

## 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Brain Injury & Stroke Conference

On Wednesday, May 19, the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire (BIANH) hosted its 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Brain Injury & Stroke Conference at the Center of New Hampshire Radisson in Manchester, New Hampshire. Those attending included 330 professionals, survivors, and family members from all over the New England area.

The Conference began with an inspiring keynote presentation by Julia Fox Garrison, survivor and author of *Don't Leave Me This Way*. Julia shared both moving and humorous stories with the audience about her stroke and her fight to regain her life and dignity. Her message throughout the presentation was clear – “always advocate for quality medical care and never stop laughing!”

A variety of workshops were held throughout the day for those in attendance, exhibitors were on display in the main room, and an open art exhibit portrayed 23 exceptional submissions by many of our survivors. During the luncheon, Bud Elkind, president of BIANH, presented the *Ellen Hayes Award*. This year's recipient was Richard (Dick) Cunningham of Alton Bay, New Hampshire. Dick was recognized for his outstanding efforts in support of individuals with brain injuries and for his many years of service on the Board of Directors for the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire.

Donna Crowley, MS, RN, and Nursing Director for Neuroscience and ENT at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon was also recognized for her many years of service as a support group facilitator.

A special thank you to all of our presenters: Mary Amatangelo, Donna Beaudin, John Capuco, Marsha Carr, Rocco Chiappini, Gina England, Diane Fagan, Steve Fox, Julia Fox Garrison, Thomas Guilmette, David Hagner, David Hajaar, Erin Hall, Linda Hanrahan, Lisa Hatz, Elizabeth Kenney, Margie King, Ted King, Timothy Lukovits, Dan McLaughlin, Beth Nagy, Denise Sleeper, Mary Starkweather, Kathleen Theis, Scott Toussaint, Mary Sue Turner, and Pauline Turner. We truly appreciate you sharing your time and knowledge with us.

The return of the survivors' art exhibit was also a popular highlight at the conference. We greatly appreciate Nicki Beauregard and Nina Hopkins for their wonderful job of coordinating this year's exhibit. To all the survivors who participated, your artwork was amazing! There were 23 pieces of art on display. While not an easy decision, attendees were encouraged to vote for their favorite work. Although every piece of artwork deserved to be a winner, these top 5 were selected.

- #1 – *Historical Events* by Curtis Barlett
- #2 – *Raindrops* by Victor DeWildt
- #3 – *Lazy Summer Days* by Charlene Lister
- #4 – *Pine Grove* by Steven Mahoney
- #5 – *Stoned America* by Steven Mahoney

Thank you to all of our sponsors and exhibitors. Your support enables us to continue providing one of the largest and most comprehensive brain injury and stroke conferences in New England.

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