



Awareness

Prostate Cancer Support Toronto

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

By Keith Braganza and John Roth

Dear fellow members of Prostate Cancer Support Toronto (PCST),

Recently, the PCS Toronto board underwent changes that resulted in two vacancies on the board:

- 1) Aaron Bacher sadly passed away;
- 2) Winston Klass was appointed to the board of Prostate Cancer Foundation BC, the parent organization for PCS Canada. As a result of this, Winston decided to step down as a full voting member of our board and to assume instead an associate board member position. He will continue to attend board meetings and contribute to our operations, as well as manage the Toronto Warriors' Group for those with advanced prostate cancer.

Please meet our two newest board members, who have been observing board operations for over a year: Roberto Stopnicki (left) and John Schofield.



Roberto arrived in Canada in 1971 as a student at the University of Toronto after growing up in Bolivia. He graduated from U of T as a civil engineer with a specialty in transportation. Soon thereafter, he joined the municipal public service in Toronto, where he served in a number of positions over his career. Roberto rose to become deputy commissioner of transportation for the former City of North York. After the amalgamation of the City of Toronto in 1998, he became the director of transportation services for the North York district and after that director of the City of Toronto's traffic management centre.

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**Step into PCS Toronto's
vast video vault**

**PCS Toronto Support Line:
(416) 932-8820
Go to <https://pcstoronto.ca>
for more information
or contact us at
info@pcstoronto.ca.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

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After his retirement in 2012, Roberto volunteered at the Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton and later worked for two years as a director of transportation for the 2015 Pan Am Games. He is an avid photographer and although he was a private pilot, he now just enjoys flying in his simulator. His passions are his family of six children and eight grandchildren.

Roberto joined PCS Toronto soon after being diagnosed and treated for prostate cancer in 2017.

John Schofield is a 61-year old former journalist who currently works as a communications and media relations specialist for Osgoode Hall Law School at York University. After studying journalism at Carleton University, he went on to work for a number of news organizations in Canada and Japan, including the Montreal Gazette, The Japan Times, Maclean's magazine and The Lawyer's Daily. He also ran his own freelance writing and editing business for 13 years.

John joined PCS Toronto just days after his diagnosis of Gleason 8 prostate cancer in December 2011. He was one of a small number of PCS Toronto members to try an unproven treatment modality in Germany in 2012 called hyperthermia, which was ultimately unsuccessful. After returning from Germany, he and his wife adopted a vegan diet. In 2017, he was treated with HDR brachytherapy, external beam radiation (to the prostate and pelvic lymph nodes) and two years of androgen deprivation therapy. Today, he's living happily and healthily with his wife and son in the former Borough of East York.

On behalf of the board and members of Prostate Cancer Support Toronto, we welcome Roberto and John to the board and wish them all success in the future.

LOOKING FORWARD: In recent months, the board (which meets via Zoom on the second Tuesday evening of each month) has been discussing:

- In-person meetings: Not everyone likes Zoom meetings and others love them. We are considering, a variety of possibilities, including returning to some in-person meetings throughout the year when it's safe to do so and possibly hybrid meetings, with some people present in person and some on Zoom. The board is still actively looking for a centrally located, potential venue for in-person meetings. If you have any suggestions, please contact us.
- Hospital volunteers: We are starting to go back to volunteering at Sunnybrook and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. We are always looking for new volunteers, so if you're interested, please contact us.
- Father's Day Walk-Run (see related article in this issue of the newsletter)
- Re-incorporation of PCS Toronto as a charity.

As always, we heartily thank everyone who provides support in any way to the newly diagnosed and survivors alike. Have a wonderful summer!

Please support our Father's Day Walk Run!

As many of you know, PCS Toronto has taken part in the annual Father's Day Walk Run fundraiser for many years. In the past, it was run by Prostate Cancer Canada and since last year has been organized under the auspices of our new national group, Prostate Cancer Support Canada (PCSC). The PCST team this year will be named in honour of former members Aaron Bacher and Stan Mednick, who recently passed on.



PCS Toronto is not a fundraising organization, nor do we charge for any of the support sessions, webinars or events that we offer. But these things do cost money, and the Father's Day Walk Run is our opportunity to raise the funds that we need to run our organization. Raising funds for the Father's Day Walk Run benefits our group because we receive 50 per cent of the funds we raise to cover the expenses that PCS Toronto incurs

throughout the year. The balance of the funds is used by Prostate Cancer Support Canada to help support the more than 55 prostate cancer support groups across Canada that are part of the PCSC network.

The link below leads you to our donations page. Just click on Sponsor Me in blue, at the lower right of the web page:

<https://www.gifttool.com/athon/MyFundraisingPage?ID=1852&AID=4193&PID=746169>

We hope you will consider supporting our group in this annual fundraising effort. Any amount you may consider donating is greatly appreciated. Tax receipts will be issued for any donations of \$20 or more. Thanks for your consideration!

2022 Awareness Night Speakers

DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
May 25, 2022	Tara Daniels, Inspire Health BC	Healthy communication and cancer
July 27, 2022	Dr. Di (Maria) Jiang, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre	Management of advanced prostate cancer
Sept. 28, 2022	Dr. Eric Marsden, Marsden Centre for Excellence in Integrative Medicine	Naturopathic treatment of prostate cancer
Nov. 30, 2022	Dr. Olivier Heimrath, Humber River Hospital	Advances in prostate surgery

A Tribute to Aaron Bacher

By Keith Braganza

Prostate Cancer Support Toronto regrets to inform you that on Friday, March 18, 2022, Aaron Bacher, long-standing group member, board member and former chairman, passed away at the age of 78. He leaves behind his wife Ronnie, to whom he was married for 58 years, his children and a large extended family that doted on him.

Aaron was an avid photographer, having worked for Kodak for many years, and could be seen at support group meetings with his camera on the floor below his chair, always alert and waiting to capture a candid moment.



Aaron Bacher

Over the past 20+ years, as a prostate cancer survivor, Aaron counselled hundreds of men as a volunteer. He was the chairman of our Toronto support group for a period of eight years. His association with our group started from the Man-to-Man days and he continued to play a major role through the transition to Prostate Cancer Canada Network (PCCN) Toronto and now Prostate Cancer Support Toronto (PCS Toronto).

Aaron volunteered at both North York General's Prostate Centre and Sunnybrook's Odette Centre, while also scheduling visits by other volunteers. He had excellent personal relationships with oncologists around the city and could call on them at short notice to speak at an awareness night event.

In addition, he managed public relations with our various corporate donors, keeping in touch with key people in those organizations. He was editor of the Awareness newsletter every quarter. In 2018, at the Father's Day Walk/Run, he was given a lifetime achievement award by Prostate Cancer Canada for his longstanding service to the prostate cancer support cause. He was the captain of the group fundraising team at the annual walk-run event.

Aaron will always be remembered for his sense of humour and his talents as a great storyteller and photographer. He was well-liked and respected in the support group and will be sorely missed and never forgotten. May his soul rest in peace.

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A TRIBUTE TO AARON BACHER



Above, Aaron (centre) with wife Ronnie (right) and family at the annual Father's Day Walk Run at Ashbridge's Bay. Right, Aaron is presented with the Prostate Cancer Canada Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018 by then PCCN president and CEO Peter Coleridge.



Take Advantage of PCS Toronto's Vast Video Library

Video recordings of PCS Toronto's bimonthly Awareness Night speakers stretch back to 2010, covering a huge array of topics of interest to prostate cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones. Simply go to pcstoronto.ca, click on "Supporting you" and "Videos." Here is a sampling:

Jan 2022: "Prostate Radiotherapy: the present and future of high precision treatment," Dr. Danny Vesprini - Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

Nov 2021: "Physiotherapy for the Management of Erectile Dysfunction and Bladder Leakage Following Prostate Cancer Treatments," Christina Dzieduszycki - Knew Life Pelvic Healing, Ancaster.

Sep 2021: "Managing Prostate Cancer in a Pandemic," Dr. Rajiv Singal – Michael Garron Hospital.

Jul 2021: "Six Prostate Cancer Stories: Survivor Forum VII" – Presented by six survivors from our support group.

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May 2021: "Physical, Psychological, and Functional Aspects of Prostate Cancer," Dr. Andrew Matthew – Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

Mar 2021: "25 Years in Prostate Cancer Care: Where We Were and Where We are Headed," Dr. Gerard Morton - Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Toronto.

Jan 2021: "Treatment of Advanced Prostate Cancer: From A (Apalutamide) to Z (Zytiga™)," Dr. Urban Emmenegger - Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre.

Nov 2020: "There is Sex after Prostate Cancer," Dr. Stephen Holzapfel – Women's College Hospital (Requires a YouTube or Google account).

Sep 2020: "HIFU: The Prostate Cancer Lumpectomy," Dr. Jack Barkin – Humber River Hospital.

Jul 2020: "Brachytherapy," Dr. Alejandro Berlin – Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

Nov 2019: "Active Surveillance Decisions: Why, Who, How and When You Know it's Time to be Treated," Dr. Danny Vesprini – Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre.



IN THE NEWS



In 2012, the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommended against routine PSA screening for prostate cancer, citing concerns that the risks of over-diagnosis and over-treatment outweighed the benefits. Canada followed suit in 2014. A team of researchers examined how this recommendation may have affected death from prostate cancer between 1999-2019.

The research team reported their findings at the American Society of Clinical Oncology's Genitourinary Cancers Symposium in San Francisco in February.

Using comprehensive data on U.S. prostate cancer deaths, PSA screening rates and prostate cancer diagnoses, the team found that:

- Deaths from prostate cancer declined at a rate of (-)0.28 per 100,000/year from 1999 through 2012. However, from 2014-2019, the curve “flattened” – there was no change in the death rate.
- The effect was even more pronounced among certain groups of men. For example, among Black men from 1999 through 2012, the death rate was declining more sharply than for men overall, at the rate of (-)0.70 per 100,000/year. From 2014-2019, the decline was significantly slower.

Also over this time frame,

- PSA screening rates have dropped.
- Increasingly, men are found to have metastatic disease at the time of diagnosis.
- The death rate from cancer overall continued to decline, without this flattening.

Taken together, these results suggest that the 2012 recommendation against routine PSA screening contributed to the “levelling off” of the death rate from prostate cancer in recent years.

In 2018, the USPSTF recommended that the decision about PSA screening for men aged 55-69 be an individual one, together with their physician. Over time, this change may put us back on course for decreasing rates of death from prostate cancer, but it is too early to tell.

What does this mean for patients? The Santa Monica, Calif.-based Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF) urges men to empower themselves with knowledge about their risk for prostate cancer. PCF encourages men to start talking with their doctor about prostate cancer screening at age 45, or age 40 if they have certain risk factors (Black race or a strong family history of prostate or other cancers).

(From PCF.org.)