**CENTRALIAN Advocate Editorial**

**Big weekend ahead for all Territorians**

WE LIVE in a land of opportunities. Sometimes so much so that it becomes difficult to decide which opportunities to embrace, and which we are forced to refuse.

Take this Picnic Day long weekend for example. Central Australia will come alive with exciting events, from the vibrant inclusiveness of the Pride Carnivale in Alice Springs to the huge Harts Range races taking place off the Plenty Highway.

Even the remotest residents of the NT will have an abundance of activities to choose from, with the action-packed Yuendumu Sports Carnival kicking off in the Tanami community.

But these opportunities would never happen without hard work.

When you’re out and about over this long weekend, spare a thought for the organisers of such events, who have dedicated large chunks of their year to creating something we can all enjoy.

And don’t forget the loyal emergency workers – NT Police, fire and rescue, St John and NTES – who, while we are out partying, are keeping us protected.

During this weekend, some of our other emergency forces will also have a well-earned chance to let their hair down and enjoy some of the activities on offer.

Constables Liz Williams and Deb Pieniacki will be among them – the two Mounted Police unit officers will be among the jockeys vying for a win at Harts Range.

Let’s make sure these officers can enjoy their time off the beat – stay safe and take care of each other on the road and around town this long weekend.

**Quote of the Day**

"Travelling for business is vital to drive the development of North Australia and creates more opportunities for Territorians."

**CHRISTIAN STEVENS**

**Letters to the Editor**

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**Huge thank you**

**RECENTLY, I was in Alice Springs Hospital for 10 days. During this time I experienced the most efficient, caring, patient, helpful and nothing-too-much-trouble atmosphere.**

From the doctors to the cleaners – a very happy atmosphere. As a teaching hospital there could not be better place to learn from a staff who always have a smile.

We in Alice Springs are very fortunate to have this facility. Thank you everyone on the Medical Ward.

**Chris Leaby, Alice Springs**

**Simplify the vote**

A BY-ELECTION costing suffering ratepayers another $100,000 is a total nonsense. Wouldn’t you think that a “clever country” could pass legislation allowing the local electoral office (MyVote Central on Hartley St) to conduct a midweek vote over their counter over (say) a week and perform the count? Maybe saving our money is a problem?

Another thought: trial an online voting system. For those unable to do so then training would assist to educate the electors of Alice for the inevitable future.

**Mark Wilson, Alice Springs**

**Justify your travel**

I CALL on Adam Giles and the CLP to adopt Territory Labor’s overseas ministerial travel policy to be open and transparent with Territorians.

I recently announced that a Territory Labor Government will undertake rigorous evaluation from the public and private sectors about how the proposed overseas ministerial travel will benefit the Northern Territory.

These assessments will be made available to the public. Prior to departure, the minister’s itinerary will be published, removing the ability to sneak off on secret junkets. On return from overseas travel a full parliamentary report on the trip will be provided by the minister and will be made available to the public. Costs associated will also be made available to the public.

This policy applies effective immediately to all overseas shadow ministerial travel taken by Labor Opposition. Costs associated will also be made available to the public.

**Michael Gunner, NT Labor leader**

**CLP’s petty snub**

THE failure of the NT Government to invite either myself or Senator Peris to the National Aboriginal Health Summit commencing tomorrow in Darwin was another demonstration of the petty political partisanship of the CLP. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health should require that we all work together in as bipartisan a way as possible so we are to achieve the national objective of closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes.

It’s concerning that the NT Government has not bothered to include the NT Federal Labor representatives in these important health discussions.

As a former indigenous health minister I was responsible for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan which has been adopted by the Federal Government. I have a demonstrat-ed commitment to closing the gap and it’s pettiness of the Giles Government to refuse to allow Senator Peris and I to attend.

I am conscience of the need to work co-operatively and I have been in regular dialogue with the Assistant federal Minister for Health Fiona Nash to ensure that we continue a bipartisan approach to closing the gap.

This conference is very important. The decision by the CLP Government to exclude both Senator Peris and myself is as shortsighted as it is stupid and petty.

We will only ever close the gap by working together.

**Warren Snowdon, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Indigenous Affairs**

**To do what they say they’re going to do. To walk the talk.**

**MELISSA CHANNING**

**DAVID ZAGLAS**

**MARIE RANCON**

**TINA HALL**

**What would you vote for in a town councillor?**

**“To be honest and care for the community and to be involved in the community so that there is a voice for the community.”**

**“Honesty is a big must and transparency is important.”**

**“I think honesty and to be involved in the community and to feel more involved, that is important. Honest is most important.”**

**“They’re going to do. To walk the talk.”**

**ALICE Springs woman, out of 3D Aussies, is heading to New York City on a “cake crawl”.$10,250 THE cost of Adam Giles’s round trip flight from Alice Springs to Darwin last September. $300,000 THE wild camel numbers across the country, feeding a new Centralian industry – camel meat and diary.**