



# Solihull Heart Support Group

## Heart Line News

ISSUE 59

Spring 2010

### Contacts

Address: 66 Pear Tree Crescent, Shirley, B90 1LD  
 Tel: 0121 430 3502  
 Web site: [www.solihullheartsupport.org.uk](http://www.solihullheartsupport.org.uk)

General enquiries: [heartline@solihullheartsupport.org.uk](mailto:heartline@solihullheartsupport.org.uk)  
 Membership/Ex.classes: [secretary@solihullheartsupport.org.uk](mailto:secretary@solihullheartsupport.org.uk)  
 News items: [heartlinenews@solihullheartsupport.org.uk](mailto:heartlinenews@solihullheartsupport.org.uk)

### Spring meetings

7.15 to 9.00 pm, at the SIMTR Conference Centre (Spire Parkway Hospital, 1A Damson Parkway, Solihull).

April 28th Nicky Buckley, Heart Failure Nurse, Solihull Hospital  
 May 26th AGM followed by George Hook, the Pearly King  
 June 30th to be confirmed  
 July 28th July Walk - details to be announced

### MEDICAL MISCELLANY

#### Looking at Art in a new way

An Italian medical expert says he has found evidence of a range of afflictions in some of the world's greatest works of art. Vito Franco, Professor of Pathological Anatomy at the University of Palermo, began studying art masterpieces for evidence of disease and illness two years ago. He has analysed about 100 art works, from Egyptian sculpture to contemporary paintings and claims that there are clear signs of diseases, from bone malformations to kidney stones. He presented his findings at a recent European congress on human pathology in Florence

Is Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa enjoying a private joke or sneaking a sly glance at an unseen lover? Or, is the glint in her eye in fact the result of a build-up of fatty acids around her eye socket, a sure sign that she wasn't watching her cholesterol?

Professor Franco says it is a yellowish collection of fatty acids underneath the skin known as xanthelasma, suggesting high levels of cholesterol. Also that there is evidence on her hands of subcutaneous lipomas, benign tumors composed of fatty tissue.

*Times on Line, January 2010*

#### Engineer shows surgeons a better way to fix a heart

A heart repair kit designed by a man suffering a potentially lethal condition and used on himself, has proved so successful it is being used on other cardiac patients.

Ted Golesworthy 54, an engineer by training, suffers from Marfan syndrome, a defect in the aorta which causes it to stretch and leaves it in danger of splitting, which would cause instant death. This affects some 12,000 people in Britain.

Usually the damaged section is cut out and replaced with tubing. However, using computer assisted drawing, he came up with a knitted polyester sleeve. This is made to measure and wrapped around the aorta to give it greater support.

The operation has since been carried out on another 19 people at London's Royal Brompton hospital with three more booked for surgery. The support called EARS – external aortic root support is now being marketed through Ted's firm Extsent.

Sunday Times 3 January 2010

### FEEL GOOD

#### A Counsellor's 5 golden rules for healthy living

1. I should give myself the same care and attention that I give to others;
2. I have needs too, which may be different from my family, friends or colleagues;
3. I do not have to say yes to all requests, or feel guilty if I say no;
4. I cannot solve all the problems that face me; I can only do my best;
5. Time for chilling out is time well spent.

*Flora Vitality magazine March 2009*

#### Vitality magazine

You probably already get the BHF magazine, but did you know that you can also sign up for the Flora pro-active Vitality magazine, designed for people interested in their heart health.

Sign up through the Flora pro-active careline on 0800 389 8193, or e mail [contact@vitalitymag.co.uk](mailto:contact@vitalitymag.co.uk), or write to Vitality magazine, Freepost MID15931, PO Box 6007, Sutton Coldfield, B76 1Br. Provide your name, address and date of birth.

#### De-cluttering or downsizing?

If you are having a clear out or moving house, don't forget that the BHF welcomes your donation of larger goods through its Furniture & Electrical stores. Any electrical goods which they can have safety checked and sell at a profit are welcome (household, DIY, gardening etc). Also soft furnishings like beds, sofas and chairs, so long as they meet fire retardant standards.

Better still, making it a gift aid donation means they can raise another 28%, and once your goods are sold you get a letter telling you how much money was raised.

Just ring 0844 412 5000 and they will arrange a date and time to call and will take the goods they feel they can sell there and then. From my experience they are very reliable and arrive on the dot.

#### Waitrose charity of the month – April

SHSG has been nominated as one of three charities Waitrose, Hall Green will support for the month of April. Each month £1,000 is divided between 3 local charities, the ratio for division is decided by the customers. Every time a grocery purchase is made the customer is given a green token to put into one of three large Perspex boxes at the exit, the number in each box governs the proportion of the final donation. If any of you shop at Waitrose in Hall Green during April **please** ensure that you are given a token at the till and place it in our box. Thank you.

## GROUP MEETING REPORTS

### January 2010:

#### Pharmacists and Cardio-Vascular Disease

Lydia Taylor and Shireta Vij, from Lloyds Pharmacy, spent the first part of their talk discussing what items of health care we need to manage ourselves with the assistance of our local pharmacist. Most importantly we need to know our blood pressure (ideally 140 over 85) and our cholesterol count (normally below 5 unless we have had heart problems when it should be nearer to 4). The lucky people can control these by diet and exercise whilst others will need drug therapy and frequent reviews – often by a pharmacist.

Stopping smoking is widely recognised as one of the most important things we can do to protect our health, 2 in 3 smokers say that they want to give up – again pharmacies offer services to help in this.

We were taken expertly through the most common drugs used, their side effects, what not to eat and drink alongside them and the best time of day to take them, all the simple things that make life easier for patients. Lydia explained about the quota systems for some drugs used by manufacturing pharmacists, how the pharmacists are only allowed to order a certain amount each month so that we may have to wait for supplies of a drug to come in. Lydia suggested 2 web sites which were very useful sources of information

[www.NHS.uk/CHD](http://www.NHS.uk/CHD) and [www.lloydspharmacy.com](http://www.lloydspharmacy.com)

Lydia and Shireta spent a great deal of time answering individual questions for which we are very grateful

### February 2010:

#### Tricia Lines – Current dietary ideas

This was a change to the published talk as we had to reschedule the meeting to a week earlier than planned. Tricia took a range of newly published diet cook books, discussed their value to cardiac patients. She had cooked a dish from each for everyone to taste.

The books included The Omega 3 cookbook, the GI diet ( both available from our library), The Italian Diet by Gino de Campo, The Secret Ingredient by Sally Bee and two Weight Watchers cookbooks. The last four of these books are available at very much reduced prices through The Book People.

Sally Bee is from Stratford on Avon. She is a 36 year old mother who almost died following a collapsed cardiac artery. As a result of this she decided to totally revamp her diet and wrote this cook book for her friends and family. The book gained publicity when Michelle Obama ordered 12 copies to give to White House staff at Christmas, it is certainly easy to read and contains family friendly recipes.

Following a general discussion everyone tasted the dishes – recipes are available at the next meetings for those who couldn't come in February.

*Thank you to Trish Lines for the write ups.*

#### A thought for each day

Look well to this day

For it is life

In its brief course lie all the realities of existence

For yesterday is but a memory and tomorrow only a vision.

*A Sanskrit poem*

## Subscriptions

Subscriptions for year ending 31/3/2011 are now due. It helps us enormously if you pay promptly . Please contact David Laband Tel: 01789 764736 or send in your money with the reminder notice to David asap.

## MISCELLANY

### Try something different

Now that spring is here it's time to get out and about. What about going to:

#### Tuesday 6 April: Ranger Road Show

Meet the Solihull Park Ranger team in Mell Square between 10 am and 3pm. Find out what they do and what to see in Solihull's parks.

#### Wednesday 14 April: Spring River Walk

Meet at the Ranger Information Point in Meriden Park at 1pm for a two hour stroll to Babbs Mill Local Nature Reserve. The park ranger will point out interesting features along the way and tea and biscuits will be provided at the end. Sensible footwear needed.

#### Saturday 1 May: Bluebell trail, Millisons Wood

Follow the trail round the carpet of bluebells at Millison's Wood, Albert Road, between 10.30 am and 3pm.

#### Sunday 9 May: Bluebell trail, Coldlands Wood

Follow a 30 minute trail around the bluebell wood, between 10.30am and 3pm.

#### Saturday 29 May: Nature Walk

Join a nature walk around Lavender Hill Park to discover the habitats it hosts and the creatures who live there. Starts at 1.30pm and finishes at 3pm.

#### Music in the Park:

##### Sunday 2 May

##### Sunday 30 May

##### Sunday 6 June

##### Sunday 18 July

Have a musical stroll in Tudor Grange Park as it hosts a local brass band, between 1pm and 3pm

#### Sunday 25 July: Explore Cole Valley

Meet at Babbs Mill Boat House car park at 1.30pm for a 2 hour circular walk led by the park rangers, from Babbs Wood local nature reserve, Yorkswood, through Meriden Park and along the banks of the river Cole.

More information on these and other events from

[connect@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:connect@solihull.gov.uk) or 0121 704 6000.

## Dickens Heath Nature Reserve

Have you discovered this yet? Originally part of Braggs Farm, then used for landfill, this has been developed into a 2.52 hectare of wildflower meadow, wetlands, woodland and open water. Park in the centre of Dickens Heath and cross over the canal for a spring visit.

## Spring into Action – Exercise classes

The assessment class for beginners or those returning after a cardiac event is held at Tudor Grange Leisure Complex at a cost of £2.50 per session payable on the day. You need an approval letter from Solihull Hospitals Rehab Department or your GP . To find out more contact Mike Parsons on 0121 704 3539. After assessment you are assigned to the class level which best suits you. These classes are held at Bannantynes Health Club or Club Motivation and are paid quarterly in advance. Try our friendly classes with our own specially trained instructors and spring into exercising !!