

## Volunteers Spreading Heart Health Message

Ashburton's longstanding volunteer Joy Jaine is a firm believer in giving 110 per cent to the Heart Foundation, after first becoming involved with the charity in 1989.

After 15 years of helping organise local events, teaching heart health and fundraising, Joy says the local branch continues to go from strength to strength.

The Ashburton Heart Foundation branch is manned entirely by volunteers, led by Joy, as its chairman, and branch secretary Gina Smith. Altogether, there are 19 volunteers in this South Island branch, but this number swells to more than 70 for the annual Heart Week appeal.

The branch's high profile within the local community is also evident, with a recent charity golf tournament having all 18 holes sponsored by local businesses and two tables full of donated prizes.

"We like to make sure we're at local health days, offering blood pressure tests and heart health advice, as well as supporting the Juvenile Cooking Class at the region's three A&P Shows," says Joy.

The branch team also works closely with the local Heart Foundation affiliated cardiac club, the Cardiac Companions, and the hospital's Cardiac Educator, who is also a branch committee member.

"We try to cover a broad spectrum of the town and county, and work hard to keep the Heart Foundation's profile high in the region."

All 19 Heart Foundation branches rely on their volunteer networks to help with fundraising and supporting those who have had a heart attack or are at risk of a heart event. This may include supporting the individual and their family, assisting with transportation motivational support and office assistance.

The Heart Foundation was established more than 30 years ago by volunteers. It now has almost 300 active volunteers, spread across its Board, advisory groups and regional branches. This number is boosted considerably during major fundraising campaigns – in 2003, approximately 3,500 people collected donations for the Heart Week Street Appeal.

The Heart Foundation's Executive Director Tony Duncan believes being a volunteer gives people valuable work experience, the opportunity for personal growth and to contribute to their community.

"We truly value the time and energy volunteers give to the Heart Foundation. They have a positive relationship with permanent staff, and provide invaluable help for them and the Foundation as a whole," says Tony.

The Heart Foundation is committed to valuing and recognising its volunteers.



Long time volunteer Joy Jaine with prizes for the Ashburton charity golf tournament

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### Welcome

Last year the Heart Foundation approved its strategic plan. Within this a key objective for us is to work collaboratively with like-minded groups who share a common interest in the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease.

As a result, the strategic plan aligns the Foundation with the Ministry of Health's new regional and local health delivery structure - now a decentralised health model whereby District Health Boards (DHBs) are responsible for the health of local communities. Working with the DHBs, Primary Health Organisations are responsible for implementing a number of population health promotions, specifically targeted to their regions.

Our challenge in responding to this decentralised model lies in assessing the opportunities of where and how we can assist and partner with regional organisations and groups to promote better heart health. Our strategic plan ensures that the Foundation is relevant to this environment through our branch structure, which has a community focus.

Branch Heart Health Advocates promote, facilitate and advocate public health and cardiac care services in their local communities. They liaise effectively with local health care providers and actively work towards achieving the Heart Foundation's objectives of reducing rates of smoking and obesity, raising public awareness of heart health-related issues and providing help for those at high-risk of heart disease.

As always, these and other heart health outcomes must be achieved with our limited resources, which is why we continue to need financial support and rely on your goodwill in supporting us, through volunteering and donations.

We are a dynamic organisation, operating within an ever-challenging healthcare environment. We have the expertise, the evidence-based research and the people in place to deliver and implement our heart health work. Once again, we thank you for your ongoing support in allowing us to make a difference to the heart health of your local community.

Tony Duncan  
Executive Director



**Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer of New Zealanders**

**Heart  
Foundation**  
The Heart of Our Nation



# Hearty Tomatoes for Heart Health

Tomato plants purchased from Mitre 10 have raised thousands of dollars for the Heart Foundation, and could also be helpful in preventing blood clots that contribute to heart disease.

This is the fifth year Mitre 10 have donated 50 cents from the sale of every punnet of "Hearty Red" tomatoes to the Heart Foundation — an initiative which raised more than \$22,000 in 2003.

Research from the Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen, Scotland has shown that the yellow jelly around tomato seeds keeps platelets in the blood from clumping together, reducing

the chance of dangerous clots that can block vessels and contribute to heart disease.

"Tests on a small group of volunteers showed the jelly from as few as four tomatoes could reduce platelet activity by up to 72 per cent and yet did not cause bleeding," says the Heart Foundation's Medical Director, Professor Norman Sharpe.

"So not only are Hearty Red tomatoes a great way to boost your health naturally, through the generosity of Mitre 10 they also help the Heart Foundation to fund further research into the causes and treatment of New Zealand's number one killer – cardiovascular disease."



Heart Foundation Direct Marketing Manager, Robyn Cremer (right) presents Mitre 10 Glenfield Garden Assistant, Betty Corlett with a certificate of appreciation, after the store sold the most Hearty Tomatoes in 2003.

## Tick Makes Healthy Eating Easier

The well-known Pick the Tick Program is taking a critical look at itself to make sure it continues to highlight healthier food choices in popular categories.

For almost nine years, the Heart Foundation's Tick has helped New Zealanders make healthier food choices and become a leading food approval program.

But with today's rapidly changing lifestyles, people are eating differently to the way they ate nine years ago. So, to remain relevant Pick the Tick Program is reviewing its nutritional criteria, which will see new food categories introduced and even higher nutritional standards set. Cereal bars (including breakfast, muesli and fruit-filled bars), cakes, muffins and pasta and cooking sauces, are the first products to be investigated.

Dave Monro, Heart Foundation Food Industry Manager, says that as a public health

programme, it's vital that Tick continues to make a real difference to New Zealanders' nutritional health by remaining up-to-date with changing eating habits and signposting healthier options.

As part of the new criteria, Tick has introduced a limit on the number of kilojoules a product can have in some categories. This is important when it comes to snack foods because of the growing problem of obesity, particularly among children.

As well as kilojoule limits, cereal bars, cakes and muffins have new limits on saturated fat content. Also the sodium (salt) criteria for these foods are stricter and new minimum fibre contents have been introduced.

Shoppers have been able to find meat and chicken products with the Tick for many years, but until now, it's been difficult to pick the healthier type of sauce for a stir-fry or curry to go with it. New criteria for cooking sauces have



now been introduced which identify the best options – again reflecting the way people are eating today.

"We will soon have new criteria in place for soups, biscuits, ready-to-eat meals and many other foods, so people don't have to be nutrition experts, they just look for the Tick. Tick's aim is to do the hard work, so healthier shopping is easier for everyone," says Dave.

The review is due to be completed by the end of this year. So, save time and make healthier choices by looking for the Tick next time you're in the supermarket.

*\*Tick foods need to meet strict nutritional criteria to join the Program and are regularly tested for ongoing compliance with the Program's rules.*

## Art wins Christchurch's Hearts

The combination of art, a talented singer and fine dining helped raise money for vital heart research in Christchurch recently.

The Heart Foundation held its 'Art to Heart' charity auction at Christchurch Casino in February.

'Art to Heart' combines fine dining, opera and an art auction, to fundraise for heart research in New Zealand, with a variety of New Zealand artists providing work. This Heart Foundation initiative began in 2000 and has continued to be highly successful, with a number of 'Art to Heart' events each year.

The nearly 180 people who attended the Christchurch event were also entertained by internationally recognised, New Zealand-born tenor Shaun Dixon.

More than 40 paintings by some of New Zealand's finest artists, including Tim Wilson, were among the items to go under the hammer.

"We were so fortunate that Tim Wilson donated one of his special South Island Landscape works – this alone raised \$21,000," says 'Art to Heart' event organiser Dorothy Forbes.

The next 'Art to Heart' auction will be held in Nelson on 23 April. Contact Ms Forbes on (03) 343 2204 or 027 483 3570 for tickets.

## New Heart Foundation Brochures

The Heart Foundation has recently published new resources, including: What is Rheumatic Fever? This booklet is designed to help people understand more about Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease.

*Infective Endocarditis Prophylaxis Card:* This credit card sized information resource details the prophylactic antibiotic cover for patients at risk of Infective Endocarditis.

If you would like any further information, please contact the Heart Foundation on (09) 571 9191 or email [info@nhf.org.nz](mailto:info@nhf.org.nz)