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A Hand Up



Compassionate



Human Centered



Volunteer Based

### Regional Director | Phil Donnan

Hi all, Warmer weather is arriving and it is good to see the cold fading. Hope you are all enjoying the warm and spring in general.

**Festival Masses** – The Festival Mass for Armidale Central Council is being held on Sunday 24th September in Armidale with the commissioning of new Conference Presidents and gathering to hear Society leaders talks on faith and action and to discuss issues as a group. Dates for 2024 for all Regional Councils and Central Councils are currently being drafted.

**CAMS / IT rollout** – CAMS was fully implemented across NSW in June and members are steadily getting used to the software. Many conferences are opting to record interviews using the paper forms and then enter the data into online shortly afterwards. This is OK, but please ensure that there is minimal delay to data entry so that the CAMS data is current for all users. The CAMS team are committed to continuous improvement of the program, so members are encouraged to suggest improvements to the CAMS team at [cams.support@vinnies.org.au](mailto:cams.support@vinnies.org.au)

**EAPA (Energy Accounts Payment Assistance)** – The Society has now signed the contract with the government and EAPA training is being scheduled for October. Conferences that nominated to provide EAPA will be contacted to gather participant details shortly. Conferences will have the opportunity to opt in at a later time and do the training then.

**Employees** – there has been a number of staff changes recently. In Armidale **Ahmed Adeniji** finished at the end of July after moving to Toowoomba. **Matt Knights** is leaving for Port Hedland Western Australia to take up a role as an Assistant Chaplain to the Seafarers – a mission role that he is well suited for. Interviews for both positions have been completed, with Ahmed’s replacement just being determined. We are pleased to announce that **Joy Howe** has accepted the role to replace Matt. Many of you will know Joy as she worked for the Society for seven years before finishing in 2016. We are thrilled to have her back and are sure she will get up to speed very quickly after starting in late October.

In Bathurst **Denise Martin** and **Gail Gilbert** are reducing hours and have agreed to job share in the Operations Support Officer role. From Monday 25th September Denise will work Monday and Tuesday and Gail will work Wednesday to Friday. Interviews for Denise’s replacement occurred in August and we are pleased to announce that **Gabrielle (Gab) McDonell** (pic) commenced on



Monday 18th September. Gab comes with a wealth of experience in community services and aged care and will be

wonderful assistance to Conferences and Members.

Financial Year to Date – July 2023					
Council	Number Members	Number Interactions	Number Primary Clients	Value of Assistance	Appeals Income
<b>North West Region Total</b>	<b>346 (-4)</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>\$81,884</b>	<b>\$7,718</b>
<b>Armidale Total</b>	<b>185 (-4)</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>\$33,207</b>	<b>\$1,793</b>
North Eastern Regional	36 (-4)	99	85	\$11,660	\$1,728
Armidale Regional	62 (+1)	50	44	\$8,631	\$60
Namoi Barwon Regional	40 (-2)	57	49	\$7,566	\$5
Tamworth Regional	47 (+1)	35	31	\$5,350	\$0
<b>Bathurst Total</b>	<b>161 (0)</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>\$48,677</b>	<b>\$5,925</b>
Castlereagh Regional	45 (0)	31	30	\$3,201	-\$2,292*
Cudgong Regional	28 (0)	60	50	\$7,575	\$783
Orange Regional	43 (-2)	189	172	\$23,399	\$4,082
Evans Regional	45 (+2)	165	143	\$14,502	\$3,352

\* \$3,000 rolled into Community Sleepout event from June 2023 deposit

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## Armidale Central Council President | John Adams

Phil Donnan chaired our NAIDOC Week celebration with approx. 150 participants joining online.

The annual sleepout was held in both Armidale and Tamworth on Friday 25 August. I'd recommend the next Vinnies Sleepout in 2024 as it's a unique and rewarding experience, and of course a great fundraiser.

Armidale city conferences and shops have been chosen as test sites for the new Vinnies gift cards. These cards will replace the current paper orders for goods from the shops.

Child Safe Familiarisation Training is continuing across the region, we now have three excellent and accredited trainers in the Northwest - Cassie Croft, Kerry Steller and Denise Martin.

We are looking at new locations in some areas within the region and further information will be forthcoming soon.

The vehicle from Moree has been moved to replace the old unit currently at Glen Innes. Some shops are finding it hard to recruit new volunteers. A recent recruitment drive in Guyra resulted in a positive outcome.

There have been some staff changes recently in the Armidale office with Ahmed moving to Qld in late June and Matt heading off to WA at the end of September. Matt's position has now been filled and Ahmed's position should be filled shortly.

As this will be Matt's last newsletter, I would like to say thank you for all his amazing work and my prayer is that his future life will be rewarding and fulfilling. God bless you all, John.

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## Bathurst Central Council Acting President | Pat Yeo

The Winter Appeal across the BCC has been another good result with many Conferences giving it their support.



Don Martin (centre) presents a cheque for \$2,000 on behalf of Rotary to support the Vinnies Van Service in Orange. Operations Support Officer, Gail Gilbert (right) and Vinnies Van Coordinator Keith Dowling (left) were happy to receive the very generous donation for the Orange Community Sleepout.

The Sleep-outs across four sites in the Central Council are building well and things look more promising for 2024.

Mudgee Conference is expanding its welfare coverage to include outreach to Gulgong and Dunedoo clients. Cudgong Regional President Brian McCarney is confident these arrangements will work OK.

Orange Regional President, Christine Worley, spoke highly of the support provided to victims of the Eugowra flood. The support of clients with \$200 cards per fortnight and pastoral care is a huge effort by our members. A real issue for our clients in Eugowra is the current lack of paying jobs as the town rebuilds.

The Regional Councils are all experiencing an increase in clients requesting assistance and many of these are new clients. It would appear the increased cost of living is the root cause of the changes.

CAMS continues to be a problem for many of our members across the Central Council. It would appear more training is required for many of our members. The duplicated entries after the download from the hand-up data base will be merged by the CAMS project team.

Our Regional Presidents are supporting the enthusiasm of our State President Paul Burton to rejuvenate our spirituality from the grassroots of Conference through to State Support and the Board; including all members, volunteers and employees. St Marys Catholic Health Care aged-care facility in Dubbo has closed and with the help of State Support, the former SVDP facility may become a facility similar to Freeman House in Armidale. God Bless, Pat.

I'd recommend the next Vinnies Sleepout in 2024 as it's a unique and rewarding experience



NSW State President Paul Burton among the sleepers at McCarthy Catholic College Tamworth

We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19