

February 2011

Issue 11

Mitchell Shire Bushfire Recovery

Welcome to the latest edition of the Mitchell Shire Bushfire Recovery newsletter.



Newsletter Information and Distribution

If you are not already on the newsletter distribution database or if you have anything to add to the newsletter, please contact Ellen McComish on 5734 6337 or ellen.mccomish@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

2011 COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS GRANTS

The Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund has made available funding for 2nd Anniversary commemorative events in the Mitchell Shire. If you, your group or someone you know has an idea that you would like to discuss, or would like to submit an application, please contact Jacqui Sims 0407 944 414 or jacqui@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au.

This Grant will support commemorative events organised up until 31 March 2011. Terms and conditions of this Grant are the same as the first year Commemorative Events Gift.

Specifically:

1. The activity must take the form of a commemorative or memorial event for the 2009 Victorian Bushfires.
2. Participation in the activity must be open to all members of the bushfire affected community.
3. Events must be organised in consultation with community members.
4. There must be no commercial benefit or activity associated with the event.
5. The activity must not involve the purchase of alcohol.

Applications will need to be approved by Mitchell Community Recovery Action Group (MCRAG) and Council.

REMEMBERING THE 2009 FIRES

A central service to remember the 2009 bushfires will be held at 3pm on Sunday 6 February 2011 at the Zinc space at Federation Square in Melbourne.

Retired Victoria Police Chaplain, Rev. Jim Pilmer PSM, will lead the inter-faith service which will follow the theme *Remember, Reflect, Hope*.

The service will cater for bushfire-affected people living outside the affected communities, those who lost someone close to them and members of the general public wishing to pay their respects.

It will be open to all Victorians and Federal and State leaders and will recognize the national significance of the fires in 2009. It will be the only centrally planned activity across Victoria.

For any enquiries please call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.

Contact info: Community Development Workers – Bushfire Recovery

Jacqui Sims on 0407 944 414 or jacqui@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

Kate Lawrence on 0409 108 198 or kate.lawrence@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

YOUTH PARK/SPACE FOR WANDONG/HEATHCOTE JUNCTION

A community consultation was held in Wandong on Thursday 16 December, to start to engage young people about what they would like to see developed in the Wandong/Heathcote Junction Memorial Park, for young people.

If there is interest from young people in the towns, Council officers would like the development of the youth aspect to be a project that builds connection and capacity in a group of young people. Council officers will assist them to work on this project, developing the concept and obtaining the funds and approvals necessary. To start the process there was a casual event just before Christmas in the rotunda opposite the post office in Wandong.

Overall the response was fantastic. At the allotted time (4pm) kids and Mums and Dads from the primary school started arriving. There was a range of ages and interests. There were also several groups of boys and some individual girls who participated. While hard to judge, at a guess about 60% of survey respondents were primary school age. This often translated into visions that suit their age now, rather than the target age which is 12 and up. Having said that, there was a clear and strong theme in favour of skate/scooter/roller blade facility, as well as other ideas.

The number of surveys collected was 28, with ages ranging from 4 through to 16. In addition to the support for a facility that allows skating, there were suggestions of a basketball ring, climbing wall, and places to hang out. Reflecting the ages present, there was also mention of playgrounds and swimming pools.

A question on the survey asked the participants 'Do you think we should be remembering the bushfires in the development of the park?'. Most answered 'yes' to this question. In answering how the fires should be remembered the responses included sculptures, plaque, trees, name tiles, carved tree, photos, memories and signs.

There was lots of willingness to be involved in developing the park, most being willing to be actively involved, while others were happy to be just kept informed.

A second meeting has been set for 4pm to 6pm on Friday 28 January at the Wandong Community Centre. The aim is to have this as a more formal meeting, to develop some connections amongst the young people and start to build a group that can carry the project forward. All young people from Wandong and Heathcote junction, between 12 and 24 are welcome to get involved.

If you have any queries, or wish to add anything or contribute, please contact Joanna Stubbings, Mitchell Council Youth Resource Officer Phone: 5734 6271 email: joannas@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au or Kate Lawrence, Mitchell Council Community Development Worker, Bushfire Recovery, Phone: 5734 6361 Email: kate.lawrence@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au.

COMMUNITY TRAINING WORKSHOPS – BASIC BOOKKEEPING

Key Speaker - Tom Caelli, Project Accountant

Tom is a Chartered Accountant with 35 years experience in the Corporate Sector and Local Government. He was Mitchell Shire's Finance Manager for 10 years prior to taking phased retirement. He now works part time on financial projects for Mitchell Shire Council.

The session will cover topics including:

- Bookkeeping, what does it mean for your club and you as Treasurer?
- Financial procedures
- Different types of accounting systems
- Handling money
- Business Activity Statements (BAS) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

When: Wednesday 16 February 2011

Where: Council Chambers, High Street, Broadford

Time: Refreshments available at 6.45pm, workshop commencing 7pm sharp and concluding at 9pm

RSVP

Friday 11 February 2011

Paula Gibb: 5734 6253 or Paula.Gibb@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

Important Contacts

Case Management Service
1800 050 400

Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund
1800 180 213

Community Service Hub located at:
96 Walnut Street, Whittlesea
Phone: 03 9719 1000
Email:
whittlesearecovery@gmail.com

Mitchell Shire Council
5734 6200

Building Commission
1300 360 320

Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and
Recovery Authority
1800 240 667

Department of Primary Industries –
Broadford
5784 0600

Nurse on Call
1300 606 024

Department of Human Services
1300 650 172 www.dhs.vic.gov.au

CFA: www.cfa.vic.gov.au

DSE: www.dse.vic.gov.au

Mitchell Community Health Service,
Counselling and Support
1300 773 352

Kids help line
1800 551 800
www.kidshelp.com.au

RSPCA for Bushfire Recovery
information or animal issues
9224 2222
www.rspcavic.org

BEYONDBLUE LAUNCHES THE SHED ONLINE

beyondblue: the national depression initiative, together with the Movember Foundation and the Australian Men's Sheds Association, is pleased to announce the launch of an exciting new website **The Shed Online**, an online social community where men can make mates and share skills. Like the 400-plus community-based Men's Sheds across Australia, The Shed Online aims to provide a space where men can discuss a range of topics, exchange ideas and take part in activities.

Visit www.theshedonline.org.au and you can:

- contribute ideas
- connect with mates
- take part in discussions
- catch up on the latest news and events
- play online games and participate in online activities
- find DIY tips and contribute DIY projects
- learn more about men's health and healthy living
- be part of a community.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS – SHARING STORIES OF THE FIRES

Community members from 32 fire-affected communities attended a VBRRA hosted forum in the Yarra Valley in July. This was an outstanding response; demonstrating the communities' desire to come together to reflect and share experiences of what happened and how best to move forward.

The interaction and understanding generated through sharing these stories was powerful for many, contributing to their personal journey of recovery.

A collection of these personal and moving stories has recently been published and is available to download on the VBRRA website www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au or call 1800 240 667 to have a copy sent to you.

A book recording the Black Saturday accounts of Mitchell Shire residents and volunteers is to be compiled by local historians, Heather Knight and Catherine Turnbull.

If you would like to contribute, please contact:

Heather Knight: 5784 2126 or 0418 371 147 (no mobile reception at home)

Catherine Turnbull: 0400 687 771

Email: blacksaturday@nl.com.au

MITCHELL SHIRE BUSHFIRE COMMUNITY WEBSITES

Don't forget to check out what's happening with the Community Advisory Groups:

- www.broadfordcag.com
- www.clonbinane.vic.au
- www.reedycreek.vic.au
- www.upperplenty.com
- www.wandong.vic.au



TOTAL FIRE BANS AND FIRE DANGER RATINGS

Although Total Fire Bans and Fire Danger Ratings are predominantly both determined by weather, they exist for different reasons.

Total Fire Bans - A Total Fire Ban sets legal restrictions on what activities can or cannot occur in a particular district for that day. It aims to reduce the activities that may start a fire.

Fire Danger Ratings - Fire Danger Ratings predict fire behaviour should a fire start, and how hard it will be to put out.

The Total Fire Ban and Bureau of Meteorology weather forecast districts were aligned before the 2010 fire danger period. They now have the same names and boundaries. It is important for people to understand what Total Fire Ban and weather district they are in.

Mitchell Shire is in the North Central District.

The current Fire Danger Period was declared on 20 December 2010 and will end 1 May 2011 unless advised earlier.

Remember, burning in the open air is prohibited without a permit. Permits will only be granted in extreme circumstances. This does not affect the use of incinerators. At this stage, incinerators can still be used on Wednesday & Saturdays, 10am to 3pm (Within a Township) and any day/time outside the township providing it is not a Total Fire Ban day or a Smog Alert day.

For information on Total Fire Bans across Victoria, visit the Country Fire Authority website www.cfa.vic.gov.au



DSE PLANNED BURNING INFORMATION

To help manage the risk of intense bushfire, the Victorian Government, through the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and Parks Victoria, carries out planned burns to reduce fuel, often with the help and expertise of the Country Fire Authority. DSE and Parks Victoria also use fire to copy the natural cycles of fire in ways that help plants and animals thrive.

DSE's planned burn program is the considered use of fire to protect life, property and the environment from the threat of bushfire, and to maintain the health of plants and animals that have come to depend on bushfires to survive.

Visit www.dse.vic.gov.au or [DSE Planned Burning Information](#) for further information.

PLANS DELIVERED TO COMMUNITIES

VBRR has released an update, highlighting the status of projects identified by Community Recovery Committees (CRCs) in their plans for recovery and reconstruction.

Support for many of the priority projects has been made possible through the joint efforts of 33 CRCs working in partnership with their local communities, VBRR, other government departments and authorities, councils, the philanthropic sector and private donors.

As a result of these combined efforts, almost 800 projects have been supported, including the rebuilding of major community infrastructure and delivery of health and wellbeing programs and community events.

Hundreds more projects have been funded and implemented outside the Community Recovery Plan process, which complements the significant support for individuals provided by governments and private donors, including gifts more than \$300 million from the Bushfire Appeal Fund.

Information is available on the We Will Rebuild website about local communities, their updated Community Recovery Plans and the support they have received. To find out more about what projects have been funded go to www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au > *Local Community* > *Recovery by Community*. Alternatively, contact the Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 to have a copy of the latest fact sheet sent to you.

MITCHELL SHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL FIRE RECOVERY PROJECTS OFFICER - UPDATE

Revegetation: Over a thousand trees planted

Several revegetation projects have taken place in the fire affected areas; Council's Environmental Fire Recovery Projects Officer, James Nelsson, has worked in partnership with the Deep Creek Landcare Group, Sunday Creek/Dry Creek Landcare Group, DSE, Darraweit Guim Primary School, Seymour Special School, Certified Practicing Accountants, ANZ Bank employees and numerous local volunteers to distribute and plant indigenous plants across the Mitchell Shire fire affected areas. *"So far we've given away and planted over a thousand trees across the fire affected areas of the Mitchell Shire. At present there are no more trees to donate or plant, but it is expected that next planting season more plants should become available."* said James.

"Gardening After the Fire" program: Seed offer

Various packets of seeds are available through the Sunday Creek/Dry Creek Landcare Group and the "Gardening After the Fire program" (limits apply) to Mitchell Shire residents in fire affected areas re-establishing their gardens.

To take up this offer please contact Elyse Kelly on 5734 6200 or James Nelsson on 0427 498 872 or e-mail James.Nelsson@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au



Revegetation: Guards and stakes offer

Mitchell Shire residents in fire affected areas that are revegetating their properties can still have access to free tree guards and stakes. So far we have given away over 2000 guards and 4000 stakes. We still have plenty of guards and stakes to give away to Mitchell residents still wishing to undertake revegetation works (limits apply).

To take up this offer please contact James Nelsson on 0427 498 872 or e-mail James.Nelsson@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

Course: Chemicals and Chainsaws

"Chainsaw User and Maintenance", "Chemical User" and "Chemical User Refresher" accredited courses are to be conducted next month for residents of the Mitchell Shire.

These courses are being funded courtesy of the Kilmore East Community Advisory Group and through the Community Assistance Gift and are open to all residents in the Mitchell Shire. Already we have had 56 Expressions of Interest in attending either one or a combination of the courses.

Expressions of interest are still being taken and **close on Monday 1st February 2011.**

The courses are subsidised with attendees contributing \$50 towards the cost of each course. This is a saving of between \$120 and \$200 depending on the course being undertaken.

The courses will run in the last week of February, then depending on the numbers, in the first week of March. We are hoping to run a mixture of weekend, weekday and evening courses.

To take up this offer please contact James Nelsson on 0427 498 872 or e-mail James.Nelsson@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au



Photo: W. Hinterberger

EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

SWEAT
AND SWIM

Would you like to have fun with passes to the Kilmore and Seymour Leisure Centres?

Complimentary Leisure Passes are available for Mitchell Shire residents with a Bushfire Appeal Blue Referral Card.

**Please call for enquiries and further details:
Leanne Camilleri 5787 1166 or Renee Hallam 0412 616 804**

Limited vouchers so please apply quickly

FLAMEINGOES
MORNING TEA
GROUP

Have you heard about this great activity that happens each week with some fantastic people?

Morning Tea Group the Flameingoes meet at 11am Thursday in the Church House, Church Street, Kilmore.

Morning activities include scrapbooking and making bead jewellery.
In the afternoon starting at 1.30pm there are belly dancing classes for those interested.

For further information please call Heather on 0418 371 147.

Everyone is welcome.

KILMORE
MEN'S
SHED

The Kilmore Men's Shed is located at Graves Street in Kilmore and is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10am until 4pm.

For more information or to join the Kilmore Men's Shed contact **Jeffrey Robinson on 5781 0756.**

TAI CHI FOR
BEGINNERS

Use Tai Chi as a way to meditate into a calm state, relieving the physical effects of stress on the body and mind. The focus and calmness cultivated by the meditative aspect of Tai Chi is seen as necessary in maintaining optimum health (in the sense of relieving stress and maintaining homeostasis) and in application of the form as a soft style martial art.

Where: Broadford Community Centre

When: Every Friday, 1.30pm

To register please contact Tracey on 0400 259 886 or

tracey.bowden@centacaremelbourne.org.au



Help others and meet new friends!

Subscribe to

volunteering@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

MITCHELL VOLUNTEER NEWS



Photo: W. Hinterberger

Supported by:

