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grabbed her hair and both of them fell to the ground. "He had hold of her hair and was punching her," the prosecutor told the court.

The others in the room finally restrained the man and the woman twice tried to punch him just as police arrived. The woman was taken to Cunnamulla hospital for treatment while her husband was taken to the watch-house and interviewed in the presence of an Aboriginal legal service advocate.

The prosecutor requested a 12-month jail term for the man, who pleaded guilty to assault causing bodily harm and breach of a domestic violence order. Barnes said the man had been jailed for two months for similar offences some years ago.

Defence lawyer Tim Carberry said his client acknowledged he could not handle alcohol but his father's visit compelled him to break a long period of abstinence. "His father was present in Cunnamulla and he had not seen his father for five years and he broke a dry period of two years. Since his last incarceration he's in fact been sober for two years up until that date."

Tendering a report from a drug and alcohol counsellor, Carberry said his client had attended a detox program and had just completed 12 months with the CDEP work-for-the-dole program. "He comes from that majority of Australians who in fact contribute something in return," he said. One of Cunnamulla's detectives had lined up a two-week work trial for his client on a property out of town.

The defendant was on good terms with his wife and had complied with strict bail conditions requiring him to refrain from alcohol or violence since December, the lawyer said.

Magistrate Col Strofield warned the man that he would have gone to jail for a year but for the positive report from his drug and alcohol counsellor. Instead he sentenced him to a 12-month suspended jail sentence.

FINE FOR MOP THREAT

A 27-YEAR-OLD man was fined \$300 at Cunnamulla magistrates court last week for breaching a domestic violence order when he threatened to use his former de facto as a mop to clean up broken eggs.

The woman called police to her house in King Street, Cunnamulla on 4 February telling them the man was preventing her leaving the house to take her children to school. She complained the man was intimidating her, telling her she couldn't leave the house until she cleaned up the mess created by a carton of broken eggs on the kitchen floor which she'd thrown at him during an argument the previous night, police prosecutor Mark Barnes told the court.

"He said, You clean them up or I will tip you upside down and mop them up with your hair," Barnes said.

The man's lawyer Frank Jongkind said his client admitted telling his former de facto he would use her hair as a mop. "However there was no actual violence and no intention on his part that there would be any," he said. No conviction was recorded.

SKYTRANS TAKES THE LOW ROAD

EVERYBODY raves about Skytrans, the little Cairns-based airline that for nearly a year has plied the two subsidised routes through southwest Qld. The mayors rave about it, the airline's local agents love its timeliness, and international jetsetters declare its in-flight service and attitude is superior to Qantas, Singapore Airlines ... any of the international carriers.

This week, the company's commercial people zoomed through the southwest to garner feedback through a series of air users group meetings. They drove in a Prado rented from Avis in Charleville. Commer-



Andrew Mahon, transport department aviation adviser, with Skytrans contracts manager Louise Ottewell, commercial manager Steve Jones and customer relations manager Clare Nash.

cial manager Steve Jones said the airline had doubled passenger figures to about 220 a month on the Western 1 route since taking over from defunct MacAir. On time performance was running at 97%, better than the company's target 85%.

Senior management was studying ways of increasing the service from two to three flights per week. "We see a lot of potential out here," Jones said. "A couple of good seasons and business will pick up. Tourism is very much untapped in Qld. We service 26 ports and fly to wonderful places that few people know about."

The company is keen to promote the region's attractions with the aim of increasing the number of tourists flying to the southwest. Three months ago, it launched Skytrans Holidays to develop its tourist trade. Parkers Travel Collection is driving marketing and distribution.

At the Cunnamulla meeting, Wyandra's Deirdre Williams piqued the Skytrans crew's interest with a proposal to tailor flights for kids attending boarding schools in Brisbane and Toowoomba.

Keeping alive the flame

IN SMALL towns it's hard enough getting anyone to a dog fight, let alone a horse race, a show or an Anzac day parade. Bollon's got one ex-serviceman, former sergeant-major Duncan McPherson, Thargomindah's got ex-RAAF Jan Seery, the shire's tourist officer. Wyandra's got nobody but Anzac day just keeps getting bigger. It's got borrow-a-veteran.

Thirty Vietnam vets in caravans will descend on the town of 100 this weekend. There'll be a memorabilia display, sports day, goat races and a dawn march stacked with medals on Sunday.

Cunnamulla will have two services, one at dawn and the other at 10.30am.



Senator Joe Ludwig with Jo Sheppard

GIDDAY JOE, GIDDAY JO

SENATOR JOE Ludwig returned to his former stamping ground in Cunnamulla this week to talk flood fallout with Paroo councilors. The local reps appraised the cabinet secretary and special minister of state of the impact the big wet has had on roo shooters and other small businesses.

They also demanded action on flood gauging stations on the upper Paroo and mid-Warrego. Also discussed was population drift and the need for governments to encourage people back into the interior.

Ludwig said he completed most of his education in Cunnamulla and had fond memories of the joint.

Snake story correction

IN LAST week's story about a snake spotted sneaking into a job recruiter's car outside the Paroo council offices, the Watchman stated jobseeker Toni Collins was the mother of two children. That was incorrect. Toni is 17 and has no children.

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Fact 003

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†State and Territory Hospital Data, compiled by the Department of Health and Ageing. \*GPs may charge a consultation fee.



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