HAPPY EASTER!

At this time of new beginnings, when the signs of spring are all around us, may the hope that is Easter and the joy that is spring fill your world with happiness.

I’m sure we’re all ready to say goodbye to our winter this year. The weather has been much wetter and colder than usual. Bring on the warmer temperatures and the daylight evenings!

It is with a little sadness that we announce that we will not be holding our annual Heart Walk this year. Over the past few years, our attendance at the walk has dwindled, due in part because of the multiple walks that take place over the summer months by other organizations. However, we have formed a new committee to look into new and exciting ideas for us to consider for fundraising...stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

We have been receiving many nice comments about the new changes to the bedrooms at Heart House. We can be proud of the facility we provide for out of town guests.

This is the perfect opportunity to acknowledge all our wonderful volunteers and supporters. We couldn’t operate without your fine efforts. It is also important to recognize the valuable work of our office gal, Susan, and our Heart House staff who take such good care of our guests. It is heart warming to receive such positive comments about our welcoming and caring staff.

Thanks to you all for a job well done! We can always use more volunteers so if you have time to spare, we’d love to hear from you.

On behalf of your Board of Directors, we wish you all the blessings and joy of the Easter Season.

Heart House
Accommodation for heart patient’s and their families

Phone: (250) 595-1931
Email: vhh@shaw.ca
Living With AFib: Experts and Patients Share 10 Tips

If you have atrial fibrillation (often called AFib), you’re not alone.

AFib is the most common type of heart arrhythmia—a problem with the heart’s rhythm. It happens when the electrical signals that help the heart function become chaotic and misfire. You may feel a fluttering sensation in your chest, or your heart might be racing or skipping beats, which can be worrying; although not all people have these signs.

Living with AFib can affect many different aspects of your life, including your stamina, relationships and emotional health. But taking an active role in your care can help you feel better and more in control.

Below are some practical tips to help you live with and manage your condition.

1. Talk with your doctor about how AFib is affecting your life: Your care team knows only what you tell them. They will want to know how you are feeling to better tailor your treatment. Are you limiting certain activities for fear that it might make your AFib worse? What can or can’t you do because of how you are feeling? Many people with AFib also have heart failure. Ask about how to pace yourself and when to report in.

2. Know your stroke risk: AFib can put you at up to five times greater risk of stroke. Your doctor is in the best position to calculate your risk. Most people with AFib need to take a prescription blood thinner to prevent clots from forming; some need only aspirin.

3. Take your medications exactly as prescribed: Medications are an important part of managing AFib, your heart rate and the risk of stroke. But medications work only if you take them the right way. Always tell your health care provider about any side effects, and don’t stop taking or make changes to your medications without consulting your health care provider.

Over time, AFib can change the shape and size of the heart and how electrical signals are communicated. Medications can help regulate AFib, but they sometimes need to be changed or the dosage may need to be adjusted. Therapies such as cardioversion to try to “kick” the heart into a normal rhythm or ablation may be considered at a certain point if medications alone are not working well for your symptoms.

4. Take steps to manage other medical conditions: These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, thyroid disorders diabetes and heart failure. Ask your provider about sleep apnea because many people with AFib also have this sleep disorder. Both need to be addressed.

5. Eat a heart-healthy diet: It's very important to be mindful about the types of foods fuelling your body. Talk with your health care team about how to adopt a healthy eating plan that is low in fat and salt. Ask whether consulting a dietitian would be helpful. Keep in mind that alcohol, caffeine and smoking can trigger episodes of AFib.

6. Shed extra pounds: Studies have shown that losing weight, if needed, can help ease symptoms and episodes of AFib in some people. It may even reduce the amount of medication you need to take.

7. Find an exercise plan that fits your life: Talk with your health care team about what exercise routine is best for you, including the type and frequency of activity. Moving your body also helps boost feel-good hormones and tends to set you on the right path to make healthy food choices. In fact, studies show that people with AFib who exercise are better able to manage their condition and go about usual activities than those who are not active.

Some people with AFib say they are wary of exercising for fear that it will make their condition worse. While it may not be a good idea to take part in overly vigorous workouts, strengthening your heart is important, so find time to talk to your doctor about what is the best choice for you.

8. De-stress: Excessive worry and intense bouts of anger or anxiety can make AFib worse due to faster heart rates. Of course, the onset of symptoms themselves can be fairly anxiety provoking. Try to find ways to lower stress. For example, go for a walk, listen to music, exercise, or find ways to better manage your time. Research has shown that for some people with AFib, yoga helps them feel better and lowers heart rate, blood pressure and anxiety/depression scores.

Common AFib Triggers:

- Infections
- Heart Failure
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Caffeine, which can increase your heart rate and spark an AFib episode in some individuals.
- Skipping doses of medications aimed to control AFib
- Smoking or taking stimulants

Continued on Page 3
The First Open Heart Society of BC would like to acknowledge and thank the City of Victoria for approving this year’s Permissive Property Tax Exemption.

Continued from Page 2

9. Stay connected socially: Don’t let AFib define you. Continue or pursue new hobbies, and participate in community or faith-based activities. Many people say doing so helps them to cope and keep a positive attitude.

10. Get support and accept help when it is offered: Other people may not understand how AFib makes you feel or affects your ability to do certain things or what to do to help. Try to anticipate your needs ahead of time so you know what might be most helpful if friends and family ask what they can do. Consider bringing someone to your medical appointment to help you remember what was said and who can think of questions to ask, walk with a buddy for motivation to exercise or reach out to other people with AFib.

Questions to ask your Doctor:
• What type of exercise program is best for me? Are there activities I should avoid?
• “Should I be keeping track of any health markers at home (for example: my weight, pulse…)
• Are there things that might trigger episodes of AFib? If so, what are they?
• What is my risk of having a stroke?
• What steps can I take to lower my risk of heart attack or stroke?
• Will my AFib ever go away?
• How can I explain my condition to other people?
• If I am on warfarin, does it mean I can’t eat any greens?
• After starting on blood thinners, what should I do if I notice that I’m bruising more than usual?
• How can a pacemaker help manage AFib?
• Are there other resources for information and support?

CardioSmart

Thrifty Foods Smile Cards

Members have been using Smile Cards for several years now. 5% of your purchases will be donated to Heart House and used for much needed projects.

You can get a Smile Card from the First Open Heart Society office by phone at 250-595-2123 or email us at admin@fohs.bc.ca. Up-Island Members can use these cards also.

Once you receive your card you can take it to any Thrifty Foods Customer Service desk and have them load your card with the amount you like. You choose the amount that best suits you. Once the card is “loaded” you are set. Anytime you do your grocery shopping, pay with the Smile Card. When your credit balance has depleted, simply re-load a new credit balance onto the card again – using the same Smile Card.

Oops: Below names were mistakenly omitted from our Winter newsletter.

A “Heartfelt” Thank You to the following supporters for their donations or In Memory Donations to the FOHS from December 1st, 2015 to December 31, 2016!

John White       Eugene Lemauvel       G. Bruce Oliver
D. Cameron       Elvio Cramaro
Comox United Church (LCW Unit)
Miriam Krause    Patrick Orr
Heart House Bedroom Renovations

Campbell River Room

Comox Valley Room

Port Alberni Room

Ladysmith Room

Nanaimo Room

Lioness Room
Pasta with Zucchini and Toasted Almonds

2 cups cherry tomatoes
2 tablespoons minced shallot
1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt (optional)
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1/4 teaspoon sugar
5 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
1 package linguine
1 1/2 teaspoons minced garlic
3 cups chopped zucchini
3/4 cup fat-free low sodium chicken broth
3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
1/3 cup grated fresh Romano cheese
3 tablespoons sliced almonds

1. Combine first 7 ingredients in a medium bowl. Add 2 teaspoons oil, tossing to coat.
2. Cook pasta according to directions
3. Heat a large non-stick skillet over med-high heat. Add the remaining oil to pan, swirling to coat. Add garlic and sauté. Add zucchini and sauté 3 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add broth to pan and bring to a simmer. Stir in pasta and 1 1/2 tablespoons mint; toss well. Remove from heat; stir in tomato mixture. Place 1 1/2 cups pasta mixture in 4 bowls, top evenly with remaining mint. Sprinkle each serving with 4 teaspoons of cheese and 2 teaspoons almonds.

Laughter Quite Possibly the Best Medicine

A veterinarian was feeling ill and went to see her doctor. The doctor asked her all the usual questions, about symptoms, how long had they been occurring, etc., when she interrupted him: “Hey look, I’m a vet—I don’t need to ask my patients these kind of questions: I can tell what’s wrong just by looking. Why can’t you?

The doctor nodded, looked her up and down, wrote out a prescription and handed it to her and said, “There you are. Of course, if that doesn’t work, we’ll have to put you down.”.

Reducing Our Operating Cost

We want to make the most of our funds by not having to use it for postage and copying costs. We spend on average $400.00 every second month. You can help us by receiving Heart news by email. This would not only save money but also trees.

Do you have a new internet provider? Don’t forget to give us your new contact information.

The First Open Heart Society of BC Now Accepts Credit Cards!!

Did you know you can now pay your Membership Dues or make a donation by Visa or MasterCard!! If you would like to pay by credit card, please call the office at (250) 595-2123. We also accept cheques, cash or money orders.

A gentle reminder to all members if you receive your Heart News by mail your expiry date is on the address label. If you receive your Heart News by email your expiry date is in the body of the email. If you are not sure please call Susan at the office and she can look it up for you.

Thank You!
Our March 15, 2017 meeting was held at the Comox Rec Centre. Anne called the meeting to order at 7:10PM. All were welcomed. There were 16 people in attendance.

It was officially stated by the President "Anne" that at the end of this year's meeting cycle, due to several reasons (Health being one of them) the present executive in total would be retiring; and that if there were no persons willing to step forward to take over, then the Comox Chapter would fold.

Bernie gave an update on the progress with regards to the planning for the upcoming "Walk for Hearts" scheduled for May 7th. We are on track and the Radio Stn "97.3 the eagle" has been booked for on air promotion. There are copies of the Walk flyer and pledge sheets available for all to pick up at the end of the meeting.

Anne introduced our guest speakers for the evening; "Jim Lariviere" from the Comox Fire Hall. Jim's presentation to us was excellent and very informative. He talked to us about the use of the AED (Automated External Defibrillator) and how it is to be used in conjunction with CPR. There was a demonstration and several questions from our group.

Our next meeting is April 19, 2017, 7:00 PM at the Comox Rec. Centre. Our Guest speaker will be "Barb Paulson" RN & Nurse educator from St. Josephs Hospital, to talk to us on latest advancements in Cardiac Care as well as information related to the new Hospital.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM

A Meet & Greet followed with snacks, refreshments & conversation.

Cheers
Anne Poole

Eleventh Annual “Walk for Hearts” Comox Valley Chapter

To raise funds for the “Comox Valley Chapter” of the “First Open Heart Society” (FOHS) of BC.

- Funds raised stay in the Comox Valley & will be targeted to help support Cardiac Care initiatives at St. Josephs Hospital in Comox.

- Our walk will take us around the airpark & back to the “Filberg Centre”. Walk as much or as little as you can.

- **When:** May 7, 2017 Sunday
  10:00 AM – Registration Starts
  10:30 AM – Walk Starts

- **Where:** Filberg Centre Courtenay (Evergreen Lounge).
- Our group is a support group for anyone, and their families, who have had a heart procedure, is about to undergo a heart procedure, or has any concerns with regards to cardiac issues.

For more information, and pledge sheets, please call: (250) 339-5349

Official Sponsor of this event
**Mid-Island Chapter—March 2017 News**

At our January meeting, we focused on Earthquake Preparedness with Dean Monterey who lives in Nanaimo and has traveled many places all over the world to prepare people for any kind of disaster. [dean@global-ics.com](mailto:dean@global-ics.com)

We learned there are 4 types of earthquakes. One close to home was Volcanic that erupted at Mt. St. Helens, Wa. What we should think about and act upon is “How prepared are we for an earthquake?”

We will need AIR, WATER, HEAT/SHELTER and FOOD! One can purchase an earthquake kit or make your own. Buy a book or go online for information. You can learn how to store water, what foods to store – such as high energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly crackers, granola bars, trail mix; foods that will not increase thirst. A First Aid Kit is essential, also Tools and Supplies: paper plates, cups and cutlery, can opener, matches, flashlight, battery radio, cash (in case banks are closed). One can even be prepared with a power source: generator, an inverter. We saw how cheesies make a good flame!

I know everybody has their water tank strapped in, or not?

Books: Earthquake by Graeme Castell; The Human Side of Disaster-second edition by Thomas E. Drabek (from Amazon.ca). The library can be a whole source of information!

The February meeting was a luncheon meeting with new folks. A good discussion for speakers came out with the topic for the March 14th meeting ---Sleep Apnea was explained as well as the demonstration of the CPAC Machine with Richard James answering many questions. With his wit, people learned the inconvenience of having a “snoring partner”!

We meet at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church 4235 Departure Bay Rd. Nanaimo.----

**SATURDAY, APRIL 22,** 1:30 – 3pm – Ms. Carmen Troje, Pharmacist
**FRIDAY, MAY 26,** 1:30-3Ppm – Paramedic Garry O’Rouke and “buddy”
**SATURDAY, JUNE 24,** 1:30-3Ppm - Ms. Jayne Williams, RN

We have met 2 times at the new library on Hammond Bay Rd. They draw up a new schedule in May. For more information: [emurphy39@shaw.ca](mailto:emurphy39@shaw.ca) or (250)753-1915

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**Campbell River Heart News - March 2017**

We are very pleased to be advised the Campbell River Hospital Foundation is putting up a permanent plaque in our new hospital designating our Campbell River First Open Heart Society in the philanthropist group. We have been purchasing cardiac equipment and funding courses in cardiac care for nurses and technologists since 1990.

Candace Soltys, Pharmacy Manager for London Drugs was our guest speaker in February. Candace shared a handout on the changes to Pharmacare payments as well as a handout on the different vitamins and supplements offering advice on which are beneficial and which to avoid. She answered questions from the floor.

Bev Birce was our guest speaker in March. Bev gave a very good presentation on Osteoarthritis and how to live with it. She was knowledgeable and answered questions from the floor.

Ken donated a small handmade table to the Campbell River Fish & Wildlife group for their annual fundraiser on behalf of our group.

There will be no guest speaker in April as our meeting will be devoted to organizing our annual Walk for Hearts on May 7th. Registration is 1:00pm with the Walk starting at 2:00pm from the Willow Pt. Hall north along the Sea Walk. We are very pleased that the Campbell River Recreation Dept. will be partnering with us. They will give us a warm up and provide First Aid. Rich Hagensen and Joanne Banks will be providing their great music. There will be refreshments and prizes all donated.

Guest speakers in May will be Joan and Steve Wallace from the Wallace Driving School in Victoria. They will be presenting “Prepare, Beware and Don’t Despair”.

We are very sorry to announce the passing of Ida Cook, a long time and valued member of our heart society. Our Walk for Hearts will be dedicated to Ida.

We have been assisting a family for some time with a child who requires several trips to Children’s Hospital. We are very pleased to mention that Victoria FOHS donated half of the $1000 we recently gave to the family which was needed and very much appreciated. The little guy had a trip there last month and had another surgery recently. He has to go back in three weeks for a check up. Thanks to Victoria FOHS for joining us in assisting this family. Our assistance will be continuing for some time.

Lois was pleased to report that Campbell River Council passed 3rd reading on a By-law to prohibit hospital pay parking. Courtenay Council is also following suit to ban pay parking at their new hospital. Happy Easter!! Lois Jarvis

Next Coffee social - April 12th at 10am - Merecroft A & W Next regular meeting - April 26th at 7:00pm - Campbell River Community Centre
May Meeting— May 24th at 7:00 pm—Campbell River Community Centre
**Membership Dues**

- 1 year for one(1) member $25
- 1 year for two(2) members $35

Name ___________________________________________
Address _________________________________________
City ___________________ Postal Code ______________
Telephone ____________ Member ID ______________
Email ___________________________________________

Would you like the Heart News emailed? Yes ______ No _______

Payment by: Cheque ______ Cash ______ CC ___________

Please make cheques payable to:
The First Open Heart Society of BC
1580 Pembroke Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1W2
Phone (250) 595-2123

Credit Card: ___________________________
Expiry Date: ___________________________

All donators will receive an income tax receipt
Charitable Registration Number 13091 8824 RR0001

**Donations & Gifts**

- Donation for Heart House
- Memorial Gift
- Other
  
  Amount: $_________________

Rec’d from Name ___________________________
Address ___________________________________
City ___________________ Postal Code __________
Telephone ____________ Email _______________

**Gift in Memory of**

_________________________________________

In Memory acknowledgement to be mailed to:

______________________________
Address _______________________ City ______________ Postal Code ______

**Next Membership Meeting:**

May 7th, 2017
2:30 pm

**Guest Speaker:**

To be announced

**Next Meeting**

AGM
September 10, 2017

Sunday Meetings are held at
St.Aidan’s United Church Hall,
3703 St.Aidan’s, Victoria, BC

**General Meeting Dates**

Jim Weaver President/Finance Committee
Carol Connolly Vice-President & Heart House Committee
Ray Calton Treasurer/Finance Committee
Robert des Trois Maisons Secretary/Finance Committee
Doris Nicholson Heart House Committee
Janie Apostolakos Director/Heart House Com.
Sihong Huang Director/Finance Committee
Laurie Geddes Director/Hospital Visiting

Up-Island Contacts

Ken McRann Campbell River Chapter
250-923-3466
Elaine Murphy Mid Island Chapter
250-753-1915
Anne Poole Comox Valley Chapter
250-339--5349

Susan Harrison Administrative Officer

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