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29th Annual Conference

Wilderness Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI
April 24-25, 2017

Save the Date!

NE Wisconsin—August 6
Madison—September 10
Brookfield—September 17

Visit www.classy.org/walkbiaw

to register or make a donation
Executive Director’s Message

My first BIAW Conference on Brain Injury is in the books!

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 2016 conference a success. I met some terrific people and learned a great deal from all of you.

I had a few take-aways from the conference that I wanted to share, and that we will make part of the BIAW’s agenda moving forward.

- We need to work extra hard to ensure brain injury is recognized and treated as a unique condition and the people in the brain injury community are not lumped in with others.
- We’re reconnecting with our support groups. You can see the schedule for the groups in this newsletter.
- We want to offer more educational opportunities, particularly regional events.
- We want to connect with our government officials to advocate for those with brain injuries, caregivers and service providers.
- We want to revitalize and relaunch the PlaySmart concussion awareness program.
- We want to streamline our membership program.
- We will extend the state-wide reach of the BIAW

I hope you are as excited as we are about the direction of the BIAW. Be sure to contact us and let us know what you are thinking.

Karl Curtis
Executive Director
Walk for Thought and Picnic in Three Cities!

Registration/Donation website now up and running at www.classy.org/walkbiaw.

On behalf of the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin (BIAW), you, your family and/or your team are invited to participate in our 13th Annual Walk for Thought & Picnic which will be held on three weekends at three locations:

NE Wisconsin – Heesakker Park, Little Chute – Saturday, Aug. 6
Madison – State Capitol Grounds – Saturday, Sept. 10
Brookfield - Fox Brook Park – Saturday, Sept. 17

We have all kinds of exciting news about the walks this year, including the involvement of Dennis Krause, radio voice of the Milwaukee Bucks, speaking at the Brookfield walk and also a high-visibility walk at the state capitol building in Madison. We are also very excited and grateful to have the family of Shelly Reichardt of Appleton working with us on the NE Wisconsin Walk this year.

The annual Walk for Thought and Picnic is one of our biggest fund raisers each year. By participating in this annual event, you will be helping BIAW continue our commitment to provide programs and services to individuals who have experienced a brain injury, their families, and professionals. Brain injury can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time. BIAW is here to give HOPE through Help, Opportunity, Prevention, and Education.

You can find a registration brochure here.

Please contact me at (262) 790-9660 or kcurtis@biaw.org with any questions regarding the enclosed materials.

We hope we can count on your support for our 13th Annual Walk for Thought & Picnic. Your support will make a huge difference for individuals with brain injury and their family members in Wisconsin.

New Board Members at BIAW
Kjell steps down after 6 years

The board of directors at the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin set a goal in 2015 to expand its membership, both in terms of number and geographic coverage. In June, the board met that goal with the addition of five new board members.

Unfortunately, in addition to the growth the board was sad to see the departure of two-term board member Kelly Kjell. In addition to her board service, Kelly had also served as the BIAW bookkeeper and remains very active in the Walk for Thought.

Voted on to the board in June were:

Ed Garza – Ed is the director of veterans services at Concordia University. He is also very active in veterans’ groups in the Milwaukee and Green Bay areas. Ed has experience working with veterans dealing with battlefield TBIs. Additionally, Ed has a variety of non-profit and fund raising experiences.

Caroline Feller – Caroline Feller has been an important contributor to the BIAW for years, including serving as board president. She stepped away for about a year due to job concerns, but is now in a place where she can become involved again. Caroline has a long history of involvement with brain injury including working in several leadership positions at Lakeview Specialty Hospital in Waterford. She recently joined the staff at Dayspring in Milwaukee.

Brenda Bostwick – Many of you many know her as Brenda Brown and have met her at previous BIAW conferences. Brenda has facilitated the Janesville support group for several years while working at Catholic Charities. Among her duties was running an annual conference for survivors and caregivers. Brenda continues to be a leading advocate for those with brain injury in Rock County.

Dr. Lisa Allen – Dr. Allen is a family medicine physician from the Green Bay area. She is also a TBI survivor. At present she works with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. You can learn more about her by watching the video on this page http://www.rightdoc.com/doctor/dr-lisa-allen/10623

Gaylene Stingl – Gaylene was recommended to us by current vice-president Kevin Pasqua, and will be an ideal fit for treasurer. Gaylene is a CPA with Blau-Himmel. Gaylene's professional career began in a Waukesha law firm where she spent over ten years working with general business, litigation and probate administration lawyers. After becoming a CPA, she further enhanced her skills working on assurance, tax, business valuation, personal and business consulting and litigation support with clients of many different industries.

Golf Outing Cancelled

Due to difficulties with scheduling, organization, and just plain bad luck, the 2016 BIAW “Chip In for Brain Injury” golf outing has been cancelled. We will make every attempt to revive the event in 2017.

If you would like to help revive the golf outing by serving on an organizational committee, please contact Karl at the BIAW office at (262) 790-9660 or (608) 206-6426.

BIAW NEWS · Summer 2016
Focus on Support Groups

One of the most important assets the BIAW has is our network of support groups. These groups offer a safe place for people with brain injuries as well as caregivers to get together, talk and share success stories.

We strongly encouraged anyone with a brain injury, whether recent or years ago, to join a support group. As one of our facilitators said, “when someone attends our group and no longer feels alone, you see their hope and faith strengthen.”

NORTHWEST

Brain Injury Support Group
Frederic Public Library
127 Oak Street West
Frederic, WI 54837
2nd Friday of the month 2 pm - 3:30 pm
Julie Martin, julieannmartin92@yahoo.com, (715) 327-4474

Rice Lake
Lakeview Medical Center
Conference Room
1700 W. Stout Street
Rice Lake, WI
1st Sunday of the month 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Corinne & Jim Richie, (715) 234-0079

NORTHWEST – EAU CLAIRE AREA

Wisconsin Traumatic Brain Injury Support Group
Sacred Heart Hospital-Eau Claire
900 West Clairemont
3rd Thursday of the month
Eau Claire, WI
7 pm - 8:30 pm
Chastity Krings, krings.jc@gmail.com, (715) 308-6052 or Rhonda Olson, rhonda.olson@hshs.org, (715) 717-4392

Mild Brain Injury Group
Luther Campus Clinic Entrance
Deli Conference Room
1221 Whipple Street
Eau Claire, WI
3rd Tuesday of the month
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm
Mary Beth Clark, clark.marybeth1@mayo.edu, (715) 838-3258
Michelle Knutson (715) 838-1725

NORTHEAST

Brown County
N.E.W. Curative Rehabilitation

BIAW board member Dr. Sarah Porter talks to a Madison support group in July.

2900 Curry Lane
Green Bay, WI 54311
Quarterly @ 5:30 pm
Jessica Drumm, jdrumm@newcurative.org, (920) 593-3562

Making New Connections
Bay Evangelical Covenant Church
2280 Nicolet Drive
Green Bay, WI 54311
4th Wednesday of the month @ 7 pm
Karen Feld, Facilitator, karen4tbisg@aol.com

Oshkosh
TBI Support Group Oshkosh
Aurora Medical Center
855 N. Westhaven Drive
Oshkosh, WI 54904
4th Thursday of the month
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Michael Athanasoiou, m-mathano@att.net, (920) 517-1507

Sheboygan Area
Miracle Point Brain Injury Society
St. Nicholas Hospital/Francis Room
3100 Superior Avenue
Sheboygan, WI 53081
1st Monday of the month (September-May)
6:30 pm – 8 pm
Amber Slaby, Amber.Slaby@hshs..org, (920) 459-4642

Appleton
St. Elizabeth Hospital
1506 S. Oneida Street
Appleton, WI
4th Monday of the month
6 pm – 7:30 pm
Ashley Gustafson, ashley@soarfoxcities.com, (920) 731-9831 x111.
Focus on Support Groups

Wausau
Aspirus Wausau Hospital
333 Pine Ridge Boulevard
Wausau, WI
2nd Wednesday of the month
6:30 pm
Lea Ratajczyk, lea.ratajczyk@aspirus.org, (715) 847-2826

Portage
Divine Savior Stroke and Brain Injury Support Group (not facilitated by BIAW)
2817 New Pinery Row
Portage, WI
3rd Tuesday of even numbered months
3-4:30 p.m.
Kayla Johnson
kjohnson@dshealtcare.com

SOUTH CENTRAL
Mild Brain Injury Resource Network
Meriter Hospital
One Tower Conference Room
202 South Park Street
Madison, WI
3rd Thursday of the month
6:30 pm – 8 pm
Deb Enburg, PhD, dpenburg@chorus.net, (608) 845-6356

Mild Brain Injury Group for Spouses & Significant Others
Meriter Hospital
Patient Registration Area Conference Room
202 South Park Street
Madison, WI
2nd Monday of the month
6:30 pm – 8 pm
Lynn Hovey, hoveylynn@gmail.com, (608) 222-4717 or (608) 576-5285

East Madison Support Group (new!)
UW Rehab Hospital
5115 N Biltmore Ln, Madison, WI
First Tuesday of each month
6:30-8 p.m.
Mike Mohr, 608-417-0007 or mohr.mike@gmail.com

Janesville
Rock County Brain Trauma Support Group
2200 W. Court Street, Suite 130
Janesville, WI
2nd Tuesday of the month
6 pm – 7 pm
Brenda Brown, bbrown@ccddc.com, (608) 752-4993

SOUTHEAST

Waukesha County Heading Forward
Waukesha Memorial Hospital
725 American Drive
Waukesha, WI
1st Wednesday of the month
6 pm – 7:30 pm
Mary Nichols-Dike, mary.nichols-dike@phci.org

Dodge County
Clearview Brain Injury Center
198 County DF
Juneau, WI
3rd Monday of the month
6 pm – 7 pm
Tammy Novotny, tnovotny@co.dodge.wi.us, (920) 386-3403

Kenosha County: Stateline TBI Support Group for Functioning Teens and Adults
First Christian Church
13022 Wilmot Road
Kenosha, WI
3rd Tuesday of the month
7 pm – 8:30 pm
Beth Jankowski, murphyski_b@yahoo.com, (262) 344-1505

Waterford
Lakeview Specialty Hospital & Rehab Dining Room
1701 Sharp Road, Waterford, WI.
2nd Tuesday of the month
6:30pm -8:00 pm
Caroline Feller, cfeller@lakeview.ws, 262-534-7297

Waukesha
Hold On Possibilities Exist
Brain Injury Resource Center (not facilitated by BIAW)
330 E. North St., Waukesha, WI
Second Saturday of the month (No June Meeting)
admin@bircofwi.org or calling 262-770-4882

SOUTHWEST
Big River Chapter-LaCrosse
Gundersen Medical Center
1st floor of Mooney Education Library
LaCrosse, WI
2nd Tuesday of the month
5 pm – 7 pm
Elizabeth Rand, RN, ekrand@gundluth.org, (608) 775-4063 Brittany George, OT
Scenes from the 2016 Conference on Brain Injury

Photos courtesy of Frank Heatwole
More News from the BIAW Office

Second Madison Support Group Up and Running

The BIAW has started a second Madison-area brain injury support group that will also be very convenient for people east and north of the capital!

The new group will meet at the UW Rehab Hospital on Madison's far-east side at 5115 N Biltmore Ln, Madison. They will meet the first Tuesday of each month from 6:30-8 p.m. Our former intern Mike Mohr will facilitate.

The first meeting was July 5. Come and check it out!

For more information call Mike at 608-417-0007 or e-mail him at mohr.mike@gmail.com.

Save the Date: Janesville Survivors and Caregivers Conference

The BIAW will be hosting a Survivors and Caregivers Conference on Wednesday, Oct. 19 from 9 a.m. to 3 a.m. at the Pontiac Center in Janesville. Many of you may have attended this event in past years when it was run by Catholic Charities.

Please watch upcoming e-mails for the program and more details. If you would like to help, contact the BIAW office at 262-790-9660.

Contribute to New BIAW Publication

Share your brain injury story to help others

Over the next two months the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin will be wrapping up a new publication aimed at both brain injury survivors and caregivers. Titled “Brain Injury in Wisconsin: A Survivor’s and Caregiver’s Guide,” the goal is to provide a one-stop resource guide for people in Wisconsin who experience a brain injury as well as their families and caregivers.

The BIAW would distribute these booklets free-of-charge to hospitals, support groups, and other locations around the state.

Every day we hear from people across Wisconsin whose lives have been dramatically altered by brain injury. As we all know, brain injury strikes without warning, and oftentimes those we work with are tired, scared and confused because they never imagined themselves in these circumstances.

That is why we are appealing to you. We want to create the most useful booklet we can, so we are looking to tap the wisdom and experience of those who have been there.

To help, we'd like you to share your story. Too often we hear from people who were unprepared for the affect a brain injury can have on individuals and families. Whether you are a survivor or caregiver, tell us about how brain injury has changed your life. We will pick the best, most illustrative stories and share them in the booklet. You can share your name or remain anonymous. If you're worried about your writing skills, the BIAW has a professional editor on staff to help you out.

In addition to these contributions, we envision a booklet that provides information about the basics of brain injury, treatment facilities in the state, our support groups, important medical terminology, disability resources, and much more.

If you would like to submit something for this booklet, please e-mail it to kcurtis@biaw.org. Try to keep your stories no longer than two type written pages.

BIAW Spreading the Word About TBI and Concussions

The following letter to the editor appeared in the Wisconsin State Journal and the Green Bay Press-Gazette in July.

Dear Editor,

While I will not speculate on Packers legend Paul Hornung’s motivation for suing football helmet maker Riddell, if his action shines any light on the very serious issue of brain injury it will be a positive.

The CDC tells us brain injury is the leading cause of death among children and people 18-35. It is estimated 6,000 Wisconsinites suffer a brain injury each year, and 50,000 Wisconsin residents live with the effects of a brain injury. Most all of these people do not play football. Their injuries result from household falls, auto accidents, and other mishaps. The common denominator is generally bad luck.

I can tell you from experience brain injuries turn people’s lives upside-down. Symptoms like headaches, memory loss and sleep disorders lead to job loss, family meltdowns and worse, all from a bump on the head.

I can also tell you that too many people don’t see a doctor after a head injury, usually to their own detriment. They say “I got my bell rung, I’ll get some rest and be fine in the morning.” They look fine on the outside, but the damage is on the inside.

While “getting his bell rung” may have been an occupational hazard for Mr. Hornung, it should be a warning sign to everyone else. If you see stars, see a doctor. You only have one brain, and you need to keep it working well for your entire life.

Karl Curtis, Executive Director
Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin
Thank you to Everyone Who Has Sponsored the BIAW or an Event this Year

Jan Heinitz, in honor of Christine Guild
Andrea and Tom Tatlock

Affiliated Dentists, S.C.