

Central Australia Chapter



Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

PROSTATE SUPPORTER

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

www.prostate.org.au

NOVEMBER 2010 - JANUARY 2011

Volume 3: Number 10

Sharing the knowledge proves most beneficial

The PCFA Central Australia Chapter Conference proved to be a valuable information sharing event for support groups, as Paul Redman reports.

THE Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia is delighted to report that the second annual Central Australia Chapter Conference held at the Novotel Barossa Valley Resort in mid October was a resounding success, with more than 70 people attending and a host of informative speakers providing conference delegates with valuable information about prostate cancer treatments and awareness.

With strong representation from throughout South Australia and the Northern Territory, this conference is helping to arm delegates with the necessary tools and information to make a continued success of their respective support groups – and help stimulate the creation of yet more support groups.

A full report on the conference

and its activities from Bryan Hearn is published on page 12 of this newsletter.

Turning our attention to future prostate cancer fundraising and awareness campaigns, the Movember Foundation is busily preparing for another big Movember this year.

The month formerly known as November will be a time when men around Australia leave their razors on the shelves and grow moustaches to support men's health and join the fight against prostate cancer and depression.

You can participate in the Movember 2010 fundraising and awareness drive as an individual or a team, or find out other ways you can support the cause at <http://au.movember.com> For more details, turn to the story on Page 4 of this newsletter.

Newsletters can also be read online at www.pcagsa.org.au/pages/supporter.html



PCFA support group services manager Paul Redman announced his retirement at the Central Australia Chapter conference in October. We wish him well and thank him for his help and efforts.

Season's Greetings

IT MAY seem a little early to be extending Christmas cheer, but this is the final **Prostate Supporter** newsletter for 2010, with the next edition to be issued in February 2011. Most of the Central Australia Chapter support groups will conduct their final meetings for this year during November, though some groups have special Christmas events planned – please check Coming Events columns on each page in this newsletter for details, or contact your local support group.

On behalf of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, the **Prostate Supporter** newsletter team would like to wish all readers a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year, and thank you for being so supportive of this publication. We look forward to serving you further during 2010.

• CONTRIBUTIONS from all Support Group members to the monthly Prostate Supporter newsletters are most welcome; please email items and images to Karyn Foster: karynfoster@adam.com.au

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

Prostate Cancer Action Group

COMING
EVENTSNOVEMBER 9
MEETING:

The next meeting of the Prostate Cancer Action Group SA will be held in the upstairs meeting room at the Cancer Council SA, 202 Greenhill Rd, Eastwood, commencing at 5.30pm on Tuesday November 9. Entry is via the rear stairway.

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

Maintaining our support for the Man Alive! event

Continued involvement in major community events helps spread the PC message, as Action Group chairman David Merry reports.

THE October meeting of the Action Group included planning arrangements for our annual appearance at the Semaphore foreshore Man Alive! day, which will this year be held on Sunday November 7, from 10am to 4pm.

In previous years, this has been an encouraging event for the team that provides many opportunities to distribute information on prostate cancer and to speak with the locals about men's health concerns.

This year, eight of the Action Group members will be in attendance.

Three of our group members have been speaking as Ambassadors during the past month. A very successful presentation to the Brighton Lions Club resulted in a donation to Grant Buchanan's Research Group at Flinders University.

Recently, Dean Wall was invited to Goolwa and was presented with a cheque for prostate cancer research by the Lawn Bowls Association.

The Action Group is planning involvement in Prostate Cancer Awareness meetings in Port Augusta, possibly in late November or early in 2011.

We have further plans to also present in Adelaide's western suburbs in early 2011, and possibly in Port Lincoln during 2011.

The Action Group will also be presenting an information stall at the Yorke Peninsula Field Days in Paskeville during 2011, to follow up on a very successful promotional outing at the event this year.

The group meets again on November 9 at 5.30pm at the Cancer Council offices, and this will be the final meeting for 2010. The following meeting will be in February 2011.

Connecting to more information

New links between American and Australian prostate cancer information sources will provide new free services for support group members, as John Shields reports.

SEVERAL new free information services have been arranged for support group members by the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

The American Institute For Diseases of The Prostate is offering a free prostate cancer VLOG at <https://www.askdrmyers.wordpress.com>, which is a weekly question and answer video presented by Dr Charles "Snuffy" Myers.

Subscribers to this VLOG are welcome to ask any questions they would like for publication. The criteria for presenting questions is explained at

<http://www.prostateteam.com/patient-questions.php>.

To learn more about Dr Myers, read his biography at the website www.prostateforum.com/about-dr-myers.html.

Prostate cancer support group members who sign up for this offer at <http://snuffymyers.blogspot.com> will each week receive an email notifying them about the newest video.

Further, in collaboration with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, the AIDP will also be providing a free 12-issue email subscription of a usually paid newsletter that is located



Dr Charles "Snuffy" Myers

at www.prostateforum.com

As a private organization, the American Institute For Diseases of The Prostate has a goal of delivering the most

relevant content on prostate cancer and general health for men

Rod Schecter, AIDP Vice President of Marketing, explains that the effort to reach out to more Australian subscribers is to help strengthen and diversify participation within in an already active online community.

"Whatever your stage or treatment choice, prostate cancer is highly treatable, especially when patients are proactive and remain optimistic. We hope you find our service as valuable as our other subscribers," he says.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group

Pharmaceuticals get explained by chemists

Two knowledgeable staff from the region's leading chemist shop provided an interesting presentation about popular medicines, as Bryan Hearn reports.

FOR the October meeting of the McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support group, a different venue within the McLaren Vale Hospital was required – though fortunately it wasn't too far from our normal venue, so we lost nobody.

Guest speakers were Con Kassapis and his pharmaceutical assistant Gail Blount from our local Chemmart pharmacy. Both had presented to members previously and were welcomed back.

Prior to commencing his presentation, Con presented McLaren and Districts support group convener Bryan Hearn with a cheque for \$250, being proceeds from a raffle held by shop staff members during the month of September while promoting prostate cancer awareness.

Con also reported that earlier during the week he had been in Sydney for the Chemmart National awards. With great pride he announced that his branch in McLaren Vale received the SA Chemmart Pharmacy of the Year award – and took out the National award as well. He was warmly congratulated by all present.

Con then provided members with information regarding the top 10 medicines dispensed through his pharmacy. He told us about Lipitor, which is used for lowering cholesterol, and pointed out that taking fish oil has a similar effect – as well as reducing the risk of heart attacks.

Con emphasised that taking oil was much easier than the eight or nine capsules a day that might be required. He noted that a side effect might be constipation, for which a fiber supplement may be necessary.

The relief of pain from a variety of sources required a large amount of tablets and medications for customers. In some instances, immediate pain relief

was required, hence patients would be administered an opioid analgesic such as morphine; however, some adverse effects may occur, so it is necessary to be aware of these prior to these drugs being administered.

Where ongoing sustained pain relief is required, treatment can be via capsules or patches – or in some cases by intramuscular injection. Doses can be varied to provide immediate relief or ongoing relief, depending on the nature of the circumstances requiring treatment. In many instances, this type of medication can be used as a preventative measure, treating the cause before feeling pain.

Examples of non-opioid analgesics are paracetamol, which is very common and used where mild-to-moderate pain without significant inflammation is experienced by a patient. Aspirin can be used under similar situations, even when some inflammation may be apparent.

A group of such medications are referred to as NSAIDS. These are used widely with patients suffering bone cancers, where pain is ongoing and quite high in its level of intensity.

Gail provided information relative to mineral salts. She explained that every cell in our body contains 12 different mineral salts and if only one of these is out of balance, it could present in a whole range of symptoms.

To relieve these symptoms, a patient can take a course of mineral salt tablets, designed to specifically relieve the presenting condition. A box of 100 tablets costs \$10, to be consumed at a rate of less than five or six a day early on, reducing to three or four a day as the symptoms reduce.

COMING EVENT

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 25

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, November 25. Guest speaker will be a representative of the Aged Rights Advocacy Service.

- Phone support group president Bryan Hearn on 8323 7924 or 0410 539 274 to confirm your attendance at this next support group meeting.

It appears that anybody, including young children, can take these mineral salt tablets and they do not conflict with any other more traditional medicines. The tablets have to be chewed to be effective and if the presenting symptoms are not reduced, then it may be necessary to consider an alternative combination of the salts.

Many questions from the floor were asked and responded to by both Con and Gail, who issued an invitation to all support group members to attend at the pharmacy at any time for a personal one-on-one consultation.

The meeting concluded with an informal discussion between members about their personal situations and ongoing concerns and needs. It was pleasing to note the attendance of a new member who had recently undertaken his bone scans and was about to resolve the nature of his treatment for prostate cancer within the next few days.

NOVEMBER IS NOW CALLED MOVEMBER

Movember keeps enjoying a “growing” recognition

The Movember campaign is an ongoing awareness success, as explained by David Gregory, Chairman of the PCFA National Support and Advocacy Committee.

THE Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and the Movember Foundation have a long-standing relationship which started back in 2004. And it's a very beneficial partnership that has helped the PCFA to develop and implement a world class research program.

The Movember Foundation raises funds and awareness through encouraging the growth of a moustache during the month of November; hence the name Movember.

Funds are raised through sponsorship, and awareness is generated by having to explain the growth of a moustache. It's a simple concept, but one which is delivering some incredible results for the PCFA and Movember's other global partners around the world.

Inspired by the women's health movement, it was recognised that men were lacking a way to engage and actively involve themselves in their own health.

In its first year, 30 Mo Bros took part and last year, in Australia alone, 128,000 Mo Bro & Sistas got on board, raising more than \$18 million for Movember's two men's health partners, beyondblue: the national depression initiative and the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

Since this time, Movember has continued to grow each year, both in terms of participation numbers and funds raised. It is now global movement that has raised \$104 million globally, officially operating in Ireland, UK, Canada, USA and New Zealand, involving more than 250,000 participants world wide in 2009.

While the concept has gained significant support in recent years – the Australian Rugby Union team were outstanding ambassadors for the campaign as the entire squad of players grew moustaches



through their 2009 northern hemisphere tour, which included four Test matches and numerous other internationally televised games – the organisers are hoping that participation and awareness of this significant event will keep growing.

The PCFA national Support and Advocacy Committee wants to ensure that the Movember movement keeps growing, and that interested participants have all the necessary and relevant information. They are especially keen that support groups should get on board this year and support Movember.

Getting started as a participant in Movember is simple:

STEP 1: Register your Support Group as a team for the 2010 Movember campaign online at <http://au.movember.com/register>. Your team can include Support Group members, family and friends.

STEP 2: Once you're registered, you'll be taken to your Mo Space. From here,

choose the Networks button in the left column, and enter "Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia" into the Find a Network field. When the PCFA network appears, simply click the Join This Network button.

By joining the network, each group will have its own web page and can see what others are doing on the website **WWW.MOVEMBER.COM** TO HELP generate a bit of healthy competition among all the participants.

This page is a public page, with a profile pic, blog/updates and the ability to post pictures and videos, summaries of the number of network members and amounts raised by people within your network

On request, there are a pair information documents which can be sent to give you more information about Movember. If you need any help with registering your team, please call Movember HQ on 1300 4769 66 and someone will be happy to help.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

A medico's insight to some of Australia's less familiar places

Doctors not only have expertise in medical matters but also have fascinating tales to tell of their travels and work in exotic and remote destinations, as Ian Fisk reports.

COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 15

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, starting at 7pm. The meeting will feature a presentation by Sonia Mackay of BrightSky specialist healthcare products. Also in November there will a shared social dinner with the Mitcham Support Group, at Racquets, 1303 South Rd, St. Marys. Please ring Roland Harris on 8277 2138 by Nov 18 if you will be attending.

• 2011 Feb and March meeting details are at www.psaadelaide.org

• For more information, visit the Adelaide Support Group's dedicated website at www.psaadelaide.org or contact Ian Fisk by phoning 8296 3350, or send email to info@psaadelaide.org

THE Adelaide support group's October meeting was well attended for a talk by Dr Lloyd Evans – a presentation made all the better thanks to a new public address system (and a printout from our new printer was also shown off). We extend our thanks to Paul Redman and the PCFA for their supply of these very beneficial materials.

Dr Evans spoke of his interest in going to the islands north of Australia, which finally occurred in 1982 and 1984 when, during long service leave, he later spent some time in the Torrens Island Group (mainly on Thursday Island) as a relief medical officer. He and his wife Joan also travelled there in 2009.

Dr Evans handed out sheet of information on the islands. He also showed the group some local souvenirs, including a bow and arrows and a coconut shell from the Island of Coconut. He also handed around a photo album that catalogued Joan and his times there.

To help us appreciate the area of the Torrens Island Group – which lies between Cape York Peninsula and Papua New Guinea – Dr Evans attached a map of the area to the whiteboard.

He spoke how important Torrens Strait has been in history of Australia. Once it was mapped and navigated, the route through the islands saved



Guest speaker Dr Lloyd Evans.

four to five days travel by ship from England to Australia and also saved many days travel time to and from India.

Some other very interesting historical facts were also disclosed. The Dutch first sighted Australia in March 1606, followed by the Spanish (Luis Vaez de Torrens) in September 1616, then the British, with Captain James Cook in 1770, William Bligh in 1778 and then Matthew Flinders circumnavigated Australia in 1802.

Dr Evans spoke of the settlement in the islands, which happened first at Somerset, then later of Thursday Island. These became multicultural communities of Malaysian, Chinese, Japanese, Torrens Strait Islanders, Aborigines, Europeans, Papuan, Indians, Sri Lankans, Philipinos and many more.

There were a lot of activities in

the islands during WWII, some which were explained in a very interesting evening about a part of Australia not often heard about. Ian Fisk recorded the whole presentation as an audio file, and copies are available from Ian.

PHOTOS ON THE WEB

THERE ARE some photos of the Adelaide support group's involvement in Prostate Cancer awareness barbecues held during September, and these have been put on the Internet, at www.ianfisk.org. There are also photos of the Chapter Conference online. Please contact Ian or others who attended for a link to these photos as they are only accessible with a special link.

AGM AND ELECTIONS

THE Feb 21, 2011 meeting will be an Annual General Meeting with the election of officers. Speaker will be Professor Neil Piller on lymphoedema.

Payneham Prostate Cancer Support Group

Beware the sudden stroke

Many prostate cancer patients can also suffer from stroke – and the early warning signs need to be acted upon swiftly, as Payneham Support Group coordinator Phil Davis reports.

SINCE being involved with prostate cancer support groups, I have found that several people diagnosed with prostate cancer have also had a stroke. As a result I contacted Stroke SA and welcomed Margaret Gibbings as guest speaker at the Payneham Support Group's October meeting.

Margaret experienced a stroke in the 1980s and since recovering has made an effort to help educate the community. Margaret explained that stroke (sometimes referred to as a CVA, or Cerebrovascular Accident) is the biggest cause of severe disability acquired in adult life and the most third common cause of death in Australia.

A stroke occurs due to a disruption of the blood supply to a particular area of the brain, causing damage that may result in considerable effects on bodily functions. It can happen to people of either sex at any age, and often there is no warning.

When a person has a stroke, it is an emergency situation to be treated similar to a heart attack or other major trauma. It normally requires emergency hospital treatment and assessment by a specialised stroke unit. Rapid assessment and treatment can prevent another stroke occurring in the short term. There is also mounting evidence that certain therapeutic drugs given in the first few hours can minimise

STROKE WARNING SIGNS

Some people can experience warning symptoms or minor strokes, referred to as Transient Ischaemic Attack. Some of the warning signs can include;

1. Partial or complete blindness in one eye.
2. Slurred, hesitant or garbled speech.
3. Feelings of numbness or weakness in some parts of the body.
4. Dizziness.
5. Loss of sensation (for instance, pins and needles sensations in the limbs).
6. Poor balance.

These warning signs will often occur suddenly and recovery will be quick. To avoid the onset of a major stroke, often with dire effects, such warning signs must be reported to a doctor at once.

the effects of certain types of stroke. There are three primary causes of stroke:

- A blood vessel within the brain becomes blocked, which causes damage to the tissue supplied by the blood vessel, due to a lack of oxygen and nutrients which are carried in the blood.
- An artery bursts and bleeds within the brain, damaging surrounding tissue. Damage is usually caused through the released blood placing pressure on the brain tissue.
- A blood vessel ruptures in the space surrounding the brain, which often caused spasm in the blood vessels nearby

impairing blood supply to a particular area of the brain.

The most common causes of stroke are a hardening of the arteries in the neck or the secondary effect of disease, both of which may result in clots or debris breaking away from blood vessels and flowing upwards in the blood stream, blocking one of the arteries within the brain.

Be aware that factors which can increase the risk of having a stroke included an increase in age, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, a high-fat and high-salt diet, obesity, lack of exercise, stress and heredity.

COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 16 MEETING:

The Payneham Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet in the Payneham RSL Clubrooms, 360 Payneham Rd, Payneham, at 7pm on Tuesday, November 16.

This meeting will include a barbecue, provided free of charge, followed by the Annual General Meeting and election of office bearers for the support group.

• For more information about the Payneham Support Group – or for a helpful chat about your prostate cancer issues – please phone Phil Davis (8251 0939 classic100@lifestylea.net.au), Peter Woodrow (8263 5556) or Arthur Seager (8289 4180), or visit the Payneham Support Group's dedicated website at www.psapayneham.org

City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group

COMING
EVENTSNOVEMBER 3
MEETING:

This meeting of City of Onkaparinga prostate cancer support group, at 6.30pm on Wednesday, November 3, in the boardroom at Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga, featured urologist Dr David Elder.

- Support group meetings will resume in February, 2011.
- For more information about coming events, visit the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's dedicated website at www.pcsog.org
- Special thanks are extended to the City of Onkaparinga Support Group sponsors: **Southern Primary Health Morphett Vale, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, Cartridges Now Christies Beach, The Original Open Market** and to the **City of Onkaparinga Council**.

Patiently explaining molecular complexity

Great speakers – such as Dr Grant Buchanan – can translate to big cancer theories to the layman, as John Shields reports.

THE City of Onkaparinga support group welcomed guest speaker Dr Grant Buchanan to its October meeting, who gave an in depth PowerPoint presentation about molecular biology that was well received by group members, though some found parts of it a bit hard to fathom. Still, Grant went out of his way to explain as much as possible and we were left in no doubt about the make-up of a prostate gland and what happens when it is invaded by cancer.

Dr Buchanan is an engaging person who was willing to answer questions about Prostate Cancer before his presentation began, and talked with members over supper. Dr Buchanan is happy to talk with other support groups and his contact details can be obtained from Chapter Council member David Merry (phone 8270 2227 or email djmerry@adam.com.au).

MT GAMBIER EXPANSION

A LOT OF work went into organising the September Prostate Cancer Awareness meeting at Mt Gambier, which was very well attended and successful, and led to a strong

inaugural meeting of the Mt Gambier Support Group on Thursday October 7. The newly formed Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group has a committee of six, as some members of the committee expect they will be away on extended leave – which already shows smart and progressive succession planning of leadership to ensure the longevity of this new group.

NEXT CHAPTER COUNCIL MEETING

THE FINAL Central Australia Chapter Council meeting for this year will be at Murray Bridge on Thursday, November 18. Council members will attend the Murray Bridge Support Group's meeting on the Wednesday evening, and the Group's Chairman Ron Lehmann is a newly appointed Chapter Council member.

Murray Bridge is not all that far from Adelaide, so it will be a good opportunity for members of other Support Groups to also attend this council meeting.

CLICK FOR PC SUPPORT

I WOULD dearly like to have a "Click for Prostate Cancer"

website running, similar to the Click for Breast Cancer site that I click on daily. Every daily click helps to raise money for Breast Cancer Research, and I note that the American site has the support of many organisations with products to sell that raise money for this worthy cause.

An Australian site for Prostate Cancer Research and Support would be a good thing, and I will keep raising this item at Chapter Council meetings to keep it in the forefront of everyone's mind.

SAC MEMBERSHIP

I BELIEVE that all PCFA Chapter Council Executive members should be members of the National Support and Advocacy Committee (SAC).

To preclude someone from being an SAC member simply because that member lives in the same area and attends the same support group meetings as other SAC members is, I believe, not appropriate.

If all executive members were automatically made SAC member, it would do away with this anomaly, and ensure people striving to benefit their own and other support groups.

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

• DOCTORS in Ireland have a more difficult time than many people would expect. For instance, Paddy recently shouted frantically into

the phone: "My wife is pregnant and her contractions are only two minutes apart!"

The doctor carefully considered

his response. "Is this her first child?" he asked.

"No," shouted Paddy into the receiver, "this is her husband!"

Barossa Prostate Cancer Support Group

Plans to finish the year on a fun note

In the wake of a successful chapter conference held in the Barossa, the local support group is planning a Christmas celebration, as Barossa group convenor Don Piro reports.

THE Barossa Valley Prostate Cancer Support Group has had its final business meeting of the year – and is most pleased that it has made good headway with its Reach Out campaign in local print and radio media to help encourage new members. Now the group feels that it's time to have some more fun for their final group gathering for 2010.

The Christmas meeting is scheduled for Friday November 16, starting at 6pm start in the Company Kitchen, Angaston. All support group members, partners and friends are welcome; please let Don know in plenty of time if you can make it, or are sending an apology.

Meetings for 2011 will still be scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month. Therefore, the first meeting for 2011 will be on Tuesday February 15, with a 6pm start for a shared finger food supper and friendly chatter between members

COMING EVENT

NOVEMBER 16 MEETING

- The Barossa Support Group is holding its Christmas break-up at the Company Kitchen, Angaston, from 6pm. Please contact Don Piro for further information on 8562 3359 or 0419 863 124.

and their partners at Don Piro's home at 28 Kindler Ave, Nuriootpa. Please phone Don on 8562 3359 for more information, or email him on djpiro2@bigpond.com.

The Barossa Valley Support Group would also like to congratulate Mr Alan Hall – its founding member in 1997 – for receiving the prestigious Max Gardiner Award for outstanding service to the Prostate foundation and Prostate Cancer survivors in the Barossa Valley.



At the conference (from left): Paul Redman, Alan Hall (with his Max Gardiner Award), Don Piro and Malcolm Ellis.



Pat and Peter Kent with Jasmin and Don Piro enjoy conference pre-dinner drinks at the Barossa Novotel.

Murray Bridge Prostate Cancer Support Group

Promoting the group at local events

THE Murray Bridge Support Group has been quite active over the past month, as Richard Parsons reports. The promotional barbecue held at Bunnings' Murray Bridge store was very successful. Apart from more than \$500 raised on the day, many information leaflets were handed out and opportunities were taken to promote the Murray Bridge support group and discuss concerns about prostate cancer.

Some group members also took part in the Active Ageing

COMING EVENT

The Murray Bridge Support Group conducts monthly meetings at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month, at Our Wellbeing Place, 108 Swanport Rd, Murray Bridge. The next meeting will be on NOVEMBER 17.

Expo called "Galloping Forward", which was held at the Murray Bridge Racecourse on Thursday, October 7. More than 50 organisations were represented at the expo, to show what each had to offer the older members of the

community. Our stall was manned throughout the five hours of the expo.

OCTOBER MEETING

WE WELCOMED four new members to the October support group meeting which

was attended by 21 people. Group chairman Ron Lehmann reported on the recently held Chapter Conference, and other delegates who attended added their own observations.

The guest speaker for the evening was Peter Taubert of Compsafe Consultancy. His presentation covered a broad array of health implications that stem from the consumption of additives in manufactured foods, and the affects of ingredients in cosmetics and personal care products.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99 or visit the website www.prostate.org.au

Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group

Appreciating the advice of an expert

The Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group welcomed Associate Professor Pauline Chiarelli, as Ian Wagner Reports.

ASSOCIATE Professor Pauline Chiarelli, an author, lecturer and researcher at the University of Newcastle, is recognised internationally as a leading authority on continence. And because her husband, George, is a prostate cancer survivor, she cannot only “talk the talk” about prostate cancer but has the experience of personal involvement with the disease.

The Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support group was fortunate to be addressed by Pauline on the October 28 at a special meeting convened to hear and learn from her expertise.

Her talk to the group focused on pelvic floor exercises and provided an insight to the location and structure of the pelvic muscle, and the significance of having an effective exercise plan for recovery from prostate surgery

Support group members were invited to take part in a research study – Symptoms of Pelvic Floor Muscle Dysfunction after Prostate Cancer Treatment – currently being conducted by the University of South Australia and University of Newcastle.

Those members who have had treatment for prostate cancer completed the survey study form.

The Alice Springs Prostate



From left: Continence nurses Jenny Pechey and Sandra Clyne, Associate Professor Pauline Chiarelli and support group chairman Tony O'Brien.

Cancer Group thanks Murray Neck for arranging this excellent speaker, who was able to take time out from her busy schedule while attending the Continence Foundation of Australia National Conference being held in Alice Springs.

The 30 plus prostate cancer survivors, sufferers and supporters present at the meeting thoroughly enjoyed Associate Professor Chiarelli's

presentation. The question and answer session that followed her talk was eagerly engaged by the audience and extended the closure of the meeting by one hour.

It is not often that remote support groups have the opportunity to hear a speaker of this talent and her enlightening, down to earth presentation in plain speech was well received and appreciated by all present.

COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER MEETING: The Alice Springs Prostate Cancer Support Group meets on Thursday November 11 from 6.30pm to 8pm in the conference room of General Practice Network NT, Skinner St, Alice Springs.

EVERY WEDNESDAY Support group member and lifestyle fitness coach Noel Harris invites all support group members and interested persons to participate in his long-term, free exercise session “Stretch and Stride Sessions”, held every Wednesday from 5pm at Rhonda Diano Oval, Head St, Alice Springs. The Spring program is currently underway.

- The Alice Springs Support Group's December meeting will take the form of a group Christmas Party, and details will be forwarded to support group members shortly.

Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

NOVEMBER MEETING

The Mitcham support group's November event will be its Annual Dinner and the group's final gathering for 2010, held on November 25 at Racquets, 1303 South Road, St Marys. Please contact Roland Harris on 8277 2138 by November 18th if you intend going.

- For more information on events and group activities, visit the Mitcham Group's dedicated website at www.psamitcham.org

Crafting a cancer message

Who are the people behind the Prostate Cancer Support Group network? As part of a continuing series of profiles, we introduce Prostate Supporter editor David Sly.

STRANGE as it may seem, the editor of the Prostate Supporter newsletter is not affected by prostate cancer and has no personal cancer journey to speak of – yet such impartiality has allowed journalist David Sly to give the monthly newsletter a sharp, incisive edge that helps make it a valuable document to all readers.

“The newsletter’s many contributors from prostate cancer support groups throughout South Australia and the Northern Territory all have important personal information to impart,” says David. “They don’t need an editor’s endorsement or agreement, but they often need a writer’s pen and an editor’s eye to make their story clear and concise, and this is where my professional skills and training are of benefit.”

David comes to this role as a professional freelance journalist with almost 30 years’ experience, having previously worked as a feature writer, senior sub-editor and Food & Wine editor at The Advertiser Newspaper, as editor in chief of The Adelaide Review newspaper, as production editor at The Independent Weekly newspaper and with stints at The Herald Sun in Melbourne, and The News in Adelaide.

Editing the Prostate Supporter newsletter is part of a very diverse work portfolio that he currently undertakes, from being Food & Wine editor and senior feature contributor to SA Life Magazine, to writing contributions for more than a dozen national magazines and



Prostate Supporter editor David Sly (left) on the Great Wall of China last year for a cancer fundraising walk.

newspapers on food, wine, travel, snow skiing, business and profile interviews.

He also wrote the 240-page hard cover book *This Is South Australia*, for SA Life Publications, and lectures at the University of Adelaide in food and wine writing (David was among the inaugural graduates of the Masters of Gastronomy course run by the university with Le Cordon Bleu).

“In essence, my task is to be a storyteller,” says David. “I strive to understand the core elements of a person’s story and help retell that with fairness, accuracy and a dash of flair, so that many others will understand and appreciate it.

“I obviously come to this newsletter as an outsider – engaged by public relations specialist Karyn Foster on the strength of my experience and diversity as a professional writer and editor – though I

trust that my curiosity and concern about prostate cancer will reflect the interests of the average reader.

“Therefore, I try to break down any jargon that only insiders can understand, to help make every item accessible to any reader.

“I believe one of the crucial ambitions of Prostate Supporter is to have its contents read by more people – not just as an information source for support group members but also as a promotional tool to help spread awareness about prostate cancer to those who remain uninformed.

“While I have no direct experience with prostate cancer, I have great sympathy with cancer sufferers, as many of my dearest friends have been taken by different forms of cancer in recent years, and several more continue their struggles. I also had my niece

Belinda suffer from leukaemia in her childhood – a wretched disease that she and her parents fought bravely against and won (Belinda is now 27, married, pregnant and working as a solicitor in Oxford, England).

“Her plight made me an ardent supporter of childhood cancer charities, and last year I took part in a major childhood cancer fundraising walk for the McGuinness McDermott Foundation, trekking along sections of the Great Wall of China in June.

“That was a significant challenge – not only to raise funds for the charity, but also getting myself fit enough to undertake more than 110,000 vertical steps along nine separate stages of the Great Wall for six consecutive days.

“It was an incredible experience that saw myself and 15 colleagues endure everything from sheet rain, to gasping humidity, to blast furnace heat – which of course had to come on the day of our longest march, stomping about 17km from one township to another, covering 52 towers in between. You can get the gist of this day from the accompanying picture, with walking buddy Dan Haller at right and wild China sprawled out behind us.

“On top of those mountain peaks, the walking group shared profound moments, long silences and some tears as we remembered precious people taken by cancer. In the stillness of such an awesome panorama, it reaffirmed just how precious life is.”

Prosper Darwin Prostate Cancer Support Group

New equipment, new people and new information learned

Valuable support group tools and a highly beneficial visit to the Chapter conference has bolstered enthusiasm in the Top End, as Darwin group convenor Keith Williams reports.

IN the month since the publication of the previous newsletter, life has been a busy one at and away from the Prosper Darwin group's meeting. I thought that Christmas had come early when in rapid succession a portable PA system arrived and then the fantastic a scanner-cum-copier arrived.

A trial run of the PA system at the September meeting proved that it was a very good unit, although someone commented that they didn't realise that I used so many four letter words before...

Late in September I spoke to the U3A group, which normally has an attendance of 40 plus people but on this occasion there were just over 20 – and, significantly, there were very few men. Sadly, I'd guess that the advertised subject matter of prostate cancer may have scared some blokes away. At

COMING EVENT

The Prosper Darwin support group met on **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8**. The 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.

least my presentation didn't cause a hiccup; one of our members has a friend who attends the group, and he said that apart from my noting Collingwood's premiership, he both enjoyed and benefited from my offering.

The Darwin contingent that attended the Central Australia Chapter Conference was reinforced by two of Darwin's important Allied Health workers, Oncology Unit Practice Manager Giam and NT Cancer Council senior staff member Jill. Giam's reply to me after the conference illustrated the benefits of his participation that will go

far beyond prostate cancer patients: "Thanks for inviting me to the PFCA conference. Learnt new stuff from the various speakers. Well done to the organising committee. Met many new friends. I am getting Dr Grant Buchanan to do a video conference for Alan Walker CC and RAH. Thanks for the offer to pay for the park bench; I will get a quote this week. It will be probably be in the \$300-\$500 range. This is to allow patients to have a seat, in contrast to some who are squatting or sitting on the ground."

Giam made a point of saying to me that he wanted to attend

a support group meeting soon (it will be in February) to fill us in on some significant upgrades to treatments, and also said that he would bring along the recently arrived resident radiation oncologist in Darwin. One of our new support group members, at our suggestion, went and saw the new radiation oncologist and reported back that he was most impressed. Jill also indicated her appreciation for being given the opportunity to attend the chapter conference and said she had benefited in many ways.

While the November meeting looks like having a mystery program, planning is under way for our December Christmas meeting down at Fisherman's Wharf. If you're thinking of coming for this real social highlight of the year, please let Keith know, so that we'll have enough seating.

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

DOWN ON THE FARM...

A LITTLE BOY comes down to breakfast. Since they live on a farm, his mother asks if he had done his chores. "Not yet," said the little boy. So his mother tells him there'll be no breakfast until the chores are done.

Now he's fuming, so as he feeds the chickens, he kicks a chicken.

As he feeds the cows, he kicks a cow.

And as he feeds the pigs, he kicks a pig.

He goes back in for breakfast and his mother gives him a bowl of dry cereal.

"How come I don't get any eggs and bacon? Why don't I have any milk in my cereal?" he asks.

"Well," his mother says, "I saw you kick a chicken, so you don't get any eggs for a week. I saw you kick the pig, so you don't get any

bacon for a week either. I also saw you kick the cow, so for a week you aren't getting any milk."

Just then, his father comes down for breakfast, trips over the cat laying in the doorway and then proceeds to kick the feline pet halfway across the kitchen.

The little boy looks up at his mother and with a knowing smile says: "Are you going to tell him, or should I?"

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA CHAPTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Bringing us closer together

The second annual Central Australia Chapter conference was a very effective networking, fellowship and information exchange, as council secretary Bryan Hearn reports.

THE Central Australia Chapter celebrated another successful year by hosting its second annual conference at the Novotel Barossa Resort on October 15 and 16, attracting almost 70 people to a very well organised and informative event.

After a buffet welcoming dinner on the Thursday evening, the conference commenced in earnest on Friday morning with presentations from PCFA National Board Chairman Graeme Johnson and CEO Andrew Giles.

During the morning tea break, Graeme presented Alan Hall from the Barossa Support Group with a well-earned PCFA Max Gardener award for his work in establishing and driving the group from 1997.

Presentations throughout the conference were provided by Rob Nankivell on the Aged Rights Advocacy Service; Dr Grant Buchanan on the genetic code and DNA profiling of cancer; and some light relief was provided by Rhonda Brownlow and Virginia Ip as they spoke on the topic of Continence Management, with their presentation accompanied by some very interesting visual aides and hands-on demonstrations.

Dr Eleanor Need gave a very interesting presentation on Testosterone: Its Role in Male Health, Wellbeing and Prostate Cancer Treatments. Eleanor works closely with Dr Buchanan and used some of his slides to explain this complex area.



LEFT: Council members Malcolm Ellis, Ron Lehmann, Paul Redman, Murray Neck, Bryan Hearn, John Shields, John Baulderstone, Jeff Roberts and Keith Williams. RIGHT: Guest speakers Dr Eleanor Need and Dr Grant Buchanan.



The second day of the conference opened with a presentation by Dr Peter Sutherland from the Royal Adelaide Hospital about treating prostate cancer. It featured a fascinating short video showing a prostatectomy completed by the Da Vinci robotic procedure. Dr Sutherland has performed about 800 such operations and instructed other doctors around Australia and overseas in the same procedures. Each operation takes about 160 minutes; Dr Sutherland does three each day and the average stay in hospital for each patient is down to about 23 hours.

The PCFA's Paul Redman hosted a Support Groups Forum, at which representatives of each support group named three highlights of the past year, and one challenge facing them for the coming year. Paul will inform PCFA administration of all these challenges.

David Gregory, Chair of the National Support and Advocacy sub-committee, provided information explaining the administrative structure of PCFA, and where the SAC and support

groups are placed within that structure. He provided many interesting statistics and stated that his major future direction was to work closely with the Marketing & Sponsorship sub-committee and the Education & Awareness sub-committee, as their work often overlaps with SAC.

CA Chapter chair Malcolm Ellis convened the annual general meeting. Chapter guidelines require three councilors to complete their tenure of service at each AGM, and replaced by newly elected council members. Dean Wall (Action Group), Murray Neck (Alice Springs) had completed their tenure, while Ron Lehmann (Murray Bridge) completed the term of a casual vacancy he had filled. Nominations for the three vacancies were received from Terry Harbour (Mitcham), David Merry (Action Group) and Ron Lehmann (Murray Bridge), who were duly elected. Council executive positions of chair, deputy chair, treasurer and secretary will be elected at the first Council meeting in November.

Malcolm Ellis closed what he described as a very educational, uplifting, rewarding and successful conference. Over the two days, many friendships and acquaintances were formed or renewed, and thanks to email I'm sure many of these relationships will continue.

During the conference, static displays were provided and maintained by Bright Sky, Independence and the Aged Rights Advocacy Service. Brochures and information were dispensed by staff, along with many product samples.

Many thanks must be given to Paul Redman and Carla from PCFA for all their hard work in putting the conference together.

In closing the conference, Chairman Malcolm Ellis noted that Paul is soon retiring and thanked him on behalf of all support groups and the Council for his hard work and commitment to prostate cancer survivors and careers. Thanks also go to those members of the Barossa Support Group who assisted with preparing conference satchels and registrations.