



**One person can make a difference:
Jessica Watson works with Lions to raise flood money**

[Date 15 February 2011] Young Australian of the Year, Jessica Watson has taken time out to help members of Lions Australia raise funds for the victims of the recent flood devastation in Queensland.

“This is just one of the many great philanthropic stories coming from Lions and its friends, families and colleagues”, Lions Australia Executive Officer Rob Oerlemans said.

“At the recent Lions International Convention in Sydney in June last year, honorary speaker and Nobel Prize winner, Dr Wangari Maathai, told a story of a little hummingbird who tried to help put out a huge forest fire, one tiny beak-full of water at a time. When the other animals mocked his seemingly helpless efforts, the hummingbird replied ‘I am doing what I can’.

“And Jessica Watson’s assistance with the Mooloolaba Lions Club at the local Sunshine shopping Plaza is just another example of how one person can really make a difference.

“Jessica collected red bucket donations, chatted with fans and signed autographs, books and t-shirts. Mooloolaba Lions went on to raise more than \$60,000 in flood relief”.

At the aftermath of the devastation, Lions all across the country are still pulling together, one person at a time, to do what they can for victims in Queensland and Victoria.

One very determined lady in South Australia, with the help of three local Lions clubs, hand-packed 490 boxes of donated gifts and sent them personally to Queensland to ensure the goods went to those who needed them most.

Meanwhile, Nowra Lions Club sent another 218 “boxes of love” filled mainly with clothing, to people in Toowoomba, while Lions in Victoria purchased \$10,000 worth of new linen from Myer to send to Queensland, and Ashgrove Lions at The Gap raised more than \$12,500 in donations.

The Lions Club of Mogill Mount Crosby assisted in setting up an Evacuation Centre, which eventually morphed into a flood relief facility and was manned by members of the uniting church, medical teams, police, SES, CWS, Rotary and Lions.

And it doesn’t stop there. Individual Lions, their friends and colleagues have story after story of their efforts in the relief, including collecting donations of food, money and clothing at their local shopping centres, cooking for people without food and shelter, washing clothes, raising awareness and spending their time supporting those in need.

“The work being done by individual people around Australia is really adding up to a huge sum of tangible relief that we are extremely proud of”, Mr Oerlemans said.

“And we are continue to urge fellow citizens around the country to “take pride” in assisting those in need.

Along with the incredible individual efforts, the Australian Lions Foundation committed \$200,000 through relief and recovery work. Lions are also continuing to work closely with Lions District Governors in affected areas.

For more information visit: <http://www.lionsclubs.org.au/>



About Lions

Lions Clubs International world's largest service club organization, with more than 1.3 million members in more than 45,000 clubs in 205 countries and geographic areas. In addition to its efforts toward conquering blindness, the organization has made a strong commitment to community service and helping youth throughout the world.

Lions Australia is one of Australia's largest service organisations with almost 28,000 members and 1,400 clubs across Australia. Lions Australia raises over \$20 million per annum to assist in community and health projects, and funding for Lions foundations and programs.

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