



Speech by

GARY FENLON

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard 25 August 1999

MR D. PETROVIC

Mr FENLON (Greenslopes—ALP) (10.16 a.m.): I rise to inform the House of the wonderful accomplishments of one of my young constituents, Mr Dejan Petrovic. I remind the House of my recent speech concerning a function held at the Queen Alexandra Home in Coorparoo to launch conversation classes for migrants being conducted by the Coorparoo community association. The number of local residents who came to listen to Mr Uri Thernal and a range of other speakers and enjoy the entertainment provided by students at the Coorparoo Secondary College was very heartening.

On that occasion I took the opportunity to prevail upon guests to purchase tickets in a raffle to help send one of our local primary school students to Darwin for the national cross-country titles. This was conducted to supplement the various donations and the money dedicated by the Greenslopes State School P & C Association. I have now been informed by the school's acting principal that Mr Petrovic won second place at the national titles in cross country and recorded the fastest time in a 1,500 metre relay team which won gold.

What sets Mr Petrovic's achievements apart from those of many other sporting successes is the fact that he and his family arrived as refugees from Croatia only two years ago. When he first arrived, he could not speak any English at all. Since that time he has not only excelled in athletics, but has also displayed leadership skills that have seen him appointed as the school captain. I am informed that he is also distinguishing himself academically. Such achievements are, of course, an immense credit to him and his family. I am told that all of his extended family remain in Croatia and that they have taken great pride in his achievements. His grandfather, in particular, has received photos and stories of Dejan's success here with immense pleasure.

I take this opportunity to commend the Greenslopes State School on the environment of support and encouragement it provides to its large population of migrant students and their families. I know that the acting principal, Ms Margaret Drew, has determined that one of her students would not miss out on the opportunity to participate at a national level and, together with other members of the school community, was instrumental in raising the necessary funds.

Time expired.
