

Cartoon: Max Honeyards

Young people can handle the truth

EDITORIAL

By **ALEX SHEPHERD** and **DEADRA REGO**

SOME would say that in the past century we have become more accepting and tolerant due to the diverse nature of our population as a result of ever-increasing multiculturalism and the globalised nature of the modern world and thus, better informed. However, this is not always the case.

Journalists, radio disc jockeys, social networks and media outlets all influence the opinions we have about people, events and current affairs occurring around the globe and we often receive these stories and messages almost instantly.

It is imperative that as young people we remain informed of current events and are active participants in our world but we also need to make sure that we do so with an open, critical and responsible mind. For example, social media is available to anybody and social networking sites allow and encourage users to be more open about their personal lives. This leads to cherished moments and private details of our lives being posted easily and rather frequently. However, users are still liable for what they post

and say on these sites but often young people can get caught up in the hype of other people's ideas and things they have viewed or heard elsewhere which can lead to some pretty awful and negative outcomes, such as cyberbullying.

The effects of which can leave deep mental scars on those, particularly young people, who fall victim to such behaviour.

We as young consumers are often confronted with biased and false representations of events and issues which can shape and influence our thoughts, actions and behaviours. For example, we consistently hear, see and read about many issues that are topical in our contemporary society, such as the refugee crisis in Syria, religion and climate change. All of which can be difficult topics to discuss and debate if we are blindsided by sensational stories and images which are taken out of context. However, this does not stop many from having an opinion on the information they are presented with even if they are ill informed or don't have a thorough grasp or understanding of the issue being put forward. We need to ensure that as the world moves forward at a rapid pace that we become active global citizens that reflect on and question what is happening in the world around us – both on a local level and beyond.

Sports champion is representing nation

By **DANIEL FENTON**

HARRISON Dowdell of St Mary's High School, Gateshead represented Australia at the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association World Games.

They were held in Nottingham from August 6-16, 2015.

Harrison was selected for the Australian U/19s soccer squad after stand-out performances in the NSW state team side in 2014.

The avid Newcastle Knights supporter isn't new to the stage of high-level sport with Harrison playing in the National Paralympics 7-A-Side Championships in Coffs Harbour last year.

While playing he earned the George Tonna Medal that is awarded to the player of the match in the Grand Final.

Harrison has also represented NSW in athletics.

Australia belongs to Group A of the Championship alongside Russia and Scotland. Group B consists of England, the Netherlands, Japan, and Brazil.

The Australian Parraroos played Scotland on August 11 but unfortunately lost the match 8-nil.

The next day, a better performance was put in against Russia despite still losing 4-nil.

Harrison was named Australian Man of the Match after the game, which was well-deserved through his hard work and determination.

Australia took on Japan in the

Second Round of the Championships on August 13, winning 6-3.

In their last game they played the Netherlands and Harrison scored the only goal for Australia during a 1-5 loss.

Out of the eight competing sides, Australia finished seventh overall. All games during the tournament were held at Highfields Playing Fields, University Boulevard in Nottingham.

The CPISRA World Games feature invited member nations to compete in athletics, bowls, swimming, para-taekwondo, table cricket, and soccer.

The squads that take part in these games all have the physical disability of cerebral palsy.

Each member is given a class number depending on the level of disability.

Harrison is classed as a C7 meaning he suffers from hemiplegia. Hemiparesis is the weakness of the entire left or right side of the body. In Harrison's case, the hemiplegia affects the left side of his body.

He has still succeeded despite the challenges.

Harrison Dowdell of St Mary's High School, Gateshead, has represented Australia at the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association World Games.

Picture: Daniel Fenton



Spreading message of unity through song

By **SAMUEL FROOME**

SHANNON Noll is up to his old tricks again but not in the way you think. Shannon Noll, more fondly known as Nollie, is currently touring eastern NSW along with the Aboriginal rap group, The Street Warriors. "We just want to spread a message of diversity and friendship," he said when asked why he was performing again.

Shannon and The Street Warriors are mainly visiting schools and community centres spreading

their message and promoting reconciliation, "it's just great to be out with my mates and performing for the youth of this country."

Before touring Shannon and The Street Warriors recorded a cover of the Australian classic, *Solid Rock*.

The Street Warriors, who aren't usually a political group, but after hearing what Shannon was setting out to do couldn't resist lending a hand as they were bullied once themselves because of their Aboriginal heritage.



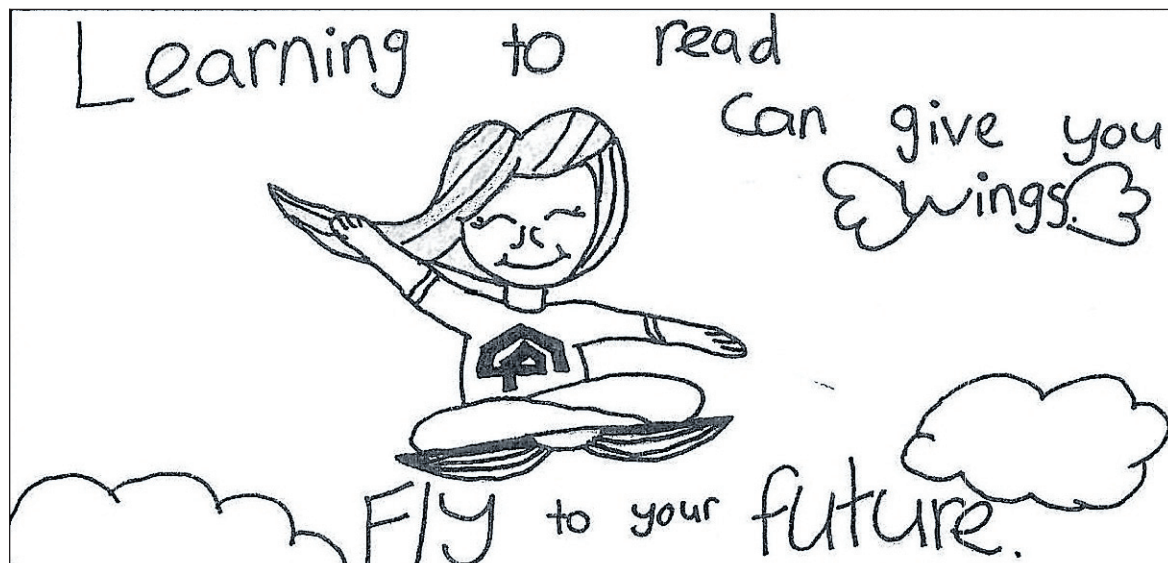
Shannon Noll and The Street Warriors with Helen McIntosh, administration co-ordinator at St Mary's, Gateshead.

Picture: Shane Abell

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