



# PEP TALK



PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY HOSPITAL  
MARCH 2014

## New and Notes around PEP

DAN VUCK

Finally putting the finishing touches on my cancer therapy and actually had enough energy to attend our February Board meeting. I sure have missed being around the Peppers and our exercise activities, especially June's baking. Rumor has it that we still need new articles for our PEP Talks, so I want to encourage everyone to share their creative genius with us. I know we have quite a few travelers who could drop a note about their most recent destinations. Please give us a hand.

As part of my advocacy and outreach role with PEP Pioneers, I am still extremely concerned about Liquid Oxygen (LOx). Betsy tells me that she hasn't had any luck getting new patients on LOx under Medicare. So it is extremely important for each of us to document any changes, issues or concerns we have had with Medicare or our oxygen suppliers. Please call or email me if you have had a negative experience with your oxygen. I have enclosed a chart about filing complaints that was provided by COPD Digest, a great free magazine for COPD patients. [www.copddigest.org/] They also have some good discussions from their 'Ask Us' column that talk about patient's rights and responsibilities. I will put them on the website under the 'Medical Oxygen Issues and Advocacy' link on the home page. Please visit it frequently if you use in-home oxygen of any type. Contact Dan with oxygen issues, Dan@danbuck.net or call 310-502-0245

## SOUTH PACIFIC PARADISE? well... almost! ...

Jo Ann and Duane Kelley

""NC"" - Well for Americans that normally means North Carolina, but it also means New Caledonia! And what a surprise New Caledonia is . . . . . it is like a secret, old fashioned, Hawaiian find, oh my goodness what special treats are awaiting. We flew out of LAX in December, ready to spend the Christmas holidays in Noumea, New Caledonia. Since their winter is our summer, we were greeted with warm, balmy weather and lovely trade winds to gently fan us while their summer drifted on. So - we arrived at the New Caledonia Airport and looked for our promised vehicle to be waiting in the parking lot there. Oh yes, this was a ""Home Exchange"" adventure, so we were exchanging cars as well as homes. They were in our home, driving our car, and we were in their home, driving their car. How good is that!? Okay, so we found the car, a Dodge Ram Four Door Truck, and the remote we had, worked to open the door. However once we got into the truck, we could not get it started, no matter how many buttons we pushed or knobs we twisted. Bad news. We solicited the help of whatever English speaking nearby airport passengers we could find and they also worked with us to figure it out. Finally, we called the owner, and as he communicated in French to our French helpers, we discovered that the remote was actually the ""key"" to put in the ignition!!! Who would have known that!!!! Well, we then began our drive to find our home. This was supposed to be a 45 minute trip through the countryside to the city of Noumea. However, with the exception of a few ""freeway"" type highways, the roads are all two lanes, and none of the roads are identified

by name. So, we made quite a few wrong turns and went in a few circles before we finally found someone who spoke some

En and helped steer us in the right direction. Our 45 minute drive turned out to be 2 and a half hours and it was dark when we arrived. Oh well. Turns out that New Caledonia is the largest lagoon in the world, and because of that the water is bathtub warm from the sun. You would have to walk out a mile to get to any waves as it is such a gradual depression. There are reefs all along the bottom, making it difficult for ships to maneuver and therefore many ships have sunk over the years. So there is water all around us. In any case, we arrived at the home which was beautifully decorated and situated in a lovely neighborhood, just walking distance to the water where there were several walking/exercise paths and separate bicycle lanes all along the coast. What a nice arrangement for our daily activities. And we did take advantage of that and walked almost every day with all the local people who were walking, running, bicycling and who seemed to be very committed to fitness. We found that the culture there was to have solid electric fences across their homes, operated by remote control. So you wouldn't necessarily see much of the lovely outside view of the home, but they had the luxury of private patios and gathering places. We had a private pool, just outside the living and bedroom with folding doors opening to bring the outside in and tropical landscaping with soft outside lighting after dark. We could sit outside on the sofa, day or night, feel the warm breeze, sip a nice glass of wine and jump in the pool whenever we wished . . . . . with complete privacy. Ahhhhh yes. However, eventually we dragged ourselves away to see what else might be going on. Well, we found wind surfing, kite surfing,

canoeing, kayaking, sail boating, jet skiing, motor boating, snorkeling, swimming, beach volleyball, and all other water sports. And that was just on the water! Everyone was just having fun, enjoying life, and being happy. On Christmas Eve we visited a restaurant for dinner and heard some special Christmas/jazz music nearby. Not being able to ignore that, we finished our dinner and moved closer. We met the entertainers and spent the evening bathed in music everyone would love. Turns out it is a Hammond organ player and his wife who are opening a jazz club there specifically for organ jazz, and they gave us one of their recent CD's. Ahhhh yes. With such a small country (2/3 the size of all of the Hawaiian islands put together), there actually was a bit to discover by car. So we began a tour around the ring of the island. Because the little villages? places to stay, are so tiny and isolated, you really need to plan ahead (which we didn't do) so sometimes we found good overnight accommodations and sometimes not. You could stay in one of the hotels (which were few) or you could try to arrange a gite stay (at a native village where you ask the Native Chief if you have his permission to enter his village). That would be to stay in a room in one of their homes with them. We didn't do that, but we wish we had. Our drive around the island, with lots of one lane narrow bridges, was fantastic with breathtaking views of the ocean from above and from below, lots of places to pull off and hang out, swim, sit on the beach. And oh my, the waterfalls, we saw so many wonderful waterfalls. No commercialism, no tourists, no billboards. And the native people are so friendly and warm. The women wear long brightly colored dresses called ""Mother Hubbard Dresses"". One time as we were driving by a church as the service was ending, the huge number of women in all those yellow, orange, purple, and red dresses created a sight that was not to be imagined. Ahhhh yes. So now we're back home in Noumea. We're driving around the streets which are very narrow and do not allow much for large vehicles – yet we have one! Yikes! Duane did an excellent job of managing that monster vehicle, but truly, the local people were so patient and helpful and used to working together in a way that helps everyone get where they want to go. Something we could all learn here in America. Anyway, thinking about museums and culture. Well the museums they have

created and supported are fantastic – especially when you think how small the country is. The museums represent their history – which is way back when and up to World War II which is huge. When the war was going on, Australia was first to begin to make arrangements to protect their territory. But eventually, America came in and over time built 11 hospitals and 16 airstrips to help the military maintain a position where the soldiers could get medical treatment from injuries and get training in a tropical climate offered to the local residents who lived there – so they benefited and had medical care they had not had before. Then while the war was going on, many of our entertainers went there to entertain the troops – Cary Grant, Bob Hope, and others, to keep morale up. They also arranged dances and local events to help keep spirits up for the military. Ahhh yes, those were the days. Going back even further, there were many, many, ships that sunk because of the reefs around the island that the boat operators did not understand. Over the years there have been divers who have recovered much of the bootie and it is displayed in their wonderful museums. They have been able to identify time periods where those specific items would have been important so that we know what was used at different time periods. Other interesting information is that New Caledonia is the second largest nickel producers in the world. They mine nickel and ship it out. France receives much of the value of that, but then France also supplements the country in many ways. The natives there like Americans, yet they are very proud of their heritage. They wave at you as you drive by. It is a French held country; the people speak mostly French; but New Caledonia is currently trying to become independent from France. As we understand it, France is okay with that movement, but New Caledonia will lose as well as gain from that change. We dearly hope they will not lose the warmth, friendliness, and togetherness we found in this country – where they are able to just all ""get along"". Ahhh – Yes!

### **INTERESTING LUNCHEON COMING UP**

Next Thursday, March 20, is the monthly luncheon at the Sizzler on Sepulveda Boulevard in Torrance. From 12 PM until 2 PM as usual.

There will be, of course, the usual raffles including the exciting 50/50 raffle for big bucks. And the tables will be tastefully decorated, and the menu the usual tasty selections that the Sizzler offers each month.

Ho-hum. Same old thing, right? So what's so interesting about that? Well, two things to be exact:

First of all, Kurt will be showing us his photo album of high points of his trip to La Paz, Mexico. As many of you know, Kurt, his wife, and another couple, motored down the coast to the tip of Baja California, rounded the tip into the sea of Cortez and then motored up to La Paz. All this in their 40 foot cruiser. During that long sea voyage as well as frequent trips into the sea of Cortez from La Paz, they have had a number of very interesting experiences. And that is what Kurt plans on relating to us. (This newsletter seems to be coming something of a travelogue.)

Following Kurt's rather short presentation, an old friend would take the podium to further enlighten us on lung related things. We will welcome back Dr. Richard Casaburi. The good doctor always enlightens us with an interesting and informative dissertation.

Now if those two things don't constitute a special, interesting luncheon, I don't know what will! So do your best to join us next Thursday.

**PEP PIONEERS** is an independent group of graduates of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at Providence Little Company of Mary Hospital that is dependent on private donations and fundraisers to finance events and purchase equipment that benefit all of its members. Donations may be made to

### **PEP PIONEERS**

Attn::

Pulmonary Rehabilitation  
20929 Hawthorne Blvd.  
Torrance, California 90503