

# Amanda answers my call!

— by BOB HOLLAND —

Regular readers of our publications *Orange City Life* and *NewsWatch* would now be very familiar with the name, Amanda Spalding. I recognised her incredible talent and experience when I first met her and, since then, she has helped me in a number of ways with different initiatives and projects where we both have common interests — one being our 2019 Community Project, *Put Orange First*, which she is still part of.

She has incredible experience and knowledge in local government and other senior Public Service-type roles but what also drew me to her ideas was her character. Very early in our association, I judged her to be very honest, highly-ethical, and someone who is not afraid to speak her mind. Qualities that I personally admire but, I also know, others may not appreciate! Being like this, doesn't always get you to the places you want to go. Just ask me, I know, but having those virtues does let you sleep at night.

For over a year or so now, Amanda has been contributing her knowledge and experience in a number of ways to our publications, and to other groups and organisations across Orange. In our case, I've tapped into her local government experience and we've been able to help our readers get a better understanding of how our Council works or should work. At times, we've been critical, other times complimentary but always with the intent of making

Orange a better place to live.

Amanda has aspirations to get back into local government at some point. In the meantime, however, I have this obsession to try and help Orange grow in my own way. Regular readers would know how I firmly-believe that our retailers and business owners generally, deserve better than they are getting in respect and support from too many people across Orange. There's only so much I can do personally with the resources I have, but I've decided to give it a decent shot and I've asked Amanda if she'd like to help me. She said YES!

To achieve this, Amanda has accepted an offer to work for my Company 'Regional Life Group,' in the capacity of Executive Officer for a new commercial arm of our business called *Hearts for Orange*. She will work out of our office but independently of our newspaper operations. She will, however, continue to be a contributor to our publications as she has been doing.

This new role will see her out there working among business owners, particularly retailers, as we try to support and encourage them, while at the same time gaining support from both them and the community generally. If we want Orange to come out the other side of COVID-19 and our other challenges, in good shape, we need to make sure our local businesses are given every chance to remain



■ Amanda Spalding, answering the call to the Orange community.

prosperous and keep people employed, or even employ more. We'll also be strongly reminding all those who live in Orange and love Orange why it's so important to spend their money where their heart is, here in Orange. That's a message we'll be hammering away at incessantly.

My sincere desire is that at least some of our businesses and some of our total community will "get it," because if they do, anything we achieve will be better than nothing.

— Will you join us?

## ROLL OF HONOUR

Jonathan Roe speaks with

## KENDAL CLOTHING



“...Good service, that's what we offer,” said Kendal, who is big on the basics...

This week's Roll of Honour candidate, Kendal Clothing has been a fixture of the Orange retail community for almost two decades. Store owner Kendal Hansen, literally grew up in retail, learning the fashion business in her mum and dad's shop right here in Orange.

After dabbling in a few other career options, then marriage and children, Kendal found herself drawn back to retail and founded her eponymous ladieswear store 18 years ago.

“Good service, that's what we offer,” said Kendal, who is big on the basics like greeting everyone as they come through the door. Indeed, stepping into the lower level Anson Street shop you are immediately made welcome by Kendal and her long-time team member Wendy Taberner.

It is an approach that has build Kendal a strong and loyal customer base.

“We've become great friends with our customers,” she said. “Over 18 years you get to know some of them very well and yeah, we pride ourselves on good service and making people feel comfortable and good about themselves.”

The past few months have been difficult for businesses big and small, the toughest Kendal said she had experienced in all her time in business.

But again, it was the focus on customer service that made all the difference, she said.

“We stayed open the whole time, we traded through it, and I offered a home service to all my customers. I would deliver clothes to their houses and they would try them on and I would pick them up the next day. So that actually worked out really well,” said Kendal.

“Women could just try on a few things in the comfort of our

own home and the safety of their home. So that was a good service that we offered, and it worked for us during COVID.”

Even now, with things (somewhat) returned to normal Kendal is continuing to offer the same home delivery service. But most of her customers prefer to come see her in person, she said, which is also why she has not made a big push into online sales.

“I did try that years ago, but it is not where my clientele sit; they like the service, they like to feel and touch the clothes. My customers like the experience of actually being served, they want to be looked after and they want to have a chat — that is the experience we are having in here anyway.

“The women that shop with me are more semi-retired or retired and they actually enjoy the experience of getting out of the house and they love that one-on-one service.”



NewsWatch is proud to add this spectacular local business in our Roll of Honour.