

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.

Edition 2/2017 (June)

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BOARD

President – Robyn Fennell

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Treasurer – Danielle Coppini

Asst. Treasurer – Arthur Fennell

Editor – Adrian Cloonan

Lynda Andrews, Alex Huang,
Dr. Rudy Lopes, Ted Williams,
Dr. Ojas Mehta

VISION: to be an excellent and well recognized peer support organization that assists in improving the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of people living with heart disease, or a heart condition.

MISSION : to advise and promote associated groups in conducting peer support activities for people living with heart disease to ensure they have a better understanding of the impact of their heart disease or condition; how they might seek ongoing services and support in their local area ; and how to raise funds to improve cardiac services.

“Heartbeat Happenings”



President's Report

Since our last newsletter in March, we have revamped our Facebook page and launched our website. Many thanks go to the Board members who were heavily involved in these actions.

Board Secretary (Louise Zambello) is now posting regularly to our Facebook page. Already we have had responses from potential members. Don't forget to LIKE and SHARE our Heartbeat articles with Facebook friends.

Preliminary planning is underway regarding our November Statewide raffle – more details next newsletter.

The Board, Branches and Affiliates will be holding their Annual General Meetings (AGMs) over the coming months. We ask ALL members to consider standing for various positions (including Board vacancies).

The Heartbeat Victoria AGM will be held 11am – 2pm Wed 30 August 2017 at the Health Issues Centre, Level 1, 255 Bourke St Melbourne (lunch will be provided). RSVP to heartbeatvictoria@outlook.com by 22 August please. The Board looks forward to meeting many members at this AGM.

Heartily yours - Robyn Fennell

Heart Health Week

30 April – 7 May 2017

This year the Heart Foundation hosted a workshop called “practical ways to strengthen your peer support group”. Thanks to Esther Lim of Health Issues Centre and Tess Pryor of Heart Foundation for the facilitation.

Twenty Branch delegates and Board members were present and all were particularly pleased to welcome the Sunraysia contingent.

During the Delegates' meeting, a Certificate of Appreciation was made to Mal Head – founding member of Latrobe Heartbeat – for his considerable efforts over the years.

Board members Louise Zambello (and husband Frank) along with Lynda Andrews (and husband Ian) represented our organization at the Annual Ecumenical Memorial and Thanksgiving Service held on Sun. 7 May at St. Patrick's Cathedral Melbourne. This event is organised each year by Heart Foundation Victoria.

Make a note in your Branch diary to recognize Heart Health Week 2018.

(Hey – why not pay your annual membership or make a donation to Heartbeat Victoria this week. Just a thought!)

Budget 2017: Patient group Heart Support Australia welcomes measures to prevent secondary heart attacks

“This Budget has delivered on strengthening the health system through investment in Medicare, pharmaceuticals, hospitals, mental and preventive health and medical research as well as a number of specific initiatives in areas vital to supporting people with heart conditions” said Heart Support Australia CEO Kelli Sadler.

“This Budget has struck a good balance between preventing heart conditions and addressing the needs of those who have had a heart event”, Ms Sadler said.

On the prevention side, the Healthy Heart Initiative provides targeted activities for increasing activity levels and healthy lifestyles with \$10m to get more Australians walking.

A further \$5 million is provided for GPs to support people to lead a healthy lifestyle. Funding of \$10m for preventive health research is a welcome initiative.

Cardiovascular disease affects more than 3.7 million people in Australia leading to 1.2 million experiencing disability as a result, and accounts for around 160,000 deaths per year. It is currently the leading cause of death in Australia (AIHW: 2016).

For Heart Support Australia members who are living with existing heart conditions, a

Budget targeting prevention of secondary events is very positive.

The listing of new heart medications Valsartan (Entresto) and Sacubitril (\$514.6m) is good news for those with chronic heart failure.

Other positive treatment and support measures include a new MBS service to lower the risk of stroke for heart patients unable to tolerate blood thinners and a cardiac devices registry to drive improvements in safety and quality of clinical care for those with high risk cardiac devices.

‘It is pleasing to see the Budget address heart disease which is the single biggest cause of death in Australia. This will make a real and lasting difference in terms of health, social and economic impact of cardiovascular disease in Australia. Consumers, their families and carers will benefit from support that enables them to lead productive and healthy lives before and beyond a heart event,’ Ms Sadler said. (Ref. Heart Support Aust. Website) (Article supplied courtesy of Heartbeat Goulburn Valley)

And now a word about one of our sponsors - Nuttelex

This family-owned company has been on a health kick since 1932. They specialise in making a range of plant oil enriched table spreads (see their website for full details of

their nine products). Based at Knoxfield Victoria, they have been successful in tapping into healthy eating trends – now more important than ever.

I delved into their website and was pleasantly surprised to read the amount of nutritional details they supply regarding their products (and was amused at the often slightly quirky language they use in descriptions).

Each year Nuttelex makes a donation to the Board – in recent years this has gone towards our State raffle costs.

So – support this sponsor by buying their healthy products (and it is an Australian family-owned business – not many can claim an 85 year family business lineage).

www.nuttelex.com.au

Facebook - Nuttelex

Lions Club donation

In May, our President Robyn Fennell addressed the Mooroopna Lions Club. Her talk touched on the benefits of peer support and the risk factors of heart disease.

At the conclusion of Robyn’s presentation, Graham Scott (Pres. Mooroopna Lions Club) donated \$500 on behalf of their members to enable the work of Heartbeat Goulburn Valley Branch to continue and thrive.

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Is your good health up in smoke!

Winter is here and our thoughts often turn to a warm blaze in a wood fired heater. However be aware that if operated irresponsibly, wood fired heating can cause health and environmental problems.

Wood smoke is a cause of particulate pollution. These tiny particles can enter airways and (in some cases, the bloodstream), resulting in breathing and cardio vascular health problems.

Particulate pollution can affect the very young, the elderly and those with pre-existing bronchial conditions (e.g. asthma).

There is no safe level of particulate emissions, but many heaters are capable of operating at low levels of emissions. Always ensure that your wood heater is installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and that the wood used burns as cleanly as possible.

State and Local Government authorities issue regular guidelines for wood fired heaters owners to follow. Remember that if you can smell the smoke from your neighbour's wood heater, it is probably causing harm to your neighbour, your family and you. (Article in Central Western Daily NSW May 13, 2017)

Heart patient interview

In this edition, Heartbeat Happenings interviews our "heart event" editor.

Q – What were your symptoms? A - In Nov. 2014, I woke up twice in a week at 3am with upper left arm pain.

Q – What did you do?
A – I took an indigestion tablet and a drink of water.

Q – When did you raise the matter with your doctor?
A – About a week later when I went to see him about another matter. He sent me for a stress test.

Q – What form did this test take? A – Running on an inclined treadmill for about 10 minutes. Only in the last minute did they detect something.

Q – What happened then?
A - I was referred to St. Vincent Private Hospital and underwent surgery. They went in through a tiny hole in my wrist and located a blocked major artery for which they inserted a stent; and a blocked minor artery which they managed to unblock. I was awake during the whole procedure and even spoke with the surgeon whilst he was operating.

Q – Any discomfort during or after the operation? A – Nothing during the operation. Afterwards, a bit sleepy and I was unsteady on my feet. I undertook a 6 week neighbourhood cardiac rehabilitation programme at IPC Health, Hoppers Crossing and then returned to work.

Q – Did you suffer any anxiety or depression following your operation? A – No – but I was cross with myself for letting this happen to my body plus I became very aware of my mortality. Looking back I can see that I had not had a balanced diet when I was young – too many sugary soft drinks, fish and chips, eating pies after football training, pizza, processed meat; sausages; too much fast food.

Q – Any messages for readers?
A – DO NOT SELF DIAGNOSE INDIGESTION; visit your doctor regularly and be open and frank with him.

Q – and now? A – I am feeling good; lost 4 kg, more diet conscious, exercising more, was able to holiday 4 months overseas within 12 months of operation (as I was on Warfarin tablets a portable blood test monitor accompanied me). For the first 12 months after the operation, I was on quarterly reviews but now I am on annual review visits. At 74yo I still work 3 days pw in spring/summer and regularly volunteer. I tell you what though - having a stent inserted is an interesting way to treat indigestion!

Calling on you

Our next newsletter is due in Sept. Articles from members are particularly welcome – personal heart health stories; activities from groups; fundraising events; photos. Please email by 1 Sept. (acloonan@tpg.com.au)

10,000 steps

This programme has been developed by Central Queensland University and “every step counts”.

Research has clearly shown that the majority of Australians do not get enough exercise. The people of Rockhampton certainly thought something should be done some 15 years ago and their community success has been well documented.

Participants back then used a pedometer to count their steps towards a healthy life. Due to the success of the idea, soon the local Council pathways were marked showing the distance and average steps between various points. (In June this year, on holidays, I noticed the same signage elsewhere in Queensland).

But if you want to lose weight then you can walk MORE than 10,000 steps (and probably reviewing your diet would help also).

So – an hour walk each day probably allows you to reach 50% of your 10,000 steps. And your dog needs that walk.

So what’s stopping you? OK – use a Fitbit if you have to – but get out there and JUST DO IT!

(website - 10000steps.org.au)

Unzipping the Zipper

Heartbeat Victoria Board member Ted Williams has long been associated with Epworth Hospital NW Group. They are a great social and support group to heart event patients and families and raise considerable funds in support of cardiac facilities. In the Mar/Apr edition of “Zippers” it was stated that of the Epworth \$40,000 annual appeal target for this year, \$10,000 was banked in the first two weeks of the campaign. Great result!

From these funds, Epworth recently awarded four scholarships – two for post graduate studies in critical care and two for attendance at cardiac conferences.

Try something new

Remember those New Year resolutions? How did you go?

Well, I did take up a new hobby (sketching); and recently (in pursuit of suitable exercise) I approached a senior’s table tennis group who gave me a two-hour workout. (Boy -never, ever underestimate the cunning of an 80yo table tennis opponent). Will I go back for more – certainly!

We all need a healthy social life so consider these activities - dancing, bowling, golf, a book club, art painting, join a gym, volunteer for a group you admire, invite friends for a BBQ (vegie patties of course!), share a skill, discover (or re-discover) musical skills.

Go on - you owe it to yourself.

Sophie Scott – ABC National Medical Reporter

In her recent blog, Sophie wrote about “resilience”.

She quoted research by Martin Seligman (creator of positive psychology) who found the best way to deal with setback was to move beyond the three Ps:
Personalization – the idea you are at fault
Pervasiveness – the belief that an event will affect all areas of your life
Permanence – the thought that the effect of the event will be life-long

Do these thoughts strike a chord with you? They do with me.

Associate Professor Adam Grant, an expert in positive psychology from University of Pennsylvania, believes there are four ways people can experience growth after a tragedy.

“Finding personal strength, forming deeper relationships, discovering more meaning in life and seeing new possibilities” he says.

“When we face the slings and arrows of life, we are wounded and the scars stay with us. But we can walk away with greater internal resolve”, he writes in Option B, a book he co-authored with Sheryl Sandberg.

What has helped you to become resilient?

(Facebook and blog – Sophie Scott)

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