29th Annual Conference on Brain Injury

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

Save the Date!
Spread the Word!

Find conference info on page 9!

Like the BIAW on

https://www.facebook.com/Brain-Injury-Alliance-of-Wisconsin-128802765289/

We share interesting news and information about brain injury daily!
Executive Director’s Message

This newsletter has been too long in coming, partially because we have been working very hard toward a goal of renewing and revitalizing the BIAW for 2017.

We had a good year in 2016. The annual conference was a success. We added a Madison Walk for Thought to the existing walks in Brookfield and Appleton. We held a Survivors and Caregivers conference in Janesville. We added several members to our board of directors.

Having pointed out these successes, in many ways we hope 2016 was setting the stage for a much bigger 2017. Next year we would like to:

- Host a one-day “mini-conference” for professionals
- Print and distribute our new brain injury guide
- Launch a TBI awareness and education program for police and first responders
- Give more brain injury awareness presentations in the community at places like senior centers, schools and libraries
- Get “Return to Learn” on our legislators’ radar
- Organize social events for the brain injury community
- Make the BIAW financially stable for the next several years

If you would like to help with any of these goals, or if you have ideas you would like to share, please feel free to contact myself or one of our board members.

Here is hoping for a terrific 2017.

Karl Curtis
Executive Director
News From The BIAW Office, by Karl Curtis

Janesville Survivors and Caregivers Conference a Success

The BIAW held its first Survivors and Caregivers Conference in Janesville on Oct. 19. This event was previously organized by Catholic Charities, but due to budget and program issues it was transferred to the BIAW this year.

The one-day conference proved informative and well attended, and the BIAW is hopeful this event can serve as a template for other, similar events around the state in 2017 and beyond.

Help the BIAW with an End or Year Donation

Anonymous donor puts forward “challenge donation”

The Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin made great strides in 2016, and it needs your help to make 2017 even better. Please consider a donation to the BIAW as the year ends to help us fulfill our mission of improving the lives of those affected by brain injury in Wisconsin. Your donations are tax deductible.

On Giving Tuesday in November, an anonymous donor pledged $5,000 to support the work of the BIAW with a challenge to all our friends to donate and raise an additional $5,000. Whether you can give $5 or $500, every donation will move us closer to the challenge goal.

Donations can be made by sending a check to BIAW, 6409 Odana Rd., Ste. 1H, Madison, WI 53719, or you can donate with a credit card at BIAW.org (use the “donate” tab on the web site, then go to “membership” and then "additional donations")

As encouragement, I want to share with you why you may want to donate. The BIAW has made great strides this year toward fulfilling our mission of preventing brain injury and the full participation in life for individuals with brain injury. Let me provide a few examples:

* A successful 28th Annual Conference on Brain Injury (planning for 2017 is under way!)
* Three successful walk for thought events
* The creation of a new Madison support group
* Hosting our first Survivors and Caregivers Conference in Janesville
* Representation on the Mayo Clinic TBI Advisory Board and the Wisconsin Injury and Accident Prevention Task Force

Here are some items on our agenda for the rest of 2016 and 2017:

* Publishing "Brain Injury in Wisconsin: A Survivors and Caregivers Guide" or our web site and then in print.
* Hosting TBI awareness training for police officers and first responders
* Hosting a Certified Brain Injury Specialist class
* Hosting additional mini-conferences around the state
* Working with our legislators to add "Return to Learn" to the state concussion law
* Hosting social events for the brain injury community (BIAW Day at the Milwaukee Brewers?)

I hope you agree the BIAW is moving in the right direct and will help our cause by donating on this Giving Tuesday. Please feel free to contact us if you ever have a question or if we can assist you in any way.
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
Focus on Support Groups

Wausau
Aspirus Wausau Hospital
333 Pine Ridge Boulevard
Wausau, WI
2nd Wednesday of the month (Even months only)
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
3:45 pm
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 in 2016!)
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
Mercy Hospital, Rm. G097
1000 Mineral Point Ave.
Janesville, WI,
2nd Tuesday of the month 6 pm – 7 pm
Brenda Bostwick, bbostwick.rcas@att.net

Beloit (New in 2016!)
Rock County Advocacy Services Support Group
Chester Square, 1st floor conference room,
136 W. Grand Ave. Beloit, WI,
3rd Thursday of the Month 11 a.m. to noon
Brenda Bostwick, bbostwick.rcas@att.net
(608) 718-9099

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

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 Walks for Thought

The Walk for Thought Returns to Madison

Another Great Event in Brookfield
More 2016 Walks for Thought

Record Turnout for NE Wisconsin Walk

![Image of people participating in a walk]

More News from the BIAW

New Beloit Support Group Up and Running

The BIAW is pleased to promote the launch of a second Rock County brain injury support group that will be very convenient for people in the state line area.

The new group is being run by Rock County Advocacy Services and meets at Chester Square, 1st floor conference room, 136 W. Grand Ave. Beloit, WI, on the 3rd Thursday of the Month from 11 a.m. to noon.

The new group is being run by a familiar face in the Rock County brain injury community, Brenda Bostwick. To contact Brenda for more information about the support group or with general questions, e-mail bbostwick.rcas@att.net or call (608) 718-9099.

Review BIAW's new publication at BIAW.org

Help out by offering an opinion

The Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin is pleased to announce its new publication, "Brain Injury in Wisconsin: A Survivor's and Caregiver's Guide," can be viewed in .pdf format on our web site, www.biaw.org (click above, or follow the Education tab on the web site to Information & Resource). We have posted this "review copy" with the hope some of our friends may offer feedback and constructive criticism before we go to print.

"Brain Injury in Wisconsin: A Survivor's and Caregiver's Guide," is designed to help survivors and families from the moment their lives are affected by brain injury and beyond. Because we want it to be as helpful as possible, we are soliciting feedback from people who know about brain injury.

Our plan is to keep a copy of "Brain Injury in Wisconsin: A Survivor's and Caregiver's Guide," on our web site, and update it as appropriate. We will also print several thousand copies of the final text and distribute them to medical facilities, families, survivors, and anyone else who might benefit.

If you have feedback about "Brain Injury in Wisconsin: A Survivor's and Caregiver's Guide," please e-mail your comments to admin@biaw.org. We could also still use more survivors stories for the back section of the guide.

If you would like to support the publication of this booklet, please call Karl at 262-790-9660 for more details.

Thank you in advance for your help.
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.
Plan to Attend the 2017 Conference on Brain Injury

The Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin is pleased to invite you to our 29th Annual Conference on Brain Injury, scheduled for April 24-25, 2017 at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells. The schedule includes a vast array of information for professionals, caregivers and survivors.

Our roster of speakers is almost full. We will be very pleased to welcome the following speakers and more:

- Anj Graniere and Patrick Sheeran, bloggers at 16 Petals of Blue Light
- Sarah Kraning (UW Communication and Cognition Lab) will speak on social communication and brain injury
- Lindsey Byom (UW Communication and Cognition Lab) will speak on older adults and TBI
- Mary Voegeli, R.N. will speak on the continuum of care
- Dr. Nicholas Ketchum from Froedtert (topic TBD)
- Dr. Terry Young (Topic TBD)
- Joe Wszalek (UW Communication and Cognition Lab) TBI and navigating the legal system
- Rosie Norman (UW Communication and Cognition Lab)

We’ll also be bringing back the survivors panel and the caregivers panel.

A registration form is available on our web site, BIAW.org, and both exhibitor registration and conference sponsorship forms will be available on Jan. 3.

We are pleased to report that in an effort to keep the conference affordable, all fees have been kept at the same level as last year. We will also be providing a limited number of scholarships for survivors.

The Wilderness Resort will also be holding a discounted room block. Details will be available in the next few weeks.

If you have questions about the 29th Annual Conference on Brain Injury, please contact the BIAW at 262-790-9660.

Spread Brain Injury Awareness with a Letter to the Editor

The Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin encourages everyone to bring attention to the issue of brain injury awareness whenever possible. One easy way is by writing a letter to the editor of your local news paper.

Whenever you see a story concerning brain injury, let the paper know your thoughts. As an example, the BIAW had this letter published in the Chippewa Herald in November. The letter was in response to the death of a UW-Stout student found to have succumbed to a brain injury. Edited versions of this letter also appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and the Madison Capitol Times.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your coverage of the death of UW-Stout student Hussain Saeed Alnahdi and reporting traumatic brain injury as the cause.

Perhaps some good can come of this senseless situation by raising awareness of the danger of TBI and how it is linked to violence. Traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death among children and people between the ages of 18-35. Assault is the third most-frequent cause of TBI, with falls and auto accidents being the two leading causes.

Despite this, very few people are aware of TBI until it happens to them or someone they know.

It is important to dispel the myth that your brain can readily bounce back from injury. Unlike the television detective shows where the hero gets knocked out on a weekly basis only to catch the criminal at episode’s end and return unharmed the next week, real life is different. Such beatings would have a negative, cumulative effect. As was the case in Menomonie, sometimes one beating is fatal.

Unlike Mr. Alnahdi, many people survive TBI and struggle through life with severe impairments including loss of memory, headaches, impulse control issues and many types of diminished mental and physical abilities. Think of people trapped in domestic violence situations, abused children or even people prone to fist fighting. We’re not surprised when boxers or MMA fighters damage their brains, but what about these people?

I hope this letter and Mr. Alnahdi’s senseless death will cause people to think about the connection between violence and TBI. It runs deeper than one unfortunate headline.

Karl Curtis, Madison

Karl Curtis is executive director of the Brain Injury Alliance of Wisconsin in Madison.

Oluchi Joins BIAW Board

The BIAW is pleased to announce Valentine Oluchi was appointed to the Board of Directors in August. Oluchi presently works as a Program Director for REM Wisconsin in Madison.