

YOUR health matters



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ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

Spring 2009



journey through Shangri-La

Gala leads guests on an extraordinary expedition at the Shangri-La Hotel, Vancouver to help raise \$1.6 million for critical care at RCH



passion for health

Celebrity chef Bal Arneson uses her talent for health Indian-style cooking to help more than just those who want to learn her recipes



back to life

Barbara Sutherland was just 41 years old with a family of three young children when she had her first heart attack.

She had bent down to fix the chain on her eldest son's bike when she experienced extreme chest pains and a tingling sensation in her arms. She went into the house to lie down on the floor while her middle son dialed 911. It was a small episode, lasting about three minutes, and then she felt fine.

Following standard procedure, paramedics took Barbara to her local hospital for testing, which indicated she had suffered a heart attack.

How is that possible, asked Barbara, as she had no family history of heart disease, didn't smoke, exercised regularly and watched everything she ate?

Barbara began to have a second heart attack before she would get the answer, and was rushed to the RCH Catheterization Lab for an angiogram. Using the Intravascular Ultrasound (IVUS) machine (funded by donors in 2006) to see the inside of Barbara's arteries, the angiogram revealed that she was suffering from a spontaneous coronary dissection. The fine lining of her main coronary artery was peeling apart, and the flap was impeding the flow of blood to the main pumping chamber of the heart.

"Heart disease can happen to anyone," says Dr. Gerald Simkus, RCH's Chief of Cardiac Services. "In Barbara's case, it was just bad

luck; she was born with a weakness in the lining of her arteries."

During the angiogram, the unthinkable happened: her main coronary artery completely blocked off. Dr. Simkus administered medication to help relieve the heart spasms, but it didn't work. Her blood pressure dropped to 60 (normal blood pressure is 120), and her heart rate slowed down to 50 beats per minute. Barbara was dying on the table.

In his 25-year career as a cardiologist, Dr. Simkus was astounded by what he saw. "Heart attacks are usually caused by plaque build-up in the coronary arteries. Spontaneous coronary dissections are fairly rare; we see about 12 cases

Thanks to the experienced medical team and specialized equipment available at RCH, Barbara is alive and well today.

continued on page 2

what matters most

Despite tough economic times, donors remain focused on helping RCH deliver the best in health care

When times are tough, we take care of what matters most to us: our loved ones and our health.

I am proud to say that despite current economic challenges, not only did we receive support for our recent Gala from many new sponsors; 90 per cent of our sponsors returned this year to help us raise \$1.6 million for RCH.

These donors, and the many others that support us throughout the year, have stepped up because they believe that supporting RCH is a wise investment, in their own health and the health of their loved ones.

RCH has a bold and exciting future ahead as its partners – RCH Foundation, donors, Fraser Health, the Ministry of Health Services, and the care teams at RCH – work on crafting a roadmap for the future that will enable RCH



"Donating to RCH is an investment in your own good health," says RCH Foundation President and CEO Adrienne Bakker.

to continue to serve as a key specialized hospital for residents in the Fraser Health region, the Lower Mainland and from across the province.

As an RCH Foundation donor, you become part of the care team at RCH. It helps to

provide the resources needed on the front lines to deliver the best in health care. Your support also inspires the RCH medical team, as it lets them know that their community values their work and their commitment to always do their best for the people they serve.

We are pleased to report that we have

reached our goal of \$1.6 million for the Urgent Needs campaign to provide vital equipment needed throughout the hospital. Thank you for your support now and in helping us build for the future.

(signature) **Adrienne Bakker**



"I have a new normal, but I'm back to doing almost everything I was doing a year ago." Barbara Sutherland, former RCH cardiac patient

continued from page 1

per year, but this is by far the most dramatic case I've ever seen."

Dr. Simkus needed to quickly rebuild Barbara's artery, so he performed an angioplasty, inserting stents into the torn blood vessel. It would take about an hour of tricky work to deploy six stents to restructure her main coronary artery. "Essentially, I owe my life to Dr. Simkus and his team," says Sutherland.

"They are so good at what they do because they do so many procedures every day."

Sutherland accepts that her body is still healing, so she takes a gentle approach to exercise and going about her daily routine. "I have a new normal, but I'm back to doing almost everything I was doing a year ago."

ONLINE: Read Barbara's personal account



coming from the heart

Handcrafted pillows are made and distributed by the RCH Auxiliary to more than 700 open-heart surgery patients annually. Providing chest support, each pillow is autographed by the patient's cardiac team, and displays a drawing of the patient's cardiac procedure.

Heart pillows are just one example of the handcrafted items the auxiliary team provides to patients each year, free of charge, as part of their patient comfort program. In addition to donating thousands of hours sewing, volunteers also provide emotional support to patients. For more information about volunteering with the RCH Auxiliary, please call 604.526.9041.

did you know?

Royal Columbia Hospital is...

- A provincially designated heart, trauma and neuro care centre providing the highest level of care for the most critically ill patients
- One of B.C.'s busiest hospitals serving 1.5 million people, with 52,000 emergency visits and 29,000 admissions annually
- Home to one of the three busiest Cardiac Catheterization Labs in the country, providing 24/7 minimally invasive heart diagnoses and treatment
- The site that receives more trauma patients by Air Ambulance than any other hospital in B.C.
- A UBC teaching hospital



Dr. Gerald Simkus, Barbara's cardiologist and RCH Chief of Cardiac Services, compares a tiny stent (fitted onto a catheter) with a spring from an average ball point pen. During an angioplasty, a catheter is inserted into the groin and threaded through to the blood vessels of the heart. A balloon attached to the end of the catheter is inflated and opens up the blocked vessel. Before the catheter is removed, one or more stents are left at the site of the blockage to keep blood flowing through the newly opened passage.

Shangri-La visited and achieved

Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation supporters embarked on a very special Journey through Shangri-La on March 5th. It was an adventure that raised more than \$200,000 for the \$1.6 million Urgent Needs Campaign to fund critical equipment needs at RCH.

Recognizing the need to support critical care at RCH is why **Gloria Macarenko** chose to co-host the gala with CBC News: Vancouver at Six co-anchor, **Ian Hanomansing**.

“What I find exciting about supporting RCH Foundation is that the money raised directly benefits patients at the hospital, and that, in turn, supports the entire well-being of the province,” said Macarenko.

Speaking from reporting experience, Hanomansing noted that people in the Lower Mainland are “extremely passionate” about having access to the best in health care. “What is remarkable is that, despite economic challenges, more and more people in the Lower Mainland are stepping up to join us in helping RCH provide that care.”



Angie Osachoff hangs words of inspiration on the Wishing Tree.



The Honourable George Abbott, Minister of Health Services, and RCH's Head of Laboratory Services, Dr. Arun Garg, toast the gala's success.



Adrienne and Dr. Nigel Murray, CEO for Fraser Health Authority. Photo by Malcolm Parry, THE VANCOUVER SUN.



Co-presenting sponsors and RCH neighbours: Stan Weismiller, Winvan Paving Ltd. President and Ted Carlson, Mainland Sand and Gravel Ltd. president.



MCs Gloria Macarenko and Ian Hanomansing of CBC News: Vancouver with Adrienne Bakker.



ONLINE:
See more Gala photos

Gala co-chairs John Ashbridge and Sharon Domaas pull the winning raffle tickets.

thank you for the **Journey**

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celebrity chef supports critical care at RCH



Bal and son Aaron roll out some rotis for an afternoon snack. Bal is using her passion for healthy cooking to help RCH deliver the best in health care.

After years of relying on Royal Columbian Hospital whenever her family needed medical attention, celebrity chef Bal Arneson realized her cooking talent could be used to help more than just those who wanted to learn her recipes – it could be used

to support a cause that was important to her: the hospital.

The idea came to her one day last summer, while her four-year-old son was being treated at RCH by the Emergency Department team, including Dr. Jason Exner and Registered Nurse Jeneen Rankin-Bayer.

“All the while that I was in [the ED] with Aaron, I kept thinking, what can I do for RCH?” Arneson says.

Equipped with the knowledge imparted to her by her mother and elders in India, Bal has worked as a private caterer to many prominent business, sports and celebrity clientele, and as a frequent guest chef on *City TV Cooks*.

Now she has taken that passion for healthy cooking and is putting it to work for RCH. Arneson is donating partial proceeds from the sale of her newly released cookbook, *Everyday Indian*, from celebrity cookbook publisher,

Whitecap Books, to RCH Foundation. The proceeds will help fund equipment in the Emergency Department and throughout the rest of the hospital.

“I wanted my book to be full of life because that’s the way I am, and now I can use it to help RCH save lives,” says Arneson. “I cannot tell you what an absolute privilege it is to be able to give something back to the hospital that has always been there for me and my family.”



ONLINE:
Recipe from Everyday Indian for Bal's Healthy Rotis.

special thanks

We acknowledge these individuals, estates, corporate and community organizations (and those who prefer to remain anonymous) for their generous donations, received in 2008, which have helped us raise \$1.6 million in this year to support exceptional care at RCH. Our sincerest apologies for any errors or omissions.

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(begins next column)

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Ian Hanomansing
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CBCnews

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