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# BSTTW TEEN NEWS

Volume 2 Issue 4

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## BSTTW OPENING DOORS

### BSTTW Auction

By: Michael Appleman, CEO

The BSTTW first year anniversary as a 501 (c)(3) Non Profit Organization, is being celebrated with our first auction. The auction will be held from October 29- November 4, 2002. We will be auctioning two new paintings that were donated by Kevin Maedgen, a burn survivor and painter. Below you will see two pictures by Kevin. Kevin is an example



of a burn survivor that works very hard to rebuild his life. In 1972, Kevin was burned in school while standing in front of a space heater, in his second grade class. Kevin's coat caught on fire. He and his friends were never taught what to do when your clothes are on fire. Kevin went to the same school that his mother taught at. His first instinct was to scream for his mother and run to her. With the help of several teachers, the fire, on Kevin's body, was put out. Kevin suffered third degree burns over 45% of his body. Most of his left hand and a part of his right were

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### Something To Think About

By: Delores Lekowski



Our fire departments and schools work hard to ensure the safety of our children in the event of a fire. Together, they practice the evacuation of mass numbers of students, making sure they have covered the most likely scenarios. Three thousand students or more can exit a building in a matter of minutes. Students know the escape routes, and the alternate escape routes. Teachers and administrators know the importance of accounting for each student after evacuation. They know this is serious stuff, and they take it very seriously.

So, just how important is fire safety in our schools? After all, you don't

hear much about schools burning these days. But school fires do occur. In fact, according to the US Fire Administration, injuries per school fire are *higher* than those of *all* non-residential structure  
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### A FAMILY AROUND THE

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amputated.

In physical therapy, Kevin began to take drawing and painting classes. As he rehabilitated and grew up, Kevin realized that painting was his true passion. He remembers back to his rehabilitation and is very thankful that he was able to continue his passion even though he lost parts of both his hands.

By bidding at this auction, the winner will get a beautiful picture made by a man that never gave up hope on reaching his goals and dreams. You will also be helping **BSTTW** to raise the money needed to reach the goals of rebuilding the lives of our present and future burn survivors and family members from around the world. For more information on this and future auctions go to [www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/auctionlist.html](http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/auctionlist.html)

If you would like to donate merchandise to **BSTTW** that can be used in our upcoming or future auctions please contact us at 941-364-8457, [auctions@burnsurvivorsttw.org](mailto:auctions@burnsurvivorsttw.org) or mail them to:

Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.  
Attn: Auctions  
650 N Beneva Rd. #105  
Sarasota, Florida 34232

## Camp Susquehanna

By: Shirin Juwaley

Just recently I had a wonderful opportunity to be counselor at a burn camp for severely burned children. Camp Susquehanna was held at Lancaster, PA in June and is sponsored by the Sertoma Club which is a civic organization in Pennsylvania. Camp Susquehanna was organized in memory of Elvan Byler, who was burned in a plane crash, by Sertoma Club, Sertoma meaning Service to Mankind. Mr. Byler was an important member of the Sertoma Club who rendered invaluable services.

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Camp Susquehanna is a wonderful opportunity for burned children to interact and learn from the experiences of other burn survivors. It is an excuse to be free and enjoy the summer without making the effort to belong.

This was my first time at a camp and I was a little apprehensive if I would be a good counselor. It was my first experience with kids and I was a little nervous. It just took one introduction with the kids and then we were friends forever. Being severely burned myself it was appalling for me to see so many kids without limbs and severely scarred and disfigured bodies. It took me a while to reel from the shock but their sheer zest for life made me extremely proud of them.

Camp Susquehanna, a four-day camp, was something every kid looked forward to. It was four days of fun and frolic and good food. It was four days away to a different world, a world of burn survivors. It was a time to be with your own kind. A time to have fun, talk and listen without explaining to one another about their burns. It was a place where one need not strive hard to belong. It was a place where everybody simply understood.

You know friends; the sad part is there is always someone worse than you. There is so much to learn and be thankful for small mercies. Just the thought, how badly these kids were burned, blew me away but I was overjoyed by the sheer courage and strength they represented. I am very proud that I was a part of such a group.

The camp had many fun-filled group activities and it gave the children an opportunity to bond with other kids. The kids enjoyed treasure hunting in the woods, which built their problem solving skills, and gave them confidence in leadership and also enabled them to work in a group. The other half of the day was spent doing canoeing, kayaking, boat rides and also rides on the ski boat. It was a day well spent on water,

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and believe me we had to apply ample of sun block crème to save us from the extensive sunrays. The focal point for the kids at the camp was swimming. Kids just loved swimming and they loved the cool water caressing their traumatized bodies. Every kid in the camp just stormed at the pool and it also gave us counselors to cool off our heels.

One night, a week before 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we went to watch the fireworks. We were atop a tall parking garage impatiently waiting for the display of the fireworks. The fireworks made a startling display of lights .It was like the sky was bedazzled with millions of colorful stars. It was a very beautiful display of colors against the backdrop of the dark clear sky. It was a very beautiful night.

There was this young girl 15 years of age and she was burned 100%. Her hands and feet were badly disfigured but she had an amazing spirit. One of the days while we were in the woods the camp organizers had organized a few challenging games. One of the games was climbing a 25ft high tree trunk by a rope ladder and then walking on a cable wire from one tree to the other twice and then just free falling on another cable wire. Of course there was a safety harness involved to avoid mishaps. This young spirited girl, with disfigured limbs climbed the rope ladder (which takes a lot of physical strength and determination) and there were times when she felt like giving up her arms and legs hurt but the group urged her to go on and she did. She completed the whole task and plummeted down the cable wire with a shri! lling shout of achievement.

One thing I've learnt that no matter how badly burned you are nothing can stop you from leading a normal life. You may have a lot of barricades in your way but with a little support and determination you will always triumph. We all need to know that we are not victims but survivors.

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fires. More than 70% of school fires occur between 8 am and 4 pm, while students are attending class.

Most of us are too young to remember Chicago's Our Lady of Angels School fire in 1958, where 90 children and 3 teachers died after being trapped by fire in their classrooms. Today's school environment is in some ways safer and in other ways less safe than the setting posed by Our Lady of Angels fire. Today's structures are safer than those of half a century ago, but the contents of today's classrooms are much more combustible and toxic.

Whether the cause of the fire is accidental or deliberate, school fires happen in large part because schools are full of things that burn. Our schools house a unique mix of supplies, flammable computer equipment, books, laboratory equipment, kitchen equipment, cleaners, chemicals, paints, solvents, aging electrical systems, poorly maintained heating systems, upholstered furniture and area rugs, and bulletin boards filled with artwork, maps and other combustible materials all over the walls. Any one of these items can turn a small fire into a large, toxic fire very quickly - and the combination of these items could be deadly.

So let's not fall into that "It hasn't happened here, therefore, it won't happen" mindset. School fires are more prevalent than you may think, and it would be a tragedy for an injury or fatality to occur before measures are taken to prevent them from occurring in the first place. Let's put into place policies that prevent too much wall area from being covered with combustible materials. Let's make sure all computer equipment has outer housings that are resistant to open flames. Let's get rid of flammable furniture, lock up chemicals and cleaning supplies in fire-proof cabinets, and maintain our schools' electrical and heating systems. And let's build in redundancy with properly working sprinkler

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systems.

Since we now seem to have fire drills down to a science, I think it is time we gave a little more thought to fire prevention - and what is burning in our schools.

### PHANTOM OF THE SMOKE

By: Cynthia E. Jackson

If I shoulda, woulda done  
would I had still been the one.

If I coulda, thoughta maybe did,  
I might not have had this gig.

Flames so hot- scorching  
like a thousand valleys of lava,  
smoothing down my face  
covering like cold cream

Severing it like a surgeons  
scalpel my visage coming  
apart sliding slowly downward  
HOTWAX!

What an odd candle I make.  
Wicked.

Like a Phoenix I strive to rise and fly  
but the roots entangle my foot  
Hindering me, preventing me  
from moving forward.

As I wipe the acrid fog clear-  
Who do I find near?

The Phantom of the Smoke

With whispering hands  
he creates muscle bands

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touching my eyes that well up-  
my body that swells up

Is it not enough that my  
mind is likend to catacombs  
dark, devoid of everything but dust  
disturbed and designed to choke?

ANSWER! Ye Phantom of the Smoke

Your crackling lies have done me great harm  
Licking me like a tender lover.  
Hot breath on my skin  
penetrating deep within

I hear your laughter snapping in my ears  
You are drunk and giddy on my fears

I shall not let u claim me  
though you have changed me  
When once I was scared of the marks I bear

Tis' a badge to me for I have the victory  
No more shall u enslave me  
for my Lord has healed and raised me.

And you.... are mere Phantom!  
of fire and smoke

### The Benefits of Laughter & Tears

By: Dr. Debra Moore, Ph.D.

Had a good laugh or cry recently? Perhaps you believe you haven't had a good enough reason to laugh or cry. Maybe you think you have to be particularly happy or sad to express feelings this way. Do you label yourself as someone who just doesn't do that?

Many of us grew up with several myths about laughing and crying. We may have been taught we had to have a "good enough" reason to laugh or  
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cry. Perhaps we heard "What is so funny?" I asked in a putdown manner. Some of us were even told to stop crying or I'll give you something to cry about!. How is that for adult logic?

Think about a six week old baby for a minute. Would you ask what's so funny if you saw it laughing? Of course not! Babies simply respond. As adults, if we ask "why" we effectively shut ourselves down and generally stop laughing immediately. The bottom line is feelings are often irrational, illogical, and without "reasonable" cause.

If we believe we must be going through an especially happy time to laugh or a time of trauma to cry we probably deprive ourselves of much catharsis. Do you tell yourself it's not right to be laughing when there is so much tragedy in the world? That you shouldn't cry because someone else has it worse? If you think of laughter and crying as both on a circle of emotional responses you can understand how someone can laugh until they cry or cry until they end up laughing. They're not end points at opposite poles from each other.

Ever been accused of not having a sense of humor? The person accusing usually means they think you should laugh at the same things they laugh at. But a sense of humor is an intellectual process. Laughter is not. We simply can't agree on what makes something funny. Back to the six week old baby - when it laughs do we say it has a wonderful sense of humor?

Laughter appears to be universal. All cultures are known to engage in it (although any traveler can tell you there are significant differences in the extent to which various societies laugh). Laughter is an innate human response and if an infant does not laugh we know something is tragically wrong in their central nervous system.

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I used the word catharsis earlier - purging, purifying, releasing, rebalancing. When we laugh or cry we actually rebalance the body's chemistry. Clients who are uncomfortable crying often tell me it doesn't do any good. I disagree. Of course it probably won't change the external situation, but internally, we have changed. As long as you are not chronically, chemically depressed, a sense of relief will generally be felt after crying.

Children laugh and cry all the time. They fall and scrape their knee - depending upon who is around to observe they may wail! They also tend to heal very efficiently. Perhaps there is a connection. Chemical analysis of tears produced from strong emotion versus from cutting onions or exposure to other noxious fumes reveals very different substances. Our bodies appear to have unique purposes in releasing the tears of laughter or crying.

What else happens physically when we laugh or cry? We move. We often raise our arms to our face. We may bend over. We lower or throw back our head. Our diaphragm, that muscular partition between our chest and abdominal cavity, begins to convulse. Norman Cousins, in his books on the power of laughter in recovery from illness, calls this "jogging your internal organs".

Annette Goodheart, a psychologist who has taught "Beginning" and "Advanced Laughter" for over a decade, calls it "internal massage".

Our cardiovascular system dilates - our blood pressure and heart rate initially goes up. But then they go back down to levels below what they were originally. There is some evidence that endorphins, our natural painkillers, and our cortisol levels go up.

Perhaps this catharsis is an anti-inflammatory! We **CONTINUED Page 5 "BENEFITS"**

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are just beginning to learn the effects on our immune system of our emotional states and reactions. It is an exciting area of research!

## Our Children and Sleep

By: Michael Appleman, M.S.

In 1999 the National Sleep Foundation survey found that sixty percent of children under the age of eighteen, complained of being tired during the day. According to the parents, that were polled, teen-agers are more likely to complain than younger children.

The data shows that teen-agers need nine to ten hours of sleep each evening in order to function at their best each day. Their body and mind is not working together in order to function without the needed sleep.

It is important for parents, teachers, counselors and the teenagers realize that sleep disorders can start at an early age.

It has also been found that nightmares and sleep walking is more common in children than in adults. These conditions usually dissipate with age. Even though these conditions occur when the individual is sleeping, they still wake up tired.

For our children to function at their best, they must get the amount of sleep their body needs. That will allow them to wake up with a full battery, ready to function at their best.

\*Below are seven tips to a healthy sleep:

1. Sleep is food for the brain. Get enough of it and get it when it is needed.

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2. Keep consistency in mind. Establish a regular bedtime and wake time schedule. Maintain it during weekends and school vacations.

3. Learn how much sleep you need to function at your best. You should feel awake and refreshed. Most adolescents need between 8.5 and 9.25 hours of sleep each night.

4. In the morning, get into bright light as soon as possible. Remember to avoid bright lights in the evening.

5. Understand your circadian rhythm (a biological process that takes about 24 hours from start to finish). Then maximize your schedule throughout the day according to your internal clock.

6. After lunch, stay away from stimulants such as coffee, colas with caffeine and nicotine. Also avoid alcohol, which can disrupt your sleep.

7. Relax before going to bed. Avoid heavy reading, studying and computer games within one hour of going to bed.

\*Source: National Sleep Function

## BSTTW CONTACT INFORMATION

### Emergency Contact

We have an Emergency Email Form on the Internet. Go to: [www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/emergemail.html](http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/emergemail.html)

You, your family and friends can also reach us by phone at 941-364-8457. If we are not in the office or it is after hours, you will be given an emergency number to call. A support team member will respond to you within 24 hours. **BSTTW** has at least one individual on call 24 hours day/7 days a week to meet everyone's needs.

**BSTTW Directors**

Michael Appleman: **Executive Director**  
[michael@burnsurvivorsttw.org](mailto:michael@burnsurvivorsttw.org)

Nguyễn Thi Diêu Trân: **Director- Việt Nam**  
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**DONATIONS**

As a 501 (c)(3) Non Profit Organization, all donations, big or small are tax deductible to the extent of the law. **BSTTW** accepts donations for our general fund, the “Dwight Lunkley Racing To Victory” fund, the Vietnamese Burned Children fund and the World Burn Congress fund. Donations from Companies, Churches, Organizations, Communities and individuals will help **BSTTW** to do the work that is needed for all Burn Survivors, family members and the public around the world. Remember your donations can be financial, clothes, food, a used bicycle, automobile, wheel chair, 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**.

**Mail your donations to:**

Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.  
 650 N Beneva Road #105  
 Sarasota, Florida 34232

**Donate on line at:**

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

If you have any questions call us at 941-364-8457  
 or email **BSTTW** at:  
[donations@burnsurvivorsttw.org](mailto:donations@burnsurvivorsttw.org)

**Volunteering your time to BSTTW**

We always can use your help. There are many children, adults and families around the world that need support and other help. You can take part in rebuilding the lives and helping people reenter their community. If you are interested contact **BSTTW**

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by phone or email us at  
[volunteers@burnsurvivorsttw.org](mailto:volunteers@burnsurvivorsttw.org)

**Purchases**

**BSTTW** has an online store were you can purchase Skin Care Products, Books and Video Tapes. Go to: [www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/sales.html](http://www.burnsurvivorsttw.org/sales.html)  
 You can also purchase Skin Care Products by phone.

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