

Primary entry #30: Lakes Grammar School



The Lakes Grammar Gazette



Firefighters helped residents during the storm. Picture: Alex Voigt

Our firemen are everyday heroes to all

By ANUPAMA ADIKARIM, KIARNA ELLIOT, ALEX VOIGT, KASEY YOUNG and JAMES SAW

SCHOOLS were closed, residents lost power and cyclonic winds reached their peaks.

The nightmare began on April 21 when local fire servicemen were woken at 2am to begin a hair-raising shift in the midst of a terrible storm.

Wadalba's Rural Fire Service was determined to protect and serve the Central Coast during one of the worst storms recorded in this region.

Simon Jackson, a long-term volunteer fire fighter with the Wadalba Rural Fire Service said, "It was one of the toughest storms I have ever faced."

Simon Jackson and his colleague Michael McKay-Hines, explained that this storm was particularly dangerous compared to the 2007 and the 1999 storms because of the fierce winds accompanied by the buckets of rain.

This made rescue operations extremely challenging because of the continuous risk of winds uprooting more trees which could then fall on and injure rescue workers.

One of the worst affected areas was Chittaway Bay where rescue workers were in knee-deep water.

These firemen were deprived of sleep as they worked tirelessly to help the community whilst residents were safe and snug in their homes.

Centre comes to rescue

By GRACE BARKER and MADELINE JAMES

"BANG!" The door closes as your family turns you away, you have no money, you are homeless and you feel judged by the community. You have nowhere to go. What can you do?

Swansea Community Cottage is a place of refuge that offers help to people who need it most. They are located in Swansea, just downstairs from the Swansea Library.

Rhonda Williams leads a team of people who provide much-needed support to struggling families.

Some of the services the community centre provides are: information and referral, community development, emergency relief, tax help, advocacy, before and after school care, support groups, art groups, social groups, resume writing, JP services, and a free clothing and household items swap.

Some people may not realise that community centres help around 60 people each day, providing for well over 400 people each week from the Hunter and Central Coast regions.

A large proportion of people coming in each week are either leaving violent homes, being evicted, those who have just moved into the area or are poor. Some people are battling with drug and alcohol addictions and have no money for food and shelter.



The ladies at Swansea Community Cottage help those in need.

Picture: Grace Barker

According to Rhonda Williams, manager of Swansea Community Centre, the centre mainly relies on volunteers and donations, as little state funding is given to this organisation. Local bakeries and some commercial supermarkets also help by passing on produce that has not been sold.

Oz Harvest is a charity that

collects unwanted food from cafes, restaurants and supermarkets, and delivers the produce to community centres who redistribute the food to those who need it most.

Rhonda Williams said people can help their local community centre by donating clothes, food, money, appliances, stationery, toiletries, every day house hold items

and their time.

You never know when you might be in a situation where you may need the help of a community centre. If tragedy fell and community centres no longer existed, there would be nowhere to go to for help, support or information.

What would we do without them and the services that they provide?



The students of Lakes Grammar wore beanies for a brain cancer fundraiser.

Beanies for brain cancer fun-raiser

By EMMA FLORIMO, RYAN BENTLEY, BLAIR EVANS, SEBASTIAN ARANETA, DYLAN INWOOD and JEREMY BEALE

ON May 15, Lakes Grammar dedicated a day to wearing beanies and raising money for the "Cure Brain Cancer Foundation".

Elisa LeRay and Chris Botfield organised the day in honour of their friend Rocky who died from brain cancer April 23, 2015, after being diagnosed in October 2012.

Chris Botfield said: "Rocky went from being a normal, active person who enjoyed skateboarding, motorbike riding, to being in a wheelchair."

According to Cure Brain Cancer Foundation, "Brain cancer kills more children than any other disease in Australia." Yet brain cancer

receives less than 5 per cent of federal government cancer research funding.

"It was wonderful to see all the students wearing their beanies," Ms LeRay said.

Everyone who wore a beanie to school brought in a gold coin donation to help find a cure, raising over \$700.



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