Winter 2018

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF VERMONT

HEADS UP

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Heads Up is a publication of the Brain Injury Association of Vermont which does not necessarily endorse treatments, individuals, or programs which appear herein.

The Help Line
(toll-free number)
877.856.1772

Find us at:
www.biavt.org

30th Annual Brain Injury Conference

Celebrating and Embracing the Future

The day began with Lorraine Wargo and Kevin Burke honoring the memory of his brother, Lenny Burke, brain injury pioneer.

Thank you to all the presenters who very generously gave their time to share their expertise. Tim Feeney was unable to do his workshops but Amy Rodgers stepped in at the last moment to do a great presentation on fall prevention (the # 1 cause of brain injuries). Thank you Amy!

David Grant spoke of his journey and urged all to never give up in the keynote presentation:

From Here to There: A Brain Injury Survivor's Journey

On the Survivor Panel Jane Hulstrunk (left) and Marie Ambusk shared their inspiring journeys with brain injury.

The goal of the Annual Brain Injury Conference is to provide education and support to survivors, families, and professionals with the focus on meeting the challenges associated with rebuilding life following TBI. This conference is unique since individuals with brain injuries, caregivers and professionals attend. Each year, individuals are nominated by their peers, for contributions made to assist survivors to regain their lives after an injury, and for survivors that have overcome challenges and persevered to make a new life for themselves.

Michael Denmeade-
Re-create to Recreate

You are braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem and smarter than you think.

Governor's Awards

Jodie has been recovering from multiple concussions for 5 years. It has been exhausting emotionally, mentally, and spiritually yet she is always trying to help others. She co-facilitates a brain injury support group and is an active participant in other brain injury support groups. Someone who has worked with her says that "she models the grit and resilience needed to keep getting up after being knocked down again and again, literally and figuratively. She has a positive spirit and commitment to family and community even in the face of challenges that would have defeated most people. A true competitor in the best sense of the word!"

Jodie Casarico
Survivor of the Year

Bryce Healy
Caregiver of the Year

Bryce was nominated by a family because of his work with their son for five years "When he started our son was not even able to hold himself up on the edge of the bed. Now he is walking with the help of a quad cane or hemi walker. Bryce has our son walking into appointments and leaves his wheelchair at home sometimes. He got our son interested in kayaking and adaptive skiing and he loves it! He says he feels more normal doing these things. Bryce doesn't let him feel handicapped and what a difference this has made in his life. Our son calls him "stickler" because he makes him stay on track. He is definitely the kind of worker that Pride and the BIAVT should be proud of. He gives over and above the job description. "

Pete Daigle said "I have been employed by this auto dealership for over 3 yrs. I have always been treated fairly and the accommodations that have been provided for me have made my employment there a very fulfilling endeavor. Fairness, accessibility, quality, and understanding are the guiding principles that this great company was built on and continues to be built on. They have put in place a Human Resource dept., as well as a management structure that is not only assessable, but also very fair. They also are well informed about brain injury and the challenges it presents to individual's such as myself. They care. I am proof that this company deserves this award!

Burlington Subaru
Employer of the Year

Dawn Peeters
Professional of the Year

Dawn is a Voc Rehab Counselor who applies her knowledge to develop strategies and plans to support the individual's barriers related to their injury. She has the ability to think creatively and identifies systems supporting daily functions in addition to supporting one's vocational needs. She offers a positive outlook for the individual building trust and helping them figure out how things can be done. She has the ability to help clients navigate complex systems and procedures. A client said "She knows her job very well, and is very knowledgeable about TBI and the many ways it could become problematic, in and out of employment. She has been able to assist me in finding my balance during the great many changes that have come into my life. We have put together a great system that works very well, and she is very good at pleasantly keeping me on task. Best of all is the comfort level and assurance I have when meeting with her. She is the Best!"

Walk for Thought changing *to* Walk & Roll for Brain Injury

In order to be more inclusive and to recognize the many who participate in wheelchairs, *& Roll* was added to the title. Changing *for Thought* to *for Brain Injury* seems to better reflect what the event really is about.

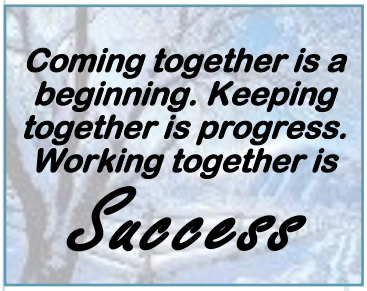
A primary goal of the event is to raise awareness of brain injury. In an effort to be more centrally located and visible the event will be in Montpelier, starting at the Montpelier High School and going to the Statehouse. Watch for more details!

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, May 18, 2019

Meet Carla Tepper, new BIAVT Admin

I am originally from the New York Metro area with a background in nonprofit educating, advocating and fundraising for children and adults with developmental disabilities. I'm now living in Vermont with my husband and two young children, two dogs and two cats. We moved here to be a part of the active lifestyle and to be at home in the state we loved to travel to so often in the past. Brain Injury has impacted my life in several ways from family and friends to athletes during my years as a cycling official. I'm looking forward to working as an ally and a resource for Vermonters affected by brain injury.

Don't worry, Jess Leal is still here (what would we do without her?!). She has a new title of Operations Director and is focusing on systems, events and fundraising. She can still be reached at support1@biavt.org.



Thank you to the Conference Exhibitors

The support and resources offered to attendees is key to the success of the Conference

Brain Balancing of VT	Next Step Healthcare
Care One at Lowell	Precision Chiropractic
Chittenden Co Medical Reserve Corps	PRIDE, Inc
Choice Support Services	Riverview Life Skills Center
Disability Rights VT	Robin Hill Farm, Inc
Downs Rachlin Martin	UVM Medical Center
Eagle Eye Farm	VCIL
GMSS	VT Adaptive Sports
Hyperbaric VT	Westside Housing /Essex Mgmt
Lenny Burke Farm Inc	
Mt Ascutney Hospital	

Thanks to All

Conference Presenting Sponsor

Courtney & Victoria Buffum Family Foundation

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Gold Sponsors

Choice Support Services

Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC

Green Mountain Support Services

Lenny Burke Farm Inc.

Pride Support Services, Inc.

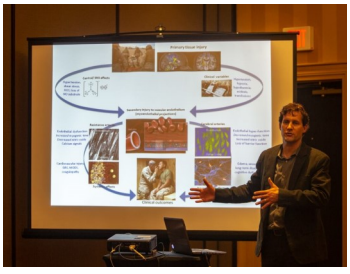
Riverview Life Skills Center, Inc

Rutland Regional Medical Center

University of Vermont Medical center

Volunteers

Allison Vachon
Anna Zenker
Dave King
Don Dresser
Jessica Leal
Jodie Casarico
Kate Ross
Leigh Clark
Lorraine Wargo
Marsha Bancroft
Maurice Diette
Michael Paddock
Ned Getchell
Sara Lane
Sue Zamecnik



Kalev Freeman, MD, PhD—Concussions

Presenters

Amanda Barrett
Amy Rogers
Andrea Macdonald, OT
Bill Schenck, DO
Charles Murdock
Cheryl Beaulieu, SLP
David Grant
David Landers, PhD
Ellen Goodenough, RN
Jane Hulstrunk
Kalev Freeman, MD, PhD
Kate Russell
Kayla Lee, DPT
Laura Flashman, PhD
Maggie Burke
Mary Wilmouth, PhD
Michael Denmeade, BS, CTRS, CBIS
Mike Cannizarro, PhD, CCC-SLP
Nathalie Gilmore, MS, CCC-SLP
Peter Isquith, PhD
Serena LaMontagne
Thomas Hall, MA
Tina Trudel, PhD

Silent Auction Donors

August First Bakery
Bolton Valley
Boston Red Sox
Bueno Y Sano
Cabot
Cheryl Van Epps
ECHO
Foxwoods Casino
Jane Hulstrunk
Lake Champlain Chocolates
Marie Ambusk
Montshire Museum
Perfectly Posh by Jess Leal
Shelburne Museum
Smith
Smugglers Notch Resort
Stoweflake Resort
Sweetwaters
The Alchemist Brewery
the Essex Resort and Spa
UVM Athletics
Vermont Teddy Bear

Amy Rogers—Falls Prevention

See page 3 for Presenters

Honor Roll of Donors —June 1-December 8,

Michael E Fanning

Sara Lane

Elyse Dunstan

Kirsten Willey

Mr. & Mrs Collin D. Rehkugler

Fuller Family Foundation

Lorraine Wargo

Barb Winters

Patrick Glasso

Alex Wonnell

FrankHoliber

IBM Employee Campaign

If we missed you on this list, we apologize.

Your gifts, no matter what the amount, *truly* make an impact.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Dylan Lowell, Sara Lane and Barb Winters all posted a fundraiser for BIAVT on Facebook for their birthdays. Thank you for honoring them by contributing to their posted event!

Now it is even easier to do by going to https://give.classy.org/BIAVTChampion to set up your fundraiser.

Contact Jess at support1@biavt.org to set up your own fundraiser for the BIAVT on our new fundraising site .

Please know that all your contributions <u>are</u> appreciated

There are so many wonderful, worthwhile causes and we all have limits on what we can give.

When you are considering your donations, please think about the importance of having an organization that speaks for the brain injury population.

The BIAVT is struggling like all non-profit organizations. Your gifts, no matter what the amount, truly make an impact and allow the BIAVT to offer the services listed on page 8.

Here are a few ways you can help support BIAVT

- **Become A Member:** membership applications can be downloaded from www.biavt.org or call for one.
- **Honor Someone:** Honor a special person in your life with a donation to BIAVT, or donate in memory of someone special you lost.
- **Leave a Bequest**: Talk with your tax advisor or attorney about how you can support BIAVT in your will.
- **Designate:** If your employer allows you to donate through employee contributions designate BIAVT as your pledge.
- Use Amazon Smile or Igive.com to designate BIAVT as a recipient
- **Donate:** Send BIAVT a check for any amount to PO Box 482, Waterbury, VT 05676
- Or you can donate with a credit card at www.give.classy.org/BIAVT.

Healthy Eating During the Holidays

Here we are again entering the holiday season with its many joys, stressors and so much food around us. Most of us move through December trying to at least maintain our healthy habits while also wanting to enjoy the season with friends and family, including our favorite foods. Here are some tips on doing just that.

Nurture yourself throughout the season:

* Schedule time to take a walk or go to the gym. Getting physical activity will fuel your energy and optimism while burning calories.
* Drink water. Staying hydrated has many benefits, particularly in the cold, dry winter weather.
* Sleep! Try to stick to your routine bedtimes so you don't get overtired, and if possible, get 7-8 hours a day. Not only does this help your energy and outlook, but now research is showing that adults and children who get too little sleep tend to weigh more.
* Ask for help. It is more fun to do things with friends and family like gift wrapping, writing cards or decorating, and will take some of the workload off your shoulders.

Headed to a party?

* Bring a healthy appetizer to share, so you have something that will work for you and encourage others to eat healthy items. A veggie tray with a low-fat dip is an easy option that is a crowd pleaser.
* If it is a cocktail party or other party without a meal, eat a snack before you go, so you don't arrive hungry. This will help you eat less over the length of the party.
* Develop a system to keep track of how many hors d'oeuvres you have by keeping count. For example, if you only want to eat 6 items over the course of the party, put six pennies in one pocket. Each time you eat an item, move the penny out of the pocket to another pocket or into your wallet. When the pennies are gone, that is your signal to stop eating.
* Move away from the food table - position yourself away from the table so you won't be tempted.
* For those who choose to use alcohol, remember that it is filled with empty calories. Limit alcohol to 1-2 drinks over the course of the evening and drink lightly by:
    * drinking wine spritzers (half wine, half seltzer on ice)
    * drinking water or seltzer between cocktails
    * drinking cocktails with 100% juice (tomato, orange or other with no sugar added) and go light on the added alcohol.
* After brain injury, many people notice their brains are more sensitive to alcohol. Drinking increases your chances of getting injured again, makes cognitive (thinking) problems worse, and increases your chances of having emotional problems such as depression. In addition, drinking can reduce brain injury recovery. For these reasons, staying away from alcohol is strongly recommended to avoid further injury to the brain and to promote as much healing as possible.

* And remember, if you do choose to drink, don't drive. Arrange ahead of the party for a designated driver or a cab to get you home safely.

Those big dinners:

* Use a smaller plate if possible, so less food fills it.
* Be sure half your plate is vegetables, especially those without heavy sauces.
* A protein serving is generally the size of the palm of your hand. Limit yourself to one serving of protein
* Aim for three or four ¼ to ½ cup servings per day of potatoes, breads or rice and strive to keep at least ½ the grains you eat whole grains.
* Enjoy a small amount of dessert: one cookie, a slim wedge of pie or a small piece of cake.

Enjoy the holidays and all they have to offer but remember that nurturing your health is the most important gift you can give yourself. You are worth it!

Making the Most of the Holiday Season

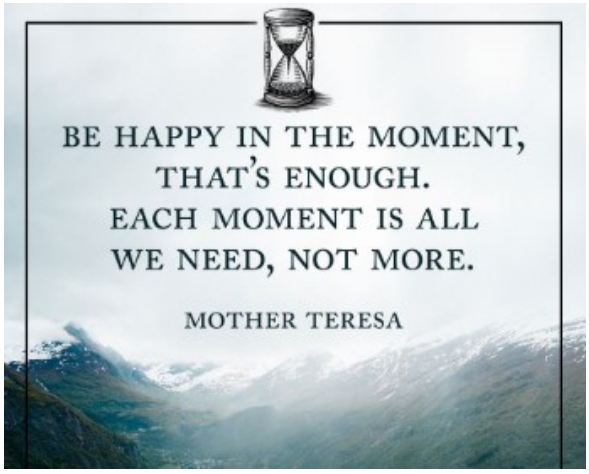
by Helen Hunter, ACSW, LSW www.caregiver.com

It's the holidays, "the most wonderful time of the year." While this season is a time for us to celebrate life and our many blessings, stress can exist. I am a firm believer in living each day to the fullest and making each moment count, but how can we make the most of each day, particularly during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season? Here are some tips that have worked for me:

SIMPLIFY

Create new traditions that make the most of your energy. Ask for and allow others to help. Share in a potluck meal with friends/families. Let others bake or purchase store baked goods, which will still be enjoyed by all. You can supervise the decoration or wrapping of gifts – you don't have to do it! Keep it simple. You decide how much you are able to actively participate in holiday activities. It's OK to allow others to help you in the preparations. Sharing the experience will be fun for all – trust me! By letting friends and family share in doing what is needed, you allow yourself to save your physical and emotional energy so you can focus on what is truly important – enjoying time with your loved ones!

LIVE IN THE MOMENT



Realize your limitations and learn to feel comfortable with doing less. Don't feel obligated to live up to others' expectations – do what is best for you. You are in charge, and when you honestly embrace yourself and your loved ones, you will be able to handle whatever obstacles are laid before you. The power of positive thinking is very important to our physical, emotional and spiritual well-being so put your best attitude forward – try it and you'll see what I mean!! When we live in the moment, we can make the most of being with those we love and cherish every experience.

SHARE WITH OTHERS—*the gift of giving*

Volunteering can be very rewarding during the holiday season as well as throughout the rest of the year, and you can schedule to do as much or as little as you are able. You set the pace! Each of us has unique gifts and talents that we can share, which will enrich our lives and the lives of others. Serving meals at a soup kitchen, helping others learn to read, adopting a needy family, visiting homebound elders or residents at a skilled nursing home or assisting in a child day care center, are ideas on reaching out to others in need. It can be as simple as inviting someone that lives alone to enjoy in a meal and other festive celebrations. By sharing with others, all involved will be thankful for the time spent together.

The most valuable gifts a human can give to others are sharing and caring. Share what you have, care for those you have.

Keep in mind that it's not the money spent or the food baked that is important. It's the time that you spend together that makes a memorable celebration. Make the holiday season (and every day) a time for you and your loved ones to have fun and share special memories. Spend time together, sharing meals and enjoying each other's company.

Count your blessings and remind yourself to make each day count; not just during the holiday season, but every day!!

Holidays can be very stressful for all but especially for an individual with a brain injury. Give yourself permission to not participate in hectic events or to step away from the hub-bub when needed. Consider scheduling one-on-one gatherings with visiting family or moving to a different room from the crowd to visit with them.

BIAVT Services Offered

People often call the HelpLine and ask just what the BIAVT can do for them. That is usually after it is clarified that BIAVT is a statewide non-profit organization and not part of the State of VT TBI Program.

Referrals & Resources

This is the primary function of the BIAVT. The **HelpLine** is staffed weekdays 9am-4pm to try to help callers find resources that meets their needs. Please leave a message if staff is not available when you call or after hours. Toll free HelpLine 877-856-1772

Walk & Roll for Brain Injury (previously the Walk for Thought)

This fundraising event for the BIAVT is a chance to socialize in a beautiful outdoor setting with food and prizes.

The Brain Injury Association of Vermont is an affiliate of the Brain Injury Association of America and was founded by Chris Pratt in 1999.

Support Groups Go to www.biavt.org to find the one closest to you.

Annual Brain Injury Conference

Education and networking opportunity for the brain injury community: survivors, families and professionals. 300-400 people attend each year.

Outreach & Education

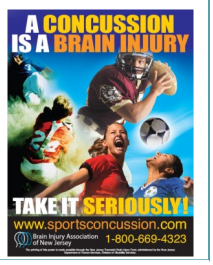
BIAVT staff work to increase awareness and understanding of brain injury and prevention through schools, business and community presentations. Contact the HelpLine to arrange for a presentation for your organization.

Community Brain Injury Consultant Program

The purpose of the CBIC Program is to increase the independence and quality of life of Vermonters living with brain injuries. CBIC staff assists individuals with an acquired or traumatic brain injury. We work with you and your 'Provider' in setting goals and making informed choices for services and supports that may be helpful in meeting your individual needs. Your 'Provider' may be a VocRehab or VA-BIR Counselor, a school team AT or nurse, a housing agency, a healthcare provider, etc. What the staff person will provide is consulting with you and your Provider. Any contact after the initial consultation can be done by phone as part of our Helpline service. **Very Important: we do NOT provide (or fund) direct services to individuals with brain injuries.** We work collaboratively with any service providers or case managers who are already providing services to you, as well as family members and other support persons who you wish to be involved.

Legislative Advocacy

BIAVT staff work to improve the quality of life for people living with brain injury while supporting initiatives that help prevent brain injuries.



Concussions

BIAVT staff work with the Concussion Task Force, a committee of the Vermont State TBI Advisory Board, to maintain and update the Concussion Toolkit for schools that is housed on the BIAVT website, www.biavt.org.

Brain Injury Support Groups

Call 877-856-1772 for information and updates—open to all

Location	When	Where	Facilitators
Bristol/Middlebury Area	Third Monday of every month 5:30—7:00 PM	Howden Hall 19 West St, Bristol	Jim Vyhnak Larry Buck
Burlington Area Evening	**First Wednesday of every month 5:30—7:30 PM**	**Fanny Allen Campus/Hospital Board Room-follow the signs 790 College Parkway (Rte 15), Colchester**	**Diane Wheaton Barb Winters**
Burlington Area Daytime	Last Friday of every month Noon—1pm	Dept of Labor, Conference Room A 63 Pearl St, Burlington	Courtney Blasius Jodie Casarico
Rutland Area	**Third Friday of every month 2:00—3:30 PM**	**Rutland Free Library**	**Jessica LeBlanc Glenn Reed**
Rutland Area Seasonal meeting	**Friday Oct 19 Friday Dec 7 1:00—3:00 PM**	**1409 US Route 7 South Wallingford**	**Lenny Burke Farm—call 802-446-2302 for info**
St. Albans	**Third Thursday of every month 5:30-6:30 PM**	**Northwest Medical Center 260 Crest Rd, St Albans NMC Conference Center Grand Isle Room**	**Sandra Haseldine**
St Johnsbury Area Daytime VCIL/BIAVT group	**Third Wednesday of every month 1:00—2:30 PM**	**Grace Methodist Church 36 Central St St Johnsbury**	**Tom Younkman**

Thank you to all of the volunteer Support Group Facilitators for giving their time and caring to help individuals cope with brain injury.

If anyone is interested in facilitating a support group in your area and can identify a co-facilitator, please contact Barb Winters at the BIAVT office-braininfo1@biavt.org

Thank you to **Kirsten Wiley** for organizing the **Movement is Medicine** event on November 9, 2018 at the ArtsRiot. This unique blend of dance party, fitness exhibition and sharing of inspirational "Surthrivor" journeys with brain injury was fun.

Thank you to the sponsors of the event: Ski Rack and Douglas Kallen

Thanks for the wonderful performances from: Sprinticity Track Club, Burlington Hot Yoga, Zumba with Hannah and D'Santos VT. The salsa dance lessons were awesome!

Thank you to Ginger Camp and all of the companies who donated items for the Silent Auction.

Thanks to the volunteers who 'staffed' the event and all of those who attended!

The Brain Injury Association of Vermont

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Carla Tepper ~ Administrative Assistant

Barb Winters ~ Program Director
Community Brain Injury Consultant,
I&R Specialist

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF VERMONT

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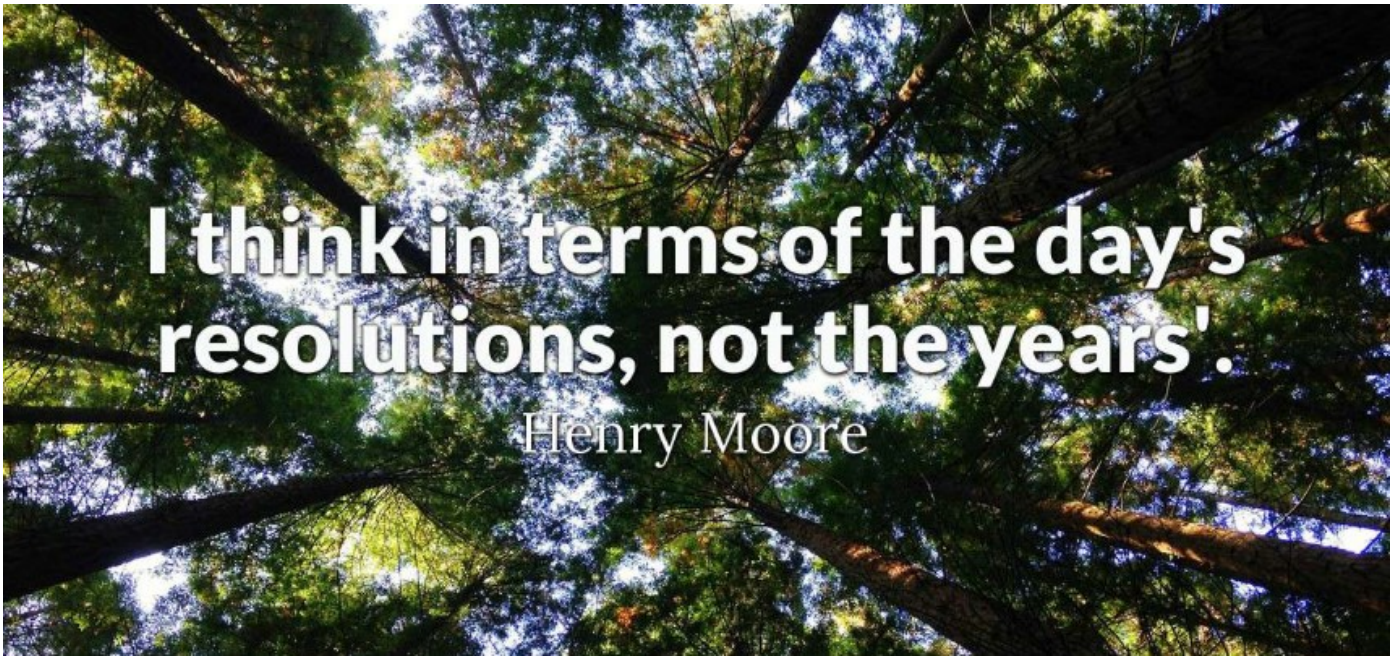

CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT BRAIN INJURY

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF VERMONT

Please contact us by email or phone if you do not wish to receive future newletters.