



# Below the Belt!

Vol. 8 No. 3

June – Aug, 2009

Newsletter of The Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.  
(ABN No. 35 871 442 176)

## President's Column

This is something new for our Newsletter. It also gives me the opportunity to inform you of some developments within our Board of Directors and at the same time express the thanks of the Board for your help in recent projects and your suggestions at the Forum during the April meeting.

Firstly the Board has approached Richard Bennett to take up a vacancy on the Board and he has accepted that position. The Board is still seeking the nomination of a Secretary to fill the vacancy created by the untimely passing of Victor Cipants. Members, we really need your help in being able to fill this important position ASAP. With the Annual General Meeting coming up in October we must have this position filled, for two reasons, our Incorporation requires us to have a Secretary and that person should also be the Public Officer. If you would like more information please contact me.

Our annual membership fee of \$10.00 is now due and this can be handed to Brett Sowerby (our Treasurer) or posted to him at PO Box 153, Springwood NSW 2777. The purpose of the fee is twofold, it will allow you to vote at the AGM, and just as importantly helps in defraying the costs of the publishing/posting of the Newsletter, posting of the Us TOO Hot Sheets, and contacting you by email and by post. Feedback from the matters discussed at the April Forum. Your suggestion that all acknowledgment of our involvement in Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) activities be made to our Support Group, has been handed on to Wendy Farrow the NSW State Manager who, in future will issue certificates or such acknowledgment directly to the Support Group. The other item about the cost of prostate cancer treatments was taken up at the Forum organised by the NSW Cancer Council on Consumer input into priorities for Cancer Research.

*Continued Page 2.*

## **What's to Come**

### **Group Meeting – Monday June 15th**

Roger French – Health Educator – Natural Health Society of Australia  
"Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle in Recovering from Prostate Cancer Treatment"

### **Group Meeting – Monday July, 20th**

To Be Advised  
See local Newspapers in the preceding week

### **Group Meeting – Monday August, 17th**

To Be Advised  
See local Newspapers in the preceding week

# Food for Thought

## Coral's Mango Fruit Cake\*

At the 'Relay for Life' one of the tasty treats that proved popular with everybody was Coral's Mango Fruit Cake. We promised to get you the recipe. Here it is:

### Ingredients

- 375gm Tin of Mango (with Natural Juice)
- 500gm of Mixed Fruit
- 2 Eggs
- 1 ½ Cups Self Raising Flour

### Method

1. Combine Mango and Mixed Fruit. Bring to the boil and allow to cool.
2. Add eggs and Flour and stir well
3. Bake at 165 degC for 30 Minutes.
4. Mix fits neatly into a 'log' tin

*(\* Actually it's not really Coral's recipe, she got it from our sister in law, Theonie, who, I believe got it from her friends in the CWA)*



*Continued from Page 1.*

The concern being that these costs may preclude someone from not proceeding with treatment due to cost of out of pocket expenses.

Recently there have been requests for input from our members on a range of topics. Opinions from our members were sought on a new booklet on Advanced Prostate Cancer developed by the Prostate Cancer Collaboration from South Australia. This booklet has been in the development phase for a few years now and is almost ready for publishing hence the need for comment. I circularised the draft to a number of members who I believed would/could make comment and some have done so already. There are two articles in this newsletter seeking your opinion on a cancer diary from the PCFA (Page 10) and pharmaceutical benefits scheme from Consumers Health Forum (Page 4). If you wish to make comment please feel free to do so, bearing in mind that our support group has been established for your benefit.

September is not that far away. This is a friendly reminder that our major fundraising event will be held at the Gales Club, Kingswood on the 5<sup>th</sup> September. In this regard we really do need your help in obtaining donations for the evening that we can raffle or auction, bearing in mind that all monies raised on the night will again be used to purchase equipment for the Nepean Cancer Care Centre.

*Alan Moran  
President*

## Penrith Relay For Life - 2009



Our group once again participated in the Penrith Relay for Life with two teams from the 'Prostate Pals' taking part.

Wasn't it a wonderful weekend! Sunshine, soft, flat grass to walk on, friendships, entertainment and food, and the joy of the vibrant atmosphere. Also there was the memorable Candlelight Ceremony of Hope and Remembrance, followed by the brilliant fireworks display which is yearly donated by one of the sponsors.

Our Anne's and Brett's powerful delivery into a hushed silence of the two core cancer poems, around which the Opening Ceremony hinged, will long be remembered for its emotional impact on

the audience.

This year our two teams totalled 31 members. We raised \$1912, a heroic effort in the circumstances. Last year we raised \$3140 and in 2007 it was \$3287, so it seems that the economic downturn bit us as it would have done to the other teams too. Many thanks to those who participated. It will be months before the amount raised in total by the Penrith Relay can be calculated.

As part of the fun we walked 749 laps around the oval. That's about 249.66 kilometres, (allowing 1/3 km per lap.)

Our champion, Barbara, went around 84 times. John K was hot on her heels with 82, (1 more than last year). Charlie went 55 laps, Richard 50 and Joan 48. Those were the top 5. Well done! It must be mentioned that Barbara went away for part of Saturday and played competition tennis before returning to the oval to continue chalking up laps and camping overnight.

Our mascots, Prostate Pete, and Porcelain Percy did 28 laps and 27 laps respectively. Thank you to all those who gave them a lift.

Brett's 5 lap record of 12 minutes 48 seconds, set in 2007, still stands! Joan, Jan, Barbara, Richard, Val, Charlie, Tom and Jean strove with earnest effort but could not topple him, although Barbara was only 12 seconds behind with 13.0 minutes. Joan was next with 13 min 28 secs. Lets have another try next year. Just for fun! Thank you all once again for your participation in the Relay for Life. By being part of these events we are all doing our bit to collectively deliver a mighty punch on the nose to cancer. All cancers. One day they will be KO'd. That is our aim.

Cheers and thanks from your humble servants,  
Eric Kent and Ian Davis. (Team Captains)



## **Some Recent Happenings Involving Our Group.**

### **Ulysses AGM.**

About 8 of our members supported the PCFA in manning the Information Stall at the AGM held from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> March at Panthers in Penrith. This afforded our Group the opportunity to make Ulysses members aware of the activities of our Group and at the same time to be involved in raising the awareness of prostate cancer among males in the age group most likely to be affected by this cancer.

(The 'Ulysses' Club is a club for 'older' motorcycle riders. The Club's motto is "Grow old Disgracefully")

### **Panthers Glenbrook Bowling Club**

At a social function following the completion of their Pennants competition on the 16<sup>th</sup> May, the Club presented our Group with a cheque for \$1,100 which had been raised from the members 'fines' box. The 'fines' being imposed on those members who had bowled the wrong bias on the bowling club greens. In thanking the Club for the donation our President Alan Moran said "that the Nepean/Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group was most appreciative of this very generous donation and that the funds would go towards the purchase of equipment for the Nepean Cancer Care Centre.



## **Therapeutic Goods Administration Survey**

We received this email from the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) advising us of a survey being conducted by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) You may be interested in contacting them and participating in the survey.

*"This email has come from Consumers' Health Forum (CHF). Given the concerns people with chronic illnesses have about medications and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme it would be worthwhile ensuring as many of your members/clients as possible complete this survey.*

*'The Therapeutic Goods Administration is conducting a short online survey from 1-21 June 2009 to get feedback on its current communications and consultation processes. The survey will help the TGA develop its business planning, consultation and communication frameworks and improve accountability and transparency.'*

*CHF recommends all CHF members inform their members about the confidential survey, which is for all their stakeholders, including consumers, healthcare professionals and anyone connected to the therapeutic goods industry. Results from the survey will be available on the TGA website by late September 2009.*

*The survey can be accessed from the TGA website at <http://www.tga.gov.au>. To register with TGA to receive it, email [surveys@tga.gov.au](mailto:surveys@tga.gov.au)."*

### **E.D.**

Sydney's 'Sun Herald' columnist, Peter Fitzsimons, has recently been waging a campaign against the companies flooding the media with all sorts of advertisements for drugs to treat Erectile Dysfunction. One of his female readers reported that when her nine year old son asked her on the way to school one day just what erectile dysfunction was, she replied "Well...remember when we went camping last year and it took dad all night to put up the tent? That's erectile dysfunction." She went on to finish; "My boy's been happy with that but I'm not sure for how long." Still, you have to admire the lady's quick thinking!

## **Promoting Wellness - Dr Mark Moyad**

Dr Moyad occupies an endowed position created and funded entirely by his patients. He is the Jenkins/ Pokempner Director of Preventive and Alternative Medicine at the University of Michigan Medical Centre (Department of Urology).

Hormone therapy, or androgen suppression, or LHRH treatment has been around for decades and will probably be around for a long time yet. The aim is to empower you with lifestyle suggestions to improve your health in general and then to look at the common side effects from LHRH treatment to better prevent or reduce these side effects. (LHRH - Luteinizing Hormone-Releasing Hormone)

On a recent visit to Australia, Dr. Moyad delivered a presentation at the March meeting of the Urology Oncology Programme sponsored by ABBOTT.

This report of that presentation was compiled by Pam Sandoe from the SAN support group and was published in their March 2009 Newsletter. Our thanks to Pam and her group for allowing us to use the report.

### **Dietary supplements = BIG BUSINESS.**

Sales of supplements in the USA exceed \$32 billion! None of these supplements undergo clinical trials to establish the benefits or otherwise. It is necessary to STOP supplements prior to surgery and especially before any form of radiation therapy. Supplements reduce the efficacy of radiation treatment.

The primary cause of death in men is:

1. Cardiovascular disease
2. Cancer
3. Respiratory Disease
4. Alzheimer's disease
5. Diabetes

Heart healthy equals ALL healthy. As heart disease is the number one killer of men and the number one cause of death in men diagnosed with prostate cancer, if you become more heart healthy this helps give you a "2 for 1" affect. Once you are doing the most you can to prevent some of the leading causes of death, ie reducing your risk of developing heart disease, you are then promoting prostate health as well. The requirement is to reduce cardiac risk to zero by lowering blood pressure, having low cholesterol and by exercising. Over the counter dietary supplements are not heart-healthy.

### **"Focus on the forest over the single tree!"**

1. Monitor your cholesterol and blood pressure
2. Maintain a healthy weight
3. Exercise and move more – including weight lifting
4. Worry more about calories, not just fat content
5. Read nutritional labels as it's a good way to control calories and decide what is truly healthy and unhealthy.
6. Consume more Omega-3 Fatty Acids
7. Consume nuts – high in Vitamin E helps control calories
8. Consume more fibre (soluble fibre a good thing)

**Selenium** is causing over anti-oxidation of the population. Don't focus on animal studies, focus on human studies. Sources of dietary selenium include nuts (especially Brazil nuts), fish or shellfish, poultry or other lean meats, pasta or bread, eggs, garlic, mushrooms, oatmeal, onions and rice. Dr Moyad suggested men take a women's multi-vitamin, if they must, because they contain the 'regulation' doses of vitamins and minerals.

**Aspirin** is a miracle drug for people who need it, but potential disaster for those that don't. By taking aspirin the risk outweighs the benefit to prevent cancer as the only benefit is for those with cardiovascular disease.

The **EPIC study** shows that belly fat is the most accurate prediction of mortality. The researchers used two measures of abdominal obesity – waist circumference and waist-to-hip ratio – in their attempt to better understand the role of belly fat in early death. The accumulation of excess fat around your middle can put your health at risk even if your weight is normal. Cutting back on 100 calories per day is equal to 10 pounds weight loss a year. (EPIC, the European Prospective Investigation of Cancer.)

Low fat diets have no impact on any disease. It just does not work! The real issue is low calorie diet. Work with your health professional to find a dietary programme that makes sense for you. If it sounds too good to be true then it probably is.

The word from Dr. Moyad is to take **Vitamin D tablets** 'if you need it'. Undergo a Vitamin D blood test to establish if you have the normal level of 90 – 100 nmol/l.

**Calcium** requirements are between 1200 – 1500mg. per day. Men are 91% - 98% deficient so it's important to boost your daily requirements, especially when on hormone therapy.

Dr Moyad indicated that the number one source of **Lycopene** IS NOT tomatoes but WATERMELON. Pomegranate juice is pure business as an 8oz. glass equates to 140-160 of your calorie intake per day.

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) trial indicated the need to **reduce sodium**. It's not the salt on the table that's the issue, but the salt in processed food! It was designed to determine the effect on blood pressure of entire dietary patterns that combine some or all of these nutrients – fibre, cholesterol, calcium, magnesium, potassium and sodium.

And for those men suffering with hot flashes from hormone treatment, **flax seed (linseed)**, in moderation, may be of benefit for reduction of weight and cholesterol.

**Exercise** acts as an anti-depressant. It also improves bone health with weight-bearing or resistance exercises. Lifting weights just two to three times per week can improve bone health and reduce osteoporosis risk, reduce the risk of falls and injury, fatigue and increases energy levels. It also improves overall quality of life, cardiovascular health, the reduced risk of diabetes and a reduction in body fat, and importantly, it improves your mood!

## **TAKE HOME MESSAGES**

- Low calorie diet
- Daily exercise
- Girth <90 cms
- Avoid trendy supplements

*(Dr. Moyad will be familiar to many of our members as he writes a column ("No Bogus Science") for the "Us Too" magazine that is distributed to our members.)*

## Prostate Cancer 'Vaccine'

Recently, our Vice President, Gabrielle Moran, was, as she puts it 'bailed up' by a representative of the Cancer Council while visiting one of Penrith's shopping centres. This fellow was soliciting donations for the Cancer Council. Gabrielle declined to make a donation but informed him that she was heavily involved in promoting cancer awareness and fund raising via our group.

To quote Gabrielle she was "told rather arrogantly by the young man that 'well you're alright now that there's a 'vaccine'. As you can imagine, this attitude did not go down well with Gabrielle at all !!"

She has since spent quite a lot of time doing her own research into the vaccine which is called 'Provenge', as yet it has not been approved by the US but looks likely to be so in the not too far future.

I decided to do a little research myself (via the internet) this is what I came up with.

*A new form of immune therapy has shown a significant survival benefit in men who have metastatic androgen-independent prostate cancer (ie Advanced Prostate Cancer), when compared to patients receiving placebo.*

*The treatment is called Provenge (APC8015) and is manufactured by Dendreon Corp. of Seattle. Provenge is called a vaccine, but unlike most vaccines, it is used not to prevent illness but to treat an already existing condition. The vaccine combines a protein that is found in most prostate cancer cells with a substance that helps the immune system recognize the cancer as a threat. In clinical trials, Provenge was well tolerated: the most common adverse events that were reported were fever and chills lasting for one to two days.*

*The vaccine is autologous in nature. That is, it is produced from the patient's own cells and must be custom made for each patient individually. First, patients have their blood run through a machine for two or three hours in order to extract certain immune system cells, called antigen presenting cells (APCs). These cells are then mixed with a protein called prostatic acid phosphatase (PAP) that is commonly found on most prostate tumors. The PAP is fused with another immune-stimulating substance called GM-CSF. The mixture is then returned to the patient in a one-hour infusion. This process is repeated three times over the course of a month. The basic idea is to alert the immune system that cells containing prostatic acid phosphatase, (i.e., prostate cancer cells) should now be attacked as if they were a foreign invader.*

*This drug is not "the magic bullet" that we would all like to see but it is a step forward. The results of recently completed trials have shown an increase in life expectancy for very advanced cases of prostate cancer.*

*The U.S. Federal Drug Administration (FDA) refused to approve the drug 2 years ago but results of more recent trials are more optimistic and it is anticipated that the drug may obtain approval in the U.S. later this year.*

*The struggle to obtain approval has been dogged by controversy with threats allegedly being made against doctors on the FDA approval board.*

*One article I read suggested that the drug would cost \$50,000 to \$75,000 per treatment, even if approved in the U.S. how long would it take to get Australian approval?*

If you want to read more on this subject just type the word 'provenge' into your computer search program. There is a lot of information out there.

## **Swan talks of prostate cancer**

Thursday, May 28, 2009 » 11:19am

Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan has launched an information DVD for men diagnosed with prostate cancer.

“Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan, who survived prostate cancer in 2001, says knowledge is power when it comes to successfully battling the disease.

Mr Swan launched an information DVD for men diagnosed with prostate cancer in Canberra on Wednesday night, speaking frankly about the 'bloody scary' disease that killed his father in 1989.

Prostate cancer has been in the news lately following the deaths of actor Bud Tingwell and businessman Richard Pratt.

Sydney broadcaster Alan Jones, who's endured an ongoing fight with prostate cancer, compered the DVD launch at Parliament House.

Mr Swan said every man diagnosed with prostate cancer deserved the best possible information on treatment options.

'Knowledge is power, this DVD is power, because it will help both men and their families understand the current treatment options, ranging from watchful waiting to radiation therapy and surgery,' he said.

Prostate cancer accounts for more than a quarter of all new cancer cases in men.

This year an estimated 18,000 Australians will be diagnosed with the disease - 3,000 will die.

Mr Swan said he was 'bloody scared' when told he had cancer. 'Many men are just as fearful of what sort of life they will lead after treatment, as they are about whether or not treatment will work,' he said.

Early detection saved the treasurer's life eight years ago.

But his father, a digger from World War II, wasn't so lucky.

'War couldn't kill him, but in 1989, aged 67, secondary cancers associated with his prostate cancer did,' Mr Swan said.

If a close relative - a brother or father - has experienced the disease, a man's chances of contracting it increases from one in 10 to one in three.

'We should never put off protecting our health,' the treasurer said.

### **A Couple of Dates for your Diary**

**Saturday September 5<sup>th</sup>** – Support Group Fund Raising Evening at Penrith Gaels Club. A Fun night of Music, Dancing, Raffles and Auctions. – Do you want to be involved in helping organise the evening? Contact Gabrielle.

**October 2009** (Final Date to be advised) – Dragon Boat Racing at Darling Harbour. – Paddlers Required - Contact Brett for details.

**Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>**, - Hawkesbury Canoe Classic – Scrutineers Required – Again, Contact Brett for Details.

# A Laugh at Life !

## Painting the Church

There was a Scottish painter named Smokey MacGregor who was very interested in making a penny where he could, so he often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further.

As it happened, he got away with this for some time, but eventually the local Church decided to do a big restoration job on the outside of one of their biggest buildings.

Smokey put in a bid, and, because his price was so low, he got the job.

So he set about erecting the scaffolding and setting up the planks, and buying the paint and, yes, I am sorry to say, thinning it down with turpentine.

Well, Smokey was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly completed, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened, and the rain poured down washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Smokey clear off the scaffold. He landed on the lawn among the gravestones, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint.

Smokey was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he got down on his knees and cried:

"Oh, God, Oh God, forgive me; what should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke..

"Repaint! Repaint!  
And thin no more!"



## **Children's Logic:**

"Give me a sentence about a public servant," said a teacher. The small boy wrote: "The fireman came down the ladder pregnant." The teacher took the lad aside to correct him.

"Don't you know what pregnant means?" she asked. "Sure," said the young boy confidently. "It means carrying a child."



## **Simple Home Remedies:**

No.7 – You only need two tools in life. WD40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD40. If it does move and shouldn't, use the Duct Tape.

## Be on time

A Priest was being honoured at his retirement dinner after 25 years in the parish. A leading local politician and member of the congregation was chosen to make the presentation and to give a little speech at the dinner.

However, he was delayed, so the Priest decided to say his own few words while they waited:

'I got my first impression of the parish from the first confession I heard here I thought that I had been assigned to a terrible place. The very first person who entered my confessional told me he had stolen a television set and, when questioned by the police, was able to lie his way out of it. He had stolen money from his parents, embezzled from his employer, had an affair with his boss's wife, taken illegal drugs, and gave VD to his sister. I was appalled. But as the days went on I learned that my people were not all like that and I had, indeed, come to a fine parish full of good and loving people.'....

Just as the Priest finished his talk, the politician arrived full of apologies at being late. He immediately began to make the presentation and gave his talk:

'I'll never forget the first day our parish Priest arrived,' said the politician. 'In fact, I had the honour of being the first person to go to him for confession.'

*Moral : Never, Never, Never Be Late*



## Never Lose Your Grandkids

A small boy was lost at a large shopping mall. He approached a uniformed policeman and said, 'I've lost my granpop!'

'The cop asked, 'What's he like?'

The little boy hesitated for a moment and then replied,

'Single Malt Scotch, Red wine, and women with big tits.'



## Nominated as best short joke of the year ...

A 3-year-old boy examined his testicles while taking a bath.

'Mum', he asked, 'Are these my brains?'

'Not yet,' she replied.



**Light Switch at the Urologist's Office**

**Prostate Cancer Personal  
Organiser — Survey**

PCFA is developing a personal organiser for men to keep track of all of the essential information in their experience with prostate cancer:

Test results, treatments, appointments, expenses, details of your health care team and much more.

Our group, along with all others, has been asked to participate in this survey.

At the meeting on June 15<sup>th</sup>, time will be set aside to compile information to send off to the PCFA.

It is anticipated that input through this survey will help PCFA to develop an organiser that is as practical and meaningful as possible.

So come along to the meeting and contribute to this discussion.

**Board Members of the Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group for 2009 are as follows:-**

<b>President :-</b>	Alan Moran
<b>Vice President:-</b>	Gabrielle Moran
<b>Secretary :-</b>	Vacant
<b>Assistant Secretary :-</b>	Vacant
<b>Treasurer :-</b>	Brett Sowerby
<b>Librarian :-</b>	Ian Davis
<b>Newsletter Editor:-</b>	Alan Howard
<b>Committee Member :-</b>	Eric Kent
<b>Committee Member :-</b>	John Withers
<b>Committee Member :-</b>	Mick Boyle

The Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Support Group Inc. is grateful for the support of its members and various local groups. This enables us to produce this newsletter and cover other incidentals in the running of the group.

The Below the Belt 'Zipper' logo (Page 1) is copyrighted to Ms. Caroline Redwood and is used with her kind permission

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**The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Group.**

**The Group does not offer medical or other professional advice.**

**Articles presented in this or any other issues are presented only as a means of sharing information and opinions with members.**

**It is important that health professionals should be consulted before making any decisions about any treatments.**

**This newsletter has been compiled by Alan Howard from material culled or provided.**

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**Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Web Site 'www.prostatesupport.org.au**