



THE BRAIN TRAIN

Get on board with BIAC

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Editor – Barb Butler

Graphic Designer – Merle McIntosh

Communications Chair – Barb Butler

BIAC Communications Committee:

Amanda Shuchat, Yvan Teasdale, Evelyn Jollimore, Tom Lush and Don Matheson

OVER 500 GUESTS GET HAWAIIAN OYSTER ODYSSEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL START

Over \$100,000 raised in first four events

by Tina George, Sponsorship and Media Coordinator, BIAC

It was a perfect beginning and we have come half way in the HOO journey this year. Halifax (Feb 8th), Toronto (Feb 20th), Saskatoon (March 17th) and Edmonton (April 27th) hosted the first four Odysseys. Four more are underway – Charlottetown, PE (June 17th), Vancouver, BC (October), St. John's (October), and Gatineau, QC (February 7th). In addition, there will be a celebration of the Odysseys at BIAC's Annual Conference in Montreal, on July 7th, where the various HOO teams will demonstrate their good work.



Tremendous sponsor, media and volunteer support

The success is a tribute to everybody who worked hard to put the events together. Our sponsors are pleased with the response and attended the Odysseys with great enthusiasm. The Odysseys serve as an opportunity for us to strengthen relationship with national sponsors Diageo, Insurance Bureau of Canada and Bombardier as well as regional and local sponsors. The media response was indeed amazing. The Odysseys generated 16 media reports. These include City TV (Halifax, Toronto and Edmonton), full page spread in the Toronto Sun with 10 photos of survivors, sponsors and special guests, front page coverage in North Toronto Town Crier, photos in Edmonton and a feature article on Barb Butler in Saskatoon Star. These articles go a long way in meeting our objective of furthering awareness of the cause of brain injury

I am delighted to report that we have received over \$100,000 in pledges to date from national and regional sponsors as well as in ticket sales from the four Odysseys.

Volunteer participation was outstanding. Their enthusiasm and excitement was contagious. The success of the Odysseys and the media attention helped us attract new donors, volunteers, friends and also committee members for next year.

Splendid collaboration across the country

One of the most exciting parts of the Hawaiian Oyster Odysseys has been the collaboration between BIAC and other associations: Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia, Brain Injury Society of Toronto, Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association, Alberta Brain Injury Association and Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society. It truly was remarkable to see the various groups come together for shared goals.

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada joined in the celebrations by sending greetings for all HOOs. We also received greetings from Peter McKay, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs (Halifax), Lynne Yelich, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development (Saskatoon) as well as Premiers of Nova Scotia, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The announcement of the Air Canada sponsored winner to Hawaii is keenly awaited. One winner was selected at each event to participate in the national draw for 2 round trip tickets to Hawaii.

In A Nutshell

by Barb Butler- Editor

After what may have either been a mild winter or a winter you would rather forget, spring is most definitely here and summer is sprinting after it. Changing weather is what keeps us on our toes and we learn to cope with whatever comes our way. You learn quickly that the only thing you can control is your reaction. Be it weather or a brain injury you learn to deal with it. In the dealing with it you get a glimpse at the core of the real meaning of life. Your feelings about life and morality change and you hold those around you closer.

Whether it is changing weather or a brain injury that confronts you having others near you to share your experiences is a good thing. With this in mind consider joining us July 7-9 at the picturesque Villa St. Martin in Pierrefonds, Quebec for our annual BIAC conference. Details will be available soon on our website. Rain or shine I hope to see you there.

A 7-minute video titled Brain Injury – A cause to believe in was produced featuring the story of Madeleine Welton, BIAC Board Member and a survivor. It was played across the country and received great response. Many said it was not only a moving story but an eye opener to the struggles and determination of survivors in getting back to normal life.

Halifax—the first: The first Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey of 2006 was in Halifax, where about 90 guests attended, at the city's historic Waterfront Warehouse. Bruce Beaton of the 2005 Grey Cup Champion, Edmonton Eskimos was a great attraction and local band Swurve provided live entertainment. Breakfast TV carried an excellent 10-minute report including interviews with Barb Hart, Mary Bourgois and Deborah Boltz. The local committee led by Ian Ross did an excellent job.

Toronto: At the Toronto Odyssey, Terry Evanshen, Canadian football legend and brain injury survivor gave a terrific speech about his accident and the inspiring path to recovery. Other special guests in the 150 plus audience were Senator Frank Mahovlich, National Hockey League legend, Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Ontario's Former Minister for Public Health and Honourable George Smitherman, Ontario's Minister for Health and Long term care. There was superb media coverage including a full page spread in the Toronto Sun with 10 photos. We also got front page coverage in North Toronto Town Crier, photos and reports in North York Mirror, North Toronto Post and a report in AM 740. Congratulations to co-chairs Howard Brown, Julie Katz and Rick Montgomery as well as the committee members.

Saskatoon—In Saskatoon, the city's stunning riverbank hotel Sheraton Cavalier hosted the event and sponsored food and drinks; about 100 business and community leaders attended. Dr. Deb Saucier of University of Saskatchewan gave a scientific review of the

impact of traumatic brain injuries and the University's well-acclaimed Amati Quartet gave a special performance. Barb Butler and Larry Carlson gave excellent presentations, recounting their personal experiences as brain injury survivors. The local committee was led by Rich Chapman, Doug Richardson and Tiffany Turcotte who did a marvelous job. Our gratitude to them and all committee members.

Edmonton: At the latest of the Odysseys, in Edmonton, over 100 guests gathered at the city's newest hotspot The Bank. Dave Irwin, Canada's skiing legend and a brain injury survivor himself was the chief guest. The staff of the venue restaurant graciously donated their time and service at no cost. City TV's Joe Gotlib was a star attraction as the Master of Ceremonies. Provincial MLAs Thomas Lukaszuk and Rob Lougheed attended. Edmonton Sun carried a photo story. The local committee led by Meloni Lyon and Ginny Gillen did an outstanding job.

We look forward to more fun and learning at the remaining Hawaiian Oyster Odysseys!

Photographs and other information on each Odyssey are available on the BIAC website:

<http://www.biac-acl.ca>



Special Guest George Smitherman and other guests at Toronto HOO.



Diageo representatives with BIAC board members in Halifax



Local band Swurve performing at Halifax



Survivors having fun at the HOO in Toronto



Saskatoon Committee Chairs with BIAC Directors



Terry Evans speaking at Toronto HOO inset: with Senator Frank Mahovlich



HOO Promotion, Saskatoon Venue



Canadian MedicAlert® Foundation

As Canada's largest national member-based charity, **MedicAlert** is the leading provider of medical information services linked to customized medical bracelets and necklets. For more than 40 years, MedicAlert has provided safety and security to help Canadian families live their lives with added reassurance.

Its mandate is to protect families in financial need with membership support through its Member Assistance Program, support communities through outreach programs such as Kids Protect™ aimed at protecting youth by educating and building awareness among parents of children with health conditions, and develop and deliver national education and awareness programs to doctors, nurses, paramedics and other health professionals.

Today, over 1 million Canadians are part of the MedicAlert family. Our members are adults and children of all ages, who have medical conditions or special medical needs that should be known by health professionals in an emergency or non-critical medical situation. In fact, one in five Canadians has a condition that can cause instability, sudden symptoms, weakness, or difficulty in communicating.



MedicAlert is recognized worldwide for its 24-hour Emergency Hotline, in more than 100 languages; custom-engraved bracelets and necklets; confidential and comprehensive member records stored in a centralized database; and membership card listing additional and vital medical information and emergency contacts.

Some of the medical conditions or special needs include devices/implants, developmental challenges, Alzheimer's, Crohn's, Parkinson's disease, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, allergies, hypertension, heart valve disease, head injury, special medications, etc.

For more information about how MedicAlert can protect and save lives, visit www.medicalert.ca or call 1-800-668-1507 ext. 1226.

McGILL UNIVERSITY – Dr. Richard Riopelle

STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF NEUROLOGICAL DISEASE, DISORDERS AND INJURIES IN CANADA

The final report will include an introductory chapter, which will describe the burden of neurological disorders as a group. Chapters on individual diseases and disorders will be modeled on a report prepared by Health Canada for the Parkinson's Society of Canada, called "Parkinson's Disease: Social and Economic Impact". An additional chapter will highlight approximately 25 other diseases for which there are little or no data. The closing chapter will summarize the current data on the epidemiology and economic burden of neurological diseases/injuries in Canada as well as outline the data gaps and limitations found through this study.

Health Canada will provide data on the economic burden of illness as it relates to the conditions covered by this report. These data will be provided by the team that works on the Economic Burden of Illness at Health Canada. Study should be released in late fall.

By *Mireille Provost*

The Synapse

A synapse is a junction between two nerve cells, where the club-shaped tip of a nerve fiber almost touches another cell in order to transmit signals. This column can be seen as a link between us all and will let you know what is happening in other parts of Canada.

Brain Injury Association of America Caregivers' Conference
'Honoring the Past, Charting the Future'
June 2 - 4, 2006

The M Street Hotel on New Hampshire Avenue, Washington, DC
For more info contact: Nancy Kaywood, (913) 310-0074

Ontario Brain Injury Association AGM will be at Hamilton Health Sciences Centre on June 17, 2006. For further information, contact Terry Wilcox at 1-800 263-5404 ext 234 or twilcox@obia.on.ca

BIAC Conference and AGM
July 7-9, Pierrefonds, Quebec
For information-

Tel. : Toll free line/sans frais:
1-866-977-2492

Tel: Local calls/Appels locaux:
(819) 777-2492

Fax: (819) 595-2458

E-mail: biac-aclc@hotmail.com

Website: www.biac-aclc.ca



Brain Injury Association of Canada

Brain Injury Association of Canada

28 Caron St.,
Gatineau, Quebec J8Y 1Y7

1-866-977-2492

(613) 777-2492

web site: www.biac-aclc.ca

Email: biac-aclc@hotmail.com

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It would be impossible to accomplish as much without the help of many dedicated volunteers who are doing translation, preparing and editing this newsletter, building the website and much more.

View from the Bedpan

View from the Bedpan is a lively and spirited true story about a 43-year old woman, Beverley June Richmond, who two years after open-heart surgery is seriously injured when she is run over by a truck, her body going one way, her black pumps the other.

In addition to life-threatening physical injuries, her mind and spirit are tested by three years of rehabilitation and more surgery, and by five years adjusting to her new life with brain injury. Although raw emotions often surface, overall she is able to keep an inquisitive, optimistic outlook and a sense of humour.

“The only way to survive such an ordeal is to see the humour in it, no matter how hard it is to find,” writes Richmond.

This is her story: how she survives her accident and recovery, what she sees and experiences in the hospital, and what she learns about herself and others. Included are many helpful tips, healing strategies, and insights.

Some readers will compare their own experiences as well as relate to these events and messages—motivational, yet comical at times—as they unfold. Others will learn about the consequences of brain injury and hospitalization from a patient’s perspective, especially the many challenges and victories of one survivor.

View from the Bedpan was a nominee for the Stephen Leacock Award for using humour to help tell a difficult story, and is now in second printing.

View from the Bedpan – ISBN-1553063619 – Essence Publishing, Belleville

To order by cheque or money order send \$19.95 to Bev Richmond, RR #1, Hillier, Ont. K0K 2J0; by credit card, contact Essence Publishing at 1-800-238-6376 or visit www.essencebookstore.com; www.amazon.com; also major booksellers.

To have the book signed or dedicated to someone you know, send \$19.95 to Bev Richmond, RR#1, Hillier, Ontario K0K 2J0; (613) 399-3696

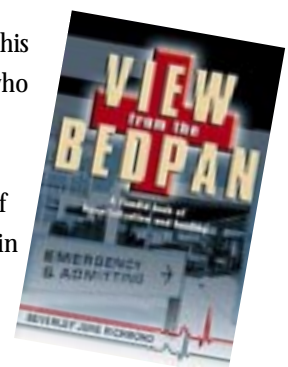
What others say:

John Kumpf, Executive Director of the Ontario Brain Injury Association: “I enjoyed it immensely. It was in parts humorous, in parts touching, in parts informative, and always engaging. I laughed, I cried, and I marvelled. In short, I think that it is a grabber. It is a book that many can benefit from reading.”

London Survivor: “I believe every survivor should read this book. *View from the Bedpan* is an excellent book. Anyone who reads it would understand what having a brain injury is all about.”

Peterborough Survivor: “more than once I found myself laughing out loud at an amusing story. I also found myself in tears. Thank you for writing this book. I hope it becomes required reading for all ABI caregivers, rehab educators and nurses.”

Cheryle Kingsman-Ralph. BGH nurse: “Every nurse should read it!”



April Conference Report:

Jim's Impressions

Smiles... fleeting fading, forced, yet, alive, inviting, hopeful. Warming to the possibilities of knowledge, hope and rebirth.

Wednesday afternoon, the beginnings of what was to be a 'weekend' of new and renewed friendships began. People entered the hotel with expectations and wonder, watching Shelly, Lee and Susan whirling madly in setting up for two glorious and information filled days.

Some, wandering timidly to the Front Desk of the Capri Hotel in Red Deer, heads twisting madly to take in the new scenes and people, had never been to a conference of this nature before. Some, familiar with the ins and outs of conference protocol, strolled the halls and meeting rooms directing newcomers to where they needed to be and who they needed to speak with. They warmed us with their open, "May I help you?", attitudes. Always ready and willing, their help was gratefully accepted.

Frowns... Will I Be accepted? Will I get lost? Can I get answers? Does anybody really care? Does anybody understand?

They did understand! They did accept us! They gave us answers and, more, they cared. And when we got lost they helped us find our way back.

Frowns? Yes, there were frowns. Listening to the horror stories of new friends, feeling the pain that had encompassed their lives and that of their loved ones for so long. But there was JOY. The successes that we shared, the laughs from our own new foibles and trips, reminding each other that we were human and we shared a view different from the world. Not worse or better, just different.

We rejoiced at the small steps that were made, we laughed at our own missteps and errant words and deeds, knowing that we were among friends. Old friends, new friends, friends that were strangers only minutes before, friends that, being who we are, we will probably not remember by name, only by joy.

Yes, we had frowns when we came but tears of joy when we left.

Fear... Everybody's watching. Nobody's listening. Too many people. I'll never understand. They won't understand. I'm afraid.

But for every fear there was an answer. Everybody watched, but only to help in our time of need. Nobody listened, to our mistakes, our errors, or our mess-ups. So many people were there when I needed them. I'll never understand why nobody told me of this happiness before. I'm afraid, still, that I won't get to the next conference, so I'm doing everything I can to make sure it happens again.

Fears are a part of life, everyone has them, but I have learned, here in Red Deer, that these fears are not mine alone. I share them with thousands of people who, thanks to conferences like this, are now my friends.

Thank you, Alberta Brain Injury Conference 2005, for bringing me and others like me together to share happiness and sadness, joy and despair, knowledge and ignorance, and thank you for helping us to bring hope out of hopelessness.

Thank you BIAA, BIRC, SABIS, NABIS, EBIRS, ABII, DTHR, and all the other acronyms I have missed.

Thank you Dr. Brian Kolb, Faith Jahelka, Lisa Somers, Holly Gilmour, Dr. Stoelting, Margaret Grant, Dr. Lisk, Brian Webster, and so many others who took time from their busy schedules to come and educate and give us hope.

Thank you all, for being a part of the new street that I am now traveling that I had feared to travel alone. Share with me the hopes that I now hope, the joys that make me laugh and the happiness in knowing others like you.

Let us begin, again.

Jim Mackey,

Survivor living in Stettler

Hawaiian Oyster Odysseys (HOO)

Upcoming FUNdraisers

*By Howard Brown,
Chair, Fundraising Committee*

HOOs are meant to help raise funds for BIAC operations, programs and support from coast to coast.



The next one is at:

Charlottetown, PE–June 17

Co-chairs: Eric Creamer, Marie Mossey

Other Hawaiian Oyster Odysseys are to be announced at a later date.

If you would like to hold a HOO in your community, contact Howard Brown at howard@brown-cohen.com



ANNUAL CONFERENCE – July 7-9, 2006

PREVENTION OF BRAIN INJURY

VILLA SAINT-MARTIN, PIERREFONDS, 9451, boul. Gouin Ouest, Pierrefonds (near Montreal)

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to attend our third annual conference in Pierrefonds, Quebec. Some speakers are yet to be confirmed but you will hear from one of our board members about helmets and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). Who is selling the helmets in Canada? Have they been tested by CSA to ensure that they are indeed safe to wear? How should you safely wear your helmet? And so many more questions about helmets.

Treat yourself and visit the Villa Saint-Martin's website to get a glimpse of that little paradise at www.villa-saint-martin.zip411.net It is important to remember that the Villa Saint-Martin is a monastery with its advantages and some limitations. There is great outdoor space to room around while listening to the birds and watching the squirrels run up the trees. However, there is no air conditioning, no elevators to the 2nd floor, no alarm clock in rooms, no TV, no computer and no electrical fan.

Complete your registration form soon as we have limited space and the price is right. If you need information, do not hesitate to call Nadine Renaud or write to us. We will do our best to answer your questions.

See you in Pierrefonds in July!

BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS WEEK IN QUÉBEC *By Mireille Provost*

The President of BIAC-ACLC, Mireille Provost, participated to the third edition of the **Semaine québécoise des personnes traumatisées cranio-cérébrales** which took place from May 15–21, 2006. The theme of the week was “*Casses-toi pas la tête!*” – Don't hurt your brain! Activities took place across the province to emphasize the need for awareness and education about brain injury. A plea was made by both associations to the young people in telling them of the importance to wear a helmet and all safety gear when practicing a sport.

Each year, between 700 and 800 people in the Outaouais region have been involved in accidents resulting in brain injuries. In Québec alone, 8400 people are added annually to the list of people who can no longer lead a regular life following a brain injury. They have to learn how to function again, to recognize their limits and abilities.

In collaboration with the local association in Gatineau, Association des neuro-traumatisés, Région de l'Outaouais (ANO), Mireille Provost, President BIAC-ACLC, Michel Racine, President ANO and Agapo Néron-Cloutier, Executive Director ANO, held a press conference inviting the local media to inform them of the consequences of a brain injury and of the resources available locally and in most of the provinces in Canada. Local newspapers spoke about the true stories of Mireille and Michel.

La présidente de BIAC-ACLC, Mireille Provost, a participé à la troisième édition de la **Semaine québécoise des personnes traumatisées cranio-cérébrales** qui a pris place du 15 au 21 mai 2006. Le thème de la semaine était « *Casses-toi pas la tête!* » -- Don't hurt your brain! Plusieurs activités ont pris place dans la province afin de dénoncer le besoin d'information et d'éducation à propos des blessures à la tête. Un rappel a été fait aux jeunes par les deux associations tant qu'à l'importance de porter un casque protecteur ainsi que les accessoires de sécurité en pratiquant son sport favori.

Chaque année, environ 800 personnes dans la région de l'Outaouais ont été impliquées dans un accident et ont subi un traumatisme crânien. Au Québec seulement, 8,400 personnes sont ajoutés annuellement sur la liste des personnes qui ne peuvent plus vivre comme avant à cause des séquelles subies. Ils doivent apprendre à fonctionner normalement et à reconnaître leurs capacités et leurs nouvelles limites.

En collaboration avec l'association locale de Gatineau, Association des neuro-traumatisés, Région de l'Outaouais (ANO), Mireille Provost, Présidente BIAC-ACLC, Michel Racine, Président de l'ANO and Agapo Néron-Cloutier, Directrice générale de l'ANO ont tenu une conférence de presse invitant les media locaux pour les informer des séquelles d'un traumatisme crâniens et des ressources disponibles localement et dans la plupart des provinces au Canada. Les journaux locaux ont également publié les histoires personnelles de Mireille et de Michel.

