

BRINGING IT HOME

From the Chair

By Bill Stunt



It's a good time to stop and take a look at the success of our signature fundraising event, Steps for Life. We were able to exceed two very important objectives with this year's walk. Number one was to reach \$400,000 in donations. We hit that mark! We also wanted to reach more people and increase awareness, which was evident from the amount of media coverage of the event. For that

we can thank all our amazing volunteers, teams and family members who put so much effort into making the walk such a success. Our new online registration system really helped as well.

It is bittersweet to say goodbye to Gil Shoesmith, whose term on the board has been fulfilled. Gil was our chair from 2005–2012 and boy was he a good one! He put in countless hours working on behalf of our families. His sage advice, always delivered in his inimitable self-deprecating manner will be sorely missed. He may have to deal with a few emails from me. Hopefully he'll work pro-bono.

The new family member representative on the board will be Wally Power. Wally is living with a life-altering injury. Please welcome Wally to the board and congratulate him in person if you run into him at a Threads of Life event.

As always, there are family stories in every newsletter. It always takes me back when I realize that there is almost no occupation that doesn't pose risks for workers. A young woman from Nova Scotia lost both her boyfriend and his father in a tragic lobster fishing incident. Incredibly she's honouring them by undertaking a fundraising marathon run in Italy next year. You'll also read a young son's story about the impact of his father's death from a fall while painting the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor.

Enjoy the nice summer weather, but above all please be safe.

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The Young Man and the Sea

Lobster fishermen, the Blackburns, are remembered

Jennifer Bonin

Just imagine someone who is always smiling and can make you laugh with little effort. That was Gerry Blackburn. We met when he was 25 and I was 21. I was his first and only girlfriend, which is why he was so easy to train.

He had so many friends. He was one of those guys that no one could say anything bad about. He was in three weddings and was supposed to be in three more. When people reminisce about Gerry they always mention his smile – he and his dad both had a contagious smile. Lucky for him – this made it hard to get mad at him. I remember a time when we were hiking in the pouring rain. The rain was going sideways because the wind was blowing so hard, and I turned to look at Gerry and he had a great big smile on his face. He'd also do this unattractive and annoying belly-dance where he'd pull up his shirt and smack at his beer belly ... very unattractive, but memorable for those who were so lucky to have seen it.

In 2005, while Gerry was getting ready for the troll-fishing season, he heard a cat crying, so he asked me and one of his little cousins to try to find it. We dug around the lobster pots that were in the stage, listening to the cries and found a kitten with its head stuck in the netting. Gerry cut it out and I took it back to his house. When I went back to the stage, he told me there were still cries from another kitten, so we went looking again. We found two other kittens that were stuck inside a pot where one had died, likely from starvation. Gerry didn't have the heart to put them back out on the loose, so we kept one and gave the other to a neighbour. Against my will, he called her Peaches. I thought there was no way she would be a tough cat with a name like Peaches. She was his baby; he loved to play laser tag with her. I still have Peaches with me.



Gerry and his father, Gerald, were hard-working fishermen that worked off the shores of Lower Prospect, NS. May 27, 2008 was a rough day on the sea, as they would say "it's blowing a gale," yet they still went out. Not all fishermen went out that day and unfortunately for Gerry and his dad, it was their last. It was the best time of year for lobster and there were just four days left of the season. They were on their last pot

"on the outside," which means that it is in deeper water and much less sheltered from the weather and waves. In an area called Hell's Gates a rogue wave overtook their boat. Neither of them had personal floatation devices or knew how to swim. In my community it is very common for fishermen not to know how to swim, as I am sure it is in many other fishing communities. Did you know that according to WCB and the Department of Labour that fishing is the deadliest occupation in Nova Scotia?

Meanwhile that day, I was off-site taking training; I was working for the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia in the prevention department. I saw one of my good friends and co-workers, Tommy in the doorway asking me to come out, I thought to myself: "Oh no, what did I do wrong at work? Did I forget something?" At the same time I got a note from

the teacher asking me to call my best friend, Lindsay. That is when I knew it was much worse than a work problem. I kept asking if Lindsay was okay, and Tommy assured me she was. "Is my family okay? Is everything okay at work? What is it?" Then Tommy said that it was Gerry. He said there was a problem with the boat.

I broke down. I knew they wouldn't be okay, neither of them could swim. My Gerry wasn't coming back and I'd never see him again. The drive home was so long.

May 27, 2008 was a rough day on the sea, as they would say "it's blowing a gale," yet they still went out. It was their best time of year for lobster and there were just four days left of the lobster season.

When I arrived in Lower Prospect I was greeted by a house full of friends and family, all who lost two loved ones in a single day. I couldn't stay in the house, I had to get out, see if I could find him. My friend Lindsay and I went up the road to the shoreline where they may have drifted. I went climbing on the rocks, high heels and all. I wanted a movie-ending, I wanted to find him washed up on the shore; I'd give him CPR and he'd cough up some seaweed and water. We'd kiss and everything would be okay. I kept watching the water for his hand, waiting for it to pop up... maybe he was alive.

The Search and Rescue teams were actively searching the waters and shoreline, along with many local fishermen and a local kayaking business. Boats and helicopters were everywhere. It was so surreal. Gerry didn't deserve to die; he never did anything wrong. He was a good person. Why him? That night I slept at Gerry's parent's house in our lonely bed with my sister by my side.

When I woke up in the morning to the sound of helicopters, that's when I knew it wasn't a dream. He was gone. It wasn't until the next day that the first body was found, it was Gerald, followed later by Gerry. A police officer showed up at the house to let us know it was Gerald. I remember his Mom yelling: "No, not my baby," as Gerry was her youngest.

I can remember being at the funeral home, making arrangements for them. I had to pick out an outfit for Gerry to wear for the burial. I gave him his sweatpants, Ladies' Man T-shirt and hunting coat. He wouldn't have wanted to be dressed up. I put a picture of me and Peaches in his pocket. I remember going into the room to pick out a coffin ... thinking, I am not supposed to do this. I am 25! This is not how it's meant to be. We should be planning a wedding, not a funeral! I picked out a pewter-coloured coffin; it looked the manliest. I knew he would like it because once I opened it up I saw that the colour was called "Gunmetal." Gerry loved to hunt, so it was perfect, well, as perfect as a coffin can be for a 29-year-old. During the funeral home visitation I actually ran out of tears. I didn't know that could happen. They were buried at the Star of the Sea graveyard in Lower Prospect on June 1, 2008. From the Star of the Sea Church where their service was held, you could see the spot where the boat sank.

I bought Gerry some of those plant-feeder bulbs for his grave. They are the ones you fill with water and stick in your plant and they slowly let water out into the ground as the plant needs it. Only, I stuck them into his grave and filled them with Alexander Keith's, his favourite beer. Every time I'd visit his grave I'd take a beer for him and I'd sit on his grave and we'd have a good chat. I missed him so much, and it comforted me to go to his grave and talk to him, reminisce about the good times we had and the stories we shared. Every night I'd cry myself to sleep while hugged-up to one of Gerry's sweaters, and every morning I'd wake up with a pounding head-ache from crying the night before.

Five months after his death it was his 30th birthday. A few of our friends and I went to his grave for a few beers and a bottle of real French Champagne that Gerry and I had bought in Paris. It wasn't the 30th birthday that I had planned.

The first year after Gerry's death was the hardest for me. Not having my side-kick, my best friend, my Gerry. We had so much fun together because I could get him to do whatever I wanted – every woman's dream! When Gerry died I felt like I lost myself, including our future plans which included building a house, getting married and having little babies.

I want you to think about Gerry when you're doing your job. Make yourself aware of the hazards in your workplace, talk to fellow co-workers and supervisors. The sea was Gerry's workplace. I sometimes wonder if teaching Gerry to swim or making him wear an inflatable personal flotation device could have saved his life. I can't dwell on that because now it is too late.

In the end, safety was not present on May 27, 2008, and two amazing men died. In 2011, 27 people died on the job in Nova Scotia alone. One is too many. We need to make our own changes to keep ourselves and those around us safe.

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Running For Gerry

May 2013 will be the five year anniversary of Gerry and Gerald's passing. In their memory Jennifer and Cory MacDonald will be completing a 42 K marathon in Italy to raise \$15,000 for Threads of Life. She has started training and it will take a full year to get ready for the marathon. "I'm doing this marathon to help make people aware of the massive impact a lack of safety in the workplace has on not only the worker, but everyone around them and their families. Everyone hears the stats but it's easy to not understand that behind every stat is a devastated family. It's the least I can do for Gerry."



Jennifer Bonin and Gerry

If you would like to contribute to Jennifer's fundraising efforts and be part of her adventure, please visit www.threadsoflife.ca/donate/2013-marathon/ and her facebook page at [-www.facebook.com/inmemoryofgerry](https://www.facebook.com/inmemoryofgerry).

Afraid of Heights

A painter falls into the Detroit River from the Ambassador Bridge

— *Josh Rene* —

My dad Jamie Barker was afraid of heights, but he had a family of five step-children and me to support so he went to work every day even though it meant he had to climb heights. He was a painter for the Harrison Muir company of Toronto and he was painting the Canada-US Ambassador Bridge for a joint company called Manz Harrison Muir Inc.

November 14, 2000 - though it may seem cliché for me to say this - it's the day that my life changed forever. This is the day I lost my dad to a horrible workplace fatality, a death that could have been prevented. Nothing will ever truly fill the emptiness in my heart that I now carry around with me.

I was 10 when it happened. I remember it was a school day. I had just woken up and made my way downstairs for breakfast. That is when my mother sat me down and broke the news to me. "Josh," she said. "There has been an accident where your dad works and he's missing." I didn't know my dad had gone missing the day before. This was just the beginning of five long months of conflicting emotion and media frenzy.

So what happened? My father and nine other workers were on a scaffold painting the Canadian side of the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor when suddenly at 4:00 p.m. during a traverse procedure, the scaffolding collapsed from under their feet. My father and two other workers fell into the river below. Several workers were saved from falling by their fall arrest systems and they were rescued. The two others who had gone into the frigid waters were rescued by boat. My father was never seen alive again.

It took the authorities hours before they realized that my father was missing; many people claimed to have seen my father pulling himself onto the shore and safely into the back of an ambulance. None of these were true, unfortunately, because my father never surfaced at all.

My family waited by the river day in and day out, sometimes taking shelter from the cold in a Transit Windsor bus. We all hoped, and prayed that my father's body would be found. Piece after piece of scaffolding was removed from the riverbed slowly

and carefully making sure that my father's body was not tangled in the wreckage. After weeks of exhausting searches, the decision was finally made to call off the search for my father.

His body was found five months later by a fisherman several miles down in the Detroit River on April 6, 2001, still clad in his white painter coveralls, hard hat and his harness.

Later on during the following inquest, engineering experts were brought in to testify. According to newspaper coverage, there seemed to be a number of contributing factors in my dad's death. One of the Tirfors (four ratchet-like devices that move the platform horizontally) was filled with black sand so the platform couldn't move until it was emptied after it collapsed. The engineer said that the sand material was typical when sandblasting and the bridge was sandblasted daily during repainting. Since one Tirfor wasn't working, it put undue stress on the other three. The wire cables suspending the platform fractured "due to overload conditions." Although it is only one contributing factor it was believed to be the one that started the tragic chain of events.

My father was wearing a harness like the other workers but the shock absorber which releases when pressure is applied, was never deployed. Gary Jones, the health and safety inspector for the Ministry of Labour said during his testimony that the harness was intact. He said either pressure was never applied, the line was cut, or it was not hooked on to the safety line.

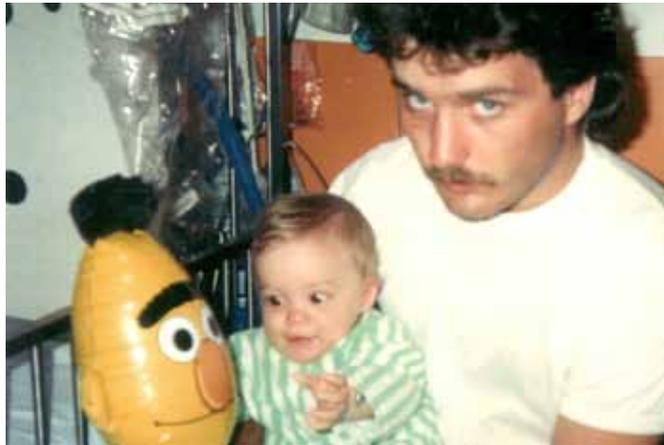
My dad was only 28 when he died; five years older than me now.

At the coroner's inquest, my aunt read the following impact statement:

"Our family would like to thank the coroners for allowing us to have a voice after almost four

years of silence. Our family would also like to thank the divers and the Windsor police for their patience, understanding, and risks on their own lives through the two-week search for Jamie.

We feel that there should be a better system for keeping a controlled list of the names of workers on a list; Jamie was



Josh Rene & Jamie Barker

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accounted for on four different occasions. At one point, he was seen pulling himself out of the water and on to the shore.

I would like everyone in this room to stop and think for a moment as if this was their own child or family member. I would also like you to picture how you would feel to have this person floating in the Detroit River for 151 days, not being able to eat or sleep because the nightmares never end. If this is not bad enough imagine how you would feel to be told that if he was tangled amongst the wreckage that he would be left hanging there dead until the coroner arrived; and for the news stations to take pictures of our family and the world to see every time a TV was turned on or a newspaper was picked up.

When trying to make funeral arrangements our family decided to have Jamie buried in his favorite hockey jersey; this had his name on the back and number 90 on the sleeve for the year his son Joshua was born. The day after the arrangements were made Joshua called and wanted to know if he could have his dad's jersey. His grandfather then had to go out and have an identical shirt made for him so that he and his father would have the same shirt forever.

When Jamie was finally found people told our family we could now have closure but for our family there is none. We buried a coffin with Jamie, whose clothes could not even be put on his body. After the accident our family went through a two-week



search with no answers to this day; five months for Jamie to be found, eleven and a half months for the ministry to file charges, a year of court dates being remanded over and over only for the charges to be dropped.

During this wait Jamie's brother remains always angry, his sister Ashley went to counselling for a year, and I go back onto medication every time I have to relive this.

Jamie's son Joshua to this day does not understand why his father had to die. All we can do for him is to try and always make him feel he still has a family. Jamie's father Richard has never come to terms with his death. His mother Wendy still wakes up with nightmares, has not been able to look at Jamie's pictures since he died and has never been able to go to his gravesite.

Our family is not the first family that has had to live through this type of tragedy, but hope we will be the last. This has not only affected our lives but also the lives of the seven other painters who worked closely with Jamie and their families.

While these men may not be doctors, lawyers, or engineers they do not deserve to die trying to support their families. If nothing else comes from this inquest, we hope there will be laws put into place that will hold those involved in the construction and safety of these projects accountable for their mistakes and neglect. What our family asks is that there be stricter rules and safety regulations to be put into place."

In the end the coroner made 50 recommendations to improve the safety of people working on the bridge. It was too late for my dad though.

The loss of my father at 10 had a huge impact on my life. I think what hurts me the most is knowing that my son and daughter will never know their grandfather the way I did: the

banana splits, the wrestling on the back porch, and the hide and seek in the dark. He was a big kid and everyone knew it. That's what everyone loved about my father.

I first heard about Threads of Life from the Steps for Life walk in Windsor. Shortly after that I decided to take the Speaker Bureau training because I want to speak out about what happened. Back then, I couldn't do much but when I heard about the latest worker fatality from the bridge, I knew I needed to step up. If through my speaking I can save just one person's life through awareness, my father didn't die in vain.

I participated in my first Steps for Life walk in Hamilton. At the time I was not fully aware of Threads but I knew that I was walking for a much bigger picture. Although the exact details of how much was raised, or the amount of people in attendance is foggy to me now, I am still left with a lasting impression of love through loss.

Threads of Life has done so much for my family, and for that we are forever grateful.

I encourage workers to ask questions at work; be aware! Please, from my family to yours, make sure that when you go to work, you come home to your family each night, you should never have to kiss your loved one goodbye like it's the last time you'll ever see them.

*My dad was only 28 when he died;
five years older than me now.*

Josh Speaks out at the Steps for Life walk in Windsor



"Today we remember those we've lost, and those we still hold dear in our hearts. Though it may seem like an impossible task, together as one we can put an end to needless suffering. Let's make workplace safety number one priority not just for today but for all days to come. So I challenge

everyone today, with every step you take to remember the loved ones that we walk for."

Fundraising Goal Reached: **\$400,000!**



Steps for Life walks were an unparalleled success, reaching our fundraising goal of \$400,000! The walk was held in most communities on Sunday May 6th, as part of the launch of North American Occupational Safety and Health Week. More than 30 communities joined the fun. Our new online registration system saw record levels of pre-registrations and the personal and team fundraising thermometers on their web pages were a clear hit!

The Steps for Life walks are a fun way to help in a worthy cause. Although the walks help bring people together for a fun day, it is always underscored by the seriousness of the cause. There is hope for lives saved but an acknowledgement of those lost as well. The memory lanes signs featured at each walk remind us of why we

walk and why it's so important to reduce and ultimately eliminate workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

Media coverage of the event is a vital part of the walk. After the Steps for Life media coverage we received a spike in phone calls as more people found out about Threads of Life. As a small charity without an advertising budget, this sort of coverage is invaluable. Our family spokespeople put a face to the numbers and let other Canadians know that we are here to help.

We thank our national sponsors, walkers, community chairs, community sponsors, volunteers, donors and all those who gave their time and effort to help families who have experienced a workplace tragedy. If you would like to help out next year as a volunteer please let us know. See you next May!

CORPORATE CHALLENGER WINNERS



Alta-Fab Structures Ltd.

This year for the first time we introduced a new category of team entry: Corporate Challengers. Each team member committed to raising \$100 and to challenge other teams to the fundraising finish line. The top three fundraising champs are listed below. Alta-Fab Structures successfully challenged another Alta-Fab team to the finish line. The Honourable mention category is not based on finances but on team spirit, innovation or other unique distinction. Aecon arrived on-site with red hats, uniforms and lots of enthusiasm! Watch for the winning Corporate Challenger profiles in subsequent newsletter editions.

Thanks to all our Corporate Challengers who participated! If your company thinks they have the right stuff to be the top Corporate Challenger, please join us for the 2013 Corporate Challenger program.

Congratulations to our 2012 Corporate Challenger Winners

1st place

Alta-Fab Structures Ltd.
(Edmonton)

2nd place

Alta-Fab Structures Ltd.
(Edmonton)

3rd place

Sass team from Watson Gloves
(Fort McMurray)

Honourable Mention

Aecon (Toronto)

Visit www.stepsforlife.ca for photos of the community events.

NATIONAL SPONSORS

A special thank you to our national sponsors who helped profile the walk and our cause at a national level.



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COMMUNITY SPONSORS

Community sponsors play an integral role in mobilizing the community to take part in our walks across Canada. Thank you for supporting the leaders in your community and our families.

CHAMPION



LEADER

- BFI Canada
- Brandt Tractor Limited
- Canadian Fertilizers Limited
- CCL Containers Inc.
- Claybar Contracting Inc.
- Cratex Industries
- CRCS Disaster Kleenup
- CSSE Hamilton District Chapter
- Department of Labour and Advanced Education – Government of Nova Scotia
- Enform
- Halifax Stanfield International Airport
- Haris Rebar
- Heritage Gas
- Kubota Metal Corp.
- Morguard Investments Ltd.
- Old Castle Building Envelope Inc.

FUN HIGHLIGHTS

- Edmonton raised more than \$53,000!
- Lethbridge can claim the most walkers with 647 participants, including a Maple Leaf Pork team that wore piggy noses.
- Fort McMurray held its first walk and surpassed its goal of 10,000 by raising \$16,072.
- Medicine Hat got signage for the city buses donated!
- Michaela Clarke, local recording artist (country and western singer) released a new song, “Angel Wings” at the Niton Junction walk. Her song was inspired by the true stories in *Forget Me Not – Canadian Stories of Workplace*

Tragedy from the Families’ Perspective.

- the Ontario Workplace Safety & Insurance Board’s Talent Acquisition Department raised \$741.38 in two hours by selling Steps for Life ribbons in exchange for a monetary donation.
- the Mayor of Timmins, Tom Laughren, declared May 6th to officially be known as Steps for Life day.
- Ottawa raised more than \$35,000. Their walk route encompassed the sites of local workplace tragedies.
- WCB PEI paid the registration fees for employees and their families in



CannAmm employees in North Bay donated \$5.00 each in exchange for a dress down day. CannAmm matched all proceeds.

- Parkland Regional Safety Committee
- Pattison Sign Group
- PSAC Atlantic
- Rokstad Power Corporation
- Suncor Energy
- WCB Manitoba
- WCB PEI
- WHSCC (Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission) NL
- WorkSafe BC

addition to its \$1,500 sponsorship.

- The City of Charlottetown launched their North American Occupational Safety and Health week (NAOSH) with the walk. Participants walked to City Hall to raise the flag as part of their ceremonies.
- Cavendish Farms challenged McCain Foods in PEI’s battle of the French fries.
- the WCB offices in Nova Scotia challenged each other to raise money for the Halifax walk.

“We completed our first ever “Steps for Life” walk at 14 Wing Greenwood. We are a small group of 21 employees amongst a much larger group of Canadian Forces and DND personnel. We raised \$877.00 to go towards the May 6, 2012 larger event at Smiley Park, Nova Scotia. With our yellow shirts we trekked through 14 Wing Greenwood and drew a lot of attention.”

–Dan Praught, CRSP, Coordinator, Health & Safety, Defence Construction Canada

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Ron Rauhut

Sarah Wheelan, Communications Coordinator



2011 Volunteer of the Year, Ron Rauhut, at the Western Canada Family Forum in Edmonton in October, 2011.

From the moment he discovered Threads of Life, Ron knew he wanted to be involved. After enquiring about becoming a member of the national Speakers Bureau in early 2010, he attended the Speakers Bureau training two weeks later in Ontario. As the first Albertan to join the Speakers Bureau, Ron blazed his first trail with Threads of Life – and he wasn't stopping there.

In May 2010, Ron worked tirelessly to bring Steps for Life to Edmonton. The following year, he organized a Steps for Life walk in his hometown of Niton Junction – a village roughly 150 km west of Edmonton. “It may be a small town, but everyone’s going to be there.” He invited and convinced Alberta’s Minister of Employment and Immigration, Thomas Lukaszuk, and Hon. George Vanderburg, Minister of Seniors and MLA for his home riding of Whitecourt-St. Anne to participate.

He also approached PCL Constructors Inc. about becoming a national Steps for Life sponsor. PCL has now been a national sponsor for the past two years, and has affirmed their continued support until 2016.

This year, Ron welcomed Hon. Rob Merrifield, MP-Yellowhead, as well as an up and coming country and western singer, Michaela Clarke. She performed her new song, “Angel Wings” inspired by the stories in *Forget Me Not – Canadian Stories of*

Workplace Tragedy from the Families’ Perspective, Marlene Luca, his sister, was one of the 21 families featured in the book.

Over the past two years, Ron has continued to share his own story, and to explain the tragic circumstances that led to the death of Marlene, a highway maintenance worker in nearby Whitecourt. What does the Niton Junction walk demonstrate? Ron says, “That a small town – with less than 200 people – can do big things!” He explains that the Edmonton walk was too far for many of Marlene’s friends and co-workers to travel to participate in that walk. “This is where Marlene’s roots are embedded. She went to school from grades 1 to 12 right across the street from where we hold Steps for Life.”

In 2011, Ron Rauhut was selected as Threads of Life’s Volunteer of the Year for his dedication and leadership in raising community awareness about workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths. As a volunteer, he has truly demonstrated “the power of one.”

FAMILY SUPPORT

The 5 Myths of Grief

Volunteer Family Guide Training

Kate Kennington

MYTH 1: Grief and mourning are the same thing.

MYTH 2: There is a predictable and orderly progression to the experience of grief.

MYTH 3: It is best to move away from grief and mourning than toward it.

MYTH 4: Tears expressing grief are only a sign of weakness.

MYTH 5: The goal is to “get over” your grief.

The Volunteer Family Guides (VFGs) are an integral part of the Family Support Program. Our unique program of one-on-one peer support was the first of its kind in the world. Volunteers partake in an intense training over several days to develop the knowledge and skills to be able to offer support to other families. Ongoing training is held for the VFGs through monthly teleconferences. Over the last few months of a very busy spring, we have been fortunate to have had several guest facilitators, and in May, Karen Simmonds, Grief Educator and Counsellor, offered the topic of the social aspects of grief.

The subject resonated with the VFGs as they understood only too well the myths of grief and mourning. All remembered very

clearly, those well-meaning family and friends who offered placating words that were meant to be comforting. However, phrases such as “He’s in a better place now” and “Tears won’t bring her back” do not provide comfort and certainly not an understanding of what a family impacted by tragedy has experienced.

The training teleconference once again reaffirmed to the VFGs what they already know because they have “been there,” “get it” and are now willing and able to provide that listening ear to a family in need. As one VFG said, sometimes the only response to the innocent question of “How are you?” is a simple and honest “I am.” All we can offer to others is our honesty and the willingness to do our best to walk alongside them as they journey from victim to survivor.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

WELCOME NEW SPEAKERS!

In February we welcomed 10 new volunteers into the Speakers Bureau. These volunteers showed their courage and compassion to share their personal story with a strong call to action to help others create safer workplaces.



Carol Brisseau's husband Teddy died of bladder cancer from exposure to formaldehyde and other chemicals while working as a carpenter.



Shane Fehr lost his step-brother Cody Davis who was working in the interior of Alberta. He was killed when a vacuum truck door at the rear closed on him.



Ryan Norley lost his dad and Lisa her husband Sean when a piece of landscaping machinery fell on him and crushed him. Ryan, at 14, is the youngest member of the Speakers Bureau.



Shannon Payne's husband Craig died when his logging truck was hit by another logging truck on what should have been a single lane road. Craig was 36. See Shannon's story in the spring 2012 edition of *Threads*.



Patty Penny lost her son Luke on May 19, 2010. He was working on waterproofing a garage foundation of a new building. When he was working in the trench, the garage foundation wall burst out from the bottom killing him instantly. He was 27.



Rachel Rauhut's Aunt Marlene was killed on a highway in Alberta while working as a highway maintenance worker on Jan 30, 2008.



Josh Rene was just ten years old when his dad Jamie died at work. He was painting the Ambassador Bridge when the scaffold collapsed, sending three of the painters into the Detroit River. Jamie was 28. See page four for Josh's story.



Shelby Sandford was very close to her step-brother Jim Sandford who died on March 30, 2005. Jim was a licensed elevator mechanic and died when an elevator platform rammed into the top of the elevator shaft he was working on. He was 30 years old.



Annette Travis misses her dad Mickey Miles. He died on September 25, 2006. Mickey, who loved his job as a bricklayer, fell off a scaffold which did not have a guard rail.



Fran Speaks at the NL and Labrador Construction Safety Association Conference

In February Fran De Filippis was the guest speaker for the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association's annual conference in St. John's. Says Jackie, CEO, Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association, "In lieu of 'gifts' to our speakers at the conference, we have made a donation to *Threads of Life*. In addition, we provided each speaker with a copy of *Forget Me Not – Canadian Stories of Workplace Tragedy from the Families' Perspective*. Paul Davis, our Minister Responsible for the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission stayed for her presentation and was quite moved."

Fran De Filippis with the Hon. Paul Davis, Minister Responsible for the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission of NL at the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association's conference.

PARTNERSHIPS

CannAmm 1st Conference a Success

CannAmm Occupational Testing Services hosted a safety conference in Edmonton on April 25th. The conference had a good representation from a variety of different industries including logging, construction, oil and gas and food services. Shirley Hickman was the keynote speaker and gave a moving speech to the attendees about her own experience with a workplace tragedy. Peter Deines, CannAmm's Vice President, Sales & Marketing presented a cheque for \$5,000 to Shirley. CannAmm's commitment to spreading the word about the importance of workplace safety is a key example of how corporate partnership aligns with the important work of Threads of Life.

CSSE

NAOSH (North American Occupational Safety and Health) Week is organized by members of the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering (CSSE) and is the leading health, safety and environmental organization for professionals in Canada. The CSSE works with industry, governmental agencies, and other safety organizations to promote a greater awareness of health, safety, and environmental issues in workplaces and communities across the nation and around the world.

CSSE through their membership provides strong support to Threads of Life by promoting the importance of workplace safety and through the active involvement in their local Steps for Life Committee. Many of the Charity of Choice events organized for Threads of Life are through dedicated CSSE members. Thank you CSSE!

LCBO

For the second year, the LCBO (Liquor Control Board of Ontario) collected change at its checkout counters at more than 620 LCBO stores across Ontario for Threads of Life. The campaign ran from April 29 to May 26. The money raised will be used to support programs and services at Threads of Life. In 2011, the LCBO donation boxes collected more than \$7,800 for Threads of Life. A big thanks to LCBO and of course those who contributed to the coin boxes. Every dollar counts!

NEWS AND EVENTS

Wally Power joins our Board of Directors



We are pleased to welcome our newest member to the Threads of Life Board of Directors. Wally Power will join as a family member representative. Wally's right arm was amputated when he experienced a traumatic workplace injury when he was working in a paper mill in the 1960s.

Wally brings a wealth of knowledge to the board. He was a member of the Nova Scotia WCB Board of Directors as a worker representative for seven years.

Wally has been the past chair of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Workers' Compensation Committee, the past chair of the Workers Compensation Committee Paperworkers Union Local 972 for more than 25 years as well as other appointments. Wally has been a leader in his community for many years as a member of the Town of Hawkesbury Waterfront Committee, the Waterfront Development Society, the East Novability Society for People with Disabilities' Board of Directors, the Port Hawkesbury Credit Union Board of Directors and other institutions.

"I look forward to participating as a board member for Threads of Life," says Wally. "This is a charity that does good things so I'm honoured to be here."

Creative Sentencing Award

On May 2010 at the Western Stevedoring's Lynnterm dock terminal, Kevin Lowes, a heavy-duty mechanic with 16 years of experience on the dock, drove a large forklift on to a barge ramp, carrying a welding unit. The forklift and its load were too heavy for the ramp, causing the forklift to plunge into the water. Lowes lifeless body was recovered by the Canadian Coast Guard from inside the cabin of the forklift, upside down in 25 feet of water.

Lowes, a 44-year-old father, had worked on the dock as a heavy-duty mechanic for 16 years, including six as a regular employee of the company. He had a reputation as an "experienced, smart and safe worker," prior to the accident, said Crown Prosecutor John Cliffe.

Lowes had been asked to repair a metal chain at the end of the barge ramp with Briglio's help. A 40-year-old operating manual set out load limits for the ramp, including restrictions against any equipment over 10,000 pounds of gross vehicle weight being allowed on the ramp unless it was set down on a barge at the outer end. But no one consulted the manual before going ahead with the work. There were also no signs posted on the barge ramp warning of the load limits.

An engineering company that investigated the accident found the barge ramp was overloaded by anywhere from 45 to 200 per cent at the time of the accident.

In February, Lowe's employer, Western Stevedoring was fined \$145,000 after pleading guilty to violating two sections of the Canadian Labour Code. It failed to ensure Lowes was made aware of every safety hazard in the area where he worked and addressing the unique hazards relating to the use of the barge ramp. The company officials expressed remorse.

Threads of Life was awarded \$15,000 from the sentencing fine.

Charity of choice

Little Ducks in a Row

The beauty of ingenuity is that a germ of an idea can create true inspiration. Deanna Hamilton lost her father Ronnie Beck when he was crushed between two rail cars while working for CN. Deanna, who operates a day care centre called the Learning Tree, rounded up her young charges and organized a fundraising mini-walk. The teachers and little ones, wearing their yellow Steps for Life T-shirts, walked around the trails next to the day care. This one idea raised \$1,000 for Threads of Life!

BC Transit Celebration

BC Transit became the first Crown Corporation to earn the Certificate of Recognition from WorkSafe BC. In honour of this milestone and the commitment each employee brings to it, BC held a celebratory fundraising lunch and donated the funds to Threads of Life. Thank you BC Transit.

JNE Welding BBQ

JNE Welding in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan hosted their annual BBQ in support of Threads of Life as part of their NAOSH Week activities. Bob Ocrane, Chair of the Northern Lights CSSE Chapter and JNE Welding's Health & Safety Manager, organized this year's event, in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association. This is the third year that Bob has organized the event. This year, more than 250 people attended the event with all proceeds being donated to Threads of Life.

2012 Summer Golf Tournaments

Jim Sandford Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament: June 23

The International Union of Elevator Constructors will present the inaugural Jim Sandford Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament. The tournament will be held at the Tamarack Ridge Golf Club, ten minutes east of London, on Saturday, June 23rd. Please call 905-383-9266 or email local90entertainment@hotmail.ca for more information about next year's golf tournament.

Levitt-Safety Charitable Golf Tournament: August 10

Levitt-Safety Charitable Golf Tournament will be held at the Lionhead Golf & Country Club in Brampton, Ontario. The cost of the golf tournament is \$250.00 with all proceeds going to support Threads of Life. To register please go to www.TOLgolf.com.

OHCOW Golf Tournament: September 12

The Links 'Fore' Life Golf Tournament will be held at the Ambassador Golf Club in Windsor, Ontario. Tickets are \$150.00 with net proceeds going to Threads of Life. The registration deadline is August 31, 2012. This is an extremely popular event, so to avoid disappointment please register today.

For more information on these golf tournaments please contact Marissa Wolicki at mwolicki@threadsoflife.ca



Pennies for Big Change!

The federal government announced in the recent federal budget that the Royal Canadian Mint will stop producing pennies. As Finance Minister Jim Flaherty noted, Canadians should “Free your pennies from their prisons at home and donate them to charity.”

We want your pennies! Threads of Life is a registered Canadian charity looking for your loose change. Just add our penny campaign label (by downloading it from www.threadsoflife.ca) to a jar at your workplace and watch those pennies add up!

Our campaign starts in July. Your co-workers, employees and clients can drop their spare change into your donation jars. Their pennies will help provide support to those families who have experienced a workplace fatality, life-altering injury or occupational disease with much needed family support programs and services. These programs have changed many lives for the better.

Contact John McCabe at atjmccabe@threadsoflife.ca if you'd like information about how you can hold the Pennies Campaign in your workplace, school or community.

Every cent adds up to big changes with your help!



Threads of Life is a registered charity dedicated to supporting families along their journey of healing who have suffered from a workplace fatality, life-altering illness or occupational disease. Threads of Life is the **Charity of Choice** for many workplace health and safety events. Charitable organization business #87524 8908 RR0001.

MISSION

Our mission is to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

VISION

Threads of Life will lead and inspire a culture shift, as a result of which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.

2012 Upcoming Events

Central Canada Family Forum

September 28–30, 2012
Kempfenfelt Conference Centre, ON

Western Family Forum

October 26–28, 2012
Sheraton Cavalier Calgary Hotel,
Calgary, AB

Volunteer Family Guide Training

February 2013
Please inquire if you are interested
in taking training.

Speaker Bureau Training: 2013

Please inquire if you are interested
in taking the training.

Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy

Sunday May 5*, 2013
*in most communities.

Jennifer Bonin's 2013 42K Fundraising Marathon in Italy

Please check the website for
event updates or give us a call.

Contributions

Please send your story, poems, photos or drawings to sbutyn@threadsoflife.ca.

Si vous préférez recevoir cette information en français, s'il vous plaît, contactez-nous.

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VALUES

We believe that:

Caring: Caring helps and heals.

Listening: Listening can ease pain and suffering.

Sharing: Sharing our personal losses will lead to healing and preventing future devastating work-related losses.

Respect: Personal experiences of loss and grief need to be honoured and respected.

Health: Health and safety begins in our heads, hearts and hands, in everyday actions.

Passion: Passionate individuals can change the world.

HOW TO REACH US

Toll-free: 1-888-567-9490

Fax: 1-519-685-1104

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