



# PSP TALK



PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY HOSPITAL  
MAY 2011

## What's Up

Mike Bergeron

Another month has come and gone - no April showers but lots of May flowers. There are some very interesting events planned for the next few months that we would like to let you know about. But first, we would like to share with you that our second monthly event called "Meet & Greet" (or Happy Hour) took place on April 26, 2011. This time it was held at the Elephant Bar in Restaurant Row at Hawthorne and Torrance Blvd. We had over 20 folks in attendance and from the pictures below we hope you can tell we had a great time. This event has become very popular, and lots of folks really seem to enjoy taking advantage of the reduced prices on food and drink during the "Happy Hour" time. Come join us at the next opportunity, which will be announced very soon.



The next event we are presenting is our "ICE CREAM SOCIAL", which will be held on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of May. This is to celebrate the Fun Run, Walk, Step Fundraiser we had last fall and winter. It is also to show off our new facility at Providence Little Company of Mary adjacent to the Women's Imaging Center, located in the Albertson's Shopping Center off Torrance Boulevard at Hawthorne. The time for you to be there to enjoy the festivities will be from 2:00 P.M. until 4:30 P.M. It is well known that you should eat dessert first as life is uncertain, and it will not spoil your dinner.

Our tradition is to have a bus trip when members think they have a good destination. This June 23<sup>rd</sup> we are planning a trip to Solvang, CA. This is a great opportunity to spend a day with other Peppers to socialize and enjoy a nice comfortable road trip. Once there, we will be able to choose a restaurant to have a leisurely lunch. Following the time in Solvang we will then go to the Quicksilver Miniature Horse Ranch to see these curious animals up close and personal. If you have friends or neighbors whom you would like to invite, please feel free to do so. The cost is very reasonable, only \$35 per person. Contact Bunny Marsh or Betsy Barnes to get your name added to the list.

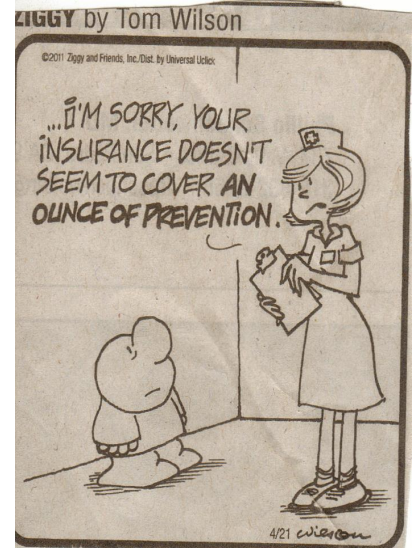
For July we have planned a visit to the South Coast Botanical Gardens. The date is July 14, 2011, and the time is 11:00 A.M. at the Gardens. Ample parking is available and the terrain is mostly level. The cost for this day, which includes a one-hour long motorized tram ride with a docent

around the gardens and use of a picnic area if you choose to bring a picnic lunch, is just \$10 per person. We have scheduled this event to take place hopefully before the late summer heat arrives, although our usual daily breeze will probably be cooling the area for us. Seats are limited to approx. 35, so be ready to sign up during the coming weeks. The Gardens are located on Crenshaw Blvd. just south of PCH.

I just realized that all of this information was included in the last issue of the Newsletter. That is a good thing, as we all need to be reminded in a timely manner and these events are worth repeating on a regular basis. There are a lot of members who work hard to make these events happen, so share their enthusiasm by being one of the folks who attend. It will be worth the effort.

Please come and enjoy our future activities!!!!!!!

**Get motivated, get excited and come to our planned events. See you soon!!!!**



## MAY LUNCHEON

This issue of PEP TALK is late for a variety of reasons which I will not bother to enumerate here. As a consequence, you will probably receive it after the election has taken place on Thursday, the 19th of the month at the Sizzler 12 o'clock as usual.

The speaker at the luncheon will be Marian Ayala, who will discuss in detail what palliative care is and how it differs from hospice care.

For those of you who will not be in attendance at the luncheon, the presentation will soon be available as a video on our website at pep pioneers.org.

Incidentally, you should visit our website frequently, as it contains a number of items of interest to us Peppers. Our webmaster, Dan Buck, continues to work hard to maintain and update the website and keep it interesting and attractive to few. But if you don't access the website, in his hard work is for naught.

By the way, the website and the newsletter welcome comments and suggestions. Only by hearing from you can we improve our communications to better meet your interests and desires. So don't be bashful - let us know.

## EDITORIAL

Paul robinson, Editor

Today I received from our old friend, Dr. Richard Casaburi over at L. A. Bio med at Harbor UCLA hospital, some information regarding the regeneration of human lungs. This came in the form of articles in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine, this month's issue.

A group of researchers claim to have found stem/progenitor cells in the lung capable of differentiating into any and all of the several tissues that make up the lung. This constitutes a major change in what had been believed to be the case: that such automatic regeneration was not possible. If further research substantiates these findings, it opens the door to a variety of techniques and therapies directed at pulmonary disease. Sadly, for many of us, such major changes are still in the distant future. But hope springs eternal. For example:

Wait. Perhaps I had better lay some groundwork first

All of the tissues in all animals including humans are given structure and shape by a sort of scaffolding called Extra Cellular Matrix (ECM). This structure is outside the cells, and encourages the growth of normal cells forming normal tissue. Cellular matter can be removed from the structure even structure intact. Then new stem/progenitor cells can be introduced which will proliferate into the appropriate tissue and form of the original organ.

So... Back to the example:

About a year ago researchers, under the direction of Dr. Laura Niklason at Yale University medical center, the cellular material from a rat lung leaving the ECM structure intact. They been introduced progenitor cells to the structure resulting in a viable, functioning new lung then transplanted into another rant word function normally for up to two hours.

My description of this event makes it sound easy. In fact, it was difficult and far from perfect. A great deal of further research and experimentation, first on rats and him him larger animals (pigs perhaps? their anatomy is quite similar to human) before ultimately regenerating a new lung for humans, using the patient's own stem cells and thus eliminating the possibility of rejection. (Today's lung transplants give the patient added years of relatively comfortable and efficient breathing. However, the patient's immune system must be suppressed to avoid rejection of the transplanted, but that suppression leads the patient at risk from most any pathogen that may wander by. Survival beyond 10 years is very low).

Other potentials seem to be waiting for the research. These new stem/progenitor cells found in the human lung have the potential to be activated to repair the patient's damaged lung tissue with no transplant of any kind required. Wouldn't that be great! And not so far-fetched - some researchers suspect those cells were originally there for that specific purpose. Consider that the largest of all our organs, the skin, repairs and regenerates itself constantly. That suggests that all tissues may have that potential. The trick is figuring out how to turn it on. They're working on it!

Now don't take all of this editorialist gospel. I am just an old goat with advanced COPD like many of the rest of you. My knowledge of things medical is year zero, so what I have written here reflects only my interpretation - and perhaps wishful thinking - of what I have read

PEP Pioneers is an independent group of graduates of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at 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 sent to the  
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