CLP picks Hendo pal
Griggs earns nod to face Labor’s Hale in Solomon

By NIGEL ADLAM

A FRIEND of Labor Chief Minister Paul Henderson was last night chosen to contest the next federal election for the CLP.

Palmerston’s deputy mayor Natasha Griggs will take on the ALP’s Dennis Hale in Solomon.

The seat, Labor’s most marginal in the country, covers Darwin and the satellite city of Palmerston.

It was won by Labor on Green preferences from the CLPs Dave Tolner at the 2007 election by 196 votes.

Mr Hale, who won Darwin’s northern suburbs but lost his home-town of Palmerston at the last poll, said he would stand again.

Ms Griggs was chosen at a pre-selection meeting in Katherine.

She beat Darwin City Council alderman Garry Lambert and Tan End Tourism chief Tony Clementson.

Mr Griggs, 40, who grew up with Mr Henderson’s wife Stacey, said: “Solomon is winnable but there’s a lot of hard work to do.”

The CLP did not select a candidate for Lingaur, the massive electorate that stretches from the South Australian border to Darwin’s rural region.

The Northern Territory News understands the party is having difficulty finding anyone willing to challenge Warren Snowdon, the junior minister who made Lingaur one of the safest Labor seats in Australia at the 2007 election.

The CLP said a favoured candidate for Lingaur was the NT News yesterday named Tennant Creek businessman Tony Christensen as the candidate.

He did not deny he had shown interest in standing but said he had never signed nomination forms.

The CLP said it expected the election early next year and it would contest Lingaur.

Nigel Scullion was chosen unopposed to defend his Senate seat for the CLP.

Labor Senator Trish Crossin said she would also stand again.

Cruisers stunned by snake in Mall

By NADJA HAINKE

DARWIN’s shopkeepers were kept busy as a boatload of tourists converged on the city centre yesterday.

Most of the stores were open in the Smith Street Mall as about 1400 visitors arrived aboard the luxurious Volendam at Fort Hill Wharf in the morning.

“We basically just arrived but we’re enjoying it.”

The visitors were eager to discover the tropical Top End city, with only a few hours to spare onboard.

“We basically just arrived but we’re enjoying it.”

Canadian traveller Fernande Husar said.

She and fellow tourists, husband Peter and Pauline and Bernard Demers, boarded the cruise ship in Singapore.

It was an opportunity to celebrate Ms Demers’ 70th birthday.

The quartet was stunned to see a python snake in the middle of the mall.

But everyone trusted the legless reptile.

“I’m not going anywhere near it,” Ms Husar said.

The 240m cruise ship is owned by Dutch company Holland America Line and a 14-day cruise costs at least $2200 per person.

The ship was due to leave Darwin for Sydney late yesterday afternoon.

Britney ventures out to party

BRITNEY Spears spent her last night in Melbourne at Eave nightclub in Rundlebank, but drinking was strictly off limits.

Spears arrived at Eave at around 11.30pm on Friday with her encourage of security and headed straight to the private Dragon room at the club.

She left there at 3.30am yesterday.

The room was reserved for her and her dancers.

Sources said part of the strict conditions were that no alcohol – or even energy drinks like Red Bull – were to be served, a far cry from her old days in nightclubs.

Spears pictured sat by herself most of the night in a corner as her dancers mingled in the main room with dark sunglasses on despite being in a dark nightclub.

However, she did surprise guests by entering the DJ booth in the main room of the club at 1am, when her dancers did a show for the club.

She was constantly surrounded by her entourage of big security guards, which is evident in a photo the Sunday Territorian obtained from one of the night clubs.

It’s the first time Spears has been out after a concert during her Australian tour.

“She promised her dancers she would have one night out in Australia and this was it,” one source said.

Spears left for Adelaide yesterday morning.

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Top End suicide intervention

Statistics show there’s been a twofold increase in the number of schoolies arrested for being drunk in public, compared with 21 in the opening week of 2008.

He said 406 tickets were issued for consuming alcohol in a public place compared with 331 last year.

“I would say their intox levels are the highest I have seen in the many years I have been doing schoolies.”

Top End Tourism head Tony Civitarese as the candidate.

The 240m cruise ship was due to leave Darwin for Sydney late yesterday afternoon.

Slipping into town:

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Tourists Paulette Demers, Bernard Demers (holding snake) and Peter Husar took a closer look at a Top End snake in Darwin’s Smith Street Mall yesterday, RIGHT: The Volendam tied up at Fort Hill Wharf. Pictures: KATRINA BRIDGEFORD

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