



Stepping up for safety and families

It's a dual-purpose event: Steps for Life raises funds that help Threads of Life continue to serve families with peer support, family forums, training and information. But the annual walk also builds momentum for safer workplaces. Thank you to all our Steps for Life walkers, volunteers and sponsors – read about this year's successful walk on pages 10 and 11!



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Bill Stunt

Spring is the perfect time for a fresh focus on safety (although we know safety must be front of mind year-round!). Each May, our national Steps for Life walks kick off North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) week. Our 30 walks across Canada, our dozens of speaker

presentations, and our relationships with like-minded companies and organizations all contribute to a sense of excitement and growth around workplace health and safety at this time of year. I believe the public conversation about health and safety is growing too.

This spring is also bringing change to the Threads of Life board of directors. After five years as the chairman, I have decided to step down – while I will still remain a member of the board. Longtime director Eleanor Westwood will take over as chairperson. Eleanor has been part of the Threads of Life board since it was formed in 2006. She recently retired from her career in communications with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. The board is welcoming two new members: Shelly Dauphinee is Vice-President – WorkSafe Services for WorkSafeNB. Wendy-Ellen Nittel is a family member from Alberta, a speaker and a volunteer family guide. At the same time, we bid a sad farewell to Shelley Rowan, who leaves the board after ten years. You can read more about Shelley on page 8.

I'd like to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve Threads of Life over the past few years. It has been exciting to see the organization develop, and I know that will continue under the leadership of our new and returning board members.

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When time doesn't heal

by Todd Smith

Anger over brother's death fades, but pain endures after 15 years



Sean Smith

My story starts on

September 14, 2000. My brother Sean was 26 years old, the youngest of three siblings. Just after lunch on that day, I was at work and was called by our receptionist and she indicated that my mother was on the line. Well, I was very curious as to why my mother was calling because she never calls me at work. She was always afraid she would be bugging me or would get me into trouble. This day however, was different for it was my birthday. So I figured she decided to take the risk and had called just to say Happy Birthday. However, when I answered she had a very monotone voice and simply said, "Your brother has been in an accident at work and could you please come to meet your father and I at the hospital?" So, obviously I left immediately and headed off to the hospital but since I had about an hour's drive ahead of me I began to contemplate what could have happened.

At the time, my brother was working as a mechanic at a local car dealership which he enjoyed very much. So I tried to think about what could have happened in that situation. Could he have severely burned himself with a torch while performing a

job? Could he have somehow cut or pinched a finger? Perhaps he actually managed to break a bone. I really had no idea what had happened and was driving to the hospital in a bit of a daze.

Well, I did find out later what had happened and it started when the owner of the car dealership got a call from a friend of his who owned a limousine service company. The air suspension system on one of the limos had a hole in the air bag and it needed replacing. He was in a hurry to get it fixed so he could meet his booking schedule. The air suspension system in a limo is made up of an air bag underneath the car so when people climb into the car, an air compressor comes on and fills the air bag to keep the car from

sinking like most vehicles do when weighted down. The owner of the call dealership where Sean worked wanted to help out his friend so he suggested he bring in the limo right away and his team would look at it.

end of the vehicle. However, as anyone who has worked on their own car at home will know, there is a safety device to prevent the car from coming down should something happen and the jack let go. This device is called a jack stand, which fits under the axle of the car and prevents the car from falling down.

Typically at the dealership, jack stands are not needed because any work underneath a car would be done using the car hoist and the manual jack would only be used for removing tires or jobs not requiring anyone to be directly beneath the vehicle. But on this day they had a dilemma because the limo could not go on the hoist and they did not have any jack stands in the shop because again they had never needed them before. In any case, my brother was assigned to fix the problem with the limo.

My hypothesis is that one of two things happened that day. Either my brother took it upon himself to jack up the limo and roll himself under the rear of the car to access the air suspension system, knowing full well there were no safety devices for protection; or he was told by his employer what was required of him. In either case, it doesn't really matter and unfortunately our family will really never know which one

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When you take your car in for service, if they need to work underneath the vehicle they will put the car up on a hoist which has several mechanisms to ensure the safety of the worker and so that the car doesn't accidentally come down. In this case, it was a problem because the limo was obviously oversized and it would not be safe on the hoist due to the potential for tipping. So they devised another plan which was to keep the limo on flat ground and use a manual jack to hoist up the rear

it was because my brother did roll himself under the vehicle without any jack stands as a safety precaution; the manual jack failed; and the car came down directly on my brother crushing his ribs and collapsing his lungs to the point where he was actually asphyxiated. The good news, according to the coroner, was that the force was so great that he would have died almost instantaneously and therefore would not have suffered any pain.

I think it was also a real blessing because

unfortunately the area where he was working was more to the back of the shop so no one actually found him for about 30 to 45 minutes.

When I reached the hospital on that fateful day, I knew instantly that something very serious had happened because I was intercepted by a police officer as soon as I gave my name at the emergency desk. The officer escorted me to a private room where my parents and sister were along with the hospital clergyman. It was there that I received word of my brother's death. We sat all huddled together, arms around one another in silence for what seemed like an eternity.

Now here we are almost 16 years later. I can honestly tell you that I can remember every single thing that happened that day like it has been burned into my brain. My family and I were dumbfounded. We were in shock and disbelief. We were crying and mourning our lost brother and son. At one point I went outside just to get some air and the owner of the dealership was waiting for me and came up to me to shake my hand and offer his sincere condolences for what had happened. And I remember to this day, that even after all the emotion I had personally just gone through in the previous few hours, I actually felt bad for this man. I felt sorry that he had to come to me to apologize for such a devastating event – devastating for everyone including him and the employees at the dealership.

When I tell this story to my own team at work, I also tell them to think about safety all the time – whether at work or a home, for both themselves and others around them – because no one wants to be the person to have to make that apology.

My brother was a very giving person who would help anyone. He had difficulty in school and was labeled a problem student for most of his classes except when he got to shop and his mechanics class, as he loved working with his hands. The issues at school were not that he was a bad student; he was seen as a problem because he couldn't learn like most students through auditory or visual learning. He was a kinesthetic learner which means he learns by touch which is why he loved being a mechanic. I remember many times my father would be looking for something – an alarm clock or radio or whatever – and he often found it in my brother's room in pieces which made him very angry. However, the next day Sean would give it back to my father all in one piece with the same apology,

“sorry Dad; I just wanted to see how it worked.” He always wanted to be part of things especially with family. The very first time I brought my future wife home for a visit, Sean told my mother “to tell me to keep this one, that she was a good one.” It must have been good advice as we have been happily married for 25 years.

It's a devastating experience when anyone loses a loved one but it's especially traumatic when it happens so suddenly and at such a young age. I'm sure everyone has heard the phrase, “time heals all wounds.” From my perspective, it's certainly not the case when you have a family tragedy

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such as this. I feel very much today as I did 15-plus years ago. The only thing time does, is allow you to think about the tragedy less and less and give you the opportunity to move forward. Even after 15 years my parents do not know the details I have shared because they do not want to hear it and cannot, to this day, talk about the event itself. My sister is very quiet and does not speak of it either and still goes to counselling to deal with her emotions. For me, it certainly was a life-altering experience. I was so angry for the first couple of years, there would be absolutely no way I could have shared this story. And it has definitely altered my outlook on life.

The car dealership was charged and convicted for several offences under the

Occupational Health & Safety Act which, at the time through all the emotions, did bring a sense of justice and some closure to this event. But after more time you realize that this is really irrelevant in the grand scheme of things. What would have been important is that it never happened in the first place. Both employers and employees must always be on alert and be prepared to work safely, whether that means having the right tool to safely perform the work or properly identifying the hazards for the job or speaking up and refusing to do the work if it can't be done safely, regardless of the perceived consequences.



Sean, left, and Todd with Todd's girlfriend Nancy – now his wife of 25 years

"Proud to call him my big brother"

by Alex Tuff

Welding explosion steals the future from brothers who were also best friends



Kris Tuff

On Saturday, August 3, 2013, at approximately 9 o'clock in the morning, I was freshly showered and ready to tackle my day working at a local Wal-Mart when I received a voice mail from my stepmother Carol saying I couldn't go to work today. As an 18-year-old man, when I hear "you can't go to work", you don't have to tell me twice. I was pretty curious as to what she wanted, so I called back only for her to say "Alex, myself and your father are coming to get you". She had a sort of "uneasiness" in her tone of voice. I left it at that, knowing they'd be here any minute to tell me this news that couldn't dare be spoken over phone.

Being Newfoundland born and bred, what did I do?? That's right...I checked the news. Nosey bunch we are, and I knew if something went down, they'd have the story. But no luck – there was nothing reported. Immediately, I was convinced one of my grandparents was dead. Although, it would have been sad, that's life's sad reality. I went outside to wait for my father Gary and Carol, pacing back and forth, not knowing what was on the go. Suddenly,

they came down the road so fast; I didn't know how they were going to stop. My dad ran out, proceeded to hug me and that's when he said "your best friend isn't coming home, there's been an accident and he's been killed".

My best friend, my amigo, my buddy was not returning home after work that day. We were close – closer than friends. In actual fact...he was my brother.

I was in absolute, utter shock. It's like someone drove a knife in my chest and then did more damage by hauling it out. I thought about Mom and how she must have felt. I asked my father how she took it and it turned out she didn't know yet! Great... an 18-year-old who's been assigned the duty

to tell his mother that her other son was killed in an industrial accident. At that moment I stopped and asked God what I did to deserve this punishment. "I believe in you, I go to church; I pay taxes... WHY ME?"

My mother was working that day so we had to drive to her work. Going as fast

life forever". She saw me and smiled ear to ear, finding it kind of strange for me to visit on a Saturday when she knew I had to work. Just as I went to open my mouth, my words wouldn't come out and I found myself rapidly nodding my head back and forth unable to speak. I'm assuming it was the shock. I can't imagine what she thought of me but without questioning it, she quickly bolted up, went outside to meet my dad and he delivered the life-altering news.

To this day, when I close my eyes, all I can picture is her fists pounding on my father's chest as she struggles to catch a breath. I swear she must have said "my baby, my baby, my baby is dead!!" a good 50 times before calming down. By now, bystanders started to take notice and in fact a paramedic was in the area and actually came over worried for her health; all this disruption in our simple little lives because of an employer's possible negligence towards the health, safety and welfare of their work force.

Though the losses were different to each family member, the feelings were the same. "Be strong for your parents," said blurs of people at Kris's funeral service. I nodded, but inside me, something twisted. I stood in a daze as people streamed by, offering their awkward words and hugs. Be strong for your parents? I thought. I was barely breathing. I was barely standing here. Strong was the last thing I felt. My

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as possible, hazard lights on and possibly breaking every traffic rule in the book, we finally arrived "safely". Anyone who has had the responsibility of telling someone their loved one isn't coming home, can vouch for me. No training course, session or classes will prepare you for the pain I was about to encounter. I walked in, saw her working at her desk and I remember saying to myself "I'm about to change her

parents' lives, including my step-mother's, would never be the same. Their pain was almost visible, as if a piece of their bodies had been cut out and the wound just left open to the elements. I felt like our family had been a four-legged table and one leg had suddenly been torn off. The remaining of us wobbled and teetered, each morning waking to the horrible fact that Kris was gone.

Being a young man, 24 at the time of death, Kris was eager to continue his skills as a welder while working for a CBS (Conception Bay South) based welding company. The company picked up a contract with Nalcor's mega-project Muskrat Falls in Labrador and Kris was sent off. Little did we know this would be his last time home. With Labrador's extreme isolation and high cost of travel, workers generally don't come home on their days off; but rather stay up there and pick up other jobs. This was the case when Kris and his supervisor, Wayne, were spotted in their work truck and approached by a company to conduct a "quick job". The short, 20-minute jobs seem to be the ones where people are at greater risk of being killed or seriously injured. In my opinion, this is a combination of insufficient planning and a lack of supervision.

Do not be afraid (or too shy) to ask your employer to go over something to make sure you got it right, or to ask them to watch you to make sure you are doing something correctly. I think it's extremely important that if workers at any age think their own health and safety is in jeopardy, then their concerns should be brought forward to management. Ultimately, all employees, including students, have the right to refuse to do work that is unsafe, and employers cannot fire anyone exercising this right.

The job Kris and Wayne were asked to do involved a worker entering the diesel tank, which was attached to a truck, to remove baffles. A baffle is a device used to restrain the flow of a fluid, gas, or loose material. At the time, the truck was used for diesel fuel. Kris entered the tank under the impression that all required due diligences/checks and balances were taken by both supervisors present at the time of the accident. He began to cut into the baffles with a plasma cutter and it's at that very moment the walls spread apart, and the explosion resulted in his death.

My life feels incomplete without Kris. Everyone can master a grief but he who has it. This is why waking up for some in the morning is an enjoyable experience, but for me, it's a physical chore; sometimes I even wish I didn't wake up at all. When someone dies and you ask people how they're doing, they're always fine, aren't they? Brushing it off like it's nothing. What they don't tell you about is the depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies and always feeling like the phone is going to ring or someone's going

to pinch you, causing you to wake up from the horrible nightmare.

doors. I remember this one funny story where me and Kris were in our mom's

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In simple terms, Kris was best kind. He's taught me so much and I'm truly proud to call him my big brother. He was always so quick to catch someone messing up so he could make you laugh and everyone always wanted to be in his life.

When Kris and I were growing up, we were like caulk and cheese. I just couldn't keep up with his desire to work with his hands. He always had to be picking at something, whether it was taking apart an engine or fabricating something out in the garage; occasionally letting his little brother help. Back then, it wasn't cool to have your little bro around in front of your friends. So with me being the pesky little one, our relationship certainly didn't come without arguments. Those usually ended with "MOM....MOM he hit me". Now that I think back, that wasn't too smart of me due to the fact we shared a room, so I'd always get it twice as hard behind closed

car fighting over the speed of the wiper, I wanted it slow, he wanted it fast, I wanted it slow, he wanted it fast...and then it cracked off! We had no way to tell mom, so we did the logical thing, waiting for mom to come out and saying it fell off by itself.

A combination of attention to detail, concentration, patience and knowledge of tools and equipment led Kris to pursue his passion in the construction industry, being able to weld various metals.

I think of Kris's big green eyes. His loud laugh. He was the co-keeper of my childhood; the person who was supposed to walk with me longer than anyone else in this life. All the good and hard times without him by my side: the deaths, marriages, births and so on. I cry for the nephews and nieces I will never have. I cry for my own potential children who will never know my brother, their uncle. How would I explain?



Alex and Kris: like caulk and cheese

Each in their own time will be the right time by Kate Kennington



When is the best time for people to benefit from Threads of Life's programs following a work-related death, serious injury or disease diagnosis? Threads of Life does not contact families directly. Instead we believe that families need to determine for themselves when they are ready to reach out to us. Some will search and find us in the immediate hours or days following their tragedy and others will connect after two, three or more years. There is no single "right time". That is as unique as the experience of grief. We have learned that each in his or her own time will be what is best for them. There is no hard and fast rule nor is there a time limit when Threads of Life feels anyone is no longer eligible for support and connection. The heart does not follow the tick of time. Grief is a powerful journey and when family members feel ready to contact us we will be here.

The only flaw in this approach is that sometimes a family cannot contact us at their "right time", because they don't know we exist. Sometimes it is many years later that a family finds us and I have often heard "I wish I had known about Threads of Life when this first happened". We rely on our many partners, word of mouth, social media and other sources for families to learn about us. We know that not everyone does find us. It is one of our goals for all Canadians to be aware of Threads of Life so that should the unthinkable happen to them they can make the choice to connect when they are ready.

Different members of the same family connect with us

differently so it makes sense that they may come to us each in their own time when it is right for them. Our two family stories in this newsletter are from Alex and Todd. Both brothers took the speakers training earlier this year with the aim to share their stories in the name of prevention in the hopes that no other family would have to experience what they have. When you read their stories, the emotions and the intensity of the loss is so similar. Alex connected with Threads of Life in 2015, a year and half after his brother, Kris died. Todd has been aware of Threads of Life since its early days. Now, 15 years after his brother Sean's death, Todd has become actively involved. The timing was different but it was right for each of them.

Time is a strange concept if you think about it too much. Those days that fly by, the week of vacation vs the week waiting for the vacation to start and the minutes that crawl so slowly when you are waiting to hear important news. The clock doesn't change and yet our perception of all of these events is so drastically different. Even stranger is how years later grief can hit you so hard and take you back in time as if it happened only yesterday.

At Threads of Life, we know that there is no timeline for grief. Everyone's experience is different, as unique as each of you are. Our lives have been forever changed and we need to honour our loved ones and our changed lives. With your help, we will continue to raise awareness that Threads of Life will always be here and for as long as families need us.

Surprised by Joy

Surprised by joy—impatient as the Wind
I turned to share the transport—Oh! with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss?—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

—William Wordsworth, 1770 - 1850

(Wordsworth wrote this sonnet after the death of his three-year-old daughter. He expresses the renewed grief of having forgotten, for a moment, that his child was no longer by his side. This poem is in the public domain.)

The effects of unrelieved stress on the body

Most people do not know how unrelieved stress affects them. The first step in managing stress is to recognize how your body reacts to it. Once you recognize this reaction, you can begin to use self-care techniques to relieve the stress.

Many of the common symptoms of unrelieved stress are listed below. Which ones apply to you?

[Adapted from the Resource Guide for Volunteer Family Guides]



Special dates, time pressures and preoccupation with grief can all be triggers for stress

Physical symptoms	Emotional symptoms	Behavioural symptoms
Feeling dizzy	Feeling angry or hostile toward others	Avoiding responsibilities
Feeling tired all the time	Feeling anxious, restless	Being late for work frequently
Headaches	Feeling 'blue' with little interest in anything	Crying frequently
Loss of sexual drive	Impatience or frustration	Eating too much or too little
Loss or increase in weight	Irritability	Having no interest in social activities
Muscle aches or back pain, diarrhea or constipation		Increased use of alcohol or smoking
		Letting personal appearance and hygiene decline
		Overreacting to things
		Sleeping badly

Identifying stress triggers

Once you have identified how your body reacts to stress, you need to identify what sets off this response. The "what" are called triggers. Think about what causes you to feel stress. Your unique journey brings many triggers that cause stress such as:

- Anniversaries, birthdays, weddings and holidays, and the time leading up to them
- Preoccupation with your own grief and loss
- Feelings of inadequate time to do all the things you need to do

Coping with triggers and stress

When you become aware of the triggers of your stress, you can begin to manage them more effectively. There are basically two ways to cope with these triggers:

- You can act on things that you have control over, and
- You can recognize or accept that these triggers will always be part of your journey and cannot be changed.

What works best depends on your coping style. People use three main coping styles in response to unrelieved stress:

- Task orientation – taking action to deal directly with the situation
- Emotion orientation – dealing with your feelings and finding social supports, and
- Distraction – using activities or work to take your mind off the situation.

How would you describe your coping style? It may be a combination of all three styles. If your style works for you, continue to use and develop it. But if your method is not helping, stop using it and begin to develop coping skills that will be more beneficial. If necessary, ask for professional help.

Shelley Rowan

by Kevin Bonnis



Shelley Rowan was one of the first members of the Threads of Life board of directors. After nearly ten years of service Shelley has decided it's time to retire from the board. Shelley's contributions will be missed, but she will always be a part of the Threads of Life family.

Shelley's first contact with Threads of Life happened with the LifeQuilt. Threads of Life hadn't even been incorporated when the LifeQuilt was unveiled back in 2003. Shelley accompanied a couple of Nova Scotia families to the unveiling of the quilt. At that time she was introduced to the organization and knew she had to be involved. As an employee of the Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation Board, she knew workers and families involved in a workplace tragedy needed more support than a WCB could

provide. She saw Threads of Life as the answer.

Now the Vice-President Prevention and Service Delivery for Nova Scotia's WCB, Shelley has been an integral part of Threads of Life's growth over the years. She has enjoyed watching the charity grow from a small group of people into a national organization. Shelley does not take credit for the growth but takes great pride in the support she has been able to provide to the staff and families over the years. She says, 'It's been amazing to watch the growth happen and see families' needs met. It's also been sad to see how many families need the support Threads of Life gives.'

In thinking about Threads of Life, the Family Forum, and what it offers to families is one of Shelley's strongest memories. This includes meeting families whose first hurdle was summoning the strength to come to the Forum. Then once there, mustering the courage to speak in a group setting – with strangers – about their personal tragedy can be so difficult. But then watching these people be welcomed by existing families and find a place they belong is very gratifying to Shelley. As time goes on these people sometimes become advocates for workplace safety as they travel down the road of healing. Watching people effect change in industry and make the workplace a safer environment; watching their health improve and having their own life grow larger, are all very satisfying to Shelley.

Shelley knows that she leaves Threads of Life as a board member in the very good hands of her colleagues on the board. And, with Shirley Hickman's vision and guidance, she says, Threads of Life will continue to grow and help more and more Canadians.

"It has been a privilege to be on the board and working with Shirley and the staff. It has also been a privilege to work with people that have faith the world can be a better place."

Shelley Rowan may be leaving as a member of the board of directors, but she will always be family in our eyes.

"I've made a difference, big or small"

A reflection on a speakers bureau presentation

by Paulette Raymond

As I look out over the many faces today, I think of how far I've come in the past six years. How much I've mourned, the pain I've felt, the tears I've cried. The days when I didn't want to wake up anymore, the pain was so profound that it brought me to my knees. I think of how much I miss you.

How much I wish you were still here, living your life, with all of us who love you. How much I wish I could bring you back. But I can't. I accept that now.

I return to all those faces looking up at me, waiting for me to tell them. All about you. What happened that night. The past six years.

As I speak, I watch their faces, I see the pain in their eyes as they avidly listen. I feel the weight lift just a little from my shoulders. I continue til I feel they know you. You were their brother too. They lost you like I did. I start to understand this gift I've been given. I can help change lives here. Help them understand what can happen when you don't work safely. How many lives that are destroyed with that decision.

I speak with the pain I feel in my heart and these people, these strangers, understand. They don't want to live my life, and I don't want them to either. I end my story and I look at those same eyes that I looked in when I started and I see it. Change. In the way they will work, the way they think about their safety and the safety of their co-workers.

I breathe a sigh of relief that I've made a difference, big or small. I've made a difference.

Thank you Tommy for standing beside me today, guiding and supporting me. Thank you Threads of life for allowing me this incredible opportunity to heal through helping others. I am truly honored.

Wellpoint Health sponsors family forums



Wellpoint's CEO Lorne Sugarman (left) with Scott McKay, Threads of Life Director of Fundraising and Partnerships

National Day of Mourning is always a meaningful event for employees at Wellpoint Health. But this year, April 28 came with the added knowledge that they're doing more than ever to support families affected by workplace fatalities, injuries and disease.

“For all of our employees, their focus is on the prevention of workplace injuries and mitigating risk; if an injury should occur our goal is to promote and support optimal recovery,” says Lorne Sugarman, CEO of Wellpoint Health Ltd. “This is what they're passionate about.”

Now, Wellpoint Health is demonstrating that commitment by becoming Threads of Life's newest national partner, sponsoring family forums across the country. The new partnership was announced in March, and for Day of Mourning this year, Wellpoint Health asked its offices across Canada to organize a mini-walk, in reflection and recognition of Day of Mourning and their relationship with Threads of Life.

Wellpoint Health provides a fully-integrated workplace health solution for employers – everything from compliance and risk management services to on-site medical staff and return-to-work assistance, Sugarman explains. The company has 14 offices across the country. (For more information, visit www.wellpointhealth.ca)

Sugarman says Wellpoint Health recently launched its new set of cultural values, focused on the theme “Make a difference and thrive”. In keeping with that, Wellpoint “wanted to create opportunities for our own employees to give back to their communities”. When they learned about Threads of Life's family forums, “it just really resonated,” she adds.

Wellpoint Health's goal of promoting workplace cultures in which health and safety is paramount aligns perfectly with Threads of Life's own vision for a safe work culture. In addition to its sponsorship of family forums, the health and safety company will also be promoting Threads of Life with its own clients.



Announcing: A new way to keep in touch

There's nothing as nice as a conversation with a friend. Threads of Life has launched a new way to keep that conversation going with our partners and supporters: a monthly e-newsletter. The e-news is delivered by email, and will include quick snapshots of what's going on – events, news, and links to stories about our work and the families Threads of Life supports.

The e-news replaced a quarterly email version of this print newsletter. If you already received that quarterly email, with a pdf attachment of Threads, then you will receive the E-news automatically. If you would like to sign-up to receive the E-news each month, please send an email to shaldane@threadsoflife.ca. Let us know what you think!

\$574,000!

Walking for safety



From St. John's Newfoundland on the east coast to Vancouver in the west, more than 4800 walkers raised the flag for health and safety this spring, participating in Steps for Life walks in 30 different communities.

Together with more than 200 companies that sponsored Steps for Life at the community and national levels, you raised \$574,000 to support families affected by workplace fatalities, life-altering injuries and occupational disease. Those funds will be used to reach out to more families hurting after a work-related fatality, injury or disease, and cover the costs of programs like our volunteer family guides and family forums.

More than that, you helped people understand the consequences of a tragedy in the workplace, and why we need safer workplaces.

Thank you for walking, volunteering, sponsoring, and donating in Steps for Life 2016!



Did you know?

Sharing stories is core to Threads of Life's values, and it's central to Steps for Life as well. In most of the 30 walk communities across Canada, a family spokesperson stepped to the microphone to share his or her personal story of loss and healing related to a workplace tragedy. These stories are the "why" behind Steps for Life. Many of the spokespeople also told their story through the media in the weeks before the walk, appearing in dozens of television, radio, web and newspaper articles. Stories of workplace tragedy and hope are the heart of Steps for Life. If you'd be willing to share your story, please get in touch with us at Threads of Life.

Teams win with Steps for Life

Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy is all about community, and each year teams of walkers make a huge contribution to their local events and to the health and safety cause. Corporate teams, family teams and community teams all join together to raise dollars and awareness.

This year, Threads of Life recognized five of the top teams from across Canada – together these teams raised close to \$30,000.

Thank you to ALL our teams who participated in Steps for Life 2016, and congratulations to our Corporate Challenge winners:

NATIONAL CORPORATE CHALLENGE WINNER:

Premier Building Solutions (Team Captain: Chuck Roberts), Red Deer

REGIONAL WINNER: Atlantic Canada

Dragon Lady (Team Captain: Dayle Biggin), St. John's NL

REGIONAL WINNER: Central Canada

Black & McDonald Steps for Safety (Team Captain: Kym Baker), Durham Region ON

REGIONAL WINNER: Western Canada

Stuart Olson Walkers (Team Captain: Louise Dyck), Edmonton AB

HONOURABLE MENTION:

Relax Guys (Team Captain: Rose Wilson), Barrie ON



New walk communities join the family

Two new communities joined Steps for Life this year. In Montreal PQ, dozens of volunteers turned out on the big day to support the event. And in Prince George BC, more than 60 walkers showed off their yellow t-shirts, including BC Minister of Labour Shirley Bond, and representatives from WorksafeBC.

Welcome aboard, Montreal and Prince George!



Coming Events

Please let us know if you'd like more information or would like to get involved!

2016 Regional Family Forums

Central Family Forum,
November 4 - 6, 2016, Barrie, ON

Prairie Family Forum,
October 21 - 23, 2016,
Saskatoon, SK

Western Family Forum,
September 30 - October 2,
Edmonton, AB

2017 Training

Volunteer Family Guide Beginner
training - January 26-31, 2017,
Barrie ON

Speaker training - February 24-27,
2017, Mississauga, ON

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER!

Pass it along or leave it in your
lunchroom or lobby for others
to read.



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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.



Yes I will, help bring hope and healing to families

Gift Payment Options

- I'd like to make monthly gifts
 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____
- I'd prefer to make a one-time gift
 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____
- I've enclosed a void cheque to start direct withdrawal for monthly giving
- You may also donate to Threads of Life online at www.threadsoflife.ca/donate
- Please send me updates about Threads of Life events via email at: _____

Visa MasterCard

_____ expiry
account number

NAME ON CARD _____

SIGNATURE _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

ADDRESS (for income tax receipt) _____

Threads of Life, P.O. Box 9066 • 1795 Ernest Ave • London, ON N6E 2V0 1 888 567 9490 • www.threadsoflife.ca

All donations are tax deductible. Charitable Registration Number #87524 8908 RR0001