

Office News Report --- August 2016

Another topsy-turvy and busy month or so for the HOPE office with -

- the cancellation of the Logan Eco Action Festival (5/6) due to very wet weather → several cartons of Green Harvest Organic Catalogues were subsequently distributed to libraries and other community facilities throughout the Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) area;
- the receipt of \$1,056 grant from the Federal Government to purchase 30 volunteer shirts;
- issued an internal e: appeal for office stationery;
- the rescheduling of our quarterly Ordinary Meeting from 11 June to 15 June as most of the executive and admin support staff were initially unavailable due to sickness, work and/or family commitments;
- a major "thinning out" of non-essential library resources → with the bulk of the reference books and magazines donated to the Southern Queensland Correctional Centre prison library;
- knock back of our application for new and replacement office computers, furniture and equipment → a fresh application to be submitted by 31 August;
- purchased MS Office 2016 (\$265) and a D-Link modem (\$88) from Officeworks (Toowoomba);
- engaged Neil Sciffer, Computer Troubleshooting (Toowoomba) to sort out the Telstra Bigpond internet connection, install the modem and reconfigure Outlook to properly receive/send emails from Telstra (fondrus@bidpond.net.au) and 1300WebPro (office@hopeaustralia.org.au) (1) – our website host.
- submitted several funding applications to undertake Landcare and Renewable Energy projects

And, we've also been busy preparing for the Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival (14 Aug), USQ's National Student Volunteer Week (10 Aug) and U3A Seniors Expo (17 Aug).

Donation of plants required for Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival (TLCF)

HOPE has had an environmental information display at the Toowoomba Languages and Cultures Festival every year since the event's inception. In recent years, we have had to pay a site fee and this year's fee is \$100. We propose to offset this cost by selling pot plants to festival visitors. We therefore ask for your support through the donation of a pot plant or two for sale at the event. Please drop off plants to the HOPE office at 22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba by 12 August at the latest - as the TLCF event is on Sunday, 14 August at Queens Park, Toowoomba.

Books & magazines appeal – The Southern Queensland Correctional Centre (SQCC), located in Gatton, is seeking donations of reading material for their library. HOPE has offered to assist SQCC by asking our members and supporters to donate novels, reference books, Australian/National Geographic magazines, Health and Lifestyle books/magazines, Reader's Digest and Gardening/Horticulture book/magazines. If you can assist with this appeal, please drop off your unwanted books & magazines to the HOPE office at 22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba.

We desperately need more **ACTIVE** members and volunteers to maintain our level of activity. So, if you have some spare time and talents to offer, please contact the HOPE office.

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135, office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Report on HOPE's display at Toowoomba Camelia Show and Garden Expo, 16-17 July 2016



HOPE member Steve Gribble with keen visitors

In spite of the un-appealing wintery weather over the weekend, crowd attendance was good – with many folk visiting our information display. A good amount of 'gardening' literature was taken; and the enquiry level was pleasing.

Thanks to Donna Hay (one of the event coordinating team) for providing us with a free indoor site.

Thanks to Green Harvest for providing 4 books on "Growing easy herbs: for beauty, fragrance and flavour" by Penny Woodward.

And lastly, thanks to Steve Gribble and Mary Ondrus for helping to staff the display over the weekend.

Much appreciated.

What does HOPE do?

A special report from Frank Ondrus, the President of Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

I am often asked what does Householders' Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) actually do? The short answer is LOTS!! Let me explain.

HOPE is a national community based not-for-profit environment organisation promoting sustainable living practices as per our Charter (http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/uploads/media/Brochure_HOPE_Charter_2012_07_.pdf).

As we are un-funded, the management committee has pursued a policy of forming strategic partnerships/alliances with organisations at the local, state and national levels (<http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/about-us/partnershipsalliances-ngos/>) so as to access their expertise and resources – as well as to cooperate on key issues such as protecting the EPBC Act and the introduction of State-based Container Deposit Schemes.

We also have formed several business alliances (<http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/about-us/partnerships-businesses/>) to assist us in furthering HOPE's aims.

On the administration front, the office spends a lot of time:

- promoting HOPE and its activities;
- pursuing corporate sponsorship;
- membership recruitment; and
- investigating grant opportunities for equipment and projects.

List of current funding applications pending:

- GCBF – Project funding to host 6 or 7 Energy Efficiency/Going Solar seminars
- Cannon Australia – for a donation of a new camera and cam recorder
- Australian Ethical Investments – Project funding to stage 3 workshops on Creating Wildlife Habitats on Your Property
- Toowoomba Regional Council – Project funding to stage an extra 3 workshops on Creating Wildlife Habitats on Your Property
- GCBF – Funding application for new and replacement office computers and furniture; and other display equipment

Locally, that is – in Toowoomba where our head office is located, we undertake a variety of outreach activities such as providing information displays for community events; holding community forums on a variety of subjects; attending NGO and government meetings; and making submissions on relevant environmental issues.

State-wide (Qld), we continue to support our colleagues in the environment sector - principally through our membership with Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) and Queensland Water and Land Carers (QWALC).

HOPE has made submissions to the Queensland State Government's discussion papers:

- Advancing Climate Action in Queensland
- Qld Renewable Energy Expert Panel
- QPC re Solar Feed-in Tariff Pricing Inquiry

We are also currently reviewing the following Queensland State Government documents:

- Qld Weed and Pest Strategy
- Qld Biosecurity Act 2014

Nationally, our priority interests are in supporting the work of the Places You Love Alliance and Lock the Gate Alliance.

Other national issues of interest to HOPE are:

- Developing a national food plan in conjunction with strong policies to protect strategic cropping land vs the overwhelming spread and impact of coal mining and CSG mining on our communities, agriculture and environment; and
- Rehabilitation of abandoned mines.

Internationally, we have several partnerships who supply us with information on issues such curbing the spread of nuclear weapon; and the elimination of 'persistent organic pollutants'.

In conclusion, we need your help to maintain this high level of activity. So, please contact the HOPE office to volunteer some of your time.

We also need your financial support to help cover our annual operating costs of approximately \$20,500.

Currently, our income is derived from project grants, fund-raising, corporate sponsorship and donations, but falls well short of our requirements.

Your financial support, by way of an annual pledge or donation, will considerably help us to achieve better financial viability. Please send your donation to the HOPE office or pledge online at <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/annual-pledgedonation/>.

Frank Ondrus, President – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135
