



Wellington's Way August 2011

Keeping the electorate of Nicklin up to date on local and State issues.

A month in the life of the Wellingtons.

We did get a couple of home cooked meals this week

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What a busy couple of months Jenny and I have had since our last news letter. On Friday June 24th 2011, I joined family and friends of the late Mrs Eileen Richards, to celebrate her life. Eileen and her late husband Harold had worked tirelessly for the Bli Bli community and hundreds of people attended the service at St Peter's Maroochydore.

Jenny and I were delighted to be part of the Cooroy CWA 84th Birthday celebrations and have attended a series of Change over dinners for various service clubs. We were also delighted to be part of the Nambour RSL Grants function. Our local RSL once again donated thousands of dollars to community and sporting groups in our region.

I had the honour of giving the welcome address at the Post Polio Support Group's birthday bash.

The following week I attended the Nambour Safe business forum, organised by Mrs Christine Jones, to address the issues that have arisen as a result of problems with young people in the town. The timing of this meeting could not have been better as I had only hours before had an update meeting with representatives from the Department of Communities. This was a follow up from my June meeting with Minister Struthers. I believe we are making progress in this area. Earlier in the day I had the opportunity to catch up with a number of friends and colleagues at the opening of the Blackall Range Care Cottage's Maleny cottage.

I had the pleasure of once again opening the Nambour Garden Expo. This year the weather was perfect and it was great to be able to welcome so many interstate visitors. The patronage was such that we needed police to direct traffic, which included bus loads of people from all regions. The Garden Expo has grown to be the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and we on the Sunshine Coast get to see a variety of plants and attend workshops and meet with experts in the gardening field. (pardon the pun)

On Wednesday 13 July 2011, I attended a Men's Shed meeting at Woombye and I am now an official Men's Shed member. Hopefully I will get to attend a few of the meetings, as I Believe this is a great concept. The Men's shed is looking at securing a permanent site in Woombye and as a follow up from the meeting I have contacted the Blackall Range Woodcrafters Guild for one of their experienced members to meet with the Group to discuss toy making and wood crafting in general.

I attended the opening of the Noosa Christian College Library, which was provided through the Federal Government's BER program. The Library is strategically located between the high school and the primary school and will become the centre of activity for both schools.

Jenny and I have attended many Master Builders Awards over the years and were delighted to be able to join almost 400 guests at the 2011 Sunshine Coast Regional Housing and Construction Awards. I presented the 2011 Sunshine Coast Project of the year award to J Hutchinson Pty Ltd.

Can you believe they let me use a chainsaw?

Over 10 years ago I supported a small group of people in establishing a respite centre for Nambour. As a result of a lot of hard work and persistent lobbying, the Sunshine Coast Family Networks Brookes Street House respite centre was established. On Sunday 17 July 2011, I was delighted to be able to help at a working Bee that was attended by about 30 volunteers, staff, clients and supporters. Together we worked on the gardens, painting and build fences. They even let me loose with the chainsaw. I had an enjoyable day and met some wonderful people.

Nambour CWA Annual meeting was held on Monday 18th July and I was able to attend and meet with the new committee, President Jenny Budge, Secretary Fay Crouch and Treasurer Margaret Bradburn. It was also an opportunity to thank the outgoing committee for their services to the community.

We caught up with the family on the Sunday

On Saturday 22nd July we attended the Burnside State High School's STEMM Christmas in July fundraising dinner. Our second Christmas in July celebration in as many days. The STEMM program is aimed at empowering young mothers and pregnant girls through education and support. Their catch cry is "By educating a mother you educate a family. The program was covered by 60 Minutes earlier this year and the teachers and staff at Burnside are to be commended for their efforts and achievements. The program currently caters for 40 girls and they continue to receive referrals from across the region.

I was a guest speaker at the Australia New Zealand Scrutiny of Legislation Conference on Thursday 28 July 2011 and was able to share my experiences on how I have been able to change some laws in Queensland. The crux of my address was that I believe politics is the art of compromise, so there is a need to give a little in order to achieve a lot. It also helps to show that your proposed law is working well elsewhere.

And somewhere along the way I made time for meetings in the office

I was recently granted the assistance of a Parliamentary Intern—a law student from QUT, who is currently looking at researching material for my next Private Member's Bill, which is looking at introducing tougher penalties for serious sexual offenders. The Library and Vicki have done some preliminary research on this but it is proving to be a complex issue and we want to make sure we have it right before presenting it to Parliament.

On Friday 29 July 2011, I attended the Cooroy CWA and was honoured to be able to present President, Wendy Bebbington with a community service award in recognition of her service to the Cooroy CWA. I have recently had the opportunity to work closely with Wendy in an effort to secure land from Queensland Rail for the CWA expansion. Congratulations and thank you Wendy.

Back to Parliament

Monday the 1st of August ,was a busy start to the Month with Jenny deputising for me at the Trefoil Wanderers AGM. After meetings in the office, I chaired the Yandina School of Arts AGM and then went on to chair the Belli Rural Fire Brigade AGM.

It was back to Parliament on Tuesday, where I followed up on unresolved issues. I met Minister Robertson in relation to Woolsloga to West Cooroy Powerlink project and it was confirmed that the need for the network upgrade has been deferred and the Powerlink project known as the Woolsloga to Eerwah Vale transmission line and the Eerwah Vale Substation project, which was required before 2014, has been terminated.

We also debated the long awaited Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill.

The Minister made it clear that he was not prepared to consider amendments to the Bill and it may be some months before the new laws come into force. Hopefully the changes will result in clearer guidelines for tree owners and their neighbours.

Wednesday saw the introduction of the new format for Committees, with meetings in the morning, followed by Parliament and Question time in the afternoon. I attended the first official meeting of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee and while most of the dealings of this committee are confidential, I can reveal that the committee is looking at scheduling two public hearings, one to be held in Brisbane and the other in Regional Queensland.

Question Time focused once again on the blame game associated with the Flood Enquiry. I think it is time to stop looking for someone to blame and get on with rebuilding the State and helping many people to rebuild their lives. We need to learn from this and make sure that history does not repeat.

I had the opportunity to once again raise the issue of the need for action at the intersection of the Nambour Connection Road and Blackall Street Woombye. The Minister advised that he is waiting on the Coroner's final report before a decision can be made into whether traffic lights will be installed at the intersection. I will be following up on this again, as soon as the Coroner's report is released. I believe this report has been delayed and will not be released until the end of this month., or early next month

On Thursday, I continued to follow up on unresolved matters and met with Minister Annastacia Palaszczuk. We discussed the ongoing Sunbus dispute, the future of the Yandina Railway Goods Shed, bus services to and from Yandina and the need for safety measures in relation to wheelchairs on public transport.

I also attended a meeting with Biosecurity Queensland, representatives from Minister Mulherin's office and constituents who raised concerns about the Hendra virus. It is great news that the Government has increased funding into Hendra research, but we need to make sure that Queenslanders are kept up to date on what is discovered through this research. The recent evidence that a dog tested positive to carrying Hendra anti bodies, has been of concern to many and has raised a number of questions that need further investigation. The Tallangatta Street bat colony is in the back of my mind every time we hear of another Hendra case.

*Speaking
In the
House*

While speaking in Parliament on Thursday, I also had the opportunity to speak about the delay in relation to the Cooroy to Curra road project and the need for a response in relation to the Cudgerie Interchange, The Department has advised me that the project is sitting on the Federal Minister's desk. waiting for approval.

I also spoke on problems associated with the new go card system and the need to improve accuracy and the reliability of the technology. In the last few weeks, I have had two elderly women come to see me with concerns about the accuracy and the technology of the go card. Both of these elderly women have been regular public transport users. In the past they always purchased weekly paper tickets that guaranteed their ability to travel around the Sunshine Coast and get home without any anxiety. Recently they got on the bus, they swiped the card and unfortunately all the money in the card was wiped. One woman was stranded. The second woman had to wait at the bus stop until a regular bus driver travelled the route, recognised her and out of the goodness of his heart he picked her up and delivered her to her normal destination. Simply not good enough.

*Back
on the
Electorate*

I also once again touched on the Sunbus dispute and called for the Government to step in and bring all the parties to the table for negotiations to resolve it. Many of the residents on the Sunshine Coast are at their wits' end about the disruption that this industrial dispute is causing to all the people on the Sunshine Coast.

On Friday, I was back in the office and had another follow up meeting to discuss the hospital car parking issue. The latest news it that discussions are continuing between the landowner and the Government representatives.

Until next time.

Peter