Science fiction, travel, and sampling different cuisines are just three of the various interests of Courtney Mapp. “I like watching science fiction movies and television shows, reading science fiction and fantasy books, watching comedies, working out and trying different types of cuisine,” Courtney shared.

As an extensive traveler, Courtney doesn’t let things stand in his way. “I’ve been to 47 out of the 50 states. The only states I haven’t visited are Oregon, Idaho, and New Mexico. One of the biggest obstacles Courtney has had to overcome is being burned in the kitchen of his home. “I was in the basement watching television and I heard the smoke detector. I got too close to the fire and my shirt caught on fire.”

Courtney suffered third degree burns on 32 percent of his body including his torso, arms, hands, and face. He spent 45 days in the burn unit and the rehabilitation department at Mercy Hospital in St. Louis.

“I had five surgeries over the first year after my injury for skin grafting and follow up releases of my hands. I also spent 10 months in the out-patient physical and occupational therapy departments working on my hands and elbows. I had a hard time getting full range of motion in my hands and elbows. After a lot of hard work, and help from those departments, I did get full range of motion in both my hands and my elbows and I can do pretty much everything I was able to do before my accident,” Courtney explained.
Spring is officially here! The trees and flowers are waking up, the days are slowly getting longer, and families are starting to make their plans for the summer, which for many of us include sending our children off to their first experience of summer camp while fondly remembering our own.

Summer camp conjures up fantastic memories for many of us and now that I have graduated to becoming a parent myself, I can’t wait for my son to one day experience the joys of summer camp. The memories of staying in cabins, meeting new people, swimming and canoeing in lakes are all things that every child should enjoy as a rite of passage into childhood.

But for some children, summer camp is not attainable. Some children aren’t able to visit a summer camp due to cost. Summer camp costs vary depending on the days spent at camp and of course the location and activities offered at each particular camp. I am proud to report that since 1997, Burns Recovered has operated a fantastic summer camp experience for burn injured children ages 6 to 17 free of charge to our campers!

Hosted at Camp Sabra on the Staeberg Peninsula on the Lake of the Ozarks, Midwest Children’s Burn Camp is the only camp dedicated to burn injured children in the state of Missouri. Ziplining, kayaking, canoeing, water-tubing, archery, and a 100-foot water slide into the lake are just some of the adventures our kids will experience at this year’s camp, scheduled for August 7 through 13. Large charter buses pick children up from various points across the state to attend and we even have children fly in, through a partnership with Angel Flights, from neighboring states.

Most of the children who attend our camp would be unable to do so if the camp wasn’t free for them. The average cost to host one child for a week at Midwest Children’s Burn Camp is $2,000, this includes the cost of renting the camp from the host facility, transportation, food, and sometimes, supplies. Some of our kids show up on their first day without the items needed for a week of camp, such as bedding and swimwear. We wouldn’t be heading into our 21st camping season without the support of some of the individuals reading this newsletter right now and we thank you!

As you read through our spring and summer newsletter, I am asking you to think back to your summer camp experience and the wonderful memories that experience provided to you or your children. Wouldn’t you want every child to be able to add that chapter to the story of their life? If you are like me, I remember vividly the sights and smells of camp, the crackling of a camp fire, the hum of the boat motors on the lake, and the laughter of the children as they experience many of these activities for the first times in their lives. If you’d like to make this dream come true for one of our kids, we’ve included a remittance envelope in this newsletter; please consider making a gift to our organization so we can add the chapter of “summer camp” to a child’s life story this year.

Enjoy the warmer weather and on behalf of all affiliated with Burns Recovered, thank you for your continued support. It is only through your trust that we are able to achieve our mission.
BURNS RECOVERED by the numbers

Direct Survivor and Co-Survivor Assistance For January and February 2017

Number of Burn Survivors seen in the hospital by staff and peer support volunteers: 107
Number of Co-Survivors seen in the hospital by staff and peer support volunteers: 101
Total hours spent at the hospital by staff and peer support volunteers: 72.5 HOURS

Support Group attendance totaled 16. Inclement weather in January caused many people to cancel.

EDUCATION

Community Presentations: 26
Attendees: 698
Apply to be a COUNSELOR or CAMPER for the
21ST ANNUAL MIDWEST CHILDREN’S BURN CAMP

Zip lining, kayaking, canoeing, water-tubing, archery, and a 110 foot water slide into a beautiful lake are just some of the adventures our campers encounter each year at Midwest Children’s Burn Camp (MCBC).

This year’s camp adventure is scheduled for Monday, August 7 to Sunday, August 13, and visitor’s day for camp is scheduled for Friday, August 11. We anticipate 70 campers this summer to enjoy our usual camp activities and celebrate our theme of Happy Halloween!

Midwest Children’s Burn Camp is open to children ages 6 to 17 who have been hospitalized for severe burns. This unique camp experience helps campers discover that who they are on the inside is much more valuable than the scars they see on the outside. Campers attend at no charge thanks to generous community support. Campers are accepted from all over Missouri and neighboring states. Free transportation to camp is provided from St. Louis, Columbia, Springfield and Kansas City. Angel Flight may be available for those of you who live out of state.

For those campers who come back year after year, we welcome you and look forward to seeing you again. For anyone who is a burn survivor who is considering coming to camp for the first time, we would love to have you and we can’t wait to meet you.

Our camp would not be the wonderful experience it is each year without the hard work and dedication of our volunteers. Last year, over 40 volunteers dedicated their time and talent to make our camp a success. We can’t thank you enough for all your hard work and look forward to seeing you again. For those who are reading this and have never volunteered but would like to, please consider volunteering to serve as a counselor. Counselors must be 21 or older. Volunteer orientation for camp is scheduled for June 24 and 25 in Columbia, Missouri. This training is essential and required for all individuals who are interested in becoming a counselor for camp.

Whether you’re interested in attending as a camper or serving as a counselor, you can find out all the information you need to participate in camp this year, including applying online to attend as a camper or volunteer as a counselor, via our website at www.brs.org. Counselor registration is already open. Camper registration begins on May 1. You can also contact us by telephone at 314-997-2757 and ask for Emily.

We’ll see you at Camp!
HELPING SEND A CHILD TO CAMP
is just a click away!

What do digital cameras, Halloween decorations
and glitter tattoos all have in common? They are
all items which will help us ensure a wonderful
camp experience for our campers this year! We
need lots of digital cameras and memory cards so
the campers can record their camp experience.

We always need Walmart and Dollar General gift
cards because many of our campers come from
financially distressed homes and are unable to
purchase all the needed items for camp. We
frequently have to drive to Walmart or Dollar Gen-
eral on the first day of camp to purchase many of
the items campers will need, including clothing,
dermal parts, bedding, and swim wear.

Our theme this year is Happy Halloween which will
include a Halloween party and you can’t have a
party without decorations, glow sticks and glitter
tattoos! And speaking of party, since many of our
kids do not have the financial means to celebrate
their birthday at home, we celebrate our campers’
birthdays each year, including party hats and a
BIG birthday cake.

We’ve made it easy for you to get involved, visit
this Amazon link http://a.co/ccK17rj and pick from
the list of needed items. Regardless of what or
how many you choose, all the items will help
enhance our camper’s experience.

Thanks in advance for helping to make a child’s
camp experience AWESOME!
NEIMAN MARCUS FASHION SHOW
Scheduled for September 7

We are happy to announce our 6th Annual “More Than a Fashion Show” benefitting Midwest Children’s Burn Camp. The event will be held at Neiman Marcus in St. Louis on Thursday, September 7 with cocktails beginning at 5:30 and the program starting at 6:00 pm.

Allen Barber, Vice President and General Manager and Teri Rafferty, Manager of Public Relations for Neiman Marcus always overwhelm us with their support and generosity. Each year Neiman Marcus provides a beautiful space in their store for outstanding “Lite bites” from the top St. Louis food vendors who all volunteer their time and delicacies.

Cameron and Isaiah served at models at last year’s fashion show.

Champagne and a special camptini add to the festivities. Neiman Marcus presents a top fashion show of the season’s newest fashions worthy of a runway show in New York. The models are accompanied down the runway by our campers from Midwest Children’s Burn Camp who speak to the audience about the impact the camp has had on their lives. The campers are truly our stars! Each year this event has grown in size and stature with spreads in all the local magazines. Last year our emcee Jasmine Huda interviewed our campers for Fox News. Co-chairs Faith Berger and Sheri Sherman expect the September event to be bigger and better than ever!

To find out more information on how you can participate, either through purchasing a ticket, sponsoring the event, or donating your time or talent, email Lynn Huelsmann, Executive Director, at lynn@brsg.org or call 314-997-2757. We’ll see you at the Fashion Show!
Each year the Burns Recovered Board of Directors awards scholarships to burn survivors who have an affiliation with our organization and need financial assistance to pursue education after high school or who need to be retrained as a result of their burn injuries.

In order to apply for a scholarship, the burn survivor must be at least 17 years old and have a relationship with Burns Recovered either through attending our annual camp or via receiving peer support services. They would also need to obtain a recommendation for consideration by someone affiliated with Burns Recovered and they must demonstrate that they have applied and been accepted to an accredited institution including a two-year college, four-year university or a trade school or training program. Finally, the applicant must be able to provide an adequate explanation of their financial need.

The Burns Recovered Board of Directors evaluates each application and selects the recipients based on need. If someone has received a scholarship in the past that does not exclude them from applying again this year. The application process opens on April 1 and concludes on May 15. Winners are notified by June 15 and scholarship funds are distributed in July or August for the fall term and December or January for the spring term.

A scholarship application form must be completed. Along with an applicant’s completed application, two letters of recommendation from a parent, relative, teacher, counselor or youth advisor explaining why the applicant is deserving or in need of scholarship assistance must also be included. Finally, the applicant must include a one-page essay describing their educational goals, how they plan to accomplish their goals and sharing who in their life is the most supportive of their continuing education.

The scholarship value varies annually and is determined by the Board of Directors. If awarded a scholarship, the student must maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) for the entire term the scholarship is awarded, which is one year. Also, the minimum school term must be completed in one year and proof of the minimum GPA and completion of the one-year term are required. Scholarship funding can only be used for tuition and school supplies, including books and required classroom materials. Disbursement of the scholarship funds will be made directly to the school/training facility on behalf of the successful applicant and under no circumstances will funding be directly distributed to the applicant.

Find out more information or, download all the materials you need to apply by visiting our website at www.brs.org.

TRIVIA NIGHT IS BACK...this time at a NEW LOCATION!

Calling all Trivia Experts! Mark your calendars for the Burns Recovered Trivia Night scheduled for Saturday, September 16, held at a new location, the Crestwood Community Center located at 9245 Whitecliff Park Lane in Crestwood. Door open at 5:45 pm and trivia begins at 7 pm. Tables of eight are $25 per person or $200, or, a donation of $250 allows you and your guests to enjoy the VIP experience which includes a waiter or waitress to tend to your every desire while you sip VIP wine and enjoy fantastic VIP snacks. Mark your calendars or reserve your table today by emailing emily@brsg.org or give us a call at 314-997-2757.
Skin grafting is a medical procedure in which healthy skin is removed from one area of the body and transplanted to another area of the body which was injured in a burn. Scarring to one’s skin as the result of a burn can limit the normal motion of the neck, shoulder, arms, hands, or legs, causing a contracture, which is a condition causing shortening and hardening of muscles, tendons, or other tissue leading to rigidity of the joints. Often surgery to help release this contracture can help a patient regain range of motion.

While Courtney was recovering from his burn injury in the burn unit at Mercy Hospital, he was visited by burn survivors affiliated with Burns Recovered. “I got involved with Burns Recovered because I had never met another burn survivor until Gary, Linda, and Chris, who were doing peer support for the organization at the time, came to my room when I was in the hospital. After I left the hospital I had more questions and wanted to see how others lived after being burned,” Courtney shared.

He then started attending the monthly support group meetings, held the first Thursday of every month on the 5th floor burn unit at Mercy Hospital in St. Louis.

Eventually, Courtney decided it was time to give even more and decided to become a member of the peer support team at Burns Recovered in September 2014.

As a peer support specialist, Courtney, along with Jamie Parker and Mark Esker, Director of Peer Support and Education, provide individualized peer support to patients and their loved ones during the burn survivor’s in-patient hospital stay.

As a peer support specialist, Courtney assists burn survivors with practical solutions he found to adjust and cope with injuries as well as providing emotional support and understanding. Peer supporters are a critical component to a burn survivor’s ability to see their life beyond their injuries. The most significant role a peer supporter plays in a survivor’s life is ensuring they know they are never alone.

Today, Courtney lives in Ballwin, Missouri with his son and has recently starting working for himself. He remains in the technology industry, serving as the principle architect working for a client in Detroit, Michigan.

He shared that if the person he is today, could talk to the person he was when he was initially burned he would share the following, “Patience, a good attitude, and hard work are the keys to your success. Don’t let anyone tell you what you can and cannot do. After reading this article, I hope that other survivors can look to me as an example and believe that they too can achieve as much or more than me with their journey to recovery!”

If you or someone you know is a burn survivor and would like individualized support, contact Burns Recovered at 314-997-2757 or email us at brsg@brsg.org. You are also welcome to join us at our monthly support groups held the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM at Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, in the Burn Center waiting room. We also hold a support group in Columbia, Missouri on the second Tuesday of each month at 4:00 PM at the University Hospital waiting room of the burn center.
April 6 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
April 11 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
April 13 < BR Board Meeting

May 4 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
May 9 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm > University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
May 13 < BR Picnic < 12 pm < Vago Park, Maryland Heights, Mo

June 1 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
June 8 < BR Board Meeting
June 13 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
June 24, 25 < Camp Volunteer Orientation, Columbia, Mo

July 6 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
July 11 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center

August 3 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
August 8 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
August 11 < Visitor’s Day at Camp
August 7 - 13 < Midwest Children’s Burn Camp!
August 28 < BR Board Meeting (not held on second Tuesday of month due to Burn Camp)

Sept 7 < Fashion Show in partnership with Neiman Marcus < 5:30 pm
Sept 16 < Trivia Night < 7 pm < Crestwood Community Center (NEW LOCATION)
Sept 12 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
Sept 14 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit < (not held on first Thursday due to Fashion Show)

Oct 5 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
Oct 10 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
Oct 12 < BR Board meeting

Nov 2 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
Nov 14 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm < University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center

Dec 2 < Holiday Party < 4 to 9 pm < Shrewsbury Civic Center, Shrewsbury, Mo
Dec 7 < Peer Support Group St. Louis < 6 pm < Mercy Hospital, 5th Floor, Burn Unit
Dec 12 < Peer Support Group Columbia < 4 pm University Hospital, Waiting Room of Burn Center
Dec 14 < BR Board Meeting
PEER SUPPORT: A Gateway to Living Through Trauma

By Mark Esker, MSW, Director of Peer Support and Education

Have you ever noticed how much pain exists in the world? Around every turn, I hear the word trauma. We could spend days talking about the trauma that exists in the world, but we need to look no further than burn-injury to witness the deep psychological and physical impacts of trauma. I continue to be amazed at the strength and endurance that burn survivors have to continue along their difficult path to recovery. I believe burn survivors have a code, perhaps a “trauma code”. We do not need to say a word in order for a burn survivor to know “you are not alone”. I believe this is the true start of living through the trauma. Peer support offers the beginning of the path to “psychological reconstruction”.

Last month, Burns Recovered helped start that journey by making over 100 peer support impressions to patients and their families in the burn unit. It is our commitment to ensure that burn survivors and co-survivors know they are not alone. We are dedicated to assisting them to move past the trauma and find their sense of belonging again. However, if you are a burn survivor, we need your help! If you ever wanted to help other people live through trauma, now is the time to volunteer at Burns Recovered. Talk to us about becoming a peer support volunteer, or consider sharing your story to help other survivors. One of the best ways to live through trauma is to help others realize that the scars are only a reminder of where we have been, not who we can become.

Mark Esker serves as the Director of Peer Support and Education at Burns Recovered. When Mark was 18 years old he had a job working at a gas station. While at work, an electric spark from a golf cart set off a flash fire which was fed by the gas fumes. In seconds, Mark suffered burns across 66 percent of his body, much of which were second and third degree. After a year of surgeries and physical therapy, Mark attended college, eventually obtaining his Master’s in Social Work (MSW) degree. Today, Mark is married with three children and serves others through his work at Burns Recovered.