



Speech by

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LIONS YOUTH OF THE YEAR QUEST

Ms STONE (Springwood—ALP) (12.23 p.m.): Today I rise to inform the House of the very worthy Lions Youth of the Year quest. This year the state final was hosted by the Daisy Hill-Loganholme Lions Club, a club I am proud to be a member of. The function was held in my electorate at the Springwood Hotel function room and was enjoyed immensely by all who attended. I want to tell the House about the history of the quest. The quest began in 1964 and was initially confined to the Brisbane metropolitan area. In 1966 the quest became open to other Lions multiple districts. The quest was solely for boys because it was considered that there were already a number of quests for girls. However, in time this changed and the quest became open to both young men and women.

Another reason I enjoyed this night is that it brought back memories of my high school years. In 1978 I represented Cavendish Road State High School in what was then called Youth Speaks for Australia. It seems that, from reading the history of the quest, I was probably one of the first females to be involved in the quest. Today I reflect back to that night and think what a great experience it was. I did not realise it at the time, but it was probably one of the best forms of training I had for the duty I now perform.

The Youth of the Year quest is a project of the Lions Clubs of Australia and Papua New Guinea. It is designed to encourage student interest in leadership and promote community involvement. In this the International Year of the Volunteer, it is pleasing to see a program that highlights to our youth the important work volunteers provide to our local communities. I am especially pleased to speak on this subject during National Volunteers Week. Candidates compete for many prizes, the ultimate being to travel overseas and act as an ambassador for Lions Club International. Students from all nations are brought together to discuss a wide range of international issues and to meet with international groups of professional men and women.

Some outstanding students represented the Springwood electorate. Miss Carla Simms, the Springwood State High School captain, recently competed at the district level. This means Carla went through the previous rounds of club judging and regional judging. I am sure this was no easy task, and I congratulate Carla on this achievement. On 7 April four students competed to represent Queensland in the national final to be held this month at Wollongong. Timothy Rawlings of Marymount College, Daniel Brown of Atherton State High School, Claire Schneider of Mt Michael's College and Eleanor Donovan of the Rockhampton Girls Grammar School were subjected to a mix of impromptu questions that were used to judge their knowledge and depth of understanding on a range of current issues. National and international issues of interest were well addressed by the four contestants.

However, that was only the beginning. The four then delivered prepared speeches on a topic of their choice. I was really pleased that I was not selected as a judge, because the performance of these four students could only be described as outstanding. While the judges were making their decision, we were treated to a speech by last year's state winner, Ms Allana Coxon. I use the word 'treat' because that is exactly what it was. It was a real treat to listen to her. She told us of her adventures travelling around Australia with the other state finalists. They visited some of our best-known tourist spots, as well as many worthy Lions projects throughout Australia. She was truly inspirational and makes a wonderful youth ambassador for Queensland Lions.

I now turn to the winner on the night. This was one time when the saying that there can be only one winner rings true. The four students were outstanding not only in delivering speeches but also in their commitment to high academic and sporting achievements and to promoting community service organisations. Timothy Rawlings of Marymount College is this year's state finalist winner. I congratulate Timothy and wish him well in the national final this month. Now back to 1978. Did I win? Yes. Even though I did not win the competition, I was a winner because I participated in a truly worthy event, an event that assists youths in leadership skills and to have a more active role in community services. I congratulate the Lions on keeping this quest alive for our youth.
