



## Welcome to the July issue of the **Cunningham Examiner**:

Its purpose is to keep you updated on issues affecting our local community. I want to hear from you too. If you want to promote a community event or just make a comment, my contact details are:

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## **Petrol prices: Commissioner needed to give motorists a fair go**

**It's becoming more and more expensive to run the family car.**

**A recent NRMA report found the cost of running the family vehicle has jumped by nearly 40% in 5 years.**

That's why Kevin Rudd and Labor have plans for a tough new Petrol Commissioner to deliver savings at the petrol pump for motorists.

The NRMA's 2007 Vehicle Running Costs report showed that the average weekly cost for running family sedans like the Holden Commodore, Ford Falcon, Mitsubishi 380 and Toyota Aurion was \$265.97.

That's about a quarter of the average weekly wage.

Kevin Rudd's Petrol Commissioner will be charged with ensuring motorists get a fair go. With petrol so expensive, it is important to ensure there is no price gouging at any point in the supply chain.

Under Labor's plan, the Petrol Commissioner

will be given full powers under the Trade Practices Act to monitor and investigate petrol prices.

The Petrol Commissioner will be able to scrutinise documents and other information from any participant in the petrol supply chain.

Labor believes the Federal Government must do everything in its power to ensure that motorists don't pay more for petrol than is necessary.



### **Costs of running your car**

**A NRMA study compared this year's average weekly vehicle running costs with those of 5 years ago.**

**AVERAGE WEEKLY RUNNING COST% INCREASE SINCE 2002**

SMALL CAR	\$174.60	33%
LIGHT VEHICLE	\$143.81	41%
PEOPLE MOVER	\$265.31	39%
LARGE SUV	\$323.02	27%

**Kevin Rudd and Sharon Bird Fresh Thinking**



# Providing **Internet Broadband** to all Australians

Labor has guaranteed **98% of Australians** will have access to faster internet broadband through a national fibre network.

This contrasts with the recent Howard Government announcement that will leave rural and regional Australia using a mix of unspecified wireless technologies.

There are serious question marks over the reliability of wireless to deliver the fast connections our regions need.

The Howard Government's failure to deal with Australia's lack of high speed internet connections is costing our economy. The Australian Local Government Association found in its State of the Regions Report last year that the cost of inferior broadband in 2006 was \$2.7 billion in lost production and 30,000 regional jobs.

The Report found that those regions that had high speed broadband were doing well and were more productive.

Only Labor's \$4.5 billion plan will provide broadband fibre-to-the-node connections ensuring all Australians, regardless of where they live, have the same social and economic opportunities.

## **MAKING WOLLONGONG MORE COMPETITIVE**

A recent analysis showed that inferior broadband access is estimated to cost the Illawarra \$15.4 million in additional exports and 180 jobs. Labor's plan will ensure that Wollongong is able to compete on a more equal footing with businesses around the world.



*Kevin Rudd and Labor will guarantee faster broadband internet access.*

## **Make sure you can **vote!****

**If you are not enrolled to vote, have changed address recently or are turning 18 it is important that you are aware of changes that the Federal Government has made to when you need to enrol to vote.**

Importantly, if you are not enrolled than you must enrol by 8pm on the day the election writs are issued, or if you have changed address you have 3 working days to update your details.

To check your enrolment status you should call the Australian Electoral Commission on 13 23 26.

**Enrolment forms are available at all post offices.**

## A **healthy** start for our children

**To ensure the next generation of Australians are happy, healthy and productive we must invest in and support our local children.**

'Identifying health problems early, so they don't affect a child's ability to learn and develop at school is critical to their chances of succeeding later in life,' said Sharon Bird.

That's why a Rudd Labor Government will ensure all children starting school receive a health and early skills assessment called a Healthy Kids Check. This will ensure they get off to the best start in life.

This will include an assessment of a child's basic health such as teeth, hearing, balance and sight.

In addition, Labor will produce a Healthy Habits for Life guide, providing practical

information to help parents assist their children to develop healthy habits for life.

These initiatives will help our children achieve their full potential.



*Sharon Bird wants all our children to get the best possible start at school and in life.*

# Secret plan to force workers onto AWAs

**The Howard Government has a secret plan to force more workers, including nurses and teachers, out of the protection of awards and onto Australian Workplace Agreements.**

The Howard Government's plan aims to destroy State industrial relations systems and force Australians onto Australian Workplace Agreements.

A recent Government tender document asks a consultancy firm to model the economic impact of 20% of the workforce being on AWAs, an increase of 15% or 1.5 million Australians.

The tender asks a consultancy to model the economic impact of 10% of employees being covered by an award, a decrease of 9%.

The leaked document also confirmed the

Government's secret plan to force almost 1 million low income earners off awards and onto AWAs.

Mr Howard previously denied his government had any plans to force State public sector employees such as nurses onto Australian Workplace Agreements. In Parliament on 26 March this year, he said 'We have no intention of doing that in relation to nurses.'

But this leaked tender makes clear that the Howard Government plans to force State Governments to hand over their industrial relations power and force workers, like nurses and fire fighters, onto AWAs.

The Howard Government's extreme workplace laws are hurting working families – if they are re-elected the pain will get worse.



Sharon Bird and Jennie George meet with Wollongong TAFE teachers to discuss industrial relations issues.

## Labor calls inquiry into **cost of living** pressures on older Australians

**A Senate Inquiry into the rising cost of living for pensioners and self-funded retirees has been established.**

**'With the cost of petrol, transport, groceries and home heating all spiralling, pensioners and self-funded retirees are under greater financial pressure,' said Sharon Bird.**

Labor proposed the Inquiry to give 2.5 million older Australians a voice to tell the Government how they are coping with increased prices.

The mining boom may be helping some in the workforce, but people on fixed incomes and pensions are getting left behind as their standard of living is eroded by rising prices.

If you would like to make a submission, please contact Sharon Bird's office on 4228 5899. Submissions close on 20 July.

## Financial squeeze forcing families to dip into Super



**There's no doubt, it's getting harder to make ends meet.**

**Financial hardship is causing families to take money from superannuation accounts instead of leaving the nest egg safe for retirement.**

New figures released in Federal Parliament show that in 2006, the amount of funds released almost doubled to \$135 million.

This was a massive jump from the \$32 million released just in 2001, just 6 years ago.

'It's not easy to get access to your superannuation before retirement. You need to demonstrate serious financial hardship, and these figures show that growing numbers are meeting this criterion,' Sharon Bird said.

These figures are more evidence that all is not rosy in the Australian economy. Interest rate increases, petrol prices, the decline in the property market are all taking their toll.

## We are regularly told about the benefits of having a healthy breakfast.

This is particularly important for children. A healthy start to the day can reduce child obesity and improve overall health and school performance.

For the past 15 years Healthy Cities Illawarra has been providing breakfast for disadvantaged children and youth.

The breakfast programs are largely volunteer run, nutritious and target school-aged children and youth who are socially disadvantaged.

They provide a safe, supervised setting for breakfast before school.

The Illawarra Area Assistance Scheme supports and helps resource Healthy Cities Illawarra.

Many local businesses also help with items such as bread but there are always difficulties getting milk, cereal and fresh fruit.

Healthy Cities Illawarra works to improve and promote the health, physical environment and quality of life of the people of the Illawarra. It is a non-profit, community-based organisation and is part of a global movement founded by the World Health Organisation.

For more information please visit [www.healthycitiesill.org.au](http://www.healthycitiesill.org.au)



Local MP Sharon Bird with Healthy Cities Secretary/Manager Frank Wallner.

## Breakfast Burrito (makes 2)

### INGREDIENTS

- 1Tbsp olive oil
- ½ onion, finely chopped
- 3 eggs
- 1 small tomato, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh herbs (parsley, thyme, basil...)
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts or pecans
- 2-3 Tbsp grated reduced-fat cheese
- 2 tortillas

### DIRECTIONS

Heat the oil, add onion, and sauté for 3-4 minutes, stirring frequently.

Beat the eggs.

Add eggs to onions. Cook for 2 minutes; add tomato, soy sauce, and herbs; and heat until warm. Stir in walnuts and cheese and remove from stove.

Place half mixture in a line in the center of each warmed tortilla, leaving 2 cm at either end of the line. Fold each end up to the filling, then fold in one side. Roll.

Voilà – your breakfast burritos are ready!



## 10 reasons why you should have a healthy breakfast every day

Here are 10 great reasons why you should reassess your busy schedule and put breakfast at the top of your priorities for you and your children.

**1. Metabolism** – So you think a cup of coffee is all you need to wake up and get going in the morning? Wrong! You also need to eat something to ‘wake up’ your metabolism after what could be up to twelve hours of not eating. Studies show eating breakfast can raise metabolism by as much as 10%, encouraging the body to store energy as fat.

**2. Concentration** – Studies repeatedly demonstrate that eating breakfast improves concentration and learning ability; teachers are often the first to notice when a child in their class has not had breakfast.

**3. Memory** – As well as boosting concentration, a healthy breakfast can also help with memory function. Eating breakfast raises blood glucose levels, thereby ensuring brain cells are as active as possible.

**4. Energy** – Eating slow release carbohydrate foods at breakfast will help keep energy levels balanced and maintained throughout the day. Porridge and wholegrain toast are great examples of slow release carbohydrates that combat mid-morning fatigue and falling energy levels.

**5. Nutrients** – Eating a healthy breakfast of, for example, whole grain cereal, berries and low-fat milk, provides a good proportion of essential daily nutrients and dietary fibre.

**6. Fibre** – Constipation is linked to colorectal cancer. Not only do the right breakfast foods provide essential vitamins and minerals, high fibre breakfast cereal products help avoid constipation, and decrease the risk of colorectal cancer.

**7. Hunger** – Slow release carbohydrates also induce a feeling of ‘fullness’ for longer that can help to stop cravings for sugary or high fat foods later in the day.

**8. Mood and Stress levels** – Skipping breakfast can make you grouchy, anxious, and irritable. Topping up breakfast with nuts and seeds can help increase serotonin levels – also known as the ‘happy hormone’! Wholegrain bread and porridge are also thought to be useful serotonin stimulators.

**9. Immunity** – Fresh fruit and fortified cereals contain lots of vitamins and minerals essential for a healthy immune system. Breakfast time is a perfect way to build up a defence to dreaded winter colds and flu.

**10. Breakfast Burritos** – The best reason of all!