

Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association

CONNECTIONS

Winter 2012



Brain Blitz

Our speaker this year is NHL
Hockey Hall of Famer, Ken Dryden.

See page 4 for more information about the event
and Ken's writings on the subject of concussion.

First Annual Fall Retreat Report!

The first annual Fall Retreat held in Regina on October 29th and 30th was a great success! The weekend was filled with educational presentations, opportunities for people to expand their social networks, good food and of course lots of fun!

This year's Fall Retreat theme was 'Making Connections'. The event began with a great luncheon that provided a chance to meet other retreaters. Over 70 people attended! Dixon Mclean from the Regina ABI Outreach Team talked about Lumosity; a memory and brain building website that many find helps to increase their skills. Patti-Lynne McLeod with the Regina Public Library Outreach Team explained how to access the Regina public libraries computer programs and how to get started using the resources the library has available to people with disabilities.

This session was followed by two simultaneous presentations. The caregiver's session was given by Allison Kotrla, the Speech and Language Pathologist on the Regina ABI Outreach Team, about 'Social Communication after a Brain Injury.' She talked about techniques to help people with language difficulties after Brain Injury. The survivor's session, "Understanding Balance and Dizziness after a Brain Injury." was presented by Carol Farmer, Physiotherapist with the Regina ABI Outreach Tea. She presented useful information about balance and dizziness and techniques for improving in these areas.

... Continued on pg. 2

"Laughter is the sun that drives
winter from the human face"

- Victor Hugo

In this Issue...

Find out how to have a Tropical vacation at our 2012 Spring Retreat on **page 3**.

Get the latest on the plans for the 2012 Brain Blitz on **page 4**.

Check out this opportunity for brain injury survivors on **page 4**.

Want to be a part of a concussion solution for Saskatchewan, check out how on **page 5**.

Read our interview with Chris Ryder from BHP Billiton on **page 6**.

Find out what's coming up in your community on **page 7**.

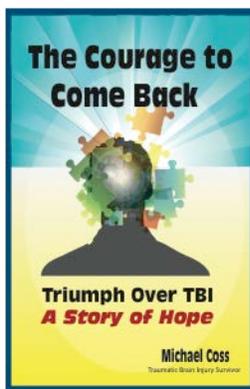
Read a quick summary of our latest news articles on **page 8**.



Generous Donation to SBIA's Prince Albert Chapter

Patti Koivisto donated \$500 from the sale of her painting to the Prince Albert Brain Injury support group.

Pictured above with a PA Chapter member, Allan Cassels.



The Courage to Come Back

Michael Cross, a brain injury survivor, wrote the book **The Courage to Come Back** to give hope to other ABI survivors, and describe the benefits of Hyperbaric Oxygen in the treatment of brain injuries. The book does this while helping his children better understand their father.

Michael has also launched the **Michael Cross Brain Injury Foundation** to support those undergoing Hyperbaric Oxygen treatment.

The book can be purchased online through Amazon.

Fall Retreat: Connections Were Made!

The rest of the afternoon on Saturday provided opportunities for making masks and individual computer stations set up for people to use, with or without assistance, to practise Lumosity or to sign up for social networking sites like facebook. Following a good supper and a lot of visiting, the group was entertained by the 'Mini Saskatchewan Express'. They were talented and very enthusiastic! After the performance it was time for the Carnival Social with games like Pop Bottle Ring Toss, Monster Head Knock Down, Plinko, The Cake Walk and many more! It was a great evening full of fun, entertainment and of course lots of laughs! We were also lucky to have 10 Cognitive Psychology Students volunteering for SBIA all day on Saturday to help make the Fall Retreat a success! Thanks for all your help!

On Sunday morning we met again for breakfast, socializing and of course coffee!! Then a surprise guest joined us! SBIA's honorary spokesperson and CEO of the Saskatchewan Roughriders, Jim Hopson came to accept the BIAC 2011 Prevention Award in recognition of the 'Save Your Melon' campaign. The award was presented by Larry Carlson, President of the Brain Injury Association of Canada. This award is presented to an individual, group or organization that supports educational and preventative programs to further advance the cause of brain injury in Canada. Jim then joined Barb Butler presenting an award to Gord Fisher who was the Regina Walk-a-thon's top pledge earner.



The group was blessed to hear an inspirational story of survival, perseverance and hope from a mother and daughter who have overcome many hurdles, Sylvia and Rebecca Coghlin. There was hardly a dry eye in the room because so many could relate to experiences they have overcome in their lives! Rebecca shared her musical talents with the audience. Their story truly touched us all! After Rebecca's story we were ready to get active with Gerry Powers and a group of volunteers from Taoist Tai Chi Society of Canada. The group presented on the benefits of Tai Chi for many different populations and led us in a variety of sets to let us get a feel for these benefits. Tai Chi seemed to be a hit and many people who participated thought they would love to join the health recovery class that happens every Tuesday afternoon in Regina!



We wrapped up the weekend with a farewell luncheon, goodbyes and many thank you's to all the survivors, families members, caregivers, volunteers and staff that made the 1st Annual Fall Retreat in Regina a wonderful success! SBIA is looking forward to providing this opportunity every fall in Regina and every spring in Saskatoon! All in all, it was a great weekend of making connections! We learned new things, met new friends, caught up with old ones, tried new things and had some good laughs! We hope to see you again next fall!



Let's Get Tropical!

It's time to register for Spring Retreat!

A Tropical Retreat! on March 24 & 25, 2012 at the Park Town Hotel in Saskatoon.

Beginning with lunch at noon on Saturday, we will gather to learn from our guest presenters and each other. The first session will be a presentation on the new *Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability* (SAID) program with representatives from the Ministry of Social Services. Information about other income and savings programs for people with disabilities will also be presented on Saturday afternoon.

Our Tropical theme will be picked up in the craft session, where retreaters will have an opportunity to make a Tropical beach craft. The SBIA Saskatoon Chapter Drumming group will share their talents with us in a session. The evening festivities will feature a Polynesian dance group performing and teaching us some simple moves.

Sunday sessions will include *Staying on Your Feet* with tips and techniques for avoiding falls. A session on *Chair Yoga* will precede our Farewell Luncheon.

Please find the registration form in this newsletter or at www.sbia.ca

The Government of Saskatchewan is committing to significant enhancements to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program following through on another campaign commitment.

The various enhancements will begin this month with a \$50 per month benefit increase for SAID recipients who live in residential care settings. More than 3,000 SAID recipients are expected to benefit from this increase.

The inheritance exemption under SAID will be broadened to include the proceeds of a life insurance policy, which will further distinguish SAID from the Saskatchewan Assistance Program.

In addition, over the next several months, an impact-based assessment will be used to evaluate the disability severity of Saskatchewan people with disabilities who are living independently - with the goal of expanding enrolment in the SAID program. The Saskatchewan Abilities Council is the successful vendor in the Request for Proposal process to conduct these assessments. The assessments will be used to determine eligibility for expanded SAID enrolment.

Expanded enrolment will be followed by substantial additional benefit increases to the SAID program which includes increasing the SAID benefits over the next four years by \$350 per month for people with disabilities who are living independently, by \$400 a month for couples with disabilities who are living independently and by \$100 per month for people with disabilities in residential care settings.

Brain Awareness Week

March 12-18 is Brain Awareness Week. Keep your eyes open for exciting events that week.

In particular, don't forget to check out Brain Blast, an annual event hosted by the ABI Outreach Team at Saskatoon City Hospital on March 18, 2012.

Brain Blitz Gala

Featuring keynote speaker, NHL Hockey Great,
Ken Dryden

Also, **Ellem Kolenick... with Straight from the Fridge**

Saturday, April 28, 2012 - TCU Place Grand Salon

6pm Cocktails - 7pm Dinner

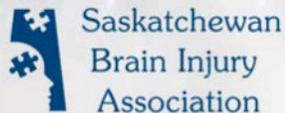
Silent Auction

Dress - Cocktail

Tickets: \$150/person \$1200/table

www.sbia.ca

sbia.office@sasktel.net 1-888-373-1555



Brain Blitz Gala... Is Approaching!

Planning is in full swing for our Brain Blitz Gala to be held on April 28, 2012. We are thrilled with the many developments thus far!

We are pleased to announce that Chantel Huber, CTV Saskatoon evening news anchor, and Graeme Bell, SK Roughriders Player, as our Masters of Ceremonies for the event.

We are happy to announce that this year's keynote speaker will be Ken Dryden. Ken is a former goalie with the Montreal Canadiens, a lawyer, and a former Liberal Member of Parliament. He has most recently written some hard-hitting articles about concussion and violence in hockey. He has been featured on the CBC program One on One with Peter Mansbridge; and Ken's book *The Game* (1983) is a finalist for Canada Reads 2012 with the winner to be announced in February.

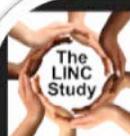
Please refer to the flyer (left) for event details and ticket information.

LINC Research Opportunity

Over the past few months exciting research has been going on with regard to neurological conditions. As is the case in most of these studies, researchers are looking for people to interact with to gather important information. Some of you have already responded to the call from the fall; some of you have started the process and need to complete it; and others may have just overlooked it within our fast paced daily activities.

Some of you may know a brain injury survivor or caregivers of a young child or adult who could participate in this study, we would encourage you to get the information about this study out to them for their possible participation.

For a long time, we have said that there are many Canadians, our estimates are about 1.4 million, suffering wide-ranging disabilities as a result of a brain injury including concussions, which is a brain injury. This is our community's opportunity to convey the challenges associated with brain injury to researchers so that they can convey the challenges to Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Public including politicians at all levels of government.



Are you or someone you know **Living with a **N**eurological **C**ondition?**

We would like to hear from you!

The LINC Study is a national study to learn about people living with a neurological condition and its impact on their everyday lives.

The LINC Study has 3 parts:

1. A snapshot in time: an in-depth survey of 3500 people living in Canada
2. A year in the life of 350 Canadians: a series of monthly conversations
3. Individual stories: a study of 18 people, their families and supporters

If you live in Canada and:

- Are 17 or older and live with a neurological condition OR
- Are a parent of a child (5-16 years) with a neurological condition

Visit our website, call or email us to see if you're eligible to complete the survey.

dal.ca/thelincstudy
902-494-1699 or 1-855-462-6828 (toll-free)
thelincstudy@dal.ca



Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada

Concussion Discussion!

On **Friday, April 27** we will be hosting an event with the goal of creating a Saskatchewan mandate on concussion in ALL sports. The event will take place in Regina, SK.

This event is headlined by our Brain Blitz keynote speaker, Ken Dryden, and will be attended by leaders in the SK sporting community and medical participants conversant in the issues.

Watch our website www.sbia.ca for more information.

To highlight the need for such a discussion, read the following excerpts from Ken Dryden:

"This is about head injuries, not fighting's place in hockey... This is about the outrageous damage that hits to the head are doing to lives and to a sport... The truly aggrieved is not the player or the team who receives the occasional unjust penalty. It's the player or family who has to live with years of an unfull life... Most important, however, it's time to think about our sports a different way. What would hockey look like if it were played in a "head smart" way? If the safety of the brain was central to the rules? What about football and other sports?"



Photo courtesy of Ken Dryden

"It is time for leaders in sports to acknowledge the seriousness of the problem and...to help create some ongoing structure that would encourage and generate public discussion, ideas, proposals, and action on head injuries in sports.... It could begin with an annual conference, hosted by a university, the first one in Canada, but in subsequent years in the U.S. and Europe.

The best brain scientists would be there to talk about what they know, and what they don't know. Players who have suffered brain injuries will provide their personal stories. League officials at different levels, in different sports, will talk about what steps they have taken, what's worked and what hasn't. The best coaches and best players, past and present, will be there to talk about what they've been trained to do and what they've done all their lives. Faced with an opponent, in this case a new "head-smart" set of rules and way of playing that keeps you from doing some things one way, what do you do? What new creative answer can you come up with? What can you do that is even better than what you did before? Each year, there will be new findings, new ideas, and fresh challenges to players, coaches, officials, scientists, and entrepreneurs who, in their DNA, feed on fresh challenges."

For more from Ken Dryden's articles at Grantland.com.

We would like to thank BHP Billiton for being our Platinum Sponsor for Brain Blitz 2011!



When BHP Billiton decides to commit to a cause, it's not just the matter of writing a check.

"We're not about just going to build a building and hoping that we can maybe fill it, we're very much about sustainable programs that deliver" said VP of External Affairs Chris Ryder. "Nobody just likes to write a check and have it be ineffective"

BHP Billiton might be the new corporation on the block, but they are committed to every Saskatchewan organization they support. With over 1000 people hired for their new Jansen project, Ryder wishes to build a community that is appealing to their new employees.



"Something that is important to us is community attractiveness. A community who cares is an attractive community; that is one of the great things about Saskatoon" said Ryder.

"We want our employees to be proud of the company, and I'll tell you, the company is proud of its employees"

The company has every reason to be proud of their employees. Case in point, BHP's *Paint Saskatchewan Pink* campaign which started as a modest idea an employee brought to Ryder because he had a relative battling breast cancer. Ryder and the rest of the BHP team got on board and sponsored the concept. With the activism of only 4-5 employees, the whole campaign managed to raise \$100 000 for breast cancer in just 2 days. The little idea of just one employee managed to benefit the greater community.

"We did get profile by promoting these events, but it's not about the profile. It's about a successful campaign" said Ryder

So where does SBIA fit in their plan to promote community sustainability?

"Brain Injury is something that affects many families" said Ryder.

Brain Injury is something that hits close to home for Ryder



Chris Ryder at Brain Blitz
Photo by: Maria Rigier

Sponsor Highlight: BHP Billiton

seeing as he has experienced a brain injury in his own family. When Chris's 16 year-old nephew was walking home from a Halloween party, he got run over by a car that was going too fast. The young boy experienced an induced coma and swelling to the brain. Ryder said he only survived because he was in such good physical shape.

"He was a Mountain biker [and] a star pitcher in baseball... He can never do the Mountain Biking again, the thing he was really good at and passionate about".

Ryder was concerned about the struggle his nephew faced after his accident. He realized how difficult it was for him to regain control of his life.

"I saw him seeking support and the right advice but didn't really know where to go and there didn't really seem like there was somewhere to go" said Ryder "The need [for help] became very apparent to me."

Ryder believes that SBIA works in BHP's concept of an attractive community because of its prevention goals towards a healthy and safer Saskatchewan.

"SBIA is an up and coming organization [with the]... ability to make a difference. People should take the opportunity to understand how many people are affected by brain injury, understand that there is not a lot out there for prevention, awareness or support. This association is one of the main ways people will understand it all".

That's not the only reason BHP decided to sponsor SBIA. Ryder commends the Brain Blitz organizers for having such positive vision and goals. "I thought, if this is what infects the team that is involved in this then we stand a pretty good chance if we are to invest our money... We saw the capability of the committee and an opportunity for us to get in at the ground level"

Ryder hopes that BHP's Platinum Sponsorship to the Brain Blitz... A Hawaiian Odyssey gives SBIA the opportunity to expand.

"Organizations like SBIA are the means by which we actually get the word out there".

Upcoming Events

Regina:

Chapter Support Group

- Every Thursday
- 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
- At the Wascana Rehab Centre (2180 - 23rd Avenue, Regina)

Contact Barb Butler at 789-6110

Drumming Circle Group

- Every Wednesday
- Time: 1:00pm – 2:30pm
- At St. James United Church (4506 Sherwood Drive)

Contact Shantelle Seibel at

sbia.events@sasktel.net or by phone at 949-8261



Prince Albert:

Bowling

- Every Friday
- At Minto Bowl
- 1:00 pm

Chapter Support Group

- Please contact Michele for dates, times, and locations

Michele can be reached at 765-6469 for chapter information or if you are in need of transportation.

Yorkton:

Lunch and Learn

- February 2, 16; March 1, 15, 30; April 5, 19
- 11:00am – 2:00pm

Saskatoon:

Walking Group

- At the Saskatoon Field House
- Thursday Nights at 6:30 – 8:00pm

Drumming Circle

- Tuesday Nights from 6:00 – 7:00pm
- At SARBI

Support Group Meetings

- Mondays – February 20 and March 19
- 7:00 – 8:00pm
- At Sherbrooke Community Centre

For more information please contact Lynne Back at 933-0179



Moose Jaw:

Support Group

- Meeting once per month
- At Pizza Hut at 5:00 pm
- Times and Location are subject to change, please contact Leslie Good at 693-0470 for times and location

Conexus Credit Union prides itself on being a responsible leader in community development. Interim Chief Executive Officer Ken Shaw understands the value of supporting organizations that provide the community with vibrant prosperity.

“Conexus maintains a long-standing commitment to improving the well being of our member communities” said Shaw. “Our Community Investment Program provides broad support to our member communities with an aim to influence positive social, economic and environmental change.”

Conexus was a Gold sponsor at last year’s Brain Blitz... A Hawaiian Odyssey in May. Shaw says that they are proud to support organizations that make a difference, and SBIA fits this blueprint perfectly.

“The Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association is also expanding its Awareness and Prevention programs to include campaigns focused on raising awareness about the effects of concussion through sports with a goal of preventing or mitigating brain injuries. This aligns with our Community Investment program’s priority area of Youth Development – as it is aimed at preventing brain injuries in young people who are involved in sports” said Shaw.

‘11 Brain Blitz Sponsor Feature: Conexus Credit Union

Shaw, and all the members Conexus, realize SBIA’s importance when it comes to promoting safe play in sports. “SBIA plays a vital role in education out youth about the effects of concussion through sports. This may help to reduce the number of concussions that occur through sporting activities.”

Above all, the Conexus team appreciates SBIA’s efforts to encourage a safer future in sports. They value their involvement in organizations that they can feel proud about. “Conexus Credit Union is the largest credit union in Saskatchewan and strives to be a leading, member-owned and controlled financial services provider. Community involvement is not only a philosophy, but also something the organization and staff take pride in” said Shaw.

Thanks again to Conexus for their sponsorship this past May!



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Connect With Us

In Case You Missed it ...

We at SBIA are very active online posting new articles almost every day! If you haven't been online here is a brief highlight of articles posted.

1. The Canadian Government has pledged \$1.5million to help reduce concussion in children.
2. The NHL has been plagued with numerous concussions after awareness of concussion has increased following the delayed return of Sidney Crosby still battling post-concussion symptoms
3. Over 300 former NFL players have sued the league for failure to disclose post-concussion risks and affects
4. The death of freestyle skier, Sarah Burke, has brought attention to the heightened risk of brain injury in extreme sports
5. New research has found a larger long-term effect of brain injury on children

Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association

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310 Main St. N.
Moose Jaw, SK S6H 3K1
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Social Networking:

Facebook: Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association

Twitter: SKBrainInjury