

SUNBURY

Shedding light on disease

MS ambassador living life to the full

Barry Kennedy

SUNBURY mother Karen Gujer is determined not to let multiple sclerosis define her.

Ms Gujer was just 20 when she learnt she had the debilitating condition, just three days after she was married.

The 38-year-old has almost no sight in one eye after 12 incidences of neuritis. She doesn't drive, needs a wheelchair to negotiate an airport and battles bouts of fatigue.

Ms Gujer became an MS ambassador in 2015, determined to shed light on "an invisible disease".

"The biggest misconception I find is MS is a death sentence; it won't kill you," she said. "If you get MS now there are better treatments than a generation ago, particularly disease modification treatments."

Ms Gujer visits schools and service clubs in her role as an ambassador "to tell my story in the hope it will motivate others in their lives".

"There are 23,000 Australia-

lians with MS and I am just one of many who have the attitude that it won't control my life. I deal with the cards I was dealt."

Ms Gujer was a Go For Gold scholarship winner in 2016, allowing her to travel to India to meet people with MS there.

"A lot of people there have the worst of symptoms as they just haven't had access to treatment and in other cases there just isn't any education about the condition," she said.

Ms Gujer is a former resident of the US, where she was also unable to access affordable treatments. In contrast, Australians with MS have had key treatments added to the PBS.

"We live in such a lucky country and the generation before me has fought hard for treatment to be made more accessible," she said.

World MS Day is on May 30. Details: msaustralia.org.au



MS ambassador Helen Gujer says she deals 'with the cards I was dealt'. Picture: ROB LEESON

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- KAREN GUJER

Street Watch

SUNBURY

A multiple-vehicle crash on the Calder Freeway overpass at Vineyard Rd at 3pm last Wednesday caused heavy traffic delays. Police and Ambulance Victoria attended the scene. Roadworks to build a shared pathway are under way at the overpass.

SUNBURY

Night roadworks will close the Gap Rd and Home St roundabout this week. Lanes will be closed from midnight to 6pm and partially closed between 10pm and midnight. Motorists must use detours such as Elizabeth Drive, Macedon St/Riddell Rd and Mitchells Lane during the closure periods.

LANCEFIELD

Volunteers will install one-way screws on numberplates at the Lancefield Farmers' Market from 9am to 1pm this Saturday. The free initiative is a joint initiative of Lancefield Romsey Lions Club and Victoria Police. One-way screws are credited with reducing the numbers of vehicle theft.

SUNBURY

Drivers are reminded to slow down when they see emergency services vehicles with flashing lights or sirens on that have stopped on the roadside. A 40km/h limit applies when passing such vehicles.



SUNBURY

Traditional possum cloak incorporates rich culture

SUNBURY is set to have its own ceremonial possum skin cloak. Pelts from 24 possums have been sewn together by an indigenous group in Sunbury to form the cloak.

Sunbury Community Health Aboriginal

engagement officer Gail Radford said several cultural protocols had been adhered to in the making of the cloak.

"We had to be clear as to the purposes of the cloak, what it will be used for and who it represents," she said.

For practical purposes, possum skin cloaks are used for warmth. But they are also ceremonial centrepieces for naming ceremonies and marriages.

On the inside of pelts are the burned designs

representing the life and journey of the wearer. So Sunbury's cloak will be adorned by a pattern incorporating Bunjil, the eagle creator god in Wurundjeri culture, with an eagle's eye view of the town.

The Sunbury Aboriginal Cooperative will be home for the cloak. Ms Radford is also collecting stories, accounts and offerings for a Sorry Book to mark a decade of Sorry Day. Details: 9744 9564.



Gail Radford.

Gas Safety Alert

Energy Safe Victoria has issued a Safety Alert for Pyrox Heritage or Vulcan Heritage gas space heaters.

These heaters can be easily identified by the Pyrox or Vulcan branding and a 'Heritage' marking on the front, lower left-hand corner.

When used in certain conditions, particularly in homes with poor ventilation and when bathroom exhaust fans or kitchen rangehoods are used at the same time, these heaters can spill dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

What do I do?

If you have one of these heaters, do not use it until it can be tested by a qualified gasfitter.

For people living in DHHS housing

DHHS is testing all Heritage heaters in their properties. Phone DHHS on 1800 148 426 for more information.

For private homes

The manufacturer Climate Technologies will arrange for a test by a qualified gasfitter.

Phone Climate Technologies on (03) 8795 2462 for more information.

In the meantime, please use other sources of heating. Do not bring outdoor gas heaters (such as a patio heater) inside. This is dangerous and can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.



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