

The following are news stories from the front page and page 2 of the Wednesday December 6th 2023 edition of The Leader, our local Barossa Valley newspaper.

Mr Darren Robinson, Director of Advertising Sales and Marketing at The Leader, has approved the stories for Rotary use, with the standard by-line "Courtesy of The Leader newspaper".

Additionally, for your interest:

The Leader has afforded great support to the Rotary Club of Barossa Valley - Rotary Says No To Domestic Violence program through this article, and the editorial in the same edition are below.

A subsequent thank you sent to The Leader was published in the Letters to the Editor on Wednesday December 20th 2023 and I have attached a copy as it appeared in The Leader.

The Leader

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the barossa *mag* SUMMER EDITION INSIDE

Locals' emotional plea: Say no to DV



Rotary Club of Barossa Valley says no to domestic violence: Steve Ahrens, Bev Stephenson, Bill Simons, Sandie Simons, Phil Graetz, Sue Graetz, Mark Graetz and Robert Brookes.



By Mel Jaunay

When a close family member of Sandie Simons' told her she 'walked into a door,' Sandie knew, deep down, it wasn't the truth. Although Sandie was only young herself

at the time, she could tell straight away something wasn't right within the marriage of her young pregnant relative.

"There were instances where she had injuries that she put down to walking into a door, bruises, it was an awful situation, and she certainly didn't deserve any of that," Sandie recalled.

"There was no support whatsoever, and no

understanding that you didn't have to put up with that. It was 'you've made your bed, you lie in it.'"

While understanding and attitudes towards domestic violence and coercive control have changed drastically over the years, with the trope of 'suffer in silence' long gone, the sad fact is, violence keeps happening.

On the back of a horror month in South Australia, with four women killed allegedly in the space of just one week, and another alleged stabbing of a wife by her husband last weekend, DV campaigners are rightly mobilising in force.

Continued on page 2

Rotary says no to domestic violence

Continued from front page

Following a statewide walk from Victoria Square to the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden on November 24, the 'Rotary Says No To Domestic Violence' campaign also featured at the Barossa Christmas Parade on Friday night, with local Rotarians using it as a timely vehicle to raise awareness and distribute resource packs to onlookers.

"As the president of the Rotary Club of Barossa Valley, I am very passionate about doing what we can to minimise domestic violence," said Sandie, the memory of what happened to her relative still front of mind.

"So many people have some sort of experience of it, whether it's something they have lived themselves or whether they know someone who has, so I think it's really important that we put mechanisms in place to support those people, and hopefully other mechanisms that will actually minimise the risk, that will educate people."

Sandie said the group's participation in the Christmas Parade on Friday evening was surprisingly emotional.



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"People were very positive in their response, we got lots of claps and cheers and call outs, 'good on you, well done', from all ages," she said.

South Australia's peak body for women's safety services, Embolden, has called on Premier Peter Malinauskas to launch a Royal Commission into domestic, family and sexual violence in SA in the wake of the most recent tragedies.

"We need to gain a better understanding of the barriers and gaps in services and systems that are failing to protect women," it stated. "One death because of family and domestic violence is one death too many."

State Opposition leader, David Speirs has supported the call, revealing the latest SAPOL statistics show family and domestic abuse-related offences have soared by 18 per cent over the past two years, the equivalent of five extra offences per day.

Meanwhile, South Australian Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Katrine Hildyard and Federal Minister for Social Services, Amanda Rishworth were in Noarlunga on Friday, launching a new Southern Domestic Violence Prevention and Recovery Hub.

Closer to home, Rotary Club of Barossa Valley hopes to continue its campaign into the new year, not just by raising awareness, but by stocking local businesses and institutions with resource materials for both victims and perpetrators, and seeking other practical ways to engage with the problem.

"We're also keen to work with the secondary schools to maybe introduce some mentoring to do with respectful relationships," added Sandie.

"Young men need male role models who



Rotarians and supporters walk in the Barossa Christmas Parade on Friday evening.

will demonstrate healthy, positive and respectful behaviours in all aspects of their lives... And young women need to be educated to understand that respectful relationships are normal, and that any form of abuse is not acceptable."

Sandie acknowledges such interventions may have been a help for her relative all those years ago, a woman who sadly went on to live her entire life under the threat of violence.

"Things have improved because we're talking about it openly," added Sandie.

"It's absolutely vital that victims and perpetrators and the people who care about them recognise what is happening, so that help can be sought."

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse or family violence call DV Crisis line on 1800 800 098 or 1800 Respect.

Domestic violence

Dear editor,

The Members of the Rotary Club of Barossa Valley are most grateful for the extensive coverage granted to us in the Wednesday December 6, 2023 edition of *The Leader*.

We are very passionate about doing what we can to assist all people involved in domestic violence situations.

Our first step is to help our community

understand that domestic violence is a very real problem and has devastating consequences for everyone involved directly and indirectly, that it is not acceptable, and that every one of us must Say No To Domestic Violence.

The front page article and editorial comment in *The Leader* have greatly contributed to that first step towards achieving our goals, and we are extremely appreciative of your support.

Anyone who is experiencing, or knows someone who is experiencing, mental or physical abuse or family violence, is encouraged to call the Domestic Violence Crisis line on 1800 800 098 or 1800 RESPECT.

Sandie Simons
President
ROTARY CLUB OF BAROSSA
VALLEY

Our view

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023

Cause for alarm

It's hard for the younger generation to believe that it was once deemed appropriate for school children to be "disciplined" with the cane and that smoking in the workplace (inside, in air conditioning, with the windows shut) was commonplace.

Thankfully times have changed and society has moved forward.

Or have we?

Two highly disturbing issues have thrown a spotlight on often 'underground' problems in Australia in 2023.

The first is, "reports of a rise in antisemitic incidents and anti-immigration activities by neo-Nazi groups around Australia," which has prompted the state government to move to ban Nazi symbols and the Nazi salute.

In a statement from Attorney-General Kyam Maher MLC, the SA government is proposing fines of up to \$20,000 or a year in gaol for the display of the swastika or "performing a Nazi salute."

When this media release hit the inbox it prompted an incredulous second read.

The fact this abhorrent occurrence has raised its ugly head, at this time of world turmoil, should rightly send shivers down the spines of all Australians.

Also devastating this past week has been the domestic violence stories coming to light in South Australia and the alleged murders of women in our community by those they loved most.

Domestic violence is a crime that often relies on fear and oppression to survive and proliferate.

It's time it was brought into the spotlight and exposed.

Congratulations to the Rotary Club of Barossa Valley for the work its team, lead by Sandie Simons, is doing with the campaign, 'Rotary Says No to Domestic Violence.'

It's good to hear that Rotarians and supporters who walked with banners and placards at Friday evening's Barossa Christmas Parade were met with support by the community.

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse or family violence call DV Crisis line on 1800 800 098 or 1800 RESPECT.