



Members of the Roscommon Anti Head Shop Group pictured at a recent function in Roscommon, the group were celebrating the closure of High Times. Picture: Andrew Fox.

Head shop protesters enjoy celebration night

Members of the anti-headshop group gathered in Gleeson's on Monday night last, July 26th, to review a successful campaign and their success was lauded by several public representatives present on the night.

Cllr. Domnick Connolly opened the celebration speeches by mentioning that the Western Regional Drug Task Force had met with county councillors on Monday and had congratulated the people of Roscommon on closing down the headshops and being instrumental in changing the planning laws. His sentiments were echoed by Cllr. Valerie Byrne, who gave her good wishes and support to the group.

Activist Jacqui Snape paid sincere thanks to all those who stood out on the picket through the bitter cold days and nights. She said that she was delighted that the Roscommon group saw it through and got closure. She said that not alone did the group get rid of the head shop, but they were also instrumental in having the law of Ireland changed, a great achievement



Members of the Roscommon Anti Head Shop Group were pictured at a recent function presenting a cheque for €300 to Paul Byrne, Recovery for Today. Pictured (l-r) Lisa Horan, Michael Earley, Jacqui Snape, Paul Byrne, Recovery for Today; Cllr. Domnick Connolly and Immacula Deane. Picture: Andrew Fox.

for a small town.

Chairperson of the group, Michael Earley, said that the campaign was "a

campaign born out of passion". He stated that he felt that the group had the support of most of the townspeople.

"Many would comment in passing on what a great thing we were doing even though they might not have been able to join us on the picket."

He went on to say that let this be a lesson that we should never underestimate the power of ordinary people. He thanked all of the people who stood on the picket and stated that he enjoyed meeting many new people who he didn't know before this. Michael went on to thank the many businesspeople in town who very kindly supported the group, including Sean and Una Doyle, Eamonn and Mary Gleeson, Frances' Finishing Touches, Roscommon Signs, XLNT Signs, Tom Beirne's, Donny Keigher, Brid Miller, Padraic Deane and the local Gardaí.

Domnick then asked Paul Beirne from 'Recovery for today' to address the group. Paul said he felt the group were 'God's chosen angels' and not only closed the shop, but saved lives as well. He said the group was an icon and Roscommon was mentioned the

length and breadth of the country in its fight against drugs. He felt that it was wonderful that the people took the initiative not to let the government dictate what is right, and if anyone was to try and open a head shop in the future, they definitely wouldn't choose Roscommon!

The group made a presentation of €300 to Paul to help his group to support recovering drug addicts. Finally Domnick thanked the committee for all their work and a presentation of flowers and chocolates was made to Jacqui from the Anti Headshop Group.

After the formal meeting, the group stayed on to review what was a successful campaign, which involved county council meetings, radio and newspaper interviews, a trip to the Dáil, an appearance on the Frontline with Pat Kenny and a documentary with Philip Boucher Hayes. Apart from the hard work of the campaign, many new friendships were forged which will last long into the future.

Dog adoption drive raises €2,000

The third annual Pedigree Adoption Drive has raised €2000 for Roscommon SPCA.

The campaign, which ran from the 1st April to the end of June, saw Pedigree donate money for every pack of Pedigree dog food sold. Raising funds went hand in hand with raising awareness during this year's campaign, which ultimately sought to help the plight of homeless dogs in Ireland.

Murphy highlights problems with Strokestown ATM

The ATM machine at Bank of Ireland, Strokestown is continuously breaking down and almost every weekend business is lost to the town, according to local councillor Eugene Murphy, who said this week that people in the locality are fed up and angry with the constant breakdowns of the ATM machine outside Bank of Ireland.

"I have in the past asked Bank of Ireland to deal with this issue, and apparently they have failed to acknowledge the problem. This is the people's money put in there by the people and now they cannot draw it when needed for shopping. Many older people are advised

not to use cash and use ATM machines and some of those tell me that the lack of service is causing them difficulty.

"Many young people also use ATM machines, but when they travel to another town to avail of the service it often means business is lost to the area". Cllr Murphy said he wants the Bank to deal with this issue once and for all. "We had a major event in this region last weekend and again some people had to leave town to get cash. There is another machine in the town in one of the supermarkets but of course this cannot be accessed after a certain time at night."

