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Advertising Conditions

As of 1st July, 2014

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RUN OF PRESS and EARLY GENERAL NEWS DISPLAY ADVERTISING:

Closing time for copy 10 a.m. Monday, or by arrangement.

Please contact Lisa Prowd for details.

CLASSIFIED DISPLAY ADVERTISING:

Closing time for copy and payment 5p.m. Tuesday.

Rate: \$9.90 (inc. GST) per single column centimetre.

CLASSIFIED RUN-ON ADVERTISING:

Closing time for copy and payment 5 p.m. Tuesday. Rate: \$10.00 for the first 10 words, 30 cents per word thereafter (inc.GST).

PAYMENT: All advertising rates include GST. Payment for advertising must be made at the time of lodgement (cash or credit card) unless the advertiser has established an account. Name, address and telephone number of the advertiser must be provided when the advertisement is lodged.

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Advertisements must comply with anti-discrimination laws.

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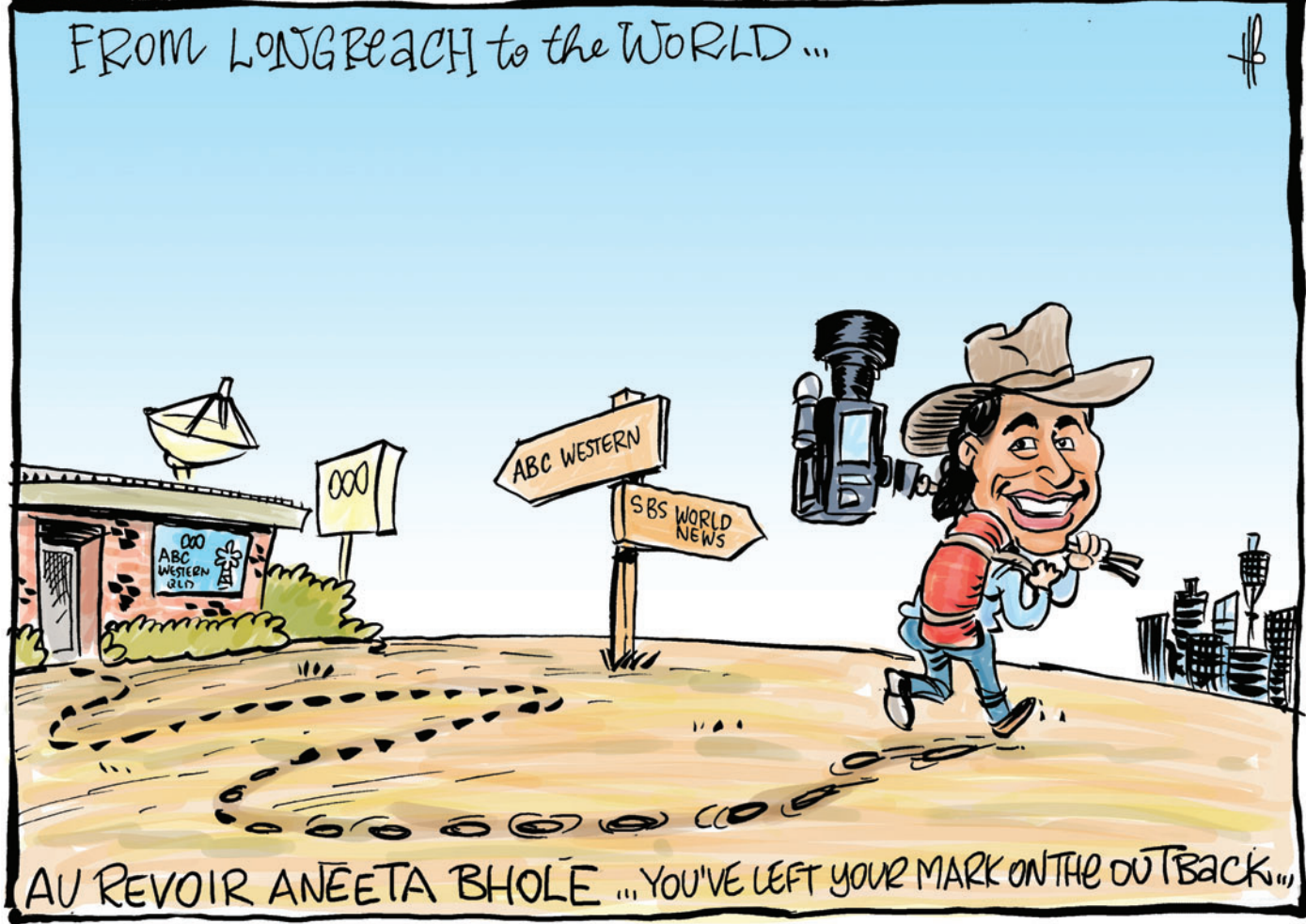
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INSERTS:

Please contact Lisa Prowd to book inserts. Inserts must be delivered to our Magpie Lane premises before 10am on the Tuesday prior to publication.

Disclaimer

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Compulsive drinking and linking with those who understand



By ZOE THOMAS
Staff Writer

ENJOYING A DRINK has long been a part of Australian culture. Whether it is a casual beverage at a barbecue, a glass of champagne for a celebration, or a pint at the cricket or the local footy — alcohol is societally ingrained.

However, it is when the continuous cycle of 'one drink' snowballs into a binge-drinking session, or a bottle of wine or two develops into a nightly occurrence, that it becomes more sinister and as equally worrisome.

As with any positive, there is always a negative, and alcoholism is an epidemic that has gripped Australia for decades.

Luckily, support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) aim to help those suffering from the insufferable disease to recover.

An Alcoholics Anonymous Professional Awareness meeting took place last week in Longreach to shine a light on the work of the organisation and ignite the conversa-

tion of more accessible resources in western Queensland.

Held at the JCU Room at the Longreach Hospital, members of the AA committee, recovering alcoholics and their families, and members of the surrounding community were in attendance.

AA Australia 2019 committee member representative, Brian, led the discussion and brought attention to a more regional focus.

Brian said that the discussion and light luncheon had a specific purpose — to bring more awareness to the disease.

"The purpose is we hope we may create a better relationship and understanding of the role that AA can play through co-operation with counsellors and professional agencies that may have clients affected with 'alcohol problems'," he explained.

"AA acknowledges the very good work that professionals do achieve through both treatment

and counselling of such people within the community who have serious alcohol problems.

"This work helps these people to recover from their battle with the community problem of alcoholism, which has both a direct and indirect effect on families and the wider community."

A recovered alcoholic himself, Brian said AA was pivotal in his recovery and wanted to ignite the conversation of more support groups in remote and regional centres.

"It's estimated there are about 2,300 meetings sprinkled around the country, more heavily along the eastern seaboard, but when you get out to places like this, it's pretty thin on the ground," he said.

A non-professional and self-supported organisation, Brian said AA is completely self-funded and is formed on the common bond of understanding.

"AA works for those who want to do something about their problem," he said.

"Today, we are not here to try and convince you, convert you, or even recruit you — we just want

to make friends with you."

It is also important to note that alcoholism doesn't just affect the individual who is suffering themselves — but also their surrounding family and friends.

Sandra, who also attended the discussion, spoke of her lived experience of her husband's alcoholism and the effects on their family.

"Many years ago, I dated, married and fell in love with a man who would become an alcoholic," she said.

"I didn't know anything about this disease of alcoholism at the time. I did not come from an alcoholic family."

Sandra said she found refuge in Al-Anon Family Groups (a subsidiary of AA), which is a support group for men, women and children of all ages and backgrounds whose lives have been affected by the compulsive drinking of a family member or friend.

"Fortunately for me, my husband found AA. We had two small children and he wanted me to come along to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings," Sandra explained.

"So I went along to the

Al-Anon Family Group, and when I went into that room it was suggested to me to try six meetings of this self-support group.

"I don't recall what was said for those first few meetings, but I do know how I felt. I felt like I belonged, I felt like I had come home, and I found someone that knew exactly what I talked about when I had this wet-rope feeling in my gut."

The Alcoholics Anonymous Professional Awareness meeting also travelled to other western Queensland centres, with similar meetings in Miles, Chinchilla, Biloela, Emerald, Blackwater, Barcaldine, Longreach and finishing in Winton.

At all stops, committee members distributed pamphlets and talked to various people about AA with an aim to raise awareness. A similar luncheon session was also held in Murgon.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with alcoholism and may find benefit and solace in attending an AA meeting, visit www.aa.org.au for more information.

*Surnames of AA members cannot be disclosed or published.

