

CENTRALIAN Advocate Editorial

Lack of outreach hurting at-risk kids

THERE has been much debate over whether the recent closure of the Youth Street Outreach Service has critically affected the community, especially from a policing perspective.

Questions have been raised over the grassroots cause of the spike in illicit activity by youth in the past few months with the NT Government recognising the issue, but reinforcing the latest crime statics, which indicate significant decreases in offences across the board.

However, youth issues have long been present in this town. We recently saw a spate of inhalant cases among minors, multiple damages to properties – both commercial and residential – and other personal attacks on individuals within the municipality.

And so, the question remains: why are we yet to find a control mechanism to combat youth crime?

One commonly recurring notion is that the blame for such offences should be attributed to the parents, their lack of discipline and refusal to promote education.

Unfortunately there is no real broad scoping mechanism that can monitor individual households, seeking out where the detrimental circumstances lie. But, what we do know is that these kids are leaving their home for differing reasons and resorting to the streets to seek safety, entertainment and attention – this is where YSOS workers came in handy.

The NT Government continually dub YSOS as a “taxi service” with no real purpose other than to collect disadvantaged kids and return them to their violent and socially tangled homes, gaining no valuable lessons other than a reliance on authorities when trouble breaks.

However, the service was actually valuable in a variety of ways. The organisations’ workers – the individuals who bravely combed the dangerous streets of Alice Springs at 3am – were able to identify, communicate with and stabilise minors prior to the offences taking place.

They became a guardian figure when the child’s parents were physically unable to monitor their activity. They worked alongside police to effectively combat the issue and highlight problematic situations in the child’s home life. They were able to establish a relationship with the Department of Children and Families to remove children from high risk situations and place them into out-of-home care.

So, the question that seriously needs to be considered is: are these parents really ready to tackle youth issues alone? Will vulnerable children be placed further at risk as authorities take refocus the eyes of YSOS workers elsewhere?



Keep ALEC active

I was saddened and angered to learn that operational funds for Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC) have been slashed by the NT Government.

Alice Springs will miss out on all the innovative environmental education programs initiated by Arid Lands Environment Centre, such as the Eco Fair, Alice Solar City and Desert WaterSmart programs, Biodiversity Matters, and the Bowerbird Tip Shop, among many others, if this organisation is forced to shut after 34 years of service to the community.

Facebook and web comments related to the fracking debate

“Australia needs to learn some lessons from the USA on the disasters caused from fracking, rivers and creeks ruined forever, underground water ruined forever. Do a google there is heaps of info there that we should be familiar with.”

Old Territorian TENNANT CREEK

“Hi, if we got rid of the “Ban the Bomb” mentality hangover from the 70s we could be using the safest power source; Nuclear Power

Letters to the Editor

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ALEC has taken the lead in many local environmental causes, including halting the Angela Pamela Uranium mine, helping traditional owners fight the unfair Muckatj

Waste Dump and educating Central Australians around fracking issues.

Is this the Government’s way of silencing those who advocate for good environmental

practices and impact assessments before major projects are undertaken?

Does the Government not want our population educated about renewable energies, clever ways to live in our harsh climate, or participate in all the amazing activities associated with Science Week and the Eco Fair?

I, for one, will be lobbying our NT Environment Minister to reconsider this ludicrous decision and have joined the Desert Defenders program to help keep ALEC active in our community for many decades to come.

Jill Pender Gillen

ONLINE COMMENTS

Stations. We mine Uranium and don’t put it to use but send it overseas which is a waste of Australia’s resources.”

Omexa PALMERSTON

“It is irresponsible to compare shale-fracking with coal seam fracking because the two are happening in entirely different depth. There is no groundwater at the depth at which shale-fracking

takes place. Fracking is taking place in many parts of the world and it produces a good deal of the gas that is used in the World today. There is more pollution and damage to the environment caused in the manufacture of solar panels and there are more health risks in living near wind turbines than in fracking, not to mention the destruction of birds by wind turbines.”

Uncle PALMERSTON

Check out our website www.ntnews.com.au/centralian-advocate or like us on Facebook

How important is the mining industry to Alice Springs?

We welcome your letters to the Centralian Advocate. Letters to the Editor should be 200 words or less and sent to PO Box 2254, 2 Gap Road, Alice Springs 0871, or via email to ceneditorial@aliceadvocate.com.au and include your name and address. Electoral editorial comment published in the Centralian Advocate is authorised by Bryan Littlely of 2 Gap Road, Alice Springs

Quote of the week



“It has been a better event than I dared hope for – I could not have asked for anything better”

ROSS GEOGHEGAN, ULYSSES AGM EVENT DIRECTOR AFTER THE WEEK-LONG ACTIVITIES IN ALICE SPRINGS



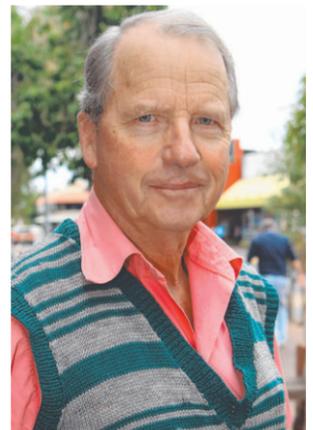
Sharon Hargreaves
I can see the opportunities but I like to think that the first Australians should be listened to and respected. It can happen and be the best of both worlds with opportunities for everyone.



Jaryn Rogers
I do not like mining. We should conserve the land and not destroy it. People come from all around the world to see this land, not a hole in the ground



Meredith Campbell
I have to steel myself to answer this. It is very important to keep our economy shiny and bright. There has to be open discussion, we should not leave the dialogue underground.



Peter Bannister
It is vital. If there was no business, the rest of us would die. There is no problem with encouraging the industry as miners get on with the job when they know the ore is there.

ALICE BY NUMBERS

24.7

THE percentage drop in sexual assaults in Alice Springs from March 2013 to April 2014 compared to the previous year.

\$750k

the amount allocated by the NT Government for operational costs of a mobile 4WD breast screen bus

17

THE number of days until the 2014 Tatts Finke Desert Race begins