

BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Redesdale Fire Community Recovery Update No 26

Thursday 10th September 2009

Help Complete the Recovery Process – please join a **WORKING GROUP**

The **Community Recovery Committee** met on Wednesday 9th September and agreed to ask all fire-affected residents to be part of one of the Working Groups. These Groups will be putting into place many actions that follow from the Community Planning Day on 15th August. Each group already has a budget, and will be getting additional resources as they become available from VBRRA and other sources.

The Groups are:

- **Farm development** and environment [workshops, sharing machinery and skills, revegetation etc.]
- **Economic development** [tourism, promotion of the district, assistance to businesses]
- **Communications** [local newspaper, website, welcome pack, improved tele-communications etc.]
- **Memorials** [considering options for suitable activities and structures]
- **Well-being** – this group already exists and welcomes more members
- **Fencing** - this group already exists and welcomes more members

If you would like to join one of these Groups, or to find out more about what it means to be part of a Group, please contact Ian or Kirra - details at the end of this newsletter. A copy of The Community Plan is available from us by email, or post, and can be read at Barfold Hall.

COMMUNITY RECOVERY COMMITTEE: The CRC will now meet monthly on the second Wednesday of each month, with Working Groups doing the detailed work as needed.

Fencing update – the CVA program and the Co-ordinator's role has been extended until December 09. Details in next newsletter. This means there are skilled people available to help with fence construction until Christmas, but you will need to find the materials. Please call fencing co-ordinator, Karl Metcalf for details on 54 234 132 or 0437 27 40 50.

The Community Well Being Working Group is offering the following events:

- **Elmore Field Day – 7th October:** family day out at the Elmore Field Day. All welcome. Transport, entry costs and meal will be provided free of charge. Contact Kirra to book – details at end of this newsletter.
- **Luna Park – 17th October:** enjoy a **fun day at Luna Park!** Everyone within the fire affected areas is invited to attend this event. You will be picked up from the Redesdale Community Hall and travel to and from Melbourne by coach. Bookings essential to Bree Allwood at the McIvor Neighbourhood House on 5431 0930 or Fax: (03) 5433 3738. With generous assistance from RDV, VBRRA and DHS.

Barfold Hall Drop-in: Case Managers will be available on Thursdays from 10am – 12, and a free soup lunch is on offer from 12 noon every Thursday.



NEW ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

- 1. Safe Removal of Hazardous Trees Payment:** The Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund [VBAF] has announced a payment of up to \$4,000 per bushfire-affected property to help assess and remove hazardous trees on private properties. Both owner occupiers and landlords are eligible. An assessment from a qualified arborist is needed. To find an arborist, look under 'Tree Felling' and 'Tree Surgery' in the Yellow Pages. There are some conditions relating to work already done. *For all details please see the fact sheet and application form at:* www.dhs.vic.gov.au/bushfireappeal/Fund-Payments/safe-removal-of-hazardous-treespayment
- 2. Donated Goods at the Central Warehouse:** items such as bedding, clothes, toys, toiletries and kitchen items are still available to fire-affected households. These are stored at Clayton in Melbourne. VBRR Donations Co-ordinator, Steph Wigan, can email or fax a check-list of what's on offer, or you can find out details of what is in stock by calling Jason or Vivanne at the warehouse, on 0413 888 775. There is also a possible visit to the warehouse [see below]. Steph will be available at Barfold Hall on Thursday 24th September from 10am – 12 noon.
Bus trip to VBRR's Clayton Warehouse: Long Gully Neighbourhood Centre would like to know if you are interested in a trip to the warehouse to see what is available. The trip will be on a week-day, on a date to be advised, dependant on the level of interest. Call Carol on 5442 1165 by 18th September if you'd like to go.
- 3. Solar hot water rebate:** a \$1,600 solar hot water rebate to people who lost their homes in February 2009 is now available. To qualify you will be:
 - rebuilding a home lost in the fires,
 - installing a solar or heat pump hot water system that is eligible for at least 20 renewable energy certificates, and
 - installing a rainwater tank at the property that meets the criteria for the Victorian five star building standards. Guidelines will be available from the website at www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency or by calling 1800 808 571.
- 4. FREE HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENTS:** an opportunity for any household to access a \$10,000 interest free loan to undertake energy efficiency improvements. Jayson Burhop is your local Home Sustainability Assessor for the Federal Government's Greenloans Program, and can do the free assessment for any home. This program is certified by the Association of Building Sustainability Assessors. For details please contact on Jayson on 0439 539 523 or see <http://www.environment.gov.au/greenloans/> .
- 5. Transitional Support Payment:** this is to support those who lost their primary residence in the bushfires in their transition to permanent accommodation. Recipients of the "destroyed homes, other structures, tenants and boarders payment" will be sent a letter explaining the payment and a copy of the application form. To qualify for the payment, the applicant must be living in temporary or transitional arrangements and experiencing ongoing financial hardship as a result of the bushfires. For more info, *contact your Key Contact Worker/Case Manager; or VBRR on 1800 240 667, Fax: 9092 5878, or see www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au*

The Upper Campaspe Combined Landcare Groups - have received some funding for a restoration project in the fire-affected area. If you have previous Landcare projects on your property that were affected by the bushfire, you are invited to submit an Expression of Interest for the restoration of the site. For further information please contact Kirra.

Mosaic Memorial Project: everyone is invited to contribute material for a tile in the mosaic. Co-ordinator Kathryn Portelli is also looking for any poets in the local community. Do you have a poem you wrote about your experience with the bushfire? If so, it can accompany the mosaic. For more



information, contact Kathryn on kportelli1@bigpond.com and 54 235 281. Great pictures on this website: <http://kpmosaicwords.com/AFTER.php> .

Calling Young Musicians: Jan Constable, Manager of Melbourne Youth Music [MYM] writes: *"MYM would like to offer 5 free places for its 2010 Summer School to students who are victims of Black Saturday. The offer is for a minimum of one Main Program activity [value of \$415]. If desired, a combination of Main Program & Prelude activities can be provided following discussion with applicant. If you know of someone who is interested please email me their details so I can make the necessary arrangements. We also want to let your community know that MYM would never exclude a student from any of its activities because of financial reasons. We do have a public fund to assist families experiencing financial hardship & while conditions apply, anyone is welcome to apply."* For full details, contact: Jan Constable on janc@mym.org.au

Bushfire preparation workshop in Hepburn – how to reduce fire-risk without burning off. Hands-on work, instruction and discussion including the use of low impact techniques for fuel reduction as alternatives to burning. Spring Creek, 10am - 1pm on Sunday, 13th September [cost \$15/adult]. Please book on 5348 3636, and you will be given details on what to bring and where to meet. Hosted by Hepburn Relocalisation Network.

And, advanced warning for Fire Forum with local bushfire prevention expert Joan Webster - Friday, 2nd October at the Daylesford Town Hall. More details coming soon.

Counselling Services: details follow about three counselling and support options for people who want to talk over any issues with a counsellor:

1. Bushfire EAR - specialised counselling and referral service for people affected by the bushfires - immediate counselling when people need it, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Bushfire EAR also has an option of a call back service to provide people with on-going support. 1300 78 99 78.
2. Free counselling through Castlemaine District Community Health Service (CHIRP) and Cobaw Community Health Service in Kyneton. You can access this service through the Case Managers at CHIRP (5479 1000) or Cobaw (5421 1666) or direct from a GP referral. The Bushfire ATAPS program gives you access to unlimited free sessions.
3. The Bushfire Psychological Counselling Voucher Program gives residents six free counselling sessions if you have received grants paid by the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund. This program includes children over five years of age and operates for the next two years. You can use your vouchers at any stage. If you have not received any Victorian Bushfire Appeal Grants you are still be eligible for this voucher program if you were directly affected by the bushfires. For more information, please talk to your key contact worker/case manager or visit the DHS website www.dhs.vic.gov.au/bushfireappeal.

Bush Fire Recovery staff at Mount Alexander:

land line: 54 711 821; **Mobiles:** Kirra - 0429 388 167; Ian: 0417 147 058, .

Email: i.lillington@mountalexander.vic.gov.au ; k.litchfield@mountalexander.vic.gov.au

Back copies of these newsletters are now available on the following web-pages:

http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page_Id=754&h=0 and

http://www.macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page_Id=1961&h=0

