
BSTTW COMMUNITY NEWS

Volume 10 Issue 1

January 2010

BSTTW REBUILDING LIVES

BSTTW Board of Directors

By: Michael Appleman, CEO

BSTTW is very happy to inform the public that Ariel Gonzalez who has been the Member at Large of the **BSTTW Board of Directors** has accepted the Vice President Position. Ariel, a burn survivor, is currently working with the Fire Department in Saltillo, Mexico and is an employee of the Saltillo Government. Ariel is also a guitar player and his band created the first **BSTTW Music CD**.



BSTTW is proud to announce that Alexis Chapman a 33 year old burn survivor has taken Ariel's old position as the **BSTTW Board of Directors Members at Large** position. Alexis was born in Indiana, Pennsylvania. She attended the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). During her time at the IUP Ms. Chapman studied anthropology and minored in religion. She did not know during her studies that her education in religion was going to be used by Ms. Chapman to reach out to God and use his strength and knowledge to save her life during a major home fire and to recover from a burn injury.

Alexis is the Secretary/Treasurer for the Direct Selling Woman's Associations and a she is also a member of eWoman Network.

In March 2007 Alexis went to sleep like always. That night she was the only person in the house.

Alexis was living in her grandparent's home. A home that had so many reminders of her upbringing, her sister, her parents and especially the love that was given to her by her grandparents. In the middle of the night Alexis woke up to smoke and the smell of fire. Alexis first thought that she was having a bad dream. Then she realized that it was not a dream. Alexis had to find a way out of the house. Due to the flames and smoke Alexis had no choice but to pray to God and fight for her life during her exit from the upper story of the house, Alexis was able to get out of the house but she suffered burns on 20% of her body. The burn injury was to the left side of her face and neck, the left arm and her left hand. When Alexis made it to the outside of the house, many of her the neighbors were waiting for her. They did what they could to help

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A FAMILY AROUND THE WORLD



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Alexis and then waited for the paramedics and fire fighters to arrive. Alexis was treated at West Penn Hospital in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

Upon release from the burn unit, Alexis had to deal with the physical and emotional trauma of the burn injury. A large part of the emotional trauma was that Alexis was unable to return to her grandparent's house due to the fact that the home was destroyed from the fire. Alexis was very so surprised that she was able to get out of the house. At first she thought that she was able to leave the house on her own. But as time went by and with her religious background, Alexis came to the conclusion that God took part not only in saving her life, helping her get out of the house but gave her the strength needed to work through the recovery of the burn injury both physically and emotionally.

Due to her grandparent's home being destroyed, Alexis had no choice but to move to Columbus, Ohio. She has been living there ever since. Due to the love and support of her immediate family Alexis was able to take the steps needed to recover and rebuild her life. According to Alexis God and her family is the rock of support and strength. Without them Alexis believes that she would never have made it this far.

A little over one year ago, in Columbus, Ohio, Alexis and her sister decided to team up and start a business. They opened up TooBusyGals (TBG). TBG provides boutique style shopping to the woman on the go. If you would like to learn more



authorPOINT

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about TBG go to <http://www.toobusygals.com>.

Presently Alexis has made it her mission to be an advocate for other burn survivors, help them to avoid social death, which is something that many burn survivors suffer from not only in the USA but around the world. Since **BSTTW** feels the same way Alexis felt that she would fit in and be able to use her knowledge and talents to help **BSTTW** continue their mission and offer their support, funding, love and knowledge to the burn survivor community all around the world.

What It's Like to Need Prosthetic Ears

12/11/09

By: Cindy Valavanis
A burn survivor of 38 years

About three weeks before my twelfth birthday at 6 pm I decided to melt some butter in a small



metal measuring cup on the electric stove for popcorn my 7 ½ yr. old brother and I had made. Despite being warned by my sister (then 9 years old) that "Mommy doesn't want us using the stove when

she's not home" I did it anyway. The result was having my hair towel (just washed hair) catch fire and set my bathrobe sleeve a blaze as well. Back in 1971 the material was a quilted poly cotton fiber that was highly flammable and flame retardant garments were only available to size 6x not for pre-teens like myself. I guess 25 cents per garment was too much money to the manufacturers. I suffered 33 1/3% deep 3rd and 4th degree burns which needed 39 reconstructive surgeries to correct. We went to my neighbor who took us to my other neighbor that instructed sister to get

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blanket to wrap me in and took me to Hempstead General Hospital where there was no burn unit b/c she didn't know how to get to Nassau University Medical Center (aka Meadowbrook Hospital). I had to take a shower to get as much fabric off me as possible and was rushed by ambulance to the burn unit.



After being in the burn unit critical the first two months (having to have had round the clock private nurses), the last month I came home for Christmas. No one had ever told me that my ears were so charred they could not be saved. When I looked in the mirror and discovered this it was extremely upsetting to say the least. My mom made it out to be like no biggie and so did the dr. I have had some surgery to reconstruct it but I still am unable to wear earrings like most women and some men do.

I heard about Bob Barron thru a TV show I believe and how he helped children with microfasia by reconstructing an ear for them. He also did a lot of work on the police officer, Jason, who was severely and horrifically burned on a car chase in Phoenix so I decided to try him myself.

My first visit was in Dec. of 2005 where he spoke to my brother and I and answered any questions we had. About a month later, I decided to go ahead with the procedure so I went back in April of 06 to have molds made of my ears. I don't remember all the dates but I know the fitting is usually two visits but Mr. Barron was able to combine it into one since I was in NY and he's in VA not too far from my brother. The other reason is I couldn't keep asking my brother to take time off work to take me. The prosthesis fit nicely when he put them on me but when I started to do them I had

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difficulty. The graft my dr. used by my ears has a lot of hair on it making it difficult for the prosthesis to stay on and on occasion they'd fall off. One may say so that's no big deal but it is b/c they cost \$15,000 and the price goes up every January.

In conclusion, I'm not certain I'd recommend having the prosthesis made because of the hassle of having to remember to remove them every night b4 bed, still not being able to wear earrings, and having to make sure that if I fall asleep watching TV for example, I don't turn over and put pressure on them. The other caution is over time, they will need to be replaced b/c they only last about 3 yrs. Or so. I spoke to a man Mr. Barron recommended I call who said that he needed to be refit b/c in some men endure changes in their ear structure or something along those lines making the prosthetic fit incorrectly.

If anyone wants to see my pictures wearing the prosthetics, they are in the book Mr. Barron has in his office along with Jason's and many other people he's helped over the past 35 + years.

A Brand New Year

By: Alexis Chapman

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." Anne Frank What a wonderful thing to think about this New Year. We don't have to wait for a New Year to make a resolution to make the world better. We have everything we need at any given moment. As burn survivors I like to think that we were given a second chance at life and it's our job to make the best of it. It's a new year, it's a new decade it's time
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to make some changes and create some waves in this burn community of ours. This is our world and it is our time to improve it. We need to embrace our fellow burn survivors and educate the community of non-burned individuals.

BSTTW is such a community. A community created for burn survivors to thrive. We place such value on numbers and statistics and prevention and wound care and the basic needs of the survivors. The needs of those victim's that have yet to become survivors also needs to be addressed. We also need to place a need on our spiritual wellness, our emotional wellness. This is where I hope to be of assistance.

Each month I hope to give you some information that will aid you. If you are newly burned I will share some of what could and will occur. If you have been burned for a while I hope to give you some things to think about and give you access to a community where you can be of help to other's while you continue to heal.

Through service we heal, we grow and that we become strong. I need feedback from the community, what you like what you don't like. What you want to see, what you feel you need, where we can be of more assistance and how we can make a larger impact on the burn community. What would you like the future to look like for your burn community?

Let's make 2010 an amazing year, a year of difference a year of change a year of surprises and let's keep our resolutions.

My Son Samuel

By: Dixie Goodrich

I am the mother of a burn survivor. I will never forget on Fri. night Sept.25 1998 my husband and I took our 6 children to the county fair as I stood there waiting with my 2 year old son for an older brother to get off a ride the man that ran the ride said to me, hey lady he belongs in a Norman Rochwell picture. And as I looked down on my little boy I thought wow he is right. The light was shining just right on my

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little Samuel as he stood there in his jean overalls and denim hat with his sweet face and twigs of blond hair just peeking up at me. Well that moment has been frozen in my memory as the next morning our lives would change forever.

My husband, eight year old son and I went to our church about that is eight miles down the road from our home. We had left the other children in the care of my 18 year old niece .We hadn't been gone more the 30 minutes when I received a phone call from my 9 yr. old daughter saying he fell into the fire. As we had left 3 sons and a friends boy at the house I did not know which he it was I was in such a shock .The 8 miles back home were the longest in my entire life all I could do was pray LORD please help him. And when we got home the ambulance still had not arrived as it was broke down and the next town over had to be called it took forever. We were very blessed to have a paramedic on our street and he heard the call and ran to our house and assed him before the others arrived. He called Life Flight and he was sent to Herman Hospital in Houston who Quickly sent him to Shriners in Galveston. It was raining and it look us an hour to get to Houston then another hr. to Galveston. I believe this was the longest day in my entire life.

Samuel suffered 3rd degree burns on 37% of his little body. He had total skin grafts on his rt. arm and hand. He was there at Shriners 4 weeks before we got to come home and I am sure other mothers have probably felt this way also. It was to soon with all the dressing changes and meds and 5 other small children to care for the youngest only 5 months old. Life was really tough for 1 year with therapy 5 days a week and all that goes with it .

At this point I would like to move forward nine years. Samuel is now eleven years old. I am so thankful for the LORD sparing his life he is such
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a sweet boy with much compassion.

Summer of 2007 he went to burn camp for the first time and we have seen such positive things from it . It was the first time he was able to talk with kids like himself until then as far as he was concerned he was the only child with scars. {On the Tuesday prior to this Sat. my husband had been clearing some land and started a fire at the back of our property . It had burned all week and because it was so far in the back we never thought about the dangers.}Well that was a big mistake our 5 year old and the friends son went back there to check things out and Samuel followed.

From what we have been able to piece together is that he climbed onto a log near a hot spot as most of the bed was cold ashes there was still a smoldering bed of very hot coals and as the older boys went back up to the house he fell in backwards and as he lay there in the coals with his back, legs and feet burning he tried to push up with his rt. arm and buried it up past the elbow.

If there are other mothers out there that would like to talk to someone who has been there and knows what it's like not to be able to make the horrible pain stop and make the boobos all better.

 **BURN SURVIVORS
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD**

[Donate To BSTTW](#)

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A Sister's Love

By: Joanna Quinn

On Thursday, November 20th, 2003, around one P.M., John and Joanna Quinn were playing in the goat shed in the back yard of their home in Millington, TN. There was a make shift hay loft made with a 4'X 8' sheet of plywood nailed to 2X4 supports. The goat's bedding filled with straw was underneath.

There were ten bails of hay stacked on top.

John liked to play in

the hay. John had a little room in the hay and being a four year old he had a lot of fun there.

There was no electricity in the goat shed so Joanna thought it would be nice to have some candles to give them some light. Joanna being seven years old did not realize her mistake.

Busy playing, Joanna knocked over the candle. The goats bedding caught fire very quickly.

Joanna ran to a small plastic swimming pool to



get a glass of water hoping she could put out the fire. She wasted precious time. John was in the hay loft screaming for help. The flames were up into the hay with John. Joanna ran

screaming to the house, 80 feet from the shed, to get her sister Leah who was babysitting for us that day. The very moment she heard Joanna's cries, "Johnny is in the fire," she bolted out the door racing to the shed already blazing.

Leah spoke of the horror that filled her soul as she heard John's screams coming from the fire. Leah rushed in to the shed, closing her eyes and holding her breath as she searched for John. Her lungs become desperate she runs out for air. Looking through the flames she

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CONTINUED From Page 5 "SISTER'S LOVE" saw a glimpse of John just as he collapsed into the fire. Leah rushed in again with eyes closed and with another breath. She reached John finally. She frantically tried to pull him down from the four foot high hay loft. For some reason he was much heavier than his normal 40 pounds. Out of breath again she had to run out without John. Knowing where he was, Leah quickly grabbed another breath and plunged into the inferno the third time. Getting a good hold on him she dragged him off the loft and both fell backwards into the fire. Leah with one arm held John to her side and on one hand and knees crawled quickly out of the fire. John was unconscious and smoldering. Leah called upon God, "Please make him breathe." John came back to life. Leah grabbed John in her arms and rushed to the house placing John in the bath tub as she ran cold water over him.



The fire men and paramedics arrived and took over. That is when Leah realized how severely she was

burned. She saw the skin melt off both of her hands. She said that she was stinging over her face, arms, hands, and back. Leah received third degree burns on both hands and forearms, second degree burns covered her face and third degree burns spotted the sides of her face. Places on her back were badly burned and she lost the tops of her ears. Leah spent two days in the Med Burn Unit in Memphis, TN. She was sent home to wait a few days for her surgery. She returned to the hospital for five days undergoing many skin grafts. She returned a few months later for another surgery keeping her another five days. After much therapy, Leah has regained most of her mobility. She lost parts of her fingers on her left hand and will only have 90-95% mobility. Leah does not consider herself a hero but we certainly do. She saved our son John Daniel's life. There is not a question about that. She risked her life three times to save John.

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John Daniel was air lifted to the Lebonneur Children's Hospital in Memphis.

We were told he would not survive the day.



However, the Shriners flew a special burn team from Galveston, Texas. They were able to stabilize him and fly him to the Galveston Shriners Children's Burns Hospital. He was in the intensive care unit for seven months. John was burned over 95% of his body with third and fourth degree burns. The 5% that was not burned was his lower abdomen to the tops of his thighs. The doctors were able to harvest enough skin from this donor spot to cover his back and chest. This 5% donor spot saved his life. He has artificial skin on his arms and legs.

John's dog, Max, perished in the fire. The doors were wide open to the shed and Max could have run out at anytime. He weighted approximately 40 pounds. John could not have held him if he wanted to get away. Leah and I believe Max stayed with John until the end.

John was holding onto Max when Leah first tried to pull him off the fiery loft. We believe Max's body shielded this vital spot of John's



body from the flames. John lost his scalp, ears, his eyebrows, his eyelids, nose, lips, all of his

fingers, both thumbs, all his toes on his left foot and parts of his toes on his right foot. The repeated harvesting of his donor spots leaves John horrible scared over his entire body.

We are not overcome with this great tragedy, but fully trusting in Jesus Christ to supply our

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CONTINUED From Page 6 "SISTER'S LOVE" every need. He was faithful before the tragedy and will surely be until the end. We pray this story of a sister's love will be sufficient to show our beloved Leah is our special, very special, little 5 foot 2 inch, 105 pound gigantic hero.



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Proud participant in the Combined Federal Campaign

**Burned Children Need Our
Help**

**Donate to the
BSTTW Bishop Peter Nguyen
Van Nho World Wide Burned
Children's Fund**

At

[http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/
donations/donationschild.html](http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/donations/donationschild.html)



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

Listen To Her Melodious Songs

By: Tri Tran

Listen to her melodious songs,
A pretty singer dreamed to be among the stars.
She's burned by the orange fire,
But her songs, never will never be blazed.

A naive nightingale in your home;
Proud are your family and friends;
She, a singer, blessed by the Lord,
Her songs, so beautiful that her face cannot match.

Days and nights she sings joyfully,
Pinned down on her bed and cannot move;
She, a singer, loved by the world,
Cradled by the mahogany cloud of love.

Tri Tran

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**
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Julie Olinger: **Assistant Director – Colorado**
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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**

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Fund, The Viet Nam Fund and the World Burn Congress Fund.

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:

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Toll Free: 866-712-6164
Fax: (936) 570-1179

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