



Prostate Cancer  
Foundation  
of Australia

# PROSTATE SUPPORTER

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Groups  
of South Australia and Northern Territory

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

JULY – AUGUST 2009

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## Adelaide is set to turn blue in September

In a significant new prostate cancer awareness project, major city buildings will be bathed in blue light as a feature of the Blue September campaign.

**B**LUE buildings will be a significant feature of all Australian cities during Prostate Cancer Awareness Month in September, in a new move to get more people curious and asking questions about prostate cancer issues and testing.

Starting with the Opera House in Sydney, Parliament House in Canberra, Little Collins Street and Parliament House in Melbourne and Kings Park in Perth., buildings will feature blue gels or blue globes in their exterior lighting from Monday, August 31, to launch the Blue September campaign.

Adelaide is showing great support to become the “bluest” city in the country, with the State Library Foyer, the South Australian Museum and Saint Francis Xavier Cathedral confirmed participants.

Several local Council buildings will also feature blue lights – including civic buildings in the Campbelltown Council and the cities of Charles Sturt, Prospect and West Torrens. In regional South Australia, the Barossa Council and

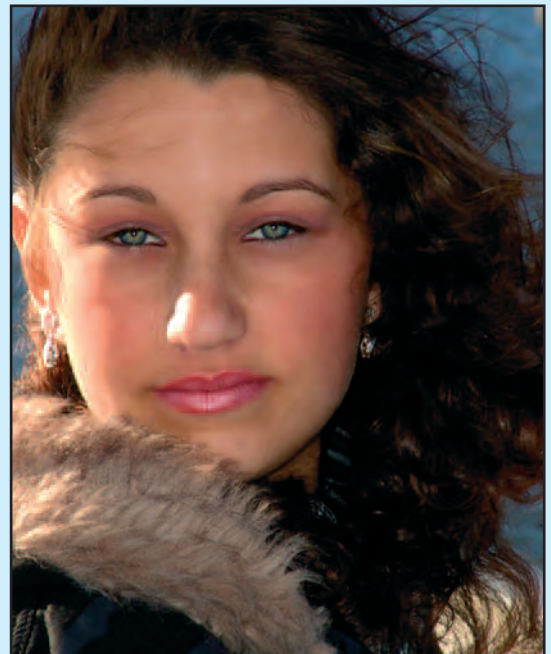
even the District Council of Mt Remarkable have come on board.

Other Blue September participants include Hoyts and Greater Union Cinemas, which will run prostate cancer awareness advertisements before movie screenings, and Bunnings is joining with local prostate cancer support groups to host awareness events at Bunnings stores before Father’s Day.

In Adelaide, South Australian Premier Mike Rann will be special guest at a function in the State Library on Monday September 7, in celebration of International Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, and to announce a new round of special research grants.

Also during September, barbecues around Australia will fire up to help fund vital Australian research into prostate cancer. As part of the PCFA’s new Community Service campaign, themed “The Difference Is You!”, people are being encouraged to host a barbecue and ask their guests to make a donation to go towards research projects. For more information visit [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au)

Newsletters can also be read online at [www.pcagsa.org.au/pages/supporter.html](http://www.pcagsa.org.au/pages/supporter.html)



Young South Australian singing star Grace Bawden supports prostate cancer awareness.

### in brief...

**A SPECIAL FEATURE** at the Central Australia Chapter Conference, to be held at Mount Lofty House in the Adelaide Hills from October 15 to 17, will be a short performance by 16-year-old operatic singing sensation Grace Bawden – an astounding new South Australian talent who is a very vocal supporter of Prostate Cancer support groups. For further details on the conference, see Ian Fisk’s notes on Page 3, and Brian Hearn’s Central Australia Chapter report on Page 12.

**CONTRIBUTIONS** of stories and images from all Support Group members to the Prostate Supporter newsletters are welcome. Please contact Foster Hill PR and Marketing by phoning (08) 8231 3555 or email items and images to [prostate-news@fosterhill.com.au](mailto:prostate-news@fosterhill.com.au)

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99  
or visit the website [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au)

# Actions that spoke loudly through the past year

Achievements of the Prostate Cancer Action Group in the past year have been significant, as Dean Wall outlines in the group's eighth annual report.

**T**HE year 2007-2008 has been another year of great activity for the Prostate Cancer Action Group of South Australia – the scope and numbers of activities being a credit to the members.

This group has continued to promote prostate cancer awareness in many ways, to the limit of our membership's capacities, and I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all members for their magnificent efforts during the year.

Activities have included awareness evenings presented in cooperation with such organisations as the Masonic Lodge, at Blackwood, Murray Bridge and Stirling, and the Apex Club and cancer support group at Victor Harbor. The SA Action Group is recognised as being unique in Australia for these awareness presentations.

The Murray Bridge awareness event – the most successful country awareness evening to date – prompted the formation of a new prostate cancer support group. Initial planning meetings attended by several of our members and representatives of the Central Australia Chapter of the PCFA ensured a strong initial support group meeting attended by good numbers of interested Murray Bridge residents.

Other Action Group activities included a publicity display at the Man Alive! festival, held on the Semaphore foreshore in March, where more than 100 enquiries were answered.

Interest generated by this very successful public interaction has prompted the group to book a site at the Yorke Peninsula Agricultural field days at Paskeville in September. Also being considered

## COMING EVENTS

**AUGUST 11 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**  
The Action Group will next meet in the upstairs meeting room of the Cancer Council SA building, 202 Greenhill Rd, Eastwood at 5.30pm on Tuesday August 11. At present, entry is through the front door on Greenhill Road.

• For more information about the Action Group and its activities, visit the South Australian Prostate Cancer Action Group's dedicated website, with detailed archives containing its newsletters, at <http://www.pcagsa.org.au>

is future involvement at the Cleve and Lucindale field days.

More awareness evenings are being planned for the coming year, at Coromandel Valley and in the South-East (probably in Mt Gambier), with other possibilities in Pt Lincoln, Whyalla and Pt Augusta.

## IN MEMORIUM

IT IS with sadness that we reflect on the recent passing of Trevor Hunt, who was a great contributor to the Action Group almost from its inception, being the group's initial chairman and a leader in forming its constitution and incorporation. Trevor was also a foundation delegate to the support and advocacy committee of the PCFA, spent many hundreds of hours scanning the internet to glean results of prostate cancer research for inclusion in our newsletter, and either chaired or

spoke as a survivor at many of awareness events. His presence at the Action Group will be sorely missed.

## INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

SEVERAL Action Group members, three who are trained PCFA Men's Health Ambassador speakers, have spoken individually to service clubs and other groups during the past year.

The continued efforts of Theban Roberts in planning and serving refreshments at all Action Group functions and at our committee meetings is especially appreciated.

## MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENTS

EARLY this year, the range of group activities was limited by the lack of members, in some cases due to deteriorating health, yet despite this the Action Group continues to enjoy a high reputation among medical professionals and health groups. Indeed, membership had reached a critical stage and it seemed the group's future projects would be increasingly limited unless it attracted more active members.

Fortunately, in recent months we have received a significant influx of new blood, though there is room for more participants to ease the workload, and to increase our range of activities.

If any readers feel up to the challenge of providing information about prostate cancer – and hopefully saving lives – we would welcome a call, or better still invite them to attend the **Action Group's next monthly meeting, which is also the AGM, on Tuesday August 11** in the conference room of the Cancer Council of SA at 202 Greenhill Rd Eastwood.

## Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

## COMING EVENTS

**AUGUST 20 MEETING:** The Adelaide Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on the third Monday of each month in the Park View Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton. This will be a light-hearted, humorous meeting with some bush poetry from Jill Wherry, and Gordon Weston's poem of a Prostate Examination will be read.

**SEPTEMBER MEETING:** The support group meeting on Monday September 21 will be a general discussion evening for group members.

• For more information about coming activities, visit the Adelaide Support Group's dedicated website at [www.psaadelaide.org](http://www.psaadelaide.org) or contact Ian Fisk by phoning 8296 3350, or send email to [ian@ianfisk.org](mailto:ian@ianfisk.org)

# Our big awareness and fundraising opportunity

Preparation for support group participation in Blue September activities has commenced in earnest, as Ian Fisk reports.

**D**OCUMENTS and information regarding how to set up a prostate cancer event in a Bunnings store during the Blue September awareness promotion have been given to the Adelaide Support Group by the PCFA.

In-store events at Bunnings stores will be conducted by the Event Co-ordinator in each store, with the participation of Bunnings employees and local support group members. We especially need help from members to attend this; could interested participants please contact Ian Fisk.

Each support group has been assigned a Bunnings Store: The Adelaide group's store is at **Mile End**, and a barbecue event has been organised for **Friday September 4**.

Merlene Burdon is the Bunnings store contact that Ian Fisk will deal with to organise the promotion fully. We have to fill out a PCFA order form for items for our fundraising stalls, such as blue shoe laces and pins, and will be supplied with a 3m x 1m banner for display purposes – which the support group will be able to keep after the event.

## ON THE AIR

ON A recent Saturday afternoon broadcast, Coast FM featured two fellows talking about their prostate cancer experiences. One had had Robotic Surgery, and the other a TURP (bore job). A few Prostrates were dropped during the interview! Still, some good advice was aired about getting tested and seeing your doctor.



• Guest speaker at the Adelaide support group's July meeting was exercise physiologist Morgan Atkinson, who was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2008 to explore exercise rehabilitation interventions for cancer patients.

## FUNDRAISING CHALLENGE

SUPPORT GROUP member Brian has been nominated to take part in a fundraising challenge for Flinders Medical Centre, to fund a three-year PhD Scholarship to undertake research into prostate cancer. The challenge is to ride a bicycle through Vietnam.

## TOOL BOX LECTURE

THE NEXT Royal Adelaide Hospital Tool Box lecture will be on the Nuts and Bolts of the Prostate, delivered by Professor Villis Marshall on Friday, August 14 from noon to 12.45pm in the Robson Lecture Theatre, Level One, Eleanor Harrauld Building, Frome Rd, Adelaide.

## Notes on the CA Chapter 2009 Annual Conference

Paul Redman has confirmed that the conference venue will be The Old Stable at Mount Lofty House, Adelaide. Arrangements will be made for those requiring accommodation from October 15.

It is anticipated that most of Friday October 16 will be taken up with the Chapter AGM and other business matters, with Saturday October 17 covering training and education, including presentations from notable speakers. It was agreed by chapter councillors that every effort should be made for Dr Carole Pinnock AM to be a participant, along with PCFA National Chair Graeme Johnson to open the conference, and various federal ministers who have expressed interest in prostate cancer matters.

Beyond Blue has already agreed to deliver a two-hour presentation on depression, and Independence Australia have made approaches to also be included.

Paul will develop a conference agenda with input from Chapter Council. It will be crucial that details of conference agenda items are provided to all group members so that those attending are readily informed on issues requiring a vote.

**COMING EVENTS****AUGUST MEETING:**

The Support Group met on August 5 in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga. Malcolm Ellis led a general discussion on health and cancer issues.

**SEPTEMBER 2 MEETING:**

The Support Group will meet at 6.30pm on September 2 in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga, conducting a general discussion on health and cancer issues

**OCTOBER MEETING:**

The Support Group meeting on October 7 will feature urologist Dr David Elder as guest speaker.

• *For more information about coming events and archives listing previous events and local group newsletters, visit the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's dedicated website at [www.pcsog.org](http://www.pcsog.org)*

• Special thanks are extended to the City of Onkaparinga Support Group sponsors: **Southern Primary Health Woodcroft, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, toneraction Christies Beach, The Original Open Market** and to the **City of Onkaparinga Council**.

# Making sure that local members get results

**Central Australia Chapter council representation ensures local support group progress, reports John Shields.**

**P**RESIDENT of the Central Australia Chapter of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and Men's Health Ambassador Malcolm Ellis has reported to the City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group that the Chapter Council meeting he attended in Alice Springs was very successful.

Malcolm emphasised this strong outcome shows that a lot can be achieved in a short time when a group of likeminded people meet to harmoniously discuss agenda items that will guide support groups through the future.

Minutes of the council meeting are now available to all local group members, and will be dispatched on request.

All members should be reminded that Malcolm and John Shields are the City of Onkaparinga Support Group representatives on the Central Australia Chapter Council and they have the local members' best interests at heart.

They therefore greatly value the input of all local group members, to make sure that they address every aspect of support services.

Please put your thinking caps on to suggest relevant issues to Malcolm and John for discussion by the council, so they can ensure the best possible support available to our group.

## **A SNIPPET FOUND BY GEOFF: FIGHTING CANCER WITH COLD GAS**

**A treatment that freezes away prostate tumours is as effective as surgery but without the terrible side effects – according to an article posted on Health News in Brief.**

**Focal cryoablation, known as the “male lumpectomy”, destroys cancerous tissue with super-cold gas, fired through needle probes, targeting the tumour without damaging surrounding tissue. As nerves and blood vessels are preserved in this procedure, it does not cause the side effects of impotence and poor bladder control associated with surgery and radiotherapy.**

**Doctors said the procedure was as good as more radical treatments in cases where the disease had not spread. The cost of treatment or how to get it was not included with the Health News article.**

## **TELECONFERENCES**

**IN ADDITION** to a monthly teleconference for the Central Australia Chapter Council Executive, there will be a teleconference every three months for all members of the chapter. The next Chapter Council Executive Teleconference was on August 6, and the first Chapter Teleconference is on August 13th at 10.30am.

If support group members have anything that they believe needs to be discussed during the teleconference and want to talk about it before this meeting, please contact either Malcolm on 8326 5588 (email [malell@inet.net.au](mailto:malell@inet.net.au)),

or John on 8382 6671 (email [jshields@aandr.com.au](mailto:jshields@aandr.com.au)) for help and assistance.

## **PRESENTATION AVAILABLE**

**AT THE** Onkaparinga group's July meeting, guest speaker Paul Redman gave an excellent presentation and explained how best to conduct a Prostate Cancer Support Group.

Ian Fisk, who recorded Paul's full presentation on the same subject delivered to the Adelaide support group in May on his PDA, has kindly advised that he can supply anyone who would like a copy. Please contact Ian by phoning 8296 5530 or email [ian@ianfisk.org](mailto:ian@ianfisk.org)

## Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

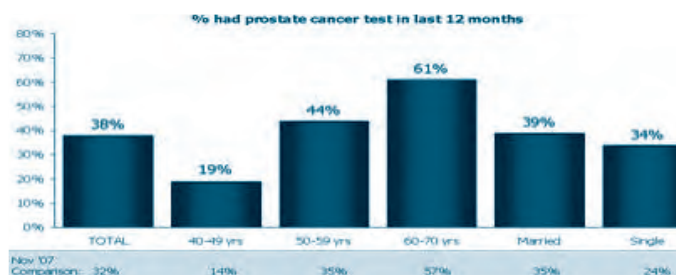
# Awareness keeps growing

Statistics show that the PCFA is succeeding in its efforts to promote more prostate cancer testing, as Terry Harbour reports.

**P**ROSTATE Cancer Foundation of Australia's Support Group Services Manager Paul Redman addressed the Mitcham Group's July meeting with a presentation similar to one he gave to the Adelaide Group in May, though it was most beneficial that Paul was able to answer many specific questions from Mitcham members.

Paul detailed the strategic goals of the PCFA:

- To be the peak independent body driving research into prostate cancer
- To provide credible and reliable information on the value of early detection
- To be known as the best source for support and information regarding prostate cancer



• To be a sustainable organisation capable of delivering its mandate now and in the future.

Paul briefly explained some of the major research grants, major events and initiatives undertaken by the PCFA over the past 18 months – especially helping with the creation of 13 new support groups and four new Chapter councils across Australia.

Graphs shown by Paul indicated the impact PCFA is having on promoting

prostate cancer and the need for early testing, comparing figures of November 2007 with November 2008 over various age brackets and in all instances, testing has increased.

Paul concluded by reiterating that although the PCFA has only a small number of paid employees, it is a very large organisation once the 9000 plus volunteers are counted in support groups and chapter councils across the nation.

## COMING EVENTS

### AUGUST MEETING

The next Mitcham Support Group meeting will be held on Thursday August 27, in the Colonel Light Gardens RSL club rooms at 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, from 7pm. Guest speaker will be Robert George, previously the Clinical Operations Manager with Dr Jones & Partners Medical Imaging. He will speak on "Advances in medical imaging and radiation therapy – a look at the future".

## Issues discussed at the Mitcham Support Group's July meeting:

THE JULY meeting for the Mitcham Support Group saw 25 in attendance, discussing issues that included the coming Yorke Peninsula Field Days on September 29 and 30 and October 1.

Jeff Roberts advised that he has a good number of volunteers who will help at the Prostate Cancer information stall, but others are welcome. The event attracts up to 50,000 people over the three days and will provide an ideal venue to the large, mainly rural community in promoting prostate cancer

awareness issues and support group activities.

- VETERAN'S Health Week Expo at the Torrens Parade Ground, from 10am to 3pm on August 26;
- THE NATIONAL "Lend a Hand with Bunnings" awareness/fund raising days in the lead up to Father's Day in September, which is Prostate Cancer Awareness month. Terry Harbour will contact Marion Bunnings to discuss what activities may be appropriate for our group to be involved in;
- The Central Australia

Chapter Annual Conference will be held at Mount Lofty House on October 16 and 17.

- THE TREVOR HUNT FOUNDATION has been established in memory of Trevor and will be used to fund scholarships for nurses. The group has approved a donation to the Foundation, with a number of members also making personal donations.

### VALE KEN

IT WAS with sadness that the group was advised of the passing of long time support group member

Ken Cooney early in July. Our condolences are with his family and friends.

### SOCIAL DINNER PLANS

THE MITCHAM Group has decided again to expand its November meeting to feature a social dinner at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Clubrooms. on the evening of Friday November 27. As in previous years, members of all other support groups are invited to join the event, but please advise Terry Harbour or Jeff Roberts if you would like to attend.

## Barossa and Gawler Prostate Cancer Support Group

# Preparations in place to present landmark public cancer forum

Promoting a special needs survey in the Barossa and Gawler region will serve as a crucial entree to next month's public cancer forum, as Alan Hall reports.

**S**IGNIFICANT progress has been made by the Barossa/Gawler support group to prepare for the Cancer Forum that will be held at the Tanunda Club from 7pm to 9pm on September 2. Intensive publicity will begin during the first week of August and continue up to the night in the hope of drawing strong numbers to the event.

A Needs Survey that has been developed to determine the needs of cancer survivors within the Barossa and surrounding areas will be distributed widely through the region. It will be printed in *The Leader* newspaper on consecutive weeks during August, is available for downloading from the Barossa Division of GP's website ([www.bdgp.net.au](http://www.bdgp.net.au)) and will

### COMING EVENTS

#### SEPTEMBER

- The next scheduled event for the Barossa/Gawler Support Group is a public cancer forum that is being held in the Tanunda Club, Tanunda, from 7pm to 9pm on **Wednesday, September 2.**

be displayed in local hospitals and medical centres.

The event organising committee, comprising representatives from Country Health SA, the Barossa Area Fundraisers for Cancer and the Barossa/Gawler Prostate Cancer Support Group, hope to have a substantial number of survey replies before the Cancer Forum.

An initial report based on these survey results will be included in the program, which we hope may lead to a new

approach to cancer support, based firmly on the considered and articulated needs of those who require help negotiating their difficult cancer journey.

The theme of the Cancer Forum will be "Generating Hope", with TV presenter Graeme Goodings featured as guest speaker, and a supporting panel comprising cancer survivors and a GP.

This public cancer initiative breaks new ground by bringing together four key bodies associated with health care in

the Barossa and surrounding areas.

It has also been distinguished by generous sponsorship from the Barossa business community – especially an outstanding contribution from highly respected family-run newspaper *The Leader*, which has served the Barossa Valley since 1918. Tony Robinson, a grandson of the founding editor, has agreed to run full-page feature articles during August highlighting cancer information and promoting the Cancer Forum.

The proprietor of the Tanunda Club has made his facilities available for the forum at no cost, and the support group will certainly benefit from the largesse of these and other businesses in the Barossa.

## Research findings and news items from around the world

### Surgery boosts survival rate for younger prostate patients

**R**ESearchers at Henry Ford Hospital suggest that men with prostate cancer under the age of 50 who undergo a radical prostatectomy will increase their chances for long-term survival.

One in 10,000 men under the age of 40 will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year, and to determine which treatment option offers the best chance for long-term survival for younger cancer patients, researchers studied

more than 8200 men under 50 with prostate cancer undergoing three types of treatment – active surveillance, radical retro-pubic prostatectomy and external beam radiotherapy.

Cancer-specific survival in the active surveillance group was 78 per cent at 16 years; in the radiation group it was 63 per cent at 17 years, and survival was 94 per cent at 21 years for those who underwent a radical prostatectomy.

"When given the choice between surgery, watchful waiting or external beam radiotherapy, patients younger than 50 with moderately to poorly differentiated prostate cancers have better long-term overall and cancer-specific survival when they opt for surgery", says study author Naveen Pokala, a urologist with Henry Ford Hospital.

- Source: *The Henry Ford Hospital* 11/5/09.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au)

## McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

# Good advice about grief

Techniques and mechanisms for coping with stress and grief are many and varied – and often quite surprising – as Bryan Hearn reports.

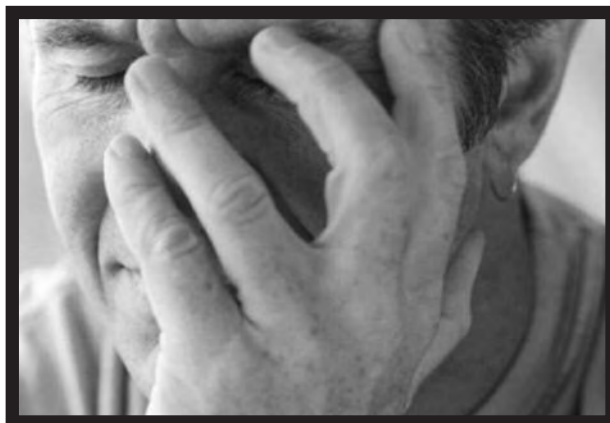
**G**RIEF and loss were the tender subjects broached in an extremely interesting and diverse presentation delivered to the McLaren Districts support group's July meeting by Yvonne Howlett, a registered nurse who has worked in the Fleurieu region for more than 30 years.

Having worked with grief and loss counselling since 2001, Yvonne explained how grief and loss covers many and varied scenarios from, death and serious illness to property loss.

The audience was asked to nominate just one item that currently concerned them. Results ranged from sleep deprivation, skin conditions, family needs, general discomfort and pain to loss of sexual function, which were all displayed as spokes of a wheel with the hub being occupied by STRESS. Yvonne says stress is at the heart of many concerns that interact with each other, thereby increasing stress levels.

Members were asked to participate in a brief meditation session which simply involved closing their eyes, listening to Yvonne speak quietly and to concentrate on regulating their breathing. We were then invited to consider how our bodies would react should an armed gunman enter the room.

A range of feelings was expressed, from fear, increased heart rate and sweating to



nervous reactions. A more in depth discussion on stress preceded a written "stress meter" test, comprising questions on topics which, if answered in a positive manner, accrued points what would assess individual stress levels, ranging from "no worries" to "you are under excessive stress and should consult a doctor".

Yvonne suggested we record our figures and undertake the test again in a month, after giving specific attention to managing our stress levels.

We then discussed that a diagnosis of prostate cancer can lead to increased stress

levels – not only for the patient but also his family members. Members discussed these effects at a personal level, which highlighted how individuals react differently to the same situation.

We talked about different types of treatment available to prostate cancer sufferers and what treatment decisions need to be made (which vary depending on diagnosis results and the age of the patient).

Yvonne then introduced us to a stress management system known as the Emotional Freedom Technique (sometimes referred to as emotional acupuncture:

Google this and you will be surprised with the results). This comprises continual, gently tapping the side of the hand below the little finger and reciting a certain positive statement or phrase.

This system of tapping and reciting a phrase moved on to the top of the head, the forehead, around the eyes, under the nose, on the chin and down to the chest. Many members found this a little embarrassing in a large group forum but accepted it may be effective on a one-on-one basis.

We also received an introduction to Effective Human Communication, illustrated by a square representing a person's life, or "paddock", which people may share with another person whose "paddock" shares a common central line.

In life people tend to throw "rocks" at each other; negative statements commencing with "You" (you are late home) which should be turned into positive statements beginning with "I" (I'm sorry you are home late because I had prepared a lovely dinner for us).

These simple examples illustrated a net effect of reducing their stress levels by remaining much calmer and recognising the "rocks" coming at them can take action – perhaps suggesting they sit and talk about the situation to help reduce stress levels.

### COMING EVENT

#### THURSDAY AUGUST 20

The McLaren Districts group will next meet in the administration building at the rear of the McLaren Vale & Districts War Memorial Hospital, Aldersey St, McLaren Vale, at 7pm on Thursday, August 20. Guest speaker will be local pharmacist Con Kassapis, talking about what services pharmacists can offer.

- Contact group president Bryan Hearn on 8323 7924 or 0410 539 274, to confirm your attendance.

## Payneham Prostate Cancer Support Group

# A couple reclaim their intimacy

Although urologist Mr Jehan Titus was unable to speak at the Payneham support group's July meeting about erectile dysfunction and men's sexual health, Phil Davis has been able to pass onto group members the very positive story of **JO-ANNE AND JERRY HARDY**, an American couple from Michigan, about how they coped with and overcome erectile issues. This insightful and inspiring story written by Jo-Anne is reprinted thank to the Us TOO Chapter Newsletter, a US organisation similar to the PCFA in Australia.

**I**N 2000, my husband, Jerry, was 46 years old and I was 43. We were about to celebrate our 24th wedding anniversary and life for us was good. Our daughter was a sophomore in college and we were greatly enjoying our empty nest.

Jerry complained of a slight urinary problem, which we thought was an infection, though a PSA test as part of his discovery process revealed a score of 4.5, and we soon found ourselves sitting in a urologist office facing a prostate cancer diagnosis.

There was no family history for him, so it was quite surprising. Jerry's 47th birthday gift was a clean bone scan.

After the initial shock, we began to research all of the treatment options and to "doctor shop". We also looked at all side effects of each possible treatment, including erectile dysfunction, and chose an option we thought provided the best chance of long-term survival – a radical prostatectomy.

Once Jerry recovered and went back to work, we became more concerned about sexual intimacy. The nerve sparing

procedure left Jerry with feeling and sensations but only a partial erection. A favourite urologist described an erection as being like a three-legged stool; its firmness, duration, and immediate responsiveness are all necessary for it to be truly effective. If one element doesn't work consistently, get advice from a doctor.

We tried oral medication first (Viagra and Cialis), then caverjet injections, which did not work for Jerry. Most urologists who specialize in ED recommend that the patient move along the continuum, starting with the least invasive modalities of treatment before considering surgical intervention, which is not reversible.

We talked a lot about it, but it really was a sad time for us. Still, the inability to have intercourse was not the same as losing sexual intimacy. We found plenty of fun things to do along the way.

After waiting three years for Jerry's erections to return, we decided to have a penile implant. Many urologists suggest that if an erection has not returned by the end of the first year after treatment, it probably won't. We found

that many other patients resigned themselves to not finding a solution, or said the ability to have intercourse was never important anyway. This really saddened me, because sometimes patients and partners give up. Maybe it's embarrassment, frustration, or difficulty in communicating that keeps them from finding answers. While couples have to find their own comfort level, for us the ability to have intercourse was extremely important, and we wanted to see if this type of surgery could restore that special part of our relationship.

Usually patients who receive a penile implant come home from the hospital the same day as the procedure, though Jerry did stay overnight. After swelling from surgery goes down, it's easier to feel good about why you had the surgery. Warm baths three times a day were definitely a highlight.

Jerry's surgery was successful and we have reclaimed a satisfying level of intimacy. It was a long journey but well worth it.

We learned five keys to solving erectile problems after prostate cancer treatment:

1. It is possible to reclaim intimacy after prostate cancer treatment.
2. Let go of embarrassment and start talking. Have frank discussions with your partner and your doctor – or change doctors, if you need to.
3. Be willing to explore options and commit to finding a solution.
4. Learn about the options.
5. Have hope.

## COMING EVENTS

**AUGUST 18 MEETING:**  
The Payneham Support Group will meet in the Payneham RSL Clubrooms, 360 Payneham Rd, Payneham at 7pm on Tuesday August 18. Guest speaker will be urologist Dr Samantha Pillay, who will speak about the widespread problem of urinary incontinence.

**SEPTEMBER 15:**  
Registered nurse Rosalie Donhardt will speak about good bladder and bowel health, while Colorectal Surgeon Dr Rieger will talk on bowel problems.

**OCTOBER 20:**  
Discussion evening facilitated by Kevin O'Shaughnessy.

**NOVEMBER 17:**  
Annual general meeting, election of office bearers for 2010, which will include a social evening and barbecue.

• For more information, phone Phil Davis (8263 2217 classic100@bigpond.com), Peter Woodrow (8263 5556) or Arthur Seager (8289 4180), or visit the Payneham Support Group's dedicated website at [www.psapayneham.org](http://www.psapayneham.org)



## Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group

### New group sparks local interest

Ron Lehmann from the Murray Bridge Support Group reports great attendance for its July meeting, with 20 people from Adelaide, Murray Bridge and near regions attending to hear addresses from Malcolm Ellis and Paul Redman.

“From the number of questions from our very animated audience,

it’s obvious that the men in our region are very interested in their general health and the problems and solutions surrounding prostate cancer,” says Ron.

“Malcom and Paul both offered different perspectives about systems in place that provide support from the community and for families.”

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

The new Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group conducts its monthly meetings at 7.30pm on the first Thursday of each month, at Our Wellbeing Place, 108 Swanport Rd, Murray Bridge. The next meeting is on THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3. For further details about the group and its meetings, phone support group chairman Ron Lehmann on (08) 8532 3277.

# Spreading the word via the media

Local media interest in prostate cancer developments, published in The Advertiser’s Boomer section on 8/5/09

## Care is needed in cancer debate

Prostate cancer is deadly for men and prevention is still better than the cure, writes Tony Shepherd.

**D**Ebate over prostate cancer screening has been raging in recent months and is set to continue for the foreseeable future. The test measures levels of the prostate specific antigen (PSA). Increased levels can indicate cancer. But the test has come under fire because it is not as reliable as many other tests and experts are concerned it leads to unnecessary interventions. Prostate cancer is one of the most common and the most deadly cancers in men. It can be cured through surgery or radiotherapy if it is discovered in time. But because it usually occurs in older men - those over 50 - and is slow-growing, it may never actually cause a threat to life. There are good reasons to avoid the treatment for cancer if possible. It can cause impotence, incontinence,

deafness and loss of vision. The PSA test is a positive step, but inconclusive,” Mr. Giles says. “We’re suggesting people should wait until the full data comes out.” The nation’s peak body for urological surgeons said the studies were flawed. Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand president Dr. David Malouf said patients should have access to PSA-based testing if they wished. “We are concerned that Australian men may be persuaded against having a potentially life-saving PSA test following media reports of this study,” he said. The PCGA agrees men need to arm themselves with all the information available and discuss their options with their doctor. “It’s pretty hard to tell guys, look, you’ve got cancer but our advice is not to have it treated. Guys just want to get in there and have it out,” Mr. Giles says. “Be a man, and talk to

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On the road to awareness

Case study: Charity motorbike riders Simon Buckley and Todd Barry want to spread the word that men need to talk to their doctors. They spoke to Boomer when they were travelling through Adelaide as part of their worldwide odyssey. Mr Buckley said the tour was to raise both awareness and funds. “Prostate cancer is a global issue and this trip is a grassroots attempt to get ordinary men talking about their health with doctors, family and friends,” he says. “I want to do something to support men’s health and do it in a blokey way.”

## Research findings and news items from around the world

### Positive outcomes reported on HBO therapy use

**T**HE Wesley Centre for Hyperbaric Medicine at the Wesley Hospital, Brisbane, has found that hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBO) has positive outcomes for people suffering with radiation proctitis.

Some men who undergo radiation treatment for prostate cancer – either external beam radiotherapy, brachytherapy or a mix of both – suffer long-term bowel and/or bladder

problems caused by blood vessels in the irradiated field beginning to progressively scleroses. This reduces the blood supply until it stops supporting tissue healing, resulting in soft tissue radiation necrosis often referred to as proctitis.

In the bladder, proctitis can trigger bleeding (seen as blood in the urine) and painful, frequent urination. In the bowel it can cause excessive flatulence and frequent bowel mucus.

Symptoms can occur months or occasionally years after radiotherapy.

Surgical remedies may partially or completely rectify these problems but HBO offers a non-invasive form of treatment where sclerosed blood vessels are rejuvenated by a process called angiogenesis and tissue healing takes place.

A recent published study examined HBO treatment for radiation proctitis in

the large bowel following radiotherapy for cancers in the lower abdominal and pelvic regions. Data on 120 patients in the trial indicated excellent results at the two-year follow-up, and several men attending Queensland Prostate Cancer Support Group meetings reported good outcomes following the treatment.

A trial is now underway to evaluate HBO for bladder problems following radiotherapy.

## Prosper Darwin Prostate Cancer Support Group

# Robust communication helps fledgling groups grow

Sharing knowledge and experience is helping to make support groups stronger and more effective, as Darwin support group secretary Peter Harvey reports.

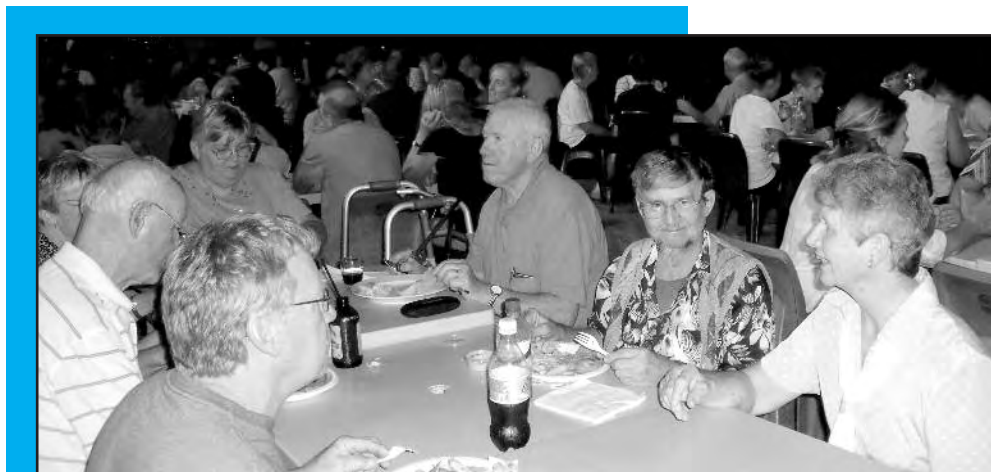
THE leaders of the Northern Territory Prostate Cancer Support Groups – Murray Neck from Alice Springs, Don Lockley from Katherine and Keith Williams from Darwin – got together for an informal telephone “mentoring” session on August 1.

This isn't a new practise in the territory: Keith explained that in the early days of the Alice Springs group a year ago, his role as mentor would involve Murray and him talking regularly by phone about various issues confronting the fledgling group as they arose.

The August telephone hook-up was an extension of that practice and proved to be a very successful session. What they thought would last for 10 minutes ran for more than 30 minutes, with Murray being able to provide lots of input now that he has completed the difficult foundation work of establishing a new group.

Don, who happened to be in Darwin in early August for a hockey function, joined Keith at his home for the session, and clearly enjoyed it. It was agreed that these mentoring and advice sessions will become a monthly fixture.

Keith has stressed that these sessions are not the start of a secessionist move; rather, Keith says he's in a position where he recognises the unique needs of similarly placed rural and remote groups, and can offer valuable advice.



## Adding a social dimension to our support groups

A NUMBER of the Prosper Darwin Support Group members and their partners met at The Wharf eatery immediately before attending our July meeting, to share a meal and good fellowship.

The Wharf is an idyllic setting, and although it's rather crowded with tourists at this time of the year, it provided a great venue for this new venture that was enjoyed by friends in the support group – as is clearly shown by the photograph above.

• IN A happy aside to this event, Don Lockley's visit to Darwin proved doubly successful. Don, who is in his late seventies, has been selected to represent Queensland against Victoria in the over-65 hockey competition. Could it be that Don is now harbouring secret ambitions to emulate his grandson Adrian, who plays hockey for Australia?

• WHILE numbers attending the Prosper Darwin Support Group meeting in July were good, unfortunately several visitors who indicated that they would attend our July meeting were unable to attend. Wheelbarrow man David Baird apologised as he had to change his agenda and depart Darwin before our meeting date. Our local Federal Member, Damien

Hale, who indicated that he would attend, failed to turn up for a second time.

• DARWIN group convenor Keith Williams stayed for an additional day after the Central Australia Chapter Council meeting in Alice Springs on July 16, to conduct an awareness presentation for staff at the Alice Springs Airport.

## COMING EVENTS

Next support group meeting: **MONDAY AUGUST 10.**

The Prosper Darwin Group meets on the second Monday of each month, at the Harbour Room, Christ Church Cathedral, corner of Smith St and the Esplanade, Darwin, at 7.30pm.

## Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group

# A worthy celebration

Having notable interstate guests provided added reasons for the Alice Springs Support Group to celebrates its first anniversary, as convener Murray Neck reports.

**I**N welcoming visiting Central Australia Chapter councillors, PCFA support group services manager Paul Redman and 26 local support group members, Alice Springs support group chairman Tony O'Brien rightly announced that the occasion of the group's first anniversary dinner in July was the highlight of its first year of operation.

This was the largest group gathering yet, and Tony extended a special welcome to the ladies present, emphasising how important their support is – especially to the success of the support group's awareness programs.

Tony also singled out several people for specific praise, including:

- **Keith Williams**, president of the Darwin support group, who initiated the formation of our group;
- **Jenny Mills**, manager of the General Practice Network and **Leslie Reilly**, president of Bosom Buddies for their early mentoring, guidance and encouragement;
- Group secretary/treasurer/librarian **Christine Absalom**;
- Committee members **Fred Miegall** and **Geoff Miers**;

• The two newly inducted men's health ambassador speakers, **Geoff Kain** and **Robert Gates**.

Tony believes the Alice Springs support group has had a successful first 12 months, gathering a small but strong nucleus of members who attend most meetings, and that the group's recognition in the community continues to grow.

Promoting the message to men under the age of 55 to take charge of their prostate health by commencing regular health checks is the support group's biggest challenge, with Tony keen to forge closer contact with medical providers and offer more supportive help for men with prostate cancer difficulties.

In his address to the gathering, Chairman of the Central Australia Chapter Council Malcolm Ellis was very positive about the progress that the chapter has made since its first official meeting in January.

He explained that he became involved with the Prostate Cancer organisation in South Australia after losing his father to prostate cancer, which had been misdiagnosed. Malcolm praised his councillors who

had come to Alice Springs for their dedication and ability to work as a team.

The Central Australia Chapter annual conference and workshop, which will be held at Mt Lofty, South Australia, on October 16 and 17, was the focus of Paul Redman's address to the meeting. This annual event will provide an opportunity to hear from some of the most knowledgeable health care speakers in Australia, and to meet and learn from other members of other support groups.

Paul spoke passionately about the achievements of the board and staff of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

Now that all states and territories are aligned with the foundation through chapters, the PCFA can speak with one powerful voice on prostate cancer issues. Government support, corporate sponsorship and voluntary fundraising events such as Movember are providing funds for research and raising community awareness of prostate cancer through the expansion of support groups – which all goes towards improving the lives of current and future generations of men with prostate cancer.

## COMING EVENTS

**AUGUST MEETING:**  
The Alice Springs Action Group's monthly meeting will be held on **Thursday August 13, from 6.30pm to 8pm in the conference room of General Practice Network NT, Skinner St, Alice Springs. Guest speaker will be Noel Harris, sports therapist with Body Health NT.**

**AUGUST 18 and 19:**  
Group members are needed to man an information booth during National Senior Citizens Conference at Council's Andy McNeil room.

**AUGUST 31:** Group members are needed to man an information booth for Men's Health Month at Yeperenye Centre.

**SEPTEMBER 27:** Stride for Health fun run.

**OCTOBER 16 and 17:** Central Australia Chapter Annual Conference, Mt Lofty, South Australia.

## And now for something completely different ... a touch of humour

I called the Swine Flu hotline. All I got was crackling. I heard that the first symptom is that you come out in rashes. Another is that you get the trots.

A doctor asked me how long I'd had the symptoms of Swine Flu. I said it must have

been about a Weeeeeeeeeeeeeek!

A friend said he's got Swine Flu, but I think he's just telling porkies.

The only known cure for Swine Flu in humans has been found to be the liberal application of oinkment. Swine flu, however, is not a

problem for the pigs because they're all going to be cured.

The Swine Flu pandemic is, apparently, the start of the *aporkalypse*, and could potentially be a threat to every single person in the world. It's a good thing I'm married then, isn't it?

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99  
or visit the website [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au)

## CENTRAL AUSTRALIA CHAPTER COUNCIL MEETING

# Spreading the reach of the chapter into new territories

The first Central Australia Chapter Council meeting conducted in Alice Springs was a great success, as council secretary Bryan Hearn reports.

ON July 16, the full contingent of Central Australia Chapter Councillors and some wives, along with PCFA's Paul Redman, flew to Alice Springs for the most recent council meeting, highlighting the chapter's commitment to reach all regions within the Central Australia zone.

An extensive agenda required 4 1/2 hours to complete, with items requiring attention and input from all support groups. To ensure these matters receive the necessary attention, all support groups have since been provided with a memo listing matters and relevant information.

Although there has been a good response to the request for volunteers to attend the Paskeville field day, more help is required and interested participants should forward their details to Jeff Roberts at the Action Group.

Paul Redman announced that the inaugural Central Australia Chapter Annual Conference will be held at Mt Lofty House in the Adelaide Hills from October 15 to 17 this year. The PCFA will cover the costs of travel, accommodation, conference costs and meals for all Central Australia Chapter councillors and their wives or partners, along with four representatives from all Central Australia Chapter support groups. It was agreed by the council that Dr Carole Pinnock AM should be invited as one



Central Australia Chapter council members with wives and Alice Springs support group members at the Alice Springs Support Group first anniversary dinner: (from left) Keith Williams, Jeff Roberts, Terry Harbour, Pam Fisk, Dean Wall, Ian Fisk, Barbara Neck, Bridgette O'Brien, John Shields, Tony O'Brien, Murray Neck, Dianne Baulderstone, Paul Redman, John Baulderstone, Kay Hearn, Bryan Hearn and Malcolm Ellis.

of the guest speakers at the conference.

A business plan for the Chapter is being prepared by Terry Harbour for consideration by council members. It was also agreed that some strategic planning is required to help establish new support groups.

Several concerns covering a range of topics were raised by members, including the coming Bunning's promotion, for which all support groups were allocated specific stores to contact.

On the Thursday evening following the meeting, the council delegates attended a formal dinner with members and supporters of the Alice Springs Support Group

celebrating their first year of existence. The evening comprised a lovely meal followed by short speeches from local group convener Tony O'Brien (who stepped straight off a plane from Perth to attend the meeting) and Paul Redman, who spoke on behalf of PCFA, before councillors and local support group members enjoyed good conversation that resulted in lots of ideas and information being exchanged.

The entire visit to Alice Springs by the council was most successful, it was well organised locally – led by local Central Australia Chapter Councillor Murray Neck – and the hospitality shown to everybody was marvelous. We

would especially like to thank The Quest Apartments on South Terrace in Alice Springs, where we were all accommodated.

The council's next meeting will be held in Darwin on September 17.

Minutes of the Alice Springs meeting will be circulated to all Central Australia Chapter support groups in the near future.

If any support group member has any comments or matters for consideration by the council, they can be forwarded to chapter secretary Bryan Hearn on [bk@chariot.net.au](mailto:bk@chariot.net.au) and Don't forget our website on [www.PCFAcentralaustraliachapter.org](http://www.PCFAcentralaustraliachapter.org) with links to all support groups.