

# PROSPER Times



## Seasons Greetings

The Prosper Times Committee would like to wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Another year on and another four issues of the Prosper Times have been published! We would like to thank all those Service Users and staff members who continue to share their personal stories and achievements. There are so many Service Users involved in their local community and in a variety of projects, educational courses and programmes. And please, please keep your news items coming in – there would be no Newsletter without your news!

For this coming year we would particularly like to include more stories from parents and family members. So if you have any advice, help or interesting or funny stories, we would be only too delighted to hear from you.

## Celebrating Age & Generosity

It was the coming together of design and function as Prosper Fingal celebrated the official re-opening of the new look Piercetown Age Friendly service.

On Thursday 12th December 2013, elected representatives and senior officials from Fingal Co. Co., the HSE, Ageing Well Network, Board of Management, Service Users, Skerries Chamber of Commerce, parents and staff celebrated the official opening of this new Age Friendly facility and service. Over the past months, Service Users and staff in Piercetown have embraced the Age Friendly Service philosophy to improve the quality of life of older adults by consulting and engaging with them in shaping and enhancing their service delivery. A well deserved Age Friendly Charter was officially presented to Service User Patricia Burke by Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Kieran Dennison, in recognition of their hard work and achievement.



Welcome to the Senior Club Pat!!

Prosper Fingal Chairman Conor Sparks spoke of this new development with pride especially as it combines and strengthens our relationship with the HSE and Fingal Co. Co. He stated that Prosper Fingal is playing its part in helping Skerries to be a town to 'live in and grow old in with positive and welcoming experiences'. Nora Owen responded on behalf of the Age Friendly alliance by acknowledging the progress that has been made in Fingal in working towards an age friendly community and the part Prosper Fingal has played in this initiative.

The day will be remembered for the positivity and the celebration of ageing. It will also be remembered for the exceptional and unique generosity of an anonymous benefactor who provided the primary funding for this extensive and superb age friendly renovation.



Cormac, Carol, Ann and Shane

## Dublin Culture Night

Culture Night in Dublin is an annual event when arts and cultural organisations open their doors to the public, offering hundreds of free events and performances. With so much going on, and so many people around, there is an amazing atmosphere in the city.

Four Service Users from the Rush Centre headed into town with staff to enjoy what was on offer. They decided to first visit the Windmill Lane recording studios which has been host to artists such as U2, The Script, Lady Gaga and Westlife, to name but a few. It was amazing! They also took part in the audience at a live recording of a new up-and-coming Dublin group - The Raglans.

Later they visited Christchurch Cathedral and explored the medieval crypt, one of the largest in Britain & Ireland, and the earliest surviving structure in the city. A scary way to end a great night!



Rory McElroy watch out!

## It's All in The Swing

Niamh Keenan (Portmarnock center) is an avid golfer who regularly goes to the driving range with her mum and dad to practice. She loves to play golf with her dad and brothers when they are home on holidays. She is a member of the Prosper group that plays every Monday in Malahide Golf Club with support from some lovely people volunteers who help the group improve their swing. This help has really paid off as last week Niamh had a hole in one - a feat we are told most golfers aspire to but few achieve.

Well done Niamh. Keep up the practice!

# Strictly Fairytails

In the Land of Rush, a secondary school called St. Joseph's and a Day Service from Prosper Fingal decided to embark on a magical adventure together...to create and perform an original Panto.

The journey began with a group of budding young actors who were itching to get back on stage after a number of years in the 'wings'. When the word spread that a Pantomime was in production everyone wanted to take part. Not everyone wanted to be on stage though, so willing bodies were set various tasks in the 'engine room' of the production i.e. back stage. Computer wizards and artists set about using their talents to create the most amazing set and props and programme design.

Naturally, all the actors wanted a leading role and so the script called for a cast of spectacular fairyland favourites including Snow White, Cinderella, Hook, Tinkerbelle, Prince Charming, Peter Pan, Puss in Boots, Pirates, Fairy Godmother, Tin Man, Lion, Scarecrow, Dorothy, amongst others. The costumes were colourful and flamboyant and ensured even the two Ugly Sisters were Princesses on the night!



The All Star Cast

The production was a true 'community partnership' with the Transition Year students of the local secondary school who enthusiastically worked alongside the cast. They took on the mammoth task of stage management which involved some tricky timing and set changes, including turning a Candy Land into a dark forest in just seconds!

The excitement and anticipation in the Rush Centre was palpable in the weeks leading up to the opening night as the cast rehearsed their songs, lines, dance moves and of course the perfect "He's behind you" routine.

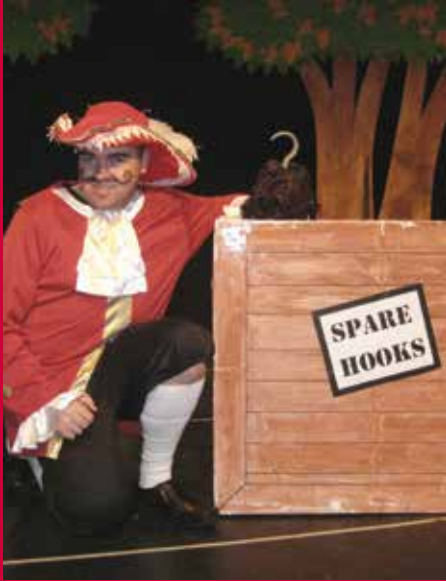
The opening night in the Millbank Theatre was on 16th December and was packed with representatives from the Board of Management, elected reps, local community groups and businesses, management and staff. The very enthusiastic and vocal audience laughed, clapped, sang and engaged in the on-stage banter.

The performance on the 17th December was for family and friends of all those involved. In particular, the parents and families of the cast were blown away by the talent of their family member and the professionalism of the whole production. On both nights the cast and crew received a standing ovation for their incredible performances and stage management.

The Service Users and staff from Rush would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to the TY students in St. Joseph's Secondary School and to the Rush community for all their support in this venture.



# Celebrating the Season



Darren is hooked!



The Panto packed courthouse



Pat Murphy and his sisters in Piercetown



North Street at the Pavillions



The Seatown party goes



Two 'lovely' sisters!



## Local News

### Brian's New World

When Brian Joyce joined the Skerries Daycare service in 2011 he was extremely reluctant to leave the building. It was a huge upheaval in his life to lose the familiar surroundings of his previous school. He was very happy to pass his days playing on the computer and watching DVDs in the centre.

Skerries and Clinical staff designed a programme for Brian that would help him become familiar with and be more at ease in the local community. Slowly but surely Brian became a familiar presence around the town particularly in Xtra Vision where he is now a regular customer and is greeted by name.

It was time for Brian to experience more than just the local shops. Through his love of animals and swimming more challenges were found and Brian is now a valued customer in many places around Fingal. The donkeys in Trim love to see coming as it means more apples for them!



An apple a day.....

## Personal Planning in Prosper Fingal

Traditionally services and supports have been provided by Prosper Fingal in a person centred way. This means making sure each individual is centrally and actively involved in planning the services and supports they receive. Very recently a new model by which to ensure this happens, called Personal Planning, has been introduced to Prosper Fingal. Personal Planning is aligned with national disability policy. It sets out to create a picture of how a person wants to live their life and record their individual goals and support needs and how it is proposed to address them.

Personal Planning will be rolled out across the organisation in three phases – Residential Services first, and then Respite Services followed by Day Services. The process was started in the Residential Service because offering a personal planning process is a requirement of the *HIQA National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities*. The residents have been briefed and the staff have taken part in training so the process of creating a Personal Plan with each individual has started.

Suzanne Griffin lives in Sealcove House and has started developing her Personal Plan with assistance from her key worker Mary Rose. Suzanne says personal planning "is a good idea and if we have any trouble [with it] our key workers are there to help us out". Mary Rose says "Suzanne has really embraced this and every evening I'm working she does another piece of the plan. I'm glad that we're at last formalising what we actually do here in Residential Services; I think it's going to be of great benefit to people from other areas of the service and to all staff and Service Users".



Here's Emmet!

### Watch Out - Emmet's About!

Emmet O'Dúill, (Portmarnock Cairde group) recently decided that he would like see what life in the lower support Community Integration group was like. As this group regularly use public transport, Emmet soon realised that he would have to give up

the convenience and comfort of the service's sleek people carrier and do his time standing at the bus stops, rain, hail or shine. Thankfully the inclement weather has not deterred Emmet and he is now a regular fixture on outings each Tuesday. He also joins the group every Thursday for bowling and as yet, remains unbeaten!!!

Since Emmet has joined the group, he has encouraged his friends to use the train and Luas more which is helping everyone build up new skills and experiences.

### David 'Angelo'

David Malone (Howth Service) has always had a keen interest in art. He recently joined an art class in Klear which is an adult education centre in Kilbarrack. David travels independently to his class. He started with "still life" pencil drawings and quickly progressed to using colour in his work. His art teacher suggested that his artwork would look good printed as it was very colourful and bright. With the help of his art teacher and keyworker, David choose one of his drawings, researched printing costs and then went into Reads in Dublin to have his art work printed. He was very happy when he saw the finished product and can now send his own personalised greeting cards to family and friends.



From me to you!



## Talented Display

It was the most viewed and celebrated exhibition that Prosper Fingal had ever organised. Literally, thousands of people viewed the work of the talented artists who are supported by our North Street Service.



What a display!

The exhibition was held over two days in early November in the central foyer of the Pavillions Shopping Centre in Swords. In fact, it could be seen from Ground and 1st Floor levels! People continuously stopped to view the works of craft and art and to enquire about the individual artists and the concepts behind their work.

This exhibition was the result of a range of artistic endeavours in pottery, photography, textiles, art and creative writing. The blend of these different works created an exhibition that appealed to so many. All the artists were there to explain their work and how the Prosper Fingal North Street Service supports them to realise their potential – artistically and otherwise.

It was a great team effort from everyone and the individuals based in North Street were centrally involved in the organising from supplying the exhibits to setting up the displays and promoting the event. The event was launched by Director of Services, Pat Reen, who told the large audience how tremendously impressed he was with all the creative talent on display.

Overall the exhibition was immensely successful but particularly in how it showcased Prosper Fingal to the wider community that is not familiar with its people and services.

## Remembering Richard

Sometimes you just meet a guy who has 'it'. That something about him that is effortlessly assured and relaxed that makes you want to be around them. Richard Yeomans was that guy. No fuss, no fanfare, just a young man who knew what he liked to do and did it.

Richard Yeomans liked doing some cool stuff. He was learning to drive; stick shift not just automatic! He didn't limit himself to cars as he was mastering the skills needed to drive a speedboat too. As a member of the Dublin All Stars marching band he could keep the beat and was quite the mover on the dance floor.

Richard could cut a dash too. Always the best dressed person in the room. His style, like the man, never shouted but was always, that word again, cool.

The words fun and happy keep being mentioned when Richard's friends remember this remarkable young man. That wonderful smile, which often slipped into a cheeky grin when the messing started, is another memory we recall.

The sentiments of some of his friends in the Training Service best reflect this unique character. "I thought he was a great guy and I liked spending time with him", said Ross Guinan, "he always made me laugh and called me funny names".

Claire Adams said, "I suppose I miss his niceness. The way he'd wait for you off the bus or when you went into the shop". His niceness was something that Susan Kenny remembers also, "he would always comfort other people if they were sad".

Everyone remembers the jokes and the laughter that followed Richard. "When he would give you a high five he would take his hand away and smile at you," said one of his oldest friends, Eoin McHugh. One of the things Stephen Gilmartin will miss is "the way he tapped his watch at 3:30pm saying look, it's time to go home".

The memories make us all smile but there is, of course, sadness too. Richard's good friend Mark Hogan said, "I really miss him. He was like a brother to me. We were very close".

Something else we will remember when we think of Richard is how he lived such a full life. He never complained or used his heart condition to avoid trying new things. The support and drive of his parents, Veronica and Mark, and his sister, Aisling, in this regard are remarkable also. It would have been easy to be cautious but instead they always supported Richard with his new adventures.

On Friday 15th November, Richard died. All of us in the Training Service continue to come to terms with this sad loss. In a centre so full of life and energy a little bit of light has been taken away.



Our dear friend Richard



Christmas crackers - Áine and Natasha



Piercetown Charter



John the artist



The Howth helpers

## “Putting” Funds for Prosper

Prosper Fingal was delighted recently to accept two very generous donations from charity golf outings.

The Rolestown Inn Golf Society has a long association with Prosper Fingal and this year it once again included the Company as one of the four recipients of its annual Golf Classic. Pat Norton, father of Shane who attends the Rush centre, first nominated Prosper Fingal as a recipient three years ago and this year Director of Services, Pat Reen, was delighted to accept a cheque for €1,500 at the annual event in December.

The Forex Ireland Golf Society has a long history of fundraising very successfully for charities in Ireland. Prosper Fingal was very fortunate to have been nominated as the charity to benefit from its efforts this year. Some 45 golfers from Ireland and abroad came together in the beautiful Heritage Golf and Spa Hotel to play on the exciting golf course designed by Seve Ballesteros and Jeff Howes. The weather was fantastic so there were no excuses for tall stories of the wayward drives and missed putts. However, the group gave serious attention to the very generous items that had been donated for the auction and raffle.

Prosper Fingal is extremely grateful for the wonderful donation of €15,500.00 raised through this event. The generosity of each individual who supported the event is very much appreciated as is the tireless work of Richard Fleming and his committee.

## Congratulations

We have several people to congratulate in this issue:

- Carolyne Coventry (Staff in Cherrygarth) and partner Séan who welcomed their first baby – a son Adam.
- Bridget O’Reilly Synnott (Service User in Portmarnock) who graduated from her course in Plunkett College with a Certificate in Advocacy and Leadership. This course has enabled Bridget to increase her learning skills and build her confidence.



Well done!



Happy birthday Patty

- Patricia McNulty (Service User in Piercetown) who celebrated her 70th birthday firstly in the Centre with all her friends and staff and then in the Bracken Court Hotel with fellow house residents.
- John Corcoran (Service User in Portmarnock) who had one of his paintings included in the National Institute for Intellectual Disability publication called “Pen and Pallet”. This is a book of poems and paintings done by students who have completed the “Certificate in Contemporary Living” run by the Institute through Trinity College.
- Claire Finn and Adam Howard (Howth Service) who volunteered to help St. Francis Hospice with its annual Christmas collection by selling different tokens in the Donaghmede Shopping Centre. As each item was a different price our helpers had to use their numeracy skills and indeed sales skills on the day.