



Consistent policy sought

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MILLICENT'S lack of a dedicated area for free camping areas for motorhomes and self-contained recreational vehicles has disappointed Wattle Range Councillor Glenn Brown.

Cr Brown told a recent council meeting it needs to have consistent policy across the area in regards to accommodating the vehicles.

He was speaking in response to a proposal for a portion of the McCorquindale Park sporting complex at Penola to be used as a place where motorhomes and recreational vehicles might stay.

Wattle Range Council has resolved to undertake further discussions, business modelling and planning with the committee of the McCorquindale Park Management Committee and the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia.

Both organisations are supportive of the idea.

Cr Brown said further discussions by council needed to take place at a later time and he was not opposed to the Penola proposal.

"I am confused about our policy in Millicent," Cr Brown said.

"It is almost a 'do nothing' option.

"We need to have a clear policy across our council area.

"We are falling behind.

"Every other town has free camping.

"They stop and they spend money."

In 2014, the council decided on a policy to allow free camping areas for motorhomes and self-contained caravans at Penola's Greenrise Lake, on the Princes Highway parking bay at Nangula and in the central

parklands at Tantanoola.

The introduction of the policy was strongly opposed by caravan park operators at Millicent and Penola.

Allan and Gloria Withers have owned and operated Millicent's Hillview Caravan Park for around 20 years and they have taken issue with the remarks made by Cr Brown.

According to the couple, Cr Brown is incorrect to state every town has free camping.

"For example, there is no free camping in Mount Gambier," they said.

"We already do offer basic low-cost camping facilities here at the Hillview Caravan Park.

"Regarding our powered sites with use of our facilities, we offer pensioner discounts and the seventh night is free and so there is not a big difference between our fees and various low-cost places."

Mr and Mrs Withers are urging Wattle Range Council to maintain the conditions it imposed in 2014 on the users of the free camping area in the central parklands of Tantanoola for motorhomes and self-contained recreational vehicles.

"We hope that council officers are checking the area for rubbish disposal, that only self-contained vehicles are using it and that long-term stays are not permitted," they said.

"With manufacturing in decline and the retail industry facing challenges, international tourism is a viable industry in the long-term for Australia.

"Governments spend money on promoting Australia overseas and then tourists come here and expect to have things for free."

The Hillview Caravan Park proprietors also commented on another matter raised by Cr Brown at the April monthly

council meeting.

"He had a motion passed calling on council staff to investigate ways of increasing the returns to council of its Southern Ocean Tourist Park at Beachport," they said.

"Surely, council's decision to allow free camping in three areas will have an impact on its own caravan park at Beachport."



STRONGLY HELD VIEWS: Millicent Hillview Caravan Park proprietors Allan and Gloria Withers are at odds with the opinions of a Wattle Range Council elected member. Picture: J.L. "FRED" SMITH



Visiting veterans join Anzac parade

Chance to march for van club members

By NADINE MORTON

EVEN though they were mid-way through a campervan rally at Mount Panorama, 40 visiting veterans took part in Bathurst's Anzac Day services on Monday.

The veterans are among more than 2000 Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) members in Bathurst for the club's 30th anniversary rally.

The club's biannual rallies often coincide with Anzac Day and CMCA chief executive officer Richard Barwick said members who are also ex-veterans always like to attend a march.

Among those to take part on Anzac Day were Vietnam Veterans, and other personnel who served with the Australian Defence Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"We've done this previously. Last year they marched in Murray Bridge in South Australia," Mr Barwick said.

He said it is important for members that they have the chance to march on a day with such national significance.

"It's a way of recognising the contributions of our ex-servicemen and women," Mr Barwick said.

"It's really important that our members play a role in that day and it's really important that we support them."

The parade departed from Bathurst RSL Club and finished at Kings Parade where the veterans attended the Citizens' Anzac

Day Commemoration Service.

CMCA veterans also attended the Dawn Service at 4.30am at the Bathurst War Memorial Carillon.

Mr Barwick has invited Bathurst and district people to come along to the club's open day on Saturday at Mount Panorama.

On from 9am until 3pm, the day will be a chance to view around 1000 motorhomes as well as visit a range of stalls and information stands.

Entry is by gold coin donation, with all money raised to be donated to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

For more information about the rally, visit www.cmca.net.au.



TAKING PART: Visiting Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia members, who are also veterans, took part in Bathurst's Anzac Day parade through the CBD on Monday. Photo: CHRIS SEABROOK

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It was just another day in paradise when a bowl of tom yum soup saved Ken Kipping's life.

It was a cloudy but dry September 10 last year, when the Sunrise Beach resident who had turned 70 just two days before, pulled into a car park at Noosa Junction just after 8pm to pick up his Thai takeaway. Seconds later he suffered a massive stroke.

A passing driver saw him slumped against the steering wheel and did a U-turn to see if he was all right. That decision by good Samaritan Josh Collins was the first step towards saving Kipping's life.

"He saw the state I was in," Kipping says, "and grabbed a passer-by who happened to be medically trained, and they immediately contacted an ambulance."

"The ambulance took me to Nambour Hospital, which has a dedicated stroke unit...and I was injected with a new drug which dissolved the clot."

"They're [medical staff] all shaking

their heads about how it all came together, it's by the grace of God and good medicine that I'm still here."

But while the miracle was being performed, Kipping's wife was driving back to the Sunshine Coast from Brisbane with her daughter – fearing the worst, especially since Ken had already suffered two heart attacks in the past.



"Australia is the third most obese country in the English speaking world, and Queensland is, how should I put it, the fattest state in Australia"

Professor Kim Greaves

"They had to ring my wife, of course, and she drove up with my eldest daughter who is an occupational therapist and fully familiar with strokes and how serious the situation was, and so they were virtually told not to expect

much when they got there."

"My wife's a big fan of Mary McKillop, so she copped a few prayers on the way up. It would have been a terrible drive for them, thinking the worst."

"You talk to the doctors – it's as close as you get, they said. I tracked the ambo down and when I saw him at the ambulance station he said: 'Mate, I can't

believe you are standing, let alone talking. I couldn't tell you then – I told you, you were going to be all right – but when I saw you, you were a goner."

Kipping says if he hadn't gone out to get his dinner that night – he would have



been home alone when the stroke struck. He says his near death experience has given him a new perspective on life.

“You think you’re indestructible to be honest, it just shows you it can happen to anyone.”

People feeling bulletproof is an attitude Professor Kim Greaves comes across every day as a consultant cardiologist and Director of Cardiac Research at the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service.

“It is frustrating, but it’s more of an issue with people thinking that once I have a heart attack the doctors will cure it, take some tablets and it will all go away.”

“Unfortunately, whilst we can do a lot of things for you, the way to really make a big difference...is at the start, before they have problems, when they are healthy. So it is frustrating, yes.

“Australia is the third most obese country in the English speaking world, and Queensland is, how should I put it, the fattest state in Australia.”

“On the Sunshine Coast, certain



areas are in the higher than average category – in the red zone basically.”

“The World Health Organisation says this is a major issue and we’re headed towards a precipice as the Western world is getting heavier and heavier, with all the complications that go with that which lead to heart disease. Heart disease is the major end point, really.”

In Australia alone, one person dies every 12 minutes from cardiovascular disease (heart, stroke and blood vessel diseases) – more than 43,000 people a year.

It affects one in six Australians or nearly four million people. It was the main cause for 518,563 hospitalisations in 2012/13 and played a role in an additional 680,000 hospitalisations.

Coronary heart disease is the biggest cause of death in Australia, claiming 19,766 lives in 2013 – which is 13 per cent of all deaths.

But it’s not just the deaths caused by cardiovascular disease that the health community is worried about. Just as concerning is the number of people who are left incapacitated – and that flows through to the family and the entire community.

“What we see are patients who have had heart attacks and so on, and if they develop heart failure that limits their capacity even further. They are breathless on exertion, and it really does affect your way of life, and those around you.

“You imagine you are born with an eight-cylinder engine and you end up with a three-cylinder engine, that does prohibit what you can do and your enjoyment of life.

“For every one person that dies from it (heart attack) you’ll have five who are left in that limbo area.”

There’s no big secret to help reduce your chances of heart disease – doctors have been telling their patients for years to stop smoking, eat better and exercise. Despite that – the condition continues to kill tens of thousands of Australians

every year.

Greaves doesn’t blame the patients, he says they are victims of the way our society has developed over the decades – in particular marketing that promotes food that’s easy to eat, high in calories, and overstimulates insulin.

He says there’s an urgent need for cultural change – and that should start in the workplace.

“The management needs to change how it thinks when we go to work. Management needs to create an

While creating health-friendly places to work is a good start, Greaves believes the measures must go much further to make a real impact on heart disease in Australia, including warnings on food similar to the ones on cigarettes.

“There needs to be better labelling, there needs to be some kind of labelling that says this is not good for you to eat, it has high calories, so although you get a quick sugar rush and it tastes nice, at the end of the day, you are doing yourself no good.”



Ken Kipping with exercise physiologist John Turnbull

environment where it’s okay to exercise in your lunch break – where it’s encouraged with shower facilities. Health classes at the start of the day or the end of the day, or even in lunch breaks. You need to change the food in the food courts, the vending machines, the areas you work. Walking meetings. But it needs to come from the top down.”

A study by Queensland Health found 30 per cent of its workforce was obese. One of the ways it’s trying to change that frightening statistic is the development of a wellness program at the new Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital, which will incorporate a healthier lifestyle into the workplace.

Prevention is better than cure, which is why Greaves believes schools also have an important role to play.

“Kids need to be made aware of what to eat, what not to eat, the right food, educated correctly, and children who are putting on weight inappropriately, need to be brought into play as well.

One Australian who has heard the message is Ken Kipping. He’s lost about 10 kilograms and is exercising more since his close call last year.

“If I had the stroke at home, the medical specialists say I would have been dead, because nobody was there. It’s by the grace of God that I’m still here.”



Camping site search

PETER BANNAN

THE search is on for a site in Koondrook to accommodate self-contained overnight campers.

A Koondrook Development Committee sub-committee is investigating possible locations for a proposed Recreational Vehicle Friendly Town site and a waste dump point, which is required at a free camping area within town.

RV Friendly Towns offer basic provisions for RV stopovers, most importantly a dump point where drivers can unload their sewage waste.

According to the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia guidelines, other essential services are the availability of potable water, provision of short-term, low-cost overnight parking, and good access to a town centre.

The target market for RV Friendly Towns, as identified by the CMCA, are owners of self-contained RV vehicles that want options of where to stay rather than traditional caravan parks.

Koondrook Development Committee president, Bryan Goble said ongoing service costs for the dump point at this proposed location are unknown and no decision has been made by Gannawarra Shire Council if it will agree to pay any ongoing costs.

An alternative proposal being considered by council is to upgrade the dump point at the Koondrook Caravan Park, which would require no ongoing service costs.

The possibility of initially becoming a RV Friendly Destination, then applying for RV Friendly Town accreditation at a later stage was suggested at the committee's March meeting.

RV Friendly Destination accreditation only requires a dump point within town and a separate free campsite.

Mr Goble said the location has to be practical and not interfere with the residents' lifestyle.

"We are very lucky to have a

State Forest on our doorstep with free camping available, but this complements that and targets a different demographic of popular motorhome visitors," he said.

The sub-committee will contact residents and businesses surrounding the proposed location for feedback and approval.

There are currently four RV Friendly Towns in the Shire of Gannawarra - Cohuna, Leitchville, Murrabit and Reedy Lake - and a decision on seeking accreditation at Kerang is expected to be made within the next month.

The owners of one of Kerang's two caravan parks has objected to the proposal.



Letter to the Editor

Meningie RV Park

Last week I attended a council meeting at Tailem Bend and spoke to council about the idea of a long overdue RV park in Meningie.

The mayor indicated that sites in Tailem Bend, Coonalpyn and Meningie were being considered, in fact I believe the football oval in Tailem Bend is currently being used, so to help me to co-ordinate all the proposals Andrew Dawes and John Boundy have agreed to help. Both will be available for you to ring.

RV sites have doubled in three years in South Australia from thirty five to seventy eight.

Your signatures and support are appreciated. I still believe we need this for a tourism boost.

*Syd Greig
Meningie*