

Hooker's Herald

October 2008, Edition 1



U.S. N.Q. Inc.'

'United Sex-workers, North Queensland.

Incorporated.'

Who are we?- We are a concerned group of Sex Workers - past and present, organized and opportunistic who want to do what we can so that we all have a safe '**Future**'. At this stage we are all volunteers, the organization has no premises or funding but we have lots of dreams, determination and hopes, but we need more support. Some of us are ex 'SQWISI' and so if you have ever visited the old 'SQWISI' office in Townsville you will know a member already. We have even kept the old 'SQWISI' phone number to make it easier. At this stage we are able to say that we are an incorporated organisation in our own right which means that we can apply for funding and control it ourselves.

What are we trying to do? - We are trying to fill the gap left by SQWISI and provide you with support, information, workshops, [if you need them], affordable supplies and an 'ear to bash' if that's what's needed!. At the same time we are trying to get funding from **anywhere** so that we can provide the type of service we feel this industry deserves, and hopefully service the best part of Queensland, North Queensland. As you can imagine this is a **very big goal** but with your support and some funding from Government Departments, it is 'do-able'!

What can you do? - Well, you can join 'USNQ'! Become a member - we already have some in Cairns, Mackay and Townsville. Give us your support; perhaps volunteer some of your time or attend meetings if you are in the area. Give us your ideas - they just might work and we are open to all and any suggestions. We really do **need you!** which is why we settled for the name 'United Sex-workers Nth, Qld.'

REMEMBER - WITHOUT **YOU** - WE HAVE NO
ORGANISATION!

WITHOUT AN ORGANISATION - **WE HAVE NO VOICE!**

Introductions from key members

Our Chairperson

Hello to you all, just a short intro; My name is Elly and I have been in this industry for approximately a decade now. I've been involved in almost every legal aspect of our work as one would imagine with that amount of time. I met Jenny and Jackie about that time as well. (The dynamic duo as I have and do call them). I also volunteered with Jackie at SQWISIS and set precedence for Sex Workers to access the Anti Discrimination Commission, Qld in regards to discrimination by a bank because of my lawful sexual activities, operating my sole trading business.

I semi retired when SQWISI closed for personal reasons, but I did feel that without a Sex Worker Organisation that I as well as everyone else would be a SITTING DUCK!

A little more than twelve months ago, Jenny and Jackie asked if I would be Chairperson. We met week after week, just the three of US in NQ discussing possibilities of how to go about creating a sex worker service. My, but how far we have come from three friends meeting around the kitchen table to an ever growing group of really very talented people!

However we do need more input from the industry itself; which is YOU! We all have different talents and an appropriate motto for us is 'Never sell yourself short'. You are more than you know. This is your chance to have a voice! Your chance to make a difference!
Hope to hear from you soon, Elly.

Jackie, the woman who answers the phone

My name is Jackie and I have been associated with the sex industry and with the previous organization – 'SQWISI' for many years now so if you have visited the old 'SQWISI' Townsville office – we have probably met. [I was the Peer Health Educator for a few years there]

When 'SQWISI' closed it was as if we had taken a huge leap backwards, and I couldn't stop thinking about all the people who had worked so hard to get that organisation to where it was and how sad it would be to lose all of that knowledge and support. I also recognized that the people in our industry deserved to be supported and provided with every opportunity to work safely, legally and to be kept informed of any changes in the laws etc. which could affect our wellbeing.

New workers entering the industry need to be supported and educated in all aspects of the industry and advised on how to work safely, how to deal with difficult clients and everything else that ensures their health and safety.

My role in this organisation at present is that of Secretary amongst other things – eg providing supplies at affordable prices, general information, the state of the Laws, how to advertise legally etc.

No one in the organisation is being paid – we are all volunteers and work from our homes or anyone else's who might offer theirs e.g. we meet on the 3rd Sunday of the month at a member's home who is willing to have us. So now that you know a bit about me and 'US' – why don't you join us and have some input into your 'brand-new' organisation? We would really welcome your suggestions and support.

Should you need any other information or assistance please ring me on 47 244 853.

[Yep. It's the old SQWISI number in Townsville]

Hope to talk or meet soon, Cheers, Jackie.

Hi to all from Cairns,

My name is Liana and I've been involved with USNQ since July. I am passionate about supporting my peers in all working situations, and fighting for our rights in whatever capacity I can. I just want to thank all of the wonderful sex workers who have warmly welcomed my contact with them. They have helped me with their encouragement and most of all by offering an insight into their working lives, so that I may better understand how diverse and amazing this industry can be. As sex workers we meet many interesting people, other workers, clients, and there are also some great people working in the various agencies that provide services to us. We can also face isolation, discrimination, not to mention legal hassles, and having a peer based support organisation is important to help us to stay happy, safe and healthy. New workers to the industry can often be the most vulnerable, remember when you first started? It is exciting to be a part of this new organisation, united together we can have more control over the issues, laws and prejudices that effect our working lives. Please feel free to call me anytime, I am always keen for a chat and your input is very valuable to me.

**Liana
US NQ Inc Cairns
0413 571 394**

SEX WORKERS ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS REPORT, (SWAN Report) was released on the 14th August 2008 and many Sex Workers from all over the state (yes they even came to Townsville and Cairns) were asked to provide input and were quoted in the report.

If you are interested in knowing what Queensland Health knows, give USNQ a ring or drop us an email and we will forward it out to you. Keep in mind it is over 151 pages and then the attachment from Scarlet Alliance is a further 90 pages so it is a big read. But they did do a quickie version which is only about six pages. USNQ would like to take this opportunity to thank Julie Bates and Rigmor Berg for the respect that they showed our industry through the process of getting this wonderful report written. It presents our industry as it is, diverse and dynamic.

Notice Board

This section of the Hooker's Herald is open for contributions. If you want to bitch, whine moan or groan, celebrate, laugh or poke fun at something to do with Sex Work, this is the place to have it published. If you have any inclusions, you can either ring them through to Jackie or email or post it.

7, Truille Bulletin, 24/09/08

Advice group included in council funding round

Sex workers support

By LENDL RYAN

A SUPPORT group for sex workers has received \$1500 funding from Townsville City Council.

United Sex Workers North Queensland (USWNQ) was one of 25 community groups to share in \$39,800 of grants approved yesterday.

The ratepayer money will go towards educating sex workers on ways to advertise their services legally, how to deal with difficult clients and where to take sexual health tests.

The Magnetic Island Boat Club received \$200 for trophies for their junior fishing competition, while the North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Services was given \$500 for a forum and the Bohlevale District Community Centre picked

up \$650 for protective gear for a youth kick-boxing group.

The Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland was the big winner with \$4000 allocated for computers for children with physical disabilities.

Council's Lifestyle and Community Development Committee chair Cr Jenny Lane said the funding for USWNQ was no different to funding council provided to any other community group.

"It is a community group like any other in the community and we must support them," she said.

"We all have different priorities in life but our role as the council is to support everyone in the community."

"It is not for us to judge their lifestyle.

"I think the group will be of great benefit to the community."

USWNQ was set up about two

years ago to take over from Self-help for Queenslanders Working in the Sex Industry, which closed after 18 years.

The organisation has about 25 financial members and assists about 70 sex workers in the city.

Meetings are held monthly to provide up to date information on issues and problems in the industry.

USWNQ secretary Jackie Kneipp said a support group was vital for sex workers, many of whom had no one to discuss the issues they face.

"Every profession needs a support network regardless of who they are or what they do," she said.

"Not everyone understand just how they feel because there is a lot of prejudice and discrimination out there about sex workers.

"It is specially necessary for sole

traders because they are not allowed any support staff whatsoever."

The council funding is the first funding of any kind the fledging organisation had received.

Ms Kneipp said the money would go a long way towards helping sex workers.

"At our meetings we inform the workers of what is happening with the laws for advertising, how to get their sexual health tests done and all those types of things," she said.

"Since the old organisation closed down we have to produce new resources on how to deal with difficult clients and the responsibility of the police and the rights of the workers."

Labor Cr Jenny Hill was reluctant to comment on the funding allocation but said she believed it was a first of its kind for council.

JOKE

The local Zoo had one gorilla, a female that had been on her own for some years. One day, the keepers notices she seemed down so they kept an eye on her. Over time they worked out that she appeared lonely so they looked at buying a male gorilla to keep her company but it was going to cost too much with the extra enclosure and purchase price.

As they were discussing it one day, the janitor was mopping near them so they asked him if he would have sex with the female gorilla for \$50. He was shocked and asked questions about condom use and what would happen if he made the gorilla pregnant, etc. The keepers explained to him that he did not need to use a condom and there was no risk of STI transmission or pregnancy as they were different species.

So he decided to agree but he had one other problem, he would not have the \$50 until pay day.

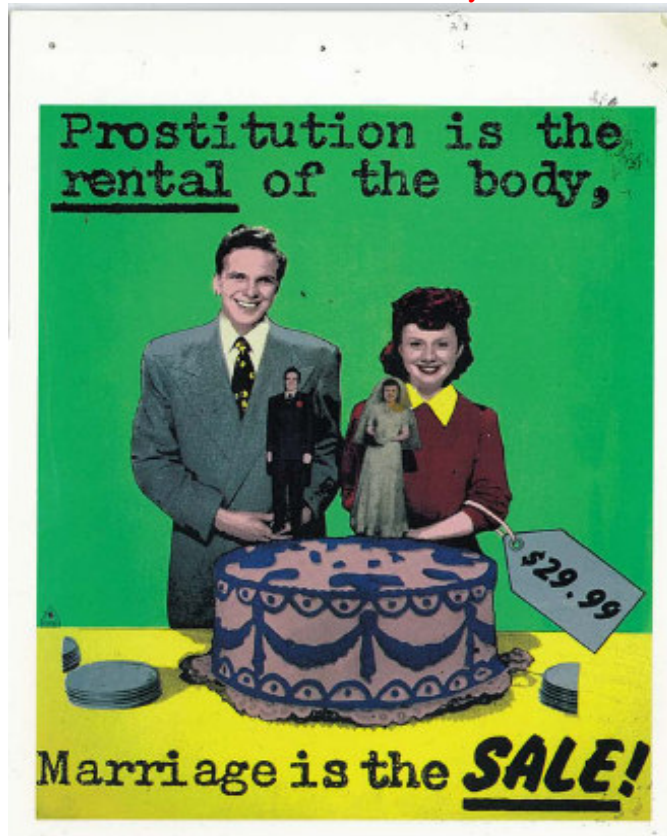
SONYA: In my life, I've done lots of different work. I've also been educating myself with this course and that course. Before I met my now ex husband I was more than adventurous sexually and in my marriage I had a pretty wild sex life. I thought at the age of 34 years when I entered this biz that I knew a lot about sex and life in general! The fact is that this industry has taught me more about sex and about life than I could have ever imagined, and it is an education I could never have got anywhere else.

BECCY: Yeah, not the 'school of hard knocks', the 'school of hard cocks'.

Rockhampton Sexual Health and HIV Service is now at Sandrock House, Canning Street, Rockhampton. We moved into this building approx 2 years ago. It is an old Queenslander style home on the T junction of Albert Street and Canning Street (next door to where our 8 Canning Street was). Sandrock House also has the Mobile Womens Health Nurse, Hepatitis B & C/Liver Treatment clinic and Breast Care Nurse. Our clients comments are that it is a friendly non-clinical atmosphere.

WANTED – EDITOR OF THE HOOKERS HERALD

We are seeking a North Queensland Sex Worker to be our Editor. They will need to be computer literate and able to access the email. It will take about 1-2 hours per week to put together and talk to the people putting articles, etc in. We do not have the funds to pay wages and it is a volunteer position at this stage but we really need help with this one. If you are interested, please contact Jackie or send us an email. It does not matter where you live in North Queensland, anywhere from Gladstone up.



Editorial, Same paper

Sex on rates

THERE might be some raised eyebrows today among ratepayers to Townsville City Council's decision to donate \$1500 to help a group of sex workers. Council has provided \$1500 in funding to United Sex Workers North, one of 25 community groups to share in \$39,800 of grants. The money will go towards educating sex workers on ways to advertise their services legally, how to deal with difficult clients and where to take sexual health tests. It's an unusual donation, and in many ways a sign of the times. The days of councils simply looking after roads, rubbish and libraries are long gone.

What is out there now What is out there now

USNQ SUPPLIES PRICE LIST

ANSELL CONDOMS lubricated				WET STUFF PLUS			
Regular size	54 mm width,			Lube 270 g	@		\$
8.50							
Closer fitting	49 mm width						
Large	57mm width			Sponges	@		\$
2.50							
1 x box of 144	@	\$38.00		24 individual	@		
\$ 8.00							
48 individual	@	\$16.00		72 individual	@		
\$24.00							

Yes they are a bit more than what SQWISI was charging but hopefully they will come down soon. If you are in Cairns, call Liana on 0413 571 394 or for anywhere else contact Jackie on 4724 4853.

“WISI Info” – Workers in the Sex Industry Information Sex Worker Interim Project

WISI Info has been

extended

The sex worker interim project, WISI Info (Information for Workers in the Sex Industry) was due to conclude at the end of 2007, but has been extended until June 2008 to allow additional time for Queensland Health’s assessment of the needs of sex workers in Queensland.

WISI Info will continue to provide telephone and email information and referral to sex workers throughout the state. Some work will also be conducted to update the content of the SQWISI website.

The WISI telephone is attended all day Monday and on Tuesday mornings. The answering machine and email is also checked and responded to throughout the week. Sex workers with clinical concerns or enquiries should continue to contact their local sexual health clinic or GP as WISI Info is an information and referral service only.

The contact details for WISI Info are:

Phone: 07 3250 0251

Email: wisiinfo@optusnet.com.au

Web: www.sqwisi.org.au

Sexual Health Clinics

It can be a bit off putting to have to tell the admin worker why you are making your appointment, but you could always tell them it is for birth control and then disclose to the nurse later. All the clinics really want to know is your preferred name (this can be your working name) and your phone number just in case one of your results needs to be discussed.

Cairns 4050 6205

Mt Isa 4744 4805

Townsville 4778 9600

Mackay 4968 3919

Rockhampton 4920 5555 (there is a blurb from this clinic in the Notice Board)



[Formerly known as SSPAN - Sexual Service Providers' Advocacy Network, QLD)

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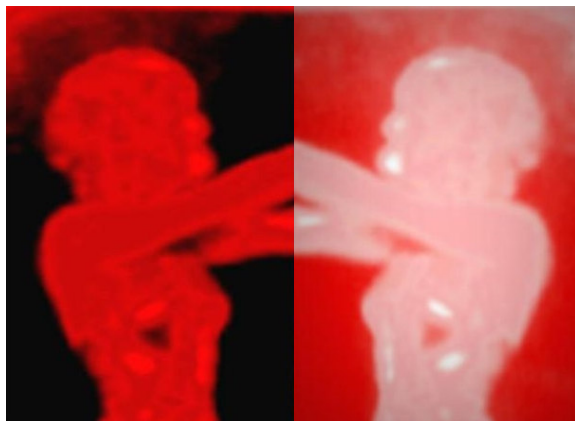
**Hello to all the sex workers in North Queensland
and elsewhere
from Crimson Coalition (in South Queensland)!**

Crimson Coalition is a small group of sex workers and former sex workers from around Brisbane who have been trying to provide a voice for, and give information and support to, Queensland sex workers since SQWISI closed down.

It's a tough job with no funding and there are a lot of issues that workers need help to address!

We are so happy that North Queensland has its own grassroots sex workers' organisation that we can work with to get funding from Queensland Health.

If you are based anywhere in South Queensland or sometimes work down here and you are interested in getting involved by becoming a member, or just want some information, please contact us.



Sex workers are holding their own

Tear off and send back by snail mail



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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
2008/2009

NAME: [Working/Given] _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT NUMBER: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **Date** _____

() Please tick if you would like Newsletters sent to you at the above address

MEMBERSHIP FEES: \$5 individual

Office Use: Date Processed: _____

Receipt number: _____

**Without members you have NO organisation! WITHOUT an
organisation—
YOU HAVE NO VOICE!**