

Early opening for outdoor pools

Summer has come early and what better way to cool off than by taking a dip in your local outdoor pool. The Latrobe City outdoor pools are gearing up for a fun packed, activity filled summer. Being solar heated; Yallourn North Pool has been the first to make a splash and opened on Saturday. With ample shade, a toddler pool and a children's activity room, Yallourn North provides for a great family day out.



Traralgon and Moe outdoor pools will open on Saturday 2 December 2006. Patrons can expect new seating and additional shade structures at Traralgon and don't forget you are welcome to bring sun umbrellas. Sun cream is provided at all pool sites.

Latrobe City's leisure centre coordinator, Georgina Mitchell, said opening day at all the pools will be free, with entry from 10am - 7pm. "Snacks and drinks are available at the kiosk facilities and the barbecue will be fired up. Expect fun and games and a special appearance from 3TR FM," Georgina said.

"Morning swimming is available again this year at Traralgon Outdoor pool with a session running on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 6am

and 8am. A complimentary healthy lifestyle breakfast will be provided for those who participate.

"Look out for some new activities at the pools this year with Tai Chi, Aqua aerobics, Pilates on the grass, beach volleyball and diving competitions plus much more.

"We have extended the opening hours at all of the pools this year to include a lunch time option during term time for those wanting to do lap or take part in

aqua aerobics but want to do so at a slightly quieter time," Georgina added.

Operating hours until Sunday 17 December 2006 and from Monday 29 January 2007 - Monday 12 March 2007: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 3.30pm - 7pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays 1.30pm - 7pm; Saturdays and Sundays 12noon - 7pm. From Monday 18 December 2006 - Sunday 28 January 2007: 12noon - 7pm seven days a week. All outdoor pools are closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Tails wag for 'Save A Dog'

A new animal welfare initiative recently undertaken by council's local laws team has seen Latrobe City enter into an agreement with 'Save-a-Dog Scheme Inc' a Melbourne-based animal welfare group who have a proven record working with various councils across the state.



More dogs will have a bright future ahead of them because of council's agreement with SADS

The Save-A-Dog Scheme (SADS) is an incorporated, non-profit, community-based organisation controlled and operated by volunteers with the help of paid staff. It operates a registered animal shelter and combines this with a community foster-care program.

Latrobe's acting coordinator local laws, Steve Wright, said SADS describes itself as a coal-face organisation, which saves hundreds of dogs each year and which seeks, by example, to provide a better way of treating non-human animals.

"In short, the agreement with SADS relates to unclaimed and suitable dogs which have completed the eight-day impound time," Steve explained.

"These dogs are transported by SADS to their animal shelter where they are offered for sale or put into short-term

foster care while a new owner is found. All of these dogs are desexed, wormed, vaccinated, micro-chipped, vet checked and assessed before rehoused."

Steve said that Latrobe City residents can still adopt a dog or cat from council's pound facility. "Council has precedence under its agreement with SADS to rehouse a dog with a local customer. In

accordance with legislation all dogs and cats sold by council are desexed, wormed, vaccinated, micro-chipped, registered, vet checked and assessed."

This dog rescue agreement came about as a direct result of council's pound register website www.latrobe.vic.gov.au. The online pound register was originally designed as a tool to swiftly reunite lost dogs and cats with their owners, but an additional and unanticipated result was that Latrobe's animal pound facility and its operation came under the gaze not only Latrobe City residents but also animals lovers and groups from far afield. In light of this development, council's local laws team undertook to build relationships with these new interested parties. "SADS was one such group that presented themselves and exhibited a willingness to be involved in a formal working agreement to rescue suitable dogs from our pound," Steve explained.

"To date, in only a few short months, over one-hundred dogs have been saved and rehoused by SADS, which may have otherwise been destroyed," he said.

The Save-a-Dog Scheme website may be visited at www.saveadog.org.au

Rug donation to benefit meals on wheels clients

The Traralgon Country Women's Association (CWA) recently donated a number of hand-crafted rugs for distribution by Latrobe City's Traralgon meals on wheels volunteers to their clients.

"Traralgon meals on wheels are delivered by volunteers to over eighty clients in the Traralgon area, ensuring that the recipients who are aging or less mobile than most of us are able to get at least one nutritious hot meal per day," Latrobe City's social support program assistant, Judy Setches explained.



Annette Smith (right) from the Traralgon CWA shows Latrobe City volunteer officer Sue Johnson a selection of rugs the CWA members have produced

"It was felt that many of these meals on wheels recipients would really benefit from a lovely rug, so the CWA donated three large bags of rugs in a range of styles suited to men as well as women. The workmanship in these rugs is really beautiful," Judy said.

Annette Smith, who coordinated the exercise on behalf of the Traralgon CWA said the rugs were individually hand-crafted by members, whose ages range from 50 to 90 years.

"While meetings are primarily for friendship, our members are extremely active in the community in many ways. Apart from the initiative to assist meals on wheels recipients, we have assisted Lifeline, drought and bushfire relief and medical research," Annette explained.

The Traralgon CWA is currently having a membership drive and is seeking some younger members. The group meets at 1pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the CWA hall in Hotham Street, near the Safeway carpark.

If you'd like to attend their meetings please contact Annette, telephone 5192 4271. For further information on volunteering for meals on wheels, please contact Judy Setches, telephone 1300 367 700

Soundshell debut heralded by sensational Madrigal sound

The official opening of the Loy Yang Power Latrobe Community Soundshell in Traralgon's Victory Park last month was an exciting event for the entire community; a demonstration of what people can achieve when they come together for a common purpose.

Among the those who provided the opening concert's entertainment, were individual artists such as Nik Bagshaw and Tim Woods; while groups such as the Yallourn Madrigal Singers, the Latrobe City Youth Band, the City of Traralgon Band, and the Latrobe City Combined Churches Choir, provided a spectacular unison of music and song.

For the popular Yallourn Madrigal Singers, the soundshell's opening concert provided an opportunity to reach a somewhat new audience, and those who'd rugged up and braved the inclement weather enjoyed the sound.

Although the township of Yallourn no longer exists, the Yallourn Madrigal Singers certainly do, and this year, celebrate their 50th anniversary. Originally comprised of amateur singers from the Yallourn township and the surrounding areas, these days members come from as far away as Sale and Mirboo North for the weekly rehearsals.

Yallourn Madrigal Singers' music director, Gae Michau, explained that a madrigal is strictly a poetic and musical piece typical of the 16th and 17th century. "Various forms of secular verse are usually unaccompanied, and with two to six different voices or parts," Gae explained.

Today, the group enjoys performing both traditional and more modern music, and having been a part of the musical community for so many years, the group was thrilled to be invited to partake in the soundshell festivities.

Their performance for the soundshell

included a program of some of the group's favourite pieces from their repertoire of songs, including a 15th century Christmas song, a Spanish folk tune and a French number from the 16th century, an early 17th century English madrigal piece, and more modern favourites including 'Bring him Home' from the musical Les Misérables, and a new treatment of a John Lennon and Paul McCartney favourite - arranged into a madrigal.

Gae said that preparation and practice are vital to any successful performance. "If you're the act following Dorothy the Dinosaur and Ronald McDonald, you've got to meet the crowd's raised expectations. The appreciative sound of the soundshell audience following our performance on the day, seemed to confirm we'd met the challenge well. So we were pretty pleased with the way things went," Gae said.

The Yallourn Madrigal Singers feature regularly on stages around the region and around the state. Performances include the recent Water Festival held in Sale. For this performance, the group received an \$11,000 grant through the Arts Victoria's Arts Development funding program to go towards the commissioning of five well known composers, including Steve Adams, Anthony Briggs, Lisa Gerrard, Mark Puddy and Christopher Willcocks.

To help celebrate their half century of sensational sound, the Yallourn Madrigal Singers are to hold a special reunion event at the end of the month. If any past members would like to get in contact with the group - please call Michelle, telephone 5174 5782.



Some of the Yallourn Madrigals at the soundshell opening