



Aidan, 16, of Belgrave, among other users at the new park at Gilbert Park Reserve. N28KN858

Concern over safety

A KNOXFIELD mother fears someone will be killed on the road leading to the new Gilbert Park skate facility if a crossing isn't installed soon.

Knox Council has asked VicRoads to fund a crossing in Ferntree Gully Rd, but there is no indication when this will get done.

Jill Coling, 46, said it was dangerous to cross the busy road and queried whether authorities were waiting for a death before a crossing was put in.

Council community services director Kerry Stubbings said she had asked VicRoads to fund a pedestrian crossing on the road, and that the council had offered to design the crossing.

The lack of shade and bins is also another bugbear for users. Ms Coling said while she was an avid supporter of the park, it needed

bins and more shade. "There are no bins for rubbish, which is building up," she said.

"You can't blame the users for the mess when nothing has been provided to prevent it. The shade structures they have put in are unusable, provide no seating, and little shade."

Regular Gilbert Park skateboarder Dean Charnley, 15, said users had to bring a rubbish bag with them for their rubbish.

Ms Stubbings told *Knox Leader* further shade was planned at the site through landscaping.

She said the site was due to be fully completed only by late January and the early opening of the bowl was a Christmas bonus from the contractors.

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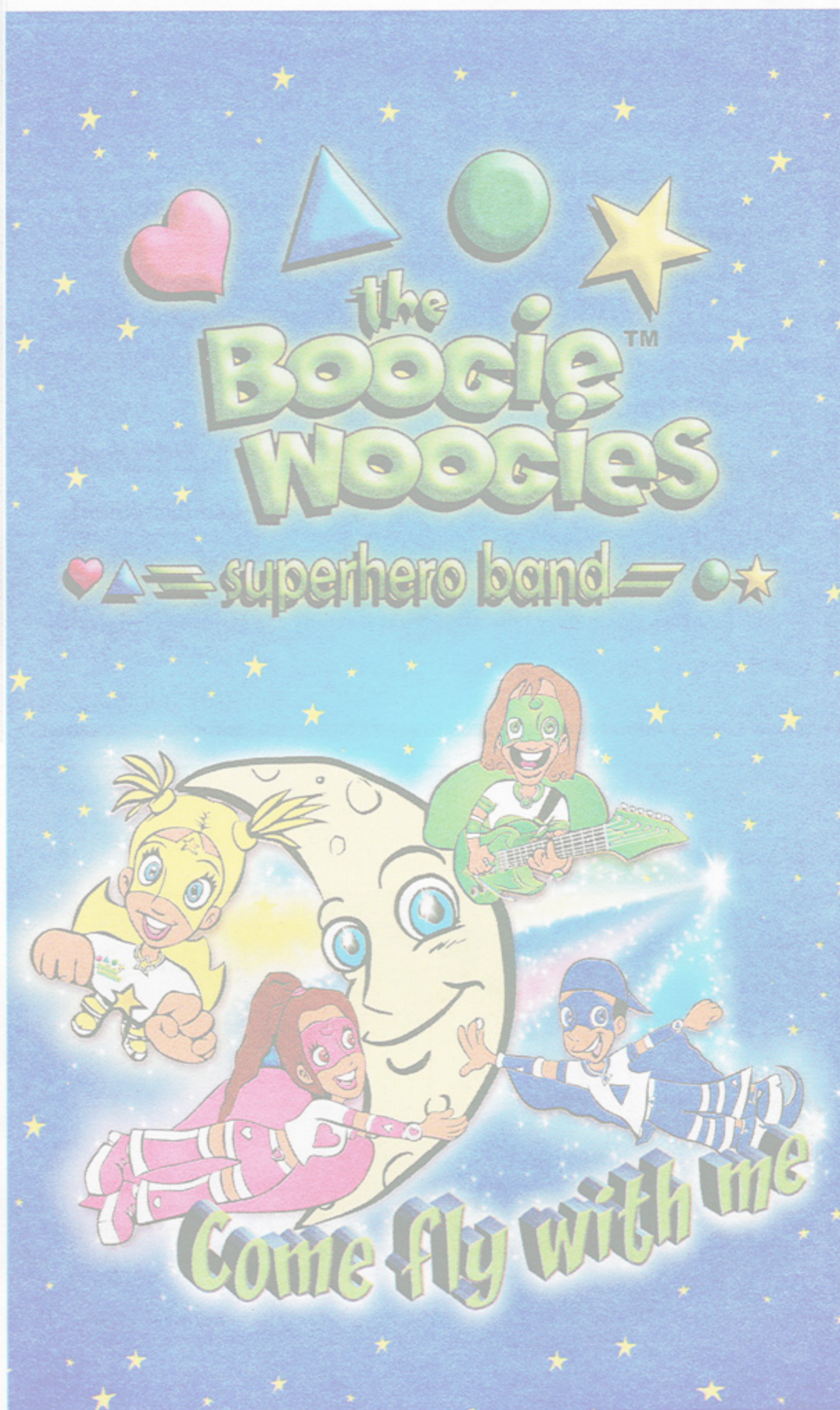


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Commercial issue

AS A resident of Ferntree Gully who has long followed this story about boarding houses, I have always agreed there is a need for well-planned affordable housing.

Despite the recent VCAT finding in support of Basil De Jong's use of 24 Craig Ave as yet another boarding house, the ongoing issue around multiple/adjacent boarding houses in Ferntree Gully is not about affordable housing.

It is about commercial enterprise in residential areas.

We now have 45 rooms at \$120 a week in Milton St and adjoining Craig Ave.

Because Mr De Jong trades in human lives seemingly falling through the welfare net, his commercial enterprise has the sanction of VCAT.

I vehemently object to not having a voice in how my residential area is changing.

Carol Blewitt, Ferntree Gully.

Pets are for life

THIS letter is a plea for parents not to give children a pet as a gift.

We recently found a tortoise under attack from a wattlebird in our garden - dehydrated, hungry and abandoned.

Why do I think he was abandoned? No ad in the lost and found column, no lost signs attached to local power poles, no pamphlets in letterboxes.

A disposable pet. What to do with this poor little fellow? Rang the RSPCA, not interested.

Rang the local vet, not open. RACV Wildlife line exhausted all avenues, but still no solution to our problem.

As we had no idea what to feed or how to temporarily house this creature, we reluctantly delivered him to a reptile pet shop.

A loving home would have been a happier ending.

News

Room for more: tribunal

William Jackson

THE VCAT decision in support of Basil De Jong's use of 24 Craig Ave as yet another boarding house, the ongoing issue around multiple/adjacent boarding houses in Ferntree Gully is not about affordable housing. It is about commercial enterprise in residential areas.



Basil De Jong outside his Ferntree Gully boarding house.

Despite the recent VCAT finding in support of Basil De Jong's use of 24 Craig Ave as yet another boarding house, the ongoing issue around multiple/adjacent boarding houses in Ferntree Gully is not about affordable housing.

It is about commercial enterprise in residential areas. We now have 45 rooms at \$120 a week in Milton St and adjoining Craig Ave. Because Mr De Jong trades in human lives seemingly falling through the welfare net, his commercial enterprise has the sanction of VCAT.

Our last report on the boarding house issue.

Pet ownership is for life, not for a couple of years or months until your children tire of the responsibility of caring for a pet.

Parents, think twice before purchasing pets as presents.

At least toys can be recycled at the opportunity shop.

Jenny Clark, Bayswater.

Crossing concern

I AM A huge supporter of the new skate park in Knoxfield and have visited the site on a number of occasions to see the children and adults alike enjoying the facilities.

I was very proud to see all users, bikers and skateboarders alike, treating each other with respect.

My concern is that no provision has been made for these children to cross Ferntree Gully Rd. Traffic flies through this area, sometimes

exceeding the speed limit of 80km/h, and with traffic entering the road from both the shops and Kathryn Rd, it is very dangerous.

Is the council waiting until a young child is injured or killed before it puts the appropriate infrastructure in?

Also these children are baking out there. Why wasn't the landscaping planned to be finished in time for the children to use the park this summer?

There are no bins there for the rubbish, which is building up. You can't blame the users for the mess when nothing has been provided to prevent it.

The shade structures they have put in are unusable, provide no seating and little shade.

My other concern is that council planners seem to think that drivers will access the existing car park to drop off and/or use the park. It is obvious already that this is not going to work.

They have rightly put the park fronting a major road ensuring as many people as possible know about it, but drivers are already dropping children off on busy Ferntree Gully Rd and parking on the grass area to use the shade of the trees.

Lights need to be erected at Kathryn Rd and the car park for the facility needs to be accessible from Ferntree Gully Rd.

Jill Coling, Knoxfield.

Stop littering

REGARDING Owen Calvert's letter.

I am a dog walker (yes, I pick up the dog poo), I work in many suburbs and I'm fed up with seeing litter everywhere.

I pick up as much of it as I can when walking, but in this day and age littering should be a thing of the past.

I recently reported our local postie to Australia Post head office for littering.

He had been removing the rubber bands from the bundled mail and leaving them on the

footpath, these can be deadly to wildlife, marine in particular (yes, I live in Rowville, but litter can travel a long way).

It angers me that people could be so lazy and not pick up rubbish that has fallen out of their bin when it has been emptied, and are too lazy to pick up any rubbish that is on their nature strip or in the gutter.

I'm also angered by the people who fill their bins to overflowing, attracting scavenging birds who scatter the mess.

Like Owen, I also don't understand why residents who aren't interested in reading junk mail don't place a sticker on their letterbox saying so.

Danielle Mack, Rowville.

Lest we forget

THANK you, Peter Maffey (*Knox Leader*, December 4) for reminding us of the noble sacrifice of our brave, defence force "to preserve our way of life" and stop the Japanese imperial forces from taking our land.

For this we are eternally grateful. Hence the numerous existing plaques in their honour, and rightly so.

While it's not okay for the Japanese imperial forces to take our land off us, why is it perfectly okay, as you imply, for the colonialists to take it off the Aborigines?

Why your bold outcry against one aggressor, yet your submissive endorsement and acceptance of the other?

Why do you apply "lest we forget" to one situation, but not the other?

Unlike you, Peter, I believe any taking of land by force is unjust and immoral, regardless of who it is.

It calls for protest against the aggressor, and it requires an active empathy towards the victims in their pain, grief and loss.

Hence the need for plaques acknowledging the traditional owners. Lest we forget.

Ray Higgs, Ferntree Gully.