

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO ADVERTISER

Your Community Voice!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020

\$1.40 Incl. GST



Mat Bowtell won the Regional Achiever of the year, at the Regional Victorian Achievement and Community Awards last week, recognised for his incredible work with Free 3D Hands. Celebrating the win is Rebecca Nerosa – Assembly Technician, Mat and Peta Strachan – Operations Manager.

Achiever of the Year

Mat Bowtell was named Regional Achiever of the Year at the Regional Victorian Achievement and Community Awards last week, for his incredible work with Free 3D Hands.

He also won the prestigious Regional Development Victoria Leadership and Innovation Award.

Mat was nominated by councillors Brett Tessari and Clare Le Serve for establishing the Free 3D Hands charity to provide 3D assistive devices for people around the world, as well as his work producing free face shields for local healthcare workers during the pandemic.

The modest achiever said he was grateful for the recognition.

"I was very, very surprised, I wasn't expecting anything at all," he told the Advertiser, of his category win.

And he was caught completely by surprise with the overall award.

"I had no idea there was even an overall category winner," Mat said, admitting he'd actually logged out of the online ceremony and was celebrating his win with a quiet beer.

After a frantic call from the award organisers, he logged back into the Zoom meeting just in time to accept

the second award.

"I was pretty relaxed, so my acceptance speech was probably a bit loosey-goosey," he laughed.

Mat said some of the prize money would be put into the Free 3D Hands charity to pay wages for one of his staff.

"We employed Rebecca through funding for the face shields, so the prize money will help her to stay on."

He also thanked the councillors for the nomination.

"I'm really grateful to Brett and Clare for nominating me. It was an unexpected and kind gesture."

Shared award

Mat said the two awards really belonged to his entire team ... and beyond.

"Awards are not the reason we do these things, but it's nice for the team and gives them encouragement to push on."

"For me, the significance of these sorts of awards is they're telling us we're heading in the right direction, like a needle on a compass."

He felt humbled by the acknowledgement, given the unprecedented year.

"There's been so many people in our community who have been ex-

tending themselves and sacrificing this year.

"This award belongs to the whole community for the sacrifices we've had to make during a difficult year."

"It really is recognition of the amazing work of the community. It belongs to everyone."

Community

Mat said Free 3D Hands' achievements this year, particularly producing the medical face shields, would not have been possible without the support of many in the community.

Continued page 10

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Your Community Voice!



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A joy ride on Saturday night left damaging tracks across the Cowes oval and the concrete under the Football Club canopy strewn with broken bottles. The clean up took club volunteers several hours.

Schoolies run wild

The second weekend of schoolies celebrations has left businesses with damage bills and local footy club volunteers with a massive clean-up.

Police were unable to provide details of the weekend's incidents, but confirmed two people had been arrested in relation to an assault.

Residents said there were large crowds and fights breaking out around the Jetty Triangle and foreshore in Cowes, while others complained of parties along the main street.

One described the Cowes beach as "trashed" with broken glass, rubbish and bottles everywhere.

Council's outdoor crew was out early on Sunday morning cleaning debris from the Jetty Triangle, The Esplanade and along the main street of Cowes.

Businesses reported nightly property damage.

A local business owner said while they appreciated Covid made it hard for the council to or-

ganise activities for the schoolies this year, something needed to be done to address the issues.

"If the kids had a planned event or somewhere they could go and have a planned party, it would take all the riff-raff away from Cowes.

"They're entitled to have a good time and if they had somewhere to go and do something, it might be more enjoyable for everyone.

"We need tourists and people to come. What we don't need is drunken people on the streets destroying property."

One business estimated damages of over \$2000.

"After the year we've had, it's not what you need. Every day we woke up and there was damage.

"Our blinds were ripped, gates broken, tables and chairs thrown away. The damage that's been caused to us, it's not on. Who pays for that?"

President of the Phillip Island Football Netball Club, Chris Ross, said there was significant

damage at the Cowes Recreation Reserve when a car got onto the footy oval.

Sponsor signs were kicked in, furniture moved and the concrete outside the clubhouse was covered in smashed bottles.

"They left a hell of a mess," he said.

"Three club members had to come down on Sunday and clean up the glass and repair the signs. It took a couple of hours.

"There's better things to do on Sunday than having to clean up after schoolies."

This week, council's outdoor maintenance team worked on the oval to repair the damage to the playing field.

Covid impact

A council spokesperson said due to Covid restrictions, it was initially unclear whether schoolies would even go ahead, so efforts were concentrated on "harm minimisation strategies".

They said the Cowes Jetty Tri-

angle area was supervised by Red Frogs volunteers between December 4 and 11.

In addition, DanceWize personnel were on hand with "particular expertise in managing alcohol and drug related matters for school leavers".

Both Red Frogs and DanceWize are part of the statewide Good Times Great Breaks program designed to help schoolies have a good time and stay safe.

Additional police have been rostered on for the entire schoolies period.

The TAC Vanessa Outreach program had been engaged by council, to "deliver alcohol and drug harm minimisation services", the council spokesperson confirmed.

Security, lighting, buses and marquees were also organised for the Cowes foreshore area and additional outdoor crews had been rostered on to help clean the streets during the schoolies period.

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LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED

Giant Worm ripped down

It was the end of an era for a Bass Coast tourist attraction last week when the Giant Worm museum – and neighbouring restaurant, Wombat World and koala viewing – were razed to the ground.

The owner of the site told the Advertiser he had destroyed the much-loved but derelict buildings for safety reasons, while Cowes resident John Matthews – who built the attraction in the 1980s – said he was sad to see it go, describing it as a wasted opportunity.

The demolition comes almost two years after the 10-acre site's most famous occupant, Rosie the Shark, which had for decades been kept in a tank full of formaldehyde, was moved to a new home in Cranbourne.

Demolition contractors began ripping down the 120 metre Giant Worm last Monday and continued through the week, with workers describing the graffiti-riden, vandalised site as full of rubbish and junk.

The Advertiser last week spoke to the current owner of the land, Nick Andrianakos, on the phone to Greece, where it was lam.

"We have done the right thing to knock it down for the public because of the damage to the building making

it unsafe," Nick said.

"We thought maybe we might find someone there who could die. We don't want people to go in there for safety."

Over the past few years there has been a dramatic spike in trespassers to the land, with complaints by neighbouring residents.

Nick also owns the neighbouring petrol station site, and a rear section of land – as well as more than 50 petrol stations around Australia.

He was vague on his future plans for the 10 acres, at one point saying "we'll have to wait and see", adding "if I'm building something I build by the rules", but confirming the land was not for sale.

Wasted opportunity

Cowes real estate agent John Matthews created Wildlife Wonderland Giant Earthworm Museum in 1985 and sold it in 2000. Subsequent owners were ordered to close the facility after accusations of wildlife neglect.

He bought the property as open farmland and lobbied the shire to rezone it for commercial tourist use.

"The current owner has the benefit of my work. If he wants to build



The worm has turned: the 10-acre former Wildlife Wonderland Giant Earthworm Museum in Bass has been ripped down after years of vandalism.

anything all he needs to do is lodge a planning permit."

John said it was sad to see the destruction, especially because the infrastructure was valuable and could have been donated to the community.

He made the worm structure with his son over three months, using Grantville gravel, covered by reinforcement and about 40mm of concrete, with the finished creation measuring 60 squares, including a 30m hollow section where visitors could hear worm sound effects such as eating and hearts beating.

Other buildings included the café and souvenir shop (about 100sq), complete with commercial kitchen, a 150-seat restaurant (50sq), an indoor wombat viewing area (20sq), which included underground viewing of burrows, in addition to a koala viewing area and trout fishing.

John said even the toilet block "was the largest on the highway", while the car park at its peak took more than 60 buses.

"It becomes unsafe because when there's a huge amount of infrastructure sitting there empty it invites the issues that drove this action. It was

sad to see the condition it was in," John said.

"Not once have I had a call from the owner to say 'what do you think or what are the opportunities with this for a local community group'."

"I can't understand why he couldn't sell the buildings or remove them and give them to a charity, as they were all – apart from the worm – on stumps."

"If it wasn't going to be a tourist attraction, the buildings had a hell of a lot of potential as a community facility, as homes for the homeless, or the kitchens could have been used for PICAL (Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre)."

Rosie

John was also responsible for the "huge logistical operation" of sourcing the shark – only recently known as Rosie – an all up cost of about \$500,000.

"We had to build a purpose-built room and the roof had to be removed and the shark craned in and put into a new, sealed tank. Everything had to have the right permits," he recalled.

"We had to have a concrete bunker

underneath in case any of the formaldehyde leaked out and a filter system worked all the time to ensure the shark didn't excrete body fluids. It was virtually daily constant monitoring."

John said he put his "heart and soul" into the attraction, that earned a bevy of awards, including the top Victorian Tourism Award in 1999.

"It was not just a little operation, but substantial, with more than 35 employees."

In 2000 John sold the tourist attraction to Chinese investors, who then on-sold it to two further buyers, with the facility finally forced to close down within five years after accusations of wildlife neglect against the then existing owner.

"Not the worm"

Since last week's demolition, former customers took to social media to mourn its passing, with John adding it attracted 350,000 people a year, including more than 20,000 school kids.

Stefanie Rossiter tagged John saying "oh no, all your dreams and hard work disappearing".

Rose Calapai wrote: "not the worm", while Karen Peel added, "it was an amazing place to visit with the kids and was left to rot".

"It had huge potential as an attraction and education centre," Karen said.

Kim Seeley commented it had "been so sad" seeing "what a terrible state it was in".

"When our kids were little they loved it. Very sad what's happening down that way," Kim wrote.

However Lorraine Ingbritsen said the demolition was the "best thing that has happened in Bass".

"We are sick of looking at the terrible deterioration of this place. Such a shame to a local tourist site, but for the best."

"Needs to be rebuilt into something beautiful for the entrance to our beautiful little village."



Within a day of demolition crews entering the site, just one small section of the Giant Worm remained visible.

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PROUDLY INDEPENDENT



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Landowners on notice over tree lop ban

Wildlife in towns such as Cowes and Rhyll will now have a fighting chance at survival, following a new state government ban on tree lopping on residential land.

That's according to conservationists and Bass Coast Shire councillors who have been lobbying for years to stop the 10/30 rule for vegetation removal applying on Phillip Island.

Last year the Advertiser reported island homeowners were "flagrantly violating" the 10/30 rule, which was introduced after the Bushfire Royal Commission a decade ago, allowing trees to be removed – without a planning permit – within 10 metres of a dwelling (built before 2009).

Even though the 10/30 rule was designed to protect homes from bushfires, landowners who faced no threat from bushfires have been destroying trees across the island.

At the time then Cr Pam Rothfield said she witnessed "almost daily, flagrant violations" of the rule, but council was largely powerless to act.

"We see that this rule is so often used for clear-felling to allow for new development and nothing to do with bushfire protection, but our hands are tied," Cr Rothfield said.

Last week Pam, now retired from council, welcomed the news the 10/30 rule only applied to properties located within a declared Bushfire Prone Area, with permits largely required for the removal of any vegetation in areas where protection controls are in place.

"I am delighted that we have joined many other councils and had the 10/30 rule modified to include only the declared bushfire prone areas," Pam said.

"This is especially important for Phillip Island, as for too long we have witnessed the senseless removal of trees and other vegetation in our urban areas for the



Last year a Cowes resident razed every tree on their land, arguing they posed a bushfire risk. The felled trees included an historic Norfolk Island pine, which was more than a century old, planted when the land was home to an historic guesthouse. The contractor described the tree as a weed, to a neighbour who objected to the tree being felled.

enhancement of views and the like, using this rule as a loophole."

Cr Michael Whelan last week said he was pleased urban areas had been removed from the 10/30 rule "but we will still see it used to change the environment of places like Silverleaves".

"10/30 was always a poorly thought out rule that arose from emotion in a Royal Commission rather than hard evidence," Cr Whelan said.

"It is destroying the character of bushland settlements."

"Devastating loss"

Phillip Island Conservation Society president Jeff Nottle said the rule had led to a "devastating loss of the natural environment and loss of habitat" especially where older trees were removed.

"The loss of habitat is devastat-

ing to our wildlife and leads to dislocation of animals to ever reducing remaining habitat," Jeff said.

"We believe the recent changes to remove the 10/30 rule from most of Cowes and urban areas in Rhyll, Newhaven, Smiths Beach and Cape Woolamai are a good step forward."

However Jeff said the new rules should now be extended to other areas on the island including Silverleaves.

"The message must get out to affected property owners and council should consider contacting each ratepayer about the changes.

"Loss of habitat and our urban tree coverage needs to be prevented."

He added PICS understood the need for safety from fire, "particularly as climate change is increasing the threat of bushfires".

"Abused"

Last year then Cr Stephen Fullarton said the 10/30 rule had been abused "beyond belief".

"We must find a way to prevent it being used in townships. It was designed primarily to be used in bushfire areas and it's being used and abused in towns, which is a disgrace," he said.

Bass Coast Shire CEO Ali Wastie last week said she was supportive of the changes.

"While we recognise the significance of the natural environment in our region, bushfire safety is also incredibly important and therefore, striking the right balance is essential," Ms Wastie said.

"We strongly encourage all residents to think carefully about tree and vegetation removal and to contact council to check if the new rules apply to your property."

Traders welcome new limits

Cafes, bars and restaurants across the island have welcomed the announcement of new density limits for hospitality.

On the weekend, the state government advised new density limits for pubs, restaurants and cafes of one person per two square metres with no other cap.

QR codes and electronic record keeping will be mandatory for venues.

For small venues, there is no density limit as long as the number of patrons doesn't exceed 25.

Kimberley Brown from North Pier welcomed the changes.

"This means we are almost back to normal trade capacity for dining inside.

"Of course this will be a big help for summer trade, but it still isn't our full capacity or what we could achieve normally.

"We are wanting to make up for as much lost trade as we possibly can over these summer months, but are still doing it with effectively one hand tied behind our back."

She said they were hoping for fantastic weather and that the higher visitor numbers continued past the usual Easter period.

Neil Gillin, who operates Rusty Water Brewery Restaurant & Bar and Beach HQ, said while the further easing was good news, he needed to wait and see the details.

"For example, if patrons are still required to be seated 1.5 metres away from patrons of another group, both our venues will not gain a great deal in capacity."

The latest government announcement was "amazing", said Sarah Pedersen from Citrus & Vine.

"We are now nearly at full capacity and without the stress of counting numbers we will save time (instead of) trying to juggle bookings and having to turn away tables.

"We are going to continue to have staggered sitting times for 1.45 hours to try to seat more people, as we can only open Thursday-Sunday nights from 5pm with our budget after Covid closure.

"The government also providing a free QR code sign in process is very helpful as this speeds up entry rather than using pen and paper to sign in."

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A black night for Cowes restaurants

For the second weekend in a row, properties across Cowes were left without power.

An equipment fault at 5.15pm on Saturday left properties in central Cowes without power, wreaking havoc on Saturday dinner bookings at local restaurants and bars.

With the AusNet outage tracker predicting a six hour wait before power was restored, many businesses had to close their doors.

AusNet Services said the power outage impacted on 577 customers.

"We would like to sincerely apologise to these customers for the inconvenience caused, particularly the hospitality venues trading in the main street and their customers," a spokesperson said.

"Crews worked at the scene and were able to progressively restore power to these customers between 7.50pm and 11.25pm."

Devastating

The outage had a devastating impact on hospitality businesses in Cowes.

For many, this was the second time in as many weekends where they were left without power.

Neil Gillin runs the Rusty Water Brewery, Restaurant and Bar (opposite the Koala Conservation Centre) and Beach HQ on the Esplanade in Cowes.

Over the two weekends, the power outages have meant a "significant loss of revenue".

"Beach HQ on Saturday night lost power around 5.30pm, meaning we were unable to continue with the dinner service," Neil said, confirming over 100 people had booked in.

The previous weekend, the power outage on Sunday (November 29) due to a tree falling over powerlines, saw Rusty Water without power all day.

"From memory, the power went down early Sunday morning. Power was returned to Cowes, however Rusty had no power all day."

This meant both lunch and dinner services had to be cancelled.

"Across the day, just under 150 bookings

were lost, plus any walk-ins," he said.

"That's a very significant loss of revenue."

It's a hit that local businesses cannot afford, after a diabolical year due to Covid.

Neil said the subject of power outages must be addressed.

"Is the new expectation that every time the wind blows, the power goes out?"

At Citrus & Vine, Sarah Pedersen said although they weren't affected on Saturday night, the loss of power the previous Sunday caused havoc for them.

"We had to cancel our eight bookings so financially it cost us and it was embarrassing to have to call and cancel them," she said.

"After being closed for so long and trying to build from that, closing last Sunday was a hit in the guts."

"When the lights flashed on and off at about 5pm on Saturday night I was panicking inside as we had a function in our back room and were fully booked in the front."

"Thankfully it turned back on for us. I later found out that several restaurants were not able to trade that night which is just horrible for them."

Ocean Reach Brewing in Thompson Avenue closed the doors at 6.30pm, after AusNet advised it could be midnight before power was returned.

On The Esplanade, staff at Kristo's Charcoal Rotisserie had to leave the building.

"We couldn't stand in there because of smoke inhalation. There was no power for the extraction fans," said owner Dora Caffieri.

Saturday night is traditionally the busiest night of the week for the popular takeaway, which was forced to close after bumper sales during the day.

"We had staff standing around out the front rather than serving customers," Dora said.

She joined the chorus of people calling for improved electricity supply for the island.

"A bit of rain and wind shouldn't cause power outages in Cowes. It shouldn't happen."



Bass Coast Shire Council is rolling out Christmas decorations across the shire. Decorations will be installed in Cowes after December 13, once the schoolies period finishes.

Christmas is definitely coming

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, as Bass Coast Shire Council rolls out Christmas decorations.

Red bows on the trees along Thompson Avenue are just the start, with Christmas baubles and lights due to be installed from December 13, once the schoolies period is over.

Lights will be placed in five of the cypress trees on Thompson Avenue, between Chapel Street and The Esplanade.

From December 14, bauble decorations will be installed on roundabouts and at the bottom of Thompson Avenue.

In San Remo, Christmas flags have been put up, with red bows on the trees. The existing lights on the pine tree will be reprogrammed for a Christmas touch.

A council report in December 2018 outlined a program of funding new decorations for key centres across four financial years.

"This year, there were two years' worth of allocated funding (\$89,000) in the budget, which was used to purchase and install decorations for Inverloch and Cowes," a council spokesperson said.

"Some funding from cancelled events was reallocated to the decorations program, in order to partially decorate Wonthaggi as well. Wonthaggi will get the rest of its decorations next year."

San Remo is due to receive more funding for decorations in the 2022/23 budget.

The council spokesperson said different types of decorations were purchased for each centre.

Outdoor areas

Work will start next week to create new outdoor dining areas in Cowes.

Covid safe circles will appear on the foreshore, along with extra seating.


In Thompson Avenue, businesses creating parklets will receive specially designed barriers for the additional outdoor dining areas.

An outdoor eating area is being created in the laneway next to the G'day Tiger café and Olive Justice Place will be transformed into an area that can seat up to 165 diners.

Local events company, Over the Top Events will be transforming the spaces using timber flooring, festoon lighting, artificial grass and picnic style tables. The work is funded through a \$250,000 grant from the state government.

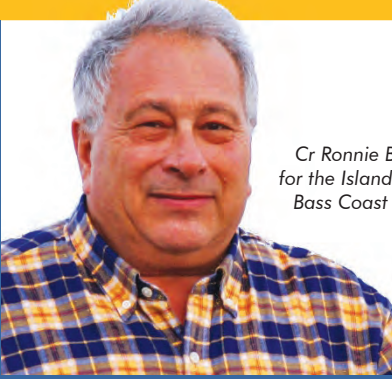
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Don't hesitate to contact me, I am here to help.



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A special message from the Phillip Island RSL and the Bendigo Community Bank branches

The Phillip Island RSL and the Bendigo Community Bank branches have, for the past seven years, sponsored the free entertainment for families and a visit from Santa before the Carols. Mums, Dads and children regard the carols night as one of the best nights of the year, but unfortunately, the 2020 Carols By The Bay evening cannot be held this year due to COVID19 restrictions.

Santa, the Phillip Island RSL and the Bendigo Community Bank branches wish the Community a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year, and we look forward to a special celebration next year.



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Over 20 years the business has built up a loyal clientele of local residents and holiday home owners and is a sought out destination for visitors. The current owner and the small team of friendly, helpful staff ensure customer satisfaction and return trade.

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Give us a sign

Surfers and Smiths Beach residents have dismissed calls for the beach to have gates that could be closed during an emergency.

The suggestion, raised in the Herald Sun last week, came after a 24-year-old woman from Melton drowned at Smiths Beach around 6.40pm on Sunday night.

The idea hasn't met with support from locals.

Smiths Beach resident and former councillor Phil Wright said he'd never heard of closed gates being suggested for the area.

He said more signage – and education – was needed.

"The reality is inexperienced groups don't understand the currents," said Phil.

"While Smiths is safe, at both ends of the beach there are gutters where the white-water energy returns to deep water. It looks nice and flat but underneath the pull is strong and at times extreme.

"As surfers we are constantly guiding people to mark a spot on the beach and when you are moved away by the current, go back to shore and start again."

He said people who weren't familiar with local conditions needed to only swim when there were lifesavers present.

Recently retired Island Ward councillor, Stephen Fullarton said language barriers created issues around signage.

"There are signs up, featuring a few different languages, but how many languages do you put on it?"

He said calls for gates so the beach could be closed were "absurd" but agreed lack of knowledge of local conditions could be fatal.

"It's a popular beach, but it is prone to having rips pop up from nowhere."



Lifesavers were taking no chances, with this safety warning sign in the middle of the entrance to Smiths Beach on Sunday.

More patrols?

Lifesaving patrols were operating last weekend until 6pm.

Predominantly made up of volunteer lifesavers, many travelling down from Melbourne, there's no capacity to have the patrols run until nightfall.

"You can't have someone there from dawn to dusk," Stephen said.

Phil agreed.

"Do we expect life savers to sit there with one or two people swimming in shallows?"

"Swim when there are lifesavers present," he said.

"The tragedy (last weekend) happened after 6pm on a day when the surf was not large but swirling, and the wind was strong.

"That's not conditions for swimming."

He believes providing easy access to rescue tubes could be one strategy to improve safety at Smiths Beach.

Made of dense foam, a rescue tube is lightweight, extremely buoyant

and flexible, so it can be wrapped and clipped around a swimmer. If a rescue tube was available last weekend, tragedy may have been averted.

"If a rescue tube was on the beach, they could have safely attempted a rescue. There is the risk of vandalism (people stealing the tubes), but it is a matter of choosing the least-worst safety steps."

Phil said he frequently approaches people at the beach who clearly have no knowledge of local conditions.

He said he saw the family involved in Sunday's incident when they arrived at the beach and thought they "lacked ocean respect", but he did not speak to them.

"Sometimes, I go and give people a little heads-up ... they usually appreciate it.

"For whatever reason, I did not do it in this situation. A five-minute chat could have prevented this loss. I wish I had my time again."



The rescue base, opened in July 2018 provides an observation tower, first aid facility and shelter for volunteer surf lifesavers from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

A life saving construction

Local surfers and members of the Smiths Beachcombers Association lobbied for more than seven years for improved surf life saving facilities at Smiths Beach.

The new rescue base opened in July 2018, a joint project between the government, council, surf life saving and local community groups.

At the time, Lyn and Ian Shand from Smiths Beachcombers Association were on hand to witness the opening, noting they'd "been hassling for this for twelve years".

Others in attendance included local surfing legend Matt Ryan of Island Surfboards, members of Rotary, Phillip Island Nature Parks and representatives from Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club and

Life Saving Victoria.

The base provides an observation tower, first aid facility and shelter for volunteer surf lifesavers from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

The elevated tower gives a clear view across the entire beach, improving the safety of the thousands of beach lovers who flock there every year, and the entry ramp provides easy access for paramedics and services.

At the time, it was noted the new rescue base would provide a massive boost for lifesavers over summer. In the previous summer, over 2000 actions or interventions were recorded, as well as 22 first-aid treatments and eight rescues.

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Smiths Beach record safety

Before last weekend, there had been no drownings at Smiths Beach in the last decade.

According to Life Saving Victoria (LSV), from 2010/11 to 2019/20, there were 13 drowning deaths at Bass Coast Beaches, but none were at Smiths Beach.

“Life Saving Victoria is aware that tragically, there have been two drowning deaths at Smiths Beach since 2000, including the reported drowning death of a 24-year-old woman last weekend,” said a Life Saving Victoria spokesperson.

Sadly, on Tuesday there was another fatality on Bass Coast beaches when a man drowned at Cape Paterson.

The spokesperson said LSV and the state government had worked closely on improved safety arrangements at beaches and waterways for the upcoming summer, in line with Covid-Safe summer recommendations.

“This year we’ve taken a number of steps in increasing our coastal safety services, as part of our summer emergency management plans, including starting lifeguard patrols three weeks earlier than previous years at tourist hotspots including Woolamai Beach, Smiths Beach, Sorrento, Portsea and Geelong Eastern Beach.

“We have also increased drone surveillance and Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service patrols during warmer weather and started our Rescue Water Craft (jet ski) services four weeks earlier.”

LSV said it would continue to “evaluate and adjust our service provision wherever possible”, but lifesavers and lifeguards couldn’t be at the beach all the time.

“As such we ask beachgoers to plan their trip to the beach accordingly and take responsibility for their own safety.”

This can be done by:

- Taking time to check the weather and conditions and assess these against your own abilities, remembering that your fitness may have decreased following a break from activities.
- Reading safety signs at the entrance to the beach and using the



Lifesaving patrols will operate on Smiths Beach every day of the week from 10am until 6pm from now until mid-February.

Beachsafe app to check the beach hazard rating or talking to the lifesavers on duty.

- Always swimming with a friend and supervising children closely around water – this is especially important after many children have had breaks from swimming lessons and aquatic activities.
- Planning to swim at patrolled beaches between the red and yellow flags – “if we can’t see you, we can’t save you”. The Beachsafe App provides details of patrolled locations and times.

Local service upgraded

A spokesperson for Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club said significant upgrades had been made to the life saving services at Smiths Beach and Woolamai.

Life Saving Victoria now funds a professional lifeguard team to operate at both locations from the end of November through until mid-February when the schools have gone back.

This means, there will be a two-person team on duty at Smiths Beach every day of the week, from 10am until 6pm during that period.

However, the club stressed that anyone swimming at Smiths or Woolamai outside of the patrol hours was taking a risk.

“Swimming at any unpatrolled surf beach on the island is a dangerous undertaking,” the club said.

The club did not support the call for gates to be installed at Smiths Beach but said there was a signage review underway to see if signage needed to be improved or added to, as it was now the busiest beach on the island.

According to the club, last summer, over 10,000 people attended the patrolled beaches at Smiths and Woolamai.

The club recorded 3747 preventative actions – including directing people to swim between the flags, closing the beach due to dangerous conditions or displaying dangerous current signs – and carried out nine rescues.

Whole of island solution needed say Beachcombers

The President of Smiths Beach residents’ group, the Smiths Beachcombers Association (SBA) has responded to the suggestion that gates be installed at Smiths Beach, after the recent drowning.

Phil Dressing said the group was pleased to see the focus on preventative strategies, but warned against knee-jerk reactions that would prove to be ineffective.

“I’m unaware of any previous episodes at Smiths Beach. I am aware of previous events at Woolamai, Punchbowl Rocks and The Nobbies,” Phil said.

Pointing to the annual report by Life Saving Victoria on drownings in Victoria (lsv.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Life-Saving-Victoria-Drowning-Report-2019-2020.pdf), he said it was “important to put things in perspective”.

He said any safety solutions and improvements should address all the island’s surf beaches.

In response to a recent article in the Herald Sun, Phil said installing gates at Smiths Beach access points was not practical.

“What are the parameters for locking the gates? Who makes the decision and is thus accountable for the outcomes,” he questioned.

“Will locked gates keep surfers and other beachgoers off the beach? Who monitors the other beach access points, eg most of the southern coast?”

Although patrol times at Smiths have increased significantly over summer, Phil said it wasn’t practical for volunteer life savers to patrol the beaches all year round.

“Which beaches should be patrolled? And what about beach days out of season, such as hot days in September or March?”

“Life savers are volunteers. The vast majority of Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club members are Melbourne based. Should they be expected to patrol from 6am in the morning till 9pm at night, seven days per week? Should they be provided with accommodation or be expected to do a day’s patrol then drive home?”

He said closing access to beaches when conditions are dangerous is a questionable strategy.

“By whom, when and who monitors, particularly out of patrol times?”

He suggested surf lifesaving floatation devices could be provided on the beach for emergency events, or local surf schools could offer swimming-in-surf and bodysurfing lessons.

“Even better, why don’t we facilitate a discussion with Life Saving Victoria, Bass Coast Shire, Phillip Island Nature Parks, Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club, Phillip Island Boardriders’ Club, Girls on Board, surf schools, related community groups such as SBA and others to think-tank possible solutions to mitigate the risks of drowning on Phillip Island,” Phil said.

“SBA would be more than pleased to facilitate such a strategic direction.”

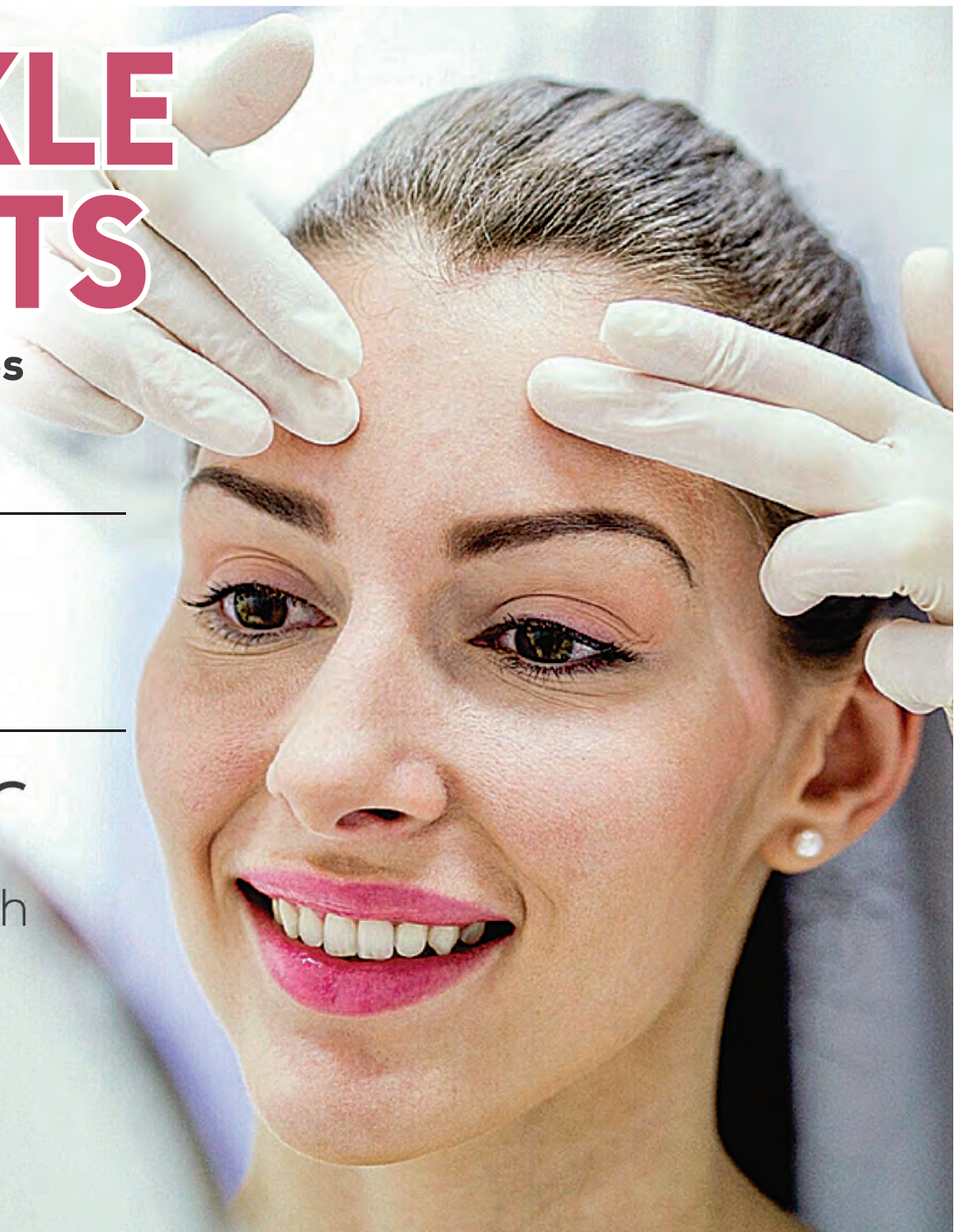
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Have your say! The community is invited to take part in online forums on December 15 to discuss the draft Phillip Island Wildlife Plan

Community forums for draft Wildlife Plan

The community is invited to bring their questions and ideas for the Draft Phillip Island (Milowl) Wildlife Plan to two online forums on Tuesday, December 15.

The Draft Plan was developed collaboratively by Phillip Island Nature Parks, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Bass Coast Shire Council, and local farmers. Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation are also involved in the

Plan's development.

"We are inviting everyone to be involved, and to share their ideas, questions, and concerns," said Catherine Basterfield, Chair of the Steering Committee and CEO of Phillip Island Nature Parks.

"There has already been a lot of great discussion around the Draft Plan and we look forward to hearing feedback from the community and providing answers to questions. This, along with the Engage

Vic feedback will help us to inform the final plan."

Each session will provide an overview of how the Draft Plan was developed and tailored for Phillip Island (Milowl), and outline the benefits of managing and living with wildlife together as a community through interactive discussion.

Book your place at www.trybooking.com/BNBAT. For more information email swp@delwp.vic.gov.au

AGL bay gas proposal "a recipe for disaster" says firefighter

A retired firefighter who has battled Victoria's most dangerous blazes – including the explosion at the Coode Island chemical plant – detailed an "alarming" litany of risks if AGL's proposed gas plant in Western Port goes ahead.

Rod Knowles, who worked for the Melbourne Fire Brigade for 30 years and is a member of Save Westernport, spoke at the inquiry into the gas proposal last week, saying AGL "had conveniently neglected" to detail the potential for accidents and collisions that would be "disastrous for the bay".

"The floating gas factory (the 290 metre Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU)) will be moored alongside a petroleum tanker which is a recipe for disaster," said Mr Knowles who lives 1.5km from Crib Point and gave a list of global LNG shipping accidents.

"(Reading the EES) we are led to believe that over 50 years LNG ships have not had problems which is not true.

"No port should have moored to its docks for 20 years a major hazard facility."

Mr Knowles said AGL was "vague" on firefighting strategies. AGL's EES suggests the use of toxic firefighting foam would be minimised in the case of an LNG leak and subsequent gas vapour cloud.

"Talking about minimising the use of foam is an insult to a firefighter's intelligence and the community's," Mr Knowles said.

"There is no doubt in my mind that any effort to fight a fire at Crib Point, and on the FSRU, foam will be used and end up in the water.

"The most success in fighting LNG fires is through foam and chemical agents. Water reacts violently with LNG and will cause the fire to intensify."

St Elmo's fire

Mr Knowles said without the use of foam the Coode Island explosion in 1991 – which was started by lightning known as St Elmo's fire – would not have been extinguished, putting lives at risk.

"The Victorian community is still suffering from the after-effects of foam leaching into the ground from Coode Island today in that it has stopped work on the Metro Tunnel (from soil contamination).

"What will it do to the marine life and water of Western Port? The beautiful bay and its pristine water would be ruined.

"Firefighters will not be worried about foam going into the bay but about saving lives."

Mr Knowles said the EES also failed to include or acknowledge "relevant world-recognised documents", which explain the "serious ramifications" of LNG shipping collisions and fires.

Furthermore, he said the EES did not analyse local wind and topography scenarios that would impact hazardous gas vapor clouds in the event of a leak or accident, nor did it include the potential for ignition from bushfires.

"The cloud won't necessarily ignite at the ship but over my home."

Phillip Island Conservation Society president Jeff Nottle described Mr Knowles' testimony as giving "the full safety horror" of AGL's proposal.

"The true risks involved in having a floating regasification storage tanker and facility in Western Port makes for very alarming listening," Mr Nottle said.

Mr Nottle and PICS vice president Jane Jobe spoke at the online hearing on Monday, followed by PICS members and

Bass Coast community residents this week.

Mr Nottle last week said their presentation would highlight the impact the AGL proposal will have on fish eggs, especially the entrainment or sucking in to the FSRU (see explanation below).

"The AGL EES states there is no scientific evidence to determine the species of the eggs entrained and no means to mitigate the impact," he said.

"Maximum entrainment will lead to maximum ecological damage. No fish eggs will be replaced by AGL so every loss is a net loss to the marine environment and recreational fishers will see an immediate impact.

"AGL need to address and quantify this impact during the Inquiry process. It simply cannot be ignored.

AGL plans: a snapshot

AGL is proposing to build a 290 FSRU terminal at Crib Point, which will suck up about 470 million litres of seawater – including fish eggs and larvae – with water discharged into the bay about 7C colder and containing up to 47kg of chlorine a day. The FSRU will receive LNG from up to 40 super tankers per year.

The Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) hearing the project's Environmental Effects Statement (EES) is being held online until December 17 and is the most complex environmental assessment carried out in Victoria.

The EES received more than 6000 submissions.

At the end of the hearing, the committee has 30 days to report to the Victorian Planning Minister Richard Wynne, who has 30 days to respond and make his decision. The Minister can ignore the committee's recommendations.

www.engage.vic.gov.au/crib-point-iac

Green sludge a dust buster

A layer of green sludge was sprayed across the centre of the Cape Woolamai roundabout and surrounds last week.

The treatment, known as hydroseeding, was applied to help deal with dust issues around the yet to be landscaped site.

"We received reports from the community about dust being blown from the site of the Woolamai Beach Road roundabout in recent high winds," said Sara Rhodes-Ward, Regional Director (Gippsland) – Regional Roads Victoria (RRV).

"We're tackling this issue by speeding-up the grass growing process with hydroseeding,

where a liquid mulch and grass seed is applied to the site and the mulch mixture helps to hold the seed and soil in place."

RRV said Bass Coast Shire Council will deliver the final landscaping at the roundabout.

In November, a spokesperson for the council said 6000 plants would be planted in and around the roundabout, and planting would be completed progressively, as weather permits.

The landscape plan includes a variety of native species chosen to reflect Phillip Island's diverse landscapes.

The spokesperson said the landscape design also "incorpo-

rates elements such as different patterns and concrete textures".

"Plants were selected for their reliability, low maintenance and safety with low height indigenous roadside plants specifically chosen for their natural forms and swamp scrub for its improved habitat values.

"Council worked closely with Regional Roads Victoria on the project, to ensure the final outcome complemented our unique landscape and did not diminish the visitor experience."

As yet, there is no confirmed starting date for the landscaping work.

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Achiever of the year Quite an achievement!

Continued from page 1

“For example, Cotton onto Craft was amazing at sourcing materials we needed.

“Even things like elastic were almost impossible to get. They found it through their suppliers. Wonthaggi Fabric and Beads helped as well.

“It was a massive community effort. Archisign went through their supplier networks and found someone to laser cut the face shields,” Mat said.

“They organised to get them delivered, doing drop-offs and pick-ups.”

He also thanked local MP Jordan Crugnale for her support – “She worked really hard with Jan Child from Bass Coast Health to get it over the line” – with government funding paying for the shields provided to public hospitals.

Community donations allowed 2000 shields to be donated to local aged care, disability and other groups.

History of support

The local community has rallied behind Mat and the incredible work of Free 3D Hands since it began in 2017.

Mat, who grew up on the island and returned home in 2017, came to international attention for his pro bono work producing 3D printed prosthetic fingers and hands for children and adults around the world who can't afford them.

His work saw him named the Victorian Local Hero award recipient in the 2018 Australian of the Year awards.

After being made redundant from the automotive industry in 2017, he started Free 3D Hands, living on his redundancy payout.

While traditional prosthetic fingers can cost up to \$6000, Mat developed a “kinetic finger” that can be made for under \$1 in materials.

Determined to make devices accessible to all, Mat began designing functional hands and fingers that could be created quickly and cheaply by a 3D printer.

Rather than licence his designs for profit, he made them freely available to download online so that anyone with access to a 3D printer can make

them. Designs have been downloaded more than 3000 times, saving recipients about \$18 million.

Originally working from a small shed at his home, at the end of 2018 he moved to the current location in the Cowes industrial estate, thanks to a \$10,000 grant.

This allowed him to increase production and spend more time on research and development.

As his work is free and charitable – he even ships devices around the world at no cost – Mat relies on crowdfunding, grants and donations.

Locals chipped in with fundraising drives and donations came from near and far.

Some generous local businessmen paid the rent on the factory space.

One crowdfunding campaign has raised \$116,000 over two years, with all that money going into making the devices.

Earlier this year, money raised by the community combined with a Bass Coast Shire Council grant and business support helped convert the factory to solar power.

Funds raised by the Phillip Island RSL in conjunction with local primary schools, plus an \$8000 grant from Bass Coast Shire Council helped pay for the solar panels.

The panels, along with two Tesla power walls means the factory now has its own uninterrupted power supply.

Covid response

Earlier this year, Mat reconfigured his 3D printers to produce face shields for medical staff, with the first batch of the new face masks delivered to Bass Coast Health.

The initial batches of facemasks were funded by Mat himself and community donations of close to \$34,000, before the state government, through Health Purchasing Victoria, came on board to fund the cost of production.

Over 4000 masks were distributed across the country to doctors, nurses and healthcare workers, as well as other essential workers.

The winners of Regional Victorian Achievement and Community Awards were announced on Friday, December 4 during an Online Awards Presentation.

Online viewers from across the state tuned in to celebrate regional Victoria's high achievers.

Awards were presented in nine different categories.

Category winners each received either \$2000 into an account in their name from Bank of Melbourne or an airtime package on PRIME7 along with a trophy.

Mat Bowtell received an addition-

al \$2000 courtesy of Bank of Melbourne and a state trophy.

The Victorian Regional Achievement and Community Awards encourage, acknowledge and reward the valuable contributions that individuals, communities and businesses make throughout regional and rural Victoria. These awards aim to recognise their success and achievements, which contribute to making regional Victoria a better place.

The nine category winners are: John Anderson – Awards Australia Community Hero Award; Leo op

den Brouw – DELWP Community Resilience Award, Ganbina – GOT-AFE Community Education Award; A Better Life For Foster Kids – GOT-AFE Community Group Award, Soilkee – Prime Super Agricultural Innovation Award, Strzelecki House a Japara Home – Prime Super Employer Excellence in Aged Care Award; Jackal Fencing – Regional Development Victoria Business Achievement Award; Mat Bowtell – Regional Development Victoria Leadership and Innovation Award; Alex Lemmon Ricoh Australia Customer Service Award.

Busy year ahead for Free 3D Hands

Not content to rest on their award-winning laurels, things are still full steam ahead at Free 3D Hands.

The factory is back producing assistive devices now, having temporarily switched production to face shields during the pandemic.

“We’ve got a local girl from Bass coming in this week to get her new hand,” Mat said.

“And about a month ago, we released our latest hand design open source.”

“So far it’s been downloaded 2200 times by people with the intention of making them for others.”

The downloads have come from across the globe, including a charity in Thailand making them for leprosy sufferers and a doctor in Poland who made it for one of his young patients.

“There are groups in Italy, in South Africa and all across the USA downloading it.

“It’s interesting and exciting to see how the design is spreading exponentially, all over the world.”

Recently an organisation in Chicago hosted a live Q&A session about the design, with Mat fielding questions for over two hours.

“We released it along with a 99-page assembly manual, which took us six months to put together, so others can replicate what we do.

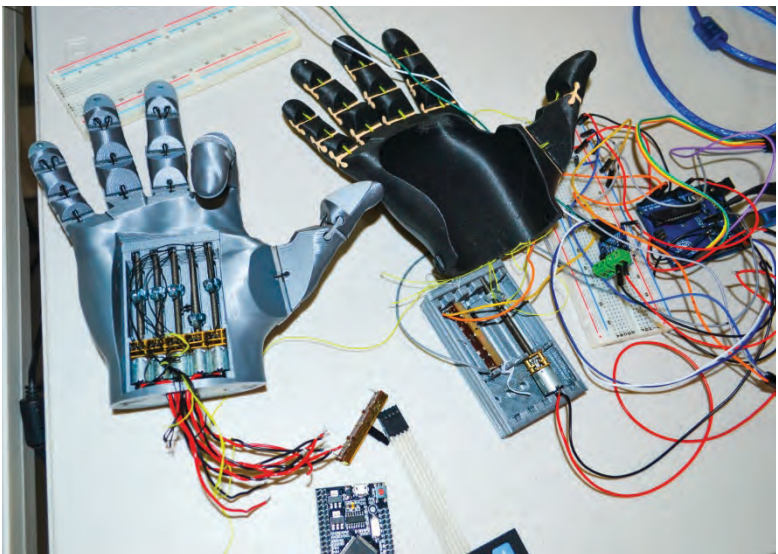
“That’s the point, it will outlive us.”

After a break over summer, “to

spend a few weeks with the kids”, Mat said there are a few things he’s working on in terms of designs.


“I’m excited to continue with that.

“I could work all year round; I just enjoy it so much. It’s not a chore.”



The Free 3D Hands factory is back producing assistive devices, after temporarily switching production to face shields to help with the Covid pandemic.

Council Update



Christmas Giving Trees

The Annual Christmas Giving Tree Program is on and Council asks everyone to participate by generously donating gifts and Christmas puddings for disadvantaged families. This year the organisation is particularly looking for gifts for girls aged seven to 12 years old, however gifts suitable for all ages are welcome. Gifts (including puddings) should be new and placed unwrapped under the trees. These gifts and puddings will be included in hampers which are distributed to local families. Christmas Giving Trees are on display in Customer Service Centres in Wonthaggi and Inverloch, the foyer of the Grantville Transaction Centre and Cowes Library. Gifts will be accepted up to Thursday, 10 December. The program is organised by The Combined Welfare Group which consists of representatives from the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, Davey House and churches from Wonthaggi and Inverloch. This program will benefit families in need across Bass Coast this year. For more information contact our Customer Service Team on the number below.

Council Meeting 16 December

Council's next meeting will be live-streamed at 1.00pm on Wednesday 16 December 2020. Join us on the live stream link www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/2020meetings.

The proposed items Council may consider:

- Annual Report 2019/20
- Planning Application 190239 - 164-188 Church Street, Cowes
- Planning Application 190293 - 58 Bruce Road, Silverleaves
- Planning Application 200080 - 21 Highview Crescent, Surf Beach
- Planning Application 200111 - 89 Silverleaves Avenue, Silverleaves
- Amendment C150Basc - Consideration of Planning Panel Recommendations
- Proposed Development Plan Endorsement (DPO3) - Grantville Mixed Use Zone Precinct
- Draft Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Council Meeting Livestreaming Trial Report
- Community Grants 2020 Round 2 Funding Recommendations
- Proposed Lease to Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club
- Proposed lease for a Regional University Centre in Wonthaggi
- Appointments to Council Committees and External Committees
- Council Meeting Schedule 2021
- COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy
- Award of Tender No. 20016 - Fincher Street Renewal, Wonthaggi.
- 2020/21 Major Initiatives, Finance and Capital Works First Quarter Report

The agenda is released on Council's website on Friday, 11 December 2020 on our website at www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/2020meetings. There is an opportunity in the Council meeting for public questions. If you would like to ask a question please submit your questions in writing no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

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Quarry operator hits back at grass tree criticism

The Grantville quarry company accused of uprooting ancient grass trees – some possibly up to 700 years old – has hit back at critics, saying the trees were removed legally.

Bass Coast Shire referred the vegetation removal by Sand Supplies to the state government for investigation after councillors at the November meeting moved an urgent motion to protect the uprooted trees, which had been dug out and bagged, “sitting in the sun”.

Council was alerted to the grass tree displacement by resident and conservationist Meryl Tobin, who made the discovery in mid-November, estimating more than 200 of the trees had been bagged.

“No government or authority would stand by and allow arguably the best grass tree forest in Australia to be destroyed if they knew it existed,” Mrs Tobin said.

However one of the directors of Sand Supplies, Robbie Viglietti, last week said his company had a work authority, or permit, which detailed “a raft of conditions” the company must undertake in terms of revegetation, translocation of trees and rehabilitation.

“It’s a condition of our operation that if we encounter any grass trees we translocate them on the site to save them, because that’s important and it’s the right thing to do,” Mr Viglietti said.

He estimated up to 160 mature grass trees – “with a visible trunk” – had been moved from the beginning of October to mid-November.

He said Sand Supplies employed a professional translocation business to move the grass trees, with some directly dug up and immediately replanted in the ground and given fertiliser.

He admitted some smaller grass trees, “with no visible trunk” had died not because of translocation but because they were water-logged and “rotten from the inside”.

Some grass trees were bagged be-



A professional translocation company was hired to translocate trees – here a bagged grass tree is backfilled, with soil taken from the same area where the tree was salvaged, according to the quarry company.

cause the services of the translocation business were not available to replant them immediately.

All trees have now been replanted. “So far they have survived. It will take months before you have a real handle on how they are going,” Mr Viglietti said.

“It’s inevitable you won’t get 100 per cent survival. How many will survive? I don’t know. All of them? I doubt it, no doubt we’ll lose some.”

Autumn?

Councillors and conservationists were critical the grass trees had been removed in the heat of Novem-

ber, rather than in autumn which is when ecologists say they should be moved (if moved at all) for the best chance of survival.

Mr Viglietti said up to 200 will be translocated in autumn 2021.

Those removed in the past two months were a result of delays due to Covid and the availability of contractors through 2020, in addition to high rainfall, which had made the ground sodden and inaccessible for autumn and winter this year.

“We watered them while they were in the sun and even diverted our equipment to build a road so a water truck could water the trees’

root balls.

“I would have liked them to be in the ground sooner. Can we do it better? Of course, we can always do it more efficiently, but there were complicating factors this year.”

Mr Viglietti said translocation had so far cost Sand Supplies more than \$60,000, so “leaving them there to die after paying that money would be nonsense”.

He said their rehabilitation plan was ongoing through the life of the mine.

“When we leave the site there will be more vegetation than when we took over.”

Future losses

He said under a detailed plan, trees were cleared as the mine expanded, adding the mine was roughly halfway through its lifespan, with about another two decades of mining to proceed.

While he couldn’t put a definitive figure on the number of grass trees to be removed in the future, he suggested a further 300 could be removed in the next two years.

“Then it will dwindle down and then after that the program will chip away at the far corner of the property where the numbers of grass trees are far higher.”

He said about 500ha had been gazetted in 1921 for sand extraction, which had effectively stopped it being cleared for other purposes such as agriculture.

Sand Supplies first started mining a 36ha site, abutting the Grantville tip, in 2002, which Mr Viglietti said was previously an old sand mine.

Conservationists argue the 500ha should become a protected grass tree forest, part of a bio-link between Nyora-Lang Lang to beyond Grantville to protect the wildlife and vegetation.

Mr Viglietti said it wasn’t a question of whether he would stop mining and translocating grass trees, but where else the state government would get its sand from for Melbourne’s massive building development.

“Melbourne’s concrete needs will exceed eight million tonnes just this year. The sand from this site built the San Remo bridge, the Wonthaggi hospital, Candowie reservoir and Newhaven College playing surfaces.

“Are we meant to close our doors and then we’ll go through another 14-year process to start a quarry somewhere else.”

He said the debate was “totally distorted”, with “grass trees everywhere, even in the tip” and the outcry reflected a more widespread concern about the growing sand mining industry in the Grantville area.

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Water levels at Candowie Reservoir remain above 95 per cent full, however permanent water-saving rules still apply. "Using water wisely is everyone's responsibility," Managing Director Peter Quigley said.

Water forecast buoyant

Water restrictions are not expected for the next year, according to Westernport Water. The authority has released its Annual Water Outlook, which considers available climate data and current storage levels for December 2020 to November 30, 2021. It concludes that given that Candowie Reservoir reached full capacity in May following significant rainfall and a "healthy storage level has since been maintained", currently at 95 per cent full, water supply "will be sufficient to meet demand in the foreseeable future". Westernport Water managing director Peter Quigley said while water restrictions were not expected in the next 12 months, permanent water saving rules still applied. "I'm pleased to report our water supply will meet demand for the year ahead," Mr Quigley said. "While we are in the fortunate position of having healthy storage levels, we are not naive to the ever-present risk of climate change." He said the authority had already seen an increase in daily demand for water over the last few weeks, especially on weekends now travel restrictions have eased. "Using water wisely is everyone's responsibility, I encourage everyone to do their bit to help secure supplies for tougher times." According to the Bureau of Meteorology's three-month outlook, December to February days are likely to be cooler, while nights will be warmer. Due to the current La Nina weather event, the Bass Coast region is likely to be wetter than average, with a 65 per cent chance of exceeding above average rainfall for eastern Australia. Despite the expected wetter than usual outlook, Westernport Water will still "actively pursue" water conservation measures, including leakage detection, education and community awareness, as well as implementing water efficiency programs. "We will continue to monitor and review supply and demand forecasts in line with our Drought Preparedness Plan," the authority states. In 2019-20 total water consumption was 2,138 million litres (ML), of which 66 was used by residential homes, with 21,567 customers – half of whom are non-permanent residents. Westernport Water is now able to access the "Melbourne Pool" of water supply as a back-up. Our key supply comes from Tennent Creek, Candowie Reservoir's primary water source, which is able to supply an average 2,911 ML/yr, in addition to Bass River and groundwater from the Corinella Aquifer. About 237ML of recycled water was used by Westernport Water and the community in 2019-20 and the authority said it would continue to seek new customers for Class A recycled water supply, "relieving pressure on the drinking water supply and reducing ocean outfall".

Safety concerns at new roundabout

Phillip Island resident Karen Easton is calling for extra safety measures at the newly installed roundabout at Cape Woolamai. Although she said the roundabout has improved the traffic flow – "I think it's fantastic" – she believes it has potentially created a new traffic issue.

She said cars are now entering Woolamai Beach Road at a higher speed, which has made turning right from Vista Place and Lantana Road, both situated within 200 metres of the roundabout, much more difficult.

"Cars are coming out of the roundabout faster and it's dangerous to try and turn right from Vista Place onto Woolamai Beach Road," she said. She's called for Regional Roads Victoria to monitor traffic at the roundabout, and for Bass Coast Shire Council to make changes at Vista Place.

"I think Vista Place needs to be made one way and I'd like it to be done before there's an accident there and someone is hurt," Karen said. Another option would be to make it left hand turn only from Vista Place.

However, a council spokesperson said no complaints had been received about the intersection. "Vista Place is the main access to the commercial area in Cape Woolamai."

"Making Vista Place one-way would force traffic into Corona Road and up Vista Drive. This would require further investigation before it could be considered," the spokesperson said. "Time based restrictions can cause confusion. Particularly in coastal townships, peak and off-peak times can be influenced by things like



One local resident believes traffic turning into Woolamai Beach Road from the roundabout is travelling faster and making it dangerous to try and make a right-hand turn from Vista Place. She's calling for something to be done before there's an accident.

temperature and wind direction. These are not easy to put onto traffic signs or enforce."

Council said there were no plans for formal monitoring of the intersection.

Speed and road rules

Karen is backing a call from San Remo CFA Captain Mark Thiele (The Advertiser, December 5) to extend the 60km/h speed limit from Newhaven to the Vietnam Veterans Museum turn off.

"I support that. I'm thinking of contacting VicRoads myself," she said.

A spokesperson for Regional Roads Victoria said the current 80km/h speed limit in the area was consistent with their Speed Zoning Guidelines.

The roundabout is designed to slow approaching traffic from 80km/h to 60km/h and for traffic to make its way through the roundabout at 40km/h.

There is no requirement for a formal monitoring program at the roundabout and RRV said they were unaware of any safety concerns.

As such, it had no plans to monitor the traffic situation.

Karen is also concerned many drivers seem unaware of the rules for driving in roundabouts and called on VicRoads to run an education campaign.

RRV advised information about the Victoria Road Rules can be found at vicroads.vic.gov.au (search 'road rules'). The A-Z of Road Rules section has a dedicated entry for roundabouts.

Sara Rhodes-Ward, Regional Director (Gippsland) – Regional Roads Victoria said the new roundabout was "a significant safety upgrade at the intersection of Phillip Island Road and Woolamai Beach Road", which was ahead of schedule and in time for the holiday season.

The \$10.486 million upgrade includes a new dual-lane roundabout, new street lighting, new footpaths, relocated bus stops and improved pedestrian access.

Anyone with specific concerns about the new roundabouts can contact RRV on 133 778.

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Stay young, stay active

Rebecca Wilson, manager at Bass Coast YMCA shares some tips on ageing well.

"That which is used develops; that which is not wastes away." – Hippocrates.

We all know the horror stories of what to expect when we age: creaking joints, slowing metabolism and sluggish memory to name a few.

So what exactly are we in for, and most importantly, how can we reduce the symptoms of ageing?

Don't think for a minute that ageing just starts at 50, but that's where we will start today.

Like muscles, fitness also declines with age unless we do something to stop it. Putting on weight, reduced immune response and reduced cardiovascular fitness are a few things that affect us. Inactivity is responsible for more than one in five cases of coronary heart disease. Memory is also affected as we age. Forgetting why we walked into a room, or misplacing our keys is not uncommon ... this is because the brain is a muscle and it is also at risk of fatigue.

The good news is there are many things you can do to reduce the signs of ageing.

Stretching will help ease everyday movements such as walking and carrying the shopping. Try Pi-

lates, yoga or a body balance class to get some length through your muscles. Strength training is essential for maintaining bone density, increasing muscle mass and reducing the likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes.

Endurance exercise like walking, cycling and swimming improves your cardiovascular health because it lowers the resting heart rate and improves the heart's ability to send oxygen to the body. It lowers your blood sugar levels and decreases body fat, which helps avoid ageing effects on the metabolism.

The Heart Foundation recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity most days.

Exercise is good for your body and your brain!

It helps preserve memory and reduces the risk of developing dementia. US research found walking for 40 minutes a few times a week boosts the hippocampus, an area of the brain that makes memories.

Exercise plays a large role in fending off the psychological and neurological changes of ageing, as well as boosting good cholesterol levels and lowering the bad ones.

Yoga and Pilates classes targeting stretching, core strength and mindfulness can help you stop (or at least slow down) ageing.



Yoga and Pilates classes target stretching, core strength and mindfulness and can help you stop (or at least slow down) ageing. Ready to tackle a pilates class are Lesley Hughes, Shayote Stinten, Rodney Baring, Astrid Strauberg, Jerry Strauberg, Virginia Baxter (Instructor), Helen Black and Kate Groves

THE WORD

We asked some of our community elders their tips for a long and healthy life.



Mark Welsh (84) – Have a good relationship with your partner, try to live your days happily by living each day without worrying about yesterday or tomorrow and finally, keep active and try to have a laugh every day.



Heather Richards (99) – With 40 grand and great grandchildren, Heather attributes her amazing health to a lifelong love of God and participation in plenty of sport including tennis, bike riding and swimming.



Shirley Courtis (93) – Shirley spent many wonderful years playing golf and her tip for living a long and healthy life is to "take every day as it comes and fight old age to make it as far as you can".



Heather Hamilton (89) – Heather's secret to living well is "try to make the best of things and always look on the bright side of life".



May Webster (92) – Living on the Island her entire life May's mantra consists of keeping fit with exercise and a mindset of "always facing your problems and always pushing on even when things are difficult."



Eileen Maiden (93) – As a member of the RSL Day Club and Legacy, Eileen still tries to keep active and loves the friendly staff at Mela-leuca Aged Care who have been amazing during lockdown.

Helping hand for business networks

Three local business networks have received grants from the state government to help them move to Covid normal.

The Phillip Island, San Remo and Inverloch associations received \$50,000 in total to support business initiatives.

Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale said the grants would help the associations by funding “buy local” campaigns and improving access to programs and services that focused on resilience and recovery.

“This is such welcome news for our local traders, visitors and residents alike,” Ms Crugnale said.

“These initiatives will benefit everyone and include streetscape changes, promotion of the natural environment, supporting and activating local businesses.”

She said the government was committed to assisting the recovery and rebuilding of local businesses.

“I want to thank all our local trader groups for working so collaboratively with

each other and for their efforts and creativity in finding new ways to bring to life their respective townships in a Covid safe way.”

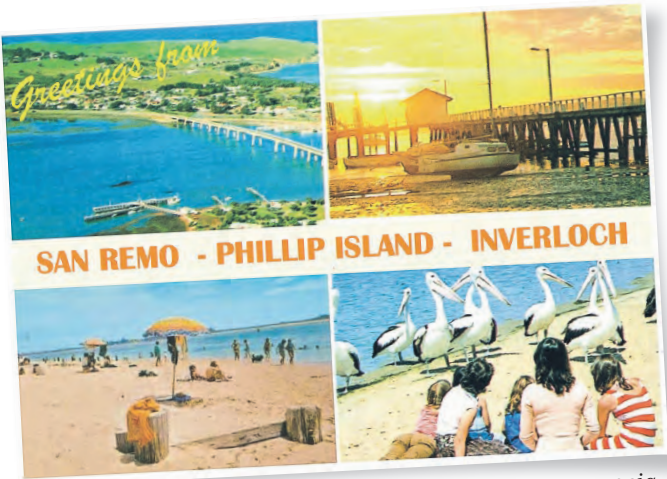
Selling San Remo

Craig Edmonds, president of the San Remo District Tourism and Business Association said their \$10,000 grant would fund a three-month TV and social media campaign to promote San Remo and the surrounding area.

“It’s a campaign to highlight and sell San Remo and show we’re not just a little town you drive through on the way to the island,” he said.

The ads will showcase local businesses, the surrounding area as well as the improved outdoor dining opportunities, including additional tables on the fore-shore.

Ads will run from January to March on WIN TV, including through the sta-



The Phillip Island, San Remo and Inverloch business associations received \$50,000 in total, as part of state government grants to support business recovery.

tion’s social media channels.

“There’s no way we’d be able to do that without a grant,” Craig said.

“We don’t have the funds for that sort of thing. We’re only a small association and we lost all our events this year, which hurt the bottom line.”

There are currently about 22 members of the association and Craig is hoping more business will get on board.

“We try and provide opportunities for our members with the events. We’ve got good members who all jump in and help.”

He believes there is a great opportunity to attract new visitors to the area.

“San Remo is a perfect location, there’s a good variety of shops. If you plonked this sort of town down anywhere in Europe, it would be buzzing.”

Island boost

The newly formed Phillip Island Business Network (PIBN) received \$20,000 to help members access support and make the transition to business in “Covid normal” times.

President Claire Sawatzky was very happy to secure the grant.

“As a brand-new group, it’s great to have this to work with.”

She said the grant would fund a project to “Reconnect, Resurrect and Reincarnate” the Business Network.

Communication is a key focus of the plan, to ensure the new network connected with as many businesses as possible.

This includes establishing a strong digital presence and helping members get access to the training and help they need.

“One of the first steps will be to build a brand-new website,” Claire said.

“This will include a membership portal and a business directory.”

In the second phase of the project, she said PIBN would build on a recent survey to establish what kind of workshops and training members were interested in.

Phase three would focus on highlighting the beauty of Phillip Island and promoting the area.

The “Reconnect, Resurrect and Reincarnate” project will be rolled out over the next 12 months.



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Santa baled up

Santa has made a welcome return to Ventnor.

Passers-by are treated to an array of hay bale displays across the year and were pleased to see the return of Santa earlier this month.

Photographer Gary Parnell captured the jolly old man on Ventnor Road. “It made my day,” he said.

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Services for those impacted by sexual assault

The Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault (GCASA) is a not-for-profit agency, which provides a range of counselling, crisis and educational services to the community, to try and reduce the impact and incidence of sexual assault.

It also provides after-hours local family violence crisis response.

A spokesperson for the centre said it strives to promote the safety and wellbeing of local communities.

"We are actively involved with local services promoting the prevention of violence in Bass Coast, including the Change for Sam initiative.

"Among our many activities, is the provision of community education about violence to schools and other community groups, and the Orange Round, where local sporting associations show their support for the prevention of gendered violence by wearing orange arm bands during a game.

"We also collaborate on joint initiatives such as the Gippsland 16 Days of Activism Film Project."

Alongside the prevention activities, during business hours the centre provides support to women, children, young people, and men who have been impacted by sexual assault and sexual violence through counselling and crisis services.

After hours, the crisis response programs continue and respond to those in need following a recent experience of sexual assault or family violence. This includes nights, over a weekend or on a public holiday.

"While we provide a wide range of services, one important and



The Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault provides counselling, crisis and educational services to the community to reduce the impact and incidence of sexual assault.

little-known service is our family violence after hours crisis support," the spokesperson said.

"Our after-hours workers can provide local assistance within Bass Coast to people who have experienced a recent family violence incident.

"We can travel across Bass Coast to meet with individuals and families to provide the essential support and resources needed to increase their safety.

"For many, this may include emergency accommodation, food, travel, support to access medical services and emotional support.

"We assist individuals and fam-

ilies to create a safety plan and provide information and referral to The Orange Door for ongoing support from local family violence services."

Anyone can contact Safe Steps (1800 015 188) to seek assistance and ask to have support in person. Safe Steps will talk with callers about current concerns, explore needs and can make contact with the GCASA after-hours team to request face-to-face support.

Contact GCASA on 5134 3922 for further information about any their programs, including the Afterhours Family Violence program.

Alarming stats examined

Crime statistics released in September 2020 showed family violence incidents in Bass Coast had increased by 17.7 per cent.

The alarming statistic put the region well above the state average, which recorded a rise of 6.7 per cent.

But it may not be all bad news. According to Acting Senior Sergeant Craig Van Breugel from Bass Coast police, family violence is an offence that historically has been under-reported.

He believes higher rates of reporting and higher detection of incidents have added to the increased figures.

"It's not great to have so much family violence, but the fact we are learning it's out there and we are helping more people than ever before – that's a positive thing.

"We have come a long way in developing our response. Compared to 20 years ago, it's chalk and cheese. As a consequence of our improved response, we're detecting more offences."

He said most people think policing is mainly about burglary, or pulling over speeding drivers, but "family violence is a massive part of policing".

And the impacts are intergenerational.

"Family violence is the cause of so many issues, from children getting removed from homes, learned behaviours and what those children themselves do when they become adults.

"It's the impact on them, it's the impact on society. It's critical we do anything we can."

Operational change

In April this year, Victoria Police launched Operation Ribbon, with investigation units contacting high-risk perpetrators and victims.

Van Breugel believes working proactively with perpetrators and victims may also contribute to the rise in statistics.

"It may not mean more incidents, just more reports," he said.

"And it could indicate people have more confidence to come forward and report offences."

With decades of experience working with family violence, he's confident new systems introduced by the police are helping officers deal more effectively with family violence incidents.

"We've now got a state-wide response to family violence and there's a code of practice which involves police intervening, doing a risk assessment and taking action based on that," he explained.

"That action may involve the police detaining a person, issuing a family violence safety notice or some sort of intervention order.

"The process is quite involved and very time consuming compared to the previous system. But it's an independent risk assessment process, not an individual personal assessment."

He said over the last 12 – 18 months all police members have been trained in the new process and he believes better training and the improved assessment framework might also contribute to the higher number of incidents being reported.

Safe Steps

Family violence rates across Gippsland are higher than the state average and Bass Coast statistics have been trending upwards since 2018 at a rate above the state average.

While the volume of reports coming in can be overwhelming, Acting Snr Sergeant Van Breugel believes improvements in services, including a central hub for police referrals, is an important step forward.

Services like Safe Steps and Orange Door here in Gippsland help determine the support that people experiencing family violence need.

When police are called to a family violence incident, referral to an agency is usually part of the action stemming from the risk assessment process.

Refuges and emergency housing both play a part in keeping victims safe.

While Van Breugel agrees with calls for increased housing, he said local emergency accommodation isn't always the answer, as small towns can't offer the anonymity of a big city.

"If we're looking at emergency housing for someone, it's usually a circumstance where it's important the perpetrator doesn't know where that person is. It's a high-risk scenario.

"We look at the immediate safety of the people involved and if the person's health or life is at risk, they have to be protected. And that may disrupt the family."

Finding accommodation for the perpetrator may also be important.

"If we remove someone from the home – that could essentially be making them homeless," he explained.

"If we can find somewhere for that person to live, even short term, it decreases the risk of that person returning to the home."

A complex situation

So why didn't they just leave? This is a common question about family violence but Acting Snr Sergeant Van Breugel said it's a difficult situation for the victims, the majority of whom are women.

"Women are often not in a great place to assess the risk around them. They may love the person, be financially dependent, there are kids involved. All these make it difficult to just walk away."

In some instances, the victims are unwilling, or too afraid to cooperate with police.

However, he said the police cannot accept the old "I just walked into a door" excuse.

"We have to look at other evidence, speak to neighbours if we can or other family members. We don't walk away."

Importantly, he said the response to family violence may involve a civil process as well as criminal charges.

"The standard of proof for a civil order is lower than to prove a criminal charge," he explained.

"For example, a civil order could be issued on the basis of the initial Triple 0 call to police."

A civil intervention order helps "give victims space" and breaches of these orders is another factor in the rising statistics.

"A breach doesn't always mean it is violent or life-threatening. It could be sending someone a text message, trying to contact them on Facebook, or even posting about them on social media.

"It might seem trivial, but if an order has been issued, there's a serious situation behind it.

"There's no such thing as a minor breach. It will be recorded and if there's evidence, police will prosecute."

Councillors speak out for respect

Across the world, 16 Days of Activism runs from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and culminates on World Human Rights Day on December 10.

The campaign calls for action against one of the world's most persistent violations of human rights – violence against women.

During these 16 Days of Activism, the world unites in an international campaign to raise awareness about gender-based violence, to actively challenge discrimination, and to call for an end to all forms of gender-based violence.

Bass Coast Shire Council has thrown its support behind this year's campaign.

"Council is committed to actively raising awareness about family violence and gender-based violence against women in our workplace and our community," CEO Ali Wastie said.

"This year we're endorsing Respect Victoria's campaign and their theme 'Respect is...'"

"We've been working with the South Coast Partnership to Prevent Men's Violence Against Women, Change for Sam – a Phillip Island based community-led initiative and the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance, to improve service coordination, information and available supports, to prevent violence in our communities and support victims."

Leticia Laing and Rochelle Halstead, the two newly elected female councillors joined with long serving Western Port councillor Clare Le

Serve, to voice their support for the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

"As a mother of two young girls and a boy I'm acutely aware of their vulnerability to gender-based violence," said Cr Laing.

"The 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence is about calling out unacceptable behaviour that undermines certain groups with a focus on women. Gender-based violence causes significant harm to families and communities.

"Coming out of Covid, women have been more disadvantaged than men and I hope to actively work to support women. Respect is also making sure we're not disadvantaged because of our gender."

Cr Halstead said respect was key to changing community attitudes and behaviour.

"Respect is valuing a person's contribution or opinion whether you agree with it or not," she said.

"Accepting that diversity, in all its shapes and forms, is what makes for a healthy, vibrant and inclusive community free of violence.

"Seeing and treating every person equally whether it's in the home, the workplace or out on the street, is essential in fostering a respectful environment, where everyone feels safe and secure.

"16 Days of Activism is a wonderful initiative reminding us of how important it is to be respectful – af-

ter all respect is the building block of all healthy relationships."

For Cr Le Serve, respect has many forms and needs to be incorporated into all aspects of life.

"Respect for all receives a lot of lip service but as a society we must make this part of our total being as people," she said.

"We must educate and offer support to all that have or are currently experiencing

violence, including family violence, gender-based violence and violence against women.

"Violence is not part of our culture but a cancer within that is not acceptable. It's only by demonstrating respect, compassion and equality for all that we will make our communities a safe place to be."

Bass Coast Mayor, Cr Brett Tessari supported his fellow councillors in calling out gender-based violence.

"I think it's important that all men openly show their support and embrace the 16 Days of Activism campaign," Cr Tessari said.

"Women in Bass Coast and everywhere should be respected and celebrated and are equally deserving of every opportunity offered to men.

"My mother and my wife are two of the most important figures in my life. I wouldn't be where I am today without them."

For information about Respect Victoria and the 16 Days of Activism, go to www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/

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Gea Lovell bids farewell to Newhaven College

In her 10 years in the job as Newhaven College principal, Gea Lovell would be forgiven for feeling like a project manager.

Over the past decade she has overseen some of the school's biggest milestones: moving the entire campus from Boys Home to the Phillip Island Road, as well as a massive building schedule that has included a new senior school, a trade skills centre, and a gym, with a roll out of renewable power making the school almost carbon neutral.

So with her retirement imminent, it's not surprising she admits that come December 31, "I have no real plans".

"I'm not daunted by it at all, I'm looking forward to it. I like to read and garden and I'm comfortable in my own skin," says the 65-year-old, who also plans to catch up with family and friends.

"In this job it's generally easy to work 14-hour days.

"The school is in a good place and it's time for a change and I'm ready to hand over."

The milestones achieved are significant.

When Gea, the fourth principal of Newhaven College, arrived in 2011 there were about 450 students and roughly 60 staff, with Boys Home Road "held together with sticky tape and paint".

Now there are 950 pupils and 125 staff, with the 2021 intake expected to be no more than 960, because "that's capacity".

"I'll never forget at my first assem-

bly in the job seeing teachers with blue binders taking the roll, which would then be entered in by a secretary.

"Since then everything has gone digital, reports, newsletters, there's even a bus app.

"I remember standing in the office at Boys Home Road thinking, where do I start?"

While the 82 acres on Phillip Island Road was bought in 2004, with the Year Nine learning centre opening the following year, Gea was dropped in the deep end when – in her first year – Prep to Year Six relocated to the new campus. Three years later they were followed by Year five to eight in the new middle school. In 2015 Boys Home Road was sold, with the entire school united on one campus in 2018.

Yet when asked if the vast campus complex is her legacy, Gea is not so certain.

"Being at the coal face with students and staff has been more important. Ultimately a school is all about the kids.

"I was asked by the Year 11s what my legacy is and it's a hard question. I don't know. I'd like to say it's the culture, the caring nature of students.

"You don't know a legacy until after you've gone."

Gea says she considers one of the greatest achievements the creation of a Concert Orchestra of about 45 pupils from Years three to 12, as well as a free music program for Years three to seven.

There have, she admits, been low

points, 2020 being one of them.

Gea touched on the past difficult year in a farewell speech to the senior school saying "bittersweet thoughts of the past year cloud my mind".

Handover

Gea officially resigned last year, with the announcement of the new head, Tony Corr, made in September.

While Tony – who was deputy headmaster at Melbourne Grammar and Xavier College – officially starts on January 1, 2021, the handover is well underway.

She says the school's previous five-year strategic plan has now wound up, with a draft new plan ready for Tony to put his stamp on.

He will arrive to several new projects, including stage one of playing fields – tennis, hockey and soccer – due to be finished on December 13.

Stage two will start at the end of December and include four netball/basketball courts, three cricket pitches and a long jump pit.

And construction of a performing arts wing, complete with theatre, recording studio, concert hall and practice rooms, has already begun, due to finish in October 2021.

Gea says the next phase for Tony will be on curriculum and pastoral care.

"There's plenty of fluidity, so nothing is locked in concrete. He might bring something different or decide a different direction. It's up to him and the staff."

Farewell

Gea will retire to her home in Sunderland Bay, where she lives with her husband John, who moved there last year on retirement, although the couple continue to have a home in Melbourne.

As such, she says she will be available in a mentor role for Tony to call, "but I won't come on site, because it's his school".

Gea, who has 44-years' experience in education, came from Wesley College when she replaced principal Michael Brewin in 2011. Newhaven College originally opening its doors with 51 students in Years 7 and 8 in 1980.

She says with COVID-19 she had hoped for a quiet exit.

That didn't eventuate with five farewell speeches to separate groups of students last week alone, a board Christmas party planned, and a staff Christmas lunch planned for the Phillip Island Winery, where they will also farewell other retiring staff David Hynes, chaplain Richard Prideaux and long-term teacher Kym Plant.

"It suits me fine to quietly slip away. It's a job I've been paid to do and enjoyed. A quiet farewell would have been nice, but every event has been special."



Outgoing Newhaven College principal Gea Lovell with incoming head Tony Corr.



Megan White – Parent and Newhaven College board member

In my time as a parent, Newhaven College has seen enormous change and improvement under the lead of Mrs Gea Lovell. Her achievements over the past ten years are countless, and she has worked tirelessly to not only grow the school in enrolments and state of the art facilities, but has provided a learning environment which has enabled students to flourish and reach their potential in all pursuits, whether it be academic, sporting, performing arts or other. She will most certainly be missed but I wish her much happiness in her retirement.



Greg Price – Newhaven College Chair

Mrs Gea Lovell joined our School in 2011. Gea has provided our school with outstanding leadership and dedicated service for 10 years. She has overseen and led great change, with our school consolidating to the Phillip Island Road Campus during her time at the helm. Gea launched this school into this "still very young" millennium and Newhaven is now a dynamic school and is widely recognised as one of the best equipped schools in regional Victoria, in both staff and facilities. Gea's skillset will be incredibly hard to replace and we will miss her.



Simon Manning – Newhaven College Chair of Finance Committee

Newhaven College has been very lucky to have a person such as Gea as Principal over the last 10 years. An exceptional hard worker, who is a great educator and always sets out to help all children achieve their best. When Gea commenced in 2011, Newhaven College was facing financially challenging times, together with ageing facilities – she had a large task in front of her. Over the past 10 years she has turned around College finances, while maintaining the ethos of the College as a low-fee paying independent school. In this time the College has moved from the Boys Home Road location and embarked on a \$30 million building program at the new site. The school has just commenced its latest project in building the Performing Arts Centre in which the College will be able to self-fund along with government grants. Gea is leaving the school in a fantastic position. The school is recognised as one of the best independent schools in the state with great facilities and great educational outcomes. Gea will be sadly missed, but is leaving the College with a fantastic future ahead of it.



In 2016 principal Gea Lovell was pictured in front of the round window at the College's Boys Home Road campus – which has served the school for 35 years – and was sold in 2015.

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Farewell Mal – we're going to miss you

A Covid safe summer

Without sirens or fanfare, a vital piece of Phillip Island's ambulance history is quietly taking his leave.

Mal McCann, the former Team Manager of the Phillip Island Ambulance leaves this week for South Australia, to be closer to family.

For over 20 years, Mal has been taking care of the community and improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Phillip Island.

His absence will be keenly felt by many in the community, not just his colleagues at the Cowes Ambulance station.

"We can't let him go without recognising what he's done," said Greg Price from Alex Scott Real Estate.

"Mal is the quiet achiever. He's always the first guy to put his hand up to help at a community event.

"Any sort of fundraiser, any community event, you can count on him to be front and centre. Our community is so much richer for this family living here."

As well as his achievements in his professional role, Mal has played a pivotal role in addressing men's health issues, working with young people and lobbying for improved health facilities.

"His working life is about caring, and that's overflowed into his community life," said Greg.

"Our loss is South Australia's gain."

Former Island Ward councillor, Stephen Fullarton said when Mal arrived on the island "he was immediately embraced by the community".

"I'd really like to acknowledge his contribution, particularly with the Scouts, youth groups, the L2P program and men's health," Stephen said.

A rich career

Like most ambos, Mal's not going to "blow his own trumpet", said fellow paramedic Mark Duyker.

Mark, a longstanding ALS paramedic who has worked alongside Mal since 2005, said his departure would be a big loss to the community.

"He's delivered babies and dealt with people at their worst and in their hour of need.

"Mal always had a smile on his dial and really engendered giving back to the community."

After joining Rural Ambulance Victoria in March 1981, Mal worked in Lakes Entrance before moving to Cowes in the late 90s as the station officer.

"From the moment he hit town here, he was very proactive in looking after the local community," said Mark.

"Whether it was training in CPR, going out to talk to community groups,



This week, the island farewells Mal McCann, after 20 years of service with the Cowes Ambulance unit. Here in 2013, Mal is at the new station, after it was put through its paces over the GP weekend.

or helping people to get better access to health care."

When Mal first arrived, the small island crew of four worked "on call".

"That means you worked on the ambulance during the day, then took it home at night," said Mark.

"You were available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's a big thing he's done for the community and I'm sure that's come at a cost for his family."

When Ambulance Victoria formed in 2008 from the merger of the rural and metro services, Mal guided the local team through the changes and by 2009 his role had transitioned to Senior Team Manager.

He oversaw the building of the new station, which was completed in 2012 and officially opened early the following year.

At the time, Mal said the new facility was desperately needed. It had space for at least seven vehicles, four separate sleeping quarters, communal areas, storage rooms and office space.

During his time on Phillip Island, he saw the team grow from four people in 2005 to 24 members today and described it as one of the busiest rural branches in the state.

"It's a very high-quality ambulance service," he told the Advertiser, as part of a tribute for the 60th anniversary.

Mark believes part of Mal's strength was his ability to work with people from all walks of life.

"He was honest, straight up and down, and very fair."

Mal represented the ambulance service on a range of different committees – "he had a logical brain, he was very good at that stuff," Mark said – and worked closely with Warley Hospital and local doctors.

Mark described him as the "voice of reason" when the hospital closed in 2008.

"Mal could see the need for 24-hour a day access to doctors, beds, scans and other services. He could foresee we were going to have to find a better solution for the community."

Community Orchard

Adrian James recently took over from Mal as president of the Phillip Island Community Orchard.

"On behalf of all of us at the Phillip Island Community Orchard (PICO) I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank Mal for the commitment and hard work that he has put into the role of president over the last 12 months," Adrian said.

"Particularly in his efforts in steering PICO through the Covid interruptions. The orchard has never looked better than it looks now.

"Mal has been an active contributor to the orchard since its inception and is indeed a founding member, working hard with his partner Deb to nurse the trees through the first summer be-

fore the irrigation system was up and running and actively contributing to working bees and events since.

"He will be missed by all of us and we wish Mal all the very best for the next stage of his journey."

Men's Breakfast

Working alongside local Baptist Minister Craig Semple, Mal helped establish the Men's Breakfast program.

The Men's Breakfast was formed following a spate of men taking their own lives as a way of dealing with personal problems.

What started as a small group meeting occasionally in a local café extended to regular six-week gatherings for over 35 men.

As well as the informal chat time, these men heard personal stories from a variety of guest speakers.

Greg Price said this work has been invaluable.

"For the last 10 years he's worked for men's health and been the convenor and organiser of these breakfasts.

"We are going to miss him, and his family.

"Because of Covid, we've missed out on a lot of things this year, right down to being able to farewell a family like this," Greg said.

"Mal's the sort of guy that mightn't want a big farewell, but we do need to send him off somehow.

"We're going to miss you Mal."



One of his more recent roles was president of the Phillip Island Community Orchard, which he described as "a village", with a wonderful sense of community. Mal (centre) with Community Orchard members Jess Moulynox and Mel Marks.



Alongside Baptist Pastor Craig Semple, Mal was a key part of the Men's Breakfast Group established in Cowes. At one of the regular get-togethers, Mal (fourth from the left) with John Dunning, Harold Jackson, Barrie Miller, Terry Holman and Frank Fokkens.

Goodbye Korral and Charlie!

After 17 years, Korral and Charlie Guy are closing the door on their time at the Rhyll General Store and passing the keys over to new owner Angela Mahoney. Last week, members of the Rhyll Mechanics Hall and Park Committee, the Rhyll Tennis Club and the Rhyll Community Association, gave the couple a warm and heartfelt thank you party to show their appreciation for the couple's service to the Rhyll community, over a long period of time.



Take the test

Everyone in the community, especially young people, is encouraged to continue to get tested for COVID-19 to build resilience against a third wave.

You should be tested if you 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.

With the return of visitors and part-time residents from Melbourne, there is expected to be increased demand for tests and on medical services, so testing times have been adjusted.

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:

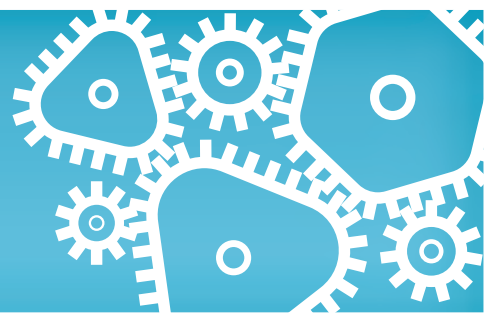
- Friday to Monday: 9am – 5pm
- Tuesday to Thursday: 9am – 1pm

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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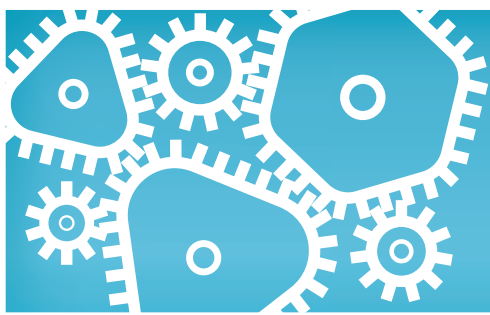
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0406 225 442
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New community library for San Remo

Work is underway on a new community library in San Remo, which will open in early 2021.

The interim location for the library will be a shop close to the town centre.

West Gippsland Libraries said the new library would provide convenience and modern services to meet the needs of the local community.

Along with full borrowing access to the entire West Gippsland Libraries collection, membership with the library also provides access to the collection of more than half of the public libraries in the state, through the Libraries Victoria network.

The library's interior will be fitted out as a flexible space including lounge areas to relax with a book, newspapers or magazines.

The new community library will include:

Accessible bathroom including baby change facilities

- Children's corner
- Reading lounge
- Flexible furniture and mobile shelving

- Free Wi-Fi
- Two public PC's
- Printing services
- Self-checkout kiosk
- After hours book returns chute
- Close to town and other shops
- Street front parking

The San Remo Community Library is part of planned service improvements for Bass Coast following the completion of the Waterline Community Library that opened earlier this year.

The interim location in San Remo will allow planning for a longer term and permanent location.

Leanne Williams, CEO West Gippsland Libraries said: "We strongly believe that our libraries play an important role in connecting people of all ages, abilities and interests."

Ms Williams encouraged the community to come and discover the San Remo library after its completion during the summer holidays.

"Our libraries are spaces where members of our communities can



A new community library will open in San Remo in early January.

connect, belong and learn.

"They're a wealth of entertainment and learning in the form of books, movies, events, PCs and free Wifi."



This fantastic gingerbread archway into the Year 6 classroom was created by teacher Tori Ryan as a surprise for her students.

Decking the halls, walls and classrooms

Students and teachers at Cowes Primary School and Early Learning Centre are getting into the Christmas spirit.

Santa is greeting parents and children as they arrive at the Early Learning Centre and classrooms are being filled with festive cheer.

Year 6 teacher Tori Ryan set the standard with a stunning gingerbread house entry into her classroom.

Other classes are now working to match the impressive effort.

Over at the Early Learning Centre, staff created a Christmas fireside nook perfect for reading Christmas stories to the children.

In the coming weeks, the school will continue the Christmas celebrations with Secret Santa gifts and a special Polar Express day for Prep students.



Karen Treppo, Coordinator of the Early Learning Centre, reading Christmas stories to the children. Staff created a beautiful Christmas fireside space for the special reading session.



Rhyll lights up

Cousins Tilly, Emily, Ash and Jack McFee, dressed to impress in Santa suits, were given the very special honour of flicking the switch on the first night of December, to light up Rhyll's inaugural Christmas lights display. A special Rhyll Lighting Committee (pictured) has been busy over the past fortnight erecting colourful lights in prominent parts of the township, and joined the children for the very special occasion. Everyone is invited to drive around Rhyll at night and enjoy the spectacle. Some local residents have also joined in the fun, and the committee is running a competition with a great prize for the most creative light display set up in the town.

Business Guide

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DEATHS

ANDERSON, Graeme "Andy"
28.9.1940 - 2.12.2020
Passed away peacefully aged 80 years.
Much loved husband of Pat.
Loving Dad and father-in-law to Terri & Hilton, Claire & Greg, Darren & Donna.
Dearly loved Pa to Ashleigh, Mitchell; Jay, Rani; Brodie, Jarrod and Jade.
"Remembered Forever Loved Gone Fishing"

ANDERSON Graeme "Andy"
28/9/1940 - 2/12/2020.
Much admired and respected brother in law of Martin.
Tight lines old boy

SIFFORD, Maxwell Neville (Max):
It is with broken hearts and sorrowful souls that we announce that on Sunday, December 6, 2020, surrounded by family, Max lost his courageous battle with brain cancer. Beloved husband of Monica. Adored son of Arthur (Arch) and Gail. Admired brother of Sam, Tom and Ken. A respected friend.
You will be forever in our hearts.

FUNERALS

ANDERSON, Graeme
the Funeral Service for Mr. Graeme "Andy" Anderson will be held at graveside, Phillip Island Cemetery, Coghlan Road, Cowes on **WEDNESDAY (Dec 9, 2020)** commencing at 11am.
Handley & Anderson
Cowes 5952 5171
AFDA

SIFFORD, Maxwell Neville:
Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Max's funeral service, at the Devonport Chapel, 117 Forbes Street, Devonport at 2 pm on FRIDAY, December 11, 2020. A private cremation will follow at the North West Regional Crematorium. Live stream is available, please go to vincentfunerals.com.au (Facebook account required).
VINCENT FUNERAL SERVICES
NORTH-WEST TASMANIA
(03) 6424 5000

IN MEMORIAM

KELLER, Ray:
3/6/1933 - 13/12/2011
Nine years since you left us.
We miss you even more than ever.
Always remembered and so very sadly missed.
Love Betty & Daughter Wendy.

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GARAGE SALES

COWES, 3 Albany Road
Sat 12 Dec. 8.30am - 2.00pm

COWES, 54 Elvington Ave.
Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 from 7.30am to 4pm.
Just Moved In Sale!
Heaps to get rid of! Outdoor Settings, bric-a-brac & clothes.

GARAGE SALE

Saturday
12th December
50 Manna Gum Drive, Cowes.

From 9am to 1pm.
Household goods, Gym bike, furniture, Xmas craft, lots of goodies.

All proceeds to Australian Red Cross.

GARAGE SALES

HUGE HUGE GARAGE SALE

COWES, 2 WARATAH CLOSE
SAT 12 DEC, 9AM - 4PM
LOTS OF GREAT ITEMS
DON'T MISS OUT

JO00495AA

SITUATIONS VACANT



Gaming Attendant Full Time

Relief Venue Supervisor

The Phillip Island RSL is offering exciting opportunity to become a member of our fantastic team. The successful applicant must possess the appropriate and necessary qualifications and be available to work nights and weekends.

The Phillip Island RSL is looking for a self-motivated, enthusiastic, customer service orientated and positive individual. Experience in a similar role with accreditations or willing to obtain, this role will work across areas of Gaming and Bar with general knowledge of hospitality and requires someone with a good work ethic and willingness to upskill.

Quick start time required.

Please forward resumes to:

The General Manager
Phillip Island RSL
P.O Box 503
COWES 3922
info@pirsl.com.au

JO00487AA

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO
ADVERTISER

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SITUATIONS VACANT

Graduate/Undergraduate Accountant

We are currently seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated individual for the role of Graduate/Undergraduate Accountant.

This opportunity will suit a recent graduate or an undergraduate seeking to commence their career whilst completing their studies.

Please send us a copy of your resume and your academic transcript together with a covering letter stating why you qualify for this opportunity, to connie@cardell.com.au

Applications close
Wednesday, December 23, 2020.

CARDELL
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

JO00480AA

SITUATIONS VACANT



TAXI DRIVERS WANTED.

South Coast Taxis are preparing for a busy summer and the easing of restrictions by seeking more Taxi Drivers.

The positions would suit both those looking to earn some extra income or those looking for more regular job.

The shifts are available from both our Cowes and Wonthaggi Depots working the areas of Phillip Island, Wonthaggi or Leongatha.

The successful applicants must be experienced drivers, be available to work a mix of days, nights and weekends and hold the appropriate licenses including the Taxi Driver Accreditation. (which can be sourced once successful).

Please phone 5951 4600 or send your resume to Brendan at: operations@southcoastbus.com.au or post PO Box 946, Cowes, 3922

Position Vacancies Bass Coast Health

Bass Coast Health is seeking applications for the following positions:

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Full Time - Closes 14/12/20

DENTAL ASSISTANT

Casual - Closes 16/12/20

ABORIGINAL HEALTH LIAISON OFFICER

Full Time - Closes 12/12/20

For full position details, a position description and how to apply, please refer to the BCH website basscoasthealth.org.au or contact Human Resources via email hr@basscoasthealth.org.au



t 5671 3333 f 5671 3300
e info@basscoasthealth.org.au
w www.basscoasthealth.org.au

JO00485AA

DECLARATION

Fire Danger Period

CFA and FFMVic will be introducing Fire Restrictions (Fire Danger Period and Prohibited Period respectively) for all private land within the municipalities listed below.

The Fire Restriction Period will commence at 0100 hours on the date shown and unless varied by a subsequent declaration, will end at 0100 hours on 1st May 2021.

Municipality	Date of Commencement
Bass Coast	14/12/2020
Baw Baw	14/12/2020
East Gippsland	14/12/2020
Latrobe City	14/12/2020
South Gippsland	14/12/2020
Wellington	14/12/2020

Certain restrictions on the lighting of fires are in force during the Fire Restriction Period. Information about fire restrictions within the Country Area of Victoria can be obtained from www.cfa.vic.gov.au, your local CFA District Office or Municipal Fire Prevention Officer.

Information about fire restrictions within the Fire Protected Area can be obtained from www.ffm.vic.gov.au, or your local FFMVic Fire District Officer.

Jason Heffernan
Chief Officer - CFA

Chris Hardman
Chief Fire Officer - FFMVic



FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT VICTORIA

FR3516



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST APPOINTMENT TO THE WOOLAMAI RECREATION RESERVE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT INCORPORATED

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, on behalf of the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change is seeking nominations from the Woolamai community to form part of the new Woolamai Recreation Reserve Committee of Management Incorporated to oversee the management, protection and development of the Woolamai Racecourse Reserve on behalf of the local and wider Victorian community.

It is the department's intention to appoint up to three community representatives together with representatives of each user group of the reserve for an appointment ending 24 September 2023.

Applications will be assessed by a panel, appointed by the department, who which will recommend committee appointments to the Minister.

Nomination forms and further information on the role and responsibilities of the Committee of Management are available from Will Hoban at Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, william.hoban@delwp.vic.gov.au, phone 0436 616 650.

Expressions of Interest should be marked EOI-1201620 and lodged at the Gippsland Regional Office at 71 Hotham St, Traralgon 3844 or email william.hoban@delwp.vic.gov.au by 5:00 pm Friday 8 January 2021.

www.delwp.vic.gov.au
Customer Service Centre 136 186

FR3421

SITUATIONS VACANT

Need a fresh start?

We are looking for three dynamic team members to join us at our Phillip Island HQ. Join a safety focused, leading employer that values diversity and inclusion.



Corporate Information Coordinator (Records Management) (Full Time, Ongoing)

Provides specialist skills for all facets of records management, privacy compliance obligations and coordinates all Freedom of Information requests.

Senior Maintenance Officers (2 positions) (Full Time, Ongoing)

These two positions provide ongoing Network Operations and Maintenance services across the Corporation's water, wastewater and gas systems.

Applications close 14 Dec 2020

For further details, please visit www.westernportwater.com.au or call 1300 720 711



Gingerbread trail spreads the Christmas joy

It certainly felt a lot like Christmas! Youngsters, parents and grandparents followed a gingerbread trail around the island, helping to spread some much-needed cheer after a difficult year.

The Marrina Mouse Gingerbread Trail was the brainchild of Belinda Phillips from Marrina Mouse dance school.

The unique Christmas journey was designed to capture imaginations and help unite the community, with a map to guide children around town to find all the gingerbread pieces.

Over 800 maps were distributed as the youngsters became gingerbread detectives, spotting characters in shop fronts all over the island.

Belinda said she came up with the concept of the trail using Marrina Mouse to help lift people's spirits.

"It's been a tough year for local businesses and a tough year for the community."

Following the map, children were able to upload the characters they discovered and go into

the draw for fabulous prizes from local businesses.

As well as posting their discovery photos online, children were able to download colouring sheets of their favourite characters and submit them.

Lucky winners picked up vouchers from the Phillip Island Chocolate Factory, Citrus & Vine and a Marrina Mouse Gingerbread doll house.

Eight students at Our Lady Star of the Sea won prizes that included Citrus & Vine vouchers, an original signed painting of trail character Elderberry the Elf, a Betty Bling doll house and Marrina Mouse books and cookies.

"All the students were given the opportunity to have a free performing arts lesson at Marrina Mouses Dancing House in 2021," said Belinda, with students able to chose between ballet, tap, jazz, drama and storytelling, or upcycling prop and costume design.

Brinnie T & Design was voted the best window display.



Four-year-old Edwina Rossiter, visiting her grandmother Sally-Ann Matthews, was very pleased to discover Renee Reindeer as she followed the Gingerbread Trail map.

"I want to thank the stores that participated, and I hope it brought business to the stores," said Belinda.

"Speaking with the families they enjoyed getting out and being together and supporting their local businesses."

SITUATIONS VACANT

Recruiting Team Members CLEANER/MAINTENANCE

Full-Time Positions, 7 Day Roster – until 30 June 2021

The Nature Parks offers a variety of career paths across a range of activities and locations, with many opportunities to work in a variety of roles.

To be successful in this position you will need to address the following criteria:

- Responsible for cleaning and maintenance of Nature Parks grounds, buildings and assets
- Demonstrated experience in a similar role, with knowledge of the safe use of cleaning equipment
- Ability to work independently, and as part of a team
- Ability to manage time efficiently and problem solve; and
- Willingness to follow instructions and complete tasks to a very high standard with a keen eye for detail.

For further information on this position, visit our website at www.penguins.org.au/about/employment/current-vacancies



Phillip Island
**NATURE
PARKS**

Please submit applications with resume and cover letter addressing selection criteria to recruitment@penguins.org.au by Wednesday 16th of December 2020

SITUATIONS VACANT

SITUATION VACANT EXPERIENCED LAND SURVEYOR/PARTY LEADER AND SURVEY ASSISTANT

Raso Consulting Surveyors is seeking both an experienced Land Surveyor with ability to Party Lead and a Survey Assistant to join our team at the Wonthaggi office in the Bass Coast.

We seek highly motivated and driven individuals to assist and undertake in projects such as:- Title Re-Establishment Surveys, Land Subdivision (Urban & Rural), Feature & Levels Surveys of Urban & Open Rural Environments both large and small scale, Site Analysis Surveys for Design & Planning, Construction & Engineering Set-Out and D-Spec Asset Recording.

Those candidates applying for the Party Leader position must hold qualifications and have relevant experience in the surveying industry.

Under the guidance and leadership of a Licensed Surveyor you will be required to party lead projects in the field and undertake computations, CAD drafting for preparation of documentation and plans.

Those applying for the Survey Assistant position should either have some experience or completed study in the field of Surveying; or have a keen desire to develop a career in the Surveying Industry.

Travel is required and at times staff may be required to work out of our Foster office.

Written applications by

Friday 18th December 2020 to:

Renae Raso c/- Raso Consulting Surveyors
PO Box 903, Wonthaggi Vic 3995
Email: renae@rasosurvey.com.au
Phone: 5672 5117

JO00488AA



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Around the Bay

WITH JIM'S BAIT AND TACKLE

It has been a strange week of fishing reports with weather playing its part in the lower numbers but even when people could get out, the catches were all over the place.

We had some tell us it is their worse week of the season so far while we weighed and saw some of the best fish for the season so far. Maybe it was the full moon.

Normally the reports slow off a little this time of the year because everybody is busy in the last few weeks before Christmas.

This year it is anybody's guess with plenty of people still booking accommodation places before Christmas and if the sun comes out, regardless of what day it is, the car parks are full of day trippers.

We are still seeing plenty at the boat ramps when the weather is fine and it is not often the jetties don't have someone fishing on them.

Several chasing calamari from the land this week with the beaches more consistent than the jetties.

While floats are normally the way to go off the beach, we had several reports from customers casting artificial jigs.

If you have not done a lot of fishing for calamari off the beach, I would still recommend a float.

Casting for calamari from the beach takes a bit of practice, if you let the jig sink too much you will lose it in the weed, but you do need to let it sink a bit. So it can be expensive if you are using good quality jigs.

Silver whiting under a float is still the preferred method from the beach and again this week produced plenty.

It is a good mixture of sizes that are being reported now. That doesn't mean we have not seen big ones, with a 3.2kg one caught in Cleeland Bight this week from a boat.

Jetties see almost everybody using artificial now and more target fishing and not so much cast and hope with the clear water.

We had stories this week of people losing big calamari from the jetties trying to lift them up instead of walking them to the beach.

While they might be well hooked, calamari have very soft flesh, and a jig will tear out easily.

Jase and Josh from Waragul Angling Club called in Friday morning for some bait and we gave them a mark to try for some whiting as they were heading out and wanted something to do for the afternoon.

They managed a few whiting in between the pinkies and

then decided to head back to the same area that night, which turned out to be a great idea.

After a few pan-sized snapper and one bigger, another rod went off. Thinking, big snapper or gummy by how heavy it was, you could imagine their surprise when a 1.6m very fat mulloway arrived at the side of the boat.

After a couple of quick photos, extra points to the guys for taking the time to release the fish and watch it swim away.

We had several whiting weighed this week for our December "TINS for TINGS" Whiting fishing competition.

The heaviest now is a respectable but very beatable 480g.

You have until December 22 to weigh a bigger one to win one of the \$100 pub vouchers, but don't forget you can weigh a couple of whiting each day for the weekly closest to the mysterious weight pub vouchers.

The whiting was all in the same places and similar times this week, but the size and numbers were a little less than the last few weeks.

With people now trying different things we are seeing as many whiting being caught in two metres of water as we are seeing caught in 10metres plus of water.

It does not take a lot of change to your gear to chase them in the deep, heavier sinkers and maybe a slightly heavier rod if needed and that is it.

Same hooks, same rigs, same baits, although you will find a small piece of squid with your pippa or pilchard will help.

Not so much in the middle of the channels but anywhere else you fish in Westernport, regardless of depth, it pays to drop a whiting in as well, at worse you might pick up some fresh baits.

Pinkies are still driving people mad with their numbers, but you just need to push through them and wait.

If you want to avoid them all together then fish towards or after dark where the very small ones seem to disappear.

It is difficult to keep baits in the water for something bigger when they are around, especially the softer baits.

Try keeping your King George whiting heads and using them, whole squid heads, sauries or garfish or something a bit harder than pieces of pilchards or squid strips.

We weighed our biggest snapper for the season this Friday, 8.73kg with another in the fish bin of just over 5kg.

We have had a lot of big snapper this year but plenty around that 4kg to 5kg and lots of reports of some quality pan sized ones.

The Corals was the place to head this week and that is where most reports came from, regardless of the time of the day.

Almost every report we had from during the daylight hours this week, of any fish came from that period, 1.5 hour before to the change of tide.

It was the same for either tide or once the tide changed it was all over.



Noel managed a couple of pan size snapper.



Matt from Yarrawonga pictured with an 8.73kg snapper.



Jase with a 1.6m Mulloway that was released after a few photos.



Sunday bowling saw (R) Marlene Puncher win the Ladies Singles against (L) Sandra Read.

Phillip Island bowls

With the further easing of restrictions, it's back to some normality for bowls.

Firstly, an apology for last week's error in not realising I had named the wrong John in the school program at the club.

It was of course John Newcombe, who has been an enthusiastic member with Kevin and Dorothy mentoring this program.

They also co-opt members of the club to assist in teaching

bowls to these young students.

The long awaited, Monthly Triples Tournament will return to Phillip Island on Thursday.

The Men's Minor competition is up to Semi-finals.

The Men's Singles will be played on Friday between (the two-armed combatants) Hans Olierook and Russell Taylor.

It will be interesting game to watch.

Sunday saw Marlene Puncher win the Ladies Singles

against Sandra Read.

The weather was appalling, with gusty winds and intermittent showers.

Sandra was a worthy opponent, but Marlene is a real trooper with years of experience. Congratulations to both ladies.

It was good to see so many spectators in the clubhouse watching the game.

Well, it was much warmer in there.

Local clubs score in latest funding round

Sports clubs from Phillip Island and San Remo were among eight Bass Coast clubs to receive grants in the latest round of the government's Sporting Club Grants Program.

Westernport Tennis Club, Woolamai Beach Surf Life-saving Club, Phillip Island and District Basketball Association and Phillip Island Croquet Club all successfully secured funding.

The grants provide clubs up to \$1000 for new uniforms and equipment, up to \$5000 for training coaches, officials and volunteers, and up to \$5000 to improve club operational effectiveness.

They help people of all ages and abilities take part in grassroots sport, no matter where they live and are a

great boost for clubs who are looking to get back on track following coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions.

Member for Bass said the program is giving "grassroots sports clubs the support they need to grow their ranks and help more people than ever play the sports they love".

"Congratulations to all our local clubs."

Grant recipients include:

- Westernport Tennis Club Inc: \$954 to purchase balls for club comps

- Wonthaggi Table Tennis Association: \$1000 to purchase tops for kids.

- Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club: \$1000 to build capacity of first-aid and emergency services at Woolamai Beach SLSC - first aid kit.

- Wonthaggi Life Saving Club: \$4450 for development of a club website.

- Wonthaggi Boxing Club Inc: \$2000 for Boxing Victoria Level 1 Coaching Course for 10 participants.

- Phillip Island and District Basketball Association Inc: \$5000 for a PIDBA Strategic Plan

- Phillip Island Croquet Club Inc: \$1000 to replace croquet hoops.

- Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club Inc: \$1000 to purchase uniforms for Cape Paterson SLSC Surf Sport and recreation volunteers.

For more information on the grants and a full list of recipients www.sport.vic.gov.au/grants-and-funding/our-grants/sporting-club-grants-program

Phillip Island Tennis

Section 1: Westernport 9.72 defeated Koonwarra 0.19, Leongatha North 8.67 defeated Leongatha 1.26 and Inverloch 5½.56 defeated Korumburra 3½.53.

Ladder: Inverloch 50.5, Leongatha North 35, Korumburra 33.5, Westernport 31, Koonwarra 10 and Leongatha 4.

Section 2: Leongatha Barty 5.53 defeated Leongatha Millman 4.43, Baromi 6.60 defeated Korumburra Green 3.50 and Outtrim 6.59 defeated Korumburra Blue 3.55.

Ladder: Outtrim 41, Korumburra Green 33, Korumburra Blue 29, Baromi 25, Leongatha Millman 21 and Leongatha Barty 16.

Westernport won well at Koonwarra's expense in Section 1 this round.

Leongatha North v Leongatha was a bit one-sided.

Gristy was part of the only

winning set for Leongatha. Well done to him going up and playing in Section 1 this week.

Korumburra v Inverloch didn't quite beat the rain and only finished six sets. The remaining sets and games were shared and resulted in a point each way.

Baromi v Korumburra Green was a good match in Section 2 with part of their match washed out. Unplayed sets are halved and resulted in the two winning points being shared.

Outtrim were four game winners over Korumburra Blue. Disappointing to hear that Sue Vansinderan went down injured. We wish you a quick recovery Sue.

Leongatha Barty recorded their first win in the Gatha derby. Well done Nicole de Longville for winning all her sets.

Patrols scheduled for summer

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

From now until Christmas Day, patrols will run from 1pm - 4.30pm on Saturdays and 10.30am - 4.30pm on Sundays and Public Holidays.

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

From January 27 until April 18, patrol times will return to the pre-Christmas schedule.

Wet day for our cricket teams

A Grade

On a wet and windy day at Cowes the A1 boys played host to Korumburra on a day that was looking like it would be hard to get a result due to the weather.

With the Cobras batting first, Simon Kirton (2 for 15 off 6) and Shiran Rathnayake (0 for 10 off 6) open up the bowling and did a fantastic job as per usual.

With Kirton taking a wicket off the first ball of the game, caught behind to wicketkeeper Jarrod Black.

The boys did as they always do and applied great pressure with the ball and on the field and were able to restrict any run scoring opportunities.

At the drinks break the score was 2 for 39 off 20 overs with the Cobras ticking along at a fairly slow rate.

This set the tone for the send half of the innings with Charith Keerthisinghe (1 for 8 off 8) and Clint (The Foss) Wilson (2 for 5 off 8) bowling the 8 overs each on the run, taking 3 for 13 as a bowling duo.

Korumburra looked determined not to lose their 10 wickets and finished their innings 7 for 63.

With the clouds looking ominous the Sharks wanted to make short work of the run chase so Shiran Rathnayake was promoted to the top of the order and did exactly that.

He blasted 40 off 20 balls with Lochie Cleeland at the end rotating the strike well.

The Sharks took just 7.2 overs to chase down the 63 set by Korumburra.

Making that the third win on the trot.

Next week we travel to Leongatha to take on the Imperials.

Go Sharks!

B Grade

B grade travelled to Leongatha to take on Town on the turf at Scorpion Park. After finally winning a toss Skipper Dave Womersley elected to bat on a pitch that looked like it might become hard work as the day went on.

Matt Parsons up from C1 opened with Kev Taylor and Kev looked on early with some nice hitting before getting too excited and was out bowled for 11.

Connor Epifano and Henry Shawcross came and went quickly, and we



U14s cricketer, Connor Macmillan takes a catch with his brother Thomas watching.

were again in early trouble at 3/22.

The skipper joined Parso and the pair knuckled down to the task at hand and began to build a good platform taking us to 3/55 off 20 overs at drinks.

With the pitch getting harder to bat on with some varying bounce and movement anything over 140 would be a great effort but unfortunately Paro was out for a well-made 18 soon after the break.

This brought a slightly unwell Finlayson to the crease (damn Christmas parties!) and the pair picked up the pace immediately before Dave was unlucky to be out caught for an excellent 33.

Matty Wright was in next and with Finno, the two ramped up the scoring rate before a nasty ball below the belt only worsened Finlayson's condition and may explain the bad call he made shortly after to see himself run out for a quick 18 and the score 6/101.

Wright and Andrew Tolley now really started to get creative when Matty was very stiff to be caught at mid-wicket for a very good 25.

Tom Niven joined Toll and with light rain beginning to fall, the pair played some great shots all the way to the close of our innings with Toll on 21 and Tom on 14 getting us to a very competitive 7/146 off our 40 overs.

Unfortunately, the showers turned into solid rain and the game was called before we could re-take the field and we had to settle for a draw.

C1 cricket

The undefeated C1 were taking on Koonwarra at Newhaven and the opposition won the toss and elected to send the home side into bat.

O'Brien opened with young Kohen Beaumont and Obi quickly was back in the shed without troubling the scorers.

This brought Tony Hornsby to the crease who is still nursing a badly injured right knee, but the experienced campaigner used all his guile to build a brilliant partnership with Beaumont as the pair batted brilliantly to put on a mammoth 147 for the second wicket when Beaumont was finally dismissed run out for an excellent 59.

Pete Cleary joined Horns and the two continued to push with the innings nearing the close when Hornsby skied a ball going for glory and was caught for a brilliant 99.

Skipper Dan McCausland was in next and with PC the pair took the score to 3-190 at the close, a fantastic score off 40 overs.

With rain threatening C1 took to the field looking for early wickets and were not disappointed with Blake Young getting one and PC picking up three to have the opposition very quickly in trouble at 4/19.

Unfortunately, soon after rain permanently halted play with Koonwarra 4/29, with PC finishing with 3/9/5 and Blake 1/9/5 and C1 certainly being robbed of another victory.

C2 cricket

Phillip Islands C2 cricketers took off to Wonthaggi for this week's game, but the skies were gloomy, and a forecast of rain proved correct. We lost the toss and were asked to bat.

Carl and Steve Burchill got us off to great start with a 45-run partnership. Carl continued his good form with 39 and Steve a well compiled 29.

Gav Excell and Kenter piled on the runs with Gav a hard hitting 30 and Dave 47.

The rain came but we completed our 40 overs at 5-180, with Mick Cleary unbeaten on 27.

The captains decided to pull up stumps and have a beer.

If anything, it was good practice.

Beaumont claims hat-trick against Wonthaggi

Under 16s

This week, the Under 16s hit the road for their clash against Wonthaggi.

Winning the toss, Wonthaggi elected to bat and it wasn't long until the Sharks struck their first blow. Opening bowler Tim Niven delivered the perfect ball, clipping the off bail and removing opener Matrix Chishalm without scoring.

Enter Jarvis Harvey (74 not out), who took no time at all to stamp his authority on the game. Dispatching the first ball he faced to the boundary, the weeks murmurings of Harvey's destructive ability with the bat had come to fruition.

A lesson learned for a young Sharks attack, who watched misplaced deliveries repeatedly crunched to the boundary.

All told, Harvey struck 14 fours and two sixes, to be retired on 74.

Partnered up with opening batsmen Jai Williamson (61), the two combined for an outstanding partnership of 103.

The tables then turned, as Heath Womersley (6 overs 1 for 10) and Ollie Hibbert (4 overs 1 for 16) wrestled control back in the Sharks favour.

Disciplined, full and straight bowling then saw wickets tumble.

Captain Kohen Beaumont then produced an outstanding spell, claiming 4 wickets in 7 balls, including a hat trick!

Taking wickets on the last two balls of his second over, Kohen returned to the crease, and sent stumps flying with the first ball of his third over, completing the hat trick.

An outstanding effort by a captain who is performing week after week.

At the end of the day, the Sharks showed great commitment to the task at hand.

Although Wonthaggi would be pleased with their total of 170 off 40 overs, the remaining eight batsmen could only manage 13 runs off their bats in total.

Next week should prove to be a great challenge.

Congratulations to Kohen Beaumont again on his hat trick and good luck for next week.

Under14s

The U14 Sharks won the toss and elected to bat, for most of the Shark's batsmen this was their first time on turf pitch.

Phillip Island golf

Tuesday, December 1 – Men's Stableford: Winner was Bill Lang H/c (22) with 40 points on a countback from Sean O'Brien H/c (12) also with 42 points.

9 Hole Stableford winner was Reg Browne H/c (33) with 20 points from Rob Leak H/c (27) with 19 points.

Wednesday, December 2 – Ladies 18 holes Stableford: Winner was Sue Brown H/c (24) with 37 points on countback to Mary Taylor H/C (30) and Janice Baker H/C (37).

9 Hole Competition – 10 players: Winner was Norma Corr H/c (40) with 18 points on a countback from Mary Smith H/c (45) also with 18 points.

Thursday December 3 – Mens & Ladies 18 Hole Stableford: Men's winner was Tony Gay H/c (16) with 38 points on countback from Harry Stirling H/c (16) with 38 points.

Men's and Ladies 9 Hole Stableford: Winner was Reg Browne H/C (33) with 23 points from Peter Matthews H/c (32) with 19 points.

Saturday, December 5 – Men's 18 Hole Stableford:

Men's A Grade Winner – Luke Zoanetti H/c (11) with 41 point on C/back.

Men's A Grade r/up – Leigh Hayhurst H/c (12) with 41 points.

Men's B Grade winner – Paul Cashman H/c (14) with 43 points.

Men's B Grade r/up – Fred Panozzo

zo H/c (16) with 41 points.

Men's C Grade winner – Mark Atley H/C (26) with 40 points on c/back.

Men's C Grade r/up – Jake Wright H/c (33) with 40 points.

Ladies competition winner was Ira Septiana H/c (44) with 40 points from Kim Rippon-King H/c (27) with 39 points.

Today was also the Members Life Plate and the winning team being Fred Panozzo 41 points, Greg Hyndman 40 points, Phil Ellard 38 points and Paul Cochrane 36 points.

Next week's event for Men is Stroke Monthly Medal sponsored by Cowes Electrical Services, club member Vince Colella.

Men's and Ladies 9 Hole Stableford: Winner was Steve Rieger H/c (26) with 23 points from Len Fenton H/c (18) with 19 points.



Captain Phil Ellard at the Phillip Island golf club receiving the Life Members plate from Life Member Jeff Bennett.



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Spots are limited. Book now at skateclub.ymca.org.au

RIGHT: Skateboarding lessons for all ages and abilities will run throughout January at the Cowes Skate Park. Photo: Kobe Ferteisk

Book in ... skate away

Keep the kids active over summer with Skate Club at the Cowes Skate Park.

Skate Club, presented by the YMCA, Sport Australia, Skate Australia and Bass Coast Shire Council, is offering skateboard lessons each week in January, from January 8 to 24.

Lessons will run on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with sessions at 10am, 11am and 12pm.

The program is designed to help

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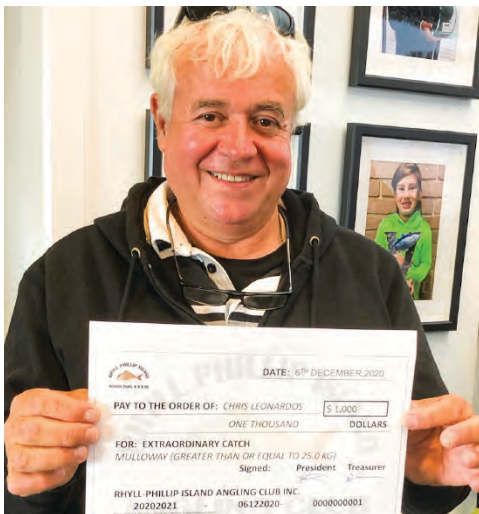
Wed 9	12.43am	7.36am	1.24pm	7.47pm
	0.62m	2.83m	0.86m	2.50m
Thu 10	1.29am	8.15am	2.08pm	8.49pm
	0.74m	2.75m	0.79m	2.50m
Fri 11	2.22am	9.00am	3.00pm	10.01pm
	0.89m	2.67m	0.71m	2.55m
Sat 12	3.24am	9.54am	83.59pm	11.17pm
	1.04m	2.60m	0.61m	2.66m
Sun 13	4.37am	10.58am	5.06pm	
	1.16m	2.54m	0.51m	
Mon 14	12.32am	5.57am	12.07pm	6.15pm
	2.82m	1.21m	2.53m	0.39m
Tue 15	1.41am	7.14am	1.15pm	7.22pm
	3.00m	1.17m	2.55m	0.28m

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Chris Leonardos and his mulloway weighing 33,800 grams (33.8 kg) – the fish was 158 cm long with a girth of 93 cm and was photographed with Chris, who is 176 cm tall (girth not disclosed).



Chris Leonardos receiving the Extraordinary Catch prize for his mulloway, exceeding 25.0 kg.



Denver Firth (left) receiving the Squidgie Mixed Bag prize from club president Albert Abram.

Magnificent Mulloway

The Macquarie Dictionary defines “extraordinary” as “beyond what is ordinary; out of the regular or established order”.

Indeed, extraordinary describes the fifth Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club (RPIAC) competition for the 2020/2021 season for many reasons.

With the start of summer, angling members had high expectations for the competition held over the weekend of December 5 and 6.

Everyone hoped for fine weather, however the Bureau of Meteorology forecasted adverse conditions and issued marine wind warnings. Somehow, the collective optimism of angling enthusiasts overwhelmed the forces of nature and delivered suitable weather for boating and angling for Saturday.

One wonders, is that extraordinary?

Considering the angling club's closure since March becoming the status quo, perhaps the easing of the Victorian Government's coronavirus restrictions could be described as extraordinary.

Certainly, Saturday's reopening of the RPIAC clubroom, with QR code check in and a density limit of one person per two square metres, was deeply appreciated by all patrons enjoying the familiar faces and surroundings.

The club has taken appropriate measures, rearranging seating, displaying signage, and requiring face masks to be used for service and to reduce risks.

Despite the weather on Sunday being a “write-off” for fishing, a total of 26 fish were weighed in over the weekend.

Whilst this is somewhat impressive, one achievement was truly extraordinary, leaving onlookers agape with amazement.

The first to catch, members only, competition

weekend Extraordinary Catch incentives for five eligible species has paid out for the first time to Chris Leonardos, for a magnificent mulloway that weighed in at 33,800 grams (33.8 kilograms), exceeding the nominated 25.0 kilogram mark and smashing the previous club record of 21,140 grams set in the 1997/1998 season.

Now, in its third year, the RPIAC's Extraordinary Catch Incentive has only four eligible species remaining for a first-to-catch \$1000 prize, for fish equal to or exceeding the nominated weight: King George Whiting (1000 grams), Snapper (10 kilograms), Gummy Shark (20 kilograms), and Kingfish (25 kilograms).

At the conclusion of weigh in on Sunday, the post-competition presentation celebrated the achievements of all anglers and attendees were delighted with a detailed and animated presentation from Chris Leonardos, describing his mulloway battle with a moment-by-moment recollection.

It appears that the beast darted to the left and the fishing rod pulsed with fury. The fishing reel screamed under the strain and the creature moved to the right.

Beneath the boat, around the boat and almost tangling with the anchor, a battle ensued.

Ultimately this ended with Chris in the boat, flat on his back with a catch of a lifetime lying on top of him.

Still in shock a day afterwards, Chris was amused by attendees suggesting that it may have been a mermaid.

Without doubt, this fishing tale will only get better with time and the angling club will be telling this one for some time.

For the record, the fish was 158 cm long with a girth of 93 cm and was photographed with Chris, who is 176 cm tall (girth not disclosed).

At the time of writing, it was not clear whether this is also a state or national record.

Reigning Squidgie Club Champion, Denver Firth, braved the conditions and tested his skills in the competition for participants aged nine or younger.

Denver was incredibly pleased to win the Squidgie Mixed Bag Points competition after catching three fish, totalling 60 points.

Second place was awarded to Piper Nicolaci with two fish, worth 35 points.

The Junior competition celebrated Brinkley Nicolaci's achievements and again she triumphed in both the Junior Weight and Junior Points competitions, weighing in a 1265-gram snapper and a King George whiting, worth 1050 points (375 grams).

The male Senior Heaviest Weight competition, Extraordinary Catch incentive for mulloway and new club record were all awarded to Chris Leonardos for his 33,800-gram mulloway.

The female Senior Heaviest weight competition was awarded to Leah Valente for a snapper weighing 775 grams.

The Senior Points competitions were won by Pat Gleeson and Debra Orr, for presenting their catches to the weigh-in masters, a trevally worth 1491 points (1065 grams) and a King George whiting worth 784 points (280 grams), respectively.

The Senior Shark competition was uncontested, and the Secret Weigh prize was awarded to Albert Abram, for a 415-gram snapper (secret weight 512 grams).

The next competition will be held over the weekend of January 9 and 10.

For further information about the club, events, competitions and rules, please visit the website: www.rpiac.com

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