EDITION 148 - DECEMBER 2019

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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Street Art by Voir comes to Gungahlin

The world-famous Voir has some new art on display at the Yerrabi Spillway Gallery.

Voir is world-famous Canberra Based street artist. The spillway is Gunghalin's main street art "gallery". The work is starting to disappear and some of the pieces have already gone.











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Message from the Editor:

Thanks to the hard work of a number of people, our latest edition of Gungahlin Smoke Signals is finally here. It's been a long time between editions, but with some renewed enthusiasm we hole to cut that time down before the next edition.

Our goal with this is to put in print some of the topics and conversations that we have been having over the past few months, or expect to be having in the next few months. We engage on these topics at our monthly public meetings, directly with government and private stakeholders, online, and in the media.

If you would like to see us cover a topic, please get in touch.

David Pollard



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Gungahlin Community Council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, at 6:30pm at EastLake Gungahlin, 51 Hinder Street. When possible, meetings are streamed live via Facebook.

We are grateful for the financial support provided by the ACT Government.

Front cover artwork by David Pope used with permission

From the President

PETER ELFORD

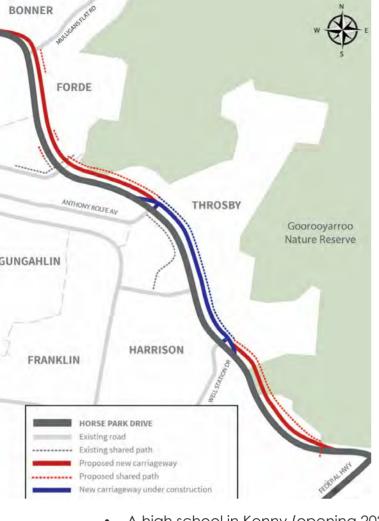
The biggest event in Gungahlin this year was the launch of Light Rail on April 20. Seeing the crowds of people over that weekend trying out the new service it really felt as though the town centre had "grown up" overnight. Certainly, the high patronage since the launch suggests the community are taking to this new mode of transport with gusto. The introduction of the Light Rail also saw the introduction of a new bus network and timetable, which suffered some pretty significant implementation issues but seems to have settled down over the past few months.





Within the town centre itself, the legal proceedings that have held up the construction of the cinema complex and associated retail outlets have reportedly been resolved and with luck, that development will now move forward. At the GCC May meeting, the Vinta Group outlined their plans for a second level expansion of the Gungahlin Marketplace, including a "laneway" development onto Gungahlin Place. Construction is expected to commence in the next 12months. Further to the West, the old Magnet Mart site is being redeveloped into a series of large retail outlets (details not yet announced), further expanding shopping options for residents within their local town centre.

No Gungahlin update would be complete without a report on roads. The duplication of Horse Park Drive up to the Federal Highway was largely completed in May and has significantly improved traffic flow on Gungahlin's Eastern arterial road. Progress continues to be made on the duplication of Gundaroo Drive, with stage 1 finally completed after months of delays (between Mirrabei Drive and Gungahlin Drive), and at least one section of stage 2 (Barton Highway to Nurdurr Drive) already open. Residents need to be reminded that this project will not be completed until mid-2020.



In April, Following trials in Bonython, Project Wing announced their plans to commence a drone delivery service for suburbs in Gungahlin. The GCC has significant concerns about the regulations of this service, and in particular how to balance the desires of those residents who wish to use the delivery service, with residents who are impacted by the service. We have scheduled numerous presentations on this topic at our public meetings and provided submissions to the ACT government's drone delivery inquiry. More details are provided elsewhere in this issue.

The ACT government's 2019-20 Budget included several major projects for Gungahlin, headlined by funding for the establishment, in partnership with Capital Football, of the "Home of Football" in the suburb of Throsby. This will be a major multi ground outdoor and indoor (futsal) facility, with one ground developed as a stadium larger than the one in McKellar. More schools will be established in Gungahlin, including:

- A high school in Kenny (opening 2023, 1000 students in years 7-10)
- A primary school in Throsby (opening 2022, preschool to year 6)
- Expansion of Gungahlin College (in time for 2020 including a specialist science lab)
- Expanding Franklin Early Childhood School (from P-2 to P-6 by 2021)
- More places at the Gold Creek Senior School site (in time for 2020)
- Transportable classrooms at Taylor primary school and Canberra College
- Planning for a new college on Canberra's northside to respond to the demand and changing demographics of Gungahlin and the Inner North

Other funded investments include duplication of William Slim Drive between Belconnen and Gungahlin, a light rail stop at Mitchell, a walking and cycling path on the eastern side of Flemington road to provide better access to Mitchell, more car parking for Palmerston shops, the design and construction of a new park and ride on Well Station Drive, habitat protection in Kenny, new nature play spaces at Yerrabi Pond, and improvements to dog parks and sports grounds including those in Nichols.



This month also saw construction commence on the Mulligans Flat learning centre in Throsby. The learning centre will showcase the innovative conservation and restoration work that goes on in Mulligans Flat and provide a hub for eco-tourism, research, community engagement and education. It will open in late 2020.

Bare Block to Biodiversity

Gungahlin SEE-change recently toured Bill Graham's eco-friendly garden in Bonner. Here is his story.



Creating an eco-friendly garden means a change in thinking, from what we want to what other creatures need. As a gardener and a member of the Canberra Ornithologists Group, I have followed the advice in the book *Birds of Canberra Gardens* (now out of print), and established a bird-friendly garden.

In 2012 I moved to Bonner to be near my children and grandchildren. Before the house was built, I removed the invasive Queensland blue couch grass. Then I dug out 2 tonnes of rock. As the yard was steep, some of the rocks were used for terracing.

These slowed water run-off and saved water for plants. Since then, corrugated iron edging set in curves has been added. After seeing a large planter bed made from stacked newspapers near the Nishi Building in Acton, I began one from paper and cardboard that had been soaked in water. It is a home for crickets, spiders and worms.

Last spring and summer the numbers of bogong moths, Christmas beetles and other insects were down in Canberra. As animals, birds, reptiles, frogs and other invertebrates depend on them, any step we take to attract them will help.

I have a compost bin for kitchen scraps and garden waste, supplemented by cow manure and to a lesser extent chicken manure. From landscape suppliers, forest litter is used as a mulch laid on wet newspapers.

An eco-friendly garden has a mix of trees, shrubs, climbers, groundcovers and grasses. A bird bath and a water bowl on the ground are also vital. The millennium drought in Canberra changed what could be grown. The new choices should include drought-tolerant species (both native and exotic), often with silver-grey foliage like lavender, acacias (wattles), eremophila (emu bush) and exotic succulents like sedums.



This summer, birds nested and raised young for the first time in the garden. They were Silvereyes. Small lizards (skinks) came and raised babies. A family of four Superb Fairy Wrens visits most days. Paper wasps have made nests. At the moment, the Russian sage (Perovskia) and sedum are in flower and attract bees (both exotic and native) as well as butterflies and other insects. Birds like undisturbed woodlands and something similar can be achieved in your garden by adding logs and branches and allowing it to become a bit scruffy. Even weeds like purslane and milkweed host insects. Each passing year my untidy garden increases in biodiversity, and I take pleasure in helping it evolve.

Bill Graham

https://www.see-change. org.au/category/localgroups/gungahlin/



Gungahlin Community Art

MICHELE GRIMSTON

Hi! I'm Michele Grimston, the new Community Arts Officer for Gungahlin. I'm working with the team at Belconnen Arts Centre to develop and deliver a series of community arts projects and events in Gungahlin and surrounding suburbs over the next three years.





So what does that really mean? Well, it will include opportunities for children, families and adults participate in all forms of the arts, but exactly what happens will be determined in collaboration with you the community. If there's something you want to be part of, something you want to see or something wonderful that you're already doing and you want to connect with other artists, creatives and community members I'd love to hear from you.



I am looking forward to meeting with as many people and groups as possible over the next few weeks to find out what you love about the Gungahlin region, and what could be improved with an injection of creativity.

If you're an artist, musician, dancer, performer, designer, maker or other creative person who lives or works in the region I want to know what kind of support and opportunities you'd like to access close to home. If you're a resident or a visitor, I want to hear about your favourite places and the wonderful things you'd like to see happen in them.



To kick things off, I will be working with a group of community organisations to plan NAIDOC week celebrations in the Gungahlin town centre which will come to life on July 13. There's a lot of excitement and support behind this already and it's wonderful to be able to launch the community arts program with an event that focusses on First Nations culture – the foundation of this region for over 40 000 years. Keep your eye out for more details, and if you'd like to get involved contact me on the details below.

If you have any creative ideas or partnerships you want to discuss, you can contact me on 0403 929 739 or michele.grimston@belconnenartscentre.com.au.

You can also complete our 5 minute survey for a quick and easy way to have your say at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JGNHXZG

Housing Market

LUKE HADFIFI D

This year in the ACT we have seen the introduction of the new Home Buyers Concession Scheme and changes to the Residential Tenancy Act 1997. At the start of the year Canberra experienced an extreme demand for rental properties with vacancy rates being at all-time lows. Whilst the rental market slowed down over Winter there are signs that it is starting to heat back up again as we prepare for the pre-Christmas and New Year rush.

The changes to stamp duty for first home buyers mean that any person or couple with an income of less than \$160,000 will be exempt from paying stamp duty on a new or existing property with no price cap. This change has benefited both buyers and sellers as it has allowed a large number of new buyers to enter the market, looking for more affordable, established properties.



The new changes to the Residential Tenancy Act, which took effect from November 1 st 2019, has been welcomed by tenants but has been met with some hesitation from landlords. If you are unsure exactly what the changes are and your property managers have not yet explained it to you the ACT Government has some factsheets online that outline the changes.

In summary ''The changes will:

- make it easier for tenants to keep pets and make modifications in rental properties, within a consent framework that will balance the legitimate interests of landlords;
- make it easier for tenants experiencing family violence to change their tenancy arrangements;
- provide that a tenant who vacates a property during a fixed term does not need to pay a 'break lease' fee if the lessor finds a replacement tenant, subject to reasonable costs; and
- provide additional protection to tenants against excessive rent increases. 1"

As we approach the end of the year the chance to get your home on the market before the Christmas shutdown is dwindling but now is the time to start thinking about January if you are interested in selling.

There are two more things potential sellers need to consider, price and presentation.

Price

If you are going to sell your home, it's a good idea to be clear on why you want to sell. Knowing the why is the key to settling on a price between you and your agent.

Homes that are priced accordingly with the market are more likely to sell quicker than houses that aren't.

If you are wanting price A but the evidence suggests your property is worth price B there are two directions you can take.

<u>Path 1:</u>You can put the property on the market at your desired price. Best case scenario a buyer comes in, loves it, and wants to take if off your hands. Worst case scenario it sits there until you are forced to lower the price to meet the market, risking it becoming stale, or you take it off the market and are out of pocket for marketing and report expenses.

<u>Path 2:</u> If you are convinced your house is worth more than what the market is suggesting and you are not in a rush to sell, don't! Stay in the house and re-evaluate in 6-12 months. If it's an investment, re-let it and enjoy the rental returns for a bit longer.

Presentation

Is your home sale ready? When it comes to the sale of your home sometimes less is more. If you've been thinking about doing that spring clean now is the time. Whilst you want viewers to see your house as homely you also want them to be able to see themselves living there. Check how old the carpet is and when was the last time the house was painted. For housing that is aimed at the affordable end of the market, major works aren't likely to generate a commensurate return, so hold off on major renovations. Keeping the property clean, tidy and presentable is the key to getting potential buyers through the door.



With changes happening and the Canberra market always turning it doesn't hurt to get an appraisal done on your property. If it's your first time or you don't have a regular agent contact a few and get multiple opinions. My only advice would be to be honest and upfront with your agent. Good agents are there to work for you and achieve the best result for you.

¹ ACT Government Factsheet on the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2019

Luke

Luke Hadfield is a Sales Associate for Bolton & Co Agents and Auctioneers. He is a local resident of Ngunnawal and is also a General Committee Member on the board of the Gungahlin Community Council.

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BOLTON & CO

Drone Delivery Services in Gungahlin – Getting the Balance Right

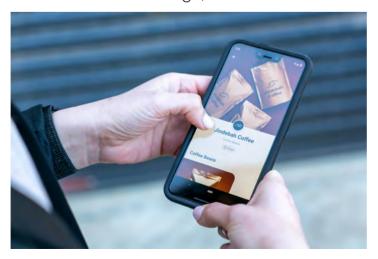
PETER ELFORD

Gungahlin is the first location in the world where *Wing* drone delivery system will be deployed on an ongoing basis (wing.com/canberra). Residents in Franklin, Harrison, Crace and Palmerston are able to have a range of products delivered to their homes using specially designed drones operated by *Wing* from a base in Mitchell.



The Gungahlin Community Council (GCC) encourages the development of any service within the Gungahlin region that brings value to Gungahlin businesses and residents. However, the value of the service to residents and businesses must be balanced against any impact to the broader community and the environment.

The GCC, and the Gungahlin community, have limited direct experience and/or understanding of the nature of the drone delivery systems so the GCC has taken steps in the past few months to better inform themselves and residents about what *Wing* service. In addition to reviewing the extensive media coverage, the GCC has facilitated briefings at the GCC public meetings from



both **Wing** and Bonython Against Drones, as well as undertaking site visits to the Project Wing Bonython trial site, to build a level of understanding of the relevant issues.

It is clear from these engagements that this new technology-facilitated capability has emerged without the regulatory controls necessary to ensure that the beneficiaries and consumers of the service, and the concerns of the rest of the community are balanced. Nevertheless, early feedback from the Gungahlin community has indicated that many residents view drone delivery systems positively.

Given the extremely early state of drone delivery systems, it is hardly surprisina that the regulatory oversight of this industry is (at best) embryonic. All the trials conducted to date have been based on exemptions or variations to existing regulations from some agencies, and there is clearly no "joined up" consistent, transparent and agreed approach between the multiple Commonwealth and state (ACT) agencies that have responsibility for the various aspects of how these services are controlled/managed. With the transition to "ongoing"



services, this is now urgent and minimally the ACT government should establish a single point of contact to take on this task, and most importantly, for the community to engage with. It is not acceptable for the operators of drone delivery systems to be the only point of contact for community concerns or issues (as was the case during the trials).



Furthermore, the GCC believes involvement of the Gungahlin community in a proactive and responsive manner must be a critical element of how this service is managed and regulated. Our submission to the ACT government's inquiry into drone delivery services also asked the ACT government to work with the relevant Federal agencies to ensure a consistent, transparent and robust regulatory framework is developed with enough flexibility that it can addresses the specific issues identified in the trials conducted to date (gcc.asn.au/drone-delivery), as well as any further issues, or any opportunities, that arise as part of the ongoing operations.

Consider the impact, both positive and negative, of drone delivery systems on existing businesses and employment, particularly in the area of operations, ie. Mitchell-Gungahlin.

Asses the environmental impact particularly regarding noise, wildlife, and pets appears to be the major issue arising from the drone delivery system trials. Much greater effort needs to be made by the ACT government to establish a process to bring the (many) government agencies and community stakeholders together to develop a cohesive strategy to enable the community to have their input.



Engage with the drove delivery system industry, rather than specific vendors, and for those engagements to be undertaken in an open and transparent manner.

The GCC continues to work actively with residents, businesses, *Wing* and the ACT and Commonwealth Governments – we are keen to receive your input on this topic.



As a Gungahlin resident, I try to purchase as much as possible at my local shops. Something I encourage, to maintain a thriving suburb! While I shop, I chat with the locals. So I thought, why not interview them and share their stories with the Gungahlin community. Here is one story & watch this space for many more....



Interviewing the Locals

Business Name: Prodigy Performance Nutrition

Owner's Name: Cam McAlister

Address: 16a/30 Hibberson St., GUNGAHLIN

Phone: 02 6241 7736

Email: admin@prodigynutrition.com.au
Website: www.prodigynutrition.com.au
Facebook: Prodigy Performance Nutrition

Business Type: Specialising in performance & nutrition supplements

Sharee

Background of the business?

Cam

After finishing school at Daramalan College in 2010, I began studying a bachelor in Human Nutrition. While at Uni, I was doing some casual work for a small business that was run by two brothers, who basically started it from the ground up and got it to a stage where it was extremely successful. I guess they were my original mentors in a way. Working around them and seeing all the different components that had to be executed in order to create that successful business was really intriguing to me.

Being around a small business at that time and also having a huge interest in nutrition, kind of led me into a fascination with the health and fitness industry, particularly sports supplements. After talks with a good friend of mine, we decided to take the plunge and open our own sports supplement store called Prodigy Performance Nutrition, here in the heart of Gungahlin in June of 2016. We really wanted to bring something different to the supplement industry.

We have just recently opened our second store in Batemans Bay, so that we could cater for these smaller towns that don't have access to sports supplement stores like Prodigy.

Products & services you provde?

Prodigy supplies a vast range of nutritional supplements to suit everyone's needs. Whether you're an elite athlete, just your average gym goer, a breastfeeding Mum, or someone with acute allergies, we have the experience, the knowledge and the most diverse range of supplements to cater for your particular needs. Vegan, celiac, lactose intolerant, you name it we'll be able to assist.

I'm sure all businesses say it, but we believe that our service is the best in this industry. I'll tell you why. We will never push supplements upon customers if we don't think that they will benefit from them. Coming from a nutrition background, I'll always address all the other aspects of the customer's current health and fitness levels first. And then allow the customer to make an inform decision.

Also, when it comes to other supplement stores, they will only stock the same old brands and have supplier contracts in place. Our range of supplements is very customer driven, where if a particular product doesn't sell or we get negative feedback, we won't stock it. We'll bring in something new and gauge feedback. We can honestly say that we believe in every brand and product on our shelves.

Why set up in Gungahlin?

went to school in the area and now live here, so Gungahlin is very central for me. Also there is a growing population of young community members to provide for.

I also love the fact Prodigy gets involved with the local sporting teams and local athletes. We've sponsored sporting teams such as the Gungahlin Eagles Rugby Union, Gungahlin Bulls Rugby League, Gungahlin Jets AFL, as well as a whole heap of other local prodigies.

You guys out there are the ones that keep our doors open, so being able to give back to the local Gungahlin community is something we'll always continue to do.

What do you love about the Gungahlin area?

What's not to love about Gungahlin! I went to school in this area, have stayed here ever since, and plan to stay here for a lot longer too.

Gungahlin has the youngest average age compared to any other area in Canberra and you want to know why I think that is? I think it's because it's a fantastic place for young families. The opportunities and services here are endless. It's packed with loads of fantastic schools, plenty of housing options for first time home buyers, unbelievable restaurants, bars and takeaways, and it's a safe, happy vibrant place for all walks of life.

The perfect way to get to know the locals is to interview them! Thanks to Cam from Prodigy Performance Nutrition for allowing me to interview you and teaching me a few things about supplements. If anyone is in the market for supplements or needs some advice, visit Cam for a chat!

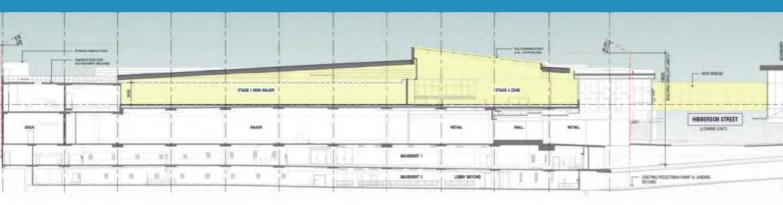
Until next time, happy shopping...

Sharee Schultz



Marketplace Gungahlin Extensions

Marketplace Gungahlin is set to expand through the creation of a new retail level above the Kmart mall. The new mall will be anchored by an Aldi supermarket and mini majors. A large children's playground with natural light will also be incorporated adding a strong point of difference and significant draw card to the level 1 mall.



- Wide Mall
- High Mall Ceiling
- Good Connections to the South Mall

Section View

A Development Application, lodged in July seeking approval for this expansion, will include:

- 1 major retail store (Aldi)
- Mini major retail stores
- Specialty stores
- A large common mall incorporating a children's play area and seating pods
- Male, female, disabled toilets and parent's rooms
- Escalators, a lift and travelator connections to the lower floors
- A pedestrian bridge over Hibberson Street to link the new level 1 extension to the existing level 1 mall in the South mall
- Relocation of the escalators in the South mall to a centralized position within the mall
- Relocation of the customer entry from the South mall rooftop car park to align with the top of the escalators and bridge link



Upon completion, Marketplace Gungahlin will be anchored by Woolworths, Aldi,Big W, Kmart and mini majors. While separated by Hibberson St at grade, the South mall will be connected to the North mall above and below Hibberson Street.



Saving Wombats

ALEXANDRA SANCHEZ

When Yolandi Vermaak migrated to Australia in 2013 from South Africa little did she know she will fall in love with one of the most wonderful (yet not as well known) native Australian creatures.

Gungahlin resident Yolandi started her crusade for saving the wombats after she realised the extreme difficulties these animals are facing, natural predators, gunshot injuries from farmers, vehicle accidents on outback Australian roads and devastating mange infections. These difficulties may soon put them on the ever growing Australian endangered species list particularly as Yolandi reminds us that "Wombats only have a joey every 2-3 years"

Yolandi wanted to make a difference so began researching as much as she could about wombats and then decided the best thing to do was take to the road very early in the morning in search for wombats that needed rescuing. This Yolandi remarks is where the biggest influx of orphaned wombats usually come from.

Rural New South Wales have been her territory ever since and as she recalls that in less than 12 months she has driven over 18,000 km's and rescued two "pinkies" (wombat joeys) but has seen over 100 wombats killed on country roads.

Yolandi checks and marks every wombat she finds on the road, in an attempt to rescue any orphaned animal that without her help would suffer a horrific death.

Wombats are really strong and muscular animals and if a mother is killed by a car, it is very likely the joey will survive. And this is one of Yolandi's greatest challenges: being on time to rescue any alive joey still in its mother's pouch.



Talking about the biggest challenges wombats have ahead, Yolandi mentions the lack of education among farmers, who still consider wombats as a pest and push them out of their farm lands, this creates considerable pressure on these animals as they are well known for being extremely territorial. Even when killing a wombat is illegal, farmers can still legally shoot them if they hold a special permit.

Wombat behaviour is yet another major challenge. Wombats are extremely territorial animals and as such, Wombats will defend their burrow with its own life making the release process after rescuing even more difficult. Yolandi says there are very few release sites and it's really difficult to reintegrate them back into the wild after they have been rescued.

Mange is another big problem. Yolandi considers mange a "national disaster" and again wombats habits make this disease extremely difficult to manage. Because wombats are nocturnal and live underground means treatment is extremely difficult, but not impossible. Researchers have discovered the Cydectin solution is an effective way of treatment.



Yolandi explained a simple way of treating wombats and preventing mange from spreading is the use of the burrow flap method, which consists of making flaps from an ice-cream container top with a jar lid inserted inside and are surprisingly easy to set up. A dose of Cydectin is placed in the jar lid which is mounted in the flap. The burrow flap is then suspended from a simple wire frame which has been positioned at the entrance to the burrow. As the wombat enters or leaves the burrow the flap tilts and the Cydectin trickles onto the wombat's back.

Wombats are particularly badly affected by mange due to the high contact ratio with mange mites, as foxes carry this parasite and leave them behind in wombats burrows that they enter. Although mange is very treatable, it has proven terminal for many wombats if left untreated. Yolandi says dying with mange is the most horrific death a wombat can suffer because as a very strong animal, they will go blind and deaf before they eventually die from the disease.

Yolandi is leading a mange treatment project at Googong Natural Reserve without any Government or private support she has made saving the wombats in our region her mission. She wants to help make people aware of this dire situation before it's too late with a small number of local volunteers and a Facebook page named "The Wombat Rescue Page" she posts not only information about the animals rescued, but important information about wombats and their habitat. This page has been attracting the attention of many people around Canberra and she thinks this is a good way to educate and raise awareness about how we can help our local wombat population.

Yolandi's goal to raise awareness isn't just limited to social media. Yolandi (when not our rescuing wombats) spares some of her time to talk with people in the Googong reserve and explain to them the horrible suffering wombats will face if they get mange. She says many people are surprised about wombats suffering from mange.



To become involved, Yolandi asks that people read more on wombats and mange, and support initiatives that help wombats with mange. The treatment is incredibly expensive, and she receives no government support for this. You can save your peanut butter jar and mayonnaise jar lids that she uses for medicine. "We go through a lot of lids as the wombats bite them and play with them, so we lose quite a few every week", she says.

The cute side

At the moment Yolandi is taking care of Dezy, an orphaned wombat. He is a healthy male wombat his mother unfortunately killed by a car. He will be released when he reaches 25 kilograms and for now his routine includes drinking bottles, playing and sleeping. Yolandi says feeding a baby wombat is really challenging as they are lactose intolerant and they can easily die from bronchial aspiration if they are fed in the wrong position. Yolandi insists if you find an orphaned baby wombat the best thing to do is to get in contact with people that know how to manage them as they are really fragile creatures when they are young.

ALEXANDRA SANCHEZ, JOURNALIST

Tuesday is 'JP Day' at Gungahlin Village

Do you need a Justice of the Peace to certify some copies, sign a document or witness a signature? Every Tuesday morning from 9 am to 12 noon, you'll find a friendly JP on duty between Penny's Paper Shop and Coles in Gungahlin Village. No appointment necessary.

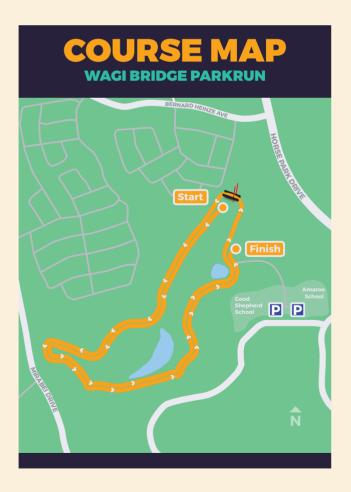
To find a JP at other times visit the ACT JPA website:

www.actjpa.org.au or

www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au (Find a Justice of the Peace)

Alternatively find us on Facebook







Free weekly 5km timed run & walk

8AM Every Saturday

parkrun.com.au



