

NEWSLETTER

December 2008

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**Something can be done ...
And we're doing it!**

Arthritis ACT Board 2006-07

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From the CEO

As I have been thinking about writing this little column for the first time I was wondering what to say to introduce myself and was very keen not to have it sound like one of those long winded boring Christmas letters. I do hope that this is not the case.

My wife Vicky and I moved to the ACT from Hobart in April this year and have settled into our new ACT life very quickly. We live on 10 acres at Wamboin and love our intensive kangaroo breeding property. We have been blessed with 5 children and 2 grandchildren and are especially excited about the birth of our second little granddaughter a few weeks ago.

My background is as an accountant and for the past 13 years I have been working as a Business Manager/Bursar in various independent schools in NSW, Tasmania and the ACT. The move into the not for profit is an exciting one for me, filled with many challenges and hopefully many positive results for our members and the community generally.

I have already met quite a few of you as I have visited various venues and events, and I do very much look forward to meeting many more of our members over the coming months. I would welcome your questions, complaints and feedback on any aspect of our organization and in this light have detailed my email address and mobile number below. Please do not hesitate to make contact with me at any time. tony.holland@arthritisact.org.au or 0417 575 537.

The first few months of a new job are always challenging as you get to know the ropes and start to get a feel for what your role entails. I have been very impressed with the services that Arthritis ACT offers and for this must commend my predecessor, Elizabeth Scrivener. Elizabeth has done a marvellous job during her watch and I know she is sadly missed by you all. It has also been a joy to meet many of our very dedicated volunteers, who make this place tick. We certainly would have no hope of doing what we do without them. Thank you so much to all of you for your tireless efforts on behalf of the Canberra community. Volunteering is certainly alive and well at AACT.

Now to some news from the trenches! Monte has referred to the range of projects that are currently underway and which are due to be completed by the end of this financial year. I would particularly like to mention the Workplace project. This project will allow us access to a whole section of the community which may never have heard our message of hope. We will be working with 2 or 3 major employers raising awareness and assisting in the development of strategies that

aim to assist staff with chronic conditions to stay in the workforce. This is a pilot project, but if it is half as successful as I hope it will be, we see many opportunities for enhancing and expanding the model into many other Canberra workplaces. I will give you an update on this project in one of the 2009 newsletters.

As a result of the workplace project we have recently appointed Carla Van Weerdenburg to work as a project officer. Carla has a strong desire to work in Health Promotion and sees this position as an excellent learning opportunity. We are very excited to welcome Carla to our small but enthusiastic team.

You may already have seen our new stationery, which was produced with funds kindly provided by the Australian Pharmacy Group. The colours used are now standard across all of our ACT literature and I hope you will agree that they give a bright and cheerful lift to our image.

We have recently applied for a number of small capital grants for a range of purposes, with the most significant being the development of a members data base. If approved we will be able to offer a significantly more streamlined interface with our members, including email distribution of most correspondence, on line payment of accounts and courses, improved capacity to distribute information by disease/location etc and much improved production of statistical information.

You will also recall from previous newsletters Elizabeth's mention of a Challenging Pain Course from the UK. This has unfortunately been stalled for quite some time due to administrative issues; however we hope to run two pilot courses in March. If you are interested in registering and attending one of these pilots, please let us know and we will add your name to the list. The course is two 2.5 hour sessions.

Finally I must make specific mention of our Warm Water Exercise Programme (WWX). This is a marvellous initiative that seems to make such a difference to so many people. Thank you to Shirley and all of the supervisors. If you have not tried it, perhaps get yourself ready and register to join in from the start of activities in 2009. Please give us a call and we will give you all the necessary information.

As I indicated above, please give me a call or drop in for a chat at any time.

Kind regards,

Tony Holland

Chief Executive Officer

Support Groups

If you have Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis or Sjogrens Syndrome, why not come along to one of our support groups to:

- share information, experiences, helpful hints and tips;
- share new development in medications and techniques;
- primarily support and encourage each other.

Our support groups meet monthly at the coffee shop, The Hellenic Club, Phillip (next to the Woden Interchange).

The Osteoarthritis support group meets the first Monday of the month at 10.30am

The Rheumatoid/ Sjogrens Syndrome support group meets the second Thursday of the month at 10.30am

Furthermore, we are planning two seminars next year for our combined support groups on topics of interest

Art for Arthritis

One Day Painting Workshop

With resident artist
Robyn Howarth

Saturday 28 February 2009 10 am
to 2 pm

at Hands On Studio, Fyshwick

Cost is subsidised at \$20 and
includes all materials and morning
tea. BYO lunch.

Limited to 12 participants.

Bookings to Arthritis ACT Office

Education News

World Osteoporosis Day

Despite a busy news day on 21 October, the radio, print, internet and TV news media coverage of World Osteoporosis Day promoted by Osteoporosis Australia was reasonable. See the abridged version of the print media release elsewhere in the newsletter.

Warm Water Exercise Program

Due to a number of changes that have occurred with WWX, the revised Supervisor's Handbooks that were issued not long ago, have recently received several amendments. Thank you to Shirley Syme, the WWX Supervisor Coordinator, for keeping the handbooks up to date.

The Monday session at BMS was resumed and is proving to be a popular one after a previous extended period of low attendance.

The Falls Prevention project is developing an exciting addition to the WWX program. See below.

We have recently been informed that major interruptions to parking at the Canberra Hospital will begin in April when the new multi-story carpark construction begins.

Pool Closures

Closures of pools over the Christmas/New Year holidays are:

The Canberra Hospital — last session

Friday 19 Dec, resumes Tuesday 13 Jan (unless unforeseen problems arise).

Black Mountains School — last session

Thursday 18 Dec, resumes Monday 2 Feb.

Simply Wellness — last session Wednesday

24 Dec, resumes Wednesday 7 Jan.

Self Management Course

Due to lack of interest, the 'Living a Healthy Life with Long Term was

cancelled. The next course will start in March 2009.

Community Talks

It was a busy three months of Community talks with fourteen presentations. The talks, promoting arthritis, osteoporosis and exercise awareness, were well received with

audiences of up to 67 reported.

We welcome the addition of Barbara Gillies as the Community Talks coordinator. Barbara has been a volunteer helping in the office for several months. Barbara is skilled at PowerPoint presentation design and will be a valuable asset to the program as we endeavour to expand its outreach in 2009.

Our ability to deliver Community Talks is dependent on the availability of presenters. If you would like to make a contribution to increased awareness of musculoskeletal conditions in the community we will be offering a training course early next year. No experience or extensive knowledge is required. Please contact us for more information.

National Science Festival

After reporting on the success of our exhibit at the National Science Festival in the last newsletter, we received notification that we won third place in the kids vote for best exhibit. So another hearty congratulation and thank you to Katrina Muir, who did much of the planning and preparation for the display.

Weston Creek Spring Festival

We once again had a stall at the Weston Creek Spring Festival. It was a well attended event and we received our share of the interest. Thank you to the volunteers who helped out.

Joint Replacement Seminar

"Surgical Options for Joint Replacement", a well attended seminar sponsored by Stryker/Argo focusing on knee and hip joint replacement, was presented on 27 November at the Hellenic Club in Woden. Speakers were Dr Damian Smith, an orthopaedic surgeon, and Timothy Mahr, a physiotherapist.

Workplace Project

The Workplace project is gearing up with the addition of Carla Van Weerdenburg as a project officer. The project is aimed at health education and prevention of arthritis and osteoporosis in the workplace. Two pilot programs are planned, one for a white-collar based workplace and one for a blue collar based workplace. Each pilot program will have two phases, an educational phase and a workplace practices phase. The workplaces targeted for the pilot programs are the National Archives, Action Buses and IP Australia.

Falls Prevention Project

“Stay on Your Feet – Falls Prevention”, an ACT Health Promotion Grant project, is aimed at incorporating a falls prevention message into all of our member services. The focus will be on exercise but will also include:

- Eye and ear problems
- Inappropriate use of medications
- Footwear
- Nutritional issues
- Safe home environment
- High risk individuals – protective and assistance gear.

We will be adapting or expanding our array of services to include a falls prevention strategy. We are planning on developing information material to be used as handouts as well as including falls prevention messages in all of our programs.

We see this as a great opportunity to develop our WWX program further by providing periodic workshops or regular pool sessions that will be aimed at exercises to develop strength and balance for falls prevention. We are currently contacting physiotherapists for assistance in developing the program and we envision that this will become an ongoing service.

In order to make this a viable ongoing service, we will need volunteers willing to be WWX session leaders. The session leaders will be trained by a physiotherapist. The leaders will guide sessions in a series of exercises aimed at strengthening for improved balance. If you are interested in becoming a session leader, contact Shirley through our office. No experience is necessary.

We are working closely with ACT Health and other organisations that are already involved in providing falls prevention services.

Monte Scharbow

Youth Support News

During the September school holidays the theme for the annual Footloose camp was "Go for Gold".

The five day camp was held at Myuna Bay, Lake Macquarie and caters for young people between 8-18 years of age who have any form of Arthritis. Two girls from the ACT attended and Steve Norris, our Young Adults Group coordinator, also attended as a camp leader.

The camp theme was based on the 2008 Beijing Olympics and Camp Footloose held their own version, not based solely on physical strength. This enabled many young people to compete in different events and have fun with new people.

If anyone has an interest in Camp Footloose for next year, please contact the office. We are very happy to provide financial assistance if it will help a child to attend the camp.

Some of my work also includes supporting young people by way of structured outings. Please contact me at the office and register your interest and I will contact you when the next event is on.

Roz Lawrence
Youth Coordinator

Bone building tips for fracture prevention

Elite athletes offer bone building techniques

Representatives from Australia's sporting and medical arenas joined forces with the Federal Minister for Ageing, The Hon. Justine Elliott MP on 21 October (World Osteoporosis Day) to release two new Exercise and Fracture Prevention Guides designed to build strong, healthy bones. The elite athletes – Jane Saville, Craig Foster, Wally Masur and Tatiana Grigorieva – revealed some of their individual secrets for building powerful bones in order to help prevent fractures

The *Exercise and Fracture Prevention Guides*, developed by Osteoporosis Australia in conjunction with Geriatrician and John Sutton Chair of Exercise and Sport Science, University of Sydney, Professor Maria Fiatarone Singh, are designed to inform Australians about preventing fractures through a combination of exercise, a healthy diet and medication when required.

The Exercise and Fracture Prevention Guides, which include a DVD and an illustrative brochure, are available from [Arthritis ACT](#) for \$12.

Members' Survey

Valuing of Information Sources			
Information sources	Very and somewhat useful % of respondents	Arthritis ACT activities	Very and somewhat useful % of respondents
Website	100 %	Self Management Programs	100 %
Newsletter	93 %	W W X	100 %
Library	86 %	Social Events	90 %
Pamphlets etc	100 %	Support/Interest Groups	100 %
Office helpline	100 %	Seminars	100 %

Some comments on how the service(s) have helped people manage their condition:-

- Providing up to date information on treatment etc
- W W X helped me with a back and shoulder problem, enabled me to maintain my mobility and to continue to contribute
- Given me information and confidence to make me feel in control of my condition
- Informed focus on positives, helps keep things in perspective.

Some of the suggestions for improvement:-

- More information pieces in the Newsletter
- Guest speakers for support groups
- Improved website and extending the use of emailing
- Improving the very critical first point of contact with sufferers.
- Keep pressure on governments to assist organisations like Arthritis ACT

News from the office

Volunteers needed

Please contact the office if you'd like to find out more about any of these activities.

Healthy Bones Week –

In August each year we participate in the Osteoporosis Healthy Bones Week activities. These activities are focused around school visits and require a considerable amount of co-ordination. If you have a love for kids and a desire to spread the positive message with regard to good nutrition

for building Healthy Bones this may be the activity for you. We need a co-ordinator to ensure this event is delivered well.

Newsletter distribution –

We need people to assist us with the compiling, folding and preparation of our newsletters. This task comes up only 4 times per year for about 4 hours per time.

Book collection –

We have a small collection of books, a trifle too small to be regarded as a Library but large enough to require keeping in order. There is also a collection of the periodicals put out by the various Arthritis and Osteoporosis organisations.

There is a system in place and it takes about 2 to 3 hours a fortnight to keep things running smoothly. I have been doing this for the past several years, but am no longer able to give the time. I would be willing to spend a couple of sessions assisting the person taking over. **Edna Edsor**

Photos from Henry

You will recall that we farewelled our long time photographer Mr Henry Cook in our newsletter, but you just can't keep a good man down. Henry has kindly decided to continue to be available at any of our major functions as our photographer. Thank you Henry!

We would also like to advise everyone that Henry will be providing the proofs to all shots taken at any major event and displaying these in our office for a month or so after each event. This will allow everyone the opportunity to come in and place orders for any snaps that they like. We currently have a nice selection of images from our Wine and Cheese night from a few weeks ago. These will be available until the start of the Christmas break.

Christmas Closure

We wish to advise that the office will be closed from 4pm on Friday 19 December and will re-open at 9am on Monday 5 January.

Living a healthy life with long-term conditions

Does your arthritis:

- ⇒ Prevent you from living life as you would like?
- ⇒ Cause you stress and anxiety?
- ⇒ Impact your relationships?

Why not consider enrolling in the "*Living a Healthy Life With Long Term Conditions*" course.

The course offers practical and well tested ways of coping with these problems and many other problems we experience due to our arthritis. It not only provides information but helps you develop your abilities and confidence in managing your arthritis.

Dates: Wednesdays, March 11, 18, 24, April 1, 8, 14

Time: 10.00 am – 12.30 pm

Venue: Grant Cameron Community Centre, Ground Floor Conference Room

For more information and to register for the course, please phone Arthritis ACT on 6288 4244

I am also conducting a Leaders Training Workshop in Chronic Disease Self-Management on Fridays March 6, 13, 20 and 27 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm at the Phillip Health Centre, Woden. There is no charge for the training and lunch is provided.

If you are interested in becoming a Leader or want more information please do not hesitate to contact me on 6161 0080.

Joe Stewart

Self Management Coordinator

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The **Icewave Pain Patch** works by providing the painful area with a thermal **cooling effect** that results in a reduction of excess heat in the area, which leads to **decreased inflammation, reduced pain, and restoration of range of motion.**

LifeWave patches are made from **organic materials** and they are safe and natural and work quickly. **No substances actually enter your body.**

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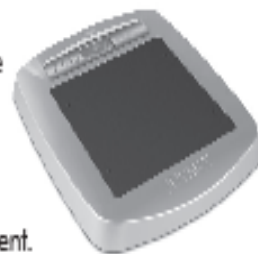
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Dynamic Motion Therapy



Safe and Effective Treatment for Osteoporosis

- ✓ Prevent bone loss and improve bone density and strength.
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- ✓ Non-invasive, non-drug treatment.
- ✓ Over 20 years of clinical study and research.
- ✓ Juvent DMT transmits high frequency, low intensity mechanical forces through the feet and up through the skeleton.
- ✓ Safe, gentle and convenient treatment. Stand on the device for only 20 minutes per day.



SPECIAL Christmas Pricing Offer

Buy an ex-rental device for \$3,300 (inc. GST).

Limited ex-rental units available.
Offer valid until 19th Dec 2008.



Call 1300 JUVENT(588368)
for further information

On behalf of the Board and staff of Arthritis ACT we would like to extend our very best wishes to all of our members and supporters for a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

We trust that you will enjoy the opportunity that Christmas provides to spend quality time with your family, friends and neighbours and that you will have an opportunity to rest and relax in preparing for another busy year in 2009.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

Tuesday 9 Card Shop Tuggeranong

Wednesday 10 Christmas Lunch

Time: 12 for 12.30pm
Venue: Southern Cross Club Woden
Cost: \$30 (Buy your own drinks)

Friday 19 Black Mountain Pool Closed

Friday 19 Office closes at 4 pm

Saturday 20 Canberra Hospital Pool Closed

Thursday 25 Simply Wellness Closed

January 2009

Monday 5 Office opens

Wednesday 7 Simply Wellness opens

Tuesday 13 Canberra Hospital Pool opens

February

Monday 2 Black Mountain Pool opens

Monday 2 Arthritis Support Group

Time: 10.30am - 12noon
Venue: Hellenic Club, Phillip

Monday 2 Fundraising Meeting

Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Arthritis ACT Office, all welcome

Thursday 12 RA & Sjogren's Interest Group

Time: 10.30am - 12noon
Venue: Hellenic Club, Phillip

Saturday 14 Young Adults Group

Saturday 28 Art for Arthritis Workshop

Time: 10am - 2pm
Venue: Hands On Studio, Fyshwick

March

Monday 2 Arthritis Support Group

Time: 10.30am - 12noon
Venue: Hellenic Club, Phillip

Monday 2 Fundraising Meeting

Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Arthritis ACT Office, all welcome

Friday 6 CDSM Leaders Training

3 weeks course
Time: 9am - 4pm
Venue: Phillip Heath Centre Woden

Wednesday 11 "Living a Healthy Life with Long term Conditions"

6 weeks course
Time: 10.am - 12.30 pm
Venue: Grant Cameron Community Centre
Bookings essential

Thursday 12 RA & Sjogren's Interest Group

Time: 10.30am - 12noon
Venue: Hellenic Club, Phillip

Saturday 14 Young Adults Group

TBA Trivia Night

TBA Bulb drive

April

National Arthritis Week April 5- 11

Monday 6 Arthritis Support Group

Time: 10.30am - 12noon
Venue: Hellenic Club, Phillip

Monday 6 Fundraising Meeting

Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Arthritis ACT Office, all welcome

Thursday 9 RA & Sjogren's Interest Group

Time: 10.30am - 12noon
Venue: Hellenic Club, Phillip

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