In This Issue:

Executive Director's Message .............. 2
Brain Injury ID Cards........................ 3
TBI Study Opportunity....................... 3
2017 Conference Info....................... 4-5, 8
Brain Injury Awareness Month ............ 6
BIAW Op-Ed ..................................... 7
Purple Thursdays ............................. 8-9
Pennies for Your Thoughts ............... 8-9
From the USBIA ................................ 10
News Briefs ....................................... 11
Upcoming Events ............................ 12-13

29th Annual Conference
“Moving Forward with Brain Injury”

Wilderness Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI
April 24-25, 2017
Register by April 10, 2017, to avoid a late fee.

See Pages 4 and 5 for details.

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month

Brain injury is the leading cause of death & disability in children and young adults.

Together we can make a difference in reducing brain injuries.

Learn more at USBIA.org

This year, 1.7 million Americans will sustain a traumatic brain injury.

The mission of the United States Brain Injury Alliance is to engage the community in preventing brain injury and improving lives.

#mybraininjury @us_bia
Executive Director’s Message

As we move into 2017, the annual conference is our primary focus, but there is a great deal more going on at the BIAW.

The Board and I, along with a number of volunteers, have some great plans for the next year. These plans do not always happen as quickly as we would like or intend, but I am confident in saying the BIAW is heading in a great new direction.

Here are some things to watch for in the coming months, and a few things we already have going on...

- We are presently putting together our third batch of brain injury ID cards. To get yours, see the article on page 3.
- We’re adding a Janesville Walk for Thought this year, and there’s room for more (page 11).
- We’re going to a hockey game (page 13), and watch for more social opportunities in the future.
- Watch in early May for news of a new regional educational opportunity.
- An updated version of the BIAW guide will be up at BIAW.com soon. Thanks to everyone who sent in material and suggestions.
- Brain Injury Alliance chapters in 18 states have picked up on Purple Thursdays. The idea started at the BIAW.
- If you would like someone from the BIAW to visit your support group or event, call us at 262-790-9660.

The one thing the BIAW could still use is your help! If you can make a financial donation, volunteer to assist with an event, start a new support group, or contribute in any other way, we’d love to hear from you. An Alliance needs allies, and we welcome your help!

Karl Curtis
Executive Director

Website Improvements
www.biaw.org

Our website is improving. Please be patient while we work to serve you better.
BIAW offering Brain Injury ID Cards

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month, and to mark the occasion the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin is offering to make brain injury ID cards for any brain injury survivors in Wisconsin. The easy-to-read, double-sided cards provide your name, emergency contact information, and tips to help others understand brain injury. The cards are designed to help survivors in any situation where explaining a brain injury may prove helpful, difficult, or stressful. These laminated cards fit easily in a wallet or purse.

A $5 donation to the BIAW is suggested for each card to cover materials, laminating and the cost to mail the card to you. If we can mail a bunch of cards to one location (like a support group) we can reduce costs. Call us at 262-790-9660 for details.

To get a card send the following information to the BIAW;
Your Name:
Your Address:
Emergency Contact's Name:
Emergency Contact's relationship to you (Father, wife, etc.):
Emergency Contact's phone number:

E-mail your information to admin@biaw.org or Mail your information to:
BIAW
6409 Odana Rd., Ste 1H
Madison, WI 53719

Please call the BIAW office if you have questions or to make a donation by credit card 262-790-9660.

Participate in TBI study

Has your spouse or partner had a brain injury? I want to know about YOU!

My name is Elizabeth Fleming and I am a doctoral candidate at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota. I am conducting a study about the experiences of people whose partner has had a TBI.

There is research about TBI, but very little about people like you and how you have coped with having a partner with a TBI.

If you are interested in participating, please follow the link below for more information. https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TBIFleming The total time required to complete the survey should be approximately 15 minutes.

If you have questions about the study or procedures, you may contact me, Elizabeth Fleming, MA via email at embuen11@smumn.edu, or my research supervisor, Dr. LaRae Jome, PhD, LP via email at ljome@smumn.edu.

Staying in touch with support groups

Thank you to the support group at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Appleton for hosting BIAW Executive Director Karl Curtis at their January group meeting. It was a terrific visit. If you would be interested in having Karl or a BIAW board member come to your support group meeting, call the BIAW office at 262-790-9660.
29th Annual Statewide Conference On Brain Injury

Moving Forward With Brain Injury
April 24-25, 2017 * Wilderness Resort * Wisconsin Dells
CEUs Available
For program, lodging and registration materials visit biaw.org/events
Or call 262-790-9660 to register with a credit card
2017 Conference Schedule and Lodging Information

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017

7:30 am  Registration
8:15 am  Welcome
8:30-9:30 am  Keynote – A Parent’s Journey in Advocacy: Stories from Under the Capitol Dome – Lisa Pugh, The ARC of WI Executive Director
9:45 am  Break/Exhibits
9:45-11 am  Keynote – Neuroimaging In Brain Injury – Nicholas Ketchum, MD

11:10-12:10 pm  Concurrent Session 1

- Continuum of Care—ICU Through Rehab – Mary Voegeli, APNP, CRRN, CBIS
- Social Communication after TBI Across the Adult Lifespan – Lindsey Byom, Ph.D., CF-SLP
- Brain Injury 101 – Nathan D Glassman PhD, ABN, ABPP

12:10-1 pm  Networking Lunch

1-2 pm  Concurrent Session 2

- Integrated Treatment of Substance Use Disorders, Mental Illness and Cognitive Challenges – Rick Krueger, MA, LPCC, LADC, CBIS
- Assessment and Treatment of Cognitive Communication Disorders After Mild TBI – Rocio Norman, M.A. CCC-SLP
- Family Panel – Karl Curtis, Nicole Dubois

2:10-3:10 pm  Concurrent Session 3

- Post TBI Therapy – Anne Repaci, MS, CRC, LPC
- Labeling facial affect in context in adults with and without TBI – Sarah Kraning, M.S., CF
- Survivors Panel – Moderators TBD

3:10-3:25 pm  Break/Exhibits

3:25-4:40 pm  Keynote – Cognitive Rehabilitation:

Tools for Living Better after Brain Injury – Jessica Petersen, Mayo Clinic

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2016

8-8:30 am  Continental Breakfast/Welcome
8:30-9:45 am  Keynote – Research in Brain Injury Rehabilitation: How to benefit, how to participate – Michael Ward, MD

9:45-10 am  Break/Exhibits

10-11 am  Concurrent Session 4

- Language Comprehension and the Legal System for People with TBI – Joseph Wszalek, JD
- Relationships and Sexuality After TBI – Chastity Krings, CBIS
- Post TBI Anger, Depression And Emotions – Sarah E. Porter, Psy.D

11:15-12:30  Keynote – Behavioral Care in Brain Injury Rehabilitation – Terry Young, Psy.D.

Adjourn

Lodging Information

Once again the Wilderness Resort has reserved a block of rooms at a discounted rate for the conference. Use the following information and group number to reserve your room today. The deadline to reserve your room as part of the block is April 3.

Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort
511 East Adams Street
Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

Call 1.800.867.9453
Group Name: Brain Injury Assn 2017
Group Number: 593747
This March, in recognition of Brain Injury Awareness Month, Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin (BIAW) joins a nationwide network of state brain injury organizations with the United States Brain Injury Alliance (USBIA) to spread the word and raise awareness about brain injury prevention, recognition, and response.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 2.5 million individuals experience a traumatic brain injury (TBI) each year. Of those individuals, 50,000 die, 280,000 are hospitalized, and 2.2 million are treated and released from an emergency department.

Despite these facts and figures, brain injury remains a “hidden epidemic.”

During the month of March the BIAW encourages everyone to help spread the word about brain injury. Here are a few suggestions for action:

- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper alerting people to Brain Injury Awareness Month (the BIAW will send you a sample letter if you e-mail info@biaw.org).
- Contact your local television and radio stations and ask them to do a story on brain injury. Volunteer to appear on air to tell your story or be the subject of an interview.
- Contact your elected officials to support the Youth Sports Concussion Act presently before congress, and also to raise your voice in support of future brain injury awareness and legislation
- Attend a brain injury support group in your area. A listing can be found at biaw.org.
- Make a donation to the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin so we can continue to advocate on behalf of brain injury survivors, caregivers and professionals throughout the state.
The following op-ed appeared in the Madison Capital Times on Saturday, March 4.

**Brain Injury is More Common, and More Dangerous, Than You Think**
**By Karl Curtis**

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month. Despite the fact traumatic brain injuries (TBI) occur more frequently than do breast cancer diagnoses, HIV/AIDS infections, multiple sclerosis cases, and spinal cord injuries combined, I’m willing to bet most people did not know this.

In truth, everyone should know about brain injury because it can strike anyone, anywhere at any time. All it takes is an accidental blow to the head or unexpected medical diagnosis. If this happens, as it did to my family, you will need to become aware quickly.

Nineteen years ago my oldest son, then nine years old, fought and beat brain cancer with the help of surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy. Unfortunately, the same treatments that saved his life also damaged his brain. The fact my son’s post-treatment TBI has had a far greater effect on his life than cancer may sound incredible so some, but it is true. Cancer can be defeated, but a brain injury lingers.

To be clear, the manner in which my son acquired his brain injury is unusual. The vast majority of TBI result from falls, motor vehicle accidents, assaults, and accidental collisions. This raises another important point: nobody plans to get a brain injury. A missed step on the stairs, a driver who runs a red light, or a wayward foul ball at a baseball game can leave anyone with a life-altering injury.

How might a TBI affect someone? My son’s story provides some examples.

As nine-year-old, my son was preparing to start gifted and talented programing at his elementary school. After his injury, simple math and even remembering to turn in his homework became difficult. Nineteen years later these cognitive problems still limit him professionally and personally.

Brain injuries can also hamper social and communication skills. We laugh at fictional Sheldon Cooper from “The Big Bang Theory” as he struggles to read emotions and detect sarcasm or humor in conversation. My son has these struggles every day. It’s not funny.

Then there is the fatigue. When my son began sleeping 14 hours a day, my first thought was laziness. I later learned a damaged brain needs to work harder to do everything, even passive tasks such as watching TV or reading a book. We’ve all had late nights and then struggled through the following workday. My son is tired like that every day.

My son also experiences bouts of anger, loneliness, depression and anxiety, all common symptoms of brain injury. His short term memory is poor, and when something does interest him he fixates on it to the exclusion of all else. Too much stimulation, even from something as benign as a family holiday gathering, overwhells him. Fortunately he does not experience the headaches other TBI survivors live with, nor the sensitivity to bright lights and loud noises.

My son is one of an estimated 50,000 people in Wisconsin who live with a brain injury. That estimate is likely low because a great many people who experience a brain injury don’t seek treatment. Perhaps you know such a person. Does grandpa seem different since he fell off the ladder? Has your co-worker been struggling since her bicycle accident? Have you not been yourself even though you left a physically abusive relationship months ago?

Keep in mind because someone looks fine on the outside does not mean there isn’t damage internally. If this sounds familiar, it could be a brain injury. Most of the 44,000 people in Wisconsin who go to the emergency room with a TBI each year recover without lingering symptoms, but for those who do not recover fully life can be a constant struggle.

He remembers his challenges, my son is a terrific person. He’s friendly, loyal, kind and smart. He has a part-time job, he graduated from college, and he has performed lead roles in stage plays. In this sense he is like any of the hundreds of brain injury survivors I have met in my work.

Like most TBI survivors I know, he is also frustrated. He remembers his pre-injury self. He remembers when routine tasks were not a struggle, when making friends was easy, and when a satisfying and lucrative career seemed a sure bet.

Karl Curtis is the executive director of the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin
The BRAIN group in Appleton celebrated Purple Thursday on March 9 and also gathered some change for the Pennies for Your Thoughts fund raiser. The BRAIN group, made up entirely of volunteers from a variety of social services and health care organizations as well as interested individuals, has been working on a fascinating study linking brain injury with homelessness and domestic partner abuse in the Fox Valley area. If you are interested in BRAIN or their study, contact the BIAW and we will connect you.

Thank you to our Conference Sponsors: (so far)

If your organization would like to become a conference sponsor, call the BIAW at 262-790-9660
Brain Injury Awareness Month Events

BIAW Promoting Brain Injury Awareness Month with “Purple Thursdays” and “Pennies for Your Thoughts”

The Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin (BIAW) is joining United States Brain Injury Alliance affiliates from 17 states to promote Purple Thursdays and Pennies for Your Thoughts during Brain Injury Awareness Month in March. The campaigns are designed to shine a spotlight on traumatic brain injury, often referred to as “the silent epidemic.”

The BIAW invites anyone touched by brain injury to wear something purple on any or all of the five Thursdays in March to show support for those affected by brain injury in Wisconsin, the families that love them, and the professionals who care for them. People wearing purple are then invited to share their support by sending a photo of themselves or their group to the BIAW at admin@biaw.org. The BIAW will use the pictures to spread awareness by posting them on its web site and via social media.

Additionally, the BIAW encourages people to collect spare change, Pennies for Your Thoughts, during March to donate to the BIAW’s outreach and awareness efforts. This can be done by cleaning the change out of your cup holder, breaking open your piggy bank, or putting a donation jar on your desk at work. Any method and any size donation helps.

For more information on Purple Thursdays or Pennies for Your Thoughts, or for general information on brain injury, please contact the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin at 262-790-9660 or visit BIAW.org.

Please e-mail Purple Thursday photos to admin@biaw.org. Pennies for Your Thoughts donations can be mailed to BIAW, 6409 Odana Rd., Ste 1H, Madison, WI 53719.

Creative Health Care Solutions, Inc.

Affiliated Dentists S.C.
United States Brain Injury Alliance welcomes Advocate Members

USBIA welcomes all those with an interest in brain injury to join the Alliance as Advocate Members! Persons with brain injury, family members, caregivers, and medical professionals are all encouraged to join USBIA and be a part of a nation-wide community of advocates seeking to prevent brain injury and improve lives!

There is no cost to joining USBIA as an Advocate Member!

USBIA is dedicated to affecting positive change through education, collaboration, advocacy, and outreach. By joining USBIA as an Advocate Member, you will be uniting with others around the country in a common mission to prevent brain injury and improve lives.

Membership can be obtained at http://usbia.org/join-usbia/advocate-membership/.

All USBIA Chapters are encouraged to share this information with their constituents.

For more information on Advocate Membership, please contact Margaret Roberts, mroberts@usbia.org, or visit www.usbia.org

Make a Call to Prevent Gutting of the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid

The House of Representatives in Washington D.C. is expected to introduce a bill to cut Medicaid and gut the ACA (Affordable Care Act) on Monday Feb. 27th. Work is expected to begin immediately to move this legislation quickly to the President’s desk.

If these bills pass, it would have an extremely negative impact on survivors of brain injury who are disabled. We simply cannot allow this to happen on our watch. We need you to reach out to your Federal elected officials and tell them that repealing the ACA and cuts to Medicaid are unacceptable. People's health, services, and lives are at stake! We need advocates to reach out to their Senators and Representatives to let them know why the ACA and Medicaid are essential to people with disabilities and their families. Please call and relay the following two messages:

Message #1: Do NOT per capita cap Medicaid!

Medicaid is a jointly funded program with matching state and federal funds. Under a Medicaid per capita cap, the federal government would set a limit on how much to reimburse states based on enrollment. Unlike current law, funding would not be based on the actual cost of providing services. Much like the proposed block grants, the intent of the per capita caps is to restructure the program, cut federal spending and drastically reduce money going to the states. Inevitably there will be cuts in funding and other negative impacts to Medicaid recipients could include:

- Losing home and community-based services and supports. Waiting lists would quickly grow.
- Losing other critical services such as personal care, mental health, prescription drugs, and rehabilitative services. If funds become scarcer, states may decide to stop providing these services altogether.
- Being forced into unnecessary institutionalization. States could return to the days of "warehousing" people with disabilities in institutions.

Shifting the costs to individuals or family members to make up for the federal cuts. The costs of providing health care and long term services and supports will not go away, but will be shifted to individuals, parents, states, and providers.

For additional information, see the Arc's fact sheet about Medicaid.

Message #2: Do not repeal the ACA's protections for people with disabilities!

For those with disabilities, the ACA is the most crucial piece of legislation since the Americans with Disabilities Act:

- Because of the ACA, health insurers can't deny health insurance if you have a disability or chronic condition.
- Because of the ACA, there aren't arbitrary financial limits to how much health care you can get in a year or in your lifetime. Because of the ACA, more people with disabilities receive supports and live in the community, not institutions.

For additional information, see CCD's fact sheet about the ACA.

Take Action! Fight for Disability Rights!

Call your Senators and Representatives today at 202-224-3121! Now is the time for action. Remember: every call matters! Don't let them take away health care and services for millions of people and replace it with a plan that cuts Medicaid. Find your U.S. Senator here and your U.S. House Representative here. Attend a local town hall meeting while your Senator or Representative is in district, find scheduled meetings here.

What to Say During Your Call:

- I live in your district.
- I am a person with a disability/I am a family member/caregiver of someone with a disability/I am a professional in the disability field.
- Please do not repeal the ACA (Affordable Care Act) without a replacement that maintains or improves coverage and protections.
- Do not allow restructuring and cuts to Medicaid to be part of an ACA replacement.

Because of the ACA and Medicaid, I/my family member to have access to health care and community based services.
Purple Thursday Pictures
BIAW Executive Director Karl Curtis (above) not only gets into the Purple Thursday spirit but also displays the football donated and autographed by J.J. Watt that will be given to a lucky attendee of this year’s Conference on Brain Injury. Thank you to Mr. Watt for the generous donation! Clearview Brain Injury Center also marked Purple Thursday on March 9. The nursing staff (top right) and the therapy staff (below) dawned purple and sent in these pictures. If you would like to spread brain injury awareness by wearing purple, send your pictures to admin@biaw.org. A group shot or a selfie will work!

Walk for Thought
Two Walk for Thought dates for 2017 have been solidified. A new Walk will take place in Janesville on Saturday, Sept. 16, and the Brookfield Walk is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 30. Scheduling for a Madison and NE Wisconsin Walk are in the works. Watch your e-mail for more information about these events.

If you would like to help, or if you would like to plan a Walk in your community, contact the BIAW at 262-790-9660.

Pasqua on TV
BIAW Vice President Kevin Pasqua appeared on Fox-6 in Milwaukee to discuss TBI, Brain Injury Awareness Month, and bike safety. You can view his segment here: http://fox6now.com/2017/03/06/prevention-of-brain-injury-what-parents-need-to-know-about-protecting-their-kids-from-head-injuries/

Letter to the Editor
Brain Injury Awareness
Open House & Program

Monday, March 27, 2017
6:00-7:30 PM

Helen Fowler Conference Center
At St. Elizabeth Hospital
(1506 S. Oneida St, Appleton)

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month!
The Fox Cities Brain Injury Support Group is hosting a
Brain Injury Awareness Open House & Program to help people
better recognize and respond to brain injuries and to learn about
resources and services that are available.

This FREE event will feature:
• Resource area
• Refreshments
• Program from 6:30-7:00 PM which will include general information on
brain injuries, efforts of the local BRAIN committee, and testimonials
from members of the Fox Cities Brain Injury Support Group.

For more information, please contact:
Ashley Gustafson, Outreach Coordinator at SOAR Fox Cities
920-731-9831 ext. 111 or ashley@soarfoxcities.com
BIAW Night!
Join the Madison Capitols hockey team for a fun night out & help raise funds for Brain Injury Alliance Wisconsin!

MADISON CAPITOLS vs. SIOUX FALLS STAMPEDE
SATURDAY, MARCH 18 @ 7:05PM - VETERANS MEMORIAL COLISEUM

Tickets Just $16
One lower bowl ticket to see the Capitols vs. Stampede
Portion of ticket proceeds donated to Brain Injury Alliance Wisconsin
Have Fun ~ Make A Difference

TO PURCHASE TICKETS, VISIT:
https://madcaps.isportstix.com/order/group/BIAW/

FOR QUESTIONS, CONTACT NICK CHACOS
608-663-6088
NICK@MADCAPSHOCKEY.COM
WWW.MADCAPSHOCKEY.COM