
BSTTW COMMUNITY NEWS

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BSTTW IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

Viet Nam Gets **BSTTW** Support

By: Michael Appleman

B **STTW** is currently working with the United States and Vietnamese Governments to coordinate their work in Viet Nam.

Tran Thi Dieu Nguyen, the **BSTTW** representative in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, has been in contact with the People's Aid Coordinating Committee (PACCOM). PACCOM is part of the Vietnamese Government. PACCOM coordinates the acceptance of aid from world wide Non Profit Organizations.

Tran has received files with pictures of several burn survivors from SOS a Non Profit Organization and a local newspaper. She sent the files and pictures to **BSTTW** for their review. The picture of the young boy, to the right, was received 48 hours after he was burned by boiling water at home in Lau Dung, Viet Nam. If you look closely his face shows his pain and suffering. This is one of so many children in Viet Nam and around the world that need our help.

BSTTW has been in contact with the United States Embassy in Ha Noi, Viet Nam and Senator Bill Nelson. Senator Nelson is **CONTINUED Page 5 "Viet Nam"**



A FAMILY AROUND THE WORLD

A Burn Survivor Helps Others

By: Rudy Pelman

I am a 52-year-old Belgian citizen and I have lived in Wales, Great Britain since 1982. I am married to Clarine and have a daughter of 17, named Lindsey and one named Jessy, who is 30. I was a manual worker; working all over Europe and the Middle East in the oil industry for many years. Life was treating us very kindly so; yet again I signed another contract in February 1992, this one to be carried out in Scotland. To cut a long story short, a fire broke out and I ended up in hospital having sustained 50% burns. I was in hospital for more than three months before being allowed home and then my rehabilitation began.

Although my recovery was teamwork between my Plastic Surgeons and all medical staff involved, it was the excellent after care given to **CONTINUED Page 5 "HELPING"**

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The Legal Rights of Burn Victims

By: Lawrence J. Buckfire, Attorney at Law

Burn injury victims often face a long and painful struggle and road to recovery. Quite often, the physical, psychological, and emotional injuries caused by burns will last a lifetime. Further complicating the matter are years of continuing treatment and the significant medical expenses involved in that treatment, not to mention the disabilities caused by many types of burns.

While many burn injuries are purely accidental, there is a significant number of burn injuries that result from the negligent actions of others or from products that pose unreasonable risks of burn injuries to individuals. These include burns caused by:

- ◆ **Chemicals**
- ◆ **Defective household products,**
- ◆ **Like drain cleaners**
- ◆ **Defective household appliances**
- ◆ **Defective barbecues, hot water heaters, and furnaces**
- ◆ **Defective vehicles**
- ◆ **Defective smoke detectors**
- ◆ **Fireworks**
- ◆ **Spilled food and beverages**
- ◆ **Defective industrial equipment**

A burn victim injured by the negligence of another or from a defective product does have legal rights. Although these rights vary from state to state, burn victims can generally file a lawsuit against a negligent person or company to recover damages for pain and suffering, disfigurement, loss of enjoyment of life, fright and shock, lost wages, and medical expenses. Based upon the nature of burn injuries, the settlements and jury verdicts obtained from these cases are often significant.

Time is of the essence if a decision is made to pursue a case on behalf of a burn victim. As time passes, witnesses become more

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difficult to locate, evidence is destroyed or disappears, and the memories of parties and witnesses fades. Also, each state has a statute of limitations which is essentially a cut off date for filing a lawsuit in court. An injured person who fails to file suit within the prescribed time period is forever barred from doing so after the cutoff date. Further, each state usually has different statute of limitations for each different type of case. For example, the amount of time permitted to file suit for a negligence case may be different than the amount of time permitted to file a products liability case.

Based upon these time constraints, it is essential for a burn injury victim to contact a knowledgeable attorney as soon as possible to obtain information regarding the victim's legal rights and potential remedies. Lawyers who specialize in working with burn survivors can often anticipate the feelings of helplessness, anger, fear and other normal reactions to burn injury. Lawsuits not only serve the purpose of compensating a burn victim, but also help to empower and strengthen the victim by holding negligent persons and companies accountable for their actions. Additionally, these lawsuits often serve to enhance the safety of products and the personal conduct on individuals to prevent others from suffering similar injuries in the future.

Pain Control and Psychological Outcome

By: David R. Patterson, Ph.D, ABPP, ABPH

At the University of Washington Burn Center, we have been conducting research on pain control and psychological outcome with patients who have sustained major burn injuries for over a decade. Most of this research has been sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. There are several major findings that have come

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out of this line of research. First of all, we have found in a series of randomized, controlled studies that hypnosis is useful in reducing pain during dressing changes, particularly in those patients who are hurting the most. Secondly, we have found in controlled studies that adding a tranquilizer (lorazepam) to pain medication during painful dressing changes reduces patients' ratings of pain. Finally, we have reported that patients (usually children) are able to tolerate physical therapy and wound care pain better when they are distracted by entering a virtual reality induced world. At the University of Washington, we are strong advocates of using morphine and other powerful drugs to control burn pain. Our research demonstrates however that such drugs do not control all burn pain and such additional treatments as hypnosis, tranquilizers and virtual reality can be very effective in lessening this type of pain.

Interestingly, we have found that the amount of pain patients experience during hospitalization is one of the biggest predictors of how they adjust psychologically. For some patients, the amount of pain they feel is more important than the size of their burn, the location of the injury or how long they spend in the hospital.

In our psychological outcome studies we have found that about 20% of patients show post-traumatic stress disorder after their burn injuries and a greater number show mild to moderate levels of depression. We have not found, however, that we can determine who will have psychological problems based on the type of burn they sustain. Rather, it is more important to look at who the person that was burned is (for example how they coped with problems before they were burned) and what type of social support they have. Sleep and pain are often problems that are neglected with this patient population and we have a great deal to work on measuring and improving survivors' satisfaction with their appearance.

BSTTW COMMUNITY NEWS **Mother Of A Teen Burn Survivor**

By: Clarinda Jones

I know being a Mother of a teen burn survivor is not easy. So surely being a teen burn survivor is not any easier. Even though we all deal with our pain in different ways, I know there is a hidden burn inside both mother and child. That is the pain of a burn that others will never see. My son, Robert, goes through the ridicule and name calling on a daily basis. He suffers from the emotional pain that you cannot see. This hidden monster is the anxiety, depression, anger, sadness and more.

As a loving mother I cannot give up on my son. I pray that our children will survive and some day help and teach others. We must realize and remember that no matter what part of the world we live in, all of us are on the same team. Just dealing with the issues is not enough. So all parents and teen burn survivors need to hang in there and work together. We must talk, listen to and support each other daily. Whenever possible, we should reach out to each other and share the difficulty times. Seek out a counselor that can help you and your child. I know some burn survivors and parents move on with their lives and others continue to struggle. As a parent I find that the hardest thing I ever had to do was to see my child suffer mentally and physically. In time and with the help of **BSTTW** and other organizations, the world will understand the pain that so many of us go through without having to feel it themselves. We must keep on climbing to be our best and love each other.

"I remember The Song" Part One

By Pastor Dale

In 1972-1974 I was a member of a Christian music group. We had about 25+ vocal members.
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Ron Hood was the Director, Merv Moore, was the asst. director & piano player. The Group became known as Dayspring. We sang the cantata called Come Together. It was written & arranged by Jimmy & Carol Owens. Their daughter Jamie who became Jamie Owens Collins wrote a piece "May I introduce you to my friend".

The song was a single voice song with just guitar. I wish I could remember the words in its entirety, but the words paraphrased say this. May I introduce you to my friend His name is Jesus/Yeshua he is here to meet you. He is here to help you & to Love you.

Please come to him. In the Gospel of John 3:16, it say that "For G-d so loved the world that He gave us His only Begotten Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting Life.

Ask Jesus/Yeshua to come into your life. If you don't know this Jesus/Yeshua come to Him. Let Him love you. I came into that love 30 years ago. He has not failed me.

I am here as Pastor to do what I can to help any member of **BSTTW**. I am only an email away. If you need me I am here.

If you need me please feel free to email me at any time. I am there for all burn survivors, family members and friends. You do not have to be a member of Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc. to get my help. We offer our support and education to all.

Part Two In June 2002 Issue

God Bless you All.....Pastor Dale

The Cold in Detroit

By: Shirin Juwaley

Today is January 31st and it's freezing cold in Detroit. As I was walking down the courtyard

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towards the library I noticed my surroundings; the whole courtyard is filled with 3" of snow and the pavement is full off slush and ice. Makes it very difficult to walk 'cause if you miss a step then you land straight on the ground. The trees, which are now totally bare of leaves with their spooky branches facing the sky, had formed icicles over them. They actually make a very beautiful sight. The tree looks all white with the icicles hanging down from the branches. It actually makes one feel as if it was made of glass and fragile to the touch. Guys, it really makes me think of all the beauty that surrounds us and how we get so caught up with our lives, its enormous problems and that we fail to take pleasure in the simplest of things.

Well... I feel the need to share another thing with you all. Detroit is a very shady city with a lot of social problems. It is filled with homeless people. I often see these shelter less folks moving around trying to keep themselves warm in this harsh weather with just probably a few sets of old torn clothes. They have no place to go and absolutely no easy way to keep themselves warm. Above all when it snows or rains they have to move from their hearth (spots occupied by them in the alleys), as nothing will avoid from their "homes" from becoming icy wet. In such times, I look at my life and I see that I have a warm room to go to with sufficient supply of warm clothes and blankets. I have friends, who care for me and see to it that my fridge is stocked with goodies and I have enough of pocket money in times of need. I go back to that warm room and often listen to music and keep myself well nourished and I also often hear myself complaining about life.....

Friends, we have in this small life of ours so many things to thank and we often take all those things for granted. Like sometimes I take you guys for granted. So today I want to sincerely **CONTINUED Page 4 "DETROIT"**

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thank you guys for everything you have done for me and am eternally grateful to have such wonderful friends.

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extremely interested in helping **BSTTW**. Senator Nelson has forwarded all of our information to the appropriate United States authorities.

Michael Appleman, Executive Director and President/CEO of **BSTTW** will be going to Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam in April 2002. PACCOM's suggested that **BSTTW** send a representative to Viet Nam in order to discuss their ideas with a PACCOM representative and to communicate with organizations and hospitals in Viet Nam. PACCOM also stated that a letter from a hospital or organization in Viet Nam, stating that they would like to have **BSTTW** work with them in Viet Nam, would help PACCOM's decision. Mr. Appleman will be traveling in several parts of Viet Nam during his 14-day trip.

When PACCOM accepts **BSTTW's** work in Viet Nam, both Michael Appleman and Duong VanDinh, the **BSTTW** Vietnamese representative in the United States, will travel to Viet Nam. Mr. Appleman and Mr. VanDinh plan on traveling around Viet Nam for a minimum of 15 days. They plan on helping as many children and adult burn survivors and their families as possible.

BSTTW is looking for the funding needed. If you are interested in donating or helping **BSTTW** get the monetary, clothing or other goods needed to help the burned Vietnamese people and their families, please contact or send **BSTTW** your donations. If you have any question you can call us or email **BSTTW** at vietnam@burnsurvivorsttw.com. Your donations will help many people and are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

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Continued from Page 1 "HELPING" me by Clarine, Lindsey and Doctor W. George my General Practitioner (GP) that brought me back to a normal life again. But, let's not jump ahead and carry on with the story.

Some four months after my discharge from hospital and during yet another 'talking' session with my GP, he suggested that I do something with my life. Although Clarine and my GP knew that I wouldn't be able to use my hands for manual work again for a long time (I didn't realize that at the time), he suggested going on a computer course... I honestly thought that he was having me on! Taking into consideration that I'm Belgian (although I spoke English, I couldn't write much as my main tongue is Flemish/Dutch) and would need more skin grafts and surgery for many years to come, one can imagine why I thought he was having me on.

Anyway, although I could hardly walk at that time because of the burns on my legs, had never seen a computer before in my life and had a technical school education in my youth, at the age of 42, I enrolled on a one-year computer course (RSA 1, evening classes). To my great surprise I completed the course and received my certificate. At that point, my GP suggested that I continue with further education and I enrolled in our local College on a two year, full time computer course (BTEC National Diploma). Again to my surprise, I also finished that course and was given the 'Computing Student of the Year' award. This achievement gave me the encouragement and also the right grades to enroll on a 2-year Higher Education course (HND) in Business Information Technology, from which I graduated in June 1997. I then went on to take a B.Sc. Honors Degree in Information Systems and Technologies graduating in June 1999.

It certainly hasn't been easy over the years...but then again, nobody told me it would be! I know **CONTINUED Page 6 "HELPING"**

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that I could not have achieved all this without the help of Clarine, Lindsey and my GP. Also other people around me i.e. my fellow students (most of them were only 17-18 years of age in the BTEC National Diploma course) and my lecturers, contributed to my recovery. Maybe unknown to them, I took some strength out of the fact that they didn't treat me any different from other students, that they didn't give me any privileges because of my condition. I just had to get on with it like everyone else and I succeeded. I didn't have time to think about my accident, as I kept busy instead.... a recommendation to anyone in a similar position as me!

While I was very fortunate to have had the 'right' people around me, I must admit that not everyone is in the same situation. Not everyone has the support and care that I had and still have from those people around me. Clarine, more than anyone else, knows that not everyday day was a 'cheerful' day for me, as the mental and physical scarring will always be with me. Although I tried to keep my head up high most of the time, I also had some off-days, but again the people around me were there to help.

It is for those people who don't have the support that I had for whom I've set up my Burn Support Group Database on the World Wide Web

(<http://www.burnsupportgroupsdatabase.com>) where people looking for help will be able to find groups and organizations offering the local, national and international support they need. Places where they will be able to get information from and to talk to qualified people and to make contact with others who have been through a similar experience. My own experience has shown me that there are many, many people out there who really care about other people and are willing and able to help in all kinds of practical ways. **REGISTRATION ON MY DATABASE IS ABSOLUTELY FREE** and I would ask that as many groups as possible

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register, the more groups that are registered, the more people will be able to find help.

At present (27 February 2002) some 18500 plus visitors were clocked on my website. Taken that my small database only began life at 1st April 1997, I believe this venture to be a success. One may argue that not every visitor to my website would be a burn survivor, and that may be true, but if only half of those visitors were burn survivors and if only 20% of those were helped, then for me this venture would be more than worth every effort I've put in and still put into it.

My Burn Support Group Database is now almost becoming a full time job, as I receive e-mail, snail mail and messages from all over the world... I do reply to all of them (rudy@burnsupportgroupsdatabase.com)!! They come

from as far apart as from Peru to Bosnia, so I know that my database does what it was designed for. My web site can be viewed in any of the 8 main International languages so people from all over the world are able to access and understand the database in either their own or a second language, however, I am in need of translations into the Scandinavian and Middle- and Far-Eastern languages and would be most grateful for any assistance in this area.

I do get a tremendous boost out of those messages that are sent to me. Mostly those messages are of praise but I also receive some from burn survivors who are desperately in need of help. Usually I am able to help sort things out as I do have a lot of connections all over the world through my database and my involvement with national and international organizations. However, sometimes I can't help, especially where someone lives in an area that has little or no provision for support and it makes me feel both sad and useless, but it also makes me realize how lucky burn survivors are in countries like the UK, the USA, Europe and **CONTINUED Page 7 "HELPING"**

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Canada.

I presently give speeches to burn survivors and I

support groups on how I rehabilitated myself. I am currently also the Treasurer of the St Lawrence Hospital Burns Unit Fund located at Morrision Hospital, Swansea and one of the trustees of the newly founded Burn Survivors Association -UK. I am also a part time Lecturer at Pembrokeshire College, Wales, UK and my wife and I have a property letting business.

I feel that there is a need to educate people around the world about burns, especially younger generations, on burn prevention and on how burn survivors struggle with rehabilitation to get their place back in society. To give an example: Holland has a system in place being carried out in conjunction with the burns unit staff, the fire brigade and professional film makers in which a burned child is filmed during their stay at the burns unit. Before the burned child is discharged, this video is edited and shown to their classmates and school, showing them what burns can do to them and giving an opportunity to explain about burns and burn prevention at a time when they are likely to be more receptive. At the same time the video goes a long way towards preparing the school for the burned child's return, mitigating the shock, embarrassment and the staring which is very much present in our world based on "good looks", and making it a little bit easier for the burned child to take their place back in their community and school.

Lastly, I have many burn survivor friends around the world, friends like Dwight Lunkley from California, Anthony Gonzales from Illinois, and Michael Appleman, also from the USA, and who is the Founder and Executive Director/CEO of Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.. These guys are my heroes and we share Dwight Lunkley's motto...

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NEVER GIVE UP, NEVER GIVE IN,
NEVER QUIT... life is too precious!
BURN SURVIVORS HELPING BURN
SURVIVORS...this is what it is all
about!

BSTTW CONTACT **INFORMATION**

Emergency Contact

We have an Emergency Email Form on the Internet. Go to:

www.burnsurvivorsttw.com/emergeemail.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.

You can contact Pastor Dale at:

PastorDale@burnsurvivorsttw.com

BSTTW Director

Michael Appleman: Executive Director
michael@burnsurvivorsttw.com

DONATIONS

As a 501 (c)(3) Non Profit Organization, all donations, big or small are tax deductible to the extent of the law. 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 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**.

Mail your donations to:

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

Donate on line at:

www.burnsurvivorsttw.com/donations.html

If you have any questions call us at 941-364-8457 or email **BSTTW** at:

donations@burnsurvivorsttw.com

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** by phone or email us at

volunteers@burnsurvivorsttw.com

Purchases

BSTTW has an online store were you can purchase Skin Care Products, Books and Video Tapes. Got to:

www.burnsurvivorsttw.com/sales.html

You can also purchase Skin Care Products by phone.

BSTTW ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBERS:

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