

Crime cameras 'need focus'

By Will Wright

COMMUNITY leaders are keen to see whether the new Federal Government will be able to deliver crime cameras to Boronia.

La Trobe federal Liberal MP Jason Wood called on the Government to provide \$150,000 for crime prevention in the troubled suburb following arson attacks in Boronia Village last month.

In the lead-up to the November poll, he

promised on behalf of the Howard Government the same amount to the Knox Council to install a closed-circuit television network in Boronia.

Mayor Jim Penna said Mr Wood now had little influence as the Liberals were in Opposition.

"That's not to say I don't welcome Jason's appeal to the Government.

"I've got more faith in our direct appeal to [Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local

Government Minister] Anthony Albanese."

Cr Penna said he wrote to Mr Albanese seeking information about how to apply for funds for cameras.

He said the Boronia Advisory Committee was in a position to apply.

"We haven't worked out how much funding will be needed, the police are handling that." The committee was also looking at other resources which were required for crime prevention.

Senior Sergeant Cliff Sunderland, of Boronia police, said he was awaiting a quote for a CCTV network to present to the committee.

"It is one small part in the policing role, but it is a valuable one."

The *Journal* contacted Mr Albanese's office for a response but was told Home Affairs Minister Bob Debus was responsible for CCTV applications.

Mr Debus' office did not respond before publication.

Physio set to be sentenced

A WANTIRNA South physiotherapist sexually assaulted 15 women, including a pregnant mother he persuaded to undergo an "internal examination" to induce labour, a court has heard.

Bradford Allen Deslandes, 44, pleaded guilty in the County Court last Tuesday to 31 charges, including indecent assault and rape, at his clinic from 1998 until his arrest last March.

The court was told that his victims were all vulnerable women who attended his clinic in a bid to alleviate various medical conditions such as back pain and chronic fatigue syndrome.

The physiotherapist will be sentenced this month.

Youth council

TWENTY young people were appointed to serve on the Knox Youth Council last Wednesday.

The members, aged 12 to 25, will serve a two-year term.

Youth Issues Advisory Committee chairman Cr Tony Kamitsis said the youth council was a vital asset to the community.

Festival treat

THE 30th Knox Festival will kick off on February 29 with an outdoor screening of *Alvin and the Chipmunks* at Ferntree Gully Recreation Reserve.

Knox Council will be presenting 'Carnivale' from 4 to 8pm the next day.

The festival will run until March 2.

Society stays at site

THE Knox Historical Society will have a home for at least the next five years after Knox Council renewed a licence agreement at the historic Ambleside site in Ferntree Gully.

The site, which dates back to 1872 and is listed on the National Trust, has been the home of the group since 1977.

Society president Frank Johnson said the outcome was reasonable for both parties.

Picture clarification

LAST week Donna Legg and her son Ben appeared in a picture to accompany the article 'Going solo: sessions offer support to single mothers'.

The *Journal* would like to clarify that Ms Legg and her son were not victims of domestic abuse.

Quiet please

A Dandenong Ranges community circus group is proving actions speak louder than words this Youth Week.

Circus Folk is recruiting people aged 12-25 to be part of a mime performance as part of week-long activities.

Sherbrooke Community School students John, Steph and Kate have been practising their techniques. Workshops to be run by a professional mime artist will help the group prepare for a five-minute show.

Circus Folk founder Rochelle Dennis said it was an art form to which people in the hills did not have much access. "A lot of people are getting into it because they're wanting to work on performance skills and presentation skills rather than just purely circus skills." The first workshop is 10am-noon Saturday at Buminja, Glenferm Road, Upwey.

Picture: Rob Carew



Rally to save skate park draws crowd

SKATERS hosted a barbecue and public rally at the Knox Bowl on Sunday in an effort to convince the council not to scrap the popular skate park.

The fate of the park will become known at a council meeting next Tuesday.

Save Knox Bowl group leader David Lalama said the campaign had gained support with a good turnout at the rally.

"The Save Knox Bowl campaign is a grassroots campaign by skaters, BMX riders and their families to save an important facility for young people.

"We are using the democratic process

to get the council to listen; we hope the council will save the skate park."

Aston MP Chris Pearce showed his support for the cause by attending the rally.

"My focus is on standing up for the people of Aston who want to see this important community facility saved for future generations."

Mr Pearce said Mayor Jim Penna told him it was not a federal parliamentarian's role to represent his constituents on the issue.

Cr Penna refused to respond to Mr Pearce's letter requesting the council's

original reasons for closing the skate park.

"It's rubbish and he knows it's rubbish ... he's just trying to take credit for any reconsideration the council might make," he said.

Cr Penna would not say whether the council was planning to change its decision to decommission Knox Bowl.

"You would be aware that a petition was presented to the council and we're going to respond to that at our next meeting.

"What I said to him [Mr Pearce] was we are not directly accountable to him."

Stamford facelift closer

ROWVILLE'S historic Stamford House is a step closer to being redeveloped after Knox Council finalised the sale of adjoining land to a property group for \$2.4 million.

Last week, Knox Council revealed it sold 4.8 hectares near Stud Road to St Hilliers group.

Part of the proceeds were used to buy land on the eastern side of the homestead to improve access to the site. The balance will be used to develop Stamford Park.

Stamford Park steering committee chairman Mick Van de Vreede said the council would "make sure that landscaping in the newly acquired buffer zone will match the style and design of the home's original garden."

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