

# Magistrate told to do his 'worst' at hearing

By Natasha Rudra

A 65-year-old man who grabbed a woman's breast and was found naked in a toilet block in separate incidents last year has been ordered into rehab for alcoholism.

John Bruce Kenney, of Ainslie, told a judge in the ACT Magistrates Court to "go ahead, do your worst" in a sentencing hearing yesterday.

Kenney was drunk when he turned up to a Wanniasa youth centre in March last year and was told to go away.

When a female employee opened the door, Kenney touched her breast before leaving the premises.

In October, he was arrested after stripping off in a public toilet block in Fyshwick and was found to be heavily intoxicated again.

Kenney had pleaded guilty to one charge of indecent exposure and not guilty to another charge of committing an act of indecency but was convicted after a hearing.

The court heard he had been an alcoholic for years.

Kenney, who represented himself, said little in the hearing but in the court he had shown remorse in a letter he wrote to the victim of the indecent act.

He told the court he wasn't going to change his drinking habits but was aware that his behaviour changed when he was intoxicated and would limit his behaviour accordingly.

The prosecution argued for a jail term, saying Kenney had not shown remorse and had not demonstrated any desire to change his drinking habits despite recognising his antisocial, sexualised behaviour when drunk.

In his letter to the victim, he said he was going to court "as a result of your allegations" and did not appear to realise the court case was due to his own behaviour.

Special Magistrate Graeme Lunney said a pre-sentence report showed the man had "no desire to address his alcohol consumption and enjoys drinking to excess".

But he said Kenney had accepted responsibility for his actions and rehabilitation was an important part of the sentence.

Mr Lunney imposed a three-month jail term, fully suspended, and ordered Kenney to undergo supervision, submit to drug or alcohol testing and undertake medical treatment as directed.

## TO THE POINT

CT 1/9/11

### DRUGS DON'T BELONG IN JAIL

I do not support drugs in jail. However, I support even less the proposition that prisoners can access drugs in jail. To my mind drugs can only get into the prison system in quantity with the complicity of some prison officials.

Howard Carew, Isaacs

To facilitate drug use in its jails a government must have been listening to the ratbag element of the human rights cabal, admitting its inability to keep drugs out and abandoning all common sense. Imprisonment is a chance to reform. This means, among other forms of discipline, learning to do without the very thing that got many of them there in the first place: drug abuse. Otherwise, what next in this cosy "home away from home" - imported brothel services?

Gordon Nevin, O'Connor

A victory for common sense at last! ("Needle decision pricks at govt", August 31, p18). This must stick in the throat of the drug reformists, and indeed *The Canberra Times*, which openly supported the issue. Well, the silent majority can cheer, because they have not let the so-called drug intelligentsia, political correctivists, and experts like Alex Wodak et al get away with eroding good, solid values. Well done to all the campaigners!

Ian Jannaway, Monash

## Needle problem

Chief Minister Katy Gallagher could be forgiven for screaming in frustration. She has proceeded with caution, taken advice and consulted with the Community and Public Sector Union. But the prison officers' union has made it clear that they will not back a needle program at the Alexander Maconochie Centre under any circumstances ("Union stymies jail needle bid", August 30, p1). Their stance lacks logic. Needles are in all jails now, including the AMC. A supervised injecting facility

within the jail would arguably reduce the need for needles outside this injecting facility, not only reducing the risk of blood-borne infection of hepatitis C and HIV to inmates, but also the risk of needle-stick injury to prison officers. While it has been found impossible to stop drugs getting into jails, it just may stop dirty needles being a risk to all. In their poorly thought-through determination to block this initiative, the CPSU, in perpetuating the status quo, is also perpetuating the risks to its members.

Judy Aulich, Giralang