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## Issue Highlights

- ✿ Dear Nurse
- ✿ Bequests
- ✿ Summer and COPD

- ✿ Sailor Chatterbox
- ✿ Dates for your Diary



**asthmawaikato**  
Better respiratory health for New Zealanders



## Thank you to all our Asthma Champions

Asthma Champions come in all shapes, sizes and forms and we would like to extend our thanks, acknowledgment and gratitude. Unfortunately there is not enough room to individually acknowledge all those who have supported our work in 2014 so if your name is not below please know we still appreciate you.

### GRANT FUNDERS/DONATIONS

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## From the Manager



Hello, my name is Ruth and I will be around to hold the fort while Kelly enjoys her time with her little one.

I am looking forward to helping Asthma Waikato continue providing asthma support, advice and education throughout the district.

Before Christmas we had to say goodbye to Raewyn Bell our COPD nurse. We all wish her the best of luck in securing a new position.

This means we are not able to provide all the service we would like. To help guide us in the right direction we provided all our members a questionnaire just before Christmas. This will help us on our journey this year. We hope to have the information collated by the end of February. Please send in your form if you have not done so yet.

In February we say goodbye to Jolene, who will be missed. She has agreed to come back in March to help deliver the Fundamentals course so it is not goodbye for good just yet. Jolene has been with the organisation for over three years. In that time she has been involved with teaching at Waikato DHB, carrying out numerous patient visits in the community and delivery of the COPD and Asthma fundamentals course. She is continuing her work as a practice nurse at Mahoe Medical Centre in Te Awamutu and we wish her well for the future.

2015 will see us continuing to offer training in COPD & Asthma fundamentals, and Spirometry, to Health professionals, helping raise awareness and improve diagnosis of these conditions. We are providing Spirometry training to members of the Midland Health Network in the first half of the year which we are really looking forward to.

We have put together some dates for 2015 highlighting important events and activities, there will be more to come, please see page 10 and note them in your diaries.

We continue to offer Spirometry testing, remember we do need a doctors referral before we can book you in.

Sailor has been collecting together the names of some of his mates and we don't want you to feel missed out so head to the back two pages to find out what he has been up to. I hope everyone finds something of interest in this addition. Until next time, kind regards

**Ruth Taylor - Acting Service Delivery Manager**

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## From the Board

Happy New Year and welcome to the first issue of AsthmaLink for 2015 and my first issue as President.

Firstly, I would like to thank Andrew Fox on behalf of the board for his significant tenure of service and contribution to the development of Asthma & Respiratory Services (Waikato) over many years. Andrew has been President since 2010, but has been associated with Asthma Waikato in the capacity of board member prior to this, and his drive and dedication has been instrumental in the success of the organisation.

I would also like to welcome Dr Noel Karalus to Asthma Waikato as our Patron. Dr Karalus is a leading respiratory physician at the Waikato DHB as well as running his own practice in Hamilton. As many of you will remember, Dr Karalus is also a past (Honorary) President of the Waikato Asthma Society and we look forward to working with him in the future.

And we would also like to welcome Ruth Taylor as our Acting Service Delivery Manager – who has introduced herself already in this issue of AsthmaLink. Ruth came on board in November and is doing a great job picking up the reigns from Kelly while she is away on maternity leave.

You should have all received a questionnaire asking for your thoughts on where/what Asthma Waikato should be concentrating on. If you do have any ideas, please respond back to us as soon as you are able. The board is conducting a strategy session in late February and we would like to have your input and ideas included as part of this process.

2014 flew past us and Asthma Waikato has had a busy year delivering services to the community. 2015 looks to be another busy year and with many changes from government will mean an additional load on the administrative side of the organization. 21,900 children still suffer from Asthma in the Waikato region, plus those with COPD and related illnesses; so we still have a huge task ahead of us and a definite need for our services. Our strategy session will help the organization to address this need and also how to align ourselves more closely with the community and government service organisations.

**Tony Hill - Board President**

COVER PHOTO: Victoria Johnstone, Community Asthma nurse and Vanda Watson, Nurse liaison, helping promote Asthma awareness at Waikato Hospital's Clinical Mead Centre during our 2014 Awareness week.

**Please contact us  
Asthma Waikato**

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**References:** 1. Seretide Datasheet, GSK 2. Tarsin WY et al. Int J Pharm. 2006; 316: 131-137 3. Bateman ED et al. Am J Respir Crit Care Med 2004;170 (8): 836-844 4. Pharmaceutical Schedule April 2014, PHARMAC.



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## Dear Nurse

**I am currently pregnant and do not like taking medication, is it safe to use asthma inhalers or should I just cope with being breathless?**



Inhaled asthma treatment will not harm your baby during pregnancy. Having well controlled asthma during pregnancy is important for your wellbeing and for the development of the baby. In fact around one third of women find their asthma improves in pregnancy while one third stay the same and the other third find it gets worse.

My advice to you is to have a check-up with your G.P. and ask for an

asthma action plan. Also make sure your midwife is aware you have asthma and you have your medications available during child birth. Also see Asthma Foundation website fact sheet on Women and asthma.

**I have heard talk of COPD, as someone with asthma is this going to happen to me?**

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a long term condition which causes persistent airway obstruction. The causes of COPD include smoking (nearly all COPD is smoking-related), airborne irritants and pollutants (e.g. industrial dusts), inherited factors (e.g. alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency) and in some cases long term poorly controlled asthma can lead to COPD later in life. If you manage your asthma well, use your medications as prescribed and do not smoke you are unlikely to develop COPD.

**My daughter has asthma and is very allergic to pine trees, what else can you suggest instead of having a Christmas tree?**

A Pohutukawa tree is a great alternative and you can buy them in pot. Poinsettias also look wonderful on tables this time of year. Decorate your house with Christmas lights and tinsel. Make a ginger bread house this sends a lovely smell through the house and the children love decorating and eating it! You can buy some beautiful fake trees now that look very natural.



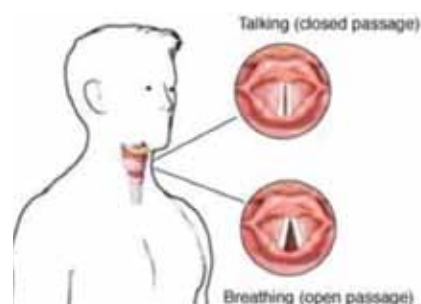
**What is the difference between vocal cord dysfunction and asthma?**

Some times it can be difficult to tell because both can cause coughing, wheeze, throat tightness and hoarseness but they are two separate disorders. Vocal cord dysfunction (VCD) is the abnormal closing of the vocal cords when you breath or out. Asthma affects the small airways further down in the lungs. Your doctor may suspect (VCD) rather than asthma if:

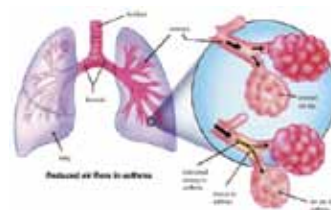
- Its harder to breathe in than out when symptoms flare up
- Asthma medications don't seem to ease your symptoms
- Results of breathing (Lung Function) tests or other tests for asthma are normal.

Treatment for vocal VCD may involve panting manoeuvres, speech therapy, psychological counselling and avoidance of irritants.

### Vocal cord dysfunction



### Asthma



**I have been told to lose weight to help with my asthma and obstructive sleep apnoea, how does this help?**

Obesity makes the throat narrower and more likely to collapse in sleep. Weight loss has also shown to improve asthma control in over weight people. Excess weight can suppress the ribs which suppresses the lungs. This is similar to wearing a pack on your front. Extra weight around the stomach also presses on the diaphragm (large muscle under your ribs that is used when breathing). We all often notice this after a large meal. Perhaps take a stroll after lunch instead of a nap!

**I've heard of a new asthma medication called Xolair, how does it work and who is it meant for?**

Xolair (Omalizumab) is an antibody that helps decrease allergic responses in the body. It is for people over 6 years old with severe asthma. It is an injection and can only be prescribed by a respiratory physician.

*Written by Jolene Dalziel, Community Respiratory Nurse.*





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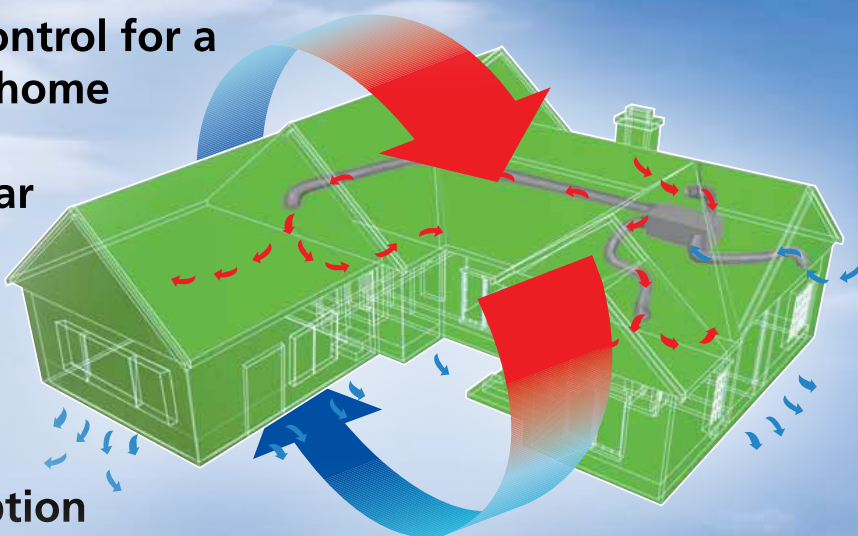
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## Be an Asthma Champion

**By making a bequest you can help provide support, advice and guidance to others long after you are gone**

### Making a Will



It is always best to speak with your legal advisor before making or changing your Will.

Having a Will allows you to decide how your assets are distributed after your death. It can help provide for your family and loved ones, and for your chosen charities.

Your Will could help keep Asthma Waikato's services running for future generations, and would be a lasting gift that serves the community into the future.

### Changing your Will

You can review and update your Will at any time. When doing so, you have the opportunity to consider making a bequest to Asthma & Respiratory Services (Waikato) Inc. also known as Asthma Waikato.

If you already have a Will you will only need to make a few changes by completing a codicil - a legal supplement to your Will that changes or amends part of it - you should contact your legal advisor to talk through your wishes.

Asthma & Respiratory Services (Waikato) Inc. is a registered charity with the Charities Commission and has the registration number: CC33207.

### Bequests



After taking care of loved ones you might like to make a gift that remembers Asthma Waikato.

All gifts received by Asthma Waikato will be used to help keep services running for future generations.

### Types of bequest

A bequest is a statement in your Will instructing your executor to give a specific item of property, sum of money, or percentage of the residue of your estate, to a particular person or organisation; such as Asthma Waikato.

There are three general types of bequest.

#### **Specific purpose bequest**

A gift of particular items or property, jewellery, car etc.

#### **General bequest**

Usually a sum of money or percentage of the value of your estate.

#### **Residual bequest**

How you want the remainder of your estate to be dealt with after any specific or general gifts have been given.

#### **Suggested wording**

If you would like to leave a gift in your Will to Asthma Waikato then you may want to use the following wording:

*"I give (a specified share of the residue/or the percentage of/or a specified gift) to Asthma & Respiratory Services (Waikato) Inc. for its general purposes and I declare that the receipt of the Service Delivery Manager or other appointed officer, shall be full and sufficient discharge for the said bequest."*

We know that the content of your Will is personal and we will not ask you for any details, anything you do choose to share will be held in the strictest confidence.

### We value your support



Asthma Waikato has been providing services in the Waikato for over 40 years. Throughout this time we have been heavily reliant on donations and grants. Receiving bequests allows us the flexibility to meet the needs of our members, rather than meet the expectations of funders.

We would be delighted to hear if you have included a bequest to Asthma Waikato in your Will. Letting us know of your intentions will enable us to thank you personally and acknowledge you on behalf of those whose lives you will affect.

If you require any further information or would like to discuss this, please contact the Service Delivery Manager:



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## November 19th 2014 WORLD COPD DAY



There was a great turn out for World COPD Day in Hamilton. The Hamilton COPD support Group is run by the energetic and passionate Shona Bramley. The speaker was Victoria Donoghue a Physiotherapist based in private practice in Cambridge who helps people with asthma, bronchiectasis, COPD and other breathing disorders. Victoria's talk was based around promoting 'Movement for Life.' I will definitely remember her advice to us all "Walking, taking the stairs and joining a new group helps to promote active exercise." "Being active can also help to prevent diseases." She also let us know some places where community support and resources can be accessed through:

- \* Sport Waikato Green Prescription: Hydrotherapy pool [sportwaikato.org.nz](http://sportwaikato.org.nz)
- \* Tai Chi: For balance/muscle strengthening/breathing exercises
- \* Pulmonary Rehabilitation: Waikato Hospital/Community support groups
- \* Don't forget to breathe: A free book for people with COPD and their caregivers [www.dontforgettobreathe.org.nz](http://www.dontforgettobreathe.org.nz)

By Vanda Watson

## Farewell Raewyn

It is with a great deal of sadness that I write to wish you all farewell. Due to financial constraints I have been made redundant from Asthma Waikato.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my clients, who I have visited over the last nine months, for the experiences that you have provided me. It has been a true pleasure to work with you all.

I would particularly like to pay respect to my COPD clients who have welcomed me into their homes and lives with an open heart. The commitment you have shown to improve your current state of wellness has been truly remarkable.

I hope to find a new role which allows me to continue my work with some of my COPD clients.

I hope you all had a very merry Christmas and have a happy and prosperous 2015. (Remember those exercises!)

*Arohanui,  
Raewyn Bell  
Community Respiratory Nurse*

## Summer and COPD

We all look forward to the end of winter and those cold gloomy days that challenge the power of positive thought. The risk of influenza and colds are reduced and we relax the limitations of becoming infected by others. Also these conditions can be celebrated summer brings along its own set of possible negative influences.

Heat and humidity can cause COPD sufferers to battle with the increased breathing effort required as we attempt to cool out bodies down.

### What can you do to minimise this risk?

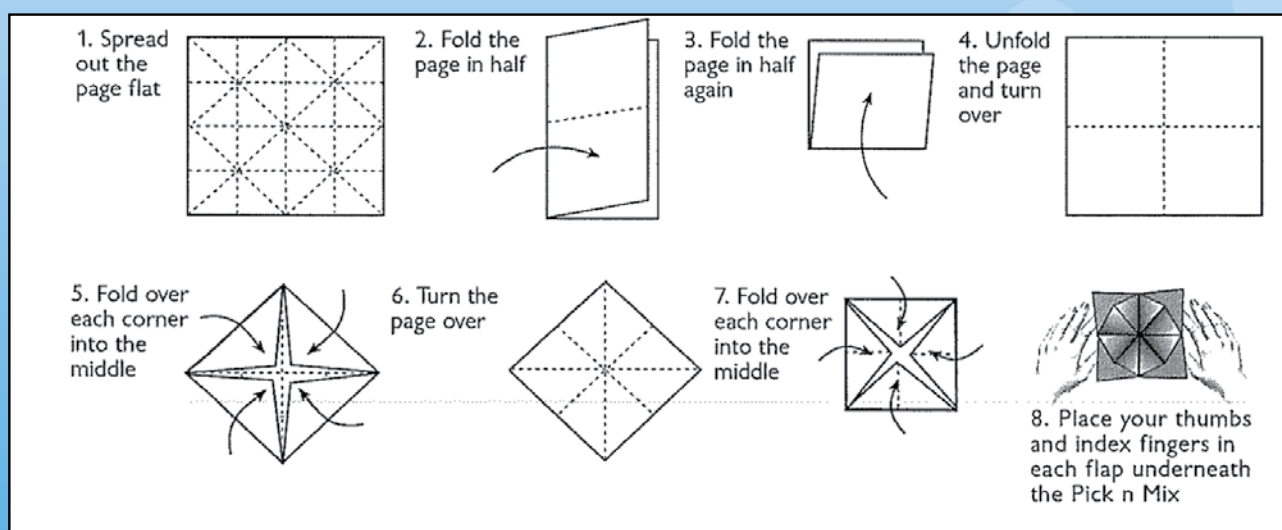
- \* Keep cool and stay in air conditioned environments as much as possible. If you need to go out to shop, pay bills etc. Do so in morning or late evening when the temperatures are likely to be cooler. Plan ahead and avoid being outside in the hottest part of the day
- \* Drink lots of water. This can assist you to regulate your body temperature. Also drinking fluids keeps mucous thin making it easier to clear your lungs and airways
- \* Stay up to date with the weather forecast. It is important to be aware of the humidity levels and avoid high percentages
- \* Stay in touch with others. If you live alone make sure that someone checks on you either by phone or visit especially during times of high temperatures and humidity levels
- \* Remember to take your medications, including your reliever medication early if you think that you are going to experience a flare up or exacerbation
- \* Wear light weight, loose fitting clothing
- \* Take a cool shower or bath
- \* Eat small meals, as opposed to large meals, as overeating can cause discomfort
- \* Call for help if you feel that your symptoms are worsening
- \* Have a lovely summer!
- \* Prepare your meals for the day in the morning when your energy levels are at their highest and the weather is cooler

# Sailors Mates



"Hi kids, I had hoped to include some photos from the Hamilton Christmas parade but unfortunately it was cancelled due to rain. I received a personal invitation so really wanted to go. Next year I hope it goes ahead as I think it would be great place to meet up with some of my mates. If you are getting up to anything exciting in 2015 then please let me know and I will ask the editor to put something in Asthmalink and put you into a draw to join me at the Parade in December."

"Though diaries and dates are a little bit boring, I am looking forward to Thursday 18th June, why you may ask, because it is International Sushi Day! (Sushi is my favourite food.) One other date I am going to remember is Tuesday 12th May as this is International Nurses day. I think it is important to remember the wonderful work they do for us, without them I would not have learnt how to puff into my spacer and use my inhaler properly and I would have been more of a flat fish, than a proper puffer fish! Keep in touch and enjoy the rest of your summer." Sailor



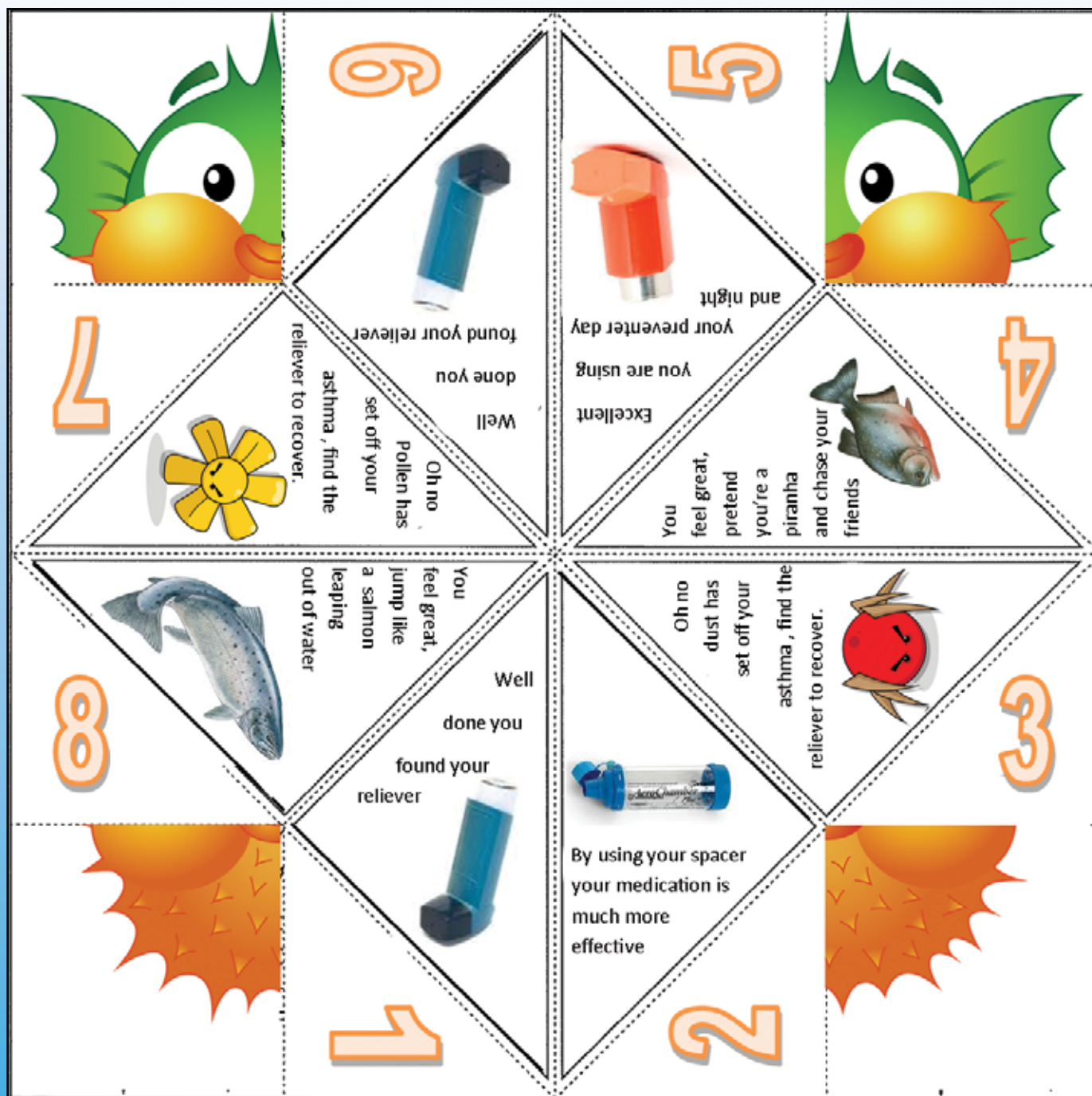
"Remembering that using your preventer, avoiding triggers and keeping active are really important when you have asthma. To help you remember all this I have had my friends in the office design you a Sailor chatterbox, use the guide above to help you fold it. I hope you and your friends enjoy using it." Sailor

## Dates for the diary 2015

Children's Day	<i>Sunday 1 March</i>	Annual golf fundraiser	<i>Friday 20 November</i>
The Great NZ Food Show	<i>22 - 24 May</i>	Waikato wellbeing show	<i>Friday 10 - Sunday 12 April</i>
Waikato Home & Garden Show	<i>1 - 4 October</i>	National Balloon Day	<i>Friday 4 September</i>
COPD and Asthma Fundamentals Course	<i>Tuesday 10 and Tuesday 17 March</i>	Lake Taupo ride	<i>Saturday 28 November</i>
Field Days	<i>10 - 13 June</i>	World Asthma Day	<i>Tuesday 5 May</i>
World COPD day	<i>Wednesday 18 November</i>	Stoptober	<i>October</i>
Gluten Free food & Allergy Show	<i>21 - 22 March</i>	Christmas parades - various	<i>December 2015</i>
Asthma awareness week	<i>31 August to 6 September</i>	Spirometry training courses	<i>Thursday 7 May &amp; Thursday 14 May</i> <i>Thursday 10 &amp; Friday 11 September</i> <i>Thursday 12 &amp; Friday 13 November</i>

Above are only a handful of events taking place in the Waikato area in 2015. It is good to keep active and involved in our communities so I encourage you to support these events.

Cut me out and challenge your mates to stay happy and healthy this Summer!



If you would like to be a little more active in 2015 then why not plan ahead and increase your fitness ready for our Golf fundraiser in November or take on the slightly larger challenge of fundraising for Asthma Waikato while riding around the wonderful lake Taupo.

For those looking for learning opportunities there will be more Asthma Waikato training dates issued later in the year. See below for information on the course we offer.

### COPD & Asthma Fundamentals

This course is endorsed by the NZ College of Practice Nurses. Points towards Practice Nurse Accreditation can be gained if successfully completed.

### Spirometry

Good quality spirometry requires a trained and experienced operator. This course is designed and run by a Clinical Physiologist and is an interactive course that provides both presentation and hands on opportunities to learn more about spirometry, understand the international guidelines for the performance of quality spirometry, and develop both your skills and confidence in maintaining and using your spirometer. This course follows ATS/ERS guidelines. A certificate of competency will be provided if the participant has attended the full course, has completed the exam satisfactorily and submits ten test results for auditing purposes. This course should be completed every three years.



## Information on Membership

- Membership is \$35 (\$30 for super annuitants & Beneficiaries) a year and includes all those in the household. The year runs from 1st July until 30th June. Anyone donating over \$50 receives free membership.

As Asthma Waikato is an incorporated Society members are really important in helping direct the organisations focus. Members receive the regional and National magazines and an invitation to the annual AGM and other events throughout the year.

If you are interested in becoming a member then please complete the form below and either send a cheque payable to Asthma & Respiratory Services (Waikato) Inc. or make a electronic deposit, using your name as the reference.

Thankyou very much for the wonderful  
help from Paewyn Bell, before she came to see  
me i was a heavy user of my inhaler and  
my Doctor was getting concerned.  
Since receiving the visit from Paewyn  
and learning to breathe and doing the  
exercises i feel better have even got back  
into the garden, i have come back to life.  
I cannot thankyou enough for the  
excellent work you do  
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how good i look.  
It is all thanks  
to you.

E A Forster from Huntly



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**Te Ha Ora Huango**  
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