



## Clubs offered pokie tax break

REGISTERED clubs in Sutherland Shire would be able to provide an extra \$1.9 million over four years to the community under the Coalition's new poker machines tax policy, it is claimed. Liberal candidate for Menai, Melanie Gibbons, said there were 31 clubs in the four electorates that cover the shire.

"Under our [four-year] plan, these clubs will be able to contribute approximately \$1.9 million more to local sporting organisations, community groups and charities," she said.

"In addition, they will pay \$5.8 million less in tax, which is money that clubs can reinvest in our local area."

CEOs and chairmen from all shire clubs were invited to Sharkies Cronulla for the Coalition's shire launch of the "clubs and community rescue package".

Sharkies CEO Damian Irvine hosted the event, with players Luke Douglas and Tim Smith on promotional duties. However, despite expectations of a much bigger turnout, only five clubs were represented. Present were Opposition spokesman on hospitality and tourism George Souris, Ms Gibbons, Liberal candidate for Heathcote Lee Evans and Cronulla MP Malcolm Kerr. Mr Irvine, who blamed short notice for the low attendance, said the proposed cuts to poker machine tax were "great". He said the move would allow Sharkies to continue and increase support of community groups. Mr Souris said Labor's clubs tax had hurt the community.

"Under our plan, tax rates will be reduced by \$300 million over four years, ensuring that clubs remain viable," he said.

"In return for this reduction in the clubs tax, clubs will be required to do even more on top of the great work they already do for local communities."

**caption: Tax relief: Lee Evans (left), Damian Irvine, George Souris, Malcolm Kerr, Luke Douglas, Melanie Gibbons and Tim Smith. Picture: Jane Dyson**

## Bargain book buys at library sale

If you're a book lover, DVD collector or magazine compiler, Marrickville Library Service will have you 'covered' during its bi-annual Book Sale in November. The Book Sale will be held at Marrickville Town Hall, 303 Marrickville Road, Marrickville, on Wednesday 3 November from 10am-7pm and Thursday 4 November from 10am - 4pm.

There will be an eclectic range of pre-loved library books for purchase, including biographies, novels and reference materials, as well as DVDs, CDs and magazines. Community languages including Greek, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese and Vietnamese will also be catered for with items available for purchase. General titles, DVDs and Magazines will cost less than \$10 and Library staff will be on hand to answer any questions. Marrickville Library Service consists of four libraries at Dulwich Hill, Marrickville, St Peters/Sydenham and Stanmore. For more information phone Marrickville Library on 9335 2173 or visit [www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au).

To access the library catalogue visit [www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/library/catalogue.htm](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/library/catalogue.htm).

# Laiki Bank Hosts Children with Special Needs Fundraiser

Over \$100,000 will be granted to support children with special needs after Radiomathon held its annual fundraiser in Sydney last weekend. Mary Coustas hosted the Laiki Bank event. It was attended by approximately 400 people at the Hilton Sydney's Grand Ballroom.



NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos was the night's guest speaker. He has been a supporter of Radiomathon since 2002. He paid tribute to their work in the NSW Legislative Council.

Hatzistergos stated: "In 2010 Radiomathon has distributed some \$276,000 to over 37 charities across Australia, helping hundreds of kids...The spirit and determination displayed by these children encapsulates the very reason for the charity...I commend the good-will

of the many volunteers and benefactors associated with the charity wishing it every success now and in the future."

Laiki Bank spokesperson Fotis Zervas said the money raised will go towards hospitals, support organisations and schools that support kids with special needs.

Zervas said host Mary Coustas did a great job of entertaining the crowd, adding that she was "visibly moved" after a DVD showing inter-

views with the organisations the fundraiser supports. "She was very moved and she couldn't really speak for a few minutes even though she was meant to be exceeding..." But she was very professional, and she was able to turn it into something that wasn't awkward, where everyone was moved with her."

Guests were also treated to dancing from the Latin Tropicana Dance Sensation while DJ JamesD kept the crowd dancing well into the night.

Radiomathon will host its Melbourne fundraising gala event on the 13th of November at the Grand Hyatt and will be hosted by barrister and actor Con Kylias.

Zervas said there was no pressure on the Melbourne event to raise as much as Sydney. "We don't really make it about the money, we try to make the guests have fun as well," he said.

(source: neos kosmos)

# Will the last to leave please turn out the lights

Letter from Athens  
Danylo Hawaleshka

It feels like everyone I know in Athens is leaving.

My friend Petros, a struggling cinematographer, is fed up and planning to move to Paris.

Thodoros, a truck driver fond of easy credit, which isn't so easy to find anymore, is so in debt it boggles the mind. He and his wife Katarina want to take their two young sons to Australia, historically a refuge for Greek emigrants.

Danylo Hawaleshka is an Athens-based freelance writer and photographer looking for work.

Vasilis, an idled construction worker, and his wife Galini also want to leave for Down Under and have started the paperwork to join her sister there.

Galini says the Australian embassy told her it has been inundated by thousands of visa applications.

Alexandra is a 20-something administrative assistant whose office closed about a month ago. She's off to the Unit-



Athens police take a rest where they can between riots as the country's forced austerity measures have sent thousands into the streets since June 2010. (Danylo Hawaleshka)

ed Arab Emirates.

"I just can't wait to get the hell out of here," she told me recently over dinner with friends.

### Packing up

There was a poll the other day that I just could not believe, astounding stuff really.

The Sunday edition of To Vima, had Kapa Research survey 5,400 Greeks between 22 and 35. A whopping 74 per cent said they would move abroad if given the opportunity.

Forty-two percent said they are already making

plans to leave.

Kapa said that translates into 250,000 would-be emigrants, or about two per cent of the population — a significant chunk of a much-needed tax base.

If it were Canada, we'd be talking about, what, 660,000 people packing their bags.

It's so bad here that it's difficult to comprehend the scale of what Greece is trying to accomplish to avoid imploding.

Everyone knows that this country of sun and too much fun has implemented a sweeping aus-

terity plan, which includes raising taxes and cutting pensions. But in practical terms, what does that really mean on a daily basis?

The non-tetotallers among you will appreciate this. When I first arrived in Athens in 2007 a small bottle (700 ml) of Tanqueray gin retailed for just over 13 euros, currently about \$18 Canadian. Today, that same bottle of spirits costs — wait for it — 20-plus euros.

It's enough to drive a man to drink, provided he can afford it.

Article from CBC News