

FREE

CUNNINGHAM EXAMINER

NOVEMBER 2005

Free local newspaper

Welcome to the third issue of the *Cunningham Examiner*.

It will serve as a useful guide to what is happening in our local community.

The *Cunningham Examiner* will keep you up to date government policies affecting your daily life or community initiatives that will help us all.

We want to hear from you too. If you want to promote a community event or just make a comment either write to me at PO Box 387, Wollongong 2520 or send an email to Sharon.Bird.MP@aph.gov.au

Sharon Bird



Shop locally, create jobs and help our schools

A healthy vibrant shopping centre is at the heart of every thriving local community.

Shopping locally helps small retailers, but also creates jobs.

On 14 November I am inviting all business owners to become part of the Wollongong Card Community Rewards programme.

The Wollongong Card Community Rewards programme is proven, low-risk and operated by Pinpoint – the largest marketing company in the Asia Pacific. The programme already operates in 11 communities throughout Australia.

The Wollongong Card Community Rewards programme can increase local sales by encouraging local people to make local shops their first choice in buying goods and services. Customers, in turn, are rewarded for their shopping support.

And, best of all it gives us all a chance to help our local schools.

The Wollongong Card will allow you to direct Community Rewards to help the local school of your choice in a long-term, community based fundraising project.

On 14 November I urge you and local businesses to join me at the Wollongong Town Hall to hear more about the Wollongong Card, and how it can benefit local businesses and local schools.

Please phone my office on 4228 5899 for more information.



Sharon Bird gathering support for the Wollongong Card at Tramps in Wollongong.

NRMA's 10 handy ways



to save on petrol

- 1 Shop Around.
- 2 Refuel when prices are low: not when your tank is empty.
- 3 Fill up early: Petrol is usually cheapest to buy on Monday and early Tuesday. Save more than \$200 a year by buying petrol early in the week.
- 4 Avoid hard acceleration and braking: Flow with the traffic - smooth driving can reduce fuel consumption by up to 30%. Don't rest your left foot on the brake of an automatic vehicle – the extra drag increases fuel consumption by five per cent.
- 5 Watch your speed: By travelling at 90 km/h rather than 110 km/h you can reduce fuel consumption by 10% or more.
- 6 Lighten the load; Take off roof-racks and bullbars if they're not needed. Remove golf clubs or tools if you're not using them — and reduce fuel consumption by up to 5 per cent. Keep your tyre pressure towards the top of the manufacturer's recommended range.
- 7 Switch off: When stuck in traffic for any length of time turn the key to the "accessory" position (not to "off") and if an automatic transmission, shift to 'park'. Vehicles fitted with this feature typically reduce fuel consumption in urban areas by up to 15%.
- 8 Open the windows: When the weather is fine, switch-off the air-conditioning. This reduces fuel consumption by up to 10% in urban driving.
- 9 Shop smart: take advantage of a range of shopper docket schemes.
- 10 Service your car regularly: blocked air filters can increase fuel consumption significantly.

With thanks to NRMA Motoring & Services.

Kim Beazley has released Labor's Blueprint on Fuels if you would like a copy please phone my office on 4228 5899.

Howard's industrial laws – unfair, divisive and extreme

A 67-page booklet and glamorous TV commercials won't hide the truth. Wages and conditions in Australia are up for grabs to meet Mr Howard's 30-year ideological obsession.

We know that:

- Award conditions will be reduced;
- Australian Industrial Relations Commission will be gutted;
- Trade union rights will be further restricted;
- Minimum wages will be frozen; and
- Unfair dismissal protection will be abolished for 98% of workers.

In return, Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) will be encouraged. In fact, AWAs are Mr Howard's preferred new method of working out how much you'll be paid and under what conditions.

Since 1996 when AWAs were first introduced, only 2% or 200,000 Australian workers have them. Most not out of choice, but forced on them by their employer.

AWAs are not popular with workers because they reduce wages and conditions.



Illawarra Mercury 11.10.05

'Bullies could win' on IR

Australian 12.10.05

Voters backing Beazley on IR

Workplace for robots: PM under fire

• Churches attack anti-family changes
• We'll all be better off, says Howard

Sydney Morning Herald 11.10.05

Workers fear for Australian way of life

Susannah Moran
After working full-time for a drug company all week...

sold enough Turkish food yesterday. Organisers said about 40,000 workers, union members and children attended the free event.

fire services were already struggling because people were being forced to work on weekends. "This campaign is about the..."

Financial Review 8.8.05

Attack on minimum wages

Mr Howard has opposed each and every national wage case before the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) since 1996.

He boasts of wage increases since his election, but his 'record' is less than proud.

Had Mr Howard's annual submissions been accepted by the AIRC, minimum wages would have been cut by 1.55% in real terms.

The facts are that the minimum wage – the base of all wages – has fallen since 1996 from 61% of average weekly ordinary full-time adult earnings to just 49% today.

The Howard Government now wants another body to set minimum wages.

yourrightsatwork
worth fighting for

Pensioners under threat

Over the last 6 months I have been contacted by many pensioners expressing concerns about Mr Howard's plans for industrial relations.

They tell me that 'the changes don't mean much for me, but I'm worried about my son and daughter'.

Unfortunately, pensioners and other low-income earners will be affected by Mr Howard's new laws.

In Cunningham, 23,531 aged pensioners, disability support pensioners, war widows

and service pensioners, and parent payment recipients all rely on real wage increases to maintain the value of pensions.

Pensions are benchmarked to 25% of Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE).

Any rise in wages under this benchmark also means that pensions increase. However, any fall in wages, or lower wages, also means that the value of the pension will fall.

We all have a stake in fair and productive workplaces.



Pensioners will be affected by Mr Howard's industrial relations changes if wages fall as a result.

Saving children's lives

The 2005 Keepwatch campaign has been launched to reduce the tragic number of children drowning every year.

With an average of one child under the age of five drowning every week in Australia, the need to educate and inform the community is constant.

New resources available include a selection of Keepwatch Fact Sheets providing toddler water safety information for specific locations and scenarios. This series of eight fact sheets covers the following topics:

1. Supervision
2. Fencing
3. Water Familiarisation
4. Resuscitation
5. Water Safety around the Home
6. Bath Time Safety
7. Home Pool Safety
8. Farm Safety

For free toddler water safety information factsheets please use order form on page 4 of this newspaper or go to www.keepwatch.com.au



Keepwatch has been launched to stop the tragedy of children drowning.

Home safety tips

You can never be too safe around your home – especially with young children.

Four new leaflets are available from my office:

- Fire Safety at Home 'Be Prepared'
- Cot Safety
- Keeping Baby Safe
- Safe Toys for Kids

To order any of these free, handy leaflets please turn to page 4 of this newspaper.

Opening students' eyes to the world

I recently met a delegation of young people who have participated in exchange programs through AFS Australia.

Every year AFS Australia, through its many dedicated volunteers and host families, welcomes hundreds of international exchange students to Australia and sends Australian students overseas.

The delegation I met which included Australian students and two students visiting Australia. All had positive things to say about the program.

AFS Australia is currently recruiting high school students and adults to participate in school and community service exchange programs.

Exchange periods vary from one to twelve months and over 50 destinations are available. Australian students are eligible for more than 50 scholarships each year.

If you are interested please phone AFS on 1300 131 736 or visit www.afs.org.au to find out more.

What the students said about AFS

Opening a lot of doors

'Each exchange student's experience is different. Mine has turned my life upside down while opening a lot of doors.' – Kyle

Wonderful experience

'A wonderful experience, through which many friends were made, from Costa Rica and the other exchange students from AFS in the country.' – Dale

Great experience

'Being an exchange student was a great experience and has led to new opportunities for me. It matures a person while making friends for life with people all over the world. It's as cool as Cuban pie.' – Oscar

Unforgettable experience

'Being an exchange student in Japan has opened my eyes about the world and different cultures and making lifelong friends from all around the world while having a journey of a lifetime. It has been an experience that is unforgettable.' – Wayne

Great experience

'I've been living in Australia for two months and I'm having a great experience. I'm understanding how many things I can learn from staying with another family in another country. I'm really happy that I made the decision to have this experience.' – Laura

Learning a lot

'I've been here for 8 months now! This kind of experience opens your mind and you learn a lot of things about yourself. You have good and bad experiences, but at the end everything is great. Now I'm scared to go back to France and back to reality.' – Valentine



Sharon Bird meets a group of local students who are part of the AFS program.

Free information kits, factsheets and DVDs

To order your free copies, please tick the items you want.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Families Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Net Alert: Parents Internet Safety Tool Kit (CD-Rom) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keepwatch Toddler Water Safety Factsheets | <input type="checkbox"/> Superannuation Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Pensioner Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Connecting With Computers (DVD) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Safety at Home 'Be Prepared' | <input type="checkbox"/> Cot Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping Baby Safe | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Toys for Kids |

Your contact details

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please mail to: Sharon Bird MP, Member for Cunningham, PO Box 387, Wollongong NSW 2520 or fax to: 4228 5077

School books for Yogyakarta

I am sure that many local residents have used children's books at home, suitable for children ages 5-12, that they no longer need.

The children of Yogyakarta in Indonesia would love these books to help them learn English.

KOLLARAS for Kids and AUSTCARE would welcome your donations of books or money.

Make this important friendship building project a success.

Books can be deposited at:

- **Tosti Cellars Port Kembla**
136 Wentworth Street, Port Kembla

- **Tosti Cellars Cordeaux**
1/26 Derribong Drive, Cordeaux Heights
- **Tosti Cellars Woonona**
28 Park Road, Woonona East
- **Sharon Bird's Office**
Shop 501, Globe Lane, Wollongong
- **Wollongong City Gallery** – front desk

For more information please contact:
Mrs Liz Williams, Manager Special Events,
KOLLARAS Group on 42268300 or e-mail
liz@kollco.com.au or Dr Rob Goodfellow,
Wollongong City Gallery on 0419682950
or e-mail robgoodfellow@ozemail.com.au

We have a winner



Congratulations to Jordan Armstrong (pictured) and Nick Allen who won copies of Possum Magic for their excellent whale coloring from our last issue.

WIN A COPY OF POSSUM MAGIC

CHRISTMAS COLORING COMPETITION
– CLOSING 30 NOVEMBER 2005.

SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: CHRISTMAS COLORING COMPETITION, PO BOX 387, WOLLONGONG 2520



Name _____ Age _____ Phone _____

Address _____