

# **ATTACHMENT TO AGENDA ITEM**

**Ordinary Meeting**

**18 August 2015**

**Agenda Item 7.1      Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory  
Committee Annual Report & Membership**

**Attachment 1      Womens Charter WCAAC Annual Report 2014/2015 ..... 192**

# Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee

## 2014/2015 Annual Report



WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION  
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COALITION STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION



GREATER  
SHEPPARTON

**Contents**

Background..... 2  
     Aim..... 2  
 2014/2015 Membership..... 2  
 Meetings ..... 3  
 Administrative activities ..... 3  
 Sub-Committees ..... 3  
 Events ..... 4  
     Women’s Voices – Know the Line’ sexual harassment forum..... 4  
     International Women’s Day 2015..... 5  
     The Good Lie Movie Night – Refugee Week 2015..... 5  
 Consultation activities/3x3 Action Plan review ..... 6  
 GSWCAAC Award ..... 6  
 Scholarship ..... 7  
 Newsletter ..... 7  
 Victorian Honour Roll of Women ..... 7  
 Website..... 8  
 Guest speakers ..... 8  
 Guests ..... 8  
 Relationships/Partnerships..... 8  
     Community interaction (Active Citizenship)..... 9  
 Promotion..... 9  
 2014/2015 Budget ..... 9  
 Future ..... 10  
 Appendices ..... 11  
     Appendix one: Membership list ..... 11  
     Appendix two: Examples of promotion..... 12

## Background

The Women's Charter was first launched by the Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition in 1996. The Charter's three principles of Gender Equity, Diversity and Active Citizenship are now supported by more than 60 local governments.

Greater Shepparton City Council officially endorsed its commitment to the Women's Charter in 2010 and an action plan followed. In 2011 an advisory committee was initiated and commenced with its first meeting being held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011. The Committee was officially endorsed by Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012, and is known as the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee (GSWCAAC).

The GSWCAAC is made up of community representatives and Council Officers who volunteer their time and is supported by Greater Shepparton City Council.

*The GSWCAAC can be found on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at <http://greatershepparton.com.au/wcaac>.*

## Aim

The aim of the GSWCAAC is to support and promote women in leadership roles and all levels of decision-making, including business or workplace positions, community groups or boards of management.

All of the GSWCAAC's work is based around the three principles of Gender Equity, Diversity, and Active Citizenship.

## 2014/2015 Membership

Throughout the 2014/15 financial year the GSWCAAC continued to build on the excellent work undertaken in previous years, and continued to build its membership, as well as its networks - particularly through its growing list of 'friends'. 'Friends' of the GSWCAAC sign up to the GSWCAAC email list and receive notifications of upcoming events, consultations, and other general information.

The GSWCAAC's profile has been raised considerably due to the focus on several key projects, and the GSWCAAC is well on the way to establishing itself as a committee of commitment and repute when it comes to promoting women's participation.

This lift in profile means the GSWCAAC now has members with a diverse range of skills and backgrounds, and its list of 'friends' has increased to 134 – this represents a 244% increase in comparison to the previous financial year.

The GSWCAAC currently has two year memberships, and also has the ability to co-opt members for a short period of time in order to utilise outside expertise.

The Council endorsed GSWCAAC membership for 2014/2015 included:

- One Council Charter Champion – Councillor Diny Adem
- Three representatives from Council
- Ten endorsed community members
- One Council appointed Support Person

In addition, the GSWCAAC also has the following:

- Six yet to be endorsed community members<sup>1</sup>
- One yet to be endorsed Council member<sup>2</sup>
- 134 Friends

It should be noted the Support Person and friends do not have voting rights.

*A list of members can be found at Appendix one.*

The GSWCAAC Terms of Reference currently allow for up to 15 community members, and up to five Members who are also Council staff. At the end of the financial year the GSWCAAC was at capacity, as the maximum number of members (as per the Terms of reference) is 20.

In the 2014/2015 financial year the GSWCAAC:

- Received nine applications for membership, seven of which are yet to be endorsed.
- Received two resignations
- Had a change of Charter Champion from Cr Jenny Houlihan to Cr Dinny Adem.

### Meetings

The GSWCAAC met on a monthly basis throughout 2014/2015 with the exception of December.

### Administrative activities

In the previous financial year the GSWCAAC worked very hard to revise and streamline their administrative processes and procedures. For example: the GSWCAAC revised the Terms of Reference, created a 'New Member's Pack', introduced a more thorough evaluation process for its events, revised its Expression of Interest form for prospective new members, and utilised feedback forms.

In 2014/15 the GSWCAAC saw the benefits of this streamlining, which has contributed to an increase in members and friends, and strengthened the 'brand' presence and reputation of the GSWCAAC within the community.

In 2014/15 the GSWCAAC built on the work undertaken in previous years and has:

- Created and distributed an 'e'newsletter
- Conducted a review of the GSWCAAC award allocation process. Draft guidelines and criteria have been written up and are close to being finalised. It is anticipated the next award will be bestowed in March 2016
- Utilised Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) to clarify and strengthen partnerships.
- Started a comprehensive review of the GSWCAAC's 3x3 action plan. This process has included consultation and will continue into 2015/16.
- Put procedures in place for a membership drive to occur in April/May of each year

### Sub-Committees

The GSWCAAC Terms of Reference allows for the establishment of sub-committees to work on specific tasks. A sub-committee can consist of some of the members of the GSWCAAC, as well as members of the community who may have been co-opted for their special skills and/or expertise. Sub-committees bring value to the work of the GSWCAAC as they allow members to join projects they can add value to and are passionate about, as well as enabling members to learn new skills.

<sup>1</sup> Four of these members have been attending meetings, and will be presented to Council for endorsement mid-year, as per the Terms of Reference. The other two applied for membership in June 2015 and therefore are just at the beginning of the endorsement process.

<sup>2</sup> This member has been attending meetings, and the membership will be presented to Council for endorsement mid-year, as per the Terms of Reference.

In the 2014/15 financial year the GSWCAAC had the following sub-committees:

- Victorian Honour Roll of Women sub-committee
- 'Women's Voices – Know the Line' Forum sub-committee
- International Women's Day sub-committee
- GSWCAAC Award sub-committee
- Movie night sub-committee
- Malala Day sub-committee
- Membership sub-committee

## Events

In 2014/2015 the GSWCAAC focused on three main events – the 'Women's Voices – Know the Line' Forum, International Women's Day 2015, and a Refugee Week movie night. The GSWCAAC is also forward planning for a second movie event/forum in the second half of 2015.

The GSWCAAC believes that events such as these are a great way to reach a variety of audiences, provide information, knowledge, resources and strengthen community ties. They are also a way of gaining new members, and provide an opportunity for consultation.

### Women's Voices – Know the Line' sexual harassment forum

On 22 September 2014 the GSWCAAC held a forum regarding sexual harassment entitled 'Women's Voices – Know the Line'.

The forum was held at the Sherbourne Terrace – Terrace Function Room, 109 Wyndham Street, Shepparton.

The forum was sponsored by the Sherbourne Terrace and was supported and funded by the Greater Shepparton City Council.

The event was disability accessible and attended by approximately 66 people.

Tickets to the event were sold for \$25.00 per person, in order for the GSWCAAC to be able to cover the cost of catering for the event.

The theme of the event was sexual harassment – in particular the Australian Human Rights Commission's 'Know the Line' campaign.<sup>3</sup>

The keynote speaker was Elizabeth Broderick, the Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner. After Ms Broderick's keynote address a panel of five local and state wide leaders participated in a Q&A panel about sexual harassment. The discussion was facilitated by Maria Dimopoulos, Gender and Equity Consultant. The five panellists were:

- Kate Jenkins - Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner
- Dr Judy McHugh - Manager of Goulburn Valley Centre Against Sexual Assault
- Julie Tyler – Women's Health Goulburn North East
- Suzanna Sheed – Then lawyer and RACV Board Director, and now State Member for Shepparton.

*A full evaluation (M14/60558) of the event is available on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at: <http://greatersepparton.com.au/wcaac> .*

<sup>3</sup> Further information about the 'Know the Line' campaign can be found at: <https://knowtheline.humanrights.gov.au/>

### International Women's Day 2015

The GSWCAAC held a free event in partnership with All Women GV for International Women's Day on 8 March 2015 at the St Paul's African House, Shepparton.

The GSWCAAC partnered with All Women GV (supported and funded by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, ABC Heywire, and Word and Mouth), and the event was also supported and funded by the Greater Shepparton City Council.

The event was disability accessible and was attended by approximately 110 people.

The title of the event was 'Local Women Inspiring Change' and this theme was tied in with the Shepparton Festival theme of 'Grown, Picked, Packed'. In keeping with these themes, the GSWCAAC and All Women GV invited local women to showcase their diverse products and/or services. 17 women had a stall at the event.

In order to illustrate the wonderful things local women are doing, the GSWCAAC and All Women GV asked nine women to present a Pecha Kucha outlining their journey and their product/service. A Pecha Kucha is a presentation in which 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each – thus making the entire presentation 6 minutes and 40 seconds in length. Presenters are able to speak whilst the Pecha Kucha is playing.

The event was ably emceed by local business woman, author, and Aboriginal leader Robynne Nelson.

All Women GV (a group of young women) created a photography exhibition at the event, which displayed the photographic results of the 'Stand Up and Stand Out' photography competition. The photography competition encouraged young people to submit an image of an inspiring female with a short blurb about why they believed the subject is inspiring.

A full evaluation (M15/17498) of the event is available on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at: <http://greater-shepparton.com.au/wcaac>.

### The Good Lie Movie Night – Refugee Week 2015

The GSWCAAC held a free movie night in partnership with the Greater Shepparton City Council, the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District, and the Shepparton Interfaith Network.

The movie night was held at the Village Cinemas in Shepparton on Wednesday 17 June and was in conjunction with Refugee Week, which ran from 14 to 20 June 2015.

The movie that was screened was 'The Good Lie'. See below for a brief synopsis:

*They were known simply as 'The Lost Boys.'*

*Orphaned by the brutal Civil war in Sudan that began in 1983, these young victims traveled as many as a thousand miles on foot in search of safety. Fifteen years later, a humanitarian effort would bring 3600 lost boys and girls to America.*

*In 'The Good Lie,' Philippe Falardeau brings the story of their survival and triumph to life. Academy Award® winner Reese Witherspoon stars alongside Sudanese actors Arnold Oceng, Ger Duany, Emmanuel Jal, and newcomer Nyakuoth Weil, many of whom were also children of war.*

The official trailer for the movie can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2tI5zW3IU8>

Before the screening of the movie Thon Thon, a local man who is a 'Lost Boy' from Sudan shared his story with the audience.

A taste of Sudanese food was provided.

More than 150 people attended to hear Thon's inspirational story and to see the inspiring film.

The GSWCAAC was particularly proud to be able to provide this event with the partners free of charge to a diverse range of people, and for it to be held during Refugee Week.

A full evaluation (M15/38121) of the event will soon be available on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at: <http://greater-shepparton.com.au/wcaac>.

### Consultation activities/3x3 Action Plan review

Whilst the GSWCAAC has been working very hard to build a presence in the local community, it is keen to build on that presence by ensuring its actions are informed by community consultation.

As a result, in the first half of 2015 the GSWCAAC began a review of its 3x3 Action Plan.

The 3x3 Action Plan was first created in 2010, when the GSWCAAC was first endorsed by Council. It was last reviewed in 2011.

The 3x3 Action Plan focuses on the three principles of the Women's Charter: Gender Equity, Diversity, and Active Citizenship.

By reviewing the 3x3 Action Plan the GSWCAAC aims to make the plan more relevant to the current community climate. It is anticipated the results of the review will guide GSWCAAC business into the future. The results of the review will be made publically available and presented to Council for endorsement, giving Council a greater understanding of community feeling regarding the three principles.

The approach of the GSWCAAC to the 3x3 Action Plan Review is as follows:

- Step 1: Gender Equity
  - Review of literature by the GSWCAAC relating to Gender Equity
  - Online survey about Gender Equity to be developed and circulated amongst networks and the wider community
  - Compilation and review of survey results
  - Utilisation of survey results to develop a draft action plan for Gender Equity
- Step 2: Diversity
  - Review of literature by the GSWCAAC relating to Diversity
  - Online survey about Diversity to be developed and circulated amongst networks and the wider community
  - Compilation and review of survey results
  - Utilisation of survey results to develop a draft action plan for Diversity
- Step 3: Active Citizenship
  - Review of literature by the GSWCAAC relating to Active Citizenship
  - Online survey about Active Citizenship to be developed and circulated amongst networks and the wider community
  - Compilation and review of survey results
  - Utilisation of survey results to develop a draft action plan for Active Citizenship

It is anticipated the review will be completed by the end of 2015 or early 2016.

### GSWCAAC Award

The GSWCAAC allocates an award to an outstanding individual or community group on an annual basis.

Traditionally this award is presented to the recipient at the International Women's Day Breakfast held by Soroptimists International Shepparton Inc. The award recipient for 2015 was local woman



Gay Giovanetti. Ms Giovanetti works tirelessly to promote women's health and educate women who are disadvantaged.

In the 2014/15 financial year the GSWCAAC worked to strengthen the administrative processes surrounding the award. The GSWCAAC is in the process of establishing new award guidelines, as well as criteria upon which nominations will be judged.

### **Scholarship**

In October 2014 the 'Women Succeeding in Leadership Conference and Breakfast Discussion with the Hon. Julia Gillard' was held in Melbourne. The conference and breakfast provided an opportunity for attendees to listen to a range of successful women.

A great deal of interest in this conference was shown by the members of the GSWCAAC and at the August 2014 meeting of the GSWCAAC it was decided that the GSWCAAC sponsor one of its members to attend the event.

Margo Koskelainen was the member who was chosen to attend, and provided the GSWCAAC with a written report about the breakfast and conference, as a way of sharing her learning.

The GSWCAAC recognises that opportunities for learning from conferences and training are important, but are sometimes missed due to financial and/or geographical constraints. With this in mind a motion was moved at the March 2015 meeting that said: "An opportunity be given to someone within the Committee to attend events that will further their leadership skills, subject to available funds."

Whilst this concept is still in its infancy, it indicates the GSWCAAC are passionate about ensuring women are given opportunities for development of their knowledge and leadership skills where possible – and in line with the three charter principles.

### **Newsletter**

The GSWCAAC newsletter is a means of distributing information about the members, activities and events of the GSWCAAC, as well as an opportunity to share resources and links to relevant organisations conducive to the three principles of the Women's Charter (Gender Equity, Diversity, and Active Citizenship).

A newsletter was distributed in the winter of 2014 and one in summer of 2015. It is hoped that as the GSWCAAC gathers strength that the newsletter will be distributed on a quarterly basis.

### **Victorian Honour Roll of Women**

On a yearly basis, the Victorian State Government calls for nominations to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

The Victorian Honour Roll of Women is a Victorian State Government initiative that aims to recognise and celebrate the great achievements of inspirational women in the community.

Recognising the importance of such recognition for women who are making a difference, the GSWCAAC released a media statement calling for the Greater Shepparton community to nominate a woman they felt would be worthy of such recognition.

The GSWCAAC also submitted its own nomination. Whilst the nomination was unsuccessful, it is an illustration of how the GSWCAAC is working to promote and recognise women who are making a difference.

### Website

The GSWCAAC has a page on the Greater Shepparton City Council's website. The page is located at: <http://greater-shepparton.com.au/wcaac>.

The page has background information about the GSWCAAC, as well as expression of interest (membership nomination) forms, the meeting schedule, information about past and forthcoming events and activities.

The page also has links to other organisations/websites that have resources and information relevant to women.

### Guest speakers

In 2014/2015 the GSWCAAC was pleased to host Karen Liversidge, Team Leader People and Performance, from the Greater Shepparton City Council.

Karen spoke about the Greater Shepparton City Council's workplace policies, particularly those surrounding women.

### Guests

In 2014/2015 the GSWCAAC made their meetings open to interested community members. This is done to enable people to see the workings of the GSWCAAC and to learn more about the work of the GSWCAAC.

### Relationships/Partnerships

Throughout 2014/2015 the GSWCAAC developed relationships with and/or utilised the resources of a variety of groups and individuals. These included:

- All Women GV
- Elizabeth Broderick – Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner
- Dr Judy McHugh - Manager of Goulburn Valley Centre Against Sexual Assault
- FamilyCare
- Goulburn Valley Pregnancy and Family Support Service
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- GV Centre Against Sexual Assault
- Julie Tyler – Women's Health Goulburn North East
- Kate Jenkins - Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner
- Maria Dimopoulos – Gender and Equity Consultant
- Primary Care Connect
- Refugee Week
- Robynne Nelson
- Shepparton Interfaith Network
- St Paul's African House
- Suzanna Sheed – Lawyer and RACV Board Director (now Member for Shepparton)
- The Australian Human Rights Commission
- The Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District
- The Sherbourne Terrace
- Women's Health Goulburn North East

The GSWCAAC also assisted the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc. by providing a small amount of funding to go toward the production of posters for their International Women's Day event, held on Friday 6 March 2015.

### Community interaction (Active Citizenship)

The GSWCAAC is also committed to supporting other organisations that support and assist women within the wider community. For example:

- GSWCAAC members attended the Mooroopna Red Cross 100 Year Centenary Celebration held on 18 September 2014
- GSWCAAC members attended the Soroptimists International Shepparton Inc. International Women's Day breakfast held on Thursday 5 March 2015
- GSWCAAC members attended the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc. Multicultural International Women's Day event held on 6 March 2015
- GSWCAAC members attended the International Day of Tolerance at Kidstown on 14 November 2015.

### Promotion

The GSWCAAC has enjoyed excellent promotion in local media. Not only is such promotion aimed at advising the community about events and activities of the GSWCAAC, it is also about trying to increase community awareness of the GSWCAAC (brand) and its work.

The Council Marketing and Communications Department has facilitated this promotion, and in the 2014/2015 year, the following mediums of promotion (paid and unpaid) were utilised:

- All Women GV blog (online)
- EventBrite (for ticketing)
- Facebook
- Greater Shepparton City Council website
- GSWCAAC friends mailing list
- GSWCAAC newsletter
- Individual networks
- Internal Greater Shepparton City Council website
- My Community
- One FM (radio)
- Posters
- Refugee Week brochure
- Shepparton Festival brochure
- Tatura Guardian
- The Shepparton Adviser
- The Shepparton Festival booklet
- The Shepparton News
- The Situation
- Weeknights (Southern Cross Ten)

*For examples of some of the promotion the GSWCAAC has done, please see appendix two.*

### 2014/2015 Budget

The GSWCAAC was allocated a \$10,000 budget by the Greater Shepparton City Council for the 2014/2015 financial year.

A breakdown of the budgetary activity for the 2014/2015 financial year is tabulated below:

Sub Account	2014/2015 Budget	YTD Actual including commit
<b>Grand Total</b>		
<b>Operating expense</b>		
361 Advert/Promo/Market	2573	2595
371 Materials or Services	12000	11808
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>	<b>14,573</b>	<b>14,403</b>
<b>Operating Income</b>		
106 Contributions	-1846	- 1846
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>(1846)</b>	<b>(1846)</b>

In the 2014/2015 financial year the GSWCAAC partnered with other groups (All Women GV , Council, the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District, and Shepparton Interfaith Network). In 2015/16 the GSWCAAC will also explore grants to enable them to build on the work undertaken in 2014/2015.

### Future

The future of the GSWCAAC looks promising, as the GSWCAAC will continue to build on the work undertaken thus far, and has already identified future projects and areas for future focus.

Work has commenced on the following initiatives:

- Conducting a focused membership drive
- Building on the community awareness of the GSWCAAC brand
- Strengthening the GSWCAAC Award process and allocation
- Reviewing the 3x3 Action Plan
- GSWCAAC newsletter
- Continuation of the 'New Members Pack'
- Creating a GSWCAAC scholarship

Future work includes:

- Events, such as International Women's Day 2016, and the forced marriage forum and 'Love and Marriage in Kabul' forum and movie event for Malala Day<sup>4</sup> (currently in planning stage)
- Partnerships with other organisations/individuals
- Reviewing the Terms of Reference (scheduled for 2016)

Note: The GSWCAAC has also put in an expression of Interest to bring a '10 Thousand Girl' Regional Financial Literacy Session to the Shepparton area. The success or otherwise of this expression of interest is not yet known.

There may also be opportunities to continue work in the space of sexual harassment, as inspired by the 'Women's Voices – Know the Line' campaign.

<sup>4</sup> Malala Day is named after Malala Yousafzai, a young girl who was shot in 2012 by the Taliban as she boarded her bus for school. Since that time Malala has continued to pursue her campaign for every child's right to education – male or female.

## Appendices

### Appendix one: Membership list

Betul Tuna	Member - Community
Charlene Norton	Member - Council
Connie O'Dea	Member - Community
Cr Dinny Adem	Member - Council Charter Champion
Fran Smullen	Member- Community
Jan Phillips	Member - Community
Jean Young	Member – Council (yet to be endorsed)
Jennifer Broadbent	Member - Community
Jo Fasano	Member – Community (yet to be endorsed)
Kate Montgomery	Member - Council
Kelly McPherson	Member – Community (yet to be endorsed)
Leanne Raditsas	Member – Community (resigning member, term ending 30 June 2015)
Lyn Hewson	Member – Community (yet to be endorsed)
Margo Koskelainen, OAM	Member - Community
Michelle Bertoli	Member - Council
Patricia Moran	Member - Community
Seema Abdullah	Member – Community (yet to be endorsed)
Shira Lam	Member – Community
Sonali Jayasundera	Member - Community
Suzanne Wallis	Member – Community (yet to be endorsed)
Terri Cowley	Member – Community (yet to be endorsed)
Emma Hofmeyer	Council Support Person

Please note: this membership list was current as at 26 June 2015.

**Appendix two: Examples of promotion**

Poster for the 'Women's Voices – Know the Line' Forum

**'WOMEN'S VOICES - KNOW THE LINE'**  
**BUSINESS FORUM**

Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee invite local business people to attend an educative and informative discussion with the Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner Liz Broderick, on the 'Know the Line' campaign addressing sexual discrimination in the workplace.

This discussion will be facilitated by Maria Dimopoulos – Gender and Diversity consultant, and include thoughts from several local speakers.

**MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2014**  
10.00am until 1:00pm

**The Sherbourne Hotel, Terrace Room**  
109 Wyndham Street, Shepparton

**Tickets \$25.00 per head**  
bookings essential and can be made in person at Greater Shepparton City Council offices, 90 Welsford St Shepparton.  
For further information please email: [women@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:women@shepparton.vic.gov.au)

**Morning tea and lunch provided**

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT. KNOW WHERE THE LINE IS.**

Proudly supported by:

M15/23084

12

The Shepparton News, 23 September 2014, page 3

Shepparton News Page 3 Tuesday 23 September 2014

# Sexual harassment discussion

By Estelle Griepink

Most Australians do not have a clear understanding of what sexual harassment is and that lack of knowledge means many cases go unreported, the country's Sex Discrimination Commissioner says.

Elizabeth Broderick was in Shepparton yesterday for "Women's Voices — Know the Line", a forum that invited businesswomen to hear from a panel of leaders about sexual discrimination in the workplace.

Ms Broderick said there was "a lot of grey area" about sexual harassment, which meant people did not know when they or a colleague was crossing the line.

It was why the commissioner had launched a campaign called Know the Line, which challenged people to rethink their comments and behaviour towards women.

"We might think, 'He's just like that,' or, 'He didn't mean anything,' and we're worried that people will think we can't take a joke," Ms Broderick said.

"But sexual harassment is not a joke."

Ms Broderick said while sexual harassment continued to be a huge problem in Australia, workplaces could not rely on women alone to make the change.

"We need powerful, decent men to step up, not to speak for us, but to stand beside us," she said.

"We need men to take the message of gender equality to other men."

She also emphasised the importance of bystanders reporting sexual harassment when they saw it or heard about it.

But she said workplaces needed to facilitate an environment where people felt like they could come forward.

"There are three things that a bystander needs in order to make a report — they need to



Gathering: Participants at yesterday's Women's Voices — Know the Line sexual discrimination forum.



Informative: Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick. Pictures: Bianca McKee

know their workplace has a zero tolerance policy to sexual harassment, that they won't be victimised and that further action

will be taken," she said. The audience also heard from Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissioner Kate Jenkins,

Gender and Diversity consultant Maria Dimopolous, SMR Legal's Suzanna Sheed, Women's Health Goulburn North East's Julie Taylor and Goulburn Valley Centre Against Sexual Assault's Judy McHugh.

Ms Jenkins said the system, which relied on the victim to make a complaint about sexual harassment, was flawed.

"Employers have the responsibility to prevent this conduct, because it is a heavy weight to bear when you are the victim," she said.

"Our social view on sexual harassment is, 'a little bit is okay' and I think that is a slippery slope to be on."

Ms Sheed said a significant shift in culture needed to occur, particularly in regional areas such as Shepparton.

"(If you make a complaint) you might be perceived as the problem or the one who was asking for it and in a small town, everyone knows everyone and hears things on the grapevine," she said.

"That's why it has to be the employer's responsibility to change things."

Poster for International Women's Day 2015

Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee / AllWomen GV

## International Women's Day

# LOCAL WOMEN INSPIRING CHANGE



**FREE EVENT**

**SUN 8 MARCH 2PM - 5PM**

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee and AllWomenGV are holding a FREE event to celebrate International Women's Day. Women and men are invited to join us for an inspiring afternoon of fun and networking, whilst enjoying a showcase of diverse produce from local women.

Photographs from the AllWomen GV (Word and Mouth) 'Stand up and Stand Out' photography competition for young women will also be on display.

Local Aboriginal community leader Robynne Nelson will emcee the event.

Produce/items will be available to purchase.

Light catering will be provided.

**Location:** African Community House, 54 Poplar Avenue Shepparton.

**Further information:** Phone Emma during business hours on (03) 5832 9479 or email [women@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:women@shepparton.vic.gov.au)

This is an accessible event. Please contact us with any special requirements.

**Tickets are available at:** [www.eventbrite.com.au](http://www.eventbrite.com.au)





This event is proudly supported by the Greater Shepparton City Council.



M15/23084

14



Scatter ad used in the Shepparton News for International Women's Day

The Shepparton News, 9 March 2015, page 5

**Budding photographers:** Charlotte Faaso, Ellie Burt, Ebony Halliwell and Pamela Gonzalez participated in a photography competition. Pictures: Julie Mercer

**Support:** Moorooopna CWA members Gwen Jenken, Barbara Carter, Judy Luscombe and Heather Drust.

**Inspirational:** Yorta Yorta leader Robynne Nelson.

**Big turnout:** More than 100 men and women attended.

**Fame:** Jean Young was photographed by her sister Erin Young.

## Achievements celebrated by both genders

**By Chloe Warburton**

A moment of silence for women across the world heralded the beginning of yesterday's celebration of International Women's Day. Organised by AllWomenGV and the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee, the day celebrated the achievements of women across the Goulburn Valley with the theme of "Local Women Inspiring Change". Charter Alliance member Fran Smullen said more than 100 women and men attended the function. "We've had really good support from both women and men in the crowd today," she said.

"The day is in recognition of achievements by women and the diversity of people — in Shepparton, we're able to celebrate that diversity." The charter stands for gender equality, diversity and women participating in the community.

The day was part of the Shepparton Festival and showcased diverse produce from local women, as well as featuring photographers from the AllWomenGV "Stand Up and Stand Out" photography competition. It featured several guest speakers, including Yorta Yorta leader and Healing Spirit owner Robynne Nelson and photographer Liz Arcus.

The Shepparton News, 13 April 2015, page 3

**IN BRIEF**

---

**Gender equity survey**

A survey on gender equity is now open for consultation, with the results to be used in forming a new action plan for the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee.

The committee is a community advisory committee of Greater Shepparton City Council and is part of a broader network of local government advisory committees across the state that are informed by the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter.

The committee is made up of volunteers who aim to increase women's participation in key decision-making forums in the community and in democratic governance, with three main principles — gender equity, diversity and active citizenship.

It will be the first of three surveys undertaken on the main principles and the survey will close on April 21.

● For more information on the advisory committee, email [women@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:women@shepparton.vic.gov.au) or phone Emma on 5832 9700.

*Shepparton News 13/4/2015  
Page 3*

Article from the Me magazine, Shepparton News 22 May 2015



**mentoring**  
WOMEN

Photography: Tishy Lynn

**A charter to support women**

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee brings together a group of women from business, industry and community sectors to take on leadership roles and promote the participation of women in decision-making forums, including business or workplace positions, community groups and boards of management.

The committee is guided by three principles: diversity, equality and opportunity. It aims to ensure that women's voices are heard and that they are successful in their endeavours. It also aims to provide support and resources to women who are facing challenges in their careers or businesses.

The women featured here, Margo Koskelainen (middle) and Betul Tuna (right), are three members of the alliance who actively mentor and support women.

**Pat Moran, 75, support volunteer**

My family background revolved around respect. I was taught to respect myself, respect other people and we were taught to respect it in return.

In 1979, when I joined the Department of Social Welfare as a family support worker, my outlook broadened considerably when I learnt that wasn't the case for many people.

I feel privileged to have walked alongside those parents I have worked with, encouraging them to respect themselves and respect them in their role in bringing up their children. Even today some of those people pull me up in their studies, in their careers, my involvement in their lives has had a lasting influence.

I have a real passion for family no matter how it's made up. It is to be a mentor to other women and have encouraged, for some time, women to stand for council. I'm involved in the Women's Participation in Local Government Association and work with them to assist women, and give them the confidence to work at the coal face.

I have encouraged and inspired women to take on leadership roles. You get back as much out of mentoring as you give out.

Shepparton, I am proud of its helping women discover strengths they didn't realise they had.

**Margo Koskelainen, 72, international softball umpire administrator**

Internationally, softball umpiring is a very male-dominated sport and I have been the only female umpire in the world for many years. As the Australian Softball Federation's national director of umpiring, 40 per cent of our umpires were women, the rest had to be men. Canada has the fewest female umpires.

Opportunities to mentor people come along all the time. I have travelled all over the world and I've found that Australian women are so much more giving of their time to other women than in other countries.

My mentoring involves watching the women umpire, taking notes and then talking to them at the end of the game. I teach the umpires about the rules, but I also teach them about the importance of these umpires. But these skills don't just apply to softball, they are life skills.

This feedback I get from people I mentor is mostly gratitude for the skills they develop and the understanding they gain that they can do almost anything.

At the Sydney 2000 Olympics we had one Australian umpiring female and I, Betty Jo, was the only woman to be selected to umpire. During the games I was the only woman out of mentoring.

**Betul Tuna, 30, youth leader**

Some time ago I realised there were many young women in my community who had finished Year 12 and weren't really doing anything. I saw unemployment as a generational thing in some sectors of the La Trobe community and I felt I needed to do something to break that cycle.

I started to get together with my Australian Year 12 youth group around the year 2000. We had a lot of discussions about how they could improve their self-esteem, personal development and helping them to gain employment. They have some decisions and now see that there are so many choices for them.

The past few years have been difficult for me so having these girls has occupied my time and also helped me. I'm a single mother with three children and I went back to school after 12 years. I can be so proud of them.

I am about to finish my Diploma of Community Services at TAFE and then I'm planning to study a Bachelor of Arts majoring in sociology at La Trobe University. My aim is to be a social worker and I can't solve all the unemployment problems but I can help that one girl who is in front of me.

Poster for 'The Good Lie' movie event for Refugee Week

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee presents a

# FREE screening of 'The Good Lie'

Date: Wednesday 17 June 2015  
 Start time 5.30pm  
 Location: Village Cinema, Stewart Street Shepparton

*They were known simply as 'The Lost Boys.' Orphaned by the brutal Civil war in Sudan that began in 1983, these young victims travelled as many as a thousand miles on foot in search of safety. Fifteen years later, a humanitarian effort would bring 3600 lost boys and girls to America.*

*In 'The Good Lie,' Philippe Falardeau brings the story of their survival and triumph to life. Academy Award® winner Reese Witherspoon stars alongside Sudanese actors Arnold Oceng, Ger Duany, Emmanuel Jal, and newcomer Nyakuoth Weil, many of whom were also children of war*



Before the screening Thon Thon, a local man who was also a 'Lost Boy' from Sudan will share his story.  
 A taste of Sudanese food will be provided.

Bookings are essential and places are limited.  
 Tickets available at [www.eventbrite.com.au](http://www.eventbrite.com.au)

This is an accessible event. Please contact the organisers to let them know of any requirements.

Further Information: Ph: 5832 9479 Email: [women@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:women@shepparton.vic.gov.au)





ETHNIC COUNCIL OF SHEPPARTON AND DISTRICT Inc.  
(Reg No. 4422)



Refugee Week



SHEPPARTON INTERFAITH NETWORK

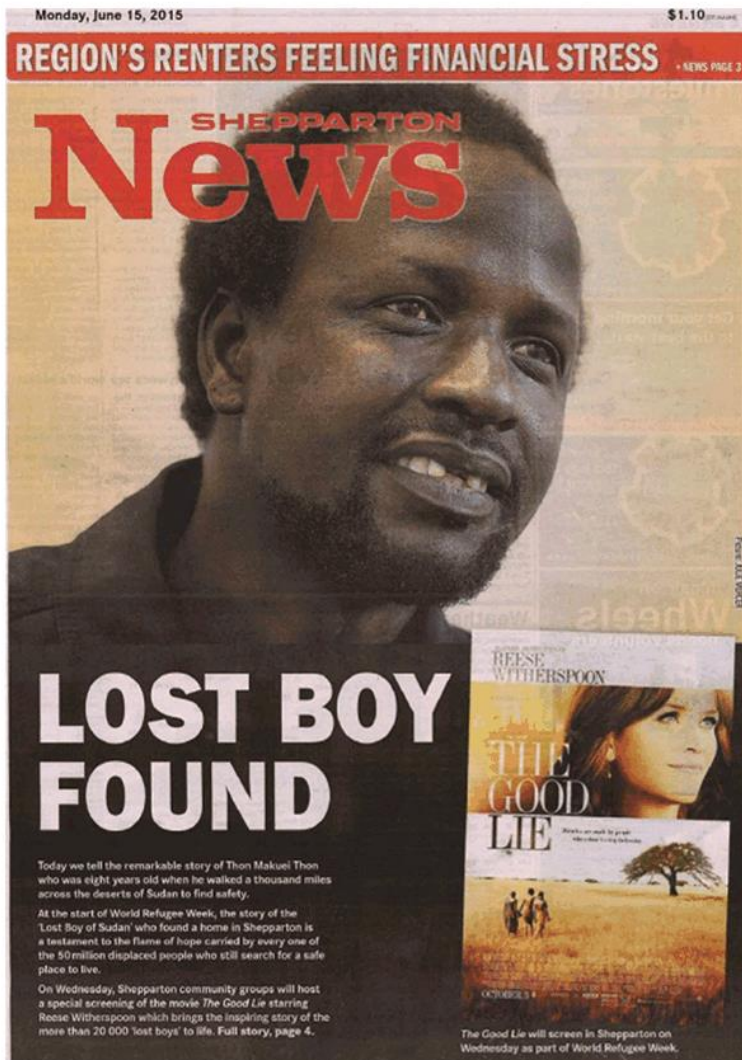


WOMENS CHARTER  
WOMENS CHARTER OF SHEPPARTON AND DISTRICT INC.

M15/23084

18

The Shepparton News, 15 June 2015, pages 1 and 4



M15/23084

19

4 SNNEWS

SHEPPARTON NEWS, MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2015

# Thon shares stunning story

REFUGEE TELLS HIS INCREDIBLE TALE OF SURVIVAL AS ONE OF 'THE LOST BOYS' IN WAR-TORN SUDAN

By John Lewis

**The war arrived at Thon Makuel Thon's town early in the morning as he was on his way to collect bread for his family's breakfast.**

The civil war between the northern Sudan government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army had been raging for two decades when Thon was born.

He doesn't know exactly how old he was when death came to town. He was born either in 1975 as his official documents state, or in 1977 as his uncle said.

So Thon was either eight or six years old when government forces attacked the southern Sudanese town of Bor about 5 am when Thon was sent by his mother to the bakery before school.

"There were troops and army cars driving around shooting randomly," he said.

He dashed through the back streets to alert his mother and sister while the fighting raged around him.

"By 11 am everything was done. They killed everything. People were running out of the city, army tanks were smashing buildings down," he said.

Thon ran with his mother and sister to his birthplace — the village of Maar, where his father lived tending the family's cattle.

There they stayed for the next year, waiting anxiously for signs of renewed fighting.

When fighting again erupted outside Maar in 1984, Thon was out of the village tending the family's cattle as thousands of young boys of his age were doing.

"About 10 am the army came and started shooting, so we ran towards the village. There was a lot of gun noise and a lot of smoke," he said.

When Thon reached the outskirts of Maar, he and hundreds of other boys were turned back by SPLA troops.

They were marched into an army barracks and told to go to Ethiopia.

"A lot of people asked, 'Where is Ethiopia?' They just pointed and said, 'You go from here to there,'" he said.

The boys were aged from five to about 14 years old — the age at which they could be drafted into either of the fighting armies as soldiers.

Thon and his fellow cattle herders were given water and beans and told to always keep the sun on their left side and keep walking.

And so began Thon's journey of a thousand miles and 21 years to find a place of safety.

## The long walk

The lines of boys stretched for tens of kilometres



Human spirit triumphs: Today, Thon Makuel Thon lives in Shepparton with his wife Nancy and three children.

Picture: Julia Marcar

through the desert, eventually numbering more than 20,000.

"When the sun set we slept. Then when the sun woke up — someone had to see where the sun was and blow the whistle — then we move," Thon said.

He quickly learned that to stay alive he had to walk in the centre of the middle line.

The side lines were for stragglers and the sick who were picked off by animals.

"If you fell asleep, you walked in the middle line — you continued with the people.

If you fell backwards, someone would push you forward," he said.

"A lot of people were taken by lions and hyenas. If you were the last person in the line and fell asleep they would pick you off," he said.

Thon is unsure exactly how long the walk lasted — he thinks about 10 or 12 weeks.

He remembers it rained only once, when the strongest boys ran to find water pools.

"The first group at the pool — they finished all the water. The second group had to suck the mud to get their body temperature down," he said.

"The youngest was only five years old — it was really very sad," he said.

Thon remembers one five-year-old who became his inspiration.

"He never gave up. Always you see him smiling. He was



Immortalised in film: The movie *The Good Lie* will be shown in a special booked-out screening at Shepparton Village Cinemas on Wednesday to mark Refugee Week.

so small, every time I felt like sitting down and saying I can't go on — he would come running past. This was the person who was really giving me the power," he said.

Thon said a lot of boys gave up from hunger and pain.

"Some boys would give up their things and say 'take my water' and they went out from the line into the outside," he said.

Thon worked in hospitals fetching water, cooking and dressing wounds — a skill he would later use to become a professional nurse.

The boys' respite lasted until 1991 when Ethiopia's Mengistu government fell and the new regime chased the Sudanese refugees back over the border.

Thon said Ethiopian soldiers arrived at Panyidu at

## Ethiopia

Eventually the wandering thousands reached the Gulo River bordering southwestern Ethiopia where they

set up camp at Panyidu.

For the next six years Thon lived on the border, stealing food, building shelters and eventually being supported by the Red Cross and United Nations with medical aid and food. But people were still dying.

Thon worked in hospitals fetching water, cooking and dressing wounds — a skill he would later use to become a professional nurse.

The boys' respite lasted until 1991 when Ethiopia's Mengistu government fell and the new regime chased the Sudanese refugees back over the border.

Thon said Ethiopian soldiers arrived at Panyidu at

8 am and by 6 pm began shooting refugees through-out the camp.

They ran several kilometres to a shallow spot on the Gulo River where they could cross into Sudan.

It was here that Thon remembers the most traumatic experience of his journey as boys were shot by Ethiopian troops as they tried to swim to safety.

Some drowned, others were left for the crocodiles.

Miraculously, Thon survived by hiding under the branches of a large overhanging tree on the opposite side and waiting for dark to climb up the river's bank.

"When I jumped in the

water the river was all red with blood. And there was bullets — just like that." Thon made a skittering movement with his fingers.

Those that survived the crossing faced another grueling march through the Sudanese desert living on leaves and grass and dead animals, until months later when they crossed the border into northern Kenya.

For the next 15 years Thon lived in the huge refugee camp of Kakuma where he and his wardens were dubbed "The Lost Boys" by an American who aired their story in 2001.

It was at Kakuma too that Thon met his wife Nancy, a nurse. In 2005 they were granted a visa to come to Australia with their young son, Dend.

After working as a nurse at Tazcoola, Thon today is a community development officer at Shepparton District Ethnic Council.

He was reunited with his mother and sister in 2006 in Melbourne.

Thon said his journey taught him to always try to be positive and face the world with strength.

"Whatever happens in the day, don't go to bed with it. Try to get a positive message — and you will sleep well."

"Every day I woke up and said, 'It is not my day to die. There is a day I will go but not today.' That was the first message I said to myself — 'Not today, Thon.'"