It’s important to get tested for coronavirus at the first sign of any symptom. Symptoms include:

- a fever
- sore throat
- chills or sweats
- loss of sense of smell or taste
- runny nose
- a cough
- shortness of breath

You need to get tested and stay home until you have your result. Getting tested means you keep yourself, your friends, family, workplace and community safe.

Turn the page for your nearest testing site

For more details visit vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne
YOUR NEAREST TESTING SITE

- Bass Coast Health -
  Phillip Island Health Hub
  **Daily: 9.00am - 5.00pm**

- Wonthaggi Respiratory Clinic
  **Mon: 9.00am - 4.00pm**
  **Tues - Fri: 9.00am - 1.00pm**

- Bass Coast Health -
  Wonthaggi Hospital carpark
  **Daily: 9.00am - 5.00pm**

**Bookings are required at some testing locations**

For more details visit vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne
Police say further arrests “will possibly be made” in coming days in relation to the theft of $650,000 in cash in 19 separate burglaries over a period of six months on Phillip Island and in South Gippsland.

Two Cowes men, Joshua Savage and his brother Taylor Savage, have been charged in relation to these crimes, and were remanded in custody following their appearance at the Wonthaggi Magistrate’s Court on August 14.

However, police say the investigation is ongoing, and further arrests may yet be made.

The brothers were arrested during dramatic early morning raids on four Cowes properties on August 13. Cash, jewellery, a boat, motorbike, a six metre Haines Cabin Cruiser valued at $50,000 had allegedly been purchased using the missing money being spent on an “agant lifestyle.”

Mr Bond, a registered psychologist for more than 40 years. said the company had spent “inordinate” sums of money on engaging in a form of bullying. They are posing an insurmountable task for many, and see to being used to power position and vast resources to bulldoze and fast track their way to a successful commercial outcome, at the expense of the local community.”

AGL has “bulldozed” through its proposed Western Port gas terminal, leaving Phillip Island and bay communities “incredibly aggrieved,” according to a psychologist.

In an 11-page submission to AGL’s Environment Effects Statement (EES), which closes today (August 26), Cowes psychologist Jeff Bond examines the social and human impact of the proposal, concluding AGL makes “little or no mention” of these impacts.

Mr Bond said the company had spent “inordinate” sums of money on developing the gas terminal plans and the EES, which is 11,000 pages including 17 studies, with a short deadline for submissions and little community consultation.

“AGL is a very large, influential, well-resourced organization,” said Mr Bond, a registered psychologist for more than 40 years.

“The community could be excused for thinking that AGL/APA is in effect engaging in a form of bullying. They are posing an insurmountable task for many, and see to being used to power position and vast resources to bulldoze and fast track their way to a successful commercial outcome, at the expense of the local community.”

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A San Remo pensioner remains homeless more than four months after his house was flooded — because of drainage problems at a controversial subdivision.

In April the Advertiser reported that Bill Wintle’s Back Beach Road house was flooded — including at one point with an inch of water in his kitchen, lounge and bedroom — blaming blocked drains and subsequent runoff off from the nearby Panorama Estate.

The 79-year-old, who is currently living at the San Remo Motel (see separate story) — was forced at one point to live in his car, with health officials deeming his home unliveable because of black mould from the flooding.

An independent building surveyor’s report concluded the residence’s foundations had dangerously sunk.

Bill said he had made constant requests to Bass Coast Shire and the developer to carry out an official building survey of his home, which would allow him to progress to mediation, receive damages and rebuild.

“The house is the same as when I left it, very mouldy. I can’t throw anything out or do any work until I can make a claim,” Bill said.

“And I can’t go to mediation until we know the status of the slab. It’s pretty obvious it has sunk when you look at it.”

“Two shire officers came out at the start and they didn’t go inside, but walked around the house and asked if I’d been in touch with the developer and I haven’t heard from them since.”

“They’re passing the buck. They’re the ones who allowed the development and who ordered the work on the drains.”

Bill blamed the flooding — which occurred twice, in April then May — on filters installed by the developer on drainage outlets on the estate, which had effectively blocked drains.

“The mesh filter is so thick you can hardly blow through it. It doesn’t take much mud to block them, so you get a deadset blockage and so water just runs down the hill, across Back Beach Road, to the footpath, and up my driveway.”

Bill is claiming damages, stating both the shire and the developer are negligent “causing my property to become uninhabitable.”

Bill called on the shire and developer to find an “immediate solution” to his home — Peter and Colleen Williams have been providing Mr Wintle with support, “he said.

“If that is the best the shire and developer can do, I don’t know why we have them at all. If they are our elected representatives why are they not doing something for him,” Gerard said.

“Drainage and stormwater is an essential service and Bill’s house was flooded because they gave a misdirection to the developer.”

“Nearly five months on and nothing has happened.”

Gerard last week wrote to Westernport Ward councillors to urge them to step in to help Bill and he said he was awaiting a response.

He also contacted MP for Bass Jordan Crugnale to help Bill.

Ms Crugnale said she “encouraged all parties to work co-operatively to deliver the best possible outcome.”

Meanwhile owners of a cluster of units neighbour-

San Remo residents have rallied behind Bill Wintle, who has been homeless since his house flooded in May (see separate story).

Trades including plasterers and concreters have offered to rebuild his home, while a resident offered a week’s accommodation.

The Salvation Army has been providing Mr Wintle with support, “he said.

“We don’t want him living in his car and he’s here for however long he needs to stay.”

The hotel business has itself hit hard times in the wake of the Coronavirus, shut again in stage three restrictions, with takeaway and the bottle shop open only.

Even when restrictions were eased the hotel limited hours to evening dining because it was unable to open longer.

“We’re keen to finalise the investigation” and were awaiting feedback from Mr Wintle, he said.

Call for a Free Quote – Steve 0466 746 749

San Remo Hotel’s Elaine, Peter and Colleen Williams, with Ben and Elyse Fisher who have generously accommodated Bill in one of their units, since his home was made unliveable from flooding he said was caused by a nearby development.

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LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED
Bass Coast Shire number crunchers have mounted a detailed defence of their hefty garbage charge to ratepayers, in response to an attack by a former shire financial boffin.

In early August, former Bass Coast Shire financial director Danny Luna – in an unprecedented move – made a submission to the draft 2020/21 budget, describing the charge as "based on a flawed model".

He said the budget’s "regressive" garbage charge was not fair to ratepayers, especially hurting poorer householders, and failed on multiple levels including being inaccurately costed, illogical and he even questioned whether the charge was "legislatively compliant".

Mr Luna – who presented the budget and was acting CEO over many years at the shire – said if the model was altered, the garbage charge to ratepayers would be "significantly lower".

The budget proposes a garbage charge in 2020/21 of $496.50, an 11 per cent increase, up from $449, but Mr Luna said the charge should be no more than $376.

However, last week shire number crunchers responded to Mr Luna’s submission in a detailed response in the budget.

The response stated the four-year waste price hike was due to "external shocks", as well as "service improvements", such as the introduction of the three-bin service and the proposed development of a transfer station on Phillip Island.

"There does not appear to have been a change in the model used for determining the waste charges as alluded to in the submission," the budget response states.

"Council is satisfied the costs recovered through the waste service charge provide direct or indirect benefits to the ratepayers who are levied these charges."

The response details the past decade of waste charge increases (see diagram).

The massive increases from 2017 onwards were explained as follows:

- 2017/18 – 14.4 per cent increase due to introduction of three bin system
- 2018/19 – 10.2 per cent increase due to recycling crisis
- 2019/20 – 9 per cent increase due to impact of compaction levy and reduced revenue from gate charges
- 2020/21 – 10.5 per cent increase due to Phillip Island transfer station, recycling costs, landfill levy, environmental monitoring

Comparison

The budget response benchmarks the shire’s 2020/21 waste service charges with charges raised by other councils, for like services:

- Bass Coast – $496.00 = 3 bin system
- Baw Baw – $392 (garbage) plus $75 (recycling)
- South Gippsland – $51.45 per cent
- Frankston – $399 (120 l bin) plus $150.20 (Green waste)
- East Gippsland – $412
- Wellington – $293.92 (no green or recycling)

The massive increases from 2017 onwards were explained as follows:

- Wellington shire (see diagram).

WASTE DIVERSION FROM LANDFILL:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shire</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass Coast</td>
<td>74.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baw Baw</td>
<td>53.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Gippsland</td>
<td>52.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Gippsland</td>
<td>51.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The budget responded to Mr Griffin’s criticism saying costs had increased “due to an increased capital cost recovery linked to the new Phillip Island transfer station facility, increased recycling charges linked to the market conditions in the waste sector, higher environmental monitoring costs and an increase in the State government landfill levy.”
Some win, others lose in final budget

The Phillip Island Golf Club is among the beneficiaries of the revised, final Bass Coast Shire 2020/21 budget. However, the budget – adopted at last week’s council meeting – has refused requests by several other community groups who made submissions, including the Rhyll Community Association and the Smiths Beachcomber Association. The shire received 31 written submissions, seven of which were heard in person.

As a result of its submission, the Phillip Island Golf Club has received $20,000 to buy a pergola and $42,000 was allocated for the design of Kilcunda’s local skate park. Other submissions that saw new budget inclusions included: Settlement Road, Cowes, footpath ($67,000), Tesby Point noticeboard ($2,000), Cornella parking and path ($26,000), and a Grantville amphitheatre shelter ($25,000). While there were winners, others were not so fortunate.

A request for funding by the Rhyll Community Association for a raised pavement to slow traffic on the corner of Lock and Beach roads in Rhyll was knocked back, with the budget explaining this request will be included “as part of the local road safety improvement program for assessment and prioritisation in future years.”

A request by Island Voice member Ron Day for new road sign funding for Rural Roads Victoria’s planned revision of speed limits was also declined, with the shire adding this would be funded following the review.

Former councillor Phil Wright asked the shire to use low interest rate loans to purchase significant strips of land on the south coast of the island over the next 10 years to create a series of public paths.

“Council thanks Mr Wright for his thoughtful submission and vision that will deliver significantly improved public accessibility to the coastline,” the budget states.

“Land values especially those that have ocean views on the island are high and council is unable to commit to or investigate funding for the acquisition of ocean front strips of land,” the budget notes.

“The delivery of the YCW barbecue shelter and picnic area planned for 2019/20 financial year has been put on hold following community concerns for the project,” the budget notes.

As a result, council will be looking to engage with the local community through the current Smiths Beach Masterplan project to better understand the whole community preference for a picnic/barbecue area at Beachcomber - YCW.

The budget states in the shire’s long-term capital works plan from 2021-2023, there is $1.5 million allocated to the delivery of projects outlined in the YCW Activity Area Master Plan including access paths, carpark upgrades and viewing platforms.

There is also funding allocated in 2023/24 - 2024/25 for the Smiths Beach Foreshore Beachcomber Master Plan.

Final budget given light

Ratepayers will pay a two per cent increase in rates, despite calls for Bass Coast Shire to abandon the hike.

Councillors last week voted on the final 2020/21 budget, which includes the two per cent increase. The budget projects an operating surplus of $3.1 million, and a capital works program of $28 million including Aquatics planning and design ($3.08 million), Cowes Cultural and Community Centre redevelopment ($4 million - being the initial funding for a $19 million project), Phillip Island Transfer Station ($250,000) and Anderson Road boat ramp east carpark upgrade ($380,000).

Following a $965,000 COVID-19 response package in April, a second recovery package is included in the budget, including fee waivers, funding to promote the shire and identifies projects to stimulate the economy, with the shire’s total pandemic response about $4 million.

The budget includes the two per cent rate rise. But in real terms, total rates – including the garbage charge 11 per cent increase to $496.50 – will be 3.3 per cent, and the average rates bill will be $1,545.

The rate rise followed a revocation of all properties carried out in January, which will apply for the 2020-2021 year, with an average four per cent rise.

Island Voice in its submission to the budget hearings in early August described the two per cent rate charge as an “implication” on the hip pocket of ratepayers, calling for it to be dropped.

The submission, by Island Voice secretary Linda Marston, said the increase was based on property revaluations that “have increased significantly in value over the last decade.”

“For long standing residents, or those on fixed incomes, this level of increase is significant growth in assets but not necessarily in disposable income,” Linda said.

“A large proportion of shire residents are employed in the tourism and retail industries and receive lower rates of pay and many may have lost their jobs during the pandemic.

“At this time any increases in fees and charges are an imposition.”

However the shire said the increase was required for the continued delivery of core services and infrastructure.

“Benchmarking across the sector indicates 70 per cent of Councils are increasing rates in line with the cap,” the shire said.

The adopted 2020/21 budget can be found at www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/budget

Seascape Avenue footpath upgrade

Footpath renewal work is currently underway along Seascape Avenue in Cowes. Bass Coast Shire Council said work on the project is expected to take up to four weeks, subject to weather conditions and contractors availability.

The $60,000 project is funded through Council’s Footpath Renewal Program, as part of the 2020/21 Capital Works Program.

Council said the aim of the upgrade is to improve access and provide residents and the community a safe pedestrian connection to the area near the shoreline.

The work in Seascape Avenue includes removing sections of the existing path on both sides of the road, which are damaged by existing tree roots, as well as the installation of tree root barriers to protect the new footpath as required.

Council’s qualified arborist will be on site to provide assistance to the contractor.

A Council spokesperson said they understood the work may inconvenience residents and the community and they appreciated everyone’s patience during the construction period.

The contractors would make every effort to minimise disruptions the spokesperson said.

For more information on these works, visit www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/projects, or call 03 9867 2211.

Don’t risk it. Always follow the health advice.

It’s up to all of us to keep each other safe.
You must continue to practise good hygiene, physical distancing, and if you’re even slightly unwell, get tested and stay at home. Don’t risk it.

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All the best for Pets

Pets Domain had a very humble beginning. CEO Jason van Peelen began selling live fish out of his garage as a young teenager before taking the leap and opening a physical pet store in Tasmania with his father. The family-owned business soon opened more stores across the state before expanding further to the mainland. A spokesperson for the company said Pets Domain has a focus on bringing a full pet offering to regional Australia. However, despite growing, the business has kept its core values, providing customers with the products they need at affordable prices and being passionate about pet care.

“Here at Pets Domain we stock everything you need as a proud pet parent to keep your furry, feathered or scaly friends happy and healthy.” Pets Domain has a wonderful team who are passionate about the care and welfare of all pets. As a company we strive to provide pets with the things they need to care for and spoil their pets – which is why we introduced our +PLUS Club Membership so you can get the best price possible.”

Pets Domain are opening in Wonthaggi this Saturday on August 29. The store will be following all coronavirus procedures.

The store will have an expansive range of pet products, including food and treats for all pets, health treatments, fashionable clothing, litter and accessories, and livestock feeds. Customers can also use the DIY Dog Wash for $10.00.

There is a large range of live fish and live plants in the specialised fish room – plus everything you could possibly need as a first-time fish owner or someone who has kept fish for years. “Fish and fish products are one of our biggest specialities.”

Pets Domain also supports the pets in the community that may not be so lucky by holding adoption days. “We enjoy supporting and working with local pet adoption and community rescue groups to assist in finding animals their forever homes.”

The business also offers a free Click and Collect service. Simply purchase the items you are after on our online store (petsdomain.com.au) and once you receive a notification you can pick it up in-store.

Come visit the store at 3/120 McKenzie Street or contact the friendly Pets Domain team on 5618 7006 to get all your pet related questions answered!

And plenty more opening specials in-store! Sale ends Sunday 12th September 2020
While your next road trip might be on hold for now, you can still champion local and get behind the people and businesses you love.

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A GL gas plans ignore social, human impacts: psychologist

"AGL proposes to bring up to 40 very large LNG tankers per day into the bay, yet there is no mention of the very real impact the noise and vibration from this shipping activity will have on the sleep patterns and mental health of local residents on Phillip Island." Mr Bond said the 17 studies conducted by AGL in the EES were an example of "unconscious bias".

"The studies will inevitably find and produce data that supports the AGL proposal, and lead to statements denying any significant negative impacts," he said.

"There is absolutely no evidence that there was any form of independence in the way the studies were conducted and by whom."

AGL response
AGL project director Ricky McNally said since proposing the project in 2017, AGL had engaged extensively with the Phillip Island community and government to ensure concerns around potential impacts were understood.

The project is expected to employ between 430 and 500 workers at the peak of construction and once operating about 40 permanent positions would be created," Mr McNally said.

"We have made a commitment to a community fund of $7.5 million to be managed by a panel of community-based representatives if the project proceeds."

He said independent experts had conducted extensive studies into the potential impacts of the project and their findings were now being considered under the state-run EES assessment.

"We are committed to following the process the State Government deems appropriate and will work with both government and the community to facilitate access to information."

"If approved, a final investment decision will then be made by AGL, which will take into account the community’s views and Victoria’s projected shortage of gas for cooking, heating and business."

Safety, risk and hazard.

What is proposed
AGL’s plans would see liquified natural gas transported on up to 40 LNG super tankers – about 350 metres long and 50 metres wide – per year in Western Port.

A 55-kilometre pipeline will be built from Crib Point to Pakenham to pipe the gas.

Submissions will be reviewed by an Inquiry and Advisory Committee, formed by the Victorian Planning Minister Richard Wynne.

The IAC will review the public submissions, then hold a directions hearing on September 17, which will lead to a public hearing on October 12, to run for up to eight weeks.

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The Phillip Island Specialists.
Demand for rental properties on Phillip Island and San Remo has soared in the past few months. Local real estate agents all agree the unusually high level of demand is being driven by people from metropolitan Melbourne. Kaitlin Wastie from Stockdale and Leggo Real Estate said at least 80 per cent of her current applications are from people outside the area, and the Coronavirus had prompted many to rethink their priorities. “At the moment it’s looking at relocating. People can work from anywhere and they’re looking for something a little bit more affordable,” she said.

Kate Shannon from Stockdale & Leggo said the increased interest has put pressure on the local market, with less rental properties available than usual. She said the average online market is about 15 per cent, while the Phillip Island market is only 80 per cent, and it’s been tight for the past three months.

“The majority of the rental applications I’ve been receiving from out of town people that have been put on hold, have definitely provoked that,” she said. Michael McLeod said many of the residents in the Phillip Island and San Remo Real Estate office are considering a combination of working from home and commuting one or two days to the city.

“That way, they get a lifestyle without the financial pressure. How could you not enjoy having the benefits – the outdoors, fishing, surfing, etc – if you can work from home and are taking this opportunity to relocate.”

Rent pressure

The increased interest has put pressure on the local market, with less rental properties available and houses being quickly snapped up.

“We are leasing properties quickly,” Kaitlin Wastie said.

“The average online market is about 15 days and normally it would be double that. We have had to transform our workplaces quickly so the bulk of their workforce is now working remotely or from home. This is likely to continue for many organisations into the near future.

“The GP is a big hit. A lot of holiday homeowners have been forced to stay at home,” she said.

Kaitlin also agrees rental prices have increased as a result.

“Owners wanting reassurance that they will have someone looking after their tenant,” she said.

However she said some tenants had offered to pay several months rent in advance to secure a property.

Michael McLeod said the increased demand can bring pressure on the lower economic groups and there were no cheap rentals anymore.

Holiday rentals

All agents reported a small number of holiday rentals moving their properties over to the permanent rental market. Kaitlin said some O’Brien holiday homes had made the switch to secure a consistent income.

“The loss of the GP is a big hit. A lot of holiday properties rely on the income.” She said O’Brien’s had 400 holiday rental properties and the GP has been booked for either the GP or Superbikes.

Landlords considerate

Under the current Coronavirus restrictions, rent cannot be increased and tenants cannot be evicted. O’Brien Real Estate had revoked any rental increases that took effect in March and said they were helping where possible with any tenants struggling to pay their rent.

“Our landlords have been pretty understanding,” Kaitlin said.

Natalie Holmes said many landlords were renewing leases straight away, to retain security.

“We are very mindful of everyone’s situation and the impact it has caused on people’s lives. Our landlords have also been very considerate during these times.”

A silver lining

The influx of new residents could have an unexpected bonus for the current crop of real estate agents reporting an increase in professional people, with good references, looking for rentals.

Bass Coast Shire Council’s CEO Ali Wastie said the region was an attractive option for people who couldn’t continue to work remotely.

“Historically, most Victorians have been forced to live closer to Melbourne and larger regional cities, because that’s where most of the jobs are. Now, they’re looking for something a little bit different, either to work remotely or from home. This is likely to continue for many organisations into the near future.

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To complete the course or for more information visit www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/budget. If you would like a printed copy of the 2020/21 Annual Budget please contact Council on the numbers below.

Bass Coast Shire Council, 76 McKenzie Avenue, Wonthaggi | PO Box 111, Wonthaggi VIC 3995 | 1300 100 700 | www.basscoast.vic.gov.au
WE’RE UP AND RUNNING
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The Cowes, San Remo and Grantville Community Bank branches of Bendigo Bank have donated over $4.6 million to the Phillip Island, San Remo and Grantville and district community since its inception. It has now added to that total by donating a large freezer to the local Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre (PICAL).

Greg Thompson, Centre Manager, PICAL, was thrilled with the bank’s continuing support of the local organisation.

“PICAL are grateful for the Community Bank’s support of the Emergency Food Relief program. The new freezer will assist PICAL greatly in supplying food to the most vulnerable in our community, our support of whom has escalated given the current COVID-19 crisis.”

Board and staff of San Remo District Financial Services (SRDFS) were only too happy to assist. “We asked Greg what he currently needed most, and were happy to be able to provide that, with the freezer purchased locally at Betta Home Living in Wonthaggi,” says Peter Paul, Vice Chair of the Board, SRDFS.

“An recent study showed Bendigo Bank is one of the most trusted brands in Australia. Our Community Bank aims to be the most dedicated as well, as made evident by our continuing support of local businesses and organisations – $4.6 million and counting.”

By supporting the Community Bendigo Banks, you also support local businesses. Contact or drop into any of the branches at San Remo (5678 5833) Cowes (5952 3383), or Grantville (5678 8773) today.

Helping locally

Shelley says Flourishing Figures is here to help ease the anxiety and stress clients may be feeling.

Accounting services are not considered essential and so we have temporarily closed the offices. Fortunately, we can work from home and we are running phone appointments for tax returns and using tools like electronic signing.

If you would like to book a phone appointment, you can do so online or by calling the office. We also have that easy to use online form. Go to ff.tax/taxreturn and look for the blue section. Stay safe and well, from Shelley, Rebecca and Bek.

Peter Paul, Vice Chair SRDFS, Tanya Donnan, Assistant Manager Cowes Community Bank branch, and Greg Thompson, Manager PICAL.

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Greg Thompson, Centre Manager, PICAL, was thrilled with the bank’s continuing support of the local organisation.

PICAL are grateful for the Community Bank’s support of the Emergency Food Relief program. The new freezer will assist PICAL greatly in supplying food to the most vulnerable in our community, our support of whom has escalated given the current COVID-19 crisis.

Board and staff of San Remo District Financial Services (SRDFS) were only too happy to assist. “We asked Greg what he currently needed most, and were happy to be able to provide that, with the freezer purchased locally at Betta Home Living in Wonthaggi,” says Peter Paul, Vice Chair of the Board, SRDFS.

“An recent study showed Bendigo Bank is one of the most trusted brands in Australia. Our Community Bank aims to be the most dedicated as well, as made evident by our continuing support of local businesses and organisations – $4.6 million and counting.”

By supporting the Community Bendigo Banks, you also support local businesses.

Contact or drop into any of the branches at San Remo (5678 5833) Cowes (5952 3383), or Grantville (5678 8773) today.
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Julianne is fully compliant with the requisite training required by the ATO for the preparation of BAS, PAYG and Single Touch Payroll returns. Don’t go it alone – as Julianne can assist you to rebuild and reconnect.

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Need help navigating Centrelink?

In these uncertain times more people are turning to government services to help maintain their lifestyle.

The rules are changing and whether you are applying for a Carers allowance, Age pension, Disability pension or Job Seeker, there are many complicated questions and confusing forms. You may need to visit the Centrelink office multiple times and wait in a queue.

We can take the stress out of your application.

Peter Armour from Money Talk Planners has decades of experience helping clients applying for Centrelink payments.

Aged care is also a sensitive area, when at times it happens very quickly. There are lots of rules and paperwork to complete and lots of options to consider. Peter specialises in this field and is happy to assist.

Meet with Peter at our office at 69A Chapel Street, Cowes, to discuss your requirements.

To make an appointment telephone 1800 24 24 81 or email admin@moneytalkplanners.com.au and we will contact you.

First 30-minute appointment is free.

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In a world first, Phillip Island's much-loved Penguin Parade is now streaming live nightly to the world's every corner.

Local writer and homelessness activist Mikhaela Barlow has announced she is standing as a candidate for Island Ward in the upcoming Bass Coast Shire Council Election.

A new candidate for Island Ward in the upcoming Bass Coast Shire Council Election.

Penguins streamed live nightly

In one of the island's worst kept secrets, Island Ward Councillor Michael Whelan has already contested the upcoming elections in October.

In a world first, Phillip Island's much-loved Penguin Parade is now streaming live nightly to the world's every corner. Phillip Island's Little Penguins are now being streamed live to the world every night via Facebook and YouTube.

This government's announcement means the elections will not have the quality and diversity of candidates that Victoria deserves.

We know that all councils were in favour of postponing council elections until 2021, but in the current environment and State of Di-saster, it would have been a sensible and practical decision, for communi-ties, candidates and councils,” said Councillor Roos.

The Penguin Parade also featured in the Government's COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Plan, which included the removal of the restrictions on council elections, as well as providing funding for councils to hold virtual meetings and community engagement activities.

Minister Leanne defended his position. This decision was not made light-ly and is based on the best public health advice available – but I am pleased Victorian communities can have their say on their local gov-ernment representatives at demo- cratic council general elections as planned.”

Election preparations

The Victorian Electoral Commiss-ion (VEC) has advised that election preparations are already well under way and that there are no adminis-trative or procedural barriers to the election being held on October 24.

A set of Safe Campaigning Guide- lines have been developed in con-sultation with the Department of Health and Human Services to help candidates follow the Chief Health Officer’s directions and health ad-visory during the campaign.

The guidelines include advice on how to conduct safe campaign activities, safety for campaign teams, hygiene and physical distanc-ing.

The concern remains that there would be local government elections on the same day as the Bass Coast Shire Council Election, with the move to delay the elections in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government has launched its candidate training course online, which is open to all who wish to run for election.

The training will help potential candidates understand the role and respect more women to run for office.

Women encouraged

The government has also given a $50,000 grant to social impact mar-keting firm Ellis Jones to encourage women to run for local government elections.

The push will include the provision of online resources including webinars. A century on from the election of the state’s first woman councillor, the MAV has lobbied the state government for the highest number of female may-or’s in history with 32 in place across Victoria and Victoria’s 79 councils have just one female coun-cillor while women make up just 38 per cent of elected repre-sentatives.

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Melaleuca residents are safe, happy and well

Melaleuca Lodge is a Phillip Island Aged Care facility, run by the community and for the community, since it was established back in the 1970s. It has 37 aged care beds, and currently 23 elderly community members are in residence.

When Covid first hit Victoria, staff lost no time and major planning got underway. Jim McFee, pictured with Melaleuca staff members Geraldine Hewett and Paul Iverach. Jim has missed not going home as he prefers to communicate.

“Hope is the best, but planned for the worst,” says Hayley Chambers, Melaleuca Operations Manager who heads the facility. “We are aware of what could happen. We were and still are following the government’s instructions and guidelines closely and working hard to always be prepared”

Precautionary changes have been made.

Before the first Stage 3 lockdown was announced, visitors were not banned at Melaleuca “but we actively discouraged them unless absolutely necessary,” Hayley says.

To compensate, and to facilitate ongoing connections with between family members and friends, a dedicated social media person was appointed to the staff, to help with this.

Learning to use technology to communicate was a first for some. Not just for the residents, but several staff members and family members as well.

Some residents have children in their 70s and 80s, who are not particularly good with social media technology.

“We needed to support them as well,” says Hayley.

“Residents are now Skypeing, on FaceTime and using Facebook Messenger, as well as making phone calls.”

“It’s a new way but a great way for everyone to keep in touch.”

Melaleuca also has a list of residents, with notation on how each prefers to communicate. This was used to make sure everyone was in touch with family members, friends, and this certainly helps.

“Sometimes I think he could have done a little more,” says Betty Hopley, although not凡事 they’re doing at Melaleuca have been fantastic, she says.

Memories have returned for many residents, of the polio epidemic that began in the 1930s. It was especially so for Betty Hopley.

“People were brought in all day. They made cards for all the staff members. Some residents were missing visits with family and friends, are taking each day in the most beautiful, and good weather has been very graceful. Spirits in the halls in the Melaleuca Lodge is the pug’s favourite place to sit when the Lodge is not in lockdown.

“It was confronting for some residents when masked staff members appeared. It was especially so for those with dementia. They cannot see our smiles, so it was difficult for them.

“The hardest thing is deciphering the lines that keep arriving from various departments of government.”

Hayley is extremely proud of the 39 staff members who work at the facility.

“Our staff are doing an absolutely fantastic job,” she says.

“They are the people who make a difference to the residents’ lives every day. They complain little about the changes and work very hard.”

“It was once said by a family member, following the death of their loved one, that if indeed angels walk on this earth, they must all work at Melaleuca.”

Jack Johnston uses Face Time to keep in touch with his daughter Trish, while Stage 3 lockdown is in place at Melaleuca Lodge.

“A glass of wine accompanies these sessions.

“It truly is a happy hour,” says Hayley.

Residents also thoroughly enjoyed participating in a Doorstep Documentary made by Claire Davie.

Claire came and took photos from outside the front door and gathered stories from residents for publication about what Covid meant to them.

Almost half of the residents participated, and they had a wonderful time.

A busy time

As far as Hayley and her staff go, the past six months have been an extra busy time.

“I have done more reading since COVID than I did in my whole university degree,” she comments.

Information from government departments is issued daily, and it must be reviewed and implemented as required.

The hardest thing is deciphering the constant directives and guidelines that keep arriving from various departments of government.”

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Management plan

The Covid outbreak management plan prepared at Melaleuca is constantly amended as more is learned about the virus.

“Hopefully, it won’t be needed,” says Hayley, “but we are at the ready if it is.”

“We are also in close contact with Bathurst District Health and our visiting doctors. Everyone is working well together over this period.”

“In some ways, being locked away from her team have learned from what has occurred elsewhere to be fully prepared, and ready to immediately respond.”

She feels reassured by the fact that of near 80% of care nursing homes in Victoria, less than a tenth have been affected by Covid.

“We have lots of advantages. We are a community facility and quite small. Management know all the residents, all the staff and all the families, and this certainly helps.”

“Not only well supported in our work by the Melaleuca Committee, but also by our island identities, are safe and well at Melaleuca, although they are all missing visits from family and friends. All enjoy the phone calls which keep them in touch. Eileen says residents could have asked for better staff, who have bent over backwards to keep them amused. Betty continues to enjoy walking and phone calls with her son. She says she is well looked after and happy that she can still stay in touch with family. The pandemic has revived memories of the polio epidemic that began in the 19th Century. She comments on how exquisite the weather is going well.

She is aware that many in our broader community are struggling. She says that is part of the reason she is so keen to understand how to protect her daughter’s health.

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Visiting Melbourne

Government guidelines state “you must not travel into metropolitan Melbourne from regional areas with high transmisions, except to buy necessary goods and services, for care and compassion purposes, for work and school purposes, and to provide you with the care and support required.”

That means a shopping trip to Chadstone to buy a new dress is not on. Nor is a week’s work-related work. And you provided you comply with the Stage 3 restrictions.

Ms Crugnale recommended anyone moving through the lockdown area carry documentation that justifies one of the three reasons for visiting Melbourne.

Mental health services

• Lifeline 13 11 17
• Kids Helpline (age 5-25 years) 1800 55 1800
• MensLine Australia 1300 789 978
• Safe Steps (Family Violence available 24/7) 1800 015 188
• Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467
• Beyond Blue 1300 224 636
• ReachOut au reachout.com
• “And you can always ring my ofﬁce Monday – Friday on 9672 4705. We are always here to help, and can direct you to the right service or re source that you need. Know that you are not alone,” said Ms Crugnale.

Ms Crugnale said it was important to check in with friends and neighbours to make sure people were coping with the restrictions.

“Be honest: if someone you know is struggling, please reach out because there are people who can help,” she said.

What can we do in Stage 3?

The number of active cases of COVID-19 in Victoria dropped below 100 last week for the first time since the start of the pandemic. However, the state still has more than 4000 active cases and the outbreak continues to spread.

According to statistics released by DHHS on Monday, August 24, there is currently one active case in the area.

The outbreak in Melbourne was first detected on May 28, 2020, and has since grown to more than 4000 cases, with more than 1000 active cases.

Ms Crugnale recommended anyone moving through the lockdown area carry documentation that justifies one of the three reasons for visiting Melbourne.

The information will include a list of local health services and a link to the Victorian Government’s website for information about cases on a regional level will be available on the DHHS website.

Tell us your stories: When Stage 3 restrictions were reintroduced, we asked readers to share their stories, frustrations, hopes and fears. Ms Crugnale said this will allow local communities to see if there has been an increase in cases and identify any gaps in the system.

Data on the number of active cases, outbreaks and aged care cases is also available on the DHHS website.

The response from my friends has been a key part of dealing with the latest lockdown. "I thought it is what it is, you can't change it and it was good I thought I'd be walking within two weeks, but it has been a long recovery. Doctor's had to give me 14 to 16 times – give up, start again, the whole cycle.

I used to teach body combat and do. I couldn't do it anymore because of the restrictions. I had to start with a walk run and then it was a walk run.

It was a much more physical battle as a mental one.

"We told our encouraging as well as hell and physically even a bit even more oxygen into my lungs, because I'm not as strong as I used to be."

I've found once I stick to it, though, I start to feel better about it and improve.

"It's the same with jumping in the ocean. I'm not doing laps or anything, but I literally jump in, a dunk, a jump and a burst. I jump in once for myself and twice to show some positivity."

I can't wait to do it today. I feel so good after it. It's unbelievable how good it feels.

Coronavirus

活性 cases dropping

Active cases are now below 100 in Victoria, with only one active case in the state. The number of active cases has dropped significantly since the start of the outbreak.

Premier Daniel Andrews announced that Victoria "stays the course" and has been given a "clear path to freedom".

"We're doing all we can to get these numbers down so quickly so we can start rebuilding our lives, economy, and our community," he said.

"The response from my friends has been unbelievable. So many, including nurses, said they keep putting up getting through it."

"As we women are nurturers, we often put others before ourselves. But you can't do that anymore."

"We have to take care of ourselves because our focus is on the pandemic. We're forgetting this stuff."

"If you or anyone you know is struggling, please reach out because there are people who can help."

"The procedure was a bit uncomfortable, but I feel safe and they took every precaution down the road.

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Permit application for the Phillip Island Dog Owners Association Centre.

In this time of Covid, we have JobKeeper.

Defending Dog Owners

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BATES, Brenda: Len and family would like to acknowledge the sympathy and support we have received from the Rhyll Community, family and friends during Brenda’s illness and following her passing. Special thanks to the staff of Bass Coast Health for their dedicated care of Brenda. Thank you also to Scott and Sharon at Handley and Anderson. Their support and support from all has been a great comfort.

BATES, Brenda Mae: 11.1942 – 17.8.2020
Loved wife of Len. Loving Mum to Michelle & Tony, Caroline, and Suzanne. Adored Nanna to her 9 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Forever in our Hearts.

BATES, Brenda: Thanks for being one of our most treasured and loyal friends over the years. We will miss sharing our special occasions and fun times with you. Love to Len (Harbs), Donna, John, Evan, Sony, and Suzanne families. We’ll be here for you. Daisy, Moon and Family

WILXON, Kaye: Passed away peacefully on August 21, 2020

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today forever." Hebrews 13:8, KJV
Nominations

The Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club has received significant nominations for prestigious awards. The Club and its members have been recognized for their remarkable contributions to the community and surf lifesaving. The Club members have been nominated for various awards which highlights the contributions made by them.

Skate parks debated

Kilcunda is a step closer to a new skate park – proposed for Newhaven – announced as Victorian Life Saving Club of the Year.

The 2020/21 budget has allocated $42,000 to the design of the Kilcunda skate park – proposed for Newhaven/San Remo area, with $1.5m committed to deliver the project, which includes skate and external funding.

The shire has already delivered new skate parks in Inverloch and Grantville, with renewal of both Skate Parks in the Newhaven/San Remo area.

A funding agreement with Sport and Recreation Victoria states the region park needs to resolve current location issues, following backslashing from the Newhaven community. The current strategy places our regional park as our number one priority before other locations can be considered,” Cr Kent said.

Kilcunda is identified in the skate park strategy for a local facility for delivery between 2021 and 2023.

What’s in your backyard?

A report from the Phillip Island Camera Club

What’s in your backyard?

Hannah Tzikos from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club has received significant recognition for her contributions to the Victorian Beach Lifeguard of the Year. The Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club has received significant recognition for its 2019-20 season. The Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club was nominated for Victorian Beach Lifeguard of the Year and Bass Region which involves assisting with lifesaving operations. Terry is also the Captain, Inflatable Rescue Boat Officer and the Coordinator of the club and Bass District. Since then he has gained many qualifications and experience in the surf lifesaving field. Terry has been a judge for the Victorian Youth Lifesaver of the Year and Campbell Smart nominated for Volunteer Trainer of the Year, which is very important. The Club continues to develop the skills of its members.

What’s in your backyard?

Hannah Tzikos from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club was nominated for Victorian Beach Lifeguard of the Year for her dedication to the club and community. Terry has been a Chief Lifeguard and Powercraft Officer for the Bass Region which involves assisting with lifesaving operations. Terry is also the Captain, Inflatable Rescue Boat Officer and the Coordinator of the club and Bass District.

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Great whites under our big blue?

It’s a question that often goes through the minds of Phillip Island surfers, swimmers and beach lovers: What lies beneath?

A great white shark research tracking project, this year taking place off the Nobbies, will soon find out.

Earlier this year a tracking receiver—a part of an Australia-wide CSIRO project—was placed 16 metres at the bottom of the sea floor, off the Nobbies.

If all goes according to plan, the receiver will pick up any tagged shark that passes within a 200-metre radius.

Professional diver Johno Rudge has been placing the receivers along the Victorian coast—including the one off Phillip Island—and says the receiver will store data, which will be examined once he retrieves the receiver at the start of 2021.

“The idea is to track the sharks along the Australian coast and in the future possibly make information publicly available for surfers or water users to adjust their activities and improve their awareness of shark movements,” Johno said.

In collaboration with various agencies, including the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA), the CSIRO has deployed hundreds of electronic tags on 210 different white sharks since 2000 (some sharks are tagged with more than one type of electronic tag).

Tagging of white sharks includes both satellite and acoustic tagging, with sharks captured from less than two metres in length or more.

The research will reveal estimates of white shark numbers, juvenile and adult survival rates, and reproductive frequency.

Johno, who runs Kina Diving, placed the receiver on a pole attached to a tyre filled with concrete on the sea floor near the Nobbies, saying he carries out the work for the CSIRO and VFA while also undertaking abalone stock assessment.

“If I’m undertaking stock assessment or other diving projects, I may as well also attach the receivers at the same time. So some of the work I do for gratis and some for remuneration.”

This year, in addition to the Nobbies, he has also placed receivers in other locations including Venus Bay and Lakes Entrance.

Johno said as part of the CSIRO project he had previously placed a receiver near Seal Rocks eight years ago, at a depth of just five metres.

“We didn’t get any active hits on that one. I think we’d be luckier with this one because it’s in deeper water.

“We can put more receivers out, perhaps another at Cat Bay, although someone suggested off the race track or near Pyramid Rock.”

Johno knows Victorian waters intimately and he said the ocean off Cape Woolamai was among his favourite dives.

“I love that area because it has a big drop off, big granite boulders and you can find nudibranchs there (soft-bodied, marine gastropod molluscs),” said the 52-year-old.

“Seal Rocks is another nice place because the seals are really playful and curious. They pull on our hoses, steal our pencils and bite on our flippers.”

Johno says his most dangerous job involved being in a croc-proof cage in a crocodile-infested river in north Queensland, “which was also full of ball and tiger sharks.”

“IT was remunerated well for that job.”
“Think about who you love, then think about them in ICU.”

For Sarah, who’s been battling coronavirus for nearly 8 weeks, being separated from her two little boys, has been heartwrenching. On top of coronavirus attacking every one of her body systems, intense pain and acute breathing difficulty, she still has no idea when she will be well enough to see her boys. Sarah’s hope is that by us all doing the right thing, no one else will have to experience the heartache her family has.

Please, play your part and help stop the spread of the virus. If you have symptoms - please get tested. Payments of $450 are available to help you stay home and wait for your test result.

To learn more of Sarah’s story go to vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne
Help is available. A $450 payment will be provided for eligible workers who miss out on wages because they need to stay home. If you test positive or are a close contact of someone who does, a further $1500 is available.