



**Cancer In Kids @ RCH**  
curing kids' cancer through research

Newsletter Winter 2009

## Don't Miss It - The Blue and Orange Ball



Please visit our website  
for more details  
[www.cika.org.au](http://www.cika.org.au)



The Sebel at Albert Park (formerly the Carlton Crest Hotel) is the venue  
for our 2009 Blue and Orange Ball.

CIKA's patron, Peter Mitchell, and John Carter from Hocking Stuart, will ensure the smooth running  
of the night and, as always, the emphasis will be on fun and raising funds for research into cancer in  
children. You can look forward to many of the usual activities –  
silent and grand auctions, raffles, heads and tails, great food and music and lots of dancing.

Tickets are available through the Royal Children's Hospital Auxiliaries office;

by phone: (03) 9345 5188 or by email: [auxiliaries.office@rch.org.au](mailto:auxiliaries.office@rch.org.au)

A link in to the office is also available on our website [www.cika.org.au](http://www.cika.org.au)

inside:



dog show



old time wood days



lab day

[www.cika.org.au](http://www.cika.org.au)

# President's Letter

2008 was an amazing year for CIKA thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, large and small. We raised over \$155,000, a record for our fundraising. Of course, all of this money goes to paediatric cancer research and we know that we are making a difference. We are now going into our third year of funding for the current research project which has eleven children involved in a clinical trial. We can only continue to support this vital research with your help.

Lots of people help CIKA in its activities and in this newsletter we introduce you to some more of our very valued supporters. There are many ways to help CIKA, through your cash donation, through product donation, by giving your time or through attendance at our fundraising events. Our new website also enables you to make direct donations with your credit card.

Make sure you set aside August 22 for our night of nights – the Blue and Orange Ball. Tickets are available through the Royal Children's Hospital Auxiliaries office; by phone: (03) 9345 5188 or by email: [auxiliaries.office@rch.org.au](mailto:auxiliaries.office@rch.org.au)



***Sandra Lehrer, President.***

## History & Aims

CIKA was founded in April 1980 by 3 families, to increase the awareness of cancer in children and to encourage financial support to aid research into children's cancer. CIKA is an official auxiliary of the Royal Children's Hospital and is open to any interested person who feels that they would like to contribute to help CIKA.

Over 140 children under 15 years of age are diagnosed with cancer each year in Victoria and 90% of these children are treated at RCH. CIKA is committed to providing funding for research into solid tumors, the most common group of childhood cancer. Solid tumors include Wilm's tumor, Neuroblastoma, Osteosarcoma and Ewing's Sarcoma.

Apart from the influence of genetic factors, inherited conditions and exposure to ionising radiation, little is known of the cause(s) of childhood cancers and nothing can be done to prevent them.

Therefore, the need to continue financial support for research into childhood cancer is imperative.

The hopes and dreams of CIKA are to stop children from ever contracting these types of cancer, but if they do, to ensure that the treatment they receive is successful. At present, the only way to move positively towards these ideals is through research.

CIKA has actively supported research projects at RCH with financial assistance since its inception and will continue to do so until these types of cancer are cured. CIKA is recognised as one of the foremost fundraising auxiliaries of the RCH, Melbourne.

The CIKA logo is in memory of the children of the founding families of CIKA. One child liked birds, particularly seagulls, one child liked butterflies and the other liked flowers especially nasturtiums.

May the children rest in peace.

## Legal Notice

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Contact us at [cikanews@cika.org.au](mailto:cikanews@cika.org.au)

# An interview with Ruth Murray – Coordinator of the CIKA stalls

## *How did you get involved with CIKA?*

My mum was a role model for me – I grew up believing that you should contribute to the community. I have known so many people touched by cancer, including friends of my own children. Through the ACI social club, we became friends with a member of CIKA. We began attending the CIKA balls and had so much fun. We got to know the great CIKA people in this way.

## *How did your involvement with CIKA develop?*

Initially we made donations through our company and over time we became close to Sandra and Steve Lehrer. I was invited to help on the CIKA stalls and this year joined the committee.



## *What changes have you brought to the stalls?*

Along with my friend Sharron Markovic we have revamped the type of product and its presentation. We enjoy sourcing the product and presenting it in a professional manner. We like to create items that visitors to the hospital find useful and attractive. With his knowledge, I steal a lot of product from my husband’s factory. Some of the items are exclusive to us. We have had lots of positive feedback from our customers and are always looking for new ideas.

## *What keeps you motivated?*

I enjoy the interaction with our customers; seeing the children choosing their products and knowing that sick children on the wards will gain pleasure from the gifts brought from us. We also enjoy being ambassadors for CIKA. We also know that CIKA is a great cause and we know that 100% of the money raised goes to research.

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## upcoming events

**Blue & Orange Ball:** August 22nd

### Stall Dates for 2009

January Thursday 29th	July Thursday 16th
February Wednesday 18th	August No stall
March Thursday 19th	September Thursday 17th
April Wednesday 22nd	October Wednesday 21st
May Thursday 21st	November Thursday 19th
June Wednesday 24th	December No stall

**Paddy’s Market:** March 17th  
**Andy’s market:** November 26th

# The Old Time Wood Days

The Old Time Wood Days is an annual event organised by the Duyvestyn family each November. The sounds and smells of the working horses, the cooking and preparation of the Saturday night 'feast', the sound of the drag saws and small steam engines, and the constant murmur of intense discussions about the various types of tools can't be beaten. The CIKA team and all Wood Days supporters are looking forward to this year's event so that we can, once again, have a great time while raising funds for CIKA. Make sure you mark November 14 and 15 in your diary and head to Milltown, about ten minutes north of Heywood, in South West Victoria. More details of this event, including directions for getting to Milltown, will be posted on the CIKA website later in the year. Go to [www.cika.org.au](http://www.cika.org.au) Hope to see you there.



## Long Term Volunteer Profiles

### Geoff Inkster

Geoff was one of our original helpers back in 1996. Every year Geoff packs up the axe handle machine and any thing else that he thinks might be of interest and heads down the Hamilton Highway from Warracknabeal. He also brings the pig that is donated for our dinner each year. He is a very good mechanic so keeps all the old engines running well. Geoff is also a very good shearer and shored Andrew's hair and beard with old blade shears when we had the shave.

### Trevor and Sue Lester

Sue and Trevor have been involved from the first year, coming now from Wentworth with dragsaws and axes and what ever else they have of interest. They also bring lots of fresh Mildura oranges to sell. Sue helps with making dampers, which are very popular, as well as helping with whatever else needs to be done. Trevor does post and rail fencing as well as cutting wood with his dragsaws. He also does the tilley kerosene lights for the evening.

### Malcolm Shepherd

Malcolm always brings a variety of tools and whatever for his display but in more recent years he has been one of the main people who has kept the fires burning, keeping the coals up to the cooks for the dampers and tea and coffee (there's no power in the bush!). He also starts very early in the morning, making sure that we have enough coals and heat to cook our fabulous camp oven dinner as well as keeping an eye on the pig on the spit.

### Bob and Helen Smith

Bob and Helen have only missed one weekend since they started coming; they are the people at the gate. Bob and Helen even have their own hut to keep out the many different types of weather that we have had over the years. They also collect the money and park the cars. They usually arrive a day early to help set up and stay a day or two after to help with the clean up.

# The Wood Days Calendar

Sam and Donna Taranto (Taranto Farms) have been generous supporters of the Wood Days for many years. Two years ago whilst reviewing the photos they had taken at the weekend it was suggested that a calendar be produced to be not only a fundraiser but also a tool to raise awareness of cancer in children. Sam approached Daniel Burke (business development manager at Graphic Impressions) to design and print the calendar. When Daniel discovered who the job was for, he refused any payment and insisted on enlisting the assistance of several professionals to donate their time. They put together this concept. For the last two years this calendar has been a sell out, and the 2008 calendar sold out in record time. Fifteen hundred were produced and then sold for \$5.00 each.

When asked why he felt so strongly about this project Daniel said that he had cause to attend the Royal Children's Hospital some years ago and he was so moved that he welcomed a project to "help the kids ". CIKA must pay special tribute to the many families and friends that organise the sale of the calendars especially Christine and Andrew Duyvestyn. We would like to also acknowledge the owners and staff of La Laupa Pizza and Pasta who sold over three very large boxes of calendars at their place of business, a great effort!

The following are the folks that put together the calendar:

Daniel Burke, Graphic Impressions.  
Christine Gaffney, Designer.  
Daryl Price, Focus Paper.  
Wayne Eastall, Marvel Binding



The pictures here are from the calendar produced each year which is eagerly awaited by many families



# Katrina's Story

Katrina Jane Tasker was born on the 28th November 1965 and tragically passed away on 25th July 1976 at the age of 10. At the time, I had no idea of the effect my little sister would have on so many people's lives, then and now. Katie was born to John and Lois Tasker and was like any other child. In the sixties, life to me was very simple, I was 5 at the time, and I was so proud to have a little baby sister. She was loved and adored by all and she was the first granddaughter to both grandparents, the apple of the eye to all family and friends. Katie and I grew up in the Doncaster area, a suburb of Melbourne. Doncaster in those days was like a trip to the country, empty grazing land and full of orchards (perhaps that is where her love of butterflies came from). She did all the normal things as a little girl growing up at that time; kinder, then school and learning ballet from her auntie Eileen and Kathy Gorham OBE (dec), a long time friend of the family. Ballet was a passion of hers, so much so that she had a hand painted life size mural of a ballerina on her wall made by our neighbour Beverly Foster. I remember her as strong-willed and very determined, and she created incredible bonds with people, like her auntie Irene and god mother Lola Welch (dec).

Our lives changed forever in February 1973 when I had to go to the doctor after a serious fall, and Katie, who had not been well for a while, was brought along too, just for a checkup. The doctor saw me first and wanted me to go straight to Epworth hospital; he looked at Katie and wanted tests and x-rays done. Later the next day, while I was in the hospital, dad came in to see me with an ashen face and cried. Katrina had been diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease, a tumor the size of my little sister's chest. I have no idea to this day the anguish and pain my parents must have experienced. First, for me, rushed to Epworth hospital, and then the next day for their daughter, in the Royal Children's Hospital, and, as I was told at the time, never to come home.

Miraculously, after only some two weeks, Katie responded so well to treatment, she did come home.



The support of friends, family and even people we didn't really know was overwhelming. Before Katie's diagnosis, no one in our circle of friends had ever heard of a child with cancer. One lady said to mum, "Kids don't get cancer!" People were incredibly generous. I recall that Katie felt like watermelon one day, but watermelons were out of season. Someone got wind of this and, that day, flew in a watermelon from Queensland, especially for her.

From what I can recall, the first 12 months of Chemo and Radio and lengthy stays at the RCH were heart breaking to live through; the suffering of a little girl as well as well as that of mum and dad. Then, one day when I came home from school, mum was crying in the kitchen with our next door neighbour. I had no idea what was wrong. Our neighbour said;

The beautiful CIKA logo honors the children from the original CIKA families.

Katrina loved butterflies so they will always form part of our logo.



“you’ve got to tell him”. With that, I went straight to my room, shying away from the tears that I had seen so often. I was never told or asked what they were crying about, but deep inside I knew that it was Katie and I felt her time was very short. I stayed in my room for hours, saying to myself; “no this can’t happen, it’s is not right, this happens to other people, not us!” I prayed every night. I was only 15 and our simple life was going to change forever.

I will never forget the afternoon of Sunday 25th July 1976 and the preceding days but, despite this tragedy for our family, the legacy of a little girl, Katrina (Katie) Jane Tasker, was about to be born. John and Lois Tasker, whose lives had recently been so devastated, contacted Karen and Nigel Hayes (who were agonizing over their little boy, Scott) and Stan and Trudie Gore (who had recently lost their precious daughter Wendy). These three families began CIKA. The very first fund raiser was held on a winter’s day in Ivanhoe where they held a street stall made up from donated bric-a-brac and cakes. Hundreds of dollars were raised, far more than anyone had dreamed. I remember some people trying to haggle over the price of an item, and then, once they found out what the money was for, just leaving item and making a donation.

The story of CIKA needs to be told because the short life of Katie Jane has affected hundreds, thousands, if not millions of people. Katie’s legacy is the raising of money for the Royal Children’s hospital, for research, support, and for the doctors so that children and families today do not have to endure what we went through.

Life has gone on; it is now over 33 years ago since Katie passed away. She would have been 43 yrs old today, possibly with her own family. I wonder what our lives would have been like had she survived her cancer and been involved with her younger sister Naomi, and aunt to Emily, Molly, Paige, Aaliyah and Blake. I am and so proud of my parents and all the people who have had any involvement with CIKA over many years.

A butterfly has a short and beautiful life.  
This is one little girl that made a difference.  
I miss her.

***Rick Tasker***



# 2009 CIKA Lab Day



Many people took advantage of the opportunity to tour the Children's Cancer Centre Research Laboratories when CIKA organised its annual 'Lab Day' on May 31. We were particularly pleased to welcome Lois Tasker and her son Rick. Lois is one of the three founding members of CIKA. She was able to share some great stories of the early CIKA times and was also thrilled to see the work being done today.



Small groups of visitors were taken through the lab by Dr Denise Caruso, the lead researcher of the project currently being funded by CIKA. She was ably assisted by Yosuke Minoda. Denise gave us a very simplified explanation of the project highlighting both the achievements to date and also the challenges ahead. It was wonderful to hear of the success so far and the future potential of this work.



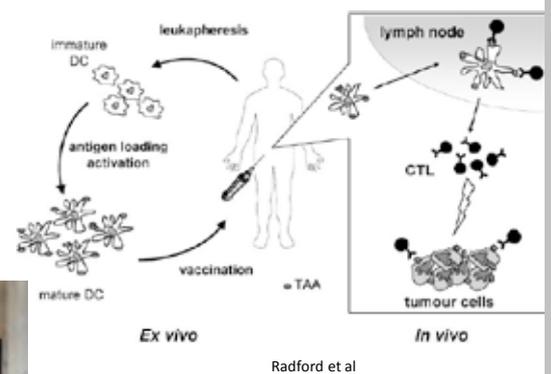
We were also able to see the dedication Denise and Yosuke have for their work. It further inspired all who attended to continue their commitment to CIKA as we endeavor to raise funds for this and other projects.

## Current Research: Active immunotherapy trial for children with advanced malignancies

CIKA commenced funding this research project in 2008. We are committed to funding for a minimum of three years at \$100,000 a year. This trial was chosen as CIKA's main focus as:

- it builds on work previously funded by CIKA;
- it has potential to benefit children with all types of solid tumours;
- it has potential to be of benefit to current patients.

*The immune system is very powerful and very specific, and therefore makes a desirable system to harness for anti-cancer therapy.*



*Children with cancer must deal with both the terrible effects of their disease and also with the harshness of their treatments.*

*Current therapies that include chemotherapy and radiation have reached the limit of toxicity that patients can withstand.*

*It is necessary to explore new directions for treating tumours in children that are effective and safe.*

Disease Indication	Patients enrolled	Patients with vaccines made	Patients given vaccines
Newly diagnosed stage 4 neuroblastoma	13	6	3
Recurrent solid tumours	3	2	1
Recurrent brain tumours	5	1	1

### Primary Aims of immunotherapy protocol

- Demonstrate its safety in children with cancer
- Demonstrate its feasibility in children with cancer

### Secondary Aims of immunotherapy protocol

- Assess the anti-tumour responses by traditional clinical measures
- Assess the stimulation and effectiveness of the immune system before and after treatment by this immunotherapy protocol



# Pooches in the Park

The 22nd of March saw the Flemington Neighbourhood House once again overrun by our four-legged friends as it played host to the 2009 Pooches in the Park Dog Show. Organised by Anne Dynon of the Flemington Veterinary Hospital, this year it was a twilight affair from 4.00 to 7.00 pm; with two bands, two MC's and lots of fun activities for both two-legged and four-legged creatures. A highlight for the spectators was the egg and spoon race with a difference – egg on spoon in one hand, dog on lead in the other! More popular with the dogs, however, was the fastest dog food eating competition. There were some truly formidable efforts by the winning pets. There were two guessing competitions; guess Mia's weight (a German shepherd with a healthy appetite) and guess the number of goodos and smakos in the jars. All these activities were free and everyone got into the spirit of the day, had lots of fun and contributed lots of money to our cause. Steve Bruce and Adoncia were our two MC's and they kept the action happening. We had three judges; a very official fellow, Jim Cusack of the Justice Department of the Victorian Governments, and two special 'bribeable' judges, Betty Harding and her friend Betty who collected over \$200 from the entrants willing to do anything to win! Margaret Greenwood's Jams and Chutneys, Kate's Cake Stall, the Pamper Tent, The Rotary Boys with their sausage sizzle and wine tasting, RCH Products and Raffles all did a brisk trade. It was another great day raising \$2824. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

If you would like to see more photos and a video from the day please go to:  
[www.cika.org.au/DogShows](http://www.cika.org.au/DogShows)



# 2009 Professional Development Weekend - May 2 & 3

Once more we were off on the much anticipated PD weekend in Daylesford. The weather was magical after the welcome rain and the company, as always, was energetic and innovative. In 2009 it was particularly pleasing to be able to welcome new faces to this essential part of the CIKA calendar.

Ellen and Sandra had planned a productive schedule of events, ensuring that the required business was worked through, yet allowing time for all attendees to include some well earned restorative activities as well. Walks, massages, coffee, the occasional glass of wine and some retail therapy all had their place.

Once again, the catering was superlative. A simple directive from Ellen of 'breakfasts' or 'dinner on Saturday' led to some fantastic food, all provided by the committee members attending. Between meals we fine-tuned the Blue and Orange Ball structure, brainstormed ideas for the forthcoming 30th birthday year for CIKA and canvassed ideas for future directions and fund raising activities.

It is great to see the growing numbers at this wonderful weekend and to be able to spend more time developing and building on the wonderful work being done by this committed team of volunteers.

*Wendy Taylor*



## CIKA's new website [www.cika.org.au](http://www.cika.org.au)



CIKA's website has a new look. In December 2008, James Clift (aged 15) and his father David attended website development training at Komosion. Following this there was lots of communication between the Clifts and the CIKA members as we tried to get things just right. Many hours, days and weeks later the new website was ready to be launched. Sample pages are shown here – we hope they will tempt you to visit.



# CIKA Supporters



## The Macedon Ranges Focus Group is CIKA's longest standing sponsor.

As well as providing generous financial support to our organization, good friendships have been developed between the two committees. This energetic and social group of women holds functions monthly and one of the highlights of the year is the annual Christmas party in December. This is a great chance to socialise, enjoy good food, sing traditional Christmas songs and of course receive a visit and present from Santa.

Several members of CIKA and the Children's Cancer Centre attended the 2008 Christmas luncheon and after a delightful welcome by President Gwen Kakafikas, CIKA President Sandra Lehrer was presented with a cheque for \$5000. This brings the total amount donated to CIKA by Focus to \$50,681

The CIKA committee would like to pay tribute to this social group. This is a fantastic effort and we are very grateful that each year, when discussions take place during their AGM, there is an ongoing commitment to CIKA.

To all the members of Focus - thank you.



Known affectionately as 'the jam lady', Margaret Greenwood has raised over \$60,000 for the Royal Children's Hospital.

Margaret is well known around the hospital and her delicious jams and marmalades are eagerly awaited by many regulars. We are very grateful for the considerable amount of money that she donates to CIKA each year.

Thanks, Margaret!

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