



House of Assembly

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PINERY FIRES

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:29) :

Today is the six-month mark since the Pinery fires ripped through parts of my electorate leaving a trail of destruction on many farms and townships and scarring many lives forever.

The fury of the fires shocked people living in the area who had never experienced anything like it.

Today in this grievance speech, which I have titled *The Pinery Fires – the Good after the Bad and the Ugly*, I wish to acknowledge those in the community who have done wonderful work to assist the recovery process.

The 'good' is a story about how the community in my electorate have banded together and helped each other through the recovery process.

They have been the champions of self-help in the true spirit of community.

At the outset, I wish to say that in the five minutes allocated to me I cannot possibly mention every great act or deed, but I

wish to highlight some of the wonderful actions in the community, and here are some examples.

Kathy Marriner's Creative Chatter group for quilters, sewers, mosaics, artists and knitters has been established following the donation of sewing machines, an overlocker, ironing boards, loads of material and other haberdashery by the Gawler quilters group.

The group aims to provide an opportunity for women to get together and get to know each other and share their experiences about the fires while sharing creative activities. Around 20 women attend each fortnight, and more donations are welcome.

Felicity Hams and Fiona Heaslip started Grow it Back, a program to grow plants from donated cuttings, pots and soil, which are given away for free to help rebuild the gardens in Wasleys.

The first pop-up nursery was held on Saturday 16 May in the grounds of the newly opened Wasleys post office. It was very well attended, and more plants are being grown for the next pop-up nursery. Donations have been received from as far away as the Riverland.

Wasleys resident Pauline Barton is compiling memories of the Pinery fire into a collection of stories, poems, anecdotes or artwork into the Wasleys Pinery Fire *Memory Book*.

Contributions can be left at the Wasleys post office, and children are strongly encouraged to submit a story or a picture.

Mrs Lynette Worden has held a number of get-together sessions with around 12 women – mainly farming women – attending for a meet and sharing of their experiences.

A couple of the women have lost everything, so there are also a few tears shed during these discussions. They are planning to meet again after seeding is complete.

A number of fundraising events have been held by the local CFS brigades and individuals to support families who are experiencing financial difficulties. One such event I wish to mention is the Christmas in July cabaret, to be held on Saturday 23 July and hosted by the Lines family in their shearing shed. Proceeds from this event will go to the Gordon and Appleton families, who lost their homes in the fires.

Wasleys resident Mr Allan Lange has held a number of barbecues for blokes in the area. These very successful, informal community-based barbecues have encouraged men to share their experiences in a relaxed and informal setting, making a very important contribution to the healing process.

Allan's barbecues have been complemented by a barbecue run by the Wasleys Community Group in conjunction with my electorate office and with the support of Willo's Men's Shed.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Gawler Foodland, Gawler Coles and Woolworths, Salt Church, and Wintulichs, who have made contributions to the barbecues.

The Wasleys Community Group have been very active with a range of activities, including a family fun day.

The family fun day was supported by many local residents and businesses, and some businesses a little further away, like Golden North Ice Cream.

One community service has received huge plaudits from the community.

BlazeAid, with its army of volunteers from across the country, has provided valuable physical and moral support and assistance to farmers in the area.

There have been a number of charities and community organisations that have assisted with the recovery process including, but not limited to, Habitat for Humanity, Lions clubs, and Samaritan's Purse.

I would also like to acknowledge the good work undertaken by the Recovery Centre and welcome the new coordinator, Mr Alex Zimmermann. Mr Zimmermann replaces Mr Vince Monterola, whose contract ends this Friday.

Mr Zimmermann knows the area well, as his substantive position is chief inspector and the local service area commander for the Barossa region.

In my last speech, I mentioned the community's disappointment with the response from Australia Post. I am happy to advise the house that Australia Post has reacted to the feedback in a very positive way and is exploring ways to address concerns for future emergencies.

Communications is still a problem, and I would like to repeat my request to the state government to work with the commonwealth to address the lack of communication towers in the area and to get rid of these blackspots.

Finally, hopefully these rains bring some relief and hope for the farmers affected by the fires.