National Burn Awareness Week will be observed from February 3–9, 2019. That’s alright, no one else knew that either! Burn injury is not a top-of-mind concern for the average person. Regardless, here are some of the facts:

- Approximately 486,000 people will be medically treated for burn injury in the U.S. this year.
- Children under 5 are 2.4 times more likely to receive a burn injury than the overall population.
- Over 75% of all burn injuries occur in the home.
- Nearly 90% of all burn injuries are deemed preventable.
- Trauma specialists rate serious burn injury as the single-most devastating injury that a human can sustain and survive.

There is hope in the information disclosed here and that is why burn injury awareness is so important. We can prevent nearly 90% of all these injuries! That is the mission of the Burn Prevention Network.

Please join the Burn Prevention Network in promoting an awareness of the incidence of burn injury and the means of preventing these injuries, not just during National Burn Awareness Week, but all year long.

For more information on burn injury, prevention and burn awareness, visit:

www.burnprevention.org

or like us on Facebook.
The 2018 Valley Preferred Spirit of Courage will certainly be one that is remembered. It included a tornado watch, an international heroine and a downpour that politely waited until the event was officially dismissed! We hosted over 700 persons on October 2nd to recognize 11 heroes from our region and two Fallen Heroes from the York, PA Fire Department. The stories of their courageous acts were as awe-inspiring as was the humility of the Awardees.

Burn Prevention Network, Valley Preferred, and the Regional Burn Center and Burn Recovery at Lehigh Valley Hospital launched the Valley Preferred Spirit of Courage Award Program in 2005 to honor people in eastern and northeastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey who risked their lives to save others from a burn or death by fire. The program recognizes individuals and groups that have done an outstanding job of promoting fire safety or burn prevention education.

An event like the Valley Preferred Spirit of Courage, where the best side of humanity is showcased, is rare in this day and age. These are certainly not the stories we receive on a daily basis from the media. These stories motivate and inspire each of us to be the best we are capable of being … of putting other’s needs ahead of our selfish interests.

In addition to our inspiring Awardees, we were fortunate to host Natalia Ponce de Leon, from Bogota, Colombia as our Feature Speaker. Natalia is the survivor of an acid burn attack who fought back and rallied the media, legislators and even the Prime Minister’s Wife to change the law of the land in her native Colombia to strengthen penalties for persons committing these crimes. She has gone on to become an International Spokesperson for oppressed women. In recognition of her efforts, she was awarded an Eisenhower Fellowship in 2017 and was acknowledged as one of the “Most Courageous Women in the World” that year.

Proceeds from the Valley Preferred Spirit of Courage support the educational outreach and burn survivor support programs of the Burn Prevention Network.

Our special thanks to the over 40 sponsors who made this event possible.
Among these were:

**NAMING SPONSOR**
Valley Preferred

**PLATINUM SPONSOR**
Lehigh Valley Health Network

**GOLD SPONSORS**
Bio Med Sciences
DataCeutics
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MedEvac
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If you happen to hear it said that arson investigation in Eastern PA is going to the dogs, rest assured that is a good thing. Particularly if the dogs happen to be either Silver or Judge!

Since 2011, Judge, a yellow Labrador retriever has been partnered with Fire Chief Lee Laubach (ret.) of the Allentown Fire Department. During his tenure, Judge was named the American Hero Dog in the Arson Category by the American Humane Society in 2016. His service has included working nearly 500 fire scenes where he uncovered evidence that has led to multiple criminal arrests and civil penalties for insurance fraud cases.

As educators, Judge and Chief Laubach have appeared at hundreds of fire safety programs and demonstrations for crime watch groups, elementary and high school programs and more. He and his handler are even members of the Burn Prevention Network Youth Fire Misuse Intervention Task Force!

According to Chief Laubach, the number of arson fires has dropped more than 50% since Judge has been in service in the city.

In August 2018, Judge and Chief Lee Laubach retired from active duty but still deliver fire safety educational programs together.

Not to fear, though … there is a new dog in town! Welcome Silver and her handler Bethlehem Police Detective, Doug Nothstein. In May of this year, Silver joined the already established Bethlehem K9 Corps. Now, with Silver’s help, the Corps expertise in searching for drugs and explosives includes sniffing out arson.

And of course, Doug and Silver are members of the Burn Prevention Network Youth Fire Misuse Intervention Team.

Both Judge and Silver are sponsored by State Farm Insurance, another very enthusiastic supporter of the Burn Prevention Network. State Farm Agent and Burn Prevention Network board member, Chris Breting stated, “Sponsoring Judge and Silver and the Burn Prevention Network is just another example of how State Farm Insurance is being a ‘Good Neighbor’ here in our region.”
We communicate almost everything via a cell phone today. This now includes seeking medical advice and treatment recommendations. TeleMedicine is at the advent of how people will seek health care in the future. In terms of burn care, the future is now!

The Lehigh Valley Health Network is an acknowledged leader in the use of TeleBurn, an app-based photo transfer program that connects referral physicians directly to a burn surgeon via a cell phone or tablet. The advantages are significant. Patients from great distances can be assessed and directed to treat the burn locally or be admitted to the regional burn center for care. This increases efficiency, timeliness of clinical care and reduces the cost of needless or delayed admissions.

There is one catch, however. The ability of a surgeon to accurately diagnose depth, severity and possible associated infection of the wound is directly linked to the quality of the photograph sent.

The ability to take quality medical photographs is not only vital for initial treatment, it is essential for conducting and documenting medical research. Here is where the Burn Prevention Network enters the picture (no pun intended!).

Members of the BPN Scar Physiology Research and Treatment (SPiRiT) Team, Dr. Sigrid Blome Eberwein, LVHN Burn Center Associate Director, and Matt Ferdock, CEO, DataCeutics and father of a burn survivor recognized the need for better photo-documentation of injuries and treatment sites in researching methods for normalizing scar formation following burn treatment. They reached out to Timothy Zoltie, a qualified medical photographer and Head of Medical and Dental Illustration at The University of Leeds, England. At their invitation, Tim presented on how to improve the quality and usefulness of photographs taken in the operating theater and during wound care procedures at the John A. Boswick Burn Care Symposium in Maui in 2018. The interest in this subject was immediate and confirmed a real educational need.

Following the Maui Conference, the SPiRiT Team has partnered with Mr. Zoltie and created an educational program entitled, Medical Photography 101. This program which will be previewed at both the Boswick Symposium and the American Burn Association Annual Meeting in 2019, is intended to instruct operating room nurses and researchers in what constitutes a quality medical photograph and how non-professional photographers can capture these using the equipment at hand, including cell phones.
Sustaining a burn injury is definitely not something to celebrate. Surviving such an injury is another matter. The truth is, surviving and healing from a serious burn takes time and support from others. That is why the Burn Prevention Network, in partnership with the Burn Care Team at Lehigh Valley Hospital Regional Burn Center, sponsors an annual Burn Survivor Family Holiday Party every December.

Nearly 300 survivors, family members and burn care professionals annually attend this festive event. Some are recently discharged from care; some are in the midst of a long road of therapies and corrective surgeries; and some have put decades between the present and their burn injury. All of them form a community that supports and encourages one another!

Aside from the abundant food, cheerful decorations, the arrival of Santa, and gifts for the children, something magical happens. Recently injured survivors connect with those who sustained their injuries years before and learn that, although things may be different, life can be meaningful and rewarding. Parents of burn injured children consult with one another to share stories of how to comfort and build self-esteem in little ones who carry scars. Burn Team members see former patients living their lives as husbands, wives, parents, or children filled with excitement and enthusiasm.

So, on December 2nd, 2018, this community will gather together at Iron Lakes Country Club in Lehigh County to once again give thanks for the gift of life and for each other. This is something to celebrate!
Without You

The Burn Prevention Network exists because of the generosity of dedicated and committed individuals, businesses, groups and organizations throughout our region.

Because you give…
we annually train over 500,000 children, grades 1 – 8, in fire safety practices and burn prevention behaviors.

Because of you…
we provide a safe place for children who have been burned to enjoy summer fun while developing self-esteem and coping skills to overcome the stares and comments that their scars elicit.

Because of you…
we coordinate a multi-disciplinary network of agencies that redirect youth who misuse fire to more responsible behaviors.

Because of you…
nearly 5,000 new families receive our “Home Safe Home” Kit following the birth of their child to help instruct them how to avoid burn injury to newborns and toddlers, the age when the incidence of burn is the very highest!

Without you…
none of these, or our other community services would be possible!

Very soon you will receive our annual request to make a donation to the Burn Prevention Network. We are counting on your continued generosity so that we can sustain our efforts to Create a World Without Burns!

Thank you!

Even more campers are expected next year at Camp Susquehanna, scheduled for June 14–18, 2019.