JUSTINE DAVIS
INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR JOHNSTON

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A message from your local representative in NT Parliament

Hello Johnston!

What a year it's been! As we wrap up 2024, it's the perfect time to reflect on our shared values —love, kindness, compassion, and gratitude— and look ahead with hope and purpose.

Darwin's rich diversity is one of our greatest strengths. For those celebrating Christmas, may the season bring peace and joy. To those observing other traditions, may your faith and celebrations bring meaning and light. In this season of togetherness, let us cherish our differences and find strength in our shared humanity. May your holiday be calm and a time for well-earned rest.

Here's to a new year filled with compassion, understanding, and unity across all cultures and beliefs.

Making Rememberance Day Poppies with Legacy

Celebrating our Community

Our electorate is made up of incredible parts, and I want to celebrate everyone - from baby Evie, whom I met this weekend, to 96-year-old Elsie, who calls to check in on me.

This year has been filled with remarkable moments. Some highlights include:

- Markets and Conversations: Sundays at Rapid Creek Markets are a highlight of my week, where I connect with many of you, hear your concerns, and celebrate our vibrant community.
- Local Schools: From crazy hair day at Nemarluk to weeding at Alawa school farm, I've loved connecting with the six local schools. It's inspiring to attend events and celebrate students' achievements and graduations—seeing young people step into their futures with confidence and hope.
- Community Heroes: So many unsung heroes take care of Johnston. The Rapid Creek Landcare Group looks after Gurambai, while locals like Ted, who painted a mural at Jingili shops, and Pam, who runs the seniors' painting group, remind us of the power of community.

Jingili Primary School Grade 6 Graduation and Assembly

- Artists and Creatives: Johnston is home to amazing talent, and I'm thrilled our community cards now feature works by local artists like Ciella Williams, Ivy & Danny Crichton, Sandra Kendall, and Frank Gohier. Your creativity enriches our community.

Special Mentions to Stan, Bill, John, and friends at the Greek Men's Club who provide a place for lonely people to come together. They welcomed me months ago, fuelling me with Greek coffee and plenty of advice on what needs to happen here.

We've also enjoyed connecting with our seniors, hosting a Christmas Morning Tea, and delivering Christmas cakes.

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Updates from Parliament

The final Parliamentary sitting for 2024 was packed with significant debates, laws, and reflections. Here's a recap:

Domestic Violence: The Real Crime Crisis
Domestic violence is the true crime and safety crisis in the NT. The Chief Minister gave a report on the rapid action the CLP has taken on our crime crisis. Let's talk about our crime crisis.

In 2023, more than half the homicides were DV-related. Two in three assaults were DV-related. Over 65% of people in prison are there for DV-related issues, and more than 65% of police time is spent on DV-related matters. Over 95% of young people in detention are affected by DV. The CLP describes itself as a government of action on crime, yet no new money has been spent on DV since the election.

I supported Labor's call for a cross-parliamentary delegation to Canberra to advocate for more domestic violence funding. Image: ABC News

New Legislation

First Home Owners Grants: While housing affordability is critical, there's little evidence that this scheme will make homes more accessible. At a cost of $200 million, this money could have been better invested in housing stock or social programs.

Fines Amendment Bill: This Bill fixes a problem that made fine recovery illegal. It raised serious questions about the validity of retrospective legislation, inequitable fine application, and lack of alternatives to payment. The bill also raises concerns about two new fines the CLP introduced: fining people for drinking in public and fining parents if their kids aren't in school.

Both will impact vulnerable people and need scrutiny to avoid worsening poverty and inequality and I am yet to hear a satisfactory answer from the CLP about how these people will be protected under the new fines recovery scheme.

Petitions and Public Voices

Many petitions were presented, including:

- A call to withdraw the Territory Coordinator Bill, which grants unprecedented override and exemption powers to an unelected official.
- Advocacy to tackle invasive gamba grass, a significant environmental threat.
- A petition to return Lee Point to the Larrakia people, supporting justice and cultural preservation.
- A concerning motion to limit women's access to reproductive healthcare, which I strongly oppose.

A note on petitions: Petitions do not create laws. They allow the public to bring concerns to Parliament. If presented, the Minister must respond, and a committee decides whether it is debated in the chamber (for about 30 minutes).

Reflections and Condolences

We marked two significant milestones: the 50th anniversary of Cyclone Tracy and the establishment of the NT Legislative Assembly. Cyclone Tracy changed lives and reshaped our city, and the Assembly anniversary reminds us of the progress made and the work ahead. We also honored Nick Dondas and Mawyul Yanthalawuy AM for their contributions to our Territory.

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What's next in Parliament?

We sit next in February, with critical bills on the agenda, including the controversial Territory Coordinator Bill and discussions about lowering the minimum alcohol floor price.

In between sittings, parliamentary committees work on laws, finance, parliamentary workings, and sometimes select committees on specific issues. Please let me know if you'd like to know more.

Domestic, Sexual and Family Violence

This last sitting of Parliament commenced on the first day of 16 days of action against gender-based violence. The coroner released her report and recommendations from the Coronial Inquest for the deaths of Kumanjayi Haywood, Ngeygo Ragurrk, Miss Yunupingu and Kumarn Rubuntja. The report is available online via the QR code: it makes for grim reading and reminds us of the imperative to act to address this crisis.

The Territory Coordinator

The consultation process for the Territory Coordinator Bill is open until January 17th. The bill will be presented to Parliament in February, then referred to the scrutiny committee for further consultation, with the intention to vote in March. The powers proposed for an unelected bureaucrat are unprecedented in Australia. We must build a a strong, sustainable NT economy without cutting corners or risking people and the country. You can find out more via the QR code here:

Back in Johnston

Thank you for welcoming me as your local member. It's been an honour to engage with our community—visiting homes, businesses, schools, and meeting people at our office or over a cup of tea. Recently, I've set up outside local shops in my electorate, a great way to connect with those who can't make it to office hours or just want a chat (and continue my quest for the best hot chips in Johnston!).

My favourite day is Sunday at the Rapid Creek markets, where I enjoy talking with many of you.

I'm committed to bringing people together to build the community you want. Last month we held our first 'Town Hall' meeting in Johnston, and we plan to hold these regularly next year. People shared concerns like no underground power, fears for cyclone season, lack of funding for public schools, and no indoor community space in Johnston.

Great to see so many of you at our Moil Town Hall meeting

They also expressed their love for our community, including the Jingili Water Gardens, the wild beauty of Gurambai, and the clear, fast-flowing Rapid Creek.

But most of all, people said they felt disillusioned with politics—frustrated by the lack of consultation, abuse of power in the NT, and risks of corruption posed by the Territory Coordinator legislation. They also expressed concern about the CLP's decision to lower the age of criminal responsibility.

They came because they felt hopeful for change and a better future—one where we feel safe, connected, and able to shape our futures. That's what I'm committed to, and I look forward to.

Left: Sundays at Rapid Creek Market. Right: My favourite barista, Stan at the Greek Club in Millner

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Thank You Team!

None of what we've accomplished this year would have been possible without the dedication of our incredible team. A heartfelt thank you to Beth, Lara, Alice, and Maddy for helping make the office a welcoming, effective space from the start, and a huge welcome to Viv, our Electorate Officer, who hit the ground running and hasn't stopped since.

To all our wonderful volunteers—you are the backbone of what we do. From organising events to assisting with research, your contributions are invaluable. We couldn't achieve this without you. Thank you for your time, energy, and unwavering commitment to Johnston, and to doing politics differently.

Volunteer gathering at the Electorate Office in Millner

Preparing for Cyclone Season

As we reflect on the anniversary of Cyclone Tracy, it's a reminder to ensure we're prepared for the upcoming cyclone season. Review your emergency plans, check your cyclone kit, and secure loose items around your home. Local resources and guides are available to help you prepare—don't wait until a cyclone is on its way. For those in older homes or areas prone to flooding, now is the time to assess evacuation options and make a plan for yourself and your loved ones. Preparation is key to staying safe and protecting what matters most.

Scan here to receive this newsletter electronically!

What's Coming Up

While this time of year is often quieter here, these are just a few of the many activities on in town over the summer!

Liquid Light - Christmas Wonderland
30 November - 25 December, 7.30, 8 & 8.30pm
Free event at at Darwin Waterfront

School Holiday Programs
Find free and low-cost activities for young people around town:

Get That Job - Free Level Up Cafe Skills
Wednesday, 8 January, 3 - 6.30pm
The Meeting Place by GTNT, Knuckey st Darwin

Seniors' Aqua Aerobics Wet Season Program 12 January - 24 March, 12 - 12.45pm
Coconut Grove. Phone 0498 100 050

Looking after Ourselves and Each Other

This can be a challenging time for anyone. If you need a hand or someone to speak to, there are many local and online services to support you:

- St Vincent de Paul Society Darwin - 131 812
- Salvation Army: Darwin Corps - 8945 1947
- Lifeline: 24-hour crisis counselling - 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Service: 24-hour counselling - 1300 659 467
- Kids Helpline: Free, confidential counselling for young people aged 5 to 25 -1800 55 1800
- beyondblue: 24-hour phone support and online chat - 1300 22 4636
- QLife.org.au: National LGBTI counselling and referral service with phone and online chat

Our office will be closed from 24 December - 2 January. We wish you all a healthy and happy festive season and look forward to working with you in 2025.

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