Welcome to the second edition of the School of Population Health Newsletter!

Our first newsletter was a great pleasure to produce and a big success with lots of positive feedback, so many thanks to all who read it and enjoyed it. We aim to put an issue out every quarter and depend on you to support your Newsletter through interesting, informative and constructive contributions that we will all want to read. Please keep items coming in! Our second issue has some great articles in it too so read on...

Head of School’s message

Dear SPH colleagues

How time flies! It is already time for the second edition of the SPH Newsletter. Much has happened in the last three months as you will read in this newsletter.

The 2008 campaign to recruit teaching-and-research staff to fill gaps in our teaching staff profile was very successful with strong fields for positions at all levels. I am pleased to report that some very good internal applicants were successful in securing more substantive teaching positions and three people from outside UWA were also offered positions. Fortunately all these offers were accepted and all will commence early in 2009. Please convey your congratulations to Dr David Preen and Dr Rachael Moorin who have become full-time (Level C) teaching-and-research staff and also Christine Smith who has a new half-time Level B contract and Ania Stasinska who has a new Level A contract. The three new people who all have appointments at Level D are Dr Fiona Bull (0.6FTE), Dr Yvonne Hauck (initially 0.8 but rising to full-time in 2010) and Dr Niyi Awofeso. Brief profiles of the new people are elsewhere in the Newsletter. These new people will join the School in January 2009 so please make them welcome and facilitate their introduction to the School. In addition, with support from the Vice-Chancellor and a deal with the Business School we were recently able to secure a new half-time Level C health economist (shared with School of Economics) who will probably commence in July 2009. More details will become available later.

These new appointments bring the School’s teaching staff profile and capacity to a level appropriate to the ongoing teaching and research training commitments of the School. Hopefully this will mean slightly lower average teaching loads, less stressed teachers (especially around end of semester and during Summer School), an opportunity for some teachers to take well-earned sabbatical leave, a richer set of unit offerings for students, and maybe even happier students as a consequence.

It is also regrettable that two teaching-and-research staff are leaving the school. Professor Phil Weinstein who, with Dr Angus Cook, established the Ecology and Health Research Group and developed and delivered a range of disease control units such as “Plagues, Pox and Pandemics”, has taken up a position at the University of Queensland. Dr Helman Alfonso-Parada has been with us for three years and has helped deliver epidemiology and research methods units as well as continuing his research interests with the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Group. Helman has taken a position in the WA Centre for Health and Ageing. Both Phil and Helman will retain some links with the School. On behalf of the School I would like to thank them both for their contributions to the school and wish them well in their new positions.

This year the School trialled a Singapore Winter School. I would like to thank Prof D’Arcy Holman for his considerable efforts in supporting and setting up this new endeavour, and all the administrative staff and lecturers who made this possible. Although not a success in terms of enrolments, a lot was learnt from this experience that will help shape further off-shore teaching ventures.

Under the academic leadership of Professor Judith Finn and with strong planning and business support from Dr Peta Tilbrook a new Master of Nursing Science degree has come to fruition at UWA with the first intake of students (Commonwealth supported places) to be in second semester 2009. This initiative is in partnership with Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital and has been strongly supported by the Faculty and also the Vice-Chancellor. This two-year degree will enrol graduates (any discipline) and, through a program of coursework units (some existing but many new) and clinical placements, produce graduates that will have a good grounding in nursing theory and evidence-based practice as well as clinical skills and be eligible for registration as a nurse. The School has a major role in this new initiative and, although much work still remains to be done, it promises to be important new postgraduate teaching program for the School.

The UWA Review of Course Structures has recommended a major overhaul of courses at UWA along the lines of the European and Melbourne University model of 3-year bachelor degree, 2-year master’s degree, and 3-years PhD although the Honours year looks like remaining as well. There will be a simplification to about 6 bachelor’s degrees including a proposed Bachelor of Health. This has considerable implications for the School and Faculty and much effort over the next few years will be devoted to developing the new
course structures which, at this stage, will probably be open to new students in about 2014.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the teaching program coordinators, the teaching administrative staff and all the teachers for successful delivery of teaching programs this year and Deputy HOS Liz Geelhoed who chairs the Teaching Committees and who has done a terrific job both for 2008 and in developing the teaching plan for 2009.

The new Research Committee, chaired by Dr Angus Cook, has got off to a flying start with active and enthusiastic participation by many staff and postgraduate students. Thanks largely to the excellent efforts of PHPS representatives (Fatima Haggar, Nita Sodhi and the PHPS committee) a good selection of research skills development sessions and interesting seminars have been held with an even stronger program planned for 2009. Efforts are also being made to instigate an internal review system for new NHMRC grants (coordinated by Dr Frank Sanfilippo) and to coordinate and enhance journal clubs. It is also very pleasing to see several research staff from SPH participating in the “On Track” development program.

A new package of awards, rewards and prizes to acknowledge, support and stimulate a higher level of research performance has been developed by the School Executive and recently announced. Some are available immediately and others come on line in 2009. Please give due consideration to this package and use it to improve your research performance. While on the topic of research performance I would like to congratulate all grant winners in 2008 but specifically acknowledge two up-and-coming researchers, Dr Min Zhang and Dr Tom Briffa, who played major roles in (separate) successful NHMRC project grants in the 2008 round.

The School has formed a Strategic Planning Drafting Group (convened by Professor D’Arcy Holman) that has a brief to develop a draft new plan for the school. A big thank you to all the individuals who agreed to serve on this important committee and undertake the extensive and comprehensive discovery and analysis process to formulate candidate priority directions for consideration by the school and stakeholders. We look forward to the Group’s findings and candidate directions.

Professional Development Reviews (PDRs) are a good opportunity to discuss duties, roles, clarify expectations, get feedback on performance, discuss training and development opportunities, and discuss promotion and career plans with your supervisor. If you are due to have a PDR in 2008, and have not already done it, please arrange for it to occur early in 2009. Most participants find it a very useful experience.

After six months as HOS I have come to really appreciate the efforts and support of the administrative team (Peta Tilbrook, Annette Stewart, Diane Valli, Fiona Maley and Denise Bracken) who do an excellent and professional job managing our affairs and supporting me and Liz Geelhoed as HOS/DHOS and all the teachers and researchers. Thank you!

The year 2008 is now almost over and the festive season has begun. Please use this period to have some rest and relaxation, re-discover your family, friends and hobbies, and come back invigorated for 2009.

Season’s greetings, best wishes and have a great start to 2009.

Matthew Knuiman
School Manager’s message

So, the festive season is upon us again and all I can wonder is where did the year go?...I’m not ready to finish it yet! From Admin’s point of view, it has been a very busy, full on year and I must express my appreciation of the fantastic effort from all the team.

Since Annette slotted into SPH so nicely whilst allowing me a holiday in France, the school decided to then poach (sorry Bob) her as Senior Admin Officer....funnily enough it took a long time to extract her from HR.... She has since unravelled many a knot from my tangles of paperwork and added a sense order to everything; its great knowing I have a backup now in HR and budgeting., more holidays for me! Actually, I will be off in the last week of January, enjoying a week at Rotto. Coincidently, Annette too will be at Rotto the same time.

Denise was our other new face this year and she slipped into her accounts role in the office very quietly (well she had no voice for a few weeks there), Despite coming in at the deep end, Denise leapt head first into intensive Peoplesoft training and is now a full book on it and all its sundary delights. Denise’s time in research grants office in NZ has also paid off for us with her knowledge of rules and regulations for grants and auditing.

Di has done a great job of keeping staff and students on the straight and narrow of deadlines, submissions, timetables and exams. Added to her task list this year (apparently?), was a daily count down to Beijing Olympics for the first half of the year. Then just because being there was not enough, Di decided to make a noted exit by collapsing into the arms of Steve Monegetti at the Beijing airport...(for those too young to know, he was a great marathon runner). Its good to have her back fully on deck now after a few months of extra sleeping. Strangely though, in the last week or so, mystery ailments have started hitting Di again as 22 boys in white, playing with a bat and ball on big grass oval call loudly to her. (**Note to school - teaching admin officer and school manager may be found at said big grass oval next week). Other than Di's short absence next week, she will be back on board at the beginning of the year.

Fiona adds a sense of style and fashion to the front office; cultural conversations now join in with the sport talk of Eagles and cricket scores. As the school ‘caterer’, Fiona recently conquered the art of coffee making and sandwich ordering for the most important part of Summer School, the food. Admin won’t be the same next week without the bubble of coffee brewing and vast numbers of chocty biccies on tap. Seriously though, Fiona has done a great job in organising Summer School and also in the role of marketing and PR, despite the delightful InDesign program that she spends hours muttering over. The results of her efforts are already starting to show - the recruitment campaign for the new Nursing course has just started and already we have 46 interested students! Fiona will be enjoying a well deserved holiday and jetting off to Vietnam for a month’s holiday until the end of January.

It is at this point that I must mention Josh, our (or rather Fiona’s) boy Friday. Josh has been helping us in Admin for a while now and has done an enormous amount of work alongside Fiona with website and advertising. Sadly for us, Josh has finished his law degree and got a real job on the Terrace in town, congratulations go to him from all of us. I suppose though that we may still see him around the school at grant time helping Judith...

Speaking of nepotism, a big thanks also goes to the casuals who helped sort through the tonnes of expired archival materials and junk in the school and storage cages. Rachel (niece) and David (Andrea’s brother), along with help from a friend or two, plowed through hundreds of boxes and filing cabinets to bring order to the chaos.

And then there are the the IT boys. Whilst Dino left us, Bernie joined us and Lindsay has been with us all year, sorry to clump you together guys but as a team you continue to do a great job in handling the mystery of computers for all of us. No question is too dumb and your patience is extraordinary...oh so you have turn the power on...

And now the boring part.....money... Well, we all know UWA will be a bit short on funds and so we won’t be getting any more money than last year and it may be less etc etc..we are still waiting for our allocation to be determined. Our accounts this year will end in the red, but for a positive reason - we paid off the SRC debt. We are now debt free in the research accounts! The other great news is Faculty and the VC have supported the new Nursing degree with a few $ to see us through the beginning stages. 2009 looms as an interesting year for us all with new staff, courses, students etc.

Finally, I must thank all the other staff and students in the school for keeping us entertained, employed and busy (okay, yes the India trip kept us a bit too busy there for a while) and wish everyone a merry Christmas or happy ‘shutdown’.

Peta
New staff:

We will be welcoming new teaching staff in January 2009

**Fiona Bull**
Fiona has an MSc from Loughborough University in the UK and a PhD from UWA (public health and human movement). From 1997 to 2000 she was a post-doctoral research fellow in Public Health at UWA and since then has held a position in the Centres for Disease Control in the USA and is currently Director of the National Centre for Physical Activity and Health at Loughborough University in the UK. Fiona has considerable experience in physical activity, health promotion and chronic disease prevention and it is wonderful to have her back in the School in a 0.6 FTE position. She will also continue her Loughborough position part-time.

**Dr Yvonne Hauck**
Yvonne has MSc and PhD degrees in nursing from Curtin University and Edith Cowan University respectively. She has several years of clinical experience in maternal and child health nursing and 20 years experience as a university teaching and research academic mainly in nursing schools/ programs. She has expertise in nursing theory and practice, qualitative methods, foundations of public health, and evidence-based clinical care. She leaves a position of Associate Professor at Curtin University to join us in January 2009.

**Dr Niyi Awofeso**
Nyi has MBChB and MBA degrees from Nigeria and MPH and PhD degrees from the University of New South Wales. Nyi has a broad range of experience as a public health practitioner and academic through medical and public health officer positions as well as teaching positions in Nigeria and Australia. He has experience in infectious diseases epidemiology and control, prisoner health, and effective health care management and administration and has also published on historical, sociological and cultural dimensions of population health. He leaves a position in the NSW Department of Corrections and lecturer at UNSW to join our School in January 2009.

**New CBEH staff: Lisa Bayly**
Lisa graduated from Phillip Institute of Technology with a BAppSci (Human Movement) and from Curtin with a Postgrad Diploma in Health Promotion. Involved in government PH projects for over 13 years, Lisa has a special interest in community-based physical activity programs. She previously worked with the Eastern Perth Public & Community Health Unit as the Health Promotion Coordinator, the South Metropolitan Public Health Unit as the Research & Evaluation Coordinator and the Department of Education and Training as the Project Manager for the whole of government physical activity strategy in schools in WA. In 2001-2 she was seconded to ECU to lecture in the School of Public Health. After a year with the Centre for Genetic Epidemiology & Biostatistics, she recently joined the CBEH as Research Manager for the group.

Congratulations!

Alison Reid has completed her PhD!  
Title “The Health Outcomes of Women Exposed to Blue Asbestos at Wittenoom”

Annemarie de Vos has completed her PhD!  
Title “Respiratory health effects of occupational exposure to bushfire smoke in Western Australia”

Scott Carver has completed his PhD!  
Title “Dryland salinity, mosquitoes, mammals and the ecology of Ross River virus”

Achievements:

**Awards**

Deacons Prize in Intellectual Property: D’Arcy Holman

He will receive his prize at a Murdoch University award ceremony in March 2009.

PHA Award for Academic Excellence
Hayley Christian (nee Cutt) graduated with distinction in September and was awarded the PHA Award for Academic Excellence.

**Award of PhD with Distinction:**

Max Bulsara
Max Bulsara Max’s doctoral thesis, “Epidemiology of severe hypoglycaemia in children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes”, has now been recognised as achieving an extremely high standard of scholarship through the award of the PhD “with distinction”. There are very few PhDs with distinction awarded by UWA, so please congratulate Max on his outstanding achievement. While doing his own thesis, Max has co-supervised Gavin McCormack, Lisa Wood and Karen Villaneuva and also being heavily involved with the Centre’s TREK study. We’re very fortunate that Max has been willing to help others so much, while trying to finish his own thesis.
Achievements:

Awards

Healthway Excellence in Health Promotion Awards: RESIDE

In October 2008, two projects from the Centre for the Built Environment and Health were nominated as finalists in Healthway’s Excellence in Health Promotion Award.

In the category, ‘Health Promotion Research (Project grants focusing on capacity building)’ former PhD student of the group - Dr Gavin McCormack - was a finalist for his PhD project and in the category ‘Health Promotion Projects targeting priority health issues or priority population groups,’ the RESIDE project was a finalist and won this category. The RESIDE project is now in its sixth year - with the collection of 5000 surveys over 6 years, an extensive GIS data base, a survey of over 2000 public open spaces and audits of local streetscapes - it has been a huge endeavor, with sustained input and commitment from a large group of people over many years. The project has had many staff working on it including four different coordinators (two of whom have gone on to do PhD’s with the group - Hayley Christian, Jacinta Francis, Claire Ruxton and Rosie Barnes), a number of research assistants (including Andrea Lange), a number of GIS analysts (including Bridget Beesley and Nick Middleton), and numerous telephone interviewers (Judy Maloney, Carole Steggall, Leslie Ramsay, Sue Broadfoot). It has provided work experience to a large number of health science students and hosted projects for five PhD students (Hayley Christian, Ryan Falconer, Sarah Foster, Jacinta Francis, Paula Hooper), one Masters student (Vince Lernihan, a health science graduate) and three honours students (two from the School of Earth and Geographical Sciences - Gary Chin, Thomas Leong; and Andrea Nathan, a former health science graduate). Four post-doctoral fellows have also worked on the project (Dr Terri Pikora, Dr Gavin McCormack, Dr Nik Medic and Dr Anura Amarasinghe (through the Eco-RESIDE project)).

The project has had funding from Healthway and the Australian Research Council through a Linkage group. The project has had input and commitment from a large group of people over many years. The project has had many staff working on it including four different coordinators (two of whom have gone on to do PhD’s with the group - Hayley Christian, Jacinta Francis, Claire Ruxton and Rosie Barnes), a number of research assistants (including Andrea Lange), a number of GIS analysts (including Bridget Beesley and Nick Middleton), and numerous telephone interviewers (Judy Maloney, Carole Steggall, Leslie Ramsay, Sue Broadfoot). It has provided work experience to a large number of health science students and hosted projects for five PhD students (Hayley Christian, Ryan Falconer, Sarah Foster, Jacinta Francis, Paula Hooper), one Masters student (Vince Lernihan, a health science graduate) and three honours students (two from the School of Earth and Geographical Sciences - Gary Chin, Thomas Leong; and Andrea Nathan, a former health science graduate). Four post-doctoral fellows have also worked on the project (Dr Terri Pikora, Dr Gavin McCormack, Dr Nik Medic and Dr Anura Amarasinghe (through the Eco-RESIDE project)).

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The last year, NHMRC funded an economic evaluation of the RESIDE project and in the category ‘Health Promotion Research (Project grants focusing on capacity building)’ former PhD student of the group - Dr Gavin McCormack - was a finalist for his PhD project and in the category ‘Health Promotion Projects targeting priority health issues or priority population groups,’ the RESIDE project was a finalist and won this category. The RESIDE project is now in its sixth year - with the collection of 5000 surveys over 6 years, an extensive GIS data base, a survey of over 2000 public open spaces and audits of local streetscapes - it has been a huge endeavor, with sustained input and commitment from a large group of people over many years. The project has had many staff working on it including four different coordinators (two of whom have gone on to do PhD’s with the group - Hayley Christian, Jacinta Francis, Claire Ruxton and Rosie Barnes), a number of research assistants (including Andrea Lange), a number of GIS analysts (including Bridget Beesley and Nick Middleton), and numerous telephone interviewers (Judy Maloney, Carole Steggall, Leslie Ramsay, Sue Broadfoot). It has provided work experience to a large number of health science students and hosted projects for five PhD students (Hayley Christian, Ryan Falconer, Sarah Foster, Jacinta Francis, Paula Hooper), one Masters student (Vince Lernihan, a health science graduate) and three honours students (two from the School of Earth and Geographical Sciences - Gary Chin, Thomas Leong; and Andrea Nathan, a former health science graduate). Four post-doctoral fellows have also worked on the project (Dr Terri Pikora, Dr Gavin McCormack, Dr Nik Medic and Dr Anura Amarasinghe (through the Eco-RESIDE project)).

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Awards

Endeavour Research Fellowship: Min Zhang

The Deputy Prime Minister has announced that Dr Min Zhang is the 2009 recipient of a prestigious Endeavour Research Fellowship.

“These awards are the Australian Government’s internationally competitive, merit-based program providing high-achieving individuals with support to undertake research collaboration in areas of shared interest between the people of Australia and the Region. The Awards aim to develop mutual understanding and foster enduring linkages between individuals, organisations and countries; and the small number of awardees become members of the Endeavour Awards Alumni Network to assist them to maintain the cultural and educational links made during their awards.”

With the recent success of her NHMRC project grant, Min is now the Director of the Lu Cha (green tea) Sino-Australian Research Collaboration. The NHMRC will fund a $1 million multi-centre program of causal pathways research in China’s Zhejiang and Laoning Provinces, using genetic biomarkers related to green tea metabolism. Her Endeavour award will enable her to commence the other half of the original vision for Lu Cha by instigating a second arm focussing on green tea intervention research. Min’s Endeavour project is a placebo-controlled RCT of green tea polyphenols, serum hormone levels and mammographic density.

After some early disappointments, it’s been a slog for Min (and her collaborators, including Max Bulsara, Frank Sanfilippo and myself in the School, as well as Michael Millward and Christobel Saunders from Medicine and Surgery) to get to the point where we have a multi-faceted international research program with China, on green tea and cancer control, as a major going concern in to the future. At this point in the history, therefore, I want to give special acknowledgment to Dr Min Zhang for her determination and perseverance during the more difficult times that preceded these stellar funding outcomes. The next step will be to secure additional funding for a placebo-controlled RCT of encapsulated green tea extract in Western Australian breast cancer patients. With Christobel’s assistance, we are also welcoming surgeon, David Ingram, to the Collaboration, who plans to supervise lab-based studies as an adjunct to the trial, supported by funds from a private benefactor.

Please join me in congratulating Min.

by D’Arcy Holman
Achievements: Publications

Please see the end of the newsletter for the full list of publications to date for SPH for 2008.

Achievements: Teaching Internships

Please join me in warmly congratulating 3 students who have been awarded Postgraduate Teaching Internships for 2009. The recipients are: Fatima Haggar, Manonita Ghosh and Nita Sodhi. The quality of applications for these internships is excellent, so our students are to be highly commended.

by Liz Geelhoed

Achievements: Grants won

NHF Grant-in-Aid
Monitoring population trends in incidence, medical care, and survival in persons hospitalised for heart failure
Judith Finn, Joseph Hung, Leonard Arnolda, Elizabeth Geelhoed, Ian Jacobs, Matthew Knuiman.
$136,000 for 2009-2010.

NHMRC Project Grant
The real and changing atherothrombotic disease burden
Matthew Knuiman, Thomas Briffa, Paul Norman, Joseph Hung, Elizabeth Geelhoed, Peter Thompson.
$489,000 for 2009-2011.

NHMRC Project Grant
Green tea and cancer prevention
D’Arcy Holman, Xing Xie, Min Zhang, Yunpeng Liu, Xiaoying Zhao, Max Bulsara
$913,288 for 2009-2014

NHMRC Project Grant
A case control study of environment and breast cancer
Lin Fritschi, Jane Heyworth, Christobel Saunders, D Glass (Monash University), T Erren (Cologne University)
$776,975 over 2009-2011.

Cancer Council of WA Early Career Investigator Grant
Cancer in the Adolescent and Young Adult Population: Incidence, Survival and Patterns of Care in Western Australia from 1981-2007
Kristjana Einarsdottir, Fatima Haggar, Max Bulsara, David Preen, D’Arcy Holman
$24,860 for 2009

UWA Research Development Award 2009
Green Tea Polyphenols and Serum Hormone Level and Mammographic Density: A Pilot Study of Placebo-Controlled RCT in Healthy Women
Min Zhang
$17,175 for 2009

New research stimulus package announced

As a means to stimulate and encourage a higher level of research performance the School executive has devised a package of prizes, awards and rewards.

The details are in the attached document. I encourage all academic staff to read this carefully.

Some schemes are administered through the usual collection of publications etc and others require a specific nomination or application.

Some are available immediately whilst others commence in 2009 (and are based on 2008 performance).

Note that the NHMRC/ARC grant application support awards are AVAILABLE NOW for applications to be submitted in Feb 2009.

The application form for travel support will be distributed soon.

If Kevin Rudd can have an economic stimulus package then SPH can have a research stimulus package!

by Matthew Knuiman
Milestones

RESIDE Project

On the 21st November, RESIDE passed an important milestone when the last follow-up phone call was made and the final questionnaires were received back from participants. The data collection phase of the project is now officially completed. RESIDE study participants completed three questionnaires over five years and the final questionnaire achieved a 68% response rate. This was a sterling effort, given the intensity of the data collection, which involved three long questionnaires and the collection of pedometer data over a week. To mark the occasion, the RESIDE team have had a number of celebrations and enjoyed glasses of wine and champagne to thank the data collection team, to celebrate the end of the data collection and to farewell Rosie Barnes - who left C-BEH last week, before heading off to India on the School’s India field trip.

It’s hard to maintain momentum on such a big project for such a long time - thanks to everyone involved (and to Professor Fiona Bull who came back earlier in the year and helped pick up the loose ends while I was in the US, to get RESIDE to the final stage). Carole Steggall celebrating the last call to a RESIDE study participant.

by Billie Giles-Corti

Conferences and travel

Medical geology gets a high profile at the IGA Conference in Oslo

In August, Professor Phil Weinstein and Dr Angus Cook attended the International Geological Conference in Oslo. A number of symposia were dedicated to the emerging topic of Medical Geology, which assesses the impacts of geologic materials and geologic processes on animal and human health. An important step in elucidating the role of geological processes and health is to facilitate cooperation among geologists, environmental scientists, and medical specialists (including epidemiologists) to characterise the properties of geogenic contaminants, their dispersal, and the toxicological pathways of elements that are transported.

Phil was invited to give one of the keynote lectures on the theme of “Human health and the Environment”. His topic was Cultural evolution and water-borne exposure pathways. Toxins of geological origin have contaminated human water sources since well before the first modern humans appeared over 200,000 years ago, but the nature and intensity of the resultant disease burden has changed dramatically with cultural evolution. Early Homo sapiens were hunter-gatherers, and directly dependent on resources in their immediate environment: Exposures therefore included toxins like fluoride in the only surface water sources available, leading to acute and chronic toxicity. After the advent of agriculture, this disease pattern changed dramatically to one of trace element deficiencies: For example, where meltwater leached valley soils heavily, iodine deficiency was chronic, and cretinism became endemic in entire agricultural communities. Finally, following the industrial revolution, a new set of water-borne exposures became possible, this time anthropogenic: Mercury in Minamata bay is one well know example, and more recently, the poisoning of millions through wells driven into arsenic laden rock strata in Bangladesh. From this historical perspective, it is clear that water has always provided an exposure pathway through which the geological environment has affected human health. However, the global disease burden from such exposures is now greater than at any time in human history, highlighting the urgent need for a Medical Geology approach to solving these multidisciplinary problems.

Angus was an invited speaker on the topic of Geogenic dusts and health: Defining the risks from a medical geology perspective. This presentation reviewed the health effects of exposure to natural dusts of geologic or geochemical origin. The sources of these dusts are diverse, including volcanoes, dust storms, long-range transport of desert dust, and displacement through natural processes such as landslides and earthquakes. Estimates diverge greatly in terms of the total quantities of dust transported, although recent papers place annual volumes at over 1 billion tons from the main...
African deserts alone. Anthropogenic influences (such as from farming and irrigation) have contributed to dust formation by enhancing the process of desertification, with losses of over 10 million hectares (~29 million acres) of farmland per year. The principal elements and compounds that pose risks to human populations are trace metals and metalloids, radioactive elements, fluoride, silicates, natural asbestiform compounds, and alkali salts. The pathways by which such agents affect health are diverse, and dust-borne contaminants may be transported through water, air, soil and the foodchain. The understanding of dust effects in more generalized, population-level context remains poorly characterized for many compounds, and there are ongoing limitations in undertaking health surveillance in vulnerable communities.

by Angus Cook

IGC “Themes of the Day”: Monday, August 11
Water, Human health and the Environment

Cultural evolution and water-borne exposure pathways
Philip Weinstein and Angus Cook

Abstract: Toxins of geological origin have contaminated human water sources since well before the first modern humans appeared over 200,000 years ago, but the nature and intensity of the resultant disease burden has changed dramatically with cultural evolution. Early Homo sapiens were hunter-gatherers, and directly dependent on resources in their immediate environment: Exposures therefore included toxins like fluoride in the only surface water sources available, leading to acute and chronic toxicity. After the advent of agriculture, this disease pattern changed dramatically to one of trace element deficiencies: For example, where meltwater leached valley soils heavily, iodine deficiency was chronic, and cretinism became endemic in entire agricultural communities. Finally, following the industrial revolution, a new set of water-borne exposures became possible, this time anthropogenic: Mercury in Minamata bay is one well-known example, and more recently, the poisoning of millions through wells driven into arsenic-laden rock strata in Bangladesh. From this historical perspective, it is clear that water has always provided an exposure pathway through which the geological environment has affected human health. However, the global disease burden from such exposures is now greater than at any time in human history, highlighting the urgent need for a Medical Geology approach to solving these multidisciplinary problems.

by Phil Weinstein

All in a day’s work

Now well into the fieldwork phase of his PhD, SPH doctoral candidate Peter Buzzacott was hard at it during the month of November at the Rowley Shoals, one of the world’s most pristine dive destinations, located 300kms NW of Broome. This remote atoll wilderness is renowned worldwide for the quality of its coral reefs, great visibility, 30-degree water, curious turtles and the number of sharks that circle visiting divers. In addition to not getting eaten, Peter collected over 500 depth-time dive profiles from recreational divers as well as data on water temperature, air-consumption and diver demography. Having previously made around 1500 scuba dives in many countries Peter describes this trip as “without doubt the best diving I’ve seen so far.” Interested colleagues will find a short music video of Peter’s trip at http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=X7qnQy3JXUE  Pictured is Peter (in yellow) amongst the first of three groups of divers he accompanied to the atolls. By sea from Broome the trips took 18 hours each way.

by Peter Buzzacott
INVOKEd in the UK

I recently travelled to the UK to attend and present at the 6th National INVOLVE Conference on Public Involvement in Research - getting it right and making a difference. INVOLVE is a National Health Service support unit which facilitates and supports consumer involvement in health research.

This is the third INVOLVE conference that I have attended. Researchers and consumers alike have shown a great interest in our journey at the School of Population Health and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research to increase consumer and community participation.

My presentation was an overview of the work undertaken over the past decade at the School and the Institute. This work has included the establishment of the Consumer and Community Advisory Council, the development of a variety of models of participation which has included establishing community reference groups and the Involving People in Research Symposium held earlier this year. At the conclusion of my presentation I distributed copies of the book written in collaboration with UK Consumer Advocate Bec Hanley on our consumer and community participation experiences. This book, which is now linked to several university teaching programs in the UK is also available on the INVOLVE website (www.invo.org.uk).

It is very rewarding to have the opportunity to attend this conference because it presents the unique experience of hearing from researchers, consumers, health professionals and funders about the successes (and trials) of working together. It was very gratifying this year to be able to really contribute to that learning by sharing some of our successes and talking about our future plans to continue increasing consumer and community participation at the School.

By Anne McKenzie

India Trip for BHSc

The Bachelor of Health Science students and staff who undertook the field trip to India, donated 53,000 rupees ($1,658) to the NGO BIRD-K, which will allow them to construct a rainwater and groundwater supply and also install ecosan toilets at the school in Kanagamakalapalli in the Bagepalli Taluk, Karnataka. This school has had no toilets or a water supply since the school was constructed 10 years ago and the villagers and school was very moved by our donation. We commenced digging the foundations for the rainwater tank and the trench for the ground water pipeline on the day we visited this village.

There will be a plaque acknowledging this donation, the students and UWA.

There was a very expressive article in the local paper- in Telugu- we haven’t the exact translation but the first few sentences were along the lines of “in some parts of the Bagepalli Taluk, there are birds chirping - beautiful birds from Australia here to do work on rainwater harvesting, and also create awareness to rural people as well as study human health. . . “

Even with the shortened time period, the trip was a fantastic learning experience for the students and they were able to gain first hand experience of many public health issues as well as develop cross cultural awareness/communication. Our students got to see PH at the coal face every day, and experienced the breadth and interrelatedness of aspects of public health including water, waste, air, food, nutrition and health. The objective of the trip was to promote rainwater harvesting in the villages around Bagapelli, Karnataka. In these villages, the groundwater supply is contaminated with high levels of fluoride. While low levels of fluoride are protective against dental caries, high levels lead to dental and skeletal fluorosis. The students could see evidence of these effects with brown staining common in the teeth of village children. Rainwater harvesting provides a safe alternative water supply.
Returning students Gemma Rosato and Vicky Gray say that “while the work was confronting at times, they would strongly encourage other PH students to take the opportunity to see PH in another culture”. Vicky says that they were able to put into action the public health they had learnt during their degree, getting involved in the process at grassroots level and seeing the importance of developing community awareness when implementing public health interventions.

Students experienced very basic accommodation, cold water bathing, waste disposal and sanitation as well as cultural aspects and differing priorities. The differences in priorities, with importance placed on fatal diseases and little done on preventative health, were highlighted, where few toilets were available or used yet everyone had mobile phones. Malaria and TB were the most common illnesses, and were managed in village, HCW employed to ensure proper treatments. Mosquito-borne viruses chikungunya and dengue were also a problem in India, but the group saw a general sense of wellbeing with vibrant people and lots of positive health.

The terrorist attacks in Mumbai were very tragic, and while we felt safe in the villages in the Bagapelli region, we would not have felt secure in Fort Kochi, especially with the Volvo Boat Race on at the same time as our visit. We would like to thank the School wholeheartedly for its support and efforts in getting the group safely out of India. Peta reorganised each itinerary plus communicated regularly with all parents. It was very reassuring to receive the daily telephone calls from Billie and Peta.

The trip tshirt contained a quote that said it all: “We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures that we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open” (Jawaharlal Nehru)

by Dr Jane Heyworth
Workshop: Survival Maths

Planning to do a unit like Biostatistics that requires scientific calculator skills? Got a big project research planned with lots of analysis? Can’t remember how to use your scientific calculator? Forgotten all your high school maths? Just want a jump-start?

Do our Survival Maths workshop!
Learn or recapture your mathematics skills in a supportive and patient environment. Build your confidence and get ahead of the game in time for first semester 2009.

Course content
- Addition, subtraction, multiplication & division
- Inequalities, absolute values & percentages
- Indices (or powers)
- Terminating & recurring decimals
- Special numbers: e and π
- Logarithms
- Order of operations
- Significant figures, rounding & scientific notation
- Pronumerals
- Statistical pronumerals
- Substituting into expressions & formulae
- Substituting into formulae with symbols
- Using calculator memory
- Solving equations
- Summation & multiplication symbols
- Calculator statistics functions

Survival maths will cover basic mathematical skills and scientific calculator use prior to postgraduate Biostatistics I (PUBH8753) which starts the following week.

The Sharp EL-531WH scientific calculator will be used in this course, and is available from the UWA Co-op Bookshop.

Who is Survival Maths for?
Anyone!
While priority will be given to those students enrolled in Biostatistics I (Postgraduate) in semester one 2009 - other staff and students will be welcome to attend.

Price:
SPH students/staff: $50
Non-SPH students/staff: $75/$100

Bookings and payment can be made by t-form or cash to Denise Bracken in the SPH Administration Office. Online bookings and shopping cart credit card payments will be open on Monday 1st December.

Where and when?
Location: Seminar Room 4, Clifton Street Building
Nedlands Campus, UWA

Date and time: Wednesday 18th February 2009 from 8.45am until 3pm. (Semester one starts the following week.)

Note that the Postgraduate Orientation session will be held on Wednesday 18th February 2009 at 4pm in Seminar Rooms 3/4.
Centre for Built Environment opening

Last year our group won a large Federal government 5 year grant and the Centre for the Built Environment and Health was officially opened.

The Centre’s mission is “To undertake policy-relevant research that builds capacity and influences planning and urban design policy and practice to create healthy and sustainable communities”.

New staff joining the group help analyse data from the RESIDE project. The opening ceremony was a great success and was attended by many distinguished guests and prominent speakers such as:

The Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLA, who spoke about the importance of the centre from a State Government perspective;

Professor Fiona Stanley, 2005 Australian of the Year, who spoke about the importance of the centre’s research for understanding health;

Professor Alan Robson, UWA Vice Chancellor, who spoke about the importance of the centre to the University;

and Professor Billie Giles-Corti, CBEH Director, who thanked staff and students and spoke about the aims of the centre.

By Rosie Barnes

SPH in the news

David Preen and Anna Hynde

Delaney says the SMH today reports that the increasing cost of pharmaceuticals is putting lives at risk, as pensioners can’t afford to fill all their prescriptions. He interviews Charmaine Crowe, Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Assoc, who says she believes it is ‘outrageous’ for the Fed Govt to state that the need for increasing the pharmaceutical co-payment is to discourage people from taking medicines that they don’t really need. She says pensioners’ health is declining because they can’t afford to pay for the medications that they do need. Delaney says Dr Anna Hynd, Uni of WA, has completed a study which has found the use of essential medicines by pensioners has fallen by 11% since the increase in the co-payment. Delaney says the PBS is in need of cash. Crowe says Medicare exists to provide a safety net for people on low incomes so they can afford basic medications. She says she would like to see the co-payment scrapped, so that no one on lower income misses out. She says if pensioners don’t take the medicines they now need, it is likely that they will become even sicker and could end up in hospital. She says anecdotal evidence is that more and more pensioners are being forced to decide between buying essential food items or visiting their doctors for tests or health check ups. She says she believes the Fed Govt should increase the pharmaceutical allowance which is currently provided for pensioners. She says an increase in GPs’ consultation fees, proposed this week, will only make the current situation even worse. She says over the years, there has been a massive decline in the number of GPs who bulk bill, particularly in rural areas. She says there are concerns over the comparative health and wellbeing of elderly Aussies in relation to other OECD countries. 22/10/08 Duration: 9 mins 14 secs

Reported in: 6PR (Perth), Curtin FM (Perth), 2CC (Canberra), 4BC (Brisbane), Channel 7 (Sydney), ABC New England North West (Tamworth), ABC Illawarra (Wollongong), ABC 612 Brisbane (Brisbane), ABC 702 Sydney (Sydney), ABC 666 Canberra (Canberra), 4BC (Brisbane), 5AA (Adelaide), Channel 7 (Sydney), 2UE (Sydney), 2GB (Sydney), ABC 936 Hobart, ABC 702 Perth (Perth), 3AW (Melbourne), 2UE (Sydney), NOVA 93.7 (Perth), 98.5 Sonshine FM (Perth), MIX 94.5 (Perth), ABC 720 Perth (Perth), ABC Midwest Wheatbelt (Geraldton), ABC 720 Perth (Perth), KY News Australia (Sydney), 6PR (Perth), ABC Gold & Tweed Coasts (Gold Coast), 6PR (Perth), 96.1 FM (Perth), ABC Goldfields WA (Perth), ABC 720 Perth (Perth), Hot Tomato (Gold Coast), MIX 94.5 (Perth), ABC Wide Bay (Bundaberg), ABC 612 Brisbane, ABC Newcastle (Newcastle), 5AA (Adelaide), HO FM (Hobart), 3AW (Melbourne), 7LA (Launceston), SKY News Australia (Sydney), Triple J (Melbourne), 5AA (Adelaide), 2SM (Sydney). Well done on this. Great work!

This is “exactly the type of policy-relevant research that SPH should continue to be renowned for”. D’Arcy Holman
SPH helps forge international body

On 4-5 Dec 2008, the Data Linkage Australia COE convened a meeting in London of 33 representatives of the world’s comprehensive health data linkage centres, including those at Oxford, Scotland, Manitoba, other Canadian provinces, NSW, NZ and WA. The meeting venue was hosted by the NHS for England who also sent high-vel representation. The attached pic gives you a feel for the atmosphere of this ‘UN-like’ event.

I am delighted to say that as a result of this gathering a new international body was formed, known as the International Health Data Linkage Network. The attached consensus statement concerning the purpose, strategies and operating rules of the Network was developed during the course of the two days and was adopted at the conclusion without dissent. It has also been agreed that the directorship of this international network will be hosted by Western Australia for the first two years (2009-2010) and that DLA’s Emma Fuller will be the inaugural director. There was also an agreement to an international conference in Scotland in 2009 and in Manitoba in 2010.

Congratulations are due to Emma Fuller, who in late 2006 was awarded a Fay Gale Fellowship to visit data linkage centres across the globe to see if they would be interested in forming an international union of this type. Emma has spent the two years since then negotiating and suring up commitment to the point where the recent events became possible.

by D’Arcy Holman
The SPH Consumer and Community Advisory Council

The SPH Consumer and Community Advisory Council, established in 2006, is an integral part of the School’s overall strategy to increase its consumer and community participation activities.

This Council, along with it’s counterpart at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, is a unique resource in Australian research organisations. Its aim is to enhance the quality and relevance of research.

The Council membership includes the Head of School, the Chair of Public Health, representatives from research, teaching and students, consumer and community members and the Consumer Advocate. Consumer and community members of the Council are also available to provide a resource service to all staff at the School.

At this time of the year when grant applications are being developed, the consumer and community members may be able to provide invaluable assistance to researchers who are considering ways to involve the community in their research. These members can provide advice on all aspects of research, from the early development stages through to planning how to disseminate the research results. Consumer or community input into strategies to disseminate results of research that has limited or no opportunity for consumer and community involvement are particularly important in reaching wider community audiences.

In the teaching area, consumer and community members of the Council are available for guest lectures and tutorials related to consumer and community participation. Many of the council members can offer insight into health issues from the consumer and/or community perspective which might be helpful in curriculum planning and development.

Collectively the consumer and community members of the Council offer extensive experiences as consumer and community advocates as well as providing access to a wide range of community networks. Contact can be made with any Council member through Anne McKenzie, the consumer advocate.

Overview of consumer and community members

Kathie McLure

Kathie McLure (Chair) represents the Health Consumers’ Council WA. Kathie is a senior consumer representative on several state and national health related committees for the WA Health Department and the Consumers’ Health Forum of Australia.

Janet Wale

Janet is the convenor of the Cochrane Consumers Network and is one of two consumer representatives on the International Cochrane Steering Committee. Janet is a member of the Health Consumers Council and is a senior consumer representative for Consumers Health Forum of Australia.

Barbara Daniels

Barbara is the immediate past chair of the Diabetes WA Consumer Group and is a consumer representative on state and national committees including the Australian Medical Council’s medical school accreditation committee. Barbara was also the consumer member of the grant review panel for the WA Health Department Research Grants awarded in 2008.

Lorraine Powell

Lorraine is a mental health consumer consultant and serves on several state and local committees in the mental health area. Lorraine is a serving Board member of the Health Consumers’ Council of WA

Margaret Culbong

Margaret represents health interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on state and national committees. Margaret currently works at the Canning Division of General Practice as the manager of the Aboriginal Primary Health Care team.

Ian Hill

Ian is the Director of Community and Economic Development of the City of Mandurah and has wide experience and knowledge of community and local government issues.

Hilary Rumley

Hilary is a disability advocate who has served on the Ministerial Advisory Council for Disability and is involved in a number of state based disability organisations such as Disability First Stop. Hilary is also a steering panel member on a research project currently being undertaken at SPH for the Insurance Commission of WA.

Beatriz Cuesta Briand

Beatriz is a community member who has worked in consumer and community advocacy roles at the Cancer Council of WA and Advocare. Beatriz is currently doing her PhD at Curtin University on the impact of socio-economic disadvantage on the management of type 2 diabetes. This includes working with health consumers and community members to set the direction of her research.

Elizabeth Buckton

Elizabeth is the newest member of the Council and represents the Cancer Council WA.

by Anne McKenzie
Postgraduate coursework - update

I hope that you are now looking back ‘fondly’ on another successful and rewarding academic year. As you consider your re-enrolment for 2009, please refer to the 2009 timetable which is available on the SPH website. I am pleased to advise that there will be two new units on offer in 2009, as follows:

1. Semester One PUBH8751 Disease Prevention in Population Health
   Coordinated by Dr Angus Cook. Scheduled for 9-12 Mondays (Sem 1)
   See the summary of the unit in the online UWA Handbook.
2. Semester Two PUBH8805 Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health
   Coordinated by Dr Colleen Fisher. Scheduled for 4-7pm Thursdays (Sem 2)
   At the end of the unit, students should be able to:
   1. Demonstrate an understanding of the philosophical assumptions and theoretical debates in qualitative research
   2. Understand and apply different approaches to qualitative research – eg grounded theory, Phenomenology, Case Study
   3. Develop a qualitative research proposal
   4. Utilise a range of core qualitative data collection techniques
   5. Undertake simple data analysis and reporting related to small scale qualitative data sets
   6. Acquire a fundamental understanding of ethics in qualitative research
   7. Develop skills in Writing and publishing qualitative research

3. **New Initiative – “Survival Maths” Workshop.**
   When: Wednesday 18th February 2009 8.45am – 3pm
   Where: Seminar Room 4, Clifton Street Building, School of Population Health
   Who: Priority for students enrolled in Biostatistics I in 2009 – but other staff/students welcome.
   Cost: $50 for SPH staff/students; $75/$100 for non-SPH students/staff.

Other ‘news’ about SPH postgraduate coursework offerings

a. PUBH8750 Epidemiology I will have a new coordinator in 2009. After coordinating the unit for six years Judith Finn will be handing over to Dr Jane Heyworth. Jane is an experienced epidemiologist who has been coordinating the undergraduate BHlthSc Epidemiology unit for a number of years.
b. PUBH8753 Biostatistics I will also have a change of Coordinator in 2009. Dr Alex Bremner will be teaching Biostatistics I and Professor Matthew Knuiman will be teaching PUBH8769 Biostatistics II in semester two.
c. PUBH8749 Foundations of Public Health (after a review and re-vamp) is being moved from semester one to semester two in 2009. The unit will most likely be coordinated by a new SPH academic staff member commencing in Jan 2009 – more details in the next newsletter.
d. PUBH8754 Health Promotion I (semester one) will be coordinated by A/Prof Fiona Bull, who is returning to UWA from an overseas academic appointment.
d. The two ‘linked data analysis’ units PUBH8785 Introductory Analysis of Linked Health Data and PUBH8802 Advanced Analysis of Linked Health Data will be back on offer in the 2009 Summer School – dates yet to be confirmed. Janet is the convenor of the Cochrane Consumers Network and is one of two consumer representatives on the International Cochrane Steering Committee. Janet is a member of the Health Consumers Council and is a senior consumer representative for Consumers Health Forum of Australia.

Frequently asked questions

MPH students often ask me about the ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of the three options for completing the MPH, namely:
a. All coursework (12 units = 72 points)
b. Coursework (10 units = 60 points) + 12 point Research Project
c. Coursework (8 units = 48 points) + 24 point Dissertation

The answer is that it ‘depends’ on a number of factors. Perhaps the primary decision needs to be based on why you are doing the MPH in the first place.

- IF you want to gain a broad overview of the breadth of public health – especially if your undergraduate degree was in a non-health discipline – then more coursework units might be better.
- IF you are thinking about doing a PhD, then a 24-point dissertation can provide the necessary entrance requirements for a PhD (ie in lieu of Honours).
Another consideration is your capacity to successfully complete an independent (supervised) research project. Students who have no problems with meeting deadlines for coursework units can be surprised to find that they struggle with completing their dissertation, since it requires more self-direction and time management.

Your academic performance in the ‘research methods’ coursework units can also be an indication of the likelihood of your capacity for success in the dissertation. In any case, you will need to find a topic and a supervisor to supervise you. Some ideas are listed on the SPH website.

All students must have a SPH academic supervisor, even if they also have an external supervisor. Students contemplating a 24-point dissertation / 12-point research project are encouraged to discuss options with the Dissertation Coordinator – who for 2009 will be Dr Colleen Fisher Colleen.Fisher@uwa.edu.au.

Please bear in mind that it is not essential that you have completed ALL coursework units before you begin the Dissertation/Research Project – although successful completion of epidemiology I and biostatistics I is a requirement. Even for full-time students – it may be a good idea to complete the 24-point dissertation over two semesters rather than one – to give you more time.

**2009 Orientation session for new postgraduate students**

Date and Time: Wednesday 18th February 2009 at 4pm in Seminar Rooms 3-4

**Further questions**

If you have questions/concerns about your study, then please do not hesitate to contact me (email is best)

Professor Judith Finn
Director of Postgraduate Studies
judith.finn@uwa.edu.au

It was on a short-cut through the hospital kitchens that Albert was first approached by a member of the Antibiotic Resistance.
Social Committee news
(Pop Goss)

Melbourne Cup

Thank you to all that attended the Melbourne Cup lunch and contributed to a fun day. Special thanks to those who helped on the big day, including Lindsay (IT) for his help setting up the big screen, Tom and Nita, our independent judges, Matthew for the fun award presentations, Mehdi and Joyce, our photographers, Peta for doing a mad dash to the bottle shop for the booze, and all those who contributed towards the banquet and the clean up at the end. I can’t name you all but you know who you are. Thanks also to Tom and Terri for putting the desks and chairs back where they belonged - as I closed the door behind me it looked like nothing had happened in the seminar rooms at all. Finally, thanks to the social committee for your assistance in helping with the pre-planning and all your help on the day.

The important news first. The Winner’s Circle.
The Sweeps:
$5 Sweep - 1st prize Liz Geelhoed; 2nd prize - Sheryl Ridout; 3rd prize - Annette Stewart
$2 - #1 - 1st prize Min Zhang; 2nd prize - Liz Geelhoed; 3rd prize - Gina Wood
$2 - #2 - 1st prize Gina Wood; 2nd prize - Min Zhang; 3rd prize - Robyn Broadhurst

Congratulations to the winners, and double congrats to those that managed to win in 2 sweeps.

The semi formal dress competition was an interesting exercise and it was good to see a few people get into the spirit of the theme.

There were two prizes, 1 male and 1 female. As you can see in the photo below, the males were easy to judge and the uncontested winner was Josh Wilcox. You can’t see on the photo but Josh is wearing thongs on his feet to go with his dress shirt and tie. Congratulations Josh. The female winner, and keeping it in the family, was Judith Finn, whose sneakers are almost showing and they complimented the diamond earrings and satin hat to perfection. Congratulations Judith.

Thank you to all of you for taking part.

by Georgie Dolphin

UWA Staff Fun Sports Day

The call went out to all UWA staff to take part in an inaugural Staff Sports Fun Day, a veritable mini Olympics, with the emphasis on having fun.

The day commenced at 12noon with an opening ceremony, complete with Olympic Torch relay.

Medicine and Dentistry were represented by staff based at UWA, SCGH and RPH, who looked resplendent in their team t-shirts. Many of the team were from the IT department, who I’m sure will already be in training for next year’s Olympics.

Thanks go to the following Population Health staff members for contributing to the success of the day:

Alison Griffith
Bernie Jaw
Georgie Dolphin
Gillian Thrahorsch
Joyce Te
Lindsay James
Lisa Wood
Mehdi Tabatabaei
Syed Hussain

Alison and Lindsay formed a formidable team in the Bocce. Gill and her netball team were on the ball and looked to be having a lot of fun. Bernie, Mehdi and Syed were players in one of the 2 soccer teams we fielded on the day.

After the traditional sports were completed the players made their way over to Riley Oval for the games we remember from our primary and high school days, Tunnel ball, Leader ball, egg and spoon & sack race, and the not so familiar events of Computer Mouse Throw & Office Stationery Challenge. Again, we had plenty of volunteers to participate in all of these sports, with some of our members begging to be part of a team taking part or putting together a team for an event we hadn’t registered for.
The Vice Chancellor and the organizers were so impressed with the way the event came together, it was announced that the UWA Staff Sports Fun Day will now be an annual event.

It is anticipated that the event will be run during a mid term month in the future due to the feedback received from many faculties concerning the end of term commitments and unavailability of staff to take part although they wished to.

by Georgie Dolphin

Social Committee news

Upcoming events: SPH Christmas Lunch

The next event organised by your loving Social Club is the SPH Christmas Lunch, which will take place this coming Monday December 15th 2008 at the UniClub Formal Dining Room. The plan is to be there by 11.45-12pm for drinks and food orders. The event will be attended by a special guest or two.

At the SPH Christmas lunch there will be an opportunity for people to donate if they would like to, towards the purchase of a ‘virtual gift’ that will benefit a project or family in a developing country. The Oxfam ‘gifts unwrapped’ initiative has a range of ‘items’ that can be purchased to help fight poverty, including a goat, a vegetable garden starter kit, school resources, fresh water supply and even manure!

When a gift is purchased, the donated amount goes towards funding programs that the item represents. For example, if we collected money within SPH to purchase either a safe refuge for women, a well, a clean water filter jar or buckets, food for a child, a bicycle ambulance, a toilet, a farmer’s pack, an orphan care pack, water for a school or support an Indigenous granny group, the money would go towards funding Oxfam health programs in these areas.

There will be an container for donations at the lunch, along with the Oxfam booklet, whereby people can suggest items that it might be good to put our collective donation towards. Even your loose change can go a long way in these countries and projects! Donations can also be dropped in to Lisa Wood or Fiona Maley up until Wednesday December 17th, at which time we will count up what we have and choose a “unwrapped gift” on behalf of SPH.

Chicken, $10, eggs, income generation... and fertiliser!
Duck, $20, eggs, income generation and environmental pest control!

These gifts are also great for someone who has everything, so if you’re interested in giving someone something completely different and helping communities in developing countries too, check out the websites. There is something for everyone and for every budget.

The Oxfam website is http://www.oxfamunwrapped.com.au
The CareGift website is http://www.caregifts.org.au

Bicycle ambulance, $296, help access district health services earlier and more easily.

SPH food appeal

The Centre for the Built Environment and Health have collection boxes for this year’s Salvation Army Christmas Food appeal. All contributions of non-perishable food will be gratefully accepted.

Boxes for this are located in the kitchen at 10 Stirling Highway offices and in tea room at the SPH Clifton Street campus offices. If you wish to donate something, please deposit your contribution by Thursday 18 December as the donations will be dropped off to the Salvation Army on Friday 19 December.
Happy happenings

David Gibson (Health Science class of 2004) and Renae Kinsman (Health Science class of 2005) recently tied the knot.

David is also a PhD student in the school.

Achievements: Publications for 2008


Buzzacott, P.L., Pikora, T.J. and Rosenberg, M. Post-training dive inactivity in Western Australia, Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine, 38:4, pp 137-139 (2008)


Publications for 2008 ctd


Publications for 2008 ctd


Publications for 2008 ctd


Teng, T., Finn, J.C., Geelhoed, E.A. and Hobbs, M.S. A validation study: how effective is the Hospital Morbidity Data as a surveillance tool for heart failure in Western Australia, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 32:5, pp 405-407 (2008)

Publications for 2008 ctd


### PHPS Seminars

The Tuesday seminar series will commence after the holiday break. The proposed calendar is below: please see Nita if this is not convenient to you.

**2009 TUESDAY SEMINARS CALENDAR**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>27-01</td>
<td>Microsoft Outlook: Archiving Emails by Bernie Jaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>03-02</td>
<td>Workshop on the Five Fallacies of Epidemiologic Methods by Prof. D’Arcy Holman</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-02</td>
<td>Centre for Health Services Research Group Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-02</td>
<td>Journal Club by the Centre for Health Services Research Group</td>
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<td>24-02</td>
<td>Student/ Staff/ Scholar - Seminar/ Workshop</td>
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<td>03-03</td>
<td>Overview of Ethics Committees &amp; Applications by Prof. Judith Finn</td>
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<td>10-03</td>
<td>Cardiovascular Health Group Seminar</td>
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<td>Journal Club by the Cardiovascular Health Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>07-04</td>
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<td>14-04</td>
<td>Occupational Respiratory Epidemiology Group Seminar</td>
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<td>05-05</td>
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<td>Busselton Health Study Group Seminar</td>
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<td>02-06</td>
<td>Potential Sources of Funding for Grants/ Travel/ Fellowships by Dr. Margaret Jones</td>
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<td>09-06</td>
<td>An Interactive Panel Discussion on Grant Writing</td>
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<td>16-06</td>
<td>Workshop on Consumer Participation in Research by Ms. Anne Mckenzie</td>
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<td>Workshop on the Management &amp; Storage of Confidential Data by Dr. David Preen</td>
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<td>07-07</td>
<td>Workshop on Applying for Post-doctoral fellowships by Prof. Billie Giles-Corti</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-07</td>
<td>Marine Safety Research Group Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>15-12</td>
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Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year everyone!