

CHILDREN'S BURN FOUNDATION

Summer 2024 Council Newsletter



Children's Burn Foundation

Giving New Hope

Children's Burn Foundation provides child burn survivors and their families with comprehensive healing, from life-transforming surgeries to psychological support until the child is 18 years old, while educating communities on how to prevent and treat burns. **Child burn survivors don't just survive. They thrive!**

2024 Giving New Hope Benefit



Heidi Jackson, Kathy Toppino, Chief Greg Barton, Carol Mancino and Kandus Simpson

Children's Burn Foundation held its 29th Annual Giving New Hope Benefit at the Beverly Hilton on Tuesday, March 5, 2024. Hosted by the Council of Children's Burn Foundation, Dinner Chairs Aida Madi, and the Melamed family, the evening honored Beverly Hills Fire Chief Gregory W. Barton. Chief Barton has served as a vital partner in CBF's burn prevention and education mission for many years. Chief Barton's unwavering leadership and commitment to our community have profoundly impacted the lives of countless young individuals.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees Kathy Toppino shared about Chief Barton's impressive background. He has earned numerous awards, including Firefighter of the Year recognitions from the Kiwanis Club, the Beverly Hills Fire Department and the Beverly Hills Masonic Lodge. He is an active member of the Children's Burn Foundation Board, serving on the Governance and Executive Committees and chairing the Prevention and Education Committee. Chief Barton's distinguished character was eloquently praised by Beverly Hills City Manager Nancy Huntcoffey, who hailed him as "an exceptional fire chief cherished by our community for his leadership, benevolence, and dedication to aiding others."

The evening raised funds for life-saving programs to heal child burn survivors and their families through comprehensive physical, financial and emotional care while educating communities in California and across the globe on how to prevent and treat burns. Attendees were deeply moved by the poignant testimonials of courageous young burn survivors like Walter Gomez, who shared his harrowing journey of resilience and transformation. Walter was only four years old when he was severely burned in a freeway car crash. He spoke about how growing up as a burn survivor was not easy. But Children's Burn Foundation support groups changed his life, giving him confidence and shaping him into who he is today. "I have now learned to love and embrace my scars, and I am proud of the person I see today when I look in the mirror. I think of Children's Burn Foundation as a lighthouse – a beacon of hope that has guided me through life. The firefighters who rescued me from that burning car gave me a second chance at life. Children's Burn Foundation taught me how to live it."

Retired NBC4 weathercaster and board member Fritz Coleman was the highly entertaining master of ceremonies. The evening featured cocktails and a silent auction, followed by dinner, entertainment, award presentations, and a live auction.

The Council thanks the CBF team, Dinner Chairs Aida Madi and the Melamed family, Benefit Chair Heidi Jackson, and the entire CBF community for coming together united in purpose to further our mission to prevent burns and heal children. Over 500 individuals attended the event, raising \$1.4 million to support CBF's life-saving programs.



Susan Mallory and Patty Nickoll



Fay Bass and Dana Kitaj

2024 Giving New Hope Benefit

"I am honored to serve as a board member for the Children's Burn Foundation because a burn can occur in an instant, but the effects of the injury last a lifetime. CBF steps in and provides a holistic approach to healing the survivors and their family members. CBF also partners with the fire service to deliver lifesaving education that will prevent burns from ever occurring. I am proud to be a part of their work in prevention and education here in the United States and around the world." - Chief Greg Barton



Kathy Toppino, Chief Gregory W. Barton, Aida Madi and the Melamed family



Barbara Deming and Christine Ofiesh



Arthur Chinski, Lynda Fadel, Katheryn Chinski and Robin Swartz



Ruth Gilliam, Ruben Turner, Elinor Turner and Howard Gilliam



Adria & Pedro Martí



Kathleen Dohrmann, Nicole Martino, Cindy Gaytan, Tricia Converse, Shannon Minor and Lily Crummy

2024 Giving New Hope Benefit



Howard Banchik & Sandi Rosenbaum



Jackie Park Kim, Monika Merchan, Ester Demorest, Yvonne Skillings and Patricia Musitano



Mino Simantob and Adriana Balaban



Janna Lowensohn and Tami Lowensohn



Larry & Sandy Post

Inspiring Survivor Spotlight: Walter Gomez

“Growing up as a burn survivor was not easy. Dealing with the constant staring impacted my self-esteem. CBF support group changed my life and made me the person I am today. I have learned to love and embrace my scars, and I am proud of the person I see today when I look in the mirror. I think of CBF as a lighthouse – a beacon of hope that has guided me through life. The firefighters who rescued me from that burning car gave me a second chance at life. Children’s Burn Foundation taught me how to live it.” - Walter Gomez



Walter Gomez, Sandra Correa, Julian Reynoso and Elizabeth Flores

New Members

In May, Membership Chairs Lily Crummy, Andrea Jordan Walker, and Rosetta Purcell hosted an informational lunch where guests enjoyed the hospitality of our membership committee while learning about our mission, programs, and volunteer opportunities. We welcomed some of our new members: Linda Levie, Tricia Converse, and Linda Konner.

Linda Levie, sponsored by Heidi Jackson and Angela Mabon, is an invitation expert and former owner of the premier stationery and gift store Presence in Sherman Oaks. Tricia Converse, sponsored by Cindy Gaytan and Heidi Jackson, is a Senior Associate at AECOM who loves tennis and skiing in her free time. Linda Konner, sponsored by Andrea Jordan Walker and Kandus Simpson, serves on the board for Raise A Child and enjoys arts, literature, travel, and volunteering. They are enthusiastic about the work ahead, look forward to meeting more of our members, and have already committed to various roles in upcoming events and activities.



Membership Co-Chairs Andrea Jordan Walker, Rosetta Purcell and Lily Crummy



Kandus Simpson and Carol Mancino

“I started the Council with the vision of creating an organization of passionate women committed to creating healing experiences for child burn survivors and their families and driven to raise funds for our life-saving work. It’s amazing to see how far we have come in our efforts helping contribute to the growth of our programs that have served over 160,000 people in the last year alone. Not to mention the lifelong friendships created amongst the ladies!” - Carol Mancino



Linda Levie and Angela Mabon



Cindy Gaytan, Tricia Converse and Heidi Jackson



Linda Konner and Andrea Jordan Walker

Taste of Hope

On Sunday, October 15, 2023, Children's Burn Foundation held its inaugural Taste of Hope Food & Wine event at the Petersen Automotive Museum. The evening was a delightful celebration of culinary excellence, featuring over 20 incredible food and beverage vendors. Throughout the event, guests had the opportunity to interact with talented chefs and restaurant personnel, who not only prepared and served delicious dishes but also shared insights into the creative process behind their specialty offerings. Event Chairs Carol Mancino, Lynda Fadel and Adriana Balaban spoke about the vital work of Children's Burn Foundation. They presented the first-ever Taste of Hope award to the evening honoree, Norbert Wabnig of The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills.



*Norbert Wabnig, Doug & Carol Mancino,
Chief Alfred Poirier and Chief Gregory Barton*

Norbert Wabnig purchased The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills in 1978 and transformed it into the beloved culinary haven it is today. Following the award presentation, Morena Rosado, a Children's Burn Foundation program participant and talented musician, shared her inspiring journey of resilience after her burn injury, touching the hearts of everyone present.

The night also featured music, a live and silent auction and a wine-pull auction. Notable guests from the Beverly Hills Fire Department, including Chief Gregory Barton and Deputy Chief Alfred Poirier, along with many members of the Los Angeles Fire Department, were in attendance. CBF thanks the community for coming together and contributing to the event's tremendous success and supporting child burn survivors.



*Lynda Fadel, Heidi Jackson and
Adriana Balaban*



Duane Jackson and Lexi Fadel



Milena Treiger and Julie Barker



*Theodora Dolotta, Kat Dohrmann, Sherri Sylvester,
Karen Anderson and Cindy Gaytan*



*Kandus Simpson, Tami Lowensohn,
Dorrie Markovits and Tanya Gill*

October and January General Meetings

The October General Meeting, hosted by Julie Barker, Kathleen Dohrmann, and Sherri Sylvester, took place on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at The Griffin Club. Kathy Toppino delivered a comprehensive report on Foundation activities, followed by Tanya Sorokin, who discussed the important initiatives of the programs team. Updates were provided on the annual holiday party, Camp Gung Ho, Giving New Hope, and the annual golf tournament. Members were excited to hear about the upcoming inaugural Taste of Hope event. Additionally, Yvonne Skillings was recognized and inducted into the Loyalty Circle.

The January General Meeting, hosted by Mary Kayne, Dana Kitaj, and Angela Mabon, took place on January 29, 2024, at Hillcrest Country Club. Members received updates on Mystery Boxes, plans for Giving New Hope and the Spring Luncheon. Lynda Fadel and Carol Mancino highlighted the remarkable success of the Council's inaugural Taste of Hope event, while Yvonne Skillings shared about the joy members brought to CBF families at the holiday party.



Julie Barker, Rosetta Purcell, Kandus Simpson and Kat Dohrmann



Lynda Fadel and Mino Simantob



Kirstin Clink, Tracey Letteau and Tami Lowensohn



Barbara Pratt and Kathy Toppino



Dorrie Markovits, Marie Krueger and Amber Cohen



Tracy Berliner Smith, Barbara Deming and Yvonne Skillings



Heidi Jackson and Carol Mancino



Nina O'Hern and Rosetta Purcell



Laurie Sischo and Sherri Sylvester



Shauna Veisch, Sandi Rosenbaum and Cindy Williams

Golf Tournament Salutes First Responders



*Christine Ofiesh, Kathy Toppino
and Tracy Berliner Smith*

Held on a beautiful fall day at El Caballero Country Club, CBF's Annual Golf Tournament, lead by The Council Board Tournament Co-Chairs Tracy Berliner Smith and Kathy Toppino, was a huge success, honoring our heroic first responders and raising critical funds for burn survivors and their families. This memorable day on the green was filled with spirited, competitive play, delicious breakfast and lunch at the turn, expert putting lessons for the Council volunteers and lively libations at the end of a great day of sportsmanship. There is no doubt, though, that the true highlight of the day was hearing from burn survivor and CBF program recipient Dami Mokuolu, whose inspiring story of his journey to recovery brought the group to their feet in admiration. We are grateful to all our incredible financial and in-kind sponsors, returning and new-to-event players and Council volunteers. We're looking forward to seeing YOU on the green, or in the cheering section, this October!

Thank you to contributing writer, Tracy Berliner Smith

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Tournament Refreshment Cart and Par-tee Sponsors:

Tito's Vodka, Trejo's Donuts, Caffe Luxxe Coffee Roasters, Einstok Beer

Thank you to all of our incredible sponsors and in-kind donors for helping make this event one for the books!



*Tracy Berliner Smith, Kirstin Clink and
Kathy Toppino with two of the winning players*



*Kandus Simpson, Jeff Michealson and
Barbara Pratt*

Save the date for
Children's Burn Foundation
ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2024

El Caballero Country Club
HONORING FIRST RESPONDERS

Children's Holiday Party



Barbara Pratt greeting families upon arrival

On Saturday, December 2, 2023, Children's Burn Foundation collaborated with The Burbank Fire Department to transform Station 11 into a festive scene inspired by the Christmas story, The Elf on the Shelf. The event was meticulously planned by the "Elves" of the Children's Burn Foundation Council, who dedicated months to preparations and decorating, including wrapping presents in the days leading up to the celebration. Yvonne Skillings, Ester Demorest and Cindy Gaytan chaired this highly anticipated event with the help of Council volunteer Lindsey Gordon, ensuring it was a joyful and memorable day for young burn survivors and their families.



Tracy Berliner Smith helping serve lunch



Yvonne Skillings, Cindy Gaytan, Ester Demorest and Lindsey Gordon

Council and Board members, along with volunteers including burn survivor families and former CBF program participants, joined forces to create a magical experience featuring crafts, games, candy, photos with Santa, and dancing. The firehouse was beautifully adorned with handmade decorations in every corner, setting a festive atmosphere for the nearly 400 attendees and 80 volunteers.

During the festivities, board member Fritz Coleman conducted interviews with the CBF community, capturing moments for social media to showcase the unique impact of Children's Burn Foundation and the collective effort in preventing burns and supporting healing. Retired Burbank Fire Chief Eric Garcia and newly appointed Fire Chief Danny Alvarez actively engaged with families and participated in the "Hopeful Holidays" interview series. In another meaningful addition, Hav A Sole, a nonprofit focused on supplying quality footwear to communities to promote healthier lifestyles, set up a tent at the event. Council members assisted in sizing teenagers for new sneakers, contributing to the day's spirit of community support and care.

Families departed with arms full of presents, content bellies from delicious food, and hearts filled with joy from this memorable holiday event.

Children's Holiday Party



Kathy Toppino and Kandus Simpson



Cindy Gaytan and Lily Crummy



Kat Dohrmann, Theodora Dolotta and Manal Hindawi



Tami Lowensohn and Fay Bass



Christine Ofiesh, Kirstin Clink and Heather Shoemaker

"The annual holiday party brings our community together, and last year's Elf on the Shelf themed event was truly one of our best yet. The setting at the Burbank Fire Department's Station 11 was simply magical. It was heartwarming to witness the children's faces light up with joy as they arrived, eagerly deciding which fun activity to dive into first!"
- Yvonne Skillings



Barbara Deming and the team from Hav A Sole passing out sneakers to teens



The youngest party attendee dressed up as Santa Claus

Camp Gung Ho

Last year's camps were nothing short of magical, bringing together over 140 children, volunteers, and staff for unforgettable adventures. From a trip to Universal Studios Hollywood and a pool and puppy party at Adriana and Jay Balaban's home to surfing and hula lessons in Malibu and exploring the wonders of the California Science Center, every moment was filled with laughter, learning, and love. These camps weren't just about having a great time; they were about building bonds, boosting self-esteem, and nurturing wellness.

"Last year's pool party and puppy party was the hot ticket of the season! Everyone loved the Pups Without Borders puppies. The Golden State Lifeguards could not have been more patient and encouraging with the kids, helping them stay safe and develop their swimming proficiency. The view of the mountains from the Balaban pool is second to none. Plus, the guest list included some of the sweetest kids I've ever met. They all wore brightly colored zinc sunscreen and went home exhausted with big smiles on their faces. I am looking forward to volunteering at camp again this summer!" - Janna Lowensohn



Janna Lowensohn hugging a camper after a day of fun

Campers had an opportunity to open up about their burn injuries in a safe space with other children who could relate to their stories and experienced the healing power of connection. Council volunteers also witnessed firsthand the profound impact of our work. Their interactions with the campers gave them a deeper understanding of why our mission is vital.

A special thank you to Camp Co-Chairs Susan Lynch, Laurie Sischo, and Jill Stein for working tirelessly to plan memorable experiences for child burn survivors and their families.



Alexandra Brand and two campers getting ready for the pool and puppy party



Jill Stein having fun in the foam with a young burn survivor



Barbara Pratt, Nancy Riordan and Beth Lane at family beach day



Dorrie Markovits and Kirstin Clink chaperoning their group at Universal Studios Hollywood

"Volunteering at camp is an incredible experience. It's a chance to forge deep connections with child burn survivors and their siblings, immersing ourselves in joyous activities like chaperoning museum tours or theme park adventures, fostering laughter through games, and unleashing creativity in arts & crafts sessions. Camp provides a safe space for survivors to enjoy summer fun, casting aside the weight of doctor's appointments and medical procedures, if only for a moment, and embracing the simple magic of childhood." - Dorrie Markovits

Heroes for Hope

“A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.” -Christopher Reeve

The Heroes for Hope Annual Donor Recognition dinner was held at the Magic Castle in Hollywood this past April. Annual membership is reserved for donors who support a minimum of \$10,000 in annual funding for the Children’s Burn Foundation’s programs.

During dinner, guest speaker Susan Baaj from the Syrian Institute of Progress recounted the spellbinding journey of Manal Hindawi from war-torn Syria to her remarkable recovery in Southern California with CBF’s Full Recovery services. Guests were entertained by a private magic show starring Johnny Ace Palmer. After the show, they explored the famed rooms of the castle.

Event chair Carol Mancino orchestrated an evening of magic and profound gratitude to our dedicated donors. Their generous gifts empower our children, instilling in them the belief that they can lead a fulfilling life.



Manal Hindawi working on her art and living her life not just as a survivor, but as a thriver



Chuck & Barbara Pratt



*Patty Nickoll, Sandi Rosenbaum and
Adriana Balaban*



*Chief Bill & Liz Bamattre and
Alex & Nicole Sinkys*

What kind of *hero* do you want to be?

Eternal Hero • Epic Hero • Dynamic Hero • Noble Hero • Super Hero
Heroes for Hope membership is reserved for donors who provide a minimum of \$10,000 in annual funding for Children’s Burn Foundation.

Funding supports vital programs such as Full Recovery, Medical and Family Emergency Assistance, Family Camps, Camp Gung-Ho, Child and Family Support Groups, Teen Support Group, Children’s Holiday Party, Safety Smart Babies, L.A. Troupe Safety Smart Presentations, Careful, That’s Hot! and International Medical Training & Burn Prevention Education.

Spring Luncheon and Shopping Boutique

On Tuesday, June 4, 2024, Council members and their friends gathered at the Skirball Cultural Center to celebrate fabulous women and experience whimsical fantasy tables while sipping and shopping the treasures of 18 fabulous vendors.

Co-chairs Carol Mancino, Jessica Pashkow, Barbara Pratt and Sandi Rosenbaum planned a beautiful day of shopping, dining and mingling, followed by a unique presentation of fantasy tables, thematically honoring notable women.

The Spring Luncheon is historically a friend-raising and fundraising event, and this year's event did not disappoint! While guests enjoyed a beautiful day of shopping and dining, 20 percent of the vendor sales were donated back to Children's Burn Foundation to support our life-saving and life-changing mission.



Co-chairs Jessica Pashkow, Carol Mancino, Barbara Pratt and Sandi Rosenbaum

Thank you to contributing writer, Barbara Pratt



Barbie



Rosie the Riveter



Frida Kahlo



Jill Stein and Ruth Gilliam



Dorrie Markovits, Kandus Simpson, Kat Dohrmann, Theodora Dolotta and Marie Krueger

Fire! Science & Safety Exhibit and Look Out Lucky!

Children's Burn Foundation continues to work with the California Science Center to spread life-saving burn prevention messaging. CBF partnered with the California Science Center's marketing team to produce twelve different videos featuring Fritz Coleman for their Safety Series on social media, promoting the *Fire! Science & Safety* exhibit. The series addressed seasonal safety topics and highlighted the dangers associated with viral social media challenges involving fire and burn hazards. Additionally, CBF's programs team continues to work closely with exhibit educators to ensure they have updated burn prevention messaging.

Have you and your family visited the *Fire! Science & Safety* exhibit at the California Science Center? This interactive, permanent exhibit is free, educational, and enjoyable for the whole family! Make sure to include it in your upcoming summer break plans.



Children's Burn Foundation recently introduced a new storybook as part of the *Look Out Lucky!* program, aimed at teaching young children essential concepts for avoiding burns from hot items. This book follows the adventures of Camo the Chameleon and Lucky the Curious Kitten as they navigate burn dangers in the kitchen. Geared towards children aged four to seven, as well as parents, caregivers, and educators in pre- and primary-school settings, the storybook also incorporates burn prevention and first aid tips for adults. Additionally, it features educational activities and coloring pages suitable for its target age group.

Readers can look forward to upcoming episodes of the original animated series, where Lucky and Camo explore outdoor burn dangers and even embark on a journey to Africa as part of the Children's Burn Foundation's international outreach program.

"Look Out Lucky! is one of my favorite CBF projects. It was incredibly fun to collaborate with an animator and bring these characters to life! I love how the first episode is engaging for kids, capturing their attention while delivering important burn prevention messages."
-Lynda Fadel



Message from the President

What a remarkable year it has been for our Council, and I am privileged to have served as your president. As we step into our 30th year, we see numerous achievements that we can look back on with pride. The Council's hard work has allowed us to expand our programs, grow our membership, and introduce new fundraising initiatives vital for supporting our survivors and their families.

This momentum requires significant time, talent, and treasure, and I thank each of you for answering our call for support. Your efforts, ideas, and infectious enthusiasm were evident in every detail of our General Meetings, Holiday Party, Giving New Hope event, Camp Gung Ho, and Spring Luncheon. I would like to offer special thanks to the chairs of this year's events and to all the volunteers who made success look easy!

Thank you again, and enjoy your summer!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kandus Simpson".

Kandus Simpson



Message from the Executive Director

What an inspirational year for the Council as they welcomed eight new members and launched their inaugural Taste of Hope fundraising event. Taste of Hope showcased the Council's creativity and determination in bringing this fun community event to fruition. Our signature Giving New Hope benefit raised over \$1.4 million in much-needed funds. Its success is attributed to the Council's uniquely curated auction and magical mystery boxes.

The financial support raised at these events has a direct impact on our burn survivor families, providing them with access to critical treatment. When survivors focus on the strengths they have gained from their injury, like resiliency, bravery and perseverance, they gain the self-assurance to navigate a positive road forward, a journey that our Council is proud to be a part of.

This dedicated and industrious group places the Children's Burn Foundation mission at the heart of all their endeavors. In addition to fundraising, they organize Camp Gung-Ho and holiday celebrations that play a crucial role in aiding the recovery of our young burn survivors. They warmly welcomed our burn survivor families to events with kindness and compassion, a testament to their unwavering dedication to providing our children with opportunities to heal.

This year alone, the foundation has touched over 160,000 individuals with our services. We are deeply grateful to the Council for their unwavering partnership in our mission to heal and protect, and we look forward to continuing this impactful work together.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirstin Clink".

Kirstin Clink
Executive Director

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Who's Who

Christine Ofiesh

Newsletter

Mara Palmer Madsen



#SurvivorToThriver



Children's Burn Foundation's 30th Annual
Giving New Hope Benefit March 4, 2025