

Man on drug charges a 'victim of revenge'

KURNELL man **Agapitos Peter Megaloudis**, 43, was trying to sever ties with an outlaw motorcycle gang when he was arrested in a raid at Kurnell, Sutherland Local Court heard last Wednesday.

Megaloudis appeared in court on nine charges relating to the possession of cocaine, amphetamines, a pistol, a double barrel shotgun, and two prohibited snakes and a chameleon.

He was arrested when police raid-

ed a property on Prince Charles Parade last Thursday.

The accused man's legal counsel, Brae Maxwell Antcliffe, told magistrate Beverley Schurr that his client was the victim of an unfortunate situation involving a poor choice of friends. Mr Antcliffe said at one stage Megaloudis had links to an outlaw motorcycle group and was trying to sever those ties.

He said the fact that police arrived at the Kurnell property with WIRE

personnel on hand to deal with the illegal reptiles indicated the police were well informed.

"It was seen to be a matter of revenge or retribution," Mr Antcliffe said. He said his client suffered from agoraphobia and had never come to police attention until last week. The father, brother and wife of Megaloudis were in court for the bail application. Mr Antcliffe told magistrate Shurr his client was overweight and unwell and would be vulnerable

in prison.

The accused man's brother had offered to post surety of \$10,000 and the magistrate was told Megaloudis could live temporarily with his wife from whom he had separated. The magistrate granted bail on the condition that Megaloudis not leave his wife's shire house except to report to police or meet lawyers or doctors.

Megaloudis will appear again in Sutherland Court on June 25.

Article from The Leader

Stop the spam and save the planet

AS IF spam email wasn't unloved enough already, new research shows all those unsolicited messages, 62 trillion of them last year, generate greenhouse gases equivalent to driving a car around the planet 1.6 million times. More than 80 per cent of the world's email traffic is now deemed spam and - between the energy devoted to sending, storing and sorting phoney messages - 33 billion kilowatt-hours of power is wasted. The study, commissioned by the computer security firm McAfee and conducted by climate change analysts at ICF International, notes that when one spammer, McColo, was closed by its internet service provider last November, worldwide spam fell by 70 per cent overnight. But the robot computer networks, or botnets, that McColo harnessed to send spam were quickly redeployed and the relief was short-lived, McAfee's regional spokesman, Michael Sentonas, said.

"A lot of spam is generated from botnets and that makes it very hard to identify where it's coming from," he said. "The botnet may be spread across 10 countries." He said some experts once thought spam would disappear as consumers learned to ignore e-mails that promised to enlarge their bank account or their anatomy, but spam has changed. "Today, spam comes with malware [malicious software] with links to compromised websites," Mr Sentonas said. "Spam is a great tool to steal someone's identity, [and] identity theft rates are growing exponentially."

Globally, one reason for that proliferation is email servers that can be used anonymously. With a single spam campaign involving up to one million messages and spammers needing a success rate of only 2 to 5 per cent, it takes little effort to steal credit card details, for example, and make a profit, he said. Australia, to its credit, has closed its mail servers to unknown entities, said Peter Coroneos, chief executive of the Internet Industry Association, and our ranking on a list of spamming nations has fallen.

Elsewhere, spammers have paid ISPs to keep email servers open. Mr Coroneos believes spam can only be thwarted by understanding - and undermining - the economics of its use. Much as polluters once saw little reason to curb the chemicals they spewed into the sky because the air was considered a free resource, spammers now send their messages through the internet at virtually no cost. Charging for each email, even less than one cent per message, would quickly make most spam unviable, he said, but consumers have shown little willingness to pay for a service they have always considered free. Legislation can help, and Australia's Spam Act of 2003 has served as a model for Canada and Korea. The only other solution Mr Coroneos sees is greater authentication. Just as some banks now require a customer to use a token to verify their identity, this could be used to combat spam. Whether consumers will be prepared to leap that extra hurdle to send email may depend, in part, on the benefits they perceive to protect their identity - and the environment.

Article from the Sydney Morning Herald



Dionysios Solomos Awards

The Greek Festival of Sydney brings you our most prestigious event to commend NSW highest ranking Greek Language students, in the presence of family, friends and distinguished guests. In this annual presentation, the top 10% of NSW Higher School Certificate students and other high achieving students are officially awarded, acknowledged and encouraged to continue to strive for excellence in Greek language studies, having achieved the highest marks in Modern and Classical Greek.

Proudly hosted by Sydney University's Department of Modern Greek and the Nicholson Museum and sponsored by Ronis Real Estate.

Date	Sun 3 May	Time 4.30 pm
Venue	MacLaurin Hall, Main Quadrangle Sydney University	
Cost	Free Entry	
Contact	02 9750 0440	

A decent standard of living for pensioners still in question

Age pensioners may not get a reasonable increase in the age pension sparking concerns that a meagre increase will only go to meet increasing living costs.

"A major concern for COTA NSW is that the possible increase in the pension will only serve to meet increases in the cost of living and not provide enough for pensioners to be lifted above the poverty line," said Jon Bisset, Executive Director of COTA NSW.

Recent research has shown that single older people have the highest incidence of poverty of any demographic group. Almost a quarter (23.9%) of older Australians and almost half (46.9%) of single age pensioners are living in poverty. Of all Australians living in poverty, 27 per cent are people over the age of 65. (Saunders et al 2008)[i]

These findings were echoed by the OECD report "Growing Unequal" which found that 50percent of Australian single people aged

over 65, are living in poverty, the highest in the OECD. [ii]

COTA's nationally have called for the single age pension to increase to 35percent of Male Average Weekly Earnings (\$375.30 per week) an increase of \$93.85.

Dianna Lee-Gobbitt, a single age pensioner in the private rental market believes an adequate increase is needed for single aged pensioners to keep them above the poverty line.

"I am in the private rental market because there is no affordable housing in my area, you do the math, I receive \$683.90 in total per fortnight (\$562.90 pension, \$5.80 Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, \$110.20 Rental Assis-

tance). My rent is \$460 per fortnight which leaves me with \$223.90 per fortnight for everything - water, electricity, telephone, medical, and food.

"To add insult to injury because I worked in the 2007-08 financial year and earned about \$5,000 income which took me over the Table of Income threshold (if you earn over \$138 gross you lose 40 cents in the dollar of the age pension) and ended up owing Centrelink \$1,377 which I am still paying off," Dianna said.

"We continue to be hopeful that the Henry Tax Review will provide a more holistic response to the issues affecting single age pensioners, especially around the removal of inequities in the system so that they may have a decent standard of living," Jon said.

[i] Saunders, P., Hill, T. and Bradbury, B., 2008, Poverty in Australia: Sensitivity analysis and recent trends' Report commissioned by Jobs Australia on behalf of the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). SPRC Report 4/08, Social Policy Research Centre, University of NSW.

[ii] OECD, 2008, Growing Unequal report

