

Men get domestic support

MALE victims of domestic violence are set to be granted access to services previously only available to women.

NSW Family and Community Services Minister Pru Goward will today announce new support for male victims of domestic violence.

The support will include a time-limited private rental subsidy previously offered by Housing NSW to female victims and their children.

Ms Goward said the move followed evidence that around one-third of all domestic violence cases were men.

The Start Safely program allowed victims to be sheltered temporarily while they worked towards finding alternate accommodation.

"Start Safely helps victims of violence by providing short to medium-term financial assistance to clients to rent alternative accommodation in the private rental market, while they get the support they need," Ms Goward said.

Men will be able to apply from June 24.

Tourists flocking to south

FOR surf, sand and sun, the NSW south coast is the top pick among holidaymakers.

According to Tourism Research Australia, the coastal strip south of Sydney just beats the north coast as the best place to holiday.

The northern rivers, Hunter and Central Coast round out the top five.

A new campaign devised by Destination NSW called "IT'S ON! In Regional NSW" promotes regional NSW and the many things to see and do.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events George Souris said regional tourism is crucial.

"Expenditure in regional NSW was worth more than \$12.8 billion in 2012, and with overnight visitation increasing to 73 million visitor nights, it is vital to our economy," Mr Souris said.

"There's an array of stunning natural attractions to explore including four World Heritage Areas and 900 national parks."

DESTINATION NSW TOURIST GUIDE INSIDE TODAY

Let's drink to the

The beer, food, view, the bar staff? Just what makes a pub so inviting? Amy Harris runs the rule over the state's best

Of the hundreds of pubs in NSW, how do you whittle it down to just 20 standouts? Cue tireless canvassing of avid pub-goers, travel writers, food critics and even a couple of long-time police-beat reporters who seem to possess an almost encyclopedic knowledge of this state's finest watering holes.

And so a list of the 20 best pubs in NSW has sprung forth, with factors like location, menu, beer temperature, atmosphere and, of course, view all taken into account, along with clientele and drink selection. Many might debate the final list, picking instead their local watering hole for recognition, but these are clearly among the best of the best.

One venue even got an extra point for boasting what one travel writer described as "the best, most well attended bathroom I have ever seen".

Another (female) wine expert highlighted staff attractiveness as a factor in picking the best. Horses are, as they say, for courses.



Eltham Hotel
AN unlikely foodie paradise in the northern rivers hinterland, the Eltham is famed for sourcing local produce and its updated seasonal menu. There's even a veggie patch out the back.



The Gardeners Inn
THE Blue Mountains' oldest licensed venue once served as a rest stop for travellers but now this grand Blackheath hotel has been restored without losing its charm.



The Robin Hood Hotel
KNOWN around the traps in Orange as "the warm-up joint", the Robin Hood has built a reputation for serving great meals (the steak kilpatrick is a specialty) and attracting a broad clientele.



The Henson
THE transformation from clapped-out Marrickville dive pub to family-friendly punter-magnet began almost two years ago when owner Ray Reilly decided to add a second venue to his portfolio (the Irishman also has the Trinity Bar in Surry Hills). "I thought there was a huge opening for a family-friendly place in the inner west and then we found out this place was available through brokers," Reilly says. Skip ahead to June 3 and, after an extensive refurb - during which a secret bar was discovered behind a gyprock wall - The Henson is a massive hit. "It really couldn't be going any better so far," Reilly says.



The Scarborough Hotel
A TRIP to Wollongong is incomplete without a visit to the Scarborough, which has peered out across the Pacific since 1886. Its sprawling beer garden is internationally renowned.



The Woolwich Pier Hotel
ANOTHER of Sydney's beautiful harbourside hotels, the Woolwich is located between the inner west and lower north shore. A big draw thanks to its tranquil views from the top balcony.



The Settlers Arms
ESTABLISHED in 1836, the Settlers Arms was built from convict-hewn sandstone and nestles alongside the Macdonald River in St Albans. Basically, it is remarkably pretty.



The Pacific Hotel
EVERYTHING is secondary to the view at Yamba's picturesque Pacific Hotel, which enjoys 270-degree views of the ocean from its bird's-eye perch atop Pilot St in the seaside fishing town.



The Golden Sheaf
THIS hulking hot spot has a long and colourful history since opening its doors in 1936, which is bound to happen at a pub plonked smack-bang in the middle of cashed-up Double Bay.

best pubs around



The Willow Tree Inn
IN the blink-and-you'll-miss-it Hunter Valley town of Willow Tree, the inn is an unlikely spot to find one of the country's best steaks.



The Lord Nelson
A LIST of the state's best pubs is not complete without including the Lord Nelson, Australia's oldest brewery pub (established 1841).



The Lord Dudley
THE watering hole of choice for the eastern suburbs glitterati the Dudley still has the throne as the prime drinking spot around Woollahra.



The Tamworth Hotel
IT'S hard to pick a standout pub in Australia's country music capital, but this pub has a heady mix of old-world charm and flannel-shirt revelry.



The Newport Arms
A PITTWATER landmark since 1880, the Arms has grown to boast a huge beer garden where patrons drink while gazing at a stunning landscape.



The Imperial Hotel
A MAJOR revamp has seen this Sydney haunt transformed into a modern, sophisticated space that has somehow managed to retain its cosy charm.



The Oaks
COOKING your own steak is an unlikely sell but such is the tradition at Neutral Bay's legendary pub, a go-to spot for north shore types since 1885.



The Clarendon Hotel
A CBD institution in Newcastle, the Clarendon ticks every box. Neat art-deco styling, a beer garden, live bands and a huge array of craft beers.



The Shakespeare Hotel
A FAVOURITE among the stylish but impoverished, the Shakey is regarded as one of Sydney's best haunts, where a meal and a beer comes in at \$15.



Ray Reilly, the owner of The Henson Hotel in Marrickville. Picture: File Photo

Sorry is hardest letter for Alan

BRENDEEN HILLS COURT REPORTER

BROADCASTER Alan Jones likes writing letters. It's how he gets things done in this city.

He has bombarded public officials with so much correspondence it was once claimed the Prime Minister's Office appointed a political adviser to the unofficial position of "the minister for Alan Jones".

But this year Jones wrote an unusual one: an apology to high-profile silk Ian Barker QC.

The broadcaster agreed to write the apology after settling a defamation case brought against him by Mr Barker.

Mr Barker sued Jones after the broadcaster attacked the barrister during his morning show, falsely claiming the lawyer was "paid comprehensively by the taxpayer to tell lies".

Jones was referring to Mr Barker's role as a crown prosecutor in the case 30 years ago when Lindy Chamberlain, now Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton, was on trial for the murder of her newborn daughter Azaria.

Jones made the comment while interviewing Mrs Chamberlain-Creighton's former husband, Michael, about a book he wrote in which he described how he and Lindy were convicted, then acquitted, of the child's murder.

Mr Barker sued, but Jones settled on the eve of it going to court. He agreed to pay Mr Barker a confidential amount and to write him a personalised letter of apology.

In a letter titled "apology to Ian Barker QC", Jones admitted he claimed the lawyer "engaged in serious professional misconduct in the course of the trial". Jones wrote: "This is untrue and I now accept this to be the case."

Mr Barker declined to comment when questioned about the letter, one of several apologies Jones has made.

In December Jones was ordered to apologise over comments he made on air in 2005 when he referred to Lebanese Muslims as "vermin" and "mongrels". He also apologised to former PM Julia Gillard after saying her father had "died of shame" at a function.

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