



Magazine

Winter 2009

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Affiliated to the British Heart Foundation and
Arrhythmia Alliance - The Heart Rhythm Charity

POOLE HEART SUPPORT GROUP

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**If you know a member who is ill, please tell us by contacting Mavis Terry,
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Magazines are published 1st March, 1st June, 1st September and 1st December.

Last date for articles to Editor is 10th day of month before publication.

Dates for your Diary — Meetings and Social Events – Please see page 18

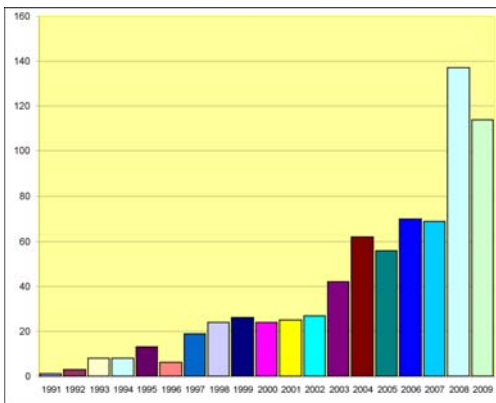
Chairman's Letter

At a tuneful gathering in October, Pelham's People handed over a cheque for £1000 to the Group to help us with our exercise programme. Pelham's People are a mixed singing group based at Kinson who give concerts to raise money for local charities and enjoy themselves in doing so, and our Social Secretary Gary Lee is an active member.



I was able to thank Sheila Hurrell and the singers personally. Sheila is the organiser of Pelham's People and is seen holding the other side of the big cheque. They handed over the real one to our Treasurer Rita though! I'm sorry to announce that Gerry Wright is standing down from the committee as member for Purbeck. Work on his farm and lack of contact with Purbeck members has brought him to this decision. We thank him for all his work, particularly organising the 'Escoffier' lunches" and the skittles and hope he will continue to help in some ways. Roger Ridout has volunteered to join the committee in his place.

Keith



PHSG Membership

Derek Pope our "Keeper of Records" has been analysing the membership of PHSG and we thought you might be interested in this little graph. It shows all our current members and is filed into the year that you all joined. PHSG was formed in 1991 and we have one member still from that year. Of course, that is our founder Jim Waine who continues

to exercise each week. The two most recent years are probably a little high because at this time Derek has not removed those members who have not renewed for 2010 yet.

Keith

Cardiology News from Poole

Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Dear Friends,

I hope that all is well with you and that you are avidly preparing for the festive season. Time just seems to fly and the seasons go by with every increasing rapidity.

Here at Poole we are now prepared for the winter and we expect it to be particularly busy this year with the swine flu issues. We have extra beds open to meet the demand and have designated

one of our medical wards to deal with swine flu should there be a large number of admissions. At present the staff are receiving their vaccinations, beginning with the front line clinical staff.

In cardiology we continue to meet the government's targets and have only 1 day wait during the week for in-patient echocardiography and less than 2 weeks for out patients with the physiologists. Our rapid access chest pain service is within the 2 weeks target and our thrombolysis targets of door to needle and call to needle time are 100%.

It is particularly difficult in the NHS at the present, with the financial constraints brought about by the recession and Poole is no different. We are always looking at ways which will not only improve the service but be cost effective too. Our colleagues at other hospitals in the County are also having financial difficulties. We focus on our none invasive work and that is increasing all the time: Stress echocardiography and CT angiography in particular. We are well placed to meet these issues as we have an excellent team of doctors, nurses and cardiographers as well as the highly qualified cardiac physiologists who undertake most of the diagnostic work. I am going to feature the work of one of these groups in coming articles so that you will have a greater insight into what they do, and I am sure you will find it very interesting.

We are hoping for the presentation of our plaques for Practice Development Status to take place in December with the university and that will be a great morale boost for the staff.

With regard to the quality service group we are going to undertake an exciting new project in the new year in which the group and a ward will work together to look at best practice and standards. We are awaiting ethical improvement at present and we are hoping to attract research funds to undertake this project. I feel it will really marry *(continued on page 5)*



Heart News with Dr. Christopher Boos

Dear All

Winter is definitely setting in and with shorter, darker and wetter days the risks of falling over are increased at this time of year. However it is important to distinguish a simple mechanical fall (e.g. tripping over) from an actual blackout. A blackout refers to a temporary loss of consciousness which may be very short lived and can cause a person to fall over. The STARS (Syncope Trust And Reflex anoxic Seizures – what a name!) Expert Medical Advisory committee have now drafted their Blackouts checklist, which highlights some very important points.

Firstly, in their report they emphasize the fact that the most common cause of blackout is syncope, which refers to a sudden lack of blood supply to the brain. This is typically caused by a problem with the heart (e.g. a rhythm or valvular disorder) or to reduced blood pressure. Other less common causes of blackouts include epilepsy (electrical ‘short-circuiting in the brain’) and psychogenic causes, such as stress or anxiety.

It is known that syncope is responsible for a significant number of falls in older adults, particularly where the falls are sudden and not obviously the result of a trip or slip. In older adults often the only recollection of an apparent blackout is the fact that they were injured or bruised. This leads the affected person to incorrectly conclude that they must have merely tripped over without appreciating the possibility that they have actually had a syncopal event. Hence, greater awareness of syncope as a cause of falls is key to effective treatment (e.g. a cardiac pacemaker in some cases) and prevention of recurring falls. So, if this has happened to any of you, please make a point to mention it to your doctor so that he can arrange for you to have an ECG, at the very least, and any further investigations as clinically indicated.

Happy Christmas!



together service users and providers to deliver care at the bedside in a way that has never been done before. So watch this space!

I was hoping to speak to you in November at your meeting but as you will know have had to cancel as I have an urgent appointment at Buckingham Palace! I will tell you all about it next time. All that remains is for me to thank you for your continued support to the hospital and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Geoffrey Walker OBE

Matron Cardiology and Medicine. Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Exercise News

It is again that time of the year when I feel I must put pen to paper to give my grateful thanks to those who help make the Exercise Venues the success they are.

There are the six regular trainers - Lesley, Clare, Paula, Angie, Emma and Jennie. They are now ably assisted by our first reserve Jayne Frank. She has stood in for us at many of the venues and we welcome her to the Group. Thanks to all the girls for their dedicated service throughout the year.

Thanks also to my regular helpers, perhaps too many to name. They assist with the taking of the registers, the collection of the fees, the payment of the trainers and the centres. They also help with the laborious task of putting out the 'kit' we use at our sessions.

This year I wish to make special mention of Lesley Bradshaw who completed 10 years service with PHSG in July 2009. Lesley continues to be a great servant to the Group and it was she who commenced the Ashdown venue before moving to Canford. She was also instrumental in starting Lytchett and Hearts-on-Seats venues. Robin

Heard at Exercise

I joined a health club last year and spent about 250 quid. Haven't lost a pound. Apparently you have to go there !

Every time I hear the word 'exercise' I wash my mouth out with chocolate.

I do have flabby thighs, but fortunately my stomach covers them.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads. That's my story and I'm sticking to it !

*Does your garden look a little tired?
Can't manage your garden like you used to?*



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Susan Arnold — 01202 399529

Have you seen this man ?

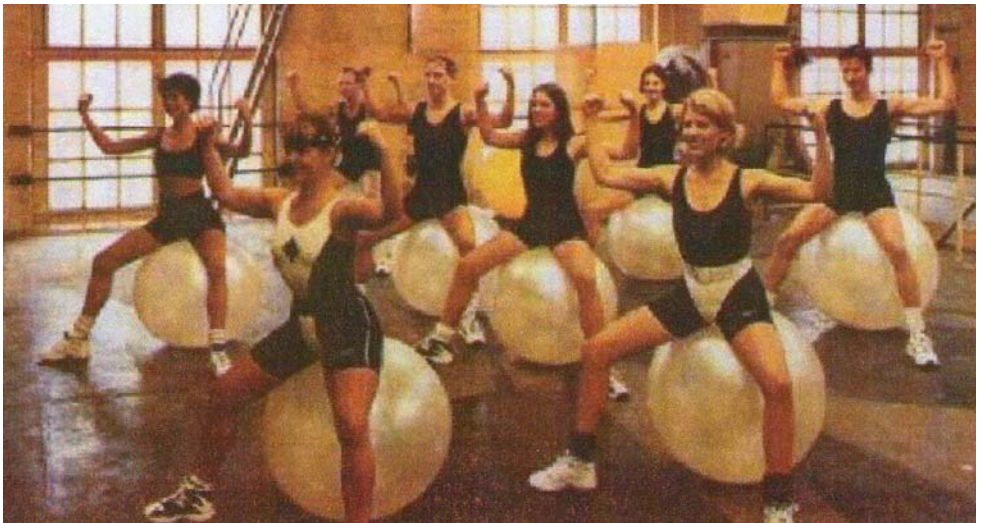
It's our very own Social Secretary, Gary Lee, complete with sandwich board !
Look out for him at an exercise class near you.
Has he got news for you ?
He most certainly has and can tell you about the interesting social events he has arranged for us.



Fun Santa Jog for all the family - Saturday 12th December 2009.

Run or walk 2 miles in festive dress starting and finishing from the car park on the water's edge in Baiter Park. Registration opens at 10.00am, the Santa Jog will set off at 10.30am. Registration is £5 for adults, which includes a Santa Suit, and £3 for children. There will be prizes for the best fancy dressed children. To register please ring 01892 893918 or email south@bhf.org.uk. Registrations will be taken on the day. All money raised will go towards the British Heart Foundation Hearts of Poole Appeal.

HM Government Health Warning It's dangerous to swallow bubblegum!



Recent Social Events

20th August - 'The Processing of Sewage' Talk – Mr Malcolm Farrell – Wessex Water.

The August talk given by Mr. Malcolm Farrell of Wessex Water, “The Processing of Sewage”, proved to be very interesting (I believe), to the rather small audience. Mr Farrell described all the steps in the process of taking all sources of sewage and waste fluids through the various systems employed. Against a background of slides, sometimes with sound effects but fortunately not “smelly-vision”, he described the stages of grit extraction, solid matter removal, and the bacterial purification of the water. And he discussed some of the problems that the processing plants do encounter, such as chemical elsan fluids and heavy rainfall among other things. Eventually pure water is discharged into a local water way, soft waste deployed as farmland fertiliser, and solid rubbish sent to land fill. Even methane is collected and used as an energy source or sold to the gas industry. Altogether a very interesting talk, sadly missed by so many. Thank you to those who did attend.

17th September —'Power to the People' Talk – Francis Aviss and Sophie Jordan

Alan Bristow was the prime mover for this event as he had personally invited Frances Aviss to address PHSG members. In the run up to the evening Alan had a few nervous moments after the poor attendance last month, but he kept taking the tablets and all turned out well on the night! An attentive audience of 30 listened as Frances explained her role in the Dorset Cardiac Network. Members were encouraged to volunteer to sit on various Patient and Public Involvement groups run by the DCN. Jim and Alan already sit on a Dorset Cardiac Network Patient Group and rave about the Dorset Applecake that Frances provides during their meetings ! Frances handed over to Sophie Jordan, who proceeded to talk about the provision of Angioplasty 24/7. She indicated the relationship of the NHS centres (Bournemouth, Poole & Dorchester) which currently have cardiac facilities. Also she talked of the inter-relationship with Southampton & London. Essentially Dorset hospitals have varying levels of facility and expertise in Angioplasty but Dorset has to rely on Southampton & London for bypass operations. Sophie produced pictorial information, which highlighted the overlap of coverage for achieving 45 minute up to a maximum of 120 minute response times (patient collapse to arrival at hospital), both in normal hours and 24/7. Concern was raised that the minimum time should be shorter, but it was explained that in a 24/7 situation the medical team has to be assembled and this determines the

minimum time, rather than the speed at which the ambulance could make a particular journey. Providing coverage in the extreme parts of West Dorset also relies on Exeter hospital.

Having explained these relationships Sophie went on to discuss the options that had been considered in trying to project a way forward to 24/7 coverage in Dorset. An absolutely ideal solution cannot be entertained at this time due chiefly to the constraints of finance in the current state of the economy. The choice of option became pretty obvious which is to keep all the resources and facilities which are currently available in Dorset, rationalising where possible, and improving the inter-working and efficiency of the services which aim to provide 24/7 coverage for Dorset. Other questions and concerns were raised and discussed during the presentation. The presentation was concluded and Alan thanked the presentation team. Judging by the hub-hub of talk that followed before refreshments were served the presentation had been well received by the audience.

Thank you Alan for organising this event, which was of great interest, was well presented, and gave us food for thought.

8th October – ‘Fund Raising for Oxfam’– Sheila Wilson

The somewhat small audience (13) was probably restricted due to the early date in the month. Nevertheless we were treated to an interesting and entertaining talk. Sheila introduced herself with the fact that her main working occupation had been as a court usher, but that was followed by her passion for socks! Some years ago Sheila had been asked to help with a local charity which organises help and shelter for the waifs and strays in the Bournemouth area. When she questioned why these poor people had wet feet and was told nobody had even thought about providing dry socks, Sheila decided to do something about it. So started the collections of socks from various benefactors and the practice of requesting socks has continued wherever she goes and has migrated from Bournemouth to Poole and other places.

Sheila also gave an insight of how the Oxfam regime operates in a very strict way, which means that all staff and volunteers understand what is required of them. Most people are aware of the shops and the Bookshops but not so aware of the business side of Oxfam with its recycling ethos. Did you know that Oxfam have a factory that recycles all the unusable clothing from its shop collections into carpet? Not a lot of us knew that! Also good quality books are sent to auction and sometimes raise thousands of pounds. These can be rare-old or first editions or other specialist items.

Gary Lee Social Events Secretary

HOLIDAY TRAVEL INSURANCE

This article is taken from the BHF web-site. BHF do not recommend the insurance companies in the list, which has been compiled from feedback received from heart patients. For the complete list of travel insurance companies, see the BHF web-site.

Able2Travel 08707506711	Single Trip (max 45 days) Age limit 79 years. Annual Multi Trip (max 31 days any one trip) Age limit 69 years.
AllClear Travel Insurance 08712 088 579	Single Trip No Age limit. Severe conditions covered. Annual policies Age limit 70 years.
Bradford & Bingley 0800 169 4078	Age limit 80 years. Medical screening.
Brunsdon Insurance 01452 623623	Age limit 80 years. No patients on waiting list.
Bupa Travel Cover 0800 0010 22	Age limit 79 years. Medical screening. Will only accept within 3 months of travel date.
Direct Travel 0190 381 2345	Single policies up to 75 years. Annual policies up to 65 years.
Flexicover Direct 0870 990 9292	Age limit 80 years. Medical screening.
Freedom Insurance Services 0870 774 3760	For people with pre-existing conditions. Age limit 85 years. Mostly Medical screening. Will only accept within 6 months of travel date.
Getmy.com Travel 0845 0262441	Single policies Age limit 85 years. Annual policies Age limit 79 years.
Global Travel Insurance 01903 203933	Covers pre-existing conditions. Single Trip Age limit 90 years. Multi Trip Age limit 75 years.
Holiday Services 01623 407321	No upper age limit for Single Trip, will be based on individual circumstances and health. Annual policies Age limit 69 years. Pre-existing conditions considered.
Insuremore Travel Insurance 0870 054 0162	Age limit 65 years. Excess varies. Patients must be stable for 12 months and not on waiting list. Medical screening.

It's So Easy Travel Insurance 0845 222 4205	Single Trip Age limit 85 years. Annual Europe Age limit 75 years. Annual world wide Age limit 65 years. Insurance designed for people with medical conditions or who are older.
Makesure Insurance Services 0870 156 6679	Policies considered up to Age 99. Provides cover for most pre-existing medical conditions. Medical screening.
Manor Insurance 0800 027 6171	Single Trip up to 18 months Age limit 74. Single Trip up to 90 days if 75 or over. Annual policies Age limit 79. Medical screening not always required. Discount if baggage is covered under existing home insurance.

Companies not on BHF list, but worth considering.

Saga 0800 015 8055	No upper age limit.
Stroke Association 01603 828 396	No upper age limit for single trips.

The Great North Run

Many, many thanks to everybody who very kindly sponsored me to run. I have raised over £550 and would not have done so without the generosity of many members.

Both Lesley and I managed to complete the 13.1 miles – although neither of us will admit to particularly enjoying it! It was a glorious day and among 54,000 people at the start, the atmosphere was buzzing. However, as the miles ticked by the temperature soared - extreme temperatures for Newcastle I'm told (we were under instruction to bring our thermals!).

We staggered across the finish line and

thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality put on by The British Heart Foundation afterwards. One more run ticked off and under our belts.

Now for the next challenge..... Jenni Sweetlove (Exercise Instructor)





Computer Club

Computers . . . Childs Play !

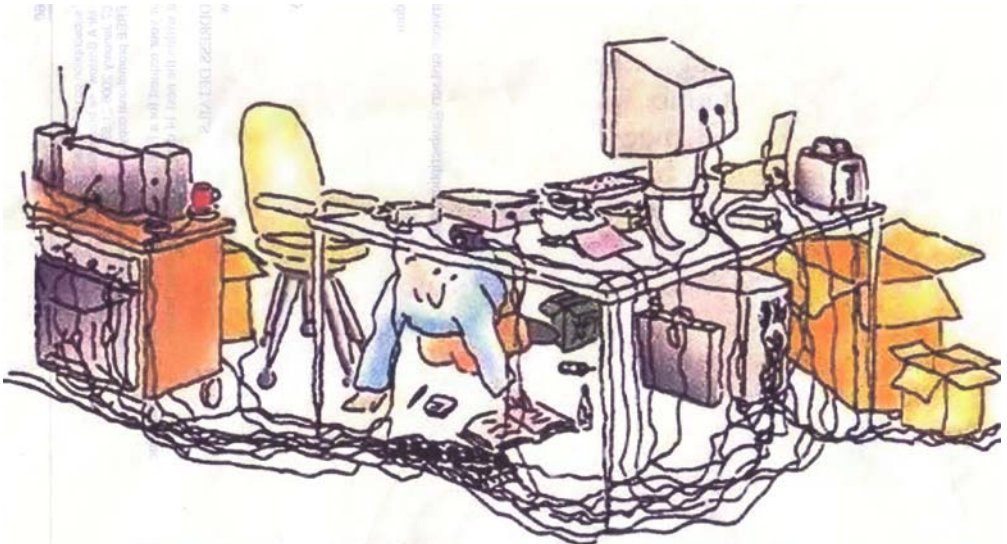
The remaining Computer Club meetings for this year are on November 10th and December 8th.

The meeting room has already been booked for next year, so it may be worth taking note of the dates now - 12th January, 9th February, 9th March, 13th April, 4th May, 8th June, 13th July, 10th August, 7th September, 12th October, 9th November, 14th December.

I have decided that I will not run the Computer Club after the December 2009 meeting, so if someone else would like to take up the position, I'm sure the regular attendees would be very pleased.

If anyone wants to discuss the running of the club, I will be happy to talk it through with them, my contact details are at the front of the magazine.

Derek



"Now, if you can find the power switch, flip it on."

Tips on Filling your Vehicles

Fill up early. Only fill up with fuel in the early morning when the ground temperature is still cold. Remember that all service stations have their storage tanks buried below ground. The colder the ground, the denser the fuel. When it gets warmer, petrol expands, so buying in the afternoon or evening, your litre is not exactly a litre. In the petroleum business, the specific gravity and temperature of the fuel play an important role. A one degree rise in temperature is a big deal for this business. Service stations do not have temperature compensation at the pumps.

Fill up when your tank is half full. The more fuel you have in your tank, the less air occupies the empty space. Petrol evaporates quickly. Petrol storage tanks have an internal floating roof. This roof serves as zero clearance between the petrol and the atmosphere, so it minimises evaporation.

If there is a fuel lorry filling the storage tanks when you stop for petrol, do not buy any. Most likely, the fuel is being stirred up as it is being delivered and you might pick up some of the dirt that normally settles on the bottom.

Which side is the fuel cap on ?

Have you ever been driving someone else's car, or a hire car, or just had a senior moment in yours when you needed to refuel ? Do you pull up with the pump on the driver's side or the passenger's side ? Maybe you just risk it (50 – 50 chance !) and get out to take a look, only to find that you've got it wrong. The hose nozzle won't reach, so you have to manoeuvre your vehicle round to the other side of the pump.

Well, there is an easier way. Take a close look at your petrol gauge – there you'll see a small icon of a petrol pump. Notice at which side the nozzle is fitted to the pump. If it's on the left, your petrol cap is on the left side of the vehicle. If it's on the right, your petrol cap is on the right side. Now you can get it right every time

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Do you have a Heart Condition?

Does someone you care for have a Heart Condition?

Would you like to help us develop local NHS services?

We know that different people want to be involved in different ways and at different times.

We have a variety of ways in which you can become involved - the choice is up to you!

Level One – Home Based Involvement



Level Two – Discussion Groups



Level Three – Involvement Forum



Level Four – Local Representation



Level Five – Network/Regional/National Representation



If you would like **further information** about any of these options – including details of time commitment, expenses, training etc. please contact our Patient and Public Involvement Lead, **Frances Aviss** on **07876 104 752** or **frances.aviss@bp-pct.nhs.uk**. *There is no obligation.*



Dorset Cardiac Network

PHSG Calendars 2010

Those who pre-ordered their calendars for 2010 will have received them with this magazine. They are full of useful information, including PHSG meetings and winter and summer walk dates. Also included are Bank Holidays and British Summertime. On the back is a form to help healthcare professionals help you in an emergency at your home. Calendars may be obtained at monthly meetings, the Christmas Party, or from Head Office, price £3.00.

Do you want to advertise in PHSG Magazine in 2010 ?

We print over 600 copies of the magazine, four times a year and these are distributed to members and people working in the Health Service. If you would like to advertise in 2010, or know someone who might like to, the rates for the year are - Quarter Page £30 - Half Page £60 and Whole Page £100. Please contact the Editor, a.bristow60@ntlworld.com

The Practice Development Unit (PDU) Quality Service Group

PHSG has a voice on the group representing Heart Support Group members. This exciting group, under the very capable chairmanship of Geoffrey Walker OBE, Matron Cardiology and Medicine, really gets things done! Positive changes are made to hospital procedures, as a result of patient feedback given to PHSG patient representatives. All PHSG members can feed back information to Poole Hospital in complete confidence about their treatment. So if you want to say anything good or bad about your experience in Poole Cardiac Unit, or its related departments, please forward your comments. You can comment by e-mail, letter, telephone, or via the web-site. All information will be treated in confidence. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Do you have computer problems?

We can resolve your problems for you. Are you unsure what you are doing, do you need assistance, a helping hand or training? We can assist with home PC security, internet connection problems, advice and installation of Broadband, PC networks and supply and/or installation of secure wireless networks in your house. We undertake virus, spyware and ad-ware removal and can supply or install security programs to make your PC safe. Is your old PC slow, is it worth upgrading? We provide impartial advice and can perform upgrades or help with any new PC purchase and accessory quotes. We supply new PCs, install, configure your system and can transfer your existing data. Why not give us a call! Contact Efficiency Solutions — **Jeff on 01202 741881**

Hospital Food Bingo

A patient at a South West hospital, disgusted by the food he was given, put photos of it online and challenged the public to identify meals in a game of 'Hospital Food Bingo.' But just as he had struggled to identify meals without the menu card, the public kept getting it wrong as well !

The patient had spent most of the year in hospital, suffering from a bone infection and broken leg. The medical care he received was "first class and second to none, but the caterer just wasn't world class," he said. He started posting photos of the meals on the Facebook website, urging people to guess what they were. "It was amazing," he said, "they were all joining in, but most of them couldn't guess what they were.



Most of the food had a white, beige or brown sauce on it and you couldn't guess what it was. It just didn't look like conventional food."

Peoples' guesses ranged from cat sick to curry, despite him never having been served either. One of his friends then assembled a montage of all the photos for the bingo game. The original intention was to have a bit of fun and maybe make people laugh, but then he thought "I've got weeks of this, how am I going to cope ?"

"Patients could take longer to recover from illness without sufficient calories and nutrients," he said. "Everything is minced and slushy and overcooked and I guess that is how many older patients need and want it. But if you are somebody a bit younger, in need of vitamins and nutrition to mend a broken bone, it isn't going to work," said the 47 year-old.

A Department of Health spokesman said "Most patients were satisfied with their meals. Good quality food for patients improves their health and we are working to improve the service."

Poole Hospital food is officially 'excellent'

The quality, choice and availability of food at Poole Hospital have been rated 'excellent' for the second year running by the National Patient Safety Agency. Patients, members of the public and NHS staff awarded the hospital's food 5 out of 5.

Canny Chef

Credit Crunch Kitchen

Here is a list of ideas to help save money in the kitchen.

Over a period of time, the savings could really add up !

Bake in batches to cut fuel costs.

Check that taps are fully turned off.

Use a microwave, which is low on fuel.

Check for dripping taps and fix if necessary.

Use an electric toaster – cheaper than a grill.

De-scale kettles regularly in hard water areas.

Use carrier bags to line bins instead of bin liners. Stand bottles upside down

to extract the last drop. Put lids on saucepans when cooking and save heat.

Buy good quality foil and re-use, by carefully washing. Cook larger quantities

in the oven and freeze the surplus. Odd rolls of wallpaper make good lining

paper for drawers. Save sturdy plastic containers for use in fridge and freezer.

Double check you have turned off the hob and oven after use. Fill a kettle

only to the level needed, but do cover the element. The electric jug style

kettle is cheaper to run than other designs. Cover food in the refrigerator

with saucers or plates instead of clingfilm. Square storage containers fit

better in fridge and freezer than round ones. Refrigerators are not cheap to

run, so choose the most energy efficient rating. Use a steamer for healthier

cooking and cook two or three items on one hotplate. A slow cook-pot is low

on fuel and can be set to cook while you are out, giving you a warm welcome

on your return.



From the Editor's Desk

Hearty Greetings from your Editor as we go live with the Winter Magazine.

It's a busy time of year for Poole Hospital staff, so thanks to everyone who sent articles, your time and dedication are very much appreciated !

It won't be long to the PHSG Christmas Party and ticket sales have been good. If you haven't got round to booking your place yet, please send your booking form to Rita, our Treasurer, asap, as there are still a few places left.

The two Georges, (contact details page 2) are collecting Christmas Raffle prizes that you've kindly donated, so please keep 'em coming for a bumper raffle !

Merry Christmas from Alan and Brian, your Magazine Production Team.



Future PHSG Meetings and Events

Thursday 3rd December - Christmas Party 2009

Our Christmas Party will once again be held at Hamworthy Engineering Social Club at Canford Magna. We do hope as many members as possible will attend and make this a memorable evening. The meal will be served at 7.30pm and members and friends are asked to meet at 7pm for 7.30pm.

We have bowed to the request to revert to a Turkey and Trimmings meal, but there will be a Vegetarian alternative. There is a Bar and a Wine List will be available on each table of 10. It is suggested that members get their applications for tickets in as soon as possible, and every effort will be made to ensure that we meet with your requests to sit with friends.

Entertainment this year comes by way of a highly recommended group known as 'Peter Pod and the Peas.' There will be the usual Raffle held to defray expenses.

The Christmas raffle is held to help with the cost of running the Christmas Party. We, the two Georges, are looking for quality items, donated by the members, for a successful Prize Draw. Please help make this raffle really special and if you could wrap your prizes in gift wrapping paper, especially if you are bringing them on the night of the party, that would be great! Prizes may be handed to any committee member, or to the person running any exercise venue, before the event.

Many thanks – George O'Leary and George Wilkinson.

Thursday 17th December

Christmas Fun and Games – Canford School

All members, whether regular exercisers or not, are invited to our Christmas Fun and Games, at Canford School Sports Hall, commencing 10.30am. Refreshments at lunchtime will follow the fun and games and soft drinks will be provided. Members are asked to provide sausage rolls, mince pies etc. Enquiries to Robin Pringle 01202 884250

21st January - Talk

'The Diabetes Poole Group' - Bob Moberly - Diabetes UK

For our opening talk of the New Year we welcome Mr Bob Moberly, the chairman of the Poole Group of Diabetes UK. He will inform us of the current support given to diabetes sufferers and the objectives and activities of the Poole Diabetes group. Maybe we can draw some comparisons with others and how they cope with their disabilities? 7.00pm for 7.30pm, Postgraduate Centre, Poole Hospital. Raffle and refreshments.

18th February -‘The President’s Address’- Dr Andrew McLeod PHSG President

Our chairman, Keith Matthews, has invited Dr McLeod to give an address in the Lecture Theatre. He will reflect on how he sees his own role in the activities of the Group, and our successes, and give his views on the direction of things to come. An opportunity for interchange of thoughts, perhaps. 7.00pm for 7.30pm, Postgraduate Centre, Poole Hospital. Raffle and refreshments.

Lunch at Escoffier Restaurant, Bournemouth and Poole College 2010

We have talked with the college, following refurbishment of their restaurant and enquired about having a PHSG lunch. There is a maximum of 60 covers and the price is £12 for 2010.

We are going to see the new facilities and the car / bus access routes and car parking and will give further information when available.

Enquiries – Gary Lee 01202 722814

Eat your way to a Healthier Christmas

Christmas can be a tempting time as we are constantly surrounded by lots of food and drink, on average, at this time of year people gain about 5lbs (2Kg). But it doesn't have to be this way; you can enjoy food without gaining a few extra pounds and without depriving yourself.

A Healthy Christmas Dinner:

On Christmas day it is easy to eat far more calories than our bodies actually need. Try following these tips for a healthier Christmas dinner to help you stop putting on the extra pounds this festive season:

Have a starter of melon, vegetable soup or smoked salmon. These will all be healthier and lower in fat than cheese based or fried starters.

When having our roast dinner, turkey is a low fat meat, so enjoy! But try to avoid the skin as this is high in fat and calories.

Roast your potatoes in olive, sunflower or vegetable oil rather than lard or goose fat and cut them into large chunks as these absorb less fat.

Dish up plenty of vegetables with your dinner, Brussels sprouts, peas, carrots and cabbage are all high in antioxidants which help protect the heart. They are also low in fat, as long as you don't cover them in butter!

When making gravy, skim the fat from the surface when it rises to the top.

Grill, dry roast or poach foods where possible to reduce the amount of fat in your meals.

Christmas Pudding is low in fat, so serve with low fat custard or half fat crème fraiche.

Be sensible with your drinks, alternate alcoholic drinks with non alcoholic ones. And try to use no added sugar or diet mixers. *(continued on page 20)*



PHSG Cycling Club

2010 Rides

An activity of Poole Heart Support Group - ALL STARTS at 10:00am

- Sunday 27th Dec Meet 10 Hill View Rd, Ferndown - "Goodbye Christmas Pud."
Sunday 24th Jan Meet Wimborne Square, Blandford and Back.
Sunday 21st Feb Meet Broadstone Leisure Centre - Poole Quay and Back.

Rides are about 15 miles long, they are open to all members of the PHSG as long as your doctor approves. For help, advice, weather check and bike maintenance call Keith Matthews on 01202 855001

We don't do RAIN!! If the weather looks "iffy", call before 9:00am to see if the ride is going ahead.

We have had an enjoyable year. In August we retraced our route around the oil-fields of Arne, riding along lovely smooth tarmac roads well away from the traffic. In September, we did a more local trip around Holes Bay using cycleways and tracks in the main, and in October, on a lovely hot sunny day, took a pedal along the prom from Sandbanks to Boscombe pier and back. We were very careful and polite to avoid a possible headline in the Echo saying "Old Age Pensioner bowls over Teenager." On this last ride we were joined by new members Angie and Rob Ward who I hope will continue to ride with us. Keith

Organisers: David Anderson, David Curtis, Keith Matthews

Regularly updated details on www.poolehsg.org.uk and
www.bournemouthctc.org

Eat your way to a Healthy Christmas (from page 19)

Snack Ideas:

Satsumas and clementines are low in fat and are a great source of vitamin C and seasonal, so keep these and a bowl of other fruits close by to snack on.

Choose reduced fat crisps, plain popcorn, pretzels or vegetable sticks with a low fat dip.

Dried fruit makes a tasty snack – raisins, dates, figs and apricots are all good choices.

Above all make sure that you enjoy yourself and don't forget to be active; have a dance at the Christmas party, wrap up warm and go for a walk after your Christmas meal !

Dael Hartley – Poole Hospital Dietitian

FOR SALE AND WANTED

Free to good home - 5 black printing ink cartridges for use with Epsom Stylus Photo RX420, RX425. 01202 694886.

For Sale - Dining room table and six chairs, good condition. Solid wood oak effect, cream fabric upholstered seat pads, approx 5 years old. £50 ono.

Jim Waine 01202 871532.



For Sale - PHSG Shirts. They are grey with our new logo (as on the front cover of this magazine) on the left hand side breast pocket area.

The sizes are small, medium, large and extra large in the T-shirts, the Polo shirts and now Sweatshirts. The T-shirts cost £6, the Polo £10 and the Sweatshirts £12.

They will be on sale at each social meeting or event and also at Canford School on Mondays and Thursdays. You can contact me, George O'Leary on 01202 743978. email george.oleary@lbsq.org

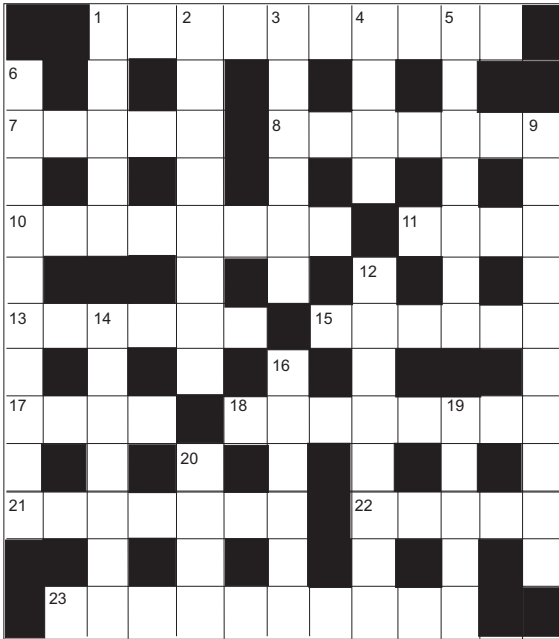
Wanted -Your old greetings cards/postcards/calendars and used postage stamps. I share these between two charities – The M.S. Society and the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. Both these charities have written thanking PHSG for the support we give them. It's another way of recycling and at the same time it makes money for two worthwhile causes.

DON'T BIN 'EM – SAVE 'EM! Also please DO NOT CUT THE STAMPS OFF THE POSTCARDS. THE POSTCARD IS WORTH MORE THAN THE USED STAMP.

The M.S. Society makes note pads from these cards. I have received from them a receipt for £18.80 from the sale of mini notepads in December. Please contact me at any of the monthly meetings, or at Canford School exercise class each Monday and Thursday. Or phone George O'Leary on 01202 743978.

***Something wanted? Something to sell?
Give the Editor a bell on 01202 694886.***

Crossword



Across

1. Corpse-like (10)
7. Respond (5)
8. Compelled (7)
10. Female (8)
11. Overtake (4)
13. Tell (6)
15. Type of shed (4-2)
17. Every (4)
18. Perverse (8)
- 21 Can be stretched (7)
22. Gutter (5)
23. Conitron (10)

Down

1. Amulet (5)
2. Explode (8)
3. Empty (6)
4. Stagger (4)
5. Let loose (7)
6. Promotion (10)
9. Jarring (10)
12. Under obligation (8)
14. Permission (7)
16. Purpose (6)
19. Diminish (5)
20. Irritate (4)

Answers page 30

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Alternative Dictionary C to E

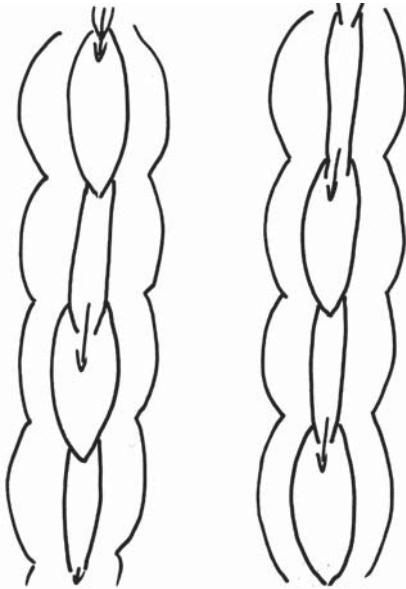
These words and suggested alternative meanings are intended to be amusing and not cause offence.

CIRCUMSPECT - Point of view of a Rabbi
CLAUSTROPHOBIA - Fear of Father Christmas
COFFEE - Someone who has been coughed on
COIFFEUR - Pretentious drinker
COINCIDENTAL - Having matching teeth
COLONNADE - Fizzy enema
COMATOSE - Fools gone dead
COMBAT - Aggressive marsupial
CONCOURSE - Education for inmates
CONCURRENT - Looks like a raisin but isn't
COPULATE - Poor Police response time
CRECHE - Vehicle collision in Kensington
CUSTARD - Swear after stepping in something
DAMNATION – Holland
DANDELION - Big camp cat
DEBASEMENT - Floor below de ground floor
DECEASE - Stop stopping
DELIBERATE -To imprison
DELEGATE - Jewish scandal
DENTIST - Man who fixes damaged car bodywork
DIALOGUE - An awful piece of wood
DICTATOR - Humorously shaped root vegetable
DILATE - Live long
DIPHTHONG - Minimalist laundry
DIRECT - Ruined by a Welshman
DISAPPEAR - To insult a lord
DISCONSOLATE - A particular embassy
DISINCLINE - Upward slope
DISPEL - Criticise magic
DISSIDENT - Foreigner pointing out damage to car bodywork
DONATION - Where Homer Simpson is King
DOSSIER - A French tramp
EGRET - Apology sent by computer
ELEMENTAL - Spanish village idiot
ELEVENSES - Welsh bull-fighting family
EXTORT - Having left school

*Courtesy Upbeat Heart
Support Group Magazine*

From a Retired Bee-keeper

THE HEART – HOW IT DEVELOPS



Earthworm heart

Don't do this at home, but look inside an earthworm, a segmented animal where one segment is very much like the one above, or below, and you will see a pulsing central tube. This tube, the heart, has a narrowing corresponding to each "segment" on the outside, and looks a bit like a string of sausages. Alternate "sausages" tighten and relax, so pumping the blood down past the narrowings, or valves. A developing baby does, in a simplified way, follow the basic evolutionary pathway that Man has followed. We share over 98% of the DNA as an earthworm, but of course we are much more complicated.

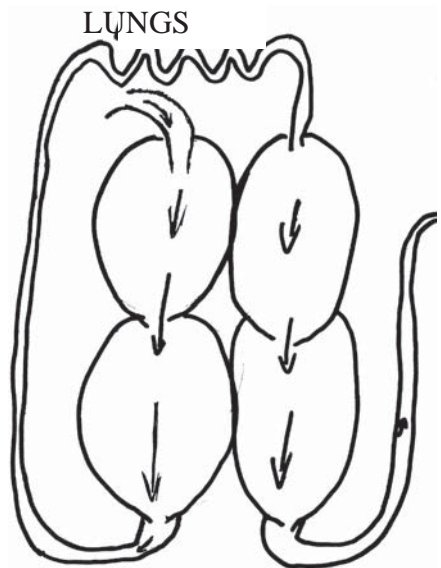
Unlike a worm, where one segment is very like the one above, through evolution certain segments of our bodies have taken over specialised tasks, developing into complicated parts of our internal organs.

Thus two sausages develop into the right atrium and right ventricle respectively, next ones down develop into the blood system of the lungs, then the next two twist to lie beside the first two, to become the left atrium and ventricle respectively. Yes, you have the four chambers of a heart, with valves between, and at exit (aortic valve) before next segment, the arch of aorta. Of course further tremendous changes occur, but this is the basic principle.

An adult heart behaves like the original segments. The electric impulses which make the heart muscle squeeze go from top to bottom of the tube(s), so that the pump is in two stages, the top part, the atria, squeeze the blood down to the ventricles on each side, and a fraction of a second later the ventricles squeeze the blood either to the lungs, or to our

main body. Electricity is quick– but the heart electrics are really clever, there is an inbuilt delay between each segment, so that there is time for the blood to be squeezed – the lub dup of the heart sounds. At the top end there is an impulse generator which gives a squirt of electricity every second or so, according to need, and there is a special bundle of cells which act as “wires”, into which is built the “delay” system. Logically this bundle of “wires” runs in the Septum – the thickening where the segments come to lie against each other.

With an ultrasound you can hear the developing baby’s heart beating at a couple of months – not strictly true, it is not the sound of the heart, but the machine’s sound waves being reflected back by the moving blood in the contracting tube. In the first couple of months or so a baby’s heart really is like an earthworm’s, before it doubles up. A baby in the womb has no use for lungs – but it does need a strong heart to pump blood around the body for the body to grow. So holes develop between adjacent segment tubes, so that most – not quite all – of the blood short-circuits the lungs. The really fantastic bit – not really fantasy, because it is real - is that those holes virtually close up within a few minutes of birth, so that all the blood goes through the lungs within those few minutes of birth. A “blue baby” is when the holes do not close completely, so a lot of the blood is still bypassing the lungs, and so does not get its oxygen.



Foetal Folding of the heart

Look inside the worm again, you will see small arteries coming from the central tube at each segment level. Yes, those in segment. 4 develop into future coronary arteries.

I hope that the above helps you to understand the basics of a heart, and how it has evolved into a highly efficient pump. No, we have not evolved from a worm, but worms (and honey bees), and us have developed from a common ancestor; to a large extent this is copied in our growth in the womb.

Medicine in History

In AD 43, a Roman doctor first used electricity for pain relief, using an electricity generating fish. The only problem with this treatment was that the occasional patient was electrocuted !

A 15th century surgeon had a musical method to detect skull fractures. He stretched a violin string between the patient's teeth and plucked it. If the note rang clear, the skull was fine. If it was fuzzy, the skull was broken.

In the late 18th century, operations were carried out by 'Barber Surgeons' (hence the red and white pole outside barbers' shops). People suffered terribly and often died. One remedy for colic was 'where there is abdominal colic, stand the afflicted up and introduce one pint of quicksilver'— no more— through a funnel into the mouth. This will surely clear the colic, but does not, then turn the patient upside down to recover the quicksilver, for it is very dear. NB. Quicksilver is mercury and toxic !

We think of contraception as a modern conception, however the Ancient Greeks and Egyptians had more methods to choose from than us – many with some scientific validity. Ancient Greek women drank potions of crushed cow parsley after sex. Chemicals in the seeds block progesterone production, so this could have worked.

The green papaya acts in the same way and is eaten in Sri Lanka for contraceptive use. Oestrogen (used as the basis of the pill) is derived from the Mexican yam and other plants, such as willow and date palm, also contain agents that reduce fertility.

Some of these methods are still used in remote areas.

Greek doctors used pomegranates to make cervical caps and in Russia some women still make diaphragms from squeezed lemons – the method used by Casanova's lovers. The modern cap was invented in the 1920's, strictly available to married women, via Marie Stopes Clinics.

Ancient Egyptians mixed crocodile dung with honey and sour milk. The milk's acidity acted as a spermicide and the honey as a natural barrier.

They could have left out the dung !

None of these methods will have been very reliable – we do not advise trying them ! The condom was developed in 16th century Italy and used in Europe by the 17th century, when the Earl of Condom prescribed it for King Charles the second. It had to be an improvement on the pomegranate, which fortunately is not native to Britain.

Walking Group

Winter Walks 2009 – 2010

It is up to the member who wishes to walk on any date to phone the named person between 6pm - 9pm the evening before, or 8am - 9am on the day, to find the meeting point and walk destination. The walks start at 10.30am.

Wednesday 9 th December	David & Sylvia	747569
Saturday 19 th December	Lynne & Chris	671237
Wednesday 6 th January	Henry & Heather	842707
Saturday 16 th January	Norman & Diane	622016
Wednesday 27 th January	John & Barbara	690636
Saturday 6 th February	David and Judy	692369
Wednesday 17 th February	Alan & Jean Robinson	695030
Saturday 27 th February	Mike, Mary, Alan, Marion	887366
Wednesday 10 th March	Nigel Hannibal	310070
Saturday 20 th March	John & Barbara	690636
Wednesday 31 st March	David & Sylvia	747569

Summer Walks will begin on Saturday 10th April 2010 at 10am.

For those who are interested in the Walking Group, we walk every 10 days on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2 to 5 miles. Some of us round off the day's walk with a Pub lunch – Pleasure after pain! If you require more information or the Walking Book (£3) please contact me on 01202-733956.

Cyril - Walks Co-ordinator.



Atrial Flutter

Atrial Flutter is a problem with the rhythm of the heart (arrhythmia). In this condition, the upper chambers of the heart (atria) beat very rapidly. As the upper chambers are responsible for the control of the heart rhythm, this usually results in your pulse becoming fast.

A person may not feel any symptoms when the heart rhythm changes from normal rhythm to Atrial Flutter, so it may only be detected by your doctor when you attend for other reasons. However, some people may present with symptoms of palpitations (being able to feel the heart beating), shortness of breath, chest pains and tiredness/fatigue. They may also experience occasional feelings of dizziness/light-headedness.

People who have Atrial Flutter, may also have another heart rhythm problem called Atrial Fibrillation.

There are many similarities between these two conditions, but also some important differences. Both can cause the heart rate to increase causing a rapid pulse. In the case of Atrial Flutter, the pulse can still be regular. In Atrial Fibrillation the pulse usually becomes irregular. The basic problem in Atrial Flutter is that an electrical impulse becomes trapped in a circle of tissue in the right upper heart chamber (right atrium) and goes around this circuit at a rate of 300 beats per minute.

In this situation an electrocardiogram or ECG is necessary to diagnose Atrial Flutter.

There are many different causes of Atrial Flutter, such as:

- Lung disease - Chronic Obstructive Airways Disease (COPD), Chronic Bronchitis or Pneumonia.
- Disease of the heart valves.
- High blood pressure (also called hypertension).
- Heart failure (also called Left Ventricular Dysfunction).
- Over-active thyroid gland.
- Alcohol.

However these are not the only causes. Sometimes there may appear to be no obvious cause.

Atrial Flutter and Atrial Fibrillation can increase the risk of stroke. The

abnormal heart rhythm causes the blood to pool in the upper chambers and this may cause the blood to clot. This clot can then be carried to the small blood vessels in the brain where it blocks the blood flow and causes a stroke. To reduce the risk of stroke your doctor will assess your personal risk factors. Depending on your risk level, they will discuss whether to start you on aspirin or a blood thinning medication eg Warfarin. There are different ways to treat Atrial Flutter and these are often used in combination.

1. Cardioversion

This is the conversion of an abnormal heart rhythm (in this case Atrial Flutter) to normal rhythm. This can occasionally be accomplished by medications. In the case of Atrial Flutter an electrical cardioversion is usually required.

Under a general anaesthetic or sedation, an electrical current is used to restore normal heart rhythm. This is a simple and highly effective treatment.

2. Catheter Ablation

Often this treatment is considered if Atrial Flutter recurs following a cardioversion. Sometimes, your doctor may even recommend a catheter ablation as the first treatment, rather than perform a cardioversion. The procedure involves passing wires (catheters) into the heart, usually via the groin or neck veins. One of these wires is then used to apply heat or cold (ablation) to a small area of the heart to prevent Atrial Flutter recurring. This is a highly effective treatment for Atrial Flutter.

3. Medication

For some patients, rather than undergo a cardioversion or catheter ablation, medications (such as Beta-Blockers, Calcium Channel Blockers or Digoxin) will be used to slow the speed of the pulse. An anti-arrhythmic drug may be recommended to prevent further attacks of Atrial Flutter.

For more information please contact the Atrial Fibrillation Association (AFA) on 01789 451837 or email info@atrial-fibrillation.org.uk

Atrial Fibrillation Association © 2009

British Heart Foundation

Back in the summer, Kinson Common had a fete and the BHF were offered a free table to promote and make people more aware of heart problems. I manned the table in the morning and Iris Roethke came in the afternoon. It was very interesting to be able to talk to people and give leaflets out. We had three games for the children:-

1. Guess the Teddy's name.
2. Guess where the pin was on a local map.
3. Guess the number of sweets in a jar.

The jar of sweets was kindly donated by "Sweeties" in Southbourne Grove, (opposite Boots) in Southbourne, Bournemouth. It is a lovely old-fashioned style sweet shop, with the jars of sweets set out on shelves. I recommend a visit and please mention you found them via the heart group magazine. Thank you from Pam Bailey

Crossword Answers from page 22

ACROSS:

1. Cadaverous
7. React
8. Coerced
10. Feminine
11. Pass
13. Relate
15. Lean-to
17. Each
18. Untoward
21. Tensile
22. Drain
23. Repentance

DOWN:

1. Charm
2. Detonate
3. Vacant
4. Reel.
5. Unchain
6. Preferment
9. Discordant
12. Beholden
14. Licence
16. Intent
19. Abate
20. Rile

What to do if you become unwell When your GP surgery is closed

Medical help and advice is available if you become unwell when your GP surgery is closed. You should:

Dial 999 or go to A & E as soon as possible if you are worried about the sudden onset of new symptoms or have suffered a serious Injury or illness.

A & E departments are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They are for a critical or life threatening situation, for example chest pain, suspected heart attack, severe breathing difficulties, severe loss of blood, loss of consciousness, deep wounds and suspected broken bones.

They are not for minor injuries or health problems, nor an alternative to seeing your GP or for a 'second opinion' if you have already seen your GP.

Call the **Dorset Out of Hours Medical Service** on **0845 600 10 13** if you are unwell but not facing a life-threatening emergency and you think you cannot wait until your GP surgery opens.

Go to an **NHS Walk-In Centre or Minor Injuries Unit** with a minor injury or illness. Find your nearest one by calling **NHS Direct** on **0845 46 47**.

You can also call **NHS Direct** on **0845 46 47** if you are feeling unwell and are unsure what to do, or need information about finding a pharmacist, dentist or other service.

**REMEMBER IF YOU HAVE CHEST PAIN
DIAL 999 WITHOUT DELAY**

A Rat under a Roundabout, a Dog in a Wine Rack and a Buffalo in a Pond How the Fire Service spent £8.5 million in two years rescuing animals

It's not just cats in trees that need rescuing - modern firemen are required to remove dogs from wine racks, hamsters from beneath baths and six-foot snakes from behind radiators. The most frequently rescued pets were cats, with 2,826 call-outs, followed by dogs with 2,277. Next came birds, with 2,049, including a budgie stuck behind a fridge.

At least two dogs became caught in wine racks and one had to be removed from a reclining chair, using spanners and a crowbar. A dog in Lincolnshire had to be released from a wheelie bin by firemen using hydraulic cutting gear, while one in Norfolk had to be freed after getting its mouth stuck on a table leg.

Among wild animals rescued, there were 244 deer, 21 squirrels, 10 badgers and 10 hedgehogs. 34 foxes were rescued, one from under a drawbridge and one trapped on a duck island. Marine mammals included 4 whales, 4 dolphins and 9 seals. Other rescued animals included 1,909 horses and 955 cattle, with smaller amounts of gerbils, chinchillas, iguanas, ferrets, rabbits and guinea pigs.

Among 18 hamsters rescued, one in East Sussex was trapped under a bath. In Strathclyde, a pet rat became trapped under a children's roundabout, and in Somerset, a six-foot boa constrictor was extricated from behind a radiator. A buffalo was rescued from a pond in Fife and 2 fish 'in distress' were given assistance in Nottinghamshire. Swans with broken wings and other problems were more costly and one in North Yorkshire involved seven fire engines and cost over £3,000.

Other incidents were resolved far more simply. A squirrel stuck on a roof in Reading was 'persuaded down in one hour,' while a rabbit in Northern Ireland, stuck under a shed, was retrieved by a crew 'poking a broom handle under the structure.' Cats were found 'stuck up a tree,' 'being attacked by magpies,' 'trapped in a dumb waiter' and one in Fife was 'trapped in a washing machine' and needed five firemen to free it.

And all because we are a nation of animal lovers !



Schoolchildren writing about the sea

- 1) This is a picture of an octopus. It has eight testicles. (Kelly age 6)
 - 2) Oysters' balls are called pearls. (James age 6)
 - 3) If you are surrounded by sea you are an island. If you don't have sea all around you, you are incontinent. (Wayne age 7)
 - 4) Sharks are ugly and mean, and have big teeth, just like Emily Richardson. She's not my friend no more. (Kylie age 6)
 - 5) When ships had sails, they used to use the trade winds to cross the ocean. Sometimes, when the wind didn't blow, the sailors would whistle to make the wind come. My brother said they would be better off eating beans. (William age 7)
 - 6) I like mermaids. They are beautiful, and I like their shiny tails. How do mermaids get pregnant? (Helen age 6)
 - 7) I'm not going to write about the sea. My baby brother is always screaming and being sick, my dad keeps shouting at my mum, and my big sister has just got pregnant, so I can't think what to write. (Amy age 6)
 - 8) Some fish are dangerous. Jellyfish can sting. Electric eels can give you a shock. They have to live in caves under the sea where I think they have to plug themselves into chargers. (Christopher age 7)
 - 9) When you go swimming in the sea, it is very cold, and it makes my willy small. (Kevin age 6)
 - 10) Divers have to be safe when they go under the water. Two divers can't go down alone, so they have to go down on each other. (Becky age 8)
-

Autumn Magazine – Caption Competition

In the Autumn Magazine, we ran a Competition to find the best caption for this picture.

There were three entries :

(1) "Stupid Cupid, stop picking on me."

(2) " It's so easy playing Cupid I can do it on one leg."

And the winner is (3) "This is what David thought was meant by hanging about in Piccadilly."

The winner was sent in by a Committee Member and so the prize was awarded to David Barcock, who kindly posed for the photo.



150 colds from a single sneeze

A single sneeze on a commuter train could spread the cold virus to as many as 150 fellow passengers within just five minutes, scientists have found.

Researchers surveyed 1,300 workers and found that almost all commuters suffered at least one cold last winter.

Commuters were the worst off, with 98 per cent suffering from colds if travelling to work by bus and 96 per cent if travelling by train.

In contrast, just 58 per cent of people who work from home had a cold last winter.

Dr Roger Henderson, a cold and flu expert, noted that 100,000 droplets are propelled into the air during a single sneeze.

If the person does not sneeze into a tissue, these droplets will then be transferred onto handles, rails and other areas that are touched by countless other people. And don't forget supermarket trolley handles! Maybe we should all take alcohol gel round with us to disinfect our hands regularly!

Think of others before you sneeze without a tissue, otherwise in just five minutes you may have infected many other people and won't be the only one feeling poorly.

The average adult catches two to three colds a year, according to Bupa, while schoolchildren can have 12 or more, not having built up as much resistance.



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Merry Christmas from the Elf and Safety Executive.

Warning you about the dangers of Christmas.

Ding Dong merrily on high, the Christmas bells are ringing! But don't forget that if you plan to ring them at a level of 85 decibels or more, you must issue the ringing team with ear defenders. Because seasonal deafness disorder is just one of the dangers that can lurk unseen, at this time of year.

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, 'tis the season to be jolly. But one of those prickly pieces of holly could take someone's eye out. So cover each little prickle with a tiny ball of Blu-Tac. It's always better to be safe than sorry!

We're not killjoys in the world of safety, you should have seen us at our annual Christmas party, earplugs in for those noisy crackers and everyone wearing their paper hard hats!

Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat, but they would be a healthier weight if someone advised them about a balanced diet and some light exercise. Serve mince pies at your party by all means, but please display posters warning that they may contain nuts. And please be aware that baking a coin in a Christmas pudding is an obvious choking hazard. Any coins should be served separately on a side plate.

If you have a fairy at the top of your Christmas tree, please be aware that the word 'fairy' can sometimes cause offence. We consider that a more appropriate term would be 'wand bearer.' In any case, his or her role (no sexual discrimination, please) falls under the provisions of the Working Height Regulations, 2005. Before the regulations came into force, there were 4,000 serious injuries a year caused by falls from high places. Owners of trees should therefore carry out full risk assessments, provide scaffolding where necessary and maintain a proper programme of regular health and safety inspections.

As for Christmas tree lights, just remember the importance of using a qualified electrician.

So while the electrician and the scaffolding are there to put up the lights, you could also ask him to put up a string for your Christmas cards. Don't forget to book him for Twelfth Night to take them all down again. And do not water your Christmas tree while the lights are on.

If you go carol singing, please consider whether you need a licence. Under the provisions of the Licensing Act, 2003, carollers are classified as a religious gathering. But if you are singing in a shopping centre, you might need an entertainment licence. If you are collecting in the street, you will need a street collection licence. If you are collecting door-to-door, you will need a house collection licence. And finally, if you decide to sing 'Once in Royal David's City' complete with a lowly cattle shed, where Mary lays her baby in a manger for his bed, please be aware that the baby could be at risk from respiratory disorders from the spores of the old hay and straw.

Have a very Merry Christmas.....from the Elf and Safety Executive.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor,

My brother, who is a twitcher, has a pacemaker. No, not one of them biventricular pacemakers, that makes him twitch every second, but he is a bird-watcher. The other day he crawled under a farmer's electric fence, very carefully, but one of the camera legs caught the wire – he did indeed twitch with the electric shock. Fortunately it did not harm the pacemaker, but it might indeed have stopped all twitching – for ever ! Your photographer readers must be very careful with the legs of their tripods !

'Tis an excellent magazine – but why does your retired bee-keeper not take up bee-keeping again ?

Avid Reader

Dear Editor,

One of the most dangerous phrases in the language must be 'How are you ?' You will probably notice that your GP will say something like "What can I do for you today ?" whilst casting an eye sideways at the computer screen, hidden from you, to see your official record.

There must be some people you avoid asking how they are, because their list is probably longer than yours, and after five minutes you will shuffle your feet, your eyes will glaze over, and you will desperately try to think of an urgent appointment.

Apart from those who seem to have every known ailment, know every medic in the area (and their family history), there are those who are so completely absorbed in one aspect of their anatomy that they literally have no other conversation.

Have you noticed how possessive people are too ? It's MY knee, MY heart, MY big toe, and equally they appear to personally own all those involved in their complaint; MY Consultant, MY Doctor, MY Practice Nurse, MY Pharmacist..... It is difficult not to be tempted to outdo anyone with similar troubles.

Mind you, from the other point of view, if you have a difficult person to talk to, just give them the lead and you can relax and not need to say anything until they eventually run down.

Perhaps we should remember the Latin phrase 'Mens sana in corpore sano,' or for those like me who have to look it up, 'healthy mind in healthy body.'

Your friends might be much relieved !

Di Bagshawe

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Poole Heart Support Group operates under the umbrella of the British Heart Foundation who rely on voluntary help for fund-raising events.

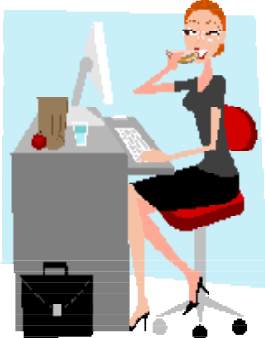
We urgently need a Treasurer- can you help please?

We also need occasional supporters for fundraising.

Please contact:
*Pam Bailey BHF Rep.
4 Knighton Heath Close
Bearwood BH11 9PP.
Telephone
01202 574944*

We would be pleased to hear from any members who would be prepared to play a more active role in the Poole branch of BHF. We meet once a month at Poole Hospital to plan forthcoming events.

**Volunteers wanted
to help
in our
P.H.S.G.
Head
Office
for only
2 hours
per month**



**Please Telephone
01202 683363 ext. 133
(9am-4pm answerphone)
Manned 1.30 - 3.30pm.
Mon & Thurs**

You can always call the Office !

You can always call the office
We're a happy little bunch.
On a Monday or a Thursday,
We're there just after lunch.

If you need some information,
Exercise or walking club,
(Cyril says they ramble
and then end up at the pub!).

We distribute magazines
and sign in each new member.
We are on the go all the time
from January to December

Jan Mesher
PHSG Office Co-ordinator.