

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



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## BRIMBANK

### RAIL PROTECTION OFFICERS FOR BRIMBANK

*Brimbank Leader– 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/rail-protection-officers-for-brimbank/>

New legislation to staff Melbourne train stations with protective services officers has been welcomed in the west.

From 6pm until the last train, 940 officers will be deployed to reduce crime, violence and anti-social behaviour.

Police Minister Peter Ryan said the officers would not have all the powers of members of Victoria Police, but would “be able to apprehend, detain, remove or impede offenders or threatening individuals”.

Western Metropolitan MLC Bernie Finn said Sunshine residents would “rejoice” at the news.

Officer recruits will undergo tactics and safety training for 12 weeks and be required to re-qualify every six months.

### ARDOCH'S SCHEME HITS TARGET IN THE WEST

*Brimbank Leader– 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/ardochs-scheme-hits-target-in-the-west-fbready/>

A Western suburbs program linking schools, business and community may be expanded after a positive evaluation by the Australian Council for Educational Research.

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Western Linking Communities and Schools run by Ardoch Youth Foundation have been used in Sunshine and Maribyrnong schools for the past five years.

It provides trained classroom volunteers, a corporate pen-pal program for literacy and role modelling, lunchtime activities, breakfast clubs and student career and pathway advice.

ACER's evaluation released at Sunshine Harvester Primary School recently found the project helped schools support the disadvantaged, gave educational support and enabled external partnerships.

"With more funding and increased resourcing, which would enable more business and community partners to contribute, the Ardoch model could be expanded for the benefit of other schools," the report states.

Sunshine Harvester teacher Carolyn Kustura said students had taken part in a pen-pal program, received instruments, music classes, excursions and help from volunteers.

She said the money the school paid to be part of the program was well worth it to have trained and checked volunteers. "It takes a big burden off us."

### **FUNDS CALL TO BEEF UP DOG LAWS FUNDS CALL FOR ACTION ON BRIMBANK DOGS**

*Brimbank Leader – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/funds-call-to-beef-up-dog-laws-funds-call-for-action-on-brimbank-dogs-fbready/>

Extra funding for councils is needed to make tough new dangerous dog laws a reality, says Brimbank Council.

The council has been inundated in stray dog reports after the State Government fast-tracked new legislation on dangerous dogs.

Owners of restricted breeds have until the end of this month to register them.

Any unregistered dog identified afterwards as a pit bull or other restricted breed can be seized and destroyed.

Chairman of administrators Peter Lewinsky welcomed the quick action but called for help to fund the city's extra animal management officers. The fourth is about to be appointed.

"The easiest way of doing that would be to let councils keep the current State Government levy of \$3.50 a registered dog," he said.

"Since the State Government announced the new laws, we have been flooded with inquiries about registering pit bulls and pit bull crosses."

The council does random and annual doorknocks to track down unregistered dogs.

"No council will ever have enough staff and resources to locate every one," Mr Lewinsky said. "Most of the time we have to rely on public information."

City development general manager Stephen Sully said tracking down the reported dogs had been a priority.

He said one pit bull has been surrendered and another was due to be brought in, but not one owner of a declared dangerous dog had been found in breach.

There has been no increase in the registration of dangerous dogs since last month's fatal attack on St Albans girl Ayen Chol, 4.

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### **SCRIPT MEDS ABUSED IN BRIMBANK**

*Brimbank Leader* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/script-meds-abused-in-brimbank/>

Abuse of prescription drugs is on the rise in Brimbank, new research shows.

Data from a survey by Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre, released last month, found that more than 100 ambulance callouts in the city related to common sedative benzodiazepine.

In the 12 months to June 30 last year, there were 134 calls for an ambulance, 17 more than the previous year, related to abuse of prescription drugs.

And Australian Medical Association Victoria board member Dr Gary Speck said doctors in the West had expressed worries about the increasing rates of tranquiliser and sleeping pill abuse.

“Some drugs that are valuable therapeutic tools also have the potential for abuse and addiction when used inappropriately,” Dr Speck said.

“This is a growing problem in Victoria and Australia, requiring a variety of solutions.”

Dr Speck said the public needed to be better educated about the risks of prescription drug abuse and doctors required better tools to ensure the right patients got the right medication.

He said AMA Victoria was calling for an online, real-time prescription monitoring system so doctors and chemists could look at what had recently been prescribed to a patient. Such a system was being rolled out in Tasmania.

The survey also found Brimbank had a sharp increase in heroin overdose attendances - 111 callouts, significantly higher than the previous year's 87.

A total of 1018 callouts for alcohol and drug-related matters were reported in Brimbank in 2009-10, up from 959 the previous year.

Ambulance Victoria assisted in centre's survey.

### **TRIO CHARGED AFTER DRUG RAIDS**

*Brimbank Star* – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/sunshne-ardeer-albion/312/story/139852.html>

Police arrested and charged three men last week after executing a series of warrants across the North and West.

Police dismantled a sophisticated clandestine drug laboratory at a Bloomfield Ave address in Maribyrnong and also conducted raids at properties in Maidstone, Altona, Ascot Vale and Narre Warren.

Aiden Khodher from Maribyrnong and Wisam Dinah from Narre Warren faced an out of session's court hearing last week and were remanded to face the Melbourne Magistrates' Court.

Both men were charged with trafficking a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence, possessing precursor chemicals, possessing a tablet press and other drug related charges.

A 26-year-old Maidstone man was charged and bailed with possession of a drug of dependence and other drug related offences.

A 25-year-old Altona man was released pending further enquiries.

The arrests were in relation to Operation Matador, which has been an ongoing investigation into drug manufacturing and trafficking.

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### **KIDS CARERS GRADUATE**

*Brimbank Star* – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/312/story/139855.html>

Mothers from across Brimbank's multicultural spectrum recently completed a six-week playgroup leader training course and are ready to take on caring for kids across the city.

Fifteen Brimbank mothers that completed the training course were presented with their certificates last week at West Sunshine Community Centre by Brimbank Council chief administrator Peter Lewinsky, and Playgroup Victoria CEO Vivienne Cunningham-Smith.

The course was aimed at mothers from non-English speaking backgrounds and it's the second time it's been run.

Mr Lewinsky told the graduates that having mums from all different walks of life including Vietnamese, Indian, Filipino, Chinese and Burmese as community leaders and teachers was a reflection of Brimbank's multicultural make-up.

"In some ways, it's the most important level as you are helping to educate the future leaders of our society," Mr Lewinsky said.

"Some people might laugh at this suggestion but it's worth remembering that the first woman premier of Victoria, Joan Kirner, started out as a volunteer at her children's school."

Mr Lewinsky said he was particularly impressed that a grandmother had also completed the course.

He said three participants had shown such dedication that they only broke their fast for Ramadan the night before and would normally be celebrating with family and friends, but instead were receiving their certificates.

Statistics from Brimbank Council revealed that only three years ago Brimbank was home to 41 playgroups, now, following the appointment of the playgroup development officers, the number has jumped to 80.

### **FORMER BRIMBANK COUNCILLOR TRAN SIU BANNED**

*Brimbank Leader* – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/tran-siu-banned-fbready/>

Former Brimbank councillor Tran Siu has been barred from running as a candidate in any political election for seven years.

Mr Siu, 27, appeared in the Sunshine Magistrate's Court yesterday, pleading guilty to two charges relating to using unregistered how-to-vote cards at the 2008 council elections, and providing false and misleading information under oath.

Magistrate Peter Mellas handed down a \$1500 fine with the conviction.

Along with the seven-year ban, Mr Siu has also been ordered to pay \$10,000 in costs.

When sentencing Mr Siu, Mr Mellas described the second charge as "a serious offence on its own."

"You made a false statement which led to a complex investigation," he said. "There needs to be a deterrent so you don't cross this line again."

"If people lose faith in the integrity of the system, we get to the stage where people want to second guess what their elected representatives are doing; they simply don't have faith."

Sunshine Resident and Ratepayers Association president Darlene Reilly said she was pleased with the outcome.

"It's a relief," she said.

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"It is sending a strong message for the next round of candidates, that this behaviour is not acceptable to anyone." Ms Reilly said.

Mr Siu's lawyer Pat Doyle said the former Brimbank Young Australian of the Year had led a "blameless life of high achievement."

"He is passionate about representing the community and aware he has limited his options," Mr Doyle said.

### **NAPPIES SOIL NATURE STRIPS**

*Brimbank Star— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/312/story/139843.html>

Frustrated residents of a Sunshine street have asked a nearby school principal to stop people dumping rubbish and nappies on their nature strips.

In a newsletter last month from Sunshine Primary School, the principal wrote:

"A number of very frustrated residents living on Derby Rd have come to see me in relation to rubbish and nappies being dumped on their nature strip.

"The residents have requested for our school community to please do the right thing and take your rubbish home or put it in the bin.

"The Brimbank City Council has been informed by the residents in relation to this matter."

Star contacted the school, but did not receive a response.

But Brimbank City Council's general manager of infrastructure and environment, Paul Younis, said records showed they "received one inquiry from the community in relation to rubbish being dumped on Derby Rd, Sunshine this year".

"This inquiry was received on 7 June 2011 and actioned on 8 June 2011."

"As we have only received one inquiry in relation to illegal dumping on Derby Rd this year, council was unaware that this was an ongoing issue.

"We are more than happy to work with the school and the broader community in relation to education around littering."

Mr Younis said the Environment Protection prescribed a maximum of 40 penalty units for illegal dumping of rubbish, with one penalty unit equalling a fine of \$122.

### **DANGEROUS DOG CRACKDOWN**

*Brimbank Star— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/312/story/139844.html>

Brimbank Council last week welcomed new legislation introduced by the State Government to crack down on dangerous and restricted dogs, including American pit-bull.

The move, which coincided with the opening of a telephone hotline to report dangerous dogs, came only two weeks after the tragic death of four-year-old St Albans resident Ayen Chol.

National's deputy leader Peter Walsh said the Coalition Government had moved swiftly to protect the community.

"The legislation is the first of several measures to get rid of restricted breeds, including pit-bull," Mr Walsh said.

"People should not be in fear of a dog attack when they are walking down a street or their children are playing in their backyard."

The legislation introduced last Tuesday will end the amnesty to register restricted breeds by September 29, meaning any dog identified as a pit-bull not registered after that time can be seized and destroyed.

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Brimbank City Council chair of administrators Peter Lewinsky said it was high time local governments had the power to seize unregistered pit-bull crosses.

Mr Lewinsky said the Brimbank community had been horrified by the events of last month.

“Local government has long campaigned for stronger legislation and at last we’re getting it. “Hopefully, the Federal Government will ensure that all states follow the lead set by the Victorian Government. All Australians have the right to be safe from dogs that cause havoc and harm.”

Mr Lewinsky urged the Government to introduce a new crime similar to culpable driving so that owners of dogs like the one that killed Ayen Chol could be jailed rather than face a fine.

People can report a dog they believe is a restricted breed by phoning the dangerous dog hotline on 1300 101 080 between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

The hotline should not be used in an emergency.

If people are in immediate danger they should call Triple Zero.

### **YEARS FOR SHED**

*Brimbank Star— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/312/story/139844.html>

Revised plans to construct an eco-living house away from Victoria University’s St Albans campus has angered community groups involved in the project.

Community group, Friends of Iramoo, President Jack Sheridan was outraged by the possibility that the house may not be constructed in St Albans after the latest plan revisions.

“There’s been too much time put into the development of a glorified shed,” he said, “I don’t see how a project like this should take so long.”

In 2006 Friends of Iramoo initiated an idea to renovate an old weatherboard house into a self-sustaining eco-house within the St Albans campus.

The house would be used to educate St Alban locals of the sustainable living options within their homes.

In 2007 Victoria University joined forces with Brimbank City Council and City West Water, with Sustainability Victoria providing a \$300,000 funding grant for the initial stages of the project.

But the location of the shed remains undecided.

Mr Sheridan, 81, has been preaching to the university to keep the eco-site within St Albans.

“If they decide to move the project away from our community, then I won’t be singing the praises of Vic Uni,” he said.

Brimbank City Council General Manager of Infrastructure and Environment Paul Younis said council was supportive of having an Eco-Living Centre constructed at a viable location within Brimbank, including the St Albans campus.

Victoria University Director of Innovation and Commercial Development and Eco-Living Centre chair Tina Rankovic said miscommunication of facts was the cause of confusion between community groups.

“There is nothing to say that Brimbank City Council and Victoria University cannot have a conversation about the project. In saying that, all steering committee meetings are documented and community groups involved in the project have

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representatives who sit on the committee. Nothing would have happened without them knowing," she said.

Ms Rankovic said the original expression of interest documents listed likely locations for the house, but nothing had been finalised. Victoria University said the initial project had been revised to allow for the best outcome for the eco-living house.

### **UNIVERSITY'S AXING HITS DISABILITY SECTOR**

*Brimbank Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/universitys-axing-hits-disability-sector/2281484.aspx>

A Taylors Lakes student is furious her university has cut the only disability-specific degree offered in Victoria, saying people who want to work in the sector will have limited options.

RMIT University will not offer its bachelor of applied sciences (disability) program beyond this year.

It says the 235 students enrolled in the program will be supported to complete the program or equivalent.

The degree aims to educate graduates to offer leadership, innovation and quality service to groups which support people with disabilities.

Graduates can work as house supervisors, specialist workers, program managers, case managers, disability liaison officers, project officers or in other professional roles in the broader community and disability sectors.

RMIT pro vice-chancellor and vice-president in science, engineering and health, Professor Peter Coloe, said the university axed the program because interest had diminished in recent years.

"The course recorded its lowest number of applicants in 2010," he said.

"The closure of the program has been made after long and careful consideration of a range of strategies to maintain it."

But Taylors Lakes' Alicia Spurr, who is completing her first year of a double education degree, said the axing would affect an already underqualified and undermanned workforce.

"The federal government's recent announcement of ongoing support of people with a disability and the trial of the new National Disability Insurance Scheme does not reflect the actions of RMIT University," she said.

"The alternatives offered at other institutions don't match the level of expertise required to provide quality service."

Principal of Western Autistic School in Niddrie and Laverton, Val Gill, said there was a desperate need for qualified workers in the disability field, "especially in areas like autism".

Professor Coloe said the university remained committed to providing training to people who want to work in the disability field, and would investigate the option of offering a TAFE program in disability studies.

About 40 students enrolled in the course held a rally on August 29 at the university.

"We had 1900 people sign a petition against the closure of the course and it was a positive response from the public," Ms Spurr said.

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### **FAMILY VIOLENCE ON THE RISE IN BRIMBANK**

*Brimbank Weekly– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/family-violence-on-the-rise-in-brimbank/2281480.aspx>

There is a desperate need for victim support groups and services for offenders to stop the soaring rate of violence in homes across Brimbank and parts of Melton, a new report has revealed.

Released last Thursday, *Stopping the Cycle of Family Violence: A report on Family Violence in the Keilor Electorate* calls for more funding to be directed to services like the West Centre Against Sexual Assault, based in Footscray, and an increase in resources for local police.

Recent Victoria Police statistics show the amount of 'family incidents' reported in Brimbank increased from 1411 in 2009-10 to 1696 in 2010-11.

In Melton Shire, 884 'family incidents' were reported in 2010-11 compared with 717 in 2009-10.

The report's author, Helen Tachos, said people subjected to family violence didn't have many places to go to for support.

"The closest men's behavioural change program is in Melton, which is 20 to 30 minutes away from the centre of the Keilor electorate," she said.

"It can take three to six months for people to get access to those services and if people aren't treated the cycle of family violence will only continue."

In the report, commissioned by Keilor MP Natalie Hutchins, Ms Tachos compared the amount of family violence services in the electorates of Brighton and Keilor and found there was a greater abundance of services for people living in the east, despite the rates of family violence being far lower.

"In Brighton there were about 42 psychologists available locally compared to six in Keilor," she said.

"There is a deprivation of resources in Keilor electorate, which is a big problem in areas like Caroline Springs and Hillside where young families are moving in. It is a high-growth area so young families can feel isolated by the lack of services and social events."

The manager of Family Violence Services at Women's Health West in Footscray, Jacky Tucker, welcomed the report.

She said there was a need for more anti-violence education programs in local schools.

"The only local school I know of which is running a 'building respect' program is Caroline Springs College and we there is a need to educate people while they are young," she said.

"We service areas across the western suburbs, but we only have two specialised part-time children and family violence counsellors."

### **FAIR COP FOR EVERYONE**

*Brimbank Weekly– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/fair-cop-for-everyone/2281483.aspx>

A new welcome sign has been put up on the front entrance of Keilor Downs police station as part of a plan to engage with people from different backgrounds.

The sign displays the word 'welcome' in 13 languages, including Italian and Chinese.

Senior Sergeant Grant Kelly says police want to reinforce that they are there to assist all people living in Brimbank.

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"About 50 per cent of Brimbank residents were born overseas," Senior Sergeant Kelly said.

"We want to make everyone feel welcome and safe."

Senior Sergeant Trevor O'Shanassy (pictured with Constable Alysha Clampit) said police were always keen to work with people of different backgrounds and cultures.

### **SEEING FOREST AND THE TREES**

*Brimbank Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/seeing-forest-and-the-trees/2281479.aspx>

Almost 200 students from across Melbourne have come together at Iramoo Sustainable Community Centre for an action-packed day of environmental learning.

The event was part of the annual Kids Teaching Kids 'sustainable schools youth conference', exploring the theme 'international year of the forests'.

Giving the day's proceedings a fun twist were Copperfield College students who tasted life as a teacher by organising the event and helping lead four workshops.

Year 11 student Stephanie Tedesco, captain of the environmental leadership team, said the event was aimed at raising awareness of the issues of forests and their ecosystems.

"It was great; we had 12 schools attending as well as Arron Wood, an environmentalist," Stephanie said.

"The workshops were great; there were a lot of interactive and crafty things."

The environmental leadership students, partnered by Brimbank Council, Iramoo and Victoria University, had been organising the event since the start of the year.

It built upon the success of last year's inaugural conference, which led to the school winning \$10,000 in the Victorian 'science and mathematics education excellence' awards and placed the environmental leadership team into the Keep Australia Beautiful 2011 finals.

### **WHO WE ARE, ON A SCREEN NEAR YOU**

*Brimbank Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/who-we-are-on-a-screen-near-you/2281473.aspx>

A statewide initiative to encourage conversations about culture has taken its first step in multicultural Sunshine.

Talking Difference is an online media project for young people to create film, sound, images and text that promotes diversity and nips stereotyping in the bud.

The interactive Museum Victoria project gives people the chance to see what others have created and respond with their own thoughts and content.

Centrepiece of the project is a state-of-the-art Talking Difference portable studio, which is at Sunshine library until September 16.

The studio will then move on to Sydenham library from October 10-23, and it will be at Deer Park library from November 14-27.

Immigration Museum senior programs officer, David Henry, said he was excited the project involved new technologies to create conversations about diversity and difference.

"People will not only become new media makers but will be champions for sharing ideas and dialogue about cultural identity and tolerance."

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The portable studio features a touch-screen, HD camera, microphone and lights.

A team of young people is leading sessions to help others create content for the project.

Brimbank Council chairman Peter Lewinsky said the project, supported by VicHealth's Arts About Us program, gave a voice to the more than 150 different language groups in the area.

"The beauty of this project is that the voice doesn't need to be in English."

The portable studio will eventually travel around Victoria and have a home at the Immigration Museum's Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours exhibition.

Museum Victoria will launch a Talking Difference website, featuring content developed in the portable studio.

The site will expand upon the discussion around cultural difference, identity and diversity.

### **MORE THAN SAFE HAVEN FOR A LOST LAD**

*Brimbank Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/more-than-safe-haven-for-a-lost-lad/2281463.aspx>

When Luke first arrived on Gertrude's doorstep with nothing more than a suitcase, he was a scared and deeply mistrustful little boy.

But six years on he has transformed into a happy 18-year-old with all the hopes and dreams of any other young adult.

Neither Luke nor Gertrude want their surname revealed.

Luke is one of the many young people across Melbourne living in foster care.

Unable to be cared for by his own mother, he never felt safe or stable before arriving with Gertrude.

These days, he's part of the family and gets along very well with Gertrude and her adult children.

Gertrude and her husband Charles first became foster carers in 2003.

Charles died recently, but the Brimbank grandmother wants to continue providing care, adding to the 21 foster kids who have already passed through her home.

"I have four children of my own, but I treat everyone who comes through as I would treat my own children," she says.

"I tell them, 'If you have a problem you must talk to me about it'. The best thing you can do is show them some love."

When foster children first arrive, Gertrude tells them they have a roof, they are safe and they can stay as long as they need.

"You don't expect miracles straight away, but over time trust builds."

Luke was 10 before he first went to school so he's had a lot of ground to make up. But Gertrude has worked with him on his counting and reading and he's come along in leaps and bounds.

Luke enjoys sharing jobs around the house, shopping and cooking. "I'm doing some work experience and staying in school for another year. I would really like to go into retail," he says.

Luke was placed with Gertrude as part of the Salvation Army Westcare adolescent community placement (ACP) program for 12-18-year-olds.

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Westcare social worker Bruce Cameron says 24 young people are in the program and more foster carers are needed in the western suburbs for this age group. As part of Foster Care Week (September 12-18), Westcare is encouraging people to find out how they can help.

"The young people referred to the ACP people come from a range of circumstances," Mr Cameron says.

"Backgrounds of abuse, neglect and rejection are fairly common denominators, as are significant family conflict. But no two situations are exactly the same."

Foster carers can provide different types of care, including weekend respite placements or other short-term care.

Gertrude encourages people to find more out about the program and give foster caring a go.

"It's so rewarding to see the changes they make and to know you've helped them find their way. I'm 62 and I won't stop looking after kids as long as I am healthy."

### **ELECTORAL REVIEW BACKS STATUS QUO IN BRIMBANK**

*Brimbank Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/electoral-review-backs-status-quo-in-brimbank/2281471.aspx>

A report on the future of electoral representation in Brimbank has rejected calls for a reduction in the number of councillors.

The Electoral Representation Review preliminary report released by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) last week has made the case for retaining 11 councillors across four wards.

Six of 10 public submissions called for fewer councillors and the same number wanted fewer wards.

But the "preferred" of three options put forward by the VEC argues that 11 councillors are needed to represent Melbourne's most populated local government area, particularly due to cultural diversity increasing councillor workloads.

The VEC recommends that 11 councillors be elected from three three-councillor wards and one two-councillor ward, retaining the current boundaries of Grasslands, Harvester, Horseshoe Bend and Taylors wards.

A second option is for the same structure but with new boundaries.

The final alternative is for 12 councillors in four three-councillor wards, an option that increases the risk of tied votes.

The review is the first since 2005, when Brimbank switched from nine single-councillor wards.

Many submissions made reference to the 2009 dismissal of the council and the need to improve the behaviour that led to its downfall.

Some wanted to extend the administrators' term, a decision that is in the hands of Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell.

Keilor Residents and Ratepayers Association called for five two-councillor wards.

George Seitz, a Labor Party powerbroker tipped to be eyeing off the mayoralty, wants fewer councillors.

"Other municipalities ... have successfully demonstrated over the years that a smaller number of councillors, with bigger issues than ever have been faced by Brimbank, have been able to manage the affairs of the city without any acrimonious personality or prodigious interfering in their decision making and policy settings," Mr Seitz said.

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The preliminary report is available at [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au) or by calling 131832 or at council offices.

Responses must be submitted in writing by 5pm on September 27.

A public hearing will be held on October 3 at the Errington Community Centre in St Albans.

### **TRADERS WANT CAMERAS 'CLICKING' ON CRIME**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/traders-want-cameras-clicking-on-crime/2281474.aspx>

Brimbank traders say there is a desperate need for closed-circuit TV cameras to be installed along shopping strips to reduce crime rates.

Crime statistics released last week reveal incidents of assault and robbery are soaring in the north-west.

There were more than 1700 incidents of property damage in Brimbank last financial year, an increase of 13 per cent.

Crime against the person increased 22.7 per cent, assaults were up 33.6 per cent, robbery offences 32.3 per cent and arson incidents rose 53.2 per cent.

The municipality's general crime rate was up 12.2 per cent.

Inspector Mick Grainger said the level of assaults and property crime, including burglary and theft, remained a concern.

St Albans Traders Association secretary Asip Demiri said many traders had experienced break-ins in recent months, and they wanted cameras introduced immediately.

"Cameras should have been installed years ago and police and the Brimbank Council need to get together and make sure it happens," he said.

"A lot of the criminals hang around local shopping centres so we need cameras on the street to catch them."

Ross Morfea, owner of Sole to Sole Locksmiths in St Albans, said his store was broken into in January and he feared it would happen again.

"It was the third time I've been broken into and I see a lot of things happen on the street, including bag snatching," he said.

"We need more police on foot patrol and I think cameras could solve a lot of problems."

Theft of motor vehicles was up by 28.8 per cent over the past 12 months, and Acting Inspector Paul Allinson urged residents to take steps to ensure their cars were harder to steal.

"Residents with an older car should put an immobiliser or alarm system in it," he said.

Although family incident reports increased from 1411 in 2009-10 to 1696 in 2010-11, Acting Inspector Allinson claimed the statistics showed Brimbank residents subjected to violence were more confident to come forward.

"Family violence is a significant driver for homicide-related crime, so if people report violence in the home immediately there's a chance we can break the cycle of family violence," he said.

Manager of family violence services at Women's Health West in Footscray, Jacky Tucker, said pressures on families in Brimbank could be responsible for the rise in assaults and 'family incidents' being reported.

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"There is a high number of young families in Brimbank who are under a lot of pressure financially and there aren't enough services out there to support them," she said.

### **GRANT TO EASE YOUNG AFRICANS' ISOLATION**

*Brimbank Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/grant-to-ease-young-africans-isolation/2281475.aspx>

A pilot project helping young people from African backgrounds has been thrown a lifeline by the federal government.

A \$60,000 grant to the Brimbank Youth Pilot Project will help build upon the breakthrough work of the two-year program run by the Centre for Multicultural Youth.

The project is working to address the experience of isolation and distrust of young men from African communities struggling to engage with education and find jobs.

Project officer Girma Seid said the program helped disengaged young African Australians sort out difficulties with settlement, the legal system and family relationships.

"Most of the young people we met were discouraged by their experiences with social services," he said.

"We try and engage them by running group workshops, providing information sessions on education and training, as well as mentoring."

Participant Augustino Daw said the program had transformed the lives of a number of young people considered by many to be beyond hope.

He said it assisted with getting them off the street, helping sort out legal troubles and laying foundations for employment.

"Girma made it clear we have to help ourselves; no one is going to pick us up," Mr Daw said.

"We've got to be self-reliant. I won't say things are perfect, but we've come a long way. Hopefully, we can lead by example."

Dominic Matiang, a peer facilitator for the project, believes education will be the key for the next generation of African-Australians.

"If you give young people the right start, they will be able to contribute to society."

Mr Matiang has praised police for building better relationships through initiatives such as camps, but he remains frustrated at the difficulty of finding work.

"You can't just be good. You have to be much better than just the average to be accepted and you have to work 10 times harder to seem better. But if you give us a chance, you won't regret it."

The \$60,000 grant, which will keep the project running for 12 more months, was announced at Sunshine's Visy Cares Hub last week by Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Kate Lundy.

She said the grant would enable the Centre for Multicultural Youth to continue working with African youth and complement existing education and training services.

"More than 20 per cent of the African humanitarian entrants who entered Australia in the past five years are in Victoria," Senator Lundy said.

"Many of them face challenges as they settle into their lives because of factors including low levels of literacy in English and their own language, years spent in refugee camps and significant experiences of torture and trauma."

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### **D-DAY FOR DANGEROUS DOGS**

*Brimbank Weekly* – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/dday-for-dangerous-dogs/2281470.aspx>

Owners of dangerous dogs have just three weeks to register them or face the animals being destroyed.

State Parliament has fast-tracked tough new laws that will crack down on dangerous and restricted dogs such as American pit bulls.

And a hotline has been established that gives residents the opportunity to do a dangerous dog.

The laws were rushed through in response to the death of four-year-old Ayen Chol, who was fatally mauled by a neighbour's pit bull-cross in St Albans last month.

Agriculture Minister Peter Walsh said the legislation was the first of several measures to get rid of restricted breeds, including pit bulls.

"People should not be in fear of a dog attack when they are walking down a street or their children are playing in their backyard," he said.

An amnesty for the registration of restricted breeds ends on September 29.

Any dog identified as a pit bull which is not registered after that time can be seized and destroyed.

The changes will close legal loopholes to ensure pit bull-crosses become a restricted breed.

Brimbank Council chairman Peter Lewinsky said the move was long overdue but welcome.

He said the death of Ayen Chol had horrified the community and the nation.

He wants the federal government to ensure all states follow suit with the law changes.

Brimbank has 50 registered dangerous dogs, and the council supports the 'dob in a dangerous dog' hotline. Council received 64 inquiries about the new laws in the first two days after they were passed.

Since the attack on Ayen, one dangerous dog has been registered in Brimbank, 20 owners have made registration inquiries and residents have doxed in 12 suspected dangerous dogs.

An unregistered pit bull was surrendered to council on Thursday and taken to the Lost Dogs' Home.

Mr Lewinsky said random and annual door knocks to track down unregistered animals were not enough to locate every dangerous dog.

"Most of the time we have to rely on public information," he said.

Mr Lewinsky called on the state government to help fund extra animal management officers to ensure the new laws can be followed through.

Lost Dogs Home managing director, Dr Graeme Smith, believes the new legislation is "fantastic".

"The idea of people being culpable for the actions of their dogs would be good," he said.

However, the RSPCA has concerns for breeds that could be mistaken for a pit bull and has received calls from people worried their pet could be targeted and put down.

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A spokeswoman for Mr Walsh said a new charge similar to the charge for dangerous driving would make owners of restricted or dangerous dogs responsible for the behaviour of their dogs.

"This only pertains to restricted breeds or dangerous dogs, you're not going to jail if your Chihuahua gives someone a nip on the heel."

The amendments to the Crime Act should be considered by Parliament before the end of the month.

People can report a dog they believe is a restricted breed by phoning the dangerous dog hotline on 1300101080.

### **BRIMBANK, THE PLAYFUL CITY**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/brimbank-the-playful-city/2281476.aspx>

An explosion of playgroup popularity has brought the number of such groups in Brimbank to 80, double the number that existed just three years ago.

A new group of 15 Brimbank mothers has qualified to run the groups after graduating from a six-week course provided by The Smith Family and Brimbank Council.

They were the second set of graduates from the playgroup leader course, aimed at mothers with non-English-speaking backgrounds.

Presenting the certificates at West Sunshine Community Centre last week, council chairman Peter Lewinsky said having mothers from Vietnamese, Indian, Filipino, Chinese and Burmese backgrounds reflected the area's multicultural makeup.

"It's worth remembering Victoria's first woman premier, Joan Kirner, started out as a volunteer at her children's school. I was particularly impressed that a grandmother also completed the course," Mr Lewinsky said.

The course was so popular that some volunteers had to be turned away.

The new leaders were taught how to run an effective playgroup, gained first-aid certificates and learned about healthy eating, early literacy and learning through play.

Mr Lewinsky said being part of a playgroup gave children social and intellectual skills that would serve them for the rest of their lives.

### **SONGS HIGHLIGHT CHILDREN'S PLIGHT**

*Brimbank Leader*— 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/lifestyle/story/songs-highlight-childrens-plaint-fbready/>

A children's choir from Uganda will make a stop in St Albans during its tour of Australia and New Zealand.

The Watoto Children's Choir consists of 22 children, aged between eight and 13, who have lost parents to AIDS, war or famine, or been abandoned.

The children and their chaperones will be hosted by local members of Grow Church while they are in Brimbank to perform on September 7.

Pastor Chris Kolle said the church wanted to get behind the concert to raise awareness of the difficult circumstances facing orphans and vulnerable children.

"We've got a lot of Africans in the church, so we're very aware of the plight of people, especially refugees, who've come from difficult situations," he said.

"I think there's a lot of stereotypes attached and this will bring some understanding to the community.

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“Some of the people in our community have been through traumas that we could not even imagine.”

Watoto Childcare Ministries cares for more than 2000 in the villages of Bbira, Suubi and Laminadera.

The free concert will be held at 7pm at Grow Church, 95 Alfrieda St.

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## HOBSONS BAY

### **BRIFFA BLOW**

*Hobsons Bay Star* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/williamstown-altona-laverton/312/story/140007.html>

Hobsons Bay Deputy Mayor Tony Briffa has been ordered to attend counselling for misconduct.

In a major scandal, Cr Briffa was taken to a Councillor Conduct Panel after allegations he sent threatening emails to Altona resident Maureen Short earlier this year.

The panel found the Deputy Mayor breached the councillors' code of conduct and “improperly sought to confer a disadvantage upon Ms Maureen Short”.

As reported by Star previously, Cr Briffa sent emails to Ms Short, her employer Mobil and several members of the community calling for her sacking following a public meeting in March this year.

The decision, a copy of which has been seen by Star, also found Cr Briffa's emails to be potentially harmful to not only the Mobil employee's professional life, but to her standing in the community.

The panel noted that the email provoked an “entirely appropriate” response from Mobil's General Manager and Refining Director Glenn Henson, who sent a letter to Hobsons Bay's CEO Bill Jaboor in defence of his employee, claiming Cr Briffa's emails were “unprovoked”, “unprofessional” and “inappropriate”.

But the panel also noted the email provoked an “entirely inappropriate response” from Hobsons Bay's Mayor Michael Raffoul – who sent a statement to the media in defence of his deputy in June.

As a result of the findings, Cr Briffa has been ordered to attend 12 months counselling under the supervision of the Mayor.

The decision has put a cloud of doubt over this year's mayoral election.

The two-time deputy mayor was rumoured to be next in line for the council's top job.

But it appears the finding will rule Cr Briffa ineligible to stand for the position.

Cr Briffa has been ordered to apologise in writing to Ms Short by Wednesday 7 September and to email a copy of the apology to all persons who were copied into the emails sent in March.

Cr Briffa told Star he would apologise to Ms Short but claimed the panel process was flawed and stood by the emails he sent to her in March.

“I was denied the opportunity to defend myself because the hearing was conducted in my absence. Additionally, mediation or internal conflict resolution processes weren't tried,” he said.

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"I will abide by the decision which includes making an apology.

"An apology doesn't mean anything when one is compelled to give it."

Ms Short told Star she was grateful for the panel's decision and to be vindicated of any wrong doing.

"I've had to constantly defend myself," she said.

"I hope that all the other councillors learn from Cr Briffa's behaviour."

Ms Short said if Cr Briffa appealed the panel's decision it would show that he shows no remorse for his actions.

"It would be a cost to the council and I can't see the outcome being any different."

Cr Briffa's apology is available on his website.

### WAR OF WORDS

*Hobsons Bay Star*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/williamstown-altona-laverton/312/story/139929.html>

A war of words has broken out between Western Metropolitan Greens MLC Colleen Hartland and Member for Western Metropolitan Region Bernie Finn.

Ms Hartland has accused Mr Finn of ducking his responsibility to cuts to the Innovative Developments in the Education of Children with Autism (IDEA) program.

The program, which was launched in 2010 at Moomba Park Primary School in Fawkner, provides support for children with autism enrolled at the mainstream government school.

"Bernie Finn wants to blame public servants for funding cuts, but he is part of the Baillieu Government and it is the Baillieu Government that is cutting funding to the IDEA program at Moomba Park Primary School," Ms Hartland said.

"The Baillieu Government, of which Bernie Finn is a member, also has the power to roll out IDEA to primary schools across the Western Suburbs and Victoria."

Mr Finn, who has been quoted as saying he would like to see this program extended to schools in the West, has retaliated accusing Ms Hartland of playing "petty politics".

"She (Ms Hartland) sees children with autism as nothing but a cheap tool with which she can promote herself," he said.

"I raised this matter weeks ago because of my deep concern about the future of children and families who need every bit of help they can get."

However Ms Hartland disagrees, going as far as to say Mr Finn should take a stand and resign from the Liberal Party if he doesn't support his party's decision.

### BAY CRIME DROPS

*Hobsons Bay Star*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/williamstown-altona-laverton/312/story/139918.html>

Crime in Hobsons Bay has fallen by 7.8 per cent, the latest crime statistics have revealed.

Despite the drop, crime against the person has increased by 8.1 per cent with robbery increasing by a massive 25.8 per cent and drug offence by 6.3 per cent.

Overall crime against property decreased by 12.7 per cent with residential burglary down by 5.4 per cent and theft from motor vehicles down by 16.8 per cent.

A total of 5,303 crimes were committed between July 2010 and June 2011 compared with 5751 between July 2009 and June 2010.

Acting Inspector Kerin Moloney told Star he was happy that the statistics decreased over the 12 month period.

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“Having said that we’re continuing to work closely with the community to drive the number of offences down,” he said.

“A number of areas of priority are robberies and residential burglaries.”

Act Insp Moloney said robberies, which involve the use of threats of physical violence against a person to obtain property, can be linked with the increase in drug offences.

He added residential burglaries similarly go hand in hand with drug offences.

Between July 2010 and June 2011, 422 residential burglaries were recorded in Hobsons Bay.

“Residential burglaries are the highest impact crime in Hobsons Bay and we will continue to work strongly towards limiting this offending,” he said.

“The spike in drug offences reinforces our efforts of trying to control drugs in the community.

“Drugs cause a large motivation for committing property crime – particularly residential burglaries and are generally carried out by a small number of individuals.”

### **WATCH YOUR STEP**

*Hobsons Bay Star– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/williamstown-altona-laverton/312/story/139921.html>

Hobsons Bay City Council received 453 footpath repair requests between July 2010 and July 2011.

Over the 12-month period, July 2011 received the most requests – with 57 being made to the council.

During this time 12 footpath related injuries were also reported to the council.

Hobsons Bay Acting Director Organisation Development Suzanne Patterson said despite the injuries there were no particular hot spots for footpath repair requests and the requests were proportional to the number of footpaths in each suburb.

In the 2010-'11 financial year, Hobsons Bay City Council repaired 12,402 square metres of footpath at a cost of \$828,700.

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## MARIBRYNONG

### **TRUCK ACTION RAMPS UP**

*Maribyrnong Star– 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/312/story/140135.html>

Residents, traders and politicians will take to the streets later this month to get some traction for the West Gate Freeway on and off ramps.

The Westgate Ramps Coalition will host a community rally on 18 September at the Yarraville Gardens from 11am in an ever-increasing campaign to get trucks off residential streets in the West.

The ramps, first proposed in the 2008 Eddington report, create a truck route that bypasses residential areas in Francis St and Somerville Rd and takes trucks directly to the Port of Melbourne via Hyde and Whitehall streets.

It is estimated the on and off ramps would direct about one million trucks a year away from residential streets.

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LeadWest CEO Anton Mayer said the ramps offered the best solution to truck traffic problems in the inner West.

"They tick a lot of boxes and will improve and address amenity for residents while also addressing access issues for industry," he said.

Maribyrnong Truck Action Group president Peter Knight agreed: "These ramps are what MTAG has been calling for since the group was formed in 2005.

"We want to see trucks using the West Gate Freeway to get to the port because that's the route with the most buffer between the trucks and communities in the inner West.

"These ramps will be a win for the community, good for business and good for the environment."

The rally follows an ongoing campaign by Labor MPs Marsha Thomson and Wade Noonan to get the Coalition Government to commit to the Truck Action Plan. The on and off ramps are a key feature of the plan. The Westgate Ramps Coalition includes Maribyrnong City Council, LeadWest, MTAG, Less Trucks for Moore, the Yarraville Community Centre, Labor politicians in the West, The Greens, Bradmill site developers and representatives from the freight industry.

### **BRING BACK 'SCRAYS, SAYS GALIMBERTI**

*Maribyrnong Weekly* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/bring-back-scrays-says-galimberty/2283966.aspx>

Former Western Bulldogs chief executive Dennis Galimberty has called on the club to embrace its Footscray roots and revert to its original name and jumper.

Galimberty, who was at the helm from 1987-96 when the club was known as Footscray, said it and the community had become divided. He believes reverting back to the old name would help bring them together.

"There was a really close affiliation between the club and City of Footscray and later Maribyrnong with council having representatives on the board. In recent years they've become very detached from the council."

Galimberty said recent political stoushes between the club, council and community had left supporters questioning relationships with the club.

"Club Edgewater [the Bulldogs' new gaming facility] was opposed by the council and residents, and that divided the club and local community. It turned into a fiasco when the council then refused to issue a permit for stage two of the Whitten Oval redevelopment.

"Residents in surrounding streets complained about the extra traffic and objected and in the end David Smorgon [club president] went to the government, leaving people unhappy."

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) hearings over the club's development plans have cost the council and ratepayers \$825,000.

Galimberty said the club would help win back supporters by reverting to the Footscray name and old jumper. "I think going back symbolically would heal a lot of wounds and get back to the Footscray spirit. There's still a lot of fans in the Footscray, Tottenham, Brooklyn, West Footscray and surrounding areas who are disenchanting with local events."

He said changing the name wasn't a new idea and wouldn't affect the club's push to be known as the club of the western suburbs. "I don't think they would lose

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members. I think they would gain members who embrace the wider western region and what the club stands for."

Galimberti challenged a suggestion by Smorgon that any petition to change the name would attract only 300-400 signatures.

"It's wrong for him to dismiss it off-hand. The club needs to look at finding out what people want. The rank-and-file members are entitled to have their opinions and it's wrong for him to belittle them."

Galimberti, who says he has no plans to return to the club in an official capacity, claimed the club now had a "culture of blame and mistrust".

"There are a lot of issues at the club and they are all linked. Supporters don't trust the jumper and mistrust the club. It doesn't embody the old spirit supporters had come to know."

### **JACKS MAGAZINE: GIFT FIRES UP COUNCILLOR'S IMAGINATION**

*Maribyrnong Weekly*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/jacks-magazine-gift-fires-up-councillors-imagination/2283969.aspx>

Victoria's largest gunpowder storage, Jacks Magazine, in Maribyrnong, will become public land in December, two years after the site's owners Delfin Lend Lease pledged it would happen.

And there is no shortage of ideas for its use. A public open space agreement signed in 2004 stipulated ownership of the site would be transferred to Parks Victoria if a viable use could not be found for it within five years.

In July, 2009, Delfin Lend Lease said the handover would happen by Christmas that year.

Edgewater project manager Anna Galluzzo said the company was committed to a handover in 2009. "However, after much discussion it was agreed that a new vehicular access would be constructed from Pipemakers Park to the main entrance of Jacks Magazine.

"The spray sealed gravel access road is near completion and the site will be officially handed over to Parks Victoria in December this year".

The storage on the banks of the Maribyrnong River was built in 1876-78 and is surrounded by bluestone walls three metres high. It covers more than five hectares, includes earth blast walls, tunnels, tramways, service buildings, a loading dock and canal.

River Ward's Cr Dina Lynch said the site could be used as a recreation and arts precinct encompassing Pipemakers Park and the Living Museum of the West, with the council taking a role in a committee of management.

"At the moment it's a pretty eerie place down there. There's hardly anyone moving around and not much recreation in that area. Jacks Magazine could be a fabulous place for a market or for artists."

Living Museum of the West vice-president Peter Somerville said the idea to link Pipemakers Park and Jacks Magazine got a "big tick".

"I would like to see regular tours done to show the building and the land mass and displays about the old arsenal and information about the old munitions factory."

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### REGIONAL RAIL LINK: SENIORS RAILROADED AS DOZERS CLEAR WAY

*Maribyrnong Weekly* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/regional-rail-link-seniors-railroaded-as-dozers-clear-way/2283975.aspx>

Footscray senior citizens groups bid farewell to their Buckley Street home of 35 years last week before it is bulldozed for a new rail line.

And it could be at least three years before they return to Footscray.

The centre, which opened on July 25, 1976, will be demolished to make way for two new tracks as part of the Regional Rail Link project.

Homes and businesses along Buckley Street have also been acquired to make way for the project.

The seniors centre and social and recreational groups which use it will relocate to the former RSL building in Raleigh Road, Maribyrnong, by the end of this month.

"In conjunction with the Regional Rail Link Authority, council has almost completed over one million dollars worth of renovations at the former Maribyrnong RSL," Mayor Sarah Carter said.

She said the Raleigh Road building would be a temporary home "for a period of two to three years" until the council develops a new, permanent home in central Footscray.

The council's community bus will ferry seniors between Footscray and the Maribyrnong site.

### MEDICINE MAN

*Maribyrnong Star* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/311/story/140006.html>

Liberal MP Bernie Finn has vowed to bring Western Hospital up to scratch after touring the site last week.

In a win for Star's Help Our Hospital campaign, Mr Finn visited the Footscray hospital last Monday to draw up a priority list of works to take to Health Minister David Davis.

Star accompanied Mr Finn on the tour, and witnessed his reaction as he was faced with:

- Having to park three blocks from the hospital because the hospital car park was full and there was no available car parking nearby
- The stench coming up through the first level from pipes underneath the floor
- Patients who had come straight from surgery sharing lifts with everyone else
- Uneven flooring, with cracks covered up by tape
- Extensive trolley damage along the walls, including some holes
- Crowded working spaces and doctors and specialists consulting in hallways because there's no rooms available
- Incomplete wheelchair facilities for people in the emergency department

Mr Finn told Star he was staggered by the level of neglect at the hospital.

"We've got a fair bit of work to do," he said.

"It's a hospital that has been neglected for a very long time.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



"It's in need of a total renovation, if not rebuild.

"We've (the West) been overlooked for so long, and now we have to turn that around.

"You only have one chance to make a good first impression, and the smell here is horrific.

"The cramped conditions of the emergency department were totally unsatisfactory, and the doctors and specialists were consulting in corridors – and not very big corridors.

"This hospital is older than I am – and that's really saying something. Apart from an odd coat of paint, not much has been done at all (since the hospital opened)."

Mr Finn detailed his experience in Parliament on Wednesday and called on the Health Minister to build a new hospital building for Western Hospital.

Mr Finn also suggested refurbishing the former Footscray Psychiatric Centre across the road from the hospital – an unoccupied grey four-storey building – as a short term measure to help the hospital.

Western Health CEO Kathryn Cook said Western Hospital would be unable to cope with the current and future population growth, despite putting various measures in place to alleviate demand.

"Unfortunately, not all members of our communities recognise that, despite the older infrastructure at the Western Hospital site we offer the highest standard of tertiary hospital care," she said.

"We know that this often leads people to travel further afield for their care, even when it could be provided by Western Health."

### THOUSANDS FACE LOSS OF AILING DENTAL CLINIC

*Maribyrnong Weekly* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/thousands-face-loss-of-ailing-dental-clinic/2283973.aspx>

Thousands of people have rallied in support of a desperately needed upgrade to the rundown dental services at Western Region Health Centre's Geelong Road clinic in Footscray.

And without an immediate commitment from the state government, the clinic may not be able to remain open next financial year.

The Weekly reported last month that the centre's board was meeting to consider whether it could carry the risk of continuing the dental services at the ageing clinic.

The board has decided to press on, but warns the continuing problems such as lack of space for an ambulance trolley and poor working conditions are "likely to ultimately make the facility unsustainable beyond this financial year".

The building has five dental chairs and in a year the clinic treats more than 10,000 people who cannot afford private care, including many from refugee and migrant backgrounds who have complex dental problems.

Petitions with close to 5000 signatures were presented to Liberal upper house MLC Bernie Finn and Footscray MP Marsha Thomson last week.

Mr Finn said there was "no question at all" that the clinic was unsuitable, and he would continue to press the government for the \$9million needed to relocate the clinic to WRHC's Paisley Street site.

The plans are "shovel-ready" and need only approval from the government to go ahead.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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"It's just appalling," Mr Finn said. "That place could fall down at any moment, and they've got outside toilets ... outside toilets in this day and age.

"I'll be pushing hard for [the money] to be in the budget next year."

The centre's CEO, Lyn Morgain, said: "There are increasing limitations on the level and type of care able to be offered from the facility."

Neither Premier Ted Baillieu nor Health Minister David Davis has taken up the centre's offer to visit the clinic.

### **FOOTSCRAY STATION LIFTS GOING DOWN, MOSTLY**

*Maribyrnong Weekly*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/footscray-station-lifts-going-down-mostly/2283968.aspx?storypage=0>

The lifts at Footscray railway station are breaking down at the rate of more than once every three days, leaving elderly and disabled commuters stranded.

In response to questions on notice from Greens MLC Colleen Hartland, Transport Minister Terry Mulder told State Parliament that lifts at the station were "inoperative" 117 times between July last year and April.

Precise times and the duration of the breakdowns was not provided.

The lifts, installed as part of the \$14.7million William Cooper footbridge project, are heavily used by commuters and residents who walk to the nearby Footscray market.

A recent survey by the Metropolitan Transport Forum asked commuters to rate their station. It found Footscray was No.8 among Melbourne's 10 worst stations, and what annoyed commuters was the lack of an escalator and "stairs [being] too steep for elderly and disabled".

Train stations built without ramps which had frequent lift failures were also singled out as a concern by the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) report *Creating Accessible Journeys*. "The failure of a lift risks people being unable to access the platform, or worse, being stuck on it," it said. "This could mean being trapped on a platform with no means of escape during an emergency, such as during a power outage or fire."

VCOSS transport policy analyst Llewellyn Reynders said Footscray and Laverton stations were often singled out by commuters with special needs as particularly bad examples of poor access.

He said the government focus had been on meeting minimum access standards rather than looking at what would work best.

"In places like Footscray we need to have the capacity for access to continue even if something happens, like when a lift breaks down."

He said a number of issues such as station layout, the size of lifts and unstaffed ticket booths made commuting "uncomfortable" for a proportion of the population, an unacceptable situation given the amount of money spent on Footscray station as part of its upgrade.

Ms Hartland said it was appalling that for some commuters an out-of-order lift meant the end of their journey.

"The whole issue is that this is how they make the station disability-compliant. If the lifts aren't working the station isn't compliant.

"They just don't understand what it means to not be able to use the train and not be able to get to work and school."

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Metro Trains Melbourne is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the lifts.

VicTrack monitors lifts at five stations, including Laverton and Footscray, and reports faults to station staff and Metro.

### **KEEP SEVEN WARDS, TWEAK BOUNDARIES: REVIEW FINDS**

*Maribyrnong Weekly* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/keep-seven-wards-tweak-boundaries-review-finds/2283970.aspx>

Retaining the system of seven wards, with a councillor in each, and with 'tweaks' to ward boundaries is the preferred option of three in a Victorian Electoral Commission review of the Maribyrnong electorate.

The review began last month and is considering the number of councillors for the municipality and ward boundaries.

The VEC released a preliminary report last week.

The review aims to ensure the number of voters represented by each councillor is within 10 per cent of the average number of voters per councillor for that municipality.

Maribyrnong is expected to grow from 73,000 residents this year to almost 92,000 in the next decade, with the bulk of the growth in Footscray and Maribyrnong, according to population forecasts by .id Consulting. The VEC preliminary report outlines three options:

- Keep seven wards and adjust boundaries to reflect population growth.
- Three wards - two would have two councillors, and the other would have three.
- Three wards with three councillors in each.

The preferred option would have the biggest impact on Cr Michael Clarke's Wattle ward, which would be redrawn to take in all of Yarraville with Somerville Road forming a boundary.

Preliminary submissions, including those from political party branches and trader groups, favoured dividing the municipality into three wards with three councillors in each and increasing the number of councillors from seven to nine.

The report stated that although submissions called for more councillors, "Maribyrnong already has the lowest ratio of votes per councillor of the metropolitan councils".

The report acknowledged that a system of three wards with three councillors in each would be "more easily understood" by voters, but it would not be "ideal" to group together the high-growth suburbs of Maribyrnong and Footscray.

The deadline for submissions to the preliminary report is 5pm on Wednesday, September 28.

A public hearing will be held at Maribyrnong Council chambers in Footscray at 6.30pm on Wednesday, October 5.

A final report will go to Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell on October 26.

Legislation passed last week will bring forward the date of municipal elections from the last Saturday in November to the fourth Saturday in October.

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### **PARENTS RALLY OVER AUTISM FUNDING CUTS**

*Maribyrnong Weekly*– 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/parents-rally-over-autism-funding-cuts/2283971.aspx>

Parents protesting against funding cuts to a program for children with autism took their fight to the steps of State Parliament last week.

The Innovative Developments in the Education of children with Autism (IDEA) program will end this year unless it receives funding.

The program, operating from Fawkner's Moomba Park Primary School, provides inclusive education in the mainstream system for children on the autism spectrum in Melbourne's north-west.

Western Metropolitan Greens MP Colleen Hartland, who joined parents at the rally, lashed out at Liberal MP Bernie Finn for blaming departmental staff.

"Bernie Finn wants to blame public servants for funding cuts," she said, "but he is part of the government that is cutting funding to the IDEA program at Moomba Park Primary School". "As part of the government, Bernie Finn is either ineffective or disagrees with their decisions."

Mr Finn said he had raised the issue because he was deeply concerned about the future of children and families in the IDEA program.

"Colleen Hartland ... sees children with autism as nothing but a cheap tool with which she can promote herself. She wants to play petty politics. I'm far more interested in getting a fair go for kids with autism."

Before last November's state election, the Education Department was exploring how it would spend \$400,000 allocated by Labor for the IDEA program.

As reported by the Weekly, Altona Meadows father Steve Morgan feared his eight-year-old son Corey would revert to behaviours like chewing his shirt and exposing himself if forced to return to a special school. With the Western Autistic School catering only for children up to grade3, it is uncertain where his son could go.

In a letter addressed to Parliament, another parent, Nadu Dove, said children would have nowhere to go if the IDEA program ended. "What is not OK is that this program will be stopped at the end of this academic year and our kids have no suitable alternative."

James Martin, a spokesman for Education Minister Martin Dixon, said the government was not cutting the IDEA program. "The IDEA program is not a government program," he said. "Moomba Park Primary School chose to implement the program in 2010 at its own discretion in consultation with the private providers of the program."

### **GROUPS UNITE TO RAMP UP TRUCKS PROTEST**

*Maribyrnong Weekly*– 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/groups-unite-to-ramp-up-trucks-protest/2283972.aspx>

Residents' groups, schools, political parties, local government, the transport industry and a developer have joined forces for the first time to push the state government to alleviate truck congestion in the inner west.

The \$380million truck action plan put forward by the previous Labor government that would have removed up to 5000 trucks a day has been shelved by the Baillieu government.

Groups that are not always on the same side of the debate are making a joint push for action.

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The new group, called Westgate Ramps Coalition, comprises Maribyrnong Council, Yarraville Community Centre, the Greens inner west branch, Yarraville branch of the Labor Party, representatives from the trucking industry, several local schools, and Paul Delutis, from De Group, developers of the Bradmill site.

Figures released by Ports Minister Denis Naphine show a 7 per cent increase in container movements, a record year for the Port of Melbourne. The Pom handled 2.39million 20-foot containers in 2010-11, an average of about 6500 containers a day.

Maribyrnong Truck Action Group spokesman Peter Knight said the group wanted trucks to use the West Gate Freeway to get to the port because it created a buffer between the trucks and residents.

LeadWest CEO Anton Mayer said the transport industry needed a more direct route to the West Gate Freeway to remove bottlenecks in the freight network. "Every time a truck sits there going nowhere it's costing money."

Williamstown MP Wade Noonan said the state government was happy to boast about the growing number of containers but was silent on the truck action plan. It did not understand the link between growth in container traffic and truck movements.

The coalition will hold a rally at Yarraville Gardens, corner Hyde Street and Somerville Road, at 11am on Sunday, September 18.

### **BREAK-INS FEED DRUG HABIT IN MARIBYRNONG**

*Maribyrnong Leader*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/break-ins-feed-drug-habit-in-maribyrnong/>

Burglaries and thefts have soared in Maribyrnong, according to police statistics.

And with drug offences also on the rise Maribyrnong residents are unlikely to see relief from property crimes.

Footscray's Insp Tong Long said there was no doubt there was a link between the increase in drug offences and the rise in thefts and burglaries. The Maribyrnong Police Service Area (PSA) recorded 599 drug offences in the 12 months to July, a 20.8 per cent jump from 496 over the previous year.

The PSA also recorded 876 house burglaries, a 46.5 per cent rise, 1244 thefts, up 23 per cent, and 175 robberies, a 32.6 per cent jump from the previous 12 months.

"Unfortunately (Maribyrnong) is known as a bit of a drug centre, (people) know they can buy their drugs here," Insp Long said.

He said people came into Maribyrnong either with stolen goods to sell for drugs or to steal something to sell for drugs.

Insp Long said the installation of closed-circuit television cameras had "been very successful for us". But he said there was a lot the public could do help themselves and the police.

Insp Long urged people to lock doors and close windows and not leave valuables in sight in their cars, because it invited trouble.

Though there had been a 27.4 per cent decrease to 193 road injuries in the year to March (from 266 previously), Insp Long said there were still too many people being injured on the roads.

"We don't have any 100km/h roads in Maribyrnong, but we still have a lot of people being badly injured in collisions, so obviously people are still speeding," he said.

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Insp Long said the last seven road fatalities in the PSA had all been pedestrians, so “people need to be really careful on the roads”.

### **DING, DING DINKUM IN MARIBYRNONG**

*Maribyrnong Leader– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/ding-ding-dinkum-in-maribyrnong/>

Trams have been rolling through Footscray for nine decades and will get an upgrade if Maribyrnong Council has a say.

Today marks 90 years to the day since trams first started running in Footscray on Tuesday, September 6, 1921, when they were opened by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board.

The Footscray Tramways Trust, established in 1915, constructed the three routes that would run from the Footscray depot in Buckley St to Russell St, and Ballarat and Williamstown roads.

Up until the 1960s, trams ran extensively through Footscray via Leeds and Barkly streets to Russell St, via Irving, Nicholson, Buckley, Victoria, Charles and Gamon streets and Somerville Rd to Williamstown Rd as well as down Ballarat Rd, Droop and Barkly streets where the existing Route 82 service travels.

As quoted in the daily newspaper The Argus at the time of the lines opening in 1921, the fare was 2.5 pence for an adult and 1.5 pence for a child to ride the local tram network which spanned 4.5 miles (7.2km) and cost 125,000 to construct.

Travelling from Footscray to Moonee Ponds today, Route 82 still tracks part of the original Ballarat Rd route, costing \$3.80 for a two-hour full fare and \$2.40 for concession (\$3.02/\$1.51 on myki).

Maribyrnong Council chief executive Vince Haining said the area’s tram network was limited.

Despite the limitations and the fact that trams made up only 1 per cent of total vehicles, Mr Haining said 15 per cent of commuters travelled by trams during peak times.

“In the short term, improvements on the two existing routes in the City of Maribyrnong are needed to improve service reliability and reduce travel times,” Mr Haining said.

Looking further down the track, Mr Haining said more trams would be needed when the North Maribyrnong Defence site was developed. “

Council will work closely with the Department of Transport to explore future viable tram route options, including the potential to connect Footscray to the Docklands along Dynon Rd and further west to Sunshine,” he said.

Yarra Trams spokesman Colin Tyrus said 206 extra services a week to Route 82 had been added to ensure connectivity with trains, arriving at Footscray station right up to the last service of the day.

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## MELTON

### **MELTON COUNCILLORS SET FOR PAY RISE**

*Melton Leader– 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-councillors-set-for-pay-rise/>

Melton's seven councillors are in line for a pay rise.

Mayor Justin Mammarella's pay packet could jump by almost \$23,000 a year under the new pay structure while ward councillors are in-line to pocket an extra \$6522 a year.

A public consultation process will determine if the increase in allowances will go ahead.

The salary bonuses come after Local Government Victoria decided to reclassify Melton Council from a category 2 municipality to a category 3 municipality.

Melton Council was reviewed for reclassification in April this year based on population growth and revenue figures for the previous financial year.

The Minister's decision was based on a "significant change of population, budget and responsibilities which have occurred in recent years largely because of the growth of the shire".

Under a category 3 classification, the mayor would net a maximum annual salary of \$88,955, including a compulsory 9 per cent superannuation contribution from council, up from the present maximum category 2 salary of \$65,984. Councillors would earn a maximum of \$27,848, up from the category 2 maximum of \$21,326.

The mayor of a growth council is expected to spend 50-60 hours per week on the job and councillors 25-30 hours.

Deputy mayor Broden Borg said that on some weeks he worked 35-40 hours as a councillor.

If there are no objections, the pay hike will take place from December 1.

### **ATTACK ON DANGEROUS BREEDS IN MELTON SHIRE**

*Melton Leader– 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/attack-on-dangerous-breeds-in-melton-shire/>

Unregistered dangerous and restricted dog breeds will soon be "seized and destroyed" after a spate of dog attacks, including one at Mt Cottrell.

Melton Council, the home to 18 declared dangerous dogs, including eight pit bulls, is still investigating an attack on an Eynesbury Census collector last month.

Karen Seidel-Davies underwent plastic surgery to her face after she was set upon by a bulldog in Greens Rd, Mt Cottrell, on August 15.

The attack happened two days before a four-year-old girl was killed by a pit bull in St Albans.

Attacks in Ringwood and Shepparton have also been reported in the past fortnight.

A state government crack-down on dangerous and restricted dog breeds will end an amnesty to register restricted breeds until September 29.

That means any dog identified as dangerous or restricted and not registered after that time can be seized and destroyed.

A telephone hotline has also been set-up to report dangerous dogs.

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Minister for Agriculture and Food Security Peter Walsh said the legislation, introduced last week, was the first of several measures to get rid of restricted dog breeds.

“People should not be in fear of a dog attack when they are walking down a street or their children are playing in their backyard,” he said.

“The changes (in legislation) will close legal loopholes to ensure pit bull crosses become a restricted breed and a visual standard for identifying pit bull terriers will be gazetted to prevent some of these dogs escaping regulation because of uncertainty over their breed.”

Mr Walsh said the dangerous dog hotline would give people a way of reporting dogs. The information will be passed to councils.

### **MELTON PLAZA COURTS REVIVAL IDEAS**

*Melton Leader* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-plaza-courts-revival-ideas/>

A radical plan to transform Melton’s drab Courthouse Plaza into a thriving entertainment precinct is moving forward.

A committee is now being formed to consider ideas to turn the run-down High St precinct, home to the town’s iconic horse clock tower and amphitheatre, into a buzzing community arts space.

The idea was first mooted by deputy mayor Broden Borg in February when he revealed plans to turn the precinct into an entertainment hub, mirroring some of the great town squares of the world.

Cr Borg said letters had been sent to potential partners for the project, including schools, youths and environment groups.

“We’ll be looking at how we can tackle this project to create a space where the whole community is engaged, not just one section,” he said.

“It’s about how we’re going to engage infants through to senior citizens in this one space.”

Early ideas to inject some life into the under-used plaza include a busy weekend program of entertainment including art, dance and music, and even a moonlight cinema.

Cr Borg has also suggested the addition of coffee outlets, food stalls and the possibility of extending nearby shop opening hours.

“We really want to revitalise this area because this is the centre of town,” Cr Borg said.

“It’ll change the way people interact with this area.”

### **MELTON SHIRE WORKERS FORCED TO TRAVEL**

*Melton Leader* – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-shire-workers-forced-to-travel/>

More than 80 per cent of workers living in Melton Shire travel outside the municipality for work.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that just 17.8 per cent of the municipality’s 36,757 workers have jobs within the shire.

The majority of employees travel to neighbouring municipalities - including Brimbank and Hume - or Melbourne. Some commute as far afield as Monash, Boroondara and Whittlesea.

More than 13 per cent of workers travel to Brimbank, almost 9 per cent to Melbourne and 7.4 per cent to Hume. Residents also go to Wyndham,

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Yarra, Moreland, Darebin and Moorabool.

Melton Council's acting manager business growth and sustainability Adrian Murphy said growth and "a shortage of employment nodes" were behind the figures. The council would continue to allocate land to cater for future growth, including 2164ha of industrial land in the shire's southeast, where the Western Ring Rd met Princes Freeway.

"Growth of this industrial node is expected to continue, particularly in Ravenhall, Truganina and Derrimut, with the recent completion of the Deer Park bypass, where there is nearly 1000ha of industrial land supply," he said.

Jobs would come with population growth. "As the shire grows, council is undertaking work to assist businesses and identify available employment land." he said.

### **MELTON COUNCILLORS AWARD THEMSELVES PAY RISE**

*Melton Weekly*– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/melton-councillors-award-themselves-pay-rise/2282511.aspx>

Melton councillors have voted to increase their allowances by more than \$4000.

Councillors receive an annual salary of \$21,326, but that will rise to \$25, 549 from December 1.

The mayor's allowance of \$65,984 will be increased to \$81,610 plus an amount in lieu of superannuation that will take effect from December 1 this year.

The council's general manager of corporate services, Peter Bean, said the decision was in line with criteria established by an independent panel review and the Office of Local Government.

"The proposed increase in allowances is reflective of the increase in time commitments required by councillors to engage with the community and advocate on their behalf."

He said the assessment was based on the population, the size of the council's budget and the complexity of its demands in providing services and infrastructure.

A report to councillors stated the mayoral role was a full-time position, with Cr Justin Mammarella required to commit 50-60 hours a week to official duties.

### **YOUTH SERVICE'S NEW HOME**

*Melton Star*– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/312/story/139861.html>

Melton Shire Council and Djerrivarrh Health Services last week relaunched the Backdoor Program operating at the council's youth services centre.

The Backdoor Program is a youth-focussed health program, which has been running successfully in the Melton Shire community for more than 15 years.

The program recently moved to the council's youth services centre following consultation with young people, schools and service providers.

Melton Shire mayor Justin Mammarella welcomed the move to the centre.

"Melton Shire Council is committed to improving health and wellbeing for our diverse community and we are very supportive of this program, which aims to empower young people to make their health a priority," Cr Mammarella said.

He said the move meant young people could now access health care, including mental health services, in a youth-friendly setting.

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The program aims to facilitate access to medical care for young people, with a core team comprising of a youth friendly doctor, a community health nurse and a counsellor.

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*Melton Weekly– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

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### **MORE VICTIMS WILLING TO REPORT SEX OFFENCES**

*Melton Weekly– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/more-victims-willing-to-report-sex-offences/2282524.aspx>

Melton police say most of the cases which led to a large increase in sex offences last financial year were "historical in nature".

Crime statistics released last week revealed a 114per cent increase in sex offences, from 64 cases in 2009-10 to 137 last financial year.

Crimes against the person, assault, robbery and motor vehicle thefts also increased.

Melton's Inspector Mario Fiorentino said often sex offences had been perpetrated against victims many years earlier when they were a minor, and the offences were only reported much later in adult years.

"For example, there were 44 offences reported in July 2010 alone, but the offences were committed many years earlier," he said.

Inspector Fiorentino was confident the increase in offences reported meant victims were feeling comfortable enough to come forward.

"Victims have the courage to finally come forward and report matters committed at a time when they may have been vulnerable, to seek help, guidance and counselling as well as to have the perpetrator held to account for their crimes."

He said an increase in robberies could be partly attributed to youth offenders.

"Most of the robberies are occurring on the streets and around shopping centres and railway stations ... stealing items such as cash, cigarettes, mobile phones and iPods."

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Despite the number of assaults in Melton rising nearly 30 per cent, Inspector Fiorentino said the chance of being assaulted by a complete stranger was remote.

Melton resident Noel Robertson said that while he didn't personally fear for his safety, he had heard of random attacks taking place in Melton, and he wanted harsher sentences.

"These sorts of things aren't properly dealt with. Punishments like community-based orders aren't enough."

Inspector Fiorentino said that in 90 per cent of reported assaults, the parties were known to each other and half of all assaults were family violence incidents.

"Family violence is still one of the most under-reported crimes in Melton ... we encourage people living in fear to come forward. If anyone knows of family or friends living in fear, let the authorities know so that we can provide them with the protection and assistance they need."

Manager of family violence services at Women's Health West, Jacky Tucker, said pressures on families could be responsible for the rise in assaults and 'family incidents' being reported.

"There is a high number of young families under a lot of pressure financially and there aren't enough services out there to support them."

### **WIND TURBINES IN DOLDRUMS IN MOORABOOL**

*Melton Leader*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/wind-turbines-in-doldrums-in-moorabool/>

A toughening of Victoria's wind farm policies has claimed its first victim with Future Energy pulling out of its Pykes Hill project in Moorabool.

Planning Minister Matthew Guy announced last week the State Government had made an amendment to planning laws prohibiting wind turbines within 2km of a home without written consent of the owner.

The three wind turbines at Pykes Hill would have been about 1km from the nearest homes.

A planning application for the Pykes Hill project was rejected by Moorabool Council in June 2010, but the company appealed against the ruling to VCAT.

After spending more than three years developing the project, Future Energy said in light of the Government's changes, it was terminating the development.

Mr Guy said Amendment VC82 provided certainty for the industry and the community while ensuring opportunities still existed within Victoria to establish wind energy facilities.

But Future Energy's managing director David Shapero disagreed, saying the new policy was a "one size fits all" approach.

"The new guidelines will not impact the construction of very large wind farms on large land areas, but it effectively rules out small projects," he said.

Amendment VC82 also establishes no-go zones for wind farms in line with Coalition election policy.

All national and state parks will be no-go zones for wind farms, as well as the Yarra Valley, Dandenong Ranges, Mornington Peninsula, Bellarine Peninsula, Great Ocean Road region, the Macedon and McHarg Ranges, and the Bass Coast.

The change in legislation will not affect the two WestWind Energy projects already approved in Moorabool Shire - the Lal Lal Wind Farm, approved in May 2009; and the Moorabool Wind Project, approved in October 2010.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



### **MAKING A GRAND ENTRANCE ... TO MELTON**

*Melton Leader*– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/making-a-grand-entrance-to-melton/>

Artwork, sculptures and more trees are ideas being mooted for a transformation of one of Melton's main entrances.

A plan to revamp part of High St, from the Melton Highway to Melton Valley Drive, will be considered by Melton Council after councillors unanimously accepted a motion to beautify the area last week.

Cr Bob Turner, who raised the motion, said he would like artwork, including sculptures, and more greenery at the entrance to "shield" the industrial area.

"It's a case of making the side areas along the road look nice," Cr Turner said.

"When you drive into Caroline Springs there are trees and it looks really nice, but you come into Melton and it's only the road. It's just an industrial area.

"We should consult with the businesses and make it a nice entrance ... do whatever the people want."

Cr Turner said he would also consider beautifying the large roundabout at the top end of High St.

"You see that a lot where the roundabout is used as a feature," he said. "It's a big enough roundabout that you could put something in the middle of it and it's not going to distract drivers."

Deputy mayor Broden Borg backed the idea, saying he would like to see a modern revamp lined with artwork.

"Anything to do with beautification of our town is needed," Cr Borg said. "I suppose it depends on what kind of atmosphere you want to create when driving

into Melton - do you want an atmosphere like the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour?

"Or do you want more of a modern, energetic style to really revitalise the area?"

"I'd like something modern."

### **MELTON MAYOR BACKS LOCAL POLICE**

*Melton Leader*– 5<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-mayor-backs-local-police/>

Melton Council has the "utmost confidence" in Melton police, Mayor Justin Mammarella says.

In a meeting with Inspector Mario Fiorentino, of Melton police, last week, Cr Mammarella backed the efforts of local police.

"Our local Melton police go well beyond the call of duty and they have my full support and that of council," Cr Mammarella said.

Insp Fiorentino said police would continue to work closely with the council.

"Victoria Police does not profess to have all the answers to solve community issues," Insp Fiorentino said.

"However, what I do know is that my team and I are committed to providing the best possible service and assistance to everyone in the community, regardless of their background or circumstances."

In his latest mayoral message, Cr Mammarella criticised a second report commissioned by Melton state Labor MP Don Nardella. "Bridging the Gap" highlighted reservations Sudanese residents had in dealing with police, but the mayor said it was based on only a few interviews.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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### **NO WIN FOR MELTON LANDOWNERS**

*Melton Leader– 5<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/no-win-for-melton-landowners/>

A new rate for development land within Melton shire's urban growth boundary is set to stay, Melton council insists.

The council's budget for the next financial year includes a 0.0056 per cent rate for development land for the first time.

The move means up to 80 landowners with land in a detailed precinct structure plan will pay about 170 per cent above the residential rate of 0.0033435.

The remaining 350 landowners with land in the urban growth area will pay the residential rate. This land was previously classified as rural and landowners paid a significantly lower rate.

Council chief executive Kel Tori said he and three councillors met four disgruntled landowners this month. But there had been no softening from the council.

Among concerns are that the rate puts landowners at a disadvantage until the expected future use of the land is in place; that there is an eight to 10-year time gap between the present use of land and its future use; and that the new rate system is inequitable.

Mr Tori said despite claims of a "win" for landowners, there had been no shift. "It would be difficult for council to reverse its decision, the budget has been adopted and rate notices have been sent out," he said.

Mr Tori said changing the system would require amending the council budget. Up to 44,000 rate notices would have to be re-issued, at a cost of more than \$20,000.

"Reducing their land rates will mean someone else's in the shire will rise," he said.

Mr Tori said the council could look at options to assist landowners. Some people had already submitted hardship applications. "We will go back to the group with our response and the Mayor will report to councillors," he said.

### **PETS GET A TICKET TO RIDE ON V/LINE TRAINS**

*Melton Leader– 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/pets-get-a-ticket-to-ride-on-v-line-trains/>

Fido and Kitty can catch the train after V/Line reversed as ban on allowing pets onboard.

The State Government had announced pets could ride on trains, but V/Line refused to comply until last month.

Melton and Moorabool commuters can travel with their pets - provided they are in an RSPCA-approved container - for the first time since 2009.

On long-distance services, pets must be stored inside the luggage van or conductor's area, on sprinter trains in the luggage area and on VLocity trains in the bike luggage area near doors at the end of carriages.

Pet containers must be no larger than 56cm long, 30cm wide and 38cm high.

The animal must not weigh more than 15kg and should be able to stand up straight, lie down without being cramped and turn around inside the container.

V/Line chief executive Rob Barnett said a balance between passenger comfort and pet owners had been reached.

"Conductors have the right to refuse travel if the pet is seen as savage, they cause a disturbance to other passengers or where space is limited inside the train," Mr Barnett said.

He advised pet travellers to avoid peak services.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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### THINKFEST PUTS YOUNG MELTON STUDENTS TO THE TEST

*Melton Leader– 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/thinkfest-puts-young-melton-students-to-the-test/>

Almost 200 Staughton College students put on their thinking caps recently to solve some challenging problems.

ThinkFest, devised by two former teachers who believed everyone was capable of thinking and solving problems in a co-operative manner, has been running at the school for the past 10 years.

The idea is to present a range of challenges to students who then, as teams, find creative solutions. They present their ideas to an audience and get feedback from a panel of judges.

Teacher Virginia Bowden said one of the challenges this year was how to use bags that could be recycled to create art.

She said 195 students as well as teachers and staff were involved in the program.

### MELTON SOUTH LEADS THE WAY ON STATE'S WATER PLAN

*Melton Leader– 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-south-leads-the-way-on-states-water-plan/>

Melton South's Toolern development appears likely to be flushed with success.

In a visit to the shire last week, Water Minister Peter Walsh said the suburb would be Victoria's first to include a potable water substitution target in its structure plan.

"Toolern will capture and reuse stormwater and recycled water to greatly reduce the suburb's demand for potable water," Mr Walsh said.

He said homes in the development would be supplied with class A recycled water, similar to neighbouring estate Eynesbury.

"The self-sustaining nature of this development is particularly important here, in what is one of the lower rainfall areas of the state," Mr Walsh said.

Western Water managing director John Wilkinson said the amount of water harvested at Toolern for reuse would roughly equal the amount of drinking water residents used.

"Toolern will truly be a suburb of the future when it comes to water management," Mr Wilkinson said.

Meanwhile, Western Water will invest more than \$200 million in water infrastructure over the next five years, including \$2.8 million on the Exford Rd water main in Melton and a \$3.1 million upgrade of the Bacchus Marsh Water Plant.

### SPRUIKER NEWS

*Melton Leader– 11<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/spruiker-news/>

This Father's Day (September 4) Woodgrove Shopping Centre is giving away Jarvis Walker rods, reels and tackle wallets.

The first 300 shoppers can win the prize when they spend \$50 at specialty stores by presenting receipts to the Customer Service Desk, opposite Kmart.

BURNSIDE Shopping Centre is giving shoppers the chance to win a holiday a month until December.

To win, buy from any speciality store, attach your current monthly receipt and drop it into the entry box.

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AN energy-efficient Melton West home will be open to the public on Sustainable House Day, Sunday, September 11. The house, at 57 Argyll Circuit, will be open from 10am-4pm.

CS SQUARE in Caroline Springs has cooking demonstrations every second Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11am-2pm, with giveaways and special offers at each session.

### **MELTON MAYOR ASKS THE COUNCIL FOR COUNSEL**

*Melton Leader— 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-mayor-asks-the-council-for-counsel/>

Melton Mayor Justin Mammarella has sought legal advice from the council over comments made by former councillor Chris Papas.

Cr Mammarella and Mr Papas have been involved in a war of words over the Melton Reservoir, also known as Exford Weir and Melton Weir.

Mr Papas says the council allocated \$6.6 million to the Melton Weir in 2005 to be spent over the next 10 years and has called on the mayor to fully implement the Melton Reservoir Development Strategy.

Cr Mammarella says Mr Papas was part of council's budget deliberations at the time and there were never any funds allocated to the weir, except \$100,000 for roadworks at the end of Clarkes Rd for safety reasons.

Melton Council CEO Kel Tori said the mayor was correct. "They adopted a strategy that had an action plan in it that said council should consider doing these projects," he said.

"But it was never adopted in the budget, it was only considered."

Mr Tori said Cr Mammarella had also spoken to him about some of Mr Papas' recent comments.

"He (Cr Mammarella) has raised it with me and I have undertaken to bring back some legal advice," Mr Tori said.

"If it's personal there would need to be a resolution before council to fund it; if council decided to take action it would need to be a council resolution. Council does have the capacity to indemnify a councillor in those circumstances in regards to legal costs."

Mr Tori said the Melton Reservoir Development Strategy probably needed to be reviewed as it was now six years old.

"It's also about engaging with Waterford who have begun their development," he said.

Mr Papas expressed alarm at the latest turn of events.

"I will not be deterred by the mayor or anyone else in advocating on behalf of the Melton community to ensure council acts to make this valuable community asset accessible to all residents,"

"Public access and recreational facilities at the Melton Reservoir are long overdue, however we should be going forward and I am happy to work with the mayor and councillors to progress this important community project at the earliest time."

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## MOONEE VALLEY

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



### **DRUG ABUSE ON THE RISE**

*Moonee Valley Leader– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/drug-abuse-on-the-rise/>

Drug abuse has increased in Moonee Valley while alcohol-fuelled emergencies are on the decline, a new report has found.

The latest Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre survey showed there were 517 drug-related ambulance call-outs and 155 for alcohol in 2009-10.

There was an 18 per cent drop in alcohol-related incidents from 189 in 2008-09.

Attendances related to anti-depressants jumped from 24 to 37 and ecstasy from nine to 15.

The 48 heroin-related calls made it into the state's top 10 heroin-affected local government areas, with neighbouring Maribyrnong second on the list with 198.

Niddrie pharmacist Brian Atkins said most pharmacies used an online over-the-counter drug monitoring system to filter out abusers.

"Cough medicine and cold and flu tablets are a few of the over-the-counter drugs that can be melted down to produce ecstasy-type products, so we don't sell it to everybody," Mr Atkins said. "We don't sell a lot of drugs without asking for a driver's licence. The trouble is once you've got a prescription we have to legally sell it to them, so a bit more needs to be done on the doctors' part."

Australian Medical Association board member Dr Gary Speck said the increase in drug abuse was due to prescription drugs being misused by the community. "Some drugs that are valuable therapeutic tools also have the potential for abuse and addiction," he said.

Dr Speck said the AMA was calling on the State Government to enforce prescription monitoring systems for all doctors and chemists.

### **WARNING ON DANGEROUS DOG RULES**

*Moonee Valley Leader– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/lifestyle/story/warning-on-dangerous-dog-rules/>

Animal experts have called for a commonsense approach to the new laws banning dangerous dog breeds.

The State Government has introduced a ruling that will force all dangerous dogs, which now include pit bull crosses, to be registered by their owners by September 20.

Owners who fail to comply risk their pet being destroyed.

Lort Smith Animal Hospital chief executive officer Liz Walker said the Government should be commended for trying to tighten rules, but warned the laws could raise other problems.

"There's a chance that the dogs that are not dangerous are going to get caught up with this," she said.

"There's going to have to be some very clear guidelines and evidence-based techniques to classify an animal as dangerous."

Ms Walker said genetic testing might come into play to determine whether dogs were pit bulls crossed with another animal.

In the past year, 20 dog attacks on people and other animals were reported to Moonee Valley council.

Eight penalties were handed out to the dogs' owners.

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Mayor John Sipek said the harshest penalty was imposed in December when an owner was prosecuted after their dog killed a cat.

The owner was fined \$1000 and the dog was declared dangerous.

They also had to pay \$2024 in pound fees as well as legal costs of \$2400.

State Agriculture and Food Security Minister Peter Walsh said the legislation was the first of many steps to get rid of restricted breeds.

### **SUN ALWAYS SHINES ON THE VALLEY**

*Moonee Valley Leader— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/sun-always-shines-on-the-valley/>

The sun is shining on the local solar panel industry, with 700 Moonee Valley homes recently turning to the green-energy source.

Electricity distributor Jemena revealed the number of panels it had installed grew by more than 600 per cent in the past 18 months.

General manager Richard Twisk said of the 7000 homes, 5800 had bi-directional meters installed - these allow residents to send excess electricity back into the grid.

Households are then able to claim electricity credits on their bills as part of Victoria's Premium Feed-in-Tariff. Ascot Vale has seen the most bi-directional meters installed, with 178. There have been 170 in Essendon, 130 in Keilor East, 115 in Moonee Ponds and 107 in Strathmore.

Among them is Darren McClelland, who had solar panels installed in February.

While he hasn't received an electricity bill yet, he said he was looking forward to seeing the savings.

Mr McClelland said he installed the solar panels because he wanted to reduce his carbon footprint.

"I think it makes sense to reduce your impact on the environment because of our finite resources."

He was one of the 44 local people who installed solar power systems through Moonee Valley Council's bulk-buy program.

The program ran during February and April and offered subsidised grid-connected solar power and discounted hot water systems.

Mayor John Sipek said the 103 solar power systems prevented venting almost 300 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

"That's equivalent to about six million black balloons," he said.

Last week, the State Government announced a new Transitional Feed-in Tariff would start on January 1, 2012 while a review is carried out on the current scheme.

### **SPIKE IN THEFT AND DRUG OFFENCES CONCERNS POLICE**

*Moonee Valley Leader— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/spike-in-theft-and-drug-offences-concerns-police/>

Police have been cracking down on local crime trouble spots, as latest statistics show a rise in theft and drug offences.

Moonee Valley Acting Inspector David Byrt said a number of overt and covert operations were being run to combat rising crime, highlighted by last week's release of My Place crime data.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



In the 12 months to June 2011, there was an 8 per cent jump in drug offences, 9 per cent rise in residential burglaries and 14.5 per cent rise in theft of motor vehicles.

Property damage and assaults were down.

Among the recent crackdowns was an operation where local and transit police saturated transport hubs in mid August. This focused on areas such as Racecourse and Ascot Vale roads in Flemington.

Eleven people have been charged with a number of offences.

Insp Byrt said the majority of those caught were from outside the municipality.

Meanwhile, a rise in drug offences, handling of stolen goods and weapons was the result of successful crackdowns by police, Insp Byrt said.

"It's not solely a police role, we do need the help of the general public to make the streets a bit safer for everyone," he said.

"If we want to minimise burglary, we need people to secure their homes." "If we want to minimise theft from cars, we need tradesmen to start locking up their things better.

"If we want to minimise assault, we need people to be more vigilant around alcohol and nightclubs."

Acting Insp Byrt said protective services officers that will eventually be deployed around suburban stations would be "most welcome" as another deterrent to crime.

### **AUTISTIC KIDS LEFT IN THE LURCH**

*Moonee Valley Weekly* – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/autistic-kids-left-in-the-lurch/2280858.aspx>

Parents protesting against funding cuts to an education program for children with autism took their fight to the steps of State Parliament last week.

The Innovative Developments in the Education of children with Autism (IDEA) program will end this year unless it receives funding.

The program, operating from Fawkner's Moomba Park Primary School, provides inclusive education for children on the autism spectrum from Melbourne's north-west.

Under this system, autistic children are taught in the mainstream school, with some input from specialist teachers.

Western Metropolitan Greens MP Colleen Hartland, who joined parents at the rally, lashed out at Liberal MP Bernie Finn for blaming departmental staff.

"Bernie Finn wants to blame public servants for funding cuts," she said, "but he is part of the Baillieu government and it's that government that is cutting funding to the IDEA program at Moomba Park Primary School."

Mr Finn said he had raised the issue because he was deeply concerned about the future of children and families in the IDEA program.

"Colleen Hartland sees children with autism as nothing but a cheap tool with which she can promote herself. She wants to play petty politics.

"I'm far more interested in getting a fair go for kids with autism."

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



Altona Meadows father Steve Morgan feared his eight-year-old son Corey would revert to behaviours like chewing his shirt and exposing himself if forced to return to a special school.

With the Western Autistic School catering only for children up to grade 3, it is uncertain where his son could go.

In a letter addressed to Parliament, another parent, Nadu Dove, said children would have nowhere to go if the program ended.

### **KEILOR COLLEGE CAMPAIGN BECOMES UNHINGED**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/keilor-college-campaign-becomes-unhinged/2280863.aspx>

A campaign to get Education Minister Martin Dixon to Essendon Keilor College took a new turn last week when Niddrie MP Rob Hulls delivered a door to Mr Dixon at Parliament.

The school has been trying to get Mr Dixon to visit its dilapidated buildings for months and make good on a former Labor government promise to fund a \$10 million rebuild.

Mr Dixon has so far been a no-show. A spokesman for the minister last week told the Weekly he hoped to visit the school by October.

Mr Hulls, who promised the \$10 million before last year's state election, has joined the school in its fight for funds and last week ramped up the campaign with the door delivery.

"I've been forced to deliver this door from Essendon Keilor College because Mr Dixon has refused to walk through the door of the school to see the conditions for himself.

"Essendon Keilor College needs to be upgraded but the Baillieu government's funding solution won't even cover the cost of paint and plumbing, let alone provide students with the facilities they desperately require.

"The school's 400 students and parents should not be forced to hold working bees to patch the school up."

The school has been given \$640,000 for urgent repair to its drainage system and for restumping, but principal David Adamson said a patch-up job was not viable for the school's long-term future.

### **IN MOONEE VALLEY, MORE VICTIMS REPORT SEX CRIMES**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/in-moonee-valley-more-victims-report-sex-crimes/2280861.aspx>

Police crime statistics have revealed a dramatic spike in the number of sexual assaults and rapes in Moonee Valley in the past 12 months.

Recorded cases of sexual assaults jumped 62percent from 66 cases in 2009-10 to 107 in 2010-11. The number of rapes recorded has increased from 17 to 27.

Moonee Valley's Acting Inspector David Byrt said the increase in recorded offences included historical cases where people who may have been assaulted as a child come forward as an adult.

He said the number also reflected that victims of sexual assaults were now more willing to come forward to police.

"Particularly some of our African communities, assaults that have occurred in a domestic setting that used to be more accepted are now being reported.

"We most definitely don't have a massive spike in women being raped or dragged off the street and assaulted - there's a lot of things that impact on the statistics."

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



Residential burglaries in Moonee Valley increased by 10.9 per cent, to 539 cases in 2011 compared with 486.

Acting Inspector Byrt said houses under construction continued to be a target for burglars.

He welcomed statistics which revealed a 6 per cent increase in drug trafficking, manufacture and cultivation offences and an 11.8 per cent increase in drug possession offences.

"It's a good sign. That means our procedures and operations are working - drug crimes are unreported crimes, we have to go out and find them and this is evidence that we are."

### **ESSENDON PROPERTY VALUES HIT \$1.05 MILLION**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/essendon-property-values-hit-105-million/2280857.aspx>

Essendon real estate has bucked a statewide trend with property values continuing to rise.

But while the north-west's first million-dollar suburb reaches new heights with a 4.5 per cent rise in property values to July, the rest of Moonee Valley has taken a slide.

Figures released by property information provider RP Data-Rismark last week revealed Melbourne is the worst performing property market in Australia with the average house price dropping 6.2percent to July.

According to Real Estate Institute of Victoria statistics, median house prices in Flemington dropped 7.5 per cent, Moonee Ponds 16.7 per cent and Airport West 9.5 per cent, in the past financial year.

In July last year, Essendon became the north-west's first million-dollar suburb with REIV figures showing its median house price had jumped to \$1,005,000.

The suburb has continued to be popular with its median house price up to \$1.05million in July this year.

In neighbouring Moonee Ponds, the median price has dropped from \$915,000 in 2009-10 to \$762,500 this year.

Essendon-based real estate agent Paul McDonald said he didn't read too much into the figures for each suburb because the numbers were greatly affected by what properties had been on the market.

"I actually think prices have come back a little but buyers are still sitting on their hands.

"I think it will stay a flat market but it depends on how much stock comes on in spring and whether [interest] rates change.

"If interest rates drop that might be a catalyst to get people buying again."

### **END TO SPEED CONFUSION**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/essendon-has-150-reasons-to-party/2280869.aspx>

Rosehill Road motorists should be among the first to respond to the government's speed limit review which seeks to make rules simpler, more consistent and easier to follow.

There's a strip of road near St Bernard's College and the Essendon hospital on which motorists contend with limits of 40km/h, 50 and 60, all in less than a kilometre.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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It's not the only area in the district where speed limits confuse motorists, but the signage is at its worst in Rosehill Road.

While motorists will be pleased to see an end to the confusion, they will not welcome the government's plan to introduce night cameras, following the auditor-general's findings that speed cameras are not designed to boost the treasury coffers but do save lives.

And we should not be misled by the government's weekly announcements of speed camera locations.

In Essendon, at least, they don't always appear where published and some operate in areas not listed in the weekly advertisements.

### **ESSENDON HAS 150 REASONS TO PARTY**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/essendon-has-150-reasons-to-party/2280869.aspx>

Planning a 150th anniversary which coincides with Christmas and the new year is challenging, but Moonee Valley Council is developing a program of events to celebrate the sesquicentenary of local government in Essendon.

The Borough of Essendon and Flemington was proclaimed in December 1861 and a council was elected at the first meeting on January 25, 1862.

There was partying in the streets at the time of the proclamation and again at the centenary in 1962.

Our celebrations will be more sedate, stretching over four months and beginning with a race day at Moonee Valley, an exhibition and cocktail party at the Incinerator Gallery and re-enactments at the Moonee Valley Festival in March.

The Essendon Historical Society will promote history walks and displays at its court house headquarters.

### **MONNEE VALLEY FARE EVADERS URGED TO THINK**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 5<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/monnee-valley-fare-evaders-urged-to-think/2281133.aspx>

Moonee Valley fare evaders have been urged to smarten up as Metlink this month launches a campaign targeting public transport users who refuse to buy tickets.

Metlink's metropolitan fare evasion survey from May shows an estimated 9.8 per cent of train passengers evade fares, while on trams that figure is 20.3 per cent. Fare evasion on buses is estimated at 9.2 per cent.

Transport Minister Terry Mulder warned public transport users there would be more tickets checked more often and more fines issued during Metlink's campaign.

"We need to get tough with fare evaders because we need every cent available to go into improvements across the network for the benefit of all passengers," he Mulder said.

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## WYNDHAM

### FROM FARMS TO HOUSING IN WYNDHAM

*Wyndham Leader*— 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/from-farms-to-housing-in-wyndham/>

One minute you can be driving past a new housing estate jam-packed with homes and the next, past livestock grazing in a spacious paddock.

Such is the diversity of Wyndham's landscape.

Population growth and the urban sprawl are bringing country and city closer together, as these photos show.

They were taken at Tarneit's The Rise estate and around the corner at paddocks on Leakes and Dohertys roads.

Wyndham Council chief executive Kerry Thompson said Wyndham had 610 agricultural properties by July last year.

But the countryside is getting smaller.

"The number of rural properties is slowly decreasing with Wyndham's increasing population and the expansion of the urban growth boundary," Ms Thompson said.

Changes to the urban growth boundary last year will allow for an extra 43,000 households in Wyndham, to a capacity of 145,500.

There were 48,254 households in 2009-10.

Wyndham's population of about 160,000 is forecast to reach 240,000 by 2021 and eventually top 400,000. It grew by 12,600 residents or almost 9 per cent in 2009-10, more than any other municipality in Australia.

Ms Thompson said Wyndham's rural properties were on the city's outskirts including at Little River, Truganina, Tarneit, Wyndham Vale, Werribee South and Point Cook.

### 'BABY STEPS' IN CALL TO MUZZLE DANGER BREEDS

*Wyndham Weekly*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/baby-steps-in-call-to-muzzle-danger-breeds/2283444.aspx>

Moves to tighten restrictions on certain breeds of dogs after the death of a child in St Albans last month have been described as merely a "baby step in the right direction" by Wyndham campaigner Leanne Pelen.

The public outcry following the fatal mauling of four-year-old Ayen Chol by a neighbour's dog has resulted in the fast-tracking of new laws that will crack down on dangerous and restricted dogs such as American pit bulls.

Under the changes, all dangerous restricted-breed dogs will need to be registered in Victoria by September 29 or council officers will have the power to seize and destroy them. But Mrs Pelen, whose husband was attacked by two dogs as he protected his young son six months ago, said it was only a small step in the right direction.

"The new rule really would have made no difference in our situation because the dogs that attacked us were registered," the Hoppers Crossing resident said. "But it's a start, baby steps are still steps in the right direction I guess, but the laws need to move more into the area of owner culpability."

Mrs Pelen said Agriculture Minister Peter Walsh's plans to charge owners of dogs which attack in a manner similar to culpable driving did not go far enough. "If it was in any other circumstances it would be considered manslaughter, but because a dog is involved, the charge is minimal."

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Mr Walsh said the legislation was the first of several measures to get rid of restricted breeds including pit bulls.

Lost Dogs Home managing director Graeme Smith believes the new legislation is "fantastic".

"Peter Walsh is the first minister trying to actually do something so that people [with dangerous dogs] will take notice," Dr Smith said.

"The idea of people being culpable for the actions of their dogs would be good."

But the RSPCA has serious concerns for breeds that could be mistaken for a pit bull and has received calls from people worried their pet could be targeted and put down.

Dr Smith said that if people do the right thing and register the dogs they were not in any danger. "That means registering, signage, muzzling and adequate fencing. The important thing is that these dogs are contained."

Mrs Pelen said muzzling made the most sense. "We muzzle greyhounds because of rabbits, yet we don't muzzle these dogs which are aggressive without provocation."

Wyndham mayor John Menegazzo said the council supported any initiative that would limit the number of restricted breed dogs.

"Wyndham has advocated strongly for recognition of cross breeds and for greater enforcement in this area. While Wyndham supports the overall principle, we are still working through the finer details of the new legislation and therefore cannot provide comment regarding its effectiveness, enforceability and impact on resources."

### **CAMERAS DRIVING DOWN TRAUMA: REPORT**

*Wyndham Weekly*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/cameras-driving-down-trauma-report/2283433.aspx>

Road safety cameras are effective in reducing road trauma and are not being exploited as a revenue raiser, a new report has found.

The Victorian Auditor-General's report into the road safety camera program has found the network has been successful in improving road safety and reducing death and serious injury on Victorian roads.

Werribee's Inspector Bill Weatherly said the perception that speed cameras were operating only to raise funds for the state government was untrue.

"From my point of view, if trying to prevent serious fatalities means people get a fine in the mail, well then that is the way it has to be until people get the message," he said.

Inspector Weatherly said Wyndham roads were well populated with speed cameras but the message to slow down still wasn't sinking in.

"I was speaking to a camera operator the other day and they had just nabbed 135 people in one four-hour period. He said in other areas they wouldn't get that in a week."

Inspector Weatherly said the man hours and speed cameras had doubled over the course of three months.

"I'm going to continue to keep requesting for more cameras and more hours dedicated to the cameras as is necessary to get the message across," he said.

Acting Assistant Commissioner Neville Taylor said the report's findings were positive.

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"It found that both the technology and systems in place around the Victorian camera program are sound and that the community can place a high degree of confidence in the accuracy and fairness of the system," Acting Assistant Commissioner Taylor said.

The report stated poor public perception about the cameras was an ongoing problem and there would be greater assurance about the accuracy of mobile cameras if they were independently tested under actual conditions.

### **MANOR LAKES TWITTER POST NO LARK FOR PARENT**

*Wyndham Weekly*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/manor-lakes-twitter-post-no-lark-for-parent/2283434.aspx>

A twitter controversy at Manor Lakes College has ignited a debate about the use of social media in classrooms.

The issue was sparked when pictures of Ann Srbinovski's seven-year-old daughter Alana were last week posted on the social network by her grade 1 teacher at the Wyndham Vale School.

Mrs Srbinovski complained to the school about the pictures. But she claimed that instead of them being taken down more images were added the next day.

Manor Lakes principal Jason Smallwood said social media tools such as Twitter were utilised to keep parents up to date with their child's learning in the classroom and to keep them connected to the school.

"The response to this [Twitter accounts] has been very positive. The majority of parents are saying to us that they love the instant feedback and seeing pictures of their kids in action."

Mr Smallwood said the accounts were password protected and only the teacher could give parents permission to access it.

Parents Victoria spokeswoman Elaine Crowle said a key concern for parents should be the manner in which social media platforms were used in schools. "It boils down to the purpose to which the teacher was utilising social media in the classroom. We can't go backwards, technology is great thing and this type of technology is here to stay, but we need to stay on top of policing it. This is an example of a cautionary tale, to raise awareness that schools and teachers need to be vigilant on obtaining permission."

Mr Smallwood said permission slips had been obtained for the collection, use and disclosure of student information, including the use of student images online.

### **POINT COOK PHOTO SHOW A THIEVES' MAGNET**

*Wyndham Leader*— 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/point-cook-photo-show-a-thieves-magnet/>

Vandals have forced the temporary closure of a community gallery in Point Cook.

The gallery at Point Cook Community Learning Centre last month hosted a photographic exhibition by local artists.

The show used small magnets to display the unframed works on paper, but over several days the magnets were stolen and photos damaged or lost.

Artist Bill Strong said he was disappointed by the vandalism.

"It's just sad to see the loss of that community space that is designated as a community arts space," he said.

The gallery has 18m of hanging space next to the library but its walls were left blank last week.

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Council chief executive Kerry Thompson said the “theft of these magnets is especially disappointing, given it was a community arts group who had put together this exhibition for August Arts.

“The photos were printed at Wyndham City’s cost, so the artists did not bear any losses.

“The decision to remove the exhibition was made by the community centre after several attempts to keep the work on display failed. This is the first time this type of hanging system has been used in this space.”

Ms Thompson said the space would be made available for future exhibitions, but the council would reassess the types displayed to ensure artists’ work was not damaged in future.

### **POLICE PLEA TO DRIVERS**

*Wyndham Star– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/312/story/139887.html>

Wyndham police have warned young drivers to slow down and take care on the roads, after a recent spate of teenagers and young adults flouting traffic laws in the area.

Wyndham Highway Patrol Unit Commander Acting Sergeant Graeme Crouch said on Sunday 28 August, a 19-year-old girl from Caroline Springs was caught travelling at 108km in a 60km zone on Dunnings Rd, Point Cook.

The previous day, police detected another three dangerous drivers including an 18-year-old who had been on P-plates for only a fortnight.

He was caught speeding doing 148km/h on the Princes Freeway in Hoppers Crossing, with two young friends in his car.

Perhaps more alarmingly, police also caught a 17-year-old learner driver in an unregistered vehicle without L-plates.

Acting Sgt Crouch said the L-plates were previously seized after he was fined for disobeying a sign, driving an unregistered car and driving unaccompanied.

However, during the latest incident, after refusing to pull over for police officers the youngster was pursued in Werribee and charged with evading police, using an unregistered car, being an unaccompanied learner and careless driving.

Police also caught a 32-year-old Altona resident in Wallace Ave, Point Cook driving while suspended. The previous weekend, a 21-year-old Williamstown man had his car impounded for 30 days after being caught travelling at 137km/h in a 60km zone in Point Cook and attempting to evade police.

### **DIABETES CONCERN**

*Wyndham Star– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/312/story/139901.html>

Wyndham City Council has expressed concern about the area suffering from “an epidemic of obesity and diabetes”, in a submission to a State Government inquiry.

The council’s advocacy program recently sent a response to the government’s ‘Inquiry into Environmental Design and Public Health in Victoria’, which said “the subject matter is of crucial importance to shaping healthy and resilient communities”.

With the municipality’s population predicted to exceed 245,000 by 2021, making it one of Australia’s fastest-growing regions, the council said it received 60 birth notifications, 120 requests for a garbage service (from new households) and issued 100 building permits every week.

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“Wyndham’s future as a healthy, resilient and connected community is dependent upon good practice environmental design for health, in particular providing opportunities for active transport such as walking and cycling (supported by accessible and integrated public transport), and providing opportunities for exercise and recreation,” the submission said.

“Wyndham has an opportunity to create new communities, with the benefit of learning from past mistakes. Wyndham communities are suffering an epidemic of obesity and diabetes: a factor in this is previous generations of poor environmental design for public health outcomes.

“The report said a 2001 study showed the leading causes of “loss of a healthy life in Wyndham was mental disorders (21 per cent), cancer (17 per cent) and cardiovascular disease (13 per cent)”. The council’s submission asked the government to consider strengthening Precinct Structure Planning guidelines to ensure “that statements related to Environmental Design and Public Health Planning is able to be delivered”.

The council also asked the government to prioritise “integrated public transport and active transport” and to increase incentives for developers and Councils to improve urban design from a public health perspective.

“The funding pressures on Wyndham City Council in providing basic infrastructure for a rapidly growing community are a major barrier to the provision of optimum environmental design for the entire community,” the document said.

### **WYNDHAM CRIME RISE**

*Wyndham Star*– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/312/story/139888.html>

Crimes recorded in Wyndham have increased nine per cent across the past 12 months, with assaults, robberies, residential burglaries and sexual assaults all registering higher rates than last year.

Annual crime statistics released by Victoria Police reveal there were 10,542 crimes recorded in Wyndham during the 2010-2011 financial year, compared to 9651 within 2009-2010.

However homicides fell from 12 to eight, rapes from 52 to 39, aggravated burglaries from 71 to 49 and car thefts from 423 to 372, from the previous year’s figures.

Drug cultivation, manufacturing and trafficking offences also decreased from 148 to 121, and drug use and possession dropped from 225 to 194.

But sexual assaults increased from 86 to 147, robbery 65 to 117, residential burglaries 1139 to 1378, arson from 85 to 108, property damage 1260 to 1318, thefts from motor vehicle 1387 to 1527 and ‘behaviour in public’ charges 36 to 61.

While assaults rose from 868 to more than 1020, domestic violence accounted for around two thirds of this figure, according to police.

Wyndham’s Police Inspector Bill Weatherly said robberies, residential burglaries and assaults were the major categories driving the crime increase.

He said the area’s fast-growing population was also a significant factor in the higher crime rate.

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“Population growth brings new housing estates, and houses under construction are soft targets for criminals,” he said.

“Our robbery problem is mainly youth victims with younger offenders, on many occasions the victims are ‘soft targets’.”

Insp Weatherly said the Wyndham Burglary Unit, which was set up in February to crack down on the high number of residential burglaries within the municipality, “has been a success story for local policing”.

The unit has made 86 arrests for burglary offences and in July, recorded the lowest number of residential burglaries in Wyndham across the past 12 months.

“Recently they arrested a ring of offenders and recovered over \$50,000 in property, property that was returned to the rightful owners,” Insp Weatherly said.

Insp Weatherly said the many arrests made by the Burglary Unit officers were males aged between 16 and 20.

On 25 August, the Burglary Unit executed a search warrant in Hoppers Crossing and arrested a 24-year-old male.

He was charged with nine burglaries, nine thefts and one charge of possessing a drug of dependence.

### **END OF RAMADAN IN WYNDHAM**

*Wyndham Leader*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/end-of-ramadan-in-wyndham/>

Thousands of Muslims across Wyndham celebrated the end of Ramadan, and fasting, last week.

Fasting from dawn to sunset during Ramadan, the ninth month in the Muslim lunar calendar is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Thousands of Muslims attended local mosques last Wednesday for a day called Eid-ul-Fitr to mark the end of Ramadan.

The day included prayers, feasts and fun at Truaganina’s Islamic school, Al Taqwa College.

Ramadan ended following the first sighting of the new moon.

It is said to be when the first verses of the Qur’an were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

Ramadan started in Australia on August 1.

### **MERCY WERRIBEE GEARS UP FOR BIG ART SHOW**

*Wyndham Leader*— 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/mercy-werribee-gears-up-for-big-art-show/>

Paintings and more are needed for Werribee Mercy hospital’s annual arts show next month.

Hospital staff, patients and the community can pay \$10 to have a maximum of two original ready-to-hang works displayed.

Categories include oil and watercolour paintings and photography. Registrations close on September 2.

The works will be unveiled at the hospital on September 16 and displayed until September 25.

There will be a prize for the work judged best overall as well as the best in each category, including ones for young entrants.

Some will be on sale, with 20 per cent going to the hospital.

For more details, visit [mercyhealth.com.au](http://mercyhealth.com.au) or phone 9216 8508.

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And an exhibition of more than 200 artworks all measuring 30cm by 30cm is on in Wyndham.

The 3030 Project exhibition is part of Wyndham Council's August Arts program.

Residents enter works including paintings, photos and sculptures.

It is at the Wyndham Art Gallery at the Cultural Centre in Werribee on Watton St until September 2. Entry is free.

Details: [wyndham.vic.gov.au](http://wyndham.vic.gov.au)

### **FISH FERTILISER FEEDS WYNDHAM VALE FAMILY**

*Wyndham Leader*— 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/fish-fertiliser-feeds-wyndham-vale-family/>

There's something fishy about the Englands' Wyndham Vale vegie patch.

The family grow up to 80 per cent of their vegetables with the aid of silver perch and trout, which in turn usually wind up on the dinner table.

Mark and Janette England use aquaponics to irrigate and fertilise their garden and feed themselves and two daughters.

Water from their fish tank, containing the fishy fertiliser, is pumped to the plants for 15 minutes every hour. The water is in turn filtered by the garden and returned to the tank.

"We're basically using the same amount of water over and over again," Mr England said.

"We use about 90 per cent less water than a normal vegie garden."

He said the intensive watering meant they could grow more vegetables in a smaller space.

The family's garden won the Wyndham Council Sustainable Garden Competition last year.

For more information, visit [harvest365.blogspot.com](http://harvest365.blogspot.com), the England family's blog.

Wyndham Council's Sustainability Festival is on from September 5-11 and culminates in an expo, including the announcement of this year's sustainable gardening competition winners.

### **LITERACY MAGIC AT WERRIBEE SCHOOL**

*Wyndham Star*— 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/literacy-magic-at-werribee-school/>

Wyndham Park Primary School was full of character last week as students and teachers celebrated Book Week.

The annual Children's Book Council of Australia festival was marked with a dress-up day and activities, with this year's theme One World, Many Stories.

Grade 4 student Bailey cast spells over classmates as Hermione Granger from Harry Potter.

### **BAY COULD BE POOL LIFESAVER FOR POINT COOK**

*Wyndham Leader*— 2<sup>thnd</sup> September 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/bay-could-be-pool-lifesaver-for-point-cook/>

Campaigners for a Point Cook pool might get some relief from an unexpected quarter.

Neighbouring Hobsons Bay Mayor Michael Raffoul has thrown his weight behind a push to upgrade the ageing Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre, just 5km from Point Cook.

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But Point Cook residents may have to wait months to hear what Hobsons Bay Council has planned for the pool.

Cr Raffoul said he would like to see the centre, built about 40 years ago, revamped to meet the needs of the burgeoning Laverton community.

“Regardless of its functional life, it needs to be enhanced with the growing population,” Cr Raffoul said. He would consider allocating funds for the upgrade in next year’s budget.

A Wyndham Council draft strategy to guide development of public pools, released in June, found the existing two at Werribee and Hoppers Crossing had reached capacity and that the council needed to expand the Hoppers Crossing pool by 2013-14 and build a third at Tarneit by 2021.

The report said Point Cook residents were among the highest users of the Hoppers Crossing pool and this should continue, particularly after its upgrades.

It recommended the council review the city’s pool needs by 2016, including considering plans by neighbouring Hobsons Bay Council for its pool at Laverton, near Point Cook.

Hobsons Bay Council is still waiting for a feasibility study into the Laverton centre’s future, commissioned early last year.

The study was expected to be completed by May, 2010.

### **BACKYARDS ARE HISTORY IN WYNDHAM**

*Wyndham Leader – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/backyards-are-history-in-wyndham/>

The disappearance of the suburban backyard is being lamented by opponents of a new housing estate planned for Werribee.

New plans for a housing estate in Walls Rd were approved by Wyndham Council last week despite 117 objections from nearby residents.

The original plans for a 105-lot subdivision of the 8ha site were the subject of a rare state planning tribunal victory for the council when the tribunal upheld a council decision to refuse the development.

Residents lodged 120 objections to the earlier plans.

The new estate will have 60 lots on 4.3ha and one super lot, which would require further council planning approval should the applicant wish to build on it.

Resident Alex Hodge said while opponents had succeeded in increasing the setback of properties abutting their own backyards, the development was still too dense.

Almost half the lots planned are between 300-500sq m with the smallest 258sq m.

“We feel backyards are disappearing not only in this estate but right across Wyndham,” he said.

Cr Heather Marcus, the only councillor to oppose the new plans, also lamented the lack of open space in Wyndham.

“We’re going to have no open space for our kids to play in,” she said.

But other councillors said issues of density and parking concerns had been addressed in the new plans and by conditions imposed by the council.

Tribunal member Tonia Komesaroff said any new housing in the area should include double garages to prevent parking in front gardens or on nature strips.

The new plans propose all dwellings less than 300sq m would include a single garage and tandem parking space and that design guidelines would ensure about

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80 per cent of dwellings would provide double garages, which a council report states would address the parking issues raised by the tribunal.

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## ACROSS THE REGION

### TRAIN PASSENGERS LET DOWN BY LIFTS AT \$93M STATION

*The Age* – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/train-passengers-let-down-by-lifts-at-93m-station-20110907-1jxqt.html>

Lifts at a recently rebuilt western suburbs railway station have broken more than 100 times in 10 months, repeatedly leaving wheelchair passengers stranded on platforms or unable to get to trains.

The \$93 million Laverton station, which opened last year, has stairs and lifts to get people onto platforms. Unlike most other stations with elevated entrances, it has no ramps.

Complaints to the Department of Transport about the station after it reopened were passed to train operator Metro. It in turn said the department had been responsible for the station's design, but attempted to resolve the issue by giving disabled passengers taxi vouchers to get to other railway stations with ramps.

Advertisement: Story continues below

Greens MP Colleen Hartland tabled a question in Parliament asking how many times the lifts at Laverton broke down between July 2010 and last April.

Transport Minister Terry Mulder told Parliament in his reply that they were inoperative on 105 occasions. And he said that a \$15 million footbridge at

Footscray station, also built last year without ramps, had lifts that broke down 117 times over the same period.

"It is quite clear that they didn't put any thought into these two stations," Ms Hartland said.

The stations were unsafe without ramps, she said, because in an emergency wheelchair passengers and parents with prams needed an alternative to broken lifts. "They need ramps at these stations before someone is seriously injured."

Altona Meadows resident Shanika Dannangoda was at the station yesterday with her daughter Hasara, and the lifts were working. Ms Dannangoda said she had previously carried her pram down the station's steep stairs when the lifts were out.

"Luckily my parents were there. If they hadn't been and someone wanted to help me I could've done it, but you can't expect people to come and help you all the time. For a wheelchair person it's even worse."

Ms Dannangoda couldn't understand why the ramps on the old station hadn't been replaced. "It was easier to walk on the ramp rather than climbing up a heap of stairs."

Mr Mulder said the former government approved plans to build the station without ramps. "Commuters left stranded at places like Laverton and Footscray have every right to be angry," he said.

But he stopped short of promising to install ramps at the two stations - although escalators and perhaps ramps will be installed as part of a pending Footscray station upgrade.

Mr Mulder said lifts at both stations needed fixing quickly when they broke. "I have spoken to the department and Metro about this."

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The reliability of the lifts at Laverton has not been the only problem. A man who died at the station last year had to be carried out across tracks because an ambulance trolley would not fit in the lifts.

### **REGIONAL RAIL LINK TAKES STEP FORWARD**

*Star– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/312/story/139860.html>

The Regional Rail Link Authority has shortlisted tenders to deliver the Southern Cross Station to Footscray stage of the Regional Rail Link.

Integrate Rail and Leighton Contractors, Downer EDI, SMEC & Mott MacDonald are in the ring to deliver the project – which includes realigning and upgrading the existing track and building two lines.

Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister Anthony Albanese said the short-listing for the second major package of works represents another major milestone in the RRL project.

Mr Mulder said the extensive package of work to be delivered by the successful consortium will transform the movement of regional trains through Melbourne's inner West.

### **GAMBLING: THE WEST'S BURDEN**

*Star– 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/sunshne-ardeer-albion/312/story/139849.html>

The six municipalities that make up Melbourne's West represent almost one quarter of poker machine losses in metropolitan Melbourne according to statistics from Gambler's Help Western.

The organisation, managed by ISIS Primary Care, provides problem gambling counselling and a community education program to residents of Brimbank, Melton, Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Wyndham and Moonee Valley.

According to the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation, the gambling losses from electronic gaming machines for 2010-2011 in the six municipalities was almost half a billion dollars.

Losses from the whole of Victoria were just over two and a half billion dollars.

There are 64 gaming venues operating a staggering total of 3867 machine across the region.

The alarming statistics come only weeks after Star revealed the growing number of troubled women turning to crime to fuel gambling addictions in Brimbank as the pokies crisis spirals out of control.

Gambler's Health Western counselled more than 400 clients in the past year, with almost 200 clients requiring financial counselling.

Michael Girolami, Gambler's Health Western director for community support services, said clients also seek support in relation to other issues like family and relationships, anxiety and depression, feelings of isolation and access to alternative leisure activities.

Mr Girolami said the most common forms of gambling used by people seeking help were by far 'pokies' or 'one armed bandits', followed by horse/harness racing and sports betting.

A recent case example by one of the group's counsellors revealed the extreme measures gamblers took once they become entrenched in the downward spiral.

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"In February 2011, I started working with Steve who had recently attempted to kill himself. This was one of many past suicide attempts.

"He had been gambling for 10 years, was unable to keep a job, suffered from chronic depression and anxiety and was also struggling with unpaid debts and loans to support his gambling problem."

The counsellor said that six months after commencing counselling the client had been able to stop gambling, quit smoking, resumed his medication and had been connected with an employment agency to develop a back to work plan.

Mr Girolami said early warning signs of problem gambling include numerous loans, moodiness, unexplained anger or depression, lack of food in the house, unpaid bills, excessive time off work and reduced interaction with family and friends.

He urged anyone affected by problem gambling to seek help by contacting Gamblers HELP on 1800 858 858 or phone Gambler's Help Western on 9296 1234.

### **CBD RESTAURANTS WORST OFFENDERS**

*The Age*— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011

<http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/restaurants-and-bars/cbd-restaurants-worst-offenders-20110905-1ju9h.html>

Melbourne's CBD has the most restaurants in the state breaching food safety laws, according to a register of convictions that names and shames Victorian eateries.

Thirty-six individuals and businesses representing 24 restaurants have been named on the register since the Brumby government set it up on July 1 last year.

Eleven of the convictions on the register are against restaurants within Melbourne's CBD.

It does not yet include Ten Ren's Tea Station in Swanston Street, which was fined \$20,000 last week after an inspector found its kitchen infested with rodent droppings, cockroaches and accumulated food waste.

Described by prosecutors last week as "deplorable", Ten Ren's owners agreed to temporarily shut its upstairs kitchen on March 7 this year - after a complaint from a customer - when authorities feared for public health.

Last week, a magistrate heard that "at the end of the day this has been a positive experience" for the couple, who now ran a "very well operated and clean business".

Restaurants in the City of Hobsons Bay, which includes Brooklyn, Laverton and Altona, also feature prominently on the register.

Eateries in Geelong, Warrnambool, Ballarat and Anglesea are the only businesses located outside Melbourne.

Asian restaurants and grocery stores appear to be the worst offenders, making up almost half of all convictions.

But the list also contains bakeries, a cafe attached to a car wash and a venue operating at the popular Queen Victoria Market.

The offences include:

- failing to remove pests living in the premises;
- smoking near food preparation areas;
- not storing potentially hazardous food correctly;
- not providing soap and warm water for food handlers;
- having no means of drying hands to reduce the risk of contamination; and

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- having kitchens with an accumulation of garbage, food waste, dirt or grease.

The worst offenders include Noodle Kingdom, whose owners were ordered to fork out \$70,000 for various breaches.

Water pooled on the floor of the Russell Street business, which was greasy and covered in scraps, and food was handled in such a way it rendered it "unsuitable", investigators found. The business was inspected in January last year and 12 breaches of the Food Act were uncovered.

Kwok Wai Sze, the director of the company which owned the business, was convicted and ordered to donate \$50,000 to the Lighthouse Foundation. He was placed on a 12-month good behaviour bond. The company, Qian Fu Yuan, was ordered to pay \$20,000 as part of an aggregate order.

Owners of Hong Vinh Asian Grocery in Meadow Heights and Indian restaurant Guju's Café and Chaat House in Malvern were both slapped with \$15,000 fines for their filthy food habits.

Both had at least eight breaches of the act, including not having sinks near toilets for staff to wash their hands, selling packaged food without a use by date and failing to store food at an appropriate temperature.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/restaurants-and-bars/cbd-restaurants-worst-offenders-20110905-1ju9h.html#ixzz1X8SAsytz>

### **BOY, 5, DIES AFTER HIS FATHER ACCIDENTALLY RUNS HIM OVER WITH HIS TRUCK** *The Herald Sun— 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/boy-5-dies-after-being-struck-by-a-car-at-melton-south-in-melbournes-west/story-fn7x8me2-1226129988762>

The family of a five-year-old boy is devastated after the boy's father accidentally ran over him with his truck.

Sen-Sgt Ross Burbidge from Melton police said the boy's father had just dropped his son off at his mother's house after picking him up from child care in St Albans.

"He didn't realise the boy had followed him out," Sgt Burbidge said.

The father was driving away from the house when the rear left wheel of the truck hit the boy.

Sgt Burbidge said the man returned to the house after he was called and told about the accident.

Ambulance officers were called but could not save the boy. He died at the scene in Melton South at 5.50pm.

Melton Highway patrol leading Senior Constable Craig Kelso said a number of witnesses were receiving counselling.

"A number of relatives of the child are all very distraught," he said.

He cautioned people to be careful on the roads.

"This is a reminder for people to be vigilant of children," he said.

The boy was the 39th pedestrian to die on the state's roads this year.

Senior police have been alarmed by the figure, which compares with 27 at the same time last year.

The death brought the state's 2011 road toll to 200, three more than at the same time last year.

Witnesses to the accident have been asked to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or visit [crimestoppers.com.au](http://crimestoppers.com.au).

Charges over hit-run

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



In a separate case, two people have been charged over a hit-run smash that left a young man fighting for life in hospital.

Police said James Michael Smith, 31, of no fixed address, would face counts including dangerous driving causing serious injury, failing to stop and failing to render assistance over a head-on collision in Tilburn Rd, Deer Park, on Saturday night.

A 23-year-old woman from Preston was charged with aiding and abetting Mr Smith after the smash.

Both are expected to appear before Melbourne Magistrates' Court today.

The injured man, a 24-year-old from Sydenham, was trapped in his car for about an hour.

He remains in hospital after a stolen hire car allegedly crashed into his Nissan Pulsar at 7.55pm.

### **LIVE IN MOORABOOL, WORK AWAY**

*Melton Leader*— 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/live-in-moorabool-work-away/>

More than half of Moorabool workers are employed outside the shire.

Moorabool council figures show 51 per cent of working residents are employed outside the shire's boundaries.

According to the council, it is also estimated 35 per cent of jobs in Moorabool shire are filled by people living outside the shire.

Shire chief executive Rob Croxford said most of Moorabool's new residents came from Melton, Brimbank, Wyndham and Hobsons Bay.

A large percentage of Moorabool residents also take up employment opportunities in those four municipalities.

Mr Croxford said the highest percentage of jobs filled by local workers were in agriculture, education, and mining.

He said Moorabool's central location and road and rail network provided options for the workforce to commute to jobs in metropolitan Melbourne, Ballarat and Geelong.

"About 74 per cent of Moorabool's total workforce travel to work by car, and rail patronage from and to railway stations in Moorabool has more than doubled since the 2006 census," Mr Croxford said.

He said the National Broadband Network's planned roll-out in Bacchus Marsh and fixed wireless to the west of the shire to places such as Gordon would attract and develop new industries and skilled workers reliant on high-speed broadband.

"Telecommuting and working from home becomes more feasible with fast, reliable broadband and Moorabool has the opportunity to be at the forefront of this emerging trend in workforce culture," Mr Croxford said.

Other industries such as agriculture, health and community services, retail, construction, manufacturing and logistics in larger population centres like Bacchus Marsh also attracted workers to the shire, he said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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### EPA REPORTS HIGH ZINC LEVEL AT ONE SITE

*The Age* – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/epa-reports-high-zinc-level-at-one-site-20110901-1jo9e.html>

Soil testing at a housing estate in Melbourne's west has detected zinc levels above recommended concentrations at one test site - but average zinc levels across the areas tested were within acceptable levels, according to the Environment Protection Authority.

Following an investigation by the Ombudsman's office, the EPA agreed to retest much of the area at the Cairnlea housing estate in Brimbank tested a decade ago - "due to the method in which the samples were collected". While the EPA will not publicly release the entire 200-page new soil test report for "privacy reasons", the executive summary has been released showing the single high zinc reading.

The report found the high reading was "likely to be attributed to natural background levels within the fill material on site and is not expected to affect a worker's health".

### ZONE 2: SEND US YOUR PHOTO AND STORY

*The Age* – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011

<http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2011/08/24/3301116.htm?site=melbourne&ref=fb-top3-melbourne-regional-landing>

We want you to join in a 'show and tell' of how Melbourne's outer suburbs are changing.

We want to document the changing landscape of Melbourne's outer suburbs and suburban fringe - and we want your help.

In the last 65 years Melbourne's urban area has quadrupled in size but it is in the last ten years that we have seen Melbourne's population grow at an amazing rate.

Victoria grew by 79,000 people in 2009-10, with 74 per cent of that growth in Melbourne.

Most of this growth has been in Melbourne's outer suburbs - Wyndham, Whittlesea, Melton and Cardinia experienced the largest and fastest growth of any local government areas in Victoria.

The Zone 2 project is an online show and tell, a chance for you to show us how your suburb is changing, for better or for worse.

We'll be using some of your entries on-air and in an online documentary to be released later this year.

Submit your photo below. Use the 'Description' field to write your story once your photo is uploaded.

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# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011



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