

Boredom 'leads to' crime

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER 29 AUGUST 2006

Steve Drill

CRIME and graffiti will increase over summer if the Oakleigh pool closes, a leading policeman has warned.

Sgt Rodd Johnson said some bored teenagers looking for fun on their holidays would get "into mischief".

"It's (the pool) mainly used by teenagers and now there is no recreational venue for them to go," Sgt Johnson said.

"It doesn't take Einstein to work out

if kids get bored... they will look for other avenues and that sometimes leads into mischief."

Oakleigh Ward councillor Denise McGill dismissed Sgt Johnson's comments and said most of the teenagers who used the pool were unlikely to be involved in criminal activity.

"The number of young people I have spoken to about the pool are unlikely to be the kids from the gangs he's talking about," Ms McGill said.

Monash Council voted to close

Oakleigh pool at its June meeting because it was too expensive to maintain but public pressure has forced the council to reconsider its options.

Cr McGill said Oakleigh pool attendance figures showed few people used the pool.

Only 11 people swam on January 1, while 714 used the pool on January 22.

A total of 4431 people used the pool in January - an average of 147 people a day.

The pool had to be closed on January

23 because of concerns about the water quality.

Campaigner Julie Clearwater said the pool kept teenagers safe and entertained in summer.

"It's only open in summer but that's when they (teenagers) have the long summer holidays and they have so much time on their hands," Ms Clearwater said.

She said attendances were low because the pool was in need of repair before it closed.



Anna Burke

29 Aug 2006

MP weighs into debate

LEADER

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Federal Chisholm MP Anna Burke has waded into the debate by writing to Federal Minister for Sport Rod Kemp and asking him to investigate if any funding is available to keep the facility open.

However, Ms Burke said Monash Council must commit to keeping the pool open before any federal funding could be awarded.

"It's time for Monash Council to do the right thing over Oakleigh pool," Ms Burke said.

"The uncertainty of the pool's future is causing a lot of anxiety in the community and I hope council will, as a matter of urgency, do the right thing and commit to keeping the pool.

"Council should respect their (the community's) wishes."

Ms Burke said she also supported an upgrade to install heating for swimmers in winter.



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People power wins fight

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER

Dangerous ring to it

WELL done, Oakleigh! The public meeting on the August 3 proves what indomitable spirit the community has.

The citizens of Oakleigh were the stars in their own show, and we in Community Life Action Group (CLAG) have nothing but admiration for the hundreds of folks who turned up with their banners, their enthusiasm and their simple message to the council regarding the Oakleigh pool.

But we must say a special thank you to our speakers and representatives from the various sporting bodies and many of the schools around Oakleigh - thank you for coming, thank you for your passion and your eloquence.

At the meeting, Heather Norling said: "Both as an ordinary citizen and a former councillor, I hate to see what is happening to our community. We are losing the facilities we have treasured for many years. We are losing part of our family lives."

Doug Loveless said he found it strange that in Australia, as the greatest swimming nation in the world, we are debating whether to close a 50m pool.

**Brian Little,
Oakleigh.**

Bus kindness

I'M an old bloke on a dis-

PETER Young (*Waverley Leader*, August 8), the right thing to do when your mobile phone rings is not to pull over, especially not into an emergency lane.

It is dangerous and illegal to stop in an emergency lane except for an emergency or breakdown and a phone call is not an emergency. The right thing to do is to ignore it. If you cannot ignore a ringing phone, or if left ringing, the noise distracts you from the task at hand - driving - then turn off your phone before you put on your seatbelt. No call is important enough to distract you from driving.

I witness many drivers who react suddenly to a phone call by suddenly swerving into the nearest gap of parked cars - without indicating or checking.

Personally, I think your sensationalising about supposed "revenue raising" is much more offensive.

Do you really think the police care that much about the income from the 50 offences in two days, given, in particular, the amount of administration recovering those fines involves?

As a cyclist who has been hospitalised by such unskilled driving, I wish that undisciplined Melbourne drivers were prosecuted more often.

**Tim Connors,
Chadstone.**

ability pension and I lost my wallet a few weeks ago.

Not only did I lose my pension money but I lost all of my cards for the doctor and photos of my grand-daughter.

Ventura Bus Company rang me to tell me I could pick up my wallet with all of the cash.

I thanked the people at Ventura as much as I could, but if you print this letter a lot more people will know how

good the people at Ventura are.

**Marcus Blamberg,
Oakleigh South.**

Dump the pokies

IF THE claim by Gaming Minister John Pandazopoulos (*Leader*, August 8) is true that the Government is less reliant on gambling revenue than ever before, then I'm sure it



Letter of the Week

This week's winner receives an environmentally-friendly shopping bag.

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won't feel the pinch if the number of pokies was halved - if not removed altogether.

The time is long overdue for Mr Pandazopoulos to deal with problem gambling. If pokies were removed, surely those who treat them as a balanced, social pastime could find other satisfying outlets.

Now is a good time for them to see the wider community need to end family crises from uncontrolled gambling.

The loss of \$1 billion in the City of Monash alone in the last 14 years clearly shows that gamblers' helpline is not having the desired effect.

It seems removing the source of the problem is the best and only way.

**Peter Phillips,
Australian Family Association,
Springvale.**