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BLUE MOUNTAINS UNION COUNCIL INC 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction: The 2016 federal election made this an extremely busy year for BMUC, with many of our members heavily engaged in the democratic process, and while we remain free from affiliation to any political party we campaigned energetically to promote our traditional aims and objectives: to advance unionism, living standards, social justice, working conditions and full employment.

Build A Better Future Campaign: BMUC volunteers worked with the ACTU and Unions NSW on a campaign that focused on:

- Workers rights and jobs - changes in the way people are employed has seen a huge increase in insecure work, with 40% of workers now employed this way - whether as casuals or on short term contracts or so called independent contracts.
- Medicare - the importance of a fair and decent public health system for all.
- Education - the need for a fully funded Gonski programme, targeting educational improvements for those who need them most.
- Public Services - the importance of maintaining efficient and well-resourced public services.

We would like to thank the Organisers of Unions NSW and the ACTU for their work in this grass roots campaign.

Building Bridges with Penrith and the Hawkesbury: During the campaign, we worked closely with our sister organisations in Penrith and Windsor - Penrith Valley Community Unions and Hawkesbury Valley Community Unions. Exchanging ideas and combining forces proved a good experience, and one we hope to build on in the future.

Politics in the Pub and public forums: This is one of our traditional bread and butter activities and during the election campaign we held a major public forum at Springwood with ACTU President Ged Kearney as keynote speaker, supported by local people speaking about their workplace and community - these included Toni Clark, a parent and P&C Member at Katoomba Primary and High Schools, Peter Buckney and Jocelyn Hoffman, who're Blue Mountains nurses, Warren Ross who spoke about ways of achieving full employment and Bronwyn Couch who outlined how privatisation threatened public services.

This event, in the middle of the election campaign, attracted over 100 people.

Education Beats Crime was the subject of our annual Rod Brooks Memorial Politics in the Pub. This focussed on the importance of education in jails, and the impact of the removal of specialist teachers from the NSW prison system at a time when the jail population is running at

record numbers. Veteran prisoners' campaigner Brett Collins, ESL Teacher from Long Bay Jail Stewart Burkitt and indigenous teacher Leanne Tobin led an afternoon of stimulating debate attended by over 70 people.

Door Knocking: During the election campaign our members participated in national door knocks - we knocked on the doors and got feedback from many of the 3,000 union members living in the Blue Mountains.
Other activities included our support of the **May Day March** in Sydney, the **Winter Magic Festival** and **Anti-Poverty Week**.

Social Media: BMUC's use of social media continues to develop and grow. This year for the first time we live streamed Politics in the Pub. We also live streamed the speakers, including St Vincent de Paul CEO John Falzon at the Anti-Poverty Forum.
To date our 2016 social media stats are:
Face book: 360 page "Likes".
Live streaming: Our first livestream via Facebook of Education Beats Crime Politics in the Pub Part 1 was viewed 220 times and Part 2 was viewed 106 times. Our livestream of the Anti-Poverty Week Forum, also via Facebook was a total of 6 separate videos with a combined total of 308 views, John Falzon's with the highest number of views of 145.
Twitter: 1596 followers.
BMUC news and Blog: 287,015 page views ever. An impressive 56423 views from November 2015 to October 2016. Thank you to Mark Gregory for the work he puts in on the website and blog. We have now started to send Tweets via the blog which should generate more traffic back to the blog.
YouTube: Combined total of 1004 views of all videos from 1/11/2015 to 31/10/2016.
SoundCloud: 309 plays with 54 downloads.

Next Year: Activities and subjects under consideration for next year include a collaboration with the Injured Workers Network to raise awareness of workers' rights when hurt at work; the push for a huge increase in the use of interns as lowly or unpaid members of the workforce; the case for a basic living wage for all when 40% of the workforce is predicted to be made redundant by new technology; and the need for radical reforms in housing policies.

Thanks: As ever thanks to the many people who make BMUC happen. Our Secretary Deb Smith who's raised the bar yet again in her commitment to the cause, Blackburns Family Hotel for their continued generous support in providing us with a free meeting place, the Orient Hotel in Springwood and Unions NSW for helping us host the Springwood Politics in the Pub, Jude Cooke for help with livestreaming, the Lammimans for kindly providing their home for our annual social, and Senator Doug Cameron's office for assisting with communications.

Kerry Cooke
BMUC President
7th November 2016