

# PBC Connections

A Canadian PBC Society Newsletter

SPRING 2007

## Annual Meeting

The Canadian PBC Society Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday, February 21 in Toronto. The President, Beverley Ritcey, presented her report on the year including updates on the previous year's events, memberships, and communications. The auditors from Starr Celeste-Falconeri presented the financial reports.

The event was very well attended and a scrumptious lunch followed the report presentations.

For more details on the President's annual meeting report, presented at this meeting, please contact the main office.

## Canadian PBC Society

### 2007 Executive Board

President.....	Beverley Ritcey
Recording Secretary.....	Shannon MacInnis
Treasurer.....	Barbara Badstober
Membership Secretary.....	Mary Jane Marley
Communications Convenor.....	Doug Hohener
Corresponding Secretary.....	Katherine Fuerst
Archivist.....	Erica Nirenberg
Fundraising.....	Esther Schwartz

Thank you to outgoing members of the Board for 2006 – Carol Pye, Nellie Zonneveld and Louise King for all their on-going support and contributions.

### Regional Coordinators

Atlantic.....	Judi Pemberton
British Columbia.....	Kathryn Swift
Greater Toronto.....	Bonny Kirschner
Northern Alberta.....	Shauna Vander Well
Southern Alberta.....	Monica Grainger

### Advisory Board

Dr. J. Heathcote.....	MB. BS. FRCP. MD. FRCPC
John I. Zeiler.....	Barrister & Solicitor



Elisa, Katherine and Shannon



Erica and Cathy



We have chosen one of Noel Coward's most hilarious and delightful plays – *Blithe Spirit*.

The event will be at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto. Tickets are \$80, which includes premium seating and complimentary glass of wine.

**For tickets, please call 416-440-0917 or via e-mail at [pbcociety@yahoo.ca](mailto:pbcociety@yahoo.ca).** Tickets are limited – so don't delay, book your seats today!

Proceeds for both events go towards the familial studies in PBC directed by Dr. Jenny Heathcote.



## Research

*Excerpt from Dr. Mason's article of the same title published in Heptology Elsewhere October 2006. Published with permission from Dr. Mason, Division of Gastroenterology, Department of Medicine, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta*

### **An Autoimmune Biliary Disease Mouse Model for Primary Biliary Cirrhosis: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

*In an article published in the Journal of Experimental Medicine in May of 2006, it was reported that a new autoimmune biliary disease (ABD) mouse model has been serendipitously created by Bill Ridgway's group as a result of genetically altering a non-obese diabetic (NOD) mouse strain that develops the autoimmune diabetes. In the NOD diabetes model, it was known that certain genetic regions on the mouse chromosomes were responsible for the development of diabetes. In order to prevent the diabetes partial substitution of chromosomes were made. Changes to genes on chromosome 3 to generate a NODc3 mouse resulted in a mild biliary disease and partial substitution of chromosome 4 to generate a NODc4 lead to autoimmunity with self-reacting antibodies. The combined substitutions creating a NOD.c3c4 mouse produced full-blown disease with hepatomegaly, biliary disease, liver failure in 50% of females and 25% of males within a year.*

*The NOD.c3c4 mouse and PBC patients share comparable clinical and autoimmune similarities. Microscopic evidence of biliary disease appears early on in the NOD.c3c4 mice. Furthermore, 55% of the NOD.c3c4 mice make anti-mitochondrial antibodies that are used to diagnose PBC. However, the mice develop additional biliary features that are not found in patients with PBC. Despite these anomalies, however, it is fair to say that the NOD.c3c4 model exhibits the most of the phenotypic features of PBC, with additional frills on the side. No doubt, unraveling the molecular process that promotes the dysregulated growth of the biliary epithelium in the NOD.c3c4 mouse will provide invaluable insight into the pathogenesis of PBC.*

*Another recent report suggests that T cell TGF- receptor II dominant-negative mice can develop spontaneous periportal infiltrates and AMA reactive with PDC-E2, as well. Taken together, these 2 models provide additional support for the idea that deficiencies in immune response may be related to triggering autoimmunity in PBC.*

*In summary, the NOD mouse model has served endo-crinologists well in the study of genetics, immunology, and therapeutics of T1D for many years. The NOD.c3c4 mouse should fulfill the same role for PBC and lead immunologists, geneticists, and even virologists and lead to a better understanding of a poorly understood biliary disease.*

## Regional Meetings

### Atlantic Group

We held four education sessions this year with professional speakers on depression, nutrition, osteoporosis and a 'caring and sharing' workshop in which we brainstormed and shared information on how we have learned to deal with PBC problems such as fatigue, medications and other health/healthcare issues.

We prepared and donated personal care kits to the transplant unit and made donations to the Society's research fund. On-going projects include collection of grocery tapes, book sales and distribution of literature.

### Proposed meeting dates:

**Apr. 16:** 10am - 1pm education meeting Laceywood Dr. Sobey's

**May 30:** PBC Awareness Day activity

**June social:** dinner & theatre/Clay cafe & lunch or dinner

For more information on this group, please contact [jpemberton@pbc-society.ca](mailto:jpemberton@pbc-society.ca)

### Toronto Group

Our Holiday Social, a Sunday brunch, was a great success again this year. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped to make this a terrific event.

We also had a very successful support group meeting, which was a great opportunity to share thoughts on how we can help and support each other. We are planning on inviting several speakers on various topics this year.

**Our next meeting:** March 10, 2007 at 11am - 1pm at 2 Covington Rd., Meeting Room with special guest Dr. Heathcote who will give an update on PBC research. For info contact Bonny Kirschner at [bonkirs@sympatico.ca](mailto:bonkirs@sympatico.ca)

### Alberta – North

We enjoyed a few meetings this past year with all attendees expressing delight in having others with this condition to talk and share with.

We agreed that the focus of our newly founded support group should indeed be – to support and share information. As we grow as a regional group, we will have the numbers required to promote education and fundraising aspects.

For more information on our Alberta North group, please contact Shauna Vander Well at [vwell@shaw.ca](mailto:vwell@shaw.ca)

### Alberta – South

For more information on our Alberta South group, please contact Monica Grainger at [grainge@shaw.ca](mailto:grainge@shaw.ca)

### British Columbia

Our February meeting featured a special guest Johane Drapeau who shared her experience of the transplant process. The meeting and her insights proved very enlightening for all.

If you would like to get involved or further information please contact Kathryn Swift via e-mail at [kswift@pbc-society.ca](mailto:kswift@pbc-society.ca)

## A Special Volunteer

Volunteers have played a vital role for the Canadian PBC Society. We are grateful for the support of volunteers nationwide. Volunteers provide assistance both locally and nationally.

In this issue we'd particularly like to thank George Boudreau, our Webmaster. George began working with our site over a year ago when our volunteer Web Designer resigned from his position.

Although not formally trained in web design, George is a computer guru of sorts with a background in computer programming and software design. He worked in a manufacturing environment and wrote software that allowed people to interface smoothly with their machines and provided custom applications for data extraction/manipulation to fit the customers needs. He is also the co-author on two software projects on-line and contributes occasionally to two other applications.

George donates his time and energy to maintain our site – he posts new events, deletes old ones and even created new interactive forms for new members and donations. He has also helped to create interesting graphics and create announcement banners for the front page. He has been a lifesaver for the Society!

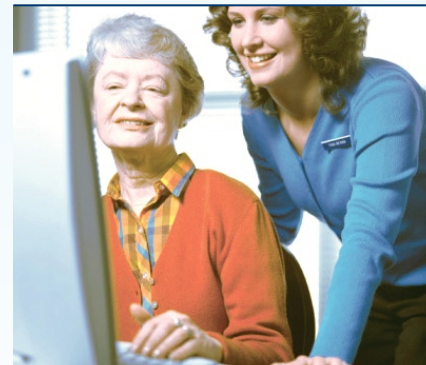


## A Call for Volunteers

Every day, volunteers for the Canadian PBC Society help support others suffering from PBC through regular chapter meetings, educational programs and events and raising funds for research efforts. We also have many volunteers who are involved in the administrative aspects including everything from organizing meetings to stuffing envelopes.

We're currently looking for a volunteer with a background in accounting who understands accounting software. If you're interested in this or any other volunteer position, please contact [info@pbc-society.ca](mailto:info@pbc-society.ca) or call (416) 440-0917.

Thank you to the numerous volunteers that give up your time to help support our Society. It is truly appreciated.



Canadian  PBC Society

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