



# *Pacific* HeartBeat

NEWSLETTER



January 2012

## President's Report

By Alfred Buchi

The POHA continues to work hard to meet our goals of providing patient support and funding for hospitals. I am pleased and grateful that the B.C Government Community Gaming Grant and the Founders Cup Foundation have again provided funds to POHA.

With their help we were able to continue the funding of the patient booklets/DVD's at VGH, RCH and St. Paul's, as well as providing financial support for the purchase of cardiac educational material at several feeder hospitals, such as Eagle Ridge, Surrey and many more.

Our yearly golf tournament provided an opportunity for all our golfers to share a day of golf and camaraderie. Eagle Ridge hospital was the beneficiary of the money raised.

The Heart and Stroke foundation together with Telus have continued to support us by providing the funds and labour for the heart pillows we hand out to patients.

An ever-changing world forced POHA to take out liability insurance for the organization and its volunteers.

To continue with our visitation program and donations to hospitals, as well as our new insurance costs, we need a strong membership base. The annual membership fee of \$10 is key in providing our basic operating budget. Membership is on the rise and I would encourage all of you who have benefited from our support and are not yet members, to join us in becoming members. We always welcome new volunteers to our visitation program. Training is provided and requires a commitment of only a few hours a month.

If you are a golfer, I invite you and your friends to our annual golf tournament. Details are in this newsletter.

I would like to extend many thanks to Barbara Smith, who has taken on the role of membership data administrator, and to Sharon McGovern, for continuing to be our telephone contact.

I would also like to thank all our board members and volunteers for their dedication in 2011 and hope that you can continue your support in 2012.

Best wishes to you all in 2012.

## **Innovative surgical procedure pioneered at St. Paul's Hospital saves lives of cardiac patients unable to undergo open-heart surgery**

Procedure taught to doctors around world via state of the art Virtual Teaching Laboratory

Dr. John Webb and his colleagues at Vancouver's St. Paul's Hospital are making open-heart surgery a thing of the past, saving the lives of patients not viable for conventional heart surgery, such as former Vancouver city councillor and Order of Canada recipient May Brown. And thanks to St. Paul's Virtual Teaching Laboratory (VTL), Dr. Webb has been able to help save yet more lives by teaching this technique to cardiologists and cardiac surgeons from more than 25 other countries.

"Since Dr. Webb and his team developed the first routinely successful percutaneous valve replacement in 2005, more than 500 successful surgeries have been performed at St. Paul's Hospital. This medical advancement is yet another example of the pioneering achievements of this hospital, as is the VTL which enables Dr. Webb and his colleagues to instruct cardiologists and cardiac surgeons around the world in this Procedure," said Dianne Doyle, president and CEO of Providence Health Care.



Dr. Webb, director of interventional cardiology at St. Paul's Hospital and McLeod professor of heart valve intervention at UBC, is the first interventional cardiologist to develop successful methods of percutaneous aortic valve replacement, or trans catheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), as commonly used today. Dr. Webb performed the procedure for the first time in January 2005. More than 10 hospitals in Canada are now performing this procedure. The Edwards SAPIEN transcatheter heart valve frequently used in the procedure received Health Canada approval in June. FDA approval in the US is expected this fall.

Instead of the traditional valve replacement technique of open-heart surgery, Dr. Webb's procedure uses a replacement valve that can be threaded up to the heart using a special catheter inserted into the patient's artery just above the leg. It's

available on a limited basis for patients with significant valve problems who would not be able to endure open-heart surgery. Until this procedure became available, there was no other option for cardiac patients who, when the aortic valve became leaky or blocked, might suffer angina and heart failure.

May Brown, 91, former Vancouver City councillor and Order of Canada recipient, who devoted her life to physical activity and community service wouldn't have been able to continue without Dr. Webb and his revolutionary procedure. The former UBC physical education instructor had enjoyed walking, hiking, skiing and other activities until finding herself short of breath on a routine walk through Pacific Spirit Park last year.

Upon investigation, a heart murmur was detected, indicating a malfunctioning valve, and a heart surgeon pronounced that she was not a candidate for open-heart surgery. St. Paul's Hospital directed her to Dr. Webb who advised her that she would be a good candidate for his procedure.

"Up until I had the surgery, I found myself deteriorating, had to be sure I had someone with me on a walk, found I had to hold onto railings all the time and be careful on steps. I could see how, if I didn't have the procedure, I would have to keep pulling back and diminishing. However, once I had the procedure, I was discharged within five days. My recovery was good and I'm back to my previous fitness level and can go uphill without puffing. I've got my life and confidence back. I'm most grateful to Dr. Webb and St. Paul's. They are fantastic," said Brown.

"According to the findings of the recent PARTNER\* trial, there are 20 per cent more deaths in patients with severe aortic valve disease after one year who don't undergo this surgery than in those who do – the largest reduction of mortality of any heart therapy ever," said Dr. Webb.

Recovery time from this surgery is shorter than for open-heart surgery as the heart/lung machine is not involved. Patients may be discharged from hospital as early as within two days of the procedure. Increasingly, younger patients are being targeted for this surgery, including patients in their 40s.

Dr. Webb started on the ground floor with percutaneous valve treatments in the late 1980s and saw possibilities to expand these sorts of therapies. Many people worked with him to put together the puzzle. He attributes the cooperative – as opposed to competitive – environment fostered at St. Paul's Hospital as conducive to pioneering new medical advances.

"We first proved that we could perform this surgery on patients who were deemed too frail or sick to have open heart surgery. Then we proved it's better than open-heart surgery in high-risk patients. Over the next 10 years, we hope to prove that it's the best surgery in most patients requiring valve replacement," said Dr. Webb.

An acknowledged world leader in percutaneous valve replacement, Dr. Webb performs five of these surgeries a week, having completed more of these procedures than any other individual worldwide. Prior to the advent of the VTL – which offers real time, high definition broadcasts of surgeries – Dr. Webb spent one-third of his time criss-crossing the globe to teach in person. Now Dr. Webb and his fellow cardiologists and cardiac surgeons are able to help others save lives without ever having to leave the hospital. The VTL is facilitated on any given day by four to eight members of St. Paul's Hospital's Media Services and Telemedicine Department and provides unprecedented, interactive access to the innovative work of the specialists at the hospital. It affords viewers the benefit of live, two-way

communication with the cardiac team, as well as unobstructed views of high definition images on multiple screens, enabling viewers to see camera views, medical imaging, patient vitals, angiograms and more – none of which would be possible in a crowded operating room setting.

The VTL broadcasted live cases to cardiologists and cardiac surgeons attending the Canadian Cardiovascular Congress (CCC) at the Vancouver Convention Centre in October 2011.

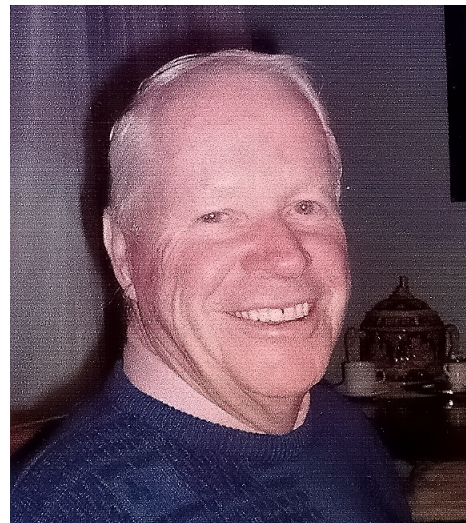
### **About Providence Health Care**

[Providence Health Care](#) is one of Canada's largest faith-based health care organizations, operating 16 facilities within Vancouver Coastal Health. Guided by the principle "How you want to be treated," PHC's 1,200 physicians, 6,000 staff and 1,500 volunteers deliver compassionate care to patients and residents in British Columbia. Providence's programs and services span the complete continuum of care and serve people throughout B.C. PHC operates one of two adult academic health science centres in the province, performs cutting-edge research in more than 30 clinical specialties, and focuses its services on six "populations of emphasis": cardiopulmonary risks and illnesses, HIV/AIDS, mental health, renal risks and illness, specialized needs in aging and urban health.

### **Moe's Medical Miracle**

**By Bill Turpin**

Morley (Moe) Pitcher has been a well-known member of the Pacific Open Heart Association (POHA) for over a decade. A lifelong athlete, (Moe played professional baseball for four years after graduating from Vancouver's Lord Byng High School), Moe and his wife Joanne are still very active in curling and golf. It was because of their love of golf that Moe and Jo ran the POHA Annual Golf Tournament while Moe was a Board Member of the POHA. Their efforts on behalf of the POHA resulted in the Pitchers becoming joint recipients of the Association's Don Topp Trophy.



**Morley (Moe) Pitcher**

Moe has also been the recipient of one of the latest developments in cardiac surgery, percutaneous valve replacement. Dr. Guy Fradet performed Moe's first cardiac surgery, seven bypasses in 2000. When it was determined that Moe would need a valve replacement in 2010, it was also determined that he was now in an age group where such a

procedure would be too dangerous. Into the picture steps Dr. John Webb, cardiac surgeon at St. Paul's Hospital. He and his colleagues had developed the minimally invasive technique of percutaneous valve replacement, a procedure which would allow Moe to undergo the valve replacement without being subjected to open heart surgery.

On August 13, 2010 Moe received the valve replacement during a one-hour procedure. Following four and a half days hospital recovery, Moe was back home. A year following his heart valve replacement, Moe noted that he was "absolutely amazed" by the whole process, especially by the time involved and also the fact that such reduction in treatment time meant making a bed available faster than usual in the cardiac ward.

Today Moe and Joanne have resumed their busy curling and golf schedule, much to the chagrin of Moe's golf mates who saw him shoot his age, 79, on his return to the golf course.

## **POHA 28th Annual Golf Tournament June 22nd. 2012**

**By Roger Kocheff Chair POHA Golf Tournament**

The date and location for the 2012 POHA golf tournament have been booked:

### **June 22nd. Poppy Estates.**

The format will be the same as last year.

We are working on a new hole-in-one prize but have not yet finalized the details. We hope to include this news in the registration package, which will be in your hands in late April 2012.

Also, there will be a new blind draw, for free entry into the 2013 Tournament. This would be drawn from all "early" registrations for this year's Tournament. There will be more details on this in the registration package.

Please plan to attend. For more tournament information or to learn how to help with phoning, prizes or general help for the tournament contact me at:

**604-467-2904** or [rkocheff@telus.net](mailto:rkocheff@telus.net)

### **Please send Golf Tournament Information to:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: 11961-203 St., Maple Ridge, V2X 4V2

## **DON TOPP TROPHY**

**By Mike Martin**

Don Topp was, for many years, a well-known and hard working member of the Pacific Open Heart Association (POHA). He was best known as the organizer of the annual golf tournament. When Don passed away in 1996, an award was created in his memory.

Each year the Don Topp Memorial Trophy is awarded to a person who has contributed in a meaningful way to the "well being" of the POHA and therefore to the members.

Bill Turpin was awarded the Don Topp Trophy at last June's golf tournament. The presentation was made by Alfred Buchi, POHA President.

Bill received open-heart surgery in October, 2000. He became a volunteer visitor at VGH and joined the Board of Directors in 2001. He was president in 2005 and 2006. He was editor of the Pacific Heartbeat Newsletter for a number of years. Bill continues to be an active member, including volunteer work for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and writing articles for the newsletter.

Bill is a retired schoolteacher. His major claim to fame is that he taught our past president, Mike Martin, when Mike was in Grade 5.



**Bill Turpin**

## **VOLUNTEER FOR THE HEALTH OF IT**

We always need more members to join the ranks of the volunteer visitors.

Right now, we are in great need of volunteers at the new Abbotsford Regional Hospital. Please contact Mile Martin (see below) if you can fill this need.

If you are able to spend 1 to 2 hours every couple of weeks to give support to open heart surgery patients, one of the following team leaders would be very happy to tell you more about the opportunities available at one of the following hospitals:

Vancouver General	Alfred Buchi	604-581-5508
Royal Columbian	Mike Martin	604-535-3195
St. Paul's	Vern Halverson	604-261-2153

## POHA SUPPORTERS

A "heartfelt" thank you to the following for making Donations or In Memoriam Gifts to the POHA from Dec.1/10 to Nov.30/11:

Paul Altilia	John Keryluk
Clifford Anderson	Art & Mary Kelm
Doreen & Howard Atkinson	See Bun Ko
Althea Babcook	Peter Kobliuk
Allan Bakken	Frank Kozakiewich
Ross Borsoi	Jaide Kuraishi
Shawn Bothwell	Cullis Lancaster
Lee Bremner	Savo Lazarian
Donald Brown	Ronald Leck
Helen Brown	Dick Mackenzie
Ron Brown	Alan MacPherson
Alfred Buchi	Melchor Mangahas
Robin Burnside	Howard W. Maundrell
Robert Carlson	Geraldine McIntosh
Marlies Caswell	Archie McKen
Ruth Chambers	Ron McSheffrey
Benedict Chee	Jose Melo
Richard Cheng	Tom & Phyllis Meredith
Richard Clarke	Donna Molgerson
June Coe	C. Neil Murray
Worth Connolly	Richard Nelson
Connolly Foundation	Fiona Odam
Elaine Cook	Helen Orenchuk
Joan Crofts	Kirk Osen
Arnold Dagenais	Constantin Papoutsis
Rene & Luci Delauriers	Ray Pelletier
Nick & Maria Dewaal	Dwayne Perry
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Ray Greenall	Harvie Walker
Phyllis Hiltz	Alan Walrond
David Hunter	Reginald Wand
Robert & Elizabeth Justason	H.R. Waymen

## PACIFIC HEARTBEAT NEWSLETTER

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Pacific Open Heart Association  
Editors: Mike Martin and Patrick Hagan

## Annual General Meeting Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Place: Unitarian Church  
949 West 49<sup>th</sup> Ave. (Oak & 49<sup>th</sup> Ave.)  
Vancouver, BC  
Time: 1:30 PM  
Speaker: Sandra Lauck, Clinical Nurse Specialist  
St. Paul's Hospital with input from Mr. Morley  
(Moe) Pitcher  
Topic: When Surgery Is Not An Option - Advances in  
Trans Catheter Aortic Valve Implantation.

Membership Registration desk will open at 1:00 PM  
Refreshments will be served after the speaker's  
presentation.

## It's that time again!

It's time to renew your Pacific Open Heart Association membership. Membership is still only \$10.00, unchanged in over 20 years !! Funds from memberships are used to cover operating costs of the Association such as the production of our brochures (in several languages); postage; Annual General Meeting expenses; the purchase of poinsettias for patients who are recovering from open surgery during the Christmas holiday. None of our volunteers or directors receives any form of compensation and never has. Any surplus funds from membership renewals are donated to hospitals for sundry equipment in the cardiac wards. So please renew and help support the good work that POHA has been doing for over 25 years. Thank you.

## MEMBERSHIP REQUEST

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in: being a visitor:

being a volunteer:

Golf:

Please send all correspondence to:  
Pacific Open Heart Association  
PO Box 3979 MPO, Vancouver, BC V6B 3Z4  
Telephone: 604-436-9005

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