

President's Report April 2019

The election has been called so I expect that means we will be busy over the next few weeks working out what to consider when we place our vote on May 18th.

The Chamber has both the major party candidates organised to present their viewpoints to us in the next few weeks. In fact, we have the Liberal candidate Gavin Pearce organised to speak to us tomorrow at our breakfast session at Wellers Inn. His presentation is titled *A stronger economy: a secure future*. The breakfast starts around 7:15 for 7:30 sit down and includes both continental breakfast items and a hot dish. It costs just \$20 for member and \$25 for guests and everyone is welcome to attend. Why not try to bring a guest along?

Gavin is a local farmer from a long line of farmers in the Sisters Creek area (going back to the 1850s) and is Vice Chair of the Yolla Co-op. He is a former Warrant Officer in the army, President of the Wynyard RSL Club and on the Board of the State RSL. He is a very passionate coaster so we are looking forward to hearing what he and the Liberal party can bring to the Braddon electorate – especially from a small business perspective.

We had some good news on Sunday regarding a \$58 million commitment made in the recent federal budget. The Treasurer; Josh Frydenberg proposed the establishment of ten regional training hubs around the nation and one of them will be located in Burnie. This hub will deliver specific training opportunities for our next generation specifically targeted at growth sectors such as renewable energy, mining, forestry and advanced manufacturing.

I'm sure there will be many announcements over the next few weeks but we are specifically proud of this one; as we raised it in the Advocate the morning after the budget; Senators Colbeck and Duniam plus Gavin picked it up, run with it and delivered it in under two weeks. The Cradle Coast Authority and Chambers from Devonport and Central Coast banded together with us to really push this one and I think the entire region will be better off for the establishment of such a hub.

We haven't seen a lot of detail yet but there are scholarships valued at up to \$17,500 available to people 15-25 in the hub regions for Cert III to Advanced Diploma level. The hub is expected to strengthen partnerships between local schools, employers and industries and I hope for the local Chambers to get involved so we can maximise the investment the government will make.

We have many jobs becoming available in the next few years as our aging workforce will see thousands of retirements, plus projects such as the wind farms, pumped hydro, the timber mill and mining start-ups means we have lots of new jobs coming online. We want our local youth to have sufficient training to be able to step into these roles, so I hope that both sides of politics can approach this in a bipartisan manner to help the region.

The Chamber is also working with Burnie Council and the federal government on training programs for elder unemployed persons and we will have more details on that in coming weeks. We are in

the final throes of tendering for a grant from Regional Development Australia to provide employability training and expect to submit it by the end of April.

On May 1st we have another breakfast session featuring the sitting Federal member Justine Key of the Labor Party speaking on *Labor's Plan to grow the North West Economy*. It will be good to have both sides of the political spectrum presented to us.

At the recent Chamber Alliance meeting BCCI raised a motion to be presented at the TCCI Board meeting - we proposed that the Chamber Alliance have a representative of the Alliance on the TCCI board to better represent the smaller regional Chambers. The motion was not successful but I attended dinner with the TCCI Board last week and the Chair, Susan Parr explained to me that they "had received the message" so we can expect closer relationships with Board members moving forward.

Work continues on *Project Hercules* with another subject filmed early this month plus general background filming performed last week. Michael Cannon has been busy storyboarding the various videographies and we are on target for a June completion.

Unfortunately, I cannot attend this month's meeting as I am in Melbourne with family celebrating my daughter's 21st birthday - I am sure that Justin and the remainder of the Chamber Executive will serve you well.

My best wishes for you and your family over the Easter period.

Ian Jones

President

April 15, 2019

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