

# PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO ADVERTISER

**Your Community Voice!**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021**

**\$1.40 Incl. GST**



At Newhaven College on the day ATAR scores were announced, some of the school's high achieving students celebrated their results. From from left: Kelsi Vanderstaay (Surf Beach) Tristan Thomas (Leongatha), Caitlin Hunt, (Silverleaves), Jack Thornborrow (Cowes), Flynn McMahon (San Remo), Cailen Lone (Cowes) and Dylan Beck (Glen Alvie) all of whom received a 90+ ATAR score.

After a year marked by unprecedented disruption to the final year of their school life, the class of 2020 has come up trumps.

At Newhaven College, all students passed their VCE with, 12 students re-

ceiving an ATAR score in the 90s.

Dux of the school and the district was Shai White, of Inverloch, with a VCE ATAR of 98.

Inverloch's Dmitri Van Oss, of Wont-

haggi Secondary College, was close behind with an ATAR of 97.2.

And a remarkable score of 90 achieved by Phillip Island student, Jess Purvis, who has lived independently for the

last two years, is also being celebrated this week by Jess, her teachers and her friends.

For more information on local VCE results, turn to page 16.

## “Off the charts” – a bumper start to the holidays

San Remo and Phillip Island traders are reporting the holiday season got off to a bumper start.

“It was our busiest Christmas period ever, by far,” said Paul Mannix, manager of the San Remo Fisherman's Co-op.

“I know a lot of other businesses are experiencing the same thing. It's off the charts.”

Other business owners agree, with San Remo IGA reporting record sales and Nick Say from the Westernport Hotel describing it as a

fantastic start.

With most hospitality venues operating at a reduced capacity, the big crowds and new outdoor dining areas have been welcome news.

“San Remo has been a-buzz,” Paul said.

“Even though it's been busy, it still had a really good feel about it.”

Paul hopes the outdoor dining continues after summer and many of his fellow traders agree.

“The new areas have been very well received and we've been lucky

with the weather,” said Nick, who believes the outdoor dining areas have changed the feel of the whole town.

“It would be great to review it with other businesses and council after summer and see if we could continue it on.”

With international travel off the agenda, most businesses are reporting an increase in first-time visitors to the area, helped along by the state government's travel voucher scheme.

“We've had a lot of first-time visitors,” Lauren Mitchell at Phillip Island Helicopters said.

“And a lot of people are asking for tax receipts – because they've applied for the travel vouchers.”

### Busy island-wide

It's a similar story across Phillip Island with multiple business operators reporting best ever takings between Christmas and New Year.

The huge spike in numbers is being attributed to the fact that bor-

ders are closed and Victorians are holidaying in their own state.

Long queues of holiday-makers seem happy to wait outside cafes and restaurants for a table to become available.

Supermarkets have never been busier with some staff describing the onslaught as almost “overwhelming”.

And accommodation between Christmas and New Year was booked out.

*Continued page 10*

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15 24	14 24	14 23	16 25	17 30	20 28	16 24

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Police said the large crowd in Cowes was mostly well behaved on New Year's Eve

## A relatively happy new year

Local police said behaviour over the holiday period, including New Year's Eve has been "relatively good".

Despite a huge number of visitors to the area, Senior Sergeant Andy O'Brien said the overall crime statistics were low.

Although behaviour was generally good on New Year's Eve, he said a number of people had been charged, including several underage youths who were arrested for intoxication in Cowes.

"It did have the potential to get

messy. There were too many young people down there intoxicated," he said.

A local male (aged 30) was charged with assaulting two people at a pub. A 16-year-old male was charged with assaulting a female police officer.

The mounted branch were used to patrol Cowes, including the foreshore area and help control crowd behaviour.

Police said reports of illegal fireworks were lower than previous years.

#### Drinking

Snr Sergeant O'Brien said drinking in public spaces was an issue across the entire holiday period.

Drinking in public spaces, including beaches, streets, parks and the foreshore, is illegal under Bass Coast Shire's local laws.

"I was disappointed at the amount of underage youth out at night and drinking.

"They were left unsupervised by parents and the foreshore area is where they congregate to drink.

It's not acceptable."

He said the amount of broken glass on the street and beaches continued to be a concern.

Residents of Cowes commented on the large groups of young people in the street.

"I've never seen so many big groups of young people roaming around," one said.

Others said there needed to be better communication about the rules for alcohol in public places.

"The signs are too small, it really needs to be improved."

## Three car smash halts traffic

An accident on Phillip Island Road last Wednesday (December 30) saw traffic grind to a halt and six people taken to hospital.

Victoria Police confirmed that police and emergency services attended a three-car collision around 12.40pm.

The accident occurred on a

section of Phillip Island Road, between Back Beach Road and the Newhaven-Rhyll Road.

At the time, a police spokesperson said: "The exact circumstances of the collision are unknown and the investigation is ongoing".

Six people were taken to hospital with minor injuries

— three to Wonthaggi, two to Dandenong and one to Frankston.

Anyone who witnessed the collision or who has dashcam footage of the accident is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or make a report at [www.crimestoppersvic.com.au](http://www.crimestoppersvic.com.au).



#### POLICE BRIEFS

A man from Leongatha South was charged with possession and traffic offences after a car was observed speeding near Cape Woolamai.

Police later found the car in a ditch in San Remo, but the driver had already left the scene. Drugs were also found in the vehicle.

The driver was later located at the hospital, receiving treatment for his injuries.

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# Masks on as Covid returns

New cases of coronavirus identified in Victoria last week include a case in Leongatha.

The new cases are all linked to a gathering at a Black Rock cafe, which was attended by a returned traveller from Sydney.

Over a thousand close contacts of all the identified cases are isolating and DHHS has a list of public exposure sites available on its website, which is updated daily.

This includes Wonthaggi Plaza Shopping Centre and Fountain Gate Shopping Centre, as well as Coral Fish and Chips in Leongatha.

DHHS advises anyone who visited Wonthaggi Plaza between 1.30pm and 2.30pm on December 28 should monitor for symptoms. If symptoms develop, immediately get tested and isolate until you receive a negative result.

Testing is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at the Phillip Island Health Hub, in Church Street, Cowes.

The Wonthaggi Drive-Through Clinic also operates between 9am – 6pm daily.

As a result of the new cases, the government has reintroduced some Covid restrictions.

Wearing masks in indoor public spaces is again mandatory and masks must be worn except when eating or drinking. You must carry a mask when you leave your home.

Masks should also be worn in outdoor settings where it is not possible to maintain social distancing.

The number of people allowed to gather at home has been reduced from 30 to 15.

## Testing numbers

Bass Coast Health reported a massive increase in demand for tests over the past week.

In the new year, the number of tests jumped dramatically, as residents and visitors heeded the call from the

state government for people to get tested if they'd visited a public exposure site, had returned from NSW before the border closed or were exhibiting any Covid symptoms.

"We were averaging 40 tests per day at Wonthaggi," said Cath Jones from Bass Coast Health (BCH).

"(On New Year's Day) we undertook 300 tests, and 100 tests at Phillip Island. We now have eight swabbing stations available at Wonthaggi Hospital (including four for 'all weather' conditions). This will significantly cut down waiting times. Thanks to the many staff from across our organisation who worked to expand our service."

Bass Coast Health said testing at the drive-through site continued on New Year's Day until the last car had been processed.

Residents are being urged to continue to check the list of exposure sites across Victoria, on the DHHS website.

Anyone who has visited an exposure site or experiences any symptoms should be tested immediately.

"We are absolutely prepared, and while it is busy we can contain the spread if our community get tested," said a spokesperson for BCH.

The local contact tracing team which had operated during the second wave has been reinstated.

Bass Coast Health facilities have again been closed to visitors, and staff have returned to wearing full PPE.

## Close call

Westernport Water confirmed their Newhaven office was vacated on December 31, after receiving advice a staff member had been identified as a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case.

"Staff that had worked with our colleague were advised to self-isolate in their home immediately and Westernport Water's Newhaven office building was vacated in accordance with instructions from DHHS," said



With large numbers of people present for testing at the Phillip Island Health Hub, Bass Coast Health were worried about people waiting in the sun. Event Ops and Over the Top Events sprang into action to expand the facility and provide some much-appreciated shade.

Gareth Kennedy, Westernport Water General Manager.

"These staff members have now been cleared by DHHS to exit isolation."

Mr Kennedy said Westernport Water has had very tight controls in place since early 2020 to reduce the risk of transmission to other workers, based on advice from DHHS.

"Services provided by Westernport Water have not been impacted by this event. We can also reassure our customers that there is no risk of infection as the Newhaven office building was closed to the public at the time."

The office building will remain closed to the public until further notice.

# Fourth time lucky for Silverleaves house plans

A Silverleaves property owner has finally been given the green light to build a house, with new Bass Coast Shire councillors approving the plans.

The previous term of councillors had deferred approval three times, handballing the plans to the new batch of councillors after failing to agree on the proposed development at 58 Bruce Road, Silverleaves.

While shire planners recommended the home be granted a permit, councillors earlier this year were critical of the plans because the building was not in keeping with Silverleaves' neighbourhood character, was too high, too close to neighbour's boundary and removed significant vegetation.

But new councillors held no reservations, approving the plans, with Councillors Michael Whelan and Clare Le Serve voting against.

## Take the test

Everyone is encouraged to get tested for COVID-19 to help contain the spread of the third wave.

You should be tested if you have visited a public exposure site or display even the mildest Covid symptoms including: fever, chills or sweats, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, or loss of sense of smell or taste.

Everyone who is tested is required to self-isolate until test results are received. Waiting times for test results may take 2-3 days.

### Cowes:

- Phillip Island Health Hub (24 hours a day). Call 5951 2100. To avoid delays, the quickest time for testing will be before 8am and after 8pm.

### Wonthaggi Hospital Drive Thru Clinic:

- 9am – 4pm daily.

You can also book a test with Wonthaggi Medical Group, Monday to Friday from 1pm – 5pm. Please book online or phone 0492 036 568.

People should phone their doctor or the Coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 if their symptoms get worse.



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# Rubbish woes continue

Island Ward councillor Ronnie Bauer remains unimpressed with what he describes as a highly unsatisfactory garbage collection service over the summer holiday period.

He said his pre-election pledge to work to improve the service, and his call for weekly red bin pick-ups in January stands.

Uncollected putrid red bins were dotted around the streets of Phillip Island last week, in the height of the tourism season, after confused residents put them out in the vain hope of collection.

Cr Bauer describes the current summer pick up service as confusing and inadequate.

While a weekly recycling yellow bin collection pickup in January is provided, annual and ongoing community calls for a red bin weekly service in summer have been ignored by council over the past two years.

And the lack of conformity with bin colours between municipalities across Victoria adds to the confusion, with visitors in rental properties unsure of what goes where.

"In Stonnington, the red bin is equivalent to our green bin. They have a blue bin which is equivalent to our yellow bin," Cr Bauer explained.

"People who come here have no idea and fill the bins in the way they are familiar with elsewhere. "And so confusion reigns!"

Cr Bauer said the garbage calendar put out by council is confusing,



Cr Ronnie Bauer said he will continue to advocate for a weekly red bin collection during January, as uncollected red bins dotted the streets of Phillip Island last week.

and residents found the month of January difficult to follow.

"The council calendar has a blue pick up week throughout January. We don't have a blue bin. It is confusing people," said Cr Bauer.

"The problem is compounded when tenants leave mid-cycle and incoming tenants are stuck with a red bin rubbish collection just once a fortnight."

He said council needed to work with the community and with the

problem ... not against it. And he believes there is a very simple answer to the main problem: a fortnightly red bin pick up in January.

"It absolutely needs to be a weekly pick up in the summer holidays.

Rates, roads and rubbish are council fundamentals. Rubbish is a council responsibility," he said.

"The population on Phillip Island in January increases tenfold. The corresponding increase

in putrescible garbage has to be addressed.

"Every other service here adjusts and plans accordingly, to cater for the January influx.

"I cannot understand the resistance by council to the introduction of an additional three weekly collections of the red bins over summer."

Cr Bauer said he would continue to advocate for this change.

"It really should not be rocket science."



After the storms on January 3, the Phillip Island SES crew were called out to deal with a tree that had brought down powerlines and was blocking a driveway.

## Quiet time for SES

The hardworking local SES volunteers got some downtime over the Christmas/New Year period, after a very busy December.

Despite the big crowds and some wild weather, there were relatively few major incidents.

Crews from San Remo and Phillip Island SES were called to help with a rescue on the George Bass Coastal Walk on December 29.

A woman had slipped and injured her ankle while walking on the track and paramedics needed help to get her to the ambulance.

"The team used our "mule" – a single wheeled stretcher carrier designed for rough terrain – to move the casualty quickly back along the track," said Phil Friedlos from the Phillip Island Unit.

The following day, the Phillip Island crew were called to a three-car accident on the Phillip Island Road (see separate story).

"The occupants of two of the vehicles were able to get out of their cars, but the driver of one vehicle was trapped in his car, unable to open the doors," Phil said.

"While the paramedics were monitoring the driver, our crew used hydraulic spreaders to remove the doors on the driver's side of the car, and free the driver."

The team then had a few days of well-earned rest before being called out on January 3 to deal with a fallen tree in Cowes, after overnight rain and wind.

A large tree had brought down the power lines to a house and was blocking the driveway.

"Once Ausnet had disconnected the power, the crew worked to clear the driveway and restore access for the homeowner," said Phil.

## Which bin goes out when?

Confusion reigns every holiday season, as residents and visitors grapple with bin collection dates.

This year, every week in January, both the organics (green lid) and recycling (yellow lid) bins are collected weekly.

The landfill bin (red lid) is collected once a fortnight.

Despite repeated calls from residents for all bins to be collected weekly during January and Cr Ronnie Bauer running on a platform to introduce weekly collections, the fortnightly landfill collection remains in place this year.

At the November Bass Coast Shire council meeting, Cr Bauer said the "matter of red bin weekly collection regrettably cannot be resolved for this summer".

"As you can imagine the concern is far more complex than just rolling up in a truck to collect the bins," Cr Bauer said.

However, he added he would not drop the issue (see separate story).

"This will be looked at again early next year and my further

hope is it will be resolved by summer 2021."

Cr Bauer told the Advertiser there were "more contractual pieces to the puzzle" than he initially understood, including cost and availability of trucks to pick up waste.

The calendar for collection dates can be downloaded from the Council website.

### Calendar

A Council spokesperson said people could download the calendar to see what zone their property was in and the designated collection day.

"A yellow square indicates that your yellow (recyclables) bin and your green (organics) bin will be collected," they said.

"A red square indicates that your red (landfill) bin and your green (organics) bin will be collected.

"A blue square indicates that all three bins will be collected."

Extra household recycling can be taken to any of the waste facilities for no cost.

"Excess landfill waste can be

disposed of at our waste facilities for a fee - \$6.50 for a 120 litre bin or \$13.00 for a 240 litre bin," the spokesperson said.

"There are also several private waste contractors who service our region and can do additional bin collections."

### What goes in

The green organics bin can take food scraps (including meat, seafood, dairy), as well as paper towels, tissues, garden clippings and pet manure.

You can also include pizza boxes.

The yellow recycling bin is the place for all your bottles, jars, cans, milk and juice cartons, cardboard boxes, paper, newspapers and magazines.

The red bin is for items going to landfill, such as foam and polystyrene, broken glass, crockery, nappies, plastic bags, soft plastics and old clothing and shoes.

Remember, electronics and batteries should not be put in a landfill bin. Batteries and e-waste (anything with a plug, bat-

tery or cord) can be dropped off at a transfer station or the Cowes Recycle Bank.

### Illegal dumping

Dumping rubbish and green waste is a criminal offence with significant penalties.

Bass Coast Shire Council said over summer areas around the shire are monitored for dumped rubbish and urged everyone to report illegal dumping.

"Evidence is key to catching offenders, so remember to get photographic evidence if possible and record vehicle registration details, locations and times," a spokesperson said.

All instances of illegal dumping reported to Council are investigated by the Community Safety Team with a view to prosecuting identified offenders.

Call Council to report illegal dumping on 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or (03) 5671 2211, or contact the EPA on 1300 EPA VIC (372 842).

[www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/services/waste-rubbish](http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/services/waste-rubbish)

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# Failed San Remo golf course finally resolved

An historic planning anomaly that has hamstrung property owners in San Remo is a step closer to resolution, with the Victorian Planning Minister set to give final approval to an amendment.

Amendment C150 went before a planning panel in September, with the panel's report accepted by Bass Coast Shire councillors at the December meeting, and the Planning Minister's approval expected in the new year.

The amendment will rezone the failed golf course development – which was built in the '90s – on land at 126 Shetland Heights Road, from low density residential zone to general residential, and will retain the

site's significant landscape overlay.

Councillors agreed to "clean up the historic mess", which has seen 27 submissions to the amendment process, including 19 in support and five objections.

The site is known as Bass Resort and includes 46 accommodation units spread across four apartment blocks.

Back when it was developed, the units were developed and sold through land tenure provided to individual purchases in 399-year leases, common at the time, according to a shire planning officers report.

In 2007, shortly after completion of 46 of the units, the site went into receivership for five years and during

this time construction of the development ceased.

The report states 60 per cent of the units at the time remained vacant, thus resulting in limited funds being available for maintenance and improvements.

It said in 2012 Bass Coast Resort purchased the freehold land on which the resort is constructed.

A separate company Bass Coast Owners Pty Ltd was set up as the de facto owner's corporation.

The report stated that with no resort facilities and golf course, Bass Resort has been left with a non-conforming land use, which cannot be further subdivided, "resulting in the land staying in single ownership with

a leasing structure that has proven to be problematic for managing the business, encouraging investment and securing bank funding".

The amendment – once approved by the Planning Minister – will resolve these issues by placing the land in the general residential zone, allowing the apartments to be subdivided without a restrictive minimum lot area.

Cr Bruce Kent welcomed the amendment.

"This will give strength to ownership and allow the body corporate to work better, as well as covering community insurance and giving more responsibility to owners," Cr Kent said.

# Debate over Surf Beach plans

Bass Coast Shire councillors have approved plans for a battle-axe development at Surf Beach, despite strong arguments against it.

The plans are to construct a single storey home at the rear of an existing two storey dwelling at 21 Highview Crescent, Surf Beach.

The plans were handballed to new councillors from the previous council term, who did not support the plan and believed the new home on the 892m<sup>2</sup> block "jeopardised" the neighbourhood character.

However, at the December meeting councillors voted to approve the plans because they believed if they rejected them, any appeal to VCAT would simply approve them.

Cr Rochelle Halstead acknowledged "community angst" around the plans because of poor surrounding infrastructure, especially drainage and dirt roads.

"If it ends up going to VCAT the applicants will receive a permit so based on that I support it," she said.

Cr Clare Le Serve voted against the plans.

"Until we get the infrastructure right, infill is not the way to go," Cr Le Serve said, adding the planning scheme needed to be changed to stop plans such as these.

"We potentially double the population with no service provision."

Cr Leticia Laing said "council has a very difficult decision".

"Because while we don't want our town boundaries to grow, there's an increasing amount of people calling this place home, so population density is something to be considered," she said.

"It's a difficult balance to achieve. But I don't think rejecting each application in an ad hoc way is the right thing so I'll support it."

# PICAL delivers turkey treats

PICAL's 2020 Christmas Hamper effort just prior to Christmas certainly helped to bring a little festive cheer to those struggling at the end of such a difficult year.

Over 207 festive hampers were delivered across the island, bringing a happy smile to the faces of the individuals and families who received them.

Greg Thompson, PICAL General Manager, said there were many people involved in putting the hampers together, and many local businesses and individuals had provided the goods to fill them.

"This wonderful effort was made possible by PICAL staff and volun-

teers, including Emma Le Mar and Courtney Wallace," said Greg.

He also thanked members of St Vincent de Paul Conference in Cowes and members of Cowes CWA for their contribution, as well as Rhyll Boomerang Bags and the Phillip Island Community Services Group (which is all the local Cowes Churches and charities) for some "fantastic" donations.

Steph Thornborrow's PICAL Casserole team of volunteers also cooked 148 delicious roast turkey dinners which were handed out in the week leading up to Christmas.

Normal operating hours resume at PICAL from Monday, January 11.



Delicious turkey dinners prepared by PICAL volunteers put a smile on lots of faces on Christmas Day. Heather Gregory and Lindy Flatz were members of the team of volunteers that made the distribution possible.

## BCH Maternal & Child Health Service, Cowes, will be relocated for Christmas.

The Phillip Island Early Learning Centre will be taking a break from 21/12/2020 to 08/01/2021

During this Christmas break a pop up MCH site will be set up from the Phillip Island Health Hub:  
50-54 Church Street, Cowes  
By Appointment Only  
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# Site of new secondary campus confirmed

In an early Christmas present for local families, on Christmas Eve the state government confirmed the site of Wonthaggi Secondary College's Junior Campus in San Remo.

The local grapevine, which had long predicted the much-anticipated site would be on Potters Hill Road, proved to be accurate.

Minister for Education James Merlino and Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale announced the Potters Hill Road site had been secured and a builder appointed for the multi-million-dollar campus for Year 7-9 students.

Construction is expected to start in February 2021. SJ Higgins has been appointed as the builder.

The new campus will open in 2022 and is in addition to Wonthaggi Secondary College's two existing campuses, including the McBride Senior Campus that opened this year.

The new junior campus will include an administration building and library, ultra-modern classrooms and separate specialist and innovation buildings. Another building will house a competition-grade gym and spaces to cater for food technology, music and performing arts.

The campus will also include a football oval and outdoor sports courts.

"This is a huge step forward for the project that will make a real difference to the families across the Bass Coast," said Ms Crugnale.

"I can't wait to visit the site early next year to turn the first sod and get construction underway."

## Road upgrade?

The section of Potters Hill Road where the new school will be located is currently unsealed. The adjoining section of Shetland Heights Road is also a gravel road.

Residents of Shetland Heights Road are hoping the official announcement of the new site will herald the end of their ongoing campaign to have their road upgraded.

They've vowed to continue their



Designs for the new campus include an administration building and library, ultra-modern classrooms, separate specialist and innovation buildings, a competition-grade gym and spaces for food technology, music and performing arts. The state government confirmed the site of the new Junior Secondary Campus in San Remo will be at the intersection of Shetland Heights and Potters Hill roads.

campaign to have the road fully sealed and are calling on the state government to contribute to the costs.

Spokesperson for the group, Fritzie Barrowcliff said they believed both Potters Hill and Shetland Heights roads needed to be fully sealed, to deal with the extra traffic the school would generate.

"My concern is that they will do the bare minimum and complete Potters Hill Road only," she said.

In 2019, the residents called on Bass Coast Shire Council to fully seal Shetland Heights Road and install

drainage and lighting to prevent a major accident.

The list of issues raised with the council included safety, dust, poor signage, traffic volumes, lack of drainage or footpaths, health risks and excess speed. It was also noted that the roads were an alternative emergency access route and were regularly used as an alternative route to Phillip Island Road during peak periods.

## Campus name

The Minister said the community will get a chance to have its say on the

name of both the new campus and the school when consultation opens in February 2021.

The most recent state budget included \$25.76 million for the new Junior Campus. Ms Crugnale said the money was for the next stage of the school construction, on top of the \$19.2 million announced in 2018.

The campus will cater for students from Phillip Island and the Waterline area and deliver on a \$24.7 million election promise which also included a gymnasium at Cowes Primary School.

"We are building new and modern

facilities to provide students on the Bass Coast with the learning facilities that they deserve," said Mr Merlino.

"We made a commitment to this community to deliver this school and that is exactly what we are doing."

In May 2020 the state government announced an additional \$5 million had been allocated to the Junior Secondary Campus to deliver a further stage of construction in 2022.

The additional funding will allow the building to accommodate 500 students once all stages of construction are completed.

## SHORT STACK

A QUICK ROUNDUP OF NEWS, VIEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Disability Action in South Gippsland

Local health services want to know how you think they could deliver more inclusive services. Provide your feedback through an anonymous survey that runs until January 15.

The information from the survey will be used by the members of the South Gippsland Coast Partnership (which includes Bass Coast Health), to improve disability services.

[www.kooweeruphospital.net.au/communityservices/community-information](http://www.kooweeruphospital.net.au/communityservices/community-information).

### Young achiever

There's still time to nominate in the 2021 Young Achiever Awards. Nominations close on January 22. To find out more go to [www.youngachieverawards.com](http://www.youngachieverawards.com) or call 9720 1638.

### Safer communities funding

A new grants program to fund innovative, community-based projects to help tackle social challenges and improve community safety has been announced. The Building Safer Communities Program opens early 2021 and include grants of up to \$300,000 for councils and not-for-profit community organisations for projects to improve safety in public spaces and crime prevention initiatives. More detail at [crimeprevention.vic.gov.au](http://crimeprevention.vic.gov.au).

### Fishing club grants

Fishing clubs can apply for funds to improve fishing in their local area thanks to a new category of Recreational Fishing Grants.

The new grants will be open year-round for projects valued between \$5,000 and \$50,000. Projects which could qualify include improving habitat in local waterways, getting new access tracks, a fishing platform to allow for all abilities and fencing stiles to allow better access along a stretch of water where the best fish are.

For more information or to apply online, go to [vfa.vic.gov.au/fishinggrants](http://vfa.vic.gov.au/fishinggrants).

### Nature Parks Board report

The latest update from the Phillip Island Nature Parks Board, based on meetings in October and December, is now available at [www.penguins.org.au/news/latest-news/board-update-december-2020/](http://www.penguins.org.au/news/latest-news/board-update-december-2020/).

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 Authorised by Russell Broadbent MP, Liberal Party of Australia, 46C Albert Street, Warragul VIC 3820.

**Don't hesitate to contact me, I am here to help.**

Cr Ronnie Bauer  
for the Island Ward,  
Bass Coast Shire

PO Box 996 Cowes 3922  
Tel: 0439 535 282  
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## Need help with University costs?

Applications are invited from eligible students in the local district attending university for the first time in 2021.

Applications open now until January 15, 2021.

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# Bass Coast Shire annual report card

Serious dog attack cases are increasing, while Bass Coast Shire has suffered a spike in planning failures at VCAT, according to a new-look annual report.

The report – which is heavy on detail, making it even more difficult for the average ratepayer to navigate – stated there were eight successful animal management prosecutions in 2019/20.

“We continue to see an increase in the number of serious dog attack cases reported to Council,” the report states.

Fewer lost animals were reclaimed in the past year (58.5 per cent), well down on the 2018/19 figure of 68 per cent.

“The number of animals impounded is significantly less due to COVID-19 pandemic. More people are at home so less animals are found wandering at large.

“Therefore, the animals that are impounded are slightly less likely to be reclaimed due to owner circumstances.”

Just 30 per cent of planning decisions that were taken to VCAT were upheld in the favour of the shire, compared to 80 per cent in 2018/19.

Of the 483 planning applications determined in 2020, 10 were appealed to VCAT, seven of which were against councillor decisions.

The time taken to decide planning applications increased to an average of 99 days, compared to 81 days the previous year.

Underscoring this slowness, 67 per cent of planning applications were decided within the required time-frame, well down on the previous year at 78 per cent.

“There was an overall increase due to staff vacancies and an increased number of Council and VCAT decisions,” the report explains.

## Waste, roads

The number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed increased from 213 in 2018/19 to 265 in the past year.

“Camera systems on the collection trucks have also assisted in verifying whether reports of missed bins are accurate,” the annual report states.

The weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins increased from 14,028 tonnes to 15,820 tonnes, however the three-bin system, including kerbside food and garden organics collection, has seen 75 per cent of waste diverted from landfill, up from 32 per cent when it was first introduced in September 2017.

The shire maintains 567km of sealed local roads and received 76 requests to seal local road in the past year, up from 58 requests in 2018/19.

The cost of road resealing also jumped from \$8.85/m<sup>2</sup> in 18/19 almost double to \$15 last year “due to the program being heavily weighted toward urban asphalt works instead of spray seals in rural areas”.

A continuous increase in population has resulted in higher density per length of road, with an average 38 people per kilometre of road in 2020 compared to 35 in 2017.

## Budget

There is a budget surplus of \$20.8 million for the 2019/20 financial year, compared to a \$2.1 million surplus for 2018/19, thanks to developer contributed assets of \$15.3 million. In 2020/21 there is an expected surplus of \$3.1 million.

Major projects cost \$18 million because a number of projects began, including the purchase of land for a Cowes Transit Centre and the relocation

tion of the Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre.

Total borrowings decreased from \$17.8 million (2018/19) to \$15.5 million as loan repayments were made.

Currently interest repayments on bank loans are 23 per cent, but due to drop to three per cent in 2022, due to a “loan rollover”.

When compared to rate revenue, interest-bearing loans are currently about 25 per cent but due to leap to a massive 49 per cent in 2024.

“Forecast for future years is expected to increase, due to the take up of new low interest borrowings to help fund major intergenerational capital works projects,” the report states.

## Bass Coast

Construction was the biggest contributor to Bass Coast’s gross revenue with \$564 million (18.38 per cent) and the fourth largest employment sector with 1223 (11.28 per cent of total jobs) of the workforce in Bass Coast.

The biggest employment sector was health care employing 1560 (14.39 per cent) staff followed by retail trade employing 1523 (14.05 per cent) staff.

Tourism generates about \$258 million in direct visitor expenditure, while agriculture contributes more than \$216 million to the local economy.

Unemployment in Bass Coast is about 3.8 per cent.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the residential population of Bass Coast was 36,320 (at June 2019), up 2.8 per cent from the previous year.

More than 50 per cent of the population is aged over 50, higher than the state average (33.37 per cent).

About half of all ratepayers reside outside the shire.



It was thumbs up all round as Year 6 students at Cowes Primary School celebrated teacher Tori Ryan winning the best Christmas Display in Island Ward.

## Gingerbread house takes the cake!

Cowes Primary School celebrated another win, after the fantastic Grade 6 classroom gingerbread archway picked up the award for the best Christmas Display in Island Ward.

The archway was put together by teacher Tori Ryan as a Christmas surprise for the class.

Her students were thrilled that Tori received the prize, presented by the Phillip Island Business Network.

For her great work, Tori gets to

enjoy a prize pack valued at over \$1000, which includes vouchers from North Pier (\$100), Wildlife Coast Cruises (\$150) and Flowers of Phillip Island (\$200), as well as new member passes to Barefoot Potential (\$120), four ten-minute Go Kart sessions at the Phillip Island Circuit (\$140), an A Maze’N Things family pass (\$140), a Phillip Island Nature Parks 4 Parks Pass (\$55) and a Business Network membership (\$100).

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In Cowes the new outdoor dining areas provided for restaurants patrons have proved extremely popular with visitors and local alike.

# “Off the charts” – a bumper start to the holidays

*From page 1*  
But no-one is complaining, after the losses suffered by traders during both Covid lockdowns.

In Cowes the new outdoor dining areas provided for restaurants patrons have worked very well, and are being well used; and the one way traffic along the Esplanade to accommodate their installation has been accepted as necessary in these Covid times by motorists.

West of Thompson Avenue, additional new car spaces on the north side of the Esplanade have replaced those lost to the outdoor tables.

It's been wonderful to see local attractions open again with increased capacity limits, even though the maximum number of visitors allowed at the Penguin Parade is lower than in previous years.

“Out at the Penguin Parade there have been plenty of sell-out nights since Christmas, and it's looking pretty strong for the next few weeks,” said PINP spokesperson Roland Pick.

“Visitation to date at the Koala Conservation Reserve and Churchill Island has only seen a drop of around 25-30 per cent from last year's numbers, which reflects the lack of international visitors.

“The Antarctic Journey has been about the same as last year, as this attraction is most popular with domestic visitors, so it's not surprising to see numbers have remained fairly even.”

## A long stretch

Most retailers reported a huge jump in business as soon as Melbourne came out of lockdown, with visitors eager to enjoy time out of the city.

That trend has continued during Christmas and New Year, traditionally one of the busiest periods of the year.

“Once everyone was able to come down from Melbourne, it really did explode almost immediately,” said Paul Mannix.

“We were at Christmas trading levels almost straight away and then it intensified in the Christmas week.

“All credit to our team, it was very stressful, but they pulled it off and did a fantastic job. I'm really proud of them.”

Nick Say agrees the normal Christmas trade started much earlier this year.

He said the new outdoor dining areas have helped at the Westernport Hotel, although the venue is capped at 60 per cent of normal capacity.

Live entertainment is also back at the Westernport, aiming to support local musicians and reinforce the hotel's reputation as a live music venue.

## Flying high

Phillip Island Helicopters are back in the skies and despite normally relying on international tourists for 35 per cent of their business, holiday trade has been excellent.

“It's been so busy, it's awesome,” said manager Lauren Mitchell.

“Between December 26 and 31, we saw a 60 per cent increase on last year's figures.

“We had good weather and that helps.”

With bookings up and strong walk-ins, she said the great start to the holiday season has helped restore confidence after a difficult year.

“The local community gave us an enormous amount of support and these few weeks

give us confidence and hope that domestic travel is up.”

## Covid restrictions

The happy atmosphere of the holiday crowd hasn't been dented by the return of some Covid restrictions, including masks now being compulsory in indoor public spaces.

At the Westernport Hotel, “most people seem to be complying with the regulations,” while the Fisherman's Co-op has found “the overwhelming majority of customers are appreciative of the service and the lengths we've gone to with the Covid-safe plan.”

Passengers at Phillip Island Helicopters have to wear masks and the aircraft are cleaned between every flight.

“The goal is to keep everyone as safe as possible. Every little bit you can do to keep people feeling comfortable and safe is important,” said Lauren.

## A busy January

Like all businesses in San Remo and across Phillip Island, at the Fisherman's Co-op, they're preparing for a very busy January.

“I expect it will be busier than normal, but it does hinge on public safety and the Covid situation,” said Paul.

“All we can do is rely on people being safe and sensible and adhering to the government advice and the Covid-Safe plans implemented by businesses.

“We're crossing our fingers, but if things keep going the way they are, January will still be a ripper.

“We're appreciative of the business that is coming through the doors each day and making the most of it, because you never know what's around the corner.”

# Rhyll lights up over Christmas

Residents of Rhyll got into the Christmas spirit, rallying behind the Christmas Lights team formed to help light up the village over the holiday period.

While the team decorated the streets of Rhyll, as well as the hall, tennis club and jetty shed, residents were invited to join in by decorating their homes for the festive season.

The Christmas Lights committee offered a special prize for the most creative light display.

After much deliberation, the prize went to Ron and Gwen Soolsma, “for an excellent display”.

The lucky couple won a Twilight Cruise, courtesy of Wildlife Coast Cruises, presented to them by Judy Lawrence and Jim Kiely from the Rhyll Community Association.

The idea for the Rhyll lights came after the usual community celebrations and Carols by Candlelight were cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

“It was fantastic to see visitors and island residents driving around Rhyll to check out



The prize for Rhyll's best light display went to Ron and Gwen Soolsma, who won a Wildlife Coast Cruises Twilight Cruise. Presenting them with their prize (from left to right) is Judy Lawrence, Ron and Gwen Soolsma and Jim Kiley.

the Christmas lights,” said Cheryl Overton from the Christmas Lights committee. “Photos were being taken of children beside Santa on a Fergie Tractor during the day, and there was a constant flow of traffic looking at the lights of a night time.

“The residents of Rhyll were very supportive and did some wonderful displays on short notice, so it will be interesting to see what they come up with for next Christmas,” said Cheryl. “Sincere thanks to everyone who got into the spirit.”

— ADVERTORIAL —

# Help shape community engagement in Bass Coast

Bass Coast Shire Council's draft Community Engagement Policy 2021 is now available and ready for your feedback.

The new Victorian Local Government Act 2020 requires councils to develop and adopt a Community Engagement Policy by March 2021.

The Policy must include the principles of deliberative engagement and be developed in consultation with the community.

Bass Coast Shire Mayor, Cr Brett Tessari, said Council is committed to actively en-

couraging individuals, groups and communities to be involved in local government through community engagement.

“Our recent move to a place-based approach to community planning is evidence of our commitment to building strong and sustainable relationships with our community,” Cr Tessari said.

“Bass Coast's residents and ratepayers have diverse needs and opinions, innovative ideas, and a wealth of local knowledge, and drawing on that helps us to make bet-

ter decisions on behalf of our community.

“This is a great opportunity to set out how we will work with our community going forward,” Cr Tessari concluded.

To view the draft Community Engagement Policy and to provide your feedback, visit [www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/engage](http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/engage).

Feedback will be accepted until Sunday, January 17.

The final Policy is expected to be considered for adoption at the February 2021 Council Meeting.

# Have your say: Draft Community Engagement Policy



Our draft Community Engagement Policy 2021 is now available and ready for your feedback.

We are committed to encouraging individuals, groups and communities to be involved in local government through community engagement, so we'd like to hear your thoughts and ideas on how you want us to engage with you.

You can view the Draft Policy on our website at [www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/engage](http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/engage).

You can provide feedback via the form on our website, by emailing [communications@basscoast.vic.gov.au](mailto:communications@basscoast.vic.gov.au) or by post to Bass Coast Shire Council, PO Box 118 Wonthaggi, 3995 before Sunday, 17 January 2021.

# An extra special Christmas morning

Cowes café Gday Tiger delivered a special Christmas bonus to Change for Sam. Opening for two hours on Christmas morning, the Gday Tiger team donated all the proceeds from the sale of takeaway coffee, ham and cheese croissants and biscuits to Change for Sam, a community led initiative working to end family violence on Phillip Island.

Staff volunteered their time for the worthy cause and customers chipped in with extra tips, raising almost \$2000. What a fantastic result!







Laser strike is fun for everyone from 5 to 85 says Craig Holmes (left) and Jeremy Westaway who designed and built the new Laser Zone at Phillip Island Tenpin Bowling and Entertainment Centre.

# Unlimited fun!

If you want to increase the fun factor of your holiday, there's no better place than Phillip Island Tenpin Bowling and Entertainment Centre.

As well as offering bowling and table tennis, the centre has now added laser tag to the menu.

The newly created Lazer Zone opened just before Christmas and is already proving a hit – with everyone from five to 85 able to join in the fun.

Proving necessity is the mother of invention, the idea for the new laser arena came about in response to the government's Covid restrictions.

"Originally we had an inflatable arena in that space and with the Covid spacing and cleaning requirements, we weren't really comfortable with that," said centre owner Craig Holmes.

That's when the idea came for a laser arena. Craig and co-owner Jeremy Westaway got to work, designing and building the 115 square metre structure themselves.

"We employed a carpenter to help us build it, and an electrician came in to do the lighting, but essentially we did everything ourselves," Jeremy explained.

"Everything" included building an internal maze, with cut-outs and slots in the walls, perfect for hiding behind, and shooting through; painting the entire interior black; highlighting the edges of the barriers with fluoro paint and: fitting the arena with UV black lights and disco lights.

Importantly, the arena was designed with all abilities in mind, meaning it's wheelchair friendly and accessible to everyone.

"We have a very good association with the all-abilities groups in the area and everything we do in this centre is all-abilities focused," said Craig.

"From the car park to the wheelchair friendly entrance, the bench heights and the toilets."

And that means anyone aged five years old and over, gets to share in the thrill of laser tag.

"It's a great game for everyone," Craig said.

With up to ten people allowed in at a time, you can play solo or in teams, with each player fitted with a special jacket or vest that includes a laser gun.

"Different areas of the vests light up, and they're worth different points if you tag them," Jeremy said.

"At the end of the session, everyone comes out and you can see how many points you scored.

"It's not scary and getting tagged doesn't hurt – it just means the light on the vest goes out and you can't shoot or be shot again for five seconds.

"We've had a fantastic response to it so far. Last year we had a group of Year 5 and 6 students from San Remo Primary School come through, and they were jumping up and down with excitement."

**Holiday special**  
The Lazer Zone is part of a fantastic holiday special, which offers three hours of unlimited fun at the centre.

Every night of the school holidays, for just \$20 per person, between 6.30pm – 9.30pm you can enjoy unlimited bowling, unlimited laser tag and table tennis.

There's no limit to the fun you can have, although the bowling does require a minimum of four people per lane.

During the day, individual sessions are available for the laser tag, starting at \$6 for 5 minutes, \$10 for 10 minutes and \$16 for 20 minutes, per person.

There's no need to book and the centre opens from 10am every day.

"Everything is provided, just bring yourself and a sense of fun," said Craig.

## Big boost for Early Learning Centre

The Phillip Island Early Learning Centre has received a \$657,000 boost from the state government to increase the number of kinder places on offer.

The money is part of a government campaign to create thousands of new kinder places and hundreds of jobs as Victoria rolls out funded universal three-year-old kindergarten.

The existing Long Day Care and Sessional Kindergarten building will be expanded to accommodate the increased hours of funded three-year-old kindergarten in 2022.

"I am absolutely thrilled with this announcement," said Centre Manager Karen Treppo.

"This means we can ac-

commodate more children and continue to deliver a high standard of educational programs within a nurturing environment."

The new room will be able to accommodate a minimum of 44 places, of up to and including 15 hours per group.

"This is such fantastic news for Phillip Island children and their families," said Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale.

"The investment means the centre will be ready for our three-year-old universal kinder rollout, offering more places for a growing community, close to home.

"Investing in early years is so important for a child's learning and development. It is a time where they learn

social skills, explore play and creativity, learn about themselves and how they see themselves in their local community as well."

The ELC is one of 127 successful grant recipients to share in \$46.9 million through the Building Blocks capacity building and improvement grant streams.

Applications are also now open for the next round of Building Blocks including major works grants of up to \$500,000 – minor works of up to \$50,000 – and including grants of up to \$200,000 to make kinders more accessible for all children of all abilities.

Applications are open until February 28, 2021 via [www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au](http://www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au)

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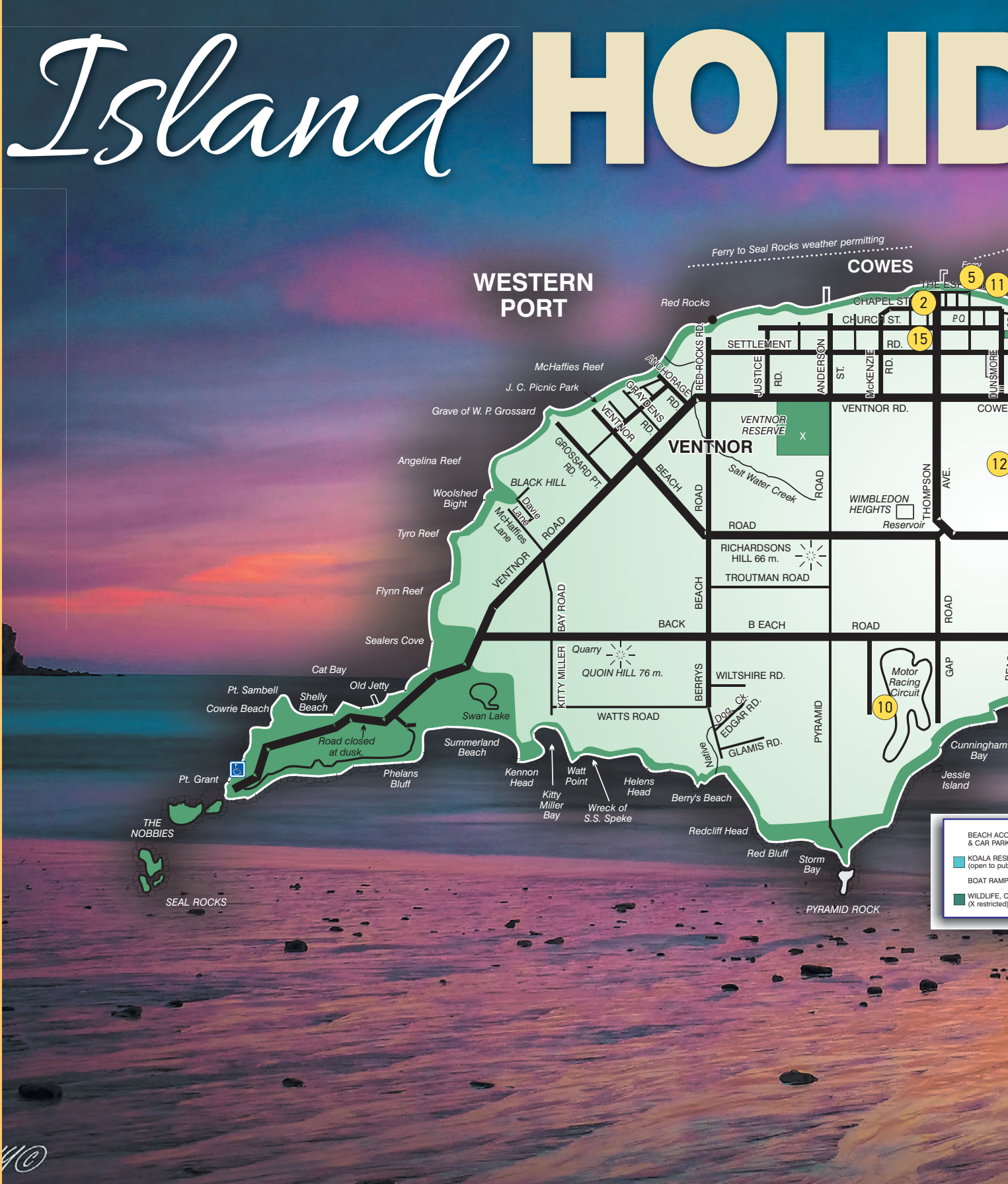


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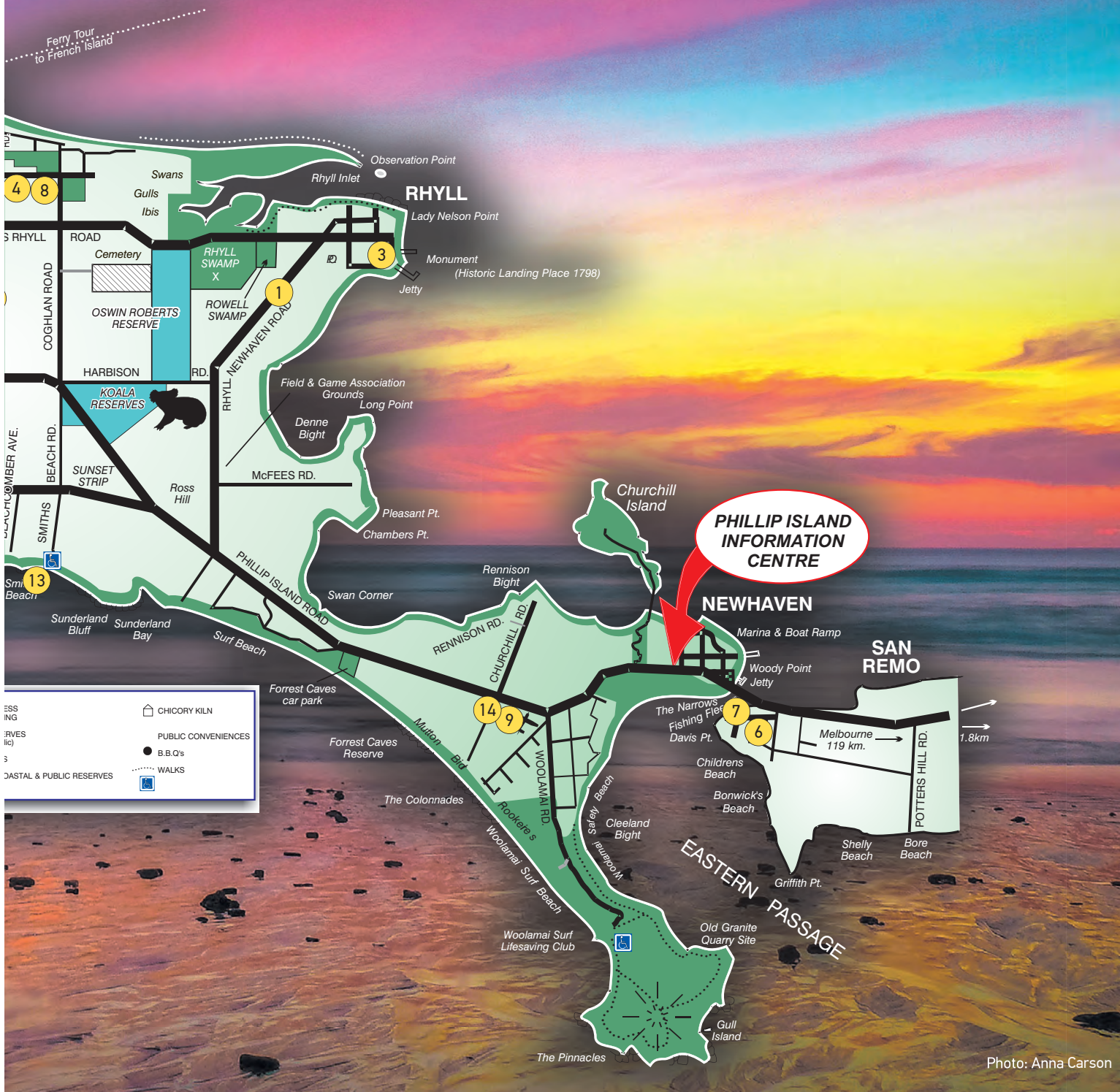
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# Phillip Island Landcare Community Shed opens

After 33 years, Phillip Island Landcare Group is excited to finally have a home to store their resources.

The Phillip Island Landcare Community Shed officially opened on Saturday, December 12. The new facility sits amongst beautiful gums just 100-metres from the Barb Martin BushBank community plant nursery at the Koala Conservation Reserve.

The event was held outside the shed in glorious sunshine and the 40 attendees were treated to entertaining speeches on the previous Landcare 'sheds', a few words from the major sponsors, and some poetry from Mike Cleeland.

The shed opening was marked with the cutting of a ribbon. In addition, the group unveiled a Life Membership honour board, a President's honour board and a plaque recognising the momentous occasion.

The Phillip Island Landcare Community Shed was named thanks to input from the community. "We can't thank the community around us enough," said Group President David Rooks.

"Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bendigo Bank and Council have all shown a huge interest in our group. The community helped build the shed, and as a group, we now want to give back to the community through the benefits the shed offers.

"When the BushBank re-opens on January 9, Landcare members who pick up plants from the BushBank will now have access to a variety of guards and stakes from the stores in the shed close by. Furthermore, our fantastic planting trailer can be used by other community groups such as the Coastal Care Groups and Nature Parks."

The shed was funded through in-kind and financial support from the Nature Parks, a successful grant of \$12,650 from the Bendigo Bank, and \$3500 from the Bass Coast Shire Council community grants. Those three groups were represented on the day. Mayor Cr Brett Tessari attended on Council's behalf along with Nature Parks CEO Catherine Basterfield, and Bendigo Bank Chair Joan Matthews.

Catherine Basterfield said: "It's great to see the relationship between Landcare and the Nature



From left to right: Cr Brett Tessari (Mayor BCSC), Joan Matthews (Chair Bendigo Bank) and Catherine Basterfield (CEO Phillip Island Nature Parks) at the opening of the new Landcare Community Shed.

Parks continue to grow. We share many similar objectives, and this shed will help both groups achieve outcomes for our land."

Prior to the shed opening, the group held its AGM and offered a choice of two tours. At the AGM, the interest in the group was so high there were more people wishing to be involved in the committee than positions available. This is a great outcome and Phillip Island Landcare President David Rooks commented: "We welcome all volunteers, some will be involved as committee members, some will attend committee meetings but not have a vote, and some will work on special projects outside of attending committee meetings."

The choice of complementary tours on the day were either BushBank or the Koala Conservation Reserve. Landcare thanks the Nature Parks for providing these informative tours.

Those interested in knowing more about the Phillip Island Landcare Group or who wish to join can visit [www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/phillipisland.html](http://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/phillipisland.html). Membership enquiries can be made direct to Robyn or Thirza on 0417 106 361 or [phillipislandlandcare@gmail.com](mailto:phillipislandlandcare@gmail.com)



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# Enjoy a book this summer

## An update from West Gippsland Libraries

2021 is here! Many now have plans in full swing for the summer holidays with family and friends.

There's no doubt that after withstanding more than 100 days of lockdown many Victorians will be taking a trip. But let's face it, if you're planning to spend a few hours in the car, train or plane, even the most enthusiastic of us are bound to get a little bored after that first hour of 'I spy'.

One place to find some boredom-busters is your local library. Best of all, you don't have to spend a cent with loads of free resources available to you with your membership.

E-audiobooks are a great way to entertain children and adults alike. Download to your digital device before you leave and you won't have to rely on mobile data. Pack your ear buds and everyone can make their own selection from the hundreds of titles West Gippsland Libraries have available – there's stories to entertain, teach and keep our minds engaged.

After a fun-filled day of adventure, a great way to unwind is with a good book. If you prefer to travel light, e-books are a great alternative. West Gippsland Libraries have thousands of e-books at your fingertips. The great part is they don't take up any extra room in your luggage. If you prefer a good paperback or



Enjoy your holiday with a book this summer. West Gippsland Libraries have thousands of books, e-books and a video streaming service, to help you unwind. Photo by Ben White on Unsplash.

a hardcover, search the catalogue online or drop into your local library and check out a few books to take with you.

For the silver screen enthusiasts, West Gippsland Libraries gives you free access to a video streaming service that provides quality, thoughtful entertainment. With a unique collection of over 30,000 films including movies, documentaries, children, foreign and indie films, you're sure to find something you haven't seen yet.

If you're spending time at home, there are some more resources to inspire you. West Gippsland Libraries have thousands of e-magazine titles available that could launch your next hobby or spark a new special interest. With topics ranging from baking, cooking, gardening,

arts and crafts, sports, science and music there really is something for everyone.

West Gippsland Libraries have a wide range of free programs and events available online. There's edutainment, family trivia, craft, gardening tips, book chats, interviews with authors and more.

Looking for guilt-free screen time activities available for kids? West Gippsland Libraries also have with a range of apps designed by professionals for 3-17-year-old children to boost learning and development that are disguised as fun.

Before you head out on your holiday adventure or get stuck for entertainment ideas this summer, discover all that's on offer at West Gippsland Libraries: [wgrlc.vic.gov.au](http://wgrlc.vic.gov.au).

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# Students celebrate VCE ac

Shae White and Dmitri Van Oss, both of Inverloch, have topped the results for local students in this year's VCE.

Shae, who attended Newhaven College, achieved the highest score in the district with an ATAR of 98.

Dmitri, from Wonthaggi Secondary College, was less than a point behind on 97.2.

Dmitri was described by his teachers as a consistently high achiever throughout his six years at WSC, with a particular interest in mathematics.

He plans to embark on an Engineering (Honours) Degree at Monash University.

Fellow WSC students Zali Anderson (95.95) and Holly Hughes (95.5) also plan to attend Monash University, studying physiotherapy and nursing (midwifery) respectively.

## Wonthaggi Secondary School celebrates results

Phil Hughes, Assistant Principal said the school congratulated all the senior students who completed their schooling this year.

"We are proud of the efforts and achievements of all our students," he said.

"2020 has been challenging for our students and staff as they adjusted to both periods of remote and flexible learning.

"In particular, the Year 12 cohort have displayed resilience and dedication as independent learners in completing their final year of schooling ... an admirable feat considering the demands of VCE."

Mr Hughes said that achievements had been made across a diverse range of subject areas within the various programs offered at WSC including the VCE,

VCAL and VET.

He said there were some exceptional individual results amongst the students achieving the top ATAR scores and these occurred in a wide range of curriculum areas including Maths, English, Science, Personal Development, Design and Technology, and the Arts.

There were also some exceptional results amongst Year 11 students including a number of 40+ Study Scores.

Mr Hughes wished all students well as they embark on the next exciting stage of their lives, whether it be in employment, trade apprenticeships, or further study.

## Newhaven College

Principal of Newhaven College, Gea Lovell said that this year's VCE reflects the excellent work and commitment shown by staff and students throughout 2020, and

that all Year 12 students had gained their VCE certificate.

"We are extremely proud of our Year 12 students this year, especially for their dedication during both Learn from Home programs.

"We celebrate each student's results knowing that all had their own journey to travel.

"We applaud the success of each child who completed their VCE ... and I am very thankful to the many in the school community for the help they gave those who required special support, so that they could gain this significant milestone."

Ms Lovell expressed her pride in the school's high achievers.

"Of note was that our median ATAR score was 75.57, a significant increase from past years.

"We are pleased that in this difficult COVID year that 41.3 per cent of students scored an ATAR of 80 or more.

"This is a huge achievement."

A number of Year 11 students who undertook Year 12 subjects also achieved excellent results, she said.

Ms Lovell said that Newhaven College is an open entry school and pointed out that there were many opportunities and pathways available to Year 12 graduates, including university, TAFE, traineeships and work.

"Our students are encouraged to remember that the ranking they receive is not the culmination of their education, but an opportunity to reassess priorities as they plan their next steps.

"While the academic statistical summary of the Class of 2020 is impressive, success and impact are rightly measured through a much wider lens.

"We are very proud of our class of 2020."



Newhaven College VCE dux Shae White is hoping to study for a medical degree at Monash University this year.

## Dux of the district

Shae White, VCE Dux of Newhaven College, and the Bass Coast District for 2020, said the only word to describe her reaction when she opened her results last week was "super-thrilled."

"I was hoping to get an ATAR in the 90s, and I was super-thrilled to get 98," said this very busy young student last week.

Shae is currently working two jobs during the summer holiday break, at the Inverloch Bakery during the day, and as a waitress at the Inverloch Hotel, preparing for the year ahead in Melbourne.

She was up at 5am on the day her results came out,

waiting for them on her phone.

It was a fairly long wait. They came through at 6.45 am.

Shae raced out to her mum who was in a farm shed and told her the great news.

"She was so happy. So was dad," an excited Shae said.

Shae had set her sights on a career in the health field, and her preference this year is to undertake a degree in medicine at Monash.

Her second preference, also at Monash, is to gain a place in biomedicine.

Shae said that her ATAR result will not be the final determinant in gaining a place

in the field she is interested in.

Places are determined through a student's ATAR score (one third) a VCAF test that assesses aptitude, and applicants are also interviewed.

It will be an anxious wait therefore when first round offers for university places come out next week, but Shae is quietly confident that she will be studying for a degree in the health field at Monash this year.

She has received an early offer from Mannix Residential College at Monash and is very much looking forward to the year ahead.

## A new world opens for Jess

It has been an exciting time for Wonthaggi Secondary College Year 12 student Jessica Purvis since the 2020 VCE results came out.

While lockdown and home schooling has presented challenges for all students, Jessica has done it tougher than most.

She has lived independently since the beginning of 2019.

When the Sunset Strip 18-year-old opened her results last week to an ATAR score of 90, which far exceeded her expectations, she was delighted.

But then unsure!

"Honestly, I thought my score must have been a mistake," said a very happy Jess.

"I was expecting a score in the 70s. I thought I must have been given the wrong result.

"I refreshed the page quite a few times to check."

Her doubts were put to rest two hours later, however, by a phone call from Melbourne University, offering her a Chancellor's scholarship and a place in biomedicine.

The life-changing offer in an instant opened up a whole new world for Jess.

The scholarship provides full fee remission, the sum of \$5,000, an additional \$2,500 which can be put toward an international university exchange program, and guaranteed admission into a graduate degree at Melbourne University.

Jess explains that biomedicine is a lead in course to becoming a Doctor of Medicine.

"My aunty was a doctor, and growing up I always wanted to be one," she said.

"I have always been fascinated by maths and science, but I did not consider medicine as a science degree until this year.

"I was initially looking at engineering and hoping to get into Monash.

"And I also considered studying music, which is a passion of mine," she added.

But gaining the place in biomedicine is a dream come true and is the path that she is determined to follow.

Like most other students, Jess agrees studying throughout Covid has not been easy this year.

She found the first lockdown hard, living out of home, "but the second lockdown was better," she said.



Wonthaggi Secondary College student Jessica Purvis received an ATAR score of 90, but that good news was topped just hours later with an exciting scholarship offer from Melbourne University which also guarantees her entry into the faculty of biomedicine.

"I was more mentally prepared for it and surrounded by supportive people."

Jess said her teachers at WSC had been extremely helpful to her, and she was very grateful for their support.

"Particularly my maths teachers were very good and very supportive to me. I am very thankful for their help.

"Some of the teachers took on a lot in regards to looking out for students' mental health and wellbeing, with the added stresses of COVID."

Wonthaggi Secondary College senior campus principal Margaret O'Donnell, speaking last week, said the school was very proud of Jess's achievement and the offer of a Melbourne University Chancellor Scholarship for Jess was fantastic.

"She is a remarkable young woman," Ms O'Donnell said.

"Jess has made the most of every minute at school and been driven through wanting a maths and science pathway.

"For her to engage with her studies the way she did was remarkable.

"Every spare minute and during school breaks, she could be found in the library working away."

With school now behind her, Jess has moved to Melbourne already, and is enjoying the new experience.

"It's amazing!" is her verdict.

"A whole new world has opened up. I have amazing house mates. One of them is studying music and it is opening the door to get involved in a band.

"I have a great passion for music, and play the guitar, so am looking forward to also getting involved in musical activities at university."



# hievevements



**Kelsi Vanderstaay** – Surf Beach student Kelsi Vanderstaay got an ATAR of 93.67, which included a perfect score in Product Design and Technology. “I was so surprised when I got my results. Both my sister and I were crying. Then my nan called me and she was crying as well. I’m a little sad that school is finished but excited for the next chapter,” says Kelsi. She plans to undertake a Business Design degree at Monash.



**Caitlin Hunt** – Caitlin Hunt, of Silverleaves did not hear about her excellent VCE score until Newhaven College principal Gea Lovell called her later on Wednesday morning. “I was at an event in the morning and actually didn’t know my ATAR until Mrs Lovell called to tell me I got into the 90s, so then I went to check and was thrilled with my result. I think I only needed a 77 to get into a science/education at Monash so anything above that is great!”



**Cailen Lone** – A score of 96.2 was a very pleasant surprise for Newhaven College student Cailen Lone. “This is the score I was hoping for but had not expected,” said Cailen. “When I told my Dad he was gobsmacked!”



**Flynn McMahon** – It was a nervous wait for San Remo student Flynn McMahon last Wednesday, the day the VCE results came out. “I was so nervous that I woke up at 5.30am. I first started logging on at 7am and all I needed for my commerce/computer science was an 88, so I was hoping for a score in the 80s.” With an outstanding mark of 92.4, Flynn said his score had happily exceeded his expectations.



**Jack Thornborrow** – Newhaven College student Jack Thornborrow, who lives in Cowes, scored 92.7. He was hoping for a score in the high 80s in order to qualify to undertake a double degree in engineering/commerce at Monash University. “I was ecstatic when we logged in and I saw my score,” said Jack.



Dual recipients of the Year 11 Dux Award (left to right): Holly van der Pligt and Max Pick, with Vice Principal of Compliance Belinda Kinnane.

## Newhaven College – end of year celebrations

At the end of a unique and often difficult year, Newhaven College has hosted its orientation and end of year celebrations.

A number of ceremonies acknowledged student achievements throughout the year, starting with the Year 12 graduation, followed by the Senior, Middle and Junior Schools award ceremonies.

Despite the challenges faced by students this year, many

have continued to excel academically, and in music, drama, visual arts and sport.

The College reported the Junior and Middle School orientation programs and Senior School early commencement programs were a great success.

The programs have been individualised for each year level, with students meeting their new teachers, classmates and enjoying many specifically

planned activities.

The Junior School students celebrated the end of the term with a special Christmas Service. The Junior Choir sang carols and retiring College Chaplain, Mr Richard Prideaux prayed for a safe and healthy 2021 for all.

The College would like to sincerely wish all in the community a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.



Middle School Award recipients (left to right): Giacinta Lyle for Drama, Oliver Parsons for Music Ensemble and Mayla Genoni for Drama, Music Ensemble & Values Award.



Junior School students formed a guard of honour to farewell Year 4 students as they transition into Middle School next year. Harvey Leary in the front.



Pictured leaving school on the last day are Caitlin Donohue (left) and Abby McEwen.



Year 8 band performing at the Middle School presentation ceremony (left to right): Alana Dean, Jasmine Turton, Mackenzie Wain, Daniel Caffieri, Campbell Glass, Dean Lyle and Adam Dean.





John and Pat Hurley saw in the New Year with friend Trish Sweeney.



It was a family celebration for Trish and Michael Callis with Georgie, Olive and Emily.



Josh and Josie Thornborrow with Patrick and Isabelle stepped out to celebrate the arrival of 2021.

# Welcome 2021!

People across the island were keen to celebrate the New Year and wave goodbye to 2020 and we captured some of the smiles and excitement of the night.



A happy group of islanders toast the New Year. Back (from left to right) Salome Rapson, Sam Bennett, Joelle Taylor, Kaz Evans and Sally Manassa. Front: Jacqui Maxwell and Steph Thornborrow.



Michael and Harvey Simonds were all set for NYE celebrations.



The Nellie Family – Andrew, Carolyn, Chantelle, Ethan and Olivia – at their holiday home in Silverleaves were happy to be out in Cowes to celebrate the New Year.



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## WHO WILL YOU Nominate?

The Awards recognise, encourage and reward the positive achievements and community contributions of young Victorians aged 29 or under as of 31 December 2020.

Category winners will each receive \$2,000 in prizes, consisting of a \$1,000 Barcard account from Wheelton Philanthropy and Budget Rent A Car, plus \$500 Qoin and \$500 cash.



For more information call 03 9720 1638 or email [vicayaa@awardsaustralia.com](mailto:vicayaa@awardsaustralia.com)

NOMINATIONS CLOSE 14 JANUARY 2021.

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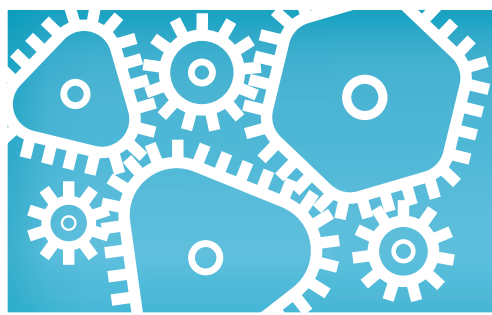


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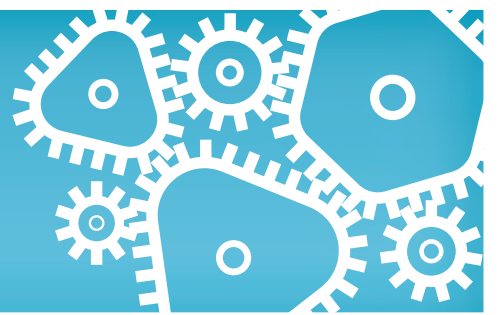
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## A Christmas thank you

A big thank you to the Bass Coast Shire for the wonderful Christmas decorations and the relaxed atmosphere throughout the Holiday Season.

It was great to get back down to the caravan and head out to our favourite restaurants, shops and surf beaches.

Congratulations on getting things moving. We really missed our beautiful getaway and are thrilled we are now back.

Robyn Johnson, Williamstown

## Please explain Wildlife Plan

If researchers have suspected Cape Barren Geese may carry pathogens, why is the Phillip Island Wildlife (Management) Plan proposing to (commercially?) harvest our native wildlife? Surely some of their experts know that wildlife is a reservoir of various pathogens and viruses that have started all of the major world-wide pandemics in recent times when they cross to humans from harvesting bushmeat (eg Covid, SARS, MERS, aids, ebola, and even Spanish flu which is suspected of avian origin)?

While some countries in Africa and Asia may justify eating wildlife on the grounds of a lack of farmed meat, what excuse does a first world nation like Australia have to potentially put the wider public at such risk? I was also horrified to hear that DEWLP has already issued farmers and landowners with kill permits that have already killed 200 of our iconic Cape Barren Geese – one of the rarest geese in the world, with only 11-12,000 mature adults alive worldwide mostly in just a few locations on islands off the coast of the southern parts of Australia. How lucky are we to have 2800 on Phillip Island! Respect please. (PS as for wallabies and possums – they don't have eggs, so please be transparent and explain how many and in what "humane" ways the Plan proposes for them to be "harvested").

Grazyna Mackiewicz, Cape Woolamai

## Community engagement

To Ali Wastie, CEO of Bass Coast Shire Council.

The draft Community Engagement Policy 2021-2024 has been

approved by councillors for public release seeking review comment.

The draft report released on December 16, 2021 currently has a closing date of Sunday January 17 which is a period when council, councillors and the community are enjoying Xmas holiday festivities.

The final Community Engagement Policy 2021-2024 will become a new extremely important policy setting a path of future engagement with all interested parties who wish to engage with council.

I request the closing date for the draft Community Engagement Policy 2021-2024 be changed to a new date of Friday, January 29 at 5pm.

The change of date will allow sufficient time for the holiday celebrations to pass and work has commenced in full.

Changing the date to January 29 would require announcements through the media and Facebook so that all community members are notified of the change.

Would you please advise of your decision.

Graham Jolly, Cape Woolamai

## Tis the season to be gorging ...

As we tra la la, indulge with sweet treats, so appetite knows no bounds. A new book, Food and Climate Change by SL Bridle at UIT Cambridge, warns us that even if all other emissions are cut to zero and no population growth, emissions, locked in with the food we choose to eat, will blow the budget to exceed two degrees warming by 2056, just food.

Clearly something needs to be done. Don't be shy, tell people, all people, loud and clear. It really is almost too late already. It never will save to "the same" but still time to save something of climate, to be bearable, just.

But don't be shy, noise, lots of it, at home, in the street with friends and enemies, even politicians of all flavours, immediately if not sooner.

Wouldn't you think that Minister for Health could have done something to discourage so much consumption of sugar, causing so much over-eating, obesity and Type 2 Diabetes? For that matter, how about campaign equivalent to plain paper packaged tobacco, for grog? Isn't it

ridiculously expensive to pretend these things can safely be ignored? So many knock-on effects, as well as obvious problems immediately.

Bernie McComb, Cowes

## Community engagement

With Mayor Cr Brett Tessari claiming it as a great opportunity to set out how Council will work with the community, Bass Coast Council is seeking feedback to its draft Community Engagement Policy 2021.

But you'd best hurry if you want to add your voice, because that feedback door slams shut on Sunday, January 17.

Using many fine words, Council is claiming to be committed to actively encouraging the community to be involved in local government through community engagement.

But is Council sincere and genuine in its claim?

For community members such as myself who take an interest in how Council behaves, there is good reason to be sceptical.

For starters, this new policy is not an engagement initiative driven from within Council. It is a requirement imposed on all councils by the state government and is due in March this year. The policy must include the principles of deliberative engagement and be developed in consultation with the community.

Whilst Council has known of this requirement for many months, as usual it offers little time for community response. Not a great start, eh?

Let's not forget that four months ago Bass Coast Council introduced restrictive new governance rules, some of which fly in the face of community engagement.

Similarly, let's not forget the fervent determination of some previous councillors to prevent the introduction of live streaming, an undeniably essential service to enhance engagement. In the end the pandemic restrictions were the only force strong enough to compel councillors to abandon their opposition.

There was also Council's embarrassing failure of engagement during the recent debacle of the proposed San Remo Foreshore Regional Skate Park.

But it's now a new year. We have a new council with some new councillors.

Perhaps the new councillors genu-

inely and sincerely do seek community engagement.

Perhaps some of the re-elected councillors have had an epiphany, and they too now also genuinely and sincerely seek community engagement. Only time will tell.

Let's hope that it will not turn out to be as described last month by Cr Kent, when referring to Amendment C150B, "It's just a 'tick the box and let's move on exercise'"

Kevin Griffin, Wonthaggi

## Reduce emissions now

How sorry, so few reductions emissions from transport sector in regions?

Despite hottest topic COVID, new ones arise, like tax on EV's, at one extreme, and at other, Minister for Planning insisting more output from sand mine at Grantville. EV tax is claimed to be about maintaining roads, while damage to roads is done by hundreds per day of B-double trucks shifting sand from Grantville. Trucks full of sand are very heavy so, as well as causing road damage, not only are they expensive to operate, they're big greenhouse gas emitters, a hot topic getting hotter.

Even disregarding exports of greenhouse gas laden fossil fuels, Australia is almost a terrorist country, with emissions reputation as bad as Russia, Brazil and Saudi Arabia, risking the fate of the whole planet, now that high projection is six degrees Celsius by 2100. Previously, all high projections have been beaten. Bass Coast is planning emission reductions to follow the highest (easiest) level projection in Paris agreement, RCP8.5, which corresponds with four degrees, now revised to six, extinction to annihilation.

Trucks pollute five times worse than trains and roads are expensive. A single train can replace 100 trucks. Until the 1990s sand did get shifted by rail, from Grantville to AGM Glass just under Westgate bridge. Rail is quick install, cost effective, reduces traffic jams and reduces emissions.

Another topic is landfill, from depot in Dandenong to quarry in Ravenhall. When will electrified rail be rebuilt for sand to Melbourne depot(s) and landfill to Hazelwood open cut?

Is such lack of emission reduction, increasing monster trucks causing congestion and damaging roads and no sign of electrification of Transport being taken seriously? Is this enough to get enough of us hassling all levels of government, writing letters and protesting? If we want the planet to take care of us, surely we need to take care of the Planet, ASAP.

Bernie McComb, Cowes

## It's rubbish

No rubbish collection Tuesday in San Remo – third of properties have red bins out for collection will sit there all day and in many cases all week, overloaded with rubbish.

Even those taken in are full, so what happens in the next seven days to rubbish?

You only need to look in green and yellow bins out this morning, many already packed with general rubbish. Cars pull up all the time just putting rubbish into any of the bins. Got to get rid of nappies and waste before they head out of town.

Where are Council officers? Where are Rangers? Where are Police? Nowhere to be seen whether on the streets or on the beaches. In 20 years, we've had our property at San Remo I'm yet to see one Council officer or Ranger on the beach ever. Police only when there has been accident on the water.

If you're renting a property this week and you turn up to start your holiday today and bins are full, what would you do with rubbish? I suppose you could follow Yarra Council and ask your neighbour if you could use their bin, good luck when already full.

This is not a new problem only made worse when third bin added to collection system. Suppose to save the environment – well not happening in holiday areas in Bass when all three bins will probably all have to go to General Rubbish tip. The rubbish collection company know this, so does Bass Coast Council but for years nothing has changed. For a Council who charges nearly 50 per cent more rates than equivalent value property in other Council areas, you are a disgrace and hopefully when the redistribution occurs you will cease to exist.

Chris Day, San Remo.



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# Around the Bay

WITH JIM'S BAIT AND TACKLE

Firstly, happy new year to all our customers and again thank you for your support over the last 12 months.

I think we were all hoping the sounding of the bell for the new year would bring a very different year ahead but sadly it seems it's just more of the same, "unsettled weather".

The real issue though is the Coronavirus. I think it will be around for a little while yet regardless of any vaccines and just something we need to adapt to.

One of those adaptations has been the re-introduction of masks indoor and reduction of gathering sizes, and anything else that changes between me writing this and you reading it.

With masks or any restrictions placed on business is not something we introduce ourselves but regulations we must follow. We ask that you respect that and respect other customers in our shop - this goes for visitors and locals.

Excuses like "you know me", "I'm local so ok", "I will only be a minute", "there is no one's else in the shop" or just plain refusal - "what are you going to kick me out and lose a sale", none of these really cut it and show very little respect for my business and staff.

We don't like wearing masks as much as the next guy and go home every night exhausted from trying to talk through them all day. But what we would like even less is to have to close the shop because of a lack of respect from customers.

I feel for those with genuine reasons for not wearing a mask as they would get questioned all the time and it probably wears a little thin, but again don't take it out on the person behind the counter. Try wearing a lanyard around your neck similar to some of our deaf customers do with a simple message. It might save a

few questions.

If you have a real problem with the masks give us a call and we can get your bait or tackle needs ready and serve you at the door or simply come to the shop give us a yell and stay outside and we can bring your tackle to you.

Back to the weather and what the hell is going on?

I don't think anybody knows or has any chance of even guessing.

It's been that inconsistent lately even my barometer has given up and seems confused.

I have written it 100 times, it's a season of opportunity. That continues with people simply watching the weather and when the weather is right heading out, planning for a one to a five-hour fish and just taking what the weather gods allow.

The only pattern over the last couple of weeks has been those out early have done the best, both on the fish but also with the carpark at the boat ramp.

This is normally the case over the holiday period with the extra traffic during the day sending the fish into their hiding spots.

It generally then fires up in the late afternoon/evening, but the winds have put an end to most days. Land based has produced a few good catches. Despite there being very few people on the jetties, at times there were a lot of people fishing off the beaches.

There has also been an odd opportunity for a quick fish offshore providing a couple of customers with a few feeds in the freezer.

Holiday time always brings an influx of reports from the jetties, especially from the kids visiting from other areas.

We have had several reports of whiting from San Remo jetty this week and while no monsters were caught off the jetties there was some quality whiting off the beaches and some good numbers also. The same for the boats with

some very respectable bags of quality size.

There was a couple of reports of whiting from Newhaven jetty also and the change of the low tide was better there.

Other land based whiting spots were low tide at Sunderland Bay, the beach near the old Boys Home in Newhaven and Ventnor beach.

Paternoster rig, size 4 hook and a cocktail of bait with squid and pippies was the most successful combinations.

Whiting from the boats started off Christmas with a rush but as the traffic got heavier the whiting got a little harder to find.

From the reports, we found as the week went on, the whiting got deeper.

They were still caught in the deep early in the week but just disappeared from the shallow.

Those who still caught them in the shallows were on the water as the sun came up and heading home when everyone was heading out.

If you are going to look for the whiting in deeper water you will need to change you gear slightly. Hooks can stay the same, but sinkers definitely need to be heavier, leader on the top end of what you would use for whiting and baits, try using squid or pilchards, even in cocktail with pippies.

Calamari was the other species caught in numbers off the land and three places made up almost all the reports.

San Remo jetty, Cleeland Bight beach and Ventnor beach produced plenty and caught on a combination of artificial and baited jigs with neither standing out.

There was a lot of calamari caught on white jigs, probably because every second person is using one, most other colours also produced.

Boating and kayaks didn't have any problem finding the calamari if they went the right times of the day, very early and in the evenings.

Those who fished during the middle of the day managed a few but found the calamari very flighty, chasing jigs to the boat but not attacking them.

While there haven't been too many opportunities to head offshore over the last couple of weeks there has been small windows and the signs are promising.

Gummies, bluefin, kingfish, flathead, snapper, salmon, school sharks and mako sharks plus plenty of bait fish are some of the species we have had reported over the last couple of weeks.

No real sign of the arrow squid yet but most customers I have asked are fishing on the top for them. I would suggest that if you do head out drop a squid jig right to the bottom as that's where we have found them at this time of the year in the past.

Paternoster rig, we use one of those wire surf rigs a couple of bright coloured jigs, not the \$30 ones, cutta love them or baited jig and a very heavy sinker.

An old rod that has been broken off at the end works perfectly with that old reel just sitting in the cupboard, drop the rig to the bottom give it a wind and just let it bounce around as you drift along.



Newhaven College students ready to learn new bike skills, as part of the 2020 Bike Education program.

## Bike Education 2020

Newhaven College Year 4 and 5 students were eager to test out and further develop their bike riding skills during the school's 2020 Bike Education program.

Bike Education teaches fundamental road skills to students to develop their bicycle riding skills as well as enhancing their health, fitness and wellbeing. Students were taught the correct use of their helmet, emergency breaking, riding in packs and how to check their bike before riding.

Students excelled in the off road activities in the school grounds and enjoyed the ride to Conservation Hill that included a House Cup event where students tested their skills on and off their bikes.

Despite the heat, there were plenty of smiles as the children worked hard to master these important new skills.



Oli headed out with his dad and brother Sam and he christened dad's new reel for him with this quality offshore gummy.



Brad fished in Cleeland Bight with his son Sam on Sunday and were rewarded with a bag of whiting that contained a fish of a lifetime, 54cm 1.12kg. Who needs a boat to catch quality!

## New record fish for Angling club

Another Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club record was broken this weekend when Brad Martindale weighed-in a 1110-gram King George Whiting (54 cm in length) for the 365 competition, caught on Sunday.

Brad revealed the secrets of his success, simply "casting a squid-strip from the beach at Cleeland Bight".

By the fight he first thought it could be a snapper, but after seeing a slender silhouette he thought it was a salmon.

At the time of landing, he couldn't believe his eyes when it was in fact a King George Whiting, quite a superhero fish!

This smashes the previous club record of 950 grams that had been held for 18 years.

The superhero dad, Brad, was fishing with son Sam, who also caught an impressive King George Whiting of 500 grams, albeit a baby by comparison.

It seems that Brad may have peaked too early as the next angling club competition isn't scheduled until this coming weekend, thus, this extraordinary catch is not eligible for the



Brad Martindale and his record-beating King George Whiting caught at Cleeland Bight.

competition weekend prize.

For more information about the club or events, please visit [www.rpiac.com](http://www.rpiac.com).

## PHILLIP ISLAND MARINE

NEW & USED BOAT SALES

## TIDE GUIDE

Tidal predictions for Stony Point  
Cowes -0.09 Newhaven -0.31

HIGH TIDE IS MARKED IN BOLD

Thu 7	12.37am 0.63m	<b>7.18am</b> 2.89m	1.15pm 0.62m	<b>7.51pm</b> 2.64m
Fri 8	1.24am 0.77m	<b>7.55am</b> 2.81m	1.57pm 0.54m	<b>8.48pm</b> 2.65m
Sat 9	2.14am 0.93m	<b>8.35am</b> 2.72m	2.44pm 0.48m	<b>9.52pm</b> 2.67m
Sun 10	3.10am 1.08m	<b>9.23am</b> 2.63m	3.36pm 0.44m	<b>11.00pm</b> 2.71m
Mon 11	4.14am 1.21m	<b>10.21am</b> 2.54m	4.37pm 0.42m	
Tue 12	<b>12.09am</b> 2.78m	5.27am 1.28m	<b>11.30am</b> 2.48m	5.45pm 0.41m
Wed 13	<b>1.17am</b> 2.87m	6.45am 1.27m	<b>12.44pm</b> 2.46m	6.56pm 0.39m

All material is supplied in good faith and is believed to be correct.  
No responsibility or liability for errors or omissions is accepted.

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PHILLIP ISLAND  
**BULLDOGS**  
FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB





The Channel Challenge organising committee and WBSLSC have made the extremely difficult decision to cancel this year's event.

# STOP PRESS: This year's Channel Challenge cancelled

After the recent outbreak of COVID-19 in the Bayside area of Melbourne the board of the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club (WBSLSC) in conjunction with the Channel Challenge organising committee has taken the extremely difficult decision to cancel the 2021 Channel Challenge.

Ron Nicholson, spokesperson for the committee said the latest outbreak "highlighted the fact that COVID-19 is still very much with us".

"In fact there were two key Channel Challenge organisers caught up with the restrictions put in place after this outbreak – one put into quarantine after a game of golf at the Woodlands

Golf Club.

"The WBSLSC is an organisation whose key purpose is to protect members of the community and keep them from harm and the risk of the event being responsible for bringing an outbreak of COVID-19 into the San Remo and Phillip Island Community did not sit well with members of the club," Ron said.

The committee said the "extremely restrictive protocols" around running the event were making it difficult to maintain the Channel Challenge's unique character.

"The small beach area at the start created social distancing problems," explained Ron.

"There was a cap on how many competitors could be in each wave and in the transition area at the one time; all spectators' contact details were supposed to be collected; the drink station at the finish also had a cap of 100 who had to be socially distanced with family and friends kept away.

"An inordinate amount of race marshalls would have been required to carry out these duties and kitted out in PPE."

There was also the risk if preparations continued, the event would have to be called off at short notice.

"The event organisers could have taken entries and carried out the time consuming and ex-

pensive preparations to set the race up and then it could be cancelled at late notice and see the Surf Life Saving Club incur a significant loss," Ron said.

"All involved with the Channel Challenge absolutely love the history and tradition of this unique event and we are very disappointed to have been forced to make this tough decision.

"We are disappointed for our loyal Challengers who have been training hard and for our great sponsors and support groups. We feel for the San Remo Traders and the Bass Coast community in general, but we do promise that we will back keener than ever for Channel Challenge XXXV1 in 2022."

## Phillip Island golf results

Tuesday, December 29 – Men's 18 Hole Stableford: Winner was Nigel Firth H/c (21) with 41 points from David Scoullar H/c (21) with 40 points.

Men's and Ladies 9 Hole Stableford: Winner was Brian Carvell H/c (27) with 21 points from David John Rodakis H/c (34) with 19 points.

Ladies 18 Hole Stableford: Winner was Pam Arden H/c (40) with 40 points from Debra Orr H/c (14) with 38 points.

Saturday, January 2 – Men's 18 Hole Stableford: Winner was Peter Moloney H/c (22) with 42 points from Neil Buttery H/c (26) with 41 points.

Congratulations to Phill Ellard with an Eagle on the 1st Hole and James Bain with an Eagle on the 18 Hole.

Next Saturday's Men's competition – January Monthly Medal sponsored by the Jockey Club. Round 3 of the Putting Competition.

Ladies 18 Hole Stableford: Win-

ner was Robyn Cornell H/c (45) with 39 points from Ira Septiana H/c (38) with 37 points.

Men's and Ladies 9 Hole Stableford: Winner was John Gill H/c (27) with 19 points from Reg Brown H/c (32) with 18 points.

A reminder to all members to collect their Raffle Tickets from the Golf Shop to sell supporting the upcoming Lighter Moments – Bass Coast and Phillip Island Exhibition – held at the Iluka Gallery in Silverleaves.

Three of the paintings on display are donated to the Phillip Island Golf Club and can be currently viewed in the Clubhouse.

Artists donating paintings are David Taylor – A.W.I.F.V.A. S, Diana Edwards – A.G.R.A and Tom Tyrrell.

Tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10.

The exhibition is for the month of January and the raffle will be drawn Sunday, January 31 at 3pm at the Gallery. Iluka Studio Gallery – 28 Settlement Road Silverleaves, Phillip Island 3922.

## Swim at a patrolled beach this summer

Life Saving Victoria funds a professional lifeguard team to operate at Woolamai, Cowes and Smiths Beach from now until early-February.

This means there will be a two-person team on duty every day of the week from 10am – 6pm.

Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club's volunteer patrols at Woolamai Beach will run through to April 2021.

During the peak holiday season, from December 26 until January 26, patrols will run from 1pm – 6pm on Saturdays and 10am – 6pm on Sundays and Public Holidays.

Riley Fyffe from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club urged swimmers to take care in the water.

"Woolamai Beach is surf for experienced bathers only," Riley said.

"The waves are usually large, the

rips and currents strong and close inshore. Stay between the flags at all times and avoid the rips.

"Swimming is not recommended outside of patrol hours."

From January 27 until April 18, patrol times will return to the pre-Christmas schedule and run from 1pm – 4.30pm on Saturdays and 10.30am – 4.30pm on Sundays and Public Holidays.

Life Saving Victoria reminds beach goers that lifesavers are only on duty when the red and yellow flags are displayed.

"Remember to always swim between the red and yellow flags at a patrolled beach," a spokesperson said.

"If we can't see you, we can't save you."

Everyone going to the beach this summer is encouraged to visit beachsafe.org.au, download the beachsafe app and only swim at a patrolled beach.

**ALEX SCOTT  
AND STAFF**

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