

viewpoint

YOUR LETTERS

Backflip welcomed

It was with great disappointment that I heard the Our Wellbeing Place (OWP) was being forced to close its doors earlier this month.

However, following an apparent backflip from the Government, I welcome the decision made by Country Health SA to commit to the OWP until June 30 whilst it considers the centre's long term future.

OWP has been a welcome initiative in Murray Bridge.

It was used by mental health organisations, community groups and locals as a place to meet, talk, ask questions and most importantly find help.

The OWP has been a terrific addition to the Murraylands community offering wide reaching support.

Reading the views of several OWP frequenters in The Murray Valley Standard on January 17, 2013, and hearing the stories from a number of devastated constituents who have contacted my office highlights how important the OWP has been for those living with a mental illness.

The State Liberal Party continues to listen to concerns in local communities regarding mental health, and has created the State's first Suicide Prevention portfolio.

We have also recently released a suicide prevention policy focussed on strong partnerships with non-government and community organisations.

We are committed to working with these groups to ensure the resources and training is there for them to work as effective community gatekeepers all over South Australia, because early intervention is incredibly important when it comes to mental health issues and suicide prevention.

South Australians can be confident that with a Redmond Liberal Government in 2014, our proactive policy and partnerships with community organisations will have a positive impact on those affected by suicide.

Personally, I have been a big supporter of the OWP centre and hope to see it continue in the future.

Country Health SA has stated that it is committed to ensuring that people in rural areas have access to high quality mental health services, so I hope those living with mental illness in our local community can continue to receive the help they require without having to travel long distances.

Adrian Pederick,
Member for Hammond.

End of a saga

We would like to advise the community that the proposed 500,000 chicken broiler farm development proposal at Wellington is no more.

After many years in council meetings and court cases, including the latest action where the applicant was appealing the Rural City of Murray Bridge's decision to disallow this development, we can finally say "the end".

The applicant has sold the horse stud and the land earmarked for the chicken farm and the new owner has confirmed to us that he has no intention of undertaking this type of development.

He intends to restore the horse study to its former prosperity.

The applicant has informed the judge that he will be cancelling the appeal.

There are a lot of people to thank.

Wellington Progress Association took on this job to appeal this development at the request of a large sector of the community.

Many people over many years have spent countless hours in meetings with courts, council and lawyers and all this at their own cost.

There have been over 25 contributors in the community to a fighting fund with some contributors donating sometimes a second and third time to cover the lawyers costs.

We also need to thank our lawyer Mr Tom Game who was instrumental in helping us find ways to fight this application.

In the end we didn't quite get an outright

win, but as our lawyer said, we need to celebrate the fact that if it wasn't for our ongoing opposition to this development over the ensuing years we would have had this development up and running by now and we would all be living with the consequences of that decision.

The fight is not over by any means.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge decided in the end to not oppose the applicant's appeal of it's decision to refuse the development.

In effect they left our community association and the adjoining property owners who were co-joined parties to the action on our own.

We still have the situation in Wellington and in the other satellite communities along the river where anyone can still lodge an application for intensive animal farming within two-kilometres from a township boundary.

The council commissioned "Rural Communities Study" asked us to help us find a way forward for our communities in which we could be a part of.

I know there have been countless submissions highlighting the imbalance between the Murray Bridge separation distances of 10km and all other communities - 2km for intensive animal farming.

The summary report from this study is still not available despite many proposed

reporting dates having come and gone.

Apparently the "Murray Bridge Township Plan" is more important, and that is a direct quote.

If the RCMB does not start the process for a development plan amendment forthwith our community and others will never be safe.

The fight has never been about the idea of a 500,000 chicken broiler farm coming to our community but the proposed position of the development so close to our township boundary (2 km), with little or no respect to adjoining property owners, proposed future land uses, township growth and environmental factors.

This fight has cost the ratepayers of this community dearly - the ball is in your court RCMB. get on with it now!

Lynette Tapp,
Secretary,

Wellington Progress Association.

Buy Australian

"Is it Australian?" should be the first question every time you part with your hard earned money.

In times of political mediocrity it is up to we, the people, to head our once fine nation in the right direction.

At the fish and chip shop ask if it is Australian before you order - at the pub or local restaurant, at the grocery store don't spend hours looking at the fine print on labels "Ask is it Australian?" as that will have an effect on shelf labelling.

Are these oranges Australian? Is this product Australian?

Get into the right habits my friends and put your money in the right pockets.

A campaign ramps up this weekend with massive A-frames hitting the suburbs, social network sites start up, and hundreds of flyers and T-shirts hit the town, so what should we ask?

"Is it Australian?"

I am succeeding with "Farm Direct" so let's expand it to the whole community and support every hard working Australian.

Visit <http://www.markaldridge.com/money-in-the-right-pocket-s.html>.

Mark Aldridge,
Independent Federal Candidate for
Wakefield.

Show Australian spirit

Natural disasters are a tough time for Australians; many families have faced dis-

advantage as a result of damage to their properties, we have lost families and friends at the hands of Mother Nature and it can take years to recover from the dent that these experiences leave on both individuals and on the community.

Earlier this year we have again witnessed or been part of terrible stories about bushfires ravaging Australia, leaving homes in ruins, removing physical traces of lifetimes of memories and leaving an emptiness in all our hearts.

These are times that test the spirit and strength of a nation.

After witnessing our country facing the floods in Queensland in 2012 and then the bushfires recently, we have seen our nation pull together to make a difference and help those that have been affected by these disasters.

We have seen people in Australia putting the wellbeing of other Australians before their own, we have seen victims helping other victims, and we have seen people with very little giving to assist others who have lost loved ones and their homes.

Our firefighters are working overtime, often without payment, putting their lives on the line to stop the blazes that are

destroying communities across Australia.

One of these courageous individuals has given his life to protect families from the devastation that these fires have caused.

Our firefighters, particularly this individual, will forever be remembered by us as heroes.

I would like to acknowledge the work of volunteers, without whom many of the crucial activities to assist with the fires would not have taken place.

Groups like our SES workers, Rotary clubs and Lions clubs have put everything aside to give their time and resources to the bushfire cause.

Ordinary people in Australia are making donations and contributions towards families that have lost their homes and properties in the blaze.

I would like to thank these individuals for such an honourable and selfless act.

It is the generous commitment of these individuals that make me proud to be a part of this country.

On Saturday, on a day that we celebrate this nation, I ask you to send your condolences to everybody who has been affected by the fires.

I encourage you to spare a moment for the people that have given their lives and donated their time to fighting the recent bushfires and to think about what being Australian really is about.

Father Chris Riley,
Chief executive officer,
Youth Off The Streets Ltd.