

## MIA'S MESSAGE



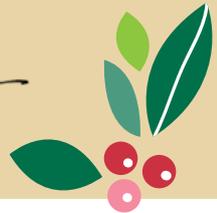
Another year has passed so swiftly - whatever you choose to do to celebrate Christmas and the holiday period, whether it be by having a bbq on the banks of the Avon River, catching up with mates under the verandah at home on the farm,

perfecting the pavlova for Boxing Day or travelling to see family, I hope everyone in the Central Wheatbelt electorate drives to the conditions, takes plenty of breaks, and stays cool and safe when playing in and around pools, rivers, creeks and dams.

While many of us will be with our family and friends, spare a thought for those who are on their own and perhaps not able to experience the joy of Christmas. I'd also like to pay tribute to those who serve our nation, and those who work over the holidays – our armed forces, police, fire

and ambulance officers – those that give up their time with loved ones to make sure we're all safe.

On behalf of my hardworking electorate office team Kath, Michelle, Rhonda, Cec and I – have a very Merry Christmas and New Year. Thank you for your support and everything you do to make the Central Wheatbelt a great place to live and work.



## HEALTHY WHEATBELT: HOSPITAL UPGRADES COMPLETE

Upgrades to Merredin and Mukinbudin health services have been completed as part of the \$600m Royalties for Regions Southern Inland Health Initiative invested by The Nationals WA while in Government.

\$23.6m in Merredin has delivered a new emergency department, ambulatory care building, refurbished palliative care suite and patient lounge, medical imaging and decontamination unit. Administration and staff office accommodation has been renovated, along with the kitchen, dining room and laundry facilities and improvements have been made to link-ways, the car park and grounds.

The town of Mukinbudin previously had an outdated nursing post, and now have a \$3.302m purpose built facility. The new building will serve the community for many years to come and I congratulate the Shire and local health advocacy group for their work over many years to secure the project.

I am proud to have been part of the team that committed funding for the State's single biggest investment into regional health care in WA history – we understand that a lack of access to reasonable health services is a deal-breaker when it comes to living in regional WA.



Merredin: Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Deputy Chair WACHS Wendy Newman and Mia Davies



Mukinbudin: Regional Health Staff, Mia Davies, Shire President Garry Shadbolt, Deputy Chair WACHS Wendy Newman, Hon Laurie Graham MLC, Regional Director WACHS Wheatbelt Sean Conlan.

## WHEATBELT ART PRIZE 2019



Robert McCaffrey with Jodie Winnett Arc Infrastructure, Georgia Kidman & Adam McGlenn RSM & Patrick O'Neill, Rodney Cusbert & Leesa Evans Ramelius Resources

Kellerberrin's Black Ant Art Gallery was overflowing for the official opening of the 2019 Wheatbelt Art Prize on Friday 1st November with artists, locals and sponsors mingling and enjoying over 150 pieces of local art on display. I was delighted with the turnout and the quality of artwork entered. Arts play a significant and often underestimated role in maintaining vibrant, well balanced regional communities. Kellerberrin artist Robert McCaffrey won the major prize of \$3,500 for a work titled *Recycled Luxe*, a magnificent gown made from plastic shopping bags.

Thank you to our generous supporters - listed on the inside page.

# PINK UP OCTOBER

Congratulations must go to those in our communities that have raised funds and awareness for breast cancer. I took two motions to The Nationals WA State Conference this year relating to cancer, and both were unanimously supported. The motions called for funding to increase the number of breast care nurses in regional areas, and to investigate ways to provide greater support to assist men and women with cancer mitigate the costs of treatment and recovery.



Mia in front of the Pink-Up Northam painting

# FRESH START

Fresh Start takes a unique approach to drug and alcohol addiction treatment and has helped over 9,000 people and their families out of the vicious cycle of addiction. It was wonderful to join ten graduates and their family and friends to mark the completion of rehabilitation at the Northam residential facility. Fresh Start were recognised for their work in the community at this year's Avon Valley Business Excellence Awards.



David and Tina Gunter with Mia and Fresh Start graduates

# GRAIN ON RAIL

The finalisation of the arbitration between CBH and Arc Infrastructure for access to the rail network is welcome after such a long period of uncertainty, but the matter of tier 3 lines is still a real concern when it comes to community safety, road funding and maintenance. We believe if Government partnered with industry to invest the capital then there may be an opportunity to reduce the overall cost and make them economical for future use. We have called on the Government to develop a business case to see if this is a possibility. If it isn't then we need an increase in funding for our road network. If Labor can find over \$4 billion for Metronet and subsidise public transport by \$1 billion a year, then they can certainly find money to ensure our agricultural sector has an efficient and safe transport network.

# FIELD DAY SEASON

The field day season was a busy one, and a great opportunity for me to be out and about in the electorate catching up with everyone. At the Dowerin Field Days I joined with the community to celebrate the life memberships awarded to John Metcalf and Wal Fairlie – both long-term volunteers deserving of this recognition. It was also great to join the Bruce Rock community to mark their centenary this year.



John Metcalf, Mia Davies and Wal Fairlie at Dowerin Field Day



Mia Davies and David Muntz at the 100th Bruce Rock Show

# VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING

I supported the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2019 through the Legislative Assembly earlier this year. Having considered the issue carefully, seeking out the views of my electorate and weighing the information gathered and dissected in the Select Committee created to inform the debate, I reached the conclusion that I couldn't in good conscience deny this option to those that need it. I believe providing a choice to go gently and peacefully under your own terms is compassionate and just when there is no longer any relief from the ravages of disease and death is imminent.



# PALLIATIVE CARE A PRIORITY

As the Parliament progresses the debate on voluntary assisted dying, there has been a welcome spotlight on palliative care. It has been clear for some time that these services have been chronically underfunded in WA, especially in regional areas of the State and The Nationals WA have cautiously welcomed Government announcements of additional funding to address this. However, WA's leading palliative care specialists estimate \$100 million is needed to ensure every West Australian has access to services and the Government's investment still falls well short of that mark. I hosted forums in Northam and Boddington earlier in the year to discuss this issue, in addition to aged care services in the electorate. I thank everyone that has signed our petition collecting support for increasing funding for palliative care services – every voice helps.

## PALLIATIVE CARE IN REGIONAL WA

Region	Specialist visits per year
Kimberley	Six: (each visit for one week)
Pilbara	One
Mid-west	Ten: Geraldton (each visit for one day); Two: Carnarvon
Wheatbelt	Twelve: (three each to Northam, Narrogin, Merredin and Moora)
Goldfields	Twelve: Kalgoorlie; Four: Esperance
South-west	Two resident specialists in Bunbury. No "adequate care" in surrounding towns
Great Southern	One resident physician in Albany. Two visits each to Mt Barker, Katanning and Denmark

## NO ACTION ON ANIMAL ACTIVISTS

The McGowan Labor Government has dragged its heels on introducing legislation to deal with illegal animal activists – despite being aware of the threats since the beginning of the year. More than ten months since these attacks by criminal activists began – attacks which have expanded from farms to cafes, restaurants, supermarkets and even schools – there has been no action despite repeated questions from The Nationals MPs in Parliament to the Attorney General, Police Minister, Agriculture Minister and Premier. In contrast, the Federal Liberal-National Government has introduced legislation making it a criminal offence for activists to incite illegal activity online with a five year imprisonment penalty, and NSW has ramped up penalties as well.

## WIDE LOAD

Over the past few months The Nationals WA heard many complaints about the curfews and rules for the movement of oversized agricultural vehicles. As a result, we sought briefings from the Government and asked a number of questions to the Minister for Transport. The Government has since announced revised rules with the curfew being lifted on all except Perth metropolitan roads and 11 major regional transport routes. The curfew will apply to agricultural vehicles above 5.5 metres in width.

## WHEATBELT ART PRIZE SPONSORS

Kellerberrin Shire (event sponsor), Ramelius Resources, Arc Infrastructure and Collgar Wind Farm (gold sponsors); Risen Energy, RSM, Avon Valley Toyota, CBH Group, Kellerberrin Farmers Co-Op, Peter Jackson Funeral Directors, Country Chemist Goomalling, Hon Martin Aldridge and Hon Colin deGrussa (silver sponsors); and Eco Lifestyle Village Northam (bronze sponsor).

# BACK IN THE POOL

We were horrified to learn that the McGowan Government had cut VacSwim classes this year without consultation or consideration for families that would have to make 100km or longer round trips to neighbouring towns. I raised the matter in Parliament after a wave of protest from families and local governments, and after further pressure the Minister was forced to reconsider the decision. A December program was reinstated for Beverley, Brookton, Kellerberrin, Koorda, Nungarin and Quairading in the Central Wheatbelt.



▲ Congratulations to Mrs Lorna Saunders who was bestowed Freeman of the York Shire. Lorna has volunteered tirelessly in her community over many years.



▲ There was a large amount of merriment at The Nationals WA annual Christmas in July event held at Southern Brook Hall this year, with great food, company and entertainment.



▲ Beacon now has a much-improved airstrip thanks to Local, State and Federal Government funding – it will allow RFDS to land at night and relieve the pressure on hardworking volunteers in the community.



▲ I'm a proud supporter of the racing industry and have enjoyed the race round this year attending several meets in Northam, Toodyay and Kalgoorlie.



▲ It was a delight to join Mr Bill Seimons, family and friends in Corrigin to celebrate his 100th birthday in September – a true gentleman and a privilege to know him.



▲ Hundreds of veterans descend on Bruce Rock for the annual 'Back to the Bush Veterans Reunion' every year – I joined them for the unveiling of a new memorial and the march past.

# POLICE NUMBERS DOWN

The Nationals WA are concerned the safety of communities across the State has been jeopardised by the McGowan Government's failure to provide enough regional police officers. Questioning by The Nationals WA spokesperson for Police and Road Safety Hon Martin Aldridge MLC has revealed there are 95 unfilled positions in rural police districts. It is unacceptable that the Minister for Police hasn't ensured the regions have their full quota of officers. Rural areas aren't getting the police cover they deserve and considering the concerns in particular areas about rural crime, illicit drugs and traffic enforcement these Police shortages are not assisting. As of October, the Wheatbelt was down 18.25 full-time officers from the WA Police Force's own authorised staffing requirements.



Hon Martin Aldridge, Nationals spokesperson for Police and Road Safety



Mia Davies with Wheatbelt District Superintendent Tony Colfer and Dr Julienne Roe on Police Remembrance Day, Northam

## Hon Mia Davies MLA Member for Central Wheatbelt

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