

portland observer

AND GUARDIAN

Established in 1842, the Portland Observer and Guardian is published each Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and circulates with almost saturation coverage throughout Portland, Heywood and surrounding rural areas.



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District weather



For latest Warnings www.bom.gov.au/weather
 ph 1300 659 217 (Cost of a local call)

Southwestern Victoria:

Today. Partly cloudy. Areas of fog early in the morning. Light wind.

Thursday. Cloudy. Patchy rain. Light wind.

Portland:

Today. Early fog.

Min 10 Max 21

Thursday. A little rain.

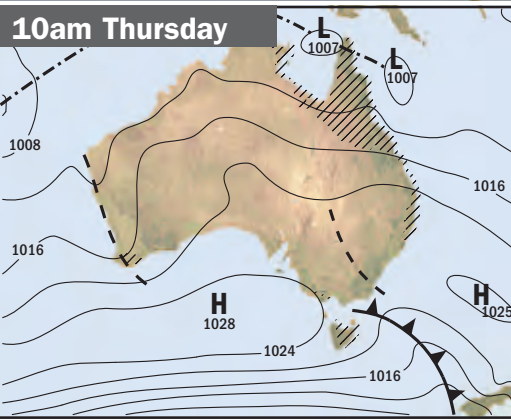
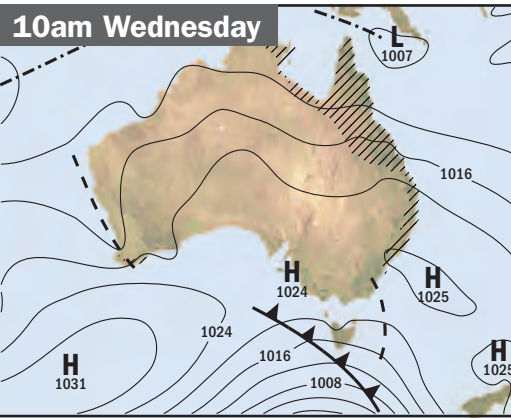
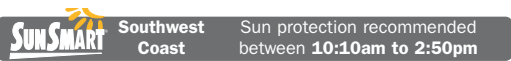
Min 13 Max 18

Friday. A little rain clearing.

Min 11 Max 17

Saturday. Shower or two developing.

Min 13 Max 21



West coastal waters

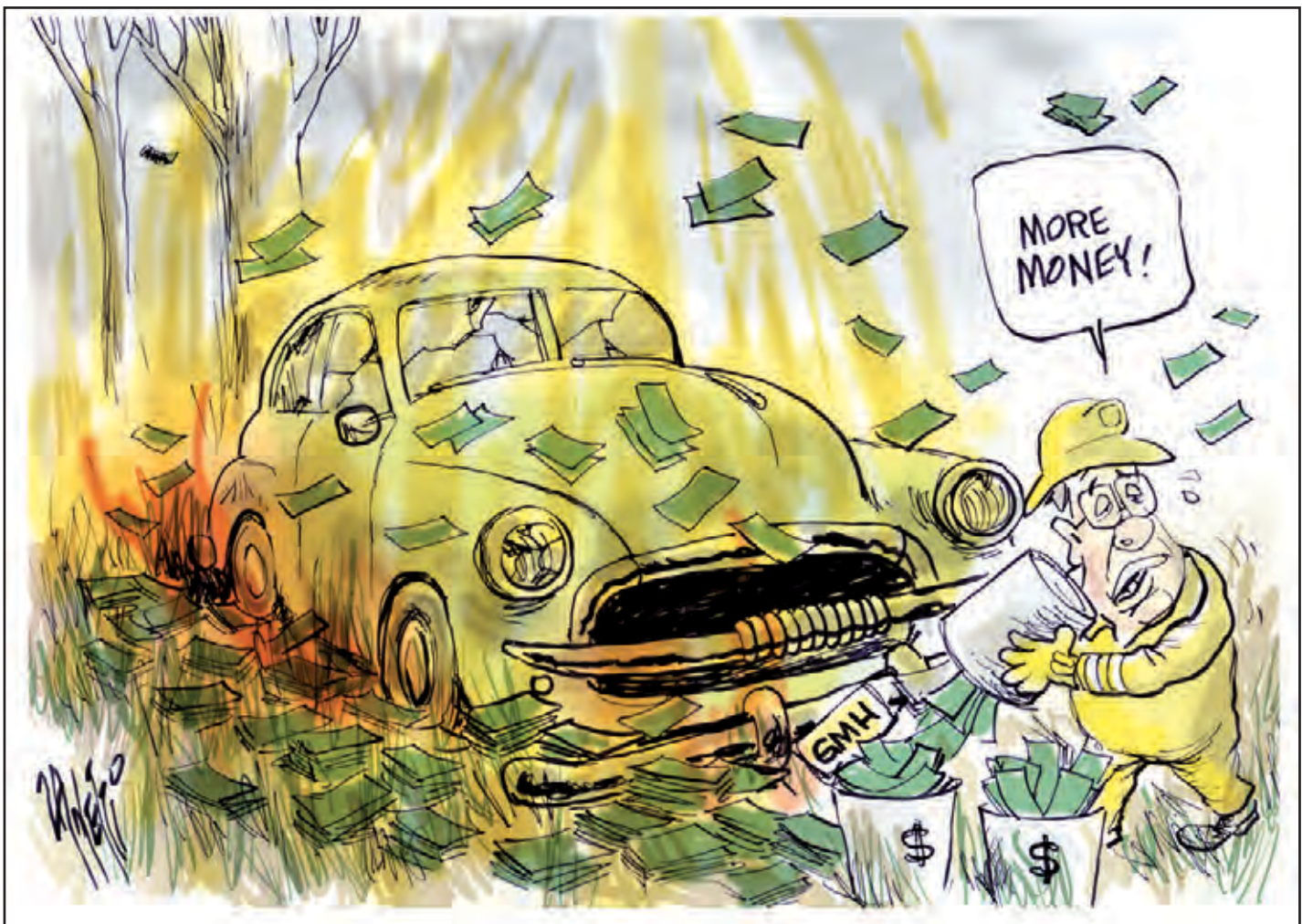
Today: Seas up to 1m. SW swell of 1.5 to 2.5m.
Tomorrow: Seas up to 1m. SW 2.5 to 3m, tending westerly 3m during the evening.

Rainfall

From 9am Tuesday to 9am Thursday: Cape Nelson nil; Portland 0.2mm; Dartmoor nil.

Fire danger rating for the South West District

Today: High. **Tomorrow and Friday:** Low-moderate. Ratings as at 5.36am on April 9 — go to www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings/ for the latest rating and fire ban details.



Terry Grant Insurance - Portland 5523 1233, Heywood 5527 1462

Thefts from cars

SMALL amounts of cash and a phone charger were stolen from four unlocked cars in Portland South overnight Sunday.

Cars parked in Flinders and Short streets, Arkell Court and Cape Nelson Rd were looted between 8pm Sunday and 8am Monday.

Acting Sergeant Sean Elliott said a 15 and 16-year-old were arrested at 5.30am in Short St, in possession of a stolen bicycle, and were later questioned by police at the station.

The two youths were charged with theft of the bike and unlawfully entering premises in Short St, and were released on summons.

The two youths will be further questioned in relation to the thefts from motor vehicles Acting Sgt Elliott said.

He said there were a number of other incidents that occurred in Short St on Sunday night which were also being investigated.

One Short St resident told the *Portland Observer* that their neighbour's dog had been cut with a knife after people entered their back-yard on Sunday night.

Anyone with information about the thefts from cars or any other incidents are urged to contact Portland police on 5523 1999 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Acting Sgt Elliott reminded all motorists to keep their vehicles locked at all times and not to leave valuables in them or visible from the outside.



Possible resolution of school issues cannot be confirmed

ROSS MOIR

RUMOURS that concerns surrounding the Portland Bay School may be resolved at the beginning of Term 2 have not been confirmed.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development acting district manager Peter Henry said he couldn't confirm if there was any investigation, as per DEECD regulations, but said hypothetically if there were an investigation, the department would not make a public statement at the end, citing the reason for that as "personal privacy and confidentiality".

School council vice-president Debbie Robinson said she had not heard when the process would be resolved, but was hoping to learn something early in Term 2.

President Kathryn Beaglehole is in the middle of a 10-week leave-of-absence from council responsibilities for health reasons and declined to comment.

Community concerns and teachers' complaints have been gathering at the school since the end of 2012, made to the DEECD through the Australian Education Union, Community and Public Sector Union and directly by parents.

Mr Henry visited Portland on February 11 for a meeting with an individual parent and a senior representative of school council, which "was very useful in terms of clarifying my understanding".

In late February, Mr Nugent said there were regular closed meetings being held between the DEECD and a cross section of parties.

Opinion

Preference will be given to typewritten or emailed letters of not more than 400 words, and SMS messages, and the full name, residential address and telephone number of the writer must be supplied for our records. The Portland Observer reserves the right to edit or not publish any letter or message. Send letters to PO Box 431, Portland VIC 3305; fax to 5523 4765; or e-mail to news@observer.net.au. SMS to 0427 383 088

Do or die!

"DO or die!" is an appropriate headline to describe the need for more prescribed burning to prevent a future catastrophic bushfire (Observer, April 5).

Unfortunately, it is up to the politicians to "Do" and the people to "die". If it was the other way around, it seems to me that the problem would have been fixed immediately after Black Saturday, four years ago.

As one of those families potentially affected by the Eltham Death Trap, I can only endorse your newspaper taking this life threatening issue seriously.

Donna Craig, Diamond Creek

Save manufacturing jobs

I AM writing this letter to congratulate Tim Black and Brad Sprague for their efforts

with Save Portland Month.

We are all well aware that there seems to be a problem with apathy in Portland, as most people think that someone else should do it all.

I am involved in a small group whose main aim is to try and save manufacturing in Australia because Portland relies so much on manufacturing to provide jobs. Keppel Prince, Portland Aluminium and Pivot Fertilisers are all manufacturers just to name a few. It must be noted that many other jobs and employment flow on as a result of these companies.

We are having a public meeting on Wednesday, April 10, at the Angling Club starting at 7pm. We urge all Portland people, not just those involved in manufacturing, to attend and show your support.

Peter Martin, Portland

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