

PRBIS BRAINSCAN

LIFE BEYOND ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

POWELL RIVER BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY

Brain Injury 101 – a Marathon for Awareness

Date: Saturday June 11, 2011

Location: Pacific Coastal Highway

Our new marathon goal - the Pacific Coastal Highway, which includes Highway 101

Brain Injury 101 – a Marathon for Awareness

For the purpose of:

- promoting public awareness of Acquired Brain Injury
- raising money to allow us to continue helping our clients and their caregivers.

Walk For Awareness of Acquired Brain Injury

In 2009 we walked the length of our section of Highway 101. This part of the Pacific Coastal Highway is 56 kilometers in length, starting in Lund, passing through Powell River and ending in Saltery Bay, where the ferry connects to the next part of Highway 101.

This first walk was completed over 3 days. Participants were clients, professionals and ordinary citizens who wanted to take part in this public awareness project. Money was raised with pledges of support to the walkers as well as business sponsors for each kilometer.

For the second year, we offered more options on distance to complete – 1, 2, 5 or 10 kilometers, or for the truly fit, the entire 56 kilometers. Those who participated did so by walking, running or bicycling. We invited not only clients, family and ordinary citizens, but also contacted athletes, young athletes and sports associations to join our cause and complete the 56 kilometers ultra-marathon.



The Too Much Sugar Easter Celebration

Linda Boutilier, our resident chocolatier and cake decorator, once again graced our lovely little office with yummy goodness. The giant cookie was excellent. Thank you Linda.



Mountain Biking Awareness for summer fun;
Stay healthy, stay fit, and stay safe

Summer is here. It is the time to get out and go green. Grab that bicycle and tear up the streets. But remember your road sense. Don't take for granted cars will stop for you. Don't forget your helmet and safety gear too; for night riding get some decals or reflectors on your bike! Powell River has many miles of beautiful backwoods for you to explore. Get out and have a great summer!

[Click here to see video](#)

Summer also brings out the swimmers and boaters. Stay afloat wear your coat/lifejacket. Drinking and boating don't mix. Parents set a good example for your kids, be safe. Kids, listen to your parents!

Think before you act. Prepare for any unexpected events. Let a friend know your plans. Don't swim late at night or drunk. Have a good summer and stay safe.





Sandra Needs Your Help

In her ongoing work on the [Power River Brain Injury](#) website our computer wizardess asks you to submit creative writings, factual, or fictional versions of your story living with-, recovering from-, and life after- brain injury.

Melissa's Jewelry Counter

I am finally learning how to wire wrap. Trevor's mom Christene is going to be teaching me and I am quite excited. My first project will be wrapping my Lapis Lazuli heart. I am going to also learn how to wrap rings and finally use all those gem stones I keep buying. I also organized my bead collection it only took me about 5 hours, but it feels good to be able to locate some of my beads. I even found some I forgot I had.

The balancing act between, calcium & magnesium, sodium & potassium, copper & zinc

Your body will balance itself no matter what you think, do or say. This is one of the many things they don't teach us in school. And not much is written about it.

For instance, your body insists the calcium in your body be balanced with the magnesium in your body. Well, everybody's heard about taking calcium to protect your bones, so we take extra calcium not realizing that it may not be doing us any good. Most of us have a magnesium deficiency. As long as your magnesium level is low, your body will keep dumping calcium out of the body until they balance. Well, not entirely. Some of the calcium seems to get lost on the way out and ends up where it doesn't belong-in our arteries. It appears we get enough calcium through diet and shouldn't supplement with calcium at all, and what is really needed is extra magnesium so that our bodies will use the calcium we already have in our diet.

There's also the deal where the body wants to balance sodium and potassium. When you swear off salt, your body dumps potassium, which raises your blood pressure. So the doctor says to really, really cut out salt, which ends up lowering your potassium even more. and thus increases your blood pressure. Ditch table salt, though. They process the life out of it, then bleach it, then add bad stuff to it. Use sea salt. You get good sodium-plus more than 80 trace minerals our bodies need.

And how about copper and zinc? They also have a ratio to maintain. But birth control pills-and other sources of bogus estrogen really raise women's copper levels big time and effects our copper/zinc ratios. A whacked out copper/zinc ratio leads to thyroid problems big time. Half the population has thyroid problems, but most don't know it.

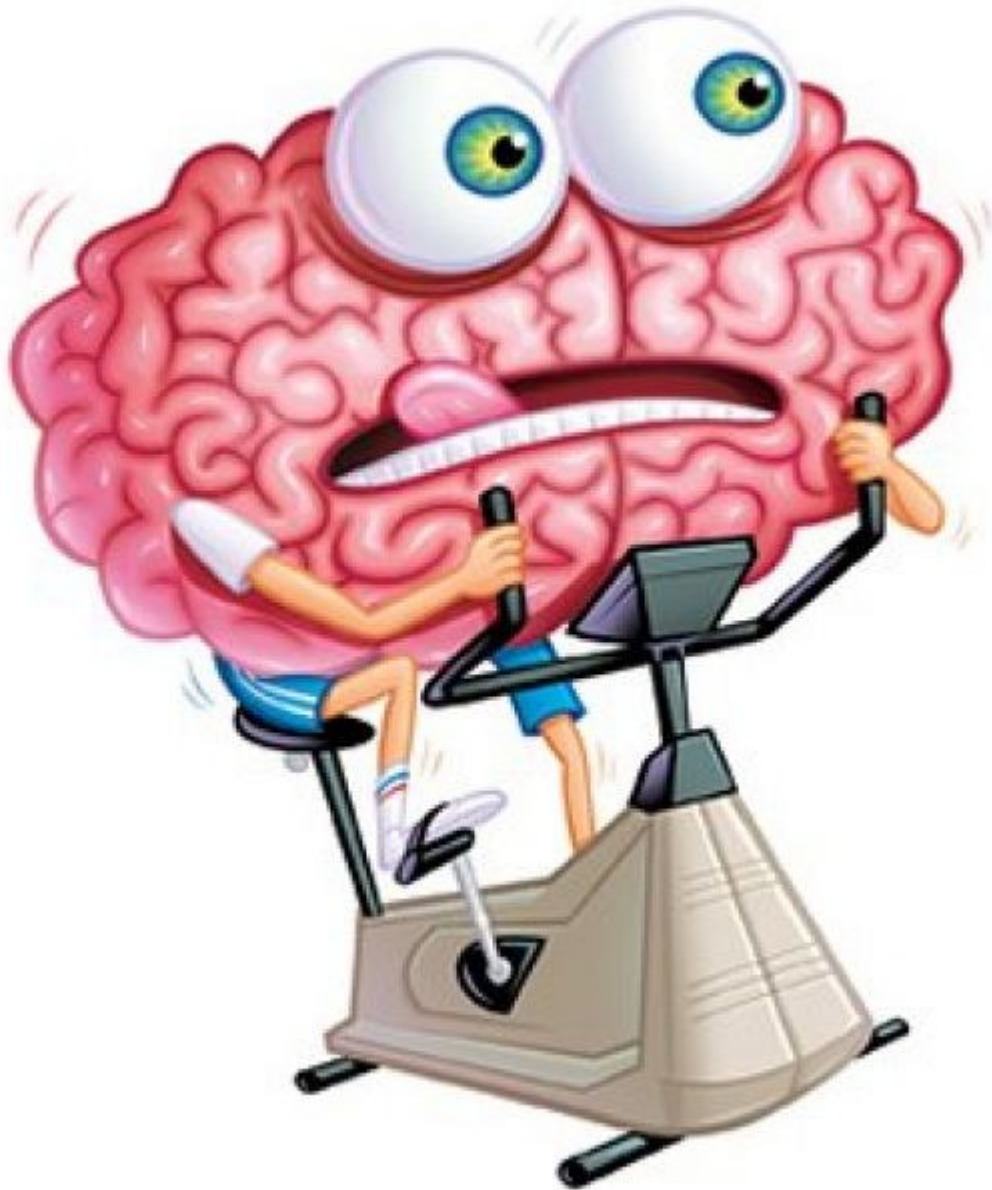
So what do we learn?

Magnesium will help your body take up and use calcium. If you have a calcium problem, it might mean you are lacking magnesium. Try it and see if it helps.

If you have potassium problem, (think high blood pressure) it might mean you need a little more sodium in your diet. Try it with your potassium and see if your HBP reduces.

If you have thyroid problems due to high copper levels, take extra zinc and see if you feel better.

ARE YOU EXERCISIZING WITH ZEE?



**THURSDAY MORNINGS IN THE DOGWOOD
ROOM AT THE REC CENTRE**

BACKWOODS BIRTH

Deep in the backwoods, a woman went into labor in the middle of the night, and the doctor was called out to assist in the delivery. Since there was no electricity, the doctor handed the father-to-be a lantern and said, "Here, you hold this high so I can see what I'm doing." Soon, a baby boy was brought into the world. "Whoa there," said the doctor. "Don't be in a rush to put the lantern down...I think there's another one coming." Sure enough, within minutes he had delivered a baby girl. "No, no, don't be in a great hurry to be putting down that lantern...it seems there's yet another one in there!" cried the doctor. The father scratched his head in bewilderment and asked the doctor, "Do you think it's the light that's attractin' 'em?"

NASTY BUG

Every night, Andrew would go down to the liquor store, get a six pack, bring it home, and drink it while he watched TV. One night, as he finished his last beer, the doorbell rang. He stumbled to the door and found a six-foot cockroach standing there. The bug grabbed him by the collar and threw him across the room, and left.

The next night, after he finished his 3th beer, the doorbell rang.

He walked slowly to the door and found the same six-foot cockroach standing there. The big bug punched him in the stomach, then left.

The next night, after he finished his 1st beer, the doorbell rang again. The same six-foot cockroach was standing there. This time he was kneed in the groin and hit behind the ear as he doubled over in pain. Then the big bug left.

The fourth night Andrew didn't drink at all. The doorbell rang. The cockroach was standing there. The bug beat the snot out of Josh and left him in a heap on the living room floor.

The following day, Andrew went to see his doctor. He explained events of the preceding four nights. "

" What can I do? " he pleaded.

" Not much " he doctor replied. " There's just a nasty bug going around."

Could red wine help lessen the short- and long-term effects of concussions?

Researchers at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center think resveratrol, a component in red wine and grapes, may help, and hope to test their theory on professional boxers.

“We know from animal studies that if we give the drug immediately after or soon after a brain injury, it can dramatically and significantly reduce the damage you see long-term,” researcher Dr. Joshua Gatson said. “There haven’t been any completed human studies yet, so this is really the first look at resveratrol’s effect on traumatic brain injury.”

Researchers plan to recruit about two dozen pro boxers to take resveratrol, a neuroprotective compound, after a fight to see whether it reduces damage to the brain.

Resveratrol is found in red wine, although to get the required dose for its neuroprotective benefits, one would have to drink 50 glasses, Gatson said.

In the study, researchers plan to administer the required oral dose of resveratrol once a day for seven days. The boxers will then take a supplement form of the compound within two hours of a match.

With neurocognitive tests and MRI protocols, researchers will track subtle brain activity, inflammation and restoration of brain cells and connections.

“The main goal of our research is to protect the brain after each episode so that we can decrease the cumulative effect of those sports concussions,” Gatson said.

Comox Valley Head Injury Society Conference in June 2011

On behalf of the Comox Valley Head Injury Society (CVHIS), I am pleased to announce our 18th Annual G & J Johnson Brain Injury Conference:

Caring for Caregivers: Connecting Local Resources to Promote Caregiver Wellbeing in the Brain Injury Community and Beyond.

This conference aims to provide participants with practical information about family caregiving and promote the health and wellbeing of family caregivers through skills development.

The G & J Johnson Brain Injury Conference will be held on Thursday, June 16, 2011, at the Crown Isle Resort in Courtenay, BC.

Garden Corner**By Linda Amundsen****Certified Herbalist****Glowing white balls?**

In my last article I mentioned the value of keeping a garden journal and so I thought I would share an excerpt from my 2011 garden journal:

May 1, 2011: warm at last, warm at last, thank God it's warm at last!

I thought I would take a break from gardening and have a nice cup of tea sitting on my back steps in the wonderfully warm sun while meditating. Meditation for me is when my usually busy mind is concentrating on one thing at a time for more than a minute. The subject for today's meditation was: "The marvels of mother nature." This vast subject was brought about by what had occurred yesterday. Yesterday was my landlord's day to mow, or rather weed eat what is known as the lawn. At this time of year our lawn is a vast sea of yellow blossoms known as dandelions. The noble dandelion, known to many as weeds, to some as important medicinal and culinary plants and to still others a lawn.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-u4ePFpNcLY>

The landlord spent the afternoon decapitating and dismembering all the dandelions in sight until the yard and driveway was covered in flower heads and various other bits and pieces of body parts which made a carpet of greens and yellow over the driveway. It was kind of pretty, better than the usual worn gravel gray. It was like the dandelion's last hurrah. That is the way the driveway stayed, because it seemed there was a hockey game that demanded far more attention than removing body parts from the driveway.

A few hours later I was passing my living room window and noticed something glowing in the dark outside. "What the heck???" I looked closer and they were everywhere, glowing white balls everywhere. "What the #*!!?" I open the front door to get an even closer look, and discovered all those flower heads had gone to seed. In only a few hours Mother Nature had sped up the dandelions reproductive system from a few months to a few hours, assuring the continuation of the species. Marvelous! Simply marvelous!

I took a sip of my tea and it was sooo bitter and soooo sour! "What the heck?"

"The ants!" I had forgotten to check my tea for any of the many sugar ants, which were determined for me to share my tea with them. I had been meditating with such concentration I forgot to check my cup before sipping. I spit out my mouthful of tea and sure enough there it was a tiny little sugar ant. "Sugar ant my foot!" That thing was soooo bitter and soooo sour there was no way I would ever eat it or any other ant. Ah, Mother Nature, survival. Marvelous. Simply marvelous.

When I was studying for my Herbalist's certificate I had to take one semester of botany, because it was imperative to know how the plants defend and heal themselves so I could know which plant to heal what and when. I was very surprised and even a little bit

Garden Corner cont.

Shocked when I learned that plants are having sex all the time. ALL THE TIME! Mother Nature, Marvelous! Survival!

Now for some practical information: (although I do think knowing ants taste terrible is practical information.)

Dandelion is very important medicinal plant but also shine as a culinary crop:

Early spring dandelion leaves make an excellent addition to any salad. Dandelion leaves are available from spring to fall; later leaves can be cooked like spinach. They are a good source Vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, C, E, G, P, Calcium, Chlorine, Iodine, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Sodium. Make sure to pick only in areas you are sure are pesticide and/or herbicide free or better yet grow your own. . I have been growing two Dandelion plants in containers for about ten years. They do not like containment very much, because they have deep roots, (their roots can be eaten likes carrot.). I have two dandelion plants that have given me, the first spring greens in my garden and the last greens of the season. They also supply greens throughout the growing season So next time you see a dandelion that has gone to seed think about collecting some seeds and plant some dandelions for delicious and nutritious greens for your table. We all know they grow will in our climate. They grow best in morning sun or semi shade but will grow anywhere in just about any soil. Plant seeds in well-drained soil in fall or early spring, grow and harvest like lettuce or spinach.

As this article is coming out in June I will give what to do in your veggie garden for July: According to the Pacific Northwest Gardener's table for fall veggies in July you should plant:

Fall cabbage plants

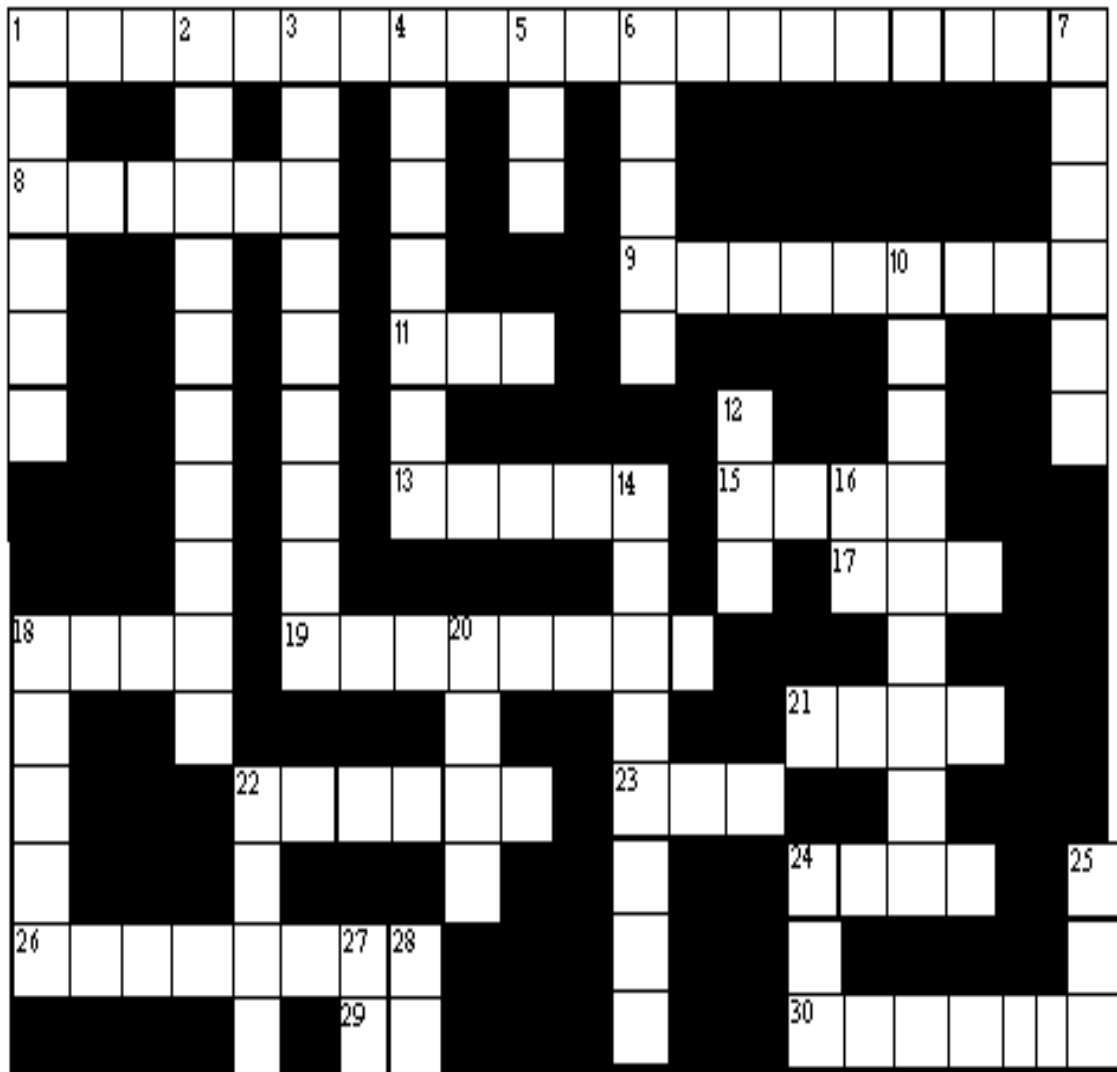
Fall cauliflower plants

Brussels sprout plants

Sprouting Broccoli

Happy gardening.

PS: For the sake of your neighbors and landscapers everywhere, don't let your dandelion seeds escape.



ANSWERS ON PAGE 28

Clues

ACROSS

1. Composed of the brain and spinal cord (3 words).
8. Contains photoreceptors; on the inner posterior portion of eye.
9. "Inside the mouth"
11. Electrical brain activity recorded with scalp or brain electrodes (abbreviation).
13. Necessary for hearing.
15. Cell body.
17. Neurotransmitter in brain, spinal cord and peripheral nervous system (abbreviation).
18. Outermost layer of meninges.
19. Neurotransmitter lacking in patients with Parkinson's disease.
21. Supportive cells of the nervous system; "glue".
22. Nerve cell.
23. Photoreceptor that is not used for color vision.
24. Photoreceptor that is used for color vision.
26. The sense of hearing.
29. Opposite of "Yes"
30. Junction between two neurons.

DOWN

1. In the brain, it is the outermost layer of the gray matter.
2. The fifth cranial nerve.
3. The middle layer of the meninges.
4. The part of the cell containing chromosomes.
5. Period of sleep when dreams occur (abbreviation).
6. The second cranial nerve.
7. Fat-like substance that surrounds some axons.
10. The first cranial nerve.
12. Fluid that fills the ventricles (abbreviation).
14. Part of neuron that takes information TO the cell body.
16. Short for "mother".
18. Electrical brain activity between 2 and 4 Hz.
20. Part of neuron that takes information AWAY from the cell body.
22. A short written letter.
24. Abbreviation for 1 across.
25. Organ for vision.
27. Opposite of "off".
28. Yes and ____

Hockey helmet maker sued for brain injury

Internal Links

FEATURE: Ski industry lagging behind public on helmet issue

DOCUMENT: More family statement of claim (PDF)

'All helmets do a poor job of preventing concussions': doctor

Safety advocates call for national helmet standards

External Links

DOCUMENT: More v. Bauer Nike and CSA. Ruling of admissibility of expert evidence

(Note: CBC does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of external sites - links will open in new window)

End of Supporting Story ContentBack to accessibility links Beginning of Story ContentA major hockey gear manufacturer and a national safety standards agency are being sued by a Victoria family whose son suffered a severe brain injury during a midget hockey game.

Sucha and Cindy More allege the Bauer Nike helmet their son Darren, then 17, was wearing should have protected him against his injury and are seeking \$10 million in damages to help care for him.

'He will have to be supervised until the day he dies.'

— Lawyer James MacaulayDarren was hip-checked and flew into the boards during a game in nearby Esquimalt in 2004. He struck the back of his head and fell into a six-week coma.

The More family lawyer, James Macaulay, says that six years later Darren still suffers from physical and emotional disabilities and needs 24-hour supervision.

"He has emotional problems, he has physical problems.... He will have to be supervised until the day he dies," Macaulay said.

Safety standards too low

"The helmet was intended to protect against impacts of the kind Darren More suffered. It didn't," Macaulay said. "It failed, and one of the reasons is that it was never tested to a standard that was rigorous enough to protect people like More from that kind of serious head injury."

The Canadian Standards Association has also been named in the lawsuit because the standards administered by the CSA were too low, Macaulay said.

"If you have a low standard, helmets have a lesser capacity to protect against serious head injuries," Macaulay said.

Bauer knew about the lax CSA testing, Macaulay alleges, and is therefore complicit.

"They were very much a part of the committee that decides standards," he said.

Expert testimony allowed

Earlier this week, Bauer Nike Hockey Inc. and the CSA lost their bid to have the expert testimony of one of the More family's witnesses thrown out.

At a preliminary hearing in Victoria, biomechanics expert Dr. Richard Stalnaker testified the CSA standard used on Darren's helmet was too low to offset the risk of severe head injuries on the ice.

Bauer and the CSA called Stalnaker's findings biased, misleading and flawed and asked the judge to dismiss the expert, but in a decision issued on Wednesday, the judge dismissed their claims instead.

The case returns to court on May 10 when Bauer Nike and the CSA are expected to present their opening arguments.

The CSA is a not-for-profit membership-based association serving business, industry, government and consumers in Canada, according to its website.

The province of British Columbia, the B.C. Ambulance Service and the Emergency and Health Services Commission are also named in the lawsuit.

What did the brain put on before the storm?

Its cortex jacket

Air Canada threatens to halt NHL sponsorship

Major NHL sponsor Air Canada threatened to withdraw its sponsorship unless the league moves to impose sanctions to reduce potential serious injuries such as the one that injured Montreal Canadiens forward Max Pacioretty this week.

The airline sent a letter to NHL officials including commissioner Gary Bettman and his associate Bill Daly, expressing its concern over the increase in dangerous hits to players' heads, and reportedly demanded "immediate" and "serious" action on the matter.

"From a corporate social responsibility standpoint, it is becoming increasingly difficult to associate our brand with sports events which could lead to serious and irresponsible accidents," Air Canada warned in the letter.

The letter came from Denis Vandal, Air Canada's director of marketing communications.

The airline is a major sponsor of the league, which has six Canadian franchises. Air Canada has owned the naming rights for the building where the Toronto Maple Leafs play since it opened in 1999.

Pacioretty suffered a broken vertebra and concussion after Boston Bruins defenceman hit him into the boards and drove his head into a stanchion supporting the glass around the ice. Bettman called the injury to Pacioretty horrific, but said it's part of the game. He also suggested the league can find new sponsors if an old one pulls out.

"Air Canada is a great brand, as is the National Hockey League," Bettman said at a press conference in Washington D.C. on Thursday. "If they decide that they need to do other things with their sponsorship dollars, that's their prerogative, just like it's the prerogative of our clubs who that fly Air Canada to make other arrangements if they don't think Air Canada is giving them the appropriate level of service."

Parliamentarians raced to express their concern over the play on Wednesday and Thursday, and Montreal police confirmed Thursday that a criminal investigation will be opened.

Other league sponsors were less vocal Thursday, but several issued statements confirming their concern.

"As Canada's Hockey Bank, Scotiabank's role in hockey is based on the love of the sport in Canada," Scotiabank said Thursday. "Scotiabank will continue to work with the NHL, and the NHLPA to educate future generations of hockey players on respect, safety and team work, and we do this through skills clinics at a minor hockey level."

"Our approach is to be very active in the educational area on concussion and drive moral passion on this issue."

to work towards addressing concerns with head injuries."

Poem by Catherine Peterson

Generations

Three, Thirty, Sixty, Ninety

Three and full of joy and life, curiosity abounds

Learning limits, the cherished child

Surrounded by love of thirty, sixty and ninety.

Thirty something confidence filled striding to the future

Three is firmly in tow lovingly guided and held in esteem

As thirty forges ahead fulfilling her dream.

Sixty wonders where the time went as watching three.

Memories of thirty fill her head. The gestures, features and
behaviour the same

Who could imagine it could happen again. Magic visions of
threes future and thirty's past slip stream into a dream of hap-
piness.

Ninety looks on with faraway eyes, closing them slowly sighs
and rejoices

In a life long enough to see the miracle of the circle complet-
ed in these cherished daughters of sixty, thirty and three

New Compound Rids Cells of Alzheimer Protein Debris

ScienceDaily (Mar. 7, 2011) — If you can't stop the beta-amyloid protein plaques from forming in Alzheimer's disease patients, then maybe you can help the body rid itself of them instead. At least that's what scientists from New York were hoping for when they found a drug candidate to do just that. Their work appears in a research report online in The FASEB Journal, and shows that a new compound, called "SMER28" stimulated autophagy in rat and mice cells.

Autophagy is a process cells use to "clean out" the debris from their interior, including unwanted materials such as the protein aggregates that are hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease. In mice and rat cells, SMER28 effectively slowed down the accumulation of beta-amyloid.

"Our work demonstrates that small molecules can be developed as therapies, by activating a cellular function called autophagy, to prevent Alzheimer's disease," said Paul Greengard, Ph.D., Nobel laureate and director of the Laboratory of Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience at The Rockefeller University in New York, NY. "By increasing our understanding of autophagy, it might be possible to stimulate it pharmacologically or naturally to improve the quality of life for aging people."

Using mouse and rat cells, scientists tested various compounds for their ability to reduce the buildup of beta-amyloid by exposing cultured cells to compounds known to activate autophagy. The effects of these compounds were then compared by removing growth factors from the culture medium. Researchers then focused on the most effective compound, which was SMER28, to characterize the cellular components involved in this phenomenon. For that purpose, the effect of SMER28 on beta-amyloid formation was compared using normal cells or cells where the expression of genes known to be involved in autophagy was reduced or abolished. Results showed involvement of three important autophagic players, and one was essential for the effect of SMER28. This research represents a radically different approach to treating Alzheimer's disease, namely boosting a cellular mechanism to enhance the clearance of beta-amyloid, as well as other protein aggregates; and it opens a new therapeutic avenue for the treatment of this and other degenerative diseases.

"Autophagy has been called the cell's equivalent of urban renewal. In that sense, SMER28 functions as a cellular forklift to clear out unwanted debris," said Gerald Weissmann, M.D., Editor-in-Chief of The FASEB Journal. "The Rockefeller group shows that strategies to remove the blight in cells that causes Alzheimer's disease are not only worth pursuing, but so far, appear to be very promising."

Head And Neck Injury Risks In Heavy Metal: Head Bangers Stuck Between Rock And A Hard Bass

ScienceDaily (Dec. 27, 2008) — Head banging increases the risk of head and neck injury, but the effects may be lessened with reduced head and neck motion, head banging to lower tempo songs or to every second beat, and using protective equipment such as neck braces, finds a study in the Christmas issue published on bmj.com.

What began in 1968 at a Led Zeppelin concert with fans banging their heads on the stage, has developed into a collection of distinctive styles including the up-down, the circular swing, the full body and the side-to-side.

Anecdotal reports of head banging induced injury include hearing loss, stroke and mild traumatic brain injury, but there has been little formal research into head banging.

Declan Patton and Professor Andrew McIntosh from the University of New South Wales, analysed the injury risk from head banging and examined possible ways to protect against these injuries.

The researchers attended hard rock and heavy metal concerts including Motörhead, Ozzy Osbourne and Skid Row, and identified that the up-down style was the most common head banging technique. They constructed a theoretical head banging model of this popular style to examine the effect the range of head and neck motion has on injury severity. A focus group of ten musicians was used to calculate the average tempo of their favourite head banging songs.

The authors found that there is an increasing risk of neck injury beginning at tempos of 130 beats per minute related to the range of motion in the head banging style.

The average head banging song has a tempo of about 146 beats per minute. The authors suggest that at this tempo head banging may cause headaches and dizziness if the range of movement of the head and neck is more than 75°. They report that at higher tempos and greater ranges of motion there is an additional risk of neck injury.

So could someone render themselves unconscious while head banging? Unlikely, say the authors, unless they are banging their head on the stage or connect with someone else's head.

And what of two of the most famous head bangers, Beavis and Butt-head? When head banging at a tempo of 164 beats per minute to "I Wanna be Sedated" the range of motion of Beavis' head and neck is about 45°, say the authors, so he would be unlikely to sustain any injury. But the news for Butt-head may not be so rosy. Preferring to head bang at a range of motion of 75°, he may well experience symptoms of headaches and dizziness.

Luckily, there are a number of possible ways to protect against these injuries, write the authors. These include calling for bands such as AC/DC to play songs such as "Moon River" instead of "Highway to Hell", public awareness campaigns headed by musicians such as Cliff Richard and the labelling of music packaging with anti-head banging warnings.

Mosh pits and crowd surfing, not safe

Scott Stone doesn't remember the night he fell from the hands of a mosh-pit throng at a Seattle rock concert, but he bears its mark: a crescent-shaped scar that starts at his temple and disappears in his buzz-cut brown hair.

Stone had gone to see an all-ages show by the California band Rage Against the Machine. Leaving his seat to join the fans packed in front of the stage, the then 14-year-old suddenly found himself hoisted up in the arms of strangers, being passed back, over the heads of other concertgoers, until there was no one left to catch him. His fall to Mercer Arena's cement floor left him with permanent brain damage.

Stone's parents reached an out-of-court settlement last month with the band, city, concert promoter and security company contracted for the September 1996 event. The city's share of the settlement, covered under the security company's insurance policy, was \$400,000, according to an assistant city attorney. The Stones, who signed nondisclosure agreements with the other parties, say they are satisfied with the settlement and want to move on with their lives.

But they are angry at what they characterize as an out-of-control concert industry with a propensity for putting profits over people. The Bothell family agreed to be interviewed because they say they want their experience to be a warning to other parents.

"We don't want this to happen to any other kid," said Scott's mother, Cathy Stone.

"But it will — it's a business," his father, Randy Stone, said.

Most concerts do not result in injuries and deaths. But the increasing frequency of serious injuries — including broken bones, brain damage and paralysis — is shining a spotlight on what some critics see as fun and freedom pushed to irresponsible limits.

The injuries have prompted a handful of U.S. cities and some bands to ban crowd surfing and stage diving, but there are no national standards for concert safety, and no one has exact numbers on how many people are injured in mosh pits every year. One survey cites at least 10 deaths and more than 1,000 injuries resulting from just 15 U.S. concerts last year.

In the Seattle area, as in most other cities, bands and promoters decide whether to allow crowd surfing and stage diving. At a Marilyn Manson concert at Mercer Arena in March last year, signs were posted throughout the venue, prohibiting crowd surfing and stage diving. At the Tacoma Dome, stage diving is discouraged and signs are often posted warning of the dangers, said the venue's director, Mike Combs.

However, at the concert where Stone and 30 others were injured, the security company was instructed to "let the crowd take care of themselves," according to the Stones' attorney, Ron Webb, referring to a security official's testimony in a deposition. Webb sees the Stone settlement as a strong message to concert organizers of their responsibility to provide a safe environment.

"The concert industry is now on notice that these kinds of actions are unreasonably dangerous," Webb said, referring to crowd surfing and stage diving. He said concert organizers "have a duty to warn of danger and take reasonable measures to correct that danger."

The bands themselves often set the mood; while one may invite concertgoers to leap into the crowd from the stage, another will remind people to be safe and look out for their neighbor, Combs said.

Paul Wertheimer, a nationally recognized concert-safety expert, says the Stones' settlement is symbolically important because it happened here, in the birthplace of grunge — arguably the most important rock movement since the punk explosion of the late '70s. It was here that people learned to ride atop surging crowds and swan dive from stages long before MTV videos and TV commercials began marketing grunge's crowd-surfing, stage-diving cool.

With the case of Scott Stone — who suffered Seattle's most serious concert injury to date, according to Wertheimer — the debate that has pitted music and hipness against safety concerns and a growing roster of injured "has come home to roost."

Life transformed

Before his injury, Scott Stone was the kind of kid who'd have his family in tears with his nightly dinner-table antics. Afterward, his personality changed from a gregarious teen into a moody, angry and often-frustrated young man, his parents said.

Now 20, he isn't able to drive or move out of his parents' home in Bothell. He graduated from Bothell High School last year and works at a local sandwich shop. He hopes to attend community college but knows he may not be able to handle the courses because his short-term-memory problems make retaining information especially difficult.

"Maybe he won't be able to do college, and maybe he won't get a fair shake at a good job," said Randy Stone, as he sat at the head of the family's dining-room table recently, flanked by his wife and son. "But I don't think the medical bills or the doctors will ever totally go away." It's likely too that Scott's depression and sleeping problems, which are common with his kind of brain injury, will continue for the rest of his life, his father said.

Scott, who has been featured in stories for the cable-TV music channel VH1, ABC's television newsmagazine "20/20" and in USA Today, Teen People and other publications, says he still goes to concerts. "I like the energy from the crowd and being with a bunch of people who are involved and into the music," he said.

The 1996 concert was the first one he attended without his father. His parents say they trusted their son would be safe at an all-ages show at a city-run venue. "It just didn't seem to be something to be concerned with," said Randy Stone. {continued on page 20}

No one knows — and Scott does not remember — whether the boy purposefully thrust himself into the arms of the crowd or was forced up by older youths who, according to witnesses, "were throwing smaller kids and girls up onto the crowd, forcing them to crowd surf against their will," said Webb, the family's attorney. A couple of older youths who knew Scott from school saw him fall and fought through the crowd to drag him out, Webb said. "If it wasn't for them, he probably would've died."

But people who crowd surf and stage dive have to assume some of the risk, said assistant city attorney Sean Sheehan, who worked on the Stone case.

"It was the city's position that Scott Stone attended concerts before, he crowd surfed before, he'd been warned not to do it by his father and he chose to do it repeatedly — so we believe Mr. Stone assumed the risk when he chose to crowd surf," Sheehan said. "In my judgment, 14-year-olds are perfectly capable of understanding 'What goes up must come down.'"

The city, which owns Mercer Arena, "complies with the normal standards within the venue industry," Sheehan said.

Sheehan declined to say whether new safety procedures are being considered for city-run facilities. Officials with Monqui and Starplex, the concert's promoter and security company respectively, did not respond to requests for interviews. Attorneys representing Rage Against the Machine could not be reached.

Survey of concert injuries

Wertheimer, who has served as an expert witness in concert-related death and injury lawsuits around the world, compiles an annual survey of injuries and deaths from news and police reports, eyewitness accounts, lawsuits, industry sources and public-information documents.

It's not a complete list because data are hard to get and there's no national clearinghouse for information, he said. But last year in a sampling of the most dangerous events, Wertheimer surveyed 31 concerts in 11 countries and counted 55 deaths, more than 11,400 injuries, 418 arrests and more than \$33,000 in property damage.

Of those 31 concerts, 14 were held in the United States and accounted for an estimated 10 deaths (which included drug, traffic and crime-related deaths), more than 1,000 injuries and nearly 400 arrests. Wertheimer estimates that at least 20,000 Americans receive first-aid at concerts in the United States every year.

Wertheimer said his figures are conservative and that in the 10 years he's conducted the survey, no one has proved them false.

His biggest beef: general-admission tickets that allow promoters to pack venues and make people compete for a limited number of spots up front.

"Being in a pit can be a lot of fun with the camaraderie, the music, the touching, the chaos," said Wertheimer, a music fan who has logged more than 100 hours in mosh pits from Seattle to Copenhagen, Denmark. "Early on, people looked out for each other. But chaos with etiquette turned into an all-out brawl when you had people who came in with the intent to hurt other people or take advantage of women under the cloak of darkness and the anonymity of the pit."

Wertheimer founded Crowd Management Strategies, a Chicago-based consulting firm, in 1992 "because I didn't think the concert industry should be allowing the same things to happen, the same missteps, time and time again."

He believes mosh pits can be safe, citing the opening of Seattle's Experience Music Project, when organizers limited the number of people allowed into the pit. And he celebrates the little evidence he sees of progress. A few U.S. cities and colleges — including New Orleans, Denver and the University of San Diego — have banned crowd surfing and stage diving. In Europe, many concert organizers have banned such activities since the deaths of nine Pearl Jam fans at the 2000 Roskilde Festival in Denmark.

But Wertheimer is frustrated by the lack of movement here: At a 1994 conference in Seattle for members of the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM), he introduced "mosher-friendly" safety guidelines which, he said, have since been adopted by a number of U.S. and European cities. They include restricting access to mosh pits, padding barricades, providing free water and banning crowd surfing, stage diving and steel-toe-boot-wearing fans — all recommendations the organization has since ignored, he said.

Julie Herrick, director of IAAM communications, said each venue has its own policies and IAAM only provides training, seminars and workshops on crowd safety. The bottom line, said Wertheimer, is that there's no real pressure on the concert industry to change things — and it won't change until insurance companies tire of paying for lawsuits filed on behalf of those killed or injured at concerts.

Which means there will be more Scott Stones.

"A serious head injury is a horrible thing to happen, especially when you went to a concert to have fun," said Wertheimer. "It's just a rock concert — so why should parents have to worry that their kids may be in some kind of mortal danger?"

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



**THERE IS VERY LITTLE WRITTEN ON THIS PAGE. YOU MAY CONTINUE
READING ON THE NEXT PAGE.**

Greetings from the desk of Debbie Dee:

Well, with the weather being cold and wet this Spring we have had to find extra things to cheer us up at the Centre. We continue to be very creative on Wednesdays with the Creative Expressions Art Group and the whole Centre is blooming with the colorful flowers that have been painted and are now hanging on the walls.

The fitness group continues to meet every Thursday morning at the Complex to work out with Zee, our personal training Guru. It remains one of our most popular programs and is really showing results. Healthy lifestyle with exercise thrown in there makes for a healthy and happy person. Some of the clients are now embarking on the 30-day Isagenix cleanse and I am joining them. We will let you know in one month how we did. By all accounts this will be a wonderful program for de-toxifying and getting rid of excess fat.

The brain injury society will be participating the upcoming 1st annual Blues Festival. We have the Art Group joining with the Malaspina Art Society to sell their pieces and to create new ones on site. Lots of canvases have been procured and along with several shades of blue paint there should be some great work come out of the weekend of June 03-05. We also have a booth in the vendor area and Jimmy will be selling his "Spark Bugs" and Melissa will be selling her hand-beaded jewelry. All in all it should be wonderful weekend of music and fun.

As usual, things are busy at the Centre and right now we are getting ready for the 3rd Annual Walk Rid Run the 101 Marathon for brain injury awareness. This year is very special as we have now made contact with people from all the way down to Quellons Chili and hope that some of them will participate. Of course we expect that it will take a few years to really catch on but we are confident that we are putting our efforts in the right place and soon we will have the longest walk in the world!! Please visit our website for all the details!

May is motorcycle awareness month and usually we would see the roads full of the two wheel wonders but this year it is still a bit cold and wet. There are bikes out there and we encourage drivers to pay extra attention to the bikes on the road and to the riders we encourage to always wear the correct protective gear. Have fun and be safe...vroom vroom! I now have a motorcycle license and I took a safety-training course, as I would encourage all new riders to do. I have all the protective gear and I ride very safely. I love riding my Harley Davidson Sportster and hope to have many years on the road.

We will be making our rounds to the school children soon with packages of information and safety tips regarding summer fun and being safe. We thank the Powell River and District United Way and the Provincial Community Gaming Grant for the funds to carry out this important work.

On June 02 several of our clients and staff will making a presentation to City Council regarding our past years activity and requesting that June be proclaimed as Brain Injury Awareness and Prevention month in Powell River. We do this every year and think it is one of the more important things we do in the community to raise awareness of the need to prevent brain injury from happening.

We are also planning for our annual summer picnic on Texada Island in August. Never too early to start planning a fun day!

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Friday June 24 at noon here at the Centre. We will be having presentations from our JCP participant (who is now our valued employee) and from our Opportunities Fund participants (who are doing a marvelous job) we will elect our board of directors and go over the plans for the coming year and review our activities of the past year. Please plan to attend and join us for a light lunch.

Drop in to the Centre anytime...the coffee, tea and hot chocolate are always on and you might even find that someone has baked and brought us some cookies or cake!

Have fun...Be Safe...Talk soon

Debbie Dee

Board of Directors:

Doug Logan – President
Nicole Narbonne – Vice President-
David Morris – Treasurer
Jena Lohrbach – Secretary
Nora Koros – Director
Maggie Hathaway- Director
Milda Karen-Byng – Director
Zee Slehian – Director
Jim Donelly – Director
Geraldine Braak – Director

Staff:

Debbie Dee – Executive Director
Catherine Peterson – Centre Manager
Donna Newall – Project Facilitator
Sandra Haszard – Research and IT
Josh Friesen – Communications Director
Melissa Tookey – Librarian

Volunteers:

Crystal Lorenzen
Linda Amundsen

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