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Girls Night Out

Wednesday 9th July, 2014

PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS SECRETARY TO LEAD GNO CELEBRATIONS

A former country girl from central Victoria who is now press secretary to Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott will be guest presenter at the 2014 Girls Night Out (GNO) event in Echuca next week.

Sally Branson, 36, will travel from Canberra to headline the function, which will raise funds for the oncology department at Echuca Regional Health (ERH).

GNO 2014 *Celebrating the Sisterhood* will be held at Radcliffe's Restaurant on Friday July 18 from 6.30pm to 9pm and will celebrate the achievements of every day women living extraordinary lives.

GNO committee member Leonie Canham said the presentation by Ms Branson promised to be a highlight of the event.

"Sally is a connector from the country," Ms Canham said.

"She grew up not far from Echuca – at the small farming community of Colbinabbin – where she went to school with 20 country kids just like her.

"These days she is a highly motivated and enthusiastic communications specialist who prior to her post with the Prime Minister, has worked as a media affairs specialist with the United States Consulate General and as managing director of Melbourne Public Relations powerhouse Undertow Media.

"Sally lives a pretty extraordinary professional life, but she loves high heels, lippy, leopard print and a night out with her girls as much as the next person."

The Echuca-Moama GNO initiative began in 2008 and is the much-loved creation of a small collective of women who have experienced first-hand the impact of cancer upon loved ones.

The charity has raised more than \$130,000 for the GNO Oncology Department Supportive Care Fund at ERH.

"That fund provides vital assistance to the oncology nurses to deliver extra care and financial support to local men and women living with cancer," Ms Canham said.

"It might be a rent payment, a wig, a travel voucher, some child care, counselling, accommodation – the list goes on - and the supportive care agreement forged between GNO and ERH gives the oncology team the authority to make the call where and when they see the need."

Ms Canham said in addition to directly supporting the oncology department, GNO fundraising efforts had helped secure funding from the McGrath Foundation for a dedicated McGrath Breast Care Nurse, who commenced work at ERH in 2012.

She said GNO events not only aimed to support those in the community who were dealing with cancer, but also to remember and acknowledge those people whose lives had been tragically cut short by the illness.

"GNO is a celebration of women – of the joy they bring to one another, and of the extraordinary work they do in their relationships, in their families, in their communities and in their own lives.

"The GNO movement connects, embraces and engages the sisterhood of our community to shape a strong and vibrant community of women who are there for each other in times of need."

Tickets to GNO 2014 *Celebrating The Sisterhood* are \$50 and include champagne, wine and finger-food between 6.30 and 9pm. Entertainment will be provided by Melbourne-based musician Marty Rose – who is world-renowned as Australia's premier piano man and rock'n'roll icon.

Tickets are available at Paperartzi or online at www.trybooking.com/87535. Contact Leonie Canham on 0407360884 for more information.