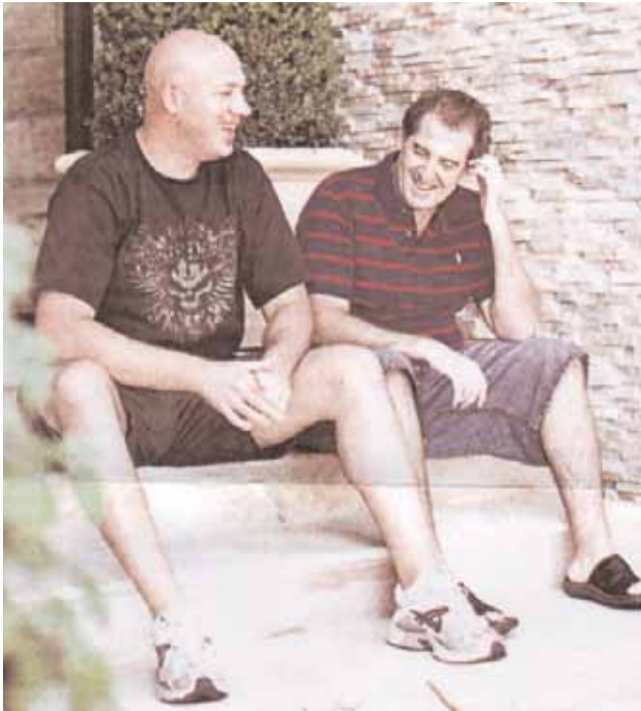


Mate gives ultimate gift



Jim Harpas and Harry Dertilis sharing a laugh

As teenagers, Jim Harpas and Harry Dertilis shared a love of football, now - almost 25 years later - they share much more.

Diagnosed with polycystic kidneys - a disease where cysts envelop the organ eventually forcing a transplant - Jim needed dialysis three to four days a week, for five hours at a time.

The 38-year-old managed his disease - the same disease that killed his mother at the age of 41 - in between running a successful electrical contracting business at Revesby and raising a daughter, Helena with his wife, Cynthia.

The Picnic Point dad would have been waiting four years for a kidney transplant next month if not for his former high school buddy, Harry Dertilis.

Harry, 37 - also married and

with two children - went to East Hills Boys' High School with Jim.

The two remained friends after leaving school although setting off on different lives.

"We kept in touch after we married and met socially at barbecues, as well as at the football now and again", Harry said.

It was at a barbecue that Harry first offered to donate his kidney to Jim.

"You know what friends are like", Jim said.

I thought he was joking around.

"I just said I'm on a waiting list, I'll be OK".

But after the years passed, Harry noticed Jim's discomfort and pulled him aside to make the generous offer once again.

"I know the implications, and I discussed it with my wife Linda", Harry said.

"She was supportive and said the decision was mine".

Jim, uncomfortable with Harry's offer, asked him to seriously reconsider and think of his own children and wife.

"What would happen if one of his family needed his kidney?" Jim asked.

After counselling, Harry went ahead with his original decision and the successful transplant took place in June last year.

"Who knows what will happen in the future", Harry said.

"I'm an easy going person and I think this was the right decision".

Jim said Harry has given him another chance at life.

"He's a lifesaver, an angel, a real mate - he gave the ultimate gift", Jim said.

Article by Mick Roberts

The story of two Greek Australian brothers wins at Melbourne Queer Fest

Kim Farrant's *Bombshell* won the City of Melbourne Emerging Filmmaker for Best Australian Short Queer Film at the Melbourne Queer Film Festival. "I made this film because no one should have to live in shame about who they are or keep secrets about who they are," said Farrant.



Bombshell tells the story of two Greek Australian brothers who must question their beliefs and identities when they discover a family secret. Farrant said the film is based on the family's shame over the father's secret bi-sexuality, which they eventually got ride of by sharing their truths. Another short, Lauren Anderson's *Love and Other Red Spot Specials* was named winner of the Selector's Choice Award for Best Australian Short Queer Film. It is the story of a shoplifting transvestite on an extravagant quest for love. The festival will have encore screenings on Monday; audience awards for best feature, best documentary, best Australian short and best short will be announced following the festival.

Youth Allowance is changing

Centrelink is helping to spread the word about important changes to Youth Allowance and student payments. Area Manager Alison Frame said you may be affected by these changes if you or your immediate family are receiving or thinking of claiming a student payment. "Some of the changes will start as early as April 2010, including a Student Start-up Scholarship for full time university students receiving Youth Allowance, Austudy and ABSTUDY. In 2010, this will be \$1300 paid in two instalments of \$650. "Some Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY customers who have to move away from home to attend university may also qualify for a relocation scholarship to help with the costs of moving. "Some of the other changes include the age of independence dropping to 24 years from 1 April 2010. This will reduce to 22 years by 2012. "Also, in July 2010 a more generous parental income test for dependent Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY customers will mean more students becoming eligible for payment." Students and their families interested in finding out more about the changes can visit www.centrelink.gov.au. New students can lodge their claims for Youth Allowance or Austudy online and current customers do not need to contact Centrelink.

Υπογράψτε την αίτηση και στείλτε τη στην αναπληρώτρια πρωθυπουργό Τζούλια Γκίλλαρντ

The Hon Julia Gillard MP
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Dear Minister,

RE: AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGES CURRICULUM

In March 2008, you announced that the National Curriculum will include a languages curriculum from 2011. A later announcement committed \$62.4 million to Asian language education by then.

As an Australian of Hellenic descent, I share the Federal Government's concern that only thirteen per cent of Year 12 students in this country study a language. **I believe part of the solution is for study of languages (including Modern Greek as an option) to be compulsory for all students (K-12).**

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Australian Council of State School Organisations and the Group of Eight Universities have all called for greater emphasis on the teaching of languages. The Australian Federal Police, the Australian Defence Force and non-government aid agencies continue to cry out for multilingual personnel, as did *The Flood Report* on intelligence.

According to as John Byron, Director, Australian Academy of the Humanities, **"There is plenty of anecdotal and research evidence that we are failing to pursue all the alternatives we can in trade to do business with those willing to speak their language"**.

The Australian Curriculum should include compulsory language education (including Modern Greek) alongside English, Science and History. Integral to the study of a particular language is the study, and understanding, of the cultural context that developed that language.

Numerous studies have illustrated how the systematic study of grammar improves students' written expression. This is also borne out by multilingual students, who transfer their learning of their second language (such as Modern Greek) into their learning of English.

Parents, principals and other stakeholders in Australian education need to be reminded that the Federal Government thinks that the study of the rest of the world is important. The introduction of language education (including Modern Greek) as a formal part of the Australian Curriculum cements learning and Australia in its regional and global context.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,