



The Victoria - Fred Whitehouse Branch Report

Summer 2009

Editor's note:

With the warmer weather coming, the days of shovelling snow (not much fun) are probably over for most of us. I thought it might be good to pass along some information to help you avoid health problems during the summer while you are doing "fun things" like mowing the lawn, pulling weeds, etc. I have included a few articles with healthy advice based on medical expertise.

From the Cowichan Press by Laila Pera, CSA

THE GRACIOUS ART OF GIVING AND RECEIVING HELP

Seniors cherish their independence. As age sneaks up and slowly erodes some abilities, the natural reaction can be to tighten your defences or learn ways to hide your challenge from those around you.

We don't want to appear infirm or unable to manage our own lives, but these actions can lead to catastrophic results. Falls are a leading factor in injuries to seniors, with results being as mild as a few bruises to severe head trauma. (A broken hip is far too common.) The wisdom of accepting or soliciting help is not only advisable, it will also provide comfort and peace of mind to a senior's loved ones as well.

The expression "Pride goeth before a fall" was coined to describe an arrogant person's imminent failure because of their boastful attitude, but it also seems to accurately describe a person gambling their well-being by refusing to accept an offer of assistance. Graciously accepting a helping hand can bring not only practical rewards that come from taking care of all the household chores and meeting all outside obligations, but also can bring meaningful emotional support and a sense of connection and friendship.

Sensitivity is also important for those offering assistance. If you go in with care and respect while offering suggestions with tact, a senior is much more likely to be comfortable with the assistance. Have the courage to assess your own abilities and your challenges objectively. Open your heart and mind to those who care about you. Offer specific assistance instead of generalities or consider purchasing time from a home support service that the senior can use at their own discretion.

Also, if you are a caregiver, be sure to frequently assess your own health and stress level. Giving home care can be very demanding and caregivers must be assured of adequate respite. Just a few hours of help a week can do immeasurable good. If you are a senior, reach out and ask for help. Think about your own parents and how you worried about them. Didn't you want the best quality of life possible for them? We live in a

wonderful community so be sure to be engaged and involved with all that it has to offer and you and your loved ones will enjoy a full and worry-free life.

Submitted by John Chomyn

RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. This lack of awareness means that a stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

An un-named neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within three hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke – totally. The trick is getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within three hours.

Stroke contains the leading letters STR that should make the following easy to remember..

S-* Ask the patient to SMILE.

T-* Ask the patient to TALK and speak a simple sentence (coherently).

R-* Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

New test for a stroke ----- Stick out your tongue.

A new test for a stroke is to ask the person to 'stick' out the tongue. If the tongue is 'crooked' or if it goes to one side or the other without the patient's intent, that is also a sign of a stroke. (A stroke usually affects only one side of the body.)

From the To Your Health Newsletter Volume 1 Issue 26 (with permission)

THIRTY MINUTES A DAY MAY KEEP STROKES AWAY

As little as half an hour a day of moderate exercise may reduce your risk of suffering a stroke, say researchers at the University of South Carolina's Prevention Research Centre. That's good news because stroke is the nation's third leading cause of death. It is particularly good news for FSNA members who are in their senior years and may be less active than they once were.

The research was presented at the International Stroke Conference in New Orleans. More than 61,000 adults were studied at the Cooper Aerobics Centre in Dallas. After initial treadmill tests to assess fitness, study participants periodically answered health surveys. The study divided subjects into four fitness levels and then looked at how many of them suffered strokes, following them for an average of 18 years. Overall during the study there were 692 strokes in men and 171 in women.

The study found that the most fit men had a 40 percent lower risk of stroke than the least fit men, while the most fit women had a 43 percent reduction in their risk of stroke compared with women in the least fit group. For moderate levels of fitness the risk reduction ranged from 15 percent to 30 percent for men and 23 percent to 57 percent for women. These risk reductions held true even when considering other known risk factors for stroke, such as smoking, excess weight, high blood pressure, diabetes and family history.

You may think you don't have the time to exercise regularly, but all you need is 30 minutes a day, five days a week – definitely worth it, considering the health and wellness benefits. Take your dog for a walk; your pet needs it too and you'll both be better for it!

A MESSAGE from Anne Bowen – SIDNEY BRANCH

In the spring issue of the FSNA Victoria Report Nancy Goodman and Anne Bowen asked readers to identify themselves if they were affected by the "Marriage after 60 and after retirement" restriction in the Superannuation Act. They had about 32 responses, mostly military, one-third Public Service and one RCMP. There are about 3 widows. They accomplished their goal of forming a steering committee that meets regularly to decide on initiatives to have this restriction removed. **Anyone interested in sitting on the steering committee in the future or helping out in some way should contact Anne Bowen at bowena@shaw.ca.**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In July, I attended the first annual congress along with all other Branch presidents, the newly appointed Regional Services Officers, National Directors for each province and the outgoing Regional Directors, the National President and Vice Presidents, making a total of 205 in attendance. The main function of this congress was to install the new Regional Services Officers and the Provincial Directors. Julie Spencer from Kamloops was installed as our Provincial Director and John Finn from Courtenay was installed as our Regional Services Officer.

Several members of our branch attended Orientation training in Duncan on 26 November, and Health Benefits Officer training at Tswassen on 27 November.

Our branch held general meetings in January, March, June and October (at the Trafalgar-Pro Patria Legion). Special events held by our branch in the past year were the Spring Luncheon at McMoran's restaurant in May and the Christmas party held (here) at the Legion. Both of the gatherings were well attended.

This will be my last function as the President of the Victoria Branch. I give my successor, Diane McIntyre my best wishes for the future.

Richard Acton

VICTORIA - FRED WHITEHOUSE BRANCH OFFICERS 2009

PRESIDENT Diane McIntyre: long distance 1-250-743-6084; elhefe@telus.net
1st VP Rick Deans: 250-370-7403; rickrdeans@shaw.ca
2nd VP - Ray Webber: (Condolences; Membership Committee; Lost Contact; WMS entry specialist/trainer; voicemail); 250-385-7800; mcmewsvic@shaw.ca
Treasurer – Genno Pereira: 250-727-0391; superannuate@shaw.ca
Secretary: Inez Walker: (Voicemail) 250-418-8726; Inezwalker@shaw.ca
Past President: Richard Acton: (LTCI; MEDOC; Voicemail); 250-479-1799; richmarj@shaw.ca

DIRECTORS:

Tom Stark: (Welfare Committee; Pensions) 250-721-3917; tbstark@telus.net
Neil Bright: (Membership Committee – WMS entry specialist/trainer); 250-478-0459; thebrightsare@shaw.ca
George Philip: (Director at Large); 250-477-3170
George Baker: (Inside Speakers); 250-474-1541; george.baker@shaw.ca
Val Kolsun: (Archives and Donations); 250-370-9106; jchomyn@shaw.ca
Joan Landsky: (Director at Large); 250-388-5090; gwili@shaw.ca
Bill Rowbotham: (Membership Committee Lead– Members ‘A’ thru ‘G’; Seminar Speaker) 250-370-2567; drumbeg@shaw.ca
Owen Robertson: (Reception & Supplies); 250-474-3869; oanderobertson@shaw.ca
Shirley Roberts: (Health Benefits Officer-Dental Plan; Voicemail); 250-381-3241; gordandshirley@shaw.ca
Nancy Kenyon: (Membership Committee – Members ‘H’ thru ‘O’ and; Lost Contact) 250-381-9037; kenyonn@shaw.ca
Jim Anderson: (Branch Report); 250-391-9545; jdandrsn@shaw.ca
Richard Savard: (Membership Committee – Members ‘P’ thru ‘Z’; WMS entry specialist; Publicity) 250-590-8755; rdsavard@shaw.ca

Voice Mail (leave a message): 250-385-3393

Our mailing address remains:
FSNA Victoria-Fred Whitehouse Branch
C/O Silver Threads, 1728 Douglas Street
Victoria BC V8W 2G7

If you move, please call 250-385-3393 and provide your new address.

COMING UP-----

No general meeting in May – Luncheon instead
Speaker in June – Joy McKerr ”The Next Chapter”
Transition to Assisted Living