

# SolarisCare News

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST FROM THE SOLARISCARE FAMILY

## Clinton Heal - In the Driver's Seat

**Clinton Heal is the Founder and CEO of melanomaWA and 2011 Young Australian of the Year. SolarisCare is pleased to share Clinton's cancer journey with you.**

My 22nd birthday in August 2005 was very much like the ones before it, and little did I know that life was only a few days away from changing forever. Thursday's celebrations were followed by a closely contested footy game on Saturday, playing for WAFL team Peel Thunder. When a golf ball sized lump appeared on my neck on Monday morning I thought it must have been from a knock during Saturday's match.

With no idea that the lump could be potentially something very serious, I went to work as a Radiographer at the Peel Health Campus like I would every Monday morning. It was only when the Nurse at work expressed her concern that I took notice, and an Ultrasound of my neck was arranged immediately. The scan revealed that the lump was a solid mass, requiring further investigation. Over the next two weeks, three separate needle biopsies all confirmed that the lump was one of four aggressive cancers. I had three separate biopsies because no one would believe the results that were coming back for an otherwise fit and healthy 22 year old. On the 12th of September 2005, the lump was removed and I was diagnosed with Metastatic Melanoma, meaning that a primary malignant skin cancer had spread to other parts of the body by travelling through my bloodstream or the lymphatic system. Subsequent skin and eye checks by Dermatologists and Ophthalmologists could not detect the primary melanoma on the skin or in the eyes.



Clinton Heal winning the  
2011 Young Australian of  
the Year Award

*"I had three separate biopsies because no one would believe the results that were coming back for an otherwise fit and healthy 22 year old"*

Subsequent PET/CT scans gave the good news that there were no other cancers present in my body, and I embarked on an ambitious treatment course of radiotherapy and chemotherapy, with a regime of three monthly scans. My parents, sister and brother became integral allies in getting me through each day. My new daily routine traced a path from Royal Perth Hospital for Chemotherapy, to Perth Radiation Oncology in Subiaco for radiotherapy and back to work in the afternoon. To be honest, I'm not sure how much use I was at work during that period, and it was only possible from the practical and emotional support I was getting from my 'support crew'.

After the successful first course of treatment, I decided to continue with a dream of mine to travel the globe. So with one of my best friends and chemotherapy packed, we set off on a European holiday to celebrate my return to good health. However the discovery of another lump in early 2007, this time on my chest, resulted in a swift return to Australia. This metastatic tumour was swiftly followed by four others on different sites around my body. At this point, it all became too much. I quickly descended into a period of pharmacological depression triggered by the chemotherapy treatment, but also from the news that the Melanoma was back.

Basically for about six weeks, I spent every day taking long walks along the beach to try to come to terms with what felt like a 'life sentence'. I had always had a close connection with the ocean, and this became a place of peace and safety at a very troubling time. Although I didn't realise it at the time, I had been letting my illness dictate how I would run my life and I was basically just a passenger going along for the ride, expecting my primary care giver, Mum and the other people around me to get me through.

## Message from the CEO



**SolarisCare CEO**  
**David Edwards**

This month's theme of survivorship reminded me of a pertinent incident that occurred when I was working at the SolarisCare offices one weekend. A former SolarisCare patient was at the desk, who explained that she visiting the hospital for a unrelated issue and had been in remission for several years. As she spoke, I could see the emotion triggered by her visit to the hospital. This month's newsletter aims to shine a light on the unique experience of being a cancer survivor that was exemplified by that former patient. Hers is just one story. The evidence suggests that survivorship is extremely complex, and the variations in experiences are vast. For this reason, I am both delighted and humbled that we are able to share two personal stories of survivorship with you from two extraordinary individuals.

According to the Australian Cancer Survivorship Centre, more than 60% of cancer patients survive more than 5 years, and long term survival rates for many common cancers has increased more than 30% over the last 20 years. Whilst I am sure that these statistics are cause for some celebration, survivorship can have as varied effect as diagnosis and treatment on both patients and carers. In 2010, LIVESTRONG, the American based cancer charity founded by Lance Armstrong, surveyed over 3,000 cancer survivors to assess areas of unmet needs. The three key areas of unmet need and associated indicators included the practical matters of money, employment and debt; physical needs such as pain management, concentration, energy and infertility; and emotional concerns of fear and sense of identity.

Emotional needs were the dimension where people felt they received the least support, particularly, fear of recurrence (53%) and grief and identity (46%). These areas appear to be endorsed in the Australian context as well. The key statement that recurred in the LIVESTRONG research was "I had learnt to live with it." Cancer survivors had become accustomed to these unmet needs as part of their lived experience. SolarisCare has a strong commitment to meet patients and carers wherever they are at in their experience of cancer. In addition to our transitional complementary therapy sessions, we are pleased to introduce our new survivorship education program that aims to support patients beyond their medical experience of cancer, and be with people in their journey of what it means to be a survivor.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Clinton Heal and Val Riches for sharing their stories with us this month. Their words inspire and strengthen our understanding, knowledge and empathy of the experience of survivorship.

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## Cancer Survivorship – Living with Hope



**Dr. Anna Petterson**

These days, many people diagnosed with cancer live a long time after their medical treatment has finished. It is often at this time when people realise the impact of cancer on themselves and on their family and friends. Survivorship is about the emotional, physical, practical and social challenges that people might face after their active treatment is over. These challenges vary depending on the type of cancer that was diagnosed and the treatment received.

The idea of being a survivor brings wide-ranging reactions. For many, it is a strong and positive label. However, some people feel it implies that they will struggle to cope. Some may find it difficult to relate to the title of survivor for many reasons, maybe because they believe that treatment was relatively straight-forward compared to other patients. People may refer to

themselves as 'living with cancer' or as someone who had cancer. No matter people feel about the word 'survivor', people find unique ways of moving through this time.

The transition from patient to survivor is different for everyone. Some people consider themselves survivors from the time they are free from signs of cancer (in remission), however for others this may occur when active medical treatment stops. Either way, the question might be, what now?

For some, they may expect life to return to what it was like before their cancer diagnosis, but for many people, it isn't that simple. Those who are attending the new SolarisCare Survivorship Course have shared that the reality of survivorship is often more emotionally and physically complex. Some participants have found that they can't (or don't want to) go back to how life was before their treatment, and struggle to find a 'new normal.' Because of the cancer or due to treatment many find that the after-effects of treatment can make everyday life difficult. These may include fatigue, difficulty sleeping, pain and depression.

Other people find there are positive aspects to having cancer and even refer to the disease as a life-changing experience. Cancer may encourage a re-examination of life choices, and may motivate lifestyle changes (e.g. starting exercise or quitting smoking) or the desire to travel and take up new activities. This shift is often gradual, with changes helping survivors to cope better with their 'new normal.'

Most people find they need time to reflect on what has happened, learn to accept their feelings and consider their future. They are often too busy or unwell during treatment to do this. Most cancer survivors find that they do feel better with time. However, some people are surprised to find that months or even years after treatment, there are periods of feeling down, and this is not an uncommon experience.

Sometimes friends and colleagues may advise survivors to 'think positively.' But this can be difficult and frustrating when dealing with the enormity of what has happened and how life has changed. There is no scientific evidence to suggest that thinking positively has any impact on survivorship, however it will improve your quality of life. Survivors at SolarisCare, say that feeling hopeful helped them to cope through their illness. The next Survivorship Course will be conducted in October giving survivors the skills, support and confidence to take control of their lives.

**Dr Anna Petterson is the Manager of Research and Education at SolarisCare**

### Tips for Survivors

- Assess your life. Ask yourself: Am I doing what fulfils me? Am I doing what I've always wanted to do? What is important to me?
- Focus on each day and expect both good and bad days.
- Do things at your own pace. Avoid pressure to make decisions or start new activities or return to work straight away. Plan 'me' time between activities.
- Exercise, for at least 30 minutes each day. This can be 3 x 10 minute sessions. Build the intensity of your exercise program. Walk a little faster without straining yourself.

## Trish's Jungle Sabbatical

**Patricia Williams has a multifaceted role at SolarisCare. As well as being a part time staff member, she is a member of SolarisCare's Collaborative Research team, sits on the Board of Directors, and also volunteers as a Pranic Healer. All this is in addition to her part time nursing role at Royal Perth Hospital. This month, Trish shares the story of her South American sabbatical with a group of Energy Therapists from around the world. In March, Trish and 30 other guests joined renowned healer Abdy Electriciteh at his retreat space high in the Costa Rican Mountains.**

I arrived in San Jose late in the evening, tired but happy to have my feet firmly on the ground after a 26 hour journey from Australia. I was greeted at the airport by Abdy and his wife Emily and we began our trip to their home in Turriabla. It was a three hour journey through heavy fog, winding mountain roads notorious for frequent landslides and truck drivers playing "chicken" I took a deep breath and held on for dear life.

The next morning Abdy left for the 'Rancho' to finalize details for the retreat. I was delegated to drive their son to school and follow Abdy to the Rancho a few days later. Usually, this is not an unreasonable request. But Costa Ricans have a rather relaxed attitude to road rules: my stress-free holiday was becoming quite a heart-starter!

Abdy's Jungle property is in Guacimo set on the edge of the jungle high in the mountains overlooking the township. Access to the Rancho is only via 4W drive; the road crosses two rivers and is often subject to heavy rains exposing large rocks, providing a very slow and bumpy ride. It was raining when we arrived at the Rancho, and the river was high and very difficult to cross. Abdy assured me if he could pass the river I would also make it. This was not very encouraging to say the least, especially when his wife and children were with me. The car hit rocks and almost stalled but finally made it across. I didn't take a breath until I reached the other side.

We then aimed to rebuild the river before the other guests arrived. Unfortunately, Abdy's excavator was broken and the mechanic didn't turn up. So the next morning we donned our wellies and became human excavators, reshaping the river for easier access. That night, I was asleep before my head hit the pillow.

The Rancho features a decked floor and roof, but no windows, doors or electricity and is completely open to the jungle. Instead of a shower or bath, we washed in the river using bio-friendly soap, shampoo and conditioner. We drank local spring water and had a toilet housed in the jungle. There are four rivers, multiple waterfalls to swim, wash and play in and many jungle tracks and walks to explore. The average temperature was around 22°C during the day, and a bit chilly at night. Wearing rubber boots is very important due to ants, mud and unexpected surprises like scorpions or snakes crossing our path. We woke every morning before 6am to be greeted by the warm sunrise and sound of Howler Monkeys and birds in the distance.

People from many different cultures attended the retreat. They included Medical Doctors from Columbia, an Architect from Iran, a Circus entertainer, Chief and a Midwife from Germany, an Engineer and a Lawyer from Canada, an Environmental scientist from Costa Rica, a Retailer from Israel, a Diplomat from the Netherlands, Nurses and Massage Therapists from Australia and Energy Healers from across the globe.

We had breakfast at about 7am and one simple meal a day at around 4pm. This ranged from an amazing delight of rice, pasta, beans, plantain, yucca, potato, green salad, chicken, fish and whatever else was available locally. During the day we had available pineapple, papaya, banana, bread, honey, tea and any other fruit available locally. Water was collected from a spring on the land. Each day we would trek 2-4 hours to waterfalls and spectacular gorges; equipped with a machete and wellies. I was allocated 'resident jungle nurse' armed with stingose, tea tree oil, bandages, slings, band aids and artery forceps (I like to be prepared). In the afternoon we would offer healings to the locals or each other. There was always plenty of opportunity to relax in the hammocks, read, or be totally captivated by the incredible views. In the evening we would listen to drumming, share stories or have a group healing. We usually drifted off to sleep by 7.30 serenaded by the sounds of cicadas, frogs and the occasional howl of coyotes in the distance.

I left Costa Rica completely rejuvenated... An amazing jungle experience



An amazing jungle experience



## Q & A with Helen Martino-Bailey

**Helen volunteers her time to SolarisCare as a Creative Visualisation Therapist. Helen's is a unique, empowering and restorative practice that patients can use and apply in their daily lives. Helen joined SolarisCare through her sister, Reiki therapist Margaret Papaelias.**

### Describe your journey to the practice of creative visualisation?

When I was about 25 and working as a nurse, I was looking after a palliative patient who was the same age as me with two small children. The primary site of her cancer could not be identified, and she had a lot of fear. One day, petrified, she grasped my hand and asked me, "Is there life after death?" I consoled her, and helped her to find some peace. That moment was the catalyst for my own existential question, and a lifelong journey of inquiry into what life is all about. That incident really challenged the way I nursed and made me seek ways to support people who are facing their mortality.

I began a very profound personal, spiritual and inner search, and I became a very different person. I gave up nursing in '93 to focus on this search and discovered reiki and other complementary therapies, and of course, creative visualisation. I read widely, worked with a variety of teachers and patients and wrote a lot, eventually creating my own practice. I became very sensitive to spiritual guidance, and have a strong desire to share the wisdom and love that I receive with others.



**Helen Martino-Bailey**

### Why is creative visualisation so beneficial for cancer patients?

Creative Visualisation is a practice of empowerment. People aren't given skills in managing life or death, it is not something that is talked about or taught. So when questions of mortality arise, it can cause a great deal of anxiety. Creative Visualisation gives patients the tools to cultivate peace of mind, to replace dread with mindfulness and joy. It is a practice related to meditation and mindfulness, but its point of difference is the use of imagery. I'm drawn to the process, because it is so teachable. It is not something that relies on a therapist, as patients can use what they learn in sessions in their own lives.

Popular Creative Visualisation tends to prescribe or give images to patients. I prefer to work with patients to help them generate their own. This is done through creating nurturing feelings with the patient and allowing them to cultivate and encourage those feelings through images. And it is different for each person. A beach scene may work well for one person, but it may not be as effective or powerful as, say, a forest is for another person.

### Can you describe what a Creative Visualisation session might involve?

I always begin my sessions with a conversation with the patient. I always express upfront that while we may not be able to cure, we can create peace of mind. This allows the patient to cope with the illness, and other challenges life may bring, with strength.

There are six phases in each session, beginning with a guided meditation to encourage relaxation. Secondly, I create imagery for the patient where they are invited to unload their troubles from their mind, as if emptying the rubbish of their heads into a basket, to try and quiet the anxious and judgemental mind. I then talk and guide the patient through the imagery that we created together. I then encourage the patient to find that central place of complete peace, the place that generates those feelings of peace, joy, contentment and utter release. Here, they can let go of tension, and feel a sense of profound connectedness to the universe and their higher selves.

Once this phase of the practice is complete, I ask patients to thank the image because it has brought peace and healing. Gratitude is an incredibly powerful value that truly brings peace to our hearts. Finally, I end the practice by bringing the patient back into the room, encouraging them to ground into the present. Patients leave with a sense of peace and rejuvenation, and with skills that they can use themselves whenever they need.

**For further information about Helen's extraordinary work head to her website [www.lightwords.com.au](http://www.lightwords.com.au)**

## Val Riches - My Story

**Val Riches is a survivor of Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma and currently works as Volunteer Coordinator for SolarisCare at our Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital Centre. This is her story.**

Everyone who has had 'the' diagnosis knows the date. It was 13<sup>th</sup> March 1981, and it was a Friday. Three years previously, my husband and I had moved from our native Sydney to Brisbane. We had 2 beautiful children who were born Queenslanders, but our families had forgiven us that. We were settled and life was going smoothly. And then came Friday 13<sup>th</sup> 1981 and Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, stage 4. Life as I knew it would never be the same.

I had two children under 19 months, I was away from home, my husband had just accepted an engineering position at Mt Newman Mining Company on the opposite side of Australia and I had just been diagnosed with cancer. As the surgeon sat on my bed my first thought was that I would never see my daughter as a bride. Funny what goes through your mind. After the initial round of tests and operations and procedures, the doctor said we could wait in Brisbane for the next development or we could get on with life and handle things when they arose. We took his advice. As far as I was concerned I wasn't sick, I had cancer. So we moved to Newman in WA and I started my first round of chemo. I flew to Perth for check-ups and I chose who in Newman to tell the real reason why. Those Newman friends became my new family.

My original diagnosis was 'at worst a week, at best 15 years.' Our family moved to Perth and I kept on living and working as I normally would. Life went on. 13<sup>th</sup> March 1996 marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my diagnosis, and the school where I was teaching organised a surprise. I was ushered out of my classroom and there stood a Harley Davidson. All the children were lined up on the driveway as a guard of honour as we took off on a ride around Kings Park and the northern beaches. It was a great celebration of life.

2001 saw a severe recurrence of the lymphoma, but I have been lucky as to date have responded well to chemo. In early 2004 my son blessed me with a grand-daughter and in Easter 2005 my daughter married. Then in 2005 I discovered SolarisCare. A friend's sister was a patient and she thought I would benefit as well. That was the start of a fabulous relationship.

***"Some consider cancer a problem. I saw it as the chance to re-assess my life priorities. Society teaches that considering self is selfish. I do not agree."***

SolarisCare helped me so much that when I was able, I offered to give something back. I started doing data entry squirreled away in an upstairs office in A Block at Charlies, when our files were first put on computer in 2006. I then ventured down to the centre on a Monday afternoon where I did Meet & Greet. I wasn't too sure about volunteering at a hospital, only sick people go to a hospital, but after being invited to be part of a Bowen Therapy trial I realised the true value and importance of SolarisCare.

In 2008 a vacancy arose on staff. SolarisCare was expanding and they were looking for a person to co-ordinate the volunteers at Charlies. I had given up teaching with my last round of chemo in 2006 and wasn't yet ready to hang up my boots so I job shared, but after a year I could not continue. Last year I popped into the centre on my way to a check up asking if there was any work going ... and the rest as they say is history!

Over the years I have had 5 courses of chemotherapy, countless scans, blood tests, biopsies and I have lost my hair twice. I won't say it has been easy. I still panic when check-ups fall due even though I have had the most amazing Oncologists and Haematologist looking after me.

Some consider cancer a problem. I saw it as the chance to re-assess my life priorities. Society teaches that considering self is selfish. I do not agree. It is a fine line, but I think it is important we each look after our self and we can do that without being selfish. And that is the key...being true to one's self.

I have grown to see my cancer as an asset. I don't see myself as a survivor, I see myself as a person who lives with cancer. To be faced with one's mortality is a sobering but beautiful thing. My philosophy is to never take today for granted because we can never be sure if there will be a tomorrow. Now is the only reality. To me, it is not why we die ... but how we live.



**SCGH Volunteer Coordinator  
Val Riches**

## Clinton Heal - In the Drivers Seat (continued)

Having heard about WA businessman Ross Taylor's similar experience of living with Metastatic Melanoma for nearly two decades, Mum contacted Ross to see if he would be able to share some of his experiences. Mum woke me up one morning with the idea of going to Cottesloe for the day, and I went along as I knew she was struggling to deal with her son not wanting to leave the house and also it was near the ocean so I reluctantly agreed. Little did I know we were going to Ross Taylor's house, and after a three hour initial meeting with Ross, I can only describe it as having a fire lit inside me and I was inspired to take control of my cancer journey. Ross shared his experiences of using vegetable juicing and meditation to help live well with the same condition, one for which he was given only a 10% chance of beating 20 years ago. I stepped out of that meeting with a new determination to take control of my cancer journey, while still having the support of the amazing people around me. It was as though I took the keys from Mum and asked her to get in the passenger seat, from that point I was driving.

*"It was as though I took the keys from Mum and asked her to get in the passenger seat, from that point I was driving."*

At the start of 2007, I made the decision to withdraw from the WAFL league to play local football for South Mandurah. I was still working full time, playing football and also surfing, but that meeting with Ross had planted the seed of an idea. I started to think about how I could make all the information I had found out about living with melanoma over the past three years public, so that other people could benefit from it at the start of their journey.

Specific Melanoma information just wasn't available to me when I was first diagnosed, and I wanted to make a difference to how others, including carers and families, could deal with this challenge. I thought that maybe a few others could benefit from the two years of research into the condition that I had done since my diagnosis, and the first place to contact was the Cancer Council. Meeting with the Cancer Council WA gave me such optimism and made me realise that there was a place for a Melanoma Support dedicated organisation here in WA, and melanomaWA was born.

The response went beyond anyone's expectations. Within weeks of the melanomaWA website going live in September 2008, we had received dozens of phone calls from those living with melanoma, and their friends and family members. I quickly realised that there was a need for more than just a website, and a support network was started in October 2008, with two groups meeting in Perth and one in the Southwest in 2011, to now where we are planning to start a group in the Wheatbelt.



Clinton Heal

The personal health challenges for me were not over yet, however. 2009 saw ten serious metastatic tumours removed, one located above my left kidney, and another six located in the lining of my heart. These serious health incidents made me realise melanomaWA should become an organisation that went beyond one person, and the group was converted into an association. In November 2010, I was recognised as 2011 Young West Australian of the Year. The award was more recognition for melanomaWA and all the great people involved. The association's current focus is continuing to raise public awareness of Melanoma and its prevention throughout Western Australia, with initiatives such as talks addressing mining and postal workers, schools and sporting groups about how to minimise exposure to the sun. I see this as being a real passion of mine, as I continue to live well with secondary cancer. I missed the boat when it comes to prevention and early detection, and it is my hope through raising awareness of skin and sun safety that the impact of skin cancer is minimised in our communities.

Despite the having 34 tumours removed since being diagnosed, I have not had another reoccurrence since October 2010, and I believe this is directly related to continuing to be proactive about my journey with Melanoma. My next scan is due at the end of this month, and I like all others who have routine scans to check for reoccurrences will be apprehensive. But I understand and am at peace with the fact that I am doing many things in my life, such as healthy diet, meditation and stress reduction to ensure that I am giving myself the best opportunities. I have also felt that being diagnosed with cancer at the age of 22 not need be a death sentence and that you could still achieve goals and have great experiences along the cancer journey. This culminated earlier this year when my partner, Dani and I experienced the birth of our first child, Abbie Grace. I think of my journey with cancer as just like a football game, with many ups and downs along the way, but the only thing that matters is that you are in front at the end of the day!

The Melanoma WA website is <http://www.melanomawa.org.au>



## Around the Centres News, events and tid-bits from SolarisCare Cancer Support Centres

### SOUTH WEST COMMUNITY SUPPORT

SolarisCare South West continues to get wonderful support from the local community, recently receiving \$350 from the Boyanup Red Hat Ladies and \$1,000 from the Dardanup Dance Group. Since Christmas, the local South West Community has supported SolarisCare with donations and fundraising of over \$10,200. Special thanks goes out to volunteers Annie, Christine, Janne, Nanette, NoelMary, Gladys and Ken for all their work at the Dardanup Dance. And warm thanks to Supa-IGA at Bunbury Forum who kindly provide the centre with kitchen and laundry requirements each month.



Therapy on the Beach

### THERAPY ON THE BEACH

SolarisCare Great Southern has had the opportunity to promote its services at two Regional Palliative Study Days, the first being last year in Mt Barker and then Denmark last month. The participants of the Study Day, which included doctors, nurses and other allied health workers, all received a complimentary therapy during their lunch break. There was a hint of rain at the Denmark Surf Club, however it didn't stop the therapy. The volunteers enjoyed the fantastic view, dolphins surfing and the positive feedback about the treatments.

### THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who donated to, supported and helped at the recent SCGH Book Sale. A special thank you goes out to Sue Ntoumenopoulos for services above and beyond the call of duty in organising this event. Thanks to their hard work, Sue's team raised an incredible \$2400.00. And the leftover books from the sale did not go to waste. A representative from the Centre of English Language Teaching at UWA approached Sue to ask what they would be doing with the books that weren't sold. A couple of her students from Africa wanted a variety of English books to send home to start a library in their village. The SCGH volunteers are very happy to advise that all leftover books have found a great home.

### CHRISTMAS IN JULY

92 guests descended on Salt on the Beach in North Fremantle for the recent 'Christmas in July' fundraising lunch. Patrons enjoyed a scrumptious lunch and live entertainment. The event was a joint fundraiser between SolarisCare and the Red Cross and raised \$5,770. The 2012 event marked the 10th Anniversary that volunteer fundraiser Di Watts and her band of helpers have been fundraising. Our thanks to Di and her volunteers and to Salt on the Beach for helping to organise such an amazing event.

### SOLARISCARE IN PRINT

All centres will soon be furnished with a copy of *Perspectives on Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, edited by Cancer Council CEO Ian Olver. The book contains a chapter written by Dr David Joske, titled 'Creating an Integrative Oncology Centre: The SolarisCare Experience.' Congratulations to DJ for his contribution to this superb book. *Perspectives* is a rigorous and thoroughly researched publication that explores complementary and alternative therapies from a wide variety of contributors, including many from the mainstream medical system.

### QUILTING UP THIS WINTER

The very talented quilters from the Canning Vale Craft Group have once again provided SolarisCare with a range of hand-stitched quilts to be given as gifts to our patients. This is the second time these gifted artists have provided SolarisCare with these wonderful gifts. The Canning Vale Craft Group meet once a week with the goal of providing organisations like SolarisCare and PMH with something to brighten their patients' day.



Canning Vale Craft Group Coordinator  
Shane Lambert with the beautiful quilts



## Welcome to The Community Corner

### Dry July Update

SolarisCare's Dry July Champions are keeping the funds rolling in. Our new fundraising hero Jessamy Ham has raised \$380 dollars for SolarisCare, while her Aunt, Volunteer and former Staffer Tracey Brooke has raised \$1520.

Dry July is a non-profit online social community determined to improve the lives of adults living with cancer by raising money through abstaining from alcohol for the entire month. A huge thank you to Tracey and Jessamy for their commitment.

### Phantom of the Opera

Tickets are now available for the **Phantom of the Opera Dinner**, a gala fundraiser for SolarisCare, run by enterprising UWA student and Bunbury expat Emma White. Following the success of Emma's long-table dinner last year, the Phantom Dinner will once again be held in the beautiful Dining Hall of St Catherine's College in Nedlands.

Music and dancing will accompany a sumptuous three course meal, with opportunities to bid and win fantastic auction items. Check over the page for details on how to buy tickets for this wonderful event, with all proceeds going to SolarisCare Cancer Support Centres. A huge thank you to Emma for creating and coordinating this event.

### Carers Course

The next SolarisCare Carers Course is scheduled for 28 July 2012 and will be held at the SCGH centre from 10am—4pm. The course is run by Trish Williams (SolarisCare Staff Member, Pranik Healer and RN), Jill Lawson (SolarisCare Counsellor) and Joan Hutchins (SCGH Oncology Nurse).

These highly experienced facilitators will present information and resources to carers on effective communication, pain and symptom management, medication matters and will also deliver presentations on nutrition, exercise, self care and complementary therapies. All course materials, lunch and refreshments will be provided on the day. For details, please phone

## "I'm not a carer, I just do what needs to be done".

**If you provide support to someone on a regular basis, you are more than just a relative or friend – you are their carer.**

A carer might take a person they support to appointments, helping them through daily tasks, prompting them to take their medication, or doing their household chores. Carers often go unnoticed and unacknowledged because they see it as their duty to help their partner, sibling, parent, child or friend. Carers WA is a non-profit organisation that represents and supports unpaid carers – and one of the ways they do this is through counselling. Carers WA view counselling as a valuable time-out from the caring role where people can talk freely about their experiences and learn ways to manage stress and prevent burn out.



Self-care is not selfish. The professional counsellors at Carers WA are dedicated to helping carers build resilience to continue the caring role, by creating a balance between caring responsibilities and self-care. They do this by getting to know the person, listening to what they have to say in a non-judgmental manner and offering encouragement. The counsellors assist in finding ways to clarify the needs and goals of the carer and develop strategies for coping with stress, conflict, grief and other factors affecting wellbeing. They also provide support during times of transition.

The Carers Counselling Line (Freecall 1800 007 332) is available from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. If you need to speak from a mobile phone, just let them know and they can call you back. Carers WA counsellors also offer free or low-cost (\$5) face-to-face counselling in both regional and metropolitan locations, as well as email counselling and support groups.

Carers WA also offers other support programs for family carers including advice, education and training, social support, a young carers program and carer representation. For more information on any of Carers WA's programs and services, please call 1300 CARERS (1300 227 377) or visit [www.carerswa.asn.au](http://www.carerswa.asn.au).

## Good Guys Give More Than Just 'Token' Support

Graham Tait and his team at The Good Guys Bunbury recently announced that the SolarisCare Foundation will be a recipient of funding from their Local Giving Token Box program for the 2012/13 financial year. The fund raised through this community initiative will help provide services to the community and further develop facilities at our South West centre.



Good Guys Customers will be given a token with every purchase made, and from this, a percentage is given to SolarisCare. So the more tokens placed in the SolarisCare 'chute' the more funds will be raised.

Since 2006, The Good Guys Local Giving Program has raised over \$4 million and has seen more than 150 charity organisations around Australia receive funding towards essential programs, services and grassroots projects.

"In the past we have assisted SolarisCare with the fit-out of their Bunbury premises, so now I am really proud to provide further financial support to this outstanding organisation as a part of our Local Giving Program," said Graham Tait, Proprietor of The Good Guys Bunbury.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

For more information visit The Good Guys website <http://www.thegoodguys.com.au/bunbury/> and remember to place your token in the SolarisCare box.

## Welcome New Volunteers

### SCGH

Joanna Kunumba, Pauline Smith & Elizabeth Rundle  
(All Meet & Greet)  
Chrissy Cush – Reiki  
Laura White - Relaxation Massage

### SJOG

Kim Day, Pam McKay, Ann– Marie Mathews  
& Carolyn Reading (All Meet & Greet)  
Bill McKay - Counsellor  
Barbara Horn - Kinesiology  
Anna Maria Paolino - Music Sound Therapy

### GREAT SOUTHERN

Debbie Bell (meet and greet)  
Joy Metcalf & Sally-Ann Blakers

### SOUTH WEST

Gina Knight (Reiki)



## The PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Dinner

**Saturday , August 25<sup>th</sup> 2012**  
**St Catherine's College**  
**Tickets are \$110 and are available by**  
**contacting Emma White on 0400 787 392**  
**Or online at**  
**<http://www.trybooking.com/25808>**



## **2<sup>nd</sup> SolarisCare Symposium** Saturday 15th September 2012

# Cancer: *"Let's Talk"*

This symposium will talk about key emerging trends in complementary integrated therapies and cancer care, as well as survivorship, living with, through and beyond cancer.

### **Featuring Key Note Speaker**

**Dr David Joske - Chairman SolarisCare Foundation,  
Senior Consultant, Haematology Care Centre SCGH**

Saturday 15th September 2012

Edith Cowan University, Bunbury

9.00am to 5.00pm

(8.30am registration)

Followed by drinks and Canapés

(6.00pm-7.00pm)

For further information please contact

Dr Anna Petterson

[anna.petterson@solariscare.org.au](mailto:anna.petterson@solariscare.org.au)



## July Snap Shots



**Graduates of the  
recent  
Communications  
Course**

**David and Valmai  
visit the new  
Albany Center**



**Christmas  
in July**

**Trish Williams and  
Michelle Hilder at  
Christmas in July**



## SolarisCare Billboard Takes Message Sky-High

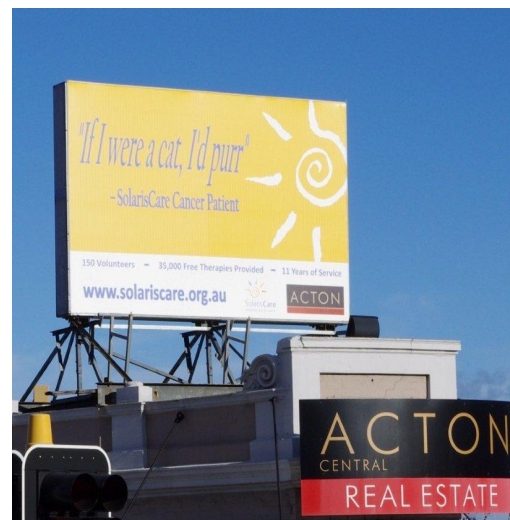
Its very rare that a billboard can bring a smile to your face. However for the month of July one Perth billboard is sending out a *PURR*-fect message.

Thanks to an ongoing sponsorship agreement with Acton Real Estate, SolarisCare now has pride of place over one of the busiest corners in Western Australia with our very own billboard.

The billboard is situated on the corner of Hay St and Thomas Road in Subiaco and features a quote from one of our patients. This promotion will also feature spots in the Western Suburbs Weekly and on Acton's website.

This is the second year this opportunity has been made available to SolarisCare and we are excited to be able to promote our good work in such a prominent way.

So next time you are passing by Hay Street look to the skies and take a look at the SolarisCare Billboard. Special thanks go to John Coleman, Graeme Baxter and all the staff at Acton Real Estate for their support.



**The SolarisCare Billboard on the cnr of  
Hay and Thomas Streets in Subiaco**

## SOLARISCARE CANCER SUPPORT CENTRES

### Sir Charles Gairdner

E Block Ground Floor  
Hospital Avenue  
Nedlands WA 6009  
P: 08 9346 7630  
F: 08 9346 3793

### St John of God

12 Salvado Road  
Subiaco WA 6008  
P: 08 9388 9788  
F: 08 9388 9700

### South West Centre

72 Brittain Road  
Bunbury WA 6330  
P: 08 9791 1559  
F: 08 9791 1558

### Great Southern Centre

Adjacent to Albany Hospital/Hospice  
Diprose Crescent  
Spencer Park Albany WA 6330  
P: 08 9842 9860