

# Pacific HeartBeat

## In Retrospect...

by a POHA member

You, the primary readers of this newsletter, are pre- and post-surgery cardiac patients. Information about the first few months of recovery and rehabilitation is plentiful. Longer term experiences are less well documented.

In my late seventies, and ten years after bypass surgery, I have some thoughts on coping with the aftermath.

**The “ologists.”** The average age of surgical heart patients is 66. Co-morbidities (other medical conditions) are common in this age group. While you will be monitored by a cardiologist, other “ologists” may be encountered. Frequent lab visits for blood tests may become necessary. Book early morning visits to avoid lineups that can grow during the day.

**A condition like hypertension** may require a mix of remedies to maintain control. Keeping a journal about prescription changes can help when dealing with new doctors. I have a list of medications and dosages in my wallet and on my phone. If you have a spouse/partner, ensure that they have the list—in case of incapacity.

**Sphygmomanometry.** Some doctors are eschewing the process of manually measuring patients’ blood pressure. They are using automatic, cuff-style monitors that are available for home use. This is ironic, since I can remember such devices being dismissed in the past.

**Beware upselling.** I made an appointment at a large pharmacy for a pneumonia vaccination—there is no cost for seniors. I was offered an expensive, two-part, vaccination—which I declined. *Caveat emptor!*

**A medical alert bracelet,** engraved with a list of medical conditions and emergency contact information, helps first responders.



*Pill organizer. A weekly ritual—filling the compartments. The large capsules are a tight fit.*

**Renewal.** I carry a Nitroglycerin Spray with me. It is for managing chest pain prior to seeking treatment. Like most things (including me!) the spray has a shelf life. Make an entry for renewal, two years after purchase, using an online calendar.

**Lessons from the pandemic.** Prior to COVID, I purchased my medications from a warehouse store. When the pandemic hit, I was unable to contact its pharmacy for renewals. Phone calls were auto-disconnected. (A few months later they were anxious for my return. I had moved on!)

I switched to a large pharmacy chain, only to be rationed with monthly supplies and a pharmacy fee each time. Questions about such practice were met with disdain. Contacting my MLA, I ascertained that there were no shortages.

After these experiences, I moved to a local pharmacy for better service. Lower cost generics have been suggested. So try local—no line-ups—no attitude!

**Travel insurance.** As a family, we had used a local agency for our insurance needs. Post-surgery, and requiring travel medical insurance, I was *persona non grata*. BCAA provided coverage. However, insurance for trips abroad is becoming prohibitively expensive. So, Canada beckons, although

I have yet to investigate out-of-province health insurance.

**Record keeping.** Recently, I had a chest X-ray. A doctor asked about scarring on my lungs. I remembered an illness in my twenties—half a century ago! Overlooking such an event, when filling out insurance forms, could prove to be costly!

**Weekly pill organizers** are available in different capacities. I keep a list of morning, noon and night dosages. Make sure you have a pill cutter for half doses. If taken off a medication, keep the pills until they expire. I have been put back on previous regimes and have used the remnants.

**Supplements.** It might be worth talking to your doctor about them. I was surprised how few are actually needed, since a healthy diet should suffice.

**Vaccination.** As a child, I was immunized—in the age of steam—and have no records. Since I volunteer with a youth organization, I have had an MMR booster as a precaution.

**Tally-ho.** Finally, during the year, you are likely to collect receipts—dental, optical, laboratory, prescription and insurance. Categorize and tally them as you go. Come tax filing, claiming medical expenses will be much simpler. ♥

## Volunteer Visitors

are needed. Visits take one to two hours; a flexible schedule is available. Training and support is provided by a team leader and hospital staff. If you are interested, contact a POHA team leader for more information:

**Nancy Farrell** • 604-442-7565 for St. Paul’s Hospital. **Alfred Buchi** • 604-581-5508 for Vancouver General Hospital.

**Mike Martin** • 604-535-3195 for Royal Columbian Hospital. **Ron Paley** • 604-463-8815 for Feeder Hospitals. ♥

## Report

It has been more than 39 years since the creation of the Pacific Open Heart Association. The prime goal was, and still is, to support patients that are undergoing open heart surgery. Thanks to the foresight of the founders, many of us found that recovering, with the help of POHA volunteer visitors, made for a smoother transition. I personally benefitted greatly and felt strongly that I could be of help to future patients. More than 20 years have passed and the experience of sharing my journey with others is still rewarding.

You might be waiting for an operation, or are in recovery, and have had a visitor that helped you on your way. We all have different experiences, but the common goal is to get back to our family and friends and enjoy a long life.

Perhaps you might feel like joining our diverse group of visitors, or join our board to guide the association into the future.

Visit our website to learn more about us, or contact us. [www.pacificopenheart.org](http://www.pacificopenheart.org)

Enjoying golf? We have a tournament for you. Add your name to our list and we will contact you for next year's tournament.

Thank you for your support, and have a great summer.

Alfred Buchi

## AGM and Volunteer Appreciation

Saturday, October 18th, 2025

Unitarian Church

49th and Oak Street, Vancouver

Doors open at 1 pm

Meeting 1:30 pm – 4 pm

### What is Open Heart Surgery?

Our guest speaker is Dr Dave Harris, a retired family physician, who was team doctor for the Vancouver Canucks in the 1980s. Dr Harris has undergone open heart surgery and is currently a volunteer visitor with POHA at the Royal Columbian Hospital. He will present a current update of the technical details of open heart surgery.



**PACIFIC  
OPEN HEART**  
ASSOCIATION

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[www.pacificopenheart.org](http://www.pacificopenheart.org)

## 39th Annual "POHA Moe Pitcher Golf Tournament"



From left to right: Roger Kocheff, (golf tournament chair), Jerry Moloci, Jason Moloci, Kelly Moloci, Chris Moloci and Joanne Pitcher.

### June 4, 2024

This year we had 84 golfers and 93 for the banquet (the most ever) for the tournament held at Delta Golf and Country Club.

Our tournament is a time for renewing old friendships, remembering those who were not with us, and for making new acquaintances.

Our golf committee endeavours to provide an affordable and enjoyable experience for every golfer. We had great weather, and we hope that everyone had a good afternoon.

A successful tournament is only possible with the support of our generous sponsors. They allow us to donate excess funds to local hospitals for the benefit of cardiac patients. Please take note of the following sponsors and try to use their businesses.

This year's Hole sponsors were Khalsa Credit Union; Jodi Friday on Esty; DMCL Chartered Accountants; Home Restaurants; Emerald Pools; Finish this Contracting; Northside Petroleum; John Timms and Associates; Austin Metal Fabricators; RCH Hospital Foundation; Ridge Meadows Hospital Foundation; Pro-Mix Concrete; Patrick Yearwood Lawyers; Perler Financial; Patrick O'Brien of RBC Wealth Management; Sheet Metal and Air Conditioner Contractor National Association in BC.

We appreciate all the silent auction prizes, many arranged by Len Mueller. Thanks to the following contributors: Debbie Mueller, Tony Zanatta, Lisa Sjodin, Monique

Mueller, Don Mueller, Jo-Anne Gordon, Karen Shafer, Doane Grant Thornton, Westwood Plateau, West Coast Golf Group, Royal City Physio and Golden Eagle Golf Course.

A special shout out to Amelia Moloci and her volunteer team (Ellen Cozzuol, Cory Barclay, Leslie Dalzell, Dorothy Lampshire) and Mike Martin and Dennis Kraft for organizing the putting contest.

### Tournament Results

This year's tournament winners were the foursome of Chris Moloci, Jason Moloci, Kelly Moloci and Jerry Moloci. They were eight under par. Thanks to Joanne Pitcher for her team's attendance and help. Her team placed fourth again this year. Well done, Joanne.

Wilf Jacobson, John Cutri, Bruce Bried and Jerry Moloci won \$30 each in the putting contest.

Jay Chambers won closest to the line drive. Bruce McLaren and Mike Mueller won closest to the pin. Emelene Thompson and Darcy Jacobson had Ladies closest to the pin shots. Chris Moloci and Len Mueller won closest to the pin second shot.

Patrick Mellesmoen won the Early Bird draw for a free entry to the 2026 tournament.

If you are interested in adding your name to our golfer email list, please contact me at: [rkocheff@telus.net](mailto:rkocheff@telus.net) or 604-467-2904. See you next year.

### POHA Golf Committee

Roger Kocheff (Chair), Jay Chambers, Rick Cozzuol, Amelia Moloci, Len Mueller.

### YES! I WISH TO JOIN THE PACIFIC OPEN HEART ASSOCIATION

I ENCLOSE ☐ \$10 ONE-YEAR MEMBERSHIP ☐ \$20 TWO-YEAR MEMBERSHIP

DONATION (OPTIONAL) \$

TOTAL \$

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/PROVINCE

POSTAL CODE

PHONE

EMAIL

I AM ALSO INTERESTED IN: ☐ BEING A VISITOR ☐ THE POHA GOLF TOURNAMENT

### Please mail cheque to:

Pacific Open Heart Association, PO Box 45001, Ocean Park PO, Surrey, B.C., V4A 9L1.

### Pay membership by Interac e-transfer:

Send money securely and directly from your bank account with Interac e-transfer.

(1) Log into your online or mobile banking app.

(2) Select 'Interac e-transfer' and select your account.

(3) Enter POHA email 'etransfer@pacificopenheart.org' as payee.

(4) Enter the amount. In the message area, please specify 'membership'.