

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Your Living Will Online?

In the U.S. Oregon is making it easier for the seriously ill to voluntarily make their wishes known about end-of-life care by creating an electronic database that first responders can quickly check during a medical emergency. At least two other states—West Virginia and New York—are developing similar systems, which are an outgrowth of signed paper forms known as Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment, or POLST.

Paper-based systems are sometimes overlooked, lost, or inaccessible at the point of a medical emergency. Electronic systems aim to make the information, such as whether a patient wants a feeding tube or even taken to hospital at all, more readily available to an emergency worker. Patients complete the form in consultation with their doctor, and the document is stored in a database accessible by staff at an emergency communication centre. Health-care providers can call the centre, confirm the patient's identity, and get instructions from the patient's POLST form in less than two minutes. (Extracted from "Digital Lists Clarify End-of-Life Choices, by Sara Murray, *The Wall Street Journal*, 21/12/10)

In Australia two bills – the Healthcare Identifiers Bill 2010 and Healthcare Identifiers (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2010 - were passed on 24 June, 2010, the day Julia Gillard became Australia's new prime minister. The changes are based on Kevin Rudd's National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission report which outlined the biggest health shake-up for decades, including the roll out of a national electronic health system which would allow access to data in time of medical crisis, such as after a car accident or during a serious allergic reaction.

In England, about 10 million people have had their details placed on the £11 billion computer system. The scheme, one of the largest of its kind in the world, will eventually hold the private records of more than 50 million patients. Denmark and British Columbia have implemented different types of electronic health systems, including health identifiers, and Singapore is also on the way. Sweden has had online access to medical records since 2006, and is currently running pilot programs which include patient access.

Online medical records are a worldwide phenomenon. **Let's make sure**, as initiated in some US States, **they include your last wishes.**

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Sunshine Coast Event –

Brisbane Members Invited!!!

Dying with Dignity Qld presents...

The End of Life Forum

Speakers:

Dr Rohan Vora, Assoc Professor, Palliative Care Qld

Dr Louise Welch, Palliative Care Qld, Sunshine Coast

Marshall Perron, ex Chief Minister of N.T. Responsible for the ROTI Act of the NT 1996

Bryon Cannon, from Ferguson, Cannon Lawyers

Where: 1st Floor, Club House, Horton Park Golf Course, Golf St, Maroochydore.

When: Sunday, 15 May 2011 from 2pm-5pm

R.S.V.P by Thurs, May 5. vesscoast@bigpond.com

Phone: 54373627/54435012

Light refreshments will be served

A gold coin donation to Palliative Care Qld would be appreciated

Brisbane Branch Next General Meeting

Sun 15 May 2011, 1.15pm - City Square Library

Guest speaker: Sara-Jane Dean, Qld Institute of Medical Research.

What you can do...

REQUEST THAT ADVANCE DIRECTIVES BE INCLUDED IN ONLINE MEDICAL RECORDS! Write to your parliamentary representatives.

GENERAL NEWS

Germany: New Guidelines

Germany's medical community has liberalized its code on helping sick patients die, giving more freedom to individual doctors. The new guidelines allow greater leeway for doctors when deciding whether to help ill patients die. Previously, assisted suicide was in strict violation of medical ethics. (DW-WORLD.DE, 18/02/11)

England: NHS Chiefs Back Law Reform

Last year the Director of Public Prosecutions issued revised guidelines setting out the factors that make the prosecution of someone who helps a loved-one die less likely. Chief among them was the fact that the suspect had acted solely out of compassion. An inquiry is now being held into whether the law should be changed further to legalise "assisted dying". The West Midlands NHS Strategic Health Authority supports further legalisation, saying "If you can afford to go to Switzerland that's fine but if you can't, you are stuck within a system that doesn't really allow you to talk about it, never mind have access to it". (*The Telegraph*, London, 24/2/11)

England: Author Calls for Change in Law

The Booker Prize-winning author Ian McEwan urged David Cameron to ignore the "supernatural beliefs" of Christians who object to "assisted dying" on religious grounds and introduce new laws to end "unnecessary suffering". McEwan, having been moved to support the group after his family doctor and life-long friend, Ann McPherson, began campaigning to revise the 1961 Suicide Act. She is terminally ill with pancreatic cancer. "The issue is not really of death but of how you live out that last chapter. To do it calmly with all the people around in familiar surroundings who have mattered to you, should be a wonderful thing." (*The Daily Telegraph*, 11/02/11)

India

The Supreme Court of India rejected a petition for the mercy killing of Aruna Shanbaug, who has been in a "persistent vegetative state" in a Mumbai hospital for the past 37 years, but the court did permit passive euthanasia subject to a declaration by a high court to this effect. (*The Hindustan Times*, 17/03/11)

U.S.: No End-of-Life Planning Payment

The Obama administration, reversing course, has deleted references to end-of-life planning as part of the annual physical examinations covered under the new health care law. The move is an abrupt shift, coming just days after the new policy took effect on Jan. 1. During debate on the legislation, Republicans claimed that the bill allowed a government panel to make decisions about end-of-life care for people on

Medicare. Sarah Palin said that "Obama's death panel" would decide who was worthy of health care. The House Republican leader said the provision could be a step "down a treacherous path toward government-encouraged euthanasia." (*The New York Times* 04/01/11)

Oncologists Urge Early Discussion

The American Society of Clinical Oncology says too often, patients aren't told about options like comfort care or even that their chemo has become futile. "This is not a 15-minute conversation, and it should not happen in the back of the ambulance on the way to the ICU at 3 in the morning," says ASCO chief executive Dr. Allen Lichter. Guidance in the form of a booklet is available at <http://www.cancer.net>, which marks an unusually strong push for planning end-of-life care, in a profession that earns more from attacking tumours than from lengthy discussions about when it's time to stop. (*Associated Press*, 09/02/11)

Self-determination for the elderly

The Dutch citizens' action group Uit Vrije Wil (of one's own free will) says it wants to give all people the right to terminate their own lives. Elderly people who want to die should be able to receive assistance to end their lives. A total of 116,871 citizens have expressed their support for the law to be changed to facilitate this.

Assisted suicide is already permitted, but only when carried out by a physician in the case of acute suffering. The step advocated by Uit Vrije Wil would make assisted suicide an option for people who have reached their seventies and feel they have lived long enough. Designated healthcare professionals would be made available to help these people die. To read the whole article, go to <http://www.signandsight.com/features/2127.html>

Please Help!

Brisbane Branch is seeking a secretary (with computer). We will provide assistance. Give it a go! Volunteer by post, phone or email. PO Box 431, Sherwood, 4075, 3379-5239. anise.horman1@bigpond.com

The exchange between Churchill and Lady Astor: She said, "If you were my husband I'd give you poison." He said, "If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

Please send:

Send comments and contributions to the Newsletter. Editor: Mary Mannison, 27 Ford St., Bongaree, QLD, 4507, or email: mannison@optusnet.com.au

UPDATE ON RIGHT-TO-DIE LEGISLATION

Tasmania

The new Tasmanian Premier Lara Giddings has confirmed that voluntary euthanasia legislation was close to her heart. She has been working on a private member's bill to legalise euthanasia with the Greens leader Nick McKim and said it would be introduced this year. (*ABC News Tasmania*, 25/01/11)

South Australia

New Legislation presented by Labor MP Steph Key, paving the way for South Australia to become the first state to allow doctor-assisted euthanasia, has passed second reading in the lower house. This is a "historic event" said Ms Key. "We've never been able to get anything that is even associated with voluntary euthanasia up in our house on the second reading." The matter will be decided by a conscience vote of state MPs, most likely before July.

The group, Christians for Voluntary Euthanasia has been noted by the Australian Greens Party as one of the influencing factors in the bill's receiving as much support as it has. "It is an ecumenical group, with Catholic, Anglican, Uniting, Lutheran, Baptist, Unitarian, Church of Christ and Jehovah's Witness denominations represented", according to its leader, retired Baptist Reverend Trevor Bensch. (*The Australian*, 23-24/03/11; *Christian Today*, 31/03/11)

Montana

Physician-assisted suicide will remain legal yet unregulated in Montana. The state Senate Judiciary Committee considered two bills related to doctor-aided death--one to regulate the practice and one to ban it--and tabled both. The legislative proposals came on the heels of a December 2009 state Supreme Court ruling that doctors who prescribe life-ending medications for patients with terminal illnesses are not subject to state homicide statutes. Advocates argue that rules are needed to protect patients from abuse and physicians from medical liability. (*American Medical News*, 28/02/11)

Idaho

The Idaho Senate voted overwhelmingly Friday to make assisted suicide a felony, revoke the licenses of doctors who violate the law and allow people to get injunctions to block anyone they think might be planning an assisted suicide. The bill's sponsor told the Senate, "It is a slippery slope to say the least. To me, (it) sends a message to our elderly people ... that some lives just aren't worth living, and that death is an acceptable alternative treatment." The president of Right to Life of Idaho, said, quoting from Psalms, "Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. ...

We don't believe that this belongs to a doctor, ...or even a patient, it belongs to our Creator. Hastening their demise in death, they are usurping the authority of God."

The bill, Senate Bill 1070 includes provisions stating that doctors following an advance care directive regarding removing artificial life supports are not violating the law, and doctors can alleviate a dying patient's pain even if it will hasten death, as long as it isn't administered specifically to cause death. (*The Spokesman-Review*, 12/03/11)

Hawaii

Senate Bill 803 would have allowed a terminally ill, competent adult to receive medication to end life. But the Senate Health Committee, after hearing more than 41/2 hours of public testimony, voted 4-0 to hold the bill in committee. (*The Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, 08/02/11)

Canada: Legal Battle Foreseen

The Farewell Foundation for the Right to Die filed an application in British Columbia to incorporate as a non-profit society. The group argues that the section of the Criminal Code that prohibits assisted suicide is unconstitutional and therefore it should be allowed to help people who are capable of informed decision commit suicide if they choose. If the registrar agrees the prohibition on assisted suicide is unconstitutional and incorporates the foundation, the group would still need to apply to the B.C. Supreme Court for a declaration that the law is unconstitutional. The foundation is challenging Section 241(b) of the Criminal Code, which forbids aiding and abetting suicide, punishable up to 14 years in prison. (*The Spokesman-Review*, 22/02/11) (Visit the Farewell Foundation website: www.farewellfoundation.ca for more information.)

France

The French Senate is soon to debate the legalization of assisted suicide for patients suffering from an "advanced" stage of a serious illness. The bill states that "any mature person, in the advanced or terminal phase of an accidental or pathological affliction that is grave or incurable, causing physical or psychological suffering that cannot be relieved and that she judges to be unendurable, can request to receive medical assistance to die." The debate represents the first time that the Senate has agreed to consider such measures. (*LifeSiteNews.com*)

RESEARCH FINDINGS

'Locked-in' patients happier than thought

Many people with "locked-in" syndrome (being conscious but completely paralysed), indicate they are happy. Investigators asked 168 members of the French Association for Locked-in Syndrome (ALIS) about their emotional state and quality of life, with the responses noted by caregivers. Of those who replied in full (65), 72% said they were happy, and 4% said they wanted to opt for suicide. [BMJ Open, online journal, British Medical Association (BMA)]. (AFP news agency, Paris, 23/02/11)

Washington's DWD Act

Eighty-seven people received medication to end their lives last year with the help of 68 doctors and 40 pharmacists, the Department of Health reported. Of the people who got drugs under Washington's Death with Dignity Act, 51 are known to have died from the medication. Most had terminal illness. They were between 52 and 99 years old. (Read the full report: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/dwda/forms/DWDA2010.pdf> *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 10/03/11)

US: Alzheimer's Increasing Dramatically

The number of new cases of Alzheimer's disease increased 10% from 10 years ago, and the rise could continue for several years, according to a new report from the Alzheimer's Association. It also found that 13% of people 65 and older and 43% of people 85 and older have Alzheimer's. The disease is the fifth-leading cause of death in people 65 and older. (*The Hartford Courant*, 15/03/11)

Journal articles:

"Prevalence of depression in granted and refused requests for euthanasia and assisted suicide: a systematic review", Ilana Levene, Michael Parker, *J Med Ethics*, published online Jan 27, 2011.

In the *Mayo Clinical Proceedings*, [Oct 2010; 85(10): 949-954] clinicians Molly L. Olsen, Keith M. Swetz and Paul S. Mueller review the differentiation of PS from other forms of end-of-life decisions. The whole article may be seen at www.worrlrdtd.net/sites/default/files/u22/ethicaldecision-1.pdf

"Dying Justice: A Case for Decriminalizing Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide in Canada" (*Canadian Lawyer Journal*, 29/12/10)

"Recent Trends in Suicides Utilizing Helium", Amy Austin, Calle Winskog, Corinna van den Heuvel, and Roger W. Byard, *J Forensic Sci*, 2011, doi: 10.1111/j.1556-4029.2011.01723.x Available online at: www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com

BOOKS FILMS ETC

TV:

The television documentary, "Tod nach Plan" (Death by Plan) follows the path to assisted suicide taken by a man suffering from bipolar disorder, focusing debate on this practice for the mentally ill. The practice of assisted suicide for people with terminal diseases such as cancer is by no means new in Switzerland. But cases involving the mentally ill and non-fatal but nonetheless debilitating diseases for the elderly, have polarised the debate around the questions of if, and how, the practice should be regulated. (Swissinfo.ch 28/02/11)

BBC One Daytime has commissioned a new courtroom drama, "The Case, which has been given a five-episode run, which will follow the high pressured life in and out of court of barrister Sol Ridley and his junior Julie Prior. Their latest case involves defending Tony Powell, who is pleading assisted suicide against a murder charge. The show is due to air in about six months (Alex Fletcher, TV Editor, BBC Daytime 15/03/11)

Books:

This is to let you know about my book "Freedom to Choose: How to Make End-of-Life Decisions on Your Own Terms". It covers all you (and your family) need to know about all possible choices you have in way of medical options including assisted dying with or without medications. The book is published by Baywood Publishing, and is available also on Amazon. I welcome any question you might have. George M. Burnell, M.D. geoburn@earthlink.net

Peaceful Pill Handbook Update: Continues the analysis of Chinese Powder Sodium Pentobarbital (Nembutal) to be found in Ch. 12. Chinese Powder Nembutal: First Person Testimonial; Quantities, Delivery, Analysis; CAS Numbers & Ordering. (11/02/11) (to order: www.peacefulpill.com)

The Hemlock Society of San Diego distributes the booklet, A Hastened Death by Self-Denial of Food and Drink, by Boudewijn Chabot. This method is not recommended but sometimes it is the last resort. The research base does make the method less difficult. It's out of print but Dr. Chabot OK'd its distribution. Send a check for \$15 (US) made out to Faye Girsh and send to: HSSD, P.O. Box 34237, San Diego CA 92163. (Please note CHABOT BOOK on the check.) (To borrow a copy, phone John Todd on 3876 7654.)

Radio:

On Jan 19, 2011, ABC Radio National, Late Night Live, Phillip Adams chaired a public forum on "The Morality of Mortality" as part of the Melbourne International Arts Festival to explore questions surrounding

mortality - whether we have a right to choose the manner of our own death, and does it matter whether we believe in God or an afterlife? You can listen to it by following this link:
<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/latenightlive/index/>

Films:

Golden Globe for Al Pacino who plays Dr. Jack Kevorkian who helps people with assisted suicide in the HBO Films biopic entitled "You Don't Know Jack". The Golden Globes recognizes excellence in film and television, both domestic and foreign. Kevorkian is best known for publicly championing a terminal patient's right to die via physician-assisted suicide. (17/01/11, politicallyillustrated.com)

"How to Die in Oregon" Derek Humphrey writes: *At a packed Portland Film Festival, I saw the best documentary film ever made on assisted suicide for the terminally ill. (It topped Sundance prizes 2011). Amidst the sorrows of dying and death there were courageous cameos and plenty of love, laughter and hugs. The film is artistic and tasteful, also showing the huge progress right-to-die has made in America.*
www.finalexit.org

The Belgian black comedy, Kill Me Please, awarded first prize at the Rome Film Festival, and directed by Saul Rubinek (Barney's Version), follows a group of terminally ill misfits who come to a private clinic lured by the promise that last wishes will be fulfilled before painless poison is sipped in a flute of champagne. (The Star.com, 12/03/11)

Museum Display:

Tasmania has a new museum called Mona – the Museum of Old and New Art, www.mona.net.au. Conceived and created by David Walsh (a native of Hobart who is described as a multi-millionaire through professional gambling) Mona is a \$200 million custom-designed establishment, where visitors will find 'My Beautiful Chair', conceived, designed, created and installed by Philip Nitschke and Greg Taylor (a noted Melbourne sculptor). When a 'participant' sits in MBC, a computer program is activated and the occupant is faced with the exact same questions as the four people who used the original Deliverance Machine during the time of the Rights of Terminally Ill Act of the Northern Territory in 1996-97. After only a few weeks on display, MBC is the second most viewed exhibit at Mona.

Theatre:

There is a play going on in Chiswick, London, called 'Happiness' that looks at the relationship between a young man (paralysed through an accident), his father, and a social worker who is determined to provide him with a 'better' life. The play examines family relationships, state intervention and the right to choose death as an option for an unimaginable

condition. (More info: www.murdermegently.com) (declan lynch, UK, lynchwall at aol.com)

Web-sites:

A web site involving the right to choose to die in Oregon on YouTube at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tB8yX3QmmVE>

Chris Docker Blog: <http://exiteuthanasia.wordpress.com/>

"Closure" This program teaches families how to talk with each other and their doctors about what they want — and want to avoid — in their final days.
<http://www.closure.org>.

Anniversary Celebration:

EXIT ITALIA was founded in September 1996 and will celebrate this anniversary during a special meeting on May 21 and 22, 2011. WFRtDS members are invited to participate free of charge. See for details and application form:
www.worldrtd.net/sites/default/files/u22/EXITITALIA/anniversaryinvitation.doc

Join DWDQ

Send \$15 with your name and address to the Treasurer: Gill McCormick, PO Box 432, Sherwood, QLD, 4075
If you pay your fees by direct debit to our account (CBA, USB: 064-162 A/C: 1002 3680), do include your name or member number with the deposit, so we know who the payment is from

Speakers:

Spread the word...Are you a member of, or in touch with a social club? Retirement village? Church group? P&C? We have speakers who will talk about DWDQ, its history, aims and activities. Please phone 1300 733 818 or email dwdq@vesq.org.au to arrange a guest speaker now, or to put on next year's calendar.



"He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp-posts... for support rather than illumination." Andrew Lang (1844-1912)



Growing Old...

*You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" Switch...
When GOOGLE, ipod, email, modem...were unheard of? and a mouse was something that made you climb on a table.*

THE FRONT LINE

In Memory of...

Nan Maitland was a very active member of Friends At The End (the Glasgow-based right-to-die organization) for many years. During this time, she wrote excellent book reviews for the FATE Newsletter, organized FATE meetings in London, and advised many individuals in the UK on how to travel to Switzerland for a physician-assisted suicide. Last Tuesday (March 1st), in her 85th year, Nan Maitland had a physician-assisted suicide in Switzerland. She asked that this message be sent to her "Dear Friends and Colleagues in the World Federation of Right-to-Die Societies" after her death:

"By the time you read this, with the help of FATE and the good Swiss, I will have gone to sleep, never to wake. For some time, my life has consisted of more pain than pleasure and over the next months and years the pain will be more and the pleasure less. I have a great feeling of relief that I will have no further need to struggle through each day in dread of what further horrors may lie in wait. For many years, I have feared the long period of decline, sometimes called 'prolonged dwindling' that so many people unfortunately experience before they die. Please be happy for me that I have been able to escape from this, for me, unbearable future.

I have had a wonderful life, and the great good fortune to die at a time of my own choosing, and in the good company of two FATE colleagues. With my death, on March 1st, I feel I am fully accepting the concept of 'old age rational suicide' which I have been very pleased to promote, especially in the past fifteen months.

Being active in the right-to-die movement, both in the UK and globally, has been an enormously important part of my life in the last few years. My first World Federation conference was in Tokyo in 2004. Then, and later in Toronto, Strasbourg, Paris, Frankfurt and Melbourne, it has been wonderful and inspiring to meet so many amazing people who have been determined, often in the face of great odds, to help others to a peaceful pain-free death. I really hope that everybody's important and vital efforts will continue, and result in legalized assisted dying becoming a reality in many more areas of the world in the coming years. Best wishes, Nan Maitland"

Evelyn Marie Martens

Canadian right-to-die activist, Evelyn Martens, of Kelowna, British Columbia, died on January 2, 2011, a week before her 80th birthday. Evelyn was born on January 10, 1931, in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, during the hardship of the Great Depression. At the age of 6 her father died, leaving the family destitute. For high school, Evelyn had one blouse and one skirt, which she washed daily. In grade 9 she left school to

waitress and help support the family. She later worked in a liquor store and as a secretary. All of her life she devoted herself to caring for brothers, sisters, children, and grandchildren.

A turning point for Evelyn was the death of her brother, Cornelius. He suffered with cancer for 2½ years and died in 1988. Evelyn told CBC television that Cornelius died in excruciating pain and that his "bad death" convinced her that there had to be a better way to die. By 1994 Evelyn was a Regional Advisor to the Right to Die Society of Canada. She later became membership director, and participated actively in NuTech research for improved methods for self-deliverance. Evelyn was a compassionate woman and believed nobody should have to die alone. Around 1997 she sat for the first time at the bedside of an individual who decided to end their suffering by a carefully planned suicide.

In 2002, at the age of 71, Evelyn was charged in the deaths of Monique Charest and Leyanne Burchell. She was the first and only right-to-die activist in Canada ever prosecuted for the offence of aiding suicide, and she faced a maximum penalty of 28 years in jail. Evelyn stood strong through a preliminary inquiry that lasted from Nov 13, 2002, to Jun 12, 2003. The criminal trial started Oct 12, 2004.

On November 4, 2004, a jury of 12 women and men found Evelyn not guilty. The victory was celebrated by many Canadians who had come to see her as a caring hero with the courage to stand up for her convictions. Her solid legal defence was funded by supporters from around the world who contributed to the Right to Die Society of Canada fundraising campaign. Evelyn Martens' acquittal was significant because it clarified that mere compassionate presence at suicide is not a crime in Canada. In 2005 the Humanist Association of Canada awarded Evelyn Martens the prestigious title, Humanist of the Year.

Evelyn will be remembered for her sympathy, compassion, sensitivity, and sense of humour. She had genuine empathy for the suffering of others and she enriched the lives of all who met her. (Russel Ogden, 207 Osborne Avenue, New Westminster, BC V3L 1Y7 Canada (604) 540-4342)

Free Free!

[Advance Health Directive Forms](#). Just ask the Treasurer: Gill MacCormick, PO Box 432, Sherwood, Qld, 4075. (stamps would be appreciated)

COMPASSION & CARE

Mother kills son in assisted suicide

A woman in New York is facing criminal charges after she killed her wheelchair-bound son because he asked her to; his cerebral palsy was making his life too difficult, as he could neither walk nor speak. She then tried to kill herself but was unsuccessful and is now in critical condition in hospital. (Metro, 03/03/11)

We can't say this often enough...

The following letter to the editor appeared 6 March 2011 in the Billings Gazette, Montana, a state where the highest courts have approved physician-assisted suicide, but not the legislature.

I am writing in regard to physician-assisted suicide. It is a hard concept to grasp until you are sitting at your loved one's bedside, watching them struggle to breath or seeing them try to fight a terminal disease that is at its last stages and there are no more medical answers to heal them or even help them to where they can live a functional life without having pain and suffering.

When elderly get to their dying days, a lot of times they will up the morphine to help the pain, which in return slows their breathing until they take that last breath. I am not a doctor or a nurse, but I have worked in the medical field for a long time, and in some ways I would say that is speeding up the death process.

I believe in quality of life over quantity, as I am sure many would choose if it was between living a fulfilling life or a life of pain and suffering on a daily basis. Nobody ever wants to lose a loved one, but how selfish would people be to rather have their loved one alive, suffering in pain and agony, just so we could have them here on earth with us?--Teresa Silk

Taiwan: Call for Caregiver Support

Following the case in which the 84-year-old Wang Ching-hsi (王敬熙) murdered his long ill and disabled wife, several civic groups, along with lawmakers, urged the government to come up with more support measures for caregivers. Wang killed his wife by hammering a screwdriver into her forehead. Wang Sun-yuan (王孫元) had been suffering from Parkinson's disease for decades and had recently been disabled after accidentally falling at home. Turning himself into the police immediately after committing the murder, Wang told the police that he did so because he wanted to put an end to his wife's suffering. (Loa lok-sin, Staff Reporter, The Taipei Times, 11/01/11)

Remember DWDQ in your will

Perhaps you are not in a position to assist your Society now, but a bequest, large or small, in your will can help us when it can no longer help you. It takes a lot of effort and a lot of money to try to influence the legislative system. Phone us for a bequest form



A good time to keep your mouth shut is when you're in deep water.

Joke submitted by a DWDQ member –

The Gynaecologist

A gynaecologist had become fed up with the cost of malpractice insurance, NHS paperwork and was burned out. Hoping to try another career where skilful hands would be beneficial, he decided to become a mechanic. He went to the local technical college, signed up for evening classes, attended diligently, and learned all he could. When the time for the practical exam approached, the gynaecologist prepared carefully for weeks and completed the exam with tremendous skill.

When the results came back, he was surprised to find that he had obtained a score of 150%. Fearing an error, he called the instructor, saying, "I don't want to appear ungrateful for such an outstanding result, but I wonder if there is an error in the grade. The instructor said, "During the exam, you took the engine apart perfectly, which was worth 50% of the total mark. You put the engine back together again perfectly, which is also worth 50% of the mark."

After a pause, the instructor added, "I gave you an extra 50% because you did it all through the exhaust, which I've never seen done in my entire career."

IN QUEENSLAND

Brisbane AGM:

The guest speaker for 31st 1.15pm August (AGM) will be from Alzheimers Association Australia. She will talk about basic dementia, education and awareness of services available.

Self-Deliverance Seminar

This seminar will be held Sunday 5 June, 1:45pm – 3:15pm. Each year there are three seminars on the techniques of self-deliverance. Attendees learn how they may end their own lives quickly, peacefully and painlessly without legal jeopardy to themselves or anyone else. This seminar is to be held on a Sunday to provide an opportunity for working members to attend. (The remaining seminar for this year will be on Tuesday 6 September.) To attend one of these seminars, one must not only have joined DWDQ but also have registered by phoning John Todd on 3876 7654.

Sunshine Coast Branch report

Our monthly meetings continue to be well attended. Speakers have included Martin Day with a team of self-defence instructors demonstrating simple tools and methods of self-defence; Geoff Boucaut from Caloundra Volunteer Coastguard flotilla; and Phil Renwick (barrister) and Rob Douglas (lawyer) on the subject of wills, advance health directives and powers of attorney.

June discussed DWDQ philosophies with Anna Bligh at a Community Cabinet gathering at Bray Park with subsequent letters to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing. We continue to send by email news articles to members, letters to the Seniors newspaper and local press, items of DWD content to politicians, and emails to all Tasmanian and South Australian politicians in support of the bills under consideration

June and her team have put a huge effort into the arrangements for our End of Life Forum, to be held on Sunday 15th May. Our thanks to Copywizz for their support with printing costs for the forum.

Refer to the front cover of this newsletter for details. All members; your attendance is vital for our cause. Future activities include taking advance health directive workshops to retirement villages.

☺ Your Yearly Dementia Test, Part 2 (Find Pt 1 in Jan issue)

It's that time of year to take our annual senior citizen test. Exercise of the brain is as important as exercise of the muscles. As we grow older, it's important to keep mentally alert. If you don't use it, you lose it! Below is a very private way to gauge your loss or non-loss of intelligence. Take the test presented here to determine if you're losing it or not. OK, relax, clear your mind and begin.

3. If a red house is made from red bricks and a blue house is made from blue bricks and a pink house is made from pink bricks and a black house is made from black bricks, what is a green house made from?
4. It's twenty years ago, and a plane is flying at 20,000 feet over Germany. (If you will recall, Germany at the time was politically divided into West Germany and East Germany.) Anyway, during the flight, two engines fail. The pilot, realizing that the last remaining engine is also failing, decides on a crash landing procedure. Unfortunately the engine fails before he can do so and the plane fatally crashes smack in the middle of "no man's land" between East Germany and West Germany. Where would you bury the survivors-- East Germany, West Germany, or no man's land"?

Answers:

3: Greenhouses are made from glass...

If you said "green bricks," why the hell are you still reading these? If you said "glass," go on to Question 4.

4: You don't bury survivors. If you said ANYTHING else, you're a dunce and you must stop. If you said, "You don't bury survivors", proceed to the next question.

Last question to appear in the next issue...