

The Renal Review



Vancouver Island Kidney Patients' Association

February 2006

Call For Nominations

On Thursday, February 16, 2006, the Vancouver Island Kidney Patients' Association will host its Annual General Meeting at 1pm in the Renal Unit Boardroom (second floor of the RJH Renal Unit). Everyone is welcome to attend, but only members with their fees paid for 2006 will be eligible to vote and stand for election. **There will be door prizes and refreshments will be served.**

A warm thank you to all of our current board members for the wonderful job they have done. Although most board members have indicated that they would be willing to stand again for election, some have held their positions for many years and would like to take a rest. If you would like to help out, or know of someone else who would be willing to offer their services, contact any member of the executive before the meeting. Nominations will also be taken from the floor. Although the duties vary depending on the position, most only involve a few hours a month.

According to Volunteer Canada, directors (board members) of any organization have three basic responsibilities: first, diligence: to act reasonably, prudently, in good faith and with a view to the best interests of the organization and its members; second, loyalty: to place the interests of the organization first, and to not use one's position as a director to further private interests; and third, obedience: to act within the scope of the governing policies of the organization and within the scope of other laws, rules and regulations that apply to the organization.

Even if you are not able to come to the meeting or to volunteer your services at this time, now is the time to renew your membership. If you purchased or renewed your membership *before* October 1, 2005, it has now expired. A renewal form has been included with this newsletter. The cost is only \$5 per year

(January 1 to December 31). A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has already renewed, and to everyone who sent in such generous donations. Your support is what makes what we do possible.

All members are welcome to attend VIKPA's monthly meetings, which take place on the third Thursday of each month at 1pm in the Renal Unit Boardroom. Up-coming meetings will take place on February 16 (AGM), March 16, April 20, May 18 and June 15.

Thrifty's Keeps Us SMILING

In June 2005 VIKPA was invited to take part in a fund-raising program sponsored by Thrifty Foods. Participants are given a Thrifty's SMILE card with VIKPA's name encoded on it. They load the card (ie put money on the card) using cash, cheque, debit or credit card and then use the card to buy their groceries. The card user pays the regular price for their groceries, but five percent of the purchase price is donated to VIKPA by Thrifty Foods. Since VIKPA joined the program, Thrifty's has donated more than \$3000 to help renal patients on Vancouver Island. Note that effective December 1, 2005, Thrifty's no longer permits cards to be loaded *after* the order is rung through. **Please remember to load your card before your go through the till, or before your order is rung up.**

Thank you to Kathy and Michelle at K & B's Corner Café, located in the medical building at 1105 Pandora (corner of Cook and Pandora) for agreeing to help distribute the cards. Cards are also available through Bill Coltart in Cumberland, Ruth St James in Nanaimo, Lita Rolofs at Hillside, Claire McDougald in the Renal Unit or by contacting VIKPA at (250) 595-3650 or at info@vikpa.org. The more cards out there the more money we make, so get yours today.

Driving With Kidney Disease

Did you know that when you go to renew your driver's licence you will be asked if you have any known medical conditions. If you have any "diagnosed medical condition," including renal failure, you are required to answer "yes" to this question. In the case of renal failure, when you answer "yes" you will be given a form to be completed by your doctor. Under current regulations, your doctor is permitted to charge you for completing this form (usually \$50-\$75), although not all do. If your doctor is uncertain about your ability to drive, they may recommend that you take a practical road test.

When completing the form the doctor will consider guidelines that have been set for physicians by the BC Medical Association to determine the safety of driving with various medical conditions. The guidelines state, "that persons with chronic renal failure, who are otherwise in good health, and who are on either intermittent hemodialysis or continuous peritoneal dialysis, can drive any class of motor vehicle safely." However, section 10.4 states, "There are many concurrent medical problems that can affect a person on dialysis. These can cause a temporary or even permanent inability to drive safely. Licensing of persons on dialysis, therefore, requires the closest co-operation between the patient and physician and between the physician and the Motor Vehicle Branch. The attending physician should notify the Motor Vehicle Branch's Medical Consultant immediately if a complication arises that could make driving hazardous." According to the guidelines, it is considered safe for persons with transplants to drive any class of motor vehicle, although some restrictions

exist during the first three months following transplantation. I was unable to find anything in the guidelines dealing specifically with pre-dialysis patients. To view the complete guidelines go to www.drivesafe.com. Click on "Full indexed content" in the top left corner and scroll down to section 10 – Renal Disease.

When determining a person's ability to drive, many aspects of their health must be considered including vision, hearing, overall fitness level and known medical conditions. Renal failure is not on its own a reason to restrict a person from driving; however, patients must be assessed on an individual basis.

Although this is obviously one more hassle for kidney patients to deal with, staying informed can, hopefully, minimize any inconvenience. The intent is to keep *everyone* on the road safe, and like it or not, it is the law.

Thumbs Up

👍 Thumbs up and thank you to Nancy Cuthbert, who has been for answering our voice mail for the past eighteen months, and to Pat Chadwick, who has offered to take over the job.

👍 Thumbs up to the McKenzie Avenue location of Curves for their recent very generous donation of \$700 to VIKPA. Thank you.

👍 Thumbs up and thank you to Joyce Foss for her generous donation of \$500.

The Vancouver Island Kidney Patients' Association (VIKPA) is a volunteer, legally incorporated, non-profit society and a registered Canadian charity working for the benefit of all renal patients.

Our address is Box 5145, Station B
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Website: www.vikpa.org
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Deadline for the June 2006 issue is
May 18, 2006.

All submissions and ideas for the newsletter are gratefully accepted and may be sent or emailed to the above addresses. The issue was compiled by Alison Phosy, with special thanks to Pat Chadwick and Lita Rolofs. Editing and layout by Alison Phosy. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue.

President: Gabor Brach
Vice-President: Patricia Carson
Secretary: Teresa Melendez-Duke
Treasurer: Patricia Chadwick
Membership Secretary: Cheryl Jones
Member-At-Large: Lita Rolofs



Vancouver Island Volunteers Needed For: Kidney Disease & Cholesterol Study

The Renal Program at the Royal Jubilee Hospital is participating in an international study of cholesterol lowering treatment in patients with kidney disease. A total of 9,000 patients from around the world will take part in this study. As of December 1, 2005 over 6,200 patients are participating, with 300 enrolled in Canada.

Why are we doing this study?

People with kidney disease tend to have a somewhat higher risk of heart attacks or strokes than people without kidney disease. When kidney function is normal, the incidence of heart attacks and strokes can be reduced effectively with cholesterol lowering drugs. However, in people with kidney disease the effects of these drugs are still uncertain. Although the main aim of the study is to test if lowering cholesterol can help prevent heart disease and strokes, the study can also test if lowering cholesterol helps delay the progression of the kidney disease itself.

Who can participate in the study?

- People with kidney disease who are 40 years of age and older
- People who are **not** already on cholesterol lowering medication
- People who have **not** had a heart attack, heart bypass surgery or a stroke

How much time is involved?

Each study participant is followed for 4-5 years; there are approximately 15 study visits in that period. We try to schedule the study visits the same day as other medical appointments.

If I am interested in participating, what is next?

Please contact the SHARP study nurse in Victoria at 250-370-8111, local 2840, or e-mail laurie.robson@viha.ca.

You are also encouraged to discuss study participation with your own nephrologist.



Study doctor, Dr Kevin Horgan, with study nurse, Laurie Robson.

Around The Island

Compiled by Lita Rolofs

Cumberland Community Dialysis Unit

(thanks to Bill Coltart and Debby McRae, RN): Since the last edition of the newsletter, we've had quite a number of new patients join our "family," with two patients leaving: Roy, from Campbell River, has transferred to Victoria to take up home hemodialysis; and Jerry Cubbage is the recipient of a new kidney. Good luck to both of you. We also say a sad good-bye to Debbie Emslie, a former Hillside patient who has been dialyzing at Cumberland and passed away January 28.



Nurse Debby McRae with one of the quilts she has made for the Cumberland Unit.

Christmas has come and gone. The Christmas treats from VIKPA were well received. The VIKPA pens also went over well. The ops room was beautifully decorated by the nurses. The unit also benefited from the addition of a beautiful Christmas quilt by nurse Debby McRae. The pattern is called "Card Trick," and the quilt, which measures 54" by 72," took more than two years to make. It is the second quilt Debby has made for the Cumberland Clinic. We are fortunate to have such generous and talented staff members. Thanks, Debby!

The next project for the Cumberland patients will be displays at various locations throughout the Comox Valley during the month of March, which is national Kidney Health Month. We hope to set up displays again this year at Wal-Mart, Comox Centre Mall, GP Vanier School, Save-On-Foods, and maybe Thrifty Foods. The SMILE cards have not gone over as well

as expected, but hopefully during our displays we'll be able to get more out there once people are aware of how they operate and how they help kidney patients. This year, we're going to put a big advertisement on the Eagle FM, Jet FM and the local newspapers promoting our purpose and our location. It's surprising, especially at the Wal-Mart display, the number of people who come up ask questions and take pamphlets. We even had one person put down a \$150 donation.

Until the next edition of *The Renal Review*, keep your chin up, keep smilin' and live each day to the fullest.

Port Alberni Community Dialysis Unit

(courtesy Elaine Rowan, RN and Norm Taylor): Welcome to our newest patients; we now have seventeen in all and are running six days a week. Congratulations to Carol J who recently received a transplant and is doing well.

Along with Cumberland and Nanaimo we took part in the Celebrate Your Life Wellness Challenge before Christmas. Patients were encouraged to do activities such as sharing a joke with someone, phoning a friend, or going for a walk. Each time they completed an activity they were able to enter their name for a prize draw and add a decoration to our tree. Our unit was able to decorate two trees. Thank you to VIKPA for donating eight \$25 gift cards from Thrifty's as prizes.

Norm Taylor from the Mid Island Kidney Association (MIKA) attended VIKPA's meeting in January. He updated VIKPA on some of the things MIKA has doing including raffles, a bring-and-buy potluck, auction, summer BBQ and a Christmas party. MIKA was founded by Norman's wife, Marjorie, a dialysis patient who passed away in 2002.

Nanaimo Community Dialysis Unit (also courtesy Elaine Rowan, RN and Ruth St James): Here in Nanaimo we sailed through Christmas. Everyone enjoyed the Celebrate Your Life Wellness Challenge, especially those who won prizes. As in Port Alberni, everytime someone completed a wellness act they were able to put a decoration (*continued next page*)

(from previous page) on our tree. We filled three trees.

SMILE cards have been passed out to interested patients and staff. Anyone who did not get one should contact VIKPA or talk to Ruth St James. We are currently trialing two new dialysis machines with one more to come.

Thank you to the Protection Island Lions Club who sent in a donation of \$750, to be used in Nanaimo, so Nanaimo patients please let us know if there is anything you would like purchased for your unit.

Duncan Dialysis Unit (thanks to Val Cousineau, RN and Gerri Tiffin, RN): All is well in Duncan with little change. We had wonderful Christmas decorations this year, which created a lovely and festive atmosphere for all to enjoy. We are now full with twenty-five patients and are anticipating an expansion to include Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings to accommodate people on the waitlist.

Hillside Community Dialysis Unit (also courtesy Val Cousineau, RN): Welcome to all the new patients who have joined our family. Two of our patients recently received transplants. Congratulations to Claire McDowell, on her long awaited Christmas gift, and to Emma Humchitt who received a living donor transplant from her mother. All are doing well.

We will soon be under-going a much-needed facelift. For the duration of the renovations (approximately two months) patients will be dialyzing at the RJH Renal Unit. You can imagine the amount of organizing involved with this, but the end result will be well worth it. VIKPA is purchasing eleven new TV's, which will replace the older televisions in use at Hillside. The new sets will be installed during the renovation process, so that when the unit re-opens all fifteen TV's will be Toshiba's. This will, hopefully, put an end to the on-going problems with the remotes.

Kidney Care Clinic (Pre-Dialysis) (by Sharon Read): Greetings from Kidney Care. We moved into our new location on November 14, 2005. We are now located on the second floor of the RJH Renal Unit. To find us, come through the main *hospital* entrance and take the main elevators to the second floor. Turn right when you get off the elevator and go down the hall through the doors. Turn left, and go past the Renal Unit Boardroom (where VIKPA's meetings are held). Kidney Care is now located just

down, and across the hall on the left-hand side. We currently have over 700 patients registered in the clinic. We encourage family doctors to refer to us as well as the nephrologists. We are hoping to reach more people with "early" kidney disease this way, and also support their doctors to care for them. Dr Nancy Craven, our family practice physician is also continuing to work with family doctors to strengthen their role in the management of chronic kidney disease. If you have any family or friends who have "early" CKD, that is, they are not yet referred to a specialist; waiting to see one; or not followed by the Kidney Care Clinic, please let them know about our early education sessions. "Getting into the Driver's Seat" is an afternoon session which teaches basic information about kidneys and what you can do to delay progression of CKD and stay as well as possible. This session will be held five times this year in Victoria on the following dates: February 9, April 13, June 8, September 14, and November 9. This session will also be offered in Courtenay, Nanaimo and other Up-Island locations. Please contact the Kidney Care Clinic for more information (370-8224 or toll-free 1-888-370-8224).

RJH Renal Unit (thanks to Claire McDougald, RN): We have been extremely busy in the Renal Unit and our numbers just keep going up, up, up. We will soon be getting even busier when we open nine new stations to accommodate Hillside patients while their unit is under-going renovations. Greg Searle has been training new nurses and Sharon Read is still filling in for Anne Gloster.

Sadly, we have recently said good-bye to several patients, all of whom have passed away: Grant Clark, Doris Soulsby, Jean Stewart and Robbie Van Der Meer. In addition, Iris Hollmann, a clerk at the Renal Unit for many years, died January 11, 2006. She was "easily noticed by her glorious long red hair and friendly manner." Our condolences go out to all of the families. Each one of these special people will be missed.

We will also soon be saying farewell to social worker Doreen O'Neill, who is retiring. She will start the next phase of her life with a trip to China in March. Thanks for all your dedication and hard work, Doreen, and happy travels. We welcome Holly Minor into the renal community. She will be taking over Doreen's job.

VIKPA is purchasing nine *(continued next page)*

(from previous page) new televisions for the Renal Unit for the stations opening up for Hillside patients. We also recently purchased a card table and Pat Chadwick donated some puzzles for the waiting room to help patients and family pass the time. They are being well-used.

Royal One (courtesy Cheryl Larcombe, RN): Things are coming along on Royal One, busy as usual. New things ... Our LPN's have started on the unit. It is a transition for everyone but we are happy to have some new faces and look forward to working with these delightful women.

VIKPA is kindly donating a new cot to the unit as we had to discard our old one from Four South. It will be much appreciated by many of our renal families who sometimes end up staying overnight to be with their loved ones. Please pass on our heartfelt appreciation.

Home Dialysis Program: Home/Hemo and Nocturnal (thanks to Frances Nightingale, RN): We are settled in to our new clinic after the move in September. All is going well.

The home hemodialysis program is continuing to grow and we now have nineteen folks dialyzing at home. They use varying dialysis prescriptions and not all are doing nocturnal dialysis. We can customize the dialysis to suit a persons capabilities and lifestyle. We plan to train twelve more folks this year.

We will be sending out another survey soon to explore the extent of interest in independent therapies (PD and home hemodialysis). We hope you will take a few minutes to fill it out. Even if you are not interested please complete the survey as knowing why a person is not interested is also helpful to us.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy new year. *(Editor's note: Since filing this report, Frances has left on medical leave for an indefinite period of time. We wish her well and hope to see her back soon.)*

... And from a patient's perspective (courtesy Pat Chadwick): Nocturnal home dialysis is still going well. I have been doing nocturnal now for a year and hope to keep doing it for a few more years. I am not dialyzing every night. I do five nights one week and four nights the next, which works out to two nights on and one night off. Since I have been on nocturnal, my clearances have gone from 75-78 percent to 85-87 percent. I can have a little more potassium and phosphorous in my diet, but the one thing I noticed

the most is the fluid. I can't seem to drink enough fluid during the day to satisfy the machine. Sometimes I have to stand at the kitchen sink and drink up to four and five glasses of water so that I have at least 2 kilos added to my dry weight. When I did dialysis three times a week, I was told I could only have four cups of fluid a day and I craved ice cold water or any fluid. Now that they tell me I can drink all the fluid I want, I find I don't even think about drinking water or whatever. Your mind plays tricks on you. When you are told you can't have something, you crave it, when they tell you can have it then you don't want it. Strange isn't it?

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all you home dialysis people the very best for the year 2006. Keep well and enjoy your freedom.

Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) (courtesy Paula Ball, RN and Nancy Clogg, RD): Our Walk Across Canada Challenge has gone extremely well. (see related articles and pictures pages 8-9). Thank you to everyone who has been logging in their steps. Check out our map next time you are visiting the Home Dialysis Clinic and see how far we walked.

Also, take a look at the beautiful artwork adorning the walls of the new clinic. It is by Nanaimo artist Vic Wilson, a PD patient.

Transplant Clinic (thanks to Gillian Vincent, RN): We are starting to see five new patients, all who have recently received kidney transplants. Congratulations to former VIKPA vice-president Claire D'Avila who received a living donor transplant on January 9 (watch the next issue of *The Renal Review* for an update). The transplant was very successful and the kidney started working as soon as it was hooked up. Claire was home within a few days. Both Claire and donor, Sharon, are doing well.

The Vancouver Island Relay takes place May 27 from Courtenay to Nanaimo "to raise awareness about the shortage of available organs for transplantation." For more info go to www.vancouverislandrelay.com.

Our usual correspondent, Kendra, is off holidaying in the Caribbean. Wish we were there with you! Farewell and best wishes to social worker Doreen O'Neill on her retirement.

April 23-30 is National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week. Wear a green ribbon in support of organ and tissue donation.

We are now in the middle of cold and flu season. Don't forget to wash your hands.

It's a Family Affair

The Story of Mary Coltart

Anyone involved with the renal community in the Courtenay/Comox and Cumberland area is sure to be familiar with Bill and Mary Coltart. Mary has been a dialysis patient since 1997, but Bill is equally involved with the Cumberland Clinic, VIKPA and the Kidney Foundation of Canada. Kidney disease, after all, not only affects the patient, but the whole family.



Bill and Mary Coltart in November 2005, the day after Mary underwent eye surgery.

Mary, the second of three girls, was born in the Kootenays. She moved to Vancouver at the age of twenty and began working as a secretary. At the time Bill was working in Port Hardy as a radio-operator for Transport Canada and the Coast Guard. Bill's family lived in Vancouver, and Mary's cousin, Sam, was a friend of Bill's. Sam introduced the two of them when Bill was on a trip home. Eventually they knew it was true love and Bill and Mary decided to get married. They started planning a large wedding; however, Bill got cold feet and instead the couple eloped in Port McNeill on September 17, 1971. This was later followed by a wedding and large reception in Castlegar (where Mary's family lives). Bill then transferred to Vancouver, where they lived for a time before heading back to Port Hardy.

Once on the Island, Mary began working as a court reporter. Their first son, Bill, came along in 1974. Due to problems with the labour, Mary had to be airlifted to Vancouver, where little Bill was born. A short time later, the family transferred to Courtenay. They have lived there ever since.

In 1976, Mary was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. Their second son was stillborn as a complication of the disease. Mary's elder sister Helen is also diabetic.

Their next son, Bob, came along in 1977. Because of the diabetes, and due to the problems with the second baby, Mary was once again airlifted to Vancouver for the birth. Both boys are now grown and live in Courtenay. Bill is getting married in May. Bob has three children: Paul, 8; Jessica, 4; and Bradley 2.

It wasn't until 1997, just after Bill had retired, that the Coltarts became intimately involved with kidney disease. After experiencing some nausea and with blood tests showing her creatinine level to be over 1000 (60 – 100 is normal), both typical late signs of kidney disease, Mary was sent to see Dr Weir. He immediately started her on peritoneal dialysis. Approximately forty percent of all patients with kidney disease, including Mary, have acquired it as a complication of diabetes. Initially Mary was on the list for a transplant, but she is no longer. While on the list one of Bill and Mary's sons offered to be tested as a donor (kidney disease affects the whole family), but Mary refused.

After about five years on PD, Mary had problems with her catheter and had to switch to hemodialysis. She initially dialyzed in Victoria and then changed to the Nanaimo Unit. Eventually, a spot opened up in Cumberland, where she currently dialyzes Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons.

In November 2005 Mary underwent eye surgery for a folded retina, also a complication of her diabetes. She has been unable to drive for some time due to her eye problems, but hopes to start driving again once her eye completely heals. She takes the HandyDart to dialysis, but because it only runs until 4pm, Bill needs to pick her up (that family thing again).

Mary enjoys watching TV, especially the food channel and her soaps "One Life To Live" and "General Hospital." When not on dialysis she enjoys cooking and baking, chocolate/chocolate chip cookies being one of her specialties; she has even done some catering as a hobby. She also did embroidery for many years before her eyesight made it impossible.

March is national Kidney Health Month, so watch for both Coltarts who will be out each weekend manning displays at various locations in the Courtenay/Comox area. After all, kidney disease affects the whole family.

Home Dialysis Walk Across Canada Challenge Update

By Nancy Clogg, Renal Dietician

Patients have commented that they have become much more aware of their level of activity.

We have made amazing progress on our walk across Canada. In fact, we arrived in St John's, Newfoundland so quickly, that we decided to walk home. As of today, we are approaching Calgary, a grand total of 17,612,270 steps! I would not be surprised if by the time you have read this article, we will have returned to our starting point at Mile 0 in Victoria.

Participation in the pedometer challenge has been great. We would like to congratulate everyone on his or her efforts! So far, sixty-five home dialysis patients have reported their steps. Fourteen staff members, including most of the nephrologists, have also tracked their steps. We give an honorable mention to Dr Antonsen and Dr Hargrove who, despite their busy schedules, faithfully reported steps every month. Thanks to all of you.

The Challenge started in September, and all of the



Carol Gilmore (left), grand prize winner of a trip for two to Edmonton on Via Rail is shown here with Bonnie Harper, RN, Dr Kevin Horgan and Carol's husband, Dan.



Pat Chadwick, winner of a gift certificate to Cook's Day Off, is pictured with staff from the restaurant.

pedometers were given out at clinics by the end of October. By November 30 we had collectively reached St John's, but we were just getting going, so we (or should I say "I") decided that we should turnaround and head for home.

Everyone's steps counted toward our goal. We had some reporting a few thousand steps a week, and others who were able to do 10,000 steps or more per day. We even had 90,000 steps from Mako, John Meloche's miniature dachshund, who wore his master's pedometer on his collar for a few days. Those little legs sure worked hard!

Patients have commented that they have become much more aware of their level of activity. Many were pleasantly surprised to see how much they actually walk around the house while doing their day-to-day activities. Others have used their pedometers as a motivator to walk more. Some have said they have enjoyed feeling part of a group effort. Some have told me that they are only doing it because "you are making me"! A few pedometers were lost and some patients chose not to participate for various reasons.

Just before Christmas, we had our draw for prizes. Any of the patients who had reported steps were entered into the draw. Carol Gilmore, a home/hemo patient, won the grand prize (*continued next page*)

(from previous page) of a return trip for two on Via Rail to Edmonton. She and her husband, Dan, are thrilled and have booked their ticket for April. What a lovely time to see the Rockies! Carol has promised to write us an article about her trip.

We had other prizes, such as two gift certificates for new running shoes, t-shirts, ball caps and socks from Frontrunner's, SMILE Cards from Thrifty Foods, gift certificates from Cook's Day Off and Good Health Vitamins, a gift bag from Tulipe Noire and candles and napkins from Avenue China and Chintz. A big thanks to Kathy Brown, a PD patient, who helped us get the prizes.

We plan to have a celebration of sorts at the end of the road. After that, we hope that those who have participated will continue on their journey to better health through exercise. For anyone interested, we have an informal group that meets monthly (usually on the weekend) for a walk followed by a coffee. For more information, contact Nancy at 370-8111 local 3103.

(Editor's note: The next walk is scheduled for 2pm, Sunday, February 19, at Gorge Waterway Park, corner of Tillicum and Gorge Road, followed by coffee at Il Greco's.)

Home Dialysis Walk Across Canada Challenge – A Patient's Perspective

By Kathy Brown

It has been six and a half years since I started peritoneal dialysis. I was forty-two years old when the news of kidney failure came my way. In that time my weight has increased by about twenty kilograms, sitting mostly very conspicuously in my abdominal area! So this year with the help and encouragement of our renal dietician, Nancy Clogg, I have joined other dialysis patients in walking to lose weight, improve my cardiovascular system and for mental therapy. Nancy organized the Walk Across Canada Challenge using pedometers generously donated by the Vancouver Island Kidney Patients Association. The idea is to wear the pedometer as we walk, to measure our daily steps. These are then recorded and plotted on a map of Canada. To date we have made it across Canada and are headed back west to Mile Zero in Victoria.

Along with feeling better from the walking, I also feel apart of a common goal and have met other dialysis patients. It has been both physically and mentally gratifying, and it has encouraged me to take part in other organized walks, like the four kilometre CFAX Santas Anonymous Merrython in December. That was a lot of fun and it also was for a good cause. Also, as a longer-term project that has come about from the Walk Across Canada Challenge is the beginnings of a walking group comprised of dialysis patients, family and friends. We walk at different speeds and distances so that everyone who would like to join us can.



Walking club members Joan Eichenlaub (with Santa dog Heidi), Pat Chadwick, Ann Purdy, Kathy Brown and Naomi Eichenlaub (with Mara) take a walk along Dallas Road.

I would like to thank Nancy for her hard work and enthusiasm in helping to promote our well-being.

Have I lost any weight? Not yet, although as my stamina improves and I can walk farther the kilograms should start to come off.

Late Breaking News Flash!

We made it! We arrived back in Victoria at Mile 0 on February 1, 2006. Way to go, walkers. What an amazing effort by everyone involved!

In Memoriam

VIKPA sends heartfelt condolences to the families of the following people who have recently passed away.

Grant Clark (Renal Unit)

Debbie Emslie (Hillside/Cumberland)

Iris Hollmann (Clerk – Renal Unit)

Jack Reginald Marshall (Vancouver/Victoria)

Russell Miles Peterson (Cowichan)

Doris Soulsby (Hillside/Renal Unit)

Jean Stewart (Renal Unit)

Robbie Van Der Meer (Renal Unit)

Thank you to everyone who has sent in donations to VIKPA in memory of their loved ones, and to the families who have designated VIKPA as a chosen charity. Your generosity at such a difficult time is greatly appreciated.

If you wish to make a bequest to VIKPA, or to have In Memoriam donations sent to VIKPA, please direct them to the Vancouver Island Kidney Patients' Association, Box 5145, Station B, Victoria BC V8R 6N4. When sending In Memoriam donations please include the name and contact information of the next-of-kin, so they may be notified of your gift.

The Christmas Stocking

This year, VIKPA continued its tradition of giving out \$50 grocery gift cards or certificates to renal patients in need. One hundred twenty-four certificates were sent to qualifying patients through the renal social workers, in order to maintain the recipients confidentiality. We have received many thank you cards, phone calls and messages from grateful patients. In turn, we would like to send a big thank you to Lita Rolofs, who first spearheaded this program's counterpart, the Easter Basket, in the spring of 2003. Furthermore, each year at Christmas and Easter, Lita collects numbers from the social workers as to how many certificates they need and from which stores, purchases the certificates, and delivers them to the social workers. Thank you also to the social workers for sending out all the letters and certificates. We couldn't do this without your help.

Once again, a huge thank you also goes out to Margaret Dowd (Margaret is a clerk at the Transplant

Clinic), her husband Stan and daughter Jennifer, for the wonderful treats they put together both at Christmas and at Easter to be given out to the patients in the renal units throughout the Island. This is a tremendous time commitment each year by the Dowd family, but the treats are really appreciated by each and everyone who receives them. Thank you!

Up-Coming Events

- ♥ February 16, 1pm Renal Unit Boardroom, VIKPA AGM. Don't forget to renew your membership, too!
- ♥ March is Kidney Health Month throughout Canada.
- ♥ April 23-30 is National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week. Wear a green ribbon in support of organ and tissue donation.
- ♥ May 27 Vancouver Island Relay from Courtenay to Nanaimo.
- ♥ June 30, deadline for applications to be in for the Gordon Duthie Bursary, open to renal patients, or their spouses, children or grandchildren living on Vancouver Island. For more info or to receive an application contact VIKPA or any of the renal social workers.
- ♥ August 6, Thirteenth Annual Dee and Jake Sangha Golf Tournament. Contact Dee (after April 10) at (250) 658-5480 to register or for more info.

The Last Laugh

The politician was sitting at his campaign headquarters when the phone rang. He listened intently, and after a moment his face brightened. When he hung up, he immediately phoned his mother to tell her the good news.

"Ma," he shouted, "the results are in. I won the election!"

"Honestly?"

The politician's smile faded, "Aw, Ma, why bring that up at a time like this?"