



House of Assembly

Extract from Hansard

**Tuesday 29th May 2012
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Gawler Community Events

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:24): Today I would like to speak about three recent events in my electorate that reflect the strong volunteer culture within my local community. I do not think there is a single person here today in this chamber whose life has not been in some way affected by cancer. The sobering fact about cancer is this: one in two Australians will be diagnosed with some form of cancer by age 85. It is the leading killer in our country, taking more than 43,000 lives in 2010 alone.

The good news is that we are turning the tide. We can diagnose it earlier and with greater accuracy, and people living with cancer are responding better to treatment. We have accomplished this because of the hard work organisations like the Cancer Council do in the community. One of the Cancer Council's major fundraisers

is Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, which is currently being celebrated all over Australia.

Last week I was happy to accept an invitation to Gawler's Biggest Morning Tea. The event was a great success. More than 300 people attended – triple last year's number. I am happy to say that the morning tea raised more than \$10,000 to help fight cancer in Australia, but more than that the event was truly an example of the community uniting behind a common cause. A great many people came together to make this event a great success.

I would like to pay a personal debt of thanks to Dominic Shepley and Jo Farrelly, the Chief Executive and Office Manager respectively of the Gawler and Barossa Jockey Club, who graciously offered their trackside function room free of charge for the event. They also named one of their weekly races after the Biggest Morning Tea, which gave the event invaluable publicity. Not only is this a fine example of local businesses supporting great community causes, but the goodwill generated by gestures like this is incredible and certainly far outstrips the minor financial cost. I applaud them.

At the morning tea we were entertained by square dancers from the Scoot Back Squares and the Wild Frontiers dancers, as well as the Adelaide Plains Male Choir. Our colleague in the other place the Hon. John Dawkins MLC is a member of the choir and gave an impromptu performance himself. I could say that, if ever there is a debate in that house

that becomes too heated, I am sure that a reprise of his *Kumbaya* will be enough to calm things down.

Almost all the catering was prepared and coordinated by just two people: Gwenda Green and Bev Filmer. They were ably assisted in table service by students from the Gawler 15, a local vocational education training (VET) program which offers hospitality training for students in local schools and which is based next to Gawler High School. Finally, big thanks go to the Gawler branch of the Cancer Council and the Gawler Lions, particularly the Lion's treasurer, Eric Filmer, for helping to organise and run the event, and also to every person who came along to the morning tea. It is truly inspiring to see so many people not only working to fight against the scourge of cancer but also uniting as a community in general. It has been a week for that sentiment of solidarity in the general community.

I spent some time on Saturday morning helping collect money for the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal, which is the Salvation Army's major annual fundraising drive. I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised by the strong support and generosity of the local community. I had high hopes for the community but these were surpassed even in the short time I was there. Dozens of people dug deep to help the valuable work that the Salvos do in our community. Last year the Red Shield Appeal raised more than \$75 million, and South Australia contributed \$5 million to that total. It is my hope and the hope of the Salvos that we can beat that total this year, so I urge all South Australians to dig

deep. The appeal in Gawler has already raised more than \$10,000 and the campaign has been well led by local Salvo officer Jodie Jones and the chairman of the local committee, the Hon. John Dawkins MLC.

The final event I would like to mention is the launch of a new carers support hub in Gawler. Being a carer is an arduous task. It is emotionally and physically demanding and can be very isolating. It relieves the healthcare system of a tremendous burden; however, the same burden is taken on the shoulders of individuals in the community who most often do the work without payment.

The Northern Carers Network is an organisation that, put simply, cares for carers. It provides support and services for people who care for other people. These services can range from training and counselling right down to something as simple as a cup of tea and a social chat, but every service it offers, no matter how minor it may seem, is invaluable to the carers it assists. Previously carers who wanted to access services had to drive to Elizabeth, so it is fantastic for the town of Gawler that there is now a local hub where these services can be accessed.

I would like particularly to thank the Northern Carers Network's Chief Executive, Maria Ross, and our local project officers in Gawler, Wendy Rose and Ian Harland. I would also like to extend my thanks to the Reverend Jeff Noble, the pastor at the Gawler Baptist Church out of which the new hub operates.

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