

\$5k before election

Foxy gave Larisa \$10k donation

CHRISTOPHER WALSH

LARISA Lee was given a \$10,000 donation through a company owned by prominent Darwin businessman John Foxy Robinson in the lead up to the last election, candidate returns revealed yesterday.

According to documents filed with the NT Electoral Commission, Ms Lee used the money for advertising, including \$2500 for broadcast ads, \$2500 for print ads, \$2500 for campaign material and \$500 for direct mailing.

There is no record of those totals being reported by media organisations she claims to have bought advertising with.

Ms Lee also claimed she spent \$2500 on "polling and research" in her bush seat of Arnhem. Despite her polling research and ads, she only managed to earn 117 votes — good enough for last place.

Ms Lee infamously propped up the minority Giles Government during the last months of their reign. Neither Ms Lee nor Adam Giles ever revealed what deal was made for Ms Lee's support.

Ms Lee had a scandal-plagued run in Territory politics, being accused shortly after winning her seat in 2012 of misappropriating money from the Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation to run her campaign. She claimed she later paid that back but had done nothing wrong.

She pleaded guilty to assaulting her niece while sitting as an MLA and later had her electorate vehicle taken away for allegedly allowing her unlicensed nephew to drive it because she was intoxicated.

But Mr Giles gave her another car out of his office which she allegedly used for a midnight cattle duffing operation on private land during the campaign.

She did not return calls or answer questions yesterday.

Mr Robinson, a renowned CLP supporter, told the *NT News* he gave her the money because she asked for it. He said he knew her and her father. "To me it wasn't a lot of money," he said. "There's no secrets with me, I donate to both parties."



John 'Foxy' Robinson gave Larisa Lee a \$10,000 donation before the last election

TriStar money changes hands

CHRISTOPHER WALSH

THE former CLP Government was given a \$5600 donation from a Texas-based coal seam gas company just days before it went into caretaker mode.

Candidate disclosure returns released yesterday listed former chief minister Adam Giles as being given the donation on behalf of the party by TriStar Petroleum on July 29, 2016 — less than a week before the company was allowed to potentially triple the time they had to explore 15,000sq km of land near the South Australian border.

The deal was finalised on the last day before the government went into caretaker mode on August 5.

A spokeswoman for TriStar told the *NT News* the donation was part of an industry dinner hosted by the CLP on July 5 — and was given to the CLP party — not to Mr Giles directly.

Former CLP president Tory Menschely provided the same reason. She said it was an error the donation was listed under Mr Giles's name.

The agreement with TriStar was reportedly arranged by a government representative when he travelled to the US in 2015.

A Mines and Energy Department spokesman told *The Australian* in August that TriStar was offered a mineral authority under a "revised administrative procedure" not publicly announced because the change was not considered significant.

Mr Giles recently took a job with mining magnate Gina Rinehart. He did not respond

to an email yesterday.

The candidate returns published yesterday showed individual Country Liberal candidates led the donation charge in the lead up to last August's election, but their spending failed to get most of their high-roller candidates elected.

Gerard Maley — who ran unsuccessfully against independent Nelson MLA Gerry Wood — racked up the most in donations, coming in at \$66,000. That cash was used for advertising and a paid staffer. Mr Wood, by contrast spent \$14,000 on campaign material and won the electorate easily.

Former deputy chief minister Peter Styles spent \$42,000 on campaign advertising, only to lose his Sanderson seat to Kate Worden.

Failed Casuarina CLP candidate Giovanna Webb spent just over \$30,000 in her electorate but lost to incumbent Labor MLA Lauren Moss.

Independent candidates also took in a lot of donations, including former Labor leader Delia Lawrie who raked in \$20,300 from property companies. Current Nhulunbuy MLA Yingiya Mark Guyula raised over \$20,000 from what he claims were 90 different donors.

Eighteen of the 115 candidates have not filed returns yet, said NTEC commissioner Iain Loganathan. "The outstanding returns will be chased up," he said.

"A few candidates are yet to provide all the requested documentation for the compliance review and this will also be chased up."

Deputy Speaker Chansey Paech fails to disclose donations

CHRISTOPHER WALSH

DEPUTY Speaker and Namatjira MLA Chansey Paech (inset) failed to disclose more than \$2000 in campaign donations he received from the public sector workers union.

Returns published by the NT Electoral Commission yesterday show Mr Paech declared no donations despite receiving a \$2421 donation



from the CPSU that they had listed as donors.

Mr Paech also received a number of donations totalling more than \$7500 from a Go Fund Me page that did not appear anywhere on his candidate returns. Some of those donations were over and above the \$200

limit needed to be listed and included anonymous donors.

Labor secretary Kent Rowe said the Go Fund Me page — called "Chansey Paech for Namatjira 2016" — was run by Labor and would be included in the party's returns due March 1. He said the failure to disclose the CPSU donation was an error.

"(Mr Paech's) election return should have included the

in-kind donation from the CPSU, which paid for campaign T-shirts," Mr Rowe said. "The return is being amended and resubmitted to the Northern Territory Electoral Commission. "Funds raised on Go Fund Me were donated to the Labor Party and are a part of Labor's electoral returns."

A spokesman from the Chief Minister's office said the error was regrettable.

"We take the issue of political donations seriously," he said. "That's why we're holding a donations inquiry and why we're developing an ICAC to ensure integrity and transparency for Territorians."

A report by BDO into candidate disclosures found that not all donors disclosed their donations and that 18 out of 115 candidates did not file their returns at all.

Regional arts tour grants are available

TERRITORY arts and cultural heritage organisations with shows worth sharing with the nation are encouraged to apply for grants under the Visions of Australia regional exhibitions touring program.

Each year, \$2.4 million is available to support arts and cultural organisations to develop or tour exhibitions.

NT Senator Nigel Scullion encouraged organisations with the capacity to tour to apply for grants.

"The Visions of Australia program gives Australians the opportunity to experience high quality art and cultural exhibitions that might not otherwise be able to travel to regional areas," he said. "It's an oppor-

tunity to share the Territory's unique arts and culture throughout Australia." Each tour must include at least three venues outside of the NT with tours to regional venues a higher priority for funding.

Two application rounds are held each year in February and October. Applications for this round close on March 10.

Sugar tax not the answer to obesity

THE Turnbull government isn't swallowing the latest advice from nutrition experts for a sugar tax and junk food bans to tackle the obesity crisis.

Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt says the coalition is tackling obesity but increasing the family's weekly grocery bill is not the answer. "We do not support a new tax on sugar to

address this issue," Mr Hunt said yesterday. Instead, the government has been working to implement a raft of initiatives to "encourage all Australians to live healthy lives", including the \$7 million Girls Make Your Move campaign and the \$160 million Sporting Schools program. "Our Health Star Rating system helps peo-

ple to make healthier choices when choosing packaged foods at the supermarket and encourages the food industry to reformulate their products to be healthier," Mr Hunt said.

The Obesity Policy Coalition released a 47-point plan, compiled by 100 experts from 53 organisations, to help improve the diets of Australians.