

In The Press

Macarthur Chronicle, Tuesday September 22 2009

Vital centre to celebrate at open day

DRUG and alcohol rehabilitation centre Odyssey House's annual open day will coincide with its 32nd anniversary this year.

The community is invited to find out what rehab is really like when the Eagle Vale facility opens its doors on Sunday between noon and 3.30pm.

Last year more than 400 people attended the event, which recognised graduating clients, educated the public about the organisation's work and thanked staff and supporters.

Visitors can tour the residential rehabilitation centre where about 100 clients live and work in a structured environment that emphasises self-help and personal growth in the journey to successfully overcoming alcohol and drug dependence.

There will also be displays of woodwork, art and craft by residents and activities for children.

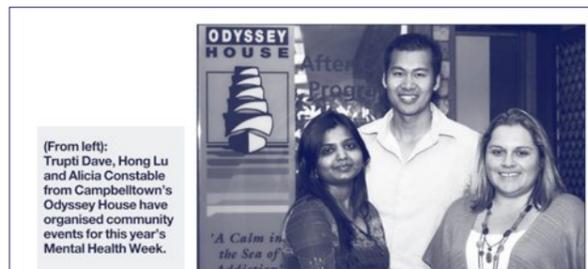
Formal activities start at 2pm.

Odyssey House is at 13a Moonstone Place, Eagle Vale. Details: marketing@odysseyhouse.com.au or 8307 8838.



COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION: Odyssey House chief executive officer accepted the Macarthur Chronicle's community contribution award, saying the drug and alcohol rehabilitation organisation had been serving the community for 32 years. "During that time the Macarthur Chronicle has been instrumental in promoting our cause and letting people know what we're doing," he said. "We support people whose lives are out of control because of their dependence on alcohol and other drugs. We are part of the community ... thank you very very much."

Campbelltown Macarthur Advertiser, Wednesday September 23 2009



(From left): Trupti Dave, Hong Lu and Alicia Constable from Campbelltown's Odyssey House have organised community events for this year's Mental Health Week.

Events to cut stigma

COMMUNITY health groups in the Macarthur area hope to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness when they host Mental Health Week 2009.

Members of the Macarthur Mental Health Promotion Network have organised a variety of events to take place from October 4 to 11.

The events, which have been funded by NSW Health, aim to raise awareness of mental health in the community and provide information about services and mental illness prevention.

Campbelltown Odyssey House Aftercare psychologist Trupti Dave said it was important people learned more about mental health issues. "Many people still don't understand mental illness and it's going untreated in the community," Ms Dave said.

This year the theme of "Sign up, link in, get involved", was chosen to promote the role of social participation in emotional wellbeing. Odyssey House has organised a community help family members deal with alcohol addiction and a Family Relaxation technique.

Ms Dave said she hoped to help and inform people. "Working on your mental health can be a big deal. It can be a challenge," Ms Dave said. Details: Phone Campbelltown Mental Health Centre on Odyssey House Aftercare Visit www.mentalhealth.org.au for more information.

Diary Dates

Rugby Dinner - 5 March

'Odyssey By The Sea' Cocktail Party - 25 Feb

Women's Lunch - May

Drug Action Week - June

For further information on any of these events, please contact marketing on (02) 9820 9999 or email marketing@odysseyhouse.com.au

Odyssey Recognition

Support that Odyssey House has recently received from the following donors is greatly appreciated.

AMP Capital
Mr John Cameron
Mr Sam Chisholm
Crown International
Mr Chris Grubb
Mr Andrew Hall
Mr Michael Hawker
HMAS Kuttabul Scaf
Mr Will Jephcott
Mr Robert Keldoulis
Mr Levi Lewis
McCarrol Automotive
Mr Sarwat McGuid
Minter Ellison Lawyers
Ms Martha Morrow
Mr Mark Nagy
Mr Grahame Pratt
The Kimberley Foundation



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Newsletter

ODYSSEY HOUSE



'A Calm in the Sea of Addiction'

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www.odysseyhouse.org.au



Andrew and Karen with five of their children excited about this Christmas!

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus

On Tuesday 21 September, 1897 the editor of the New York Sun, Francis Church replied to a letter from a little girl known as Virginia. Her infamous question being "Is there a Santa Claus?" There are a number of children in our Parent's and Children's program that for the first time really do believe there is a Santa Claus.

Our Parent's and Children's program make it possible for parents to participate in the rehabilitation program whilst living with their children. Often these are extremely dysfunctional families, and simple joys such as a Christmas tree were previously forgotten.

This year it will be different, decorations will be hung, presents will be wrapped, Santa will drop in for a visit and together as a family they will all celebrate Christmas.

Andrew and Karen are the parents of just one of our families that will be celebrating Christmas in our Parent's and Children's program this year.

Andrew and Karen and five of their seven children are currently living in one of the program's cottages. It was a bond of true friendship when they first met at age 17 and 18.

Living in Forster they went on to have their first two children Tamera and Jarrod. During this time Andrew was introduced to Ice by a family member and started using it on a recreational basis. As far as he was concerned it was a harmless party drug.

After the birth of their third child Dean "I decided that I wanted to try Ice and see what the big thrill was" Karen said. Whenever Ice was not available they would then both start using Speed.

Together they both used Ice and Speed sporadically over the next few years, and had another two children - Marcus and Jacob. By this point they felt the drugs were out of control and relocated to Newcastle for a fresh start.

Initially Karen entered into a Women's Refuge with the children until a house became available.

Finally reunited as a family in a house, Karen and Andrew continued to use Speed - however felt they now had their lives under control and everyone was happy. This trend continued on for the next six months.

"While I was pregnant with Tyrell Ice re-entered our lives" said

Karen. Andrew went into a deep drug psychosis and became out of control. Karen called the police and this action was enough to make Andrew reconsider his drug taking at the time.

The family continued to move along with their lives, by the time their last child, Jessica was born, again Ice was dominating their lives and they were both out of control. Each time Andrew and Karen would attempt to break the cycle of addiction they were soon lured back.

"After a year of being in an Ice frenzy and the children being miserable, I felt our lives were out of control" said Karen. It was at this point that she realised she had hit rock bottom and needed 'real' help.

The family entered the Odyssey program with five of their children, and have adjusted very well. The children are looking forward to a joyous family Christmas - and a present or two from Santa.

"Don't hesitate, when you know you have had enough, don't wait till it is too late. Get help - try Odyssey, it has saved our lives" said Karen.

YES! I would like to help Odyssey House assist residents to live a drug free life.

Please find enclosed my donation of: (please circle) \$50.00 \$100.00 \$500.00 or \$_____

Enclosed is my cheque / money order made payable to the Odyssey House McGrath Foundation or charge my credit card.

Visa Mastercard Amex Diners Club

Card number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on card: _____ Title: (Dr/ Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/ Miss): _____

Signature: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Facsimile: _____

I would like to pledge \$_____ per month to be deducted from my Credit Card until revoked in writing by me or Odyssey House.

DONATIONS OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

For more information on Odyssey House, visit www.odysseyhouse.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9820 9999 ~ Facsimile: (02) 9820 1796

Please return this coupon and your donation to:
Odyssey House McGrath Foundation, PO Box 459, Campbelltown, NSW, 2560.



A message from the Chairman



Cathy Doyle

I am always buoyed by the generosity of spirit shown towards Odyssey House and its residents. This generosity has led to some great cementing of shared goals and partnerships with key organisations and individuals. One of these individuals is Simon Poidevin who is the event ambassador for the Goulburn to Citi Charity ride in September. Last year \$80,000 was received by Odyssey, and in 2009 we received over \$110,000 with a record 120 riders participating in the event. Thank you Simon and all the riders for your commitment and support.

We also benefited from the recent Australian Fund Managers awards held at Star City in October. Geoff Wilson who sits on the Odyssey Board and past Board member Chris Grubb are part of the organising committee for this event. Over 500 people attended and a great night was had by all. Raising \$140,000 for Odyssey House and the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation.

Odyssey House also held its Open Day in October for residents and their families and supporters. This day showcased the great work Odyssey does and graduates of the program were recognised. More importantly it demonstrated that it takes a village of people to make a difference to someone's life. So thank you to the residents, staff, families and supporters of Odyssey - it takes all of us to make a difference. The Board also announced some key additions - two very talented women, Lucy Pryor who will also sit on the Finance Committee and Linda Simonsen who will sit on the Marketing and Fundraising Committee. We also farewelled Susan Bennett from the Board, however as always Susan will continue to support Odyssey! Thank you.

As we head into Christmas please have a safe and happy time with your families - thank you for your continued support.

Cathy Doyle
Chairman

Real men can cook



This year's celebrity's cooking up a storm!

One of the highlights on our event calendar is 'Real Men Cook'. This event continues to be a sell out and has tremendous support by celebrities who like to showcase their culinary expertise and raise money for a great cause.

Michael Lloyd and the team at bel mondo once again were extremely generous with the donation of their restaurant and staff for this luncheon, for which we are truly appreciative.

Our celebrity chefs are always a pleasure and very entertaining to have on board. This year's repertoire of chefs included

comedians Vince Sorrenti, Mikey Robins and Merrick Watts; actor Rhys Muldoon; rugby legend Nick Farr Jones; top chefs Mark Best, Ben O'Donoghue and Jason Roberts; and finally media personalities Simon Marnie, Mark Ferguson, Chris Gray and Pete 'Gadget Guy' Blasina.

A highlight of this luncheon is the opportunity for a graduate of our program to provide a personal account of their journey of addiction and recovery with Odyssey House. A touching story by graduate Craig was well received by the audience as he reflected over the poor choices he

made in the past, and the person he is today - which he attributes all to Odyssey. Craig has gone on to complete further study and is now a staff member of the program to help others with their journey of recovery.

There were many unique prizes up for grabs this year which included a private dinner in your home cooked by Ben O'Donoghue while your guests are being entertained by Mikey Robins plus many more unique prizes.

Thank you to all our supporters of this event which raised \$35,000 for Odyssey House.

GOULBURN TO CITI

It is Sunday 20 September, the sun is slowly rising and while most of us are still sleeping, there are 120 riders being led by Race Ambassador Simon Poidevin for the commencement of the Goulburn to Citi Pengana Classic Corporate Charity Ride. "We have a super fit group of corporate riders and we intend to cover the 150 kilometres at over 34 kilometres per hour" said Simon prior to the race.

This year the charity ride raised over \$110,000 for Odyssey House. This funding will play an important role in the ongoing development and expansion of our Parent's and Children's program.



CEO James Pitts and Race Ambassador Simon Poidevin

OPEN DAY

On Sunday 25 October we celebrated our 32nd Anniversary and our Annual Graduate Ceremony. While the rain settled in for the day it did not deter the 300 guests who joined us to celebrate.

The Odyssey journey can be long, and for some have many speed bumps along the way. While a large number of residents complete their treatment not all go on to graduate.

This year there were a number of graduates who were presented with their final completion certificate and recognised for overcoming their alcohol and other drug dependence. Congratulations to you all.

CEO James Pitts paid tribute to the staff of Odyssey, and presented the annual staff awards.

The Open Day is also an opportunity to thank our supporters; this year in particular we officially acknowledged our professional medical support team.

This included Dr Sacorderio who has dedicated his service to

Odyssey House for over 30 years assisting with the medical needs of all our clients. Also Dr Selveratnum, Dr Siva and the Withdrawal Unit Acupuncturist Nancy Morgan for their professional contribution over many years.



This years graduates with Program Manager Robyn Ritchie

THE GOLDEN BULL



Odyssey Artist Mel Cranfield and her auctioned artwork

From humble beginnings to a sell out audience, over 500 guests were recently entertained at the annual Australian Fund Managers Awards which celebrated its eleventh year on Thursday 29 October.

This event is an opportunity to acknowledge the achievements of individuals and companies in the money management industry and is also a major supporter of Odyssey House and the Sydney

Children's Hospital Foundation.

Master of ceremonies Helen Dalley from Sky News Business Channel returned as the host of the evening, and guests were entertained by comedian Darren Carr.

This year Odyssey House Art Teacher Mel Cranfield painted a piece of artwork during the event which was then auctioned live raising \$3,000. Thank you Mel for your creativity and for the fabulous piece of artwork.

We would like to officially thank the Australian Fund Managers Awards Committee for supporting Odyssey House and to the generosity of guests on the night. Finally, congratulations to all of the awards winners on the evening. The event was an overwhelming success raising \$140,000 for Odyssey House and the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation.

A message from the Chief Executive Officer



James A. Pitts

The success of any organisation is predicated upon its ability to meet the challenges it will face ultimately.

Due to the downturn in the economy we, like many other not for profit charitable organisations, suffered a decrease in our annual donations. This factor coupled with unexpected capital expenditure posed a gloom outlook for the financial year 2009-2010.

In response we had to curtail the replacements for two staff positions, and required some staff to voluntarily reduce normal working hours. This proved to be a very challenging prospect for the future.

Fortunately, we were able to apply to the Federal Government for assistance through the Jobs Fund administered by the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The scheme titled 'Emergency Assistance Fund' was designed to assist not for profit and charitable organisations who had experienced a significant decrease in their donations over the past year.

We were successful in our application and were awarded \$270,000 to assist in the employment of personnel critical to the operation of the program.

As a result we have been able to recruit Mr Brendan Flynn as our newly appointed, Chief Operating Officer. Brendan's appointment signals a change in the operations of Odyssey House. We will keep you apprised of these developments as they emerge.

Heartened by the injection of funds from the 'Emergency Assistance Fund' we hosted three significantly important events on the Odyssey House calendar. These were the 'Real Men Cook' luncheon held at bel mondo restaurant in August; the Odyssey House Open Day held October 25; and the Australian Fund Managers Awards (AFMA) dinner held October 29.

These three events were successful in their own right with Real Men Cook raising over \$35,000 and the AFMA raising \$140,000 for its charities.

As this year comes to a close we wish to thank all of our supporters, corporate and individuals, who continue to be critical to our ongoing success. We also wish to acknowledge the tremendous contribution of the Board of Directors and the staff at all divisions of Odyssey House who make Odyssey an ongoing story of success.

James A. Pitts, MA
Chief Executive Officer