

# Knox Leader

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Outcry forces council to hold off demolition plan, for now

## Skate park off thin ice

**William Jackson**  
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PUBLIC outrage has forced Knox Council to rethink the proposed demolition of the Lewis Park skate bowl.

It was standing room only at the council meeting last Tuesday night as more than 30 skaters and BMX riders crowded the chambers bearing "Save Knox Bowl" signs and placards. Some were even wearing specially made T-shirts.

During the meeting Cr Adam Gill tabled a petition with 573 signatures asking that the 20-year-old Lewis Park facility be preserved because of its historical significance and popularity.

Cr Gill asked that a report on the issue be prepared for the council.

Save Knox Bowl organiser David Lalama asked why when the council had more than 300 parks, reserves and playing fields, it could not maintain two skate parks.

The council had planned to demolish the skate bowl in early February, but chief executive Graeme Emonson confirmed it would hold off, at least

until the report had gone back to the council, probably at its February 26 meeting.

It will be the first time the council has formally considered whether Knox Skate Park should be decommissioned.

It is understood that council staff decided the city should only maintain one skate park after a decision to build a new \$650,000 facility at Gilbert Park in Knoxfield.

Councillors then gave the nod to the demolition proposal at a private issues briefing in November.

The decision to decommission the park was announced in a press release later that month.

Skate park users say they have never been consulted on whether the facility at Lewis Park should be retained.

One of those wanting the old skate park retained is Rowville mother Susie Brewster.

She told *Knox Leader* her sons Josh, 7, and Lachlan, 4, had been learning at the park for four years.

She said the new park was for more advanced riders.

■ Skate park history: Page 6



Susie Brewster with Lachlan, 4, and Josh, 7, want the Knox Skate Park saved. Picture: CARMELO BAZZANO N30KN307



Protesters outside Knox Council offices.

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# Leaders VCE scorers

Marnie Reid

TWO Rowville VCE students juggled leadership with study and came out tops.

Grace Williams and Daniel Tsivoulidis were school captains of Rowville Secondary College and still achieved ENTER scores above 90.

Daniel, 18, achieved a 98.55 ENTER score, which got him into engineering at Monash University.

He also got an Engineering Excellence Award scholarship for students who obtain an ENTER of more than 98.

Daniel spent up to five hours a day studying for his exams.

His advice to other students: "Aim high and be around like-minded people."

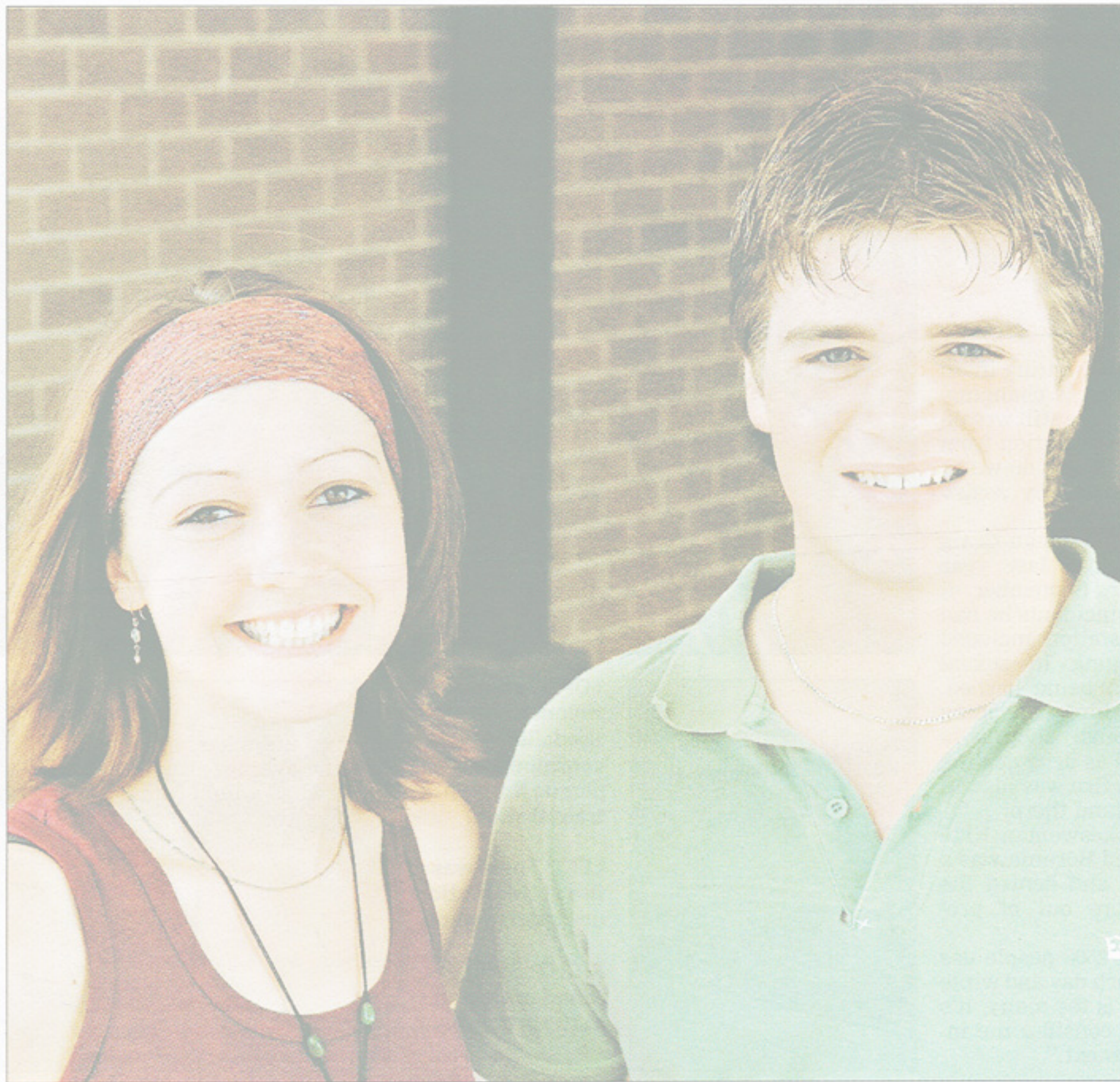
Grace, 18, said being school captain and studying so hard had made her year exhausting. However, her hard work paid off because she achieved an ENTER of 93.4.

She was also the only student in the school to get a perfect 50 for a subject - philosophy.

She is doing a double degree in politics and anthropology at Monash University.

She wants to become involved in human rights in Third-World countries.

Rowville Secondary College's 2007 captains Grace Williams and Daniel Tsivoulidis will both study at Monash. N31KN893



## How city's skate park evolved

KNOX'S skate park row began way back in 1999 when the ramp at Rowville's Eildon Parade Reserve was removed by Knox Council because it was attracting "undesirable elements".

Three years later, in response to an outcry from local skaters and BMX riders, the council released the Knox Skate and BMX Plan, which indicated the municipality needed a regional standard skate park and called for the Lewis Park facility to receive a major upgrade.

AMP Shopping Centres, owners of the Knox shopping centre, offered \$500,000 for the project, but in 2005 called for a new skate park to be located elsewhere amid fears it would create a dangerous environment for shoppers.

A split emerged among councillors, with Cr Mick Van de Vreede arguing the new skate bowl should be in Gilbert Park, in Knoxfield, because it was close to public transport, sports complexes and bike paths. However, Cr Adam Gill said Gilbert Park was unsuitable because there was no crossing on Ferntree Gully Rd, which made it dangerous for children.

He argued the new facility should be constructed at Bayswater Park, in Bayswater, instead.

In 2006 the council settled on Gilbert Park and construction began late last year with skaters granted access just before Christmas.

However, a new furore erupted when the council announced, without consultation, that it planned to demolish the Lewis Park skate bowl, once final site works at the new facility were completed in mid-January.

# Couple in act of faith

OVER their 60 years of marriage Bill and Phyllis Clark took God's order to "go forth and multiply" seriously.

In the process they increased Knox's population considerably.

Their 10 children have 23 grandchildren, who in turn have, so far, nine great-grandchildren – and there are nine more on the way.

The Ferntree Gully couple, who celebrated their anniversary recently, met at a Sunday school function in Ballarat when Mr Clark was 16 and Mrs Clark was 18.

"They both had similar interests in preaching the gospel of Christ on street corners of Ballarat," said their son Rod.

"Over the years of their marriage they have had a significant role and influence in the lives of many people becoming born-again Christians."

The couple moved from Ballarat to Ferntree Gully not long after they were married in 1948, and have lived on the same property since.

Mr Clark, now 80 and Mrs Clark, 81, celebrated their anniversary with family and friends at the Knox Highway Church.

Rod said that despite having so many kids, the family never went without.

He said his dad was a fitter and turner, and initially worked on the railways and



Phyllis and Bill Clark celebrated 60 years of marriage recently.

later at Commonwealth Aircraft in Port Melbourne.

"He also used to work part-time collecting milk accounts and sometimes did bread deliveries," Rod said. "He was a very diligent worker and always an excel-

lent provider. Mum was a housewife, as you can imagine, looking after 10 kids. They managed really well. The house was really clean and mum always made sure us kids were neatly dressed. We were well looked after."

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# Riders, skaters flock to new facility

## Knox Council captures Olympic year boost

A new regional skate park in Knoxfield is set to bring the world's best BMX riders and skaters to Melbourne.

The facility has attracted hundreds of riders since the main bowl was opened just before Christmas, including influential magazine and skating representatives keen to view the site off Ferntree Gully Road.

Chair of the Knox Council Skate and BMX Park Reference Group, Councillor Debbie Field, said the park would put Melbourne on a world stage, such was the quality of the facility.

"It's an amazing design," she said. "In fact, we're thrilled at the level of community response and support for the new facility."

"The community told us that a regional facility of this type would be popular, but we've been amazed at how strong the support has been for the new site."

"The timing of a new regional facility couldn't be

better," Cr Field added.

"And that's because skateboarding will be a demonstration sport at the Beijing Olympics this year, so I expect we're going to see massive growth in the sport."

### Family friendly facility

A special emphasis has been placed on making the site attractive for all the family, including girls as well as boys," Cr Field said.

"We didn't want to just make Gilbert Park a place for boys and forget about the wide range of interest that these sports now attract."

Knox Council is keen to provide facilities that meet the needs of its growing population, she added.

Gilbert Park is located in Knoxfield, off Ferntree Gully Road. Parking is available in Forbes Close, accessed via Gilbert Park Drive (Melways 73 C7).

A bus stop is also nearby.



Written and authorised by Knox City Council, 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, 3152

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— www.winnierose.com.au

### ➤ Footpath recession

Furious Glen Eira traders are reeling from the impact of council's new footpath regulations, with claims previously bustling shopping strips resemble deserted streets.  
— www.canineclub.com.au

## Stop bagging it

REGARDING a letter by Jill Coling (*Knox Leader*, January 15).

Why won't people leave the new skate bowl alone? Just about every week there is an article in your paper and someone is bagging it for some reason. I think it is fantastic. I go past just about every day and the only days I have seen nobody in sight was the days it was 40C.

Every other time it is packed during the day or when the sun starts going down everyone comes out. The remarks about no shade or bins,



**Aidan, of Belgrave, at the new skate park at Gilbert Park reserve.**

how many times does it need to be said that it is not finished yet? The landscaping is still to be done. I think it was very good of the contractors to allow it to be used before Christmas.

They could have been otherwise and kept it all shut until the landscaping was also finished, as Jill Coling suggested. What would be the use of that though? It would sit there unused just because of the surrounding area and then kids would probably just break into it anyway. As far as a crossing goes, what else can be done if it has already been submitted to get a crossing? Although I feel it is not entirely necessary as a few metres up there are lights that people could cross at, but children have been crossing Ferntree Gully Rd for years to go down to the Knox BMX Track, so what is the difference?

With the accessibility for cars to drop off or

pick up, isn't it the driver's own responsibility if they want to do that on Ferntree Gully Rd and not somewhere safer?

People need to start taking responsibility for their own actions and use their brains about what may be dangerous. Once the car park is actually finished you might find people use it more than you think. But at the moment, to drive and park, it is more sensible to use the grass area as there is nowhere else at this stage.

All that needs to be done is take this away when the car park is finished and then they can't park there. Or start fining them for parking on the nature strip.

Everyone just needs to get off the council's and contractors' back. Give them a chance to finish the skate park of and then see what it is like.

At that stage if parents have concerns bring them to the attention of the appropriate people, otherwise give them a chance and see what they come up with first.

**Jodie Porter, Ferntree Gully.**

## Thanks to these lads

I WAS involved in a car accident last week and didn't get a chance to say thank you to some lads who were terrific help.

Last Thursday, January 17, I was involved in a car accident while exiting Knox City shopping centre outside Hungry Jacks. Some youths came to my assistance and phoned the police, moved the cars from the middle of the Burwood Highway and were wonderful support.

As I was in shock after the accident, without them I don't know what I would have done and didn't get a chance to thank them. If you read this, thank you most sincerely.

**Joy Nicholls, Scoresby.**

## Young and disabled

TO Cheating the Disabled (*Leader*, letters pages January 15), I would like to point out that

disabled parking stickers are not just for the use of grannies. My daughter is 18 years old and has a disabled sticker of her own. She has suffered from a chronic illness since she was four, and although you might see a healthy-looking person jump out of a car in a disabled spot, it doesn't mean that they are not entitled to use them.

Young people can and do qualify for these stickers, and perhaps before you judge young people so harshly, you might like to think about the fact that these children and young adults have often had to cope for many years with illness, and more often than not do so very bravely.

So please don't judge a person by what you see, as things are not always apparent.

**Pam Atkinson, Wantirna South.**

## Water resource vital

WATER is the next most important requirement to life after oxygen, yet water conservation doesn't appear to be taken seriously by the State Government. Firefighters, indeed all emergency workers, might ponder the following.

The State Government is constructing a pipeline from the Goulburn River to Melbourne.

Lake Eildon, which supplies the Goulburn River, was at 5.3 per cent capacity on May 8 last year, storage levels at October 2003 were 41.1 per cent, October 2004 was 40.5 per cent, September 2005 was 44.7 per cent and August 2006 was 22.6 per cent. Lake Eildon is designed to allow for irrigation supplies for two drought years only.

The Government is building a desalination plant, yet makes no effort to retain or distribute rainfall. Do firefighters believe that expensive desalinated water can be afforded for fighting? Water is critical for all life, sanitation, industrial processes and fire fighting.

**Bob Wilcock, Bayswater.**

## LEADER POLL

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## LAST WEEK

**Q** Would you swim at a Melbourne beach without lifesaver patrols?

**YES**

**65%**

**NO**

**35%**

Number of votes: 112

Poll closed: 5pm, Thursday

## THIS WEEK

**Q** Do you support the bicycle ban on peak-hour train services?

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