

Concern Arafmi Magazine



Arafmi

Mental Health Carers & Friends Association (WA) Inc

Autumn 2011

You REALLY Are Not Alone

President's Report



**By Tony Fowke –
Arafmi President**

**Welcome to the first
edition of Concern for
2011. The beginning
of this year has been
a devastating time for
many in Australia who live**

**in the flood, storm and bushfire ravaged areas and
significant mental health issues are emerging.**

One of the positive things that have come out of these events is Australian "mateship" with people helping each other out. This should ideally be the norm but for various reasons the society in which we live often does not do this on a day to day basis. I accept this is a broad sweeping statement and there will be exceptions.

Mental health carers are however a section of the community that does this consistently and often at great personal sacrifices. Needless to say mental health carers will continue to be a valued part of the community even though not always recognised as such.

Please remember that as you go about this demanding task Arafmi is here to help you in any way we can and that "you are not alone"

I am pleased to be able to let you know that the Strategic Plan mentioned in the previous edition of Concern has been finalised and will be the operational blueprint for the next four years. I am happy to report that our Patron the Chief Justice agreed to conduct the official launch of the Strategic Plan, here at Carers House.

Having established a good relationship with the former Minister for Mental Health we now have to do this again with the new Minister the Hon Helen Morton who will be known to many of you. The Executive Director and I are planning to meet with her in the near future.

I formally welcome to the Board Catherine Holland and Jenni Antulov and for those that have not had an opportunity to meet either of them yet I hope you will be able to do so at one of our gatherings. Profiles of Board Members are to be included in Concern over the coming months.

Spreading the Word – Arafmi Makes News

**By Lee Tate –
Arafmi Communications Manager**

**Positive messages about mental health issues
have continued to spread following the Federal
Government's commitment to new funding
and stronger action in WA by the Barnett
Government.**

The publicity generated by Prof. Patrick McGorry has been invaluable and the mental health advocate has continued to speak up even as his term as Australian of the Year expired.

To capitalise on this, Arafmi has stepped-up its public awareness of the free program it offers in WA with a series of advertisements, used widely in Perth's metropolitan newspapers as well as in the North-West.

Arafmi has offices in Broome, Carnarvon and Port Hedland.

The key message is: "Is the mental health of someone you care about affecting your life?"

Arafmi Executive Director, Mike Seward, told the media: "When authorities have problems with people who have mental health issues, it is vital to involve their families and carers."

This applies to GPs, hospitals and the police, among others.

"After all, as families and carers know more about their loved ones' issues than anyone other than the person themselves they are in an ideal position to help," he said.

Arafmi's advertisements also carry the message that Arafmi membership is free.

Arafmi Services

Arafmi has been providing a FREE information and support service to family and friends of people with mental health issues since 1976.

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Free professional counselling for adults, children and young people.
- Community network meetings in a range of locations.
- Library service.
- Provision of workshops and seminars on a variety of mental health issues.
- School education programme.
- Young people school holiday activity programme.

For more information contact head office on 9427 7100, Country Callers 1800 811 747



THIS ISSUE:

Action At Our Outposts: A series of outings and events for carers in our North-West has kept Arafmi's staffers in Broome, Port Hedland and Carnarvon fully occupied in recent weeks. It put smiles on a lot of faces. Even Mother Nature couldn't rain on Arafmi's parades.

See our N-W correspondents' photo-reports inside.

**Arafmi's
New Initiatives**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mike Seward's column,
see back page

Arafmi Mental Health Carer Support Groups For 2011

LOCATION	PERTH	WHITFORDS	GOSNELLS	MIDLAND	MANDURAH	MANDURAH <i>First Timers</i>	ROCKINGHAM	CLARKSON
ADDRESS	182 Lord St PERTH 6000	6/32 Endeavour Rd HILLARYS 6025	Level 1 Gosnells Community Lotteries House 2232 Albany Hwy GOSNELLS 6110	St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc 2 Bayley St WOODBRIDGE	Community First 98 Mandurah Tce MANDURAH	Community First 98 Mandurah Tce MANDURAH	Rockingham Mental Health Cnr Ameer & Clifton St ROCKINGHAM	30 Ainsbury Parade CLARKSON
TIME	10am – 12pm	10:30am – 12:30pm	10am – 12pm	10am – 12pm	1pm – 3pm	10am – 12pm	1pm – 3pm	10am – 12:30pm
STAFF MEMBER	Virginia Hails & Sarah Tarulli	Sarah Tarulli & Amy Nenke	Mav Ryan	Mav Ryan	Jo Enoch	Jo Enoch	Jo Enoch	Amy Nenke
MARCH	11th	9th	18th	25th	14th	17th	16th	14th
APRIL	8th	6th	15th	22nd	11th	21st	20th	11th
MAY	13th	11th	20th	27th	9th	19th	18th	16th
JUNE	10th	8th	17th	24th	13th	16th	15th	13th
JULY	8th	6th	15th	22nd	11th	21st	20th	11th
AUGUST	12th	10th	19th	26th	8th	18th	17th	15th
SEPTEMBER	9th	14th	16th	23rd	12th	15th	21st	12th
OCTOBER	14th	12th	21st	28th	10th	20th	19th	10th
NOVEMBER	11th	9th	18th	25th	14th	17th	16th	14th
DECEMBER	9th	7th	16th	23rd	12th	15th	21st	12th

Free of charge. Tea and coffee provided. Please confirm your attendance as venues may change. Phone Arafmi head office 9427 7100

Stay Alert

Are you receiving our weekly online newsletter, Arafmi Alert?

Your newsletter will keep you fully up-to-date with material and information that is directly relevant to mental health carers in WA.

Please email your details to receive this weekly bulletin online from the next report.

Send your email address to lee.tate@arafmi.asn.au

Stay in touch!





Footprints have a following... Roberta Hunter, Betty Dixon, Gordon Dixon, Magdalene Taylor, Johnny Haseldine, Cecelia, Leanna Haseldine

Walking With Dinosaurs – All in a Day’s Work

At Arafmi’s North-West outposts – Broome, Port Hedland and Carnarvon - work for carers proceeds despite whatever Mother Nature can throw its way. And this season it has thrown plenty!

In Broome, for Carers Day after lunch a hearty group went on a hovercraft trip. When the tide is out towards Crab Creek, dinosaur footprints are clear to see. There is a trail where the Diplodocus walked.

Arafmi and Arafmi Outreach took part in Mental Health Day’s ‘jamming in the park’ in Broome. The events, at Town Beach, promoted awareness of mental health and mental health carers. People with a common cause could mix and mingle on a friendly base.

Arafmi provided Information, education tools, giveaways, free shoulder and neck massages and face painting for the kids. All the main service organisations in Broome were present. Among activities were drum beating, jamming with the locals, beach volleyball and cricket.

Arafmi in Broome is lucky to have one of the best views over Roebuck Bay, a perfect place for carers to come and relax as they did at the Arafmi mainstream Christmas lunch BBQ.

Arafmi Outreach had an amazing time with their Indigenous carers. Carers and support workers played guitars to a sing-along. A young carer who also is a mental health sufferer performed her own songs regarding her life and experiences. Brilliant!

Arafmi also took part in the Shinju Festival (festival of the pearl) parade with the Arafmi Outreach car decorated with paper flowers and balloons made by carers.

The International Day of Disability brought service groups together in Broome’s shopping centre to promote their services and give out little presents.



Arafmi Board Members - Getting To Know Them

Arafmi has a 10-member board of directors, headed by Tony Fowke. In the start of a series, we introduce you to three of them.



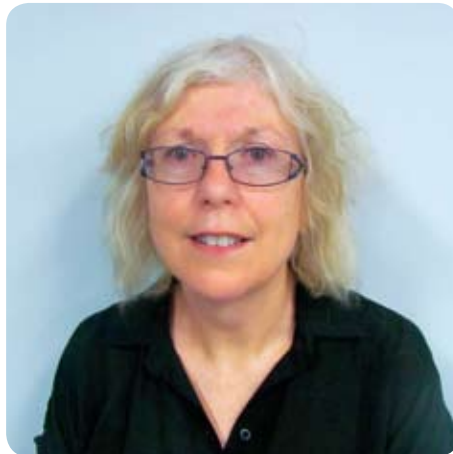
Tony Fowke

Tony, born in the UK, came with his family to Australia in 1970 and qualified as a solicitor in 1982.

He has been a mental health carer advocate/representative for 30 years having experienced mental illness within his family. In 2003 Tony was made a member in the General Division of the Order of Australia for service as an advocate for the advancement of mental health services in Australia.

Tony's positions include:

- legal member of WA Mental Health Review Board reviewing the status of involuntary patients either in hospital or who are on Community Treatment Orders
- Member Aust/NZ Assoc of Psychology, Psychiatry & Law, founding member WA branch
- WA carer rep on National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum
- Carer Board member, Mental Health Council of Australia (chair of Carer Engagement Project Advisory Group)
- President, Mental Health Carers Arafmi WA and national body
- Carer rep on Mental Health Standing Committee's Safety and Quality Partnership sub-committee
- President World Federation for Mental Health
- Member of the federal Minister for Health and Ageing's Mental Health Expert Working Group



Jenni Antulov

Jenni, a carer, taught English literature at Albany Senior High School and Lockridge Senior High School (and even female members of the Saudi Royal Family).

Other positions:

- International research company
- Child protection online
- Library technology series of seminars
- TEE markers' seminar
- English professional learning workshops
- College processes
- Student services presentation
- College policies and procedures, duty of care
- Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse
- Understanding and planning, learning environment for refugee background students
- WACOT mentors' program day
- State School Teachers' Union of WA industrial education
- Useful counselling skills in education
- Child abuse workshop- legal requirements of teachers
- Workshop on cyber-bullying.
- WACE English marking workshops.



Patrick Hardwick

After being a carer for his wife in 1996, Patrick became aware of gaps in support for carers and joined Arafmi in 1999.

He was Arafmi President for 5 years and a past board member of the Mental Health Council of Australia.

Other positions:

- Inaugural member of National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum and currently represents the Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network Australia and is State Coordinator for WA and national committee member.
- Member National Register of Mental Health Consumers and Carers, representing mental health carers on committees and forums at state and national level.
- Member WA Legal Aid Review Committee since 2000.
- Stakeholder Manager for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship in WA.

Arafmi's "First Timers" Carers Group In Mandurah



By Jo Enoch –
Arafmi Family/Carer Support Worker

Arafmi has recognized that there are some carers in our community who do not see themselves as carers, yet they are performing the caring role alone and unsupported in our community.

There are others who identify themselves as carers but have not realised the support available to them from Arafmi and other government and non-government services.

In response to this unmet need, Arafmi has begun the 'First Timers Carers Group' in Mandurah, which strives to work with agencies and the Mandurah community to highlight the needs of such carers to provide advocacy, information, education and fun.

Some of the issues to be explored will include support for carers whose children are currently experiencing difficulty with the education system and the universal concern of all carers, forward-planning as well as how to access services within the mental health system both private and public.

Meetings are held at Community First, 98 Mandurah Terrace, Mandurah. Third Thursday of the month between 10am and 12pm.

For further information, please call Jo on 9535 5844 or 0411 575 985.

NEW: Arafmi Evening Appointments in Perth

Arafmi is offering carers evening appointments on Thursdays between 4pm and 7pm.

The last appointment time is 6pm. The appointments will be 50 minutes in duration and start on Feb 24.

Interested carers need to contact 9427 7100 to book an appointment.

Your Contributions Are Welcome

YOU are invited to make contributions on any issues of your interest in your publications.

Arafmi's seasonal magazine, Concern, works hand-in-glove with our weekly emailed newsletter, Arafmi Alert.

Feel free to comment on any issue or ask any questions you like.

If something amuses, interests you or concerns you, it is likely to interest other Arafmi members. Feel free to send in photographs or drawings.

We want your feedback.

Concern and Arafmi Alert are here for you, our Arafmi members.

Your contributions to Concern magazine and our weekly online newsletter Arafmi Alert are welcome. **Please send them to lee.tate@arafmi.asn.au or phone 9427 7100**



Kids Find School Holiday Program Is Real “Classy”

By Cally Jeffers –
Arafmi School Education Officer

In the January school holidays, Arafmi once again ran the Young Carers School Holiday Program. This year we did a variety of exciting activities. With years 8 to 12 we went out to Kalamunda Camel Park and rode the camels, a thrill for all the kids. We also learnt about camels and ways to find food, water and tools in the bush.

We had great fun testing our roller-skating and rollerblading skills at Morley Rollerdrome - after laughing away to the new Disney movie, Tangled.

The group also went to Caversham and Whiteman Park where we were able to play with and learn about Australian animals, some furry, some slimy, some prickly and some noisy.

We then topped-off the holidays with a day at the beach with a BBQ lunch and cool swim, lots of games and a sand castle competition.

With the older kids we travelled “overseas” to Rottnest, swum in the basin, then learnt about the island’s war history and maze of tunnels. We also went bush out to Manjedal, where we did some scouting activities, involving lots of patience, relationship-building and team work.

We’ve had the opportunity to expand the School Holiday Program to young carers in the south of Perth with a great day bowling, then watching Yogi Bear.

We will again be running the program in the south in the Easter school holidays. For any queries contact Arafmi on 94277100 and speak to Anna or Cally.



Newcomer Emma Gives Arafmi An Edge



By Emma Barlow –
Arafmi Family/Carer Support Worker

My position provides services that strengthen carers’ abilities and capacity to support the person with mental illness to live in the community and to maintain and improve their quality of life and while promoting the carer/ family’s own well-being.

I work with adults and young people 8-to-18 who have someone in their lives with a mental illness.

I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in psychology and criminology at Edith Cowan University and last year completed my Post-Grad Diploma in Psychology at Murdoch.

My experience includes working with Ruah Community Services on their Independent Living Program.

I provided assistance to people living with mental illnesses in the community. I have also spent time working with kids in the UK for a company that provides activity courses and holidays for schools, colleges, youth groups as well as individual children and young people.



Damian’s Recreation Program Jumping

By Damian McGay – Arafmi Recreation Officer

Damian has joined Arafmi as Recreation Officer, developing recreation programs and social networks for adult consumers living in Perth’s north-west Metro Area.

“I have three years experience with the YMCA, developing and running summer programs. I have also worked as a coach for athletics and swimming, once representing Australia, in the 1500 metres and 200 metres running/sprinting event and even represented regionally for lawn bowls state wide.

I have studied fitness and plan to complete my certificate 3 in fitness this year, I have worked with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds and am looking forward to the next few months.”

Damian began in December and has had some great days out during the month of January. For February and March he has got events to suit all, for those who have special interests he has planned trips to the Art Gallery, a Museum tour, a photography course, and remote control cars (scale electrics!). For those who like socialising he has city walks, dates to meet for fish and chips by the sea and walks around Hillarys and Kings park as well as 10 pen bowling! Those of you who like to get fit or keep fit, swimming, tennis, mornings at the gym or badminton.

What is your interest? Why not contact Damian and have a chat about what he has planned and see if he can arrange an event that you would like and meet with new people.

Rhonda's Respite Report

*By Rhonda McCullagh –
Arafmi Respite Co-ordinator*

FINDING THAT GETAWAY

Carers are embracing Arafmi's respite opportunities with strong bookings for the 4-bedroom Yanchep house that is just a stroll to the beach.

It's relaxing and quiet with a garden where carers can chill-out on the sun lounges.

Carers can book the house year-round for up to 14 nights.

Our respite getaways, including Lesmurdie and Fremantle, are available to all carers of people with mental health in Perth's north-west metro area.

SURFING AND MESSAGES WOO CARERS

Hitting the surf or opting out for a relaxing massage isn't necessarily a way of life in WA for everyone but carers of people with mental health issues in Perth's north-west suburbs are making good use of the opportunities through Arafmi.

Recently under the program, 30 young carers ages 9 to 14 relished the surf and fun with a two-night overnight stay at Sorrento's Ern Halliday Recreation Camp. More are planned throughout 2011 for all young carers aged 9 – 17.

Older carers have been taking time for massages – reflexology or full-body - at Whitfords and Perth.

Funding for the north-west suburban areas has made these offers possible.

FAMILY CAMPS FOR ABORIGINAL CARERS

Arafmi are offering our Aboriginal carers the opportunity to participate in our overnight recreation camps. These camps are available to the whole family so it's not only the kids who get a break! The adults can enjoy some down-time while the kids are enjoying one of the activities organised by the camp.

RECREATION CAMPS FOR THOSE SUFFERING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

These camps will allow mental health sufferers to socialise and network in a fun and enjoyable environment. Activities will be arranged but there will also be plenty of time to relax and unwind. They will take place over a 2 or 3 day period, depending upon numbers.

How To Make Use of Arafmi Respite Offers

A range of respite opportunities are available with a constantly-improving program.

Carers living in Perth's north-west suburban areas should book through Arafmi's Respite Co-ordinator, Rhonda McCullagh on 08-9427 7100 or email rhonda.mccullagh@arafmi.asn.au



Party Packed A Punch For Young Carers

*By Anna Albrecht –
Arafmi School Education Officer*

Arafmi held a two Christmas parties for Arafmi young carers.

A spectacular turn-out from both groups. Both days were full of delicious food and exciting surprises. A great two days with a great group of young carers.

The younger group of carers spent the day at Arafmi enjoying fun games with many goodies, an intriguing and entertaining magic show and topped off with a visit from Santa bearing many great surprises for the young carers.

The older group of carers enjoyed a day out at the Innaloo megaplex, showing off their skills on the many different games at time-zone, followed by a divine indulgence at Sizzler and again topped off with many surprises from Santa's little helpers.

You Take Care

*By Virginia Hailes –
Arafmi Family/Support Worker*

An important part of the caring role is caring for yourself so this year Arafmi is having four pamper days.

The first was on February 15 with everyone enjoying the pampering! Massages are popular so will be available on each pamper day and we will be trying some new activities such as reflexology, sand therapy and Reiki. The next day is on May 20th and they fill quickly.

Arafmi received great feedback on the psycho-education workshops that you carers thought would be beneficial, such as assertiveness, partners in depression and coping with difficult behaviours. We will let you know of upcoming workshops and times.

One of Arafmi's objectives is to provide an understanding of issues that carers and consumers face when looking after someone with a mental health illness. For some this means isolation, financial hardship, burn out, lack of community support due to the stigma attached, self blame and family conflict.

Last year Arafmi provided presentations to health professionals, medical, OT, community service and nursing students and was well received. This year we are being more pro-active and contacting future health professionals through tertiary institutions and offering guest speaker to come and talk to them about these issues.

Phone Virginia on 9427 7100



Virginia Hailes

Arafmi On Track – New Initiatives

Executive Director's Report



**By Mike Seward –
Arafmi Executive Director**

As many of you would have been aware, Arafmi went through a difficult period in the recent past. This period ended at the beginning of 2010 and since the middle of the year we began to expand and re-engage, with the aim of regaining our position as the pre-eminent mental health carer organisation in WA.

I am happy to report that we are on track to achieving this. Our discussions with the WA Mental Health Commission and the Federal Government to use prior years' budget underspends have been successful.

This has led to an expansion of our carer respite programs, to more school holiday programs for young carers and to the re-introduction of the popular "Breakthrough" series of lectures, amongst other new initiatives. It is all very exciting for us and for carers.

2011 will be a busy year at Arafmi. The Board has made the decision to utilise if necessary some of our own internal resources to fund a Carer Advocate position. This position will be commencing shortly and will enable mental health carers needing advocacy help, in particular those starting on their caring journey, to navigate the mental health system in WA.

Later on in the year we will also be introducing volunteer Carer Peers. These volunteers will be available to talk with mental health carers wanting to speak to a carer like them, someone with a lived carer experience. This is all part of the Board-driven push to bring us back to our roots, which is putting mental health carers at the heart of what we do.

Sometimes organisations going through the sort of expansion that Arafmi is going through experience staff difficulties. I am happy to report that we have a very stable team that makes it a pleasure to come to work and be with.

I thank each and every one of them for their commitment to helping mental health carers in WA. Indeed, with a team like this, I can say to WA's mental health carers, **you are not alone.**

**Best wishes,
Mike Seward**



Web Looks Clearer

**By Lee Tate –
Arafmi Communications Manager**

Always looking at the bigger picture, Arafmi has been updating and improving its website.

Arafmi Perth staff have been led through the update phase by Christophe Bouyac, a project officer with WACOSS which has been funded by the Federal Government.

Arafmi's new website makes it easier for users who will be able to navigate through all the services available in Perth, metro areas and the State's North-West.

As with our other information outlets, Concern magazine and our weekly online newsletter Arafmi Alert, the website invites your comments and contributions.

Go to www.arafmi.asn.au

Donations to Arafmi

Arafmi greatly appreciates your donations.

Arafmi, a non-profit, non-government organisation, is committed to providing better services for mental health carers.

To make your donation, phone Arafmi on 9427 7100 or go to www.arafmi.asn.au



You are not alone



Arafmi

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**Government of Western Australia
Mental Health Commission**