



THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN ALEX

The first day of school in Alex, we hope that our children are accepted and find new friends. We worry as a family. It's their first move that they can remember. My son who is in the 6th grade appears cool, quiet and not very anxious, even if he feel so inside. He had many friends where we lived before and must have been missing them all.

I walk him up to some of his new classmates hanging outside the classroom before the school begins. I say hello to a boy about his age, ask his name and introduce him to my son. The boy says hello and so do a couple of his mates. My son looks a bit embarrassed and wants me to leave him alone. I do. Just nearby a few boys are kicking a soccer ball, that perks up my son, he has just done an year of soccer after 5 years of Aussie rules footy before coming to Alex. He loves both games. One boy kicks the ball, another misses it or lets it go deliberately and it comes near my son. He stops it, looks over to them, and kicks it in some special way and apparently that is enough. He is in and accepted, all without a word being exchanged. I could not tell, but my son's kick and stopping technique has been observed and appreciated and he is welcomed as a good soccer player and the kids would like him on their team. Someone asks where he played before, he answers quietly and walks off with them. They show him around and introduce themselves. It went smoothly and suddenly. And now, for my daughter. She is in her 3rd grade, nervous about a new place. The first move in her life and she is missing her friends and familiar surrounds. She is holding on to me and mum.

Starlee

We walk over to the line near my daughter's classroom. Suddenly, a bright looking, friendly, confident sounding girl with burnished gold hair and a warm welcoming smile comes up and says "Hello, I am Starlee, welcome Mynah!" offering her hand for a shake. She then says "Hello" and shakes hands with us parents as we introduce ourselves.

"Mynah, would you like to come with me? I can introduce you," turning around to us, she asks, "Can I take Mynah and show her around?"

We are quite impressed with the friendliness and air of this child who exudes the confidence of a grown up. Mynah smiles happily, takes her proffered

hand and goes along with her. Suddenly the tension and anxiety is gone! We feel relieved. I feel like we have met a potential future prime minister of Australia in Starlee!

Since that day, over time we have come to know Starlee more. She is a wonderful girl with many interests and a deep knowledge of most things she knows. She likes horses, loves to figure things out, read and is from a family where everyone has a keen interest and knowledge in a thing or two in addition to school learning. Mynah has made many more friends since then. In my mind, Starlee's first impression on us will always be memorable. She worked her magic to make my daughter's first day at a new school so much easier and welcoming, setting the tone for a new hometown. Thanks Starlee!

:By Kannan Narayanamurthy

A special thank you to Helen McDougall for introducing me to Kannan's writing and to Kannan for permission to publish it.

NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY

Our 2011 school leaders:

School Captain- Jarrad Gilbert,
JSC President- John Bennett,
Sports Captain- Lachie Wischer,
Arts & Publicity - Kendall Richards.
Fire Captains- Kaylam Kirkham, Levi Rowe and Lachi Follett,
Bus Captains- John Bennett & Rick Hodgetts,
Garden and Yard—James Macdonald
We look forward to these students being positive role models for our school. Below is a photo of the students in the junior room in 2011.

WELCOME TO ISSUE 2

Please send articles to miranda@omnipotent.com.au or ring on 57969261

Still no luck finding the postman so I'm not sure what to do next, I'll keep you informed. Please spread the word that people need to send me their email address.

The 25th February is FOB Test Friday, a special day held on the last February each year to remind all people over 50 to complete an annual home FOB Test. This is a simple, non invasive test that can help detect the early signs of bowel cancer, often in time to treat or prevent it.

Visit letsbeatbowelcancer.com or call 1800556575.

WHITE HART HOTEL

The Free Entry Music Program has some great guests to enjoy with several 'Sunday Garden Sessions'. If it rains we'll party in the bar instead.

Saturday 12th February - 8.00pm - Ooh La La - Griffith's newest country-pop singing talent. Fresh from appearances at Tamworth & Whittlesea

Sunday 27th February - 4.30pm - Austin Floyd - Fitzroy favourites back for some more country rock and bluesy roots

Sunday 20th March - 7.45pm - Rick Steward - Roots, rock & acoustic style music from this multi-instrumental one man band genius.

If you have any queries or want to make a booking, feel free to call or email us. 63 Hill St, Longwood, VIC 3665 T: 03-5798-5203

white.hart@bigpond.com



COMMUNITY WHAT'S ON CALENDAR - FEBRUARY 2011

Fortnight beg 7th Feb	TERIP TERIP MOWING ROSTER Geoff & Jan Penny Mark Ireland Both sides of Springs Rd and all four courts
Week beg 13th Feb	RUFFY RURAL FIRE BRIGADE ROSTER George Noye 57904246 0432928301 UHF CH 15
Now until the 7th March	LEONE GABRIELLE painting and sculpture exhibition at the Ruffy Store, 26 Nolans Road, Ruffy. Open Fridays from 11.30am, weekends and public holidays from 8.30am to 6pm T (03) 57904387 www.ruffy.com.au
Friday 11th February	'DRINKS ON THE DECK' at Highlands Community Hall from 6.30pm. Bring food to share for a meal together and catch up with friends old and new. All welcome - especially new faces. Gold coin donation to cover power. "Don't forget the Aerogard!!".
Saturday 12th February	BLACK MARKET 10am - 12pm: Swap & sell your home produce at this local food exchange and "open garden". This month it's being hosted by Candi Westney & Vitto Oles, at Rocky Passes Estate, 1590 Highlands Rd, Whiteheads Creek. Contact Paul Macgregor on 5797 0229, diversity@diversity.org.au , or Candi on 5796 9366
Monday 14th February	HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB The first get-together of the New Year will be at 11am. Just bring something to do, some lunch and a smiley face for a few hours of craft and laughs! Jan Sporry 5790 4361, 450 Caveat—Dropmore Road, Caveat
Thursday 17th February	Ruffy Community Action Group – Ruffy Hall, 8.00 pm. At our first meeting for this year we will give an update on progress with projects and start with planning our activities for the next financial year. Everybody interested in community planning for Ruffy is invited to the meeting!
Friday 18th February	ALEXANDRA LIBRARY an essential part of your community! 5772 0349 Storytime for 3 – 5's stories, fun, activities & songs 11 – 12 noon
Friday 18th February	BOB VALENTINE & LAUREN GILLARD For those of you who don't know Bobby, his music is a mixture of blues, country and jazz and he loves to get everyone involved. WBGadd, 1 Queen st Avenel, 03-5796 2469 7:30 till 11:00 pm \$25 www.wbgadd.com
Saturday 19th February— 20th March	GALLERY 34 Invites you to a Charles Blackman Exhibition ALICE AND FRIENDS original paintings, drawings and limited editions 34 High Street Yea Thursday to Saturday 9-4 Sundays & Public Holidays 10-4 Olivia Lawson Ph 03 5797 3222 info@gallery34.com.au www.gallery34.com.au
Saturday 19th February	ROCKY PASSES: The Stiletto Sisters are a dynamic and vibrant trio featuring Hope Csutoros on violin, Judy Gunson on piano accordion, and double bassist Jo To. They play luscious, exciting, virtuosic gypsy melodies, seductive tango rhythms, popular, traditional, old continental favourites & love songs from Europe and Latin America ... music to swoon by! Learn more about them at www.stilettoisters.com Tickets \$40 ... includes Tapas plate served from 5:30 and performance from 6:30 - 8:30. Bookings 57969366 or contact@rockypasses.com.au
Tuesday 22nd February	SOIL HEALTH AND INCREASING SOIL CARBON First of two free seminars at the Seymour Show grounds, Ken Hall Pavillion, King's Park, Tallarook Street, Seymour. 9.45 am –3pm Light lunch provided. Register by 14th February. Ring 57611663 or Helenrepacholi@dpi.vic.gov.au
Tuesday 22nd February	SOAPBOX Refugees – The Whole Picture Alexandra Library is hosting a Soapbox forum exploring issues affecting refugees – their journey, the detention experience and what happens to those refused entry. The panel features author Najaf Mazari (Rugmaker of Kabul), international commentator Paul Burton and a representative from the Melbourne Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. 7pm
Wednesday 23rd February	MURRINDINDI COUNCIL MEETING Alexandra Council Chambers 11.00 am
Thursday 24th February	ALEXANDRA LIBRARY an essential part of your community! 5772 0349 Murrindindi Writers – all aspiring writers welcome 10 am 4F Food, fiction and fun on Thursdays – Bushrangers 3.45 - 5pm
Thursday 24th February	The first of this year's SCP workshops kicks off with a Green Cleaning workshop on 9am – 11am at the Kilmore Family Centre, 7 Skehan Place (opposite Hudson Park) Kilmore. Join green clean expert Bridget Gardner and learn how to keep your home hygienically clean, without harmful chemicals, hard work or expensive products. Based on her experience as a professional cleaner and the Government funded 'Safe and Sustainable Cleaning in Childcare' project, Bridget will show you simple low-tox methods that really work. Make and take home your own simple cleaning agent! To register for workshops please contact me on 5734 6357 or cathyk@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au www.sustainable-communities.com.au
Thursday 24th February	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS Caveat Church 5.30pm All welcome
4th to 6th March	HiArts Family Film Festival Films for all ages and tastes, feature and short length, including local work. Program in Granite News and on Web site (www.hiarts.org) in the week before. Also photographic Exhibition; Spiteri Gallery; sculpture; family activities; music; food and drink. Opening night will features Don McQueen, Australian Bush poet. People need to register for Opening Night. Queries 5796 9358 or kadumbla@mac.com .

Classifieds & Community Notices

1080 ENDORSEMENT COURSE

There will be a course held for 1080 endorsement on SATURDAY, 19 FEBRUARY. Richard Lilley from GOTAFE will be running the course.

LOCATION: Yea Shire Offices, the Semicircle, Yea (next to library)

TIME: 1.00 – 4.30 pm (afternoon tea provided)

COST: The cost of \$135 is being funded by UGLN Fire Recovery.

BYO: Chemcert number (Farm Chemical User's Certificate) or ACUP number

Note: You can also apply for an ACUP with 1080 endorsement (\$45.40) or upgrade your present ACUP to 1080 (no charge; just paperwork but bring your old ACUP card).

BOOKINGS: Judy Brookes (juncball@bigpond.com or 57 972 563)
A YEA RIVER CATCHMENT LAND-CARE GROUP INITIATIVE

HIGHLANDS MAIL SERVICE

Have you recently discovered that our mail service, which was previously 5 days a week, appears to have been truncated to 4 days or in some weeks even less? Annoying isn't it? Feel free to ring 131318 to register your complaint with Australia Post.
From Pauline Roberts

2011 TOOLBOX FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

- March 17 'Using Technology for Sustainability'

Presented by Greening Australia in partnership with Melbourne Museum and Sustainability Victoria, the Toolbox for Environmental Change forum is Victoria's premier conference for those involved in education for sustainability. The event is also sponsored by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Victorian Association for Environmental Education.

The focus of the forum will be on the effective use of technology in education for sustainability, school case studies and ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

For further information and /or to register as a participant, please contact Greening Australia via 9450 5321 or visit:

<http://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/our-services/education-and-training/toolbox-for-environmental-change-2011>.

TERIP/RUFFY UNITING CHURCH

Terip/Ruffy Uniting church will gather for worship on the second Sunday of each month (Holy Communion) and the fourth Sunday of each month with all services at 11.15am.

A meeting will follow the service on 27th March to discuss plans for the future. All are welcome to attend.

Bring lunch to share.
Best wishes, Fred Jungwirth

RABBIT MESSAGE

Hey Everybody!

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and New year!
An important and URGENT note to anyone who is involved in the RABBIT RIPPING program this summer.

I know the weather has been quite tricky, but we really need to get the ripping done by the 28th of February.

If you do not do it by then you will lose your hours and your 50% subsidy. Anyone whom has not yet ripped can you please email me hughes.creek1@gmail.com or call me (Edwina McKay) on 0410459065 and contact the excavating company you are using and get started!
Anyone whom has ripped could you please scan your invoices and email them to me. If you do not have a scanner, please post a copy to Neville Ford at 35A Snell Grove, Pascoe Vale VIC 3044. From Edwina McKay

HiArts Family Film Festival - Photographers and Film makers

Those wanting to exhibit photography in the Exhibition section need to have their entries in by 14th February. Registration forms available 5796 9358 or kadumbra@mac.com

HELP WANTED

"Wanted, weekenders in Terip require some part time farm assistance with managing the property 2-3 days per week. Call 5790 4200 on weekends".

TERIP TERIP MOWING ROSTER

Anyone who doesn't normally participate in the roster but is willing to be added can call me on 57904080 or email andrewholloway1@gmail.com as soon as possible.

BUYING PROPERTY

Councilor Comment Cr Bob Flowers
Planning and Environment portfolio

The use and development of land in our shire is a contentious issue at times. In order to maintain a consistent approach to how the land is used Council has developed a planning scheme. The planning scheme contains rules and regulations that determine how land can be used. Environmental, economic and social factors have been considered in formulating the scheme. With this in mind it is important that anyone buying land in Murrindindi Shire check the planning scheme. Buyers should fully understand the rights and responsibilities associated with the land. It is not possible to use land in an unfettered way. Three types of constraint apply to properties:

Limitations on the land associated with soil and topography

Natural resources such as water and vegetation must be used responsibly

Specific requirements may be attached to a property because of the property history or the property location

Potential owners of rural land should look objectively at what they are undertaking and consider the following:

The zoning and any overlays as determined by the planning scheme
Animal health restrictions as a result of infectious diseases in the past or chemical residues

Crown land frontages. Check lease, cost, management and access entitlements

Any caveat applied to the land by a previous owner

Easements for electric, phone, water
The risk of fire and your ability to defend the property

Water supply and irrigation licences/allocations

Maintenance obligations for river management or soil conservation
Native vegetation clearance requirements

Pest control problems

Private forestry agreements. Check for any associated covenant on title
Special water supply catchment area plans

Limitations of soil, slope and water supply

Weed problems

Unused road reserves

Having considered these issues a potential buyer should then be better placed to decide on a rural land purchase.

Rocky Passes



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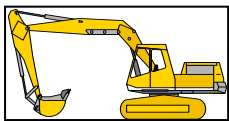
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