

The Walnut

May 2015

Newsletter of the Prostate Cancer Support Group
- ACT Region Inc.

Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Postal address: Prostate Cancer Support Group - ACT Region Inc.

PO Box 717, Mawson, ACT 2607

Website: prostate-cancer-support-act.net

Personal support

If you would like immediate support, advice or assistance contact:
SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) (02) 6290 1984 who will pass the message to one of our group members. Alternatively, if no one answers at SHOUT, contact

President: Chris Hansen
Phone 02 6161 4135 or 0413 189 340
e-mail chris.g.hansen@icloud.com

Treasurer: John Lucas
Phone: 02 6293 2532
Email: jandklucas@bigpond.com

Contact Editor at <http://tinyurl.com/mgw9rbp>

Monthly meetings

Meetings of our support group are held on every 3rd Wednesday of the month except in December.

Usual Location and Time:

Room 22, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce, ACT 2607. 6:30 for 7:00 pm
See our web site <http://tinyurl.com/bjoyczu> for details and map showing the location, and other useful information. Instructive personal stories of survivors can be found on our website.

Next monthly meeting

Wednesday 20 May 2015 at the above address.

Speaker: Dr Andreea Ardeleanu of ACT Cancer Counselling Services. Andreea is the Acting Manager of the Canberra Psychosocial Service.

All men and women are welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings. No notice is required - simply come along and introduce yourself, or contact one of the people listed in this newsletter.

Executive Group meetings are held at the SHOUT offices at the above address in Pearce on the first Thursday of the month at around 1:30 pm.

President's Report

I have been absent for much of the last month, so this month's report is a little shorter than usual.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held as part of the monthly meeting in September. I will be retiring as President and there may be other retirements from the Executive Group. This presents members with an opportunity to inject new blood into the Exec Group and bring new ideas to our community. Please give some thought to nominating for one of the positions and by all means talk to me if you want further information on this.

Many of you will know of the valuable work Peter Daley did as our immediate past president, ably assisted by his wife Patricia. In recognition of their service, the Executive Group proposed that Peter and Patricia should be put forward for the Max Gardner Award. The award is managed by our

umbrella organisation, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and is for an outstanding and significant contribution to the reduction of prostate cancer. Given the six years of unstinting effort put in by Peter and Patricia, we felt that they were worthy of consideration for this award. I found out a couple of days ago that we had not been successful, however we were encouraged to resubmit the nomination next year. While this is disappointing, I am hopeful of a better outcome at our next attempt.

Our librarian, U N Bhati, has provided details of a new book in our library: '**An ABC of Prostate Cancer in 2015**'. Alan G. Lawrenson, a survivor of prostate cancer, is its author. The following blurb on it indicates its contents. The book 'tells the story of Alan's battle with prostate cancer that was diagnosed in April 2012. It tells of "my journey over 4 continents to find the best cure'. This he achieved by having proton beam therapy at the National Cancer Centre in Seoul, South Korea in early 2013. The book is far more than just about his journey to Korea. It covers in considerable detail, information on 10 treatments (and 6 subsets of these treatments) that your doctors might not have told you about. It also discusses the latest diagnostic tests and lists more than 100 questions you should ask your doctors'.

The book is available for borrowing from the library.

The ANU Medical School calls for volunteer patients around this time every year; they want people with existing issues to act as model patients for a group of second year medical students as an introduction to clinical practice. This event didn't get much prominence this year, however several of our members attended the event in late April.

I met with the CEO of SHOUT, Melissa Guilfoyle, during the month to discuss issues and possible future opportunities for use of its services. Last meeting there was a connection problem with the display TV which I was told has been scheduled for replacement. In terms of opportunities, SHOUT have expanded the range of services available and will provide us with a 'price list' of items such as admin support.

Secretary's Report

At the monthly meeting on 15 April, the presenter was Dr. Anneke Blackburn from the John Curtin School of Medical Research at ANU. Her talk described our common enemy – cancer. Her research area is breast cancer, however she described cancer in general, its needs, characteristic and a novel way to combat it. It is apparent that the science community is at the threshold of coming up with a new drug treatment for all cancers. There is a new/old chemical compound Dichloracetate (DCA for short). It will not remove the cancer cells; however it will deny them growth. The problem is a correct dosage so the cancer will not return as a drug resistant. Denial of glucose to the growing cancer is apparently most significant factor.

As mentioned before, signing the attendance book at monthly meetings is quite important for the reporting/existence of the group. As the members of the executive are not mind readers or cryptographs it is also important to sign legibly and preferably print the individual names.

New Members: We did welcome one new member tonight. Peter D was operated on some five weeks ago and he is well on a road of recovery and the catheter was removed within a week. It was not an easy decision, but it was made with help of the urologist. The operation was performed laparoscopically He is now recovering well.

Existing Members; John D had laparoscopic prostatectomy about week ago and 'lost' his catheter only some two days ago.

General agenda: Luke Sartor (the young ANU researcher) was especially welcomed amidst our group.

The secretary highlighted problems with the website of the parent company and did indicate that the older generation was right to complain and not to accept the problems as generation differences

Developments and items of interest

Calcium Supplementation Associated With Macular Degeneration (Medcape).

1. Individuals who take more than 800 mg of calcium daily are almost twice as likely to be diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration as those who did not, according to the results of a new study. This may be of particular interest to those using medications which have a negative effect on bone density e.g. androgen suppressant therapy. Note that this refers to calcium supplements and not calcium from dietary sources. www.medscape.com/viewarticle/842931

Continuing Activities and Reminders

Work begun by Greg Amos and Graham Erickson to individually mentor men before and after treatment for prostate cancer is proceeding well, with several other members of our group keen to participate. Our President has asked Greg and Graham to manage this process and as part of the overall project proposes that we hold a 'round table' meeting of those interested to ensure we have a common understanding of our goals.

Luke Sartor, an honours student at the John Curtin School, has offered to provide assistance with research as well as volunteer at any of our community events. Luke is a keen young man who will be most helpful to our group.

The University of Western Australia is looking for volunteers for a study of sexual wellbeing and quality of life after prostate cancer for gay and bisexual men and their partners. If you are interested, contact Duncan Rose on 1800 19 20 02 or via email at pcasexuality@uws.edu.au.

Guy Blackburn has recently been appointed as the ACT representative on the PCFA Board. Guy will prove to be a valuable conduit both to and from the PCFA and help to ensure we understand the potential offered by a closer relationship as well as any additional responsibilities involved.

Disclaimer

From time to time in our newsletters we provide information about developments in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, research articles, documents, audiovisual products, presentations and other interesting materials. However, the Group's Executive and the editor of this newsletter do not have the medical expertise required to make an informed evaluation of the conclusions and recommendations presented in such materials, and we have not verified such conclusions and recommendations through appropriately qualified medical professionals. The information presented in this newsletter must not be interpreted as being endorsed or recommended by the Executive or the editor. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your particular case. Before implementing any recommendations made in the materials that are reported, it is essential that you obtain advice from appropriately qualified medical professionals. The view of the Group's Executive is that no two prostate cancer cases are alike and that no single treatment option is better than any other in all cases. While the information in this newsletter should be of interest, there is no substitute for getting informed medical advice from your own GP, specialists and other medical professionals.