, neck, chest, arms and upper back, resulting in second and third degree burns. She spent six weeks in the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn & Plastic Surgery Unit at VGH. After a year of painful healing, and learning to live with a new appearance, Brady Tupper, now 24, told the audience how she's coping, and what the research outcomes from Dr. Ghahary's work will mean for burn injured people.

Brady Tupper's Speech for Official Opening of the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn & Wound Healing Research Laboratory at Vancouver General Hospital, August 18, 2005

I have been a burn survivor for three years. At 21 years old I had one year left of university and nothing more stressful to worry about than what to do on a Saturday night. At 5:30 in the evening on July 29, 2002, I phoned a girlfriend to see if she was interested in grabbing some sushi for dinner. I told her that I was going to have a quick shower and give her a call when I got out. While I was finishing up my shower I felt the onset of a seizure and went to shut off the water. Unfortunately I was only able to hit the cold water and I ended up lying in scalding hot water for about five minutes. I remember waking up, feeling instant pain and confusion. I *vividly* remember seeing myself in the mirror and the intense feeling of panic that swept over me after seeing my face. I quickly went into denial, repeating to myself that it wasn't happening because bad things don't happen to me. I called my friend because I knew she was home, and in a state of hysteria I asked her to come over. From that point on things began to move in slow motion. I did not understand why I had to go to the hospital. Going there would only make what had happened serious and official. I was in incredible pain and screaming my head off (*I remember I wasn't very polite to the nurse tending to me in emergency*). My entire family and then some came to the hospital and I was told that I would be staying there for the next two weeks. I spent the next few days in and out of consciousness feeling confused and delirious. The VGH Burn Unit became my home for the next six weeks.

My stay was very distinctly broken into two three week sections. The first three weeks I describe as living in a bubble. I preferred the mindset that what had happened was not very serious and I was quite certain that I would leave the hospital looking the same way I did before I arrived.

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I was upbeat, optimistic and eager to heal so that I could go home and get ready to start school in September. I was very confident going into my first surgery as I knew that it was necessary to heal my skin and get better. Despite the fact that I was attached to a feeding tube and confined to my bed, I still managed to believe that I was going to be perfectly fine. I had a constant stream of visitors and was thrilled to see each one of them. I found it difficult to take my physio seriously because I had not yet grasped or accepted the magnitude of what had happened. I had never known a burn survivor before. I had seen it on TV, but I can tell you from experience that's not always the most accurate depiction.

As I moved in to the second section of my stay I began to lose my upbeat attitude and become much less optimistic. I began to realize that I had had a very serious accident and things were never going to be the same again. I was exhausted by the pain and the amount of energy that needed to be expended to do the simplest of things. I grew up an athlete and things came easily to me. Accepting the fact that simple body movements were needed to be exercised just to have regular mobility and a normal quality of life does not come easily. I feared my second surgery intensely. I was convinced that it would not be successful and I would never be able to leave the hospital.

While I was in the hospital I had an army of doctors, nurses, physio therapists, and occupational therapists at my side day by day to make certain that I recovered fully and completely. At the time these people were certainly not the people that I looked forward to seeing. When they came around they inflicted pain and made me miserable. However, without them I would most certainly not be even a shadow of what I am today and I am truly thankful for their persistence.

I remember my first moment of clarity while I was in the hospital. I was in the physio room with my occupational therapist and my mother when finally it hit me that I did not ask for this nor was I cut out to be a burn survivor. I broke down, crying that I wanted my old life back, that things were not fair. My mother tried to console me, telling me that I would get my life back; eventually everything would get back to normal. I did not believe her for a second.

On September 6, 2002 I was released from the hospital. It is an overwhelming feeling to leave a place that you are so bitter towards, but also consider so safe. On the burn unit I did not feel out of place. The people that surrounded me knew my situation and understood that I had had an accident; that I was not born this way.

When I began to venture outside my home as a burn survivor I remember feeling like I had to carry picture of myself to prove to people that I didn't really look like this so there was no need to be afraid of me. I had spent nearly 22 years looking a certain way, building my personality and my identity around it and it was all gone in an instant and I had to start from scratch. There is no better way for me to describe this other than to state it as physically and mentally being *uncomfortable in my own skin*. When I looked at myself I did not see *my* neck, or *my* arms, or *my* chest. It was something foreign. These are feelings that can be described but not understood unless they are experienced. I would never wish my experience on my worst enemy and it thrills me to know that future burn injured people are going to have the opportunity to bypass the emotional pain and uncertainty that comes along with a burn injury. What Dr. Ghahary is about to accomplish is going to relieve survivors of that moment of clarity that I and many other burn survivors have experienced, when they realize that nothing in their lives is ever going to be the same. The feeling that their looks have changed forever and they will have to rebuild their identity based on a look they are not comfortable with. It makes me so happy to know that not only burn patients, but also diabetics suffering from ulcers and people in physically scarring accidents will have someone as talented and respected as Dr. Ghahary on their side when they feel that the world is against them.

In the past three years I have grown comfortable within my skin. I am 24 years old now and I have acquired a wealth of knowledge and experience that I would not have been privy to had I not suffered a burn injury. I have hope for future survivors of burns and other injuries and have learned to look forward with excitement and enthusiasm rather than looking back with sadness and regret.

Brady Tupper, Adult Burn Survivor

**BC Professional Fire Fighters Association
Local Donations
from April 1 2004 to October 31, 2005**

Vancouver Local 18	\$38,602.64
North Vancouver City Local 296	\$1,725.00
Burnaby Local 323	\$2,906.00
Prince Rupert Local 559	\$4,800.00
Victoria Local 730	\$100.00
Nanaimo Local 905	\$26,380.34
Kamloops Local 913	\$1,405.00
Trail Local 941	\$1,000.00
Kelowna Local 953	\$48,690.87
Saanich Local 967	\$7,572.71
North Van District Local 1183	\$1,038.90
Surrey Local 1271	\$30,125.00
Richmond Local 1286	\$12,150.00
Nelson Local 1343	\$819.00
Prince George Local 1372	\$10,760.00
Vernon Local 1517	\$6,000.00
West Van Local 1525	\$4,615.00
Campbell River Local 1668	\$9,012.47
Revelstoke Local 1746	\$1,200.00
Delta Local 1763	\$11,500.00
Coquitlam Local 1782	\$5,263.07
Port Coquitlam Local 1941	\$9,795.55
Dawson Creek Local 2136	\$1,000.00
Port Moody Local 2399	\$2,554.00
White Rock Local 2407	\$4,142.75
Terrace Local 2685	\$4,255.63
Fernie Local 2827	\$500.00
Abbotsford Local 2864	\$20,000.00
Langley Local 3253	\$3,641.99
Whistler Local 3944	\$7,295.00

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Calendar of Events 2005

- November 20** Rogers Santa Claus Parade in Vancouver. Bright Nights has a float in the parade.
- November 24** Burn Fund issues Holiday Safety Tips. Media Day at Bright Nights in Stanley Park.
- November 26** Edmonds Santa Claus Parade in Burnaby. Bright Nights has a float in the parade.
- December 2** Bright Nights in Stanley Park is open to the public from December 2, 2005 to January 2, 2006 from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm daily. Closed on December 25th.
- February 5 to 11, 2006** Burn Awareness Week. See the online program at www.burnfund.org

Please send info about fundraising events to
pr@burnfund.org



BURN CAMP PHOTO ALBUM

Burn Camp 2005 was one week of fun for 67 young burn injured children and 59 counsellors, junior counsellors, and support camp staff. DID WE HAVE FUN??? ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING!

For a complete photo album on the Summer Burn Camp, please visit <http://www.burnfund.org/burncamp/>

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