



State Connection

By Nationals Member for Lismore Thomas George MP

December 2010

Thomas George MP, 55 Carrington Street, Lismore, 2480
www.thomasgeorge.com.au lismore@parliament.nsw.gov.au 02 6621 3624

Youth Services Brochure

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Youth Services Brochure
- 2 Nurses' campaign
- 3 Energy efficiency program
- 3 Student Insurance
- 5 Girl Guides work on display
- 6 Community Building Partnership grant recipients
- 7 High Achievers list

"Our youth contribute to society through their views on many issues such as youth culture, music and sport"

The youth of today are our leaders of tomorrow. Hence I believe it is imperative the youth in our electorate in particular, are given every opportunity to realise their potential.

To help them do just that I have produced an eight-page booklet entitled *Guide to Youth Services*, (see pic below) which highlights many services available to youth in the Lismore Electorate.

This initiative is aimed at helping youth become more involved in the community by encouraging them to take advantage of various services, scholarships and awards on offer.

The Guide can also assist parents in getting their children interested and participating in local activities.

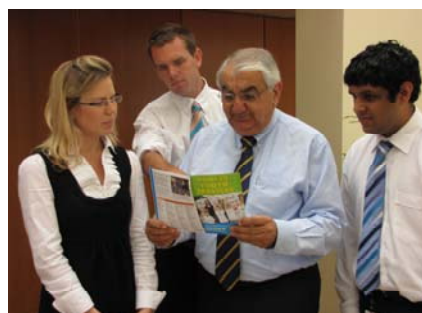
Our youth contribute to society through their views on many issues such as youth culture, music and sport.

The booklet focuses on the many and varied opportunities being made available to local youth within organisations such as the Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC), the Scouts and Girl Guides movements and the Defence Force Cadets.

The Guide provides several point of contact telephone numbers and internet sites which can assist youth engaged in various activities at different stages of their lives.

If you have not received your *Guide to Youth Services* booklet in the mail, call 6621 3624 to have one sent out to you.

I urge you to take the time to read it and keep it for future reference.



Better Nurse to Patient Ratio Campaign

On 24 November 2010, nurses in my electorate took part in a state wide campaign to improve nurse to patient ratios in public hospitals.

Unfortunately, due to Parliamentary commitments in Sydney, I was unable to attend the campaign launches at Lismore, Murwillumbah and Tweed Base Hospitals however I was able to issue a statement of my support.

My statement stressed that I have been, and continue to be, a great advocate for the important and wonderful job nurses do. It also stressed how over the last couple of years, I have continually been highlighting the 400 odd job losses that have occurred within the North Coast Area Health Service.

More specifically, the Keneally Labor Government has significantly cut nurse numbers right across NSW.

The NSW Liberals & Nationals believe nursing is the backbone of the health system, and we will deliver an environment that supports nurses, give them a stronger say in patient care and a real voice in management decision making.

In regard to nurse to patient ratios, the NSW Liberals & Nationals will support the findings of the Industrial Relations Commission.

The choice is clear, the NSW Liberals & Nationals who are for nurses, or the incompetent Keneally Labor Government who cuts nurses and leaves hospitals short of nurses.

Cultural Grants for Emerging Artists

I would like to encourage all emerging artists from the Lismore electorate to apply for an Ian Potter Cultural Trust Grant.

The Ian Potter Cultural Trust aims to nurture the growth of excellence and diversity in cultural activities in Australia by making small grants of up to \$7,000 to outstandingly talented people in the early stages of their careers.

Disciplines covered include the performing and visual arts, crafts, music, the media, literature and design, through to experimental media.

Grant requests must be for postgraduate study that will take place overseas, mentoring or private lessons overseas, overseas residencies or study tours with an educational focus or non standard musical instruments or equipment. Applications close Monday, 31 January 2011.

For details go to www.ianpotterculturaltrust.org.au or call Claire Rimmer Roberts, from The Ian Potter Cultural Trust on (03) 9650 3188.

"the NSW Liberals & Nationals will support the findings of the Industrial Relations Commission"

Energy Efficiency for Small Business

The Energy Efficiency for Small Business Program is currently recruiting small businesses across New South Wales to a new program that helps lower power bills and carbon pollution. I encourage all small businesses in the Lismore Electorate to take advantage of this rebate.

The Energy Efficiency for Small Business Program offers an energy assessment, a tailored action plan and a rebate of up to \$5,000 for making energy improvements that save the small businesses money as well as reducing the impact on the environment.

After the onsite energy assessment, the business will receive an action plan to help save electricity by improving the efficiency of existing equipment or installing new equipment that is more energy efficient. Return on investment timeframes are included in the plan for each action identified.

*“Funding of up to \$5000
is available”*

Small businesses in the Lismore electorate are eligible if they spend up to about \$20,000 a year on electricity or employ up to about 10 full time people. Funding of up to \$5000 is available.

A rebate of up to \$5,000 is available to pay for half the cost to implement the action plan recommendations that have a return on investment period of more than two years.

Rebates will be paid for improvements to lighting, including skylights, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, boilers, air compressors, commercial refrigeration, electric motors, insulation and hot water systems.

The Energy Efficiency for Small Business Program closes 30 June 2011.

For more details email NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water sustainbus@environment.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 361 967.

Student Insurance

Did you know children who attend public schools are not covered by insurance during their school time, even when representing the school?

A mother of a Wollumbin High School student does now after having to wait eight months for her son to have reconstructive knee surgery in a public hospital in lieu of forking out \$8,300 for private treatment.

Following her son's accident in March which occurred whilst the boy was representing his school in regional soccer trials, this mother was told that only if the Department of Education and Training was found to be at fault would any out-of-pocket expenses for her son's operation would be paid, and only if negligence was found.

....**Continued page 4**

Continued from Page 3 ...

How do you prove negligence in a soccer game? You can't.

A school principal contacted me recently requesting that I make representation on the school's behalf regarding reciprocal rights for ambulance cover when students travel interstate, including to the Australian Capital Territory, on school excursions.

Currently many schools do not have their students covered under those circumstances and therefore run a risk.

When students cross a state border and an accident occurs, parents are up for considerable sums for ambulance support. A simple solution, as suggested by this said principal, would be the reinstatement of reciprocal ambulance rights for students on school excursions, especially across border areas.

I approached Ms Verity Firth, the Minister for Education and Training, about this and she sent back a response with an attached copy of an ambulance school cover bulletin that was issued to principals.

The bulletin states that if schools do not have ambulance school cover, only students whose parents have a Commonwealth Government health care card or who hold private health insurance with ambulance cover are covered for ambulance costs relating to injury or illness. The principal mentioned above even considered cancelling the school's major year 6 excursion to Canberra and a year 4 excursion to Brisbane because of the potential cost to families.

The New South Wales Department of Education and Training has stated that parents of children injured at school will be compensated for medical costs if the school is at fault, but in games of football, rugby league, rugby union, Australian rules, netball or whatever, no-one is at fault—no-one goes out of their way to cause damage to someone else.

So parents, please be aware that your children are not covered, even if they are representing their school, unless you have private health insurance or possess a Commonwealth Government health care card.

In addition, students are not covered for an accident interstate if they are required to be transported by ambulance unless they have private health care cover.

“only students whose parents have a Commonwealth Government health care card or who hold private health insurance with ambulance cover are covered for ambulance costs relating to injury or illness”

North Coast Guides Hanging in Parliament

Earlier this month I was proud to have had hung in the NSW Parliament House a local artwork made by North Coast Girl Guides.

The wall hanging of 100 girls was made by 100 girl guides in the year that marks 100 years of guiding.

Each of the Guides made the girls featured in the wall hanging in their own likeness, making it a completely unique piece of work.

The North Pacific Coast Region (stretching from Tweed Heads to Forster) of the NSW Girl Guides approached me recently to assist in having their Centenary wall hanging exhibited in Parliament House.

I was more than happy to arrange this, as they are a well-loved organisation playing a large role in the development of young girls in Australia, and indeed in our area.

In this, the centennial year of guiding, it is an enormous honour for the Guides to have their work on display in Parliament House.

On Friday 3 December I was honoured to have the Deputy State Commissioner for Girls Guides, Ms Joanne Muller, visit Parliament House for an official unveiling of the wall hanging.

Ms Muller explained that the wall hanging was designed and prepared by Mrs Patricia (Trish) Templeton, a former Unit Leader and District Leader in Northern Rivers Division.

At the North Pacific Coast Region Centenary Camp in the October holidays, the Senior Guides did the lettering, the Junior Guides sponge-painted the background and the Guides painted guide uniforms on the little calico dolls and gave them hair. The dolls were then glued to the canvas.

The wall hanging will remain on display in Parliament House for a period of three months.



Community Building Partnerships Announced

My congratulations to the organisations listed below from the Lismore electorate, which were successful in gaining funding under the Community Building Partnership Grants.

These groups will share in the \$700 000 allocated to much needed projects within our electorate, which includes the additional \$300 000 for having a high unemployment rate in the Lismore electorate.

Sadly many groups have missed out on receiving a grant this time and understandably will be disappointed.

A lot of great projects will not go ahead because they did not receive Community Building Funding and do not fit into the criteria of other NSW Government department grants.

The overwhelming response from across the Lismore Electorate for the Community Building Partnership Grants is proof that communities are struggling to source funding.

To those groups who were unsuccessful, please look to other grants available which may assist your projects.

The website www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au is a vital source for groups who are seeking a funding avenue for a project.

Successful Community Building Partnership Grant recipients: -

- West of the Range Pony Club Inc
- Tyalgum Literary Institute and Progress Association Inc
- Tweed Border Hockey Association
- The Wiangaree Public Reserve Trust
- South Lismore Celtic Football Club Inc
- Nimbin Health and Welfare Association Inc
- Nimbin Agricultural and Industrial Society Inc
- Murwillumbah Cricket
- Murwillumbah Community Centre Inc
- Mallanganee Campdraft Grounds Reserve Trust
- Lismore Thistles Soccer Club Inc
- Lismore PCYC
- Lismore Parish Centre Preschool
- Kyogle Tennis Club Inc
- Kyogle FC Inc
- Far North Coast Baseball Association Inc
- Eden Creek/Fairymount Preschool
- Dunoon Preschool Inc
- Clunes Community Preschool Association Inc
- Bentley Community Preschool Inc
- Albert Park Primary School P&C Committee

Congratulations to this month's high achievers: -

- **Sergeant Grant Martin**, of Tabulam Police Station, on being awarded the Customer Service Officer of the Year award for exceptional actions in initiation programs to improve Police and community relations.
- **Zenon Kosmider**, of Kyogle High School, on being awarded the Kyogle Lions Youth of the Year Award for 2010 and **Melissa Hoffman**, of Woodenbong Central School, on being named Youth of the Year Speech Winner in the Kyogle Lions Youth of the Year Awards.
- **Luke Vassella**, of Goonellabah, on having received the Australian Songwriters' Association Award for the Australian section for his song *Lismore Girl*.
- **Lucy Barker**, former Kadina High School student, on being awarded a Certificate of Commendation for services to the community. Lucy was presented with an inscribed medallion by Her Excellency the Governor Marie Bashir AC CVO at Government House, Sydney, on 24 November. I was also able to congratulate Lucy with a certificate at a special presentation at Kadina High on 9 December. (Lucy is pictured left with Principal Ian Davies and I.)
- Volunteers of **Friends of the Koala Care Centre** in East Lismore on winning the inaugural 2010 Northern Rivers Volunteer Team of the Year.
- **Mummulgum Public School** and **Modanville Public School** on being recipients of the Sydney Markets 2010 Promoting the Consumption of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Combined with Physical Activity Grant – Mummulgum for their 'Health Kids Healthy Choices' program and Modanville for their 'Our Edible Garden and Orchard' program.



Thomas George MP
55 Carrington Street
Lismore NSW 2480

Phone: 02 6621 3624

Fax: 02 6622 1403

E-mail: Lismore@parliament.nsw.gov.au

THE NATIONALS
for Regional NSW