

THE COMET

Journal of the Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' League, Qld. Inc.

OPEN LETTER TO ALL APSL MEMBERS

Dear Members,

You would recall at our last APSL State Conference Caloundra Branch moved a motion to increase the Single Pension. This was passed, and to be completed by way of a petition with copies of the petition circulated to each branch for them obtain signatures, from family, friends, and most importantly from the general community.

This benefits APSL as a successful promotional exercise, but most importantly it has a long-term benefit to single Pensioners, who for far too long have suffered financially at a time when they are most vulnerable.

Currently the difference between the Coupled Pension and the Single is \$473.60 and the gap becomes wider with every pension adjustment.

I am pleased to say that currently Caloundra has almost 500 signatures.

Now that the holidays are over, I will be contacting retirement homes, sporting clubs, community groups, etc. with the hope of leaving petitions in their offices for their support.

If other branches would do the same, we could build our petitions to many thousands. If each branch could collect three hundred signatures, we would have close to ten thousand signatures on our petitions, no politician could argue against that.

Imagine the impact this would have on the media, and would strengthen our case for an increase not only to the single pension but also, to the coupled pension.

I am astounded to learn that the majority of people are shocked to find out that the difference in pensions is \$476.60 a fortnight.

One branch can only do so much; this needs the

support of all APSL branches, please obtain as many signatures as your branch can.

It is a very sad fact of life that in time Coupled Pensioners, will become Single Pensioners. Benefits gained now will help many more in the future.

To those branches that have completed petition forms, thank you very much. The secret to any petition is numbers for without the numbers we will not achieve anything.

No Government is willingly going to help us so, we must work for ourselves.

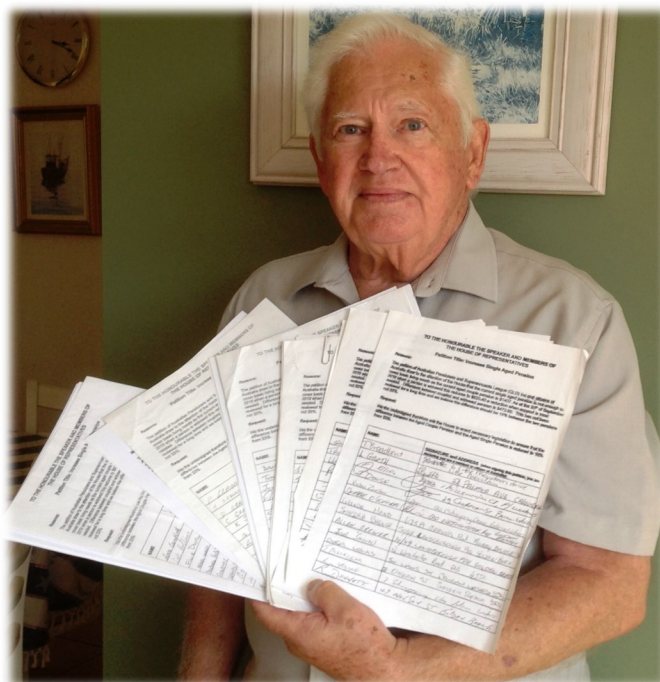
Thank you for your support.

Frank Gower

President

APSL Caloundra

(Frank is pictured below with signed petition forms)



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The Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' League Qld, Inc. (APSL) provides advocacy and support services to pensioners and superannuants in Queensland.

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Services Directory

Commonwealth Government Directory

Administrative Appeals Tribunal	1300 366 700
Aust. Competition & Consumer Commission	1300 302 502
Australian Hearing	131 797
Aust. Securities & Investment Commission	07 3867 4700
Aust. Taxation Office	132 861
Centrelink (Older Australians line)	132 300
Child Support Agency	131 272
Commonwealth Respite and Life Flight Centre	1800 052 222
CRS (Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services) - Human Services	1800 277 227
Family Court of Australia	1300 352 000
Home & Community Care (65+ years)	1800 200 422
Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Comm.	1300 369 711
Immigration & Border Protection Department	131 881
Medicare	132 011
Migration Review Tribunal	1300 361 969
National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Services	1800 012 255
Pharmaceutical Benefit's Scheme	1800 020 613
Private Health Insurance Complaints	1800 077 308
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman	1800 640 695
Translating & Interpreting Service	1300 655 820
Veteran's Affairs Department	133 254

Queensland State Government Directory

Anti-Discrimination Commission	1300 130 670
Department of Communities	137 468
Department of Energy & Water Supply	
Electricity & Gas	134 387
Water	137 468
Energy & Water Ombudsman	1800 662 837
Health Ombudsmen	133 646
Legal Aid Qld	1300 651 188
Office of Fair Trading	137 468
Public Guardian (Adults & Children)	1300 653 187
Public Trustee	1300 360 044
Qld Competition Authority	07 3222 0555
Qld Ombudsman's Office	1800 068 908
Residential Tenancies Authority	1300 366 311
Safe Food Queensland	1800 300 815
Senior's Advocacy Information & Legal Services (SAILS)	07 3214 6333
Senior's Card	13 74 68
Senior's Enquiry	1300 135 500
Senior's Legal & Support Service	
Brisbane	07 3214 6333
Cairns	07 4031 7179
Hervey Bay	07 4124 6863
Toowoomba	07 4616 9700
Townsville	07 4721 5511
State Emergency Service Office	13 74 68
Youth & Family Support Service	07 3274 9917

Community Support Services Service Directory

Domestic Violence Crisis Line	1800 811 811
Immigrant Women's Support Service	07 3846 3490
	07 3255 1420
Qld Aged & Disability Advocacy	1800 818 338
Seniors & Go Card	13 74 68
Senior Shopper	1300 360 265
Sexual Assault Help Line	1800 811 811
South Brisbane Immigration & Community Legal Service	07 3846 3189
The Incapacitated Servicemen & Women's Assoc. of Aust	07 3356 9022
Women's legal Service	07 3392 0670
National Welfare Rights Network	1800 358 511

Department of Health Service Directory

Department of Health	1343 2584
Health Services Info Line	07 3837 5986
Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme	1300 443 570
My Aged Care	1800 200 422
Police link Queensland Police (non-urgent)	131 444
Crime Stoppers	1800 333 000

Advertisers

Alex Gow Funerals	07 3852 1501
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FEBRUARY 2020

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P9 APSL Christmas function

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Contact APSL State Office to enquire about membership and a branch near you.

**APSL—
MAKING A
DIFFERENCE!**



EDITORIAL

By

Cherith Weis



Dear Readers,

I pray that you have weathered the climate and the storms of life; endured the awful news bulletins which were beamed into our living rooms and made the never ending headlines of newspapers.

I found myself in tears watching the horrible news of the bush fires in southern states to the extent of turning off the T.V. The huge losses suffered by people including supreme sacrifices made by people either working as Fireys or as residents determined to save their property, and the impact on nearly every Australian was heart breaking.

Meanwhile, in my neck of the woods, properties near the coast suffered huge losses with at least thirty being subjected to wholesale damage. Fruit growing properties decimated with huge losses of crops such as Lichees, Pineapples and more. Evacuations of the Coast's Coorberie Park took place with all animals made safe. To make things worse, it has been ascertained that the fires were deliberately lit.

The conversation about the cause of the bush fires was discussed by all and sundry. Experts; Activists; Politicians and "Keyboard Warriors" all had their say, and so it continues.

I would draw your attention to the front page of this month's Comet and the open letter to all APSL members. I would also appeal to our supporters to sign this petition.

- Fact. Support for the Pension petition was passed unanimously by all delegates who attended the September APSL State Conference.
- As Frank has said :- "The secret to any petition is numbers for without the numbers we will not achieve anything. No Government is willingly going to help us so, we must work for ourselves."

When sending this Comet out, I will include a copy of the two page pension petition. It MUST be printed back to back.

Thanking you

Cherith Weis.

State Secretary

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ROAD SAFETY

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Seat Belts

I would like to welcome everyone into a safe and happy New Year.

The latest road toll figures released by the police for 2019 indicated that there were 217 fatalities on Qld roads, the lowest figure since records have been taken. While I believe that this is fantastic news, there is still room for improvements as every life lost on our roads is one life too many.

It is very sad to hear of someone dying on our roads but it is even worse to understand that by just having a seat belt on, may have saved their lives.

Police revealed that in 2019, the highest at 30 % of all fatalities were contributed to not having a seat belt on and 25% was from drugs and alcohol, speeding.

I can't understand why in our current climate, that it is not instinctive to immediately apply a seat belt before driving off in a motor vehicle. It has been tested and proven that if you are involved in a crash without wearing a seat belt that you will most likely die as you launch into the windscreen and out onto the road.

It is also important that you don't just click the seat belt in, but also apply it correctly to avoid serious injury that can

lead you into spinal damage and end up in a wheel chair.

Make sure that the lap part of the belt is across your hip bones, the strongest point of your body and that the shoulder part of the belt is not against your neck. This simple observation can save you from serious injuries with your seat belt, in the event of a crash.

It is also important to check the condition of the seat belt is okay. Check for fraying of the edges or of any tears and also the replacement indicator, which is clearly identified on the belt and explained in the vehicles owner manual. If there are any doubts, get it checked, as the seat belt works in conjunction with the air bags and some have explosive tensioners in the event of a serious collision.

It is so important to instinctively use your seat belt before planning to drive any where, even if it is just around the corner from home as you never know what you could encounter. Click your seat belt on and adjust it properly, for a safe journey throughout the New Year.

Please check out Leyland's website

www.evolutionintraining.com.au/roadrules

Gympie Branch—Christmas Function and Presentations



Gympie Pensioners held its annual charity donation presentation on Thursday November 21. They raised funds for some of the regions most dedicated organisations and volunteers. As President Kevin Ward and Vice President Albert Bulley were unable to attend, Secretary Maureen Perry presented the Recipients who were: RACQ Carelife Helicopter (Ron Douw), Bluecare (Tracey Johnston), Senior Citizens Hall Committee (Michelle Smith), State Emergency (Jason Myatt), Palative Care (Christine Keeler), Gympie Volunteers (Jess Mann),



Meals on Wheels (Wayne Sachs), the Community Bus (Narelle Hefferman) and Chemotherapy (Kacy Ringshaw). Donations were proceeds from charity concerts held throughout the year. On December 12, Gympie APSL held their annual Christmas Party. Deputy Mayor Bob Leitch (Picture centre left) represented Gympie Council. Entertainment by guest artists before and after meals were served. Gympie QCWA ladies served a delicious meal as always. A lovely day was had by all.

NEWS FROM BOWEN BRANCH



APSL'S State and Bowen President, Joyce Macdonald surprised Eve Reitmajer before Christmas with a beautiful bouquet of flowers.

Eve takes care of the printing of the Comet for Bowen Branch and always has them ready for Joyce to pick up.

Eve is the Whitsunday Regional Council's Council Support Officer and happily looks after our northern members.

Thank you, Eve.

1. Bowen Branch Pensioners with Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor Andrew Willcox, standing at back, in black, and Cr Mike Brunner, who has been the patron of this branch for many years.

2. Bowen Branch Members with Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor Andrew Willcox, standing at back, in black.

3. Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor Andrew Willcox with Bowen President, Joyce Macdonald.



APSL EXECUTIVE MEETING WITH DEPUTY PREMIER, JACKIE TRAD



Present: at the meeting with Ms. Trad on Wednesday December 18 were:-Joyce MacDonald (State President); Barry Ramsay (State Vice-President); Cherith Weis (State Secretary) and Maree Stenson (State Assistant Secretary).

We were well received and had a lengthy discussion with the then Acting Premier Ms. Trad.

We spoke about a number of issues about which we are concerned including

- Newstart and our resolution which passed through the September State Conference. Jackie Trad had spoken about the need to Raise the Rate of Newstart at Kurilpa Hall in October. She said that she would lobby the Commonwealth Government about this matter.
- Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme – we discussed how it does not adequately cover people in regional areas. Ms. Trad advised that this comes under her portfolio and that she would certainly take up the issue.
- We discussed the Single Rate of Pension Petition. Ms. Trad was very happy to support this and offered to put it on her Facebook page as an E-Petition. At this point, the Executive Committee supported the proposal. She would take a hard copy to the markets and suggested that we ask people who are lining up for Micah's hampers to sign it. (The latter which was done by Barry).
- We discussed grants and how the Organisation lost funding in 2013. We also discussed one-off Grants that we have received and that we are awaiting advice on a recent Community Gambling Fund application for funding for lighting and photocopier.
- A number of issues will be worked on in the near future and we will release those details at a later date,



BRANCH PICS

State Secretary Cherith Weis was a guest at the Mount Morgan Christmas party in November.

She surprised Mount Morgan Branch Secretary, Pat Hare with a presentation on behalf of the APSL.

Pat has been a long-time dedicated supporter of the Branch and an active working member of the branch.

She prepares for the Christmas function soon after the one just finished and works through the year on a theme, colours etc to decorate tables for the following year's Christmas celebrations.

All decorations are hand made with nobody missing out on personalized place names and all the trimmings.

Every year, she also tries out our brain power with a couple of written quizzes.

Well done, Pat!



GLADSTONE CHRISTMAS PHOTOS

1 Photo is Glen Butcher Member for Gladstone, Joan Green President of Gladstone APSL, Janet Domoney Secretary APSL P J Sobhanian, Member of Gladstone Regional Council . 2 . photo is Glen Butcher Member for Gladstone and Councilor P J Sobhanian.



Pictured left at guests at the Lord Mayor's Christmas function. In December.

Maree Stenson State Assistant Secretary; Barry Ramsay State Vice President Admin Assistant Anneliese Tolbert and Gympie's Maureen Perry..

Barry is pictured with some Christmas characters.

APSL'S CHRISTMAS PARTY!



Pictured above:-

Pro Musica Singers provided first class entertainment at the APSL Christmas Party which was held on Thursday, December 19. Guests came from Warwick, Gympie, Gracemere, Inala, Logan and all places in between!

These photos were taken mostly by our State Vice President, Barry Ramsay. If anyone would like a digital copy which we could send you via email, please let us know.

GEN Aged Care Data: Government spending on aged care

This GEN Aged Care Data release uses data from the 2019 Report on Government Services (RoGS) to report on Government spending on aged care services. The data has been updated for the financial year 2017–18. Analysis of Commonwealth and state funding on aged care services are included, with interactive graphs providing a breakdown of spending on different types of services.

- 96% of spending on aged care services comes from the Australian Government.
- There was a 23% increase in aged care funding 2012-2013 and also 2017-2018

The above is from the Australian Government web page for the Australian Institute of Health and Human Welfare.

ooOoo

The results of Royal Commission will be a major interest to groups such as APSL We can only hope that wisdom and commonsense prevails for the sake and well-being of all residents. Recent reports in the media which stated that many Aged Care facilities are not managing their concerns well and are reporting that they are struggling, must point to mis-management in some areas. It's time to hear what the Royal Commission has found and their solutions. Many old people can't wait any longer.

ooOoo

A SMART DAD!

From a father who was talking with a friend.....

I have a spare \$400 cash. My kids got to hear about it.

My daughter just texted me and said, "Dad, I need \$200."

Not long after my son emails me and said, "Hey Dad can I have a loan of \$150."

His friend said, So you've only \$50 left?

Wrong! says the Dad. I have \$400 and two missed messages.

PENSION PETITION

Please remember that we need your help to circulate the pension and obtain signatures.

The chilling thought is that one day we will all be single pensioners.

APSL & CONNECTIONS

For the information of new members of the APSL your Management Committee is responsible for the overall stewardship of the organisation and it's responsibilities.

APSL has one part-time employee and the load of the Office Bearers who are all volunteers, is great.

Anyone who is able to give some hours in the office is always welcome.

We are "affiliates" in services for the aged with:-

- Elder Abuse (2 of our reps attend their meetings)
- QCOS (2 APSL Executive members attend their meetings).
- COTA
- **We recently joined the EveryAGE Counts Coalition whose membership is growing.**

There are other bodies with which we work as we believe that it is vital that we join forces as there is strength in numbers. Ed.

MORE BRANCH FUNCTIONS/ACTIVITIES



2
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1
9

PICS from Mount Morgan Christmas Function - Gracemere's Christmas function - North Rockhampton Bowls (Bardy sends one down) - And North Rky Break-up - Two APSL Christmas photos (Wilma and Maureen from Gympie & guests Julie and Pater pictured singing with Maddy from Terri Butler's office.



THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

SENATOR PAUL SCARR
SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 21 January 2020

SUPPORTING QUEENSLAND RSPCA WILDLIFE HOSPITAL

Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley has met with Queensland RSPCA officials in Brisbane to discuss the challenges being placed on animal hospital facilities in the wake of Australia's devastating bushfires.

Minister Ley joined Senator for Queensland Paul Scarr at the RSPCA Queensland Wildlife Hospital in Wacol where more than eighty animals are being brought in each day, with many facing a loss of habitat areas.

RSPCA Queensland runs the largest wildlife hospital in the southern hemisphere and the Morrison Government was able to contribute \$1 million to koala rescue and rehabilitation in December last year as part of a \$3million funding package for Queensland koala hospitals.

"The workload here over the last few months has been extraordinary, and it is a tribute to the dedication of the staff at this facility," Minister Ley said.

"Habitat loss means animals are needing to be kept for longer and that underlines the importance of the Morrison Government's initial \$50 million wildlife and habitat restoration package, which seeks to identify habitat impacts and restoration strategies."

Over November and December 2019, the hospital took in nearly 300 koalas, three times as many as the previous year, the 80 animals a day being received now include birds, koala, kangaroos, possums, snakes, gliders, lizards and many more.

"Now is already a peak time for the hospital and the combination of drought and fires has had an extraordinary impact," RSPCA Queensland Wildlife Hospital Chief Executive, Mr Darren Maier said today.

Senator for Queensland, Paul Scarr said the work of the RSPCA Queensland Wildlife Hospital would play a critical role in the future of native wildlife.

"I'm delighted the RSPCA's important work is recognised and supported," Senator Scarr said.

"Many native animals that survived the bushfires still need care and a home."

ENDS

Environment Minister's office: John Brady 0427 867 638

RSPCA Queensland Wildlife Hospital: Michael Beatty 0415 385 602

ooOoo

From Michael Beatty— Minister for the Environment Susan Ley has met with officials at Queensland RSPCA Wildlife Hospital in Brisbane today where around 80 animals a day are being admitted in the wake of drought and bushfires.

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at**

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**Seniors'
Luncheon**

Message to Branches

This space box is provided to insert your Branch contact details when you leave The Comet at Doctors' Surgeries /Libraries and so on



CODE of ETHICS and PERSONAL CONDUCT

The Australian Pensioners' & Superannuants' League (Qld) Inc.

Be patient and courteous in all dealings with fellow members.

Be inclusive - Members to welcome and support people of all backgrounds and identities and discriminate against no one.

Be considerate - Each member should respect fellow pensioners and superannuants. Our decisions and comments will affect our fellow members, therefore we must always take this into consideration.

Be respectful - Each member may not agree all the time, but disagreement is no excuse for disrespectful behaviour. Each member may experience frustration from time to time, but we cannot allow this to become a personal attack. An environment where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not productive or creative and not in the best interest of The League.

Choose your words carefully - Always conduct yourself professionally. Harassment and exclusionary behaviour is not acceptable in The League. Differences of opinion and disagreement will occur, each member must resolve disagreements and differing views constructively and respectfully.

Our differences can be our strengths - Members can find strength in diversity. Different people have varying perspectives on issues, and that can be valuable for solving problems or generating new ideas for the betterment of The League.

ooOoo

APSL Mission Statement

To lobby powerfully with governments at all levels and private sector agencies, and within community sector, to promote all aspects of the security, well being and dignity of pensioners of all ages, superannuants, other self-funded retirees, low income families and other disadvantaged people, including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) peoples.