

REDLAND COTA MAIL (FORMERLY "GREY MATTERS")



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Printed by courtesy of Andrew Laming, MP, Member for Bowman

<i>President's Message</i>	2
<i>Rotary Bowelscan</i>	2
<i>U3A new website</i>	3
<i>Voluntary position — Tournament of the Minds</i>	3
<i>Membership</i>	3
<i>Seniors' Lifestyle Expo</i>	4
<i>Have-Your-Say Forum</i>	5

FROM THE MANAGER

I wish to express the sincere thanks of the Management Committee to Di Gordon for producing "Grey Matters" and this first edition of Redland COTA Mail. Production of newsletters is never easy and I appreciate the great work that Di has done.

The new title is meant to be more descriptive of what we will produce – a relatively short informative document with both comment and notices about seniors' issues.

PRESSURE NEEDED ON PENSIONS

The recent indexation rise for pension payments bringing the single pension rate up by \$7.65 a week to \$283.95 isn't going to bring relief to single pensioners.

When this is compared to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' May figure of around \$1132 per week for average full-time earnings, it can be seen for the pittance it is.

Almost nobody argues that the single pension should rise to those heights. A closer look at some of the implications helps to show how badly we cater for our senior citizens who worked when there was no superannuation guarantee or who were so poorly paid that they were not able to lay funds by for their retirement.

A single pensioner who is able to earn money through some means is able to earn up to \$138 a fortnight before starting to lose 40c in the dollar from their pension. This is designed to let them keep most of what they earn (less tax) but still leaves the pensioner struggling to survive. The sum of a fortnightly single pension and \$138 earned results in around \$352.95 a week.

Even if a single pensioner were able to earn \$1500 a fortnight, the reduced pension amount would result in a total for the week of \$761, still well short of \$1132.

When those of us who had jobs recently compare what we earned a week with these figures, we can see how difficult it is to make ends meet on a single pension. Of course, many single pensioners are not able to earn additional funds and are forced to make do with the bare \$283.95 per week with some small allowances and possibly rent assistance.

The Australian Government seems determined to draw consideration of the plight of the single pensioner out to the

budget in May 2009 while the Opposition wants to push for a \$30 a week bandaid. Looking back at the Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings figure in the second paragraph, one can see that an increase to even half that figure is unlikely. **COTA Queensland policy is to raise the single pension to 35% of average weekly earnings, a sum of \$395 per week.**

Those of us who feel strongly about this sad state of affairs should not hesitate to voice our concern and bring as much pressure as possible to bear on politicians to spend some of our massive surplus on relief for single pensioners.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Redland District Committee on the Ageing needs active volunteers for a number of tasks and projects.

Some of these involve office skills but others, from time to time, are more hands-on with members of the community.

Some volunteers make themselves available on call when needs arise but there is an ongoing need for volunteers with office skills, computer literacy and public relations.

If you can help, please contact RDCOTA.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Readers,

In our last 'Grey Matters' we announced the appointment of Tony Christinson as RDCOTA's new volunteer manager. You may gauge a small measure of Tony's early work by the message on pensions he has published in this issue. The brightening-up of our former 'Grey Matters' is another of his works in progress. We are fortunate that Tony's commitment will continue to drive us into the future.

Our Management Committee and Tony have met recently to review our directions so that we can prioritise the tasks that are possible with our present resources. Our active tasks now include the following:

- Participating in the Redlands Seniors Network, and the Redlands Advisory Group on Seniors Issues (RAGOSI)
- Continuing to support residents in aged care facilities through the Tournament of the Minds program and provide support for the Circle of Men
- Jointly with our parent body, COTA Queensland, participating in advocacy work on government policy, principally by listening to Seniors and giving them the opportunity to "Have Their Say" through public forums
- Planning and conducting community awareness seminars relevant to healthy and positive ageing
- Assisting with publicizing Seniors Week
- Co-operating in the organization of the Seniors' Lifestyle Expo

Continuing to co-ordinate the establishment of a community managed 'Information Hub' for Seniors in the Redlands

I think you will agree that, given our completely volunteer workforce, the above represents a formidable effort. We continue to seek financial support that will permit us to further flex our muscles. In particular we are still actively pursuing the funds to establish the one-stop, face to face 'Information Hub' that we jointly designed with our sector earlier this year.

Kind Regards
 Ross Wiseman
 President
 27 September 2008

LIONS TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAKES

There are Lions Christmas cakes for sale at the RDCOTA Office.



Prices are:

1.0 Kilogram	\$9.00
1.5 Kilogram	\$12.00

ROTARY BOWELSCAN IS COMING—MARCH 2009 DON'T MISS OUT

The aim of this initiative is to promote early detection of bowel cancer.

If you have tested positive to a bowelscan and are prepared to tell your story, please ring RDCOTA on 3488 0680.

U3A REDLANDS NEW WEBSITE

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A) REDLANDS DISTRICT INC.
[HTTP://U3AREDLANDS.COM.AU](http://u3aredlands.com.au)

POSITION OF VOLUNTARY CO-ORDINATOR, TOURNAMENT OF THE MINDS

The Redland Committee on the Ageing (RDCOTA) is urgently seeking someone with the necessary skills and experience to take the voluntary position of Co-ordinator of the Tournament of the Minds Program.

This extremely worthwhile program was initiated by RDCOTA SOME 8 years ago, and the present Co-ordinator, Mrs Eva Kass, is needing to retire.

Tournament of the Minds (TOM) is essentially a trivia quiz social occasion which is conducted in the 10 aged care facilities in Redland City. Each of the facilities take turns in inviting visiting groups of residents from the other facilities on a monthly basis throughout the year. The host facility takes responsibility for organizing the particular event with a morning tea and some other entertainment perhaps, while the diversional therapists co-ordinate mini-bus or maxi-taxi travel between the facilities, and participate in developing the questions each month.

The Co-ordinator's position is to:

- Undertake careful planning to prepare and oversee the two monthly events which occur on the north side and south side of the Redlands
- Support and oversee the RDCOTA volunteers who assist with each event
- Anticipate and troubleshoot problems which may arise
- Identify and arrange changing entertainment programs
- Generally act as an "emcee" when, and as, required
- Liaise with and report regularly to the Management Committee of RDCOTA in writing.

Each year all trivia teams gather together for a "fish and chips in the park" social occasion.

The Co-ordinator needs good people skills, an empathy for frail older persons, good humour, good organizing and troubleshooting skills, an attention to detail, and the ability to be an up-front person as well as being able to lead from behind.

The Management Committee will consider the possibility of negotiation of assistance with travel costs.

Residents are ardent supporters of the program and enjoy the challenge of sharpening their minds in a friendly competitive environment, and they really enjoy interaction with the residents of other facilities which helps counteract social isolation.

For further information please contact RDCOTA Manager, Tony Christinson, on 3488 0680 or at seniors@rdcota.org.au

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

The RDCOTA membership year is from 1 January to 31 December.

Members are reminded that membership dues (\$5 for individual membership; \$20 for organizations) can be paid at any time up to the AGM in February or March 2009.

Renewal forms are available from the RDCOTA office and can be obtained in person or by phoning to have one posted.

MAKE SURE YOU VISIT THE BAYSIDE SENIOR LIFESTYLE EXPO 2008

Redland District Committee on the Ageing (RDCOTA) in partnership with Queensland Community Newspapers will hold their 8th Senior Lifestyle Expo offering information and advice on planning for, and living comfortably, in your retirement years.

It will be held at the Redland Performing Arts Centre in Cleveland on the 30 and 31 October from 9.30am to 3.00pm each day, and includes a line-up of expert speakers offering information and advice at eight seminars tackling travel, health, and financial issues.

Seminars will cover healthy living with chronic diseases, memory and ageing; looking at what happens as the brain ages. Travel seminars will take you to New Zealand, luxury coach and small group tours, train travel as well as to Africa, and include complete cruise destinations and solutions.

Val French from Older People Speak Out shares her experience at attending the 2020 Summit and provides an update from the Pension Review reference group on which she sits. Financial speakers will look at Superannuation and how to make the most of your current Super funds and other assets, as well as Centrelink's overview of the current aged pension, eligibility and entitlements for self funded retirees and much more.

With over 30 exhibitors the Lifestyle Expo is planned to cover the areas of accommodation,

financial, health, travel and recreation. Because of the variety there is much to be learnt by the over 45s age group during the two days. The public will be asked for a gold coin upon entry to assist the work of the Redland Committee on the Ageing in the community. We invite you to take the time to visit our booth to speak with the volunteers.

There will be major prize give-aways taking place throughout both days, so make sure you put your entry into the barrel as soon as you can to win some wonderful prizes. The canteen will be operating with morning and afternoon teas and light lunches available. Cleveland High School students will entertain you during the lunch time period with ensemble instrumental music.

In all it will be a wonderful opportunity to gain valuable information when planning for your retirement years, or to maximise the many benefits available in retirement, and to prepare you or your loved one for the fourth stage of your lives.

Make sure you mark the dates in your diary to visit the Bayside Senior Lifestyle Expo. Visit www.rdcota.org.au for further details, or pick up a copy of the October issue of the Bayside Senior Lifestyle Magazine with a pull-out feature on the Expo.



BAYSIDE SENIOR LIFESTYLE EXPO SEMINARS

Thursday, October 30

10.30am

Chronic Diseases

Join Spiritus Community Care registered nurse Jan Desbrow in this session on healthy living with chronic conditions, especially diabetes. Jan will also provide an introduction to the Spiritus care Chronic Conditions Self-Management program.

11.30am

Grand Pacific Tours on New Zealand

Barry Watts, of Grand Pacific Tours, speaks on how to get all the travel information you need. Luxury coach tours, small group tours, train travel, and special interest tours throughout New Zealand will be

covered. Join Jetset free travel club for a chance to win a South Pacific Cruise for two. Speak to the experts and benefit from the Expo special offer.

1pm

2020 Summit and Pension Review

"Don't let pride stop you speaking out", is the advice of Val French, who heads up the Queensland organisation, Older People Speak Out.

Val also attended the 2020 Summit and is one of the 13 members who make up the Pension Review Reference Group. Join her as she shares her experience of the 2020 summit and also takes feedback from expo visitors about living on the pension.

(Continued next page)

HAVE-YOUR-SAY FORUM SUCCESSFUL

An over 50s seniors forum held at the Redland Performing Arts Centre on Monday 29 September has raised issues of concern to Redland senior citizens.

The Council on the Ageing Queensland (COTAQ) and the Redland District Committee on the Ageing (RDCOTA) conducted the forum to provide information for advocacy with various levels of Government, development of policy and budget submissions.

RDCOTA Manager, Tony Christinson, said that around forty seniors attended the meeting and discussed housing, health, transport, pensions and aged care facilities in the Redlands.

"A combination of the non-availability of services in Redland City and difficulties with transport combine to produce a number of health problems," Mr Christinson said.

"Some people cited difficulties with dental treatment, long waiting lists at dental clinics, long waits for optical testing and supply of glasses as typical problems in the Redlands," he said.

Mr Christinson said that few seemed aware of the Extended Primary Care options for dental and optical treatment available to chronic disease sufferers through their General Practitioners.

"We were told that there is a desperate need for af-

fordable housing in the \$200 thousand to \$300 thousand range which is accessible to transport and amenities and not located in cheap inaccessible developments," Mr Christinson said,

"There was considerable objection expressed to 'high-rise isolation towers'," he said.

A number of Bay Island residents raised issues of lack of medical services, island public transport and the long trip to go from an island to the Princess Alexandra or Mater hospitals.

Managing Director, Mark Tucker-Evans told the meeting

that COTA Queensland was seeking a single pension rate of \$395 per week which is 35% of average weekly earnings.

Mr Christinson said that both COTA Queensland and Redland COTA would now consider how to proceed to act on the information received at the forum. He said that it is likely that Redland COTA would conduct more forums in locations around Redland City.



RDCOTA President, Ross Wiseman, addresses Have-Your-Say Forum

(Expo Seminars—Continued from previous page)

This session is your chance to "tell it like it is" and have direct access to someone who can take your experiences and ideas to the reference group.

2pm

Centrelink

Gail Allom from Centrelink's Financial Information Service will provide an overview of the current aged pension and eligibility criteria for the aged pension as well as entitlements for self funded retirees. There will be a question and answer segment.

Friday, October 31

10.30am

Superannuation

Qualified Suncorp Financial Planner Deborah O'Flaherty shows you how you can enjoy a better retirement income by making the most of your current superannuation funds and other assets. Deborah's presentation will help you understand:

- * How much money you will need in retirement;
- * Some powerful retirement strategies;
- * How to enjoy a tax-effective retirement;
- * Superannuation versus alternative investment options.

11.30am

Memory and Ageing

Alzheimers Australia community educator Maxine Tobias presents a session about memory and ageing.

Anyone with an interest in what happens as the brain ages and how to reduce the risk of dementia will benefit from this session. Information will also be helpful for carers of loved ones living with memory loss.

1pm

Scenic Tours Cruising and Africa

Kate Webster of Redlands Travel presents Africa as a destination and presenters from Scenic Tours and Complete Cruise Solution will speak about their companies' products and destinations. Special packages and deals will be available for Expo visitors, with a prize draw for all who join the Redlands Travel Club.

2pm

Fraud Prevention and Identity Theft

Sergeant Joe Cranitch delivers an informative session on safeguarding yourself against fraud and identity theft. Sgt Cranitch will discuss what happens if your identity is stolen and how to safeguard yourself against becoming a victim of fraud. This one of the major security problems confronting seniors and the session will empower you by raising awareness of these types of crime and you will leave with sound strategies for self-protection.

RDCOTA would like to acknowledge its sponsors:

Rotary Club of Cleveland

Lions Club of Capalaba

Redlands Sporting Club

RSL Cleveland

Pilot Light Panel Christmas Wrap

Redland City Council

Mater Private Hospital - Redland

George Hartnett Funerals

Biddle Lawyers

Great Southern Garden of Remembrance

Without our sponsors, Redland District Committee on the Ageing Inc. would not be able to reach out into the community as much as it does.

RDCOTA welcomes all contributions to this newsletter.

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OPEN DAY

Great Southern Garden of Remembrance Crematorium and Cemetery

1774-1794 Mt Cotton Road, Carbrook

Saturday 18th October 2008

Between 10.00am and 2.00pm



Mail: P.O. Box 1051, Cleveland. 4163

Phone: 3488 0680 FAX: 3488 0681

Office: 57 Wynyard St, Cleveland. 4163

Office Hours: 9.30am to 2.30pm Monday to Friday