



ROBYN LAMBLEY MLA

Member for Araluen

ARALUEN COMMUNITY NEWS



March 2012

Postal: PO Box 2654, Alice Springs NT 0871 - Tel: 08 8953 6580 - Fax: 08 8951 5820 - E-Mail: electorate.araluen@nt.gov.au

Dear Araluen Residents,

Great things happening along Gap Road

The good news for Araluen is that we will see several new and exciting developments in 2012. And it seems that a lot of the action might be along our famous Gap Road. Rumour has it that the For Sale signs at the old Melanka Site have been removed and there are renewed plans to develop the site. This is fantastic news for the town. I hear that the plans have been modified to reflect a slightly more modest and affordable commercial development.

The lovely owners of the 24 Hour Store, Liz and John Allen have been through the "post-demolition" years of Melanka. The new Melanka development will hopefully mark another prosperous phase in their business. The 24 Hour maybe considered the epicentre of anti-social activity in Alice Springs at night but the store itself remains a modern and reliable convenience store that has served the community for many years.

As Liz told me recently, the social problems occur around the 24 Hour Store. On the premises and inside the store it is safe, clean and well stocked with everything you would expect in a top convenience store. The 24 Hour is always well lit and fully marked by CCTV cameras 24/7, so don't be put off.

The Alice Springs Hospital upgrade is well underway, due for completion in 2013. Hospital staff should be given gold medals for their patience working in and around what seems like a permanent work site.

Although not in Araluen, the opening of the northern end of the Todd Mall is causing some controversy. Many long term residents I've spoken to are unhappy about the decision. However the increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic along this section of the Mall will hopefully serve to provide a safer environment and stimulate business activity.

Piggly's is another fantastic convenience store along Gap Road that had a face-lift and upgrade last year. Having a bright, modern store in this particular area of the Gap goes a long way to lifting the spirits of local residents.

The Quest Apartments are expanding their enterprise from South Terrace onto Gap Road. The Neck family are renowned for their quality and innovation in business. They have bought to Alice Springs a beautiful accommodation facility. Congratulations to Greg and Val Neck and Paul and Jenny Montefiore on the expansion of Quest in Alice Springs.

The Gapview Hotel also has major plans to expand and redevelop their premises due to commence this year. If you haven't been to the Gapview in recent times, do yourself a favour and drop in. It is a beautiful hotel with a beautiful outdoor pool area, great for families and kids of all ages. It is a credit to Ray and Di Loechel who have done an amazing job in restoring the Gapview to its former glory.

I am so excited about these developments and proud that people feel Alice Springs is still a great place to invest.



International Women's Day at the Araluen Electorate Office - 8 March



Dates to Remember

EASTER DATES 2012

Good Friday: 6th April 2012
Easter Saturday: 7th April 2012
Easter Sunday: 8th April 2012
Easter Monday: 9th April 2012



2012 ALICE SPRINGS CUP CARNIVAL

Girls Day Out: 14th April
Family Fun Day: 21st April
Ladies Day: 28th April
Young Guns Day: 5th May
Cup Day: 7th May



2012 SCHOOL DATES - SEMESTER 1

Term 1: 30 January - 5 April
Easter Break: 6 April - 9 April
Term Break: 9 April - 13 April
Term 2: 16 April - 22 June

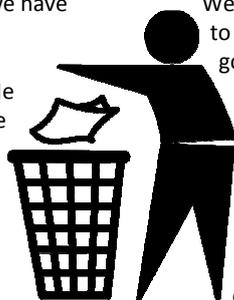


Litter: We've got it wrong!

Litter is a big, expensive problem in Alice Springs. A major slice of the Alice Springs Town Council annual budget (our rate payer's money) is committed to cleaning up people's mess. But this does nothing to teach people how to "do the right thing". It actually serves to reinforce bad behaviour and ultimately, it exemplifies just how completely and utterly ridiculous we have become as a society.

A man came into my office this week extremely angry. He told me how he was at the Alice Springs Court House the day before and was horrified by the amount of rubbish strewn around the park across the road. He could not believe people could be so blatantly disrespectful and flout the law. The man went to the Police Station and asked them what they could do about the littering.

The Police told him that they were too busy to address the problem of littering and that it was not considered a priority. The man then went to the Alice Springs Town Council and was told that unless you can actually catch people in the act of littering nothing can be done. The man was stunned and bewildered by these polite but dismissive responses. He questioned how Governments could spend huge amount of money on picking up rubbish when positive initiatives such as sporting facilities and parks were starved of funds. "What has become of our town?" he asked me.



The perception of what is right and wrong has become blurred when it comes to litter control in Alice Springs. Most people would remember the highly successful National litter reduction campaigns launched decades ago that changed the behaviour of generations of Australians. The great messages of the Keep Australia Beautiful, Tidy Towns and the Do the Right Thing campaign have been lost. The deep shame associated with littering has vanished.

We need to bring back that naming and shaming when it comes to littering. We should hold each other to account and reinforce good behaviour. This is the responsibility of all levels of Government but as individuals we also have a role in reminding offenders that littering is not acceptable.

"Excuse me you've just left your KFC box on the lawn! Can you pick it up please?"

The Police and Council Rangers are in the best position to constantly remind people to pick up their rubbish. Perhaps the ballooning population of prisoners at the Alice Springs Corrections Centre could provide the labour to clean up of our streets rather than using our precious Council funds.

In the scheme of things littering might not be a critical social problem but it is symptomatic of a society in which the basic values of cleanliness and tidiness and consequences for bad behaviour have seriously slipped.

Crime Wave in Araluen

The electorate of Araluen has borne the brunt of the recent Alice Springs crime wave. In past weeks there have been two murders, several serious assaults and numerous domestic violence incidences and break-ins in the Araluen electorate. There must be a serious and immediate response by Government and police to the crisis. Instead of short term police operations, we require a sustained and prolonged attack to keep crime under control. During Operation Thresher, which ran between December and February, there was a reported impact on levels of crime. Anecdotally, I was told by residents that levels of break-ins and property crime were lower than normal. With the additional police presence in the town as part of Thresher withdrawn, we are witnessing a dramatic increase in serious crime. The Government must be convinced to place an additional 20 police on the beat in the town. The Government must also acknowledge that its alcohol bans have failed the people of Alice Springs. Reduced trading hours and electronic ID checks has been a complete and utter failure in stemming alcohol related crime - In fact it appears to have made it worse. Families and seniors in suburbs such as Gillen and The Gap are now bearing the cost of the Government's failed policies. The average Alice Springs resident is now the victim of multiple home invasions and thefts by problem drinkers looking for grog.

The Local Government Elections - 24 March 2012

As a former Alderman and Deputy Mayor of Alice Springs I have an idea of the angst people go through when they make the decision to throw their hat in the ring for Local Government. Being an Alderman or Councillor is a very demanding role. To do the job well it takes considerable time, not just to attend the many meetings and social functions, but to research and study the business Council is presiding over.

To fully understand local issues and the possible solutions you must consult widely with people from all walks of life, not just the "experts". You need to grasp what the real people thinking about the state of the footpaths, street lighting and dump charges? You have to work hard to keep your ear to the ground. When you speak publicly on a topic you need to ensure you have some credibility and that you represent a broad cross-section of the community.

Being a Local Government Councillor it is a voluntary position. You are paid a minimal allowance which may cover your telephone and fuel expense if you are lucky. Your time is provided free of charge. There are some perks, lots of cuppas and nibbles! For me the great privilege was connecting and working with people across areas I would not normally have ventured.

As a Councillor it is essential you work as a team. You must adhere to the rules and Standing Orders of Local Government. This can be incredibly difficult particularly when you feel that Council has made the wrong decision. Prior to motions being passed or decisions being passed the debate can be vigorous and aggressive in public. After a motion is passed, the expectation is that the Council is united. One must put aside their personal position and adopt the Council line. When emotions are still running high this can be extremely challenging.

The role of a Councillor is an elected leadership position which should be honoured. People who take the plunge into Local Government deserve far more recognition than what they get. It is a tough job with little or no thanks.

NT COUNCIL ELECTIONS
24 MARCH 2012

Voting is Compulsory

1800 MYVOTE or visit www.ntec.nt.gov.au
698663

The roller coaster ride of being a Local Government Councillor is not for everyone. It is certainly not for the faint hearted. A bullet-proof vest, a good sense of humour and a passion for debating is essential. I wish all candidates well and look forward to working with the new team after the election on 24th March 2012.