

Heads UP!

The official newsletter of SMARTRISK

Fall 2009

Vote for SMARTRISK No Regrets

Help SMARTRISK to introduce 250 new high schools to No Regrets in 2010 by voting for our idea submitted to the Aviva Community Fund competition. The most popular ideas, as voted on by Canadians, make it to the semi-finals. You are permitted to vote up to once each day. Visit www.avivacommunityfund.org/ideas/acf1059 to vote for SMARTRISK and help save lives across Canada!

Kenzie 2010 Calendar

Here's an easy way to help SMARTRISK while getting an early start on your holiday shopping. Leading Canadian automotive journalist Jim Kenzie is producing, for the fifth year running, the Kenzie Car Calendar, featuring his photos of luxury cars snapped in exotic locations. Each month also includes a smart risk tip. Best of all, Mr. Kenzie donates a portion of calendar sales to SMARTRISK each year. Your 2010 calendar will soon be available to order at www.jimkenzie.com

No Regrets: new for 2009-2010

New SMARTRISK website is centre for youth programming

While Canadian high schools were closed over the summer with students and teachers taking a well earned breather, SMARTRISK staff were hard at work pulling together a new website to support our youth programming. Now that students are back in school and No Regrets programs are getting off the ground for the year, www.smartrisknoregrets.ca is up and running. Website features have been designed to help SMARTRISK staff efficiently and effectively support students and teachers to run their programs.

This popular peer leadership injury program is now into its seventh year. From its beginnings in five Canadian high schools as a pilot project in 2003, today more than 100 high schools have participated in No Regrets.

These include schools in the Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, with plans for further expansion.

SMARTRISK staff train student leaders and their staff advisers to implement injury prevention activities and events in their high schools to promote our five key smart risk messages: Buckle Up; Look First; Wear the Gear; Get Trained; and Drive Sober. These youth-led activities and events are designed to influence the attitudes and risk-taking behaviour of the general

student population in each school related to activities such as driving, biking, skateboarding, skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling and partying.

The new website allows SMARTRISK staff to communicate more easily with school staff, students and parents as we continue to expand our numbers. For example, students can download detailed instructions on how to prepare and present various activities, events and campaigns in their schools during the year. As students graduate and new students join No Regrets teams, they can access videos on the website, introducing them to the program and the injury issue.

Understanding that parents are a key influence on their teenagers' risk-taking behaviour, a section of the website is dedicated to parents, including a video interview with our chairman, Ned Levitt, who lost his teenaged daughter to an injury. Tips for parents on how to talk to their teens about risk are also at the site.

In addition, SMARTRISK staff will be using social networking sites to communicate with students where they are already congregating online, including on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube. We invite you to visit www.smartrisknoregrets.ca and we thank State Farm for the funding that helped us to create the site.

Andrew Walker



Some Canadians may remember the bare facts of the brief news story in early July – about 21-year-old Andrew Walker of Kelowna, B.C., who lost his life after being towed by a car on his skateboard.

But to those left

behind to grieve, there is much more to the story.

Friends and family, including an older brother and sister, remember Andrew as the carefree young man with the big smile, who, like many on Canada's west coast playground, took full advantage of the outdoors, learning from a young age to ski, water ski, play soccer, baseball and volleyball, later taking up wakeboarding, snowboarding, skateboarding and downhill cycling.

While he enjoyed sports and played hard, his father Scott recalls, Andrew was never hyper-competitive. He played more for fun, rarely getting upset if things weren't going his way. Through his high school years, he was shorter than most of his friends, only growing to his full height of nearly 6' 2" by age 20.

After graduating from Kelowna Secondary School in 2006, Andrew took a year off before spending two years at the British Columbia Institute of Technology, graduating with a Diploma of Technology in Business Management. Friends remarked how it seemed he never needed to study while still passing all his courses, excelling in some.

"He was adventurous but not a thrill seeker," said Scott. He used his longboard skateboard mainly for transportation and cruising around with his friends. He wasn't much of a drinker, instead regularly acting as the designated driver for his friends.

On July 2, the day of Andrew's death, the family had attended a cousin's funeral. They invited about 35 people back to their house for a barbecue afterwards. After spending the day and early evening with his family, Andrew went out to meet a few friends. As it was explained to Scott afterwards, who had had no previous knowledge of the practice, the youths would sometimes hold onto a friend's car while longboarding until they reached a certain speed, then they would let go and cruise down the road. Apparently the driver heard him shout, "I'm out" but Andrew somehow suddenly lost control and was hit by the car, resulting in the loss of his life.

Andrew had spoken to his friends of how he wouldn't want people coming to *his* funeral dressed in dark, sombre clothing. Carrying out his wish, the family designed colourful T-shirts for friends and family to wear to the funeral. Along with his name and life dates, *Enjoy Life Everyday* was stencilled on the shirts.

A Walker family friend knew of SMARTRISK through its founder, Dr. Robert Conn, who was born and raised in Kelowna. As the family learned of SMARTRISK's emphasis on youth and peer-led injury prevention programs in high schools, they decided to establish a memorial in Andrew's name, to bring SMARTRISK to local high schools. The Okanagan area offers lots of opportunity for fun and thrills, Scott observed, but sometimes young people "cross their Stupid Lines" and take risks that get them into trouble.

Donations may be made directly through SMARTRISK in memory of Andrew or through the Central Okanagan Foundation. All money raised will go to two purposes, Scott explained: to SMARTRISK to bring its youth programs to the area's high schools, (six schools are already scheduled for training) and to find ways to improve communications between parents and their teenagers. SMARTRISK is honoured to play a role in helping to ensure Andrew's fun-loving spirit lives on through empowering local youth to choose smart risk.

Sponsor news



SMARTRISK is pleased to announce that Hydro One has renewed its support of the organization this year. Hydro One has been a valued

partner of SMARTRISK since 2000, helping us to present

our youth programming to thousands of young Canadians.

We invite you to join with SMARTRISK and help us to prevent injury and save lives.

Donate today by visiting www.smartrisk.ca.

RISK RADAR

Fall is peak season for wildlife collisions

Here's how to reduce your risk of injury

An estimated four to eight large animal-vehicle collisions occur each hour in Canada. In most cases, damage is to the vehicle (and animal) only; in a minority, people are injured and in some cases, killed. There have been anywhere from 12 to 33 fatal collisions annually in the last few years.

More than many countries, Canada has issues with large animals such as deer and moose coming into contact with traffic. Much of the land bordering roadways in Canada is wilderness and open range where large animal crossings are common and unpredictable.

MANAGING THE RISKS

- Collisions are most likely between sunset to sunrise, typically in good weather, on two-lane roads outside of urban areas.
- Moose and deer are most likely to be near roads in the spring, attracted by road salt in ditches, and in the fall during mating and migration seasons. November

experiences the highest number of collisions.

Many provinces have been active on this issue. For example, the Ontario government says it has installed fencing and lighting along major highways, removed roadside brush to improve sight lines, drained salty ponds beside highways, which may attract wildlife, and posted warning signs where there is a history of wildlife collisions.

In addition, some vehicle manufacturers have begun developing systems to alert drivers to large animals on the road ahead.

As a driver, what can you do? Ontario's Ministry of Transportation offers these tips to reduce risk:

Watch

- Watch for wildlife warning signs, slow down and scan the road ahead. If you see wildlife beside the road, slow down and pass carefully. Avoid driving at night, if possible.

- Use high beams at night where you can and watch for glowing eyes of animals.

Steer

- Stay in control and avoid swerving, which can cause you to lose control.

Brake

- Brake firmly if an animal is standing on or crossing the road. Don't assume the animal will move out of your way.

Stop

- If an animal is crossing the road, stop as safely as possible, realizing that other animals may follow.

More information

See the 2003 report, *Collisions Involving Motor Vehicles and Large Animals in Canada*, at www.wildlifeaccidents.ca, updated data at Transport Canada and tips at the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

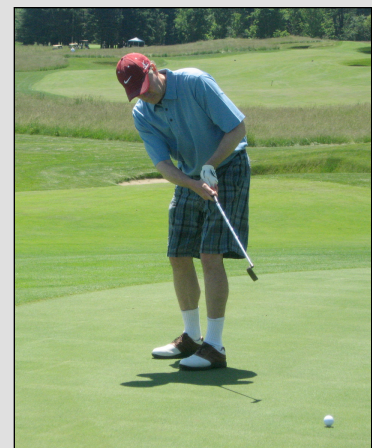
Golf day a success

SMARTRISK is grateful to all our corporate and individual supporters for making our 15th annual charity golf tournament our most financially successful to date. Our net revenues exceeded \$80,000.

A special thanks goes to event chairman, Tom Turner, who was a big factor in our success, and to Rogers, our new presenting sponsor.

Thanks also to our sponsors, who include: Publicis Canada, Inc., Beswick Group Management Inc., Cellworks Communication, Discover Communications Inc. and Uptown Communication House Inc.

Finally, we appreciate the support and hospitality provided by the Glencairn Golf Club in Halton Hills, Ont., and we look forward to returning to this beautiful and challenging course next June for our 16th annual tournament.



POINT of VIEW

Helping youth choose smart risk

A lot has been going on at SMARTRISK over the last months. We're comfortably ensconced in our new, more compact offices. We hosted our 15th annual charity golf tournament, which, despite the current economic climate, turned out to be our most financially successful venture yet.

We publicly launched *The Economic Burden of Injury in Canada* (find it at www.smartrisk.ca) report to significant media attention, including in *The Globe and Mail*, on CBC Radio, over Radio Canada International and numerous radio stations, newspapers and websites across Canada and around the world. You may even have caught a glimpse of it on *The National* on CBC TV.

We continue to work with other national injury organizations – Safe Kids Canada, ThinkFirst Foundation and Safe Communities Canada – as the Think Smart and Safe Alliance, on finding efficiencies through working together.

As you will read elsewhere in this issue, SMARTRISK has also been diligently updating our programs and working to ensure they are as efficient, effective and affordable to hosts across Canada as they can be. Many young people have died tragically over the previous months, involving cars, skateboards, water and other factors. Indeed, we have been in contact with some of the families of those intimately affected by injury. It only reinforces to me how important it is to awaken young people to the wisdom of taking smart risks. Research shows that the adolescent brain differs markedly from the adult brain in some important respects and thus, it's to be expected that many young people will take risks that could get them into serious trouble. That makes SMARTRISK's mission of reaching youth even more critical. I fervently believe if we can reach Canadians with these smart risk messages while they are young and just beginning to go out into the world and take risks, we can help turn them into smart risk takers for life. Working with them in schools where they are already gathered in large numbers is the easiest, most efficient way to connect with them.

I am also aware, however, that school principals and teachers are busy individuals, continually coping with changing curricula and demanding expectations. The easier we can make it for them to bring life-saving messages of smart risk to their students, the better it is for us all. To that end, that's been a key focus for our staff in recent months as they work to translate more of our youth programming into easily accessible online formats. We are excited to have launched our new SMARTRISK No Regrets website in time for this school year and we are looking forward to the school year ahead. Visit www.smartrisknoregrets.ca and see what we're up to!

Bob Baker, President and CEO, SMARTRISK



SMARTRISK is a national, charitable organization, dedicated to putting an end to the No. 1 killer of young Canadians: injury.

Find out about our award-winning injury prevention programs for youth by contacting us at:

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