



Brain Injury Association of Canada  
Association canadienne des lésés cérébraux

# THE BRAIN TRAIN

*Get on board with BIAC*

Published by the Brain Injury Association of Canada

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## FRY ANNOUNCES NEW BILL FOR SPORT SAFETY

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, BC – March 14, 2007

The Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, Member of Parliament for Vancouver-Centre and Liberal Opposition Critic for Sport, announced that she will be introducing a Private Member's Bill to the House of Commons next week, requiring all snow sport helmets not approved by the CSA to be prohibited under the Hazardous Products Act.

Currently, helmets for hockey and lacrosse are regulated under hazardous-products legislation, but helmets for sports such as snowboarding and skiing are not.

"As a physician, I have seen the tragedy of brain injuries caused by trauma during sport activities in which heads are unprotected," explained Dr. Fry.

"My bill will ban the advertising, sale or import of unsafe helmets. It will ensure that Canadians have the headgear protection they need when skiing or snowboarding," said Dr. Fry. "This is not only a medical and safety issue – it is good public policy. It is estimated that recreational head injuries cost Canadian taxpayers over \$100 million each year."

Dr. Fry's bill also has the support of helmet-safety expert Richard Kinar of the Brain Injury Association of Canada.

"A report by Ski Canada tells us that some ski and snowboard helmets for sale in Canada offer no more protection than putting a bag of milk over your head," said Kinar, "This 'new' Conservative Government continues to ignore this important health issue, as does [Minister of Health] Tony Clement."

Dr. Fry's bill is scheduled to be tabled in the House of Commons on Monday March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

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### **About the Honourable Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.**

A former president of the BC Medical Association, Dr. Hedy Fry was elected Member of Parliament by voters in Vancouver-Centre in 1993 – becoming the first "rookie" MP to defeat a sitting Prime Minister. Fry served as a Minister for six years as the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women, and was a candidate for leadership of the Liberal Party in 2006. A vocal advocate for Vancouver, Fry currently serves as the Official Opposition critic for Sport and the Vancouver Olympics. She blogs on her website at [www.hedyfry.com](http://www.hedyfry.com).

### **About Richard Kinar**

Richard Kinar is the Chair of the Helmet Safety Committee and serves on the board of directors for the Brain Injury Association of Canada. He is a co-recipient of a Canadian Parks and Recreation award for his work on Mountain Risk Safety in West Vancouver. Kinar currently works on a panel for the Canadian Standards Association, developing a new generation standard for ski and snowboard helmets.

## Synapse

- ▶ **International Brain Awareness Week**  
March 12th to March 18th. See [www.dana.org](http://www.dana.org)
- ▶ **2nd Biennial Vocational Outcomes in Traumatic Brain Injury Conference**  
May 24-26 at the U of B.C.  
The contact is Shelly Johnson who can be reached at (604) 875-1775, E-mail: [sljproductions@telus.net](mailto:sljproductions@telus.net)  
Website: [www.tbicvancouver.com](http://www.tbicvancouver.com)
- ▶ **3rd annual conference for ABI Survivors "Moving Ahead Together"**  
June 5th & 6th 2007  
Woodeden Conference Centre London, Ontario  
Cost \$50.00  
Keynote Speaker: Terry Evanshen  
Register: [www.cornerstoneclubhouse.com](http://www.cornerstoneclubhouse.com)
- ▶ **Alberta's 3rd provincial conference for Alberta Brain Injury**  
sponsored by the Brain Injury Association of Alberta  
April 19-20, 2007 in Edmonton, AB  
You may register online at the conference website  
<http://www.biaa.ab.ca/bic2007/>
- ▶ **Survivors Celebration**  
The Brain Injury Society of Toronto is pleased to announce our 6th annual event to raise awareness of brain injury in Toronto. We are pleased to announce a survivors Celebration on June 8, 2006 from 6:30-9:30 PM to be held at Nathan Phillips Square. Join us for music performed by the Trackside Jazz Band,
- Hip Hop Dancing by Da New Attraction and a performance by Ariel's Worm. Our host for the evening is Herbie Kuhn, the Voice of the Raptors and he will introduce you to artists who will be displaying their artwork.
- ▶ **Brain Injury Association of Canada Fourth Annual Conference**  
July 13-15, 2007 in Pierrefonds, Québec  
"Survival Skills for the New Millennium"  
Skills for surviving every day life are the theme for this year's conference, with a continued focus on prevention. For the brain injury community across this country this requires a very special and specific skill set. This year our focus will be on surviving everyday life as a brain injury survivor, caregiver, family member, friend of a survivor, service deliverer and professional. We will examine just what it takes not only to survive life but also to do it effectively.  
Website: [www.biac-aclc.ca](http://www.biac-aclc.ca)
- ▶ **The 2nd International Come To Your Senses Conference, Opening the Sensory World to Children & Adults with Complex Disabilities**  
May 23-27, 2007 in Toronto, Ontario  
The goal is to share and disseminate knowledge and experience from around the world so that we can better understand the Sensory Reality of people with disabilities and the many forms of treatment that exist. Contact name: Eyyub  
Website: <http://www.sensoryconference.ca>

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## Word from the President

More and more we read about accidents happening on hills because people are not wearing a helmet for winter sports. Nobody likes to be told what to do, but we can certainly ask ourselves "what should I do when I go on a hill". Let's think about it before we take an action that says "I will not protect myself against injuries". Winter on the hills stays for many more weeks because of artificial snow – be careful.

It was a very strange winter with snow in Vancouver, hot spells in Nunavut and no snow in Ottawa for a while. Many of us are waiting for the spring hoping that the climate change has not affected it too. With spring comes the crocus, house cleaning, losing pounds to go to the beach and taking the time to look for programs and services to get what we need. Consult the website of Health Canada for Services for People with Disabilities. There are so many things out there that it is confusing.

With the private Bill of Dr. Hedy Fry – Bill C-412 *An Act to amend the Hazardous Products Act (recreational snow sport helmets)*, we know for sure that we will have a lot of work to do in the coming months in developing a strategy with our provincial counterparts and other organizations interested in the issue to support this bill. The issue of June will explain this bill and the Canadian standards designed for helmets for winter sports.



# Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey – National Fundraiser for BIAC

## Hawaiian Oyster Odysseys bring in over \$100,000 and hundreds of new supporters

The 2007 Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey series have kicked off with a bang.

### GATINEAU

The Quebec chapter of the Brain Injury Association held its first Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey fund raiser on February 6<sup>th</sup>. It was a cold February day, so a very good time to think of warm weather and sunny skies. The food and drinks, served with a smile and a warm welcome by the staff of Le French Quarter, hit the spot. Canada's former Minister of Public Health Carolyn Bennett joined the supporters with Special Guests such as Jean-Pierre Lupien, president of RAPTCCQ (the Quebec Brain Injury Association) and Michel Racine, president of the Gatineau Brain Injury Association. A number of students attended the event who expressed an interest in getting more young people involved in BIAC. The winner who became eligible to win two tickets for Honolulu, Hawaii is Guy Monette.



*Guy Séguin, Serge Lafrenière, Renald Piché and Duane Casselman, happy to be in Hawaii in February for one night*



*Carolyn Bennett with Mireille Provost and Madeleine Welton enjoying one another's company*

Many friends and supporters of the association were on hand – they ate, drank, and chatted with old and new friends in a pleasant atmosphere. Many thanks go out to the organizing committee, Mireille Provost, Lise Monette, Yvan Teasdale and Réjeanne Lalonde. As well, we appreciate the contribution of Carole Eldridge, our photographer for the evening, Serge Lafrenière, who provided the audio equipment, and Jacqueline Teasdale, who presided over the prize draws.

### TORONTO

In Toronto, Ontario's Minister of Health Promotion Jim Watson kicked off an exciting evening with over 150 supporters. Co-chairs were Howard Brown, BIAC's Fundraising Chair and Madeleine Welton, survivor and BIAC director.



*Howard Brown (left) and Rick Montgomery (right) co-creator of the Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey with Ontario's Minister of Health Promotion Jim Watson*

It was held at the historic Drake Hotel. Also in attendance was BIAC director Howard Stevenson, two members of the Toronto Argonauts and former Toronto Maple Leaf Stew Gavin. Guest speakers included Megan Patterson, a survivor and president of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto, which will receive a portion of the funds raised.

The Toronto winner of the eligibility draw for 2 tickets to Hawaii is Anna Greenblatt, president of Interaction Rehabilitation Inc.

## A Survivor's Story

By Yvan Teasdale



On November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1991, at the age of five, Denis Teasdale of Gatineau, Quebec is struck by a car while crossing the street with his sister. In critical condition, he is taken to a hospital in Hull where a medical team assesses the seriousness of his brain injuries, stabilizes him and have him transferred to the Children Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEEO). It is a tragedy that will change his life and those close to him for ever.

Denis defies death and will spend five weeks in a coma. On coming out, he needs to relearn every movements, to speak, to eat, drink etc. He makes good progress thanks to the multidisciplinary intervention program of CHEEO and La RessourSe, a Gatineau Rehabilitation Centre and the support of the Quebec Automobile Insurance. After two years of therapies, Denis is left with a disability that includes short-term memory loss, aphasia and diminished fine motor skills.

In spite of overcoming many challenges as years went on, Denis is determined to become independent, to achieve social integration and complete his studies. Over the years, many teachers supported him and he graduated in 2005 with a Secondary School Diploma. Now aged 20, Denis resides in an apartment and manages to live his life with the help of his parents. Like many young people, he enjoys video games, the Internet and swimming at the community centre.

Denis is bright, friendly and has a good sense of humour in both official languages. He is realistic and recognizes that he can do many things but with some functional limitations. His plan includes looking for part-time employment and volunteering his time to help others. Denis is featured in the brochure of the Gatineau Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey event held on February 6. Denis says "considering what I lived through, I think that I'm more mature for my age and that I can overcome the challenges of life."





## MEDIA

ROB TV host Amanda Lang was the Master of Ceremonies in Toronto. CITY-TV covered the event and ran an item on its 11 pm news with a clip with Madeleine Welton.

*Kevin Eiban of Toronto Argonauts second from left with Wendy Broad, former Canadian women's boxing champion and member of the Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey Committee, Gigi Rosenberg, Frank Rosenberg, Eli Rosenberg and Victoria Freeman, members of Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey Committee*

## ACROSS CANADA

Other HOO's are being held in Edmonton March 22, Saskatoon March 23, Fredericton April 19, St. John's April 20, Vancouver May 24, Charlottetown June 2, Montreal July 13 and Winnipeg October 30.

## SPONSORS

To date, national corporate sponsors like Diageo, Insurance Bureau of Canada, TD Bank Financial Group, Apotex, Bombardier have helped us raise over \$100,000 for BIAC's advocacy and awareness programs.

## AIR CANADA

Again, Air Canada is donating two tickets to Honolulu for a draw prize. One finalist is picked from each HOO and the final draw will take place July 13, 2007 in Pierrefonds, Quebec.

## GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Canada's Governor-General Michaëlle Jean sent BIAC greetings that said:



It is a pleasure to send greetings to all those who have gathered for the Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey in support of the Brain Injury Association of Canada.

This Association can take pride in its dedication to helping those with brain injuries cope with all the life changes brought on by this type of trauma.

The volunteers and supporters of the Brain Injury Association have put their time and energy into ensuring that understanding and prevention are keys to putting an end to brain injuries.

This organization has done wonderful work in raising awareness of this cause thanks to those who have gone above and beyond what was asked of them to bring hope to brain injured survivors and their families.

Everyone who has embarked on the Oyster Odyssey has made a commitment to help victims of brain injuries and their families. It is my hope that this Odyssey will serve to strengthen this dedication in the Association's supporters. I wish everyone an enjoyable evening.

Michaëlle Jean  
March 2007

*This greeting will be printed in each program. For more information visit [www.hawaiianoysterodysseys.ca](http://www.hawaiianoysterodysseys.ca)*

## Tobogganing & Sledding Safety

— from Ottawa Citizen website

### When you head for the hills this winter... Plan-it Safe.

Winter recreational activities are plentiful in the Nation's Capital. Popular winter activities include sledding and tobogganing. Unfortunately, every year hundreds of people are injured and many require medical attention. Children between the ages of five and nine, account for 40 per cent of all sledding related injuries in Canada. Over 20 per cent of these injuries involve concussions, internal injuries or broken bones. (Statistics: Canadian Hospital's Injury Reporting Prevention Program). Most injuries are caused by colliding with an object (e.g., trees, rocks, signs) or from being thrown from the sled. While we want to encourage people to continue with outdoor activities and having fun, they need to realize that potential dangers do exist. By planning-it safe, everyone can enjoy the benefits and limit the risks. So remember,

### Don't Use Your Brains for Brakes!

#### DO...

- ▶▶ Before you go sledding check the weather and physical conditions of the hill to ensure it is safe.
- ▶▶ Select a hill with a gentle slope and make sure that there is plenty of room to stop.
- ▶▶ Sled during daylight, and if you are out at night don't slide unless the hill is well lit (most injuries occur in late afternoon and evening hours).
- ▶▶ Choose a sled or toboggan that is easy to control.
- ▶▶ Wear a CSA approved helmet, especially children.
- ▶▶ Always sit or kneel facing forward.
- ▶▶ Keep your hands, arms and legs inside the sled to prevent injury.
- ▶▶ Remember to tuck in strings, and long toques. Use a neck warmer instead of a scarf.
- ▶▶ Wait until the path is clear before starting down the hill.
- ▶▶ Accompany any child under five on the toboggan.
- ▶▶ Keep an eye out for oncoming sledders and quickly get out of the way when you reach the bottom.
- ▶▶ Roll to the side if you have to get off in a hurry remembering not to use your hands or feet to try and stop the sled.
- ▶▶ Climb back up the hill by keeping to the side (away from where people are coming down).

#### AVOID...

- ▶▶ Hills that are closed have signs that say they are unsafe or have too many obstacles (trees, bumps, etc.).
- ▶▶ Building ramps and jumps. Construction of snow ramps and other obstacles is strictly prohibited on hills.
- ▶▶ Hills that are too steep and too icy.
- ▶▶ Inner tubes, crazy carpets, flying saucers, garbage bags and cardboard boxes, as they are difficult to control.
- ▶▶ Overcrowding a toboggan with too many riders.
- ▶▶ Going down hill head first (no lying down).
- ▶▶ Attempting to stop the toboggan with your hands and feet if you lose control.
- ▶▶ Bringing pets to the hill.



# 20th Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference

By Shirley Johnson

The Brain Injury Association of Canada (BIAC) partnered in hosting the 20th Annual Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Vancouver, British Columbia from February 15 through 17, 2007. The conference was well attended by members of the Board of BIAC with Barb Butler and Larry Carlson from Saskatchewan who were presenting, Meloni Lyon from Alberta, as well as Richard Kinar and Shirley Johnson from British Columbia.

February 15<sup>th</sup> was a day for Pre-Conference Workshops. **Workshop 1**

focused on **Prevention**. Mr. Matt Herman, Injury Prevention Manager from the BC Ministry of Health opened this workshop with an overview on some of the BC provincial initiatives in injury prevention. Dr. Philip Groff talked to attendees about injury prevention in the future. Dr. Groff is the Director of Research & Evaluation at SMARTRISK, responsible for the expansion of research capacity both internally and externally in injury prevention. He was the national coordinator of Listening for Direction on Injury, part of the process in developing a National Strategy for Injury Prevention. Dr. Louis Francescutti founded the Injury Prevention Centre at the University of Alberta Hospitals and is instrumental in the development and implementation of several award-winning innovative injury control programs. He addressed the activities that contribute to injuries as a result of vehicle collisions. He identified the use of cell phones while driving as an issue that is causing significant risk. Dr. David Brooks, from the Performance Athletics Sports Medicine Clinic in Summerland BC, presentation is on Concussion & Sport. Dr. Brooks is the recent co-author with Dr. Brian Hunt of the paper "Current Concepts in Concussion Diagnosis & Management in Sports: A Clinical Review". Dr. Ian Pike and Dr. Shelina Babul from the BC Injury and Research & Prevention Unit engaged us in an interactive game of Jeopardy titled "Protect Your Melon". The BC Injury & Research & Prevention Unit takes the position that injuries are predictable and preventable. The day concluded with a panel comprised of some of the presenters and Brain Injury Association of Canada board member, Richard Kinar. Richard has lobbied the government for the past 4 years for funding to enable the Canadian Standards Association to underwrite Canadian Standards for helmets of ski/snowboard, in-line skating, skateboarding, push scooters and other small wheeled vehicles.



Richard Kinar with the Helmet Tree

**Workshop 2** focused on **Human Relations**. Al Condeluci, PhD, opened this workshop. He has been an advocate and catalyst for building community capacities and understanding culture since 1970. Participants chose one of the following 3 concurrent workshops for the afternoon session: Building Tools and Strategies for more Effective Human Relations, Family Members & Caregivers Discuss Strategies for their Toolbox or Persons with Acquired Brain Injuries Discuss Strategies for their Toolbox. A welcome reception followed the workshops and display booths were open.

The Conference took place on February 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>. There were concurrent presentations on numerous topics throughout both days (please visit [www.pcbic.org](http://www.pcbic.org) for more information on these presentations). BIAC's board members Barb Butler and Larry Carlson gave an interesting presentation entitled "The Road Not Chosen" that explores how their injuries altered the paths they were on. Friday during lunch presentations were made to sponsors and winners of the Sheldon Berrol awards. Friday evening awards were presented to the "Legends" of acquired brain injury in British Columbia, followed by a social and dance. Some attendees were invited on stage by the live band and we got a great insight into their special talents – one BIAC board member who had presented earlier in the day showed us he can still "shake it" with the best! The Conference wound up Saturday afternoon with a presentation by the Extreme Kindness Crew. These young men have traveled across Canada doing random acts of kindness and had an important message to share with us all.

The Brain Injury Association of Canada had a display table throughout the Conference. Our Helmet Tree at the display was a great hit. Our thanks go to Richard Kinar and Dwane Armbruster from Ambruster Design/Build for creating the tree and for the loan of GIRO helmets for display. There was much interest in the work that is being done to move forward on helmet standards. Visitors to the BIAC table were interested in and supportive of the progress of our organization. It was wonderful to have the opportunity to speak to so many people and to get input on what is important to members of the brain injury community.

All in all, it was a tremendous opportunity to network with others, learn new information and even have some fun!



# Services for People with Disabilities

## Guide to Government of Canada Services for People with Disabilities and their Families

Who should use Services for People with Disabilities?

You should if you are:

- ▶ a person living with a disability
- ▶ caring for a person with a disability
- ▶ a professional or community service provider who works with people with disabilities
- ▶ a volunteer who helps people with disabilities.

This guide about Government of Canada services and programs for people with disabilities provides information on everything from employment, accessibility and education, to health, income support and tax benefits. A section tells you how to contact your provincial or territorial government to find out about its programs and services for people with disabilities. You can view or download this guide at [servicecanada.gc.ca](http://servicecanada.gc.ca). Click on "I am: A Person with a disability". You can also get a free copy of this guide by calling 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232) TTY 1 800 926-9105.

## Frequently Asked Questions about programs and services for Canadians with disabilities

This document was prepared by the Office for Disability Issues, Social Development Canada. It may be accessed on the Internet at [www.sdc.gc.ca](http://www.sdc.gc.ca). This guide answers some common questions about programs and services available to Canadians with disabilities. It brings together questions asked by persons with disabilities as well as by family members, government officials, employers, health and social workers, disability groups and others who live and work with persons with disabilities. For each question, the guide gives a brief answer and then points you to the best resources for more detail. Many of these resources are websites. If you do not have access to the Internet, you can call 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232) TTY 1 800 465-7735.

## Access to Justice For People who have Communication Disabilities

"Over 350,000 people in Canada have communication disabilities and cannot speak. We use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems such as communication displays and speech generating devices."

Resources are available for legal professionals, police, judges, legal aid clinics, jury members, legal education networks, victim witness services, counselors, shelter workers, disability advocates, people who use augmentative and alternative communication, their families and service providers.

You can get access to services and information about abuse issues, inaccessible community services, housing, discrimination and many more. Free resources are available at: [www.accpc.ca/equaljustice.htm](http://www.accpc.ca/equaljustice.htm)



## In A Nutshell

— by Barb Butler, Editor

I had the great pleasure of attending the Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference and was able to meet many survivors and caregivers. Many people stopped by the BIAC booth to say hello and tell us about themselves. We were able to collect many peoples email addresses so if you were one of them, and this is your first Brain Train visit, a huge welcome. I encourage you all to email us with any happenings in your area you would like us to include. We would like to hear from you with any suggestions you might have. If you are a survivor who would like to be featured in our newsletter I would welcome your story, feel free to email BIAC and it will be passed along to me. I hope to meet many new faces as we gather again this July for our annual AGM and Conference in Montreal. Stay safe.

## Newspaper Article Review

— by Yvan Teasdale, Past President

In the first page of the Ottawa Citizen newspaper of January 23rd (today) appears a long article titled: "Helmet plan gets frosty reception on sled hill – Making safety gear mandatory is pushing it, parents say."

Briefly, the article discusses making safety gear on the hill mandatory. Although many are opposed, some are in favor of posting a sign at the hill warning it is unsupervised and suggests sledders wear a CSA-approved helmet and avoid icy days.

It says that tobogganing accidents have killed at least seven people in Canada since 2003 including a 12-year-old Gatineau boy who crashed into a tree. Also, it says that "according to the Ontario Injury Prevention Resource Centre, tobogganing caused 502 head injuries and resulted in 1,731 visits to the province's emergency rooms between 2004-2005. Just over 100 people required hospital stays."

Finally an argument is made for a federal law that makes helmets mandatory for young tobogganers as opposed to having it be piecemeal and different everywhere across the nation. It concludes by saying that "if you can save one child from brain damage or a broken neck, I think it would be worth the effort."

This is something else we should be promoting in our prevention efforts to educate the public including our political leaders to effect changes in current legislation.