Wellesley Rotary had speaker from Brain Injury Association of Mass.

By Dick Carls, Special to The Townsman
Wicked Local Wellesley

Wellesley — Wellesley Rotary this past week had a moving presentation from Steve Machnik of the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts, a very important and very key organization for helping keep people safe and preventing accidents.

Machnik talked about his personal experience, a skiing accident in 1995, before a rapt audience. The accident left him in a coma for weeks. Although he survived, it was at a terrible cost.

A young man with a wife and three small children, he was in many ways succeeding in life, with a family and career, and doing well in work he enjoyed. After the accident he was unable to keep his former job; his marriage went on the rocks, and there were difficulties in raising the children. (They are now successful adults.) Machnik yearned “to feel normal; again,” but physically couldn’t.

Although physically challenged, Machnik is a superb spokesman for those who suffer from brain injuries. Although he said there is research going on, he went on to say there are no real cures other than being careful and operating safely.

Brain injury causes are both trauma (accidents and violence and war) and non-trauma (alcohol and drug abuse). Machnik stressed the importance of being careful in sports.

He pointed out brain injury is eight times more prevalent than breast cancer. In his humble way he told Rotary, “I didn’t know what I had until it happened.”