



SPRING 2017

PARTNERS

OF THE SAANICH PENINSULA HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

NOT GONE & MOST DEFINITELY NOT FORGOTTEN!

I know that some of you have heard Dr. Ambrose Marsh say he's leaving. It's both true and not true.

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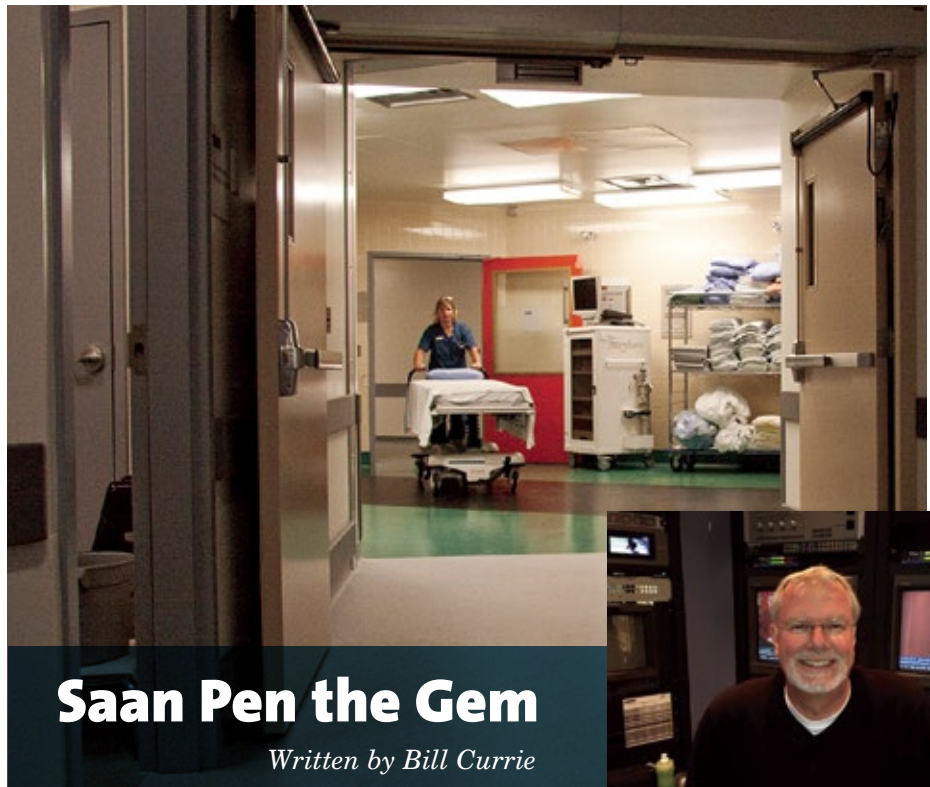
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Saan Pen the Gem

Written by Bill Currie

Sometimes life throws you a curve ball or a knuckle ball. But sometimes, when you least expect it, you'll get that perfect pitch.

That's exactly what I caught recently at the Saanich Peninsula Hospital, a lovely rural facility tucked away on Mt. Newton Cross Road. I say a perfect pitch, because it's a hidden gem of a hospital on the South Island. And that's important when you are going under the knife!

"Saan Pen" as it's affectionately called, is far less traveled than the big boys like the Royal Jubilee Hospital or the Victoria General Hospital. Don't get me wrong, our hospitals are first

class, but when it comes to the measure of a small hospital, Saan Pen delivered a much less stressful experience.

OK I hear you. You figure I am on some pretty good drugs, 'cause after all, who praises hospitals? Well I do, because what happened to me should happen to you. I was fairly anxious heading into my first operation in about 40 years. You see I have a small heart issue and going under the knife with a general anesthetic gave me the willies.

I confess, the part of my anatomy in question was only my right foot in need of reconstructive surgery. True, nothing near any

vital organs, but still, call it human nature, one of the best ways to jack up your heart rate is to walk through a hospital door.

So we did on the morning of October the 11th. But I get a little ahead of myself. My wife, Liz, and I did a quick reconnaissance of Saan Pen a few days before the operation. We were greeted by a lovely lady at the information booth who was very concerned that we didn't pay for parking because it wouldn't take long to get the lay of the land. Got to love small hospitals.

It was a cool autumn morning when we arrived in the dark at 6:45. We headed to the emergency desk because that's where the paperwork begins at this god awful hour. Next, off to the surgical daycare area, a youthful name to describe that your procedure is so routine we ain't keeping you. That sure sounded comforting as we head for first base.

To start me off was a no-nonsense nurse who led me to a curtained-off gurney and gave me a gown that tied up in the back. Well, at least

I got to keep my underwear on, just in case I put the gown on wrong. She inserted an IV plug into my hand, gave me a few pills, and then I was wheeled off to stage two by Greg, a pleasant fellow who swapped thanksgiving stories with me. Rounding second base now, stress still low.

Next up, a chatty nurse named Louise. We find ourselves talking about the beauty of the South Island after some clumsy observation I made about a picture of Lake Louise hanging on the wall. I just had to draw some kind of stupid parallel between her name and the picture. A lame act of a babbling idiot. Ah blame the drugs now. Still everyone is making this experience as painless as possible.

And now the main man whose job it is to make it painless introduces himself as Dr. Chana, an affable anesthesiologist with an air of calm authority. I tell him that nearly 40 years ago I underwent a general anesthetic for a wisdom teeth operation that didn't end well. Oh crap, now I could feel my stress rising and I think he could sense that, too. In no

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Just over a year ago, Dr. Marsh was invited to apply for a new position as Medical Director, Saanich Peninsula and the Gulf Islands. Of course, having made himself the most eloquent and passionate advocate for SPH, he was a natural to take on this wonderful new opportunity. He spent a year doing both his new job and the old

Chief of Staff job (and looking after the patients in his practice!), but in the last few months, has recruited a couple of the new young doctors in the community to jointly take on aspects of the Chief of Staff role.

He's not gone from his (and our) much-loved hospital. His office is still here, he is still passionate about SPH,

but he is also learning (and becoming passionate) about healthcare issues in the community and on the Gulf Islands. We at the Foundation are very happy that our dear friend and colleague is still here, working hard to make sure we all have the healthcare services we need. ■

uncertain terms, the good doctor said “we have come a long way in 40 years and there’s nothing to worry about.” Sounded good to me, after all, where was I going at this stage of the game?

Here comes the big moment. The surgeon makes his way to the patient. Earlier I was informed that Dr. Torstensen was enroute from town, so when we greeted each other I made some feeble attempt at humour, saying something like “I hope you didn’t break any speed limits ’cause Currie is in no hurry.” Straight faced, but kind, he asked how I was doing and said it won’t be long now. (I really should stop that humour thing!)

So in a little over an hour from passing first base to rounding second, I was ripping past third, being wheeled into the OR, a spacious room with machines and computers everywhere, and people milling about making sure everything goes right. What struck me most was those domineering OR lights. They looked like big owl eyes casting an attitude of authority down on me, but in a warm way.

The last thing I remember was being shuffled sideways from the gurney to the operating table, which was no more than two feet wide, with arms that spread out like angel wings. Not a pleasant image at this stage! I made some comment about being too big for the slab while the IV was inserted. Feeling pretty good I took one last stab at humour (I know, I shouldn’t have) by asking the doc if I will be making my two o’clock tee time? Boom, I was out like a light before I even got an answer, if I even did get one, other than rolling eyes.

Three hours later I opened my eyes as I finally knew that I had crossed home plate! Yet another room within the surgical daycare area. I recognized the nurse and told Louise I was feeling fine, no pain. She told me her name was not Louise. Man they looked alike, must be the hospital garb. Anyway, she was very comforting, explaining what comes next and that Liz was on her way to pick up my sorry foot. Again, feeling no stress, drifting on a comforting cloud of drugs.

The recovery room was large but mostly empty except for a lady at the far end who I think had cataract surgery. My eyes were not too good either. And to my right was a pleasant lady who was recovering from her surgery and hoping to catch the afternoon ferry back to Pender Island for her granddaughter’s birthday. I wished her good luck as Liz came in carrying the crutches for me to hobble home.

So there you have it, a small hospital with a big heart and a personal touch that’s often rare these days. A gem of a hospital that often doesn’t get the praise it deserves. Often lost in the shadows of its big brothers and sisters.

Like baseball, as in life, it’s all about the kind of pitches that get thrown at you. Some are good. Some are bad. On this day, I just happened to score a good one that I hit out of the park. Low on stress and high on halcyon. Because small is big when worry takes over. Now how’s that for a little medical magic? ■

Bill Currie is a local writer and you can see more of his work at curriesnotebook.weebly.com

Life as a Caregiver

Imagine that you have set your life course, made healthy choices, found your life partner, had a family, and have seen them on their way. Next comes the time to think about your future with your partner: how you will provide for yourselves going forward, the planning of trips, paying off those big bills and helping your children with their educations. Then, out of the blue, your partner is diagnosed with a serious illness.



This is just a snippet of my story of appreciation—of life, of my partner, of my health and my children’s health—and how to keep going forward knowing that things can change in an instant. This is a new part of my life now; my role as a caregiver.

Many of us don’t think something like this will ever happen to us (or we don’t want to think about it), but we do not choose our future and we must use our resources to gather the strength to move forward. There are so many thoughts that enter your mind when faced with life changing events, and they usually arrive in the middle of the night. When you are an advocate for your partner, your days are filled with helping navigate through the information overload around treatments, medications, financial issues, hospital visits, choices of care, and questions about the possible length of time you have to share together. These are just some of the

challenges that I deal with on a daily basis, but when I feel overwhelmed, I reach out to people and organizations I know have the knowledge, understanding, or compassion to help.

Who am I, you ask? I am your friend, neighbour, co-worker, sister or brother. I am just one of many out there who share the same challenges and want to let you know you are not alone. At the same time, I am the friend, neighbour or co-worker of someone you know dealing with these challenges.

Which brings me to the simple pleasures of life we must enjoy now--lighting that candle when the power goes out, playing cards with family, or taking in a movie with my partner. Cooking delicious meals and enjoying them together or with family and friends is another favoured event. Providing a caregiver a meal, a visit or a simple phone call to let them know you are thinking of them can make a world of difference. There are so many small things you can do or receive to make this difficult time manageable.

The caregiver must also look after themselves, as I have recently discovered. As much as you think you have it all in hand, another curve ball may be thrown your way and you have to make choices for your own health as well... but these are just some of the many challenges of life, as change is constant... and life is good. ■ *Anonymous*

SAANICH PENINSULA HOSPITAL FOUNDATION'S
LAST EVER TEE OFF FOR TECHNOLOGY GOLF TOURNAMENT



JOIN US FOR ONE FINAL RIDE



On *Thursday, June 15th* we'll host our last ever golf tournament. Please join us at the *Cedar Hill Golf Course*. Golf & carts with a shotgun start and Texas Scramble play. There's a Shindig to follow featuring a buffet dinner, auction & prizes for the best Wild West get-up.

See ya' there Partner!

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It's our hospital 250-652-7531 sphf.ca  



SAANICH PENINSULA
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To scan, or not to scan?



Throughout most of my life I was a person who would limit my use of medical services and believed that dealing with issues using a natural approach was best. For example, with my second pregnancy I did not even have an ultrasound, and both of my childbirths were natural.

My life changed dramatically in 2013 when I was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. My life goal evolved to ensuring I maintained my health so I could hopefully spend years with those I love. At the same time, I was immersed in a sea of medical assessments, research and ongoing treatments and monitoring.

Initially, I was fortunate to participate in a clinical trial drug treatment. It was important for me to “help my fellow sisters” through the clinical trial research and provide findings for the medical community. Being on a clinical trial required that I had quarterly monitoring, which included CT scans, EKGs (electrocardiograms), EEGs (electroencephalograms), and other testing. Even though I was diagnosed with a terminal illness, it became even more important to exercise due care in my

decisions, since my health was already compromised. In my research of medical imaging devices, radiation from CT scans is shown to be significantly higher than x-rays, ultrasounds and MRIs.

CT scans were deemed the best option for monitoring my progress and treatment results. I was so delighted to find out that Saanich Peninsula Hospital now has one of the best CT scanners in Canada. With lower radiation exposure and superior imaging, I am so thankful that all of my scans are done at SPH – my community hospital. I am so thankful for this new scanner and the donor support for the community’s best interests and well-being. ■ *Anonymous Grateful Patient*

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN OUR NEWSLETTER?

If there is a story you would like to read, about our hospital or foundation, please let us know. Or, if you would like to contribute as a volunteer reporter or photographer, please contact Donor Relations Manager Renn Bibeau at renn.bibeau@viha.ca.

Focus on strengths

Be a help to others

What is stopping me?

Take action NOW!



Mental Spring Cleaning

What is it about Spring that makes us want to clean house? OK, to be honest, I never want to clean my house....but like most, I appreciate the results. Another area benefitting from an annual mucking out is our heads. Why not also eke out some free space in our grey matter? You know; the space dedicated to fruitless criticism, aka “self-limiting beliefs.” Here are five of the most noxious;

1. I'm not good enough. When we compare ourselves to others and come up wanting, remember: others are also beautifully imperfect. We may focus on their strengths and ignore their weaknesses. Why not afford ourselves the same courtesy? Make notes about what you could do better, and brain storm some small actions for improvement.

2. What will they think? Humans seem to persist in the delusion that we have some control over what others think of us. Accept that we never really know what is going on in someone else's head. The good news: when we think they are judging us, most of the time they aren't thinking of us at all! Instead of “What will they think of me?” ask yourself, “How can I be of service to them?” When our actions come from a place of service, we are too busy to worry about what others are thinking.

3. I shouldn't. These are the unwritten rules we carry around with us that come from family, friends and society. Take a look at what is stopping you. Can you identify where you may be following a “rule” that is obsolete?

4. It's impossible. It always seems impossible until it's done. In the words of Henry Ford, “Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right.” Impossible goals only seem like that because we cannot see the path to get there. That mountain can be summited with a series of small steps.

5. Someday. “Someday” isn't so much a self-limiting belief as a mechanism for procrastination. Don't wait for the time to be perfect. Make an action plan and break it down into small, easily accomplished steps. As the English proverb says, “Where there's a will there's a way” so get excited about your “somedays” and take action right now!

It may seem like a big job, but you can make room for more opportunities and bigger dreams. Now if you'll excuse me I need to get started on my dream of becoming a jazz-singing, fashion-blogging mandolin virtuoso with my own zoo... ■ *Chryseis Green*

Survey Results...

In advance of the strategic planning session this year, Board members and staff wanted to get some feedback on how well we're doing, as well as your perceptions of problems in healthcare delivery. You may have noticed the survey in our last newsletter. There weren't many responses mailed back, so we decided to supplement those responses by adding the survey to our Facebook site in January. Many thanks to everyone who let us know what they think – we take your responses and comments to heart in trying to constantly do a better job for you. Here's what we learned:

In total, 166 people responded to the survey. There was good representation from all areas of the peninsula (and it was roughly proportional to the population of each area). The results seemed to pretty closely match what we know of the age range of our donors. And finally, the majority of those responding (88 or 53%) have been donors for 5 or more years.

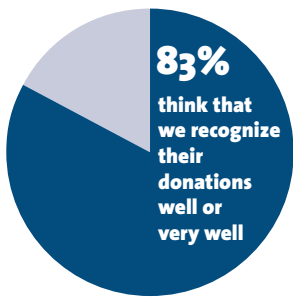


CHART 1 – How well donations were recognized

83% of people who responded (137 responses) think that we recognize their donations well or very well (Chart 1) and 94% (156 responses) think we positively impact the lives of Saanich Peninsula residents (Chart 2). Thank you; that result makes us very proud!

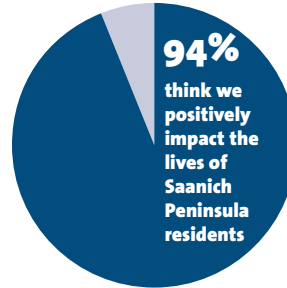


CHART 2 – Does SPHF positively impact peoples' lives?

When asked “What’s the most pressing healthcare problem on the Saanich Peninsula”, there were many responses to this question, but a few things stood out (Chart 3). 42% (69 responses) mentioned the lack of family physicians, even though 95% said they have a family doctor (but 41% use a walk-in clinic when their own doctor is not available).

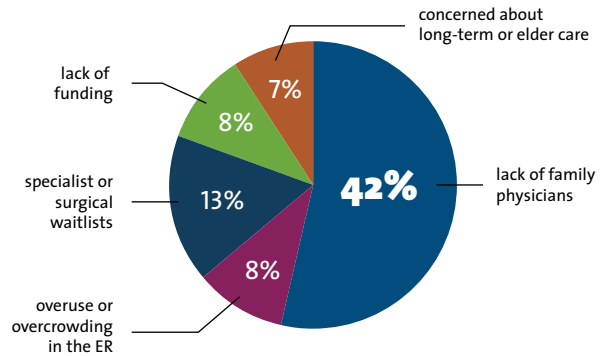


CHART 3 – What’s the most pressing healthcare problem on the Saanich Peninsula?

Many people mentioned overuse of SPH’s Emergency Department in the same answer and another 8% (13 responses) specifically pointed to overuse or overcrowding in the ER as the major problem. Another 13% (22 responses) think the most pressing problem is specialist or surgical waitlists. The perennial problem of lack of funding was mentioned by another 8% (13 responses), while 7% are very concerned about long-term or elder care. ■

Good NEWS

The fundraising efforts of the hardworking ladies and men of the Auxiliary provided a recent major gift to the Foundation in the amount of \$25,000! This donation will go to the ECU Renovation Campaign. Every time you attend one of the Auxiliary events, be it a trip to the gift shop or their famous bazaar, you are contributing to their fundraising endeavours.



We are privileged to have the support of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #37. This organization provided a gift of \$5,000 to our 2016/17 Extended Care Unit Campaign for equipment purchases. Gifts from the Legion's Poppy Fund directly support Canada's Veterans and their families, while ensuring Canada never forgets.

Our Residential Care Campaign is in full swing! Did you know that studies show that activities such as painting, singing, reading and gardening benefit the emotional, mental and physical health of our elders, resulting in alleviated depression, greater retention of cognitive abilities and less need for some

medications? Our current campaign is committed to supporting our Residents in Care to continue enjoying the passions they love. We are happy to report that we are almost there! To date, \$1.5 million has been raised. Thank you for your wonderful generosity!



A huge, two-fold thank you goes out to The Peninsula Singers! One for their wonderful Christmas performance in the hospital's Extended Care Unit. Our residents received a large dose of the festive spirit as they sang along to old favourites or enjoyed a new twist on the carols they have loved. Two for their generous donation! The \$3,000 cheque is the fruit of their 2016 Benefit Concert Series, culminating in December's performance of A Magical Christmas at Mary Winspear Centre. This money will be used to enhance Music Therapy Programs in the Palliative Care Unit.

After posting the video of our "baby shower", which introduced the new "Love and Comfort" therapy program in Residential Care on Facebook, we were thrilled to receive a call from CBC radio to come and chat about this innovation at SPH. Jennifer Wear, the nurse spearheading the project, and Renn Bibeau from the Foundation talked with CBC All Points West host Robyn Burns about both the program and the response to the video (more than 53,000 views so far!). While we can't find the link to that radio interview (but

take our word for it; it was wonderful!), here's a link to the CBC story done afterwards.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/dementia-alzheimers-therapy-dolls-1.3932912>



There is nothing better than being invited to share a toast with the wonderful group of Veterans at ANAF Sidney Unit 302. What an additional joy it is when they make a donation to the Foundation. Their donation of \$5,000 this year has been put towards Extended Care renovations to the unit and garden. We are very grateful for the continued support by this group and we thank you!



Last fall, Karen and Lesley were honoured to accompany long-time donor and volunteer Shelagh Bell to a luncheon at which she received a Valued Elder Recognition Award from the University of Victoria's Centre on Aging. Congratulations Shelagh!



On November 11th, Karen attended the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Sidney and snapped a photo of donor Peter Chance, who at 96 years young still marches with the veterans. It looks like he's blowing Karen a kiss (which wouldn't be unusual), but he's actually raising his arm to salute.



We had a wonderful surprise when Sean Donnelly of TELUS project PureFibre (North Saanich) stopped by the hospital. To celebrate the arrival of this new network, TELUS proudly launched the Fibre for Good programme, which supports communities by giving \$25 to local participating charities, on behalf of residents who switch to Optik TV. Sean presented Board members with a cheque for \$2,875 to support improved programs, better walkways, equipment to help with mobility and family stays - all crucial to enriching the lives of our residents in care. Thank you to our community and to TELUS! ■

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