



## BIST BEACON

LATE FALL 2012

### GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Wow, it is hard to know where to start! I am very pleased and honoured to be embarking on another year with the Board of Directors of BIST. As always, BIST is very fortunate to have a group of dedicated volunteers on the Board, each of whom is so passionate and gives so much of their time to the organization. You will have the opportunity to meet each of them at upcoming community meetings and BIST events. Please take a moment to introduce yourself and feel free to speak with them about anything you would like to ask or share regarding BIST.

This has been another great autumn for BIST. On September 22, 2012 we hosted our second annual BIST 5K Run, Walk & Roll. Although the first annual event in 2011 was hard to beat, we did it! We had many more runners this year and almost doubled our revenue. We couldn't have done it without all of our wonderful sponsors or without all of the blood, sweat, and tears that each of the participants put into their fundraising and training. So once again, THANK YOU! And a special thank you to the planning committee. Time to start training for next year!!

BIST Members have also been very busy these past few months with a great number of very exciting events and outings including a trip to WindReach Farms, the annual BIST/CHIRS Halloween Dance, Bowling Extravaganzas and community meetings. You can read more about these events in the following pages.

Although this was a very busy and exciting year, we are pleased to tell you that there is more to come. 2013 promises to be a banner year for BIST with more Support Groups and workshops for members and their families, the addition of a second monthly community meeting in another location in Toronto, and many



more fun outings, brought to you by the Program and Services Committee. We are also so pleased that we have been able to secure a small office space for BIST, a place where the staff can come together and get on with the business of planning another great year!

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holidays and fantastic 2013!

Judy Moir, Chair of BIST Board

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Another Chance to Give Back—Rob Ashe**
- **Volunteer Spotlight—Frank Bruno**
- **New! BIST Monthly Social Night**
- **Member Trip—WindReach Farm**

### BIST BLOG

Make sure you check out and subscribe to BIST's blog at:

[www.torontobraininjuryblog.wordpress.com](http://www.torontobraininjuryblog.wordpress.com)

Don't miss out on having great articles delivered directly to your inbox!

#### torontobraininjuryblog



#### Monthly preview: BIST takes on winter

Posted on January 5, 2012

Canadian winters.

Love them or hate them, there is no denying that winters and Canadians' struggle against the extreme conditions that they bring are part of what defines us. Look no further than a 2008 survey commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Dominion Institute. With items such as the Maple Leaf, hockey and the Canadian flag topping the list of the 101 things that best define this country, those surveyed still had winter on their minds and ranked it 89th on the list.

#### Recent Posts

- Monthly preview: BIST takes on winter
- The Day After Tomorrow
- Join the 2012 Study - Psychological Needs of Children in Canada
- Question and Answer: Ethical Justification for the H1N1 Vaccine
- BIST Congress Wednesday

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## ANOTHER CHANCE TO GIVE BACK

By Rob Ashe, BIST member

Throughout the years of being a brain injury survivor, I have experienced much and had the chance to give much because of the many brain injury groups I belong to. I want to tell you about my most recent opportunity: the Annual BIST 5km Walk, Run and Roll held in Sunnybrook park on September 22nd.

I came with my friends Mike aka Pinky and Sarah his wife, all BIST members ourselves. The park had many people crowded at the registration table handing in pledge forms and receiving numbers that they pinned to their chest area plus gift bags. Before the race began we saw a lot of people we knew and had a chance to talk to them, no problem as we all love to talk!

Before the runners, walkers and rollers started we had found our spot as we were course marshals. As we anticipated them passing us we were amped to the max, shouting words of encouragement, jumping up and down, cheering to which we received smiles, laughter and words of gratitude.

For me personally, to see the team from CHIRS ( Community Head Injury Resource Services ) a brain injury group I belong to and spend many of my days at, was a highlight. When I saw the determination on their faces as they approached the finish line, I was able to cheer them on, give high fives and thumbs up to inspire and motivate them to realize that they can accomplish much more than they think they can. The honor is mine and to you all I say a big thank thank you!!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Survivor Workshop  
Substance Abuse and Brain Injury**  
Date: Monday December 10th  
Time: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm  
Location: Northern District Library  
40 Orchard View Blvd, Rm 200

**BIST Bowling**  
Date: Tuesday January 29th  
Time: 12:30 pm—3:00 pm  
Location: Thorncliffe Bowlerama  
East York Town Centre  
45 Overlea Blvd

**Ontario Science Centre**  
Date: Tuesday February 19th  
Time: TBA  
Location: 770 Don Mills Road  
(Southwest corner of Don Mills and  
Eglinton)

## FACEBOOK AND TWITTER



You can also follow BIST on  
Twitter at @BrainInjuryTO



Check it out by searching for  
Brain Injury Society of  
Toronto

Feel free to send submissions to [info@bist.ca](mailto:info@bist.ca)

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – FRANK BRUNO

*How long have you been a member of BIST?*

3 years now with BIST and years with HIAT/BIAT

*What is your volunteer role with BIST?*

My role as I see it is to help out wherever and whenever I can. I consider myself as a pusher...I will push others to do as much as they can. It is so easy to say I can't do that or it is difficult to do. We all have the same (basically) limitations, yet to different degrees. You can always do something, no matter how small or little you think. Helping out wherever you can helps a lot to so many people.

*What motivated you to become a volunteer with BIST?*

I did so much fund raising for HIAT/BIAT, that after they passed away on their final days, I had a void there and was helping out with different Brain Injury Associations like Peel, Oshawa, OBIA, Fort Erie, Ottawa, Kitchener and the Heart and Stroke getting prizes for whatever they needed.

*What is the best part of being a BIST volunteer?*

Best part of volunteering is seeing others helping others to achieve things that they didn't or couldn't think was doable. 10 or 15 or more heads together does great work.

*What would you say to potential volunteers?*

Volunteering is great fun. You don't have to do a lot at the beginning, just start out where you think you can help the most and then grow and expand from that.

*Why do you think it is important to volunteer?*

How much better you become and how much stronger your association with BIST becomes.

*How do you balance work, life and volunteering?*

Balancing, now that is not easy and very tricky. You have to watch your own stamina level and try not to do too much too quickly. You don't want to burn out fast.

*What is your favourite book? What is your favourite movie?*

I don't read books. When I read a paragraph 5 times, I will get 5 different meanings so I have given up on reading books. Same for movies because of my lack of concentration

*What other activities are of interest to you?*

I organize three touch or flag football teams.....a one hand touch...a two hand touch and a flag. I don't play anymore as I can't play at the level I am used to. These teams are at a very high level for ordinary people (those without disabili-



ties). Then there is the volunteering I do with other group, mostly collecting items for them to use as auction items in their events. I have access to the Hockey Hall of Fame and their honoured members

This past summer I volunteered (refereeing) at West Park Hospital for their first annual soccer tournament. Teams raised money to enter this fun tournament. Then in September I was a referee in the Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer with Darryl Sittler, Bryan Trottier, Elizabeth Manley, Don Cherry and others helped make that more fun

*What is the most important thing you have learned through volunteering with BIST?*

If you are not volunteering, get out and enjoy what you have to offer and see what others can do. We are all in the same boat together. Let's make this a fun, happy and smooth sail. Imagine what all of us together can do!

## WHEN THE GAME'S OVER: THE LINK BETWEEN CONTACT SPORTS AND BRAIN INJURIES

By Melissa Myers

After 14 years of fighting and over 100 fights including boxing, MMA and kickboxing matches, life is not the same anymore for Gary Goodridge. Goodridge, who resides in Barrie, Ont., was an accomplished fighter and author of the book *Gatekeeper: The Fighting Life of Gary "Big Daddy" Goodridge*. Now retired, he has been diagnosed with a disease called Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), the result of numerous concussions. "In a day I probably lose 70 per cent of what is happening," said Goodridge, referring to his short-term memory. "I couldn't tell you what I was doing a half hour ago."

CTE, formerly known as boxer's dementia, occurs when a protein called Tau builds up in the brain after several concussions. Those diagnosed exhibit symptoms similar to dementia or Alzheimer's. Although Goodridge's biography and the overtly aggressive nature of fighting in MMA and kickboxing are extreme examples, concussions are quite commonplace and the risks become even higher when participating in any contact sport.

"Concussions are the most frequent head injury," said Dr. Paul Comper, Clinical Neuropsychologist in the Neuro Rehabilitation Program at Toronto Rehab, in an interview last month. Dr. Comper says football/rugby, hockey and soccer are the most high-risk contact sports because of the associated speed and aggression.

Concussions, also referred to as mild traumatic head or brain injuries (MTHI's or mTBI's), occur when a person who is moving quickly comes to an abrupt stop and their brain hits up against their skull. Although helmets can protect the skull, they cannot protect against concussion when high speeds are involved, as abrasions can still occur to the brain tissue when an athlete's head comes into contact with another player or a hard surface. This action often results in the symptoms we associate with concussions, such as blurred vision, nausea, dizziness, and in extreme cases, loss of consciousness. When athletes show no symptoms, their injury is called a sub-concussion. But just because it is not apparent a concussion has been sustained at the time, that doesn't stop its long-term effects from becoming apparent later on.

"It is an injury that can be managed and should be managed effectively," said Dr. Comper.

He says that because symptoms may not arise right away, allowing an injured player to re-enter the game too quickly could have catastrophic results. Dr. Comper stressed that educating parents and coaches about the proper steps to take after athletes sustain a concussion can make all the difference in the long run.

Dr. Comper also noted that the best treatments for concussions are removal from play, rest, and gradual reactivation. Spectators on the scene can have an essential role in initiating the healing process by ensuring the player does not return to play.



Gary Goodridge. Photo from Twitter.

Dr. Comper, along with a team that includes Dr. Doug Richards and Dr. Mike Hutchison, have been working together in partnership with the University of Toronto to initiate an organized "return to play" model and practice. The University of Toronto/Toronto Rehab Varsity Athlete Concussion Program is the first of its kind in that "return to play" guidelines are science and evidence-based as opposed to being based on recognizing clinical symptoms. This means that doctors work with players to create baseline neurological tests that can be compared with post-injury results later on, which allows medical staff to assess the athletes' cognitive impairment after a concussion. The return to play policy can be viewed in full at: <http://physical.utoronto.ca/Concussion/Recovery.asp>

In rare occurrences, returning to play too early can lead to a fatality. SIS, or Second-Impact Syndrome, can happen when a subsequent concussion occurs before the brain has had enough time to rest or heal from the initial injury. As a quick and proper response is the best way to lessen the permanency of concussion symptoms, awareness is the greatest tool in preventing potentially life altering injuries.

Dr. Comper and the U of T Athletic Department aren't the only ones working in our community to raise concussion awareness and promote proper injury management. The Canadian Football League (CFL) and the Canadian Football League Alumni Association (CFLAA) are also doing their part to get the word out and to protect Canadian football players of all ages.

Earlier this summer the CFLAA along with the Hamilton Tiger Cats Alumni Association (HTCAA) held a one-day concussion course featuring expert guest speakers in the medical, legal, therapeutic and coaching fields. The course was called "Concussions 101" and was held in McMaster Innovation Park in Hamilton.



## WHEN THE GAME'S OVER: THE LINK BETWEEN CONTACT SPORTS AND BRAIN INJURIES—CONTINUED

In May of last year, the CFL launched a countrywide concussion awareness campaign with the goal of distributing concussion awareness and management flyers to hundreds of thousands of coaches and athletes across Canada.

To view the flyer, click [here](#)

Although the connection between several concussions throughout one's career and the onset of neurodegenerative diseases has yet to be determined, there is a steady pattern of serious brain damage in contact sport-athletes. Former Toronto Argonaut and Hamilton Tiger-Cat Bobby Kuntz and former Ottawa Roughrider Jay Roberts, after autopsy, were both found to have had CTE. Before passing, Kuntz and Roberts suffered from Parkinson's and dementia, respectively.

It can be particularly challenging to come to terms with the realities of these diseases as those diagnosed struggle to remember their former lives. The thrill of competing in front of an audience, the heady feelings associated with winning a cherished trophy or title,

indeed the chance simply to get paid playing a sport one loves, are great rewards for athletes.

In fact some of the best mixed martial artists in the world, including UFC light heavyweight champion Jon Jones, will descend on Toronto this weekend seeking to entertain and gain fame at UFC 152. However, as retired MMA fighter Goodridge knows all too well, there are serious repercussions associated with competing in contact sports.

"Had I known I was leading myself to be the way I am, I would've chosen a different path," he said.

*Melissa Myers is a member of BIST's Communications Committee*

## WE NEED YOUR INPUT

As BIST members are aware, the Brain Injury Awareness Committee (BIAM) puts on an annual event in June, to celebrate Brain Injury Awareness Month. In previous years we have had a circus theme with bands playing at Nathan Philips Square as well as Artist Displays and a Survivor Tent with guest speakers.

**The BIAM committee is asking you, our members, for unique ideas as this committee would like to change up our venue and do something a little different.**

Please forward all and any ideas and suggestions to [info@bist.com](mailto:info@bist.com) by Friday December 21, 2012.

Please remember, this is awareness for the general public. Thank you for your participation and contribution to our awareness campaign.

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETINGS

### Monday December 17th, 2012

Holiday Party  
Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
Location: Northern District Library –  
40 Orchard View Blvd, Room 200  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

### Monday January 28th, 2013

Internet Privacy Awareness  
Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
Location: Northern District Library –  
40 Orchard View Blvd, Room 200 (2<sup>nd</sup>  
Floor)

### Monday February 25th, 2013

Living with ABI  
Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
Location: Northern District Library – 40  
Orchard View Blvd, Room 200 (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

**BIST SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP**

# Brain injuries change lives.

The **BIST Survivor Support Group** allows individuals living with the effects of brain injury to meet others to share experiences, receive emotional support, as well as valuable information and resources.

**When:** 8 sessions – 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Tuesday of every month

**Cost:** FREE with BIST membership (participants can become members of BIST during registration) - \$5 Subsidized (for Survivors Only)

To learn more about the group, please call  
**(416) 830-1485** or email [connections@bist.ca](mailto:connections@bist.ca).



[www.bist.ca](http://www.bist.ca)



FAMILY COFFEE CONNECTION

# Family Coffee Connection



**Cost:** FREE  
**Date:** Last Tuesday of every month  
**Time:** 6:00 pm—7:30 pm  
**Place:** Northern District Library, 40 Orchard View Blvd, Room 200

No registration necessary, but let us know if you plan to attend so we have enough coffee.

**Contact:**  
Debra Fine, BIST Social Worker at [dfine@bist.ca](mailto:dfine@bist.ca) or 647-990-1485

Great opportunity to network and make connections.



Ontario Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario

## BIST COMMUNITY SOCIAL NIGHT

BIST is introducing a Community Social Night starting January 2013. These will be in addition to our Monthly Community Meetings on Monday and will take place on the second Wednesday of each month.

Come join us for games, activities and movies. This is another great chance for a night to get out, meet others and socialize.

### Upcoming dates:

Wednesday January 9th 6:00 pm – 7:45 pm

Wednesday February 13th 6:00 pm – 7:45 pm

Wednesday March 13th. 6:00 pm – 7:45 pm

### AccessPoint Danforth

3079 Danforth Ave.

Toronto, ON M1L 1A8

Phone: 416-693-8677

Contact Kat Powell, Programs & Services Coordinator at 416-830-1485 and [connections@bist.ca](mailto:connections@bist.ca) for more information.



## BIST PROGRAM CALENDAR

BIST Program Calendar December - 2012 to December 2013				
Date	Events / Program	Location	Time	Target Group
Monday Nov 26	Community Meeting	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd – Rm 200	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	All Members
Tuesday Nov 27	Bowling	Thorncliffe Bowlerama East York Town Centre 45 Overlea Blvd	12:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Survivors
Monday Dec 10	Survivor Workshop – Substance Use and Brain Injury	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd – Rm 200	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Survivors
Monday Dec 17	Holiday Party	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd – Rm 200	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	All Members
Tuesday Jan 8	Survivor Support Group – Jan to March 8 sessions, 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd	2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Survivors – Registration Required
Wednesday Jan 9	Community Social Night	Access Point Danforth 3079 Danforth Ave	6:00 pm – 7:30pm	All Members
January TBA	Family Member Workshop	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd		Family Members
Monday Jan 28	Community Meeting	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd – Rm 200	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	All Members
Tuesday Jan 29	Family Coffee Connection	Northern District Library 40 Orchard View Blvd – Rm 200	6:00 pm – 7:30 pm	Caregivers & Family Members
Tuesday Jan 29	Bowling	Thorncliffe Bowlerama East York Town Centre 45 Overlea Blvd	12:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Survivors
Wednesday Feb 13	Community Social Night	Access Point Danforth 3079 Danforth Ave	6:00 pm – 7:30pm	All Members

BIST has over 70 programs scheduled for 2013 and we have made it easier for you to keep track of what is going on.

Download the full calendar of BIST Programs and Services on our website.

Visit [www.bist.ca/bist-programs-and-services](http://www.bist.ca/bist-programs-and-services) to download it now.



Box 4999, 660 Eglinton Avenue East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4G 4G1  
Tel: 416-830-1485

[www.bist.ca](http://www.bist.ca)



## BIST TRIP TO WINDREACH FARM

On October 11<sup>th</sup> BIST members took a trip to WindReach Farm in Ashburn, ON. Although the weather was a bit chilly for early October, a great time was had by all.

WindReach Farm strives to enrich the lives of persons of all ages with disabilities and/or special needs by providing opportunities to enjoy experiences in farming, nature, outdoor recreation & other activities and to share those experiences with family and friends. We went on a tractor ride, fed the cows, travelled the corn maze, and took turns holding the resident kittens.

For more information about WindReach Farm, please visit [www.windreach.org](http://www.windreach.org)

BIST has more great trips planned for next year!



## BIST HOLIDAY PARTY 2012

**Come Celebrate and be Merry!**

BIST Annual Holiday Party  
 Monday December 17th, 2012  
 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
 Northern District Library  
 40 Orchard View Blvd  
 Room 200



**BIST**  
Brain Injury Society of Toronto

Monday December 17th, 2012

# BIST'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY



http://www.bist.ca/photos.net/

**Meeting Time:**  
6:00—8:00pm

**Come join us for this fun filled evening where**  
**Fun Games**  
**Holiday Songs Sing-a-long**  
**&**  
**Great Snacks and Drinks are offered**

**Please dress in festive clothing for this event**

**Meeting Location:**  
 Northern District Library  
 40 Orchard View Blvd – Room 200 (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

Located just one block north of the Eglinton Subway station on the west side of Yonge St.  
 Parking is available on the streets around the library.

BIST - BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY OF TORONTO  
 804-48988, 680 EGLINTON AVE EAST, TORONTO, ON M4G 4G1  
 Phone: 416-430-2495 - Email: [info@bist.ca](mailto:info@bist.ca)  
[www.bist.ca](http://www.bist.ca)



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WINTER WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

S E I B A B N E W Y E A R S E V E Y
G C H A M P A G N E T Y I M N S T T
E N S S U E T H C D A N C E D R H R
S Q I N F E T O O D M U A Y O E I A
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S R E Z I T E P P A Y F R I E N D S

- APPETIZERS BABIES BALLOONS BANNERS BUFFET CELEBRATE CHAMPAGNE CONFETTI DANCE DAY ONE
DECORATIONS END OF DECEMBER EVENTS FAMILY FATHER TIME FEAST FESTIVITIES FIREWORKS FIRST OF JANUARY FRIENDS
HATS HOLIDAY HORNS KISS MIDNIGHT MUSIC NEW YEARS DAY NEW YEARS EVE NOISEMAKERS OCCASION
PARADES PARTY PUNCH RESOLUTIONS SINGING STREAMERS THIRTY FIRST TIARAS WINE YEAR IN REVIEW

Did you enjoy this puzzle? Visit: http://www.puzzles.ca/wordsearch.html

BIST Brain Injury Society of Toronto



660 Eglinton Avenue East, Box 4999 Toronto, Ontario M4G 4G1

Telephone: (416) 830-1485 Email: info@bist.ca

www.bist.ca

The mission of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto is to enhance the quality of life for people in the City of Toronto, living with the effects of acquired brain injury, through education, awareness, support and advocacy.

Our services include:

- Community Meetings Support Groups Personal Development Workshops Peer Support Mentoring Special events

For more information, volunteer opportunities or to make a donation, please visit www.bist.ca or 416-830-1485

BIST is proudly supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.



The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario