



Speech by

Dr Alex Douglas

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Hansard Tuesday, 23 November 2010

GAVEN ELECTORATE

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—LNP) (10.27 pm): I take the opportunity to acknowledge a number of community groups and individuals in my electorate of Gaven. There can be no greater compliment to the dedicated and caring service that the Nerang Community Respite Care Association offers to a growing number of clients than a generous bequest from a past client. The association, established in 1989, celebrated 21 years of service at its recent annual general meeting, which I attended, with the outstanding news for 2010 being a very generous bequest from Mr Albert Switzer, formerly of Nerang. Prior to his passing, he was a patient of mine.

One must consider why a small organisation like this engenders such an act. President Denise Wallace said at the meeting that she believed it was because the service offered a unique, personal service dedicated to excellence, and for Mr Switzer the centre was his other home. Ms Wallace said that he received what everyone who attends the centre gets—that is, respect for his individuality, genuine support and dignified care. His gift is a tribute to all of the staff. Many people in need will benefit from his bequest. This extremely valuable community service has more than 400 clients providing respite for the frail, elderly and disabled. It also provides in-home care, transport, meals, carer support, allied health and hairdressing.

Recently, a wonderful new community group in Nerang has been formed called MOT—Men Out There. They work with a range of different men, including those who are unemployed, retired, socially or mentally disadvantaged, or homeless. Their aim is to provide these men with a network to be able to communicate with others, sharing common goals and improving general wellbeing. At present they are working with a professional theatre director, creating variety performances including comedy and music skits. I would like to acknowledge Mr Mike Hammond for his work in the community, specifically for Men Out There and also with the Nerang Neighbourhood Watch.

I also met recently with Liz Fritz, the chairperson of the Gold Coast Homelessness Network. I would like to acknowledge her tireless work with homeless people for over 20 years, including her work with the Blair Athol Accommodation and Support Program on the Gold Coast. In October I attended a Pink Ribbon Day luncheon, held by the Nerang RSL to support women with breast cancer. I spoke last year at their luncheon in support of their cause, but I could never foresee that less than one year later my wife would be affected by the disease. I thank all the generous community groups and businesses who so generously donated gifts to the luncheon, making it a very special and positive day.

Last week, I was able to team up with Diabetes Queensland and host a virtual supermarket tour in Nerang. With the huge array of food products and packaging that is in our supermarkets, it can often be confusing to select the healthiest choices for people and their families. Diabetes Queensland provided vital information for residents on label reading, common nutritional claims and ingredients lists to help residents make better choices in the supermarket. I thank all who were involved.