

Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health

WATCHWORD 24.2.16

WATCH updates

Did you notice any impacts from the recent heatwave?

Thank you to those of you who provided information about the impacts of the January heatwave on the local area. Although this heatwave had less of an impact than the 2013 and 2014 heatwaves, we nevertheless received 20 observations across a range of categories including impacts on vegetables, trees, animals, insects, humans and infrastructure. For the full list, visit this webpage and scroll down to '2016 heatwave' link: <http://watch.id.au/local-climate-impacts/>

Great to see an article in the Border Mail about the early grape harvest which included this quote from Marc Scalzo: 'Climate change sceptics can say what they want, but there's no doubt the warmer seasons are bringing ripening forward'. The more that *Border Mail* readers read about the impacts of human-induced climate change, the better.

Trans Pacific Partnership

The Australian Fair Trade & Investment Network (AFTINET) was looking for organisations to sign a letter to ALP, Greens and Independent MPs, asking them not to support the TPP legislation without proper, independent assessments. WATCH, NERSA (North East Regional Sustainability Alliance), Benalla Sustainable Future Group and approximately 55 other groups signed their letter.

Letter in the Border Mail

Plastic Bag Free Victoria is on a mission to get limited use plastic bags banned in Victoria. Lizette wrote a letter to the Border Mail on this issue: <http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/3705051/letters-to-the-editor/?cs=14>

WATCH meetings

WATCH meets every second month in central Albury. If you want to do something about climate change, you can. We offer plenty of opportunities to take positive action. Find out more by attending one of our friendly meetings. The next one is on Tuesday 12th April at 6pm. Please RSVP to Lizette on 60 59 4185 to be advised of the venue.

Pollution-free politics

Fossil fuel activists target MPs on donations

<http://www.theage.com.au/business/energy/climate-campaigners-ask-mps-to-shun-resources-industry-donations-20160216-gmvb4n>

With a Federal election looming, [350.org](http://www.350.org) Australia has just launched a campaign - **Pollution Free Politics** - calling on our politicians to say no to taking money from and giving money to the big polluters. Great to see that Cathy McGowan has already signed up! So take action today: www.pollutionfreepolitics.com [Campaign animation](#) (or vimeo [here](#) for non-fb users).

Climate news

Flying Blind – Navigating climate change without CSIRO

The Climate Council has made a very important contribution to the campaign to stop the destruction of climate science research capacity in Australia. It has released a report that describes the impacts if the massive cuts to the CSIRO climate science research go ahead:

<https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/csiro-report>

And they have a video to share: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWNLI_0Kp-U

Fires in Tasmania's ancient forests are a warning for all of us

<http://www.nature.com/news/tasmanian-bushfires-threaten-iconic-ancient-forests-1.19308>

Possums' tale of survival

Climate change could prove to be a death by 1000 cuts type scenario for the possum.

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/3738525/possums-tale-of-survival/?cs=11>

Hottest Year on Record (Again) report

The Climate Council's Hottest Year on Record (Again) report, which analyses the data in an Australian context, also found 2015 was a horror year for extreme heat, bushfires and storms.

<http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/d8ed2731739da328fe6149ca1e17f9a9.pdf>

Ecoportal

<http://www.ecoportal.net.au>

Ecoportal is your online directory, listing groups and events for sustainable living in Albury-Wodonga, North East Victoria and Southern New South Wales. Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Ecoportal.net.au?fref=nf>

We welcome new 'group' listings by [National Environment Centre](#), [Farrer branch of the Australian Greens Party](#), and [RAW Energy - Renewable Albury Wodonga Energy](#)

February <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2016-02/>

March <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2016-03/>

Selected events

Public forum re increasing train services between Albury and Seymour, The Cube, Wodonga, Monday 29th February, 5.30pm

The forum has been organised by the *Border Rail Action Group* BRAG. The forum may attract in excess of 100 people so to speed up registrations an on-line system has been established. Visit <http://www.trybooking.com/KHXO>

Kiewa River Makeover Walk and Talk, 5.30pm, Monday 7th March

Join Parklands Albury Wodonga for a one kilometre walk and talk and learn about plans to enhance the Kiewa River Bushlands picnic area at Killara.

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/kiewa-river-makeover-walk-and-talk/>

CANA (Climate Action Network Australia) Assembly for Action, March 17-18, Melbourne

With post-Paris momentum, fossil fuel and renewables campaigns growing more powerful by the day, and a federal climate election on the horizon, this will be a not to be missed event. Two WATCH members will be attending. Register with this link: http://www.cana.net.au/register_afa?recruiter_id=6763

'Black Hole', Wednesday 30th March, 7pm, Regent Cinema, Albury

This riveting exposé documents the ongoing battle to save the last of an endangered woodland forest from being cleared to build one of the largest open cut coal mines in Australia. A four year battle has raged between Whitehaven Coal and an unlikely alliance of farmers, grandparents, war veterans, doctors, religious leaders, and environmentalists in one of the most sustained campaigns of non-violent civil disobedience in Australia. The screening will be followed by a brief Q and A session. <http://ecoportal.net.au/event/movie-night-black-hole-feature-documentary/>

Living Lightly

Living Lightly is published every Wednesday in the Border Mail and published on the Ecoportal website www.ecoportal.net.au/articles/. These articles are a way of inspiring others to have a positive impact on our environment. If you know of someone who would like to contribute or who inspires others by their own example of living lightly, then please encourage them to send a 400 word article to Karen Bowley at kbowley53@gmail.com

Recent articles

[Planned Obsolescence](#) By Lizette Salmon, Coordinator, [Repair Café Albury-Wodonga](#)

[What to do with Broken or Unwanted Electrical Appliances](#) By Lizette Salmon

[Shark Fin](#) By Tess Middleton, Fin Free Albury Wodonga

[Atmosphere of Hope](#) By Melissa Kane, Eco-friendly mum

Community energy

Renewable Albury Wodonga - RAW Energy -Community Conversation report

Here is a link to the report of the RAW Energy community conversation last November:

http://ecoportal.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/RAW_Energy_Forum_Report_Dec15_Final.pdf

RAW Energy members Michelle Wilkinson, Bobbi McKibbin and Jenny Davies met with Wodonga Council staff to discuss the Victorian New Energy Jobs funding. A submission for a feasibility study for a large scale solar plant will be prepared in conjunction with council and business groups. So exciting! To be added to the contact list for regular updates please send a message to: renewablealburywodonga@gmail.com Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Renewable-Albury-Wodonga-RAW-Energy-1628745107358278/>

TRY - a sustainable approach at Yackandandah Folk Festival, 18-20 March

Yackandandah Folk Festival has a reputation for great music and community vibe. It is also gaining a reputation for sustainable practices. This year the festival is sharing profits with Totally Renewable Yackandandah (TRY) for their community Perpetual Energy Fund: <http://totallyrenewableyack.org.au>

TRY is forming a Green Team of volunteers to handle the drinking water points, recycling and rubbish for the festival. To volunteer go to <http://yackfolkfestival.com/join-in/volunteers/> More details here: <http://ecoportal.net.au/event/rubbish-a-sustainable-approach-at-yackandandah-folk-festival/>

A Vibrant, Clean Energy Future ... Join the Dots!! Saturday April 23, 7 - 10pm, Yackandandah Public Hall

Save the date! Totally Renewable Yackandandah proudly invites you to enjoy an evening with Dr John Hewson, and Australian musician, Shane Howard of folk rock group Goanna. This event is a fundraiser for TRY to help Yack shift to 100% renewable power by 2022. Tickets \$35. Details here:

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/a-vibrant-clean-energy-future-join-the-dots/>

Food and gardens

2nd edition of North East Local Produce Guide – register now!

The original North East Local Produce Guide has been so popular it is almost out-of-print. Hence, a new, fully updated edition is now underway! The North East CMA invites local farmers and retailers of fresh produce grown in North East Victoria and the Albury area, to register their business for **free** inclusion in the updated edition of the guide. Register online at www.nelocalproduce.com.au. For further information contact Amber Croft amber.croft@necma.vic.gov.au

Bhutanese Association of Albury and Parklands Albury Wodonga

Thirty five supporters of the Growing Community Market Garden project were treated to a magnificent Bhutanese feast at the riverside garden: http://www.parklands-alburywodonga.org.au/news-events/latest-news/PL_11-February-16_907.asp

Birallee Neighbourhood House, Food Swap each Thursday, 11am-1pm

We encourage backyard gardeners to come along and see how we are doing things in our gardens, and perhaps leave any produce that may not be able to use. Nothing is wasted as we use the food in our emergency food relief program which is distributing over 400 meals a week. <http://ecoportal.net.au/event/food-swap-2/>

Seed Savers Albury Wodonga Tomato Extravaganza, 25th February

The first Seed Savers Albury-Wodonga gathering for 2016 is a seed cleaning session and discussion of all things tomato – tomato seed saving, tomato growing experiences, best varieties, and what to do with the glut!

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/tomato-extravaganza-growing-eating-saving-seeds-more/>

Myrtleford Community Garden Open Day, 27th February

Find out how you can be involved in this new and exciting community initiative:

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/myrtleford-community-garden-open-day/>

Corowa Tree of Life Community Garden Official opening, 12th March, 2-3.30

We invite you to join us in celebrating the official opening of the garden by the Mayor Cr. Paul Miegel and to acknowledge the sponsors who have made this project possible.

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/community-garden-official-opening/>

Energy matters

'Catching the sun' - movie

Catching The Sun is a new documentary exploring the international race to build a clean energy economy.

<http://www.catchingthesun.tv/> Here's an interview about it on ABC Radio National:

http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2016/02/ras_20160216_1406.mp3

Melbourne Girls' College pedals toward carbon neutral status

Melbourne Girls' College is working towards carbon neutral status through the installation of solar arrays and energy reduction projects, spearheaded by the school's Sustainability Collective. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-19/melbourne-girls-college-pedals-toward-carbon-neutrality/7180684>

Battery powered homes - ABC Catalyst

There's a power revolution heading for our homes – a device that allows you to take power into your own hands. And the key to the transition away from fossil fuels. A fascinating episode:

<http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/stories/4398364.htm>

Petitions

Petition calls for solar on all new Australian homes

A petition calling on the Australian Federal Government and all state premiers to make solar panels mandatory on new houses is gaining quite a bit of attention and support:

<https://www.change.org/p/malcolm-turnbull-legislate-mandatory-installation-of-solar-panels-on-all-new-housing-in-australia>

AYCC climate scientists petition

The new CEO of the CSIRO has plans to slash the jobs of 350 Australian climate scientists. Help the Australian Youth Climate Coalition grow the petition today: http://aycc.org.au/save_csiro

Save the bees

Bees are responsible for almost one out of every three bites we eat. Now the US could finally ban one of the biggest bee-killing chemicals, catalysing a global ripple effect. Join the call to save bees:

https://secure.avaaz.org/en/save_the_bees_global_2016sam/?bYNvlab&v=71926&cl=9332168306

And for more details on how Neonicotinoids are the new DDT killing the natural world, have a look at this link:

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/georgemonbiot/2013/aug/05/neonicotinoids-ddt-pesticides-nature>

Wonder Dogs!

Detection dogs have remarkable success sniffing out endangered native species. A lovely snippet from ABC's

Landline: <http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2015/s4406083.htm>

Thanks again to everyone who provided content for this newsletter. Apologies it was a week later than previously advertised. Next one is due out on Wednesday 23rd March.

Warm regards,

Jenny Davies

WATCH website <http://watch.id.au/>

WATCH email address: watch.albwod@gmail.com

Keep up to date by checking the WATCH Facebook page for daily news links:

<https://www.facebook.com/wodongaandalburytowardclimatehealth>