

# MIGHTY MILDURA



*There was lots of fun and some serious business at convention headquarters, the St Joseph's Stadium (left).*

*Bottom left: The soon-to-retire District Governors were presented with Edge of the Outback survival kits.*

*Bottom: Lions thank GM Holden and local dealer Tim Harrison for their invaluable sponsorship and support of the convention.*

## Aussie Lions get together and celebrate a pleasing surge in growth

**From the welcome by celebrity chef and convention ambassador Stefano de Pieri to the closing ceremony, the 'Edge of the Outback' 2010 58th National Lions Convention in Mildura was one to enjoy.**

Organised largely by the six clubs in the area (Irymple, Mildura, Merbein, Coomealla, Buronga-Gol-Gol and Red Cliffs), it was a relaxed, friendly affair with Mildura at its welcoming, autumn best.

When not involved in Lions business, nearly 1500 attendees enjoyed the city's restaurants, scenery and rich cultural history, the result of people of 52 different nationalities living here.

For Lions, the good news was that this convention heralded an upturn in numbers, with the membership downward spiral of recent years being reversed. With renewed vigour and a lot of hard work, Lions Australia is clearly on the build again.

With chairperson Laurie Phillips guiding the

action, the convention started with a flag ceremony by local Air Force cadets and over four days introduced top speakers, emotion, laughter and much camaraderie.

A standout was a powerful keynote address by founder and chairman of Angel Flight Bill Bristow AM (his account of a volunteer pilot flying a mother with her dead child cradled in her arms back to her home town for the funeral brought a tear to many eyes). "I don't think a week goes by that we don't receive a cheque from a Lions club," this committed volunteer told the audience.

Former politician and local, the Honorary Ken Wright OAM, spoke in glowing terms of Lions deeds in the area, and overseas guests, MD 202 Council Chairman Neil Blake and his wife Fern and Indonesia's Council Chairman A.D. "Hammy" Hamiprodo and his wife Sri, joined in the action.

V2 District Governor Bob Gilchrist had reason to

smile. He was announced as the new Lions Australia Council Chairman.

There was great emotion too, such as when our International Director Ken Bird thanked his wife Maureen for her unstinting support during a year in which she had endured medical problems.

Peter Mendel, himself a kidney recipient, spoke of organ donation and how 1700 Australian would-be recipients are on waiting lists.

PDG Noelene Heggart won the Syd Packham Award for PR, while Bill Watts won his second Ted Horwood Award for the year's best story in the *Lion*.

Inducted into the ALF Hall of Fame were Dick Strickland (King Island), PC Ambrose Depiazzi (Mandurah), Garth Gleeson (Yungaburra) and PDG Bob Korotcoff (Marion).

At convention's end, organising chairman Laurie Phillips and his team could be happy with a job well done.

