Osteoporosis Canada
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COPING

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Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

Happy Birthday Osteoporosis Canada!

From the very beginning Osteoporosis Canada has been unique among health charities. Although many health professionals have supported the establishment of a national osteoporosis organization, **the spark that led to the creation of the Osteoporosis Society of Canada (as we were originally called) came from self-help advocate and osteoporosis patient Lindy Fraser.** In 1981, when she was 87, Lindy Fraser started the first self-help group for people with osteoporosis in her home town of Ottawa. News of Lindy and her Ottawa group spread across Canada and around the world. In 1982 she was invited to take part in the first national symposium on osteoporosis, at the St. Lawrence Hall in Toronto. Her inspirational appearance gave rise to the Osteoporosis Society of Canada.

On **June 17, 1982**, the Osteoporosis Society of Canada became the first national osteoporosis organization **in the world** when it was incorporated by the federal government. Since that time, OC has held a leadership role in the international osteoporosis community. A lot has happened in the last 30 years, but here are a few highlights from more recent history.

In 2005, the **Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy was launched**, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The goals of the Strategy include educating seniors, implementing a fracture clinic follow-up program and improving the knowledge of health professionals. An ongoing issue for people affected by osteoporosis is exercise. We all know that exercise helps to build and maintain bone, but at the same time, there are movements that can be harmful to those with osteoporosis. In 2010, the Strategy launched **BoneFit™**, a program for health and exercise professionals to train them in the basics of osteoporosis and the safe prescription of exercise for those with osteoporosis or low bone mass. This program was rolled out across Canada in 2011. Also with the support of the Strategy, OC recently started a series of **lunch-time sessions on osteoporosis for health professionals.**

In October 2010, Osteoporosis Canada and its Scientific Advisory Council published the *clinical practice guidelines for the diagnosis and management of osteoporosis in Canada*. The creation of evidence-based guidelines is one area where OC has been in the forefront of osteoporosis research, having published the first such guidelines in the world in 2002. Some months after, in March 2011, *Towards a Fracture-Free Future* was published. This advocacy document highlights a significant care gap in Canada, in that hundreds of thousands of Canadians needlessly fracture each year because their osteoporosis goes undiagnosed and untreated. These two documents supported the new strategic direction of OC, which is to focus on those who have fractured because they are at highest risk of further fractures. This strategic direction is being delivered to the public and to health professionals through the **Make your FIRST break your LAST campaign**.

Today, Osteoporosis Canada has almost 30 Chapters and Branches across the country offering educational and other support services to individuals affected by osteoporosis in their communities. *Click here* for the list of Chapters and Branches.

And then there is **COPN (Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network),** ratified by the OC Board of Directors in 2004. In 2007, *COPING*, the newsletter, reached 600 people. Five years later, we have over 5,000 subscribers, a growth of almost 1,000%! COPN members have participated in advocacy events and sponsored 12 public education forums, viewed by hundreds of people across Canada either live or via the Internet.

At 30 years of age, Osteoporosis Canada has achieved maturity. We look to the future with hope, optimism and some wisdom, guided by the dream of achieving a Canada without osteoporotic fractures. We are honored to share that dream with you.

Living and *Dancing* Well with Osteoporosis

At COPN, we are thrilled to share stories like this next one. When I heard the news of Pat Trimble's success in a major dance competition I wanted to know more. Pat as some of you know was the Chair of the Surrey-White Rock Chapter and a very active volunteer for Osteoporosis Canada for many years. When she "retired" from the Chair's position a few years ago she turned her attention to another passion – dancing. I was delighted when Pat agreed to meet to bring me up to date, and I am even more delighted that she agreed to share her truly inspirational story with all of our readers. Thank you Pat and congratulations to you and Dan on your amazing accomplishment! - Larry, Chair, COPN

In its 46th year, the Surrey Festival of the Dance is one of the largest amateur dance festivals in North America with 10,000 dancers crossing the stage. It includes dancers of all ages and all types of dance. This year there was $13,000 in prize money and $60,000 in scholarships awarded. Encouraged by my husband, my dance partner Dan Minor and I entered the seniors' song and dance duo category and performed on April 21st. I must point out the seniors category is over 30 -Dan and I are both in our 70's!

Dan is a former dance teacher, a brilliant choreographer and great dancer and performer which has been a great help to me. I danced as a child but got busy in my adult life raising my family; in retirement I found an entertainment group of seniors, "The Vaudevillians", and began dancing again. When I met Dan just over a year ago we started to dance together. He has worked with me with great patience and, I believe, great success. We placed first in our category at the Surrey Festival with a mark of 94/100, the highest marks awarded that evening. The most amazing part was the reaction of the adjudicator when making his comments. He told us he was at the age (40'ish) where he was wondering if he should continue to dance. After seeing our performance he said we inspired him to continue. His comment sheet stated "great voices, excellent-great timing, great sounds and clarity in your taps, beautiful, excellent tappers! Wonderful personalities, fantastic!" He came over to Dan and me to shake our hands and kissed my hand. Our

From all of us at COPN, Congratulations Pat and Dan!

Our category was not one that included a cash prize but I can tell you that that was not important. His accolades were all we needed and I floated on a cloud for days. We also got a standing ovation from the other dancers present. There is nothing better than applause from your peers. It was a truly amazing evening and one that I will never forget.

But life was not always this way. In my early 50's I had sustained several fractures. The final one was a wrist so badly broken that I required 2 operations and extensive therapy. My diagnosis came at that time when the surgeon told me I had brittle bones. My bone mineral density test results, added to the fact that I had fractured, *showed severe osteoporosis. I was 55 with no family history of osteoporosis, and needless to say, shocked. Knowing very little about osteoporosis I felt very sorry for myself but decided I had to find out where to go from there. I discovered the* Osteoporosis Society of Canada (*OSC), as it was known then. They were very supportive and provided me with the information I needed. Being a proactive person, it wasn't long before I was volunteering for the society, facilitating educational classes and ultimately becoming the Chair of Osteoporosis Surrey White Rock for several years. Although I am less active now, I have continued as a member to this day.*

My volunteer time today is spent with the Vaudevillians, the group that got me back to dancing.

I have been a member for 10 years, sitting on the Board as Treasurer, President, Past President, and now, as my husband Jim is the President, I'd like to say that I am the "First Lady".

Although I have just recently stepped down from the Board, I continue to look after booking our shows, doing P.R. and chairing our major fundraiser held every November to provide Bursaries for deserving students at Douglas College. It is a busy life but one that Jim and I thoroughly enjoy. We perform and rehearse 10 months of the year, last year doing 28 shows, and when we have a break we are always anxious to get back to "work".

My doctor has told me dancing is good for my back as it provides smooth, rhythmical movements. I love to dance so it is easy for me to exercise and it's also good for my bones. I encourage everyone to find an activity they enjoy. It makes exercise so much more fun.

Today I am doing well and I feel very blessed to be enjoying such a wonderful life. Approaching 75, I cannot ask for anything more. Our children, grandchildren and wonderful friends make everything worthwhile. I believe your life is what you make it. We are often faced with adversity but it is important to count our blessings and ignore the other stuff. – Pat Trimble

Did you miss the presentation? Click here to view the archived version of *Are You Unbreakable? A Personal Transformative Journey to Building Better Bones.*

ARCHIVED VIRTUAL EDUCATION FORUM

On Thursday, June 14, 2012, Christine Thomas, author of *Unbreakable, A Woman's Triumph Over Osteoporosis*, shared her knowledge from her own personal battle with osteoporosis. Christine Thomas was only 42 when, bending to lift her newborn daughter, she fractured her spine. In this presentation, she takes us on a transformative journey and shares her hard won expertise on managing osteoporosis. Catherine Morisset, a Resilience & Wellness Coach, is a key part of her journey. Catherine helped Christine become more aware of the hundreds of decisions and choices she faced daily and how small changes in some decisions can build bone health. View this presentation and learn how you can build better bones!

For more information please contact: copn@osteoporosis.ca or 1-800-463-6842 ext. 224 or visit www.osteoporosis.ca

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FRACTURE FACT: Osteoporosis can strike at any age.

FUNNY BONE:

Children Are Quick

Teacher: Why are you late?

Student: Class started before I got here.

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