



Below the Belt!

Vol. 10 No. 4

Sept – Nov, 2011

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

Happy Birthday We're 10 Years Old

That's right!

At our October General meeting on Monday 17th, we will have achieved 10 years of service. We have come a long way from the inaugural community meeting at Glenbrook. This meeting came about due to the efforts of the various service clubs in the Nepean and Blue Mountains areas and included local health representatives as well as members of the public. At this meeting it was realised that a definite need existed for a Support Group to help men that had been diagnosed and treated for Prostate Cancer. The committee elected at this meeting guided us on our journey.

The group has grown in this time. We now have 324 members 'on our books'. Obviously not all of these members are actively involved in the functions of the group. (It is sobering to realise we have had a total of 438 members pass through the group during our existence. Sadly many of these men have since lost their fight with Prostate Cancer.)

Over the past 10 years our profile within the community has also increased and by that many more men are aware of the insidious disease we know as Prostate Cancer. This year sees the 10th year of our participation in the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic (Refer item on page 8).
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What's to Come

Group Meeting – Monday September 19th

Dr. Hishanm Hillani - Cardiologist
Heart Health

Group Meeting – Monday October 17th

Group Annual General Meeting
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Group Meeting – Monday November 21st

Dr. Amy Hayden – Radiation Oncologist
Latest techniques in Radiation Treatment

All meetings :- Gather at 6-30pm for a 7-00pm start.

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Activities

We are all aware that September is officially known as 'Prostate Cancer Awareness Month'. During this month extra activities are organised to both raise awareness and lift the profile of Prostate Cancer in the community. These functions are held nationwide and involve many high profile organisations such as the Commonwealth Bank, Qantas Airways, Bunning's Hardware Stores to name but a few. Locally, we also do our 'bit'. In the past few weeks we have manned a number of information booths at all three Bunning's Stores in our area (North Penrith, South Penrith and Minchinbury). We also manned the barbecue at the North Penrith store one Sunday at the end of August. On all of these occasions we have been able to distribute information and talk with men about Prostate Cancer. We have also used the opportunity to 'rattle the tin' and collect funds to help finance our local charitable activities.



These events don't 'just happen'. A number of people are involved in ensuring their success. However, particular attention should be drawn to the efforts of one man in organising these activities. Eric Kent has contributed countless hours in liaising with the Staff at the Bunning's Stores. He also organised the barbecue and all the catering required for the successful outcome for that event. Well done Eric!

New Support Group Manager for PCFA

Our support group would like to welcome John Friedsam to the role of Support Group Manager for PCFA.

John joins us at a time of major change within the PCFA organisation.

John came to Australia from the USA in 2001. Since 2003, John has held varied positions with Cancer Council NSW.

Most recently, since 2009, John was the Support Services Manager, overseeing a suite of supportive care delivery services such as; Telephone Support Groups (TSG), The Cancer Support Group Network (CSGN) of NSW and Cancer Connections Online.

During his time the TSG program developed into one that reaches in excess of 225 groups per annum, using technology to reach isolated and under supported cancer patients. During this time technology based outreach via the Cancer Connections website grew to over 50,000 visits per year. With the CSGN, John managed a systematic review of the program's engagement with over 300 support groups in NSW.

"As a health professional passionate about support, group work and men's health – I am extremely excited by the opportunity to work with PCFA, to harness the already rich experience of the organisation's support group history and to fully utilise the generous new funding from Cancer Australia."

Incidentally, both John and new PCFA C.E.O., Anthony Lowe, will be joining us to paddle in this year's Dragon Boat spectacular at Darling Harbour. Will **YOU** be joining us? (Refer page 6 for details)

Careful what you purchase on eBay.

I ordered a penis enlarger.

Bastards sent me a magnifying glass.

Instructions said: Don't use in sunlight.

ODE TO THE PROBLEMS WE FACE WITH PROSTATE CANCER

First published in the Victoria/Tasmania Chapter Prostate Supporter newsletter.

Submitted by Peter of the Bayside Support Group; written by his wife Heather, about Peter's prostate cancer journey.

(Our copy obtained from the 'Prostate Supporter' published by the Prostate Cancer Support Groups of South Australia and the Northern Territory) www.pcagsa.org.au

"It's cancer," said the doctor,
And he didn't bat an eye.
But my insides were battling.
I wished that I could fly.
If I didn't listen to him
As he spouted all this stuff,
Maybe it would go away,
And I could still feel tough.

We took home reams of paper
Filled with articles and such,
About so many different options
Getting it right would take such luck.
Our first thought was get rid of it
I don't want this thing in me!
But then as we read further
They all sounded good to me.

We saw many different doctors
And they all said "My way's best"
But when we wrote all the pros and cons
Only one could pass our test.
Brachytherapy was the way
That we decided to go,
But some of the medicos shook their
heads,
"It will not work," they said. No! No!

The best advice we were given
Was whatever you decide is right.
Make up your mind and stick to it
And then be prepared to fight.
We went ahead regardless,
And soon it was time to measure.
I lay there in all my glory
While they fiddled around with my treasure.

"You have a very long prostate," they said
[I guess something had to be long]
With that and other nice comments
I knew I hadn't had the gong.
They poked around for ages!
An invasion was taking place!
But they did it all so nicely
I felt I didn't lose face.

All too soon it was seeding day.
To the Alfred Centre we went
But the doors were shut and the lifts didn't
work.
Perhaps the wrong letters were sent?
We found some others who were also lost,
And we formed some scouting teams.
We went left and right and up and down
And we beat their dastardly schemes.

Finally I got into theatre,
And after a nice little nap
I woke up feeling quite comfortable,
Except for the pad in my lap.
I stayed in hospital overnight
cos they said they'd dropped a seed.
Maybe they thought they could catch it
The very next time I weed.

It turned out they were joking,
So I went back home to mend,
Armed with a little tea strainer
And an old fella that wouldn't unbend.
Since then we've worked on this problem,
With a certain amount of success,
And now when he's called on to function,
He stands up straight and says YES!

So what if I need the little blue pill?
The result is just the same.
And I've learned from my Prostate Support
Group
There's other ways – if you're game.
At Beaumaris there's a great little group
Of very friendly blokes
We discuss our flows and Willies and Joes
And tell very corny jokes

They and the folk at the Alfred
Help everyone to cope
They should all be given medals
For providing us with hope
It's been 18 months since my journey
began
And everything's gone to plan
I guess I really don't have to say
I'M A VERY HAPPY MAN!

Incidentally, I had a PSA check up recently and received some good news. My PSA had actually *gone down!* (0.08 to 0.07) Now all I have to do is remember what I have been eating and doing for the past six months so that I can keep doing it! (Actually I put it down to 'acquiring' two new Grandchildren in the past couple of months!) *Alan H.*

Incontinence – The Ongoing Problem

The Group meeting held on the 15th of August featured a talk by Anne Sargeant, a Nurse Continence adviser employed at the Lemongrove Health Centre in Penrith.

Anne's presentation included a detailed description of the functioning of the urinary system as well as stressing the importance of Pelvic Floor Muscle exercises not only in regaining urinary continence after prostate cancer treatment, but before treatment is undertaken.

However, in spite of our best efforts, some of us are plagued by serious incontinence.

For these people there are a couple of government schemes designed to assist in the ongoing cost of providing incontinence products (pads etc.)

These schemes are:-

'CAPS' (Continence Aids Payment Scheme). This scheme is funded by the Federal Government and is provided through Medicare. This scheme provides up to \$506.30 annually for the purchase of continence aids. To access this scheme a person must have permanent and severe loss of bladder and/or bowel function (incontinence) caused by an eligible condition. Prostate cancer is one of the conditions covered, plus, you must hold a Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card, whether as a primary cardholder or a dependent of a cardholder. The 'CAPS' web site is www.bladderbowel.gov.au

The second system is 'Enable'

'EnableNSW' is a unit within Health Support Services, NSW Health, which was established to provide central administration of the services previously administered through various NSW Health disability support programs. For continence sufferers disposable and non-disposable products are supplied. However supply limits apply. You do not have to be a Concession Health Card holder to apply for assistance under the 'Enable' program The 'Enable' web site is 'www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au'

In most circumstances continence sufferers can access funding from both the Commonwealth and the State Governments.

Applications to both CAPS and 'Enable' can be made by a G.P, Nurse Continence Adviser or Community Nurse. It is advisable that a person apply to both, if eligible as CAPS alone may not be enough assistance.

Apart from the above web sites you can obtain more information from the following;

Continence Foundation of Australia, National Continence Helpline on 1800-330-066



President Alan Moran with Anne Sargeant

Continence Foundation of Australia, NSW Inc. ph 8741-5699.

You can get help locally from Anne Sargeant, CNC/Continence and Barbara Pye, CNS/Continence based at Lemongrove Health Centre. Both can be contacted through Ph: 4734 - 4800.

You can refer yourself for a continence assessment by calling the Community Intake on Ph: 1800 013 101; A Nurse Continence Adviser will then contact you to arrange an appointment.

Our web site 'www.prostatesupport.org.au' also gives detailed information on this subject.

Dragon Boating



Come and join us

- When ?* *October 30, 2011*
- Where ?* *Darling Harbour, Sydney*
- What for ?* *Fun and well being and support for great cause—breast cancer*
- Why ?* *Because we're prostate cancer survivors and we want to show the world what we prostate cancer survivors can do*
- Who with?* *The wonderful Dragons Abreast ladies*
- Who can paddle?* *We need PC survivors, partners, carers or direct family members who want to promote prostate cancer awareness and have a fabulous day*

Paddle for PC with the Prostate Dragons

**For more information contact
Brett Sowerby**

**waxtech@bigpond.com OR
Garry Clear**

gclear1@bigpond.com



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2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY, OCTOBER 17th

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, October 17th, 2011, so here is an overview of what is involved and how you go about nominating for election our Association .

Our Board has 10 members, with four of these members forming an Executive, these four members are President, Vice -President, Secretary (who is also the Public Officer) and the Treasurer. The other positions on the board are; Assistant Secretary, Librarian, Newsletter Editor and Committee Member (3 positions)

If you want to re-nominate for the Board or nominate as a new member for the Board, you will need to fill out and sign the nomination form below, (or you may nominate in writing) and have two other members endorse and sign your nomination, which, when completed, will need to be handed to Alan Moran, our President or Ross Baker our Secretary no later than seven days before the date of the AGM . (i.e. Monday, October 10th, 2011)

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**NOMINATION FORM
For
ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF
NEPEAN / BLUE MOUNTAINS PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP INC.**

To The Secretary
Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.,

I. Wish to nominate for election to the

position of On Board of the
Nepean / Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group Inc.

Signed.....

We endorse this nomination.

Name..... Signed.....

Name..... Signed.....



Have you seen a particular aeroplane displaying the Prostate Cancer logo? PCFA is delighted with the decision by **Qantas** to emblazon the PCFA logo on one of its 737-800 series planes to help raise awareness of prostate cancer. Keep an eye out for it.

NEPEAN/BLUE MOUNTAINS PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP INC.

**IT'S ON AGAIN and this year is THE 10TH YEAR OF OUR PARTICIPATION!
So we would like this to be a really big turnout o**

THE HAWKESBURY CANOE CLASSIC ----- OCTOBER 22nd, 2011

This is a canoe race over 111 kms from Windsor bridge to Brooklyn bridge, non stop and most of it at night. The event has been running for over 30 years..

The event attracts over 430 canoes and kayaks and 600 + paddlers to get them to Brooklyn.

This will be the tenth year that our Group have provided volunteers to assist in the running of this event.

The HCC is not only a race but also a major fund raising effort for worthy causes and ours is one of them. Last year we raised \$2000 for providing volunteers to assist with the preparation stages of the event, and in particular, the boat scrutineering. The funding this year will again be directed to NBMPCSG

The HCC committee have once again asked if we would assist with this year's race.

So.....what's involved?

We are asked to be at Macquarie Park Windsor by about 0830 on Saturday morning October 22 and we are needed until about 2-3 pm, depending on the arrival of the boats for scrutineering. The work is not arduous, not complicated, and there is a very social aspect to the day. Bring a chair, any extra food or drink you might need and the usual outdoor stuff like sunblock etc. Lunch is provided for the volunteers and they receive also a T shirt and a few other extraneous goodies.

Those who have participated in previous years have enjoyed the day and it puts forward the presence of our cause to a large gathering in one location.

I hope you will join us again for this interesting and worthwhile day. If you can, would you please complete the section below and return to me as soon as possible

Many thanks

P O Box 153
Springwood, NSW, 2777

Brett Sowerby
(Minister in Charge of Boating)

Email waxtech@bigpond.com

Yes, I would like to help with the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic for October 23rd, 2010

NAME(s).....

CONTACT PHONE No.....Mobile.....

Email address.....

