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1. Federal Budget Cheat Sheet for Not-for-profits

A new charities' regulator, changes to not-for-profit tax concessions and the development of a statutory definition of "charity" are the three key Federal Budget announcements affecting the not-for-profit sector.

The May 10 Federal Budget included announcements of long-awaited reforms to the not-for-profit sector, the biggest of which is the \$53.6 million set aside over four years to establish an Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).



National regulator

In a move sought by the sector for years, and recommended to the Howard Government by the *Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations* way back in 2001, the Gillard Government will oversee the establishment of the ACNC – an independent regulator for the not-for-profit sector.

The ACNC, which will begin work on July 1 next year, is designed to reduce red tape and to serve as a one-stop shop to which all not-for-profit organisations report.

The Commission will initially be responsible for “determining the legal status of groups seeking charitable, public benevolent institution, and other not-for-profit benefits on behalf of all Commonwealth agencies” (a role currently carried out by the Australian Tax Office, which many have argued constitutes an extreme conflict of interest).

Another key aim will be to provide education and support to the sector on technical matters, with a planned public information portal a key component of this aim.

The Government plans to put in place a “report-once use-often” reporting framework for charities, a move in line with the national roll-out of the Standard Chart of Accounts.

The Government says that a fully independent commissioner will drive the changes, reporting directly to Federal Parliament via the Assistant Treasurer.

The make-up of the commission is yet to be determined.

A taskforce to establish the commission will be set up in July, and will consult with the public, the not-for-profit sector and government agencies on the general reporting framework and information portal.

While at least one commentator has categorised the introduction of the new Commission as a “crackdown” on charities, most not-for-profits themselves seem cautiously optimistic.

Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) chief executive Cassandra Goldie offered cautious support for the changes, while Salvation Army spokesperson Bram Cassidy said the new regulator would be good if it did actually manage to cut red tape.

“We'd welcome the presence of a regulator if it's going to streamline processes, I've got to admit I'm not sure at a detail level how it will, but that's certainly the claim,” Major Cassidy told the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

“They're talking about cost savings in excess of \$500 million across the sector, if that's the case, well obviously that's going to be a better thing for any not-for-profit (organisation).”

Changes to not-for-profit tax concessions

Of course what the government giveth, the government can also take away.

Under the guise of “better targeting of not-for-profit tax concessions”, the Government has announced it will close what it describes as a loophole to do with tax on businesses owned by charities. Of course, one person's loophole is another's fundamental principle.

Back in 2008 the High Court said (in *Commissioner Of Taxation v Word Investments* [2008] HCA 55) that if a charity – in this case a missionary group spreading Christianity in developing countries – funded itself by running a business, that business had all the tax advantages of being a charity.

The Henry Tax Review basically gave these arrangements a pass.

“The High Court of Australia's 2008 decision in the Word Investment case has significantly increased the scope of NFP organisations to undertake commercial activities. In light of this decision, the Review has considered the impact of the three main tax concessions (income tax, GST and FBT) on competitive neutrality. the income tax and GST concessions do not appear to violate this principle.....”

The Government apparently thinks differently. The problem wasn't immediate, but they thought that after *Word*, smart accountants would increasingly be pushing future commercial activities under the not-for-profit umbrella. From the *Sydney Morning Herald* earlier this month:

“The government and the charity sector have grown concerned at the proliferation of groups which qualify as a not-for-profit entity and then launch profitable businesses. The Hillsong church has links with the Gloria Jean's coffee shop franchise, while the cereal company Sanitarium is owned by the Seventh Day Adventist Church.”

The changes announced in the Budget will mean not-for-profits will pay income tax on the profits they retain in their commercial undertakings, rather than sending them back to altruistic work.

But existing businesses, such as Sanitarium, will not be immediately affected – the government will consult on transitional arrangements.

Activities central to the purpose of the charitable organisation would still be untaxed, even when run commercially, such as non-profit hospitals and childcare centres. Businesses such as op shops, whose profits go back to the charities, will continue to be exempt from income tax.

Tim Costello, for one, welcomes the change.

“Australian taxpayers expect the commercial arms of charities not to use the charitable front as a shell to avoid tax,” he says.

However not everyone is happy. Moore's Legal – whose Principal Murray Baird represented Word Investments in the 2008 case – was scathing in its criticism in its post-Budget Not-For-Profit Briefing.

Moore says the move is inconsistent with Government policy and promises and flies in the face of Federal Government-commissioned reports, including the Henry Review and the 2010 Productivity Commission Report.

Statutory definition of “charity” to be introduced by 2013

After countless reviews, recommendations and delays over the past decade, the Federal Government announced in the Budget that it would finally develop and adopt a statutory definition of “charity” by July 1, 2013.

(Curiously, this highly significant move appears to have been omitted from the pre-budget leaks about changes affecting the not-for-profit sector.)

The task of developing the definition will fall to the new ACNC, which will receive \$2.9 million from the Government to establish a definition which will be consistent across all Australian States and Territories. State and Territories will be consulted during the statutory definition's development.

The definition will be based on the 2001 *Report of the Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations*, taking account of the findings of recent judicial decisions such as *Aid/Watch Incorporated v Commissioner of Taxation* [2010], in which the High Court of Australia extended the definition of charity to include further types of advocacy-based organisations.

The change is, obviously, long overdue. Currently our definition of charity dates back more than 400 years to the Statute of Elizabeth I.

And while the Common Law has gone on to develop the notion of what is a charity, the starting point has been the Statute's very old set of criteria outlining the four purposes that were charitable:

- The relief of poverty;

- The advancement of education;
- The advancement of religion; and
- Any other purpose beneficial to the community (which must fit within the spirit of the statute).

Clearly an unsatisfactory situation – something acknowledged in numerous Government-commissioned reports over the past decade.

Once the new definition is in place, the ACNC will develop new guidance for the not-for-profit sector as well as reassess the charitable status of groups on the basis of the new definition.

Other announcements

Other key Budget announcements that may be of interest to those working in the community sector include:

Mental Health/Health:

- Almost \$1.3 billion on new services, including:
 - Clinical and support services for people with severe mental illness;
 - Prevention and early intervention mental health services for children and young people;
 - Funding to help mental illness sufferers better access the primary healthcare system.
- \$32 million for a new National Mental Health Commission.
- \$50 million on new personal helpers and mentors to guide mental illness sufferers in seeking work.
- \$1.8 billion for regional health infrastructure.
- \$717 million to improve access to diagnostic imaging services (like MRIs) and to make medicines more affordable.

► *For a mental health consumer perspective on the budget, sign up as a member to Our Consumer Place (OCP) – www.ourconsumerplace.com.au. A full consumer perspective analysis will be included in OCP's next newsletter.*

Education:

- \$1.75 billion towards reforms to vocational education and training.
- \$425 million towards rewarding top-performing teachers with pay bonuses.
- \$222 million to expand the school chaplaincy program.
- \$200 million towards helping schools and teachers support students with disabilities.
- \$51 million for school-based traineeships and other support aimed specifically at Indigenous students.
- \$18 million in post-graduate education to encourage professionals with specialist qualifications to become teachers.
- Regional universities to share in \$500 million Education Investment Fund, as well as receiving \$110 million towards covering higher costs in delivering education in regional areas.

People with disabilities:

- \$200 million towards helping schools and teachers support students with disabilities.
- Almost \$150 million towards early intervention services for families whose children have disabilities.
- \$31 million for autism assistance for children.

- From July next year employers will be paid \$3000 in subsidies if they provide 15 hours of work per week to those with disabilities.

Environment:

- More than \$80 million to help landowners protect the habitats of threatened native species.
- \$10 million towards establishing and maintaining wildlife corridors.
- \$4 million towards eradicating the damaging Yellow Crazy Ant from Christmas Island.
- Cuts to a number of green energy programs, including the Carbon Capture and Storage Scheme, and the scrapping of the Green Start Program.

Indigenous:

- \$51 million for school-based traineeships and other support aimed specifically at Indigenous students under the Youth Career Pathways Program.
- Almost \$40 million to help members of the Stolen Generation trace their families.
- \$35 million towards Indigenous health services, plus a mental health package.
- \$28 million to upgrade airstrips in remote areas.
- \$15 million towards National Indigenous Television.
- \$11.2 million towards the process to achieve recognition of indigenous Australians in the constitutionn.

Welfare:

- A four-year freeze on upper cut-off thresholds for a number of welfare programs, including some family payments, paid parental leave and the baby bonus.
- A trial program of quarantining 50-70% of welfare payments to “disadvantaged parents” so they are used on essentials.
- Single parents on Newstart allowances allowed to keep up to an extra \$3900 a year.
- More than \$100 million for single parents’ training and career advice.
- Disability Support Pensioner assessments and work requirements tightened. However Disability pensioners can now work 30 hours, instead of 15, and still get allowances.
- Twenty-one-year-olds to remain on Youth Allowance rather than going onto the Newstart Allowance; though they can now earn more without suffering a reduction in benefits.
- \$772 million to boost Family Tax Benefits A for dependent 16-19 year-olds who are studying full-time.
- \$460 million to extend education tax refund to cover school uniforms and school sports uniforms.
- Almost \$70 million to help boost the job skills of early school leavers.
- Extra fortnightly payments to ex-prisoners of war.

For more information on the Federal Budget, go to <http://www.budget.gov.au/>

State budgets are also currently rolling out around the country. To keep up on what’s in and what’s out, what’s bolstered and what’s cut, keep an eye out for *EasyGrants*.

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2. Communities – Finally in Control?

You know, this might just be our year.

There have been a lot of missed chances for the community sector over the last decade – one government minister has even referred to ‘inquiry fatigue’ – but things do seem to be starting to come together.

If the government does act (and going by this week’s budget – see [last item](#), it looks like it will), it will be the most significant change to government / community sector relations for 400 years.

You need to be part of it. You need to ensure your community and your community group have a voice.

At this year’s Communities in Control Conference we’ve got Australian of the Year **Simon McKeon** saying that the community sector makes up a large part of the national economy and should have a voice in national affairs, we’ve got **Phil Ruthven** from IBIS pointing out that the sector’s a hundred-billion-dollar business that’s growing by 4% a year, and we’ve got **Linda Lavarch** (Chair of the Not-for-profit Sector Reform Council) talking about where the Council’s coming from, where it’s breaking through, and where it’s taking your future.

More good ideas come from the Centre for Policy Development’s **Miriam Lyons** – she’s got a book full of them, in fact, the most important of which is that Australian badly needs more good ideas – while social researcher **Hugh Mackay** keeps us in touch with the constants of Australian behavior. **Mark Scott**, head honcho at the ABC, will let us know what’s in the pipeline for the media and its communities.

Sex Discrimination Commissioner **Elizabeth Broderick** will be talking about the current pay equity case, which is likely to have a massive impact on the community sector and all those who work within it, while **Christine Nixon** will brainstorm about how women in the sector can bring about the changes we need to see.

Former ACTU chief **Sharan Burrow**, who is currently the General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation based in Brussels, will deliver the inaugural Joan Kirner Social Justice Oration, putting forward her vision for a more progressive, socially just Australia.

Plus there will be luminaries from federal, state and local governments to talk about what they’re contributing to the new synthesis.

After that, of course, comes the really interesting bit – where Simon and Phil and Linda and the others puzzle out what to do next, and you decide where you fit in the big project.

Good conferences are interactive, with the speakers giving you the ideas you chew over while networking in the coffee breaks and then feed back to the folk back in the office on your return.

Communities in Control conferences always stimulate involvement – check out the comments [here](#) – and this year the discussions feed directly into the future of the sector. Keep an eye out on the floor for the people carrying the microphones.

Planning for the future in the community sector involves guessing what threats are lurking around the corner, guessing where the country is headed, and guessing what plans the government has in its bottom drawer.

This year’s Community in Control conference should give you a head start on the long view.

The conference will take place at Moonee Valley Racing Club, Moonee Ponds, on May 30 and 31.

Let’s get moving, today, together. Australia’s not going to reform itself.

Find out more and book your place at www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2011



Elizabeth Broderick



Miriam Lyons



Hugh Mackay



Simon McKeon



Phil Ruthven



Linda Lavarch



Mark Scott



Sharan Burrow

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COMMUNITIES *in* CONTROL Conference 2011

*Incredible
Value!*

*The 'Must Do'
Conference*



**REGISTER NOW
FOR YOUR CHANCE
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**Our Changing
Communities &
Community Organisations:
→ The Takeaway is Hope:
CHANGE NOW!**

CONFERENCE:

Melbourne, Australia

Monday 30 May & Tuesday 31 May 2011

Plus

PRE-CONFERENCE SKILLS DAY:

Sunday 29 May 2011

**“Women Achieving and Flourishing”
with Christine Nixon APM**

BOOK NOW:

**www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2011
or call 03 9320 6800**

3. Participation, inclusion and Sports Without Borders

Australians love their sport. In fact, participating in or watching sport is a key part of many Australians' lives.

Many of us take for granted that we can easily join in and participate in organised sport. But for some Australians there are very real challenges to overcome.

Groups that can suffer disadvantage – migrants, Indigenous people, women, young people and those with disabilities – sometimes need more support in order to get involved.

Even where there's no active discrimination, there's often little outreach or recruitment, little understanding of particular needs, and little motivation to change in response to those needs.

Having groups who are excluded from full participation in their communities is a negative – both for those who are excluded as well as for their communities. Conversely, participation in one of Australia's many sporting organisations can help previously excluded people to connect with, and take a greater role in, wider society.

These are some of the themes to be explored at next month's **Sports Without Borders** conference, to be staged at Moonee Valley Racecourse, in conjunction with Our Community, on June 27.

Formed in 2006, Sports Without Borders is a not-for-profit organisation that provides support for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds who are either involved in sport or want to get involved in sport.

The conference aims to promote "a new era of participation and inclusion and a more equitable Australia". It will bring together sportspeople, clubs, government, local government workers, administrators and educators to learn the facts, hear the stories, and learn about new practices and best practice solutions. Speakers include:

- **Grant Hackett** – Champion swimmer, television presenter and Head of Sports and Entertainment for Westpac.
- **Dr Sue Dyson** – researcher whose work focuses on preventing violence and discrimination, and who looks at how culture, gender, disability, race, and linguistic diversity intersect across sport, education, workplace and place-based settings to support and maintain cultures of disrespect that can lead to violence.
- **Dr Ruth Jeanes** – Dr Jeanes' research interests sit are within the area of social policy and sport development, with a particular interest in the role of sport as a vehicle for social change.
- **Paul Kennedy** – Respected TV and radio journalist, sports presenter and former state league footballer.
- **Senator Mark Arbib** – Federal Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic Development, Minister for Sport, and Minister for Social Housing and Homelessness.
- **Judy Flanagan** – Respected national and international sports administrator and volunteer who currently heads up the Australian Sports Commission's Sport Leadership division.
- **Senator Kate Lundy** – Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.
- **Martin Flanagan** – Highly respected writer for Melbourne's *Age* newspaper, as well as the author of 12 books, including *The Game in the Time of War* and *Richo*.
- **James Demetriou** – Co-founder and Executive Chair of Sports Without Borders, and former senior footballer and director at the Essendon Football Club.
- **The Hon. Hugh Delahunty** – Victorian Sports and Recreation Minister, and someone with a long-time involvement in community activities and organisations.

For more information about the event, or to register, visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/swb2011.



4. Reboot your organisation at Connecting Up 2011

Improving not-for-profits' online presence and helping them better integrate the web into their fundraising, marketing and other everyday work are among the aims of the Connecting Up 2011 Conference, to be held in Melbourne next month.

The conference is organised by Connecting Up Australia, an organisation that provides information, products, resources and programs centred around the use of information communication technology.

The event follows on from the group's recent *Year of Listening* report, which saw Connecting Up Australia interview 900 groups about their needs, big picture issues and daily challenges.

The report found that many groups and their boards struggled with gaining or sustaining the necessary expertise in specialist areas like marketing and public relations, business development, ICT management and financial management.

It also found decision-makers in not-for-profits were keen to upgrade their technology systems and websites, but struggled with the options available and with finding suppliers to complete the upgrades.

With a theme of "Reboot your Nonprofit", the Connecting Up Conference aims to address some of the issues expressed in the *Year of Listening* report, including:

- Changing groups' perceptions of online tools;
- Helping groups overcome the fear of change;
- Looking at how to shift fundraising and marketing online;
- Improving the use of social media in groups' everyday communications;
- Using technology to increase flexibility of working arrangements;
- Increasing funding diversity;
- Improving governance; and
- Managing staff more effectively.

The conference's keynote speakers are software developer and technology expert Allen Gunn – who will speak about how using "open" models like those developed in open source software can help community organisations – and Executive Director at Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN) Holly Ross – who will look at important technology trends and how community groups can respond to them and benefit from change.

Almost 50 other speakers and presenters are on the conference program, covering the gamut of technology issues, and looking at how groups can either improve their technology use, respond to change or harness it to benefit their organisation.

The conference will be staged from June 1-3 (the days that follow **Communities in Control**) at the Crown Conference Centre, Southbank. June 3 is a special post-conference workshop day featuring Ms Ross and Mr Gunn entitled "Technology Leadership for the (Sustainable) Win".

All conference details, including the program, pricing, bookings and other information, can be found here: <http://www.connectingup.org/>.



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5. Combatting ‘Grants Rage’ one program at a time: HOW YOU CAN HELP!



By Simon Herd,

Director of Grantmaking Reform

Australian institute of Grants Management (AIGM)

AIGM is a division of Our Community

As community group representatives, you will know better than most that giving out grants is not a job that just anyone can do. It requires a certain knowledge, a certain set of skills, a particular type of understanding.

At Our Community, we know more than most about grants rage. We’ve heard over and over about programs that are unfair and non-inclusive, processes that have buried time-stretched volunteers in red tape, online forms that stutter and crash and don’t do what you need them to do, grantmakers who have failed to learn from their own mistakes.

Our research suggests that more than \$23 billion is given out annually in grants funding in Australia – that’s money that should be being used to build better communities, not to prop up poorly performing grants programs.

After several years of research, development, listening to what tore at the hearts of grantseekers, and reflecting on what was blocking the paths of progressive grantmakers, **SmartyGrants** was unveiled by Our Community in November 2009.

SmartyGrants is a hosted grants management application which helps grantmakers to collect online applications through a simple, stable system, and manage the processes involved in assessing applications, dispensing grants and handling monitoring and reporting tasks.

Best practices are built into the system: we know what drives grantseekers spare and we’ve done our level best to eliminate those defects from the programs of the organisations that use it.

It’s gratifying that in just over a year, 40 forward-thinking grantmakers have taken up the system. Users include visionary local governments like Sunshine Coast and Port Phillip and Brisbane; state government entities like the Victorian Multicultural Commission and ACT Health; philanthropic foundations like the Foundation for Young Australians and New Zealand’s Todd Foundation; not-for-profit grantmakers such as FebFast and beyondblue; corporates such as Alcoa and Westpac; and the Federal Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Grantmakers need systems that are both nimble and flexible enough to respond to diverse grantseeker needs and unexpected events, and solid and consistent enough to provide a base for the knowledge and the planning needed to find out what’s working and to keep improving.

With SmartyGrants, we’re working hard to make that dream a reality.

Here’s where you come in

SmartyGrants has just been announced as one of the outstanding Australian innovations included in this year’s **SMART100**.

You can support the work we are doing to spearhead the grantmaking revolution by helping to spread the word about SmartyGrants. Visit our SMART100 webpage – <http://anthillonline.com/smartygrants-smart-100/> – and show your support by commenting, tweeting or ‘liking’ our entry.

To find out more about SmartyGrants, visit www.smartygrants.com.au



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Showcase your cause/ services to 1300 community groups!

We are now taking bookings for display tables at the 8th annual Communities in Control Conference.

WHERE: Moonee Valley Racing Club, McPherson St, Moonee Ponds VIC

WHEN: May 30-31, 2011

WHO: Approx. 1300 delegates from all over Australia – people who work in, work for, work with or care about the community sector

Option 1: Display Table

Package includes display table (table provided) plus 10 two-day conference passes for staff, volunteers or members (value of 10 passes=\$2980).

Cost: \$2,500*

Option 2: Display Table + Delegates' Pack Insert

Package includes a display table (table provided) plus 10 two-day conference passes for staff, volunteers or members (value of 10 passes=\$2980), plus a brochure inserted in delegates' packs**

Cost:\$3,000*

Option 3: Delegate's Pack Insert

Package includes brochure inserted in delegates' packs**

Cost:\$1,500

Please note display space is limited and will be restricted to those whose values are in line with Our Community, CatholicCare and the Communities in Control ethos.

INQUIRIES & BOOKINGS:
(03) 9320 6820
lisar@ourcommunity.com.au

*Price includes GST

** Inserts to be supplied 14 days before the event. Insert size/style to be approved by conference organisers.



6. Great Australian Leaders in Focus: The Hon. Joan Kirner AM

The **Our Community Leaders** initiative is designed to highlight community leadership in Australia. Each interview is designed to excite and stimulate discussion on the important elements of leadership as well as providing some personal insights that can serve as lessons or guides for other younger and emerging leaders.

Leadership interviews appear in this newsletter and are also available via the Community Leadership Centre: www.ourcommunity.com.au/leadership

This month's interview is with The Hon Joan Kirner AM. Joan Kirner began her working life as a school teacher and later became the highly prominent president of the influential lobby group, Victorian Federation of State School's Parents Club.

She joined the Labor Party in 1978 and was elected to Parliament in 1982, becoming Victoria's first female Premier in 1990.

Since leaving Parliament in 1994, Joan has continued to work tirelessly as a community activist, advocate, champion for the advancement of women and social justice campaigner. She is currently the Victorian Community Ambassador.



► Who do you consider to be three great leaders of our time and why?

- **Mary Robinson**, Former UN Human Rights Commissioner
 - Human Rights, Women's Rights, Gender Equity
- **Nelson Mandela**, Former President of South Africa
 - Courage, Conscience, Compassion
 - Freedom of the Human Spirit, Compassion,
 - Empowerment, Oratory
- **Paul Keating**, Former Prime Minister of Australia
 - An Australian Republic: independent, proud, democratic, respected, reconciled, innovative, progressive, nuclear free.

Shared Qualities:

- Inspirational vision and leadership in policy, advocacy and action.
- Understanding that the best and most lasting decisions are made when people affected by the challenges are part of identifying and implementing the solutions.

► What are the three attributes you consider to be essential to a leader?

1. Be clear about your values and what you stand for in words and practice;
2. Be committed to social and economic inclusion and community ownership, participation and environmental sustainability, innovation;
3. Be respectful of people and place and have the courage to stand firm when that respect is challenged.

► What are the greatest barriers to new leaders emerging in Australia?

- Individualism and lack of understanding of the lessons of history and the benefit and importance of acting together for the common good;

- Short-term political polling and popular media domination of our nation’s public dialogue and action on key issues including human rights and equity;
- Inability or refusal to see the big picture and link it with the community’s understanding of how they can improve their own lives and the lives of others.

► **What advice would you give to a potential leader to take them to the next stage?**

- Believe in yourself and your power to be part of creating a better society;
- Think big;
- Be clear about your central purpose in all that you do;
- Work as the leader of a team;
- Act with the community not on them;
- Give respect: gain respect. Don’t be afraid of risk and share responsibility. The best and most sustainable solutions are those made with and by the community affected by those solutions.

► **What insights have you gained personally on your leadership journey and how have they impacted on your style of leadership?**

- Collective wisdom and action achieves more and is more enduring than individual ideas and action;
- Know what you stand for and live your life through these values. Or as my parents would have said:
 - “practice what you preach”
 - “if something needs doing – do it yourself and be sure you take others with you.”
- Be clear about the difference you want to make and how.

► **Who have been your own leadership mentors and how did they assist in developing your own leadership style?**

- Dr Jean Blackburn – Jean taught me that closing the Economic and Education Gap is the key to a healthy, cohesive, progressive and inclusive society;
- My parents – taught me their values of community action, respect for people as equals and the social justice ideals of the Labor movement;
- Feminists who have shown me the importance of achieving gender equity in expanding and organising the power of women in the economic, environment and social arena.

► **Thinking about your own leadership journey, what are you most proud of and what would you change if you had the chance?**

- Being the first woman Victorian Premier and hopefully demonstrating to young women that they too can take the opportunity to be a leader.
- Education Reform: The Disadvantaged Schools Program, integration of children with disabilities into regular schools, the introduction and success of the broader curriculum of the VCE in increasing the retention rates in schools, and introducing gender equity into in schools and the Education Department.
- De-institutionalisation.
- The Landcare Movement; the Rural Women’s Network; Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act; Extension of National Parks including East Gippsland and Alpine.
- Deciding that the Victorian Women’s Trust should become a viable independent Trust to advance the causes of women.

- Family Violence and Rape Law Reform.
- The Public Service Equal Opportunity Act.
- Legalisation of Abortion.
- Beginning in 1993, Labor's Affirmative Action Campaigns and in 1996 the creation of Emily's List, enabling more progressive women to be elected to Parliament and become political leaders (e.g. Julia Gillard, Prime Minister of Australia). In 1980 there were about 60 Labor women in Parliaments across Australia: there are now 152 Labor women MPs.

► **If you had a magic wand, what would you change about community life in Australia right now?**

I would work with others to close the poverty, economic and social inclusion gap between communities and within communities and to end violence against women.

In honour of the tireless work for social justice carried out by Joan Kirner over many decades, the Communities in Control Conference will this year include a 'Joan Kirner Social Justice Oration'. This year's inaugural oration will be delivered by former ACTU chief Sharan Burrow. For more information visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2011.

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7. Treasurers' Awards provide snapshot of community diversity



By Julienne Price
Head of Social Sector Banking
Westpac

Judging is now under way for the 2011 Westpac Community Treasurers' Awards.

Now in their third year, this year the awards received a record 514 entries from right across the country.

The majority of entries (70%) came from small organisations (budgets less than \$100,000), although medium and large organisations were also well represented.

The nominations provide a fascinating snapshot of the immense diversity of interests being pursued by the people involved in community groups right across Australia.

- **There's the tried and true** – Scouts and guides, surf life saving clubs and emergency services organisations, church groups, educational facilities, neighbourhood houses, health and welfare support groups – for humans and animals – playgroups, economic development groups, show and historical societies, country women's associations.
- **There's the particular** – Love orchids? Interested in dog agility, or Irish Wolfhounds? Want to learn how to play floorball? Fancy working with model buses? Want to help preserve and promote the Western Australian Outback Heritage Horse, or record and preserve the history of the SA Police Force, or commemorate the 1956 Olympic Torch Relay torchbearers? Then there's a group out there for you.
- **The arty** – From cake decorator's to country music clubs, drama, theatre and arts groups, choirs and brass bands, writer's groups, wood crafters and folkdancing associations.

- **The sporty** – Football ... netball ... soccer ... croquet ... swimming ... golf ... softball ... baseball ... volleyball ... tennis ... hockey ... bowls ... calisthenics ... squash ... gymnastics ... rugby league ... cricket ... shooting ... arts ... and even sports trainers' and umpires' clubs are represented.
- **And the outdoorsy** – Four wheel drive and sailing and equestrian and archery and gliding and anglers' and yacht clubs.
- **There are fellowship groups** – Ionian, Soroptimist, Lions, Rotary and Probus Clubs, Masonic Lodges, men's shed groups, Fu-Ring-Gai and Order of the Eastern Star groups.
- **And organisations catering to particular groups of migrants** – Hungarian, Indian and Greek senior citizens' clubs, a Manx society and a society for Scottish Gaelic speakers.
- **And groups for those who want to provide a service to others and to their communities** – Hall, recreation reserve and cemetery management committees, seafarers' support organisations, relief of poverty organisations, voluntary fire brigades and ambulance teams and rescue helicopter support groups.
- **Or to fight for justice** – Aboriginal, disability, anti-violence and mental health advocacy organisations.
- **There are groups for the young** – Junior sports and little athletics clubs, youth clubs and mentoring organisations.
- **And for the more mature** – Senior citizens clubs, retirement village associations.
- **There are groups for people who come together to support the environment** – Friends-of beaches, parks, gardens, creeks; sustainability awareness groups.
- **Or to share the good life** – Wine and food appreciation association.

Overall, there were more female treasurers (53%) nominated for an award than males (a figure that flies in the face of the prevailing view that “women can't do numbers”!).

Women were least represented in medium and large organisations (40 and 43%, as compared with 58% for small organisations), which seems to confirm the suspicion that the bigger and more prestigious a not-for-profit board is, the more likely they are to have men in key positions.

The Westpac Community Treasurers' Awards are an initiative of Our Community and Westpac that aim to highlight and elevate the role voluntary treasurers working in community groups across the country.

Winners will be announced in June.

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8. Marketing Guru: Shorter is shorter



When it comes to marketing copy shorter is better, right?

Here's a quick example. Analysing some email mailouts, done by the number-crunchers over at the [Marketing Experiments](#) blog (thanks to our friends at [Hootville](#) for alerting us to this one), if you cut your email message by 50% you get 16% more click-throughs.

Proof positive?

Well, it is possible to take this too far.

Yes, that's a good result, and it shows that the best of us can do with a little trimming – but if they cut the text by another 50% we doubt whether the click-through rate would go up again, and if they cut that version another 50% it would have to be written in Twitterese. There comes a point where shorter is more confusing.

We're talking here about email, and about click-throughs. The point of the email is to trigger a click to the page where you have your actual sales pitch.

When the readers do come to your page, they want answers. The answers don't all have to be on the one page, and some of the material isn't even designed to be read.

You should have your last financial report up there, for instance, just to show you appreciate the importance of efficiency and transparency, but it's all you can do to get your Board to read that – the general public just wants to know it's there.

Going back to the email, though, luckily a lot of the things that make your message more telling also make it shorter.

- Break up long sentences.
- Don't use passive voice (not "rice was provided to...", but "We gave rice to...").
- Be concrete, and personal.
- Use pictures where you can.
- Read your work aloud to make sure it flows easily.

You want to cut everything from your copy that doesn't support your point, everything that's vague and insufficiently concrete, everything that doesn't tell the story or build your links with the reader.

If you do that right you should end up with a snappy message – but bear in mind that when Tolstoy did exactly that he ended up with *War and Peace*. Your message should be as short as possible, but no shorter. Australians read enormously, and they read enormous fat books in interminably long series. Length is not a problem. Not writing what they want to read is a problem.

You cut unnecessary copy not because people will be repelled but because the extra words hide what you actually need to tell them. It's not what you cut that sells your cause, it's what you leave in.

Alan Sharpe, a highly regarded fundraising consultant, says:

"If your donors won't read any more than a few paragraphs of what you have to say, then you don't have an attention-span problem. You have a branding problem, a credibility problem, or a reason-for-being problem.

"And you can't remedy that lack by keeping your remarks to one page. Make your case for support something that donors long to get behind and they will long to read your long letters."

The Marketing Guru is an initiative of the Marketing, Media and Post Centre, the online resource provided by Our Community and Australia Post. Send your questions to guru@ourcommunity.com.au.

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NAB Schools First – rewarding and recognising outstanding school-community partnerships.

When schools partner with the community, everyone involved benefits.

When we talk about NAB Schools First, "community" means any agency or entity that isn't a school. Examples of eligible "community" partners are community health centres, sporting clubs, not-for-profits, youth & family support services, environmental groups, business and local government – just to name a few!

NAB Schools First is a national awards program with \$5 million in funding available this year.

If you have an existing partnership, or if you're interested in forming one, find out more about NAB Schools First.

For information on Partnership Forum locations, applications guidelines and case studies on award winning partnerships, visit schoolsfirst.edu.au.



9. COMMUNITY CLASSIFIEDS: Offers, giveaways, opportunities

TO GIVE AWAY: Sports Jerseys (Granville, NSW)

A NSW junior soccer club has up to 10 sets of second-hand soccer jerseys to give away.

The jerseys were used by the Granville Rage Junior FC but are now surplus as the club has changed names.

They have been used for three years but are in excellent condition and range in sizes to suit six-year-olds through to adults.

Organisations that think they can use the jerseys will need to either pick them up from the club in Granville, or pay for postage.

For more information, contact Mark Rivet, phone 0404 865 977 or email juniors@granvillerrage.com.au

TO GIVE AWAY: Hospital Beds (Gold Coast, Qld)

A Queensland aged care facility has around 140 wind-up hospital beds to give away to an Australian or international community group.

The beds are being disposed of as the centre is replacing them with electric beds.

They would need to be picked up as soon as possible from each of four facilities on the Gold Coast.

For more information contact Wendy Baker at Homestead Aged Care Facility, phone (07) 5557 1888 or email to wendy.baker@cofcqld.com.au

WANTED: Census Collectors (Australia-wide)

The Census Collector recruitment period has been extended until May 19, 2011.

Twenty-nine thousand collectors are needed for the August 9 Census, which, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, will be the largest peacetime operation in Australia's history.

Collectors are sought nationwide – in urban, rural, regional and remote areas. Positions are temporary – from July 1 until September 8 – with flexible working hours available.

Collectors will be asked to deliver and collect all Census forms in their allotted area, as well as help householders fill in the forms where necessary. Collectors will also need to work from home, use their own telephone or mobile phone for Census purposes and have use of a vehicle which can be securely locked.

Apply at www.abs.gov.au/census.

WANTED: Not-for-profits for a TV pilot (Victoria)

TV production company Renegade Films is seeking a not-for-profit organisation, community group or charity to take part in the taping of a pilot for a new television program.

The program will involve a charity expert visiting an organisation that feels it needs help in a certain area.

Renegade Films are seeking an organisation that: (a) has a specific concern or would like to develop in a particular area; (b) thinks expert help would be useful; (c) is interested in seeing how a TV show is put together; and (d) is willing to provide feedback at the end of the process that will help shape the final TV series, which is designed to be aired on ABC TV. Note that the pilot is not designed to go to air, but rather to test the concept.

The participating organisation will receive several days of expert help and may use the footage shot during the filming for its own website or marketing purposes.

For more information contact Esther Coleman-Hawkins: email esther@renegade.com.au or phone 0416 365 242.

10. Fundraising for Schools: new training opportunity

One of the great challenges schools face is to develop and implement a successful, sustainable and diverse fundraising strategy.

Of course, this isn't surprising given all the other things schools have on their plate – not least the education of our children!

Time is of the essence. You need access to the practical knowledge of successful fundraisers. You need to know which events to avoid and which of them will help you re el in the most amount of money for the least amount of effort. You need to know the shortcuts.

Our Community's new seminar, *Money Money Money ... Schools Fundraising Seminar*, will deliver all this, and more.

To be staged in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth between June and August, the seminar sets out to help schools develop the fundamentals of a varied, sustainable fundraising strategy.

Participants will learn:

- How to ask for money – from a variety of donors and across a range of media.
- How to draw up a fundraising plan – one which will work for your school.
- How to raise secure, unattached, and predictable income – untied money that can be used for your group's own priorities and decisions.
- How to run great events – including how to pick special events which are real winners and make them work while avoiding or eliminating costly, energy-sapping failures.
- How to rally the troops – a vital part of successful fundraising is to fire up a fundraising culture and drum up more volunteers.
- How to get businesses to support your school – learn the secrets to profitable community-business partnerships.
- How to ensure sponsors get what they expect – find out what to expect from your sponsors (and what they will expect from you).

All those who attend also receive a free copy of the Our Community book, *How to Find Money Fast: 50 Great Ideas to raise up to \$5,000* (right), which usually sells for \$36.

Money Money Money ... Schools Fundraising Seminar will be held in:

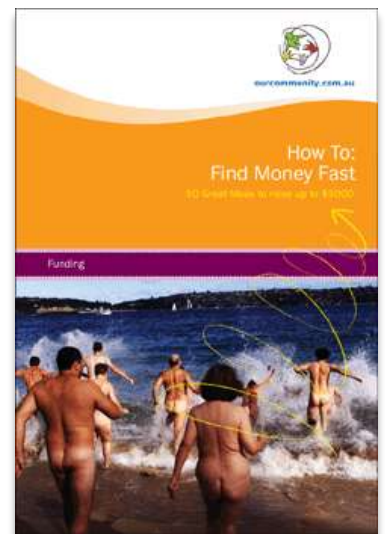
- **Sydney** – June 16 at the Hyde Park Inn.
- **Adelaide** – June 23 at the Mercure Grosvenor Hotel Adelaide.
- **Melbourne** – June 30 at the Moonee Valley Racing Club.
- **Brisbane** – August 18 at the Chifley at Lennons Brisbane.
- **Perth** – August 25 at the Mantra on Murray.

For more information, and registrations, visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/schoolseminar

AICPG has a number of other scheduled training events, seminars and conferences coming up in the next few months – headlined by the annual Communities in Control Conference later this month, and next month's Sports Without Borders Conference.

Other training opportunities include:

- Advanced Grant Writing Seminar 2011 (AG11) – You've mastered the basics, now it's time to become a GRANTS MASTER
- Certificate IV in Governance - for Community Boards (BSB40907) (C411) – Accredited four-day training for community board/committee members and supporters



- [Diploma of Management BSB51107 \(DM11\)](#) – Practical, affordable, accredited training for staff of community and not-for-profit organisations
- [Introduction to Writing Winning Grant Applications \(GW11\)](#) – How to access more grants for your community organisation or school
- [Secrets of Successful Boards 2011 \(SB11\)](#) – Full-day seminar for prospective & current board/committee of management members, and those who support them
- [Strategies for Sustainable Funding Seminar \(FS11\)](#) – Seminar for volunteers, staff and fundraisers on how to build sustainability beyond grant funding for your community organisation
- [Women Achieving And Flourishing \(WL 11\)](#) – Our Community, Women’s Leadership Institute Australia and Christine Nixon APM have joined forces to offer a half-day workshop designed for women in supervisory, management or leadership positions, and those who aspire to those roles.

For more information on any of these training opportunities, including session dates and locations, visit: www.ourcommunity.com.au/training/calendar.form.

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11. Ebenezer Jobs: Apple fails the charity test

If you’re an Australian community group you’ll have been to [DonorTec](#) to get some of their products – software that’s free or cheaper for not-for-profit groups. Free software – what’s not to like?

You can’t help noticing, though, that DonorTec in Australia has a considerably smaller menu than its American equivalent, [TechSoup](#). DonorTec has about 150 items, TechSoup more than 500. Adobe, Blackbaud and Seagate, among other American companies, feel they have responsibilities to their American charities that they don’t feel called upon to extend to ours.

This can’t be said of Microsoft, which is generous in both nations (as is Symantec). Microsoft hands out its software quite freely, to the tune of some \$350 million dollar’s worth. There are some conditions and some exclusions, but what remains is a generosity that can best be appreciated by comparing it to its nearest competitor, Apple.

Apple’s machines are cool, and its software is nifty, but its business model is based on that of Ebenezer Scrooge. Apple gives no freebies to anybody, however selfless the cause. If you want to update your operating system, or install an Apple office package, stump up.

It’s not as if Steve Jobs made up for his commercial tightness by his generosity elsewhere, either. Neither Jobs individually or Apple collectively lift their gaze from their spreadsheets for an instant. They don’t give money, and they don’t give discounts, and they don’t give support.

Worse – they actively discourage people supporting anything other than Apple. Both the iPhone and the iPad bar apps that allow people to donate to causes, and as people migrate on to these technologies that’s going to be becoming more and more important. Scrooge isn’t just not giving himself, he’s kicking the tin cup out of the beggar’s hand.

And still Bill Gates is seen as the mean one and Steve Jobs as the rebel. That’s quite some reality distortion field there.

Google is also in the papers for stiffing the Australian taxation system (perfectly legally, apparently) through transfer pricing, shifting their profits out of Australia and over to Ireland, where the tax is lower. (And they were the people who said their motto was “Don’t be evil....”)

It’s enough to make one nostalgic for the quill pen and the inkwell.

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12. The XX Factor: Women's leadership in focus

If you haven't yet had the chance to get along to one of Christine Nixon's *Women Achieving and Flourishing* leadership sessions, your next opportunity is coming up on May 29.

These highly acclaimed sessions, which are being run in conjunction with Our Community and the Women's Leadership Institute Australia, bring together women who are in leadership roles or aspire to those roles to discuss strategies for achieving goals, developing resilience and flourishing.

One strategy, of course, is to get together with a group of like-minded women to discuss challenges and seek moral support and fellowship. One such group is The Sassies, which has been set up by three not-for-profit workers in Melbourne's north-west, Vivienne Amery, Kim O'Neill and Julie Roach. The Sassies were born from the women's desire to prevent the loss of more good women from the sector.

The Sassies write:

Too many good women are lost to this sector. Funding shortages, problem boards, one too many restructures, endless reviews and program/policy changes mean that too many women with vision and values and a desire for social change who have risen to the position of not-for-profit CEO simply give up.

This is how a conversation between three of us began last year. Over dinner we were bemoaning another loss. It was enough for us to either order another bottle of red or do something about it.

The Ross Trust shared our vision. A small grant of \$7500 and we found ourselves ready to invite women from our region to join a project of hope, support and encouragement.

The Sassies, a group of women CEOs and General Managers (the next generation of CEOs), held our first meeting in November 2010.

It would be easy to simply convene the group, eat, drink and share for two hours a month. We could talk forever about the loneliness of our role and the endless board requests for information, policies and statistics and our fruitless representations for decent funding. But we wanted to invest more than that.

We each had view that after a year of meeting together we would be changed – a measurable improvement and understanding about how to flourish in the role. Yep – flourish. Not merely survive.

Women were invited to join the group and surveyed on what they found challenging and what they wanted from the group. We identified the stuff that really mattered and we designed a constructive solution-orientated program – so that we could not only talk about the challenges of leadership, but learn the skills and techniques to grow in the role.

The Sassies group is now five months old. Our sign-up was remarkable – every one of our invitees said 'yes' – women leaders from asylum seeking support services, mental health, community health, parenting, family & children's services, youth projects and family violence.

And what do we talk about?

Based our initial survey work we knew that we wanted to talk about the Board-CEO relationship – there are endless experts telling us that '*there must be a good relationship between the board and the CEO*'. But beyond this self evident advice, where is the 'how to' guide?

We decided to focus on governance and use an external facilitator to help us see the forest and not the trees. Our survey results told us that we needed to provide real examples and real skills not just mutual agreement that it's a tough job. We know that already.

To our delight – and hopefully to the delight of our participants – it seems to be working.

Each month we take a specific topic, we bring our experience and our facilitator brings her expertise. Our views and behaviours are challenged and it's not necessarily an easy ride.

We are not yet half way through, but we are encouraged by the friendships forming, the confidence to do our jobs well and the knowledge that there are others experiencing the same ups and downs. We are surviving and some of us are flourishing.

For more information about The Sassies, contact Vivienne at Vivienne.Amery@tweddle.org.au.

13. Equal Pay Case: Rallies planned for June 8

As most people involved in the community sector would be aware, there's a case running to bring equal pay – higher pay – to the largely female community sector: equal pay for work of equal value.

It's in the hands of the Fair Work Australia tribunal at the moment, with a result due soon.

And then the fun really starts. Higher pay in the community sector means that many, many not-for-profits will get a sharp kick in the budgets. And either the governments that fund many, many not-for-profits will either increase their contribution to compensate or they won't. Interesting times.

The latest contributions to the argument have come from two quarters.

The chief executive of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has opined that “simply because an industry or sub-sector has a majority female labour force or is paid less than different occupations is no reason alone for wage rises to be granted”.

On the other hand, ACOSS ran a rather large survey that found that 60% of people thought that community sector workers should be paid the same as people doing similar jobs in other industries, and of the 40% who didn't, three-quarters thought they should be paid more.

Perhaps we're making progress, though.

The Federal Government has announced the formation of a Community Sector Wages Group chaired by Labor Senator Jacinta Collins and including representatives from the federal, state and territory governments, social and community services providers, and unions “to assess the potential implications of pay increases for community sector workers”.

ACOSS has applauded the move, saying that the process of implementation will be as important as the principle of equal pay itself.

The Australian Services Union (ASU) is organising a series of rallies on June 8, presumably expecting that the word will be out by then. Start times and locations vary from city to city:

QUEENSLAND

- NUNDAH 11 am – Nundah Memorial Park, cnr Buckland Rd & Bage St, Nundah

VICTORIA

- MELBOURNE 11 am – Trades Hall, cnr Lygon & Victoria Sts, Carlton

NEW SOUTH WALES

- SYDNEY 12 noon – Hyde Park South, Sydney
- NEWCASTLE 12 noon – The Tram Sheds, Newcastle Foreshore Park, Wharf Rd, Newcastle
- LISMORE 11am – Cnr Carrington & Magellan St, Lismore

ACT

- CANBERRA 12 noon – Outside of Legislative Assembly, London Circuit, Civic

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- ADELAIDE 12 noon – Adelaide Town Hall, King William St, Adelaide

TASMANIA

- HOBART 12 noon – Premier's Office, 15 Murray St, Hobart

NORTHERN TERRITORY

- DARWIN 12 noon – Rain Tree Park, Darwin Mall

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- Workplace based events. Contact the ASU WA Branch for further details.

Find out more at <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=121041387971618>

14. Community Calendar: What's on in the community sector

Our Community's online **Community Calendar** features all of the nationally significant events focussed around a major community or advocacy/awareness issue in Australia. Some events taking place in the next month include:



Making Music Being Well Week: 16-22 May

This is an initiative all about celebrating the links between making music and feeling good! Thousands of people are signing up all over Australia to include their music concert, workshop, singalong, tutorial, open day or other activity as part of the week-long series of events. This year it's even easier to get involved, with lots more online support and automated registration and listing of your events.



National Palliative Care Week: 22-28 May

We live in a society that doesn't like to talk about dying, let alone plan for the care we would like to receive at the end of life, and we know that one of the greatest barriers to receiving quality care at the end of life is a lack of knowledge and preparation. Unless they have had some direct experience with palliative care, people tend not to know what support is available. This lack of understanding often extends to family or loved ones, who can be integral in decision making when the time comes. The theme of this event is *Let's chat about dying*.



National Sorry Day: 26 May

The National Sorry Day Committee invites Australians to walk across their local bridges while carrying the symbolic 'Stolen Generations Track Home' feet. This time, people are encouraged to stop halfway: sit down to symbolise that only half the job has been done – there is still 'unfinished business' for the Stolen Generations. They are living on borrowed time while waiting for justice, reparations and compensation.



National Day of Action for Equal Pay: 8 June

Thousands of Equal Pay supporters will gather across the country on 8 June 2011. We are at the business end of the campaign as we await the decision of Fair Work Australia and continue to contend with governments who must commit to funding the outcome. The fight is not yet over.



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day: 15 June

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day occurs on June 15 each year. There are a number of elder abuse agencies in Australia which mark the day with various events and activities, of which Seniors Rights Victoria is one. The international site for the day can be found at: <http://www.inpea.net/weaad/worldday2011.html>

More events, plus the full listing for each event, can be found at www.ourcommunity.com.au/calendar.

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Vale Brenda Gabe –advocate and activist



Brenda Gabe, tireless advocate and activist on behalf of those with disabilities, died last month aged 69.

Ms Gabe’s work with a variety of disability advocacy organisations began after she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis almost two decades ago. Her aim was to “promote people with disabilities into an inclusive community”.

She was active on a number of boards and committees, including Women with Disabilities Victoria and the City of Monash’s disability advisory committee.

She chaired the co-ordinating committee of the Victorian Disability Advocacy Network, becoming involved in advocating on issues like public transport access, violence against women with disabilities and the availability of aids and equipment.

Her work with Women with Disabilities Victoria saw her represent the group in the development of a strategy to prevent violence in the state.

Ms Gabe pushed for changes to make housing more accessible through changes to building regulations and the use of step-free access, wider doorways and repositioned light switches. She also worked locally to improve elements of the public transport system to help those with disabilities.

Ms Gabe acted as spokesperson for many of the organisations she represented, and took part in national and international conferences on topics linked to disability. She was also a long-time supporter and attendee of Our Community’s Communities in Control Conference.

National Disability Awards: nominations now open

People have until June 30 to nominate groups and individuals for the 2011 National Disability Awards.

The awards are supported by the United Nations International Day for People with Disability – to be marked on December 3 – and the Federal Government.

They aim to recognise individuals and groups which have had success in the field, or which have made a significant contribution to the community.

The awards cover seven categories, including:

- **Young Disability Challenge Award** – for those aged between 12 and 25 who have advanced the rights of people with disability.
- **Business Award** – for groups that have improved access to employment, or created increased employment opportunities for people with disability.
- **Local Government Award** – for councils that have helped provide opportunities for full inclusion of people with disability.
- **Social Inclusion Award** – for schools, universities, employment and training providers and advocacy services which have enabled equal participation amongst people with disability.
- **Inclusive and Accessible Communities Award** – recognises work by developers, builders and the building sector to create accessible buildings or facilities.
- **Health and Wellbeing Award** – for services in the field which help create equal access for people with a disability.

In addition, a special Lifelong Achievement Award will be presented to those who have advanced the rights of people with disability over a prolonged period of time.

More information on the awards can be found here: www.idpwd.com.au/index.php/awards/. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the same page, with hard copies available by calling 1800 440 385.

Volunteer Grants up for grabs

Sixteen million dollars worth of grants are available to not-for-profit community groups as part of this year's Federal Government Volunteer Grants program.

The always-popular program provides funding to support volunteers and encourage volunteering.

The 2011 program will provide grants of between \$1000 and \$5000 for:

- Purchasing small equipment items to help volunteers;
- Reimbursing the fuel costs for volunteers who use their own car to transport others to activities, deliver food and help people in need;
- Reimbursing transport costs incurred by volunteers with disability who are unable to drive; and
- Contributing to the costs of training courses and/or doing background screening checks for volunteers.

Selection and eligibility criteria can be found in the program's application guidelines, available via the Volunteer Grants program's webpage: www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/volunteers/funding/Pages/volunteer_grants2011.aspx.

Applications are open until June 8, and more information can be found either through the website above, via the toll-free Volunteer Grants Hotline – 1800 183 374 (Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm AEST) or by email: vg2011@fahcsia.gov.au.

To stay updated on all grants on offer in Australia, sign up to Our Community's *EasyGrants* newsletter. To subscribe, visit: www.ourcommunity.com.au/easygrants.

Sector outcry sees UK cheque abolition reviewed

The UK's planned abolition of cheques by 2018 will be reviewed in the wake of outcry from charities worried about the move's potential impact on the sector.

As Our Community's *Raising Funds* newsletter reported early last year, the UK's Payments Council decided to phase out cheques as legal tender by 2018.

A steep decline in cheque usage, the rise in alternative payment methods, the £1 cost for banks to process cheques, and the fact that many retailers had already stopped accepting cheques were cited as reasons for the move.

While the proposal has been popular among many in the retail and financial sectors, those in the not-for-profit sector, which still receive countless donations via cheque each year, have protested loudly.

A survey of more than 600 groups by nfpSynergy found that 40% rated their concern level about cheque abolition as 10 out of 10. Another 33% ranked their concern as either eight or nine out of 10.

Other findings included:

- More than 60% believed the move would have a significant or very high impact on them, especially on the level of donations from existing donor appeals.
- More than 50% thought the move would have the same negative impact on securing donations from new supporters.
- 40% said they earned 80-100% of their appeal-based income from existing donors via cheque, while another 30% said they got at least 90% of their major donor income paid in by cheque.

The UK's Treasury Select Committee has now re-opened its inquiry into the Payments Council's recommendation.

A number of charities and sector publications, as well as nfpSynergy, have sent submissions to the Treasury Select Committee. No date is set for a final decision.

Bad egg lands cook in hot water

Modern life continues its quest to eliminate every trace of volunteer grassroots community.

The Kensington Bowling Club in NSW had regular gatherings for the South American community. At one of their barbecues they invited home cook Mercedes Zambrano to do the catering, and agreed to pay her for her costs.

Unfortunately, a bad egg got into the mayonnaise mix, and 50 people reportedly fell ill with salmonella poisoning. The NSW Food Authority took Ms Zambrano to court.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reports:

In hearing the matter in the Local Court, Magistrate Gregory Hart acknowledged the woman had contributed significantly to her community through fund-raising, and volunteer work, and she never intended to cause harm; however, he stated the need to provide a deterrence factor in imposing his findings.

"It is important to alert [people] conducting food businesses, including part-time food businesses associated with community activities, that the requirements of the Food Act 2003 and the standards set by the Food Standards Code must be complied with," Magistrate Hart said.

The NSW Food Act says that

"food business" means a business, enterprise or activity that involves:

(a) the handling of food intended for sale, or

(b) the sale of food,

regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only.

The takeaway for every community group is to make sure you check the food handling and supply requirements before you stage any food-based fundraiser or event.

There is an Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, the enforcement and interpretation of which is the responsibility of State/Territory health departments and food agencies (including local councils in many states) within Australia and New Zealand.

The standards are continually changing so it's recommended that you contact your relevant authority each time you stage an event to familiarise yourself with current standards. Visit www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodstandards/.

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16. Good Moves: Community Sector Jobs & Board Vacancies

The Community Jobs Centre is the place to find or advertise a community sector job in every state of Australia.

It's free to browse the listings, or to be sent the weekly "Good Moves" jobs listing bulletin, while advertising a job costs only \$30. Visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs

JOB VACANCY LISTINGS (Paid Positions)

New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
Manager Community Engagement	Brooker Consulting	Details
Executive Manager Client Services	Brooker Consulting	Details
Day Program Coordinator - Canley Vale	Australian Foundation for Disability (AFFORD)	Details

Queensland

Job Title	Organisation	
Regional Carer Services Officer	Carers Queensland Inc	Details
Multicultural Information & Training Officer	Carers Queensland Inc	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
Community Initiatives Officer	Volunteer West	Details
Executive Officer	HealthWest	Details
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER		Details
Programs Partnerships Manager	Ardoch Youth Foundation	Details
Board Directors	Brooker Consulting	Details
Co-ordinator	Alphington Community Centre Inc.	Details

Western Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
Chief Executive Officer	Hills Community Support Group Inc	Details

www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs

BOARD/COMMITTEE VACANCY LISTINGS (Volunteer Positions)

The following is a list of the most recent Board/Committee vacancies listed at Our Community. To view other board or Committee vacancies [please click here](#) (This matching service is free)

New South Wales

Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member	Hepatitis NSW	Details
Chair, Treasurer, General Board Member	Youth Angle	Details
General Board Member	NSW Justices Association Incorporated	Details

South Australia

Job Title	Organisation	
General Board Member	Julia Farr Organisation	Details

Victoria

Job Title	Organisation	
Treasurer, General Board Member	Yeramboee Community Centre Inc	Details
General Board Member	Catchment Youth Services	Details
Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, General Board Member	SEW (Supporting & Empowering Women)	Details
Chair, Secretary, General Board Member	Outer East Employment Services	Details
General Board Member, Chair- Finance and Audit Committee	Football Federation Victoria	Details
General Board Member	TreeProject	Details
General Board Member	Minus18	Details
Women With Disabilities Reference Group	Royal Women's Hospital	Details

www.ourcommunity.com.au/boardmatch

17. Fast Forward

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send it on to your friends and fellow community groups in your area. People can sign up to receive their own copy at www.ourcommunity.com.au/signup.

If you would like to reproduce anything in this newsletter in your own newsletters or websites, you are free to do so. Please just add a small credit line, "courtesy of www.ourcommunity.com.au" and a direct link to the www.ourcommunity.com.au site if on a webpage.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email service@ourcommunity.com.au and put "Unsubscribe-OCM" in the subject line.

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18. About Our Community

Our Community is a world-leading social enterprise that provides advice and tools for Australia's 600,000 community groups and schools, and practical linkages between the community sector and the general public, business and government.

Our major offerings include:

1. www.ourcommunity.com.au - Australia's most useful website (comprising the online Knowledge Centres) and publishing house - accelerating the impact of Australia's 600,000 community organisations and schools
2. GiveNow.com.au - Helping individuals and businesses give more, give smarter, give better, Give Now!
3. [Australian Institute for Community Practice and Governance](#) - practical and accessible certificated training delivered locally through our training Institute
4. [Australian Institute of Grants Management](#) - the unique suite of grants management services for government
5. [Australian Institute for Corporate Responsibility](#) - cutting edge corporate responsibility resources for large, medium and small business and community organisations

► Read more about us at www.ourcommunity.com.au/aboutus

