



# Pathways

**A Year  
in  
Review**

## **Welcome to the new BIAPH newsletter, Pathways.**

Pathways will keep you informed of what's been happening and what's upcoming at BIAPH. You'll hear about the dedicated people who work for BIAPH. You'll meet survivors of acquired brain injuries and read their inspiring stories. We'll also have news from around the province, from the Ontario Brain Injury Association.

The past year, 2009, has been a busy one for BIAPH. Here are the highlights:

### **New Executive Director**

BIAPH welcomed a new Executive Director in June of 2008, Jorun Rucels. Jorun has a very special reason for taking on the directorship. Here's Jorun's story, in her own words.

As I reflect on the past year and half, since taking over the position as BIAPH's Executive Director, I realize how fortunate I have been to meet and work with so many of you. Just as with so many that I have crossed paths with during this time, I became acquainted with acquired brain injury through my own personal experience.

In July of 2000 while visiting family in Norway, I got the call that every parent dreads. My oldest son, Yuri, had had a serious motor vehicle accident. He had been airlifted to St. Michael's hospital in Toronto, where he was in the ICU on life support with a serious head injury. Before his accident Yuri was a bright, young, outgoing 20 year old with a wide circle of friends. As time went by Yuri found it increasingly difficult to accept his new self with the limitations that he was now facing. Sadly, as a result, Yuri indirectly succumbed to his injuries in May of 2003. The following year with the help of his many friends, we organized a golf tournament to celebrate Yuri's life. It became an annual event. To date Golf4Yuri has raised close to \$60,000 in support of ABI survivors in Peel and Halton.

We are very honoured that BIAPH's respite program is presently named in Yuri's memory. If anyone reading this is in need of respite services, please contact the BIAPH office.

Concerned and courageous family members founded our association in the 1980's. BIAPH's mission is to enhance the quality of life for persons in Peel and Halton who are living with the effects of an acquired brain injury through education, awareness, support, advocacy and prevention.

As your Executive Director I will do my very best to fulfill our mission. I am deeply grateful for all the guidance, help and support I have received, and look forward to working with every one of you to strengthen BIAPH as we enter a new decade.

From all of us at BIAPH our best wishes for 2010.

Sincerely, Jorun (Jo)

## Office

Charlene Crites volunteered her time in the BIAPH office for the past two years, answering phone calls and performing administrative duties. We are fortunate that Charlene will continue her work with BIAPH on the Board of Directors. We welcome our new office volunteer, Maria.

## Board of Directors

BIAPH said good-bye to two long-serving and dedicated members of the Board of Directors, Lynn McFerran and Linda Askew, and welcomed four new members.

## Caregivers, Young Adult and Adult Survivors Support Groups

Our Caregivers and Young Adult Survivor Support Groups moved their monthly meetings north to the Ontario March of Dimes office near Burnhamthorpe Road and Erin Mills Parkway. Both groups are growing in numbers.

In May, both groups met at Classic Bowl for a fun night of bowling. In June, for our last meeting before the summer break, we planned an outdoor picnic and garbage clean-up in Erindale Park. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate so we moved our picnic indoors.

In the fall, we established a second support/social group for adult survivors.

## New Brochures

Work began on an updated version of our brochure. It was printed not only in English, but in Portuguese, Urdu, Punjabi, Chinese, Polish, Italian and Spanish. BIAPH gratefully acknowledges the support of Carranza Barristers and Solicitors for the design, translation, printing and distribution of the brochures.

## Website

Thanks to the support from Thomson Rogers, BIAPH has an improved web-presence. We are currently working on more updates to the website. You'll find information about past and upcoming events and this newsletter will be posted on the website.

## Respite Care Program

BIAPH's Respite Care Program is now funded by the Yuri Mutiger Memorial Respite Care Fund. In 2009, the proceeds from the 6th annual Golf4Yuri tournament raised \$14,000 for the Respite Care Fund. Four families are currently benefiting from the program, but more can be supported.

## Peer Support

In April, BIAPH held a successful mentor training workshop. Alexis Moskal is our Peel Support Coordinator. In her role, Alexis will facilitate matches between the mentors and partners across the province.

## Brain Basics

BIAPH hosted Brain Basics Courses in Mississauga in June and November for health care workers and caregivers. A certificate was awarded to the participants upon completion of the course. Contact the BIAPH office if you are interested in attending a Brain Basics Course.

## Fundraising Events

### Holiday Dinner and Dance

Last November, we held our 13th annual Holiday Dinner and Dance at the Royal Canadian Legion in Brampton. The night included a roast turkey dinner, raffle, silent auction and dancing. A great time was had by all. The event was generously sponsored by the firm of Shekter Dychtenberg.

### Bowl-A-Thon

In February, participants enjoyed a fun night of bowling at Classic Bowl in Mississauga. Individual and team pledges brought in \$4,771!

Save the date: our 2010 Bowl-a-thon will be February 25th. If you or your organization would like to sponsor a bowling lane for \$250, please contact the BIAPH office.



## “Une affaire de chocolat”

BIAPH's first corporate "Meet and Greet" was held at the Win Henstock Gallery in Oakville on May 5th. Everyone enjoyed an evening of art, an auction and some extravagant chocolate creations from Chef Andryjko Moskal. The event raised \$7,600 for BIAPH.

## Golf4Yuri Memorial Tournament

The 6th Annual Golf4Yuri Memorial Tournament was held on May 9th at Caledon Golf and Country Club. All proceeds from the tournament (over \$14,000) went to the Yuri Mutiger Memorial Fund which supports BIAPH's respite care program. The golfers braved some inclement weather but enjoyed a delicious dinner afterwards. For more pictures and videos from the event, visit the website, [www.golf4yuri.com](http://www.golf4yuri.com).

Save the date: our 2010 tournament will be May 15th.



## BIAPH in the Community

June was Brain Injury Awareness Month across the province. At BIAPH's Annual General Meeting, we held our annual Candle Light Vigil to recognize all survivors of brain injuries and to pay tribute to their inspiring courage and strength.

In June, BIAPH participated in Purolator's Diversity Week. Their theme this year was Invisible Disabilities. BIAPH manned a booth and provided information about our services.



Also in June, BIAPH attended the kick-off event for the Helmets on Kids program at Brandon Gate Public School in Malton. The programs provided 500 helmets for kids.

## **Report from Ontario Brain Injury Association Advisory Council (OAC)**

The Ontario Brain Injury Association Advisory Council undertakes collaborative initiatives and exchanges information among brain injury associations throughout Ontario in order to enhance the quality of community based support to people living with the effects of acquired brain injury. Here is their final 2009 report.

### **Across the Province OBIA Advisory Council (OAC) Review of 2009**

On November 13, OAC held its final meeting of 2009. Representatives from across the province spent some time reviewing the role and purpose of OAC and talked about how they can strengthen the communication and flow of information from you, the members of our associations, with the leadership of their local association, with the OAC and with Ontario Brain Injury Association. Looking ahead to 2010, we will be introducing some new standards for how we work in an effort to offer better service to you. We will be introducing a Code of Ethics for staff, volunteers and consultants, and ensuring that all associations have policies about confidentiality that will better protect your privacy.

Over the past year, OAC reps have increased their knowledge through workshops on:

- Fund development
- Legal aid services
- Income maintenance programs (i.e. ODSP, CPP, Long Term Disability, Ontario Works)

Participation in these workshops helps increase the knowledge of community resources so that your association is better able to share information with you.

In 2009, we worked together on the Provincial Conference, Peer Support and the Dual Membership program. We had greater collaboration than ever before. Seventeen associations participated in the provincial conference hosted by the Brain Injury Association of Niagara (BIAN) and OBIA. Local associations contributed volunteers and door prizes and their presence was felt by those in attendance. Our collective efforts to promote the conference resulted in a sell-out crowd of 566 delegates.

In Peer Mentoring, we were happy to add the Brain Injury Association of Thunder Bay to the participating associations. There are now fifteen associations offering Peer Mentoring. In 2009, we hosted Mentor training sessions in Peterborough, London, Belleville, Mississauga, and we will finish the year with a Mentor training session in Toronto. With our collective efforts, we have been able to train 134 Mentors and support 132 Partners through this program. In 2010, we plan to increase our marketing efforts and extend our reach.

On behalf of OAC, we wish you a happy and peaceful holiday season and look forward to even greater successes in 2010!

## Help Support BIAPH

You can support BIAPH in a number of ways:

- Become a member of the Community Support Network. For one low membership fee, you will become a member of BIAPH and the Ontario Brain Injury Association. This dual membership will help provide a stronger voice for people living with acquired brain injuries as well as develop and produce supportive province-wide programs.
- Making a personal or corporate donation.
- We are looking for volunteers for committees to help with various BIAPH events.

For more information, visit our website or contact the BIAPH office.

We welcome your suggestions for future editions of Pathways. Please e-mail or fax your ideas to the BIAPH office. You can also contact BIAPH through our website, [www.biaph.com](http://www.biaph.com).

BIAPH would like to acknowledge the generous sponsorship of our newsletter by the firm of Thomson, Rogers.

