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NE105111

1 AUGUST 2006

Figures sink hope

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER

A CLAYTON resident believes Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre is not as popular as the council is leading residents to believe.

Bruce Boyle has accused the council of inflating figures at the Glen Waverley swim centre - showing 750,000 annual attendances - to justify its decision to close Oakleigh pool.

But Monash Mayor Joy Banerji was quick to deny the accusation, saying all figures were accurate and based on computer records.

"The figures they stated are ridiculous," Mr Boyle said.

"They are very, very inflated - I believe only about 350,000 to

400,000 is a more likely reflection of real (yearly) attendances. This is just a smoke-screen to justify what they are doing to the Oakleigh pool."

The council decided to close the Oakleigh pool because of safety concerns, its deteriorated condition and limited patrons. Mr Boyle said comparing MARC figures to Oakleigh pool usage was like comparing "apples with pineapples".

Cr Banerji said the figures - 480,000 attendees from December 2001 to June 2002, 500,000 in the financial year to 2002/2003, 630,000 in 2003/2004, 670,000 in 2004/2005 and 740,000 in 2005/2006 - were correct.

"Each attendance is electronically recorded and collated on to a master database, either through the point of sale system for every casual sale or by members' cards being scanned each time they enter the facility," Cr Banerji said.

"The figure of 750,000 represents attendances, not 750,000 different people using the centre."

The Community Life Action Group is holding a Save the Oakleigh Pool meeting on August 3, at the Oakleigh Hall (formerly the Mechanics Institute), 142-144 Drummond St, Oakleigh, at 6.30pm.

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Put in and help, or just butt out

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I WRITE as the Ashburton, Ashwood and Chadstone Public Tenant Group chair in response to Mathew Knight of Malvern East's letter "Cracks in the system" (*Waverley Leader*, June 20).

Our group meets at Power Neighbourhood House in Ashwood at 9.30am on the last Friday of each month.

Mr Knight, don't you think it would be more appropriate to work with us to improve the lot of our membership than to use us to take cheap, political shots at those few people who have worked hard and consistently to address the historic shortcomings in public housing in the area?

Many of our homes may not compare to those in Malvern East. But they are our homes.

Please respect that and know that our local member has been our strongest champion since the 1950s.

Just look at "Burwood Bob's" (Bob Stensholt) record to understand my group's meaning and appreciation.

Sure there is still important work to do, Mr Knight.

Either put in and help or frankly - butt out!

But please don't belittle us, our community or the very people who have been, seen and delivered consistently for ordinary Victorians.

Arthur Larsen,
Jordanville.

Pooling the votes

WHAT'S the fuss re: Oakleigh pool?

Our councillors got it right - pull down the pool and build a monument to themselves.

And please councillors, ensure us ratepayers there will be no money wasted on it for maintenance.

So the water feature will deteriorate over a few years as the water features did in the Brickmaker Park.

Or is there some dealing between bureaucrats with their own agenda and councillors: Pull down the pool and we support your pet projects?

Have your say

Readers can write, fax or email to the Leader letters page.

■ Write: 1 Chapel St, Blackburn, 3130

■ Fax: 9875 8344

■ email: monash@leadernewspapers.com.au

Preference is given to short, typed letters. We reserve the right to edit letters. Letters must carry full name, address and phone number.

The main concern of many politicians (on all levels) is their re-election. So tell your councillor: 'Pull down the pool and you lose my vote!'

U Zaugg,
Oakleigh.

Council arrogance

MONASH Council is treating the community of Oakleigh and Monash with "hubris and arrogance".

A recall election should be called/demanded on the basis that the majority of councillors appear to be controlled by influences from beyond the Monash borders.

Explain why State Government money to upgrade the pool was not applied for.

Explain why there was no community consultation prior to the decision.

The "whole" community does not want a "sprinkler pad" area! The "whole" community does not want another sauna built around a short-length pool!

It should be quite obvious from reading the "Your View" section of the papers that residents and schools want the existing facilities to remain.

The decision process that leads to justifying the reduction of maintenance to the pools, so forcing the closure of pool areas and exposing the community to sub-standard pool water filtration, should be investigated, exposed and responsibility taken.

This is a valid request as a previous decision (enforced by the community) had been made to keep the pools open and maintained.

There was no mandate given for this lot to reverse the decision, as pool closure was not raised as an issue at the time of the election.

The Oakleigh pool complex complements the existing Oakleigh Recreation Centre. Is there a larger plan to close the recreation centre?

For the sake of the immediate and surrounding communities, leave the pool complex in its current configuration and upgrade as required to retain all of the pools.

Ian Palmer,
Hughesdale.

Money stolen

I DO hope that the person who took advantage of an opportunity I unwittingly gave them, needed the \$300 more than I did.

On July 20, I withdrew \$100 from the Westpac ATM in Oakleigh and removed my card, money and receipt.

I then put the card in again to get a statement for Centrelink (something I rarely do and won't do again in a hurry) and took the statement, but forgot to remove the card.

Just as well I took the statement or the person would have known and they could have taken more than \$300 (not much more though) - my balance is often well below \$300. So thankfully I have enough to cover the two direct debits due.

The \$300 that was taken is exactly the amount a kind friend had sent me as a gift a week before. I am glad that I had sent my thank you card that morning. I couldn't and wouldn't dare to tell her.

Robin Hood used to rob the rich to help the poor, you are no Robin Hood and you won't be getting any thank you cards from me either!

Name and address supplied.