
BSTTW COMMUNITY NEWS

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BSTTW REBUILDING LIVES

BSTTW 2008 Funding Drive

By: Michael Appleman, CEO

Since I founded **BSTTW** in August 2001, this international non profit organization has been offering support, education, funding, medical and legal referrals, medical supplies and free medical treatment to individuals who suffer a burn injury.

Each day over 3000 individuals from around the world suffer a burn injury. Many of these individuals do not have the finances and/or the medical insurance needed to receive medical treatment and recover from the severe injury.

BSTTW has found that many individuals, families and companies wait until a fire and/or burn injury touches them personally, a loved one or friend before they realize how important **BSTTW's** work is. As a burn survivor, founder and CEO of **BSTTW** I ask you to not wait and begin supporting **BSTTW** today. You never know when this type of traumatic event will touch you. With your financial and volunteer support **BSTTW** can remain ready for anyone who needs our support. You can learn more about **BSTTW** by going to our internet site at www.burnsurvivorsttw.org. If you would like to donate to **BSTTW** go to www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donations.html. To learn more about becoming a **BSTTW Volunteer** you should go to



A FAMILY AROUND THE WORLD



www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/volunteer/volunteer.html.

With your financial and volunteer support **BSTTW** will continue to offer a peer support team, education, advocacy, medical referrals, finances, a free medical treatment program, medical equipment, legal referrals, healing weekends, fire safety education and public awareness.

You can mail you donation to **BSTTW** at:

Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.
16193 Lone Star Ranch Drive
Conroe, Texas 77302

For support you can contact the **BSTTW Support Team** at 936-647-2256 or 866-712-6164.

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Burn Injury Accident Cases: The Road To Recovery

By: Robert A. Brenner, Esquire

Burn injury cases present their own unique set of challenges even under the best of circumstances. Burn injury cases present themselves in many forms, including structure fires, construction site incidents, electrocution incidents, product defect, and product design failures, to name a few. When faced with a burn injury case, you are faced with a case that will be contentious, expensive to litigate, and expert intensive. However, the earlier into the case an attorney is retained, the better off the litigant will be for several reasons. One of the main reasons to retain an attorney early on is to preserve the evidence. Preserving the evidence, whether it be the accident scene or product, will allow an early and thorough investigation of the cause of the fire, electrocution, or product failure. Early thorough investigation as to the cause of the incident prior to the filing of the lawsuit allows you to focus your investigation and determine the viability of the case that will allow the potential for substantial recovery and compensation to the burn survivor and/or family.

Due to the complexity of these cases, an initial review of the injuries and damages is crucial as generally speaking, these cases involve major injuries and thus present serious recovery challenges. In a perfect world, the burn survivor's testimony on the particular details of what took place that caused the incident in the first place will be important. However, often times as not, the burn survivor either has no recollection as to what happened or does not know what caused the fire, electrocution, or defect in the first place. Thus, the need for accident reconstruction by various types of experts. For example, in a structure fire, it is important to preserve the scene of the accident if possible and have a "cause and origin" expert investigate this fire scene to determine where the fire started and the cause of the fire. In other types of incidents, it may be necessary to reconstruct what took place by hiring various types of experts, such as electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, and

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perhaps a human factors expert to determine the cause of the incident. For example, if a power line is involved in an accident, it may be necessary to have an electrical engineer to go to the scene of the accident and take measurements of the height of the power line at the point where contact was made with the line and either the ground or structure that may have been involved, to determine whether or not there were any electrical code violations regarding the height of the line. It may also be important to determine the temperature at the time the incident took place to determine whether or not the power line had an excessive amount of sag which caused the line to be lower than allowed by law. This is a simple example of what is often times necessary in the investigation of this type of electrocution case. Each case requires its own analysis to determine what type of investigation and/or expert is necessary in reconstructing the accident and determining fault.

Depending on the nature of the way the accident took place, there may be several potential defendants, including public entities, premises owners, product manufacturers, private entities, such as general contractors, their subcontractors, and project managers. Often times it is necessary to identify who owned, controlled, and possessed the property, whether it be real or product at issue. Additionally, there may be multiple problems which caused the incident and thus multiple defendants; and if so, it is necessary to determine if each on its own presented a hazard or whether it was a combination that created the hazard. Next, you must establish how the defect or problem came into effect – who created it, how long it existed, whether there is a history of prior incidents or knowledge by someone in a position to have fixed it before the incident took place.

Another example would be an accident at a construction site which can be the result of a fire, an electrical failure, or perhaps a gas leak resulting in an explosion and fire. In these types of cases, it may be asserted that the potential defendant failed to maintain the area in a

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reasonably safe condition. In order for a burn survivor to prevail in this type of case, it must be established that

1. The defendants owned the burn survivor a legal duty
2. That the defendants breached the duty
3. That the breach was a proximate or legal cause of injuries suffered by the burn survivor
4. Damages

Generally speaking, the law provides that everyone is responsible for the injuries to another by their lack of ordinary care or skill in the management of their property or person. Ordinary care is that degree of care which people of ordinarily prudent behaviors can reasonably be expected to exercise under the circumstances. In essence, the care required must be in proportion to the danger and risks to be avoided and the consequences that might reasonably be anticipated.

In addition to this general duty to use ordinary care, an individual may have a duty to act affirmatively to warn or protect others or to control the conduct of others if a special relationship exists between the actor and either the person to be controlled or the person who need protection. It is important to note that a duty of care may arise through a law, contract, or the general character of the activity or the relationship between the parties.

To determine fault under a premises liability theory, the crucial elements are ownership, possession, and control of the premises. The person who owns, possesses, or controls the premises may be responsible for any injuries arising from the condition of the premises.

The above are some examples of what is involved with incidents involving burn injuries. Generally speaking, these are complicated cases that involve complex analysis, but the rewards for both the burn victims and family make pursuing them worthwhile and aim to

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restore “economic dignity” for the burn survivor, as well as the family members.

About the Author:

Robert A. Brenner, Esquire limits his practice to the representation of persons who are catastrophically injured. Mr. Brenner tries to restore economic dignity to people who have had their lives yanked out from under them. Mr. Brenner received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1968 from the University of Southern California and his Juris Doctor degree from Whittier College, Beverly School of Law in 1975. Mr. Brenner is a member of the American Trial Layers Association, the Consumer Attorneys Association of California and the Million Dollar Advocates Forum, as well as Super Layers for the years 2006 and 2007. “The Burn Injury Law Group of Robert A. Brenner” provides legal representation to accident victims who have suffered serious burn injuries.

To learn more about The Law Offices of Robert A. Brenner go to <http://www.AttorneyRobertBrenner.com>. To ask Mr. Brenner a question go to <http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/eforms/legalem ailform.html>.



Effects of Burns & Rehabilitation

The Effects of Burns:

The skin is the largest organ that covers the body. In addition to being our bodies protective shield against heat, light, injury, and infection, the skin also:

1. Stores water and fat
2. Is a sensory organ
3. Regulates our bodies' temperature.
4. Prevents the entry of bacteria into our body
5. Prevents the loss of water

A severe burn has been found to be a critically destructive injury, both physically and emotionally, to the body and the mind of both the burn victim and family members. Depending on the degree of the burn, several layers of the burn victim skin may suffer. The burn injury can result in damage and/or destruction to the bones, organs, muscles, tendons and tissues. The individuals who suffer the severe burn injury may be left with the loss of a limb and mobility, disfigurement, scars, infections, heart condition and strokes to name a few. On the emotional side of the stick, both the burn victim, family members and witness to the accident can suffer from depression, nightmares, flashbacks (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and grief.

Rehabilitation:

The Burn Rehabilitation Team:

Because so many parts of the body can be affected by severe burns, the need for rehabilitation becomes a crucial part of the recovery.

There are many burn units and rehabilitation specialists that team up and offer the specialized treatment needed to help a burn patient recovery from a burn injury. This multidisciplinary team includes any/all of the following specialist:

- Psychiatrists

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- Plastic Surgeons
- Orthopaedic Surgeons
- Psychologists/Psychiatrists
- Social Workers
- Internists
- Rehabilitation Nurses Who Specialize In Burn Care
- Occupational Therapists
- Infection Disease Specialists
- Dietitians
- Case Managers
- Vocational Counselors
- Physical Therapists
- Respiratory Therapists
- Recreation Therapists

The Burn Rehabilitation Program:

Burn rehabilitation begins during the acute treatment phase and may last days, months or years. This depends on the extent of the burn injury. Rehabilitation is designed to meet each patient's specific needs. The goals of a burn rehabilitation program includes helping the patient return to the highest level of function and independence possible. This is done by improving the overall quality of life - physically, emotionally, and social.

In order to help reach these goals burn rehabilitation programs may include the following:

- Complex Wound Care
- Skin Grafting
- Pain Management
- Cosmetic Reconstruction
- Nutritional Counseling
- Patient and Family Education and Counseling
- Physical Therapy for positioning, splinting, and exercise
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychological Counseling

Advances in the understanding and treatment of a burn injury, updated burn units, comprehensive burn rehabilitation services, and integrated medical care have contributed to the increase in survival rate and recovery of a

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burn injury.

New Emergency Stroke Procedure

Clearwater, Florida - Diane Marsden appreciates the little things now, like sipping a soda with her husband. She nearly died last October, after two strokes in five days.

The first hit early in the morning, as she walked to the bathroom. Diane remembers, "I fell and I hit the back of my head on the wall. The thump is what alerted my husband."

The second struck in the middle of the night. Her husband woke up to find his wife, missing. "He said, Diane. Are you all right?" said Diane. "I said yes, of all things. He said, well where are you? I said, I'm down here, and this is where I was."

After both strokes, Diane was rushed to Morton Plant Hospital. She was treated with an emergency stroke procedure called the Merci Retriever. A corkscrew-shaped device is inserted through an incision in the groin and maneuvered to the brain.

The corkscrew pulls the clot out of the brain and restores blood flow. Initially, the device recovered about 50% of clots. "Now with experience and the newer generations, we're basically up to 80 percent, at least in my personal experience," said Dr. Eric Lopez del Valle.

The device captured both clots in Diane's brain and reversed the paralysis on her right side. "It's just amazing", she said. "I think. I mean it saved my life. There's no way I would be like I am today if it wasn't for that."

Which means she will be able to see her 3 grandchildren again, when she and her husband return to Canada. "I'm anxious to go back home and give them a great big hug and a great big kiss," said Diane.

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WE ALL HAVE FLAWS, AS BURN SURVIVORS... WE JUST WEAR OURS ON THE OUTSIDE

By: Lisa Burt



Hello everyone,
My name is Lisa, my story started 30 years ago. I was your typical little 9 year old girl. I loved dancing, playing with dolls and

most of all playing dress-up. Enjoyed school a lot and had lots of friends. I was very cute with my long blond hair and my pure soft skin. Everyone thought that my sister and I were twins.

On Dec 25th 1976 at 5:46 am, Christmas morning, my life changed forever! My sister, my brother and I were all sleeping, waiting for Santa to come and getting the Christmas presents we had been dreaming about. Unfortunately he never came. Instead we woke up and found that our house was on fire. This was due to a brand new wood burning stove and too much Christmas wrap and packaging. I don't remember really anything except that my Christmas present was a severe burn injury. Most of what I know about my burn injury and the fire has been told to me by family and fire fighters. I guess I do not remember due to the fact that I suffered such a traumatic.

At this point I would like to tell you about my burn injury. I remember being curled up in a ball at the top of my bed. I fell between my bed and the wall. I was told that this made it very hard for the fire men to find me. They could hear my screams but had a very difficult time finding me. My brother was able to get out. My **CONTINUED On Page 6 "FLAWS"**

**BURN SURVIVORS
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD**

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sister was stuck in the fiery home. With the help of God and the firefighters my sister was found and carried out of the house. For me I suffered burns to 56% of my body. From my waist up, I suffered 3rd degree burns. I was taken to Clarkson Hospital where I stayed for one week. At that point I was taken to Shriners Hospital. The doctors at Shriners in Galveston, Texas did their magic and began saving and rebuilding my life. I spent 3 months at Shriners in Galveston. The pain and emotional suffering was like living in hell! I will never in my life time forget the baths, the scrubbing and the debriding of the burned skin. The pain level of the pins that were put in and taken out of my fingers and wrist was so high that I thought it would never end.

I know many of you reading this story have also suffered from the physical and emotional pain. Some of you suffered from less and many of you suffered from more pain. The good news is that we did not shut down and we are still here today. By giving each other support, we can get through anything.

As we all found out, life can be unfair sometimes! I spent years trying to figure out why this happened to me and what I could have done that was so bad that God would let this happen to me! I would cry all the time. When kids called me names, I would say to myself way don't they understand, don't they know how much I have been through and how long it took me to get where I was at that time in my life. I now know, that they will never ever understand the long road of recovery a burn survivor has to go through. UNTILL THEY GO THROUGH IT THEMSELVES, THEY WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND! That is why we as burn survivors have to open up and tell are stories. Maybe this will help educate them.

I know there are so many burn survivors who are suffering in silent's. This type of burn survivor pushes everyone away. They would rather sit in self pity then face their life with burns! Life is not over just because you are burned! As burn survivors we have to learn to move forward. The burns are on the out side of our body. The truth person is inside and waiting

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to shine again. Only you can choose to let it out! Please don't lock yourself up and hide from the world. We are our worst enemy! I ask you to think about the following: The outside world can't beat you down any worse then you can beat your self down.

My life now as a burn survivor is pretty good. I have been married now for over 16 years to my high school sweetheart. I love him very much! He is my life! I know he truly loves me for me! He see's things in me that I haven't even found yet. We have six wonderful kids, Tyler who is 15, Chelsey who is 12, Lacey who is 9, Austin who is 7, Marissa who is 5, Logan who is 3 and Zackery who is my baby in heaven that I miscarried in April 2007. I enjoy my life, time with my family and friends.

I am now starting a burn survivor support group in Nebraska. Before I started the support group we did not have one. I feel it is very important to reach out to other survivors. I know how important it is to get the support from others who suffered the same injury. When I am not busy running kids. I keep busy with my home base business. I am a burn consultant, I mainly help people understand their skin and the differences between normal and burn skin. It is so important to hydrate the skin inside out. My pure, safe and beneficial skin care does all that. It works very well to hydrate. Many plastic surgeons are using these products. If you would like to email me at Burn@myArbonne.com, I would be more than happy to speak with you about these products and give your information about how our skin is different. You might also like to learn more about corrective cosmetics by visiting Barbara Pinson's internet site Pinson Cosmetics at <http://www.pinsoncosmetics.com>. Barbara is truly a great and fun specialist to work with. I spent a weekend with her in

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Georgia and got my makeover. She was able to match all my skin tones and make them look even. It changed my life! I am now ready to move forward and get my training, to be able to offer the same services to other burn survivors! My life is going good now. It wasn't always moving in a positive direction! If their is anyone out there who would like someone to talk to feel free to email me at lisa-64@hotmail.com. I am here for anyone. I will do anything I can do to help you! Remember

LIFE IS A JOURNEY, ONLY YOU KNOW
WHERE YOU'RE GOING!!!!

You all take care and God Bless you
All on your journey,
Lisa Burt



Proud participant in the
Combined Federal Campaign

BSTTW POEMS

I began writing poems during my recovery in order to not only help himself, but to offer support and positive thoughts to all burn survivors and family member who are going through a rough time. I ask you all to never give up and continue to do what I and so many others have done during and after recovery...find the support needed to work through the rough time and continue moving forward in your life.

If you would like to submit a poem or story to **BSTTW** you can do so by email at poems@burnsurvivorsttw.org or stories@burnsurvivorsttw.org. **BSTTW** also has a program on our internet site that allows you to submit your stories and poems electronically. You can submit the full story at www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/stories/storymaker.html and your full poem at www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/poems/poemmaker.html

Michael Appleman, CEO

Crisp

By: Michael Appleman

The burn injury lit me up inside and out
Many times a day I would like to shout

Coming home from the hospital was a trip
I wanted to smile but I burned my lip

Friend and family looked at me with love
My eyes kept looking above

Today and tomorrow I fiddle around
How long before I remain on the ground?

Where are the others who also suffered this trip?
I feel alone, lost and ready to slip

I pray that things will be ok
We will wake up and face each and every day

Together we stand during this time
Alone we are not, please give me the sign

Michael Appleman

You can contact **BSTTW Support Team** by using our internet site at <http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/eforms/supportemail.html> or by telephone 936-647-2256 or toll free at 866-712-6164

BSTTW CONTACT INFORMATION

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

BSTTW has a support team that is on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week to help a burn survivor, family member or firefighter deal with a burn injury and fire related emergency. You can contact **BSTTW** on the internet or by telephone. On the internet go to the **BSTTW Emergency Email E-Form** at www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/eforms/emergemail.html or the **BSTTW Support Team E-Form** at www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/eforms/supportemail.html

To contact **BSTTW** by telephone by dialing 936-647-2256 or toll free at 866-712-6164. If we are not in the office or it is after hours, you can leave us an emergency message in our voice box 44 and a support team member will respond to you within 24 hours.

BSTTW Directors

Michael Appleman: **Executive Director**
michael@burnsurvivorsttw.org

Nguyễn Thi Diêu Trân: **Director- Việt Nam**
tran@burnsurvivorsttw.org

Ariel Gonzalez: **Director- Mexico**
ariel@burnsurvivorsttw.org

DONATIONS

As a 501 (c)(3) Non Profit Organization, **BSTTW** depends on donations from corporations, organizations, families and individuals. All donations, big or small are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the United States government tax laws. **BSTTW** has several different funds that you can donate to. The **BSTTW** general fund, the **Bishop Peter Nguyen Van Nho World Wide Burned Children's Fund**, the **"Dwight Lunkley Racing To Victory" fund**, **USA & Asian Burn Camp funds**, **BSTTW Healing Weekend Fund**, and the **World Burn Congress Fund**.

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Your donations will help **BSTTW** to do what is needed to help a burn survivor, family members rebuild their lives. It will also be used for public awareness on fire safety and how the community can help a burn survivor reenter their community.

BSTTW also offers people that donate \$25.00 or higher to a free copy of the **BSTTW Music CD**. To learn more about this you should go to www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donatecd.html or www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donations.html

Remember your donations can be money, clothes, a used bicycle etc.. All will help burn survivors and their family. Many families loose their homes and property. Please personally think about and talk to your family and friends about donating to **BSTTW**.

MAKE DONATIONS PAYABLE TO & MAIL TO:

Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.
16193 Lone Star Ranch Drive #102
Conroe, Texas 77302

DONATE ON LINE

To learn more about donating on line go to: www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donations.html

If you have any questions call us at 936-647-2256, toll free at 866-712-6164 or by email at: donations@burnsurvivorsttw.org

VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME

There are many children, adults and families around the world that need support and other help. You do not have to be a burn survivor or family member to become a **BSTTW Volunteer**. All you need to do is become a **BSTTW** member and then apply to become a **BSTTW Volunteer**. If you are a burn survivor or family member, in order to become a **BSTTW Member**, fill out the **BSTTW Membership & Profile Registration E-Form** at: www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/membership/memform.html,

Next fill out the **BSTTW Volunteer E-Form** at: www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/volunteer/volunteer.html

If you are not a burn survivor or family member you can skip the **BSTTW Membership & Profile Registration E-Form** and go directly to the **BSTTW Volunteer E-Form**.

By volunteering with **BSTTW**, you will be taking part in rebuilding lives and helping burn survivors reenter their community.

If you have any questions, you should first review the **BSTTW Volunteer E-Form**, after that if your questions have not been answered, you can contact **BSTTW** by email at volunteers@burnsurvivorsttw.org, and by telephone at 936-647-2256 or toll free at 866-712-6164.

PURCHASES

BSTTW has an online store where you can purchase Skin Care Products, Books and Video Tapes. To learn more go to:
www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/sales/sales.html

BSTTW also offers a free copy of the **BSTTW Music CD** to people who donate \$25.00 or higher to **BSTTW**. To learn more about this you should go to

www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donatecd.html

or

www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donations.html

BSTTW ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBERS:

Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.
16193 Lone Star Ranch Drive #102
Conroe, Texas 77302
(936) 647-2256
Toll Free: 866-712-6164
Fax: (936) 647-2257

Feel free to contact **BSTTW** if you have any questions and/or comments by using the **BSTTW Comment & Question E-Form** at:
www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/eforms/emailform.html