



ADVOCATE:
Mental health advocate, artist and journalist Kyra Sykes with her art featured in Headspace Mount Gambier.

Mental health recognition

Passionate advocate awarded for awareness contributions



AMELIA PEPE

amelia@tbw.com.au

PASSIONATE mental health advocate and *The Border Watch* journalist Kyra Sykes has been recognised at a state level for her outstanding contribution to raising awareness of mental health in the region.

Ms Sykes was awarded the South Australian Mental Health Promotion Award at the 2017 Mental Health Excellence Awards for her work committed to increasing awareness and reducing the stigma around mental health.

Through expressing her experiences with art in both the Penola and Mount Gambier communities, Ms Sykes is a well-known and respected mental health advocate in the region.

Art has been a significant outlet for the journalist and through her art ventures, she

has courageously given the community a unique insight into her own struggle with mental health.

“At age 20, my counselor suggested drawing as an outlet and motivator for discussion during sessions,” Ms Sykes said.

“For more than a year, I carried a sketch book and pen and drew whenever panic attack symptoms surfaced - it was a successful method which resulted in a full sketch book of emotional works.”

Her two exhibitions *Scribbles of a Madman* and *Reflection of a Madman* featured works created during her spurts of panic, reflecting her daily hardships battling

anxiety and depression.

Both art exhibitions collectively raised over \$1000 for The South East Junction Mental Health Activity and Resource Centre.

The money raised by Ms Sykes went towards a Coonawarra screening of the self-love film *Embrace*, self-harm workshops for teens and parents and supporting local live music event *Dweebfest*.

In between art and her career, Ms Sykes dedicates her time as a Headspace Mount Gambier Youth Reference Group member - a team which strives to raise awareness of mental health.

Ms Sykes was humbled to be recognised at a state level for mental health promotion.

“Knowing my art is giving people in the area a greater understanding of mental health issues is super rewarding in itself,” Ms Sykes said.

Her artworks have sparked an increase in events supporting mental illness and conversation, thus reducing stigma even within her own social circles.

“For me, the major goal is for people to recognise and respect mental illnesses in the same way as other medical diseases and disorders,” Ms Sykes said.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Minister Peter Malinauskas congratulated the finalists and winners of the 2017 Mental Health Excellence Awards.

“These awards recognise and celebrate those who work tirelessly to improve the mental health and the wellbeing of others,” Mr Malinauskas said.

The awards were presented on Monday afternoon at The Adelaide Pavilion.

For me, the major goal is for people to recognise and respect mental illnesses in the same way as other medical diseases and disorders

Mental health advocate
Kyra Sykes

City cafe provides opportunity to connect over coffee

PRIMARY health care organisation the Riverland Division of General Practice and the recently opened Little Saigon cafe are teaming up for a special Mental Health Week event tomorrow.

Connect Over Coffee will give people the opportunity to drop in to the Little Saigon and meet with local RDGP staff - including mental health and drug and alcohol counsellors - over a \$1 coffee.

Starting at 7am, the event will also profile the Limestone Coast Services Directory and a range of RDGP services such as the HEAL program, an accredited, free service aimed at combating chronic disease and

encouraging healthy lifestyles.

“Mental health related issues are a big concern in our local community,” RDGP Limestone Coast manager Vicki Fabris said.

“Partnering with the Little Saigon in this way means we can give people the chance to talk about things which may be bothering them in a relaxed, confidential environment.”

As well as the “front of house” display of resources and service options, mental health and drug and alcohol counsellors will be on duty through the day to provide a more confidential opportunity for people to talk one-on-one with people

who may have deeper concerns, either about themselves or a loved one.

“For some people, fronting up at a GP or other formal health service is a massive step, for all kinds of reasons,” RDGP clinical services lead Philip Galley said.

“We want to create some space for individuals to explore options in a safe ‘no strings attached’ environment.”

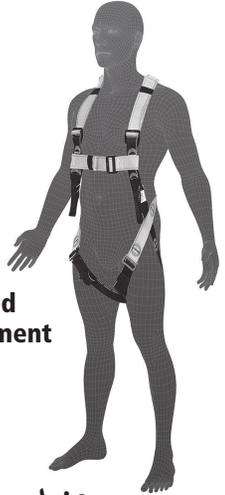
This will be provided in the lounge space at the rear of the cafe.

Connect Over Coffee starts at 7am and runs until 3.30pm.

Vouchers for \$1 coffees will be available at the RDGP stall in the cafe on Sturt Street (formerly 37 Degrees Celsius).

ESSENTIAL HARNESS H101

- Large Dorsal Dee Ring
- Front Belay Loops
- Retro reflective detailing in webbing



Medically designed for maximum moment of impact safety.

\$99

Mt Gambier safety supplies

Like us on Facebook

118 PENOLA ROAD • PH 8724 8011



City of Mount Gambier

Weekly Affairs

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
PERCY STREET & RIPLEY ARCADE PUBLIC ART PROJECT

The City of Mount Gambier seeks expressions of interest from Australian artists and artist teams to develop site specific contemporary public art works in Percy Street and Ripley Arcade in Mount Gambier's central business district.

Artwork(s) can be two or three dimensional. These can include but are not limited to:

- Large scale murals
- Mosaics
- Installations/ sculptures
- Light based installations
- Ephemeral or temporary
- Interactive or kinetic

The Project Brief and Application details are available at www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au

Expressions of interest must be received by 5:00pm on **Monday 23rd October, 2017.**

For further information please contact Council's Arts, Culture & Development Officer, Serena Wong, swong@moutgambier.sa.gov.au or (08) 8721 2405.

RIDE2WORK DAY

City of Mount Gambier locals are being urged to join commuters across Australia to jump on their bikes to celebrate Ride2Work Day on **Wednesday 18th October, 2017.**

Those participating will receive a free coffee or juice at either the Limestone Coast Pantry or The Dining Car at the Rail. Just show your helmet to receive your free drink.

For further information please contact Council's Environmental Sustainability Officer, Aaron Izzard on aizzard@moutgambier.sa.gov.au or (08) 8721 2528 or you can register for free at www.ride2work.com.au

AUSSIE BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

With only 12 days until the Aussie Bird Count begins, BirdLife Australia is encouraging everyone to begin planning when and where they will start counting. You can register your interest by heading to the official website at www.aussiebirdcount.org.au.

Whether you take part by yourself or in a group, every bird counted during **Monday 23rd October - Sunday 29th October, 2017** will help BirdLife Australia reach its target of 1.5 million birds counted in seven days to smash last year's record.

The new, updated Aussie Bird Count app allows you to take part anywhere—not just backyards, but in local parks, botanical gardens, schoolyards or beaches—wherever you might see some birds.

For further information please contact Council's Environmental Sustainability Officer, Aaron Izzard on aizzard@moutgambier.sa.gov.au or (08) 8721 2528.

WORK IN PROGRESS

The City of Mount Gambier outdoor staff will be working in the following areas in the coming week:

- John Street - footpath construction
- Bishop Road - construction
- Commercial Street East - kerb and channel reconstruction
- CBD paving works - Elizabeth Street
- Crouch Street South - tree removal

For more information on the City of Mount Gambier visit our website www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au