

President's Report 2011

Delivered at the 2011 AGM

in conjunction with the Residential Weekend at Parkes 9-11 September

I am happy to be able to write and present a President's report to the 2011 Annual General Meeting of The Compassionate Friends NSW INC. Last year there was much discussion around the possibility of TCF NSW closing its doors. Having seen the hard work and tireless efforts of those on the outgoing council, it was difficult to imagine how TCF NSW could keep going without them. A new council was voted in and, with the help and support of those more experienced members, we have been able to continue giving support to over 300 bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents throughout NSW.

This year has been a busy year for the new council. Learning the ropes, the ins and outs of the administration of and for The Compassionate Friends NSW, has been a steep learning curve for us. A new Chapter began in Tweed Heads and a Saturday Support group has begun at the Drop-In Centre. Volunteer hours worked in Centre since July 2010 total over 1400 at the Drop in Centre and countless more volunteer hours are worked by Chapter leaders and telephone contact support members. Now that all council members and Chapter Leaders have an email address, they spend more time on the computer but just as much time on the telephone keeping in touch with members, answering enquiries and supporting newly bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. Since the last Annual General Meeting, volunteers across the state have responded to over 1500 telephone and email contacts. The library, located in the Drop in Centre is expanding and is being reorganised and catalogued by two of our volunteers. I encourage you to visit the Centre when you are next in the Sydney CBD.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed so much of their time and energy to the running of The Compassionate Friends NSW. Special mention to the 2011 council, Joy, our treasurer for keeping the accounts organised and balanced; Julie, our secretary, for keeping up with all the correspondence and maintaining data bases to keep our membership up to date; Richard for his skills in organising and running the Saturday support group of the City and Metropolitan chapter; Manny for his suggestions and ideas and for his work with Maree in providing support for the siblings; Gail (who resigned earlier this year) for her cheerful supportive comments; Ann (who has replaced Gail) for her tireless efforts with organisation of the library and communications with outside agencies; also, Tony & Mary who provide us with advice and guidance; Tony and Judy for organising the 2011 Residential Weekend; Jenny, our editor, for getting the FOCUS ready each quarter; Janis and the mail-out team for getting it posted and Lyn for her contribution as office support person in the first half of 2011. Thank you to the Chapter Leaders, phone contact volunteers and Bereaved Parents Centre volunteers, who give so much of their time to support TCF NSW and keep it afloat. And, of course, thank you to my husband Mike, who makes sure I answer emails by being the administrator of the website for TCF NSW. Finally, a big *Thank You* to all those people who work behind the scenes' in so many ways to support The Compassionate Friends NSW, your contribution is what keeps TCF going.

In the words of Ringo Starr: "I get by with a little help from my (Compassionate) friends"

Sue.

President, The Compassionate Friends NSW INC.