

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2023

Sentinel-Times

ROCKS IN YOUR HEAD...

if you're not wearing a life jacket

IN FEBRUARY 2022, the State Government introduced a two-year trial making lifejackets mandatory at 10 of the Victoria's most treacherous rock-fishing locations.

Three of the 10 are in Bass Coast; at Pyramid Rocks (Phillip Island), San Remo (southern end of Potters Hill Road) and the notorious Punchbowl Rocks (near San Remo).

The trial has already been spectacularly successful, most recently

on Monday, November 13.

According to two of the first responders, CFA District 8 Catchment Commander Phil Rogan and Phillip Island First Lieutenant Rhyce Davis, someone was fishing at Punchbowl Rocks when he was swamped by a wave while retrieving a fish, fell in and got swept out.

"Fortunately, he was wearing a PFD (personal flotation device) and no doubt that saved his life," said Commander Rogan.

"On the day, the weather wasn't that bad, and the waves weren't all that big, so it just shows you what can happen," said Lt Davis.

"We understand he was in the water for quite some hours. The current brought him back in towards the rock shelf, but he was unable to get back up again," said Commander Rogan.

He was quick to praise the police airwing for their efforts.

Continued page 3

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Specials available from Wed 20th December 2023 to Tues 2nd January 2024. While Stocks Last.

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Rocks in your head if you're not wearing a lifejacket

From page 1

"We were just there in a supporting role. The police helicopter winched him out. He was exhausted but alive.

"Look, they don't want anyone fishing down there (at Punchbowl Rocks), it's just too dangerous but the message is, if you are going rock fishing, wear a PDF."

Attending the scene on the day were SES, ambulance, police, Parks Victoria, CFA, and the police airwing.

Parks Victoria staff have contacted the Sentinel-Times about the incident in the hope of highlighting the safety message, about wearing an approved lifejacket ahead of the busy summer holiday season.

Fortunately, it seems, many if not all those rock fishing at Punchbowl Rocks, and also at San Remo and Pyramid Rock have got the message and are wearing their PDFs.

Why anyone would want to run the risk of scaling the goat-track to the Punchbowl Rocks, only to put their life in peril, is anyone's guess. You'd certainly hope the fishing is good!

MP seeks mandatory PFDs

Bass MP Jordan Crugnale was contacted for comment about the intentions of the government for making the lifejacket trial provisions mandatory, or at least extending the trial beyond its two-year period, potentially concluding in February 2024.

"I have and will certainly continue to make representations to the relevant minister that lifejacket wearing become law for rock fishing," said Jordan Crugnale this week.

"Our coastline is unpredictable in terms of its swells, winds and rips and we have lost too many lives over the years which is why we introduced the trial in the first place. It saves lives.

"This is an opportune time to also remind locals and visitors alike to be very sensible in and around our waters and no matter where you are rock fishing, to wear a life jacket as we do when boating, windsurfing, paddleboarding or on other vessels," she said.

"We are in the top dangerous locations in the state and most recently someone fortunately lives to tell the tale as they were wearing a life jacket when they were swept in."

Lifejackets for fishermen at the 10 most high-risk locations in Victoria came into force on March 1, 2022.

The two-year trial on lifejackets was introduced following consultation by the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) with members of the public, angling clubs, Future-Fish and VRFish.

"An increasingly popular form of fishing, rock fishing has also proven to be dangerous following the tragic deaths of several rock fishers swept off rock shelves and reefs in recent years," a government spokesperson said at the time.

"Already proven to save lives during emergencies, the trial aims to reduce the chance of drowning with a properly fitted and well-maintained lifejacket, should a rock fisher end up in the water."

And that's how it has turned out with several reports of lives saved, and likely to have been numerous others.

It is noticeable that rock fishermen, walking to these beaches with their gear, already have their PFDs on.

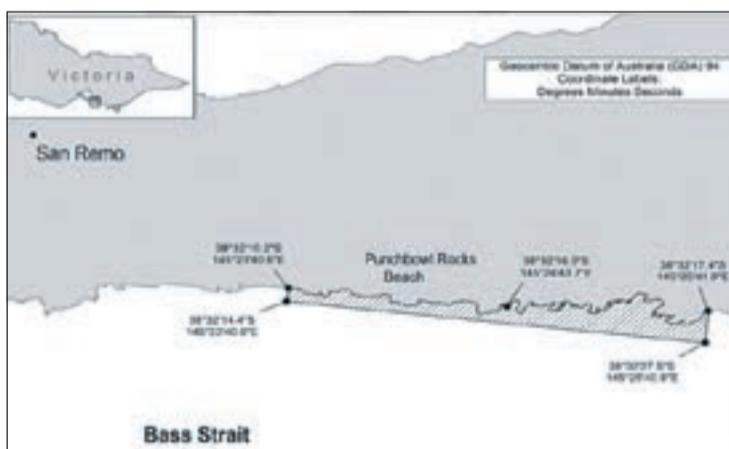
The 10 most dangerous rock fishing spots, where mandatory lifejackets has been enforced are at Cape Bridgewater (near the blowholes car park), Artillery Rocks (west of Lorne), Sheoak Falls (south of Lorne), Sorrento Back Beach rocks, Rye back beach number 16, Cape Schanck lighthouse rocks, Bushrangers Bay rocks (east of Cape Schanck), Pyramid Rocks (Phillip Island), San Remo (southern end of Potters Hill Road) and Punchbowl Rocks (near San Remo).

Lifejackets need to comply with Australian Standards and be a Type 3 or greater for adults. Children under 12 must wear a lifejacket at the 10 sites even if they are not fishing, and they must be a Type 1 or greater model.

Although, why children are not banned from attending these high-risk sites is unfathomable.



A police helicopter was called in to winch a rock-fisherman to safety on November 13, at the notorious Punchbowl Rocks location, after he was swept off the rocks while retrieving a fish. He was in the water for several hours before the emergency call went out and is almost certainly still alive because he was wearing an approved personal flotation device.



Fishermen visiting the Punchbowl Rocks area, and nearby rock platform sites, must wear a lifejacket as part of a trial at Victoria's 10 high-risk rock-fishing locations.

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POLICE BRIEFS

More car thefts and stuff stolen

BASS Coast police have issued a timely warning to tradies and other residents, especially those who are prone to leaving their cars open.

In an ongoing spate of car thefts, more went missing last week.

"Over the last few nights in Wonthaggi and North Wonthaggi there has been several incidents where vehicles have been stolen and items stolen from vehicles," said police.

The investigation into these offences is ongoing.

"Your local police would like to remind everyone, especially tradespersons with vehicles such as utes, and vans, to lock their vehicles and not leave keys in their vehicles.

"This helps protect your property and makes it far harder for crooks to steal your valuable things."

Follow this link to some great advice about preventing things getting stolen from your vehicle: police.vic.gov.au/preventing-theft-from-motor

And, if you see people acting suspiciously, please let police know by calling 000 at the time and reporting it straight away.

Accident closed highway before Christmas

THE South Gippsland Highway was closed for several hours last Tuesday, December 20 following a two-car collision between Loch and Nyora.

In the incident, which occurred near the intersection of the South Gippsland Highway and Nyora-St Helier Road at about 12 noon, two people were injured and conveyed to hospital.

Firefighters also reported that one person was trapped and the highway was closed while emergency services responded.

The trapped person was removed from the car quickly and cared for by Ambulance Victoria paramedics.

The CFA had six vehicles on the scene including from Lang Lang, Loch and Poowong.

Ambulance Vic said a woman in her 30s was taken to Frankston in a stable condition with minor injuries to the upper body. A man in his 40s was taken to Dandenong Hospital in a stable condition with lower body injuries.

Anyone with any information about the incident is urged to contact the Loch Police Station on 5659 4267.

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FEATURES

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*Please note changes occur as a result of public holidays.

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DEADLINE CHANGES

Due to the New Year's Day public holiday the deadlines for the next issue of the South Gippsland Sentinel-Times, to be printed Wednesday, January 3 will be as follows:

DISPLAY ADVERTISING
Deadline: 3pm
Friday, December 29

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
Deadline: 12 noon
Tuesday, January 2

Sentinel-Times
COVERING SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST

6 Day Weather Forecast

SOUTH GIPPSLAND

* Please Note: This weather report was compiled on December 21 at time of printing and may have changed.



WED | Dec 27

Shower or two.

16° 21°



THUR | Dec 28

Partly cloudy.

12° 25°



FRI | Dec 29

Partly cloudy.

12° 16°



SAT | Dec 30

Possible shower.

8° 14°



SUN | Jan 1

Sunny.

11° 17°

13° 25°

Meeniyian preschool says goodbye to Fay

IT WAS a very teary day on Monday December 18, when Meeniyian Preschool celebrated the early education career and retirement of Fay Sinclair.

Known as 'Mrs Sinclair' to all the children and adults alike, Fay has taught multiple generations, teaching at Meeniyian kindergarten for 23 years.

"I love my job, the children and the people I work with. I didn't have to work," Fay stated in her speech to the crowd that gathered to celebrate her career.

Fay started her career in 1983 with Marg Fox at the kindergarten in Hassett Street, Leongatha.

Back then the four-year-olds only did two half hour sessions four days a week.

Now, four year olds do a minimum of 15 hours per week.

How things have changed over the time.

Fay joined Meeniyian Preschool as a staff member in 1999, after helping run the kinder as a member of the committee of management for the previous seven years.

On display at the celebration were numerous class photos from Fay's career, including a kinder photo of the current vice president, Nat Goodfellow and more recently, that of her daughters.

After an emotional speech from the current president of the kinder, Melissa McRae, Fay finished her speech with, "I know there is life after work and the community is my passion, so I look forward to holidays and catching up with my friends. I wish the Meeniyian Preschool all the

best for the future and I will certainly miss seeing the children, parents and staff."

The committee of management of Meeniyian preschool are grateful to Fay for the dedication she has shown to her job over many years.

Not least, her cheerfully warm welcome that greeted everyone each day, her amazingly creative activities, her passion and her 'get the job done' mentality has meant that she will be sorely missed.

However, the community will now benefit more from her passion. Enjoy those holidays, Fay!

RIGHT: Meeniyian Kinder celebrated the retirement of much loved staff member Fay Sinclair last week.



IN BRIEF

Get snapping in South Gippsland

DUST off those cameras, the South Gippsland Australia Day Photo Competition is now taking submissions.

This year, entrants are encouraged to embrace their inner photographer and submit a photo that fits under the theme of Australia Day: South Gippsland - Our people and places'.

All photos must be taken in, or in close proximity to South Gippsland.

There are two prize categories - an open category with a \$500 prize and junior category (under 15) with a \$300 prize.

For more information and to enter before Wednesday January 17, please visit: southgippsland.vic.gov.au/australiadaycompetition

Winners will be announced on January 26, 2024.

* All submitted images will be used for the purpose of the competition only. This competition has been funded by the National Australia Day Council.

Nominations open for Victorian training awards

The achievements of Victorians within the TAFE and training sector will be celebrated by the Victorian Government for the 70th annual 2024 Victorian Training Awards.

Nominations recently opened for the awards, which honour Victorian apprentices, students, teachers and trainers, employers, and training providers across 15 categories.

The 2024 winners will be announced at the Victorian Training Awards gala ceremony in August 2024 and will

each be awarded \$5000.

The Victorian Training Awards acknowledges the support of the Awards' Principal Partner 2022-2024, the Apprenticeship Employment Network (AEN) and the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN Australia).

One thing that could be costing you about \$300 a month

FOR MANY grabbing a glass of wine or beer at the end of the day to wind down has become a habit, with perhaps a few more drinks on the tab as the end-of-year celebrations begin.

Yet, recent Compare the Market data has found that this habit could be costing Millennial Aussies as much as \$445 a month.

The survey found that the average Australian who drinks, spends \$65.56 a week on alcohol, or \$284.09 a month, while Millennials hit it out of the park, spending on average \$102.91 a week on their favourite grog.

Gen Xers were the next big spenders, (though not as much as their Millennial counterparts), with \$68.17 of their weekly budget going to a tall glass of their preferred alcohol. Baby Boomers, on the other hand, were the least likely to spend money on booze, with a modest average of \$34.70 a week being spent.

CLAY.made returns

AFTER the success of the October CLAY.made market, we are excited to announce our next makers market, Mostly CLAY.made, will be held at the Meeniyian Town Hall on Sunday, January 7, from 10am until 2pm.

While CLAY.made is predominantly clay makers of

all kinds, we are including some other favourite makers, so there will be a range of gorgeous wares available and the CWA are again providing delicious Devonshire teas. If you went to the one last time you'll know they are unmissable.

At this time of year, Meeniyian will be a hive of activity, so this is a great chance to create even more buzz about local makers and artists. We look forward to seeing you on January 7! Follow @clay.made_south_gippsland on Instagram for updates.

Look after local bats

WITH an influx of flying foxes such as those at the Leongatha Wetlands and on Phillip Island, community members are being urged to ensure any fruit netting is compliant with Victorian law so as not to endanger the animals.

A post on the Little Wing Bat Haven Facebook page issued the important message.

"Currently a number of calls are coming in daily for bats stuck in netting," it stated, stressing that netting with an aperture of over 5mm is illegal in Victoria.

Anyone with non-compliant netting is urged to dispose of it responsibly.

The current dire plight faced by flying foxes was starkly outlined.

"Flying foxes are in a starvation event right through Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland and as the situation becomes more dire, bats are trying desperately to find food," it stated.

People are also encouraged to consider removing compliant fruit netting to enable the famished animals to eat.

"They will thank you

tenfold by dispersing seeds and pollen," Little Wing Bat Haven said.

Little Wing Bat Haven is a registered bat rehabilitation shelter on Phillip Island and can be contacted on 0409 530 541.

Word of the year is coozie livs

WITH the words 'cost of living' on everyone's lips over the past few months, the Australian Macquarie Dictionary has coined the abbreviated slang term 'coozie livs' as word of the year for 2023.

It's a word that illustrates the year well, and the committee, comprised of three of the dictionary's editors, chose the word over two other honourable mentions, blue-sky flood and algospeak.

"Although coozie livs was coined in the UK, it has resonated soundly with Australians, with its -ie suffix and its clipped formation... And what could be a more Australian approach to a major social and economic problem than to treat it with a bit of humour and informality?" said the committee.

Blue-sky flood is the idea that there is a deluge coming, even though the sun is shining, almost like the time bomb we're all sitting on with climate change.

Algospeak describes an attempt to circumvent AI surveillance. But how long will it be before the moderating software learns the code words?

The People choice for the 2023 Australian Word of the Year was generative AI. While it isn't a clever or humorous construction, it has touched a nerve and shows that AI is figuring prominently in our minds this year.

Us against them: Why Kongwak says no

THERE may not have been, pound for pound, a proposed development like it for generating so many words in opposition.

The proposed redevelopment of the old Kongwak Butter and Cheese Factory into a hospitality and accommodation venue has really lit up the small hamlet of 50 residents in such a way that 80 per cent of them, we're told, don't want it.

On Gippsland ABC Radio last week, Carolyn Rowson of the Save Kongwak Group even alleged that the plan for the iconic venue might block out the stars!

"Other impacts could include things like light pollution. With all this massive infrastructure and buildings there's going to have to be a lot of street lighting and lighting so that will affect not only the people but the birds and wildlife. We probably won't be able to go outside and see the stars on a starry night anymore. Yeah, so it would really spoil the landscape, serenity and atmosphere of our little community," Ms Rowson told the ABC.

As well as putting up signs around the town, typically with sentiments including 'Save Kongwak' and 'Preserve our Valley of Peace', they've also launched a petition on Change.org which has already attracted about 350 signatures of a target of 500 people against the project.

The developers want to modify the old butter and cheese factory, which hasn't operated since the 1960s, to create a wedding and convention centre for 130 people, while constructing 32 cabins on adjoining land, plus eight other accommodation rooms or cabins.

Here are the key issues, according to the Save Kongwak group:

- They want to knock down a local house and construct a carpark.
- For the other car park, they have indicated they will cut access roads through our historic Avenue of Honour, first planted in 1918. Each tree represents a fallen or returned soldier from our district from the two world wars.
- The developers plan to construct 32 cabins in farmland but these paddocks are



The historic Kongwak Butter and Cheese Factory hasn't operated since the 1960s but certainly must have created its share of noise and environmental impact in its day. Now the townsfolk say they don't need the aggravation of a new use for the old site.

natural floodplains, and tributaries to the nearby Foster Creek.

- They plan to construct septic tank sewage processing in those paddocks less than 20 metres from a permanent tributary to the creek.
- The wedding venue will be constructed 40 metres from the nearest house. We object to the impact of noise, traffic, parking and expected patron behaviour on our tiny town.
- We expect the late night trading, loud music, alcohol, litter and the sounds of party-goers traversing our tiny town to their accommodation will ruin the serenity of Kongwak.
- The wedding venue alone will overwhelm the population of our community by 260 per cent, in addition, the cabins will swell our population by another 168 per cent.
- The sewage processing required, to be located in farmland, will exceed the sewage processing capacity of the entire town many times over.
- All infrastructure created in the project - roads, curbs, gutters, lighting and other infrastructure will drive up rates for all South Gippsland residents.

"We don't want this development in our town," they say.

"We are not opposed to any development, just to the size and scope of this development. We are for small-scale

development including a restaurant, cafe, art gallery and general store but we oppose a large wedding/convention centre venue, late night trading and live music, and oppose street facing car parks, short-stay cabins and effluent processing on farmland and any impact to our Avenue of Honour."

They don't believe the Kongwak Butter Factory (KBF) Infrastructure and Business Development should have received \$500,000 from the State Government's Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF) Investment Fast Track Fund projects initiative.

And they want the planning permit for the project removed from the direct application stream through the Victorian government Development Facilitation Program (DFP) and returned to the South Gippsland Shire Council process so that local residents can have their say and the project will be subject to conditions generated by local knowledge, local conditions, and competing local interests.

"We're not opposed to development of any kind, just the size and scope of this development is just way too big for this town," Ms Rowson on Gippsland ABC Radio last week.

"We are a small settlement, designated as a hamlet by the South Gippsland Council. We

only have about 50 residents. There are no town services here like water, gas or sewerage. We're all on tank water and septic systems.

"So, for this town, this project is not in alignment with the South Gippsland Shire Council's strategic plan for no further development due to the lack of infrastructure. It's also not in a designated tourist zone. So, it's a great idea but really it's in an inappropriate location.

"We would be very happy to support a smaller project or proposal, like a cafe or a small store, a little gallery or something that operates during business hours, and on weekends, like the Kongwak Market which has been so well supported by the community because it's once-a-week and it doesn't have a huge environmental footprint on the land.

"We just think that it would absolutely destroy the peace and tranquillity of our little town, of our little hamlet. We'll have a whole lot of extra traffic, noise and parking issues. There'll be late night trading with obviously alcohol, and you know potential noise (from) people leaving late at night.

"Also, we're very concerned about the environmental impacts on the Foster Creek because where they're planning to build these cabins is on a natural floodplain so effluent may end up in the creek as we know the areas around here are very wet throughout the year and the land often floods."

A spokesperson for the Kongwak revitalisation project has denied their application has been included in the direct approval process set up by the State Government, not yet anyway.

"The project is progressing well. As you'll be aware we are currently exploring our planning options including the Victorian Government Development Facilitation Program, noting that we have not yet been accepted into this process," said Gemma Cosgriff and Damien Backholer this week.

"We continue to keep the community and interested stakeholders updated and these are available on our website. There is nothing further to report at this stage."

Summer ambulance boost for tourist spots

AMBULANCE Victoria (AV) is boosting its capability in tourist towns and areas of population growth across Gippsland by arranging additional resources over the Summer and New Year period.

Locations to receive an increase in AV resources this summer include Cowes, Wonthaggi, Wilsons Promontory National Park and Mallacoota.

The additional summer support will see more Advanced Life Support (ALS) crews deployed across the region as required, as well as team managers to assist crews during busy times.

AV Gippsland Director Clinical Operations Ross Salathiel said the extra hands on deck is a feature of AV's operational planning for summer every year, and ensures the community is well-served during the holiday period.

"We have some beautiful coastal areas along the Gippsland coast and understandably lots of people want to visit us over the holiday season," Mr Salathiel said.

"We'll see a great deal of holidaymakers and travellers venture through these communities over the coming weeks."

"While this influx is great for tourism and the local economy, the extra population leads to a demand on our services.

"We work hard to ensure we can continue to provide best care and timely responses to those who need us during these busy periods."

Mr Salathiel said it was a timely reminder to take precautions to stay safe this summer, with people planning their getaways over the coming weeks.

"There are a number of simple preventative steps people can take to keep themselves and their loved ones safe in extreme heat," he said.

"Remember to stay hydrated and drink water regularly throughout the day."

"Avoid being outside during the hottest time of the day and keep cool by using air conditioning and fans whenever possible."

"Heat can cause serious illnesses including heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke."

Heat stroke is fatal in up to 80 per cent of cases but is entirely preventable.

Heat stroke is a life-threatening emergency. If you or someone else is experiencing symptoms such as confusion, seizures, collapsing or loss of consciousness, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

If you're feeling unwell, you can also contact the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department, visit a Priority Primary Care Centre, call NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24 or see your doctor or local pharmacist.

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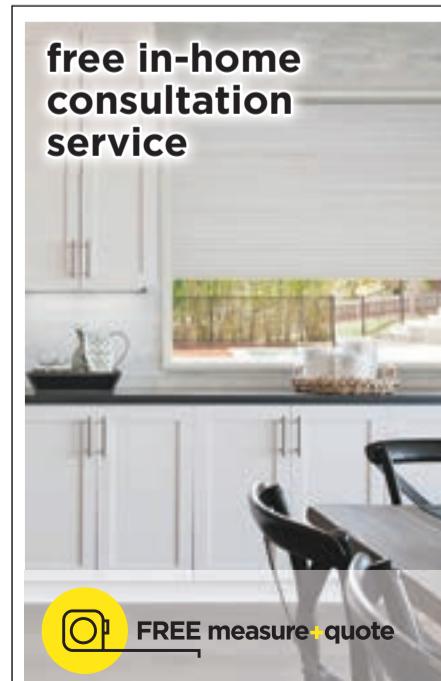
Please support the fundraiser for Sam Fraser's children, to help cover the cost of their care and education. To donate, go to gofund.me/b6e777cb, or search gofundme.com for "Caring for Sams Children".

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Too much competition

CR ROCHELLE Halstead has explained why she didn't vote for the \$20 million Bass Coast Dinosaurs Trail project at the December council meeting and making an application to the Federal Government's Growing Regions Fund asking for a \$3 million contribution.

Cr Halstead said she might have supported it under normal circumstances but in these straightened times, \$20 million would go a long way on other priorities.

If council gets the grant, they'll have to stump up matching funding of \$3 million.

Firefighter honoured

THE Mayor Cr Clare Le Serve took time at the start of the recent council meeting to mark the passing of two, long-serving firefighters, Kilcunda's Phil Ruby and Ker-not-Grantville's Barrie Stewart.

She said Barrie dedicated over 37 years to his local brigade, serving as an officer for 18 years, in various lieutenant positions, delegate to Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria District 8 Council, and Community Safety and Fire Prevention Coordinator.

"Barrie also contributed significantly to community education for over 20 years, receiving recognition such as the National Emergency Medal for the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires. Last year, he was honored with a 35-year Long Service Award by CFA."

Details of Phil Ruby's 33 years as a firefighter have already been published.

Shire rules on exceptions

WHEN is a rule not a rule? When it's one of the provisions in the Bass Coast Shire Council planning scheme. Or so it seems if you consider Council's response to a clearly exasperated ratepayer in question time recently.

Manfred Decker quoted the shire's "very detailed" 1173-page planning scheme when he asked how it was that the Council could still approve non-compliant applications that were so clearly outside the aims of the scheme.

"Non-compliant planning applications are not granted permits. Planning Applications are assessed against the Bass Coast Planning Scheme. Generally, the zones, overlays and particular provisions that are applicable to land, will guide planners to the relevant aspects of the Planning Scheme that must be considered. Each application is assessed on its own merits," came the reply.

No 'yes' votes at Pioneer Bay

ROSS Bencraft of Pioneer Bay wanted to know how Pioneer Bay's residents voted on their special charge scheme, after the Sunderland Bay-Surf Beach project was abandoned recently.

He put his question to council and got the following reply:

"There were 23 per cent objections from 227 property owners," at Pioneer Bay, according to the Council, but 77 per cent of property owners did not respond.

"As there were less than 50 per cent objections, the scheme was able to go ahead."

Why it's all about boating in Bass Coast

BETTER Boating Victoria (BBV) in partnership with Bass Coast Shire Council is delivering significant upgrades to the existing boat ramp facilities across the shire.

Some major infrastructure projects recently completed were Cowes (Nov 2023, \$2.8 million) and Rhyll (2022, \$6 million) Boat Ramp facility upgrades, with Newhaven the next cab off the rank.

And Inverloch's boat ramp is also in line for an upgrade as well.

But at its council meeting recently, the Bass Coast Shire Council signed off on Stage 2 of the Mahers Landing Boat Ramp upgrade. The total cost of stage 1 was \$4.2 million, totally funded by the State Government and Better Boating Victoria while the total available funding for Stage 2 is \$1.59 million.

Mahers Landing Boat Ramp facility upgrade in Inverloch is a significant investment from the State Government's Better Boating Fund to provide for recreational boating improvements across Victoria.

The project will improve access and safety for the boating community and support the businesses, community groups and social benefits associated with recreational boating.

The works in Stage 2 include:

- Implement and maintain sediment erosion control measures and removal at completion of works.
- Construction of the new carpark facility which will improve traffic flow and include 52 new car-trailer parking bays, and five car parking spaces.
- Construction of a new toilet block.
- Construction of all landscaping elements, footpaths etc.

Council is contributing \$150,000 to the total cost of works.

Cr Leticia Laing welcomed the commitment by council and Better Boating Victoria as "an incredible boost for tourism in Inverloch", upgrading a facility that was overdue



The Mahers Landing Boat Ramp upgrade is expected to be completed in the early part of 2024. m04_5223

for work.

"The \$150,000 we will contribute will upgrade the toilets at Mahers Landing," she said, noting they were also sorely in need of upgrading.

The Better Boating Fund returns license and registration fees paid by boaters into delivering major ramp upgrades, more all-abilities boating facilities, grants programs to boost boating access, boating safety initiatives and much more.

The proposed Mahers Landing Boat Ramp Facility Upgrade project was broken into two parts to allow the project

to be constructed in two parts if the funding allocation for the entire project was exceeded at time of tender.

- Part 1: Construction of a new boat ramp, rock revetment and jetty.
- Part 2 Upgrade of the car park, new toilet block and associated landscaping works.

Newhaven Boat Ramp

A draft concept has been developed for the future upgrade to the Newhaven boat ramp and BBV is asking the community for feedback.

Some of the issues to consider include:

- Lack of space and configuration of berthing and tie up points
- Limited car-trailer unit parking
- Tide restrictions, particularly at low tide
- Existing jetty poses challenges in terms of accessibility

BBV is now seeking your feedback on the draft concept design, which you can view at betterboating.vic.gov.au/consultations/newhaven.

The survey, to close on January 19, 2024 is available at [surveymonkey.com/r/YGQS2M9](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YGQS2M9).

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No news isn't good news

AT BASS Coast Council question time recently, John Kuzma wanted to know why the statutory planning results hadn't been reported in the meeting agenda for three months.

A glitch in the system was the answer:

"A recent software upgrade has been addressed and up-to-date reporting will occur from the next Council Meeting (in February 2024)."

Island carnival back again

WHILE Bass Coast Council forced the purchase of the Cowes carnival site for its new sports precinct a few years ago, the carnival is back again for its summer holidays run, and the site is set to be rezoned for public use.

Council watcher, Melissa Dagg, asked council in question time recently why the site hadn't yet been rezoned, to which council replied that 'the rezoning is being scoped'.

Why 'DAL' is short for 'delay'

A QUESTION to the Bass Coast Shire Council last week, by Melissa Dagg, has highlighted why "neighbourhood character" is being systematically destroyed in a lot of settlements across Bass Coast.

"A number of Councils are developing a Neighbourhood Character study, comprising of built form, land use and land foot print use. When will Council establish its own study for planning purpose use to be used for the next 10 years?" asked Ms Dagg.

To which Council replied it is in the process of developing a Neighbourhood Character Study, to set standards on such things as setbacks, building envelopes and to strengthen vegetation protection but that finalising this important document was in the hands of the Department of Transport and Planning which recently announced another delay in finalising the Bass Coast Distinctive Areas and Landscapes project.



Local highway patrol police say they are happy with the attitude of Bass Coast and South Gippsland drivers to not drink-driving or drug-driving but the amount of speeding offences they have detected has alarmed them. C02_1223

Your speed is killing us, say concerned police

ACROSS the state, police have been alarmed at the rate of traffic offences they are detecting as part of Operation Roadwise.

However, while there has been a worrying haul of drink and drug driving offences, mobile phone breaches, incidents of not wearing a seatbelt and speeding; there's a same'ol standout offence in the Bass Coast and South Gippsland policing districts.

"Without a doubt our number one is speeding," said Sergeant Clint Goff of the Bass Coast Highway Patrol.

"It's far and away our biggest problem in the local area, high and low speed, and it is really concerning."

Sergeant Goff said speed, including driving too fast for the road and weather conditions

was highlighted in too many collisions, especially fatal collisions.

"We're running three and four shifts-a-day at the moment on patrol and all of the stationary cameras are out there, as part of Operation Roadwise, but drivers need to be taking on the responsibility themselves and slowing down.

"Our next biggest one is mobile phone detections, attracting a fine of \$577 and four demerit points if you're caught on a mobile devices while driving.

"Then it's the problem of not wearing seatbelts. For some reason it's more of an ongoing issue in country areas, but once again, we see the shocking results of that when there is a collision."

In the first five days of Operation Roadwise, Victoria Police

detected a total 4701 offences. They conducted 72,372 preliminary breath tests, with 190 drivers detected for drink driving – a strike rate of one in every 381 motorists tested caught over the limit.

There were also 131 motorists caught drug driving, with 2312 roadside drug tests conducted.

Mid-range speeding between 10km/h and 25km/h has resulted in the most infringements issued, with those motorists receiving a \$385 fine and three demerit points for the offence.

Police are also concerned at the high number of mobile phone detections, 274 drivers in less than a week, and 106 motorists caught not wearing a seatbelt.

Police will continue to conduct highly visible road policing

enforcement over the Christmas to New Year period where Victorians are expected to travel to coastal areas and regional holiday hotspots across the state.

Motorists are being urged to be patient and allow extra travel time, as well as maintaining a safe braking distance, particularly around caravans and heavy vehicles.

Operation Roadwise commenced at 12.01am on Friday, December 15, 2023 and concludes at 23.59pm on Monday, January 1, 2024.

Most traffic operations police missed out on Christmas with their families to keep the community safe, so don't expect any leniency at this time of the year, especially if you are speeding or using your mobile phone on Bass Coast and South Gippsland roads.

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Stop kidding yourself. If you drink, don't drive.

Thinking about driving after a couple of drinks? Think again.

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Early childhood services are improving children's oral health

STAFF, families and children at Foster Early Learning, Welshpool Kindergarten, Allora Kindergarten, Karmai Community Children's Centre, Bass Coast Children's Centre and Bass Coast Family Day Care educator Aga Tynska are all smiles after receiving their Smiles 4 Miles award.

Smiles 4 Miles is an initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria which aims to improve the oral health of Victorian children and their families. The key messages promoted in Smiles 4 Miles are 'Drink well, Eat well and Clean well'. The program is implemented locally by the South Coast Prevention Team (Health Promotion workforce of Bass Coast Health, Gippsland Southern Health Service and South Gippsland Hospital).

We all want our children to thrive. Unfortunately, children with tooth decay and poor oral health can have trouble eating, sleeping, and paying attention at kindergarten. Tooth decay, an oral disease, affects half of all children and adolescents. The percentage of children in Bass Coast and South Gippsland aged 0-5 attending public dental services who have at least one decayed, missing or filled tooth is 25 per cent and 27 per cent, respectively, which is above the Victorian average.

Early childhood services achieve the Smiles 4 Miles award by implementing healthy eating and oral health policies, completing a menu assessment if they provide food, engaging families about the importance of oral health, and educating children through a variety of fun learning experiences based on the key messages – Drink well, Eat well



Beth (Smiles 4 Miles Coordinator, South Coast Prevention Team) presenting the Smiles 4 Miles award to Amy (Early Childhood Teacher, Foster Early Learning).

and Clean well.

Early Childhood Teacher Amy Rogers from Foster Early Learning was excited to see the service awarded. She says, "We know that good oral health is essential to overall health and wellbeing and it's rewarding to achieve our award and know we're teaching children these good habits early in life."

Paul Greenhalgh, Chief Executive Officer at South Gippsland Hospital

applauded the early childhood services for receiving their awards.

"These Smiles 4 Miles awarded early childhood services are leading the way to help children form good healthy eating and oral health habits early."

Mr. Greenhalgh added, "By promoting healthy habits early in life, you are helping to set the foundations for our children to have a healthy start to life."

Free School Holiday Activities at Myli Libraries

AS THE school holidays approach, Myli - My Community Library is once again bringing joy and excitement to families across the Bass Coast and South Gippsland.

From craft sessions to workshops for young writers, the libraries have a lineup of events that promise fun for kids of all ages. Let's take a look at just a few of the events on offer.

Inverloch Library is gearing up for a Board Games Day, offering a mix of strategy and fun for families looking to enjoy some quality time together.

Wonthaggi Library is getting crafty with a range of events including diorama craft, mask making and scratch art.

Phillip Island Library is set to host Young Writers Workshops led by author Melissa Gisjbers, and Mr T's Mathematical Marvels, encouraging kids to explore the world of mathematics in an interactive and fun way.

Mirboo North will host Children's Movie Sessions suitable for the whole family.

Additionally, the Foster Library team will bring the art of foil to life with 'Foil Art' at the Toora Hall.

Korumburra Library is taking storytelling to the next level with a 'Design and Bind Your Own Book' session, providing an opportunity for young minds to become authors and

illustrators of their own stories.

Leongatha Library is turning up the excitement with the 'Big Bluey Bash,' promising a lively and entertaining experience for kids.

All these fantastic events are free, ensuring that families can enjoy the school holidays without breaking the bank. And, of course, don't forget to participate in the BIG Summer Read, a free reading competition designed to keep children engaged with reading over the summer holidays.

Prizes are on offer!

Beyond the events, Myli - My Community Library continues to provide an array of free resources to keep kids entertained throughout the holidays.

From e-books and e-audiobooks to digital movies and online resources like Story Box Library, Kinderling Radio, and Busy Code, there's something for everyone.

Registration for these school holiday events is now open. Secure your spots by visiting myli.au/JAN24.

For more information about free library membership, events, resources, and library services, visit myli.org.au, call 1800 44 6954, or drop by your local library branch to chat with our friendly team.



SCHOOL HOLIDAY— FUN DAYS!

Join us for a BIG summer of fun at your local Myli library! Ignite your child's imagination with our free events and creative workshops. Event registration is now open!



Visit myli.au/JAN24 to check out our schedule of events or phone 1800 44 6954 to chat with our team.

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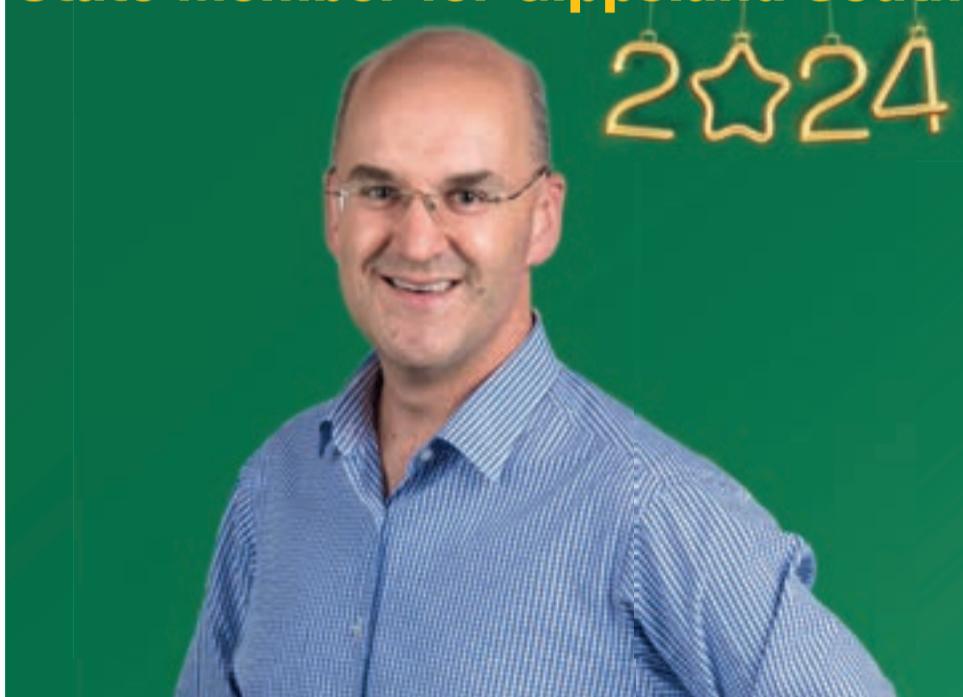
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NATIONALS for Regional Victoria

Travellers warned to stay informed this summer

BEFORE hitting the roads this summer on your travels, CFA is urging Victorians to check local conditions, download the VicEmergency app and familiarise yourself with Fire Danger Ratings.

Recent conditions have resulted in significant grass growth across the state, with fuel loads quickly drying out in the western and central parts.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan reminds Victorians if you are travelling or holidaying across the state this summer to make sure you are fire ready.

"We encourage our communities to be well-prepared as they head off on their well-earned break or festive getaway with their friends and family," CO Heffernan said.

"Fire safety is a shared responsibility so Victorians cannot become complacent about the fire risk this season.

"Stay informed, be prepared, and pack some essential items like water, blankets, and protective clothing so you're ready to leave when you need to."

CO Heffernan said there is a simple checklist to follow to ensure you are safe to travel.

"It's important to be aware of the weather conditions, Fire Danger Ratings and Total Fire Ban declarations in the areas you are travelling through each day this summer," CO Heffernan said.

"It's a good idea to download the VicEmergency app, check the CFA website and listen to local radio for warnings and updates.

"Within the app you can set up watch zones for the location you're visiting, that way you will receive a notification for any fires or other emergency incidents in that area."

Should conditions change, Victorians should be prepared to alter their travel plans.

"On hot, dry and windy days, have a back-up location to visit that is not in a high-risk bushfire area," CO Heffernan said.

"If you're staying in a high-risk bushfire area, the safest option is to leave the night before or early in the day on a Catastrophic or Extreme day.

"We know grassfires can move at speeds of up to 25km per hour, faster than you can run, and can jump highways in the right conditions - so we need everyone to be well alert."

Victorians should reconsider travel on days of Extreme Fire Danger Rating and those camping and hosting barbecues must be aware of what they can and can't do during a Total Fire Ban day.

"Check CFA's Can I, Can't I? guide on our website for more information to ensure you are protecting yourselves and your families."

"If you plan to have a campfire this summer, check the conditions, always have a person near it and fully extinguish it with water before leaving or going to bed."

Traveller safety tips:

- For all travel safety tips including the checklist, visit: cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-and-during-a-fire/leave-early/staying-safe-when-you-travel
- Learn about the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System on the CFA website.
- Check the four-day Fire Danger Period forecast for your area.
- Download the VicEmergency app for real-time updates about emergencies across Victoria or visit emergency.vic.gov.au.
- Reconsider travel through bushfire risk areas on 'Extreme' days and do not travel to bushfire risk areas on days of a 'Catastrophic' Fire Danger Rating.
- Stay informed and, be prepared and pack some essential items so you're ready to leave when you need to.

Leongatha mural success

PROJECT manager for the recently completed Leongatha Railway Precinct mural Melanie Caple is delighted by the way in which the community has embraced the vast artwork.

The mural depicting local flora and fauna, and created by Brisbane Artist Ash Taylor, measures about 56 metres across the front and four metres high, with the design's total length close to 70 metres.

Melanie is confident the successful project has demonstrated to local artists that they can achieve such works.

"Being able to see a professional female artist managing a site like that will hopefully inspire artists," Melanie said.

While she understood some community members being disappointed the mural wasn't created by a local artist, the project manager explained that the complex work required specialist skills.

"You almost have to be ticked like a construction worker, so you need a White Card, and you also need an Elevated Work Platform Licence which allows you to use boom lifts and scissor lifts," Melanie said.

On top of those requirements, public liability insurance is essential.

Melanie added that while



Project manager Melanie Caple, observer Eirian Chapman and artist Ash Taylor with the completed mural in the Leongatha Railway Precinct.

Ash isn't a local, the artist ensured her design was appropriate for its setting.

"The way she approaches her work and subject matter was empathetic and sensitive to the South Gippsland landscape, so it works well in that sense that once people saw Ash on site and how the mural was taking place they could see those benefits," Melanie said.

The idea for the railway precinct mural came to mind two years ago, with Melanie saying it has been interesting to see the increased interest in art in South Gippsland over the past few years.

Council was approached about the possibility of supporting the mural initiative.

However, Melanie explained there were complicating factors.

For the project to be possible, the building's owners needed to be on side.

The fact VicTrack and council each own part of the railway precinct site added to the complexity.

"There was quite a lot of negotiation to get to the point where they said, 'Yep, we think it's great, let's work together on it,'" Melanie said.

She enjoyed working with council, which hadn't previously done an arts project on such a scale.

"It was nice to be able to bring my experience of large-scale public work and deliver it at home," Melanie said,

having acted as a conduit between council and the artist to make sure everything ran smoothly.

Eirian Chapman, herself an illustrator with an interest in mural art, acted as an observer for Ash, having the correct licences to help in the event anything went wrong.

Ash's mural was chosen from three shortlisted designs, artists having been called on to base their concepts on the theme of 'Leongatha and its Landscape'.

Funding came from the \$6 million Great Southern Rail Trail Railway Precincts Project allocation that includes both Federal and Victorian Government support, with the Leongatha mural costed at \$50,000.

No excuse to leave campfires burning

IT'S ALL-hands-on-deck for Parks Victoria, the Conservation Regulator and Forest Fire Management Victoria to ensure parks and forests stay open, clean and safe as this bushfire season coincides with the holiday season - the busiest period for people seeking adventure in the great outdoors.

With around 10 per cent of bushfires caused by campfire negligence each year, Authorised Officers have increased patrols across Victoria's parks, forests and reserves.

Despite recent wet weather across Victoria, campfires can still easily turn into bushfires when left unattended or not put out properly. Many people incorrectly attempt to extinguish campfires with soil, or without enough water to extinguish them completely. Fires that have not been properly extinguished can smoulder under soil for several days and reignite with the right conditions.

Parks Victoria is already expecting more than 85,000 campers following 34,054 bookings made at campsites across



Don't let your campfire become a bushfire is the message for holidaymakers heading into Victoria's parks this summer.

Victoria this season. With this number set to grow as we bring in the New Year, it's crucial visitors understand campfire safety is their responsibility.

- Before you light a fire, check fire restrictions. Can you have a campfire? Is it a day of Total Fire Ban? Download the VicEmergency app to stay informed.
- Use a purpose-built fireplace

if available, otherwise dig a trench at least 30cm deep.

- Always follow the designated rules of your campsite. In national parks, fires can only be lit in purpose-built fireplaces unless marked otherwise.
- The campfire must not exceed one square metre, and three metres above and around your fire must be clear of flammable material.

- Branches and logs on your campfire must be no longer than one metre.
- Never leave a campfire unattended - an adult must always stay within a 50-metre line of sight.
- Campfires must be extinguished with at least 10 litres or several buckets of water every time you leave the site, even for a short while.
- If the remains of the campfire, including coals, are cool to touch, it is safe to leave.
- All rubbish must be taken home with you, not burned.

People who breach campfire regulations on public land face on-the-spot fines of \$577 or a maximum penalty of \$19,231 if the matter is prosecuted in court. The maximum penalty for lighting or maintaining a fire during a Total Fire Ban is \$46,154 and/or two years in jail. Report unattended campfires to Parks Victoria on 13 19 63 or the Conservation Regulator on 136 186 or call 000 to report a bushfire.

The economic value of Women's Health Services highlighted

A LANDMARK report has shed light on the economic value of Women's Health Services (WHS) to Victoria, underscoring the critical need for sustained government funding beyond 2023-24.

Conducted by Impact Economics and Policy, the Return on Equity - Health and economic dividends from investing in WHS report reveals the long-term economic benefits of investing in women's health, from reducing cost pressures on the healthcare system to improving workforce participation.

"Ongoing investment in an equitable health system that

benefits women in rural, regional and remote areas continues to be a critical objective for Gippsland Women's Health," Gippsland Women's Health CEO Kate Graham said.

"The benefits of the funding boost to (WHS) over the past two years has generated greater opportunities across the region and enabled an increased focus on meeting the challenges women face in accessing timely and contemporary health services and living a life free from violence.

"The report clearly highlights the value and return on investment that sustained funding for

(WHS) can provide. The report highlights the direct and indirect contribution that (WHS) make to a range of health and safety indicators and outcomes that benefit the Victorian economy and the health system.

"Maintaining (WHS) and equitable funding for women is crucial in ensuring women and girls can lead safe and healthy lives."

The report found that WHS have directly and indirectly contributed to Victoria's superior performance across a range of outcomes, with significant benefits to the economy and health system. These benefits included less

women experiencing violence, fewer teenage pregnancies, healthcare cost savings due to lower rates of sexually transmitted infections, and a reduction in long term mental ill-health.

To safeguard the progress and benefits generated by WHS, it is imperative to maintain funding in the 2024-25 Victorian budget.

The work of Women's Health Services does not just benefit women. It delivers significant benefits for all Victorians, through fostering more inclusive communities, reducing cost pressures on the health care system, and improving workforce participation.

Why now for Coal Creek consultation?

WITH South Gippsland Shire Council to open consultation on the future of Coal Creek Community Park and Museum next month, including the prospect of closure as one of a trio of options, the Sentinel-Times asked why that consultation wasn't done before post-pandemic improvements to the attraction.

Council's manager of economy community and investment Christian Stefani chatted about the timing of reaching out to the community for its views on Coal Creek.

He explained that during the pandemic, council was run by administrators, with a special election then held and the newly elected council having to initially concentrate on broader issues.

Christian said developing a Community Vision and Council Plan, both of which required extensive community consultation, formed the key initial focus for the newly elected council.

"That was the focus, to take in not a single agenda item but look at the community to understand what the aspirations were," Christian said.

He noted that after the Community Vision and Council Plan were in place, council created its Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Strategy, saying that part of that process involved consultants considering the situation at



Coal Creek Community Park and Museum team leader Kim O'Connell and South Gippsland Shire Council's manager of economy community and investment Christian Stefani with Coal Creek's refurbished rotunda. A01_5223

Coal Creek and the relevant issues and opportunities.

Christian said the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy identified the need for further consultation in relation to Coal Creek, stressing that is what council is now undertaking.

"Our role as officers has

been to operate the park as best we can within budget and business objectives and we've been doing that," he said.

"Our focus has been, let's get the park open, safe and appealing, and I think we've done that successfully."

Christian stressed that while ceasing operations at

Coal Creek is one option put forward in a recently released Discussion Paper on its future, revitalisation or new direction are other options outlined and that council is open to everyone's feedback.

"It's not showing a leaning towards one option," he said of the Discussion Paper.

Stakeholders share thoughts on South Gippsland's future

SOUTH Gippsland Shire Council held a round table breakfast event recently for a mix of stakeholders with this year's event having a focus on managing growth.

Council's manager of economy community and investment Christian Stefani spoke about the value of the event and the reason for the chosen focus.

"There are growth pressures that we experience in rural communities, and we've got the offshore renewable wind energy proposals that are being discussed at the moment," Christian said, alluding to future projects to generate energy in Bass Strait off South Gippsland.

He noted that will create great opportunities and impacts for South Gippsland Shire and the broader Gippsland region.

Christian explained the stakeholder breakfast was run in the context of likely significant growth in terms of investment and development, noting there will be associated pressures such as attracting sufficient employee numbers.

Round table attendees contributed their ideas on the issues and opportunities they see.

"We had about 80 participants representing various agencies of government and public sector, hospitals, aged care, schools, small business and community associations," Christian said.

The audience heard presentations on renewable energy and the offshore wind energy proposals being considered, with Barry Beach Marine Terminal representatives outlining potential port developments.

Director at Leongatha Children's Centre Paula Holt was at the stakeholder breakfast.

"It was awesome," she said, having enjoyed the chance to mix with people from different industries.

"We spoke a lot about employment and the perceived job vacancies that we will have once the windfarm comes to the region," Paula said, adding there are expectations of a massive boom.

During the round table gathering, she chatted about the severe shortage of early childhood educators and the shift to training locals rather than being reliant on outsiders to move to the area.

Burra Steel's Russell McNally outlined similar challenges facing the business, with employees

tending to come from outside South Gippsland Shire, leading to some workshopping of ideas to help recruit from within.

Paula was glowing in her praise of the round table event and the chance it gave community members to look ahead.

"It left us feeling energetic and enthused about the future of South Gippsland," she said.

"We're feeling supported and fortunate that we've got a council that's looking forward."

Mayor Clare Williams stressed the importance of the round table feedback council gained.

"Hearing about everyone's challenges and opportunities and how we can all work together to come out with some really good outcomes, it's amazing," she said.

Mayor's Message



Cr Clare Williams

HELLO South Gippsland.

As 2024 rapidly approaches we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year. As we celebrate the festive season, let's not only celebrate the warmth and joy it brings but also reflect on the growth and resilience that have marked our journey through the year.

This year marked important accomplishments including the completion of the Great Southern Rail Trail, one of Victoria's longest trails stretching from Nyora to Port Welshpool, offering an abundance of beautiful spots for community walking, bike rides and events.

We also saw the development of the Coastal Strategy, which continues to be important for addressing sustainable land use as demand for residential and commercial development increases; tackling climate change risk and ageing infrastructure.

The Korumburra Community Hub was also completed, providing a beautiful multipurpose building. It holds the local Myli Community Library, Milpara Community House, Korumburra and District Historical Society, meeting spaces and consulting rooms, kitchen facilities for catering purposes, and will soon be home to a second customer service counter for Council services.

We saw creative endeavours flourish including our local ArtCubes which have brought accessible, creative spaces to various locations across South Gippsland. The Leongatha Railway Precinct Mural was finished by the talented Ash Taylor. We also saw Coal Creek hold THREADS, Southern Lights Festival, All Hallow's Eve, and Carol's at the Creek.

As we bid farewell to the year, let's cherish these accomplishments made possible by our supportive community, volunteers and dedicated staff.

Council offices will close over the Christmas period and reopen on Tuesday, January 2 at 10am. Council staff will be available on the phone and online from 8.30am.

Please stay safe over the Christmas holidays, exercise caution on our roads and use this time of year to celebrate with loved ones. If you can, check on your neighbours in a genuine and loving way, especially those who are alone.

From all of us at Council, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

STEP UP TO

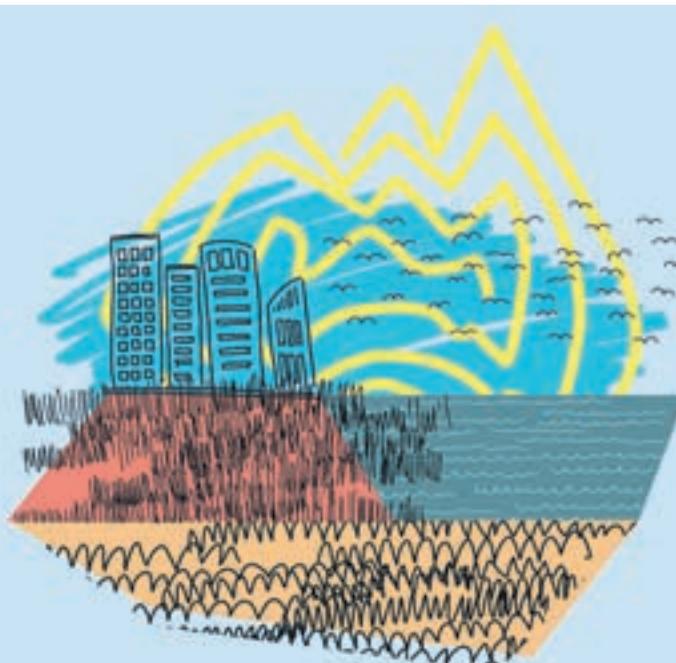
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Gippslanders important contribution to antibiotic study

HUNDREDS of patients in Gippsland were involved in a major antibiotic study that Latrobe Regional Health (LRH) was part of, which found less is more when it comes to patients using antibiotics at the time of having hip and knee surgery.

The Australian Surgical Antibiotic Prophylaxis (ASAP) trial aimed to discover whether adding additional antibiotics at the time of surgery would help prevent infections such as golden staph.

But the trial revealed current best practice is the way to go, because adding a second antibiotic called vancomycin did not reduce infection rates, compared to the use of a single antibiotic called cefazolin.

In those patients having a knee replacement, the incidence of infection was slightly higher when adding vancomycin but researchers are yet to find out why.

These findings were recently published in one of the world's most respected medical publications, the New England Journal of Medicine.

LRH played a significant role in the three-year trial, having recruited 369 patients out of the 4113 participants across 11 hospitals in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

LRH principal investigator Dr Peter Rehfisch said the trial was made possible because hundreds of patients in Gippsland, and thousands in Australia, agreed to be part of important research.

"Post-operative infection is one of the most serious complications that occurs in a small number of patients having a hip or knee replacement," Dr Rehfisch said.

"This trial was designed to see whether we could find good evidence that we could reduce the likelihood of infection occurring by changing the current antibiotic treatment.

"But the results do suggest the single antibiotic that is currently used for infection prevention in Australia in this type of surgery appears to be the safest and most effective option."

More than 65,000 knee and 53,000 hip joint replacements were performed in Australia in 2022, and with an ageing population this is projected to exceed 250,000 each year by 2030, according to Monash University.

Phillip Island's tourism boost

NEW data revealed tourism spending in the state has hit a new record high of almost \$37 billion in the year ending September 2023.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos celebrated the sector's growth from strength to strength as the latest data is the third consecutive record result for Victoria.

Release by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) last week, the figures were driven by continued strong demand in the domestic market coupled with the recovery of international travel – cementing Victoria's stature as the nation's major events and cultural capital.

Every tourism region across Victoria experienced boosted domestic visitor expenditure compared to 2019, including Phillip Island that saw a 64 per cent visitor expenditure increase.

Victoria's top two international markets for expenditure were China, which surpassed \$1 billion for the first time since 2019 and now sits at \$1.6 billion, and India at \$444 million.

The record tourism figures have been supported by a blockbuster major and business events calendar and Visit Victoria's campaigns Stay close, go further and Get Set – Melbourne. Combined, these campaigns had reached almost 18 million people in the year ending September 2023.

The momentum is set to continue in 2024 as Visit Victoria keeps marketing the State on the world stage and with major events such as the recently announced Matildas versus Uzbekistan match, the Australian Open and the Grand Prix all happening in the first quarter of 2024.

Kelly is Proud to be a Chef finalist

KELLY Packham's creativity and passion for food has led to her being chosen as one of 32 finalists from all over Australia for the Proud to be a Chef 2024 competition.

'Proud to be a Chef' aims to fast-track the careers of apprentice chefs through a fast-paced mentoring program.

The program is an all-expenses paid, four-day event taking place in Melbourne in February 2024, with one standout finalist winning a culinary scholarship.

Hopeful third year apprentice chefs put forward their best recipes to enter into the competition.

Beneath the Lemon Myrtle Tree, was the recipe for a sweet dish that Kelly put forward:

An inspired dish of visual delight of greens, yellows earthy tones and creamy whites that will take your tastebuds on a journey through zingy lemon, crunchy textures, smooth creaminess, all while enjoying the taste of a beautiful Australian native. The Lemon Myrtle Tree.

"It's an amazing plant. All the leaves and the flowers, everything on it is edible," Kelly explained.

When Kelly got the call to say she was a finalist, she was at work, at the Korumburra Hospital, dishing up meals.

"I was just hysterical," she



Kelly Packham (on right) with Kelly Smith who has been an inspirational, encouraging and energising teacher to Ms Packham.

exclaimed.

"I think being an older apprentice you kind of doubt yourself a little bit that you've still got it."

Kelly has cooked all her life, even as a child, and loves to get creative in the kitchen; her speciality is baking and decorating cakes and she is looking forward to meeting other

passionate foodies in the Proud to be a Chef program.

On the last day, along with the other finalists, Kelly will have two hours to cook her dish which then has to be served on two plates and they must be identical.

"I'm just honoured to be able to do it," she said.

"I feel like I've come so far

and I'm really putting myself first these days."

As a mother to five children and a grandmother at 46, going back to TAFE and doing an apprenticeship was somewhat daunting for Kelly, but she hasn't looked back.

"It was a big deal going back to TAFE, but my teacher, Kelly Smith, is the most incredible teacher, inspiring everything, she has changed my life."

"She is everything behind why I want to do what I do, because she just is so bloody inspiring."

Kelly also started working with the Korumburra Hospital four years ago and began her apprenticeship three years ago, recently became a fully qualified chef, and now will step into a managerial role.

"I love where I work, I love where I am in the hospital and with my team behind me."

While Kelly loves preparing food that helps to make people feel better, she is also looking forward to unleashing her creativity in cookery.

"I don't know where my journey will take me but I'm a creative person and I just can't wait to go to this competition - see what it's about and just meet so many people from around Australia," she said.



The Sticks Kilcunda. Photos: Peter Clarke.



A space designed by a local collaborative of award-winning creatives.

A vibrant sense of community at The Sticks Kilcunda



A vibrant hub of community focused activity.

THE six boutique retail pods interconnected by an infill of open spaces known as The Sticks Kilcunda held their grand opening to the Bass Coast community last week welcoming an influx of support for the sensitively crafted precinct.

Manager of the complex Lauren Russo shared that three of the stores opened their doors for a soft opening on Wednesday, December 20, including Pod 1 - Udder & Hoe, Pod 6 - Cove Boutique and on the Terrace - Licca Lucca from 1pm until 5pm.

The others including Pod 4 - Hair Vision by Holly - Bookings by appointment and in Pod 3 - Sophie Fletcher Designs are holding a summer pop up 10am-5pm until January 31.

Stores that opened Friday, December 22 are a summer pop up in Pod 2 - Copper Door Kilcunda open 10am-5pm until January 31, and in Pod 5 - Above and Beyond Bookkeeping which is by appointment.

"We had a wonderful turnout with a beautiful energy shared with locals," said Lauren.

The precinct was designed by a local collaborative of

award-winning creatives – Branch (architects), Orchard Design (landscape architects) and The Set (design and interiors).

For decades, Kilcunda has been Bass Coast's own little secret – a sleepy picturesque coastal town, visitors would stop for coffee, enjoy the view, and pass through on their travels.

Locals have long been aware of Kilcunda's unique energy and cultural pull. In recent years there has been a shift that suggests the secret is out, with the town emerging as a popular destination for travellers.

A series of landscaped external spaces link together to form a town square of sorts, a space to linger with a latte, chat with a neighbour, engage with community events, pick up locally produced goods; or partake in some retail therapy.

The Sticks Kilcunda offer short-term pop-up style opportunities for local and non-local designers and creatives and will also offer a variety of programs and events catering to the ever-expanding coastal village. For leasing or general enquiries email: info@thesstickskilcunda.com

Wonthaggi Toyota

WE BUY
CARS!



USED VEHICLE SPECIALS



2017 Hyundai Accent Sport

17,990 DRIVE AWAY

77,790kms, 6 speed sports auto hatch
SN: W101619



2016 Mitsubishi ASX LS XB

20,990 DRIVE AWAY

125,501kms, 6 speed CVT auto SUV
SN: W101672



2018 Volkswagen Passat
132TSI Comfortline

24,990 DRIVE AWAY

107,566kms, 7 speed auto wagon
SN: W101530



2019 Mitsubishi
Eclipse Cross LS YA

27,990 DRIVE AWAY

70,733kms, 8 speed CVT auto SUV
SN: W101671



2013 Volkswagen Polo
77TSI Comfortline 6R

11,990 DRIVE AWAY

126,934kms, 6 speed manual hatch
SN: W101086



2012 Holden
Commodore Z Series VE

17,990 DRIVE AWAY

146,930kms, 6 speed sports auto
wagon SN: W101690



2022 Mazda
CX-30 G25 Astina DM

40,990 DRIVE AWAY

13,695kms, 6 speed sports auto SUV
SN: W101660



2021 Toyota Kluger Grande

77,990 DRIVE AWAY

45,189kms, 6 speed CVT auto SUV
BON 913

Leongatha Toyota

USED VEHICLE SPECIALS



2021 Isuzu MU-X LS-U
46,990 DRIVE AWAY

96,904kms, 6 speed CVT auto 4x4
SUV SN: L101112



2019 Toyota Hilux SR5
46,990 DRIVE AWAY

176,260kms, 6 speed CVT auto 4x4
double cab SN: L101094



2017 Holden Commodore
RSV Sportwagon

26,990 DRIVE AWAY

73,799kms, 9 speed auto AWD
wagon SN: L101088



2021 Nissan
Qashqai ST-L J11 Series 3
28,990 DRIVE AWAY

72,116kms, CVT auto SUV
SN: L101114



2022 Ford Ranger XLT
71,990 DRIVE AWAY

29,341kms, 10 speed CVT auto 4x4
double cab CAN 385



2019 Toyota
Corolla Ascent Sport
26,990 DRIVE AWAY

23,319kms, 10 speed CVT auto
hatch SN: L101089



2020 Ford Ranger
Wildtrak PX Mk III
52,990 DRIVE AWAY

75,539kms, 6 speed CVT auto 4x4
double cab SN: L101113



2023 Ford Ranger XLT
63,990 DRIVE AWAY

15,391kms, 10 speed CVT auto 4x4
double cab CID 687

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LMCT 8179
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OH WHAT A FEELING



Photo of hooded plovers nesting on the Bass Coast by Phillip Island Nature Parks.

Here's how to be a 'Hoodie Hero'

SHOREBIRDS like the threatened hooded plover, pied oystercatchers and red capped plovers are nesting on Phillip Island again and on beaches from the Island to Waratah Bay.

Hooded plovers make their nest on a sand shelf, giving it a better chance of evading the high tides – one of the factors affecting the number of fledglings each year, according to Phillip Island Nature Parks.

You can help these species by keeping at least 100 metres clear of roped refuges.

You can also volunteer to help by joining PINP as a volunteer or citizen scientist while the kids can help raise awareness about the need to protect our precious shorebirds by entering the poster competition.

Find out how you can help at bit.ly/3uGk4iO

Poster competition

This summer, Phillip Island Nature Parks wants to inspire students on Phillip Island to create a poster that encourages all beach users to foster respect for their local beaches and wildlife. Summer months are a busy peak holiday season.

The poster competition is open from December 1, 2023 through to April 30, 2024.

During the holidays, Phillip Island welcomes thousands of visitors who come here to surf, explore local attractions, nature reserves and trails, delight their taste buds in local cafés and restaurants, and simply enjoy their time with family and friends while soaking up sun on a beach.

"Phillip Island is very fortunate so many amazing species call it their home," said a spokesperson for PINP.

"And during summer months you can help our precious and vulnerable wildlife raise their young safely on our shores."

This year's competition theme is "Be a Hoodie Hero!". Children are invited to make a poster that will encourage beachgoers to be aware of the nesting shorebirds, to stay on formal pathways and out of the dunes, to keep their dogs on a lead in these areas and to demonstrate what they do to become a Hoodie Hero.

Entry is open to all children who reside on Phillip Island or San Remo, or attend a Primary School on Phillip Island or San Remo, from Prep to Grade 6 with two extra categories for students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent and students with special needs.

Entry categories include: Foundation (Prep), Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6, students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent and students with special needs.

What materials can be used? Any material can be used, including paint, Textas, pencils, copyrightfree original photos and computer graphics.

How you can submit your poster entry: Please note: this year, PINP is only accepting digital entries by email, no hard copy can be accepted. Please scan or photograph your poster and entry form and email them to community@penguins.org.au by 5pm on April 30, 2024.

Copy this link for details and access to the poster entry form: penguins.org.au/assets/About/community-news/Sharing-Our-Shores/Share-Our-Shores-Comp_2023.pdf

Doctor's legacy lives on in donations

DR MICHAEL Bourke created a lasting legacy over many decades as a Leongatha GP and his contribution to the region is living on.

Dr Bourke died aged 85 in January 2022 and in lieu of flowers, his family asked mourners to make donations to Gippsland Southern Health Service (GSHS).

His family recently presented a Sara Stedy lifting machine and patient scales and handrail to the health service.

"We knew he would have wanted something more tangible so in lieu of flowers, we asked for a donation to the hospital in memory of Michael," his wife Thérèse said.

The lifting machine enables a single caregiver to assist patients or residents to perform sit to stand transfers throughout the day. The scales and handrail can determine height and body mass index (BMI) in a single process.

Dr Bourke was a General Practitioner in the Gippsland region from 1964-2016 and co-founder of the Leongatha Medical Group in 1966 where he remained a partner until 2002.

He continued to work as a locum until 2016 and was a regional geriatrician with the South Gippsland Aged Care Service and medical officer of Woorayl Shire (now known as South Gippsland Shire Council).

He was made a Life Governor of Leongatha Hospital and



Dr Bourke's family recently presented a Sara Stedy lifting machine and patient scales and handrail to the Gippsland Southern Health Service.

was also a board member and chair of Woorayl Lodge Aged Care for 30 years along with a Life Governor.

Mrs Bourke said Leongatha and GSHS were close to her husband's heart.

"We came here in 1964 and raised our five children here. He was a real dynamo and loved his work and the Leongatha community. There was never any thought of moving. Michael spent a lot of his time at the hospital and greatly valued the dedicated nursing staff.

"He along with his former partners; Dr Alec Bennet, Dr

Ron Eagger, Dr Mario Croatto and Dr Kee Chiam advocated for more visiting specialists to the region, to extend the range of local services available to their patients."

Following his retirement from the Leongatha Medical Group in 2002, along with continuing to do sessional work in the practice, Dr Bourke was kept busy as a locum, spending time supporting country practices because he knew how difficult it was to get doctors in these areas.

Mrs Bourke said she would like to encourage others to consider making donations in



Dr Bourke, a Leongatha GP for many decades, died in January 2022 and in lieu of flowers his family asked mourners to make donations to Gippsland Southern Health Service.

times of bereavement.

His daughter Sarah added that the family was pleased to make the contribution.

"I think dad would feel very happy to continue making a positive contribution to a place that was so dear to his heart, through equipment to help the day to day a bit easier for staff and patients" she said.

Dr Bourke also had a deep passion for horse racing that led to a 50-year stint as a committee member of Stony Creek Racing Club from 1960-2010 and a term as president from 1994-1996. He was made a life member in 2003.

Keep encounters with flying-foxes fleeting this summer



Keep your distance from bats if you encounter them, and let them rest, even if they are on the ground or low on a tree.

Only trained, vaccinated wildlife rescuers should handle flying-foxes. If someone is scratched, bitten or exposed to bat saliva, seek urgent medical attention. Contact the Department of Health for further advice on 1300 651 160. If your pet has interacted with a flying-fox, contact your local vet.

If you see flying-foxes, remember:

- Keep your distance and let

them rest, even if they are on the ground or low on a tree.

- Avoid disturbing flying-foxes – sudden noise such as clapping or beeping horns can startle them.

- Don't handle them. If you find a flying-fox on the ground, call a local vaccinated wildlife rescuer to assist. While flying-foxes may carry rare disease, risk is avoided by not touching bats.

Grey-headed Flying-foxes are protected by law in Victoria and it is illegal to harass, injure, or disturb them. Offenders face maximum penalties between \$3846 and \$48,077 or 12 months in jail.

The Conservation Regulator relies on community information to investigate wildlife crime, including disturbance of native bats. Reports can be made to Crime Stoppers Victoria on 1800 333 000.

To find out more about Victorian flying-foxes, see: wildlife.vic.gov.au/our-wildlife/flying-foxes

New COVID booster will protect you, your family and your friends

PEOPLE eligible for a COVID vaccine booster are being urged to take advantage of the new vaccines now available.

The latest XXB 1.5 vaccines provide better protection against the COVID-19 strains of the virus now in the community.

Bass Coast Health CEO Jan Child said with the summer holidays upon us, now is the perfect time for people to update their vaccination status to give the best chance of staying safe during the holiday season.

"We have been seeing many more cases of COVID in the

years.

For people without risk factors, a booster is recommended if they're aged 75 and over, and should be considered if they're aged 65-74 years.

To receive the best protection against serious illness or death from COVID-19, eligible people should receive all recommended doses appropriate for their age or individual health needs.

Vaccinations are available from select pharmacists and from some GPs.

People can also reduce their

risk of inadvertently spreading COVID-19 by following public health measures such as staying home when unwell and symptomatic; avoiding crowded indoor spaces; wearing a properly-fitting mask; covering your mouth when you cough and sneeze; disposing of tissues carefully; regularly washing and sanitising your hands; and cleaning surfaces that are commonly touched by people.

Rapid Antigen Tests can be obtained from council service centres.



Be Your Best Award – Freya Bennett and Nikki Gatherum.



STEAM excellence awards – Ned and Cliff Schellekens.



Physical Education Achievement Award – Paige O'Brien and Chelsea Stephens.



2023 Alumni Hamish Scothern receiving his Gold Award from Scott Chapman, CEO of the Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria.

Bass Valley Primary School students being their best

THE Grade 6 students at Bass Valley Primary School (BVPS) celebrated their graduation from primary schooling recently with a final assembly and graduation evening at Maru Koala and Animal Park. Most of the students started their school career at BVPS and celebrated many successes along the way.

Families and friends joined the students at the school assembly where scholarships and awards were handed to some Grade 6 students for their outstanding efforts and attitudes throughout the year and their entire school year. All students were



Lions Club Award recipients Lizzie Francis and Sean Trebley.

introduced on the stage by their teacher Mr Fergus O'Connor and received their booklets from Principal Ms Sharon King.

The afternoon session at Maru was enjoyed by students and staff where they sat for dinner, enjoyed a

game of mini golf together and spent some time with the resident birds, kangaroos, peacocks, a crocodile, and reptiles. Students were presented with gifts including plants, graduation pens and certificates to acknowledge their achievements.

Grade 6 students Steph Jaskula and Paige O'Brien summed up the student's year with a poem they wrote which highlighted their experiences at Bass Valley PS.

Grade 6 teacher Mr O'Connor congratulated the students, saying they were "a creative group with a huge range of interests and abilities which have been shaped by the experiences they have had both at school and at home, we have had some amazing highs and been challenged along the way as well."

Mr O'Connor wished them luck and ended with "Once a Bass Valley student, always a Bass Valley student."

FOR over 30 years Newhaven College has supported students to complete the internationally recognised Duke of Edinburgh awards. Recently, seventy-six young Victorians were celebrated for their outstanding achievements, receiving the prestigious Gold Award at The Duke of Edinburgh's International Gold Award Ceremony held at Melbourne Town Hall.

The Gold Awards were presented by Scott Chapman, CEO of the Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria. This ceremony acknowledges the dedication of students who have excelled in the highest levels of the program, commemorating up to three years of commitment across service, physical recreation, skills, an adventurous journey and a residential project.

The Gold Award is the world's leading youth achievement accolade, helping young people discover their purpose, passion, and place in the world. Operating in over 120 countries, with more than eight million participants globally, the Award has engaged over 775,000 young Australians in the past 63 years. Research has demonstrated that the Award enhances young people's educational attainment, employability, health and well-being, social inclusion, civic participation and environmental awareness.

"Each participant's journey is unique but one thing one that is clear is that the Award provides a practical framework for young Victorians to learn essential life skills and enhance their educational and employment opportunities," said Sue Lloyd-Williams AO, Chairman of the Board of Award in Victoria.

Gold Awardees that were recognised completed their Award through a diverse range of over 30 Government and Independent schools and community organisations from around the state.

Representing Newhaven College was student Hamish Scothern. When interviewed about his Gold Award journey and the impact it has had on his life, he reflected on the impact of one experience, saying, "I recently completed a Duke of Ed kayaking camp on Lake Eildon, and it was an incredible experience. The clean water and amazing natural surroundings provided a perfect setting for adventure and learning, as we navigated the lake's waters. It was a fantastic opportunity to connect with nature, build relationships and physically challenge yourself. These types of outdoor activities, in my opinion, are vital for growth as a person and developing an awareness of environmental responsibility."

These sentiments align with the overall experience of this year's Gold Awardees. The majority expressed positive sentiments about the program's impact on their life and opportunities. Surveys revealed that 86 per cent of Gold Awardees believed The Award expanded their opportunities, providing early access to university, influencing their career paths, or developing skills to enhance employability.

Year 11 student Mackenzie Wain also received her Gold Award this year. Mackenzie has recently joined the Australian Defence Force and has been in training over the past few months at Kapooka near Wagga Wagga. The College is very proud of Mackenzie's achievements while a student at Newhaven College.

The Award program will continue in 2024 and beyond.



CWA Citizens Award – Harley Wesley.



Assistant Principal's Excellence Award – Rubee White and Eliza Taranto.



Principal's Academic Achievement Award – Miller Bardwell and Steph Jaskula.

Schools show off their bike education skills

BASS Coast schools have participated in two Bike Ed Challenge events. The Bike Ed Challenge utilises the knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards cycling safely that riders have been developing in the Bike Ed programs at the schools.

Balance and bike control activities in the Challenge include riding in a straight line, scanning for hazards, riding slowly when approaching hazards, negotiating uneven surfaces, and simulated hazardous materials such as broken glass, as well as knowledge of turns at traffic lights and roundabouts.

One event was held at Wonthaggi Primary School, and included riders from Wonthaggi North, St. Josephs' School, and Powlett River Primary, as well as Wonthaggi Primary students. The other Challenge was at Bass Valley Primary, where about 50 riders took turns to go through the course.

The Challenge activities were partly supervised by students from the senior classes, who not only helped the activities run

smoothly, but also had the task of identifying riders who were to receive awards and prizes at the conclusion.

These prizes included gift vouchers to Wheel Heat, the Wonthaggi bike shop, as well as bike computers, drink bottle cages, head lights, tail lights, bike repair tools, puncture kits, tyre levers, handlebar grips, ride shirts and caps and other goodies. These were purchased from a grant from the Department of Transport and Planning, and supplied by Wheel Heat, an important sponsor of Bike Ed for over a decade.

Don Turner, one of the organisers of the Challenges, had strong praise for the schools involved.

"I was very impressed with the riding ability of the students. It shows how effective the schools' programs have been. The level of concentration and skill the riders demonstrated is a credit to the schools. I was really pleased as well with the students who supervised the activities during the challenges, and the way they chose riders for the prizes at the end

was outstanding."

The schools have each implemented their Bike Ed programs, mostly during Term 3 and Term 4, with volunteers from the Phillip Island Bicycle User Group, who are trained Bike Ed Instructors giving expert assistance.

The extra helpers enable riders to develop their bike skills in smaller groups, while getting important feedback about progress. The extra helpers are also able to support inexperienced riders, sometimes for one-to-one 'learn to ride' help.

One of the barriers to students participating in Bike Ed is access to a roadworthy bike and helmet. This is overcome by being able to borrow bikes and helmets from a fleet owned by Wonthaggi Blue Light. Schools can book a trailer, which is delivered to the school for the duration of the Bike Ed program.

Each year, a handful of students learn to ride for the first time during the Bike Ed program. The new confidence this gives those students can rub off to other aspects of their wellbeing.



Mia learning balance during a slow ride with the Bike Ed Challenge program.

Sentinel-Times

COMMENT

Looking forward to 2024

YOU want to look forward to 2024 with hope and optimism and certainly, the strong jobs market and the prospect that home-loan interest rates will stabilise and start to come down later in the year are reasons to be cheerful.

Hopefully, the Reserve Bank can pick the right moment to ease interest rates without killing the economy and the Federal Government's promised tax cuts can still be delivered without overheating the economy again.

But there are still plenty of concerns hovering over our heads, many of these issues, such as the shortage of housing, the state of our roads, the amount of illicit drugs, and the lack of police, teachers and medical staff have local implications while others, such as the forgotten war in the Ukraine, the fearful situation in the Middle East, and sabre-rattling by China are of global concern.

Also a worry is the way the State Government's debt has blown out, as a result of the exploding costs of its major projects, expected to reach \$177.8 billion by June 2027 and daily interest payments, if you can get your head around it, of \$24 million-a-day by 2026-27.

And that without delivering the basics such as much-needed early learning and childcare centres, for growing areas like Bass Coast and road maintenance, particularly in regional areas, no doubt impacting the rising road toll.

Wonthaggi, Inverloch and Foster are on the list for new early learning centres in the next few years, and there's also the government election promise of the \$290 million Stage 2 of Bass Coast Health's Wonthaggi hospital development, following on from Phillip Island's share of \$675 million to build 10 community hospitals across the state.

So, you probably can't complain. But the state's debt is a concern, and you hope the Wonthaggi hospital and basic infrastructure and services aren't impacted by the debt load.

Locally, a feature of 2024 will be the local government elections due in Bass Coast and South Gippsland in October. Although it goes nowhere near paying for the hours councillors contribute weekly, from December 18 this year, our councillors will receive an annual salary of \$32,232, plus relevant expenses.

Let's hope these issues of concern turn our way in 2024 and also that we attract some good candidates for our council elections.

Municipal governance vulnerability

RECENT letters from Rob Parsons and Helen Zervopoulos draw attention to matters that came to a head during the late lamented referendum; i.e., the increasingly 'inappropriate' intrusion of an extraneous minoritarian ideology into our institutions that has not just distorted their goals, but undermined their capacity to carry out their core functions in a cost effective and efficient manner... or for that matter, make sound political judgements about things like leadership.

Back in the late 1950s, a historian by the name of C Northcote Parkinson wrote a book on public administration called 'Parkinson's Law' whose main

Vox Pop

What's the best thing that's happened in 2023?



Kate Nardone

"I've just enjoyed being with family and friends and taking every opportunity to embrace the small things in life."



Gian Nardone

"Our Kilcunda holiday was a standout, a holiday to unwind and be along the coastline with family."



Massi Nardone

"I loved making bead bracelets in the classroom at school with my friends."



Valen Nardone

"Having ice cream, playing with my brother Massi and going for a ride on a boat."

thesis was, that 'work expands to fill the time available for its completion'. The warning was that public administration without very clear, disciplined and productive goals was always vulnerable to takeover by process activism, where tick boxing and feel-good symbolism was more important than measurable outcomes.

Early in this century, Price, Waterhouse and Cooper did a report on municipal governance which very damningly pointed to a loss of management control of 'blue collar' built and maintained physical assets in favour of warm and fuzzy, sharing and caring 'supportings', full of expensive-to-maintain graduate supernumerary functionaries, facilitators and consultants. And while as a result of the report, measures were taken to tighten asset management, the 'soft services slab' was left to not just prosper, but became an easy target for ideological opportunists to take over and colonise, which is what has happened... bringing with them idiosyncratic race and sexual agendas that took no account of the interests of the people who paid their fat salaries.

The results of the referendum put the proponent clique and its flunkies on notice that outside the inner cities, they are neither popular nor approved of. The polite silence that they took for tacit support and permission to dictate agenda broke cover and showed them otherwise. And unless they pull their heads in, a purge could be in the offing.

Christopher Eastman-Nagle, Grantville

otherwise of their investments which is inappropriate at a council meeting.

This "climate" action taken by the current councillors on banking and their pass the mayoral parcel games point to a dysfunctional group lacking courage, direction and independence, who have not earned the right to our support and must go in 2024.

Rod Gallagher, Inverloch

revive language, culture and re-establish ancient songlines points to an area of understanding that Cr Darakai can and should aim to develop during the remainder of his term. The residents of the shire are watching and perhaps he does not realise how many are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander who are undoing a couple of centuries of deliberately divisive damage, supported by successive administrative policy at all levels of governance and who also know that "racially divisive" actually looks like and feels like. For too many it looks like dead ends when looking for a great-great father because that ancestor went to their grave with the shame of being removed and told not to practice their culture in the place they had been forcibly taken to become assimilated into the system that Cr Darakai represents. Can Cr Darakai imagine his family tree coming to a blank at that point?

If you're going to invoke "racially divisive", please understand what "race", racism and "divisiveness" is and is not, first. Arts funding advocacy for a wider range of non-First Nations artists needs an argument and focus other than the lazy "race" hook to do anyone justice.

Iznaya Kennedy, Stony Creek

New Year message

AS THE new year approaches and we commence the holiday season I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and Happy New Year.

I hope that this holiday season will provide an opportunity for all to spend time with friends and family and enjoy all that Gippsland has to offer.

As I reflect on another year as the State Member for Gippsland South, I am grateful for the continued support of my electorate and for the opportunity to continue to serve the people of Gippsland South as we work together to achieve a better future for all.

While 2024 is a new year, please be assured that I will continue to advocate on the matters that are important to the people I represent – better roads, affordable housing and policies that will bring relief from the growing cost of living.

May your New Year be filled with peace and happiness.

Danny O'Brien MP, The Nationals Member for Gippsland South

It's our money Jan

HOW thoughtful of the Bass Coast Shire Council with much prompting from Cr Whelan to decide that they can afford to forego our rate payer revenue to fund their so called woke climate action views. They don't want to understand that "it's not their money", they don't want to accept the stewardship involved in handling other people's money.

The Local Government Act needs to be changed to prevent councillors and, for that matter council administrators from taking financial decisions that disadvantage rate payers. How about a motion for our august councillors to make up the financial loss. Would like to see that happen but won't hold my breath. Yet these people always stand on their principle and ethics but have little regard or respect for the views of others. Very much our way or the highway.

Que, "Westpac and their stinking money", how strikingly insulting of that institution and their depositors by this Cr Whelan, expressing his personal view about the appropriateness or

Advocating for artists

In response to the story about Cr Darakai claiming that the Arts policy for South Gippsland is "racially divisive":

If anyone is going to go down the road of identifying what is "racially divisive" or "racist", one would expect a person in a position of responsibility in the community to be quite familiar with the concept of racism enough to know that there is no such thing as "reverse racism". Whilst Cr Darakai was not quoted using the term "reverse racism", this is the concept he implied and it is only a phrase coined by ignorance.

If he'd like to advocate for artists from further afield contributing to the streetscapes of the shire, he needs to come up with a much better and sound argument than one off the back of a redundant idea. Equating arts funding with the generational harms done to real people who were pushed from the lands on which he serves and upon which traditional owners are working hard to

From game to vermin

DUCKS in NSW have been turned from a game species to a vermin species, with thousands now being destroyed on rice crops during the breeding season due to crops being eaten out by ducks.

Jock, Outtrim

The 'Sentinel-Times' encourages readers to write with issues of interest or concern but letters that have a local reference point will be given priority. Writers are also urged to be brief where possible. Letters may be edited for space and legal reasons, and must be submitted with the author's name and contact details of which only the name and town location will appear.

Sentinel-Times

COVERING SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST



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Cartoons share prehistoric joy

CARTOONIST Zev Landes has brought our local dinosaurs to life.

His life-size creations were viewed by the public for the first time during the Inverloch Street Party on Thursday, December 7 and he has considered it a privilege to be part of the Bass Coast Dinosaur Trail project.

"It was a dream come true to see the looks of pure joy on people's faces as they walked into the exhibition," he said.

"My role on the Bass Coast Dinosaur Trail team was to learn all I could about Bass Coast 125 million years ago, get to know our own local prehistoric creatures and then bring them to life."

The collection includes the six heroes that people will meet as they adventure along the trail – the sloppy Koolasuchus, the armoured Ankylosaurus, the speedy Qantasaurus and the huge meat-eating Megaraptors.

Zev based his work on the random pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that have been discovered in Bass Coast.

He based his final designs on these findings, matching them with more complete skeletons of similar animals that have been discovered around the world.

"Once we have a shape, I'm able to work out what parts to exaggerate for the cartoon and what parts need to be drawn accurately so you know what animals it is," he said.

"From there, we have to work out what colours and patterns to make them. To spark a connection with the audience, I decided to use



Cartoonist Zev Landes with his creations for the Bass Coast Dinosaur Trail.

brighter colours, big cheeky eyes and I even gave some of them eyebrows. I used the power of cartoons to help people fall in love with them.

Zev worked alongside local palaeontologists to learn as much about the local dinosaurs as possible.

The project took six months to complete.

"I wanted to capture what it was that makes our dinosaur special and unique. Bass Coast was once much further south, so we have polar dinosaurs," he said.

"A lot of people don't know

what our dinosaurs are, and I had some people come into the exhibit (at the Inverloch Street Festival) and say things like 'wow, it's a T-Rex'. They then discovered no, these are our dinosaurs. These are ours, and they lived and walked here. They get to feel proud and curious about them, which is what's going to make the Dinosaur Trail so incredible. It's exciting to bring that to life."

Zev has been drawing his whole life, and in recent years has worked overseas to help conservationists,

scientists and institutions to tell the stories of the important work they do.

He has created educational material with grassroots conservationists in the jungles of Sri Lanka, to designing exhibits and campaigns with governments and major NGOs.

Recently, he completed a permanent exhibit for the Melbourne Zoo.

He has called Bass Coast his home since the pandemic.

"When COVID hit, it changed our lives completely. We were so lucky to end up on Phillip Island," he said.

"With the airports closed and no way to get back to work overseas, we found our way to the coast.

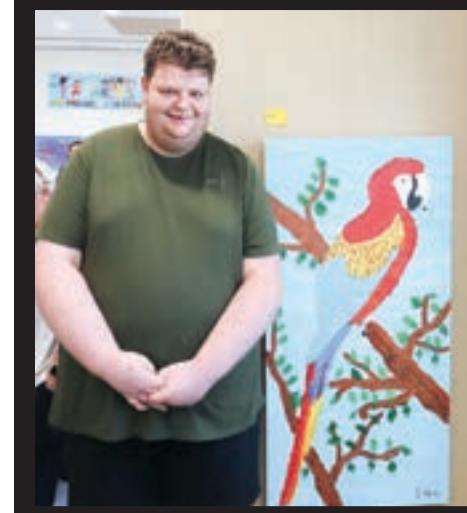
"We have fallen in love with the life here and have no plans to leave. The Bass Coast is our home."

Zev expressed his gratitude to Bass Coast Shire Council for giving him the opportunity to become involved in a world-class level project in his own backyard.

"I'm grateful to have the chance to show what I've been able to do on the world stage at a local level to boost creativity and inspire people," he said.

"I'm thankful to council for getting on behind me and allowing me to create the dinosaurs. We are lucky to have a council that supports the arts and allows artists to connect people with life and the natural environment, which is what the Dinosaur Trail does."

Into the future, Zev is looking to be involved in more local projects and events, including the Whale Festival.



Sam Lennon showcased his artwork at the Social Equity Art Show in the Leongatha IPCC building recently.

Art show highlights social equity

GIPPSLAND Southern Health Service's latest art show highlighted the artistic skills of local people with disability.

The Social Equity Art Show at the Leongatha IPCC building was staged in honour of International Day of People with Disability on December 3.

The health service's NDIS team invited clients who enjoy art to make contributions to the show.

Join the Labyrinth Walk

COME join the Labyrinth walk on New Year's Eve to reflect on your past year and contemplate your personal and community journey in the year ahead.

New Years Eve Labyrinth Walk will be held on December 31 from 8pm until 10.30pm.

It is a free, family-friendly event, and participants are encouraged to bring their own chair or rug and a torch.

The Australian Labyrinth Network Inc. member Lorraine Rodda will acknowledge Elders and people of the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders present.

She will also give a heartfelt appreciation of the work of the First Peoples Assembly, the Voice of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Joanne Cashman, a Veriditas-trained labyrinth facilitator, will introduce participants to a simple technique of mind-heart-emotion balance that can be life-changing.

It can also be inspirational and transformative when walking with a specific intention.

Each person will be able to experience a soundscape from her Tibetan Singing Bowl before entering the labyrinth path, then the sounds of the natural world will accompany the walkers for the remainder of their walk.

Location directions: drive down Back Beach Road, San Remo, then continue on the unmade road, past the Lions Children's Park and Picnic Ground, then drive along the unmade section.

The Labyrinth is on the right, alongside a row of cypress trees.

Car parking is available.

This event is part of a series of five monthly Labyrinth walks at San Remo that will be structured to give participants a deeper understanding of how walking experiences can be life-changing.

Lorraine Rodda said that simply placing one foot in front of the other on the labyrinth path quiets the mind, opens the heart and allows the walker to go beyond the busyness of their day-to-day lives, finding new ways of looking at issues.

Each month's walk will offer a different theme as listed below:

- Heart-brain coherence and setting intentions.
- Finding new ways of looking at issues
- Knowing what the message is from your walk.
- Understand how the Labyrinth is a path to transformation.
- Ways to make a difference in the world.

If you require further information regarding this request, please contact either Lorraine on 0400 045 397 or Joanne on 0417 137 369.

Special celebration for Korumburra Lions

THE LIONS Anniversary Garden in Korumburra was officially opened on Monday December 18, celebrating 75 years of Lions Clubs in Australia.

Planning and work on the garden took over a year, with 1st Vice District Governor Lion Ian Davey and past District Governor and Korumburra Lion life member Norm McPherson given the honour of unveiling the plaque.

"We hope that by beautifying this wayside stop on the western entrance to Korumburra, locals and visitors alike will enjoy the space," Korumburra Lion Janet Powell said.

The rejuvenation of the Lions shelter, erected in 1999, the addition of another picnic table and the creation of this Anniversary Garden has been made possible by fund-raising efforts and a grant from the South Gippsland Shire Council.

Many Korumburra Lions Club members and partners witnessed the unveiling, plus the presentation of the Norm and May McPherson 2023 District Club of the Year award.

The award was bestowed by Ian Davey, with Korumburra Lions Club the recipient for the second year in a row, recognising its continued community work.

Zone Chair Lion Rod Jackson was also present, with



There was a healthy turnout and a relaxed atmosphere for the opening of the Lions Anniversary Garden in Korumburra.

all those assembled enjoying light refreshments and the social occasion.

"Our team leader for the project was Lion Jim Ahon who selected a fabulous range of plants to go in the garden," Janet said of another successful project.

It was a team effort as Lion Gavin Browning highlighted.

"Many hands make light work," he said.

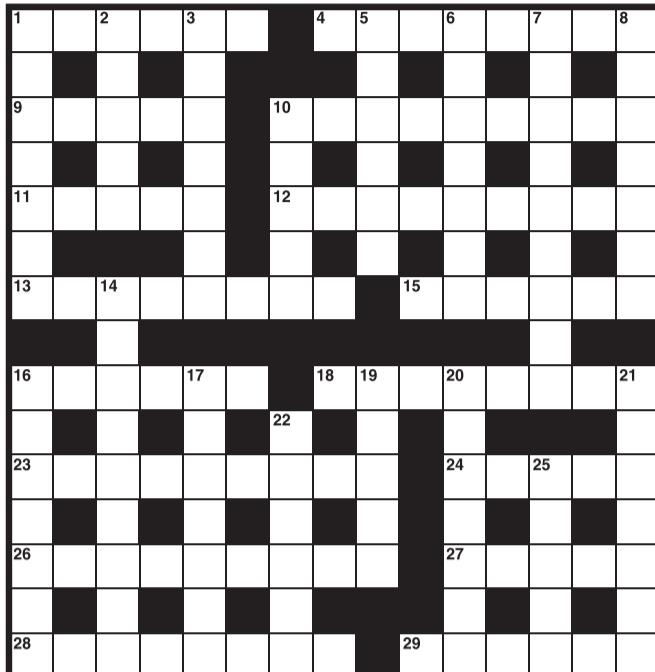
Korumburra Lions, as with other clubs, continue to live by the motto 'We Serve'.

RIGHT: Ian Davey and Norm McPherson unveil the plaque in Korumburra's Lions Anniversary Garden.





CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Underground railway (6)
4 Dirty (8)
9 Member of a Jamaican religious movement (5)
10 Adored (US) (9)

11 Follow (5)
12 Doppelganger (4-5)
13 Primula vulgaris (8)
15 Greek capital (6)
16 Beginner (6)
18 US state (8)

9-LETTER

No. 207

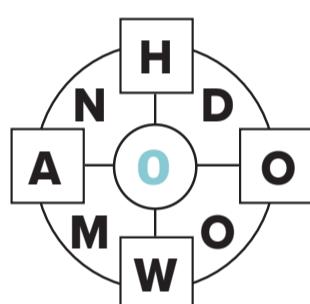
Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural words ending in "s".

Today's Aim:

9 words: Good

13 words: Very good

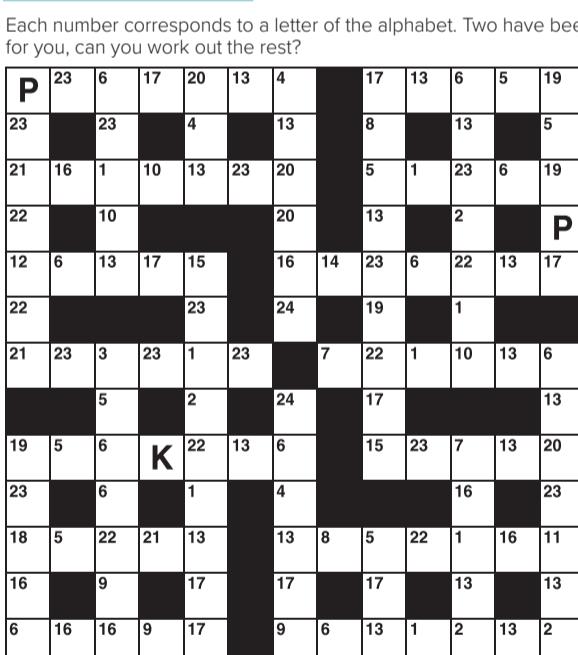
18 words: Excellent



wood, woodman
WOODMANHOOD,
wood, woman,
whoo, whom,
moan, moon,
moan, moono,
moanhood, moan,
moan, down, hood,

CODEWORD

No. 157



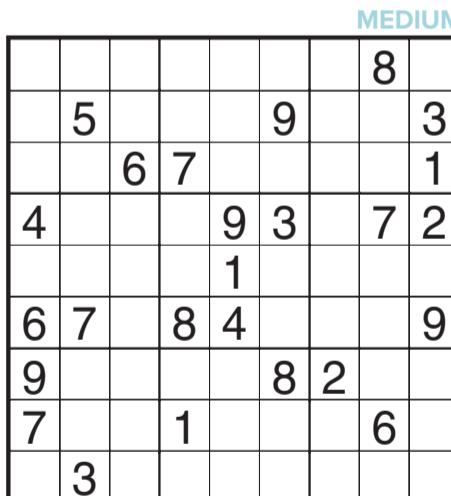
SUDOKU

No. 207

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every number from 1 to 9 must appear in: each of the nine vertical columns, each of the nine horizontal rows and each of the nine 3x3 boxes. Remember, no number can occur more than once in any row, column or box.

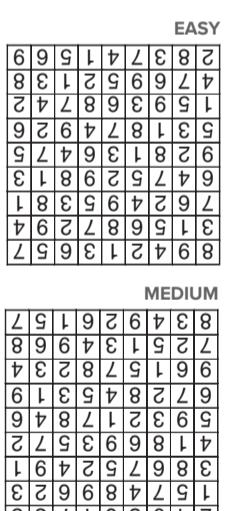


EASY



2212 | PUZZLES AND PAGINATION © pagemasters.

SOLUTIONS



QUICK QUIZ

- In what city would you find the world's deepest swimming pool?
- How many Lisbon sisters are there in Jeffrey Eugenides' novel *The Virgin Suicides*?
- And who directed the film adaptation released in 2000?
- The face of which 1980s movie character was supposedly modelled after poet Carl Sandburg, Albert Einstein and a pug dog?
- Which musician released the single *Starman* in 1972?
- What is the longest-serving lighthouse in Australia?
- In which year did King Edward VIII abdicate the British throne?
- Sana'a is the capital of which country?
- What food is made by coagulating soy milk?
- In the original *Knight Rider* TV series starring David Hasselhoff (pictured), what did the car's name, KITT, stand for?



7. 1936 8. Yemen 9. Tofu 10. Knight Industries Two Thousand
ANSWERS: 1. Dubai 2. Five 3. Sofia Coppola 4. E.T. 5. David Bowie 6. The Macquarie Lighthouse

WORDFIT

No. 207

3 LETTERS

ACE SUMS
ACT TEST
BEE TOSS
COO UNIT
DAM

EAT

END ABBEY
EVE AIRED
GEE AMPLE
GEL ANTIC
HOE AROMA
HUB ASHED
ILK ASSET
ILL CARAT
INN CLASS
ITS COINS
NIL COMMA
PEA COVES
SAT CURIO
THE CYNIC

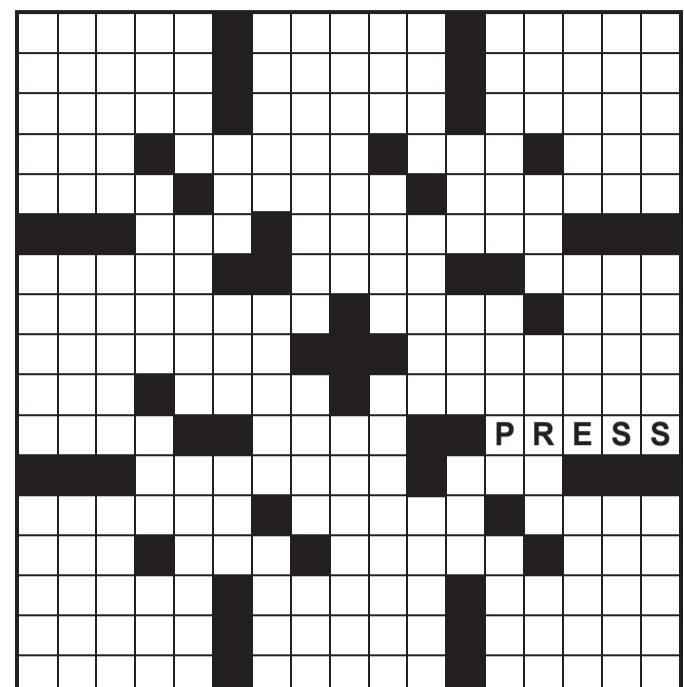
TOE

USE EBONY
UTE ELECT
WAS EMAIL
HEAPS PRESS
HEEDS ROUSE
CLIP HERDS
COIN ICING
CYST INLET
DIRT ITEMS
DRAG MASKS
ETCH SHUNT
NABS MILES
NEWS NIECE
PALE OPIUM
PEAC STARS
SATE SCALY
UTE SENSE
WAS SHEAR
HEEDS SHEDS
CLIP SHONE
COIN ITEMS
CYST MASKS
DIRT SHUNT
DRAG SLEDS
ETCH NIECE
NEWS SNAPS
PALE PANIC

4 LETTERS

AMBLE THETA
BELIEVE TOMES
ASSAILED TOYED
ASSENTED GOOUEST
HARANGUE VYING

No. 117





Upcoming events across the Bass Coast

STAY up to date with upcoming events across the Bass Coast this Summer:

December 31 -

- Cowes New Years Eve Fireworks
- Inverloch New Years Eve Fireworks
- Coronet Bay New Years Eve Fireworks

December 30 to January 1 -

- NYE on the Hill

January 6 -

- Bass Coast Agricultural Show - Wonthaggi
- Ocean Sounds Music Festival - Churchill Island

January 21 -

- Cape Paterson Aquathon

January 28 -

- Kilcunda Lobster Festival

Summer by the sea activities

EXPLORE a range of free fun guided activities across Bass Coast, Phillip Island and Wilsons Promontory with summer by the sea activities this January.

Get involved in a sea slug census at San Remo and explore the highly diverse and intertidal habitat with marine scientists looking for sea slugs.

Join a recognised authority on local geology and take a close look at amazing rock formations along the Walkerville coastline or ramble in rockpools with an expert marine guide exploring the rock pools and crevices for its abundant life.

Discover dinosaurs at the caves in Inverloch with a Bunurong education officer and palaeontologist or go on a guided night walk in search for nocturnal animals.

Visit BirdLife Australia's free information store and learn about the local threatened beach nesting birds, how you can help wildlife and about local dog walking locations, with giveaways for all, even the dogs.

Summer by the Sea is a great opportunity to discover Victoria's coastal and marine environments. Victoria's precious coastal and marine environments support a wide variety of species and habitats.

Summer by the Sea activities give you a chance to find out more about these remarkable places and to learn about some of the challenges facing our marine and coastal environments.

Fun activities in Sandy Point

KIDZ Klub is returning to the Sandy Point Community Centre in January.

The program will run from 9.30am to 12.30pm from January 1 to 5.

Kidz Klub has been running in Sandy Point for more than 30 years.

All activities are free and specially designed for primary school aged children.

It is a fun week that include Bible stories, games, craft, quizzes, singing and prizes.

Kidz Klub is a great place to meet new friends.

Parents are welcome to leave their children with the team, or to stay and have morning tea while the children enjoy the fun.

The centre hopes to see lots of children enjoying the activities and bringing along their friends.

All Kidz Klub activities are conducted in compliance with Victoria's Child Safe Standards.

For more information, check out Facebook at facebook.com/KIDZ-KLUBatSandyPoint or visit sandypointkidzklub.org.

The centre is also contactable via kksandypoint@gmail.com or phone 5940 0926.

The genYOUTH program is also available.

This is a free activity for teenager, which will be held at the Sandy Point Community Centre from 7.30pm to 9pm from January 2 to 4.

Each night features high energy activities, games, a positive message from the Bible and – as in previous years – Sandy Point's best supper.

These activities are also conducted in compliance with Victoria's Child Safe Standards.

For more information, head to facebook.com/GenyouthAtSandyPoint.

New PICES exhibition at San Remo Library

PHILLIP Island Contemporary Exhibition Space Inc. (PICES) was formed in 2019 after the Saraghi Gallery in Cowes closed, leaving the arts community without an accessible community gallery space.

PICES believes that arts and culture and creativity are central to a healthy, thriving, engaged and active community and should be accessible to all, PICES is committed to enriching the Arts and Culture environment in Bass Coast by bringing contemporary art to the community.

The partnership between PICES and the San Remo

library to exhibit PICES members 2D art works was launched in August 2023 with the first exhibition by four artists displaying their bright colourful paintings giving the library a facelift.

The second exhibition, which is currently being hung, will remain on display until the end of February 2024. The exhibiting artists are John Adam who is a well-known artist and teacher creating dramatic works using strong colours, Diana Bannister who is known for her semi abstract work based on the shapes of the natural and

man-made environment, Sandra Lamerton (Hendridge) who creates beautiful interpretations of her environment and Sheryl Stuart who is passionate about her garden and demonstrates this with her beautiful detailed paintings.

All artworks are for sale, payment and collection of your purchase is to be arranged with the artist. Contact details of the artists are available at the library just ask the staff member on duty.

For more information about the San Remo Library and new opening hours visit myli.org.au/updates-san-remo-library



Green Bird Flowers. Oil on Canvas by Diana Bannister (PICES) available at San Remo Library.

Send us your photos

If you're having a 21st, club function, wedding, or other social event, take some photos, name the people in the snaps and email to news@sgst.com.au

Sentinel-Times

It won't cost a cent to see them in print!





WONTHAGGI BINGO

WEDNESDAY 1pm - 3pm
THURSDAY 8pm - 10pm

Wonthaggi Workmen's Club, 75 Graham Street
 Come and join in the laughs at South Coast FM Bingo

★ RAFFLES ★ DOOR PRIZES ★ LUCKY NUMBER JACKPOT

JA21496



Outstanding students recognised



Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award recipients Mia Trevethan, Rhiannon Rawlins, Phoebe Ye, Chloe Gaffney, Naomi Pether, Eva O'Brien, Emma Gardner, Isabella Thomson, Natalie Churchill, and Abbey Nicholls (Silver Award). A19_5123



Year 12 Excellence Award winners Liam Wilson and Hal Joyce. A27_5123



Year 7 award winners Ella Cochrane (Excellence), Amity Olsen (Dux), Jaydah Loader (Excellence), Amelia Van Der Ploeg (Co-ordinators Award), and Dallas Walker (Co-ordinators Award). A11_5123



Holly Fowler with the Russ Smith Encouragement Award for outstanding effort across a range of disciplines. She also received the Russell Smith Citizenship Award. A22_5123



Riley Sullivan with his VCE VM Award. He also received the White Family Scholarship for outstanding leadership in the school and community. A17_5123



Rennie Sullivan Music Encouragement Award winners Xander Beach and Ryder Humphrey, Jill McCulloch Junior Music Award recipient Alana Sage and Rennie Sullivan Music Encouragement Award winner Eve Chrisafis. A08_5123



Year 11 award recipients Kirrah Belvedere (Excellence), Lucy Thomas (Co-ordinators Award), April Reeves (Dux) and Liam Thomas (Co-ordinators Award). A15_5123



Appreciation Award recipients Hal Joyce (Rainbow Palace), April Reeves (Korumburra Veterinary Clinic), and Amber Sullivan and Rhys Pether (Koringal Women's Service Club). A26_5123



Year 8 award winners Janae Hopwood and Cassidy Patten (Co-ordinators Award), Jessica Churchill (Dux) and Stella Whittle (Excellence). A12_5123

at Korumburra Secondary College



Kwong Lee Dow Scholarship Award winners
Marty Cook and Riley McIntosh. A21_5123



Sport award winners Zachary Sherar, Billie Wrigley, Daniel Whelan, Tarkyn Taylor-Wilton, Harrison Clark (Australian Olympic Change-Maker Award) and Gypsy Quaife. A10_5123



Year 9 award winners Matthew Perez (Coordinators Award), Zi Xin Ye (Excellence), Natalie Churchill (Dux) and Chloe Rodgers (Co-ordinators Award). A13_5123



Year 10 award recipients Charlotte Anthony (Co-ordinators Award), Marty Cook (Excellence), Declan Beech (Dux and Exam Award) and Riley McIntosh (Excellence). A14_5123



Like Minds Award winners Hudson Jefferis (Year 7) and Stella Whittle (Year 8). A16_5123



Enviro Group Award winner Jessica Churchill and **SALT Group Award** recipient Stella Whittle. A18_5123



Marty Cook with his Australian Defence Force 2023 Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award and Declan Beech with his Australian Defence Force 2023 Future Innovators Award. A24_5123



Breanna De Bondt with her Vocational Award for demonstrating excellence, dedication and commitment to the Head Start program. She also received an LLEN Award. A20_5123



Prior Law Legal Experience Award winner Eva McCarrick-Lawes. A25_5123



Kelsey Kruger with her TAFE Gippsland Award for excellence in VETDSS. A23_5123



Riley McIntosh with his Barbara Hoy Outstanding Musician Award. A09_5123

Tiny Towns grants are open

THE new Tiny Towns Fund will support local communities to deliver quality tourism and community facility projects, such as splash parks and bike trails, playgrounds, community hall and library upgrades, public art and more.

Towns with a population of up to 5000 people in the 48 local government areas of regional Victoria are eligible to apply.

From barbecues to community centres, the Tiny Towns Fund will back community-driven projects that enhance our smallest towns, strengthen community connections and encourage more visitors to all corners of Victoria.

Grants between \$5000 and \$50,000 will be available for each project.

Applications close 5pm, Sunday February 25, 2024.

For more information visit: rdv.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/tiny-towns-fund



Tea Smoked Salmon

By Meg Viney

THIS is an extraordinary dish – a bit hard to believe – but wait until you try it! Great for a New Year delicacy

Ingredients

- 1 large fillet of salmon, skin on
- 1 cup rice
- 1/4 cup tea leaves - must be smoky, like Russian Caravan or Earl Grey
- 1 cup brown sugar
- Sour cream
- Horseradish
- Lemon juice

Method

Line a saucepan that will hold a strainer with foil.

Mix rice, tea leaves and brown sugar and place on foil.

Place saucepan on fairly high heat for a few minutes, until it starts smoking.

Place salmon, skin side down into the strainer and place in saucepan. Cover with lid and leave over medium heat for about 10 minutes.

Cool.

Remove skin and place on serving platter. Mix horseradish, sour cream and lemon juice to your taste.

Serve with a crunchy baguette – guests can spoon on some salmon and sauce and enjoy!

Another holiday dip, which is mostly mix, taste and adjust, but the basic recipe is this:

Smoked trout mousse:

Ingredients:

- 1 large smoked trout (available in most supermarkets)
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup sour cream
- 3 or more tablespoons horseradish puree
- Lemon juice
- Salt and white pepper to taste

Method:

Peel the skin from the trout and carefully remove the bones.

Place flesh and remaining ingredients in a food processor.

Taste and keep adjusting the flavours until it tastes delicious and irresistible.

Serve with baguettes or even dry biscuits.

Real Estate

South Gippsland and Bass Coast



Inverloch shops up for holiday weekend auction



THE auction of two prominently-located shops in Inverloch's Ramsey Boulevard commercial strip could hardly have been offered at a busier time of the year than auction day, Saturday, January 27, 2024, right in the middle of Australia Day Long Weekend.

They're bound to attract maximum interest on the day and present as an entry-level commercial investment, in a strong, consistent coastal location, that's worthy of consideration.

Partner at selling agent Burgess Rawson, Raoul Holderhead, with plenty of local knowledge himself, rates the property as an "absolute prime 360sqm retail site in the heart of the Inverloch" with brand-new five and three-year leases to long proven, established Pizzeria Restaurant and Beauty Salon.

The shops he said have a "huge 18.5 metre retail frontage and exposure, with the two shops "to be sold in one line" with a combined 264sqm net

lettable area.

"Beauty Salon includes an immaculate, new, capital-intensive tenant fit-out, with both shops in a perfect location, adjoining the Esplanade Hotel, with huge foot traffic, and immediately opposite a proposed three level, 42 apartment development."

A start to work on this project, expected to further increase foot traffic, is imminent.

Mr Holderhead said the shops were centrally located in the town with ample parking in close proximity.

It is expected that they will sell, together, in a range between \$1.25M and \$1.3m.

Needless to say, with the auction being held on site at 11.30am on Saturday, January 27, there may well be a lot of passerby interest on the day.

For further details contact Raoul Holderhead at Burgess Rawson on 0413 860 304 or at Ray White Inverloch, Fiona McMahon-Hughes 0417 743 355 or Kevin McMahon 0418 512 072.

Property market predictions for the year ahead

IT TAKES two weeks less time to sell a home in Australia now than it did last year, as real estate agents, property lawyers and conveyancers are busier than they have ever been keeping up with the demand.

The International Monetary Fund found that the Australians have the highest levels of mortgage stress in the developed world.

We spend 15 per cent of our income paying off a home loan.

Australian Conveyancer magazine reveals the pleasure and pain that came in a year of 'highs' in the national property industry. The key takeaways in multi-dimensional

coverage include:

The RBA's official home loan cash rate of 4.35 per cent - a 12-year high - is having a stabilising effect on Australia's rate of inflation, bringing hope of relief in 2024.

A cut in interest rates in 2024 would spark demand and create another home price up-swing.

An Australian Property Council survey reports high confidence among industry professionals.

Renters in our capital cities would be financially better off if they bought the apartment they live in.

The Australian Conveyancer includes a 2024 outlook by

political and business leaders. Some observations:

"Whether further tightening of monetary policy is required to ensure that inflation returns to target in a reasonable time frame will depend upon the data and then evolving assessment of risks," Reserve Bank Governor Michele Bullock stated.

"Australian households and businesses are generally well placed to manage the impact of higher interest rates and inflation, supported by continued strength in the labour market and sizeable savings buffers. However, this resilience is unevenly spread. Some households and businesses are

already experiencing financial stress, and the squeeze on household budgets is likely to continue to build," the Reserve Bank of Australia noted.

"We are making some welcome progress in the fight against inflation and that will determine the future directory trajectory of interest rates," Federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers added.

Westpac Bank initially predicted a stable housing market for 2023 but revised its forecast - citing strong population growth - for national house price inflation to seven per cent for the year 2023. It expects a further four per cent price rise in 2024.



'Cascades' – a tropical retreat of unrivalled elegance and resort living in Inverloch!

NESTLED in the heart of the seaside town of Inverloch, 'Cascades' is a tropical resort-style haven that stands as a testament to luxury living. This unique property, presented by Harcourts, beckons you into a private oasis, surrounded by lush landscaping featuring tall palm trees and tropical plants, creating an atmosphere that transports you to the beauty of tropical Queensland. As you stroll through the well-thought-out gardens, illuminated by strategically placed lights and accompanied by the gentle sounds of water features, you'll truly feel like you're on a perpetual holiday.

Perfectly positioned for the ultimate coastal lifestyle, 'Cascades' is a mere 250-metre walk to the ocean, a short 300 metres to the boat ramp, and conveniently located near all the amenities Inverloch has to offer – shops, cafés, supermarkets, and two welcoming pubs.

Crafted in a Queensland-inspired architectural style, this double-storey home, built approximately 13 years ago by a renowned local builder, invites an abundance of natural light through its large, double-glazed windows. The lower level unfolds as an open plan living and entertainment haven, featuring a high-end kitchen with a combination of marble and Caesarstone benchtops, Smeg appliances,

a DeLonghi built-in coffee machine, and more. The larger living zone, a cosy sitting room, and a meals area overlooking the pool, complete with a generous spirits bar and two built-in bar fridges, offer a perfect blend of sophistication and comfort. The enormous laundry, equipped with Caesarstone benchtops and ample storage, conveniently provides direct access to the oversize double car garage. A well-appointed bathroom caters to those returning from a refreshing swim in the inground salt-chlorinated, self-cleaning, solar-heated swimming pool, surrounded by a landscaped and private north-facing front.

The upper level of 'Cascades' unfolds into a haven of comfort and tranquillity, housing all bedrooms and a spacious living zone with a ceiling reverse cycle air-conditioning system. Two primary bedrooms, each a king-sized retreat with walk-in robes, ensuites, reverse cycles, and ceiling fans, offer sweeping views of the swimming pool area. Two additional king-sized bedrooms, adorned with ceiling fans, air-conditioners, and ample built-in cupboards, provide the perfect retreat. The large family bathroom, with a bath, shower, and double vanity, ensures convenience, complemented by a separate powder room and a versatile storage

room/small office space.

The backyard of 'Cascades' is a haven in itself, boasting palm-style landscaping, a large pond, and a 6m x 6m shed with a concrete floor, power, and lights. A 10,000L water tank ensures the flourishing gardens, while an outdoor shower with hot and cold water is a welcoming feature after a day at the beach. The home is equipped with modern conveniences, including a ducted vacuum system and a home security system.

The allure of 'Cascades' extends beyond its walls, as it is offered as a walk-in, walk-out basis – a complete package inclusive of all furniture and items. Simply put, what you see is what you get, making 'Cascades' the epitome of ready-to-enjoy resort living. Don't miss this opportunity to make 'Cascades' your home, where every detail has been meticulously designed to offer a lifestyle of luxury and tranquillity.

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Opportunity for Women-led agtech startups

FARMERS2FOUNDERS understands that female founders face unique challenges and barriers in accessing resources and funding.

This is explicitly evident in the intersection of two male-dominated industries: agriculture and technology. Research tells us that only three per cent of the \$16.9 billion of funding invested in agtech worldwide, went to female-only startups, yet women-founded startups are able to generate 78 cents for each dollar of funding, while their male-founded counterparts generate 31 cents per dollar, less than half of that.

Farmers2Founders has created the TEKWOMEN VIC program.

By establishing a program specifically tailored to support and uplift female entrepreneurs, Farmers2Founders aims to level the playing field, nurture talent, and unlock the untapped potential of women-led agtech startups.

The free program provides the frameworks, skills, and networks you need to turn your idea into a scalable business. TEKWOMEN will give you the knowledge and confidence you need to examine, prototype and launch your venture.

Skills, learnings and support:

Test your idea and understand its commercial potential, support to overcome early obstacles, how to build a sustainable business model, financing your first venture and MVP protect your intellectual property, marketing and social media for agribusiness, how to build a Go To Market strategy, pitch your idea with confidence and acquire first customers.

The program is open to any woman or team (as long as there are at least 50 per cent women on the team) in Victoria with a technology idea or concept to solve a challenge on farm or for the agricultural industry.

To find out more about this program go to farmers2founders.com/tekwomen-vic.

Landcare Awards are now open

NOW IN its 32nd year, the State and Territory Landcare Awards stand as a prestigious biennial national Landcare Awards program.

The objective is to honour individuals, groups and organisations that are making outstanding contributions to caring for the environment in their local communities for the benefit of all Australians today, and for generations to come.

In each state and territory, the Landcare Awards will be granted to recognise the achievements that encompass climate action, environmental leadership, sustainable agriculture, First Nations, Women in landcare, youth, Coastcare and children.

Nominating is free. You can nominate yourself, or you can nominate someone you know who should be recognised for their work to restore, enhance and protect the natural environment in their community.

Nominating is easy. If you know an individual, group or organisation in your community making a difference to the environment and sustainable land or water use, nominate them for a Landcare Award.

The winners of the nine national Landcare Award categories will advance as finalists to the 2024 National Landcare Awards. For more information and to make a nomination go to: landcareaustralia.org.au/landcare-awards-2023.

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Over 170 people came from all over the state to attend and supported a pro hunting forum in Wonthaggi recently.

Forum sends message to back hunting

HUNDREDS turned up to a forum in Wonthaggi last week, in support of keeping the hunting of ducks, quail and deer on the table.

Attendees moved a single unanimous motion calling on the Government to allow the continuation of the traditional pursuit of hunting for all Victorians.

The forum was organised by Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Public Land Use, The Nationals Member for Eastern Victoria Region, Melina Bath.

Representatives from across the state converged on Wonthaggi to discuss current plans to ban duck and quail hunting.

Ms Bath said she was delighted with the response to the forum as it demonstrated the breadth of people who are passionate about traditional pursuits and maintaining access to public land.

"It is abundantly clear that hunters care deeply about the sustainability of their harvest and dedicate countless volunteer hours to restore wetland habitat for all wildlife," said Ms Bath.

The forum included a Q&A panel discussion with Shadow Minister for Agriculture and



The forum on hunting included a Q&A panel discussion with many of the local political and industry leaders.

Deputy Leader of The Nationals, Emma Kealy, Rob Passarin - President Western Port Field & Game, Gary "Pud" Howard and Anne Wilson - Sale Field & Game, Stuart Allen - President Wonthaggi Clay Target Club and Gippsland MP's Melina Bath, Danny O'Brien, Martin Cameron, and Wayne Farnham.

Addressing the forum Emma Kealy reiterated the Victorian Opposition's strong support for hunting and other traditional outdoor recreation pursuits, saying "it was critical that

access to public land was encouraged and not diminished..."

Ms Kealy said there is no logical reason to ban sustainable hunting as an activity in Victoria as there is strong scientific evidence to support its continuation.

Harvesting food for the family table through activities such as hunting and fishing has been occurring since the beginning of time with our first nations people - it's important that this tradition continues in a sustainable manner and be available to all Victorians.

Ms Bath said the forum represented a push back from Victorians on the Government's political ideology.

The fact remains hunting is a highly regulated, sustainable activity that generates enormous economic revenue in regional Victoria.

The Nationals back the continuation of hunting and traditional outdoor pursuits based on sound science, and will continue to support them to be conducted in a safe and responsible way well into the future.



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Sluggish global milk supply growth and improving dairy prices expected in 2024

LIMITED milk supply growth and lacklustre demand led to soft global dairy commodity pricing in 2023. However, the global dairy market appears to be transitioning to the next phase in its cycle, with prices expected to move higher through 2024, according to a new report from Rabobank.

"Still, the market remains finely balanced, and uncertainty remains surrounding underlying demand for 2024," the specialist agribusiness bank says in its Global Dairy Quarterly Q4 2023 report.

As 2023 draws to a close, Rabobank says, the global dairy market continues to walk a tightrope of limited "new" milk and sluggish demand.

"The year saw soft global dairy commodity pricing due to weaker underlying fundamentals. Global milk supply growth was underwhelming, with three consecutive quarters of growth. Then lower milk prices, elevated costs, and weather disruption put the brakes back on."

Rabobank's global milk supply outlook for 2024 has weakened, with sluggish growth expected across most export regions.

"The milk supply export engine never fully fired on all cylinders in 2023 and declined year-on-year in the third quarter by 0.2 per cent," says report lead author, Rabobank senior dairy analyst Michael Harvey.

"Year-over-year milk production from the 'Big 7' (the EU, US, New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay) exporting regions is forecast to decrease through Q1 2024 before turning positive. Overall, milk supply is forecast to grow by a modest 0.3 per cent for the entire year," he said.

Rabobank said in local currencies, farmgate milk prices across the export regions will close out 2023 anywhere between 20 per cent to 40 per cent lower versus the start of the year. However, with the 2024 feed cost outlook looking more favourable, some regional milk prices have recently increased, boosting farmgate margins, the bank said.

"We expect a slow recovery in



dairy commodity prices back to long-term averages," Mr Harvey said.

"However, current fundamentals provide the perfect ingredients for price volatility and a possible market whiplash. Geopolitical instability risks, volatile energy markets, and weak macroeconomic conditions will be something to watch in 2024 for the global dairy markets," Mr Harvey said.

Mr Harvey said demand would be a key factor to watch in 2024, with high dairy inflation, broader cost-of-living issues, and weak consumer confidence remaining on the horizon.

"Peak food and dairy inflation have passed, but market uncertainty remains, and rising unemployment will further impact purchasing power in 2024. Emerging markets and low-income households are under the most pressure," he said.

"In China consumer prices are falling, and foodservice recovery continues, but overall consumption growth is sluggish.

"China's import appetite for dairy commodities is still expected to drive any Oceania commodity price rally in 2024."

Rabobank expects China's import volume to flatline in 2024, which would be a positive result, given the previous

two years of withdrawal from the global markets. This is an opportunity for importers outside of China to build stocks in 2024, the bank said.

"Other factors to watch in 2024 include a mildly softer grain and oilseed price outlook, El Niño and weather-related risks, mixed livestock markets in export regions, and the impact of the Israel-Hamas war on global markets," Mr Harvey said.

Mr Harvey said Australia's milk supply had "modestly recovered" in the first quarter of the new season.

"Milk production reached 2.036 billion litres in the July to September period, 0.5 per cent year-on-year higher. Growth has been elusive in Western Victoria and Northern Victoria," he said.

"For most of Australia's key dairying regions, rainfall between August and October was below average, negatively impacting soil moisture. And the latest climate outlook leans toward below-average rainfall into Q1 2024," he said.

However, the report notes, dairy farmers are overall "well-equipped to combat these seasonal conditions".

"Most dairy farmers have access to good carryover feed reserves, ample supply of supplementary feed, and irrigation water. Nonetheless, after three consecutive record

winter crops, the current winter crop will decline materially," Mr Harvey said.

"Feed and fertiliser input costs are expected to track closer to long-term averages, which is good news for producers. However, interest rates are still increasing, and inflation is evident across most overhead costs," the report stated.

Mr Harvey said Australian farmgate milk prices were set for the remainder of the season (ending June 30, 2024), remaining at or near record levels, buffering the sector from global markets.

"Australian dairy exports continue to plummet," he said.

"In the first three months of the new season, export volumes are down more than 13 per cent year-on-year with big falls in milk powder ingredients, bulk cheese, and butter. Export volumes of liquid milk, a growth sector in recent years, are off 30 per cent year-on-year.

"A tight domestic milk supply is part of the story. However, export price competitiveness remains an issue given the high price of farmgate milk versus major competitors. Australia's butter and cheese imports are up 43 per cent and 21 per cent year-on-year, respectively."

Mr Harvey said Australian households continue to adjust purchasing behaviours in response to an income squeeze.

National biosecurity training hub now open

AUSTRALIA'S first one-stop shop for online biosecurity training is now open and available to anyone looking to increase their understanding about biosecurity.

Agriculture Victoria has partnered with Plant Health Australia (PHA), the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Animal Health Australia (AHA) to create the National Biosecurity Training Hub.

Agriculture Victoria executive director Dr Katherine Clift said biosecurity and emergency animal disease preparedness is a top priority for Victoria.

"Victoria faces intensifying biosecurity risks – driven by climate change, increasing trade and travel, and changing land use," she said.

"Small actions can have big impacts on preventing and managing the harms caused by pests and diseases. The things we do, or don't do, can touch everything we value."

Dr Clift said biosecurity was a matter for all Victorians, not just people on farms, and the training hub is a great way for people to increase their understanding and knowledge.

"We can all help prevent pests from getting into Victoria, contain outbreaks before they get out of hand, and manage established pests and weeds," she said.

The National Biosecurity Training Hub offers a central location with a database of online biosecurity training resources to help reduce the duplication of effort and costs associated with developing and delivering biosecurity training.

The Hub unifies and streamlines training to give national visibility of biosecurity-related training across government, industry and community in a single location.

It is a centralised platform that supports biosecurity prevention, preparedness, response and recovery by providing users with access to the latest biosecurity-related training materials and courses suited to different industries, levels and skill sets.

Designed with learners in mind, the Hub is easy to navigate with a library of plant, animal and aquatic biosecurity training that is searchable using a topic, keyword, location and preferred method of delivery.

The quality assurance protocols in place ensures each course listed meets the required standards.

The Hub can be found at biotraining-hub.com.au and features 64 online training courses with plans for continuous expansion.

Organisations with biosecurity training packages interested in contributing to the Hub are encouraged to make contact with PHA via nbth@phau.com.au.

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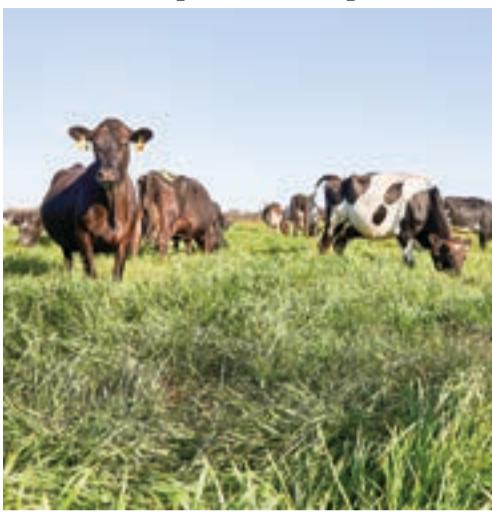
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Be prepared this facial eczema season



Facial eczema has devastating impacts on herd productivity and animal welfare.

WE ARE seeing spore counts on the rise early this facial eczema season given the favourable sporulation conditions across Gippsland.

Facial eczema is a liver disease, often accompanied by photosensitisation, caused by spores of a pasture fungus that multiply rapidly in warm and humid conditions. The spores of the fungus release a potent mycotoxin known as sporidesmin in the gastrointestinal tract, which causes damage to the liver, bladder, and mammary gland. It can therefore have devastating impacts on herd productivity and animal welfare.

Early intervention is critical. Use prevailing weather conditions in combination with pasture spore counting to predict and identify periods of pasture toxicity, whilst taking preventative action when local pasture spore counts trend upward of

By Kristen Davis, GippsDairy

20,000 spores/gram and weather conditions look favourable for sporulation.

Remember that by the time you see some cows in the herd affected by the photosensitisation caused by facial eczema, a large proportion of the herd is likely to have already suffered liver damage, for which there is no specific treatment. (Zinc can only prevent facial eczema. It cannot reverse liver damage already done from exposure to the toxin).

Feeding the correct amount of zinc oxide in grain/concentrates at milking can be highly effective for facial eczema prevention in the milking herd. However, dry stock such as heifers, bulls, and dry cows are also at risk of facial eczema. Utilisation of zinc oxide rumen boluses provide highly effective prevention against facial

eczema in these classes of stock for four weeks. Discuss with your veterinarian or nutrition advisor about your farms specific risk and prevention options.

There are also several accompanying strategies that can be used to help reduce the risk of cows ingesting large numbers of toxic spores, which tend to concentrate at the base of the pasture sward. These include careful grazing management, use of alternative pasture species, crops, and supplements such as hay, silage and grain/concentrates.

The Facial Eczema Spore Monitoring Program is taking place again in 2024, funded by GippsDairy and DairyNSW, and supported by Dairy Australia. If you would like to subscribe to the fortnightly spore monitoring report, please contact the GippsDairy office at info@gippsdairy.com.au or 5624 3900.

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DEATHS

AXFORD, John:
Members of the Outtrim Lodge 209 and the District Brethren mourn the loss of our brother.
WBro John Axford PM.
He will be sadly missed.
So Mote it Be.

LUCARDIE, Maureen Joan:
18.09.1940 - 15.12.2023.
Aunty Maureen you were simply the best.
Our hearts are heavy, and our thoughts and love go to Anne, Helen, and Daryl and their families.
Love always.
-- All the Diggeman family.
The Funeral has already been held.

FUNERALS

WARE:
The Funeral Service for Mr. Raymond Lorance Ware will be held at Handley & Anderson Chapel, 3085 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Wonthaggi next Thursday, January 4, 2024 commencing at 2pm.

At the conclusion of the service the funeral will leave for the Wonthaggi Cemetery.

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Wonthaggi 5672 1074

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All advertisements must be prepaid unless client has an existing credit facility. Accounts are due and payable on the due date as shown on the account.

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Will this planning application affect you?

The land affected by the application is located at:

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The application is for a permit to:
Clause 52.02 - under Section 23 of the
Subdivision Act 1988 to remove an easement

APPLICATION DETAILS

Application Number: **2022/310**
Address: **943 Berrys Creek Road,
Mirboo North, VIC, 3871**
Applicant name: **Brian Moxham Surveying**

For Further reference contact:

Sebastian Lorenzo Ph: 5662 9200
Email: council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

How can I find out more?

You may look at the application and any documents that support the application at the office of the South Gippsland Shire Council at 9 Smith Street, Leongatha. This can be done during office hours and is free of charge.

You can find more details or make a submission regarding this application by scanning the QR code below or by visiting the link to view more details:
www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/planning

How can I make a submission?

What are my options?

This application has not been decided and you can still make a submission before a decision has been made. Any person who may be affected by the granting of the permit may object or make other submissions to comment to the responsible authority. An objection must:

- be made to the responsible authority in writing
- include the reasons for the objection and;
- state how the objector would be affected.

If you object, the responsible authority will tell you its decision.

The responsible authority must make a copy of every objection available at its office for any person to inspect during office hours free of charge until the end of the period during which an application may be made for review of a decision on the application.

The responsible authority will not decide on the application before: 15th January, 2024.



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South Gippsland
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Applications Close Monday January 8, 2024 at 9am



LB1213

Applications Close
Sunday January 7, 2024 at 5pm

LB1214

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Winners of the fishing competition were Holly Carr, Maxine Kelly, Ross Kelly and Roman Carr.

Wonthaggi Angling

WINNERS for the November fishing competition were:

Junior female, Holly Carr with a bream weighing 550g.

Senior female, Maxine Kelly with a bream weighing 712g.

Veterans, Ross Kelly with a bream weighing 858g.

Junior male, Roman Carr with a bream weighing 615g.

Senior male, Brian Allan (absent) with a bream weighing 627g.

Sponsor of the Month was Bass Coast Rubbish Removal & Bin Hire.

Bag limit reduced for cockles in Corner Inlet

THE DAILY recreational bag limit for cockles in Corner Inlet has been reduced to two litres per person to better share the resource and ensure the species remains sustainable for generations to come.

Victorian Fisheries Authority CEO Travis Dowling said Corner Inlet is a fantastic fishery shared between recreational and commercial fishers and is home to a delicious array of seafood including King George whiting, flathead, calamari, gummy shark and cockles.

"Cockles offer shore-based fishers who don't have a boat another option to take home a fresh meal of Victorian seafood for the dinner table," Mr Dowling said.

Reducing the bag limit for cockles was a recommendation of the Corner Inlet Fisheries Management Plan released in 2022 and received widespread support during recent public consultation.

The new lower bag limit for cockles of two litres, or half a litre if removed from their shells, applies only to Corner Inlet and includes McLoughlins Beach, a popular spot amongst fishers to collect the bivalve shellfish.

Elsewhere across Victoria the cockles bag limit remains at five litres per person, or one litre if removed from their shells.

Ahead of the Christmas holidays, Fisheries Officers are installing signage about the change around Corner Inlet and McLoughlins Beach to inform local and visiting fishers of the new lower bag limit.

Mr Dowling said summer is a wonderful time to enjoy the great outdoors, wet a line with family and friends, and explore Victoria's world-class fisheries in Gippsland and beyond.

Recreational fishers are reminded that only hands and feet can be used to collect cockles and that digging implements are not permitted. A recreational fishing licence is required, unless exempt.

For more information about recreational catch limits and licensing, fishers are encouraged to download the free VicFishing app or visit vfa.vic.gov.au/fishingguide



Andy Burgan - Open Men Winner. Photo: Peter Fogarty.

Longboarders compete at Summerlands

PHILLIP Island Boardriders Club (PIBC) held their longboarders competition two at Summerlands where they were sheltered from the wind. There was some serious rock dodging going on out at Penguin Point as they battled with the low tide which started to fill in and so did the waves.

A standout competitor was Andy Burgan, with 30 years' experience on the point paying off, taking out the Men's.

Ebony Maier surfed graceful as always, taking out the Open Women's. Mark Letts

with his powerful turns dominated the oldies, taking out the style masters and Sonia Seuren styling her way through to take out the mixed Juniors.

Longboard winners (PIBC)

Open Mens: 1st Andrew Burgan, 2nd Eli Curry, 3rd Ben Gerard Taylor

Open Womens: 1st Ebony Maier, 2nd Natalie Van Der Heyden, 3rd Nala Taylor

Mixed Juniors (U18): 1st Sonia Seuren

Style Masters Mixed (45+):

1st Mark Letts, 2nd Andrew Lidsey, 3rd Natalie Van Der Heyden

Aggregate winners (PIBC)

Junior Males (U18): 1st Toby Davies, 2nd Oscar Dean, 3rd Lachie Eastwood

Junior Females (U18): 1st Sarah Seuren, 2nd Abbey Clarke, 3rd Zoe Scott

Cadet Males (U16): 1st Angus Kennedy, 2nd Hamish Farman, 3rd Sunny Steiner

Cadet Females (U16): 1st Evie Lutz, 2nd Lillian Bassed, 3rd Savannah Bennett

Senior Mens (28-45): 1st Marcus Wright, 2nd Bill Hosking, 3rd Tim Anagnostou

Masters (45-60): 1st Adrian Maier, 2nd Dumpy, 3rd Drew Johnson

Legends (60+): 1st Mal Gregson, 2nd William Yusko, 3rd Robert Michael Hosking

Senior Women's (35+): 1st Zoe Adams, 2nd Michelle Fincher, 3rd Kellie McDonald

Open Women: 1st Sarah Seuren, 2nd Lillian Bassed, 3rd Abbey Clarke

Open Men: 1st Carl Wright, 2nd Harry De Roth, 3rd Ash Easton

Fishcare Volunteers bring events to thousands



Ciana, Melena and Grace, at the Come and Try Fishing Day, hosted by Fishcare Volunteers and Corinella Boating & Angling Club, earlier this year. ob01_5523

FISHCARE would like to extend a heartfelt Happy New Year to all the dedicated Fishcare Volunteers who made a significant impact throughout the year.

These individuals have shared their passion for fishing and have also played a crucial role in promoting responsible fishing practices.

The Corinella Boating & Angling Club (CBAC) worked with Fishcare Volunteers earlier this year for The Corinella Come and Try day.

It was a busy event with two sessions of 15 participants each that were booked out well in advance.

Fishcare volunteers also worked with the Anderson Inlet Angling Club Inverloch, holding practical fishing workshops for 90 grade five and six students in November.

Over the past six months, Fishcare Volunteers conducted an impressive 205 responsible fishing workshops to over 3780 participants.

Volunteers have worked

with 42 schools and held 102 community events including 36 all-ability events.

These workshops have been instrumental in educating the community about sustainable fishing techniques and the importance of preserving our aquatic ecosystems for future generations.

By engaging with students,

the Fishcare Volunteers have instilled a sense of environmental stewardship in the younger generation, ensuring that the principles of responsible fishing continue to be passed down.

These events have brought together people from all walks of life, fostering a sense of community and shared

responsibility towards our natural resources.

They have been an excellent platform for spreading awareness and encouraging more people to adopt sustainable fishing practices.

These events have ensured that everyone, regardless of their physical abilities, has the opportunity to participate in and enjoy the joys of fishing. This inclusive approach underlines the commitment of the volunteers to make fishing an activity that everyone can enjoy and appreciate.

The dedication and hard work of the Fishcare Volunteers have not only promoted responsible fishing but have also created lasting memories and learning experiences for all participants. As we celebrate this festive season, let's take a moment to appreciate and thank these incredible volunteers for their invaluable contribution to our community and the environment. Season's greetings to all the Fishcare Volunteers, and here's to another successful year ahead!

TIDE GUIDE

TIDAL PREDICTIONS FROM PORT PHILLIP HEADS

Approx. Tide Variations: Seal Rocks, Venus Bay, Waratah Bay and Cape Woolamai (Same), Tooradin +2hrs 45, Cowes Pier +50, Stony Point +40

WEDNESDAY	December 27
▲ 1.00am	1.57m
▼ 6.19am	0.86m
▲ 12.18pm	1.32m
▼ 6.35pm	0.26m

THURSDAY	December 28
▲ 1.54am	1.61m
▼ 7.18am	0.80m
▲ 1.14pm	1.33m
▼ 7.26pm	0.24m

FRIDAY	December 29
▲ 2.42am	1.64m
▼ 8.08am	0.75m
▲ 2.04pm	1.35m
▼ 8.13pm	0.25m

SATURDAY	December 30
▲ 3.25am	1.64m
▼ 8.53am	0.69m
▲ 2.50pm	1.36m
▼ 8.57pm	0.26m

SUNDAY	December 31
▲ 4.02am	1.63m
▼ 9.35am	0.65m
▲ 3.33pm	1.36m
▼ 9.37pm	0.30m

MONDAY	January 1
▲ 4.36am	1.61m
▼ 10.15am	0.61m
▲ 4.15pm	1.36m
▼ 10.15pm	0.35m

TUESDAY	January 2
▲ 5.06am	1.58m
▼ 10.53am	0.58m
▲ 4.55pm	1.34m
▼ 10.50pm	0.42m



Email us your
fishing photos

news@sgst.com.au



Woolamai Beach SLSC Bronze Medallion Camp participants at Smiths Beach.

Woolamai Beach SLSC Bronze Medallion Camp

WOOLAMAI Beach Surf Lifesaving Club (WBSLSC) recently held their weeklong Bronze Medallion Camp where candidates learnt the skills and knowledge of patrolling and surf awareness in order to participate in life-saving operations.

The Bronze Medallion Award is the minimum standard to become a fully qualified lifesaver. Some of the training that candidates encounter during the course include, how to identify hazards and risks, how to recognise appropriate beach types and conditions, how to safely

assist a person in distress using rescue techniques and perform basic resuscitation techniques, plus much more!

Chief instructor Terry Aslanidis ran the camp at the Woolamai Beach Surf Lifesaving Club, where a majority of the training was conducted on the beach of Woolamai, however, candidates travelled to neighbouring beaches due to extreme weather conditions.

"This year we had a total of 54 candidates and 19 leaders participate on the Bronze Medallion Camp making it our largest camp ever," said Terry.

"The training team were faced with a few challenges across the weeklong camp including lightning and thunder and big swell however candidates remained in high spirits and enjoyed every little bit of the camp."

Summer is here and with the forecast predicted to be hot and dry, Woolamai Beach SLSC and Life Saving Victoria urges beach goers to be responsible around our waterways this summer holidays.

The conditions and beach layout are always changing at Cape Woolamai.

"Over the last month we

have noticed a significant change to our sandbars and rips posing greater danger for unsuspecting beach goers," Terry explained.

From January 26, Woolamai Beach, Smiths Beach, and Cowes Foreshore will be patrolled by lifeguards and lifesavers every day from 10am until 6pm. Beach goers are reminded to always swim at patrolled beaches between the red and yellow flags.

Any changes to the patrol times will be communicated through Woolamai Beach SLSC social media platforms @woolamaibeachslsc.

Surfs up and safety too at Cape Paterson

THE First Surf Beach at Cape Paterson is a great option for families looking to get some surfing action this summer with good surfing waves at both ends of the beach and some great boogie board waves on either side.

The Cape Paterson Surf Lifesaving Club has been running continuous patrols over the pre-Christmas and Christmas-New Year period and are encouraging people to swim between the flags.

Their busiest day is likely to be Sunday, January 21, 2024 when they provide safety services for the annual Cape Aquathon, swim and run race with a start time of 10am.

Meanwhile, skills training and competition continues with Josh Kitwell one of those getting their inflatable rescue boat driving hours up in recent weeks.



Laura Moara, Gemma Mavangio and Mark 'Doogs' Legg on patrol at Cape Paterson recently.



Amy Hodson has committed to raise \$2000 for the Starlight Foundation Super Swim Challenge for the second year running. Z01_5223

Amy dives in to swim 30km in 2024

SUPER Swim Hero Amy Hodson is taking to the pool again in 2024 for her second year running, and this time, Amy is aiming to raise \$2000 for the Starlight Children's Foundation.

Amy has signed up to complete the swim challenge during February of 2024 with a goal of swimming 30kms; with most of the kilometres to be swam at the Wonthaggi YMCA.

The community showed immense support for young Amy in 2023 and this time around, the 11-year-old young lady is aiming big to continue helping those sick kids using the services of the Starlight Foundation.

At the beginning of the year Amy swam 25km and exceeded her personal goal – raising \$10,000 and brightening the lives of over 51,000 kids.

2024 will be the fifth annual super swim challenge and Amy loves swimming, hoping one day to be in the Olympics.

"When I initially heard about the challenge I thought, I want to do it because adults help kids all the time but it's hard for kids to help kids and with this challenge, I can help sick kids and swim at the same time."

As we re-cap on Amy's dedication in 2023, Amy's mother Robyn said Amy's motivation for the challenge came from her time in and out of hospital as a young child. Amy has no vision in her right eye, she was born with a rare cataract on the right side and underwent surgery at only eight weeks old. Since then, she spent many years at the Royal Children's Hospital for appointments and further surgeries due to her cataract.

Amy's coaches and teammates from South Gippsland Bass Swimming Club (SGB) rallied behind Amy in her last challenge and were extremely proud of her determination to achieve her goal.

Amy looks forward to her 2024 goal and her chance to support the Starlight Children's Foundation again next year.

To support Amy and encourage her thoughtful effort in helping others visit superswim.org.au/amyhodson

Wonthaggi Ladies Golf

LAST Wednesday, Wonthaggi ladies enjoyed superb golfing conditions and of the 15 players half the field had scores better than 36 points.

There were two mates who played together and both came in with 44 points. It was only on countback that Donna Brosnan (42) 44 points was the winner with Simone Lindsay (37) 44 points runner-up. What great scores, so Golflink deducted 3 shots from Donna and 4 shots from Simone off their handicaps.

BDL Wendy Cross 41, Catherine Bolding 40, Merryn Dear 40, Robyn Wilkinson 38, Anne Poulton 38.



Back from left, Chris Read, Peter Reagan, Joel Dickson, front, Alex Miller, Daryl Smith, Garry Knox, Barry Ingwersen and Arthur.



Rusty Cricketers and our Korumburra visitors.

The good oil on Rusty Cricket

By Garry Knox

CRICKET in its truest sense is very time consuming. Not everyone can commit to training, playing and contributing to a cricket club as much as a cricket club would like. So Neil White and I discussed a quicker alternative for the not-so committed cricketer. Rusty Cricket, with its bat and chat theme, was born. This season the abbreviated form of cricket celebrates ten years of batting and chatting.

Here are some of the memorable moments.

We started in October 2014. We've always had humble numbers, only occasionally have we utilised the second net at the Loch Memorial Reserve. Participants vary according to work commitments, health, family commitments and the weather. Unlike regular team sport, you are not letting anyone other than yourself down by not turning up. "Do it when you can... while you can," we say.

Batting and chatting can mean many things. It's a men's shed in the nets with no catching, no running, no throwing... just a relaxed bat and a bowl in the nets. We chat amongst ourselves, with the caravanners, with the dog walkers. Last Monday night we were told it was 50 years since Woodleigh-Kernot won the first of four Premierships. We reminisced.

Our closest brush with fame was when we met the caravanners from Lismore. They proudly told us that "their boy" Josh Hazelwood was not a Gippsland power station, but a future powerhouse of the Australian Test team. How right they were.

The South Gippsland Shire filmed us. Which led to Chat and Chomp, a Shire auspiced men's mental health initiative. This led to table tennis tables

for the Woodleigh Hall... then the Table Tennis marathon for the Poowong-Loch Cricket Club... then \$6500 for local cricket via the Bat Bowl Catch and Care program. Koonwarra, Imperials and Mirboo North Cricket clubs were the beneficiaries.

That film is now included in a Queensland Government program to address idle hours for shift workers in the Queensland mines. They paid us \$300 for filming Rusty Cricket, it was suggested that that money might marry up with a huge donation of cricket books from the Loch opportunity shop to start a cricket/sporting library at the Loch Memorial Reserve.

Campers and caravanners frequently join our rag-tag cricketing group. A foursome from Sweden came back to Loch after seeing the "Rusty Cricket here Monday nights" sign. They were waiting for us, they welcomed our coaching, they participated to the fullest, they were great students. Us Rusty Cricketers signed a cricket ball, which was duly presented to the Swedes. On some mantelpiece in Oslo there's memorabilia and memories of Loch, the Reserve and Rusty Cricket.

On the same night as the Swedes, we met a young family from Broome. They joined in fully too. And just as we were about to pull up stumps, the couple from Broome brought out the chocolate cake cooked in their camp oven. A beautiful gesture - a special night for nationals and internationals.

We stumbled across a fifteen year-old training by himself but under the watchful eye of his grandmother. They were both new to Loch. He joined

in with Rusty Cricket, we connected him to the Poowong-Loch juniors... he went on to play in a Poowong-Loch Under 16 Premiership.

There was the working bee that no other committee would take on. Cleaning out, and then dismantling Evan Jones's rambling old shed was a project enthusiastically embraced by all of our Rusty Cricketers of the time. Evan paid well, we bought half a dozen cricket balls with the cash and "banked" the camaraderie. Unfortunately, Evan never got to build that new shed on our cleared site.

Not known by everyone is the fact that Rusty Cricket played a lead role in establishing the local over 60's team. One wet January Monday night when all others had invoked the wet weather rule, Doug Pell and Andrew O'Hoy twisted my arm toward Loch starting an over 60's team. We discussed at length the merit of one club establishing a team, compared to the team being Association based. The eventual outcome and subsequent letter to the local cricket association prompted the formation of the Kookaburras, which in turn, the following year, led to Over 50's cricket, and now on a regular basis the cream of our older local cricketers representing Victoria (and better).

We swapped passionfruit, rhubarb, berries, fish and fishing stories on a regular basis. We solved the world's problems every week. We solved a few serious personal problems too.

We were visited by Cricket Victoria. We'll never know if Cricket Victoria's interest was initiated "higher up", or just their local rep showing good local interest. But we appreciated their interest. We were disappointed that CV

didn't inspire us further by batting or bowling with us on that night.

Then there was the young bloke who had a liking for fast cars and too often being chased by the cops. He was our most unlikely recruit. He was semi regular for two seasons... regular enough for the local policeman to thank us for playing a positive role in the young blokes otherwise very disrupted life.

Every Australia Day weekend, one of Korumburra's sporting elite families and their friends camp at the Loch Memorial Reserve. Their offspring inject an element of never-before seen pace into the Rusty Cricket nets. For that week "we guard our loins like never before".

The bowling from the French family that joined in one week was more to our liking. We gave them their first taste of cricket. And when we took Rusty Cricket on the road to Leongatha and witnessed the retired school teacher present his near new wicket keeping gloves to the newly formed women's cricket team, we agreed that "cricket was in safe hands".

We'd like to think that Rusty Cricket has in some small way contributed to our communities' well-being, brought us in contact with multi-culture and the passing traveller, and helped continue the friendships that cricket (and sport) enables. Happy tenth birthday Rusty Cricket.

And many thanks to the Sentinel Times for their decade of support, the ladies at the South Gippsland Shire Council for their work toward men's mental health and all the Loch Community Facebook participants for their timely and regular encouragement.

Regulars at Rusty Cricket, Andrew O'Hoy, Neil White, Daryl Smith and Garry Knox. absent Gavin and Viraj.



Trevor Wilson was a regular at Rusty Cricket for the first five years.

Gippsland Goannas

THE Gippsland Goannas Over-70 cricketers made the long trip to Glen Waverley on Tuesday, to be greeted by a heavy shower of rain.

After a cuppa or two and a ground inspection, it was decided that there would be little chance of a decent game, so the Goannas turned around and went home.

The next scheduled games are: the Over-60 team is due to play at Koo Wee Rup on Sunday January 7.

The Over-70 team is due to play a home game against the West Gippsland Wombats and the Over-50 team is not scheduled to play until January 17, but they do have a couple of deferred games to fit in.

More information on venues etc will be forwarded in the new year.



Arthur O'Connor for parents Fergus O'Connor and Abby Tranter.



Lettie Lindsay for parents Riley Lindsay and Laura Williams.



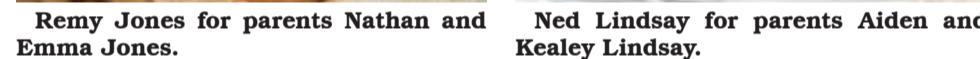
Frederick Francis on the other wing for parents Tristan and Kelsey Francis.



Remy Jones for parents Nathan and Emma Jones.



Ned Lindsay for parents Aiden and Kealey Lindsay.

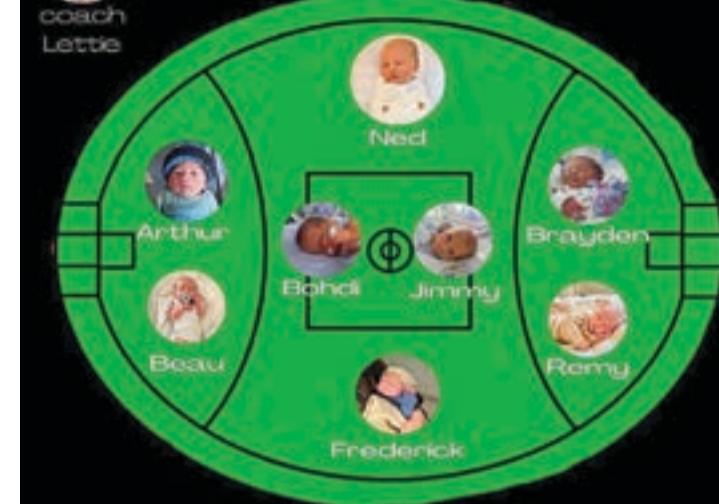


Brayden Duscher for parents Glen and Jo Duscher.

Team of the year 2042



coach Lettie



Wonthaggi Power had such a big year in 2023 that they've been able to name their 'Team of the Year for 2042' from upwards of a dozen babies who arrived through the year, including in the latest arrival, twins for coach Jarryd Blair and his wife Jess. They are Ned Lindsay, Jimmy and Bohdi Blair, Frederick Francis, Lettie Lindsay, Arthur O'Connor, Beau Marshall, Brayden Duscher and Remy Jones.



Beau Marshall for parents Bryce and Chloe Marshall.



One of the twins, Bohdi Blair, for Jarryd and Jess.



Another of the twins, Jimmy Blair.

Baby boom primes Power's premiership plans

THEY promote themselves as 'the family club' down at Wonthaggi Power, taking a leaf out of the Hawthorn playbook, and they certainly backed it up this year with upwards of a dozen babies arriving during 2023 for the Power playing group, football and netball.

In fact, in a light-hearted nod to the club's success off-the-ground, you might say, they posted a picture of 'The Team of the Year 2042' after coach Jarryd Blair and his wife Jess announced the arrival of two more boys, twins Jimmy Blair and Bohdi Blair, to join the busy Ziggy and Gus, making it four under five we're told.

Also included in the team, named on a wing was Ned Lindsay for parents Aiden and Kealey Lindsay; Frederick Francis on the other wing for parents Tristan and Kelsey Francis; Arthur O'Connor down back for parents Fergus O'Connor and Abby Tranter; Beau Marshall another key defender for parents Bryce and Chloe Marshall, Brayden Duscher an obvious forward for parents Glen and Jo Duscher, opportunist forward Remy Jones for parents Nathan and Emma Jones, with Jimmy Blair and Bohdi Blair in the engine room.

And in a move we hope

doesn't take this long to arrive, Lettie Lindsay named as coach, for parents Riley Lindsay and Laura Williams.

New General Manager at Power Brendan Knight said it was a nice way to finish the year.

"Yeah, it was great, there's been quite a baby boom this year with a lot of kids around the club," said Brendan, after putting the club's 2023 annual general meeting last Tuesday night to bed.

"There's more than one way to count success and, apart from losing the grand final, we still had a great year," he said.

It was steady as she goes on the committee with Peter Liddle continuing in the role and similar personnel throughout.

They have all the football coaches in place, with the latest appointment being successful Under 14s coach Jess Feather promoted to coach the Under 18s. Jarryd Blair Seniors, Darren Brown Reserves and Matt Pugh/Glenn Jobe Under 16s are continuing.

The club has wrapped up training for the year, they have a pre-season camp organised for January and practice matches set down for March 9, 16 and 23 next year.

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LEFT: The endurance and skills at the contest of Wonthaggi Power's Ryan Sparkes have been noticed by Collingwood VFL list managers.

RIGHT: The brilliance and athleticism of Wonthaggi Power's Jack Hutchinson will find a ready outlet in Collingwood's VFL side next year.

Collingwood VFL call up for Power pair

TWO of Wonthaggi Power Football Netball Club's best and brightest, Jack Hutchinson and Ryan Sparkes, will get the chance to raise their already impressive games to a whole new level after being picked up by Collingwood's VFL team for the 2024 season.

It won't mean the pair will be lost to Power, if the example of Richmond VFL regular Cam Olden of Leongatha is anything to go by.

Olden played 14 VFL games in 2023 as a small forward and seven for Leongatha, including a starring role in the final series including having a day out against Moe in the Qualifying Final at Wonthaggi when he kicked a match-defining eight goals.

Both Sparkes and Hutchinson bring something different to the Pies; Sparkes an all-round game based on awesome endurance and ability to get forward, back and to more contests.

Hutchinson could be anything up forward with his athleticism and drive.

Both would benefit from the fitness and structure of a VFL stint, and it might just add some of that small percentage of improvement Wonthaggi needs to capture to go one better in 2024.

Clearly the connection with Collingwood premiership player, Power coach Jarryd Blair has helped.

Power FNC posted its congratulations on its website: "Well done to our very own Jack Hutchinson and Ryan Sparkes on being listed at Collingwood VFL. These two were standouts over the last two years at Wonthaggi Power and in the Gippsland league earning their positions at Collingwood. We are proud to be called your home club boys!"

New home for South Gippsland Umpires Association

SOUTH Gippsland Umpires Association (SGUA) has a new training facility at Korumburra Recreation Reserve.

"This move comes as a result of large growth in our membership over the last several years, outpacing the capacity of our previous location," the SGUA stated in their announcement.

The new training home includes a 110-seat function room, well-equipped kitchen and bar facilities, and dedicated male and female changerooms.

Umpires will enjoy a full-size training oval with modern LED arena lighting, having previously trained at the Leongatha Velodrome.

The SGUA committee worked hard to orchestrate the move to Korumburra.

"This transition marks the beginning of a new era and we eagerly anticipate the opportunities our new facility presents for our association."



Among those delighted to be meeting one of the heroes of the 2023 Collingwood premiership win, Mason Cox, were Fish Creek youngsters Brylie and Heidi Hamilton and Jasper Miletto.



In statesmanlike style, Collingwood's Mason Cox takes time to chat with young and old during a visit to Fish Creek on Tuesday.

Mason Cox for Prime Minister

AUSTRALIA is not the same as America in a number of key ways. One of them is that you don't have to be born in Australia to rise to the rank of political leader in this country, the Prime Minister, like you do in the US of A.

And if his statesmanship during a visit to the devastated, but fighting-back-from-adversity Fish Creek Football Netball Club on Tuesday is anything to go by, Collingwood's Mason Cox is a political leader of someone's country, maybe theirs, maybe ours, in waiting.

He was absolutely superb, not only pressing the flesh, meeting old timers of the Fish Creek club, recent and modern-day legends, supporters, kids you name it, but also took a keen interest in the club's history, what happened on that fateful day back in November and what the club intends to do now.

At the end of it, he pledged Collingwood's support for their recovery.

"On behalf of the Magpies, thanks for asking us out and for telling us the story of your club and also the fire," said Cox before an assembled throng, many of them attired in the black and white of the Pies and also the



Collingwood's Mason Cox took a particular interest in the history of the Fish Creek Football Netball Club and its fight back from adversity prior to handing over a signed Collingwood guernsey to Fish Creek co-president Ray Stefani, also with Oleg Markov and Paddy Lipinski in support and Jason Harding holding Collingwood's premier trophy.

red and white of Fish Creek.

"I know you're going to come back bigger and better but if there's anything we can do that helps with the rebuild, just let us know."

They've already done a lot.

As well as coming over specially from their country training camp at Morwell and Traralgon, after hearing of the devastating incident, when the revered clubrooms

was burnt to the ground on

Saturday, November 4, with all of the club's 37 premiership cups, trophies, photos and memorabilia from 120 years, the Collingwood players also brought with them a signed premiership jumper to keep or to auction.

"Here's a signed and authenticated Collingwood jumper, it's yours to keep but I wouldn't blame you if

you wanted to auction it to raise money for the rebuild."

A delighted co-president Ray Stefani gratefully received the jumper and thanked the Pies' players Mason Cox, Oleg Markov and Paddy Lipinski as well as the Collingwood staff who came across to support the club as the immense task of rebuilding starts in earnest.

Collingwood flies in to back Fish Creek fightback

From page 36

As sad and tragic as that moment was, it was also the beginning of the club's fightback, and together with members of the rebuild committee, including Jason Harding and Megan Vuillermin, they explained that the club's netballers and footballers were back in training and preparations were well advanced towards putting temporary accommodation in place for showers and changerooms, and a kitshed, while they got on with the job of building new clubrooms.

"We hope to have that in place during February," said Stefani.

After taking the time to hear the story of the fire and the fightback, the Collingwood players had a few surprises of their own, presenting the club with a signed and authenticated Collingwood jumper that they can keep or auction, and they also produced the 2023 AFL Premiership Cup, for a photo with Fish Creek's replacement 2023 Mid Gippsland Premiership Cup, replaced and handed over a few weeks ago at a league meeting.

"On behalf of the Collingwood Football Club, thanks for asking us out and for telling us the story of your club and also the fire," said Mason Cox.

"I know you're going to come back bigger and better after this but if there's anything we can do that helps with the rebuild, just let us know."

The city media thought enough of the visit to send news crews from Channel 7 and Channel 9, including up-and-coming young reporter, Xander McGuire, son of former Collingwood president and TV celebrity Eddie McGuire.

A feature of the visit by the Collingwood players was an extensive meet and greet with Fish Creek and district locals, young and old, prior to the start of the last training run for Fish Creek at the end of a highly eventful year.

Major fundraiser

Fish Creek FNC has an enormous task ahead of them, raising enough money to rebuild at John Terrill Park Recreation Reserve but their first major event will come on Sunday, March 3 at Leongatha's Memorial Hall when they stage a mega-sports gala with Hawthorn great David Parkin and former player, coach and administrator Neil Balme among those already signed to appear.

It is expected that several of the stars of Australian netball will also attend.

Watch for more details in the months ahead.



Here's cheers as two premiership cups are joined at Fish Creek last week; Andy Kerr, Alex Moon, Jason Harding and Ray Stefani with theirs and Oleg Markov, Mason Cox and Patrick Lipinski with theirs.



Fish Creek Football Netball Club secretary Brenda Jordan takes possession of the signed and authenticated Collingwood guernsey, presented by Pies' premiership forward, Mason Cox last week.



Oleg Markov had heard about the plight of the Fish Creek FNC from former teammate at the Suns, Sam Flanders and was delighted to catch up with Sam's grandfather Kelvin Flanders during the visit to Fishy.

Snapped Out

with Collingwood at Fish Creek



Collingwood premiership player Oleg Markov chats with Fish Creek Under 18s coach Colin McPhee and his Collingwood supporter son, Eli.



Collingwood champs Patrick Lipinski and Oleg Markov crowd in with the kids and supporters at Fish Creek for a photo of the two cups, Fish Creek's replacement premiership cup of 2023 and Collingwood's AFL trophy.



Capturing the moment of the visit by Magpie heroes Oleg Markov, Mason Cox and Patrick Lipinski to Fish Creek, with the two premiership cups and gift of a signed and authenticated Collingwood guernsey.



Collingwood players Oleg Markov and Mason Cox discuss the highs and lows of the 2023 season with Fish Creek FNC officials Ray Stefani and Megan Vuilermin on the site of the devastating fire.



Stop that man! That's former Fish Creek FNC President Alex Moon and crazy Collingwood supporter appearing to make off with the 2023 AFL Premiership Cup during the Magpies' visit last week.



The spotlight was on Fish Creek last Tuesday when the Collingwood Magpies came to town and the city press, including Channel 9's Zander McGuire prepared news stories on the plight of the Fish Creek club.



Collingwood premiership player Oleg Markov meets the kids at Fish Creek during a visit by the club last week.



Big Mason Cox made a lot of effort to get around to all the kids and adult supporters at Fish Creek and to chat with the club about its fightback from adversity in 2023.

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That's two cups, Collingwood's 2023 AFL Premiership Cup and Fish Creek's replacement 2023 Mid Gippsland Football Netball League Premiership Cup, on display when three premiership Magpies visited the club as a show of support for Fish Creek last Tuesday where they were given a warm welcome. m02_5223

Collingwood flies in to back Fish Creek fightback

WHAT happened last Tuesday when the most successful football club in Australia met the biggest?

It was a moment of mutual respect when members of Collingwood's 2023 premiership team including Patrick Lipinski, Oleg Markov and Mason Cox, came across from their community camp at Morwell to visit the Fish Creek Football Netball Club and hear how they're fighting back from adversity.

It was also the latest show of support from throughout the football world, with everyone it seems, well aware of the plight of Fish Creek, up one minute as 2023 Mid Gippsland Premiers, and down the next as victims of a shocking arson attack.

"I hear you've won a few premierships," said the big Texan, Mason Cox.

"We just won our 37th this year. We think it's the most premierships

won by any club in Victoria. Might be the most in Australia," replied Fish Creek FNC Co-President, Ray Stefani.

Cox explained that Collingwood had heard what had happened in the fire a few months ago and that the club had lost all of its premiership cups, flags and memorabilia and were keen to come over and show their support.

"So, can you tell us something about the fire and how it happened?"

Stefani explained the fire had been deliberately lit during a robbery on Saturday morning, November 4, with devastating results.

"At 5 o'clock on Saturday morning I got a phone call to say the clubrooms were on fire. The next thing I got this photo sent through on my phone," he said of a information sign on the site of the old clubrooms, complete with a photo of the

building as it was, a shrine to the club's success, but also an important community facility, and the now-famous fire of the rooms in flames.

"It was hard to believe. We got down here and the fire brigades and the police were here but there was nothing anyone could do."

"As you can see in this photo, it was already well ablaze, and the roof had already fallen in."

"And as the day went on, one of the shire engineers came down and had a look and said it's all got to come down."

They explained how club members were in tears as they helped demolish the place, with former members and players coming down to watch as the top floor and then the change rooms were demolished.

"By the following Wednesday, it was all gone."

Continued page 34



Collingwood premiership player Oleg Markov autographs a football for Violet Johnstone of Toora. Markov along with teammates Mason Cox and Paddy Lipinski took time away from their community camp at Morwell to meet locals and visit the site of the old clubrooms at Fish Creek. m03_5223

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