

Annual Report by Chief Executive Officer

Simone Patterson

Retreat For Kids Inc/The Sanctuary Women and Children's Refuge

Burleigh Heads Surf Club, 6.30pm

27/7/17

Good evening and welcome to everyone. Thanks for coming, and thanks for being a part of The Sanctuary Women Children and Pet's Refuge.

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the country upon which we stand, the Kombumerri and Yugambeh mobs. I pay respect to the elders past and present.

It has been a very exciting, rewarding and hard working year. 19 years, 7 months, 1 day and 1 hour ago, I had a dream to start a domestic violence refuge which was pet friendly. Today that dream is a reality. I work on the premise that if we only save one life, or change one persons' direction, then we have won. So far we have won time and again. This makes me very proud.

Every volunteer has contributed to the women having a safe comfortable house in which to live. These women are my absolute focus. Helping them to leave with better living skills than when they arrived. Being able to see beauty. Taking advantage of all the opportunities we offer them. Knowing their choices have value. The volunteers have helped me achieve this, and for this I sincerely thank them.

There have been many milestones, achievements, setbacks and satisfaction. I have resigned my paid work at TRACC as a case manager, so I can devote all my time to The Sanctuary.

We officially opened on 6th May 2016. Since then we have opened a CBA Bank A/C and:

- Housed 58 women!!!! 58 lives saved.
- Encouraged many women to pursue education. Some are doing Cert IV's in Community Service or Aged Care.
- Turned at least one young life around. After years of being an IV drug user, she has completed a personal training course and is now alcohol and drug free.
- Completed the refit of the main house and added security cameras and an extra bathroom, as well as adding a community laundry
- Completed 4 family units
- Fenced the fishponds, so that we can have children on the premises
- Fenced the 500m perimeter with Colour bond.
- Created an outdoor meeting and eating area, which we plan to make into a real communal kitchen

- Built a more permanent chicken and duck to night enclosure, to keep them safe from the foxes. Concrete steps have also been built for access to the bottom paddock
- Attended Parliament at the invitation of Ros Bates MP, to hear the debate regarding the new legislation which increases penalties for perpetrators of domestic violence, and alerts victims when the perpetrator is nearby.
- Modified most of the units so that they are pet friendly
- Turned the tropical run down gardens into places of beauty again.
- Dealt with literally tons of donations from thousands of charitable people on the Gold Coast.
- Purchased two storage containers to house these donations.
- Manned many stalls throughout the year to promote our cause, including the Women's Expo, and The Boat Show.
- Held 5 massive working bees under the auspices of Fight Like A Pro and Better Men and Symcorp Builders. They provided up to 50 people for 6 hours, doing every trade job available, including electrical, plumbing, carpentry, roofing, tiling, painting, gyprocking etc
- Cooked thousands of sausages at 3 Bunnings BBQ's. They are a good source of income.
- Officially became a Charity in Nov 2016. Now we can gain DGR status, which hopefully means we will get more cash donations
- Received two significant Community Awards, recognising Simone as a leader, innovator, a force for change, and a contributor to our vibrant community.
- Built 2 storage sheds on concrete slabs, for tools and BBQ equipment
- Hosted a very successful Domestic Violence Forum at Burleigh Surf Club. 95 people attended (on a night The Bronco's were playing)! Many inspirational speakers, great raffle prizes, an original art work was auctioned, music was provided, networks were established, and we increased community awareness of our cause.
- Amazed a client by holding a 21st Birthday Party for her. So many presents, so much delicious food, so many friends. We have truly created a family at the refuge.
- Been donated a 72 seater bus, no longer in service. We will refurbish this to create a children's play/therapy area, as well as it being suitable for volunteer meetings.
- Assembled secure night houses for the goats. We have also been blessed with a baby kid called Charlotte.
- Plan Mark III for Mr Pig. He wants to sleep with the other farm animals, but now has his own enclosure.
- 24 solar panels on the roof of the main house, which will save us thousands of dollars in electricity.
- Hosted lots of in house events, with volunteer presents, food and good will. Mothers Day, Xmas Day, religious days etc. Sad times to be alone, so we make sure our clients aren't alone, that they are valued and celebrated.
- Raised \$14,665.75 through fundraising.
- Received \$37,841.06 in donations.

- Been granted \$3500 .

We have achieved all of this without any paid staff. Everyone is a volunteer.

I cannot go any further without acknowledging the help and support my husband Nigel has been over the last 12 months. He is at the refuge every day, performing planned and random tasks, using his considerable handyman skills to build, maintain and improve the facilities at The Sanctuary. Many thanks Nigel.

My Management Board has been totally supportive. They bring a diverse range of skills and also provide feet on the ground. Manning stalls, BBQ's, Tara Brown Foundation Days, cooking breakfast and lunch for working bees, gardening, sourcing and collecting donations, sorting donations, helping the clients with medical issues, legal issues, Centrelink. The list is endless.

The hundreds of volunteers have contributed immensely. Gavin and Michelle Topp from Fight Like A Pro, and Mick Robinson from Bettermen, have been our major in kind sponsors, as they organise the working bees, along with Chris from Symcorp Building Services.

There are too many people to thank tonight, so I am providing a DVD presentation of all our sponsors / donors, which will run through the evening. As you will all be aware, I thank everyone on our Facebook page for any help.

Despite Rosie Batty being the Australian of the Year in 2015, and a fierce, high profile advocate against domestic violence, governments are cutting funding to many refuges in South East Queensland.

For those women and children escaping domestic violence, this is counterproductive and hypocritical. Nigel and I feel so passionate about this issue, which is why we privately funded our own refuge.

Again, I feel privileged to have been supported by so many community organisations, which care about the issue of Domestic Violence. It is blight on our society, and I think history will judge us harshly on our inability to correct this imbalance of power, especially at a government level.

Unfortunately we have no immediate of funding, so we still have to appeal to the charitable nature of our community members, who recognise that domestic violence is not OK , and that the long term effects of such violence on our whole communities can be devastating and create social problems for many years to come.

To all our volunteers and donors.

Without you, the Refuge would not be viable or rescuing victims of domestic violence.

Tears of happiness and gratitude for your generosity of spirit, intent and actual contribution, be it physical or financial. You are all “awesome”.

My report will be posted on our website, as we embrace technology in the 21st Century.

Simone Patterson.

27/7/17.

Sincere thanks to all our sponsors. We would not be where we are without you.

Sorry that this list is not in alphabetical order. More like a chronological one.

Many of our sponsors are repeat donors, or even continuous ones. I am so humbled by your generosity.

Mel – South West Rocks – working bee on Day 2

Adam- Yatala- working bee Day 2 – bobcat and trailer

Denise Hogan – working bee Day 2 – learning to drive a bobcat, concreting steps

Daniel Patterson – my wonderful son- first aid, IT, cameras, anything

Juliette Patterson - my wonderful daughter – manning awareness stalls – general everything

Friends With Dignity – Manuela- furnishing rooms for the women

Debbie Craft – gardening, fund raising, fencing

Industry Trade College from Robina – sheds

Charlene and Kim – cash donations

Woolworths 19th Ave - food donations, plus vegetables etc for the animals every day.

Steve Courtice – concreting

Sawtells – gravel and machinery

Fight Like a Pro – Inspiration and expertise in every field- Michelle and Gavin Topp

Susan Kelly – general cook and bottle washer, fund raiser and maker of awesome cakes – Board Member

92.5 Gold FM – Bridge and Spida – support and publicity

NSW Rural Fire Service – professional burning off

Buy Australian Properties AU – David Pascoe – grocery donations

Gold Coast University Hospital Radiology Dept – Melanie – donations

Starlight Foundation – Tahayne – fund raising ideas

Currumbin- Tweed Rotary – Gloria –barbeque queen

Bunnings at Burleigh- BBQ fund raising slots

White Ribbon Day – Cindy- support to our clients

A Bit Hippy- moisturisers and baby eczema cream

Jennifer- donated \$200 from her 60th Birthday – at a Bunnings BBQ

Kelly- fish tank

Watmar Property Maintenance and Electrical Contractors – Bernie – electrical

Malcolm Maiden - plumber- donated 4 weeks work

Storage King Miami – Wayne - free donation storage for months

Ella Reid – a 13 yr old who raised money and turned that into gift vouchers for our women.

Gold Coast Community Fund – grant

Destiny Rescue – Amanda and Jennifer – Marketing and compliance advice.

Michael Hart MP – on going support from Michael and his team.

Robina Chiropractic Wellness Centre – gift drive

Gold Coast Basket Brigade – Xmas gifts for our women

Urban Mix Farm – Benedict, Wendy, Dominic and family – gifts for Xmas

PCYC Gold Coast- Kelly and Karen – gym and yoga + Xmas hampers

Natalie – massage vouchers

George- jewellery donations

Magic Mountain Miami – Xmas presents

Curvy Bras - \$300 voucher for the women

Amcal Chemist at 19th Ave Palm Beach – cosmetics for the women

Leisa and family - post hole digging

Brumby's Bakeries at The Pines- Luke – daily bread, pies and cakes

Michelle Slayters' Radical Retreat- a special day for the women organised by Sophie – 92.5 Gold FM

Toni Childs- international singer - has agreed to be our Ambassador, even though she is hardly ever at home on the Gold Coast.

Feros Care in Coolangatta – Phil, Glen and Jon – donating revamped Dell laptops

Naomi – yoga classes for the women

Apex Club of Southport – fencing

Pyramed Pty Ltd - \$1000 towards ceiling fans – Shayne

Mermaid CWA. – donation of toiletries

Jane Francis and Ros - 30 individually hand sewn toiletry bags, and baby blankets

Sun Newspaper – Bob – publicity by Laura Nelson

Symcorp Building Services - Chris, Heath, Daniel and crew - building

Bettermen – Mick Robinson- building services

Prime Fencing – Dan – fencing the fish ponds

Hutchinson’s Builders- Mark -land clearing- donation of building supplies worth – \$14,000

Kennards Hire – Burleigh – equipment hire

Mantas Ambrakaitas- Jim’s Antenna’s – TV Aerials.

Dr Marian Evans – medical services to our clients

Jill – runs group counselling sessions, and pampers our clients.

Kesti – teaches sewing and counselling

Selina – organising donations of everything for The Refuge – Board Member

Sasha Bristow – interior decorator – furnishing new rooms at The Refuge

Rex the Vet – animal welfare

Agape Outreach Church – Teresa Newton- homeless services – mentor- Refuge partner

Ros BatesMP – supporter

Channel 9 – publicity

Sugar and Spice by UJ – UJ- cake maker and decorator- donating delicious cakes for our special occasions

My Jewellery Shop – Katherine – birthday presents for our clients 21st Birthday

Ace Community College- Robyn Keenan – donations, raffles, grant writing help

First National Real Estate- Lorraine – donations

Zealifi Hospitality Training and Consulting – Justin McGurgan- donation

Modergy- Jared Mosly – donation and installation of solar system

Zest Coffee Cafe and Catering – Donna – donating food for a cancer sufferer

Wattle Quilters – Pam – donation of beautifully crafted quilts for our women

Share the Dignity – taking the women to high teas

Coolangatta Dental Group – donated a set of dentures for our cancer sufferer

Tweed City Mowers – repairing our mower, blower and whipper snipper

Good Guys Tweed Heads – massive donation of white goods for our family units

Jai Topp – producing our FB video as a testimonial to both our refuge and our cause

Surfside Buses – donation of an out of service 72 seater bus – welcome as a children's play area

Sisters of Steel- motorbike rally- raised \$2000.

Shane Hegarty – amazing donor through Face Book.

These donors/sponsors have contributed until 30th June, 2017.

Simone Patterson

Founder/CEO/ Manager

