A Bright Future for Lawn Bowls

The Memorial Lawn Bowling Club was thrown into a state of panic when the Memo Club was suddenly placed into Voluntary Administration on 20 March 2012. In the short term the bowling club has access to the Memo facilities, on a user pay basis. But the long term future of lawn bowling is uncertain with the possible loss of the only functional Bowling Green in town.

The Club is now working hard to find an alternative home for lawn bowling, in the likely event the Memo does not survive in its current form. They are considering possible partnerships with the RSL Club and the Golf Club and trying to resurrect the now defunct and derelict old Alice Springs Bowling Club. All these options require a huge amount of negotiation, planning and money.

Despite the pickle they find themselves, the Memo Bowling Club continues to look to the future with their crucial role in the organisation and staging of the Masters Games Lawn Bowling program and participation in a full schedule of other bowling activities including the Bowls Australia Qualifying event in Alice Springs (2-5th Oct) and the Alice Springs Open (6-9th Oct). It seems lawn bowlers are a tough lot that persevere through adversity.

This determination to keep lawn bowls alive and active in Alice Springs has been due to the determination and commitment of their committee and membership. Over the past 4 months since the Memo closed, the Club has made several attempts to meet with the Minister for Central Australia, Sport & Recreation, Karl Hampton. The Minister has not met or spoken with any member of the Club. His unwillingness to even hear their concerns is very poor form. If it were the future of AFL football in Alice Springs at risk, I think the Minister might have a very different response.

A town the size of Alice Springs without lawn bowling is unthinkable! A Country Liberals Government will ensure that lawn bowling survives in Alice Springs and we will do whatever we can to support and assist the Memo Lawn Bowling Club to work through their challenges.

The Territory’s Debt Trap

The Labor Government has placed the Northern Territory in an extremely vulnerable economic position. For the past 4 years the Treasurer Delia Lawrie has spent wildly.

Since 2008 the Government has increasingly spent more than what it has received. Labor has set the Territory on a trajectory of increasing debt. The Government’s solution to every problem has been to increase borrowings placing us in a extremely high risk position.

The Northern Territory is now paying $650,000 per day in interest alone. It is estimated that in 4 years the level of debt will equate to interest repayments of approximately $1 million per day.

Think of what we could be spending this money on instead of interest repayments: schools, roads, health facilities, youth programs, pools, footpaths and parks. The waste and squandered opportunities of this Government is staggering.

Another 4 years of Labor could quite possibly put the Northern Territory in a similar position to many European countries, whereby the whole focus of the Government is paying interest on borrowings and nothing else.

Our loved and much prided lifestyle of freedom, prosperity and great opportunity is hanging by a thread thanks to a Government that has placed us in a position of potential ruin. Of all the States and Territories of Australia we have the worst debt to income ratio. And Labor has no plan to control our debt.

National experts are now speaking out publicly on the appalling state of financial affairs in the NT. The Labor Government is borrowing money to pay for the wages of Public Servants. Under Labor there is one guarantee and that is that things will get worse.

A Country Liberals Government will manage responsibly and bring the Territory back on track. A Country Liberals Government will provide a great long term future for Territorians.
Tough on Drunks

The bottom line is we have all had enough of drunks on our streets, no matter where you live; Alice Springs, Katherine, Ludmilla, Palmerston or Tennant Creek.

The Government launched their "Enough is Enough" $10 million campaign to reduce the number of drunks on our streets in 2011. Despite the money and the best of intentions, it simply has not worked.

I went to a bottle shop in Darwin recently and asked the shop attendant how many people he has had to refuse the sale of alcohol on the Banned Drinkers Register. He said he had worked in the bottle shop for 7 months and had never come across anyone on the Banned Drinkers Register. I asked him what sense he made of that. His response was simple:

“Well, if you know you are not going to get served grog, you are not going to bother trying. You just get someone else to buy it for you.”

Habitual drunks are not silly. In fact they are driven by their addiction. Drunks will acquire alcohol regardless of the price and the superficial obstacles to buying it. Why can most people see the obvious flaws in this policy when the Government continues to chant its success and virtues? There is no evidence to prove that alcohol consumption in Alice Springs has been reduced. People have had to change the way they purchase alcohol. More people buy alcohol through clubs and on-line traders. This area of alcohol trade is not being monitored or measured. I suspect it is a flourishing business for local and interstate alcohol merchants.

The Country Liberals are sick and tired of the whole community having to bear the cost of habitual drunks.

We will scrap the Banned Drinkers Register. We do not agree in the principle to everyone having to identify themselves to purchase alcohol. It is demeaning but more importantly unnecessary. The Banned Drinkers Register and the ID EYE identification system have not achieved anything since it was introduced in Alice Springs 4 years ago. Alcohol related violence, abuse and anti-social behaviour has increased proving that these reforms have failed.

A Country Liberals Government will introduce a three point strategy to remove drunks from our streets.

1. Anyone picked up for public drunkenness three times in six months will be declared a ‘habitual drunk’.
2. Habitual drunks will be issued with a control order to keep them off the streets and require that they undergo alcohol rehabilitation treatment.
3. Breaching a control order would trigger an automatic custodial sentence in a rehabilitation facility.

We will provide Alcohol Rehabilitation in a professional and meaningful way.

Marathon Runner Emma Kraft

Alice Springs and Araluen resident Emma Kraft, returned from the Gold Coast Airport Marathon in July with a 3minute and 30sec PB (personal best) time, placing her in the top 20 female for the ASICS Half Marathon. In a slick time of 1:23:15 she knows her new training and Pilates program must be working, not to mention the perfect race conditions at the Gold Coast.

“I had a good lead up to this event with other key races beforehand. I had a few 10kms which really helped and also racing in the NT City 2 Surf in Darwin, where I placed 3rd and gain over 1 minute PB”.

“I was excited to race at Gold Coast; I knew I was in shape for a PB, but by how much could only be answered on race day. I am happy with my time, but of course I now have another time in mind I want to break, so I am training for the Melbourne Half Marathon in October so hopefully I can do it then. However, before that I will race the City 2 Surf in Perth in August and City 2 Bay in Adelaide, in September.”

NT Elections 2012

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
GENERAL ELECTION
25th August 2012
Polling Day
Saturday 25 August
8am to 6pm

Where to vote in the Araluen Electorate:

Gillen Primary School
Milner Road, Alice Springs
Alice Springs Turf Club
(Pioneer Park Racecourse)
South Stuart Highway, Alice Springs

Postal: PO Box 2654, Alice Springs NT 0871  Tél: (08) 8953 6580  Fax: (08) 8953 8029  Email: electorate.araluen@nt.gov.au

New Direction Real Action