

<http://www.becausewecare.org.au/>



“If re-elected, further aged care reform will be a second term priority.”
— PM Julia Gillard, 21 July 2010

Let's make that promise a reality, PM.

Ged Kearney: Because We Care

The Blue Mountains Unions Council is pleased to announce that the President of the ACTU, Ged Kearney will be speaking at “Politics in the Pub” at Blackburns Family Hotel in Katoomba on Saturday, 16th April in support of the Australian Nursing Federation’s “Because We Care” campaign and the Quality Aged Care Action Group Inc (QACAG Inc).

“Quality Aged Care benefits all those who receive care, will need care in the future, entrust the care of family to the aged care industry, work as aged care professionals and need support to provide unpaid care at home.” said Ged Kearney, President of the ACTU.

“The recent release of the Productivity Commission's draft report “Caring for Older Australians” recognises that inferior Aged Care services are a burden on the Australian people and economy but underestimates the importance of those factors which put the “Quality” into Aged Care, the people, the resources and accountability.”

Three confirm for BMUC Forum

Blue Mountains Gazette

Three of the four officially declared Blue Mountains hopefuls have confirmed their attendance at the Blue Mountains Union Council (BMUC's) meet the candidates forum.

Labor candidate Trish Doyle, Independent Janet Mays and Kerrin O'Grady of the Greens have confirmed their attendance.

BMUC president Kerry Cooke said he was hopeful Liberal state candidate, Roza Sage would turn up..

“We were disappointed that only two of the three key candidates in the lead up to the federal election [in August last year] agreed to attend the forum, and we hope the Liberal state candidate, Roza Sage, makes herself available to questioning from the engaged Upper Mountains community,” he said in a statement.

Women on Boards

SMH 10/03/2011

The largest operator of private hospitals in the country boasts a workforce comprising more than 84 per cent females.

Ramsay Health Care also has an extensive portfolio of medical services targeted at women, including a new private maternity unit which opened just last month.

Its closest competitor, Primary Health Care, provides obstetric, gynaecological and mammography services to tens of thousands of women every year.

But women do not get a look-in when it comes to making the big decisions. The boards of Australia's two largest private healthcare companies are all-male domains.

Along with the usual mineral, energy, transportation and financial companies in the Australian stock exchange's Top 200 list, healthcare providers, media houses and kitchen appliance manufacturers are among the big corporates without a single woman on the board.

Sunbeam, which is owned by GUD Holdings, joins other household names such as Elders, Cabcharge, Flight Centre and the property arm of Bunnings Warehouse, on the list of boards bereft of female directors.

According to a Women on Boards analysis, 10 per cent of directorships in ASX200 companies are held by women, while 87 of those companies still do not have any women on their board.

As the centenary of International Women's Day was observed around the world, the pay TV company Austar beckoned women to watch “an inspiring documentary commemorating the achievements of Australian women who have helped shape the nation”.

None are shaping the station's own direction from its boardroom; nor from the boardroom of its free-to-air competitor, Southern Cross.

Limitations of NAPLAN data

Margaret Wu, an academic from Melbourne University and an expert in educational measurement and the analysis of student testing data has outlined the limitations of the NAPLAN test when used in the MySchool website data to compare schools' performance..



The overseas experience is clear. League tables change fundamentally what is taught and how it is taught. Based on a single test instrument, league tables damage schools and communities by unfairly naming and shaming them, and devastate both students and teachers in schools identified as failing, whether on a local, state or national basis. League tables narrow the curriculum as more and more pressure is applied to 'teach to the test' to improve school score.

Unions and Disability Insurance

ACTU 1 March

A National Disability Insurance Scheme is long overdue and could stand alongside Medicare and compulsory superannuation as a landmark social reform.

Commenting on the release of the draft report from the Productivity Commission's inquiry into disability care and support, ACTU President Ged Kearney said the NDIS was an idea whose time has come, and which would make immeasurable difference to the lives of people with disability and their carers.

"Just as Medicare and superannuation help to spread risk across lifecycles and across the population, to promote social inclusion and to reduce social inequity and hardship, a National Disability Insurance Scheme could do the same for people who require care and support," Ms Kearney said.

"Existing arrangements to support people with disability and their carers are clearly inadequate. They provide a safety net, at best - but not the comprehensive and universal level of support that meets people's needs.

"This chronic underfunding leaves many people with disability and their carers living in poverty.

"A National Disability Insurance Scheme would be the cornerstone of the Australian disability support system.

"A national scheme is also needed to create the environment to attract more carers into the disability support workforce, which would be necessary to expand services.

"Proper funding would transform the system with greater pay, more jobs, better working conditions and career structures, and the resources to do the job properly."

Blue Mountains History

Jim Angel

The election of the Carr Labor government in 1995 saw the Blue Mountains national parks boundaries rationalised and dramatically changed as part of the beginning of the long campaign to get World Heritage listing which came five years later.

This was a time when subdivided blocks of land were on the ridges from Mount Victoria, Blackheath, Katoomba and Leura in full view of our world famous lookouts. Subdivided and inappropriately zoned blocks were across all of our now pristine wilderness areas all the way to Glenbrook and Lapstone and in most cases in the now national parks.

Going way back during the early 1980s, our national parks were managed by a committee of dedicated volunteers with almost no staff to back up the huge job of managing the environment.

Administrations were set up and the processes put into place, mainly through the National Parks and Wildlife Service, to begin the long and difficult task of managing our environment.

During this time our environment was polluted to the point where almost no creek or water stream was safe and we had weed infestation and the like across our entire community.

Large amounts of funding were invested to ensure the proper management structures and support staff were in place to do the necessary repairs.

Today and into the future there is still a lot of work to do.

My clear recollection of the Liberal government from 1988 to 1995 was that they were famous for huge cutbacks made to the administration of our national parks to the point where it almost went back to the volunteer days.

I have read the policy speech delivered by Barry O'Farrell recently at Penrith and found nothing that the Blue Mountains community can find any joy in. As a matter of fact it asked more questions than it gave details of anything.

Unions and Green Jobs

ABC 28 February 2011

The chief executive of the Climate Institute, John Connor says the research

shows a carbon price will lead to big growth in renewable energy jobs in Australia particularly in regional areas.

"What we've found is a net growth in the power sector so we have looked at the ups and downs here with this transition, a net growth of some 34,000 jobs nationally so this is an important element.

We'll see numbers of scare campaigns and hypothetical about the drops against business as usual so this shows we can significantly reduce pollution, grow the economy, grow jobs.

This is ground-breaking research which it combines not only modelling, top-down modelling in terms of the clean energy resources and opportunities that are there if we put a price on pollution and also bring on clean energy policies, but we combine that with on-ground research and discussion with business and community leaders about how we make those opportunities and turn them into reality so it is also looking at the skills and industry development policies that we need."

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union National secretary Dave Oliver says the industry must be proactive.

"Our union has always viewed tackling climate change not only as a threat but an opportunity and you only have to look at the global clean technology sector in the world, is globally worth \$6 trillion and that is why we have been keen to see that the government in any policy about tackling climate change ensures that our country is positioned to get in as part of that industry.

So we welcome the reports that clearly show that there are actually jobs in it if we get it right."

JOIN BMUC

Blue Mountains residents can become BMUC members if they support our Aims and Objects. Membership is open to union members, to retired unionists and to those who are unemployed or unwaged.

Membership Fees
Waged \$15.00 pa
Unwaged \$5.00 pa

BMUC Secretary
52 Great Western Highway
Mount Victoria
NSW 2786
Phone 02 4787 1401