

Pop drop will cost

BEN PIKE

THE Senate's defeat of the alcopops tax could put the Macarthur region's young adults at risk of excessive drinking and future alcohol problems, drug and alcohol expert James Pitts said.

The chief executive officer of the Eagle Vale drug and alcohol rehabilitation service, Odyssey House, said young people were most at risk from the falling price of the drinks.

The cost of alcopops is set to drop from about \$5 a can to about \$2 after the tax's defeat. Mr Pitts said cheaper drinks like Smirnoff Black and Bacardi Breezers - which the Federal Government says target young people - would have a significant impact on the age group.

ALCOPOPS TAX GOES BUST

WHAT: A tax on ready-to-drink sweetened spirits such as Bacardi Breezers and Vodka Cruisers began in April 2008. Prices went from about \$2 to \$5 a drink.

WHY: The Federal Government targeted alcopops in help curb teenage binge drinking.

END: The Senate voted down the move in Federal Parliament on Wednesday. Prices will go back to previous levels.



Residents Steve and Tim are pouring lots of tender loving care on the veggie patch to grow a giant pumpkin.

Poo is their growing secret

ODYSSEY House is well on track to claim the top honour in the Cumberland-Courier Great Backyard Pumpkin Challenge. The drug, alcohol and gambling addiction rehabilitation organisation set its sights on growing the biggest pumpkin ever when the competition was launched last year. Odyssey House senior marketing co-ordinator Sandy Schofield said all pumpkin plants were doing well thanks to the centre's secret weapon. "There were 19 seeds that were split between Eagle Vale and Minto and they are all doing very well with the secret fertilizer," she said. Last year, Odyssey House administrator Steph Leau said secret mixture obtained by a resident who came from a long line of farmers would give the pumpkin patch a boost. "And it appears to have worked. The pumpkin seeds have turned into strapping young plants, ready to flower, in just a couple of months. It's not just about growing the biggest pumpkin here, it's about a healthy lifestyle choice as well," Ms Schofield said. Entrants' produce will be judged in a special competition at the 2009 Royal Easter Show. Categories will include biggest pumpkin, smallest pumpkin and most unusual shape.

idents of alcohol-related violence where there is licensed premises," Det Insp Parkin said. "Crimes involving alcohol are so spread over a wide age bracket." In Camden alcohol-related assaults on licensed premises were about half the state average, based on figures released recently by the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing. The figures also showed most alcohol-related assaults occurred in Camden, Eiderslie and Narellan Vale.

just think

WHAT: The Macarthur Chronicle is running an intensive Just Think campaign in an effort to discourage young people from binge drinking. WHY: The campaign is aimed at making our community a safer place.

MacArthur Chronicle, Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Inspire Big achievers sign up for our campaign

THE Macarthur Chronicle Inspire campaign continues to attract inspiring Australian achievers to speak to the area's youth.

Wayside Chapel chief executive Graham Long will speak at Wollondilly Anglican College on Tuesday, May 5.

Odyssey House chief executive James Pitts will address Picton High School students on May 13. The ABC's 7.30 Report presenter Kerry O'Brien will visit John Therry Catholic High School at Rosemeadow on May 20.

Odyssey Recognition Support that Odyssey House has recently received from the following donors is greatly appreciated.

- The Crivelli Family Foundation
- Mr Alan Farrell
- Mr Gary Gerstle
- Mr Andrew Gray
- Mr Maurice Green
- Mr Chris Grubb
- Mr Michael Hawker
- Mr Stewart Hindmarsh
- Ms Sally Loane
- Ms Susie Lobb
- Mr Richard Longes
- Mallesons Stephens Jaques
- Mr Paul McCullagh
- Mr Tony McInerney
- Mr James Millar
- Mr Gregory Minton
- Mr David Mortimer
- The Murphy Foundation
- Mr Daniel Musson
- Mr Jules Nickson Pole
- Mr Marcus O'Connor
- Ms Audrey Page
- Mr Luke Parker
- Hon Peter Philips A.M.
- Piobaireachd Pty Ltd
- Mr Ian Plater
- Mr Justin Punch
- Mr Robert Rich
- Mr Matt Williams

ODYSSEY HOUSE



'A Calm in the Sea of Addiction'

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www.odysseyhouse.org.au



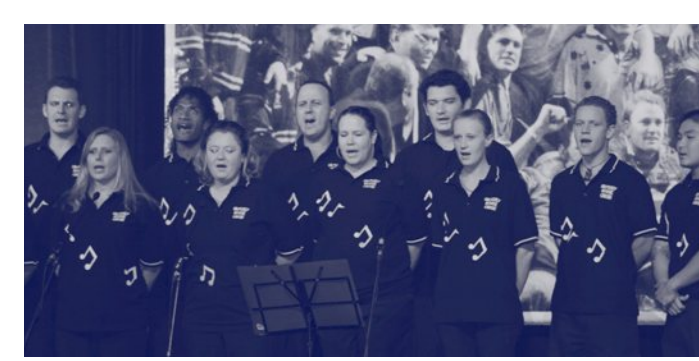
Sally Loane and Odyssey House resident Jaala

RUGBY DINNER

The Odyssey House Rugby Dinner was yet again another fantastic evening and a low key event on this year's social calendar hosted by long time Odyssey supporter Sally Loane.

The 300 guests were joined by members of the 1999 Wallabies Rugby World Cup team at the Four Seasons Hotel to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of their win. Players included David Giffin, Andrew Blades, Rod Kafer, Jason Little, Matt Bourke, Richard Harry and winning coach Rod Macqueen.

Opera group sensation ARYA, made up of six of Australia's most talented up and coming young opera singers entertained guests with a dynamic and heart warming performance which included their rendition of the Rugby theme song 'World in Union'.



Odyssey House Choir

during those crucial moments of the series.

We wish to thank all in attendance on the evening who contributed to the phenomenal fundraising total of over \$100,000 on the night.

We Thank You!

Art Union Wrap Up

The Odyssey House 30th Anniversary Art Union was drawn on Monday 4 May. The lucky recipient of the major prize 'A trip for two to San Francisco flying business class with Qantas, including five nights accommodation at the Ritz Carlton' was Mr R Rich. He was very pleased and surprised of his fortunate win.

We thank all of those people who purchased tickets which helped to raise over \$20,000 for Odyssey House.

YES! I would like to help Odyssey House assist residents to live a drug free life.

Please find enclosed my donation of: (please circle) \$50.00 \$100.00 \$500.00 or \$_____

Enclosed is my cheque / money order made payable to the Odyssey House McGrath Foundation or charge my credit card.

Visa Mastercard Amex Diners Club

Card number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on card: _____ Title: (Dr/ Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/ Miss): _____

Signature: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Facsimile: _____

I would like to pledge \$_____ per month to be deducted from my Credit Card until revoked in writing by me or Odyssey House.

DONATIONS OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

For more information on Odyssey House, visit www.odysseyhouse.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9820 9999 ~ Facsimile: (02) 9820 1796

Please return this coupon and your donation to:
Odyssey House McGrath Foundation, PO Box 459, Campbelltown, NSW, 2560.

A message from the Chairman



Cathy Doyle

Thank you to the attendees and donors at our recent fundraising event the Annual Rugby Dinner held March 20 at the Four Seasons Hotel.

In difficult economic times we managed to raise over \$100,000 on the night due to the generosity of Odyssey guests and friends - thank you indeed! This is a wonderful effort and the monies will be used to continue to provide the services, facilities and resources to ensure the continued effectiveness of the Odyssey programs.

It was such a fantastic event - for those of you who weren't able to attend there were great rugby memories shared as we remembered the incredible 1999 World Cup effort - amongst a lot of humour! We had ARYA perform, along with our own Odyssey Choir, and a graduate of the Odyssey Parent's and Children's program demonstrated to us all why Odyssey needs to exist and how it helps people gain confidence in themselves as they beat their demons. All of this amongst great food, wine and company.... My personal thanks to the amazing organising committee of the event - it was a wonderful team effort - and I really appreciate you all.

The Board held its April Board meeting at the facility in Eagle Vale where we heard directly about another great program at Odyssey - the Young Adults program. We all know how hard it is to make the transition into adulthood and learn life skills. For those battling addiction who have no support and direction it is a very difficult time. This program provides emotional support, tools and an exercise program targeted to the 18 yrs to 25 yrs age group. The participants who addressed the Board were very appreciative and inspired by the program - thank you to the Program Coordinator Justin and the staff at Odyssey for making this program what it is today!

Our CEO - James Pitts, and his team continue their great work - he can't do it without your donations and support. We have some functions coming up in the next few months including Real Men Cook lunch - please contact Odyssey Marketing for details.....every little bit of support helps.

May I wish you all a happy and safe next few months...look forward to catching up in the next newsletter.

Cathy Doyle
Chairman



Justin and YAG's group members Joseph and Ashley

Young Adults Group

The Odyssey House 'Young Adults Group' (YAG's) is a group of young people aged 18-25 who are currently undergoing rehabilitation.

The group is specifically designed to cater for the younger people in our residential program to encourage young adults to actively participate in social events and learn to interact positively without the use of drugs or alcohol.

There are a number of important aspects of the YAG's group such as learning to have fun and build positive relationships through interacting with people in the same age group.

New staff member Justin Famularo is the Youth Recreation Counsellor establishing the important foundations of the

YAG's group.

"My main objective is to support the young adults in their journey to recovery, and to build strong foundations of knowledge and promote positive alternatives to drug use" said Justin.

"Many young people turn to drugs as an outlet or to have 'supposed' fun. Through positive peer interaction, social and sporting activities, I simply wish to show members of the group, alternatives to having fun and living a healthier lifestyle" Justin continued to say.

Almost half of the clients entering Odyssey House are young people aged 18 - 25. It is an important part of their treatment process to learn how to 'socialise' in the community, a skill that is often taken for granted.

Justin said "Hopefully this group will assist the youth of the program to form life long relationships with their peers".

As the needs of our residents grow, so do the needs of Odyssey House. We were fortunate to receive funding from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation which subsidises Justin's salary. However, the YAG's program needs the help of the community to develop the right tools and equipment to really assist the youth in the program.

If you would like to become a sponsor of the 'YAG's' program or able to assist in any other way, such as sporting and camping equipment please contact us now - you can make a difference!

A WONDERFUL RESULT

The final stage of the Amphetamine Type Substances Project in consultation with ATCA members in Australia and New Zealand has been completed. The project focuses on the treatment protocol for people dependent on amphetamine type substances with particular focus on

the initial phase of treatment.

The findings of this project have been accepted to be presented at the European Federation of Therapeutic Communities conference in June of this year by ATCA Board members Lynne Magor-Blatch and

Odyssey House CEO, James A Pitts.

"We are very excited to be able to make this contribution to those residents of therapeutic communities who are dependent on Amphetamine Types Substance" James said.

A Road to RECOVERY

To demonstrate the real work of Odyssey House, this column features an Odyssey House resident's story.

Joseph came to Australia from China with his parents at age five. He grew up in a traditional and average Australian family with supportive parents, and at age ten he was fortunate to have a new baby brother added to his family.

An above average student at school, Joseph excelled in most of his subjects with aspirations at the time of becoming a lawyer - this was not meant to be.

Growing up as a teenager in Cabramatta Joseph was faced with many negative influences from his surrounding 'friends', at the time these people were selling and using drugs - mainly heroin.

By the time Joseph was 14 he decided to smoke heroin to see what it was like. Eventually the addiction and cravings grew until he was out of control.

"I started hanging around the wrong people, mainly gangs. By the time I was 16, I was in juvenile detention and then jail for various criminal offences and selling of drugs to support my habit" said Joseph.

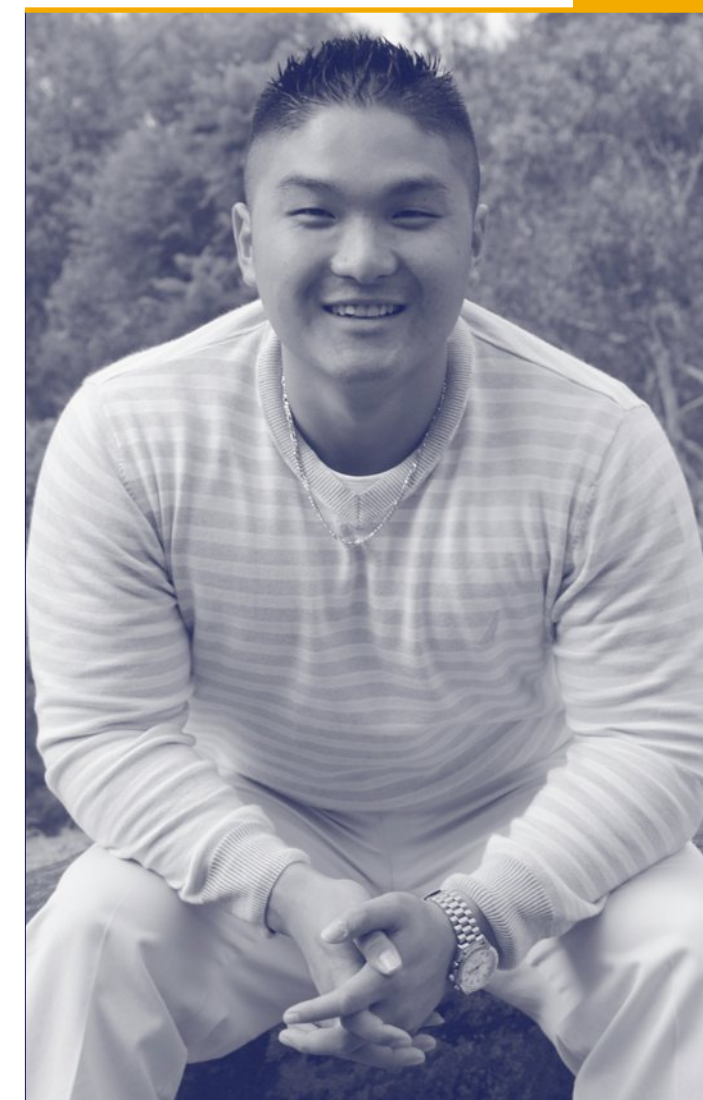
When Joseph was 22 and on parole, he failed two 'clean drug' tests and was given the option to enter Odyssey House for a minimum of three months to get him self clean.

Joseph decided the best option he had was Odyssey House.

"It was scary at first, every day for the first two weeks, I just wanted to leave" said Joseph.

Joseph then realised that the people at Odyssey House had a genuine interest and investment in him to recover, this is what made him stay. "Odyssey has helped me change my views, my values and challenge everything I thought I was" said Joseph.

Joseph now considers his eyes to be wide open, and he realises that he has many opportunities available to him, and the life he can choose to live.



Joseph is now in the final stage of the program, he has built a good strong relationship with his family and is now a role model for his younger brother.

Now enrolled in Human Resources at the University of Western Sydney, Joseph hopes to complete his degree and work in the industry. Joseph also has a renewed respect for health and well being,

and would also like to work in personal training - to help others to achieve their goals.

"If there is one message I would say to other young teenagers like my brother, it would be that life is meaningless without the struggles we need to overcome. We have opportunities and choices - it's just about making the right one" said Joseph.

Diary Dates

For further information on any of these events, please contact marketing on (02) 9820 9999 or email marketing@odysseyhouse.com.au

Milton Luger One Day Forum - 23 June
Real Men Cook - 24 August
Smash Tennis - 9 September
Goulburn To City Classic - 20 September
Odyssey House Open Day - 25 October
Australian Fund Manager Awards - 29 October

A message from the Chief Executive Officer



James A. Pitts

Some 2500 years ago the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus opined that the only constant was change! That same concept is very much in vogue today at Odyssey House as we embark upon a number of projects to improve our infrastructure while enhancing the amenity of the environment.

We have been fortunate to receive much needed funding through the Federal Government's "Building Education Revolution National Schools Pride program". Our educational unit, the Progressive Learning Centre will be the beneficiary of \$75,000 earmarked to replace older equipment and to establish a new Outdoor Learning Centre at our Assessment and Referral Centre.

At the Assessment and Referral Centre renovation work began the first week in May. The project to renovate the kitchen and dormitory areas has taken 2 years to come to fruition! This was due mainly to the heritage status of the site which is known as Robin Hood Farm. It was one of the first land grants awarded to the area in 1838! The renovations will afford new electrical systems to the dormitory area and an upgrade of the heating/cooling system. The kitchen and dining room will receive a re-fit of all new appliances, repairs to the floor and ceiling areas and new furnishings. We are thankful for the support of the Federal Attorney-General's funding through the "Proceeds of Crime Act" as well as that of the Thyne Reid Trust, which made the renovations possible.

In other news our Amphetamine Type Substances (ATS Project), "A Treatment Protocol for People Dependent Upon Amphetamine Type Substances" has been completed. The Treatment Protocol was trialled at 2 therapeutic communities, Mirikai, Tweed Heads, New South Wales and Cyrenian House, Perth, Western Australia, in the month of May with good results. The Treatment Protocol will be presented at the European Therapeutic Communities Conference, June 2-5, 2009 at The Hague, Netherlands. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Commonwealth's Department of Health and Ageing (DOHA) through their Amphetamine Type Substances Program for the funding for this project.

We look forward to the continuing changes at Odyssey House. They will afford all who utilise our services first class facilities.

James A Pitts, MA
Chief Executive Officer