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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

ADJOURNMENT

**Dress as a Teenager Day, Tuggeranong
United Football Club, Fry, Mr Adam**

SPEECH

Thursday, 22 March 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Brodtmann, Gai, MP

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Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (12:36): Today I would like to speak about two events that are happening and have happened in my electorate that really showcase the sense of community that we have here in Canberra. Canberrans are great contributors and donators to worthwhile causes, and I think these events highlight that giving spirit. In fact, I understand that we have the highest volunteering rate in Australia and that Australia has one of the highest volunteering rates in the world, so we are definitely up there in terms of achievement in this area.

The first event I would like to talk about is Dress as a Teenager Day, which is an initiative of Galilee Foster Care and Communities@Work. They are two very important organisations in my electorate. Communities@Work runs a range of community programs—in excess of 200, I think—throughout the Tuggeranong Valley region in particular. It plays a vital role in ensuring that we have a range of community services throughout Canberra.

Communities@Work and Galilee have come together to launch Dress as a Teenager Day on 30 March, which, funnily enough, requires adults to dress like a teenager to help raise awareness and funding for foster carers in Canberra. This great fundraising initiative began last year as a way to help provide more support to children in foster care. There are almost 35,000 children in foster care in Australia and many find a new home through Galilee Foster Care, where they stay with their foster family for a few days or months or an extended period of time. Canberra certainly has a need for foster carers, and I commend those people in the Canberra community who open their lives and their doors to children and young people in need.

While I will be visiting my constituents on Norfolk Island on 30 March, I will make sure I take my jeggings and Ray-Bans to comply with the teenage dress code and support this very worthwhile cause. I was involved in the cause last year and I wore my Justin Bieber T-shirt, but I am now in love with someone else and so I will be reflecting that on Dress as a Teenager Day because, as you know, Mr Deputy Speaker, love is very strong and true when you are a teenager. But I will still be out there in the jeggings and the Ray-Bans—or the rip-off Ray-Bans anyway. I hope others will do the same, not necessarily by wearing the love of their life's T-shirt and the jeggings but by making a donation to help Galilee Foster Care continue to assist young people in the Canberra community.

I would also like to thank the Tuggeranong United Football Club, who invited me to their Adam Fry Memorial Season Launch last weekend. This event is held by the men's section of the club each year to launch their season. The event is named after Adam Fry, a former player who passed away in 2003 as a result of an epileptic seizure. He was a very much loved player of that club. Many players whom I met on Saturday had played with him all those years ago. I just think it is fabulous that this club is still honouring the memory of their much loved former team member nine years after he passed away. What was also really heartening was the fact that Adam's parents were there on the day—Richard and Rhonda Fry. They have been going to these memorial season launches ever since they began. They are still very much involved in the Tuggeranong United Football Club. It is good to see that continuity.

Each player on the day makes a donation and all money raised is donated to Epilepsy ACT. Tuggeranong United FC is one of the ACT's largest sports clubs and provides the opportunity for anyone to play football regardless of age, gender or skill level. They run football programs for juniors, women and men, and I met them all on Saturday. They are the largest men's football club in the ACT region of any code, with over 250 players. But they also have 180 female players, so there is a very strong female and male presence. What I also found really heartening was the fact that there is a mix of age groups. It goes from essentially the under-15s right through to 70-year-olds still playing. Some of the 70-year-olds set the club up all those years ago and it is great that they are not only interested in and involved with the club but also still pulling on the boots.

That morning they held a round robin tournament. That afternoon the premier team was going off to play the White Eagles in the first kick-off of the season. It was a wonderful morning. They raised a lot of money for Epilepsy ACT. I take my hat off to them and look forward to following their progress in coming months.