



Teachers conquer the wild

Beau Greenway

THREE Coolamon teachers have returned home from a gruelling trip to the Blue Mountains after competing in the Wild Endurance marathon.

Jo Holgate, Michael O'Neill and Nadine Lucas from Coolamon Central School competed in the mixed category of the 100-kilometre event where they placed third in a time of 27 hours and 38 minutes.

All teams endured torturous conditions with the event track resembling a swamp in many parts, and competitors having to cross creeks in waist deep water after torrential rain fell throughout the event.

"We had better conditions in the respect that it wasn't anywhere near as cold and windy as last year, but it rained the whole time," Holgate said.

"We were walking through water and mud the whole event, we had leeches, we had creek crossings up to our waist which was horrendous in that respect."

She said despite battling the conditions, the team was confident it finished in better shape than last year.

"We were glad we competed again even though it took us half an hour longer than last time due to the conditions we were walking in," she said.

"We were pretty pleased with our efforts and our support crew was fantastic as ever.



Coolamon Central School teachers (l-r): Jo Holgate (second from left), Mick O'Neill and Nadine Lucas, supported by Chris Guthrie and Jody Lucas fought their way through horrendous conditions to finish third in the mixed category of the 100-kilometre Wild Endurance marathon through the Blue Mountains last weekend.

"It was fairly enduring because there were more than 50 teams entered in the 50-kilometre event and 31 were unable to finish.

"If one person pulls out, you have to join another team and

your team doesn't get to finish.

"We came third in the mixed category and out of 20 or so teams that started the 100-kilometre walk, only seven finished intact, so we were pretty impressed with

that."

Holgate added that organisers did a fantastic job with the track throughout the event.

"Wild Endurance deserves a huge congratulations," she

said.

"The logistics of setting up the course in difficult conditions, the safety crew, the supportive volunteer staff at each check point and the detailed information given to

participants should be applauded.

"To be part of such an event is inspiring and the enormous 'buzz' that we've gained from being involved is fantastic.

"We had the same support crew of Chris Guthrie and Jody Lucas and they were exceptional again."

Event manager Sarah Williams said it was a phenomenal performance by the team under the conditions.

"It was easily the worse conditions we've ever faced and it was a massive effort for the teams to complete the event," Williams said.

"Local runners, who are experienced with the event route, said they had never seen conditions this bad.

"It was like a swamp in several areas while the competitors were in waist deep water at Bedford Creek.

"Competitors left Dunphy's Creek in Megalong Valley on Saturday morning under threatening skies, and it wasn't too long before the heavy rain fell."

Conducted by the Wilderness Society, the event attracted over 340 competitors and raised almost \$150,000.

Part of the money raised will go to Science for Wildlife to track and save koalas in the Blue Mountains.

The money will assist with the purchase of GPS tracking equipment and collars plus the training of koala detection dogs.



THE SUDDEN passing of Christine Atkinson has saddened many in the Coolamon District.

Ms Atkinson, who was the manager of Coolamon's Multi Service Outlet was taken ill a couple of weeks ago and sadly passed away in Wagga Wagga Base Hospital on Tuesday.

She worked closely with volunteers and community organisations to improve the lives of the elderly and others in need of community support.

She was a respected community volunteer at the Up-to-date Store and a member of the Coolamon Rotary Club.

Ms Atkinson was a gracious lady who will be sadly missed by her many friends, colleagues and the Coolamon community.

Her funeral will be held next Tuesday at St Paul's Anglican Church, Wagga Wagga at 1pm followed by the cremation at the Wagga Wagga Crematorium.

Following the service, Ms Atkinson's fami-

ly have invited her friends to join them at the Wagga RSL Club from 2pm.

A number of Coolamon locals paid a visit to the Darlington Point Altina Zoo during the week and were both surprised and delighted with the experience.

The expansiveness and management of the facility, the vast number of animals and the excellent tour guide made for a great day out.

Pre-arrangements need to be made with details available on the website or brochures at the Coolamon Up To Date Store.

Darlington Point is a pleasant two hour drive from Coolamon with the zoo situated seven kilometres out of town towards Naranderra.

The Easter newborn giraffe with his parents was a special feature but the white lions and cubs were also crowd favourites - all up close and personal.

The pleasant Autumn

weather has brought many visitors to Coolamon during the week with the town, the B and B and the Up To Date Store receiving many compliments.

Visitors have been blown away with the many heritage aspects of the collections on display, and were from Tamworth, Canberra and Sydney as well as the many Wagga Wagga folk who continue to patronise the ever-popular Ajanta Coffee Shop at the rear of store.

Goldenfields Water County Council (GWCC) continues to ensure that savings gained through organisational efficiencies and the introduction of technology are passed onto consumers.

At its April meeting, the GWCC board halved the previously agreed five per cent increase for fees and charges for 2015 and 2016 to 2.5 per cent.

This saving will apply to all fees and charges, excluding headwork's,

until the State's Developer Servicing Plan is reassessed.

The board indicated that 2.5 per cent per annum will be applied to the next four years' annual increases, excluding abnormal events.

Coolamon Shire Council's representative on the GWCC, Councillor David McCann said the board members put up a strong



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case to reduce the increase.

General manager Andrew Grant said, "the minimisation of increases is possible due to the efficiencies achieved in GWCC over the last three years thanks to the

board's direction and hard work of staff".

Coolamon Library will celebrate National Volunteer's Week from Tuesday to Friday next week.

All individuals currently volunteering their services are invited to enjoy a complimentary morning tea between 10am and 12pm at the library.



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The event aims to recognise the contribution volunteers make in the local community.

The next "Storytime" session at the Coolamon Library will be held today at 10.30am with

the theme "Love and Cuddles".

Another session will be held on Friday, May 22 where the theme will be "Giddy Up".

The library has a variety of New South Wales Premiers' Reading Challenge books available for participating students to borrow.

This challenge aims to encourage a love of reading for leisure and pleasure. Those who require more information are urged to contact the library.

The Canola Adventurers took a bus trip to Ganmain yesterday.

The group enjoyed morning tea at the Ganmain Men's Shed before wandering over to the Historical Society for a look around the museum.

They then had a break for lunch at the Ganmain Hotel.

The Adventurers thanked Adele Hearn for volunteering to drive the bus.

personals

Pub Trivia is returning to the Ardlethan London Hotel next Wednesday with winners going in the draw to win a share of \$5000 and a stack of other prizes on the night.

Pizzas will be available during the night with all money raised going to local charity.

Ardlethan bookings are being taken for a day trip to the Ganmain Straw Bale House and Permaculture Garden on Thursday, May 21.

The tour takes approximately three hours and will begin at 10am.

Numbers are limited and bookings close next Wednesday.

For further enquiries please contact Danielle Garrett.

Do you have some news you want to share or information for the "Coolamon Personals"? Please contact David McCann on 69272379, Mobile 0427273044 or email at david_mccann@bigpond.com