



# Annual Report

## 2016- 2017

### **Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.**

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Established 1984  
Melbourne, Victoria

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## About Us

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*Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. is an association incorporated under the Association Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic.). It is a charitable institution and is endorsed as deductible gift recipient. Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. is an umbrella organisation for Heartbeat Victoria Affiliates and Branches which provide heart peer support groups across Victoria; Heartbeat Victoria is a voluntary organisation.*

Support groups are an important first step for people who are recovering from a heart event or adjusting to living with heart disease or a heart condition. They provide a place for people to come together, learn about their condition and speak to others in a similar situation to themselves. Most of all they provide friendship and support for ongoing heart health and wellbeing.

Peer support can be delivered in many ways: from structured support groups, telephone calls, via the internet, home or hospital visits, going for walks together, having regular coffees or dinners to informal catch ups.

For a person living with heart disease or recovering from a heart event, becoming a member of a heart peer support group can have many benefits.

Being part of a support group can:

- Help you understand your condition
- Help you feel more motivated and make healthier life style choices
- Help you feel less alone
- Help you feel more in control and informed about your condition
- Provide ongoing heart health education and support
- Provide social and exercise activities
- Help you feel a sense of belonging and community connection.

***My Heart My Health: ongoing life style changes are required to keep a healthy heart***

# President Report

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The Strategic Plan 2015-17 has provided the strategies that have guided the Board of Management actions through the last three years with steady progress, and this year we have made significant achievements that I am proud to report on.

The design and launch of our new website was a major highlight which supported Heartbeat Victoria's move forward with innovative approaches, including the use of modern technologies to market our organisation and build and sustain membership. The use of social media with Heartbeat Victoria's Facebook page has also enhanced our communication and to reach members, health professionals and the wider community with our information. This has also expanded our opportunity to link with other health services and like-minded organisations.

Guidelines for the establishment of new Heartbeat Victoria Branches have been written and this will be followed up with mentoring and training resources.

Board members, Louise Zambello and Lynda Andrews are currently involved in the re-establishment of Heartbeat Victoria Knox Branch and the development of a new branch at Sunbury. It is immensely rewarding to see the progress and enthusiasm of the health services personnel and other community groups.

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. is totally operated by volunteers, from Board level to the Committees of Management of the Affiliates and Branches. Without support of any formal remunerated Administration Position the work load across the Board of Management is quite significant and not sustainable long term. Investigating and finding a solution to this issue, including sourcing funding for such a position within the organisation will be a high priority for action by the Board in 2018.

The Affiliates and Branches are also requiring additional help to find volunteers to take office bearing and organisational roles with in their individual Heartbeat Victoria peer support groups. The Board is aware that it must provide the help and assistance required to the smaller Heartbeat Victoria groups to maintain links with health services and the community, to be able continue to provide heart peer support across Victoria. Distance between Affiliates and Branches means we must be innovative in travel arrangements and funding for members to meet three times a year for training and Delegates Meetings.

Sourcing of funds and sponsorship for operation and special projects is ongoing and essential for the financial viability of Heartbeat Victoria. Some grants have been lodged and we are awaiting outcomes on these. The Annual Raffle conducted by the Board of Management continues to provide funds for the Affiliates and Branch operation.

On behalf of the Board I would especially like to thank our Secretary, Louise Zambello, who has completed a remarkable amount of work in a brief time, along with demonstrating a solid commitment to Heartbeat Victoria and its path forward.

## President Report

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We acknowledge and appreciate the work of Treasurer, Danielle Coppini, who has guided our fiscal management with competence.

To all the Board of Management who have contributed to the organisation with their individual skills, voluntary time and commitment a special thank you.

The Heart Foundation Victoria, through their Community Engagement Officer, Tess Pryor has continued to provide valued professional guidance, assistance and advice for which we are grateful.

The commitment of donations from VicSuper staff at Blackburn, through our Community Partnership Program is valued and appreciated by Heartbeat Victoria Council. We look forward to further expanding this partnership.

The Board commends and thanks the capable work contributed by each team of volunteer Committees of Management in organising the programs and activities for the nine Heartbeat Affiliates and Branches. You are the “HEART” of our organisation and not only provide enormously to the ongoing health and wellbeing of people with heart disease, but assist with raising the awareness of the risks and management of heart health and providing funds for cardiac equipment in Health Services in your communities.

In terms of future direction, I wish the 2017-8 Board a fulfilling and rewarding year as together we develop a new Strategic Plan for 2018-21. Heartbeat Victoria will aim to build on its achievements and support the vision of the organisation to be an excellent well recognised peer support organisation which assists in improving the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of people living with heart disease or a heart condition.

**Robyn Fennell**  
**President**  
**Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.**

### Strategic Plan – 2015-2017

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The Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. 2015-2017 Strategic Plan has been an ambitious plan for a voluntary organisation but aimed to drive outcomes while meeting new challenges presented in a health reform and technologically changing environment

The Heartbeat Victoria Council committed to the strategic plan to extend and strengthen its work including its governance and the range and scope of strategic alliances including stakeholders and partners i.e. cardiac patients, relatives and friends, philanthropic organisations, hospital rehabilitation centres and community health centres, other non-government organisations with a shared interest, businesses that support our work and other Heartbeat organisations (e.g. South Australia).

Heartbeat Victoria's *Mission, Vision and Values* were identified first. A *Statement of Our Strategic Directions* followed. The next sections *About Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.* and *Environmental Context* provided a summary of the factors identified by internal and external reviews including a SWOT [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat) analysis undertaken by the Board of Management, advice received from Lawyers, Corrs, Chambers Westgarth in 2000 and Hall and Willcox in 2013 and documentation made available by the Board of Management and accessed from appropriate websites such as the Australian Taxation Office [ATO], Consumer Affairs Victoria and The Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission [ACNC]. The final section was *The Plan: Objectives, Strategies, Actions and Measuring Success*.

The plan has focused on building and maintaining a sustainable organisation with a capable governance structure and revenue base. The plan was underpinned with a focus on activities which has enabled Heartbeat Victoria to continue to deliver good services to the community.

Over the past three years Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. has continued to provide peer support programs for our current and future members and to help enhance the quality of life for our members.

In more details, Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.'s strategic objectives have been:

**OBJECTIVE 1: Good Corporate Governance: To bring together our vision and values and planning to ensure that our mission is explicit, understood and implemented utilising good practice systems and approaches at all levels of the organisation.**

- Review the organisational structure of Heartbeat Victoria
- Ensure the financial sustainability of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.
- Build the capacity of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. and ensure its sustainability

# Strategic Plan – 2015-2017

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## **OBJECTIVE 2: To increase Heartbeat Victoria's Membership, Profile and Reach**

- Communicate and promote Heartbeat Victoria's vision, mission and values to appropriate stakeholders
- Identify opportunities that will enhance the Heartbeat Victoria network and growth

## **OBJECTIVE 3: To collaborate, Partner and Engage with Others**

- Maintain and build relationships with like-minded organisations and networks

## **HEARTBEAT VICTORIA COUNCIL INC. - PEER SUPPORT SERVICE PRIORITIES**

- To act as the coordinating body and serve impartially the Affiliates and Branches of Heartbeat Victoria
- Assist in the formation of new Branches across Victoria
- To provide a network that supports Cardiac Rehabilitation and promotes maintenance of well being
- Provide activities in peer support that encourage help seeking behaviours, build capacity and empower individuals through raising awareness, providing information and support to people with heart disease, through social, education, exercise, meetings and activities.
- Promote, assist and support heart health education programs within the community.
- Develop partnerships with other Heart Health related organisations.
- To provide the opportunity of volunteering within local Health Services where appropriate
- To provide funds for cardiac equipment and to enhance the delivery of care services
- To assist or cooperate with heart researches in appropriate research programs.

One of the first tasks of the newly elected Board of Management after the Annual General Meeting will be to undertake to develop a new Strategic Plan 2018-20.

## Another Year of Growth

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**Governance Statement:** Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. (HVC), established in 1984, is incorporated under the Association Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic.). A not for profit charitable organisation run by volunteers, HVC is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNC). HVC is the umbrella organisation of 6 Branches and 3 Affiliates. Branches comprise Ararat, Ballarat, Grampians, Goulburn Valley, Knox and Latrobe. The Affiliates are independently incorporated namely Bendigo, Epworth and Sunraysia.

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. follows its Rules of Association [amended on 27 August 2015]. The Rules were amended under the Associations Incorporations Reform Act (2010) to replace the Constitution of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. 1984. The Rules can be downloaded from Heartbeat Victoria's website [www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au](http://www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au).

**Strategic Plan:** As reported in last year's Annual Report, a Strategic Plan 2015-2017 has been in place since 2015 and the Board of Management has continued to be guided by the Plan which represents the vision and mission of Heartbeat Victoria.

This year the Board has continued work on improving the communication and promotion of Heartbeat Victoria's vision and mission with the launch of a new website, creating dedicated Heartbeat Victoria emails for each Board Member and an increase in Facebook presence. A Heartbeat Victoria Policy and Procedures Manual was finalised and distributed to all Branches and Affiliates in July 2017. The idea behind the creation of the Manual is to guide Branches and Affiliates on major decisions, actions and all activities that take place within a set of boundaries. The Board of Management is feeling confident that the user friendly Manual complete with stylish templates will assist and make the job of running a Branch or Affiliate a lot easier for office bearers not only providing guidance in relation to governance issues, but with those sometimes onerous administrative tasks that office bearers invariably inherit.

Newsletters are an ideal place to cultivate community involvement because they can reach all members, even those who haven't attended a meeting for some time. With this in mind and to spread the heavy workload within the Board, a Board Member who enjoys creative writing offered to take over the role of Editor. Consequently, the quarterly Council Newsletter aptly renamed "*Heartbeat Happenings*", was revamped and well received.

**Financial Sustainability:** A Treasurer's task is to keep the finances healthy so the organisation can achieve its mission. Heartbeat Victoria has indeed been fortunate this financial year to have a board member who is a Chartered Accountant to take on the role of Treasurer who is to be congratulated on a job well done. For continued financial sustainability the Board will continue to seek out and identify opportunities via government funding, philanthropic grants and sponsors. See Financial Reports commencing page 11.

**New Board Members:** Five highly skilled and experienced professionals joined the Board of Management this year. In October 2016, a replacement Secretary was appointed, then in February 2017, four further Board



## Board of Management Report

Members were appointed to replace three Board Members who stepped down due to personal reasons. The Board came with diverse professional skills which include years of experience in the areas of financial management, fundraising, administration, computer literacy, corporate governance knowledge, grant applications, strategy, health and wellbeing, medical and cardiology.

**Membership:** Affiliate and Branch membership across the Branches and Affiliates totals 846. Having received feedback from the Branches and Affiliates that they were experiencing difficulties obtaining/retaining volunteers to take on office bearer positions, in February 2017, the Board of Management in collaboration with Heart Foundation Victoria and the Health Issues Centre held a Delegates Training Day in the Melbourne CBD. Representatives from each Branch and Affiliate were invited and attended a session on how to foster a successful Heartbeat Victoria peer support group. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive from all those who attended. The Board continues to emphasise the importance of volunteer involvement with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Programs that take place in local community health services and the fostering of links with local medical practices as being one of the best ways of raising awareness of the value and benefits of belonging to a heart peer support group. Plans are underway for representatives from the Board of Management to visit various Branches and Affiliates in the next few months to assist with creating stimulating and informative monthly agendas, recruitment of further members and office bearers and the strengthening of links with local health services.

See table below setting out the membership distribution within the various Affiliates and Branches.

Branch/Affiliate	Membership	Branch/Affiliate	Membership
Ararat	15	Grampians	26
Ballarat	20	Knox	Unknown - in process of re-establishment
Bendigo	327	Latrobe Valley	7
Epworth	356	Sunraysia	21
Goulburn Valley	74		

**Knox Branch:** In July 2017, Knox Branch went into voluntary recession due to the difficulties finding volunteers to take on office bearer positions, a decline in membership and in turn fractured links with local health services. The Board of Management would like to especially thank and acknowledge the enormous amount of energy and time Board Member, Lynda Andrews has put into the re-establishment of this Branch. Read more about Knox on page 24.

**New Sunbury Branch:** In July 2017, it was identified that there is a need and desire to establish a group in Sunbury. More about the establishment of a Heartbeat Victoria Sunbury Branch on page 26.

## Board of Management Report

**Fundraising:** Heartbeat Victoria's major focus and objective is to promote and foster peer support groups so people, particularly those who are isolated and alone, can share experiences and receive social and emotional support. Another objective however is to raise funds to provide cardiac and/or emergency equipment and enhance the delivery of care services in local health services.

One of the main challenges of putting on a fundraising event is the sheer effort and coordination that goes into the planning and execution. Branches and Affiliates are to be commended for their fundraising efforts.

Heartbeat Victoria Affiliate and Branch	Donations
Ararat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No donations made this financial year</li></ul>
Ballarat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$5,150 for weights and exercising steps to Cardiac Rehabilitation Ballarat Health Service</li></ul>
Bendigo Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Currently organising donations</li></ul>
Epworth Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$120,000 to the Epworth Medical Foundation as the third and final donation of \$120,000 to help fund the implementation of the "Point of Care" system in cardiac care at Epworth Richmond.</li><li>• \$25,000 for a Sara Combilizer</li><li>• Scholarships were awarded to four nurses</li></ul>
Grampians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Donation of \$1,000 to Stawell Regional Health Cardiac Rehabilitation Program to purchase an arm exercise machine</li></ul>
Goulburn Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$1,958 for Dell Digital Projector for Cardiac Rehabilitation Goulburn Valley Health</li><li>• \$15,000 held pending allocation for cardiac equipment</li></ul>
Knox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$500 to Cardiac Rehabilitation Eastern Health</li></ul>
Latrobe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No donations made this financial year</li></ul>
Sunraysia Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Currently organising donations</li></ul>

**Nuttelex Food Products Pty Ltd:** Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. acknowledges the long association it has had with the McNally family and their organisation, Nuttelex. Once again, a special thank you is extended to Mr Ian McNally from the Board of Management for yet again contributing financial support in relation to the Heartbeat Victoria Annual State Raffle.

**The Board of Management wishes to express their appreciation and thanks** to the following organisations for their generosity in donating various items/gift vouchers for prizes to be included in our Heartbeat Victoria Annual State Raffle. Many thanks to various organisations namely Onkaparinga, JASON, RACV, Samsonite, Hello World Travel Shepparton, Dan Murphy stores [Watergardens, Chadstone, The Glen, Forest Hill, East Malvern, Mulgrave, Burwood, Sunbury] Coles [The Glen, Knox and Sunbury], Kmart

# Board of Management Report

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[Brandon Park and Knox] Woolworths Sunbury, Bunnings [Springvale and Notting Hill], Mars Foods Australia, Ink Depot, Natio Pty Ltd, Big 4, Chemist Warehouse Sunbury, Toyworld Sunbury and First Choice Liquor Sunbury.

Our thanks is also extended to Officeworks, Watergardens for its donation of some stationery.

We also would like to thank and acknowledges the probono assistance that Webb Henderson, Legal and Regulatory Advisors generously provided with regard to the Council's regulatory requirements in relation to this website.

**The importance of peer support:** Cardiovascular disease [CVD] is a major cause of death in Australia. CVD was the main cause for 480,548 hospitalisation in 2013/14 and played an additional role in another 680,000 hospitalisations. CVD claimed the lives of 45,392 Australians (nearly 30% of all deaths) in 2015 – deaths that are largely preventable.<sup>1</sup> Evidence based research proves that people with heart disease who attend peer support, experience improved health and wellbeing, are less likely to be readmitted to hospital and are more compliant in management of the risk factors associated with heart disease.<sup>2</sup>

Peer support groups offer a place for people who have suffered a heart event, their family and carers to share experiences, be offered comfort and hope, socialise, be educated on how to reduce the risk factors to prevent a further heart event, learn about what to eat and the importance of exercise.

The Board of Management takes this opportunity to thank each and every volunteer of all Branches and Affiliates who are all “doing their bit” to raise the awareness of heart disease and the risk factors to the community. The Board of Management is looking forward to continuing its work with the Affiliates and Branches in the forthcoming year by providing further resources and training, assisting with the re-establishment and/or creation of new links with health services in their local communities and identifying opportunities to generally spread the word about the benefits of joining a Heartbeat Victoria peer support group.

To all the Affiliates and Branches .... stay heart healthy and keep up the great work!

**Louise Zambello**  
**Board Secretary**  
**on behalf of Board of Management**  
**Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.**

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<sup>1</sup> The above statistics taken from Heart Foundation Victoria website, <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/enhancing-support/peer-support-groups/main>

## Treasurer Report – 30 June 2017

### HEARTBEAT VICTORIA COUNCIL INC. – Small Charity – Income Statement for 2016-17

Income/Receipts	2016/17	2015/16
Government Grants	\$-	\$4,943.00
Donations and bequests		
<i>Vic Super</i>	\$1,300.00	\$1,409.00
<i>Donations</i>	\$1,480.00	\$-
Other income/receipts		
<i>Raffle Tickets</i>	\$6,551.00	\$-
<i>Membership Fees</i>	\$3,797.90	\$3,649.50
<i>Sale of goods</i>	\$25.00	\$184.00
<i>Interest</i>	\$1,079.28	\$1,087.28
<i>Contributions</i>	\$2,000.00	\$-
	<b>16,233.18</b>	<b>11,272.78</b>
<b>Expenses/Payments</b>		
Assets purchased < \$5000	\$1,297.00	\$-
Consultancy	\$5,078.80	\$10,609.50
Fees & Permits		
<i>Consumer Affairs</i>	\$55.80	\$224.40
<i>Raffle Permits</i>	\$23.70	\$23.70
Fundraising Expenses	\$11,250.00	\$-
Administration costs		
<i>Insurance</i>	\$2,718.82	\$4,803.37
<i>Hall Hire &amp; Catering</i>	\$267.00	\$185.00
<i>Other admin costs</i>	\$1,483.12	\$1,210.10
<i>Postage and Printing</i>	\$2,640.39	\$121.00
<i>Travel expenses</i>	\$1,272.24	\$600.00
	<b>26,086.87</b>	<b>17,777.07</b>
<b>Net surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>(9,853.69 )</b>	<b>(6,504.29 )</b>
<b>Cash and other investments</b>	<b>51,432.31</b>	<b>61,286.26</b>

#### NOTES:

Raffle funding was a major cost in FY16/17.

*A generous donation of \$1,480 from Nuttelex funded printing of the raffle tickets.*

Current year consulting fees for the procedures manual and website development costs are “one-off” in nature and represent an investment in fundamental tools for our organisation to leverage from in the future. Prior year consultancy costs were primarily for a strategic review.

*The insurance costs payable date is in the process of being realigned, hence are not currently comparable year on year.*

Travel costs incurred in FY16/17 have been funded via a government grant received in FY15/16.

## **Schedule 1 – Regulation 15 – Form 1**

### **Schedule 1**

### **Regulation 15**

### **Form 1**

*Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*

Sections 94 (2)(b), 97 (2)(b) and 100 (2)(b)

**Annual statements give a true and fair view of financial performance and position of incorporated association**

We **ARTHUR FENNELL** and **LOUISE ZAMBELLO** being members of the committee of the **HEARTBEAT VICTORIA COUNCIL INC.** certify that –

“The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the above named association during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending 30 August 2017.”

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 20.8.2017

Signed: Louise Zambello

Date: 20/8/17

## Branch Updates – Ararat and Ballarat

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### Heartbeat Victoria Ararat Branch

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Heartbeat Victoria Ararat Branch continue to meet on the third Tuesday of the month at the RSL Club, Ararat for lunch then followed by a meeting. Of the 15 current members, a small number attend exercises together every Friday morning at East Grampians Health Service.

The Board understands that the Branch is experiencing difficulties filling office bearer position and requires assistance with fostering and re-establishing links with health professionals in their local area. Plans are underway for a representative from the Board of Management to visit the Branch in October 2017 to assist.

### Heartbeat Victoria Ballarat Branch

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Heartbeat Victoria Ballarat Branch has 20 financial members and meets monthly. They usually meet for dinner at 6pm at the Midlands Golf Club in Invermay Park [Ballarat], then have a speaker or a presentation on some health related issue. This year Ballarat have donated \$5,150 to the Ballarat Health Service towards for some weights and some exercising steps in the cardiac rehab area.

A highlight for the year was Alex Cole, Treasurer, attending the Delegates Training Day in April 2017.



*PHOTO: [Left to Right – Adrian Cloonan, Board Member of Board of Management, Alex Cole [Ballarat] and David Leonard [Latrobe Valley] at the Delegates Training Day in April 2017*

### Heartbeat Victoria Bendigo Branch



*PHOTO: Cardiac Rehab Coordinator  
Jacquie Dunstan and Thursday Heartbeat  
Volunteer Barbara Dellar*

For more than twenty years, Heartbeat Victoria Bendigo Branch members have been volunteering in the Cardiac Rehab Unit at Bendigo Health, greeting patients, assisting staff, providing afternoon teas on Wednesday and Thursday each week.

Patients are participating in a 12 weeks supervised exercise program following a cardiac event or in preparation for treatment for a cardiac condition, using equipment in the gym, most of which has been funded by Bendigo Branch.

Currently, Heartbeat Victoria members Dawn Bateman, Noel Rumbold and Barbara Dellar enjoy this rewarding interaction watching patients gradually improve in fitness and wellbeing. A bonus for these volunteers is the friendship developed with staff members, Debbie, Jacquie, Megan and the physiotherapy students involved in the program.

During 2016-17 the Bendigo Branch membership has remained static. Meetings are held bi-monthly on a Sunday commencing at 2pm with the meeting concluding with afternoon tea and socialising. There's usually a good turn up of around 60 members.

The Social Committee works tirelessly during the year organising a variety of outings and activities, the main objective being to offer support, encouragement and friendship to patients and their families following a cardiac event, but also helps to raise funds for cardiac equipment for local health services. In the past twelve months members have been able to choose to attend six Melbourne musicals and a three-day excursion to the Portland area, Summer and Winter displays by "Blume Fashions" have proved popular as well as "Morning Melodies" at the Capital Theatre in Bendigo. Well supported were two Mystery Trips and a day to Werribee Zoo. Dinner at Redesdale, a Christmas in July and some pokie trips to Rich River Moama were well attended. Another outing was to D.F.O. South Wharf to experience shopping heaven!

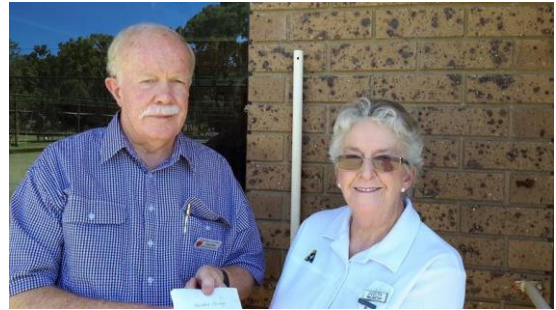
Heartbeat Victoria Bendigo Branch has also recently updated its website - [www.heartbeatbendigo.org.au](http://www.heartbeatbendigo.org.au) – which going forward will be regularly updated and show details regarding meetings, social events, roster and other relevant items. Heartbeat Victoria Bendigo is also forwarding information on their Branch to "Flat Matters", a free paper distributed in Kangaroo Flat and surrounding areas each month to advertise the Branch.

Although the New Year's Day bowls at Marong was not held this year the Bowling Club still held a raffle for Heartbeat, and the proceeds of \$235 were donated to the Heartbeat Victoria Bendigo Branch.



## Branch Updates - Bendigo

*PHOTO: Bendigo President Frank Ward being presented cheque representing the proceeds of raffle conducted by Marong Bowling Club*



### A PERSONAL STORY FROM BENDIGO - MY SECOND CHANCE



***What happened? What surgery/intervention did you have?***

I experienced shortness of breath and chest tightness when walking on a slight incline, followed by a range of tests and angiogram, culminating with the placement of 2 cardiac stents.

***What effect did this have on your emotional wellbeing and immediate life style?***

Some stress as I actually considered myself to be reasonably fit. After stents I gradually resumed my normal lifestyle.

***How did your family and friends react to your sudden diagnosis with a heart disease?***

Family and friends were fully supportive.

***Were you offered any help to manage your condition or event post-surgery by the hospital, your Cardiologist or your GP?***

Yes, I was offered regular monitoring and appropriate medications by my Cardiologist and GP.

***Was there anything you felt you needed to know more about but didn't ask or didn't receive the information when leaving hospital?***

I was fully informed about the procedure, stents and effects on my well-being.

***Did you get referred to Cardiac Rehabilitation and have the benefits explained?***

Yes, suggested by my GP and Cardiologist who referred me to the program.

***How long did you wait after referral to get into a Cardiac Rehab Program?***

Only two weeks.

***What was your experience of rehab? Did you find it useful? If so, what specifically was helpful?***



Excellent support from staff with setting exercise and monitoring progress.

*How did you hear about your peer support group?*

From Heartbeat support people at Cardiac Rehab.

*What were the benefits both to you, your family and friends that you received from being part of the group?*

Fitness program, weight loss and follow-up phone calls from members of Heartbeat.

*Did you set any goals re behavioural changes, for e.g. exercise, nutrition etc?*

This encouraged me to pay more attention to my eating habits and encouraged me to increase my exercise.

*What does peer support offer you that you need?*

I have a new appreciation of how many in the community are affected by a huge range of heart conditions and resulting heart disease and how the local hospitals need assistance in purchasing vital cardiac equipment.

*Are your family more aware of the risk factors for heart disease since your diagnosis?*

I think my family members were more aware of the risks than I was but it took a cardiac event to make me aware!

### Heartbeat Victoria Epworth Inc.

#### AGM Highlights

The Heartbeat Epworth AGM was held on 30 November 2016. John Thurkle, President for the last five years, nominated for and was duly elected Vice President. Bill Preston, Vice President for 2016, was elected President. The Secretary and Treasurer positions became vacant at the end of financial year 2016 and, as no one currently on the Committee or from our member base was in a position to take up either of these key positions, a decision was taken to recruit from outside the organisation.

Heartbeat Epworth Committee 2017



*PHOTO: Claire Singleton, John Thurkle, Fay Henderson, Glad Warren, Howard Allingham, Bill Preston, Priscilla Rogers, Loula Vlass, Margo Kelley, Marion Thurkle, Sylvia McGregor, Alan Lang, Ted Williams, Con Vlass (not in photo)*

At the AGM our members also supported the adoption of a new constitution and we conferred life membership to Fay Henderson and Ted Williams. Fay was President from 2008 to 2011 and continues to participate as a Committee member and volunteer. Ted was a diligent Treasurer for ten years until his retirement in July 2016. Ted and his wife Joan also provide great support to our North-West Group. Heartbeat Epworth is very thankful to Fay and Ted for their wonderful service and continued commitment.

During the AGM we were very proud to present a cheque for \$120,000 to the Epworth Medical Foundation as the third and final donation of \$120,000 to help fund the implementation of the "Point of Care" system in cardiac care at Epworth Richmond. This system uses touch-screen technology to provide a range of entertainment, education and information services for patients and to offer clinicians a range of integrated clinical applications including electronic prescribing and administration and patient results all accessed with

## Branch Updates - Epworth

a biometric signature. Non-clinical functions such as Room Ready (room cleaning and facilities maintenance) and electronic meal ordering have also been included.



*PHOTO: Treasurer Ted Williams,  
President John Thurtle, Executive  
Director Epworth Medical Foundation  
Scott Bulger and Group Chief Executive  
Alan Kinkade*

### Our Priorities

Heartbeat Epworth entered its thirty-third year in 2017. The first Committee meeting this year focused on planning for the future of the organisation. Three key objectives were agreed for 2017: raise awareness of Heartbeat Epworth brand, grow Heartbeat Epworth membership to 500 members, and donate \$120,000 for cardiac care at Epworth in 2017.

Awareness of the Heartbeat Epworth brand was given the highest priority as it is considered a driver of increased membership and successful fundraising. A number of strategies to increase brand awareness have been implemented. These include a new, larger A5 brochure promoting “membership”, “volunteering” and “donating” as the three key features of Heartbeat Epworth that patients and their families should consider when looking to becoming involved.

While it is too early in this campaign to fully understand the effectiveness of these awareness-raising strategies, the anecdotal feedback is promising.

### Heartbeat Epworth Eastern

A committee to run Heartbeat Epworth at Epworth Eastern, Box Hill was established in April 2016. Epworth Medical Foundation is supporting Heartbeat to the tune of one dollar for every dollar raised by Heartbeat Epworth Eastern. This has enabled Heartbeat to purchase a number of pieces of equipment over the last year for Epworth Eastern, including a Sara Combilizer costing \$25,000. The Sara Combilizer enables patients deemed as high risk or inappropriate to mobilise to be easily moved to a standing, sitting or supine position in a safe and comfortable way. Achieving greater mobility during the first days after surgery, even while in intensive care or while mechanically ventilated, provides patients with better physical stimulation, supports

## Branch Updates - Epworth

the development of stronger muscles and skeleton, improves vascular and respiratory function, and reduces the risk of hospital-induced delirium.

*PHOTO: Presenting the Sara Combilizer:  
Con Vlass, Heartbeat Epworth Committee  
/Coordinator for Heartbeat Epworth  
Eastern; Louise O'Connor, Executive  
Director Epworth Eastern; Bill Preston,  
President Heartbeat Epworth; Bronwyn  
McParland, Clinical Resource Nurse ICCU  
Epworth Eastern; Scott Bulger, Executive  
Director, Epworth Medical Foundation and  
Loula Vlass, Heartbeat Epworth*



### Scholarships

In 2013 Heartbeat Epworth established a scholarship fund to provide a minimum of two scholarships to nurses each year in perpetuity. In 2017 scholarships were awarded to four nurses.

### Fundraising

Our commitment to raise \$120,000 in one year takes a lot of effort on the part of many people. Heartbeat Epworth raises funds through our Annual Appeal, fundraising lunches, theatre nights, sales of raffle tickets, greeting cards, entertainment books and sausage sizzles at Bunnings stores and Woolworths supermarkets. In addition, the North/West Group organises Christmas in July and end of year Christmas events and the South/East Group puts on a fundraising lunch at a local restaurant and runs a fundraiser at one of the local fashion houses. None of these activities would be possible (let alone as successful as they are) without the commitment and effort of our amazing volunteers, the support of our members, the Epworth Medical Foundation, Epworth Executive and many local businesses who support our activities.

### A PERSONAL STORY FROM EPWORTH - MY SECOND CHANCE

I am an 86 year old male who has enormous gratitude to family support, the medical profession in all its aspects, to Epworth Hospital and the various support groups associated with it.

At age 50 I suffered my first cardiac event and was admitted to the Austin Hospital with a suspected heart attack. Subsequent tests confirmed that I had narrowing of the cardiac arteries and an extremely high cholesterol level. The cholesterol problem was assessed as genetic.

## Branch Updates - Epworth

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The next 6 years was spent trying various diet regimes and drug trials before statins became available. At age 56 following persistent angina I was referred to a cardiologist who confirmed my coronary artery problem and I was referred to a cardiac surgeon.

I underwent quadruple bypass open heart surgery at Epworth Hospital at age 57. I have the greatest praise for the wonderful team of health professionals that cared for me. The teamwork was amazing from the surgeon and his support team in the theatre to the nursing in intensive care and in the wards. Strong support was also received from the physiotherapists, pastoral care and other support groups.

Following recovery at home with wonderful help from my wife I attended group meetings at Epworth which assisted in advice on exercise, diet and mental wellbeing. I believe this was the start of the hospital's very successful Heartsmart program. It was at this time that I had my first contact with Heartbeat Epworth, a group that I have been associated with ever since.

I was able to return to work and lead an active and fulfilling life for the next 26 years. Although after about 20 years I required coronary stents on two occasions. At age 82 following a return of angina it was determined that surgery was again necessary if I wished to remain active.

Consultation with a heart surgeon followed and with the full blessing of my wife I underwent surgery for a further 2 coronary grafts. Again full praise for the team at Epworth. Before returning home I spent a period at the hospital's rehabilitation unit at Camberwell. This proved extremely beneficial with closely supervised exercises programs, advice on diet and mental wellbeing and occupational therapy to assist in returning normal activities.

In summary I would like to say that over the whole history of my cardiac problems I have been blessed with wonderful support from health professionals, supporting staff and in particular from Heartbeat Epworth members.

### Heartbeat Goulburn Valley Branch

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Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch meets on the first Monday night of each month. Members enjoy a two-course meal together catered for by Goulburn Valley Health. This is an ideal time for members to chat and socialise before having a meeting at 7pm.

Each meeting covers the usual formalities for running a successful Heartbeat Victoria peer support group and regularly includes a guest presenter. Some examples of speakers' topics are an Ambulance Service update, benefits of Tia Chi, life as an Intern at Goulburn Valley Health and the importance of medication compliance. Members gain valuable information and receive an opportunity to ask questions to help support the management of their heart disease or condition. Following the meeting there is an opportunity to share experiences and chat with others over while enjoying supper.

Goulburn Valley Branch also conduct a monthly walk and social meal together alternating day and evenings for this activity which is well supported.

At the February meeting members were asked - ***Why do you come to Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch and what are the benefits to you?*** We conducted a group brainstorm around these topics. These are answers from the twenty-eight members present.

- Happiness, fun and fellowship.
- Support of people who have gone through the same thing.
- I am a loner; this gets me out of the house and socialising; all my friends are here.
- Sharing experiences with others.
- Relieves that "anxious feeling".
- Gradually receiving information in a manner you can understand, which you can absorb better. Regarding good health in general and what happens during the event as it all happens so quickly!
- Understanding of where you are in the process of resuming good health and wellbeing.
- Not being alone, getting support, giving support to others.
- Fundraising for cardiac equipment for Goulburn Valley Health Cardiac services.
- Enjoy volunteering for the Cardiac Rehab Program Goulburn Valley Health, helping and talking with clients.
- Learn from the information sessions while volunteering for Cardiac Rehab Goulburn Valley Health
- Interesting speakers that help you by providing up to date information and education about maintaining you heart health.
- Spending time with other members that have had their heart attacks or cardiac event several years



## Branch Updates – Goulburn Valley

ago and haven't had any other issues – very comforting and reassuring to know.

- Evidence that our members are benefiting from attending Heartbeat Vic. GV Branch peer support group.

### Goulburn Valley 30th Birthday Celebration

Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch celebrated their 30th year of operation and Christmas social event in December 2016.

*PHOTO: Left to Right - Secretary Robyn Fennell, President Ian Powell and Peg Mellington [Joined GV Branch 1991]*



### Volunteer Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch has ten members who having completed training for Volunteering with Goulburn Valley Health. One volunteer is rostered once a week to attend the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program to assist the staff and patients as planned. This program has been in operation since June 2015 and has proved very successful and beneficial to all stakeholders.

The Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit won the Patient Centred Care Award for 2015-16 at Goulburn Valley Health, Shepparton. This Award is nominated by consumers for care that demonstrates two or more of the eight principles of patient catered care. Award participants are selected based on the recognition and feedback that Goulburn Valley Health receives from patients and families through a "Tell us what you think" complements form. The Award winner was announced and presented at the Goulburn Valley Health AGM.



*PHOTO: Goulburn Valley Health Cardiac Rehabilitation team with Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch volunteers (red polo shirts)*

On 5 April 2017 Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch volunteers with this program, were invited to share in an afternoon tea to celebrate the winning of the Award. The Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit considers Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley volunteers as playing a key role as part of the team receiving the Award.

### Heartbeat Victoria Grampians Branch

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The Grampian's Heartbeat Victoria Branch meets bi-monthly on the fourth Monday of each month in the evening and has 26 members. Most meetings are held in the Cashin Hall at Eventide Homes in Patrick Street, Stawell. In the summer months meetings begin at 7.30 pm and the programs include a short business meeting, then guest speakers from local health providers or social activities followed by a light supper. In the winter months, meetings begin at 6 pm with a light shared meal before a short meeting and then a guest speaker or social activity. Activities have included Tai-chi for Arthritis sessions, a visit to the Stawell Historical Society Museum and sing-a-long time with a local musician. Our December meeting is always a Christmas Dinner at one of the Stawell Hotels and then a social evening.

The Annual Heartbeat raffle is our main way of raising funds which allow us to support Heart Health related activities in Stawell. The group recently donated \$1,000 to the Stawell Regional Health Cardiac Rehabilitation Program to assist with the purchase of an arm exercise machine.



*PHOTO: Grampians Heartbeat Group members with President Alan Kettle presenting the cheque to Viv Cole from the Stawell Regional Health Rehabilitation Program*



### Heartbeat Victoria Knox Branch

Heartbeat Victoria Knox Branch was an active group with a number of activities on the agenda such as walking, coffee mornings, outings and monthly dinners with guest speakers. In 2016 the group went into voluntary recession due to the inability of the group to form a Committee of Management. The Board of Management of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. unanimously agreed that there was certainly a need for a peer support group to continue in Knox. Board Member, Lynda Andrews is coordinating the re-establishment of the Heartbeat Victoria Knox Branch.

Many people in the community believe that heart disease is an “old person’s” illness. However, statistics indicate that there is an increase in people from 40 years onward experiencing a heart event. With this in mind the Heartbeat Board of Management are keen to reach out to a slightly younger age bracket within the Knox community.

Lynda, with the support the Board of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. has been working hard re-establishing existing links and fostering new connections with cardiac staff at Knox Private, Wantirna Health and Angliss Health, representatives from EACH Knox Community Health, Volunteers for Knox and Knox Leisure Work and the response she is receiving is not only encouraging but positive.

Heartbeat Victoria is delighted to announce that the Heartbeat Victoria Knox Branch Inaugural Dinner and Information Night regarding the re-establishment of its Branch is to be held on Thursday 26 October 2017 at 6pm at the Mulgrave Country Club. Following an informal dinner, the President of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. will deliver a presentation on the importance and benefits of Peer Support Groups. Membership forms will be available for people who are interested in joining the group. Following this meeting a committee will be elected Heartbeat Victoria Knox Group will be formed. A monthly activities timetable will be established by the committee after consultation with the new members.



*PHOTO: Left to Right - Anne Page, Lynda Andrews [Board Member] & Wendy Tresivan of Knox Private*



*PHOTO: Left to Right – Karen Stortenbeker, Sue Rowe and Physiotherapist Brigette Decker of Victorian Rehabilitation Centre*

### Heartbeat Victoria Latrobe Valley Branch

Heartbeat Victoria Latrobe Valley Branch has 7 members who meet on the last Thursday of each month at 11am for lunch and a social get together at the Morwell Club.

Due to the decline in membership, no donations have been made in the last 12 months. Latrobe Valley is experiencing difficulties finding office bearers. Plans are underway for a representative from the Board of Management to visit the Branch in October 2017 to assist with creating new links and fostering existing relationships with health professionals in the surrounding community, building up the membership base and assisting with recruitment of office bearers.

At the Delegates Training Day on 27 April 2017, the President of the Board of Management presented the current President of Latrobe Valley with a Certificate of Appreciation to pass onto Mal Head for his years of service on the Heartbeat Victoria Latrobe Valley Branch who had recently stepped down as President due to ill health.



*PHOTO: President of Board of Management, Robyn Fennell handing Certificate of Appreciation to David Leonard, President of Heartbeat Victoria Latrobe Valley Branch to pass on to Mal Head for many years of service on the Committee*

# Establishment of Heartbeat Victoria Sunbury Branch

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The benefit of peer support is not only well researched that it helps people live longer and healthier lives, but the “proof is already in the pudding” from the feedback the Board of Management has been receiving from the other 9 Heartbeat Victoria Branches and Affiliates. Heartbeat Victoria peer support groups are indeed an excellent method of sharing experiences, offering support and hope, socialising and an opportunity to learn how to improve diet and motivate people to exercise. Thus the reasoning behind the Board of Management’s decision to support Louise Zambello, Board Secretary of the Council with her request to establish a Heartbeat Victoria Sunbury Branch.

After consultation with health services in and around Sunbury, it has been identified that although there is an excellent 8 week cardiac rehabilitation program in place for those people who have suffered a heart event and a couple of popular physical exercise programs, there is nothing offered in Sunbury for cardiac sufferers, their family or carers to meet and share experiences with a distinct social, motivational and/or educational flavour.

Contact has been made and several links fostered with the local Sunbury Community Health Centre, Hume City Council councillors and staff, State and Federal MPs, local medical practices, cardiologists with consulting rooms in Sunbury, local organisations and retirement villages.

An Information Night has now been planned for the establishment of a Heartbeat Victoria Sunbury Branch on Wednesday 25 October 2017 at 6pm at the Goonawarra Community Centre, Dornoch Avenue, Sunbury. Finger food and tea and coffee will be provided. The President of Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. will deliver a presentation on the importance and benefits of Peer Support Groups. Membership forms will be available for people who are interested in joining the group.

Following the Information Night, a Heartbeat Victoria Sunbury Branch sub-committee will be formed and within days an Inaugural Meeting will be held to appoint office bearers, welcome members and create a six monthly agenda.

We are delighted to report that the response and support to date has been overwhelmingly positive.

### Heartbeat Victoria Sunraysia Branch

Sunraysia sits in the north-west corner of Victoria and is a considerable distance from Melbourne, making it very difficult for members to attend Heartbeat Victoria Delegates meetings and training in Melbourne. This year for the April workshop and meeting Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. were able to fly two members to Melbourne using grant funding. This meant for the first time in several years Heartbeat Sunraysia were able to meet with other members, share ideas and gain valuable information from the workshop to take back to their support group. Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. are keen to continue to provide the travel support to Heartbeat Victoria Sunraysia Branch on an annual basis.



*LEFT PHOTO: Left to Right – Gail Newton, Treasurer and Taranda Davis, Secretary, Sunraysia Branch at the Delegates Training Day in April 2017*

*RIGHT PHOTO: Left to Right – Louise Zambello, Secretary of the Board of Management and Gail Newton, Sunraysia Branch enjoying a healthy lunch and a chat at the Delegates Training Day in April 2017*



## Heart Foundation

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**A strong working relationship continues:** Heartbeat Victoria and the Heart Foundation Victoria have been working closely together since 2012. The Supporting Hearts program funded by the State government ran from 2013 – 2015, which produced a Toolkit for support groups, quarterly newsletters, a number of regional forums and two training workshops. In 2015/16 the Heart Foundation received funding from the Ian Potter Foundation and Joe White bequest to fund Heart to Heart - a manual specifically for Heartbeat Victoria groups and another two training workshops. Another skills development workshop run in conjunction with the Health Issues Centre and funded by the Heart Foundation was held in April 2017 with very positive participation from Heartbeat Victoria members.



There are no specific projects currently funded but our relationship continues to be strong, with the Heart Foundation's Community Engagement Officer providing us with advice, information and guidance on a regular basis. We look forward to continuing this positive and mutually beneficial relationship.

*PHOTO: Left to Right – Pat Riley, Knox Branch with Tess Pryor, Community Engagement Officer, Heart Foundation*

**Heart Foundation Ecumenical Service:** On Sunday 7 May 2017 the Board of Management represented Heartbeat Victoria by attending the Heart Foundation's Ecumenical Memorial and Thanksgiving Service. This important annual event brings together families from different

cultures and backgrounds to remember their loved ones who have sadly lost their lives to heart disease.

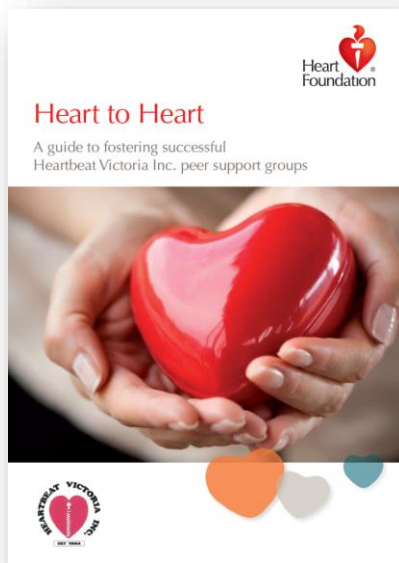
## Activities with Heart Foundation and Health Issues Centre

### **Delegates Training Day on 27 April 2017**

In October 2015, the new Manual: *Heart to Heart – A guide to fostering successful Heartbeat Victoria Inc. peer support groups* was successfully developed and launched. As mentioned above, it was funded through the Ian Potter Foundation and Joe White Bequest.

The resource was produced by Heart Foundation Victoria, Heartbeat Victoria Inc. and Amanda Spillare Social Work Services. Each section was written specifically to enable the Heartbeat groups to gain more confidence, skills and knowledge in managing and facilitating groups for people living with heart disease.





On 27 April 2017, a Delegates Training Day was hosted by the Heart Foundation and representatives from each Branch and Affiliate were invited to attend. Esther Lim in her role as Project Coordinator, Consumer Participation Projects of the Health Issues Centre facilitated the session. The key topics addressed at the Training Day were:

- What makes a successful peer support group
- Welcoming new members
- Assessing your progress as a group
- Succession planning
- Building partnerships between support groups and health services
- Keeping your groups interested and engaged
- Dealing with challenging behaviours and situations
- Looking after yourself.

Delegates reported after the training that the session was interesting and useful and felt more confident about returning to their groups to source office bearers, organise stimulating group activities and avenues to seek ideas and assistance and grow their groups.

*PHOTO : Left to Right front row – Lynda Andrews, Board Member of Board of Management and Knox members at the Delegates Training Day in April 2017*



## Acknowledgement of Sponsors

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### Sponsors

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## Contact Us

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