



## Helping Hand for Tony's Hands September, 2009 Update

### Tony's Appeal:

Gifts: \$ 2,980

Donors: 17

It is with tremendous respect and appreciation that we thank each and every one of you who were able to contribute to Tony's Appeal. Your willingness to support a fellow Swede, someone you have not met nor seen in person, is testimony to your sincere kindness and compassion. The entire "Tony's Helping Hand " Team thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your gifts.

As you will see below, Tony has a long way to go to regain his independence and ability to be employed via the use of his hands. If you have not contributed to Tony's Appeal, please reconsider and assist us in helping Tony through his very rough recovery time frame. It could be more than a year before he can successfully support himself. See below for details for your contribution.

### Tony's Recovery:

(submitted by Carey Clayton)

Tony's Burn Clinic appointment on Friday (09/11/09) went well. He still has a long way to go. There appears to be some tendon damage on the left pinky finger, and we don't know if he will ever be able to straighten it. The skin is applying pressure to the small muscles and tendons of his fingers as it heals and contracts, so some of his other fingers are also bent at the top joint. There is no way of knowing at this point what the ultimate outcome will be, but his range of motion, strength, and flexibility are improving little by little.

The staff was very complimentary of his dedication and efforts in wearing his compression garments, and doing his exercises every day.

He spends around eight hours a day working on his hands, stretching and



Tony's Hands and Compression Garments  
[Vest with Sleeves and Gloves].

19 September 2009

exercising his face, and it is obvious that he is doing everything possible to get better. We have another appointment on October 2nd, and he will continue to go to therapy twice a week.

At the end of one year, he will probably need to continue physical therapy for up to another year. Right now he is working on stretching the skin, and after it heals,



he will focus more on working the muscles and joints.



Tony Soderstrom and his fiancée, Carey Clayton  
19 September 2009

We appreciate all the support and help we've received from family and friends (even those we've never met!).

Tony had a new splint made for his right hand yesterday (09/15/09). The scar tissue on his wrist is thickening, and this splint will be worn at night to help him extend his wrist. The one he was wearing before at night did not stretch his wrist, only his hand. We had a hard time getting it on, but we finally managed. He sleeps (or tries to) while wearing a mask, tubes in his nostrils, splints on his hands, and his compression gloves and vest.

We continue to be encouraged and supported by friends - Rod Johnson's latest care package contained Corell dishes (lighter than our stoneware so Tony can pick them up), an insulated mug with an easy-grip handle, and more International calling cards donated by Billy Peel. Linda Moore provides transportation and much-needed companionship, and we are still receiving donations from the Swedish Community of Central Texas. My friends at Wimberley

High School have helped in so many ways. You all are our lifeline.

This week (09/27/09) has been a rough one. Boredom and pain don't go well together, and Tony has been discouraged about the slow progress with his hands. He is keeping himself to a very strict routine of working his hands several hours every day, and this causes blisters on his fingers and palms, which are painful when we put on and remove the compression garments.

We also had our washing machine break down, and had to buy a new one. When the delivery people came today, they backed into a limb on one of our Oak trees with their delivery truck when they were leaving and cracked the trunk so that it will now have to be removed. He was very upset about that, and spent some time on the phone with Sears. We are beginning to see some lightening in the redness of his skin in some areas, meaning that the scar tissue is starting to mature and will stop growing. That, at least, is a little good news.

Tony drove the car a short way yesterday, and did well handling the steering wheel. It's still painful for him to grip the wheel while turning, but he will be able to drive fairly soon, and I know that will improve his outlook.

We appreciate the prayers, donations, phone calls, and good wishes of all those who care for us. Tony has a Burn Clinic appointment on Friday, Oct. 2nd, and I will update the journal then.

(Carey Clayton]



For more details of Tony's experience:

- Read the news articles and complete detail journal of events at the Burn Center in San Antonio at: **Tony Soderstrom Story:**  
<http://www.swedesintexas.com/readingroom/rrtony.htm>
- Read the original **Tony Soderstrom Appeal:**  
<http://www.swedesintexas.com/readingroom/rrtonyappeal.htm>



Tony at IKEA in Round Rock, in dining area, telling of his being Captain of the Gota Canal ship "Juno", shown in the foreground.

5 September 2009

Tony has no immediate family in the United States. His family in Sweden consists of his mother Birgit, sisters Camilla and Annette and his brother Jan. His father Ture has died. Through use of the internet and phone calls he has been able to communicate his condition to his family. This appeal is to encourage you to financially help a fellow Swede who has a very special need.

In summary, his health and life insurance, student loan, land, and car payments, plus living expenses, are approximately \$2,000 per month. It is anticipated that Tony will not be able to work for a minimum of 12 months.

In order to take the financial burden off of Tony's shoulders and allow him to focus on his recovery, we encourage you to consider this opportunity to provide financial support to a special **Swede in Texas**. Your gift of \$10.00 to \$20.00 per month for the next 12 months will go a long way in helping Tony. Your gift can be mailed monthly, quarterly, or at your convenience or even better, a onetime gift. Our financial goal is 12 months of support for Tony.



Tony and Coffee plus Big Cup for Grip at IKEA in Round Rock

5 September 2009



*Fellow Swedes and Swedish Americans*

*Just a personal thank you for the assistance each of you have given Tony and Carey during this very difficult time for them. They are both so up-beat and looking for a very bright future and their attitude and hope is beyond belief. They know Tony is going to get back to doing what he wants to do. Thank you again for what you have done and if you can help more, please do.*

*Billy Peel*

Make Checks Payable to: Tony Soderstrom

Send to: Broadway Bank  
Att: Wimberley Branch  
P.O. Box 17001  
San Antonio, TX 78217

We sincerely appreciate your help with this special need. Tony and his Team thank Broadway Bank of San Antonio for providing this collection and financial service.

"Tony's Helping Hand " Team

Marlene Bartlett      David Borg      Rod Johnson      Irma Pearson      Billy Peel  
Barbara Van Neil



Tony ready to spray with the "Wasp" in Texas, 2008