

HERALD NEWS

Super post office opens

by Melina Scarfo

An Australia Post superstore was officially opened last week in Mount Barker by MP Rebekha Sharkie.

The new post office is designed to make it easier and more convenient for customers accessing postal services and required an investment of over \$400,000.

The store features free 24/7 parcel lockers for PO Box holders, a dedicated online shopping zone and financial, identity and travel services.

Australia Post State Manager Jaymie Zadow said that the store was being opened in response to Mount Barker residents' need for a more convenient postal service.

"Online shopping in Australia continues to grow and the introduction of a superstore in Mount Barker provides shoppers with access to postal services six days a week," Jaymie said.

"We know Mount Barker locals love shopping online, especially recreational goods, with music and outdoor purchases such as boating, camping and fishing items soaring over 25 per cent according to latest research."

Federal Member for Mayo Rebekha Sharkie said that she was pleased this store would be more accessible.

"It's good to see a layout that is more spacious and accessible for people with disabilities," she said.

"Australia Post remains an important part of regional communities where digital access isn't as available or reliable as it is in metropolitan areas."

"It is a one-stop-shop for a wide range of services including bill paying, money transfers and passport applications."

"This is important for my electorate which, according to the latest census, has a much older demographic than neighbouring seats."

"Our older citizens often prefer face-to-face retail exchanges. It is also encouraging to see Australia Post committing to a superstore in Mount Barker which is one of the fastest growing regional centres in Australia."

The Mount Barker store joins over 70 superstores that have opened across the country and will contribute to the 50 superstores Australia Post have committed to opening in regional and rural areas by 2020.

The new Mount Barker Post Office is located at 11 Walker Street, Mount Barker and is open Monday to Friday from 9am-5pm and Saturday from 9am-12.30pm.

Drop in and talk cats

by Thomas Luke

If you want a chance to have a say on issues of animal management, including the controversial proposal to confine cats to owners' premises, then the Adelaide Hills Council is holding three drop-in sessions across the region over August.

The sessions are aimed at educating the community about the council's animal management plan, which includes provisions for the mandatory microchipping and desexing of dogs

and cats, as well as flagging the possibility of introducing cat confinement.

John McArthur, Manager Waste, Health & Regulatory Services said the drop in sessions had proven a valuable part of community engagement in the past, and he hoped to see similar responses in this round of drop in sessions.

"Council found the feedback provided by those who attended valuable and has therefore incorporated another three drop in sessions into phase

two of the community consultation," he said.

Gumercha will host the first drop in session on Saturday, August 5, Stirling the second on Thursday, August 10 and Woodside the last one on Saturday, August 12.

Over the month of August, council has also called for feedback to be given online, with submissions closing on Tuesday, August 22.

For more information about the drop in sessions or to submit feedback online, visit www.engage.ahc.sa.gov.au/animal-management-plan1

News in brief

Death after train hit

An elderly woman has been killed after she was hit by the Overland train near Stirling on Friday morning. Paramedics were called to the tracks near Stonehenge Reserve on Stonehenge Avenue after receiving reports an 83-year-old woman had been hit by a train. The Overland train left Adelaide at 7.45am and was on its way to Melbourne and passengers and crew were forced to remain on board while the train was kept stationary at the scene.

Fixed freeway cameras rack up most fines

Fixed speed cameras on the South Eastern Freeway at Craferas and Leawood Gardens were the top two locations for fines according to police reports released earlier this week. Reports showed that 99,652 drivers were fined over \$38.5 million for speeding across a network of 155 fixed cameras in SA in 2016-17.

The fixed freeway cameras were responsible for over \$7 million worth of fines.

Playgroup good for elderly too



Four generations of the Grivell family: Audrey, Ashley, Kym and youngster Mitchell. Photo by John Hemmings

by Amy Park

Thursdays at Onkaparinga Valley Residential Care have become about bridging the generational gap with young kids participating in a playgroup hosted by the residents of the aged care facility.

The playgroup is for kids aged 0-5 and occurs every Thursday morning with benefits for both the young and the young at heart.

Onkaparinga Valley Residential Care Lifestyle Coordinator Renee Wichmann said the playgroup initiative is still in early stages.

"The intergenerational playgroup at Onkaparinga Valley Residential Care has been running for about five weeks now," Renee said.

"Already we are receiving some positive feedback from residents, parents and kids alike."

"This is the only intergenerational playgroup in the Hills and we've had some families travel from quite a distance to be involved."

"We're generally having about 10 kids out to each session."

Renee said that she was determined to run an intergenerational playgroup after reading about the potential benefits for residents of the care facility.

"I'd seen some other similar playgroups reported on in the media and thought it would be good to have one here," Renee said.

"There is also some really positive research showing the benefits of an older generation interacting with young kids."

"I knew I wanted to give this a go and found out that Playgroup SA would support the initiative."

"Playgroup SA have been able to provide some guidance as well

as helping out with promotion and coordination of the program, and they're there if I have any questions."

Renee said that the program was already having a positive impact.

"Everyone who is involved seems to be loving it," Renee said.

"Some of our residents are either too far away from their own family to see them or being in the residential facility means that they don't see their family as often, so it is nice for them to have the contact with the kids."

"And for the young ones, they seem to enjoy coming along and getting involved with the activities."

"We have a welcome activity or ice-breaker that usually involves some music and singing and then the kids break into activity groups that participate in messy play, craft, playing with toys and reading stories."

"Lots of the parents get involved with the activities as well and I think this shows the holistic approach of the group."

Kylie Grivell is a parent involved with the playgroup and has been taking her three year old son Mitchell to the Thursday morning sessions.

"We've been attending the playgroup since it started," Kylie said.

"Mitchell's great grandmother Audrey actually lives at Onkaparinga Valley Residential Care and this has been a nice way for him to remain in contact with her."

"He was quite shy at first but he seems to be enjoying meeting the other residents too."

"I think the playgroup has provided a really nice opportunity for him to engage with an older generation, hear new stories and learn about their lives."

Kylie said that she grew up very

close to her own grandmother and wanted Mitchell to have a similar experience.

"I grew up with my grandmother actually living in our house," Kylie said.

"I think that connection with an older generation is really important for young kids and helps build their understanding of the world."

"This is a nice way for the kids and their parents to meet new people and a really good way to connect the community."

Kylie said that Mitchell looks forward to going to the playgroup.

"It is one of those mutually beneficial things," Kylie said.

"I know that the residents look forward to the kids visiting but Mitchell is also really enjoying going along on a Thursday morning. He loves the really messy activities with slime and paint and things that he wouldn't normally be allowed to play with at home."

"At the start of playgroup all of the residents are usually sitting in a circle for when the kids arrive and I think Mitchell also loves the opportunity to show off for an audience."

"And it is really lovely to see the smiles on the residents' faces and know that they're enjoying this, too."

Kylie said that other parents should give the playgroup a go.

"I would encourage others to get on board and support this great initiative," Kylie said.

The intergenerational playgroup is open to kids aged 0-5 and occurs every Thursday morning at Onkaparinga Valley Residential Care.

To find out more or register your interest to be involved, contact Renee on 8389 7566.

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