

Newsletter May 2009

News from the Office

As our last Newsletter was being distributed, four people from the programme were off to Adelaide to attend the Citizen Advocacy National Conference. We have included a snapshot of the event on pages 6 and 7.

Linda stayed in Adelaide to participate in a Program Evaluation (CAPE) of CA South Australia. A team of six people, led by Zana Lutfiyya from Canada, spent six days reviewing the work of the program and talking with Staff, Board Members, Advocates and Protégés. Verbal feedback was given which has since been followed by a written report. CAPEs are designed to be a learning experience for all concerned and this CAPE team comprised some very experienced CA Coordinators and Board Members who mentored and guided those of us who were new to the experience. As a result Linda gained a great deal of insight into the practical application of CA principles as outlined in the 36 Ratings which comprise the CAPE standards manual.

As we progress planning for our own CAPE early in 2010 we were delighted to be successful in obtaining a grant towards the cost from the newly established Citizen Advocacy Trust of Australia. We thank the Trust for its support.

Since returning to Launceston we have continued to get to know those Protégés whom we have decided to re-match following discontinuation of their previous Advocacy relationship. We have identified some potential Advocates and look forward to taking them through Orientation and introducing them to their Protégés. Meanwhile we continue to seek suitable Advocates for other people on our working list.

Our follow-along contact with Advocates works two ways, with staff making regular



contact with Advocates at agreed intervals to hear how things are going, and Advocates calling us to discuss issues as they arise. Through Advocates' willingness to share their experiences with the Coordinators, we are able to appreciate the breadth and depth of the relationships within the Programme and offer support as needed when challenges arise. We have planned an opportunity to come together and learn from these challenging experiences on Friday 24th July. Details are on p3.

Since our last Newsletter there have been some changes on our Board of Management due to resignations from Phil Baker and Mike Parry. Brian Cole is now Chairman and Merilyn Crack, Vice-Chair.

As we approach the end of the financial year we invite those who support our Programme to continue, or to apply for, financial membership. Information is on p10. Together, we look forward to continuing the work of Citizen Advocacy in the Launceston region.

We hope you enjoy the Newsletter and welcome your feedback.

Linda, Vanessa and Lyne

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What's been happening

The following are examples of actions taken by Citizen Advocates in our Programme:

A Citizen Advocate

- ◆ Is looking into ways to make their Protégé's life more meaningful
- ◆ Is pleasantly surprised how far their Protégé has progressed in the time that the Advocate has been involved in their life
- ◆ Has arranged for some new clothes, which are better fitting and more flattering, to be made for their Protégé
- ◆ Is in the process of re-establishing contact with their protégé
- ◆ Has been worried about their Protégé's health, and has been looking into alternatives for meal preparation and ways to make it easier for the right medication to be taken at the right time
- ◆ Assisted their Protégé to go through family history to identify the Protégé's child, in the hope of re-establishing contact with them
- ◆ Has gone to the Guardianship Board to have a Financial Administrator appointed for their Protégé
- ◆ Informed us that their Protégé had an upcoming appointment with an employment agency
- ◆ Was looking into how their Protégé's money had been spent on a recent holiday
- ◆ Has been visiting their Protégé's mother to gain a better understanding of the Protégé and their background
- ◆ Was very excited to have taken their Protégé on an outing from the Nursing Home they are living in, for the first time. The protégé was also excited to be going shopping again, as she hadn't been out of the Nursing Home for three years
- ◆ Is happy that their Protégé has started to initiate contact with them, instead of the Advocate contacting the Protégé all the time



*Action springs not from thought,
but from a readiness for responsibility.*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Advocate Gatherings



Advocate Gatherings are one way that Advocates can both give, and receive, support. These are informal opportunities where, together, we can celebrate successes and explore options on how to address challenges.

One of the Advocates who came to our Lunch Gathering on 20 March has been involved with the Programme since 1993 and this was the first time she had come to an event at the CA Office. We hope to see her again, as well as others who may not have come before.

Please refer to the calendar on page 9, or our Events listing on the website (see website upgrade below), for dates of future **Lunch and Evening Gatherings**.

All are welcome to:

- ◆ Meet other Advocates and Staff
- ◆ Ask questions
- ◆ Share experiences
- ◆ Suggest topics for future gatherings
- ◆ Access available resources

Ongoing Training

One of the Key Office Activities for Staff is to provide relevant ongoing training to support Citizen Advocates in their roles. A theme of recent follow-along contacts has been “**Meeting Challenges within the Advocacy role**” so we will hold a session on this topic on

Friday 24th July from 10am—1pm.

All Advocates are warmly invited to attend to learn from each others’ experiences. We will also share and discuss information presented by John Armstrong at the National Conference on ways to achieve potency in Advocate actions (see page 5).



Lunch will be provided.

Please contact the office to let us know you are coming! Ph: 6331 2177

Website Upgrade

Online Newsletter and Events listing!

Our Newsletters are now downloadable from our website www.citizenadvocacylton.org.au under “Latest News” and Advocate Gathering and Training Dates are now posted under “Events”.

Please let us know if you would prefer to access future Newsletters on-line, rather than receive hard copy.



Rekindling Relationships

During our follow along conversations with Advocates we have become aware that sometimes relationships need rekindling.

One of the hardest things in life is to reconnect with some one after you have lost contact. It's also easy to blame yourself, feel guilty or a little overwhelmed. Lost contact can occur when either person moves, changes phone numbers or when life simply gets in the way.

Some of the reasons for reconnecting with your Protégé include

- **Finding out how things are. Things may have changed since you last spoke with them**
- **Do they have any current issues that need addressing? What can you do to assist them in this?**
- **How is their health?**
- **Is their accommodation still suitable or stable?**
- **Do they have any unmet dreams?**
- **Is there an upcoming celebration (e.g. a birthday) that they would like you to be a part of?**

These are only a few things that maybe happening however, unless you make contact, you will never know.

So you have decided to make the first step and re-establish contact, well that's great, but where to from here?



- **commit to make the phone calls**
- **locate any phone numbers you have for your Protégé**
- **make sure you have some times you can be available to go and see your Protégé**
- **call at a time you expect there will be someone about. For example, in a group home there is generally someone there before 10am or after 3pm**
- **re-introduce yourself and how you know your Protégé**

You may be pleasantly surprised and find they are still living there but, if they are no longer living there, ask whoever answered the phone if they know the person you are talking about, and if they have any current contact details for them.

Generally, if the person was living in a group home, the support workers may be unable to give you the contact details. However, ask to speak with a manager and explain who you are. This may assist you in getting the details you require. You also may need to contact the main office of the organisation.



If this is unsuccessful, then what next? You might like to try:

Rekindling Relationships contd. & National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) Review

- **The White pages if they are in their own home, or living with their parents.**
- **Check what other contacts you have for your Protégé. They maybe able to assist you.**
- **The CA office: we may be able to suggest other people to contact.**

Remember, don't feel guilty. You can't fix what has happened in the past, however you can change the future. That first contact maybe just what your Protégé is waiting for, or needing from you right now.

Vanessa Henry, Assistant Co-ordinator

No-one keeps his enthusiasm automatically.

*Enthusiasm must be nourished with new actions, new aspirations,
new efforts and new vision.*

Papyrus

National Disability Advocacy Program Review

One of our Advocates recently asked me what was happening regarding future funding for Citizen Advocacy as he recalled a potential 'threat' to funding in 2007.

Since that time, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) has embarked on a review process involving consultations with all funded agencies. The aim of the review is to enhance the efficiency of the NDAP and the effectiveness of funded agencies in order to:

- a. Meet the advocacy needs of people with disability.
- b. Develop the capacity of NDAP funded agencies to respond to the advocacy needs of people with disability.
- c. Meet the performance and accountability needs of the Australian Government.

As part of this process agreement has been reached on the defining characteristics of the 6 models of disability advocacy, including Citizen Advocacy, funded under NDAP. Agreement has also been reached on the development and implementation of a new quality system which will include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and assessment methods. Work on these is ongoing.

Two consultations are currently in progress:

1. to develop a draft costing model and
2. to gain better understanding on how the 6 models support people with disability and how they influence government policy.

CA Launceston is participating in these consultations and FaHCSIA will be commencing negotiations with agencies for the development of NDAP funding agreements for 2009-10 in the near future. Information on the Review process is available on FaHCSIA's website at: http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/pubs/policy/Documents/national_disability_advocacy/default.htm

Linda Hahn, Coordinator

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 February 2009

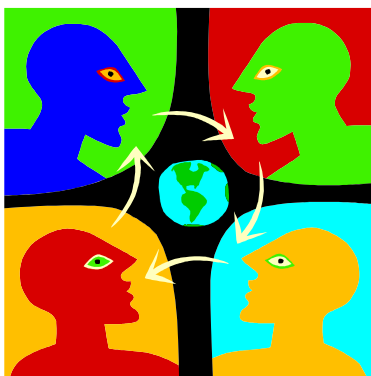
Over 35 people gathered in Adelaide for the 2009 National Conference. Attendees came from 9 CA Programmes in Australia, 1 in New Zealand and 1 in Canada, and included Coordinators, Board Members, Protégés and others deeply committed to the work of Citizen Advocacy.

For Linda, Vanessa and two of our Board members, Carol-anne and Kevin, it was an invaluable opportunity to put faces to names in the CA world. We were also able to benefit from hearing speakers on a broad range of interesting and challenging topics including:

Zana Lutfiyya PhD, Chair Winnipeg CA, Canada on the **“Principles of Program Evaluation and related issues”** highlighting the importance of internal and external evaluations and the challenges that such activities present to participating programmes. Zana also gave a presentation on **“Board Roles and Development”**.

Jenni Keerie, Coordinator Capricorn CA, Qld, **David Abela**, Coordinator CA Sunbury & Districts, Vic, and **Patrick Ruthven**, Coordinator and **Sue Gilbey**, Board Member, CA South Australia, who all spoke on their respective **Programme’s initiatives to introduce CA to other regions and communities**.

Bob Lee, Coordinator Sunshine Coast CA, Qld on **“Putting a price on protection, Measuring Prevention”** which highlighted the power of effective advocacy where a Service Provider knows that a Service User (Protégé) has someone (Citizen Advocate) who is going to continue to monitor the service provision, speak up and ask questions.



Dr. Lorna Halloran, Chair SA Disability Advisory Council provided her **“Reflections on how to influence government decision making”** making the point that the CA model is built on mobilising the inbuilt capacity of the community which is a key goal of government.

Peter Miller, Senior SRV Trainer and Citizen Advocate spoke on **“Whither or wither Citizen Advocacy?”** and posed some pertinent questions on the future of Advocacy services in general and CA in particular.

Mitchel Peters, Board Member CA Eastern Suburbs asked **“Is it time to reconsider the expressive-only advocate role option in Citizen Advocacy relationships?”** and explored the trend towards predominantly instrumental actions within some CA relationships.

John Armstrong, Senior SRV Trainer and Citizen Advocate asked **“Is being right all an Advocate has to be?”** and explored the concept of achieving potency in Advocate action through ‘bargaining’ as opposed to a ‘rights approach’ which is usually antagonistic and only escalates the defensiveness of those being challenged and reinforces their position. By contrast, bargainers seek ways to work together to reach a common goal.

And finally, **Linda and Vanessa** gave a presentation **“Reflections from the ‘new kids’ on the CA block”** in which we shared some of our experiences and observations as new Coordinators and gave the assembled audience a few laughs and some thought-provoking challenges to ponder.

Reflections on the CA National Conference



Kevin O'Dea
Board Member

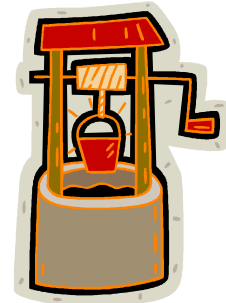
"My memory of the National Conference is coloured by the VERY HOT weather over that weekend, the weekend of the bushfires in Victoria. Thank God for air conditioning!!!!

It was a great opportunity to network with, and swap notes with, Citizen Advocates from across Australia and New Zealand. The various presentations were very well put together and provided much food for thought and discussion. Program evaluation was one of the big issues covered in depth.

I was very impressed with the presentation by CA South Australia on their work in outreach to the aboriginal community in Adelaide. It was a major learning curve on the pitfalls of community outreach work in general."

"I was struck by the depth of understanding and wisdom held by those who have been involved in CA for many years and feel grateful that this deep well of knowledge is accessible by the 'new kids' such as Vanessa and I".

Linda Hahn
Coordinator



"One of the main things I remember was the support and willingness of other Coordinators and people associated with CA to help in any way possible. I came back with a sense of belonging and feeling a little less isolated within the world of CA".

Vanessa Henry
Assistant Coordinator

"I came away with a huge amount of enthusiasm for moving forward with Citizen Advocacy [including] ideas for looking for other types of funding [and] the need to lift the profile and community awareness of the Programme.

It becomes a challenge to move forward because we need to refer back to the CAPE (CA Programme Evaluation) manual for guidelines and proceed as a modern not-for-profit organisation. I look forward to answers and enlightenment from the ones who have been before me."

Carol-anne Morrison
Board Member



A guide to meeting with Service Providers

The following was published in the April 2009 Newsletter of Citizen Advocacy South Australia. The author and source are unknown but the content, we believe, is most helpful.

- ◆ Make it clear that you want to be included in discussions that relate to your Protégé. Make sure that your Protégé is also given the option to attend and participate.
- ◆ Make sure that the service is aware of the times that you are generally available for meetings. Don't be afraid to request meetings be held outside of normal working hours.
- ◆ When you have been informed of a meeting always ring a few days prior to check the meeting time is still the same.
- ◆ Check that your Protégé has been given the option to receive any written information that will be discussed at the meeting. If possible, arrange to receive these at least one day before the meeting.
- ◆ If possible, discuss the issues that will be raised at the meeting with your Protégé beforehand. Make notes about what your Protégé feels or would like to say. Most people will be able to think more clearly about things away from the pressure of a formal meeting. If your Protégé cannot indicate their feelings clearly, then discuss the issues with another trusted person. This person may be a Citizen Advocacy staff member.
- ◆ During the meeting, always allow your Protégé to respond first, and add information as appropriate. Make it clear that you are there to give your Protégé support and not to speak for them. If your Protégé cannot speak for themselves, then make it clear that you have put their best interests first.
- ◆ When you are providing information always check with your Protégé that they agree with what you are about to, or have, said. For example: "Is it alright to tell them what we discussed last night?" or "Do you agree with that?".
- ◆ Remember to take notes during the meeting so you have an accurate record for future reference.
- ◆ Safeguard your Protégé's rights during the meeting. If you feel that your Protégé's participation is being blocked in some way (ie. not being given enough time to respond) then draw the attention of the chairperson to this fact.
- ◆ Always remember to keep the focus on what your Protégé feels and thinks. Try not to be drawn off into discussions that relate to disability in general, as opposed to specific issues that face your Protégé as an individual.
- ◆ If you and your Protégé feel you need more time to discuss an issue, don't be afraid to ask for more time or another meeting.
- ◆ After the meeting, spend time discussing how it went with your Protégé. If needed, arrange time to have a trusted person available to discuss the meeting with. By discussing things with another person you will release some of the stress. This person may be a Citizen Advocacy staff member.

Dates for your Diary

Please see below for details of Advocate Gatherings, Training session, and Board Meetings.

For catering purposes

please call or email to let us know if you will be attending.

P: 6331 2177 or E: admin_ca.lton@bigpond.com

Thank you!



CALENDAR			
May 2009			
7th Thu	Board Meeting	CA Office 12.05pm	Board and Staff
26th Tue	Advocate Evening Gathering	CA Office 5:30 to 7pm Wine and cheese	Advocates and Staff
June 2009			
4th Thu	Board Meeting	CA Office 12.05pm	Board and Staff
26 th Fri	Advocate Lunch Gathering	CA office 12.30pm to 2pm. Lunch provided	Advocates and Staff
July 2009			
2nd Thu	Board Meeting	CA Office 12.05pm	Board and Staff
24th Fri	Advocate Training: 'Meeting Challenges within the Advocacy role'	CA office 10am to 1pm. Lunch provided	Advocates and Staff
August 2009			
6th Thu	Board Meeting	CA Office 12.05pm	Board and Staff
25th Tue	Advocate Evening Gathering	CA Office 5:30 to 7pm Wine and cheese	Advocates and Staff
September 2009			
3rd Thu	Board Meeting	CA Office 12.05pm	Board and Staff
To be advised	AGM		Financial Members
25th Fri	Advocate Lunch Gathering	CA office 12.30pm to 2pm. Lunch provided	Advocates and Staff

Ideas by themselves cannot produce change of being;

Your effort must go in the right direction,

And one must correspond with the other.

P.D Ouspensky

Membership Renewals and Contact Details

Membership Renewals

The programme's continuity and stability is greatly enhanced by support from the local community in the form of funding, in-kind support and leadership involvement.

- ✦ **If you are a Financial Member**, your Membership Renewal Letter and Form is enclosed with this Newsletter. **We encourage you to continue your support of Citizen Advocacy by renewing your membership.**
- ✦ **If you are not yet a Financial Member** but would like to become one (Individual Membership is just \$10pa) or,
- ✦ **If you know of someone else who might be interested in our work,**

please contact the Coordinators

We will be happy to send information about the Programme and a Membership Application Form.

 **THANK YOU** in anticipation of your continued support !

Contact us

Our office hours are 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday. Staff are often out on appointments, so we have an answering machine to take your messages. You can also contact Linda or Vanessa on the mobile numbers listed below. If your call is answered with the message service, please leave your name and contact number and we will call you back as soon as possible.

We value your feedback and comments, so please keep them coming in!

Staff

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Board of Management

Brian Cole Chairman & Public Officer

Merilyn Crack Vice-Chairman

Ron Murfet Treasurer

Carol-Anne Morrison Secretary

Ivan Dean Member

Kevin O'Dea Member

Chris Van Essen Member

Chris Wells Member

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The programme operates in the 63 telephone code area encompassing Launceston region, Deloraine, Westbury, Georgetown, Scottsdale and St. Helens areas

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