14th of September saw the ACV/GARDS team at Lavalla College where one of the VCAL students Ben Schena made a presentation to his class with asbestos as his topic.

Ben had been at a tute at GippsTAFE where he had listened to Vicki talking about all things asbestos. Ben decided he wanted to do something like this to his class mates as his end of year session/ project (Ben was to be evaluated on this). Ben did a wonderful presentation in front of his peers and he and his class learnt so much about asbestos and the issues. Vicki backed up Ben with a short presentation on some of the other issues. The class enjoyed it immensely and Ben was praised by his teachers for the wealth of knowledge he had been able to give the class and the high quality of his presentation.

Well done, Ben and the VCAL class of 2015 at Lavalla College Traralgon – thank you for being so welcoming to the ACV/GARDS team. Footnote to this story recently Vicki ran into Ben and Ben advised Vicki that he has secured himself a full time job starting next year in 2016 – Well done Ben, we are all very proud of you.

On 3rd December we were very privileged and honoured to be given a monetary donation from the dance club. A great group of people who get together for the joy of dancing.

The group members also teach others to dance and it was a real pleasure to see young faces in the dance group enjoying the music and dancing to some old time favourites. The group raise money for the running of the dance through raffles etc., and any money left over after insurance and hall hire and other things required for the dance to run each week is donated to charity.

On the night we were invited to receive our monetary donation there were 5 other groups who would be receiving a donation from the group. Some of those were SES, Heart Kids, Local Ambulance, and Centenary House. Thank you so much to all those who were at the dance – it makes a difference and we all appreciated your support.

We would like to thank Maurice Blackburn Lawyers for again sponsoring us this next 12 months. Sponsors are very important to our organisation without them we would find it extremely difficult to provide the services that we do to our sufferers and their families.

Our organisation relies on the generosity of the community, firms and companies to keep providing education, awareness, 24/7 support, and all of our medical equipment that we lend to our sufferers free of charge.

So we would like to say thank you to Jane McDermott, Principal in Asbestos Litigation at Maurice Blackburn along with Associates Sally Weir and Victoria Keays for having faith in us to keep delivering the services we provide to the community. It is so good to know that companies like this have community spirit. Thank you to you all.
11/1/1949 – 28/11/2015 – On the 28th of November the world lost a truly amazing man. Here are some excerpts from the eulogy Vicki gave at his celebration of his life on the 9th December.

I and the ACV/GARDS organisation feel very honoured and privileged to have worked alongside him – I personally became very close to John and he was like the big brother I never had. A good friend that I adored and loved. John was our Treasurer on the committee of ACV/GARDS for 4 years and he was made a Life Member of our Association in March of this year.

I first met John when he came to the Valley to head up the Gippsland Trades and Labour Council – I viewed John with some scepticism as our relationship with unions at that point had not been all that flash and we were not trusting of many people and associations. In fact you might say we were very GARDED – excuse the pun!

He held the hand of friendship out and said that the GTLC wanted to work hand in glove with community groups like ours to make Gippsland a better place for all. I am so glad that we took that plunge with him and the trust and bond that grew up from that point onwards became links in a chain that has now spanned more than a decade. The trust and bond that plunged with him and the trust and bond that grew up from that point onwards became links in a chain that has now spanned more than a decade.

John never crowed about his achievements – but he derived so much satisfaction knowing that he had helped to bring about that change. He was a visionary, an honest bloke who told it like it is, selfless, caring and compassionate for his fellow human being, he was always trying to right the wrongs of others - man of integrity and a sense of justice compared to none. A true community leader that we admired greatly.

He was a warm, gentle and a passionate fighter for Gippsland workers and their families. He use to call himself the scrapper! – because he never shied away from a battle if that is what it took.

I was always ringing John up for his opinion on asbestos situations as we were dealing with them on a day to day basis from the community. John’s opinions and the wealth of knowledge that John had taught me so much – I was an integration aide working at Newborough Primary School when I first met him and I was trying to juggle my work commitments with the demand on us from the community to help with all things Asbestos – as most of you here would know now - this was a mammoth job on its own.

John inspired me to be the very best advocate I could be for asbestos sufferers and their families. He reassured me and supported me when those in the community were not so supportive of the work our organisation was trying to achieve for sufferers and their families. Thank goodness times have gotten better in recent years around support from the community and starting to understand the issues that our area and the nation face into the future – he helped us wherever he could and joined us in meetings with whomever it took to make change. He was our rock and if anyone dared to down us John was there to stand up for us. A truly great CFMEU organiser – one of the best – some of John’s sayings to me included he was the feather duster not the rooster – lets go deal with those who can make the change – another of his sayings was I am just the oily rag not the engine driver – lets go see who can take this forward for us. He had a wonderful ability to clear away the bullshit so the problem could be seen clearly by everyone. He empowered so many people and organisations to deal with their problems and make change for the better. This is a great legacy he has left Gippsland with a very big foot print on all of us.

John never crowed about his achievements – but he derived so much satisfaction knowing that he had helped to bring about that change.

I know that all the ACV/GARDS members join me in saying the world has lost a truly amazing man we called John, Friend, mate and comrade with us – we are so grateful to the Parker family for allowing us to have our piece of John Parker to keep and remember. We had some laughs along the way and many cherished memories to go over in our minds and I know I will always look back on the times I had with John and cherish them.

Again lastly I want to thank Alison and her family for sharing the truly amazing man we called John, Friend, mate and comrade with us – we are so grateful to the Parker family for allowing us to have our piece of John Parker to keep and remember. We had some laughs along the way and many cherished memories to go over in our minds and I know I will always look back on the times I had with John and cherish them.

The wonderful things he created with his magic hands and keen eye – his love of painting – and the magic he created on canvas – his interest and love of rock collecting that he was passionate about maybe something that you did not know was John could knit, sew and do needle point – for a tuff union organiser the inner layers of this onion would astound you.

He was a true gentleman and he has left Gippsland with a wonderful legacy of all that he has loved and been involved in – it is up to us to keep up the standard John has set.

And I want to thank all the ACV/GARDS members join me in saying the world has lost a truly amazing man – we called John, Friend, mate and comrade with us – we are so grateful to the Parker family for allowing us to have our piece of John Parker to keep and remember. We had some laughs along the way and many cherished memories to go over in our minds and I know I will always look back on the times I had with John and cherish them.
The grade 3/4s invited community groups and individuals who volunteer making a difference in our community to a thank you afternoon tea. We were honoured to be invited and partake of a beautiful afternoon tea prepared by the grade 3/4s. We also were treated to a video made by them thanking all the different groups that came along in the video. It was a delight to listen to them sing a wonderful song that they had put together. They are a great bunch of kids and we thank them and their teachers for such a fun way to celebrate volunteerism in our communities. They learn so much from this about the value of volunteering and giving to your community and who knows one day they will be the next volunteers enjoying have grade 3/4s afternoon tea.

On 22nd – 24th November ACV/GARDS was lucky enough to be sponsored by ASEA to attend the International Conference in Brisbane – It was great to catch up with those we had not seen for some time. Many interesting speakers on all things asbestos. One of our heroes who attended was Barry Castleman, we were lucky enough to meet him and have our pic taken with him. We also met our honorary ACV/GARDS member of two years Vilada from Lao – she was at the conference as an APHEDA rep. It was so lovely to catch up – we had so much to chat about. We also had a chance to catch up with our friend Matt Peacock Senior journalist with the ABC. We were also thrilled to talk to our friends who came from Sydney from ADFA and our friends from SA from AVA along with one of the asbestos litigation lawyers we work with, Bree Knoester ALIL – it was nice to get time to catch up on all the news from everyone around asbestos issues and much more. We also liked being able to say a big Hi to Brian Sketcher and his wife from Asbestos Audits Queensland. Thank you so much to ASEA for our sponsorship, we really appreciated their support in getting us there – it meant a lot to us.
We are here for you!

Good deeds.

Join us? Call the number listed below.

The Latrobe Valley Palliative Care Fundraising Association "provides concentrators and conserving equipment hire needed in the patient's home to help them go home sometimes - we would all like to see you. We thank you so much for your donation and we hope you are still punching above your weight - hope to see you sometime soon."

Thank you so much for your donation and we hope you are still punching above your weight - hope to see you sometime soon.

ACV/GARDS membership fees were due 30th September 2015. Could you please make sure your fees are up to date. We do not send out personal reminders for membership as this adds burden to our costs. The fees only cover some of the costs associated with being a member of the organisation - it does help us to send out information to you. We thank all those who support us by being a member as this gives us strength and unity.

Annual Membership Fees

ACV/GARDS New Web Site Under Construction

We would like to thank Italicherry Design studio Wendy McEwan for all the great work she is doing for us - she has been very generous with her time & expertise www.italicherrydesign.com.au

All those who have donated to our information on the web site, we will be placing their logos on our new web site shortly in appreciation.
**ACV/GARDS Inc. Membership Form**

Asbestos Council of Victoria/Gippsland Asbestos Related Diseases Support Inc.

ABN: 77 687 118 554 - Inc. No. A0042386U

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

Postcode: ___________ Telephone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

Occupation: ____________________________________________________________

**ACV/GARDS NEW MEMBERS Joining Fee** $5.00
PLUS
**ACV/GARDS Annual Subscription 2016**

1. Concession (Pensioner/unemployed) __________________________ $3.00
2. Full Rate (employed) ____________________________________________ $11.00

Upon my admission as a Member, I agree to be bound by the rules of ACV/GARDS Inc.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ______/______/______

Please return to ACV/GARDS Inc. with payment, PO Box 111, MOE, Vic. 3825

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**ACV/GARDS Fees**

Joining Fee: ……………… $5.00

Annual Fees:

Pensioner/Concession: ……………… $3.00

Unemployed: ……………… $3.00

Employed persons: ……………… $11.00

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**ACV/GARDS SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS FOR 2016**

**ACV/GARDS NIGHT MEETINGS FOR 2016**

**UP AND COMING EVENTS IN 2016**

**OUR NIGHT/DAY MEETINGS**

**1.30PM – 3.30PM**

Meetings are held at –

ACV/GARDS Premises
41 Monash Road, Newborough

- Tuesday 23rd February
- Tuesday 29th March
- Tuesday 28th April, International Workers Memorial Day, Rose Garden, Morwell
- Tuesday 31st May
- Tuesday 28th June
- Tuesday 26th July
- Tuesday 30th August
- Tuesday 27th September
- Tuesday 25th October
- Friday 25th November, Asbestos Awareness Day, Rose Garden, Morwell, 11am
- Christmas Break-Up TBA

**7.30PM – 9.30PM**

Meetings are held at –

ACV/GARDS Premises
41 Monash Road, Newborough

- Tuesday 16th February
- Tuesday 15th March
- Tuesday 19th April
- Tuesday 17th May
- Tuesday 21st June
- Tuesday 19th July
- Tuesday 16th August
- Tuesday 20th September
- Tuesday 18th October
- Tuesday 15th November
- Christmas Break-Up TBA

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**UP AND COMING EVENTS IN 2016**

- Support Group Tuesday 24th February
  Luke Prust – Pharmacist
- Support Group Tuesday 31st March
  TBA
- International Workers’ Memorial Day event 28th April – 11am
  Rose Garden, Commercial Road, Morwell
- Bus excursion to Power Works in Morwell
- Bus excursion to the Darnum Musical Village

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**ACV/GARDS AGM 2016**

Sat 30th January 2016 – 2pm
41 Monash Road, Newborough

President * Treasurer Committee Member
Other business to be conducted Election of Auditor for 2016/17
Change of Membership fees
ACV/GARDS INC. SUPPORT

ACV/GARDS provides support and information to asbestos sufferers, their families and carers. This includes home visits by ACV/GARDS volunteers, a telephone information/support service 24 hours, 7 days a week. ACV/GARDS has an office, which is open for sufferers, their families, carers and the general community to access at the times listed in the information section.

ACV/GARDS INC. Support also conducts a monthly meeting (1.30pm – 3.30pm) on the last Tuesday of the month) where guest presenters are invited to provide information about support services of all kinds and any other topics of interest that the members might find of relevance. The meetings also provide a gathering place for experiences; ACV/GARDS Support is open to anyone whose lives have been affected by asbestos, their families and the general public.

ACV/GARDS loans out free of charge to asbestos sufferers - oxygen bottle regulators, conserving devices, oxygen home concentrators, wheel chairs, oxygen bottle carriers, nebuliser, walking frames & walking sticks.

We also have an extensive library of books, DVDs and CDs on asbestos issues, health, social and environmental that we loan free of charge to those wishing to improve their knowledge.

ACV/GARDS can provide professional counselling with a qualified psychologist free of charge for those who have been diagnosed with asbestos related disease and also their family members. If preferred telephone counselling can be arranged.

ACV/GARDS INC. EVENING MEETING

ACV/GARDS has an organisational, activities and advocating arm. Interested financial members can come along to evening meetings, which are, conducted 7.30pm – 9.30pm on the third Tuesday of the month.

These meetings provide a focal point for information sharing and problem identification. The aim of this group is to focus on improving health and support services and any other issues deemed relevant to improving overall outcomes to asbestos sufferers, their families and the general public. Thus ensuring asbestos-related issues are kept in the public eye and trying to rid our environment of asbestos products.