

**SUPPORT LINK****Information for Support Group Leaders**

Project STAR and The Family and Community Support Center at Carolinas Rehabilitation

*A note from the President... Sandra Farmer.*

BIANC has adopted a new mission statement which we think provides a more accurate description of our role of helping people with brain injuries in North Carolina. The new statement says that the mission of the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina is to offer help, hope, and a voice for people with brain injuries and their families. The best way for us to offer help and hope is to have a strong advocacy voice at the state legislative level. It is extremely important that people with brain injuries are represented in mental health reform plans.

Since 1987, North Carolina has provided funding for services for people with brain injuries through the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse. These services include residential and community supports that allow people with brain injuries to live in the least restrictive environment possible. This means that there should be group homes, independent living programs and other services that specialize in working with people with brain injuries. There are a few places in the state that provide these services but we need many more.

Several years ago, North Carolina officials decided to reform our mental health system to allow more services to be provided in local communities. It has become very clear that the funding system for community based services does not meet the needs of people with brain injuries. The Governor's Advisory Council on Brain Injury is asking that the State Medicaid guidelines be changed in order to provide more services for people with brain injuries.

The Advisory Council is also continuing to encourage the state to provide a brain injury Medicaid waiver and a brain injury trust fund. You will be hearing more about these efforts in the coming months and we will be asking for your support with contacting legislative representatives.

I think 2008 will be great for people with brain injuries!

Contact Sandra by phone at 1-800-377-1464  
or by mail at PO Box 10912, Raleigh, NC 27601  
or at [Sandra.farmer@bianc.net](mailto:Sandra.farmer@bianc.net)

**FREE MEMBERSHIP to BIANC...***an offer too good to refuse*

Did you get your package from the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina (BIANC) offering members of your support group a **free** six month membership?

Growing the membership of the Brain Injury Association is critical to improving services and creating opportunities for persons living with brain injury in North Carolina.

The old adage that "numbers talk" is really true in the case of organizations that work to impact system change for the benefit of its members. The success of any advocacy initiative depends on many factors, but numbers is one of the drivers that cannot, and should not, be overlooked.

Some of the most successful advocacy efforts over the past few years have included large numbers of people converging on a designated place at a designated time in order to make a powerful statement for their chosen cause. Another option is to become a member of an organization that can effectively represent you by advocating for your chosen cause.

When you, and those who attend your support group meetings, choose to become members of BIANC, you are supporting the advocacy efforts for brain injury in North Carolina. By increasing the membership base of the organization, BIANC can have a much stronger voice with legislators and state agencies. One of the most often asked questions is: "How many people does your organization represent?" Numbers really do talk.

Membership in the state brain injury association also comes with a subscription to "Starting Point", the BIANC newsletter, and ongoing information on events and resources for persons with brain injury and their families.

Please encourage your group members to join during this campaign to increase membership. After all, it is **free!**

If you did not get your package containing the Support Group Membership Drive Forms, please contact the Family and Community Support Office in Raleigh at 1-800-377-1464

# *March is Brain Injury Awareness Month*

*Here are some activities to help create awareness in your community.*

- **Contact Project STAR or BIANC for Brain Injury Awareness Materials.**
- **Contact your local cable provider and ask to do a scroll on the information channel. Most cable providers have a local information channel that scrolls information on events and other information. You can put in information about brain injury and your support group.**
- **Set up a display at a local mall or other location where there are lots of people.**
- **Put a Brain Injury Fact Sheet in the local Church bulletins. (There is a great brain injury fact sheet on the BIAA website at [www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org) )**
- **Contact local radio and TV stations and request that they promote brain injury awareness. Offer to write the scripts or to go on a talk show to discuss brain injury.**
- **Organize an event such as a walk or run. Make sure the local media knows your plan and is present when it occurs.**
- **Ask local newspapers to do a special interest story or write a letter to the editor yourself.**
- **Contact local schools and arrange to hand out fliers on bike safety or other brain injury prevention materials.**
- **Schedule an appointment and visit your local and state legislators to discuss the impact of brain injury on survivors, families and communities.**
- **Put up posters and other informational materials in public places, such as grocery stores, malls and restaurants.**
- **Promote membership in the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina**

**If your group has an awareness event planned please share the information with SupportLink so we can share it with other Support Groups.**

## Getting to know you

### Members of the Board of Directors of The Brain Injury Association of North Carolina

A Board of Directors governs the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina. Persons who serve on this board are volunteers who devote their time and energy to making a difference in the lives of those living with brain injury. The board is made up of professional in the brain injury and medical fields, brain injury survivors and others who are willing to serve.

Over the next year, SupportLink will introduce you to the Board of Directors and share a little about them, and why they have chosen to serve in this capacity. It is important that members of the support groups know that there is a dedicated group of people working to improve awareness, services and funding for those living with brain injury in North Carolina. Share this information with your support group members.



**Rita J. Gillis, Ph.D.**

really got to know their patients. At that time, it was not unusual for someone to receive inpatient rehabilitation for 6 months.

Rita spearheaded the first writing of a Family Education Guide that included the Rancho Scales. Along with a family member, she started the first Eastern North Carolina Support group and was the Program Chair for the first Regional Conference on Closed Head Injury that attracted around 200 people from around the state and outlying areas. This was very new stuff back in 1982.

In 1983, she left Greenville to complete a doctorate in Hearing and Speech Science at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Upon graduation, she was hired by the Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center to design and start a comprehensive rehabilitation center primarily for individuals with traumatic brain injuries. In addition to her clinical role, she served on the faculty at Vanderbilt and designed a curriculum on Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation for the graduate students in Speech Pathology. She also served on the Board for the Middle Tennessee Support Organization called REBIRTH.

Over the years Rita worked in other settings and in other states before returning to North Carolina in 2003 to be closer to family. In 2005 she moved into her current position as Program Coordinator for the Brain Injury Unit at the Regional Rehabilitation Center in Greenville. Rita says of her transition back to the rehabilitation center, "It's like returning to one's roots, although with a much richer perspective."

With an impressive history in brain injury rehabilitation which has included not only clinical practice and supervision but also grant writing, rate setting, contract negotiation, budget management, policy development, and marketing, Rita was recommended for membership on the Board of Directors of BIANC for a three-year term beginning in 2007. For the past year she has served as Director of Program Oversight for the Board.

When Rita is not busy with efforts on behalf of persons with brain injury, she enjoy gardening, in particular growing heirloom vegetables organically, gourmet cooking and experimenting with food, reading horticulture books, traveling to new places, and spending time in the country with her husband.

Rita is married to Jeffrey Pierce, M.D. who is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Medical Director for Medical Acupuncture, Brody School of Medicine, ECU . They have one daughter who is a jewelry designer in New York City.



**Flora Hammond, MD**

**Flora Hammond** is a Psychiatrist at Carolinas Rehabilitation in Charlotte. She is the director of the Brain Injury Program and Director of the Carolinas Rehabilitation Research Department. She also serves as the Principal Investigator and Director of the Traumatic Brain Injury Model System Grant funded by the National Institute of Disability Rehabilitation and Research. As part of this grant, she is the principal investigator for Model Systems research studies and co-investigator on numerous other projects. Dr. Hammond also sees patients as inpatients and in the outpatient clinic at Carolinas Rehabilitation.

A graduate of Tulane University, Dr. Hammond completed her residency at Baylor University and also completed a Brain Injury Fellowship at Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan. In addition to being a member of the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina Board of Directors, she also serves on the North Carolina Governors Advisory Council for Traumatic Brain Injury.

After thirteen years at Carolinas Rehabilitation, she is still enthusiastic about her work in brain injury research and rehabilitation. When asked how she decided on brain injury as her specialty she told us; “During my residency training I had the chance to treat several individuals with severe traumatic brain injury. These individuals and their families taught me so much and inspired me to focus my career in this area. I saw that there were so many unmet needs in brain injury care: provider education, family teaching, and research. My mentors gave me teaching and research opportunities, and I was hooked. I saw incredible outcomes achieved through dedicated efforts, and pushing through imposed barriers. As providers, we need to diligently pursue efforts to relieve the problems our patients and families are experiencing. I am constantly inspired by the incredible outcomes that can occur with such persistence. Due to the complex nature of brain injury, specialized clinical care and teaching are critical. Each day I am able to treat individuals with brain injury I am reminded of this great opportunity that I have been given to help my patients and their families improve their lives.”

The brain injury research program at Carolinas Rehabilitation continues to grow under Dr. Hammond’s leadership. It is one of sixteen sites in the United States designated by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research to receive funding for brain injury research under TBI Model Systems of Care. Current research initiatives include clinical trials on medications, medical devices and other studies.

Dr. Hammond is a native of New Orleans, where most of her extended family still lives. She grew up in Pensacola, Florida, but returned to New Orleans for undergraduate and medical school. She now lives in Cornelius and enjoys spending time with her husband and three sons.

**Brain Injury Association of North Carolina Board of Directors**

<b>Hank Baker</b> Raleigh, NC	<b>Linda Herbert</b> Columbus, NC	<b>Jeff Payne</b> Winston Salem, NC	<b>Sandie Worthington</b> Greenville, NC
<b>Mark Eagle</b> Charlotte, NC	<b>Ana King</b> New Hill, NC	<b>Grey Powell</b> Raleigh, NC	<b>Marilyn Lash</b> Wake Forest, NC
<b>Rita Gillis, Ph.D.</b> Greenville, NC	<b>Debbie Leonhardt</b> Hiddenite, NC	<b>Katherine Taber</b> Salisbury, NC	
<b>Flora Hammond, M.D.</b> Charlotte, NC	<b>Stephanie McAdams</b> Chapel Hill, NC	<b>Jerry Villemain</b> Chapel Hill, NC	
<b>Marian Hartman</b> Cary, NC	<b>Charles Monet</b> Charlotte, NC	<b>Michael Weaver</b> Creedmore, NC	

## AROUND THE STATE SUPPORT GROUPS AND OTHER NEWS FROM

### Charlotte Area

Submitted by: Sally Rickard & Peggy Philbrick

December found most of the Support Groups holding Christmas parties, but by far the largest was the annual Christmas Celebration coordinated by Project STAR and hosted by the Union County Area Brain Injury Support Network and Siler Presbyterian Church. Attendance was approximately 200 including persons with brain injury, their families, and those who volunteered. Entertainment, food, fun and many gifts made the day special for those who attended. This annual event continues to grow. A special thank you is in order for Barbara Westphal for her work as MC, and to Bruce James who came all the way from Fuquay-Varina to entertain those who attended, and to Ana King and her husband, who provided transportation to get him there as well as all of the other volunteers.

Over the past ten years the Celebration has grown from a small party for the Union group to a statewide event. Mark your calendars for next year. The date of the 2008 Christmas Celebration will be Saturday December 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Charlotte Area Brain Injury Association enjoyed a group tour to the Billy Graham Museum and Library and lunch at the Graham Brothers Daily Bar in October. The group especially enjoyed seeing the \$5.00 donation check to the Billy Graham Ministries given by President Richard Nixon. Trips for 2008 are in the planning phase with a Bowling Trip planned for February. Holidays were celebrated at the December meeting with a gift exchange, much laughter and lots and lots of food!

The Cleveland County Support Group hosted the Western Region Support Group Leaders meeting in October. Carolyn Costner, group leader, shared information about how they work with community supports to hold the Brain Bonanza, a brain injury awareness and prevention fair each year. Kim Munroe of the Surviving Angels Support Group in Statesville presented information on how her group supports other community agencies.

A new resource for persons with brain injury is now available in the Charlotte area. Hinds' Feet Farm now offers a day program and is accepting members. For information on the program visit the website at [www.HindsFeetFarm.org](http://www.HindsFeetFarm.org) or contact Will DeGrauw at 704-992-1424.

### Asheville and the Western Region

Submitted by: Karen Harrington

December started with a road trip to Charlotte for the annual Christmas Celebration. It was a fun and enjoyable time for everyone that attended and offered a chance to see old friends and make new ones. The rest of the month was busy with all the holiday preparations.

There is one sad note to report, at the end of December Lynn Williams' mother passed away. As some of you may know, Lynn Williams has been the president of the Smoky Mountain Support Group in Asheville for quite some time. If anyone would like to send her a card her address is: 115 Sleepy Forest Drive, Leicester, NC 28748.

We are looking forward to 2008 and wish everyone a great New Year.

### Down East

Submitted By: Darlene Wetzel

During the last several months, the Eastern Family & Community Support Office located in Greenville participated in many events. The first regional recreational BIANC event was held on the Pamlico River. This event, Adaptive Water Sports Day, included collaboration from East Carolina University, the Walker Center and Support Team for Active Recreation (STAR). All in all, this event was a success as the BIANC Greenville office was well represented with twelve survivors and office staff Darlene Wetzel and Jennifer Lenoir. The day included such events as tie-dying t-shirts, boat rides, adaptive water-skiing, bean bag toss, kayaking, food and more food and fellowship with others.

October is known as National Disability Awareness Month and to celebrate this, the Greenville Office participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Disability Awareness Fair by having a booth on display. The event included a breakfast for Pitt County employers, with discussion focusing on the "Importance of Hiring Individuals with Disabilities". The Awareness Fair went from 12:00 noon until 4:00 p.m. and included approximately 55 vendors having displays that ranged from durable medical equipment, Local Management Entities, SmartStart for Families, to local county agencies.

Survivors from Greenville and surrounding areas participated in the Halloween Social that was held at the Pitt County Memorial Hospital Rehabilitation Department. The F.I.S.H. (Families Initiating Support and Hope) pediatric support group hosted a pumpkin painting session and a Holiday/Christmas party where entertainment was provided by a local church group known as "The Naughty Elves" who were very mischievous but brought stuffed animals to all the good little boys and girls.

The holiday season was great and Eastern region support groups like Coastal Brain Injury in New Bern, Down East Survivors and F.I.S.H. in Greenville and Over the Bridge in Rocky Mount celebrated with food, fun and festivities.

## **Central Region**

**Submitted By: Susan Fewell**

**Raleigh Triangle Support Group** had a wonderful holiday celebration and gift exchange and over 50 folks attended. Cosco provided two large cakes to help us celebrate. Certificates of appreciation were presented to family members and survivors who had reached out to provide leadership and service to other survivors and families in our area.

### **Cary Support Group -Leslie Johnson and Dave Baack**

The Cary Brain Injury Support Group meets monthly and generally has a group of 8-10 people in attendance. They have had some interesting and fun topics for their meetings which have included diet and nutrition, meditation, and for our December meeting a potluck dinner and magic show! H

### **Diane Rankin - High Point**

BIA and Brain Boosters had a joint Christmas dinner with music and had around 40 or more people in attendance. It was pot luck with lots of good food. The groups wishes everyone a happy and healthy 2008.

### **Kittie Berringer- High Point**

On December 5, the High Point support group had its annual Christmas covered-dish party. There were 45 family members, caregivers and survivors attending. There was plenty of food, fellowship and fun. We had live music as well as singing and dancing. Everyone seemed to enjoy the evening and look forward to it at Christmas time 2008 John Peeler, with the High Point support group, recently brought in a \$1,000 sponsor for the Triad Walk & Roll-athon planned for April 5 at Bolton Park in Winston-Salem. Congratulations to John.

### **Ellen Morales-Fayetteville**

Event planning has started for the Walk & Roll-athon planned for March 15 in Fayetteville for the second year in a row at the Kiwanis Recreation Park. The support group is a very active group.

### **New Group in Jacksonville**

Sgt. Robin Bristow and her husband have started a new group to serve children, adults and military families in Jacksonville/Camp Lejuene area. The couple has a son who had a brain injury in a car crash on May 3 of this year. They are calling the group the "Right Hand Angels" because their son cannot use his right hand at this time and others are his 'right hand angels' to help him when needed. The first group meeting was in December at Sgt. Bristow's home. She wants families to get together to help each other with support and understanding.

*Contributed articles reflect the view of the contributing author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Project STAR or Carolinas Rehabilitation. Websites and other references are intended for use at the discretion of the user and inclusion in this newsletter in no way implies endorsement by Project STAR of Carolinas Rehabilitation.*

## ***Special Invitation***

On Tues February 5 at 6pm at Durham Learning Services, 707 Morehead Avenue, Durham, NC a local doctor who experienced a brain injury will be speaking to the Acquired Brain Injury support group. Please let everyone know of this event— It is open to all and will be an interesting evening.

**Dr. Patrick Craft** went to medical school at ECU and trained at ECU and U Kentucky. When he was a 3rd year medical student, married with a 3 month old baby, he experienced a brain injury. He was able to return to medical school and finish (albeit a year late). Dr. Craft has been in solo practice, and has done ER work. He now works in a public health clinic in Roxboro. He will share his life experiences with the group.

For additional information please contact Shani Cohen at (919) 529-1241 ext 107

# **ACCENT ON ADVOCACY** - *A resolution challenge for the New Year*

***The Time is ripe*** for getting the word out about brain injury. In recent years more people than ever are surviving brain injuries, but the awareness level of the general public remains almost non-existent. The challenge that brain injury advocates face is to identify ways to get “recognition and resources” for persons with brain injury.

In an article in the Summer 2007 Brain Injury Association magazine “THE Challenge”, Susan Connors, President and CEO of that organization addressed the challenges facing brain injury survivors and their advocates. The points she makes in this article reiterate those issues we have discussed in our statewide support group leaders meetings and within the BIANC Advocacy Committee. You can download or read the article by Susan Connors by using the following web address. [http://www.biausa.org/publications/tbi\\_challenge\\_summer\\_2007.pdf](http://www.biausa.org/publications/tbi_challenge_summer_2007.pdf)

In the article, Ms. Connors list four challenges, that in her opinion, brain injury advocates must overcome in order to affect change in the attitudes and perceptions people, especially legislators, have about brain injury. The four challenges she list are

1. **Dealing with diversity**
2. **Recognizing brain injury as a disease**
3. **Overcoming public depictions and perceptions**
4. **Adjusting attitudes in advocacy**

In the article, she points out what we already know, “*Brain injury is acquired. Individuals and families are overwhelmed by the injury so there’s little time, energy or money left for advocacy.*” As support group leaders, we must question how we can be effective advocates for those we serve. How can we meet the challenges identified by Ms. Connors?

The most simple solution is to take a pro-active approach and participate in any opportunity that allows us to have a “voice” for brain injury, and while some group leaders have the flexibility to travel, others do not. Many group leaders cannot travel to attend meetings, go to the legislature and speak out or attend rallies, but there are many ways to advocate without doing any of these things.

## ***Food For Thought***

- **Responding to emails that offer the opportunity to have a voice**  
How many times when we get emails asking us to contact our legislators about issues that impact brain injury funding and legislation, do we hit the delete key rather than the “contact your legislator” link? Do we forward the email to others asking them to also respond, or do we automatically assume that they won’t do it, so why bother to clutter up their inboxes with the information?
- **Attending forums and community meetings on health care issues that impact persons with disability, including brain injury**  
When we get information on community forums, workshops, town hall meetings and other public hearing venues that offer the opportunity for public input, do we try to attend and speak to the needs of persons with brain injury, or do we assume that someone else will do it? If we cannot attend do we share the information with others who might like to attend? We can rest assured that other disability groups will show up and speak out for their cause. Those who participate are most likely to reap any benefits that come out of the meetings.
- **Taking voice and educating others about brain injury**  
When the opportunity arises do we share information about brain injury with others? Do we keep in touch with local media and take advantage of every opportunity to get our group and its activities mentioned in the local media? Do we make a point of trying to participate in local health fairs or other informational forums where there is an opportunity to educate the public about brain injury.

Let’s all think about advocacy and consider making a New Years’ Resolution to become “Proactive” toward advocacy. Ms. Connors offered a lot of insight into why brain injury is so underfunded and underserved. If we can do nothing more, we can download the article, print it out and share it with anyone willing to read it. Who knows, maybe they will become an advocate for brain injury.

**High Visibility** is a term that you have often heard at support group leaders meetings. If brain injury awareness is to be increased, it is imperative that the brain injury community take every opportunity to participate in meetings and forums that affect services and supports for persons with disability in North Carolina.

Over the past few months, Project STAR and BIANC has shared information about the Money Follows The Person (MFP) incentive grant that North Carolina received to assist persons who are currently in nursing homes, mental hospitals and group homes, transition to living in community settings, with proper supports. The state held a series of public meetings around the state and brain injury was represented at many of these meetings.

We now have another opportunity to participate in a forum that has the potential to improve service facilitation for those with brain injury in North Carolina. Improvements in supports and service delivery can greatly enhance the quality of life for persons with brain injury who rely on state services funded through Medicaid or Medicare.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Grant Program, is a cooperative effort of the Administration on Aging (AOA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). It was developed to assist states in their efforts to create a single, coordinated system of information and access for all persons seeking long-term support and to minimize confusion, enhance individual choice, and to support informed decision-making. Such a coordinated system could greatly benefit persons with brain injury.

As stated in a memo from the Aging and Disability Resource Center, "The ADRC is considered to be one of the primary vehicles to modernize long term care systems, particularly in relation to helping people avoid unnecessary institutionalization by supporting individuals of all disabilities and incomes to make informed, cost-effective choices". It further states that "The initiative is not about adding new services but rather building on existing community infrastructure and realigning systems and processes." Ease in accessing services would greatly benefit persons with brain injury.

North Carolina received \$800,000 to conduct pilot programs which ran from July 2004 through June 2007. The highlights from these pilots will be discussed and the information shared in a series of community forums around the state. These forums are open to the public and ADRC encourages people with disabilities and their caregivers to attend. There will be opportunities to participate in small group discussions and to ask questions about the pilot projects and implementation process. Registration is required. There is no cost to attend and lunch will be provided. The meetings are from 8:30 AM until 4:00 PM on the dates and at the sites below:

Location	Date	Phone Number	Registration Deadline
Greensboro, NC	January 17	336-697-4000	January 7
Fayetteville	January 29	910-433-1574	January 18
Jacksonville	February 7	910-455-274	January 29
Concord	February 12	704-721-7438	February 4
Williamston	February 21	252-792-3540	February 11
Raleigh	February 18	800-662-7924	February 18
Waynesville	March 25	828-452-2370	March 17
Boone	March 26	828-262-4300	March 17

You should have received registration information by email. Consider attending the forum nearest you and share the information with members of your support group and encourage them to attend if possible. The higher the visibility of brain injury at this type of event, the higher the awareness of brain injury becomes. For additional information please contact the DHHS Office of Long Term Services and Supports at [ADRC.forums@ncmail.net](mailto:ADRC.forums@ncmail.net) or phone 919-555-4428 or you can contact Project STAR for registration and location information.



# Brain Injury Association of North Carolina

## Membership Form

### How to Reach Us

#### Family Helpline

1-800-377-1464

[bianc@bianc.net](mailto:bianc@bianc.net)

BIANC has four regional offices:

#### Asheville

Community CarePartners

68 Sweeten Creek Road

Asheville, NC 28803

828-277-4868 Fax: 828-277-4869

1-866-890-7801

#### Raleigh

P.O. Box 10912

Raleigh, NC 27605

919-833-9634 Fax: 919-833-5415

1-800-377-1464

#### Charlotte

*Carolinas Rehabilitation*

1100 Blythe Boulevard

Charlotte, NC 28203

704-355-1502 Fax: 704-355-9480

#### Greenville

202 East Arlington St., Suite T

Greenville, NC 27834

252-439-1900 Fax: 252-439-1993

1-800-697-3115

Visit our website:

[www.bianc.net](http://www.bianc.net)

Membership in the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina provides an opportunity for **you** to demonstrate your interest in and support for survivors and families in North Carolina. Who should join? **Brain injury survivors, family members, friends, nurses, doctors, therapists, rehabilitation specialists, case managers, attorneys**, other professionals, and **organizations** that work with individuals who have had brain injuries.

Benefits of membership include: discounted registration for events sponsored by the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina, and subscription to the *Starting Point* newsletter. All membership fees to this non-profit organization are tax-deductible.

- **Basic Membership** is \$38 a year. Includes all benefits above. No survivor or family will be denied membership due to finances. A reduced rate is available.
- **Executive Membership** is \$100 a year. Includes the additional benefit of recognition in BIANC's publications.
- **Platinum Membership** includes all of the above benefits, as well as a certificate suitable for framing and recognition on our website, which receives over 3000 visitors each month, for \$250 each year.
- **Corporate Sponsor Programs** are also available. These include all of the above benefits plus advertising space in BIANC publications, tickets to the annual golf tournament, and sponsorship of campers at the survivor's retreat. Contact BIANC for more information.

**Our financial viability is largely dependent upon the generosity of our members. You can help now by becoming a member. Join by completing and returning the membership form below.**

## Membership Form

- Basic individual membership.....\$38/yr  
 Platinum membership.....\$250/yr

- Executive membership.....\$100/yr  
 Please send me an information packet on the Corporate Sponsorship Program

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

I am a:  Survivor  Family member  Professional

Other

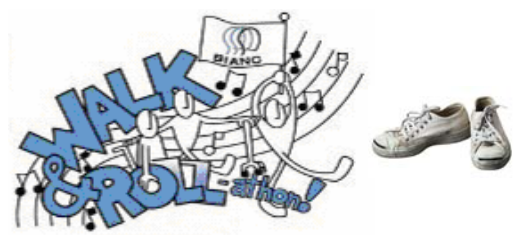
Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Master Card  Visa  Check enclosed.

Send to: Brain Injury Association of North Carolina  
PO Box 10912  
Raleigh, NC 27605



# Notes about the



**March is Brain Injury Awareness Month** and in March 2008 BIANC will once again stage Walk & Roll-a-thons at locations across the state. Plans are already underway to make these events successful. Planning is well underway to making each of these events a success.

The Walk & Roll-a-thons serve many purposes. They create awareness, promote a sense of community among participants and supporters and raise funds that BIANC uses to support persons with brain injury and their families through the BIANC membership program, support group development, legislative advocacy toward improving services, survivor and family camp at Camp Carefree. Income from the walks also helps with providing information and resource materials for the Family and Community Support Offices, updating and maintaining the BIANC website and providing training for professionals, caregivers and support group leaders.

The March 2007, walks were held in five locations across the state; Raleigh, Fayetteville, Asheville, Greenville and the Triad. These walks raised approximately \$32,000 and created a lot of interest in the communities where they were held.

There are things that Support Group Leaders can do to insure that the 2008 walks are a success. Start now to plan for your group to participate in the closest walk. Here is what you can do:

- **Talk it up!** Tell your group participants about the planning process. Let them know that March is Brain Injury Awareness Month and that BIANC is already working on putting together awareness activities, including the Walk & Roll-a-thons.
- **Encourage participation.** Encourage participation on an individual level. Locate the nearest Walk & Roll-a-thon site and think about ways to make it happen. Pre-plan such things as transportation, awareness themes, a group logo or other methods to create a “team” spirit.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Think about family, friends and acquaintances who may be willing to donate toward sponsoring an individual who will be participating in the event. Several individuals raised over \$800 in personal sponsorship for the March 2007 Walk & Roll-a-thon.

This year there are seven events planned across the state making it more accessible to more people. Below are the event dates and locations. Please contact BIANC for additional event details for your preferred location.

Location	Date	Site	Event
Fayetteville	March 15, 2008	Honeycutt Park	Walk&Roll-athon
Jacksonville	March 15, 2008	Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville	Joggin' for Your Noggin 5K Run Picnic for families and survivors
Asheville	March 29, 2008	Biltmore Square Mall	Walk & Roll-athon
Morrisville	March 29, 2008	Lake Crabtree Park	Walk & Roll-athon and Joggin' for Your Noggin 5K Run
Greenville	March 29, 2008	Colonial Mall	Walk & Roll-athon
Statesville	March 29, 2008	To be announced	Walk & Roll-athon
Winston Salem	April 5, 2008	Bolton Park	Walk & Roll-athon

Please plan to attend one of the walks or runs and help us find sponsors or others donations to meet our goal of raising awareness and \$100,000 for materials, training, support group support and advocacy so BIANC can provide help, hope and a voice for people with brain injuries and their families. Make plans NOW to participate in the Brain Injury Association of NC Walk & Roll-a-thon in your area.

Upcoming Events	Date	Location	Information contact
Managing Behaviors Following Brain Injury	March 28, 2008	Charlotte AHEC	704-512-6517
• A workshop addressing behavioral changes after brain injury			
Camp Carefree	June 6-8, 2008	Stokesdale, NC	800-377-1464
• Annual survivor camp at Camp Carefree			
BIANC Open Board Meeting	June 8, 2008	Stokesdale, NC	800-377-1464
• Annual meeting of the BIANC Board of Directors that is open to the public			

# Notes from the Western Central and Western Support Group Leaders Meeting

BIANC Regional Support Group Leaders Regional Meeting

October 6, 2007, Boiling Springs, North Carolina

*Areas Represented: Asheville, Hickory, Statesville, Rutherfordton, Monroe, Lake Norman, Shelby, Gastonia, Charlotte-Project STAR*

Hosted By: Carolyn Costner, Cleveland County Support Group

Peggy Philbrick and Karen Harrington opened the meeting with a welcome and overview of BIANC direction. The topics covered included:

- Advocacy emphasis
- Membership drive and support groups
- Events

Karen Harrington gave an update on the Western Family and Community Support Office and the collaborations underway there to build supports for the brain injury community in that area.

Kim Munroe, leader of Surviving Angels, the Statesville group, did a presentation on giving back to the community. She shared how her group supports a local battered women and children's shelter by bring useful articles such as toiletries to their meetings that are then donated to the shelter. She also stressed the importance of prevention and shared some of the things the group does to educate their community.

Carolyn Costner of the Shelby Support group shared information about how their group has made connections within their community that has allowed them to hold a health and safety fair and bike rodeo each year that draws hundreds of people. The group uses community donations to purchase bike helmets that the group gives away to children at the fair. Collaborations with community agencies such as the local Park and Recreation Department, Safe Kids, the police and fire departments, local radio stations and others allow them to offer a wide variety of prevention and safety information as well as entertainment.

In a discussion about growing support groups, most groups reported that their groups are stable and that attendance levels are manageable. Reaching out to surrounding counties and offering to help get new groups started was discussed as an opportunity for existing groups.

An open discussion about community connections and event planning allowed group leaders to share how they reach out in their own communities to get support for their projects. The open discussion time pointed out the following interest and concerns from those present.

- Training for group leaders in the area of legal information such overviews of Medicare and Medicaid set asides, workers comp, disability rights, etc.
- Beyond Tomorrow in more locations around the state to make it more accessible to small towns and rural communities
- Social Security training for group leaders – perhaps a workshop or other training on how to apply and appeal and other issues connected with securing benefits for persons with brain injury. This would help group leaders share appropriate information with those who need it.
- An identification card, perhaps something offered with survivor memberships to BIANC that would officially identify the person as having sustained a brain injury. This card could be used to convey information about brain injury when it is needed. Examples of occasions where this could be helpful include, traffic stops, emergencies, difficulty communicating, etc.
- Information and training for small town police departments on brain injury in order to avoid persons with brain injury being mistreated. This need could possibly be met by providing materials distributed to local police and sheriffs departments to be used during training.
- Resource handouts for group leaders that gives an overview and/or outline of state services would be helpful. Copies of the Agency Spotlight from the newsletters could be used for this.
- Several people mentioned that they were having difficulty receiving information from BIANC. It was mentioned that either they didn't receive follow-up or that information was received very late.



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