



*'The right to die is as inviolable as the right to life'* Sir Mark Oliphant

## **The SA election: momentum towards law reform**

At the March 20th state election for the South Australian Legislative Council two groups of voluntary euthanasia candidates achieved what SAVES President Frances Coombe referred to as a 'most respectable' number of votes. In making this assessment at the recent SAVES AGM, Frances gave heartfelt thanks on behalf of the society for the hard work and commitment of all these candidates. Legalise Voluntary Euthanasia candidates, Jenny Wheaton and Denis Haynes, received 0.95% of the total vote; being 9057 votes including preferences. Christians for Voluntary Euthanasia candidates, Ian Wood and Reverend Dr Craig de Vos, received 0.38% of the total vote, or 3608 votes including preferences.

Although the votes received were only a small

percentage of the total, they signify strong support for a single issue. The publicity gained through the results of the election was by far the best ever in SAVES 26 years of operation. Frances stated 'all this pushes the agenda in the new parliament'.

As reported in The Independent Weekly (March 19th -25th) Legalise Voluntary Euthanasia candidate Jenny Wheaton's commitment to law reform was as a result of watching 'terrible deaths' in both her personal and professional life. Now a dog-carer, Ms Wheaton makes the point 'at least when their time comes they can be put out of their misery'. In part of online commentary (Adelaide Now October 30th 2009) fellow candidate, Denis Haynes, posed a question around what he held to be 'gutless' political timidity, asking:

'What happened to our politicians here in South Australia? We used to be the leaders in politics on social issues when we voted to enfranchise women, and helped aboriginals to get the vote....'

The VE Bulletin will provide updates of future electoral activities.

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## **Urgent call!**

SAVES is calling for the assistance of a skilled voluntary web manager to maintain the integrity of the website. The main duties include making content changes under the direction of the committee and uploading copies of The VE Bulletin. This is an exciting opportunity to make an important contribution to achieving SAVES primary aim. SAVES sincerely thanks Ken Hausner, who has stepped down from the role, for his generous past assistance.

**SAVES is not affiliated with Exit International / Dr Philip Nitschke and opposes the public availability of a 'peaceful pill'.**

### **Electoral candidates supporting voluntary euthanasia law reform**

The four voluntary euthanasia candidates at the March 2010 SA election are pictured below.



Legalise Voluntary Euthanasia candidates Jenny Wheaton and Denis Haynes



Christians for Voluntary Euthanasia electoral candidates Ian Wood, Co-ordinator, Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia, and Rev Dr Craig de Vos

### **Take action now!**

A pro-forma letter is included with this Bulletin. Please send it to your House of Assembly MP, including a date and the MP's name. Your letter will have greater value if you personalize it by adding a statement of your own in the space left at the end. Sign the letter and print your name and address below. If possible please make copies of the original and send to all Legislative Council MPs as they represent all South Australians. For easy dispatch you can place each letter in an envelope with just the name of the MP written on front and then place all envelopes in one big envelope addressed to Parliament House, North Tce Adelaide 5000.

### **Know where your member stands on law reform**

Does your member of parliament support legalisation of voluntary euthanasia? SAVES has compiled a list of MPs categorised as 'supportive', 'opposed', or whose position is 'not confirmed'. This is for both the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council. They are provided to help inform your future voting intentions:

#### **House of Assembly – supportive**

|                    |            |             |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Bedford, Frances   | Florey     | Labor       |
| Breuer, Lyn        | Giles      | Labor       |
| Brock, Geoff       | Frome      | Independent |
| Fox, Chloe         | Bright     | Labor       |
| Gardner, John      | Morialta   | Liberal     |
| Key, Steph         | Ashford    | Labor       |
| McFetridge, Duncan | Morphett   | Liberal     |
| Marshall, Steven   | Norwood    | Liberal     |
| Pisoni, David      | Unley      | Liberal     |
| Redmond, Isobel    | Heysen     | Liberal     |
| Such, Bob          | Fisher     | Independent |
| Weatherill, Jay    | Cheltenham | Labor       |

#### **House of Assembly – opposed**

|                        |              |         |
|------------------------|--------------|---------|
| Atkinson, Michael      | Croydon      | Labor   |
| Evans, Iain            | Davenport    | Liberal |
| Goldsworthy, Mark      | Kavel        | Liberal |
| Hamilton-Smith, Martin | Waite        | Liberal |
| Kenyon, Tom            | Newland      | Labor   |
| Kousantonis, Tom       | West Torrens | Labor   |
| Pederick, Adrian       | Hammond      | Liberal |
| Snelling, Jack         | Playford     | Labor   |

#### **House of Assembly – not confirmed**

|                   |             |             |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Bignell, Leon     | Mawson      | Labor       |
| Caica, Paul       | Colton      | Labor       |
| Chapman, Vickie   | Bragg       | Liberal     |
| Conlon, Patrick   | Elder       | Labor       |
| Foley, Kevin      | Pt Adelaide | Labor       |
| Geraghty, Robin   | Torrens     | Labor       |
| Griffiths, Steven | Goyder      | Liberal     |
| Hill, John        | Kaurna      | Labor       |
| O'Brien, Michael  | Napier      | Labor       |
| Odenwalder, Lee   | Little Para | Labor       |
| Pegler, Don       | Mt Gambier  | Independent |

|                        |           |         |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Pengilly, Michael      | Finniss   | Liberal |
| Piccolo, Tony          | Light     | Labor   |
| Portolesi, Grace       | Hartley   | Labor   |
| Rankine, Jennifer      | Wright    | Labor   |
| Rann, Mike             | Ramsay    | Labor   |
| Rau, John              | Enfield   | Labor   |
| Sanderson, Rachel      | Adelaide  | Liberal |
| Sibbons, Alan          | Mitchell  | Labor   |
| Thompson, Gay          | Reynell   | Labor   |
| Treloar, Peter         | Flinders  | Liberal |
| Van Holst Pellekaan, D | Stuart    | Liberal |
| Venning, Ivan          | Schubert  | Liberal |
| Vlahos Leesa           | Taylor    | Labor   |
| Whetstone, Tim         | Chaffey   | Liberal |
| Williams, Mitch        | MacKillop | Liberal |
| Wright, Michael        | Lee       | Labor   |

### Legislative Council – supportive

|                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Bressington, Ann  | Independent            |
| Darley, John      | Independent            |
| Gago, Gail        | Labor                  |
| Gazzola, John     | Labor                  |
| Dawkins, John     | Liberal                |
| Hunter, Ian       | Labor                  |
| Jennings, Tammy   | Greens                 |
| Lensink, Michelle | Liberal                |
| Parnell, Mark     | Greens                 |
| Sneath, Bob       | Labor                  |
| Vincent, Kelly    | Dignity for Disability |
| Wortley, Russell  | Labor                  |

### Legislative Council – opposed

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Brokenshire, Robert | Family First |
| Finnigan, Bernard   | Labor        |
| Holloway, Paul      | Labor        |
| Hood, Dennis        | Family First |
| Lucas, Rob          | Liberal      |
| Ridgway, David      | Liberal      |
| Stephens, Terry     | Liberal      |
| Wade, Stephen       | Liberal      |
| Zollo, Carmel       | Labor        |

### Legislative Council – not confirmed

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| Lee, Jing | Liberal |
|-----------|---------|

## SA 2010 election campaign funding

A summary of SAVES' campaign funding for the recent SA election is outlined below:

### Donations received

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| VE/DWD Societies -           | \$21,000        |
| Interstate individual member | \$1,000         |
| SAVES members -              | \$9,600         |
| <b>TOTAL -</b>               | <b>\$31,600</b> |

### Campaign costs

- 1) Legislative Council nominating cost for 4 candidates-\$1,800
- 2) Managing candidate positions on SAVES website - \$920
- 3) 8 consecutive days advertisement in the main SA newspaper *The Advertiser* - \$27,143
- 4) SAVES members and Christian Group members mail out approx - \$610
- 5) Advertisement in all metropolitan weekly editions of *The Messenger* for 2 issues - \$8,262
- 6) *Independent Weekly* online advertising - \$1,265.00

**TOTAL - \$40,000**

## Voluntary Euthanasia Bill 2010

As part of ongoing legislative activity in the SA Parliament, the Hon Dr Bob Such (Ind) is introducing a new Bill in the House of Assembly. The *Voluntary Euthanasia* Bill 2010 is on the Notice Paper to be reintroduced when SA Parliament resumes on 24th June. Further information will be provided in later editions of this bulletin.

## President's report March AGM

SAVES president Frances Coombe welcomed members and guests to the 2010 AGM, providing an update of the 'high and low light' of the year, which was Greens MLC Mark Parnell's *Voluntary Euthanasia* Bill. The 'agonizingly close' outcome of the Bill was profiled in the March edition of

this bulletin. Frances discussed the state election campaign, including the extremely heartening broad-based financial support, stating:

*The goodwill and cooperation gained from the Voluntary Euthanasia Societies AVES Conference last October encouraged us to ask our 'sister' Australian Voluntary Euthanasia / Dying with Dignity Societies for financial help with the election campaign. We also asked SAVES members who have always responded generously to our appeals and were thrilled with the response. It was a most welcome expression of faith in the SAVES executive, enabling an effective campaign.*

Frances noted, with appreciation, that the initiative for SAVES finding and supporting VE candidates was provided by Greens MP Mark Parnell. This advice to SAVES on February 1st allowed the society only 7 weeks in which to make SAVES' primary aim a reality.

Publicity for the candidates included a SAVES Face Book page, a 'Legalise VE' website and candidate flyers. SAVES will be supporting candidates again if a Bill isn't successful in the next four years, seeking to improve upon our first effort. SAVES is strongly encouraging other VE Societies to think about such an endeavour and is running more advertisements encouraging people to join the society due to the high interest shown following the election.

Frances, in her ninth year as President, expressed heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to her dedicated team of committee and task force - also her band of other volunteers. Election of officers returned the same committee as last year, listed here on the back page, there being no other nominations. ***There is an urgent need for new committee members to share the load - please contact Frances 0421 305 684 if you can help in this way. Computer skills are essential.***

Frances provided a snapshot of the preceding busy year for the voluntary euthanasia movement with SAVES and a range of other groups working towards legalisation of choice, with activities including:

- ∞ Two 12 hour awareness days in Rundle Mall,
- ∞ monthly 'Legalise VE' days on Parliament House steps,
- ∞ the biggest ever 'Legalise VE' rally,
- ∞ the many activities of the group 'Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia',
- ∞ stalls and displays at the Disability and Ageing expo,
- ∞ hosting the national AVES Conference
- ∞ the work of two Doctors' Groups: 'Doctors for AMA Neutrality on Voluntary Euthanasia' and 'Doctors Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia'
- ∞ the Victor Harbor Support Group, profiled in this edition, receiving a range of media publicity
- ∞ the initiative of a fledgling group 'South Australian Nurses Supporting Choices in Dying'

There can be no doubt about the huge momentum around the issue of voluntary euthanasia law reform; with it now widely understood that over 80 per cent of the community support this well-entrenched human rights issue.

### **SAVES' Victor Harbor support group**

SAVES' Victor Harbor Support Group is a vital part of SAVES' advocacy role. It began with a visit to Victor Harbor by two members of the SAVES executive; holding a meeting to explain SAVES primary aim and activities, with momentum building from this.

*Legalise VE* election candidate Jenny Wheaton is the group's chairperson, and Denis Haynes the secretary; most ably supported by wife Pat. Victor Harbor members are strong and enthusiastic in their support – some even travelled by chartered bus to take part in the *Legalise VE Rally* held on Parliament House steps last year.

Please contact Jenny Wheaton on **0402 496 919**

or Denis Haynes on **08 8552 1824** for further information on the Victor Harbor Support Group.

The following photo was taken at the Victor Harbor Market Stall day in January this year. L-R Dianne Lake, Jenny Wheaton, Frances Coombe and Dr Rosie Jones.



The following photo was taken at the 25th anniversary of Neighbourhood Watch at the Torrens Parade Ground. It featured a street march from Pennington Tce, stalls and community groups.

L-R: Helen Sedgeman, Kaye Lockwood and Bonnie Brown from the SAVES Victor Harbor Support Group who travelled from Victor Harbor for the event.



## Meeting to be held at McLaren Vale

On Wednesday 1st September there will be an easy opportunity for southern districts SAVES members to hear the latest 'VE' news when SAVES President Frances Coombe speaks with a community group at McLaren Vale at 1.00pm. Further details will be provided from Frances nearer the day – **Ph 0421 305 684**.

## South Australian Nurses Supporting Choices in Dying

This group is a new initiative by Sandy Bradley who briefed the SAVES AGM on its formation in February. The group's rationale is for supporting legislation that, in Sandy's words, 'enables choices in the way a person wishes to die, including the choice of voluntary euthanasia'. In recognition of the pivotal role that nurses have in caring for the dying, Ms Bradley stated 'It is time now, however, for us to have our voices heard in this debate'. Sandy will be our guest speaker in November so please come along and support her initiative. This group will be working in coordination with SAVES, 'South Australian Doctors Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia' and 'Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia'.

*To become a member of the SA Nurses Supporting Choices in Dying, email [sandrabradley2@bigpond.com](mailto:sandrabradley2@bigpond.com).*

### Just a reminder....

SAVES public meetings are held three times a year at 2.15 pm on Sunday afternoons at the Disability Information and Research Centre (DIRC) 195 Gilles St Adelaide.

This is an important forum for updating members on SAVES' activities, legislative issues and relevant local, national and international events and initiatives.

Guest speakers provide a further informative dimension to these meetings which conclude with informal discussion over tea and coffee.

The final public meeting for 2010 is on the **21st November** with further details provided in the November VE Bulletin.

**Make a diary note now!**

## **Elected Dignity for Disability MLC supports choice for voluntary euthanasia**

The successful *Dignity for Disability* candidate at the recent election for the Legislative Council, Kelly Vincent, now heads this party which received 96,485 votes. Ms Vincent has stated her personal in-principle support for choice for voluntary euthanasia. Ms Vincent assumed the leadership role following the untimely death of disability advocate Dr Paul Collier on March 10th. Dr Collier, who was also supportive of law reform, addressed last year's SAVES *Legalise Voluntary Euthanasia* Rally in support of the legislation which was before parliament.

The *Dignity for Disability* 'd4d' Facebook provides a profile of Ms Vincent; her achievements, interests and awards received. These include the 2006 Carl Dibben Courage Award for her approach to advocacy work. Ms Vincent made Australian parliamentary history by being the youngest female ever elected to parliament. She has stated:

*People with disabilities and those who love them will not be silenced. I will be a voice for those without a voice.*

In the Sunday Mail (23rd May 2010) Sarah Mennie canvassed Ms Vincent's personal views on a range of issues. In respect of voluntary euthanasia she stated that some things were 'worse than death'... 'There is some call from people with disabilities to have that right'.

While Ms Kelly speaks in a personal capacity on this issue, the Vision Statement on *Dignity for Disability's* website (d4d.com.au) claims:

*..dignity for disability (d4d) believes that people with disabilities should have the same opportunities and choices as non-disabled people to improve their quality of life and be respected and included as equal members of society.*

It states that Dignity for Disabled (d4d) was established in 2004 and in 2009 it established a focus on human rights:

*... with a change in name to **Dignity for Disability**, with the mantra 'Dignity Through Choice' to reflect its forward progress.*

As with all political parties, SAVES welcomes dialogue with this new South Australian political force with its adopted human rights agenda.

## **Guest speaker May meeting: Rev Dr Les Underwood**

Speaker at the May meeting was Rev Dr Les Underwood who gave an engaging discussion on his personal pastoral perspective on choice for voluntary euthanasia. This was based upon experiences from his life ministry of over 30 years. He discussed social change, including that of the changing power of the church to construct meaning. There are different ways in which people find meaning that help identify what it is that they truly value in life.

According to Les, one of the essential tasks around dealing with issues of choice for voluntary euthanasia is determining how one taps into personal spirituality and a sense of personal integrity. Les focused on the term 'integrity' rather than 'dignity', with integrity linked with authenticity to 'ones own being'. He argued against equating voluntary euthanasia with suicide, as voluntary euthanasia is a rational and deliberate decision about life. It is congruent with the range of other decisions individuals make in life; decisions that they quite rightly own. He made the point that it is important to be respectful and supportive of peoples' decisions.

Les spoke of his 30 year ministry focused on older people with chronic conditions, as well as in the palliative care setting. He told of the gratitude and anger expressed by patients, depending on whether or not the wishes of their families and/or the medical profession may have over-ridden their own life decisions. He maintained that for some Christians there is still an undertone of the 'last enemy' being 'death' and the need to defeat it; an unhealthy way of understanding life and death. Les understands that for some people there are worse things than death. He made the important distinction between ones 'biological' and 'biographical' life; the latter being that which gives shape and meaning to each person's uniqueness.

He argued for the need to be more proactive towards enabling people to feel comfortable in

making decisions about how they live, and how they may be assisted in dying. His discussion attracted lively engagement with the audience and SAVES thanks him sincerely for sharing the range of insights gained through his professional ministry.

## OVERSEAS NEWS

### No increase in euthanasia in the Netherlands since legislation

SAVES membership officer, Gerry Versteeg, has kindly translated an article from a Radio Netherlands Worldwide transcript which states:

*The number of requests for euthanasia in the Netherlands has not risen since an act to decriminalise it came into force in 2002. The finding comes in a study by NIVEL, the Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research, published in the British Journal of General Practice.*

*The act does not fully legalise euthanasia but enables it to be carried out at a patient's request provided a number of conditions are met. The legislation has improved communication on euthanasia, the researchers conclude, which in turn has benefitted the quality of euthanasia practice. For example, the correct drugs are more likely to be used, and in the right dosages.*

*There appears to have been little change in the reasons patients give for requesting euthanasia, such as intolerable pain or loss of dignity. The act doesn't appear to have created a "euthanasia hype", say the researchers, because of the strict criteria it sets.*

The Dutch version of the news item concludes:

*The researchers recommend that managing euthanasia becomes part of general practitioner education. Also that it becomes part of their policy in nursing homes and hospitals.*

**Description:** [of the article from *Radio Netherlands Worldwide*]

### Washington's Death with Dignity Act

The VE Bulletin has on several occasions reported the annual findings of the operation of Oregon's

*Death with Dignity Act* over the decade since its adoption. These reports have revealed that only a modest number of people avail themselves of the Act and that fears of a 'slippery slope' are unfounded. The Department of Health has now published the findings of the operations of the first nine months of Washington's *Death with Dignity Act* passed by voters in 2008. In that time 63 terminally ill patients received prescriptions for medication to end their lives. Of these 36 died from ingesting it, with complications occurring in three people. Forty seven of the 63 had died at the time of the report; some from their underlying illness. Nearly 80 per cent had cancer, with 90 per cent holding some form of health insurance. Over 60 per cent were college educated. As with the history of the Oregon Act, many of the findings were on par with what advocates of the law had expected.

'A lot of people aren't taking the medication, which indicates that people weren't in a hurry,' said Robb Miller, executive director of Compassion and Choices' in Washington; a group that had fought for passage of the law.

'It shows that a significant number of people are using the law for peace of mind and control, sort of like insurance,' he said. 'One doesn't run out and burn one's home down just because you get fire insurance' being an apt analogy he drew upon.

**Reference:** *Vanessa Ho* [seattlepi.com staff](http://www.seattlepi.com/local/416191_death.html) March 4th 2010. [http://www.seattlepi.com/local/416191\\_death.html](http://www.seattlepi.com/local/416191_death.html)

### Toronto: 'a place for reflection'

Late last year a Toronto advertising campaign came up with the idea of park bench 'plaques'; in reality stickers replicating brass plaques that are placed on park benches. This was in order to draw attention to the fact that some deaths can be excruciating and to raise consciousness around the need for living wills and for debate around choice for voluntary euthanasia.

The two advertising campaigners both had parents die painful deaths and the faux plaques "commemorate" three fictional people and point to an information website that they created in their spare time- [dignityindeath.com](http://dignityindeath.com). In slightly more than one day the stickers had already generated

1,500 website hits, stirring heated debate, which is what they were designed to do.

**Reference:** Susan Pigg *thestar.com* 23rd Dec 2009

### Bequests to SAVES

A bequest to SAVES is one way to make a significant gift to further the aim of the society which is to achieve law reform to allow choice for voluntary euthanasia.

The appropriate wording for the gift of a specific sum is I bequeath to the South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. the sum of \$.....

In the unlikely event that you wish to leave your entire estate to SAVES it would read I give, devise and bequeath the whole of my real and personal estate to the South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc.

### 'New book highlights grey areas around 'refusal of treatment'

Former journalist Iola Mathews has written a memoir called *My Mother, My Writing and Me*, which is about her return to writing after a long gap but also needing to care for her elderly mother and a new grandchild. Iola's mother was a long-term member of 'Dying with Dignity Victoria' and gave her children medical power of attorney to refuse treatment when necessary. Despite these precautions however, when Iola's mother had a stroke at 95 she was treated, and ended up in a nursing home until she was nearly 100, trapped in a wheelchair, with failing eyesight and increasing dementia.

As Iola writes, 'My mother's decline in those last years was like someone falling down a cliff strewn with sharp boulders, bumping from one jagged edge to another. From time to time she begged us to end it, but there was little we could do.'

This is a case study of the sometimes grey area around 'refusal of treatment,' and the need for all of us to make adequate preparations for our end of life. This includes the writing of a *detailed* advance directive and making sure that a copy is given to our loved ones and every health professional who treats us.

Anne Deveson AO, has endorsed this memoir as follows: 'A courageous and thoughtful book – one where the author confronts her own mortality and the mortality of her ageing mother, while at the same time grappling with an intense desire to return to her writing. Iola Mathews brings humour and rich wisdom to familiar but painful situations.'

\* *My Mother, My Writing and Me: a Memoir*, by Iola Mathews (Michelle Anderson Publishing, \$24.95) is available in bookshops or direct from [www.michelleandersonpublishing.com](http://www.michelleandersonpublishing.com)

(Article submitted to VE Bulletin 15th March by Iola Mathews)

### The gift of life and death

The following poem written by Denis McGill in 2010 and published locally in the Fleurieu Peninsula in a book entitled *Random Ramblings*, was sent by Jenny Wheaton, one of the two *Legalise Voluntary Euthanasia* candidates in the recent election. Its intention is to stress the message to politicians on the need for a 'better way'.

#### 'The gift of life and death'

Crippled in mind and body, he lies there,  
His life now ended yet still he lives.  
No longer can he taste the sweetness of the country air,  
No longer can he see the beauty of the world around him.  
No longer is he able to partake of social interaction,  
No longer can he reciprocate his wife's loving care.  
She, whose life now revolves around his daily needs.  
She, who still has house and garden to care for.  
She, who sees despairingly the man of her dreams,  
Slowly but surely succumbing to the ravages of  
Alzheimers and Parkinsons diseases, killing him slowly.  
*Surely there must be a better way to die!*

### Thank you

SAVES President Frances Coombe sincerely thanks members who returned their skills register forms which provide the society with a valuable data base for its ongoing activities.

## **Your Anticipatory Direction**

If you have not already completed an Anticipatory Direction, also known as Advance Directive, please do so to ensure that your end of life wishes are respected.

You can choose from the:

(1) *Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act 1995.*

Forms are available for downloading from the Dept of Health website [www.dh.sa.gov.au/consent](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/consent) or may be collected from Service SA, Government Information Centre 108 North Terrace Adelaide, or by ringing the Office of the Public Advocate.

(2) *Guardianship and Administration Act 1993.*

There is a link to the Office of the Public Advocate from the above website for completing an *Enduring Power of Guardianship* under this act. Either Anticipatory Direction may be obtained by telephoning the Office of the Public Advocate (08) 8269 7575 or by country free call on 1800 066 969). An Enquiries Officer will answer any queries concerning Anticipatory Directions.

## **Quotations on voluntary euthanasia**

There have been many views expressed by prominent individuals around the choice for voluntary euthanasia. Several appear on SAVES' and other societies' websites and in their broader literature. The Voluntary Euthanasia Society of Queensland (Sunshine Coast Branch) cites four quotations in different contexts in their pamphlet *Voluntary Euthanasia: Your Right to Choose*. These are reproduced below for SAVES members and other interested readers:

*Euthanasia is an affirmation of compassion in the relief of human suffering.*

**Dr Francis Macnab, Uniting Church Minister**

*If I can choose between a death of torture and one that is simple and easy, why should I not select the latter? As I choose the ship in which I sail and the house which I inhabit, so I will choose the death by which I leave life...I will not relinquish old age if it leaves my better part intact. But if it begins to shake my mind, if it leaves me not life but breath, I will depart from the putrid or the tottering edifice.*

**Moral Epistles LXX, Seneca, the stoic, 4BC-65AD**

*I believe the current law is crude and unjust. People want reassurance that if they are suffering and dying they can receive excellent palliative care and, as a last resort option, voluntary euthanasia. I believe a sensible and compassionate framework for care of the dying will be a hallmark of civilized society.*

**Roger Hunt, BM, BS, GDPH, FACHPM**

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Email: [info@saves.asn.au](mailto:info@saves.asn.au) to receive future editions by email. Thankyou.

## Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia

At SAVES AGM Ian Wood, Co-ordinator, *Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia*, provided an update on the group’s activities. He stated that the highlight over recent months was that he and Rev Dr Craig de Vos, Minister at North Adelaide Baptist Church, stood as candidates in the recent Legislative Council Election on the *Christians for Voluntary Euthanasia* platform. As reported in ABC News Online (3rd March 2010), the group *Christians for Voluntary Euthanasia* claims to be the first religious organisation in the world to stand on the issue. Craig de Vos, who has a passion for social justice, stated his view that:

*..in some cases the best outcome for life is a dignified and good death and at the moment a lot of people don’t get that.*

In a media release by the group on 22nd May 2010 he was quoted as saying:

*Our politicians, often guided by their dogmatic religious beliefs, continue to deny the majority who want the choice of a death with dignity. We want to redress that injustice....*

Ian and Craig were delighted with the number of votes received as single issue candidates, particularly when combined with the vote for the two *Legalise Voluntary Euthanasia* candidates reported above. They acknowledged the generous financial assistance from supporters who contributed over \$6500. This paid for three newspaper advertisements, resulting in a number of new members, as well as votes. Ian also advised that the group has now been accepted as a member of the *World Federation of Right to Die Societies*.

Ian has a Power Point presentation giving his group’s perception of support for VE legislation from a Christian perspective, and would be pleased to show it to interested community groups in Adelaide and local environs even though he lives in Port Pirie. Ian may be contacted on: 08 8632 2272 or [ChristiansforVE@westnet.com.au](mailto:ChristiansforVE@westnet.com.au)

### Join today!

Membership is FREE. We simply add your name, with all other members, as ‘signatories’ to Group letters going to MPs. We welcome non Christians who support our aims.



Post coupon to  
429 Anzac Road, Port Pirie,  
South Australia, 5540  
or visit our website  
[www.Christiansforve.org.au](http://www.Christiansforve.org.au)

Donations or sponsorship  
towards advertising are  
welcome.

### I WANT THE CHOICE OF A PEACEFUL DEATH!

I wish to join **Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia** as a ‘signatory’ in their campaign to have Voluntary Euthanasia legalised in Australia as an option for people suffering unbearably from a hopeless or terminal illness. Such legislation would include stringent safeguards against abuse.

Name ..... Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr/ .....

Address .....

Email .....

Signature ..... Date.....

Please send more information [  ] Denomination (optional).....

**OPTION** I am not a Christian, but wish to support the Group [  ]

# NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

Of the SA Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. (SAVES) at  
The Disability Information and Resource Centre (DIRC), 195 Gilles St, Adelaide.

2.15 pm Sunday 25th July 2010

Guest Speaker will be

**Hon Mark Parnell MLC**

**The topic is 'Greens' new *Voluntary Euthanasia Bill***

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available at the conclusion of the meeting.  
Bring your friends. All welcome.

**Final public meeting 2010 : 21st November**

## South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. (SAVES)

**Annual Membership Fees:** Single \$ 25.00 (concession \$ 10.00) Double \$ 30.00 (concession \$ 15.00)

**Life Membership:** Single \$ 200.00, Double \$ 300.00

**Annual Fees fall due at the end of February.** Payment for two years or more reduces handling and costs.

Mr/Mrs/Ms/other ..... Date.....

Address .....

..... Postcode ..... Telephone .....

Date of birth (optional) ..... Email address .....

Your expertise which may be of help to SAVES .....

Membership fee(s) for..... year(s) \$ .....

Donation \$ .....

Total \$ .....

Enclosed cheque or money order

Or pay by Electronic Funds Transfer quoting name and type of payment to:

Commonwealth Bank BSB 065 129 account number 00901742

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**SAVES Membership Officer,  
PO Box 2151, Kent Town SA 5071**

SAVES members support the Society's primary objective which is a change in the law, so that in appropriate circumstances and with defined safeguards, death may be brought about as an option of last resort in medical practice. These circumstances include the free and informed request of the patient and the free exercise of professional judgement and conscience of the doctor.

**SAVES IS NOT ABLE TO HELP PEOPLE END THEIR LIVES**

## **SAVES' Primary Objective:**

A change to the law in South Australia so that in appropriate circumstances, and with defined safeguards, death may be brought about as an option of last resort in medical practice. These circumstances include the free and informed request of the patient and the free exercise of professional medical judgment and conscience of the doctor.



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**The VE Bulletin** is published three times a year by the SA Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. (SAVES). Letters, articles and other material for possible publication are welcome and should be sent to The VE Bulletin Editor, SAVES, PO Box 2151, Kent Town SA 5071.

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**Editor: Julia Anaf**