When I was first asked to Co-Chair the Burn Prevention Committee in 2015, I was excited, scared and a little intimidated. I had only worked in the burn community for three years at that point as the Executive Director for a burn foundation in California and I was still learning about all that the American Burn Association and the Burn Prevention Committee could offer. I had been attending the ABA Burn Prevention Committee meetings for just a few years, yet I was not even officially a member. The “all members” welcomed attitude of the Burn Prevention Committee allowed me to not only sit in on the meetings, but to actively participate and engage in conversations and projects.

As a newcomer to the burn care community, joining the Burn Prevention Committee was the best way to learn about burn prevention efforts across the country, from a Committee with collectively hundreds of years of burn prevention education experience. But these Committee members were not just talkers- they were doers. The burn prevention poster contest, National Scald Campaign and the Burn Prevention Specialist Award were just a few of the many accomplishments of the Burn Prevention Committee. Now, as I take on the role of Burn Prevention Committee Chair, I am excited, honored and ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work!

With 23 official members and 10 honorary members, the Burn Prevention Committee is comprised of nurses, physicians, firefighters, burn foundation executives, lawyers, researchers and epidemiologists from more than 15 states. This diverse multi-disciplinary approach to burn prevention education allows for a more comprehensive review and analysis of current burn prevention efforts and creates a “think tank” environment that encourages thoughtful discussion and innovation.

The 2016-2017 Burn Prevention Committee is already hard at work. As the newly appointed Committee Chair, I developed six goals in which I hope to accomplish during my tenure as Chair. These goals include: Review and update the Burn Prevention Committee’s Strategic Plan; Review and update the mission and goals for the Burn Prevention Committee, SIG and Workshop; Review and Assign Chairs for Sub-Committees; Increase Burn Prevention Committee participation at the American Burn Association’s National Leadership Conference; Revitalize National Burn Awareness Week and Increase international burn prevention education efforts. In just four short months, the Burn Prevention Committee has been able to accomplish half of these goals already!

The Marketing, Media and Advocacy Sub-Committee has been hard at work developing a multi-year campaign for National Burn Awareness Week titled “The M.O.B.” (Mechanisms of Burn). Each year the “M.O.B.” Campaign will focus on one mechanism of burn (i.e. scald, fire/flame, chemical, contact, electrical, etc.) and develop burn prevention education messages around this mechanism of burn. These developed and turn-key materials will be available free of charge on the ABA website.
Would it be fair to characterize the Prevention Committee as one of the most productive committees within the American Burn Association? Let’s see what this group of enthusiastic volunteers has done over the last several months.

Everyone is getting ready for National Burn Awareness Week, February 5-11, 2017. For those of you involved, you know the amount of work necessary to coordinate and execute this far-reaching project. Those of you who use National Burn Awareness Week in your home districts to further the message of burn prevention also appreciate the value that this event has for communicating with legislators, regulators and citizens alike. What many probably don’t appreciate is that this event was in hibernation, up until recently, when fervent supporters from your Prevention Committee took it upon themselves to resurrect Burn Awareness Week from a condition that Dr. Pruitt would no doubt term “terminal torpor.”

Members of your Prevention Committee had the assignment of attending the recent Congress of the International Society for Burn Injuries. They braved the stormy weather conditions in Miami to reach out to your international colleagues in burn prevention. They successfully created new linkages with fellow preventionists overseas, and we will no doubt see these relationships bear fruit in the not-too-distant future.

But from my point of view, the top of the list belongs to the recent hard work done by Jennifer Radics-Johnson, with Tina Palmieri and Kevin Foster, to secure an important prevention topic as one of our two “asks” on Capitol Hill this coming February during the National Leadership Conference. In addition to our perennial “ask” for continued support for burn research from Department of Defense appropriations, we are also going to be asking for support of a Congressional bill specifically designed to reduce the risk of serious burn injuries. A pending bill requires compliant flame mitigation devices to be used on portable fuel containers for flammable liquids. This is very exciting, because it is rare that the ABA focuses its advocacy efforts on a burn prevention topic.

So the answer to my question is a resounding, YES!—The Prevention Committee is truly one of the most industrious and dynamic committees that the ABA is privileged to have within its organization.

Keep up the great work!

Michael Peck, MD, ScD, FACS
ABA President, Board of Trustees, 2016-2017

A Letter from the Chair (continued from page 1)

A number of Burn Prevention Committee members served on the National Leadership Conference (NLC) Ad Hoc Committee to discuss possible prevention related topics for the NLC in February 2017. Potential topics included water heater temperature regulations, lithium battery regulations, mandated home sprinkler systems, among others. After much research and discussion, flame arresters will be a topic at the 2017 NLC. Each year there are a number of injuries and deaths caused by the ignition of flammable liquid containers. The “Portable Fuel Container Safety Act” will require compliant flame mitigation devices (flame arresters) to be used on portable fuel containers for flammable liquids and for other purposes. A webinar with more information about flame arresters and how ABA members can support the Burn Prevention Committee with this issue is currently being developed and will be released in the next upcoming months.

In August 2016, a number of Burn Prevention Committee members attended the International Society of Burn Injuries (ISBI) Conference in Miami, FL. A meeting was held in conjunction with the ISBI Burn Prevention Committee Chair to discuss more projects and opportunities for the ABA and ISBI Burn Prevention Committees to collaborate on. A central repository of all burn prevention programs worldwide is one project that the ISBI and ABA Burn Prevention Committees are currently working together on.

As we transcend upon 2017, I am honored to be able to be at the helm of such a dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and hard-working Committee. We invite all ABA members interested in learning more about burn prevention education, or those wanting to share their knowledge and expertise in burn prevention, to join the Burn Prevention Committee! There has been a lot accomplished and yet there is still much to be done in the world of burn prevention. Roll up your sleeves, get ready to work and join the Burn Prevention Committee!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Radics-Johnson, MBA, CFRE
Burn Prevention Committee Chair, 2016-2018
Peter A. Brigham, (76) of Wynnewood, PA, a long-time local and national leader in the field of burn injury, died on June 22nd, 2016 after a long fight with cancer, at Wesley Enhanced Living in Media, PA.

Peter was born and raised in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where his mother became one of the first female United Way executive directors in the nation in 1947. She instilled in her son a social service orientation that has led to a productive 30-year career with the Burn Foundation in Philadelphia.

Inspired by President John F. Kennedy’s creation of the U.S. Peace Corps in April, 1961, Peter was accepted into one of its first training programs shortly after receiving his BA in English from Yale University. In 1962-63, he taught English, French and Latin and coached track and football (soccer to Americans) at one of the top secondary schools in Nigeria. After extensive travel in Africa and Europe he returned later in 1964 to study community organization at the University of Michigan School of Social Work.

After obtaining his MSW in 1966, Peter worked in health and social service planning in the Philadelphia area before coming to Crozer-Chester Medical Center in 1973. Crozer and St. Agnes Medical Center had just founded the Burn Foundation of Greater Delaware Valley (renamed the “Burn Foundation” in 1983), to support their new burn centers and carry out education in burn prevention. In 1974 Peter was assigned to help staff the new agency, and in 1979 was selected as its president.

The 1970’s were a time of tremendous growth in the establishment of burn centers and in fire and burn prevention activity. Recognizing the lack of documentation and coordination of these efforts, Peter’s far-sighted mentor, Crozer-Chester President James Loucks, encouraged him to make a major time commitment to the American Burn Association (ABA). Dr. Loucks grasped both the potential central role of the ABA and, at the time, the limitations resulting from its lack of a central office and its natural preoccupation with clinical practice, teaching and research.

With similar encouragement from ABA leaders, notably Drs. Alan Dimick, Charles Baxter, Basil Pruitt and Charles Hartford, Peter soon expanded the organization’s visibility and connections in several directions. He compiled in 1975 the first comprehensive directory of burn care facilities in the U.S. and Canada, began monitoring federal legislation and regulations relevant to burn prevention, and built bridges to numerous other national organizations and data sources related to burn injury and its causes. In 1976 he was appointed chairman of the Committee on Organization and Delivery of Burn Care, the first non-physician to chair an ABA standing committee, a position he held for an unprecedented four years. In 1979 he was elected to a two-year term on the ABA Board of Trustees, where he supported equalizing membership status within the ABA and encouraged the growing involvement of firefighters.

Peter was a key organizer and early Chairman of the Federation of Burn Foundations, which now includes close to 50 regional burn support organizations, most of them active in burn prevention. At the national level, he worked closely with fire-safe cigarette champion Andrew McGuire, notably in securing the endorsement of the American Public Health Association in 1980 and contracting with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission in the early 1990’s to study burn center admissions resulting from cigarette-ignited fires.

Peter was honored by the ABA in 1984 with the Curtis P. Artz Distinguished Service Award for his many contributions to the burn world up to that time. Over the past 20 years, other ABA members and the new central office have assumed leadership in many of the areas where Peter broke ground, while he continued to promote burn prevention through the ABA as an “ex officio” statistician member of the Burn Prevention Committee, a copy editor of the committee’s annual prevention guides, and, as a member of its editorial board, a frequent reviewer of epidemiology and prevention-related papers for the Journal of Burn Care and Rehabilitation. He remained a primary source for the incidence and treatment statistics provided by ABA fact sheets.

Along with presenting about a dozen papers at the national meetings of the ABA and several other professional organizations, he co-authored two major JBCR articles, “A History of the Development of North American Burn Centers,” (in 1993, with Alan Dimick and Betty Sheehy) and “A Treatise on Burn Injury Incidence Trends and Data Sources” (in 1996, with Elizabeth McLoughlin). The latter paper was the first to document the 50% decline in reportable burn injury and burn hospitalization since most federal data systems were established in the 1970s—coinciding with the growth of burn prevention as part of the ABA mission. Increased burn prevention efforts by ABA members may well have contributed significantly to this remarkable 25-year trend. Peter was nominated by many of his peers and the 2004 Burn Prevention Award was bestowed upon him for all of his efforts. So many accomplishments in his life have touched so many. From all of your friends here, rest well dear friend.
Burn injury survival, recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration are primary goals for each of us involved in the burn community. At the same time, we strive to understand the facts behind how the burn injury occurred and ways to prevent its reoccurrence in the future. Fortunately, with the speed of today's tracking and reporting systems, common causes for many types of burn injuries can be quickly identified and burn prevention measures developed and put into action. Nevertheless, warnings, public safety announcements and education are not always enough. Engaging legal support for the promotion of burn prevention and safety is an important tool to use.

In the eyes of the law, the risk/benefit analysis excuses the manufacturer need not make a design change if the cost of doing so is greater than society's benefit of that change. In other words, the manufacturer need not make a design change if the cost of doing so outweighs the overall benefit to general public. What is not factored is a "victory" bonfire been cancelled because "we might get sued!" Thousands of burns never occur each year because of the fear of litigation.

Unfortunately, it sometimes takes one or more adverse jury verdicts to effectuate a product design change.

When burn injuries are less severe, but have been caused in a similar manner to a large number of people, class action lawsuits are another method of producing change in favor of burn prevention. Because the economic and non-economic damages of each individual burn survivor are relatively small, banding together as one unit streamlines the process and secures a consistent outcome for all.

Products that cause burn injuries are prime examples of other situations when legal involvement may be necessary to force a change in favor of burn prevention. Litigation is the forerunner for sparking product recalls and later changes in laws, codes, regulations, and practices. Hot water heaters, gas fireplace glass doors, instant cups of soup and noodles, vehicle fuel system defects, and now e-cigarettes, are just a few of the many types of products that have caused significant and serious burn injuries and deaths over the past 40 years. When a manufacturer learns its product is causing burn injuries, it conducts a risk/benefit business analysis to determine whether or not it should make an elective production change. In the eyes of the law, the risk/benefit analysis excuses the manufacturer from making a design change if the financial cost of doing so is greater than society's benefit of that change. In other words, the manufacturer need not make a design change if the cost of doing so outweighs the overall benefit to general public. What is not factored into this analysis, however, is the human suffering and life changing impact that occurs with burn injuries and deaths. The magnitude of those damages and losses can be emphasized through our judicial system.

In the case of Grimshaw vs. Ford Motor Company, evidence was presented to the jury of the car manufacturer's risk/benefit analysis that the expense of an $11 per vehicle production change would cost the company more than it would if it had to compensate the 180 people who were seriously burned, and another 180 families whose loved ones were killed each year from ignition of its vehicle's gas tank upon rear impact. Ford may have been correct in its risk/benefit economic numbers, but it clearly never anticipated the jury's punitive damage award of 125 Million Dollars when it found the company exhibited malice in order to maximize corporate profits. The case was one of more than a hundred civil cases filed against the manufacturer that eventually financially pressured it into "voluntarily" recalling its vehicle to make changes to the fuel tank design. Unfortunately, effecting change at the federal, state and local legislative levels often takes years to accomplish.

Finally, every profession has its bad apples, and the legal world is no exception. Nevertheless, attorneys who are qualified and experienced in working with burn injury survivors know the importance of burn injury prevention. Partnering with those attorneys who genuinely care about safety and prevention, and give their time, effort, and financial support to achieve those goals without any attachments or expectations of personal financial gain, should be included in burn injury prevention efforts.

Engaging Legal Support to Promote Burn Prevention

Bonnie Y. Sawusch, RN, BSN, JD
E-cigarette explosion: A new mechanism for burn injuries

Mini Thomas, RN, MSN

Conventional smoking behaviors are changing, especially among adolescents and young adults. The emergence of newer tobacco products such as electronic cigarettes (vaporizers) has become popular among youth, replacing the conventional smoking of cigarettes. According to the 2015 National Youth Tobacco Survey, 16% of adolescents use e-cigarettes. Reports from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that the prevalence of e-cigarette use is increasing at a rapid rate. Tobacco, in any form, is harmful and the introduction of newer products brings in additional dangers.

Several concerns exist around the use of e-cigarettes. The intended use of e-cigarettes as an aid to quit smoking is still controversial. Additionally, e-cigarettes are reported as a gateway to conventional smoking. Around 500 different brands of e-cigarettes are now available through the internet alone. However, the safety of e-cigarettes is not fully understood and regulations are lacking. The device itself has brought safety concerns including poisoning, explosion, and burns.

E-cigarette explosions could happen in many different ways. While the e-cigarette battery is the most common cause of the explosion, it is hard to pinpoint a single type of e-cigarette product as the cause of an explosion. E-cigarette explosions can happen while charging, while in use, or in storage in the pocket or elsewhere. Explosions while charging is reported as the most common reason. Even though explosions can lead to property damage, injuries are most definite if the explosion happens while the e-cigarette is in use and is stored close to the body.

Although there is minimal literature published about e-cigarette burns, a simple web search brings up several cases of e-cigarette explosions and horrifying images of burn injuries. A compiled data of 97 e-cigarette explosions identified 47 people with burns including life-threatening injuries and disfigurement. Published case studies on e-cigarette burns indicate major burns from e-cigarette explosions require hospitalization and surgical management. Even though there is no data available on the current prevalence of e-cigarette burns, more and more burn centers are admitting patients with this new mechanism of burn injury.

Preventive measures for this new form of burn injury should be implemented at different levels. Tobacco cessation interventions should focus on comprehensive measures addressing newer products such as e-cigarettes. As the e-cigarette market continues to grow among adolescents and young adults, preventive actions should receive maximum attention among younger age groups. While screening patients for tobacco use, healthcare personnel should include all types of tobacco products including e-cigarettes. Even though e-cigarettes are not a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved quitting aid, many people use it for this purpose. Individuals interested in quitting tobacco use should be referred to using FDA-approved cessation methods.

Federal regulations and quality control measures should also be enforced on preventing such accidents for consumers of e-cigarettes. FDAs initiative to include e-cigarettes as a tobacco product can hopefully strengthen safety measures around e-cigarettes. Until safer products are available, consumers of e-cigarettes should follow manufacturers’ instructions regarding safe handling of these products. Before storing an e-cigarette in the pocket, consumers should remember the possibility of an explosion, which can result in significant health complications. Burn injuries are a serious health concern in regards to using e-cigarettes and all necessary measures must be implemented to ensure safe use.

Resources:


ANNUAL ABA BURN
PREVENTION
Poster Contest 2017

Calling all members of the burn team!

Here’s your chance to increase awareness of burn hazards by creating your own prevention message. Three monetary awards in the amounts of $500, $300, or $200 will be awarded to the top three posters. All awards are paid to the institutions represented. Winners will be announced during the ABA Annual Meeting in Boston in 2017. For consideration, abstract and poster must be received no later than February 1, 2017. Late entries will not be accepted.

To obtain a poster abstract form link, go to:
http://www.ameriburn.org/2017PosterContestEntryForm.pdf

Posters will be displayed at the ABA Prevention Booth at the 2017 Annual Meeting.

2016 Prevention Poster Contest Winners
American Burn Association 48th Annual Meeting • May 2016, Las Vegas, Nevada

1st Place Winner
“Keep Me Safe”
Children’s Hospital Colorado Burn Program – Aurora, Colorado

2nd Place Winner
“Stay Cool”
University of Calgary, Plastic Surgery – Calgary, Alberta, Canada

3rd Place Winner
“Keep Children Safe Behind The Gate”
Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Wisconsin

People’s Choice Award
“Stop The Scald”
Joseph M. Still Burn Centers, Inc. Burn and Reconstructive Centers of America, Inc.
Each year, over 486,000 individuals were seen in emergency departments, minor emergency clinics or physician’s offices for the treatment of a burn injury in the United States and Canada. In 2014 alone, there were 3,275 recorded deaths from fire and smoke inhalation injuries. The majority of these injuries were preventable. This is why the American Burn Association and its Burn Prevention Committee wants to bring awareness to the cause of such devastating and costly injuries and encourage the public to make simple environmental and behavioral changes that have proven to mitigate this problem.

Using the term “M. O. B.,” (Mechanisms of Burn) for the national campaign, the many ways in which a burn injury may occur is addressed. The campaign’s unique approach features a law and order motif. The many causes of burns (flame, scald, electrical, etc.) are identified as “criminals” being sought after by “Police Commissioner Sean O’Safety.” Fire and Life Safety Educators, parents and others are given the opportunity to explore the various ways in which a “criminal” may cause a burn. Specific topics address the mechanism of injury for various age groups and persons with disabilities. For example, Larry “The Steamer” Liquids, may cause a burn in a different manner to a young child, then an older adult; William “The Wire” Electricity, may cause an electrical injury in many forms. By arming themselves with the knowledge of the many different ways a burn injury could occur, individuals may take the necessary steps to ensure a safe environment for themselves and their loved ones.

“We are really excited about this new initiative of the Burn Prevention Committee of the ABA,” said Dr. Michael Peck, President of the ABA. “This Committee has worked tirelessly to raise awareness that burn injuries can be prevented,” he said.

A complete fresh set of resource materials for National Burn Awareness Week 2017 will be available on the American Burn Association Website, www.ameriburn.org, on November 1, 2016. Resource materials will include a fact sheet, prevention poster, sample press release, suggested social media posts and more! The MOB (Mechanisms of Burn) is coming … are you ready for the MOB?
The Burn Prevention Award is awarded at the ABA Annual Meeting to a current American Burn Association (ABA) member for contribution in burn prevention. To qualify for this award, the nominator must establish:

1. Nominee is a current member of the American Burn Association.

2. Nominee’s burn prevention activities demonstrate local, regional, statewide or national impact for the past year. In addition, these accomplishments and contributions may benefit or compliment other prevention programs within organization, local community, region, state or nation.

3. Nominee’s burn prevention activities demonstrate local, regional, statewide or national impact over their lifetime and professional career. Additionally, these accomplishments and contributions may also benefit or compliment other prevention programs within organization, local community, region, state or nation.

4. Nominee, as an individual, is recognized as a prevention leader in the burn community who has achieved wide-scale reduction of burn injuries and/or progress toward elimination of burn injuries utilizing community partnerships.

5. Nominee will be able to attend the annual meeting and will be present to accept the award.

The award program will recognize prevention leaders in the burn community who have achieved wide-scale reduction of burn injuries and/or progress toward elimination of burn injuries utilizing community partnerships. This award also intends to showcase the outstanding efforts of burn prevention achievements of maintained superior prevention results and advanced practices to improve safety.

An individual is eligible for this award each year if the work is new and significant and continues to fulfill at least one of the above criteria. The award will be based on the nominee’s accomplishments during the past year and general accomplishments in prevention over their lifetime. Nominee must be a current ABA member at the time of nomination. Applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Burn Prevention Committee, based on the selection criteria. The current ABA Burn Prevention Committee Chair will abstain from voting except in the event of a tie in which case the Chair will have the final decision of the award recipient.

The award, under the auspices of the ABA Burn Prevention Committee, includes an honorarium of $1,500. The winner will be notified prior to the annual meeting and is required to attend to receive the award. The award will be presented at the 2017 American Burn Association’s 49th Annual Meeting during the Presidential Address on Wednesday, March 22, 2017 in Boston, MA.

Please confirm prior to nominating an individual that he/she is a current ABA member. Nominations may be made by completing the form which can be downloaded at: http://www.ameriburn.org/2017ABABurnPreventionAwardNominationForm.pdf. Nomination form(s) must be received no later than December 1, 2016. Nomination forms must be complete for nominee to be considered. Please email completed nomination form(s) to Kelsey Hartman-Viega at kviega@shrinenet.org.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call 916-453-2060.