



Jann Stuckey MP

State Member for Currumbin

February 2012

EYE ON THE ELECTORATE

2012 is well underway and I trust this first newsletter for the year finds you all in good shape. Thousands of visitors flocked to our picturesque region during the summer holidays to enjoy the many water and beach activities on offer here. It reminded me how truly fortunate we are to live in such a stunning part of the world.

Only 12 months ago we were coming to terms with the enormity of the flood and cyclone damage that wreaked havoc across our state and cost precious lives. Many Queenslanders are still trying to pick up the pieces and get on with life.

What disappointed me though, as I traversed the electorate was the amount of rubbish being tossed out of car windows or carelessly dropped to litter our streets, highways and parks, and the unsightly graffiti on several spaces. As a community we can make a resolution not to litter, and to pick up 'safe to handle' rubbish when we come across it and put it in a bin.

Our hardworking police at the Elanora Police Beat are taking up the fight against graffiti and are calling on local residents and businesses to keep an eye out for any information on graffiti vandals or incidents. Let's all commit to making Currumbin as litter and graffiti free as possible in 2012.



Jann with members of the Yanguwah attraction

New Attraction for CWS YANGUWAH

I was delighted to officially open the new indigenous attraction, Yanguwah at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary in December. Yanguwah, meaning 'welcome' in the Yugambeh language, is a night experience including a welcome ceremony, traditional feast, song and dance performances and a close-up encounter with some native Australian animals. This dinner and show experience is a unique insight into Aboriginal culture and a wonderful night of entertainment for the whole family.

While staking its claim as a long-standing international tourist attraction, the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary also has a special place in the hearts of many locals in this area, including myself. Like any tourist destination, the Sanctuary has suffered its share of lean times, and our Wildlife Hospital staff really struggle to manage rising demands and costs. I will continue to lobby the State Government for any funding to help keep this much-loved facility open for many years to come.

Southern Cross Uni Expands

Exciting times for the world-class Southern Cross University in our electorate at Bilinga, as the university continues to expand. Construction of the second building is scheduled to be completed by November, which will include clinical health laboratories and a public Wellness Clinic. Funding for a third building has also been announced to house the SCU College that will deliver pathway programs as a stepping stone to university education.

New courses will be offered at the campus from 2013, including a Bachelor of Health Science with a choice of majors in physiotherapy, speech pathology or podiatry.

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Police Staffing

Welcome to new Acting Inspector Damien Crosby. Inspector Crosby will be responsible for supervising the Coolangatta, Palm Beach and Robina police divisions in his new role. Coming to us from Officer-in-Charge of a Townsville station, the acting Inspector brings 23 years experience with the Queensland Police Service, mostly in the north of our state. However, he is looking forward to the challenges of working in the unique geographical location of Coolangatta.

With plenty of cross-border issues to tackle, Inspector Crosby is keen to strengthen ties with the Tweed-Byron local area command and will continue with established programs such as the Southern Alliance and Operation Unison. We wish him every success in his endeavours to keep our community safe.



Jann welcoming new Acting Inspector Damien Crosby at Coolangatta station

In a recent question to the Police Minister, I asked why actual staffing numbers at the Coolangatta Station are short of approved levels. The answer revealed an entrenched understaffing of our local area, with officers regularly “borrowed” or moved elsewhere on the Gold Coast, as a result of inadequate State Government funding. This practice must stop and adequate staffing levels must be met.

Quarry Update

Together with the Stop the Gold Coast Quarry action group, I am continuing to seek information from relevant ministers about the processes undertaken by the Labor Government and Boral leading up to the classification of the proposed quarry as a “significant project”. Latest information revealed a complete failure to consult with neighbouring residents about the designation of this site as a Key Resource Area back in 2004.

At no point was the local community advised by the State Government, Boral or any other relevant authority about the possibility of this intrusive project before the shock announcement in November 2010. As soon as the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) studies commence later in the year, I will be recommending the formation of a Community Reference Group (CRG) similar to the one I had established for the Energex powerlines project, to ensure direct community consultation and accountability in this process.



Jann with 'Disconex' co-founder Natalie Wain

Allconnex Pain

As water bills appear in residents' letterboxes we are reminded of the Allconnex debacle. Last year, residents were angered by huge rises in their water bills and the finger-pointing between GCC Councillors and the State Government when both were to blame. After months of heated community protest, the decision was finally made for the Gold Coast to separate from the State Government's ill fated water grid that was created in a panic in 2006 by a Labor government that failed to secure our future water supply. Legislation is now sitting before a State Parliamentary Committee to return control of the city's water to GCCC.

Small Businesses Hurting

Recent media reports revealed that Queensland small businesses are now required to comply with over 92,172 pages of red tape, a growth of 31.6 per cent (or an average of 9.4 % per year) since the Productivity Commission estimate in 2007.

This equates to a massive \$7 billion in taxes, fees and other charges annually due to a sharp increase in State Government red tape. The Government's over-regulation has meant small business owners face mountains of paperwork for mandatory permits and licences, and complicated calculation methods that can take up to 50 hours a week to complete and cost owners thousands of dollars per year.

Several months ago I initiated a small business questionnaire to invite people to have their say on burdensome and 'nuisance' red tape and regulations. I am now in the process of collating the results and am putting out a final call for contributions. If you would like to comment you can complete the survey at <http://www.lnpsmesurvey.com.au> or collect a paper copy from my office.

Businesses who provide great customer service and quality merchandise often survive while others perish and have to close their doors. There are many customer friendly businesses in our electorate and I urge residents to support their local shops and retailers.



Service with a smile at Kingswood Park Butchery

UPDATES

Tugun to Bilinga Oceanway

Council is calling on residents to have their say on the Tugun to Bilinga Oceanway and accessway options. The proposed options for comment are for a 1.7km stretch connecting Bilinga Surf Life Saving Club to O'Connor Park, Tugun. The State Government has offered conditional funding to the tune of \$2.3 million if the project goes ahead. Consultation closes 28 February 2012. Visit goldcoastcity.com.au/haveyoursay or call (07) 5667 3807

Bypass Landslip

While mostly sparing the Gold Coast, last summer's damaging floods caused a major landslip on the Tugun Bypass south of Stewart Road. Spanning 17m high and 35m wide, the landslip damaged vegetation and fauna fencing. Work is expected to commence this year following investigations to stabilise the site of the landslip area for future wet weather events. Around \$1.8 million is to be spent, funded by the joint State and Federal governments' Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements.

Bureaucratic Madness Sinks Bridge

The construction of Council's new \$1.8 million pedestrian bridge underpassing Thrower Bridge on Currumbin Creek has become a victim of bureaucracy gone mad. Partly funded by the State Government, competing council and Main Roads specifications for the design of the bridge have meant huge costs to meet higher technical and safety standards. After all this, the bridge will still be under water at high tide. There appears to be no plans for lighting to ensure the safety of bike riders or walkers using the bridge at night. While the workmanship is of a superior quality by a respected and experienced company, questions must be asked of Cr Daphne McDonald about the suitability of this project and value for taxpayer dollars.

Koala Conservation

Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Wildcare Australia and Gold Coast City Council are developing a conservation plan and mapping for our local koala population. Residents and visitors are encouraged to report all koala sightings in Elanora and Currumbin Waters – whether the animals are healthy, injured, sick or deceased - by calling the koala hotline on 1300 69 4222

We can also help by keeping dogs indoors or confined between dusk and dawn, when most dog attacks on koalas happen. Also watch your speed and drive with care near bushland to avoid koala injuries and fatalities on the roads.

As a long term advocate of koala protection I urge all residents to look out for our furry friends or they will disappear altogether.



Jann brings needs of CWS to the attention of Campbell Newman and colleagues

Safer Summer for Currumbin Bar

Currumbin bar has remained relatively incident free over the busy summer period thanks to the efforts of the Currumbin VMR. Boaties and other users of this popular spot are also to be commended for their increased safety awareness. I am happy to report that as a result of our call-out in the last newsletter, the VMR has attracted several new members, however more are needed.

If you can help, contact VMR on (07) 5534 1000

“Meet me at The Pines Shopping Centre”

From 10:30am to 12:30pm

• Saturday 11 February • Saturday 10 March

* Please note, if a state election is called, these sessions will not be permitted in the Shopping Centre

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USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Graffiti Hotline
(07) 5581 7998

Traffic - Main Roads
13 19 40

Koala Hotline
1300 69 4222

Allconnex Water
(07) 5570 7600

Energex (loss of power supply)
13 62 62

Energex (power lines down)
13 19 62

Palm Beach Police Station
(07) 5534 0222

Coolangatta Police Station
(07) 5589 8444

Elanora Police Beat
(07) 5569 8480

Crimestoppers
1800 333 000

Kirra Surfriders 50th Anniversary

Congratulations are in order for Kirra Surfriders who celebrated their 50th anniversary on 28th January. Over the years this longstanding group has bred and mentored some outstanding surfing talent and is home to world champion Mick Fanning.



Mary-Jean Brill, Jann and Tom Tate