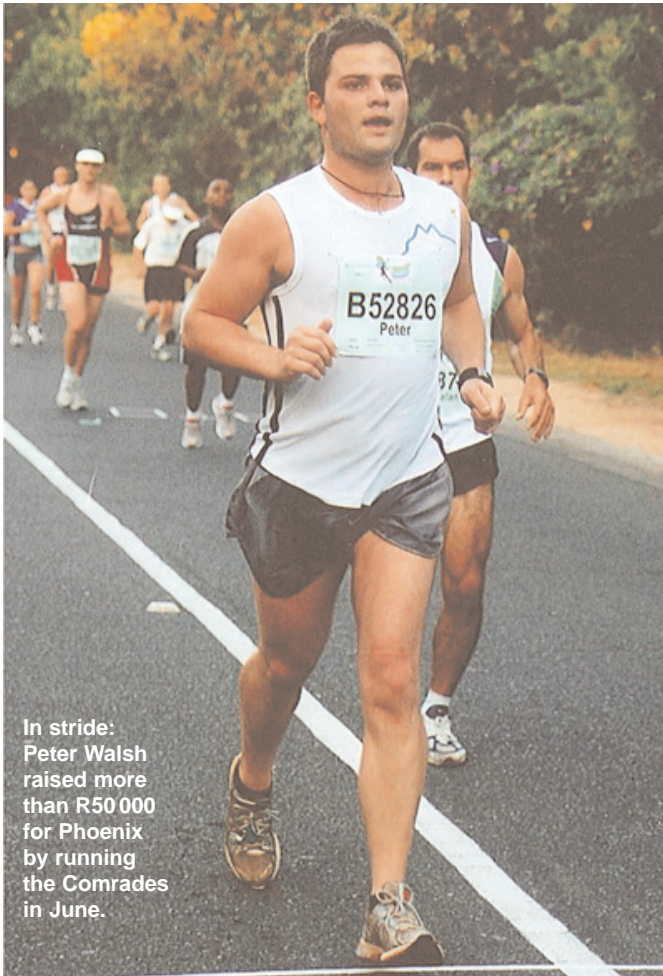




A real comrade of Phoenix



In stride:
Peter Walsh
raised more
than R50 000
for Phoenix
by running
the Comrades
in June.

How far would you go to for a cause you believe in? Peter Walsh of Observatory in Cape Town tested that rhetorical question and arrived at 1 273km by air and 89km by foot.

In June Peter ran the Comrades Marathon – this year 89km uphill from Durban to Pietermaritzburg.

Peter has been running with a Cape Town club for the past few years, and this was his first Comrades Marathon race. “Not having the build of a natural runner it has always been an aim of mine to do something completely out of my comfort zone. I wanted to do it because it is there. But that was secondary to another goal – to raise money for the Phoenix Burns Project.”

In the month leading up to the race, Peter maintained a blog page on the Phoenix website, where his sponsors could follow his training programme and his thoughts as the day of the race drew closer. Although none of his training runs were as long as the Comrades race itself, they were not without challenges – such as getting up at 4am to train while others slept, or coming face to face with a menacing Rottweiler during one of his runs. However, Peter’s blog shows that he managed to retain his humour throughout these trying times.

The week before the race Peter visited the Burns Unit at Red Cross Children’s Hospital, where he met the staff and a number of the children in the ward. “I felt that a key part of my experience would be to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced not only by burn survivors but also by the Burns Unit and the Phoenix Burns Project. I strongly felt that this was necessary if I wanted to be an effective ambassador and fund raiser for burn survivors,” Peter said.

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Xenophobia attack survivors kitted out

The wave of xenophobic attacks that swept across South Africa in April and May also claimed children.

One such child was the two-year-old daughter of a Mozambican family, which lost all their possessions when a group of men attacked them in Cape Town. The assailants set fire to their shack and made off with most of their possessions. Shockingly, the thugs doused their two-year-old daughter with boiling water. The little girl sustained extensive burn injuries to her abdomen and arms.

The family was homeless for the first few weeks after the attack. The mother stayed with her child in hospital for several days before she received any assistance.

The Phoenix Burns Project was able to maintain contact with the family and to provide material assistance while they started to rebuild their lives. Once they

had secured another dwelling, we were able to give them a Phoenix Fire Recovery Kit, which contains the essentials to start up a household after all one’s possessions have been lost in a fire. For more details on the kits please visit the Phoenix website www.pbp.org.za under the Projects section).

We thank all donors who have contributed to the Phoenix Fire Recovery Kit project. We aim to build up a significant stockpile of kits so that we can respond rapidly to an emergency.



This family lost everything in a xenophobic attack, in which their daughter was brutally burned with boiling water.



We have a new patron

Archbishop Lawrence Henry, head of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town, has accepted the invitation to become a Patron of St John Relief Services, the parent organisation of the Phoenix Burns Project. The Archbishop is well known for his support of social causes with a particular passion for poverty-relief.



Archbishop Henry was born in Athlone, Cape Town on 27 July 1934. He completed his seminary studies in Urban College "de Propaganda Fide", Rome, and was ordained a priest in Rome on 2 December 1962. He was ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Cape Town on 16 August 1987 and installed as Archbishop of Cape Town on 29 August 1990.

In a letter, Archbishop Henry said he was "privileged and honoured" to act as a Phoenix patron.

Back in the ward

Phoenix's Dr Roux Martinez has returned to Red Cross Children's Hospital after a break of 5 years – and is delighted to be working again with the "wonderful" staff, experts and volunteers who she said are making such a big difference.

"But the brave little patients and their families are still the unsung heroes, and not a day goes by without a moment of sheer admiration for these people whose lives changed so dramatically in just seconds or minutes," Roux said.



She said that the *My Child Has Been Burnt* booklet (see page 3) is having an impact. "It is wonderful to see the parents reading our booklet and it works well as a training aid with the final-year medical students, especially in showing that burn care is more than calculating the burn surface and intravenous fluid requirements. It demonstrates how to consider the entire person, their situation, emotions, frustrations and expectations."

The Bear with your Rehab initiative (see page 4) is also making a difference. "It is also good to see our volunteers in their crisp white Phoenix aprons handing out meals and kind words to the weary parents. The soft toys are very popular and I do believe they make it less traumatic to come back for follow-up treatment." She spoke of a young patient who had recurring nightmares about his ordeal. "During one of his follow-up visits, he received a soft fluffy dog. His parents reported that since his comforting dog friend started to cuddle up next to him at night, he started to sleep peacefully again."

Be a Friend of Phoenix

With the "Friends of Phoenix" campaign, members of the public and companies can support the organisation financially.

To accomplish our objectives and challenges, we are inviting the public to join our work not just as funders, but as a part of Phoenix. This means that we will keep our Friends informed on new developments, showing them how their support has helped.

Run every mountain

From page 1

And so, in the early hours of 15 June, Peter was one of the 11 191 runners who started the gruelling 89-km race in Durban. Exactly 10 hours, 28 minutes and 21 seconds later he crossed the finish line in Pietermaritzburg – carrying a Phoenix Burns Project banner. For his efforts, he received a bronze medal – and the quiet gratification that his energy had helped to make a difference.

Not only did he raise much-needed funds for Phoenix – a total of R55 206 – but also helped raise awareness of a much-neglected problem.

Phoenix President Dr Peter Martinez said: "Peter Walsh is an inspiration to all of us in Phoenix. He set himself an audacious goal and he worked extremely hard to achieve it. At the same time he did it out of love for his neighbour also. The importance of this event goes far beyond the very significant amount of funding that Peter raised. He also raised awareness of the plight of burn survivors, and this is invaluable. We also thank the many people who pledged sponsorships and then made good on their pledges."

Phoenix's UK Councillor

Carolyn Cripps, founder of the British Children's Fire and Burn Trust, and a member of Phoenix's Board of Advisors, has been appointed Phoenix's official representative in the UK.

Her appointment recognises her excellent work in raising awareness of the work of Phoenix in Britain. UK residents will now be able to contact Carolyn to find out about the work of Phoenix and to make donations in their country.



Carolyn has 17 years of experience in supporting child burn survivors in Britain, the Russian Federation and other countries of the former Soviet Union.

In 2000, she was awarded the OBE in the New Year Honours List for her work in founding and running the Friends of Russian Children, a charity that focussed on caring for child burn survivors in Russia, and which was subsequently incorporated into the Children's Fire and Burn Trust, of which Prince Michael of Kent is the Royal Patron.

Carolyn can be contacted at ccripps@pbp.org.za

Meet Carolyn Cripps – See page 4

Friends can also assist us by raising awareness about Phoenix and recruiting more friends.

To obtain copies of the "Friends of Phoenix" brochure, which explains why we exist and what we aim to accomplish, please phone Gail Simmermacher at 082 932 9504 or e-mail admin@pbp.org.za, or download it in PDF format at www.pbp.org.za/supportus.htm



Sign this petition

Did you know that burn survivors do not qualify for disability grants in South Africa? Do you think they should? Phoenix has launched a petition on the MyPetition website (mypetition.co.za) aimed at increasing public awareness of the challenges faced by burn survivors and starting to lobby government to address burn survivor issues, such as the grant issue.

Visit the website (the petition is numbered #205) and add your name to those of the other people who believe that burn survivors should receive more attention from government.

Introducing Phoenix's Project Coordinator

The Phoenix Burns Project has appointed Gail Simmermacher as its Project Coordinator, responsible for managing the day-to-day administration, liaising with our friends and partners, and organising special events.



Gail (left) is the former regional coordinator of the now defunct Marketing Federation of South Africa (MFSA) in the Western Cape. She previously worked for St John Ambulance in Cape Town for many years, and so brings experience in both corporate and NGO sectors to the organisation.

David Waight, Phoenix Treasurer, said: "We are delighted that Gail has joined our initiative. Our increasing activities necessitated the appointment of a Project Coordinator. We are confident that her appointment is going to aid Phoenix in its further growth."

Gail can be contacted at 082 932 9504 and e-mail gail@pbp.org.za

Phoenix brochure piloted in Cape, KZN

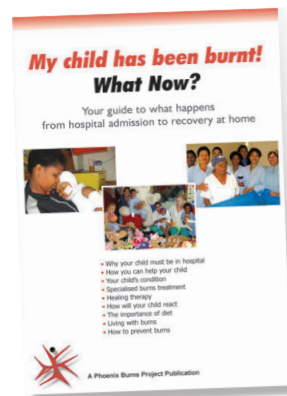
Parents of burnt children in hospital need information on what to expect during the acute phase of their child's recovery in hospital, as well as after discharge.

In response to requests from the staff of the Burns Unit at Red Cross Children's Hospital, Phoenix developed a booklet aimed at parents titled *My Child Has Been Burnt – What Now?*

The first version of the 8-page A5 booklet, written in English, is currently being piloted at Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town and St Mary's Hospital in Durban. Information gained from this pilot implementation will be used in preparing the final version of the booklet.

Phoenix intends to produce translations of the booklet in Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, French and Portuguese. Initial feedback received from the pilot sites has been very positive. At Red Cross the booklet is also being used to support training of nursing sisters and undergraduate medical students, and by foreign visiting medical students as a guide to assisting and counselling parents on the ward.

A digital version of the booklet is available online for free download at the Phoenix website (www.pbp.org.za) under the Resources and Links section. Assistance is being sought for the translation and funding of the other language versions of this booklet.



PHOENIX FIRE MONITOR

Shack fires reported in Cape Town newspapers for the period 1 April to 31 August 2008

31 August	Wallacedene informal settlement One adult dies – three shacks burn down
	Bloekombos informal settlement 2 adults die – shack razed
	New Crossroads informal settlement 5-year old girl dies, shack burns down
8 August	Mandela Park informal settlement, near Hout Bay 50 shacks razed, 200 people homeless
19/20 July	Philippi, Nyanga, Langa, Heinz Park and Old Crossroads settlements 3 persons die, 40 people homeless
18 July	Masiphumelele informal settlement, near Fish Hoek 800 people homeless, 250 shacks destroyed
28 April	Du Noon informal settlement, near Milnerton 8 people homeless, two shacks destroyed
26/27 April	Masiphumelele informal settlement 75 people homeless
TOTAL:	7 DEATHS, OVER 1 100 HOMELESS

These are only cases reported in the press. No official statistics are made available. The figures above therefore represent only a minimum of shack-fire related destruction.

FILL A TIN FOR CHANGE

Your small change can make a big change in a burn survivor's life.

Through the generosity of DivFood, we have introduced collection tins as one of our fundraising activities.

Please consider keeping a collection tin in your home to put all the small change cluttering up your purse or wallet. Every cent helps, and it all adds up!

Better still, why not support Phoenix by taking a carton of collection tins to distribute in your school, your office or among your friends?

If you would like to take a tin, please contact Gail Simmermacher on 082 932 9504



Phoenix now has a presence on the popular social networking site Facebook. Join the Phoenix group on Facebook (you can find it easily by typing Phoenix Burns Project into the search engine).

Wine, dine, talk

Come and join us for an evening of fine dining, interesting conversations and a book launch, all in support of a good cause. The keynote speaker for the evening will be Carolyn Cripps (OBE), an authority on child burns, who will describe her experiences in setting up support programmes for burnt children in the former Soviet Union and in the UK. She will be joined by author Erica Nesor (pictured), who will launch her new book, *Een voet voor die ander*. Erica will speak about her experiences as the mother of a child burn survivor and the challenges that face someone in that situation.



6 November at 7pm at Kelvin Grove Country Club, Newlands

To book your place, or for more information, contact admin@pbp.org.za or call Gail at 082 932 9504

Volunteers, donations make a big difference

The Bear With Your Rehab project was started to improve the extremely poor rate of follow-up once patients were discharged from Red Cross Children's Hospital.

Returning for follow-up treatment is extremely important to ensure the best long-term recovery for the patient. Patients who default on their follow-up treatment risk complications – such as contractures – that may hinder complete recovery, or require subsequent extensive and expensive periods of hospitalisation. The reasons for poor follow-up are manifold, ranging from parents not being able to afford the transport costs, or time off work, to simply not appreciating the need to bring their children back to hospital for follow-up treatment.

The Bear With Your Rehab project aims to make follow-up visits more enjoyable in several ways. Children are given a soft toy on discharge and on each subsequent visit. These soft toys are often the only toys these children have. Since the start of 2008, some soft 350 toys have been distributed, worth an estimated value of R17 500. The toys are accompanied by a message to the parent or caregiver concerning the importance of follow-up treatment.

For the mothers who wait in long queues, Phoenix coordinates the distribution of a wholesome lunch prepared and distributed by volunteers. Many of these parents sit at their children's bedside for days on end before they can go away to have a nutritious meal. Children attending the out-patient clinic for wound inspection and dressing changes are also given a snack bag with sweets to make the experience less traumatic. In winter knitted woollen caps and scarves, donated by kind supporters, are also given out. The older children receive peaked caps to shield their faces from the sun, since burnt skin is particularly sensitive to sun damage.

Phoenix organiser Patricia Waight said: "We would like to thank the many people who support this project so generously, whether by donating soft toys, or by donat-



Above: A burns patient receives a teddy from Phoenix's Bear With Your Rehab initiative.

Left: Phoenix's Patricia Waight speaks with mothers of patients at Red Cross Children's Hospital

ing their time and talents to provide lunches for the waiting parents. Your generosity is making a huge difference to these children and their parents."

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PHOENIX UPDATE is a regular newsletter dedicated to highlight activities and news of the PBP, and burn survivor issues in general. PHOENIX UPDATE is circulated electronically free of charge to stakeholders in the burns prevention & rehabilitation community, Friends of Phoenix and other interested parties. If you would like to be placed on the mailing list, please contact the editor. We welcome submissions on burn issues for potential publication in Phoenix Update. Please e-mail the editor at admin@pbp.org.za