Tragedy a lesson in life's frailty

It is one of those stories that will not go away. Just when you think it has, it comes back, with an echo that whispers, "It could be you."

Written by Tracy Manzer on page one in Tuesday's Press-Telegram, the story told how Lisa Gigliotti, 49, a popular college professor, mother of three children, beloved wife and the kind of person friends turn to in times of need, was suddenly up against it herself. On Oct. 4, her Ford Escort was struck broadside by a motorcycle speeding along Carson Street near Faculty Avenue. The motorcycle's fuel tank exploded. Flames spread to Lisa's car.

Tracy's story told how two Long Beach City College employees ran bravely to pry open her car door and how Lisa, herself on fire, nevertheless walked from the vehicle to a curb, where she sat down. She was taken to Memorial Medical Center and later transferred to the Torrance Memorial Burn Unit. Tracy's story noted she is suffering from third-degree burns to 56 percent of her body.

Burn treatment is highly expensive. Donations made payable to the "Elisa Gigliotti Fund" may be sent to 6444 E. Spring St., #159, Long Beach, CA 90815.

One morning this summer, I had breakfast with Lorenzo Gigliotti, a man of many interests and many causes.

A DAY TO CELEBRATE

Khmer Rouge refugees seek aid

Study: Cambodians in L.B. willing to turn to medical help for emotional stress.

By Kevin Butler

LONG BEACH — Contrary to what researchers had assumed, Cambodian refugees traumatized by the brutal Khmer Rouge regime frequently seek medical help for emotional or psychological problems, according to a study released Wednesday by the RAND Corporation.

The study, which featured interviews with Cambodian refugees in Long Beach, found that nearly 70 percent of those with mental health disorders had turned to a medical provider for help within the previous year.

Those refugees sought medical help at higher rates than the general population suffering from such mental disorders, said Grant Marshall, lead author of the study, which was published this month in the American Journal of Public Health.

The results represent an exception to researchers' belief that Asians seek mental health treatment less frequently because of cultural stigma, he said.

"Seeking treatment for mental health problems is stigmatizing for a lot of the population, but it's particularly seen as problematic for Asian-Americans," Marshall said. "In the case of the Cambodians we find that the rate of care-seeking is actually higher than in the general population."