



# Spring Newsletter 2010

## From the President

*Dr. John Hetherington*

Another Spring Newsletter already! That means another year is nearing its close. But too much happens within our organization for us to let a year go by without putting pen to Newsletter paper. Since our last publication in Autumn we have continued to provide care in their home for those who are dying – and for their families. That is our primary purpose and it is an expanding one. Not because the death rate is rising but because more and more it is being appreciated that good palliative care can benefit many people with diagnoses other than cancer. Indeed, any death which is not sudden is likely to generate symptoms with which we can assist. A wider view shows us that there is a change afoot in the pattern of causes of death. In years gone by overwhelming infection commonly resulted in death within days. Likewise serious accidents were likely to be fatal – and sooner rather than later. Now we have an ageing population whose members stay alive long enough for cancers to develop or for their vital organs to slowly wear out. Usually the effects of that wear can be limited - but not halted. The result is a longer interval between first symptoms and death. At some stage along that extended trajectory palliative care is likely to be able to help.

It is therefore important that plans are laid for adequate care to be available in the future. To that end our senior staff are involved in constructive dialogue with Health Department bureaucrats and

planners. But all the plans in the world come to naught if there are insufficient nurses to deliver the care that is needed. So we continue our involvement in education, with some expansion achieved and further expansion planned. Carmel Smith's Executive Manager's Report in this Newsletter contains more detail.

As well as ageing and better care of acute illnesses, another significant change in our society is the continuing immigration of people with different ethnic backgrounds. Death, more than any other episode in human life, carries with it taboos, customs and beliefs. They differ from society to society but the death is going to occur in Australia so our staff have to be sensitive to sometimes unfamiliar needs and correlate them with existing systems. Also, general medical practitioners born and trained overseas can be confused by and apprehensive about caring for families whose customs are traditional Australian ones. Our staff have been assisting these doctors and are finding that information, explanation and reassurance go a long way towards stilling their fears.

I congratulate members of our staff who, like jugglers, keep many balls in the air at the same time. A juggler can carry on if he loses one ball; our staff cannot because each of the balls' functions is inter-related. Long may they stay in the air and long may your assistance in keeping them there continue! Thank you for your support.

## From the Executive Manager

*Carmel Smith*

The work that we do with our patients and carers at hospice makes us appreciate how lucky we are to look forward to another season and to appreciate nature in all its glory. For many of our patients this will be their last spring, and in our work with these wonderful people and their families and friends, we are dedicated to support them and help them enjoy what time they have left and to strive for quality at the end of their life. This might involve facilitating holidays or visits to family and friends, and coordinating these events so that they will still receive the medical and psychological support they need while away. We ensure that the palliative team where they are visiting are fully informed of this persons needs. This all ensures that there is continuity in the care of our patients, and they are able to have breaks with minimal disruption to their lives.

### CONTINUING TO EDUCATE THE REGION

*"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it" (Margaret Fuller)*

GVHCS continues to coordinate and sponsor the Annual Banksia Palliative Care Resource Nurse Course here in Shepparton. Planning has commenced for a 2011 course.

Sonia & Annette have also been very busy planning and implementing education across the West Hume corridor, and Dr Joseph Ding has commenced a monthly journal club at Hospice House, and we teleconference these sessions to interested nursing and medical staff.

### QUALITY-Where improvement has no limits.....

GVHCS continues to maintain their vision of Excellence in Palliative Care. The Service has submitted their first self-assessment against the Australian Council of HealthCare standards and has completed our assessment against the Palliative Care Standards under the National Standards Assessment Program in June 2010. We also received a very positive first Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration (PCOC) report reinforcing that the care we provide continues to achieve high outcomes,

All of this education and quality is important to our service, but patient care will always be our top priority and never compromised. Our service is supported so well by the community of Shepparton, and this allows us to continue to provide our patients and their families with around the clock care where ever and whenever they need it.



President of Shepparton Croquet Club, John Hammond with John Hetherington



Ron Poole presenting a \$10,000 Cheque to Carmel Smith

# Friends of Hospice

## CHRISTMAS CARDS:

Hospice Christmas Cards will be on sale at the Combined Charities' Christmas Card Shop located in Scots' Church Hall at the corner of Fryers and Corio Streets. (Enter by the Fryers Street door.) Friends of Hospice have a variety of attractive cards; prices are 40c and 30c.

The shop opens on Monday, 11th October and closes on Friday, 17th December.

## HOURS OF OPENING

### MONDAY TO FRIDAY:

October: 10.00 am – 4.00 pm  
November: 9.30 am – 4.30 pm  
December: 9.30 am – 4.30 pm

## SATURDAYS:

November: 9.30 – 12 noon  
December: 9.30 – 12 noon

Friends of Hospice will be on duty at the shop on 28th and 29th October.

## HOSPICE TEA AND HARMONY 2011:

Keep this date free! EASTBANK will again be the venue for our next Hospice Tea and Harmony on Tuesday, 17th May.

## 2011 AUTUMN GARDEN COACH TOUR:

Tentative date is Thursday, 13th October, 2011.

The 22nd Annual General Meeting of

## The Goulburn Valley Hospice Care Service Inc.

will be held at Hospice House

102 Balaclava Road,  
Shepparton

Wednesday, 3rd November,  
2010

5.30 p.m.

## ALL WELCOME

For more information and to  
R.S.V.P.

Telephone: Hospice House  
5822 0068

## Co-ordinator of Volunteers Report

*Lanya Holt*

I am happy to welcome some new volunteers on to our Patient Care Volunteer team. Training was conducted throughout August and included participants for our service, as well as from Moira Shire and Lower Hume (who then go back and become volunteers in their own local palliative care services).

The role of the patient care volunteer is many and varied and the past few months have seen volunteers take our patients to and from appointments, visit them both in their home and in hospital, assist with the recent 'Funeral Expo', support people through our various bereavement programs including the walking group, 'documenting memories' craft group and Kids Grieve Too (KG2) amongst other things.

This work requires many skills, including compassion and empathy and I am very thankful to our team of dedicated volunteers. Each year I meet one on one with each volunteer and invariably I am told that 'I get out of it more than I put in'. I am glad that the hard yards are richly rewarding.



*Opp Shop volunteer - Kev Finteln with Sharyn and Julie at the COGS 2010 volunteer awards*



*Margaret Brewer*

## Good bye and Thank you

After an amazing 21 years, Margaret Brewer has decided to retire from her role as a patient care volunteer at Goulburn Valley Hospice Care.

We would like to acknowledge Margaret's contribution as a volunteer dedicated to her role, who has provided companionship and support to many of our patients over the years. As well as this, Margaret has been a fantastic mentor and her wealth of knowledge and bank of experience have been appreciated and respected by other volunteers and staff members, along the way.

Margaret has taken her role very seriously, keeping her training up to date by attending

conferences and training days regularly. She has given her time willingly and with enthusiasm offering help in many ways, including being an advocate for our Service in the community.

Volunteering is a big part of Margaret's life and she is very involved in many community organisations.

Thank you for all the time and expertise you have given to Goulburn Valley Hospice Care Service, Margaret, we wish you all the very best as you, no doubt, will continue to have many other interesting adventures!

# From the Hospice Opportunity Shop

141 FRYERS ST, SHEPPARTON

Location of clothing donation bins:

- Fairleys IGA car park – Numurkah Road, Shepparton
- Riverside Plaza car park – Melbourne Road, Kialla.
- Fishers IGA rear car park – McLennan Street, Mooroopna
- Harvey Norman car park- Melbourne Road, Kialla
- Fisher IGA car park – Walsh Street, Tatura
- Shepparton Market Place car park – Benalla Road, Shepparton
- Fryers Street Shepparton – located at the front of the Hospice Opportunity Shop

HOURS OF OPENING:

Monday to Friday – 10.00 am – 4.00pm

Saturday – 10.00 am – 12 noon



This year's 10th Annual Fruit Loop Ride has been postponed to the 31st October due to the floods early in September. Mr. Phil Anderson 7 times Tour de France rider and Malvern Star Ambassador, and Mr. Joel Pearson from Genesys Wealth Team (a pro cycling team from Tasmania), are planning to join this year's ride. For further information and to register go to [www.fruitloopride.com](http://www.fruitloopride.com)



Sonia Strachan

## “Who Cares...” Conference Report

*Sonia Strachan - Clinical Nurse Consultant*

Over the course of Thursday 13th and Friday 14th May about 115 people, mainly local nurses, gathered in Shepparton at the Carrington, to participate in a conference organised by Goulburn Valley Hospice Care Service entitled “Who Care’s...” The purpose of the conference was to explore ways to care for ourselves with the same dedication and compassion that we invest in others and the speakers reflected this aim.

Professor Margaret O'Connor, President of Palliative Care Australia, gave a welcome address and opened the conference with an update on Palliative Care Australia.

Judy Arpana is a consultant and counsellor and has worked with people with life threatening illness and grief and loss for the past 20 years. Judy spoke about the importance of caring for the carer and focused on how to be compassionate to yourself (and how this can lead you to being more compassionate towards the people you are caring for).

Molly Carlile, who has a background in nursing and management in Palliative Care, and is a author, centred her talk on the question “Who is this person?” She hypothesized that in order to ask the question of patients, we first need to ask it of ourselves. Molly talked about the importance of exploring and getting to know ourselves in order to improve our clinical performance and to build personal resilience.

The conference recommenced in the evening over drinks at the Manor House followed by dinner at the Carrington. The feedback from the dinner was extremely positive, with participants (including many GP's) enjoying the opportunity to socialise and network with colleagues in a relaxed environment, and to listen to an engaging and informal presentation by Liese Groot-Alberts.

Liese spoke again on Friday morning. Liese is a grief therapist who works in private practice, provides workshop training, is a seminar presenter and clinical supervisor with over 30 years experience working in the field of grief, loss and trauma. Liese's theme for the conference was the “Power of Hope”. She spoke from the heart and shared many stories based on her personal experience. Liese said ‘the power of hope brings meaning back into life, despite the suffering, and gives the energy to go on and take the next step’.

John Boyle, psychologist, continued the theme of burnout and loss of self care with a funny and and engaging presentation-asking the tricky questions about whose responsibility it really is to look after, manage and take care of ourselves.

Dr Jennifer Phillip who is the Deputy Director of Palliative Medicine at St Vincent's Palliative Care Service spoke on ‘anger in palliative care’. Jenny gave some very practical information about dealing with anger.

Irene Nolan closed the conference with her presentation about professional supervision and how that can be a self care tool for health care workers. She explained and presented a compelling argument about the benefits of professional supervision.

It was wonderful to see such high calibre speakers come together in Shepparton to provide quality, local education for people in our region and beyond. The feedback we received has been overwhelmingly positive and I hope that some changes in the practice of self care have occurred based on the wisdom imparted by our speakers.

This conference could not have gone ahead without the very generous support and sponsorship from Mundipharma, Hume RICS, Goulburn Valley Division of GP's, Norgine, PEPA, Palcare and The Carrington.



Professor Margaret O'Connor - President of Palliative Care Australia

GVHCS would like to acknowledge the following Committee Members for their years of service and look forward to working with everyone for many more years to come.

**PRESIDENT**

Dr. John Hetherington

**VICE PRESIDENT**

John Beaver

**HON SECRETARY**

Wendy Cook

**HON TREASURER**

Greg Luscombe

**MEMBERS**

Dr. Paul O'Dwyer

Canon Andrew Neaum

Michael Blake

Margaret Watts

Les Young

Robert Sands

Lindsay Symons

Hayley Coates

# Photo Album



*Education at Packham St*



*2010 Memorial Service*



*2010 Bereavement walk group*



*2010 Conference, Narelle, Tanya & Kerrie*



*2010 Staff*



*2010 Memorial Service*



*Greg Barnes & Brendan Magee*

## up and coming *Events*

Fruit Loop Bike Ride

Sun 31st October

Annual General Meeting

Wed November 3rd, 2010

Garage Sale

197 Echuca Road, Mooroopna

Fri 19th & Sat 20th November

Hospice would like to thank the following for their generosity

- Pat & Tina Di Conza's BP Service Station
- Andrew Beks Landscaping & Sprinklers Service
- Gouge Dry Cleaning
- Prominent Group
- The Goulburn Valley United Way Community Fund

The Service is grateful to receive funds from several community benefit schemes:

Please support these businesses and in doing so support the Goulburn Valley Hospice Care Service. Collection tins for the Service are at Medicare Office, City Walk Wyndham Street, Shepparton