



Your Messenger

DECEMBER 2006

**ROB MESSENGER MP—MEMBER FOR BURNETT
SHADOW MINISTER FOR POLICE & CORRECTIVE SERVICES**

Authorised R. Messenger, Shop 7 Bargara Beach Plaza, BARGARA.

Rob's Message:

We have seen some major changes since this year's state election. The most significant change for the Queensland Nationals is within the Party's leadership team. Jeff Seoney, Member for Callide and former Deputy Leader of The Nationals is now the Leader with Fiona Simpson, Member for Maroochydore, elected to Deputy Leader. Both Jeff and Fiona are genuinely committed to good Government and getting the priorities right in Queensland.

Locally, we have also seen the election of Nationals Jack Dempsey to the seat of Bundaberg. Jack has made history in being the first Nationals candidate to be elected to the Seat in 110 years! This is a positive result for the people of Bundaberg and Burnett. Jack has settled in to his new role quite comfortably and is already proving to be a strong, active representative for the people of Bundaberg.

I look forward to working closely with Jack to ensure our region gets a fairer share of services and proper infrastructure.

Bundaberg's crime rate climbs

Crime in Bundaberg has worsened markedly in the past year with more sexual assaults, robberies, drug offences and domestic violence protection order breaches reported.

Queensland Police Statistics tabled in State Parliament recently reveal that in Bundaberg in 2005/06:

- Sexual assaults increased by 50% (244 up from 162 in 2004/05)
- Robberies were up 322% (38 offences up from 9 in total, with 18 armed robberies reported in 2005/06 up from 2)
- Drug offences were up 49% (1454 up from 978)
- Breaches of domestic violence protection orders up 85% (526 up from 285)
- Assaults down by 3% (465 down from 479)
- Break-ins down by 24% (817 down from 619)

While the fall in break-ins is welcome, Mr Messenger was alarmed by the increasing number of sexual assaults and other offences, such as drug offences.

"These latest figures confirm the Beattie Labor Government has done very little to crack down on violent offences, particularly violence against women," he said.

"It is inexcusable in the extreme for any State Government to be presiding over a more than 50% increase in sexual assaults and a 49% increase in drug offences in Bundaberg.

"Our police do an outstanding job, but they need the staff numbers, resources and appropriate powers to be able to do their job, while it is vital our laws protect our community.

"Under the Beattie Labor Government, almost a third of all convicted paedophiles do not go to jail, while a vast majority of sex offenders released from Queensland prisons do not complete rehabilitation programs.

"That's just not good enough.

Queenslanders expect and deserve a police force that has the resources and powers they need to properly protect the community from these vile and repugnant offenders."

Messenger takes on Opposition Police Portfolio

In case you haven't heard, Rob Messenger, who previously held the Shadow Environment and Heritage Portfolio, has been awarded the Shadow Portfolio of Police and Corrective Services.

Mr Messenger said it was a great honour and privilege to receive such an important Portfolio and took this responsibility most seriously. "I am extremely honoured to be

given this Opposition Portfolio and I know it will be a challenging role, but it will also be a rewarding role," he said.

Mr Messenger is looking forward to the challenges ahead within this demanding Portfolio and will be carefully listening to the police and also the victim and other community groups to find solutions to problems and

improve our police service delivery.

"This is a great honour because it gives me the opportunity to get to know the professional, well-trained and motivated people who are prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice everyday to ensure Queensland is a safer place to live," Mr Messenger said.

"There are many different law enforcement challenges we

face in the 21st century and I want to make sure that the police and Corrective Services are well-resourced and trained to tackle these challenges," he said.

Mr Messenger will be working closely with the newly elected Member for Bundaberg Jack Dempsey, who will take on the role of Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services.



Rob Messenger has officially called on the State Government to fund a minibus for transporting regional patients seeking medical treatment in Brisbane.

Mr Messenger's proposal included a Queensland Health funded minibus or large taxi with wheelchair access to be made available for multiple patients to be transported from Roma Street train station, Brisbane, to their destinations.

Mr Messenger said the reality is many Bundaberg and Burnett residents have to travel to Brisbane Hospitals for

treatment.

"While patients travelling onboard the tilt train to Brisbane have expressed their satisfaction with the service, they have raised concerns over the problems that arise upon arrival in Brisbane," Mr Messenger informed the Minister.

"Many of the patients, who are quite frail and are not accustomed to the city, are experiencing difficulties finding and travelling to their destinations once in Brisbane," he said.

"A trip to the capital city for a rural or regional person can be extremely

stressful at the best of times, but when that person is struggling with medical problems, serious life threatening illness just the journey from the train station to the hospital or hotel can be a nightmare," Mr Messenger said.

It was also suggested to the Health Minister that a Social Worker could be involved in this service to be on-hand, should patients experience difficulties.

Mr Messenger is inviting anyone who would like to comment on the shuttle bus initiative or make an alternative suggestion to contact his electorate office.

Messenger serves up coffee treats for charity

Rob Messenger along with his fiancé, Tarni, got behind the counter at Gloria Jean's Coffees Bundaberg in October this year to help raise money for 'Mercy Ministries', a national charity offering assistance to women aged 16-28 in crisis.

Mercy Ministries assists young women suffering a number of life controlling issues such as eating disorders, unplanned pregnancies, self-harm and abuse, by offering a residential program at no cost to these women.


The charitable organisation supports these young women in need of assistance and gives them the opportunity to make a fresh start in life.


Through the sale of various items and generous donations Gloria Jean's Coffees Bundaberg was able to raise over \$750.

As you can see Rob and Tarni thoroughly enjoyed themselves while they assisted the team at Gloria Jean's Bundaberg!



Rob and fiancé Tarni with the team at Gloria Jean's Bundaberg had a ball raising funds for 'Mercy Ministries'





MERRY CHRISTMAS!

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your continued support throughout the year. I, along with my fiancé Tarni, and the Burnett Electorate Office girls, Bron and Melinda, wish you a very Merry Christmas and a safe, happy New Year!

We look forward to working with you next year.

* The Burnett Electorate Office will close for the Christmas break from 20 December, 2006 and will reopen on 15 January 2007. If you require assistance over the Christmas break, please do not hesitate to **contact Rob** on **0407 904 134**.

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