

FALL BRINGS CHANGE

From the Chair

By Bill Stunt



Fall for many means a return to busy schedules, including Threads of Life. Our regional Family Forums will take place on September 28–30 in Barrie and in Calgary on October 26–28.

Yet fundraising continues year round. The LCBO generously gave us access to their coin box program in April and May; we received more than \$10,000 from LCBO customers, a

significant increase over last year's donations. We also received more than \$30,000 from the inaugural Levitt Golf Tournament this summer. We're waiting to see the results of the annual OHCOG golf tournament in September. We're grateful that these organizations and participants recognize the value of the services we provide to our family members with their generous contributions.

Indeed more and more companies are recognizing our work, donating the proceeds of events like barbeques, Christmas dinners and other special events. Details of some of those events are included inside.

Jennifer Bonin, a family member and Speakers Bureau volunteer is seeking pledges to sponsor a marathon run through Italy next May. We've got a special penny campaign happening right now as well. Take a look at the back page to see how you can turn the poor unloved penny into a meaningful sum of money for Threads of Life.

As always in our newsletter we have family stories. This month we'll hear the heart-wrenching details of how two separate

workplace fatalities changed the lives of a wife and a sister forever. Both of these stories underline how even the most safety-minded individuals can be at the risk of catastrophic injury when standard health and safety practices are not in place.

Finally, as we head towards Thanksgiving it is appropriate for us as an organization to give thanks for the years of terrific service we have enjoyed from Suzan Butyn, our Program Manager of Marketing & Communications. I've witnessed up close and personal just what a pivotal person Suzan has been for this organization. It's with a mixture of sadness for us and joy for Suzan as we say goodbye and wish her all the best as she sets off to pursue her life's passion, to become a Veterinary Technician and care for animals. You can read more about it how she came to this decision in her "swan song."

We are most fortunate to welcome Susan Haldane, our new Program Manager of Marketing & Communications. If you see her, please say hello.

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A Widow's Story

Pete Szabo, part of a road crew, was electrocuted on the job

Jo-Anne Szabo

This past July, a six year anniversary came and went. It was not a wedding anniversary, but the anniversary of the death of my husband Pete.

Pete grew up in small town named Petrolia. He lived with his parents, a twin brother and one sister. He dabbled in different jobs throughout his twenties and then went back to school to specialize in welding, but the job market was slow at that time so he didn't pursue that career.

He eventually got a job with the road department in Lambton County.

I met him in 1980 and we were married three years later. We were blessed to have three sons together: Brian in 1985, Jamie in 1988 followed by Scott in 1991. He was a great father to all of them.

We also had a dog named Hailey: I had to have another female in the house with all those males! We got our puppy from the humane society when she was six weeks old. Pete didn't know anything about it. I took two of my sons to the humane society and we saw a litter of puppies and could not resist bringing one home. Pete was shocked at first, because we never had a dog before, but he fell in love with Hailey quickly and we certainly enjoyed taking her for walks together.

The boys were all involved in soccer, hockey, basketball and football. We didn't have a lot of extra money, but Pete worked hard and always made sure we could put our boys in the sports that they loved. I think Pete's favourite sport was hockey, playing it, watching it on TV and watching his sons play. He really enjoyed taking the boys to hockey tournaments and travelling with them and the other fathers. He was very proud of his sons. As they grew older we often talked about what we would do after they moved out of the house and our plans for the future. Pete looked forward to doing odd welding jobs out of his garage and we looked forward to taking some trips together, but that would never come to pass.



Pete and Jo-Anne enjoy a moment

On July 21, 2006 on a beautiful sunny day, as I stepped out of the shower that morning little did I know my life would be changed forever. My son called up to me that someone in a red truck was in the driveway. I thought it was Pete, forgetting his keys but I was wrong.

A supervisor from his workplace was sent to pick me up because there had been an "incident" at work that involved Pete. All he told me was that Pete had come in contact with electrical wires and he was transported

to the hospital in Petrolia, a town nearby. We lived in Sarnia so it was a 30-minute drive to the Petrolia hospital. The supervisor asked me if he could call Pete's mother, siblings or anyone else but I was shaking so bad I couldn't remember anyone's phone number.

As we were driving and I gazed out the window I imagined what electrocution could do: paralyze parts of his body, maybe he couldn't speak, but nothing prepared me for what I faced at the hospital.

Brian was home at the time so he came with us to what seemed to be the longest ride of my life. As we were driving and I gazed out the window I imagined what electrocution could do: paralyze parts of his body, maybe he could not speak, but nothing prepared me for what I faced at the hospital. As I

walked into the hospital two doctors were standing in the emergency department waiting for us and they said, "I'm sorry, your husband didn't make it" or something like that; I'm not really sure what they said because that day was quite a blur for me. He was just 48 years old.

Brian and I couldn't believe he was gone in an instant – he left for work that morning and was not coming home again. The night before Brian was sitting with his dad, enjoying a beer with him and watching the hockey game and now he was gone. I had just said goodbye to him in the morning and now I was at the hospital saying goodbye forever.

I am so thankful that I got to see and touch Pete one last time as he lay in the hospital looking peaceful, as there were no outer signs of the electrocution. He looked like he was sleeping. As things started to sink in the task of letting relatives know began. All we could do was wait for each family member to arrive at the hospital and say their

goodbyes. The worst time for me was waiting for my two other sons to get to the hospital; it seemed like forever. How was I going to tell them that their dad was gone forever? As they walked into the emergency department they both broke down when they saw me and realized something was terribly wrong.

When we arrived home all I wanted to do was hide in my room and try to understand what had just happened, that I had left Pete at the hospital and I would never see him again, but many people had already arrived and the flowers and food were also starting to come. Funeral preparations were underway. There is no time to truly grieve then because your life is consumed by the many decisions that need to be made: the funeral, burial sites, church, banks, wills, etc. I remember that I needed to see and touch him again even though it meant he was at the funeral home.

A representative from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) was sent from Toronto and she arrived a couple of hours after Pete had died. She sat down with my sisters and I and explained how the WSIB would help our family because Pete had died at work. It was overwhelming to take in all that she had told us that day. My sisters and family were my strength that day as they took over and made the arrangements at the funeral home, the church, organized the food, the visitations, etc.

As the months passed we found out just how Pete was electrocuted at work. He worked for the County of Lambton in the Roads Department and that morning he was on a crew that was re-shouldering a piece of road. Pete was on a machine called a Midland Spreader (shouldering machine). In front of him was a dump truck and behind him was a grader. As work progressed that morning the dump truck in front of Pete raised his bucket to release the material he was dumping on the road. Then Pete's machine would control the amount of material that was released from the hopper and the grader operator would smooth out the material. When the dump truck driver raised his bucket no one on the crew knew he had touched the overhead wire and because all three machines were connected, when Pete stepped off his piece of equipment and touched the ground, he was electrocuted. Once the dump truck's bucket was lowered from the wire and there was no longer a threat of electrocution, they all ran to Pete's side. Many of his co-workers tried to revive him at the scene and got a few breaths

but I think he died before the ambulance got there.

Pete was very safety conscious and would not knowingly put himself in a dangerous situation.

After a year-long investigation by the Ministry of Labour the County of Lambton was charged and fined with "failing to provide a signaler", the person whose sole purpose was to watch for overhead wires and advise the road crew when they were approaching an overhead wire. There was no signaler working that day. Many safety precautions were overlooked but we didn't find out

about all of them until two years later at the Coroner's Inquest.

When the dump truck driver raised his bucket no one on the crew knew he had touched the overhead wire and because all three machines were connected, when Pete stepped off his piece of equipment and touched the ground, he was electrocuted.



Pete with sons Brian, Scott and Jamie, with Jo-Anne.

We went through a coroner's inquest, because the fatality was on a construction site. It was a hard week to go through, reliving that day over and over again.

On day one of the inquest, two of my sons came to the inquest with me, but before it started they had to leave as they were overwhelmed with grief. My sister stayed with me throughout the whole inquest

and many family and friends were also there. Many positive things came out of the inquest. The jury made 11 recommendations to help provide a safer work environment while doing road work, but it is too late for my husband Pete. His death was ruled accidental, but it was preventable. There were known safety issues that cost him his life.

I am so thankful for Threads of Life. I attended their Family Forum for three years and found a place to find support and share my story of the loss of my husband. Also I give thanks to my Volunteer Family Guide Liz who was always there when I needed to talk.

It's been six years now since Pete died and although life for my sons and I have moved forward, there is so much that he has missed: like my sons' graduation from college and the birth of our grandson Lucas and many more events in our lives. As my sons move into adulthood, they will miss their father with all the new challenges they will face in life, but I know their father will be looking out for them. Pete, a caring, giving person who would do anything for his family and friends left us too soon. We miss him every day and he will be in all of our hearts forever.

Editor's note: Jo-Anne has been involved in the Steps for Life walk in Sarnia since its inception, three years ago.

All about Bob

Bob King, who lobbied hard for better safety, became the company's first fatality

Diane Nicholson

Bob's story is sad, truthful, happy and educational. He was a very ordinary person, very humble in nature. Of course, growing up as kids we didn't appreciate all his qualities. He was the second child and first brother in a family of seven children.

We lived on a farm in Southwestern Ontario, better known as the Alps of Culross because there were so many hills.

When you grow up on a farm, chores are the order of the day. Bob was the only boy in the family for 15 years so a lot was expected of him, from milking the cows and cleaning out the stables to picking stones out of the fields before the crops were planted. The girls never really did farm work until the youngest, Sandra, came along. Sandra took her place alongside her two brothers, Bob and Jerry when it came time to do the farm work.

It's funny the little things you remember about a person. When Bob went to the country elementary school, he would eat fresh leeks that he found in the bush with his friends. When he returned to class after lunch he would be sent home because no one could tolerate the smell of raw leeks!

Baseball, swimming in the farm creek, playing in the hay mow and skating on the pond – these were his childhood pursuits. Bob never really injured himself during his childhood. Safety became more of a reality to him and of course to all of us as we got older. Our father reminded us constantly to be safe but sometimes we learned by trial and error. We used to ride on top of a hay wagon full of hay. As a youngster we didn't think if we fell off what would happen but as we got older we knew enough not to do that. Farming has many hazards by the very nature of the work and the machinery used. Quite often young children are doing adult work because that's what has always been done and accepted when running a family farm.

Bob entered high school and completed the necessary courses. It wasn't his favourite place to be so he was glad when he finished and was able to start working.

He married Joan and they had seven children. His proudest moments were when he was with his family. He showed them how to live life, work hard and have fun safely. At a young age no matter what sport they were in, they were taught how to play safely whether they were handling a baseball bat, BB gun, hockey stick or playing on a swing.

Bob started working at the "Foundry" in Wingham in his early 20's and worked there for many years. He was a very dedicated employee. He served on the safety committee at his work for a number of years. At times he became very frustrated with his company. He often felt that no one was listening because it seemed to take forever to meet with management and then try to implement an idea or technique.

Quite often the "cost factor" can come into play when making changes in a company. Companies can become very

complacent; as long as there has been no devastating injuries or deaths, why change? The safety committee worked very diligently as a group to discuss and brainstorm different ideas to make their workplace a safer one. They tried to get new employees involved with their committee because it would be up to the younger people to carry on and continue their safety legacy.

On July 14, 2006 our family received a phone call that impacted us forever! Bob arrived at work at 6:00 a.m. and shortly after, he died on the job.

After you receive a call like this, many thoughts run through your mind: "This can't be real; did this really happen? Why Bob? He has seven children and a wife to look after. What's going to happen to them?"

I was at work at the time, before I realized that I was shouting out for the world to hear that my brother had just been killed. It didn't matter who went by; they had to know that Bob had died. I had to let them know. People were very concerned as to what and how it happened. Bob was so safe. How did this happen? He had been at work less than half an



*Bob celebrates his mother's birthday with his sisters.
Diane is the second from the right.*

I was at work at the time, before I realized that I was shouting out for the world to hear that my brother had just been killed. It didn't matter who went by; they had to know that Bob had died. I had to let them know.

hour when it happened. He was dead on arrival at the hospital when the family was told. Their hopes and dreams all dashed away in a second; all because of lack of safety by the company. The next few minutes, hours and days all became a big blur, filled with sadness, confusion, anxiety and anger. Funeral arrangements had to be made. Bob was 56 years old.

There had never been a death at this company in the 100 years of operation. What does that mean? Were they just lucky all those years? How ironic for Bob to be their first statistic! The one who tried to make his workplace a safer environment for everyone had to die before changes would be made. Changes were made because the company was now mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Labour after the investigation. Change was going to happen whether they wanted it or not. The company was closed down for a period of time during the initial investigation; the section where Bob worked was closed for a longer period of time.



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So what exactly happened that day?

According to the investigative report by the Ontario Ministry of Labour:

“Bob was working in a steel melting area when he was crushed between the furnace’s hood and a lip (a vibrating steel plate) that was extending on a charger car which is a vehicle that carried and delivered scrap metal to a row of furnaces.”

My sister Brenda had heard of Threads of Life; she wasn’t sure what it was all about but thought we should call them. Our call was received with great empathy and concern. Shirley Hickman, the Executive Director of Threads of Life agreed to meet with Bob’s immediate family and siblings. She drove approximately two hours to the family farm to meet all of us that evening. I will never forget meeting her and thinking, “What a wonderful lady”. She was very forthright with her information, and very honest about protocol and expectations. Although the family was still very devastated they felt calmer after her visit. Here was someone that would listen to us and try to help.

Bob was a loving and devoted husband, father, son, brother and a friend to all. He was a great support to his 87-year-old mother who is in a nursing home and misses him as much today as the day he died. Every time she looks at his picture all she can say is, “Poor Bob.” Mom is still grieving and will continue to grieve until the day she dies. She continues to say, “A mother should never have to bury her child.”

Joan and their children have struggled during the last six years to make a new life without him. His presence has been missed on special occasions – weddings, birth of new grandchildren, holidays and birthdays. A visit to the cemetery doesn’t cut it. His sisters and brother will always have a deep sense of loss. He was the one to go to for advice and support. No matter if the request was big or small you could always count on Bob for assistance.

Bob was very involved in his community, but we didn’t understand the impact of his death on the community until he died. He was a very humble man and he would have never believed the outpouring of the love and support from



the large number of people who came to the visitation and funeral. Bob coached baseball, volunteered at community events and was always lending a hand to many without being asked. He loved the outdoors; hunting and fishing were his passions. His presence is very much missed especially during deer season by his hunting buddies and his sons.

I think that Bob is with us in spirit when we see a deer running through the field or when we watch his children and grandchildren develop and grow into people that strive to follow his example. Thank you Bob for everything you strived to change for the betterment of workplace safety. It is now up to all of us to carry on and help make it happen!

My sister Brenda and I get great comfort from attending the Threads of Life annual Family Forums. I’ve decided to help others by becoming a Volunteer Family Guide so I could help someone through the process, just as we had been helped by Shirley. If I could make someone’s life a little easier by assisting them and listening to them in their time of need, I am here to for them.

Ready to speak out or lend a listening ear?

Sarah Wheelan, Communications Coordinator

Threads of Life is extremely fortunate to have so many amazing, dedicated volunteers. Two of our most essential programs could not function without them: our Volunteer Family Guide one-on-one peer support program and our national Speakers Bureau.

Speakers come together to tell the story of their loved one or their own story of survival if they are an injured worker. It is always a small, intimate and supportive group but there is a lot of work to do on-site. You'll be given guidelines on how to write your story before you arrive. During the weekend, you'll learn how to tell your story to an audience. You do not need to be a "good" writer, be good at public speaking or using computers. We will help you meet your potential no matter where you start from.

The ability and strength of our family members to share of themselves and offer their experience to provide support to others is much needed. To become a Volunteer Family Guide you need to be far enough along in your own journey of healing to be emotionally able to support another family. A strong sense of empathy, understanding of confidentiality and the ability to listen will make you a vital member of the Volunteer Family Guides.

The next training sessions have been set for the new year. The training occurs over a weekend to help accommodate our volunteers' work schedules.

- **Volunteer Family Guide Training:** Thursday, January 17th to Tuesday, January 22nd, Kempenfelt Conference Centre
- **National Speakers Bureau Training:** Thursday, February 7th to Sunday, February 10th, Courtyard Marriott in Mississauga (close to the airport)

Through grants and other financial supports we are able to cover your accommodation, travel and meals for the training. Please contact us if you would like further information on either of these two programs.

This training has helped me on many occasions of my daily life in different situations and I find our monthly teleconferences are quite informative.

—Diane Nicholson, sister of Bob King

Put your company logo here!



Since *Forget Me Not* launched in April 2011, we've been overwhelmed by demand for the book.

The soft-cover book of easy-to-read first-hand, compelling accounts

of lessons learned from survivors, stories of inspiration and the facts about health and safety hazards across multiple workplace sectors, including construction, industrial workplaces, fisheries, agriculture, forestry and others.

Now it's time for a second edition of the book this fall! Would you like be part of our next edition?

If you'd like to see your company logo in the next edition as a leader in health and safety, and align your company with a good cause, please call John McCabe, Program Manager-

Fundraising & Partnerships at 1(888) 567-9490 or email jmccabe@threadsoflife.ca for a variety of sponsorship opportunities. All book sale proceeds go to Threads of Life family support programs and services.

The Book seemed a logical fit for our organization and valuable to a number of departments. We distributed it to the leadership team, the OH&S team, and the Critical Incident Stress Management Team to sensitize them to the issues from the family's perspective.

—D. Pagnutti, Vale

The books are used for training and team kick-off meetings (every shift). We find the books valuable because it brings a personal touch to the statistics and the training our workers have received. They ask themselves questions like, "What if this was me? What if I did this to my family."

—J. Jonasson, Syncrude Canada

Kimberley Labrecque

Sherry House

On October 5, 2007 Kimberley Labrecque's husband, Fabien Guindon, died when a trench he was working in collapsed. This tragedy was a terrible blow for her young family and also marked the beginning of Kimberley's fight to improve the safety of workers in Quebec and the support available for families affected by a workplace tragedy in La Belle Province.

In 2009, while looking into the possibility of starting her own support group in Quebec, she heard about Threads of Life through a contact with the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB). Kimberley signed on immediately as a volunteer. She met with the President of the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail du Québec (CSST) and he agreed to provide assistance right away. Work is underway to translate our newsletters and other documents.

Kimberley has been working to raise awareness of workplace safety at the Quebec Parliament since 2008. She addressed the Parliament herself on one occasion and convinced the members to wear yellow ribbons. For the Day of Mourning she requested a moment of silence for lost workers and the flags at the assembly were lowered to half mast to mark the occasion, which is a very rare occurrence at Parliament. She says she will continue the fight into the future, noting the fines for occupational health and safety infractions were increased in 2009, but there is still a lot of work to do.



Kimberley is a member of the Speakers Bureau and has made several presentations in Quebec, including the municipalities of Longueuil, Varennes, Repentigny, and Lévis. She is also a Volunteer Family Guide providing much needed information and support to French-speaking families.

In 2011 she single-handedly organized the first Steps for Life walk in Oka, QC. Friends and family came out to support Kimberley and her children, as well as to remember Fabien. The general director from Laurentians and representatives from CSST were also in attendance.

Kimberley recently returned to work in January and is enjoying her position as secretary with the International Hockey School. She also volunteers with Parent Étoile, a Quebec non-profit organization that helps children deal with grief after the loss of a parent.

She has created a website to the memory of her husband: www.fabienguindon.com, which is a lovely tribute to Fabien, but also serves as a resource for other French-speaking families. Kimberley Labrecque lives in Pointe Calumet, Quebec with her two sons Marc-Antoine (11) and Mathieu-Oliver (9). Her daughter Amanda is now 20 and she works and attends school nearby. We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation for all you do. Merci Kimberley!

Need a pair of work boots? Consider Mark's Work Wearhouse.

A portion of your boot purchase will be donated to Threads of Life.



If you're looking for a pair of antislip footwear, you might want to consider checking out Mark's Work Wearhouse. This large Canadian retailer will donate a portion of proceeds from the sales of the antislip Tarantula line of work boots. Our logo on the boot tag and information on the Tarantula anti-slip packaging has been rolled out to all stores.



Mark's

REFLECTIONS

What's in your jar?

Lynda Kolly

I recently read a story that I'd like to share with you.

A professor of philosophy, in front of his class, took a large empty pot of jam and began to fill it with golf balls. He asked his students if the jar was full. They said yes.

Then he took a box full of marbles and poured them into the pot of jam. The marbles filled the gaps in between the golf balls. He asked them the same question. Again, they said yes.

At that point, the professor took a bag of sand and poured it into the pot of jam. The sand filled all the remaining gaps and the professor asked again if the jar was full. The students unanimously answered, yes.

Then he added two cups of coffee to the jar, filling the small gaps between the grains of sand. The students started laughing. After they stopped, the professor said: "I want you to realize that the pot of jam represents life. The golf balls are the very important things in life such as family, children, and health; everything you are passionate about. Our lives would still be full even if we'd lost everything else and these were the only things that remained. The marbles are the other things that count in our lives such as work, house, car, etc. The sand represents everything else, all the small things in life.

"If we had first poured sand into the pot of jam, there wouldn't have been any room left for anything else such as the marbles or the golf balls. It's the same thing in life. If we put all our energy and time into the small things, we will never have any time/space left for the things that really matter.

"Pay attention to the things that are really important to your happiness. Play with your children, take time to go to the doctor, have dinner with your spouse/partner, exercise or take time to enjoy your favorite pastimes.

"There will always be time to do the cleaning and fix the taps on the kitchen sink. Take care of the golf balls first, or the things that really matter. Choose your priorities, the rest is just sand."

One of the students asked what the coffee meant. The professor smiled and said: "It's good that you ask. I only added coffee to show that although your lives may seem full and busy, there is always room for a cup of coffee with a friend."

When I first read this short story I thought about how it reminded me of my own life and reminded me of Threads of Life. Our members lead and inspire a culture shift because they have been affected by a workplace tragedy. They know that workplace illnesses, injuries and deaths are morally, socially and

economically unacceptable because like the jar, there is a shift in what matters to you in life.

The sand is everything else – the small stuff.

We need to feel that our lives are lived with love, purpose and substance. How does Threads of Life fill your life like the jar?

For me, it helps to speak out about workplace safety and how each and every worker should come home healthy, whole and alive.

There are many different levels and textures and all are important to fill the jar – just like how Threads of Life provides support to families in various ways. It helps families heal through a community of support. We could say that this represents the pebbles that fill the spaces between the golf balls.

By promoting the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths, Threads of Life is represented by the sand that fills the spaces between the golf balls and the pebbles.

Now is the jar full? No, not yet... it is the people like the coffee in this story that matter. There is always room and time for a friend.



Penny Campaign



If you'd like to fill a small jar in your workplace with your small change, it can bring big change to families of workplace tragedy. Jar labels are available for download on our website. Our penny campaign runs this fall and all donations, big or small are welcome. Thank you!

Calling all challengers!

Company Team Challengers Step-Up



Alta-Fab teams won the Corporate Challenger coming in 1st and 2nd place



In 2012, thousands of walkers participated in more than 30 Steps for Life community events held across Canada. Steps for Life issued a challenge to companies to enter teams of five to inspire friendly rivalry with other Corporate Challengers. The teams consist of five members personally committed to raising \$100 each. Alberta teams put the other provinces to shame! All three winning teams were from Alberta: Alta-Fab Teams 1 and 2 from Edmonton and Team Sass from Watson Gloves in Fort McMurray. Alta-Fab teams raised more than \$11,630 while Team Sass crossed the finish line with \$1,765. Aecon received an honourable mention for team spirit.

The top winners' enthusiasm is the result of Alta-Fab's strong safety culture. Team organizer Millie Lovell explains, "Safety plays a key role in our company, and we all benefit when we practice it – at work and at home. Stop, think, plan. These are the words that keep our workers safe. As Corporate Challengers, we took a step toward reinforcing our commitment to preventing workplace injuries – among staff and in our community."

Are you up to the challenge? Visit our website for more information.

Sponsorship Packages now available

Are you looking for a high profile event that showcases your commitment to health and safety? Not only will your sponsorship be visible in your community but your dollars will also help to support families of workplace tragedy.

Sponsorship offers your company the opportunity to:

1. Be seen – as a good corporate citizen in your community;
2. Lead by example: creating a culture shift where work-related injuries and illnesses are unacceptable;
3. Be highlighted in local event media relations and on-site media coverage ... and other benefits.

Sponsorship Levels: National and Community Opportunities

Companies can choose from a range of sponsorship levels from local event categories of \$250 to \$5,000 to national sponsorship levels of \$10,000 to \$50,000. Please call us to discuss these opportunities and receive your sponsorship package please contact John McCabe at jmccabe@threadsoflife.ca or call 1-888-567-9490.

Mark your calendars!

We're grateful for all of the volunteers who put in countless hours to host the walks in their communities and the financial support from sponsors and those who supported the walkers with personal donations. The \$400,000 raised in 2012 will go a long way to provide family support programs and services while raising awareness about the importance of workplace health and safety. Please join us once again as family members, health and safety professionals, co-workers and business leaders walk together with a united vision of safety and injury prevention in the workplace. Mark your calendars for Sunday May 5, 2013 (in most communities)!



Please visit www.stepsforlife.ca for more information.

Recycling your used T-shirts



We know that many of you have quite a collection of yellow T-shirts and although they're not the most fashionable, the shirts continue to create awareness whenever and wherever you wear them. We appreciate that! However, you can only wear so many. So for all of you crafters and tree huggers, we have the perfect project!

T-shirts can be made into the perfect yarn for knitting or crocheting. The process is fairly simple and on the Steps for Life website you can find the instructions along with helpful photos to guide you. Once you have created your yarn there are many options and patterns can be found on the web. Just a few ideas to get you started: place mats, tote bag, dish cloths, rag rugs, pot holders or trivets. Use your imagination and please send photos of your completed projects!



A white cat crossed my path

Suzan Butyn

Recently a big birthday passed, bringing with it a forced time to reflect. If I've learned anything from working for Threads of Life, it's to listen to those inner whisperings of your soul, even when it's damned inconvenient.

I blame the white cat. One Easter weekend, a young white cat stupidly ran across four lanes of a busy road. I held my breath; I was rooting for it. It panicked, tried to head back and boom! Got hit by three cars in a row. Thump, thump, thump. I was car number four.

I pulled over and (when it was safe!) gathered up the cat which was still purring. She wasn't pretty. Her eyeball was hanging out and she died shortly after. She had on a pink collar so I knew she was loved and her owner would be worried. I found her home and delivered the grim news and her body.

This stayed with me for a long time. I wondered why no one stopped. Why did I stop? I realized that helping and caring

for animals was an unfulfilled calling that I've had since I was a kid. Through some digging into options and careers I found the college program that sang to me: Registered Veterinary Technician. And after much jumping through hoops and writing entrance exams, I'm happy to say I've been accepted into the program starting this fall at Seneca College. Those of you who know me won't be too surprised (although my husband certainly was, and my teenage son was appalled!). Go back to college? Are you crazy? Well maybe a little but it feels right.

It was a tough decision. Threads of Life has been a dream job for me. As the Program Manager of Marketing & Communications, it's allowed me to do some good in the world. Our volunteers have been an inspiration, opening a door into grief that has made me appreciate their selfless giving and fortitude and frankly, they inspired me. If they could walk bravely into the unknown, maybe I could too.

My co-workers and I have been able to make the virtual office work well and have a good time doing it (how I will miss them!). Working for Shirley has been a mutual test of smarts, resolve, skills and humour. We have made each other grow in untold ways. I wonder if I will ever work for another boss who will hear what I have to say (even when it's tackling the white elephant in the room), who may not agree with me and then thank me for the challenge!

Yes, it has been a grand adventure. We are small but mighty and have achieved so much. It's a good time for me to hand the reins to my successor Susan Haldane. Bid her hello when you meet her. She will bring Threads of Life to the next level of professionalism, with care and compassion.

It's a small world and we don't need to say good-bye. We always have the Internet and of course the phone.



Welcome! Susan Haldane New Program Manager of Marketing and Communications

A journalism graduate and former newspaper reporter, Susan has worked in communications, marketing, and product and program development for Ontario's workplace health and safety associations for the past 17 years. Susan is looking forward to contributing to Threads of Life's mission. She will be working from her home base near North Bay, Ontario, where she operates a farm with her husband and two teenaged sons.

Charity of Choice: What You Can Do

Saskatoon NAOSH BBQ event



From l to r

Bob O'Crane, JNE Welding, Colleen Marcotte, Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA), Charlene Jones, Graham Construction and Darren Tangen, Lydale Construction

Bob Ocrane, the Safety Officer for JNE Welding and a member of the CSSE Northern Light Chapter executive joined forces with Ben Bonsan, a member of

the Saskatoon Construction Regional Safety committee to host the third annual BBQ for the Saskatoon North American Occupational Safety & Health (NAOSH) event. This special event was created from the efforts of a committee consisting of representatives from Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA), Northridge Homes, Lydale, PCL construction and JNE Welding. "We thought it would be great to join forces and put on one big barbeque and raise money for the Threads of Life," says Ocrane. The event was held at the Case New Holland training center in Saskatoon on the same day Acklands Grainger had their grand opening with more than a 1,000 people attending the grand opening.

The barbeque was aimed at people working in the construction trades and



offices in the north end of Saskatoon and featured a mini trade show and a short safety demonstration on fire extinguishers and crane safety by Graham Construction.

The barbeque was a great success, raising \$1,414 with 300 participants! We thank the many volunteers for their countless efforts on our behalf.

Nurdoco Steel & ACS



Carillion Construction held its Sustainability Week in June. The week kicked-off with a BBQ and raffle along with a paintball tournament and potluck. Over 400 employees participated in these events. Carillion presented Threads of Life with a cheque for over \$2,100. Thank you to Carillion Construction and its employees for your dedication.

LCBO coin box program raises \$10,214

The LCBO (Liquor Control Board of Ontario) selected Threads of Life as one of its two charities in April and May. For the second year in a row LCBO retailers featured Threads of Life coin

boxes at the cash. We are pleased to report that the LCBO initiative raised \$10,214! Only 20 charities are selected a year from many applicants and we consider it a coup to be among the

selected charities. We look forward to participating in this program in the future and we thank you and the LCBO for your support of this initiative.

Levitt Safety Golf Tournament results

We were excited to see more than 100 people attend the inaugural Levitt-Safety Charity Golf Tournament with proceeds to Threads of Life. The event was held at Lionhead Golf & Country Club on

August 10. It was a great day despite the rain! At the afternoon reception it was announced that more than \$5,000 was raised on-site from the raffle and silent auction. Later, Levitt-Safety presented a

cheque for \$25,000 to Threads of Life. Thank you to all those who golfed and who supported this event.



United Way Centraide

Each fall, charitable workplace campaigns are launched across the country to raise funds to support their community through their local United Way Centraide office.

Did you know that you can direct all or a portion of your United Way donation to support Threads of Life's Family Support Programs and Services?

Setting up a payroll deduction to make a charitable contribution through the United Way can be a simple and effective way to support Threads of Life. Even a small contribution of \$12 from each bi-weekly pay cheque adds up to a donation of more than \$300 a year: \$300 can provide peer support for one family member for one year! Payroll deductions are simple and convenient and can really make a difference.

Donor forms do vary slightly between the more than 100 United Way Centraide offices across the country, but they all provide the option to direct your donation to a specific charity. To direct your United Way donation to Threads of Life, simply fill in your United Way donor form and indicate us by our legal name, Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support, and our Canada Revenue Agency Charitable Business Registration number No. 87524 8908 RR0001.

2012 Upcoming Events

Western Canada Family Forum:
October 26–28
Sheraton Cavalier Calgary Hotel,
Calgary, AB

VFG training: January 17-22, 2013

National Speakers Bureau Training:
February 7–10, 2013

Please inquire if you are interested in taking training in these areas.

Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy:

Sunday May 5*, 2013
*in most communities

Jennifer Bonin – Italy Marathon Run for Threads of Life

May 2013

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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Lynda Kolly
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Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

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

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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