



IN THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	1
DOORKNOCK APPEAL 2011	2
ACT YOUNG AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR 2011	3
PARTNERSHIP WITH ACU	3
VINNIES YOUTH CHARITY BALL	4
Q&A WITH A NIGHT PATROL VOLUNTEER	6
INSPIRATION AT 37,000 FEET	6
2010 VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL	7



President's message



It is extraordinary to believe that Christmas is here again and knowing our volunteers will work tirelessly during this festive season bringing goodwill and hope to people in need.

In November, our Youth volunteers organised a charity ball to raise money to take up to 100 underprivileged Canberra kids on holiday camps in January 2011. I am proud of the efforts and happy to say they raised \$28,000. Vinnies Youth have organised their charity ball for four years, and this year was the most successful one yet. More details can be found on pages 4 and 5.

In February, we will be conducting our annual Doorknock Appeal. For the Society in Canberra and Queanbeyan, Doorknock is the main local appeal to raise awareness and funds for our core work, Home Visitation. We are currently seeking your help to volunteer during this time to knock on doors in Canberra suburbs or Queanbeyan. All money raised will be used to support people who are struggling the most in our region. For more details, please see the article on page 2.

Christmas is a time of hope. Hope that comes from knowing deep within our being that "God is with us" no matter who we are and where we live. Jesus came into our world as a new born child whose parents had been turned away because they were possibly unable to pay their accommodation (if they had money, would they have had decent accommodation?). The birthing suite was a dark, dirty and unfriendly cave surrounded by animals and the visitors were the poorest of the poor.

What does Christmas say about God? Jesus' birth tells us that God is with us in our vulnerability, our poverty, our doubts and fears. Christmas reminds us that God is the source of all life and hope and, like Jesus, we are called to live the gift of our lives in faith and hope.

On behalf of the Society, I wish you and your loved ones a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

We will continue to work hard to meet your expectations as a charitable organisation.

God Bless,

Evan Brett
President, Canberra/Goulburn Central Council

Doorknock Appeal - February 2011

The Doorknock Appeal has been a vital part of the Society for the past 28 years. This year we hope to raise \$300,000 to support our Home Visitation program.

For the month of February, volunteers will be pounding the pavements throughout Canberra and knocking on doors.

Our volunteers directly help:

- People who are homeless
- People living with a mental illness
- People suffering loneliness
- People that are without food, furniture and bedding
- The frail and aged
- People needing emergency accommodation
- Victims of domestic violence
- People battling addictions

We need your help:

By volunteering this Doorknock Appeal, you can help us break the cycle of poverty, giving people the breathing space they need to get back on their feet.

How you can get involved:

Call Marlene Plumb on (02) 6234 7340 or email doorknock@svdp-cg.org.au.

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We give
food, clothing,
shelter,
friendship...



How much will you give?

2011 DOORKNOCK APPEAL

Without donations, we can't continue to help people in desperate need, such as families in crisis or homeless children. So when Vinnies come knocking at your door this February, please give generously. We need volunteers and donations. Visit Vinnies.org.au or call 02 6282 2722



St Vincent de Paul Society
CANBERRA/GOULBURN CENTRAL COUNCIL
good works

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We would love to hear from you, please send all correspondence to:

Stephanie Hawkins *Communications Officer, Community & Corporate Relations*
PO Box 642, Mawson ACT 2607 E: stephanie.hawkins@svdp-cg.org.au

P: 02 6121 2944

Ordinary people helping anyone in need

Congratulations David Bresnik ACT Young Australian of the Year 2011



We congratulate David Bresnik on his achievement of becoming ACT Young Australian of the Year 2011.

David began volunteering in the Vinnies Youth program in 2003 while studying accounting at the University of Canberra.

David has played an important role in Vinnies Youth, assisting with sporting activities, day activities and holiday camps, as well as becoming President of Vinnies Youth in 2006.

At just 27 years of age, David is a committed and humble volunteer who has dedicated an extraordinary amount of his time to Vinnies Youth and the Society as a whole.

In 2009, David was appointed National Youth Representative in which he was spokesperson for the Society's Youth program Australia-wide, and represented the Society to the broader Australian public.

David will now join all winning recipients from across the country as finalists for the National Young Australian of the Year award which will be announced on 25 January 2011 in Canberra.

David is well deserved of this recognition for the incredible effort and work he has done for the Society over the years.

We wish David all the best for his continuing role with the Society.

St Vincent de Paul Society partners with ACU

The St Vincent de Paul Society and Australian Catholic University (ACU) have signed a memorandum of understanding for a scholarship supporting indigenous students for the next three years.

The St Vincent de Paul Society Dhara Daramoolen Indigenous Students Scholarship for 2011 has been awarded to ACU Bachelor of Education (Primary) student Larissa Duncan.

Larissa is a Kamilaroi woman from Queanbeyan, and said receiving the scholarship creates a fantastic opportunity.

"This scholarship will help me achieve higher education outcomes not only for myself, but for the wider Aboriginal community. As an educator, I aim to help improve the education outcomes for Aboriginal people." states Larissa.

The Dhara Daramoolen Indigenous Higher Education Unit at ACU's Canberra Campus provides encouragement and support for indigenous students during their studies and a place where they can meet and work on assignments.

Mr Bob Wilson, CEO of St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn Central Council said "With this particular program, the Society is helping ensure university education for indigenous students is promoted. We hope that once these students graduate, they will become role models for other students and their indigenous communities."

For more information, please visit www.acu.edu.au.

St Vincent de Paul Red Carpet Charity Ball 2010

Raising funds to help Canberra's underprivileged children.

On Saturday 13 November 2010, Vinnies Youth held the St Vincent de Paul Red Carpet Charity Ball at Rydges Lakeside in Canberra.

Vinnies Youth are delighted to announce they raised \$28,000 and are now able to provide up to 100 underprivileged kids from Canberra and surrounding region the opportunity to attend summer camp in January 2011.

While most Canberra children will be enjoying their Christmas holidays, there are hundreds of local kids who will be having a tough time, many of whom are affected by homelessness, poverty, neglect, abuse and addiction.

"The Ball is not only our major fundraising effort for the year, but also an important event in raising the profile of those who are often forgotten, mistreated, and at times abused living in our community - children." states Peter McNulty, President of Vinnies Youth.

The Ball was a great night, full of fun and entertainment. Comedian, writer and actor Corinne Grant had the audience in raptures.

The Maria Selleck Properties Live Auction raised over \$15,000 and the Aharoni Jewellery Raffle was very popular, with the first prize being an 18 carat white gold necklace.

Guests danced until the end of the evening with Canberra's premier band, The Remnants.

"I'm really thrilled to MC for Vinnies Youth as it is a great cause and the work these young volunteers do for these kids is incredibly important. I'm proud to have helped out, and hope January camps will be fun for all involved." states Corinne Grant.

Last year, Vinnies Youth took more than 300 underprivileged Canberra kids on holiday camps to give them a break from their daily struggles and provide them with the opportunity to have fun in a safe and nurturing environment.

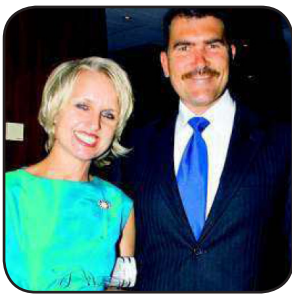
Vinnies Youth is founded on the principle that all children should have the same opportunities to be kids. On these holiday camps, the kids get to spend 5 days camping out in dorms, playing games, participating in group activities, making crafts, watching movies, and attending the all-important awards ceremonies and the disco.

Vinnies Youth is made up of volunteers who are young adults aged 16-30 years. The volunteers give up their time from university, college and full-time work to look after the kids on camp.



Image: Cate Robson, Vice-President of Vinnies Youth, and Peter McNulty, President of Vinnies Youth, with Corinne Grant (in the middle).

Ordinary people helping anyone in need



We would like to sincerely thank the following for their contribution to the success of the Vinnies Youth Ball:

MAJOR SPONSOR

Maria Selleck Properties

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National Zoo and Aquarium
Silos Estate
Subsdance
The Boathouse by the Lake
The Good Guys Tuggeranong
Thoroughbred Park
The Remnants
The Well Retreat
Tranquility Day Spa

Q&A with a Night Patrol volunteer

The Night Patrol van provides a mobile outreach service, offering food and friendly faces to people on the streets at various hours of the night.

The volunteers provide drinks, food, clothing, and friendly conversation to people from all walks of life.

Q&A with Anne, a Night Patrol Volunteer:

Q. How long have you been volunteering for Night Patrol?
Since it started in August 2001.

Q. Why do you volunteer for Night Patrol and what do you get out of it?

I volunteer because it sometimes makes me feel warm and fuzzy!

Q. What has been a happy moment?

To see the smile on a teenager's face when I offered a donut!

Q. What has been the saddest moment?

The saddest moment I have had during Night Patrol was when I saw a quiet, 40-something, well-mannered gentleman collect his drink and a sandwich and then proceed to his favourite alcove where he sat all alone.

Q. What do you think the clients of Night Patrol get out of using this service?

It's a chance for them to chill out with their friends and the volunteers over a drink and a bite to eat, and it is also a chance for those that have no friends to talk to the volunteers as it can be the only friendly person they speak to that day.

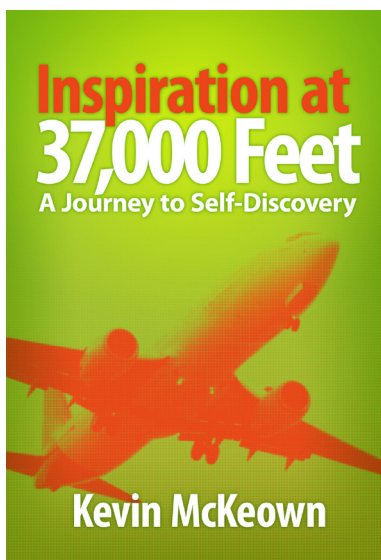
Q. If there was a message you would like to tell people in Canberra about those who use Night Patrol, what would it be?

We lighten their load by offering continuity, compassion and friendship.



Night Patrol has been operating in Canberra since August 2001 and is currently assisted by over 150 volunteers. The van operates 7 nights per week. For more information, please contact nightpatrol@svdp-cg.org.au or call (02) 6211 8441.

Inspiration at 37,000 Feet: A Journey to Self-Discovery



Kevin McKeown knows first-hand what it is like to be living a life marred by addictions, going nowhere and slowly self-destructing. However, through adversity, Kevin has overcome his addictions and has found success in life.

Kevin is a recovering addict of cigarettes, alcohol, gambling and recreational drugs, and had always wanted to share his vision with others. In 2009, he realised he could help others by completing his first book "*Inspiration at 37,000 Feet - A Journey to Self-Discovery*."

In his book, Kevin shares his private poems and short stories of self-reflection of what matters most, how we can all reach the heights we desire and to live life the best we can, and how he felt dealing with life through his addictions, family and work.

Kevin McKeown has pledged \$5 from every book sold to the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn Central Council as a thank you for the support he received from the Society during his struggle.

For more information or to purchase Kevin's book, please visit www.kevinmckeown.com. RRP \$19.95.

Ordinary people helping anyone in need

Help make tomorrow a better day 2010 Vinnies Christmas Appeal

Throughout the year, we have spoken to many people in our community suffering hardship and asked them to share with us what a day in their life is really like.

Some have told us what a day is like being homeless on the streets. Others suffering mental illness have told us of their anguish and social isolation. Families have told us of their daily struggle to feed, clothe and shelter their loved ones.

One common theme to emerge from listening to these men, women and children was the crippling financial problems are nothing compared to the emotional grief and anguish such hardship brings.

“Every day we receive on average 65 calls for help and the added pressure at Christmas time sees this increase significantly. Last December, we received an average of 85 calls per day in our region due to the high cost of rental accommodation, the high cost of utilities and having enough money left to ‘celebrate’ Christmas creates added pressure.” States Bob Wilson, CEO St Vincent de Paul Society, Canberra/Goulburn Central Council.

This Christmas, you can help the St Vincent de Paul Society make a better day for those in need. Your support will enable these individuals and families in our community to have a Christmas they deserve.

During the festive season, our volunteers will visit families who have had their electricity cut off. They will sit down and chat to lonely men and women who never have visitors over the Christmas period. We also provide beds for the homeless so that they can wake up on Christmas morning with a roof over their head.

“Christmas funds will also be used for hampers tailored to meet the needs of families and individuals looking for hope, comfort and joy this Christmas. We anticipate the delivery of 1200 hampers to households across Canberra and Southern NSW this year.” says Bob Wilson.

Your generous donation will help give these people the breathing space for them to get back on their feet. Please help make tomorrow a better day by donating to the 2010 Vinnies Christmas Appeal.

\$80 buys bedding and a meal for a homeless person on Christmas night so they can wake up with a renewed sense of hope.

\$100 could buy essential groceries for a family for one week.

\$200 can provide emergency accommodation for a woman and child escaping domestic violence.

\$500 buys all meals and gifts for a family on Christmas day.

\$1,000 buys the gift of hope for a family. It means the difference between keeping their home for another week or sleeping on the streets.

How you can help:

To make a financial donation:

- **Call 13 18 12 (hotline)**
- **Visit www.vinnies.org.au**
- **Fill in your details on the back on this newsletter and send it to PO BOX 642, MAWSON ACT 2607.**

If you would like to donate a Christmas gift please call our Call Centre on (02) 6282 2722 or email info@svdp-cg.org.au.

6.30AM

I wake up all wet.
My sister's wet our bed again.

8.30AM

I don't like walking to school
but there's no petrol.

12.30PM

**The teacher asks me
where my lunch is.
I don't have any.**

4.00PM

I don't want mum to be sad,
I wish dad would come back.

5.30PM

People from Vinnies give us food,
now we can eat.

6.00PM

My tummy hasn't felt this happy in ages.



Sam's day. Aged 6.

**Help make tomorrow
a better day.**

Donate now call **13 18 12**
or visit **www.vinnies.org.au**



Vinnies Christmas Appeal



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Yes! I would like to make a special donation to the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn Central Council

DR/MR/MRS/MS/MISS

Name:

Suburb, State and Postcode:

Phone no:

Email:

Please give an email address if possible. Email is cheaper and better for the environment.

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$250 \$500 OR \$ _____

My cheque or money order is enclosed and crossed 'not negotiable' and made payable to 'St Vincent de Paul Society'

Visa MasterCard AMEX Diners

Name on Card

Signature

Expiry

Thank you for your generosity. All gifts over \$2 are tax deductible and a receipt will be sent to you. Please return this coupon and your gift to the St Vincent de Paul Society

PO Box 642 MAWSON, ACT, 2607

The St Vincent de Paul Society follows the National Privacy Principles and keeps donors' information private. If you do not wish your details to be used for future fundraising activities by the Society, please tick this box