



VOLUNTEERS

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:45): I would like to take this opportunity today to give—

Members interjecting:

Mr PICCOLO: Madam Deputy Speaker, could I have some quiet, please?

Members interjecting:

Mr PICCOLO: Thank you. I would like to—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just keep going, member for Light.

Mr PICCOLO: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. We certainly would not behave in my chamber like that. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge, honour and celebrate the contributions and achievements of volunteers in my community, particularly as this is National Volunteer Week.

My electorate has a plethora of volunteer groups, and we are very fortunate to have a strong volunteering spirit in our community—in fact, there is not one walk of life throughout my community where volunteers are not involved. Just as an indication, most weekend and junior sport is arranged and supported by volunteers. School governing councils, school coaches and grounds and working bees again involve volunteers. Meals on Wheels and other groups that support our elderly groups are made up of volunteers.

Our service clubs, churches and faith groups and Neighbourhood Watch are supported by volunteers. Environment, heritage and Landcare programs are supported by volunteers. A number of welfare and support groups, businesses and professional associations, show societies, the CFS, the SES and other emergency services are supported by volunteers. Our hospitals and other health services are supported by volunteers. The residents associations in my electorate—such as the Peachey Belt Residents Association—are again staffed and supported by volunteers.

Also, many councils have volunteers who undertake work in various council operations. In Gawler, for example, the anti-graffiti team is made up of volunteers, and does an excellent job. The visitors centre has volunteers, and they also do a wonderful job. There is a whole range of other services, such as the library, that also have volunteers.

While I would like to acknowledge the enormous contribution economically that volunteers make to our community and society, I think that is outweighed by the social and cultural benefits. For example, the lives of many isolated people are enriched by the work of volunteers, and we do not often acknowledge that—whether it is someone who is visited in hospital by a volunteer visitor or someone who lives in their own home but is elderly, infirm or sick and the person from Meals on Wheels comes to visit them.

Volunteers are often the connection to society and the community for many people. Often the contribution that volunteers make is not acknowledged until the volunteers are not there. I ask members to imagine their own community without volunteers. There would be very little sport and a whole range of other community life.

In Gawler, our volunteers are supported by the Gawler Volunteer Resource Centre, which is an initiative of this government and the Town of Gawler. The volunteer coordinator, Sheila Willox, does a wonderful job. There is also the Volunteering Barossa and Light volunteer resource centre, which I had the pleasure of opening on behalf of the current Minister for Volunteers. Ms Elaine Johnson, the volunteer coordinator, plays a wonderful role in supporting the volunteers in that area. That centre is also supported by the

Barossa Council and the Light Regional Council. One of the challenges these days is how to involve youth volunteers to maintain their activity.

I would like to provide a quick case study of one volunteer group to show the important role they play with respect to the social wellbeing of our community. I would like to bring to the attention of the house the Look Good...Feel Better program, which is a free community service program dedicated to helping men and women who are undergoing treatment for cancer. The purpose of the program is to help them to manage their appearance-related side-effects while undergoing or about to undergo chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment for any type of cancer and, therefore, help them to restore their appearance and self-image.

Over 800 workshops are held every year, and the program has assisted 70,000 cancer patients since 1990. The national program is available in every state and various hospitals, and next year it celebrates its 20 years of service to the community.

A teenage program was launched in 1998, and a men's program was launched in 2004. The workshops are delivered by volunteers and without their commitment this program would not be possible. In Gawler the workshops have been running for about 10 years. They celebrated 10 years recently through the Gawler Health Service. A recent activity in Gawler raised \$4,000 for the program.

The volunteers in the Gawler program are: Patricia Dent, Judy Rowden, Christine Spencer, Sue Sherman, Audrey Hartnett, Katyhryn Krause, Diane Costa, Rosemary Barnet, Sue Humphreys, Anne Webb, Raeline Trevethick, Rosemary Chapman and Bryndis Scheer, all who do a wonderful job through that program, and not to forget Hilda Downey, the hospital coordinator, assisted by Joyce Elkins, Pat Pipe, Barry Pipe and Diana Timpano.