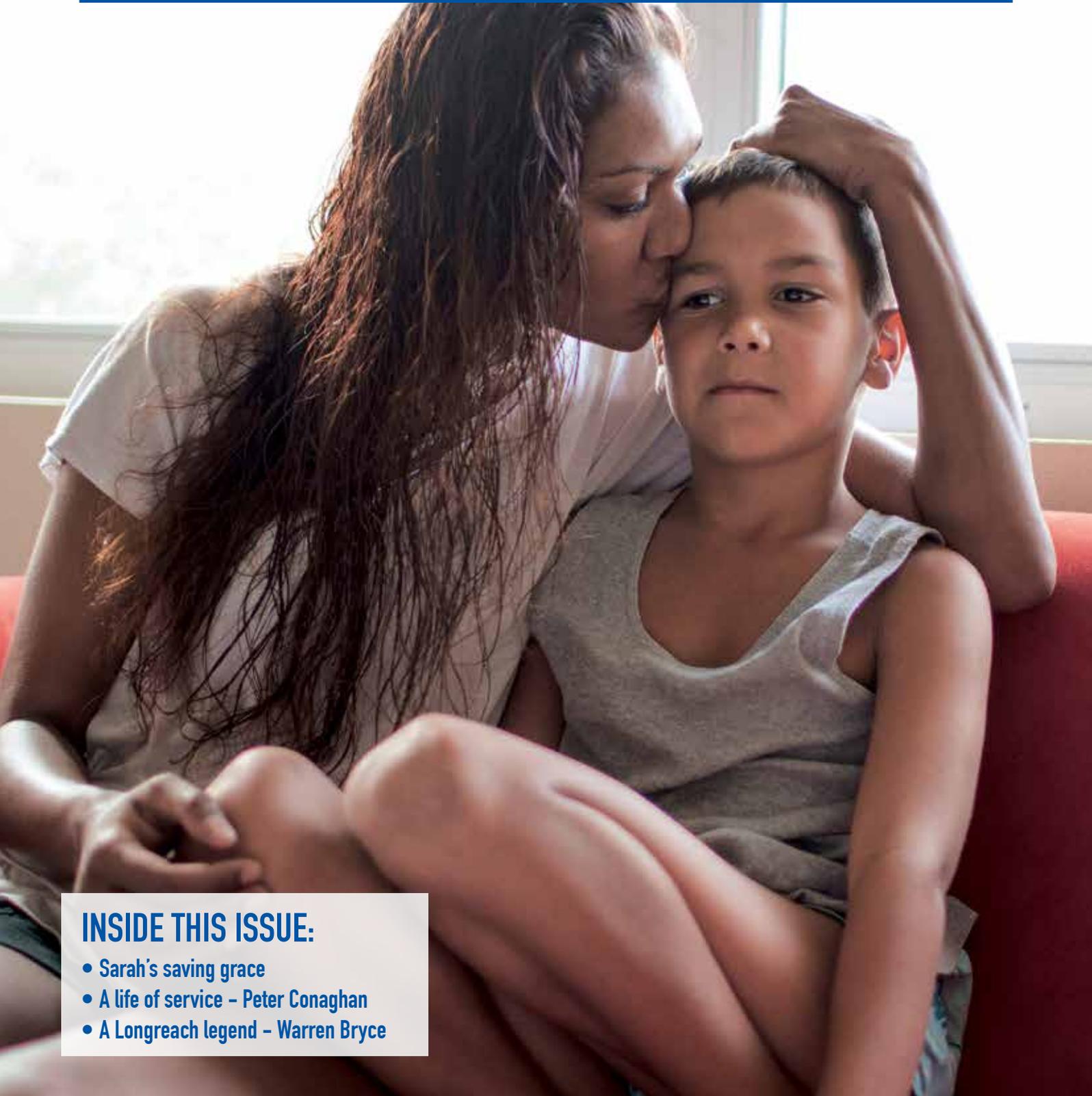


SPRING 2018

Together we are

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

A newsletter for supporters of St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Sarah's saving grace
- A life of service - Peter Conaghan
- A Longreach legend - Warren Bryce

www.vinnies.org.au/donate



St Vincent de Paul Society
QUEENSLAND

good works



REFLECTION FROM JOHN FORREST

Formalities are complete and our new State President Dennis Innes was recently welcomed by State Council to take up his role for the next four years. We bring you this final *Making a Difference* address from former State President, John Forrest.

As technology advances further it has begun to dictate not only our communication methods, but also the way we interact with each other. People are sending virtual high fives and tweeting their joys and sadness across the world.

When St Vincent de Paul Society founder Frederic Ozanam said “embrace the world in a network of love” he had no idea that in the 21st century the term ‘network’ would have a whole different meaning to what he promoted to members of the early St Vincent de Paul Society.

In our current world, when a text message provides instant gratification and everyone is only an internet connection away, how do we, the Society, continue to carry out our Mission to shape a more just and compassionate community?

We do this with human connection through our in-home visitation program and our Family Support Centres. We are committed to serving the poor with love, respect, justice, hope and joy.

Now that my term of office is at an end, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you all for supporting the Society.

You have all contributed in many ways, so on behalf of myself and on behalf of those we assist, for all your valued contributions, I truly thank you. May God bless you and yours and keep you safe.


John.



FROM THE NEW STATE PRESIDENT



(L-R) John Forrest and Dennis Innes

Welcome to the Spring 2018 edition of *Making a Difference*, a special publication designed to celebrate our supporters, volunteers and members.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the previous State President, John Forrest, who has exemplified the true spirit of servant leadership over the past four years.

Our story in Queensland dates back 124 years to 1894 when the first Conference was established at Red Hill in Brisbane. Who would have foreseen that on the evening of June 9, 2018, CEO Peter Maher and I would accept the Queensland Great Award on behalf of the Society from Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk.

What made this occasion so special was being able to dedicate the award to our more than 9,900 volunteers and members. It is their hard work and selfless dedication of time and spirit that enables us to help people in need.

I wish to also thank all of our supporters. Because of your generosity, we are able to offer not just food and clothing, but housing and homelessness support, family support centres, aged, mental health and disability services, youth work and our well known Vinnies shops.

I hope that you continue to support Vinnies so that we can further expand our services to reach the most disadvantaged people in our community.

Thank you and God bless,



Dennis Innes, State President
St Vincent de Paul Society QLD

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

To donate call 13 18 12 or visit www.vinnies.org.au/donate

Follow us on Social Media





SARAH'S SAVING GRACE

SARAH'S CHALLENGES:

- Memories of staying in homeless shelters as a child
- Single mum with a six year old son
- Unemployed. Can only work during school hours
- Behind in rent and facing eviction
- At risk of having Centrelink payments cut-off
- Lifelong experience of disadvantage.

After spending much of her youth in homeless shelters and couch surfing with friends, Sarah's only goal in life was not to put her 6-year-old son through the same hardship she experienced growing up.

When Samuel was born Sarah vowed he would never have to go through the same situations. But when her rent increased by \$40 a fortnight, they faced the very real possibility of becoming homeless.

Sarah's Centrelink payments were only just covering the rent, but with a power bill overdue and the need to keep them both from going hungry she soon faced an impossible choice: Does she feed her son, keep the lights on, or pay her rent?

After deciding to put food on the table and pay their electricity bill, Sarah quickly fell two weeks behind in rent.

Unemployed, Sarah applied for jobs every day but when she explained she could only work school hours because of Samuel during interviews, no employer offered her a job. She searched for a cheaper apartment, but was unable to find anything suitable. She even considered moving somewhere where rent was cheaper, but that would make it harder to find a job.

After missing an appointment she received a letter from Centrelink warning her that her support was about to be cut off. Sarah felt both lost and cornered.

"I just felt like everything was going wrong and piling on top of me. I was worried about where Samuel and I might end up," Sarah says.



That's when Sarah called Vinnies Helpline.

A local team of volunteers from Vinnies, known as Vincentians, connected with Sarah. They paid her overdue rent and connected her with the Queensland Department of Housing to access rent subsidies so she and Samuel could remain in their home.

They also helped Sarah engage with Centrelink, enabling her to continue receiving assistance and advocated on her behalf with her energy provider to reduce her utilities costs.

In addition, the volunteers gave Sarah and Samuel food vouchers and warm clothes. They even helped to update her resume and practiced job interview scenarios.

Because of generous donations and the care and support provided by Vinnies volunteers, Sarah and her son were given a hand up when they needed it most.

"Thank God I made that call to Vinnies, I've now got a part time job and Samuel and I are secure and he is doing really well at school."

HOW WE HELPED SARAH:

- Paid overdue rent and assisted with rental subsidies
- Engaged with Centrelink to ensure continued support payments
- Advocated with energy provider to secure utility discounts
- Provided food and warm clothes
- Referred to 'job ready' programs.

*Real names have been changed to protect the privacy of the people we assist.

Peter Conaghan is someone who others would refer to as being ‘salt of the earth’ - a thoroughly decent person for whom helping others just comes naturally.

Peter has been a Vincentian* (or Vinnies volunteer) for 57 years. Raised in Rockhampton, Peter moved to Yeppoon 22 years ago and is currently Vice President of Sacred Heart Yeppoon Conference. In 2017 he was awarded the Livingstone Shire Council Citizen of the Year.

Peter says what he loves about Vinnies is the ability to provide hope to people who are struggling.

(As a volunteer) “If you come in to a Vinnies Support Centre and see three little kids who haven’t had anything to eat since yesterday and you give them a packet of Weetbix, some sugar, a bottle of milk, loaf of bread and some baked beans, you know when they walk out the door that they are going home to have something to eat,” he says.

“You can see the look on the kid’s faces, it makes all the difference. And one day in the future when they drive past a Vinnies shop they will tell their kids; when we were hungry Vinnies fed us.”

Peter said whether it’s helping out in the Yeppoon shop or conducting welfare work he has always enjoyed giving back to others since he was 18 years old.



“In Yeppoon, there’s real sense of community, we have a Conference of about 20 people, and we have a President, a fellow named Rick Williams, who is a really good guy.”

When asked what Vinnies means to him Peter said: “If you’ve got a problem come to me and we’ll talk about it over a cuppa and when you walk away you’ll think, I’ve got something out of that.”

Peter’s lifetime of service resulted in him being given the honour of carrying the Queen’s Baton in the relay prior to this year’s Commonwealth Games.

“Trish from the Council asked would you be interested in doing it and I said, is the Pope Catholic?I’d love to.”

“My work is at the grassroots level, helping people who need help, just like kids who walk out with a bit of food, that is my cup of tea and that’s what Vinnies is about.”

*Vincentian = a volunteer member of the St Vincent de Paul Society.



DID YOU KNOW...

In the first five months of 2018 members of Vinnies were able to reach thousands of Queenslanders in crisis through our in-home visitation program.

REGION	IN-HOME VISITS	TOTAL PEOPLE ASSISTED
South Coast	3179	10,873
Brisbane	4800	15,401
Western	4835	16,392
Toowoomba	3348	8412
Northern	6006	18,566
Rockhampton	4345	10,901
Townsville	2282	9142
Far North QLD	2318	6597



A LONGREACH LEGEND – WARREN BRYCE



Vinnies volunteer Warren Bryce is the type of person who makes country towns like Longreach great places to live.

Warren not only gives up his own time to help Vinnies but is also the treasurer of the local RSL sub-branch, a Lions Club member and a proud Scout Dad, all while working full time as a truck driver.

Not one to seek recognition for his consistent efforts helping others, Warren was recently honoured as a baton carrier for the Commonwealth Games.

Giving back to the community through Vinnies runs in the Bryce family. Son Calvin, 12, regularly pitches in to help his dad on truck runs and daughter Mackenzie, 10, volunteers for Vinnies on weekends. Even Warren’s wife Jo Hellyer, who nominated Warren to carry the baton, manages the local Vinnies Longreach shop after previously being a volunteer.

“My wife nominated me for all the volunteering I do within the community and for just generally helping people around town,” Warren said.

“It was a nice surprise, I was a bit nervous to start with but it ended up being a really cool day.

“There was a lot of family and friends and a lot of Vinnies people who turned up as well, which was really nice.

“We have a very generous community, we get a lot of stuff donated from a lot of people.”

“I drive the ute down to Barcaldine and pick-up stock from there, it is usually bales of gear or boxes and Calvin, my son, he helps load the ute up,” Warren said.

“I do pick-ups when people donate their furniture and then deliver the sold items on weekends to people who can’t get their new furniture home.

“We’re looking to grow the service there because the community has been so supportive and so appreciative.”

Warren said his selfless attitude to giving back is instinctive.

“I don’t really have a clue why I volunteer so much, I’m just there to help.”

“IF PEOPLE NEED SOMETHING DONE THEN I’LL BE THERE HELPING ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.”



A GIFT IN MY WILL WAS AN EASY DECISION

Having seen first hand the life changing work of Vinnies for more than three decades, Janine’s decision to leave a gift to Vinnies in her will was an easy one.

Janine came to Australia from Ireland in the 50s as a teenager with her parents. After raising five children Janine, whose husband was always involved with Vinnies in some form, decided to leave a bequest in her will as a lasting legacy of hope.

After raising five children, Janine, who along with her husband has always been involved with Vinnies in some form, decided to leave a bequest in her will as a lasting legacy of hope.

Janine is an active member who has volunteered at Vinnies Family Support Centres and Vinnies shops for more than 30 years.

“I’m grateful to have played my own small part in the work of the Society which has touched so many lives in a positive way,” Janine says.

“Being involved with Vinnies has been a wonderful experience. My decision to include a gift in my will to the Society was easy. I am grateful for the work they do; the work I can do for others and who knows when I may need help from Vinnies myself.”

If you would like to include a gift in your will to Vinnies, please contact Bequests Coordinator Carol Guinane on 07 3010 1076.

Disclaimer: Names have been changed to protect the anonymity of our supporters.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

-  vinnies.org.au
-  1800 846 643
-  dosomething@svdpqld.org.au



VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT 2018

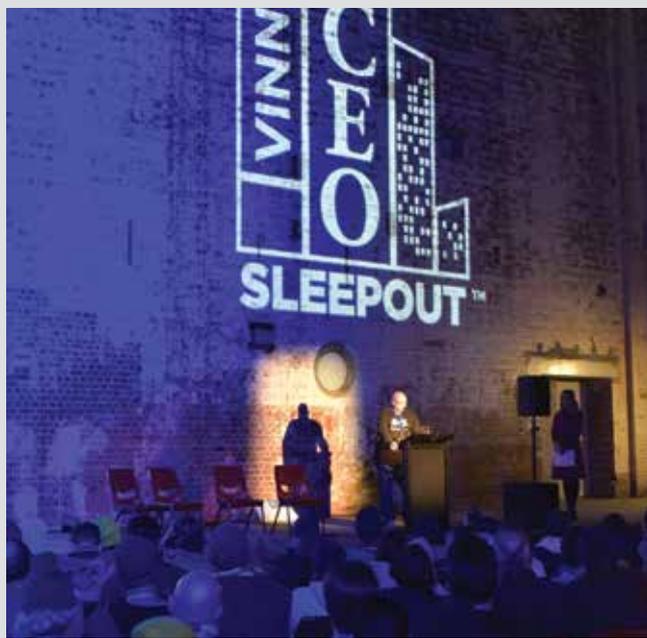
On 21 June 2018 more than 400 business leaders slept rough for one night in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast to raise funds and awareness for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

An incredible \$1.5 million was raised for homeless services and affordable housing for Queenslanders who would otherwise have nowhere to call home.

At the Brisbane event burns victim Doug Herrington shared his life story with a captivated audience.

Doug spoke about how Vinnies has ‘walked beside him’ in times of need during the past 30 years, both before and after the house fire that almost claimed his life.

You may remember Doug, an aspiring motivational speaker, from the Autumn 2018 edition of *Making a Difference*.



KRYSTAL IS A WINNER

Vinnies Queensland administration trainee Krystal du Frocq was recently crowned the TORGAS Regional Most Outstanding Business Administration Trainee of the Year.

Ms du Frocq, who works for Vinnies Family Support Centre in Toowoomba, was also named a finalist for the overall Trainee of the Year award.

The 29-year-old former trainee, and now permanent employee of the Family Support Centre, says she is thankful for the opportunity to serve the Toowoomba community.

“I LOVE BEING ABLE TO HELP PEOPLE EVERY DAY. VINNIES REALLY GAVE ME A HAND UP, AS THEY DO FOR SO MANY PEOPLE.”

“I started a Uni course straight after school but didn’t complete it due to the sudden loss of my mother, I did meet my husband though and we now have two beautiful children”, she says.

“Now I have a far better future outlook thanks to TORGAS and Vinnies.”

Vinnies Toowoomba Family Support Centre Coordinator Vicki Berghofer says Krystal was a deserving recipient of the honour.

“Krystal comes in to our office every day with an abundance of imagination, creativity, care and compassion.”





BECOME SOMEONE'S HELPING HANDS

Renewing lives through regular giving

- ✓ Our Helping Hands are our regular givers – people who want to help us with a recurring donation
- ✓ Regular giving helps us provide continual support to people in need and makes a big difference to the lives of Queenslanders
- ✓ You will only need to complete the donation form below once and your credit card will be charged automatically
- ✓ You can change or cancel your regular donation anytime by calling Vinnies Queensland on 13 18 12

YOUR DONATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Name _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Please debit my card:

S18MAD

Visa Amex Diners MasterCard

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Name on card _____

Signature _____ Expiry _____ / _____

Option 1 I'd like to join Helping Hands by making a monthly donation of
\$ _____ (minimum of \$10)
Please debit my credit card every month until I advise otherwise

Option 2 I'd like to make a single gift to support the work of Vinnies
 \$50 \$75 \$150 \$250 \$500
 Other \$ _____

Option 3 I'd like to donate online: vinnies.org.au/donate

Option 4 I'd like to donate over the phone: 13 18 12

- Please email my receipt to save on administration costs
- Please send me information to help me consider including Vinnies in my Will
- I have already remembered Vinnies in my Will
- Please tick here if you do not wish to receive future fundraising communications

The Society collects your personal information to process your kind donation and to provide you with direct marketing materials. We may not be able to process your donation or provide you with direct marketing materials without this information. We are strongly committed to protecting your personal information. We can provide you with details of the privacy policy if you would like further information. Our privacy policy is available at www.vinnies.org.au