

Chainsaw Weekend: A Great Success

The July "Chainsaw Weekend" was a great success in spite of a wet and cold start!

On Saturday, the 11th of July we had an attendance of 27 which included 5 members of the Lions Club, who came to cook lunch.

The results for Saturday were as follows

- 47.5 Tonnes of firewood was cut,
- 17.5 Tonnes was split and distributed

This was a great effort considering the awful weather conditions. The day was cut short due to rain.

On the Sunday the 12th of July there were 20 attendees, with 5 of attendees from Lions Club who came to prepare the lunch.

The results for Sunday were as follows:

- They cut 47.5 Tonnes was cut (Same as on Saturday) and
- 27.5 Tonnes was split and distributed

That makes

- a total of 95 Tonnes of wood cut, and
- 45 Tonnes of wood split and distributed, a magnificent result!

The cut and split wood was distributed out to 19 properties across the mountain to fulfil the most urgent needs and to the very grateful recipients.

The next "Chainsaw Weekend" will be on the **Saturday the 8th** and **Sunday the 9th** of **August, 2009**.

All expressions of interest to bramleigh@netspace.net.au or phone Peter Olorenshaw on 0458 895 197.

A very big vote of thanks goes out to all of those who gave of their time, wear and tear on their equipment as well as Loy Yang for providing the work site and Jon Missen and Dale for running the event.

Community Service Hub

Community Service Hub, Cats Drive, Traralgon South 3844
Open: Monday-Friday 10.00am – 5.00pm

Hub Captain: John Worters

Ph: 5195 5011

Mob: 0400 399 024

Fax: 5195 5012

Email: hubtraralgonsouth@bigpond.com

Traralgon South Relief Centre

Cats Drive, Traralgon South
Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat: 12pm – 4.30pm
Thurs & Sun: CLOSED

Everyone is encouraged to call in during opening hours.

Our wonderful volunteers have asked if anyone has a spare hour or two to come down and assist with sorting out of all the goodies that are available, it would be much appreciated.

New items keep coming in!!

Community Website Information

Callignee - www.callignee.vic.au

We will rebuild – www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au

Boolarra - www.boolarralink.com.au

Pakenham Garden Club – Donation of Plants

Pakenham Garden Club extends an invitation for you to enjoy a day with us at 315 Pakenham Rd Pakenham, Map reference M315 E11

When: Tuesday 8 September, 2009

Time: 11am onwards

Lunch will be provided

A wide selection of donated plants will be available to you.

RSVP: 1st September (for catering purposes) to Nicole Scott at Latrobe City
nicolesc@latrobe.vic.gov.au or phone 5128 5781

Tool Library Now Open

The application process for membership is now ready.

The Tool Library is located next door to the Community Hub, at CATS Cricket Club and is available to use by all.

There is a wide range of tools available for loan and more tools are on the way.

Opening Hours are the same as the Hub - Monday to Friday 10.00 am to 5.00pm or enquire at the Relief Centre on a Friday Night or Saturday Afternoon between 12.00pm & 4.30pm.

Peter Harrison will be available to accept returns on the Sunday.

Bushfire Update From Christine Nixon

CHAIR: BUSHFIRE RECONSTRUCTION AND RECOVERY AUTHORITY

Free Toilet and Shower Scheme

Free portable toilets and shower units will be available to bushfire-affected property owners living in temporary accommodation on their land, thanks to the generous donations made to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund.

The Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (the Authority) will oversee the hire, installation and management of the amenities, which will be available to people who are living in temporary accommodation on the property where their principal place of residence was destroyed in the 2009 fires.

Portable single toilet and shower units will be fully installed at no cost to property owners, although the ongoing cost of consumables such as gas refills and water supply will be the responsibility of the property owner.

Grocon, who were contracted by the Victorian and Commonwealth governments to undertake the bushfire clean up, will continue their work in affected communities by assisting with project coordination in the rollout of this initiative.

Grocon and its network of Community Liaison Officers will liaise with property owners through the next phase of recovery.

The same on-line and telephone register used for the free government-funded clean up will be used to apply for the toilet and shower scheme. Property owners who did not previously register for clean-up can still register for free toilets and showers.

Those who are eligible for this scheme and have already commissioned toilets or showers are still able to participate. They should register, stating their specific details, and the Authority will come to an arrangement with the existing hirer, replace the existing units or assist by providing part or all of the rental costs.

The Authority will deal directly with the Appeal Fund so that only one application system will apply.

People will be able to register to receive a toilet and/or shower under the scheme from Wednesday 15 July via www.wewillrebuild.com.au or by calling 1800 240 667.

Clean-up Register Closing

With the property clean-up largely finalised some two months ahead of schedule, new arrangements will be put in place from August 7 for those remaining people wanting their property cleared or who are seeking a reimbursement for clearing costs.

From that time, the Authority and Grocon will manage any remaining property clean-ups on a case-by case basis.

To arrange this, people will need to ring the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667, rather than registering via the Authority's website.

For more information about these or other forms of assistance available to bushfire affected people: 1800 240 667 / www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au

New needs-based system for large donations

Many big businesses and corporations have dug deep to provide around \$8 million worth of larger donations to assist individuals and families get back on their feet, including free flights, holiday accommodation and shopping vouchers.

Some of these generous donations have already been distributed but there are still a significant number available.

We are putting in place a new system to ensure these donations are disbursed fairly to as many bushfire affected people as possible, depending on their needs.

Under this needs-based system, each item will be given a certain points value and each household will be given an initial allocation of 1000 points to use in accessing these items according to what they most need.

Donations Coordinators are now on the ground in communities to administer this new system, working with Case Managers. Households are encouraged to work closely with their case managers in deciding which of the donated goods and services are going to be of most benefit to them.

Any bushfire affected person who was approved for or received a grant from the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund will be able to access donations under this system.

The Authority sought advice from the Australian Red Cross and other aid agencies on the easiest and fairest way to distribute the many generous donations on offer and this was deemed to be the best approach.

Distribution of many of these goods and services will be staggered over a number of months, rather than all being made available at once. This ensures that people at different stages of the recovery and building process can access items when they need them.

These donations are just one part of the package of assistance available to help bushfire affected individuals and families get back on their feet. They come on top of ongoing material aid for essential items and the full range of grants available through the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund.

Temporary Accommodation Guide out now

A guide to temporary housing options for people affected by the bushfires is now available from Community Hubs and Material Aid Centres.

The rebuilding process could take years rather than months, so it is important that people are as comfortable as possible as the rebuild process gets underway.

A range of temporary accommodation options is available to bushfire affected people while they rebuild or make decisions about their future housing. The guide outlines the various accommodation alternatives and the way people can access them.

It will be available from Wednesday 15 July at Community Service Hubs, through Case Managers and housing workers, at local council offices, online at www.dhs.vic.gov.au and by calling the Victorian Bushfire Accommodation Line on 1800 006 468 to get a copy.

New Referral Card

After hearing feedback about the need to replace the 'blue forms' handed out in the days after the fires, the Authority will be providing a new blue referral card to bushfire affected households.

This will ensure those who need access to material aid can continue to do so. The card will also be useful for case managers and our Donations Coordinators when matching individual household's needs with particular goods or services.

The card will be mailed out in coming days, along with a new guide that contains all useful contact information – including telephone numbers for community service hubs, material aid, donations, the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund, local councils and the Rebuilding Advisory Centres.

Information sessions for people bereaved through the Victorian Bushfires

You, your family and friends are invited to attend an information session to receive an update on the bushfire reconstruction and recovery effort, bushfire coronial process and information on support services.

DATE: Friday 21st August 2009

LOCATION: Churchill & District Community Hub
Phillip Parade, Churchill

TIME: 6.30pm to 8.00pm

For further information phone the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority Information Line: 1800 240 667 or visit www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au

Questions and Answers

1. Information Session Sponsor details?

This is a joint initiative between VBRRRA, Coroner's and DHS.

2. RSVP process?

Explain that for catering and setting up of venue purposes could we record the caller's name (only if they are agreeable for this to be noted), the numbers of individual/family attendees and intended information session location.

3. Who can attend these sessions?

People bereaved through the bushfires and their family members and friends (i.e. people who have lost someone close to them).

4. If I can't attend any of the sessions, where can I get further information?

- In relation to VBRRRA information, see the website: www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au.
- In relation to the Coroner's presentation, contact the State Coroner's Office Counseling and Support Service on (03) 9684 4395 or (03) 9684 4396.
- In relation to the trauma and grief presentation, contact Anne Giljohann on (03) 9265 2111 or 0447 710145.
- In relation to the presentation about support services, see the attached resource flyer.
- All other enquiries can be directed to Kim O'Shaughnessy on (03) 9092 2516, Genelle Ryan on (03) 9096 9270, and Anne Giljohann on (03) 9265 2111 or 0447 710145.

Nesting boxes

A successful wildlife nesting box installation program has just been rolled out with Latrobe City Council distributing 140 nest boxes to 45 land-holders in and around fire affected areas. The program was organised by Latrobe City with the support of Maffra and Districts Landcare Network and a Caring for Country Grant along with ITC Timber in Heyfield who supplied the timber. A variety of boxes including bats, possums, sugar gliders, rosellas, parrots, tree creepers and owls were made with assistance from the Fulham Prison Crews who did a great job in constructing the boxes. On the evening of Tuesday 4 August a Nest Box Information Session was held with guest speakers Rolf Willig (DSE) and Steve Kurek (Landcare) talking about the different animals that rely on hollows and nesting boxes for habitat and how to maximise the chances of the boxes being used by the appropriate native animals. It was a fantastic forum to learn more about how nesting boxes can be a viable habitat alternative whilst the fire affected areas are recovering.

It is hoped that through the Work for the Dole program that another similar program can be run to further assist in the rehabilitation and recovery of fire affected areas.

FRIDAY NIGHT MEAL **at** **CATS CRICKET CLUB**

***Come along and catch up with your friends
or make some new ones.***

**Friday Night's – 7:00pm
(Limit of 60)**

\$10.00 – Two Course Meal /\$5.00 for Children

Bar will be open from 6:00pm

**To assist with Catering – bookings must be made no later than
Thursday 6:00pm either by ringing the Clubrooms (5195 5059)**

or

leaving your name at the Relief Centre.

Christmas in July Review

On Saturday the 25th July there was a Christmas in July event held at the Traralgon South Cricket ground and the Community Hall. This was a community event for residents of Callignee, Koornalla, Le Roy and Traralgon South.



In the hall there were 150 kids who were entertained by Koko the clown and his magic show, Santa with presents for everyone, face painters and other volunteers. The kids were fed pizza, party pies, sausage rolls, fairy bread, fairy floss and popcorn straight from the machine and other goodies.

After dinner a local D.J called Christian allowed the teenagers and children to “burn off” some excess sugar by providing a fun disco. The night was made complete with a quiet DVD.

A marquee on the Cricket Oval was the venue for around 350-400 adults. It was beautifully decorated by a team of local ladies led by Mandy Frantz.

We were provided with nibblies and then an amazing feast of beef, turkey, chicken and an assortment of vegies. Dessert followed with Christmas pudding, sticky date pudding, chocolate pudding with chocolate sauce or fruit salad.

A juke box provided background music for the earlier part of the evening before Rennie Jones and Murray Sanders livened up the night with their fabulous music.

Christmas in July could not have happened so successfully without a huge commitment from a large number of people.

A big thanks to;

- Westpac for volunteering staff for the night to help with catering, child supervision and providing us with a raffle prize of a trip for 4 people to the Gold Coast, flights and passes to theme parks included!
- Melina from M.A.D woman for “planting the seed” for the event and providing all of the gifts for both children and adults and some volunteers from Melbourne.
- Latrobe City for their behind the scenes support and assistance.
- Sandra Walker from St.Vincent de Paul for providing vouchers for the teenagers.
- Pauline Taylor and her team from Anglicare who provided the magnificent catering. “Not bad for someone who thought she was catering for between 30 and 80 people only 1 week prior to the event!”

This event was thoroughly enjoyed by all and it was great to see so many happy faces and conversations between old and new acquaintances. It is a fantastic example of the strong community spirit we continue to display!

Ange Gordon - Co-chair Community Recovery Committee

