

John Castrilli MLA



Representing the people of Bunbury

AN INSPIRATIONAL COMMUNITY

On behalf of our community, let me start this week's column by offering applause to those who actively partook in the State-wide groundswell of support for Telethon this year.

The \$9 million figure raised across WA was amazing but what made me most proud was the immense spirit of giving on show in the South West.

I am sure you will all agree that our own local Telethon ambassador Lachy Ross was an inspiration and we all have something to learn from this eight-year-old who was so brave and upbeat despite the battle he has had with leukaemia.

Yet another inspirational story to highlight is that of Bunbury's Kristian and Gemma Collins who raised more than \$23,000 for Telethon by organising the Row for Isla event.

The event was held in memory of their daughter who passed away in Princess Margaret Hospital in March this year, aged eight months.

The two-day event at the Back Beach centred on a team of rowers, including Kristian, who undertook a 200km journey.

Like the rest of our community, I am in awe of the courage and fortitude this couple has shown in the face of adversity.

Their efforts also complement a wide range of other ongoing fundraising initiatives throughout our community.

One such endeavour is South West Bike Week which started Monday and will culminate with a Family Bike Ride from the Bunbury Runners Club from 10am Sunday.

That event will raise money to send local people with cancer to the acclaimed Balya Wellness Retreat.

These efforts are nothing short of remarkable and it is times such as these that remind us how lucky we are to live in this community.

HEALTH SERVICES STRENGTHEN

I was pleased by last week's announcement that a local company, Global Diagnostics, had won the \$24 million contract to continue and expand its services at the South West Health Campus.

I believe this is one of many welcome signs that our local health system is strengthening to ensure that we have safer and more accessible hospital services to meet the needs of our growing region.

I have long had concerns about gaps in our health system but significant investment and progress has been made in the past two years to bridge these.

I am also pleased that the State Health Minister Kim Hames has worked collaboratively with the Federal Government towards delivering a Cancer Radiotherapy Unit, expansion of the Emergency Department and creation of a much-needed ICU.

At long last patients are being put first after many years of clashes between the State and Federal Governments of the past.

While on the topic of our health system, I would also like to remind local people that they can now access the newly-opened After Hours GP Clinic which is located near the entrance to Bunbury Regional Hospital.

The Clinic was established through a grant from the State Government and is a great service for people whose condition may not require immediate emergency treatment but needs the attention of a GP after hours.