

THE TIMES

SATURDAY JULY 18TH 2009

116TH EDITION

Have a baby, get married or never-ending work for Youth Allowance

THE FEDERAL Government is under intense pressure to scrap its proposed changes to the Youth Allowance scheme which will leave country students working full time for 18 months to qualify for the allowance for university.

Other options in which students could qualify to obtain the \$200-a-week allowance would be to have a baby or get married.

Previously, students could qualify for the allocation by earning \$19,532 in a year and a half, however the government's new assessment would require students to work 30 hours per week for a minimum of 18 months. This will mean some students will no longer get a relaxed gap year because of this work load burdened on them, and many university courses do not accept students who have deferred more than a year.

Nationals member for Rodney, Paul Weller, has attacked the Government for its proposal, calling for the changes to be scrapped. >P4

A girl faces off against the Chinese Military police in Urumqi, China.



China in crisis: Ex-government official speaks out about riots

EXCLUSIVE

IT HAS been going on since before the Qing dynasty, many hundreds of years ago, in an on-again, off-again region of China. Racial tensions between the local Muslims and Han people have existed, some people might believe, for eternity. But only now have those tensions boiled over 2>



‘The new Tiananmen’

From Page 1>

in a spectacular riot in the small town of Urumqi, situated in the Xinjiang region.

It has been dubbed “the new Tiananmen” because of the military intervention which quelled the violence between locals, but has also been heavily condemned. Allegations that the Chinese police open fired upon its own people have not been proven nor denied.

In fact the entire town was sealed off, except for a few foreign journalists allowed to film, to help public relations with the west.

The Government’s official death toll has flattened out at 184, but local Uighur women claim it could be over 800.

Charles Qin, a former Chinese Government official, also involved with the Tiananmen Square incident, has told *The Crofton Street Times* that the true reason behind the riots is very complex. He says the racial tensions between the Muslims and the Hans – who make the majority of all Chinese people – has been going on for a “long, long time”. He explained that the Xinjian region is new territory (being just 300 years old) and it has been



constantly shifting in and out of China’s borders. But that area has always had Muslim people, although the region was historically Buddhist. Many of the countries surrounding China have fought for their territory in the past. “China used to own much of Siberia,” Charles said. But the Muslims took advantage of this, so they could become liberated, “And with the support of Russia they want to become independent.”

However for the past 300 years most of this action has been all talk and no physical movement. Although there have been a few scuffles over the years in that particular province, nothing has amounted to what happened two weeks ago. The Chinese Communist Party has dealt with it in its usual manor. Hundreds of “suspects” who are accused of instigating violence have been arrested, and the Premier Hu Jintao has >

Deadly riots



A picture posted on Twitter of the riot's aftermath.

From Page 2>

vowed to execute them. The Government also shut down the internet and stopped anyone going in or leaving the town. "The communist party want to be in control of everything. They don't want people to know what happened. They want to control the whole situation, it's like the Olympics," Charles stated.

"It's always how they do it, there's nothing special there." So was the massive military intervention an overreaction to what would seem like a small domestic incident?

"It's not that I agree or don't agree," he began.

"If there are riots, you need to deal with it. The Government needs to send police out to restore law and order, because it's the ordinary people that suffer."

"If there are disturbances and peoples lives are affected, you need to do something."

He questioned what would be the wrong or right thing to do

if you were in power.

So why then does the military use bullets to restore the civil order, instead of alternatives like water cannons?

"That's just their way of doing it. They don't have the tradition of water canons or tear gas. But they are becoming more civilised and they (China) are being more influenced by the west," he said.

Similar things have happened in the past. Charles remembers when there was lots of violence between a similar Muslim group, the Hui, and the Government in the 1970's:

"Lots of people were killed; we just don't know what happened."

But the violence is far from over. The survivors of the riot are yet to be released to their families, probably facing execution, and the 130 million remaining Chinese Muslims will fight for their ultimate goal of independence, for as long as it takes, until they are no longer governed under an iron fist.

Briefly...

Street

- CROFTON Street's Anna McLaurin has been outraged by the Federal Government's proposed changes to the Youth Allowance scheme. The changes would make students work 30 hours a week for 18 months to qualify for the allowance, or they could have a baby or get married. The Opposition has set up a petition to help fight the changes.

Local

-TODAY, Vic Park will host what's been dubbed the 'Grudge match of the season' with Echuca facing off against arch rivals and ladder leaders Rochester. The money is currently on Rochester, who have enjoyed 10 wins out of 12 this season, however some believe Echuca can pick up their performance to win the match.

National

- AN Australian man is missing and dozens more are injured after two bombs exploded in Jakarta on Friday killing nine people. A New Zealand man was reportedly killed as well. The bombs went off at the Marriott Hotel and at the nearby Ritz. A car bomb also exploded in the Indonesian capital.

World

- AFTER the 9/11 terrorist attacks, former Vice-President Dick Cheney called for the assassination of Osama bin Laden and his inner circle, but kept the creation of a CIA program to do this hidden from Congress it has been revealed in newspaper reports.

Youth allowance changes cause a stir

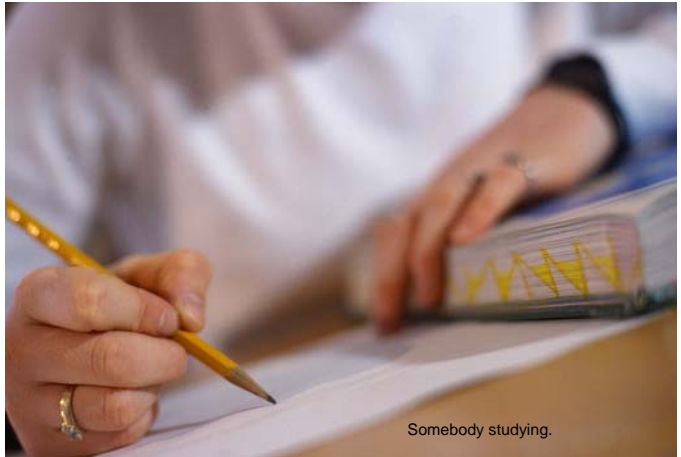
From Page 1>

“My office has been inundated with inquiries and complaints from students, parents, grand-parents and teachers,” he said.

Mr. Weller says that the government is looking to save money by changing the scheme, however is not looking out for rural students.

“Few issues have raised the ire of country families more than this plan which effectively blocks country students from accessing university education opportunities which are open to metropolitan students.”

He says the Government has just put “their spin on it” when responding to criticism. “They say it (allowance) will be available to more people, that’s not true,” he claimed. Mr. Weller fears that students who completed their VCE studies last year will be left in an



Somebody studying.

“Education dead zone,” because they will no longer qualify for the allowance. Crofton Street’s Anna McLaurin, who is in the midst of VCE studies, is outraged by the proposed changes.

“It screws over country kids, yet again,” she said. “The government was all about educated future, but what are these changes going to do? An education revolution? I think not.” She believes that other good-will based programs

such as Gap Year volunteer programs will be disadvantaged because students are choosing not to defer, which will then impact on charity based initiatives.

“People in Echuca, who actually want a job struggle to earn \$30,000 a year, so how are we meant to (get a job) with all our study?” she said. The government has so far not responded to the criticism, not returning questions to *The Times*.

THE CROFTON STREET TIMES

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

DEAN COSTELLO, OF RAY WHITE ECHUCA

SPORT

Still chance for Echuca finals bid after win

MATHMATICALLY, it is still possible for Echuca to make the GVFL finals later this year if the rest of the season is played well. And there is a good chance of this happening after a number of consecutive wins, including one against the Shepparton Bears last weekend.

Final score: Echuca 137 d Shepparton 113.

This win has promoted Echuca to eighth on the ladder, with 20 points, however they still need a bit of catching up to do to defeat ladder leaders Rochester, with 40 points.

Rochester's performance has been extraordinary this season, defending their title of reigning champs, with the 2008 season won by them. This season they have won 10 games out of 12.

The last time Echuca's senior's team won was in 2002, however heavy training of the team has put them in a good position to gather momentum on the way to the finals.

This weekend will be an important match, with Echuca playing against their Rochester rivals.

Although most have their money on Rochester, Echuca has been known in the past to surprise the spectators.



This weekends grudge match should be interesting.

'Grudge match'

THIS afternoon's game between Echuca and Rochester has been dubbed a "grudge match," and is expected to turn out a huge crowd. The game will be played at Vic Park.

EDITORIAL

Spare the details: a broad Bridge history

PERHAPS Echuca's most controversial topic, the proposal for a new Bridge, anywhere, has left the community arguing with everyone from the local Aboriginal group, to each other.

If you've read this newspaper for the past two years, you would be well aware of the details behind the proposed Mid-West Bridge, but what happened in the past to lead to a desperate plan to put a Bridge through the middle of town?

After a shocking study found the current Bridge couldn't cope with future traffic loads, three proposals were put forward as potential new Bridge sites. One proposal was for a Bridge to go right next to the existing Bridge, now known as the Central Option. But the council didn't want it there, and after a short spat it was ruled out as an option. Then the Eastern Option was assessed, a much larger looking option, that drove



The current Bridge.

around the outside of town. But it was going to cost an enormous amount (although the current proposal will cost more) and that option was ruled out also. Finally the Western Option was put up, and the community was hugely in favour of it. However the Yorta Yorta believed that it would destroy some of their heritage, and after a number of VCAT hearings, community meetings and long rants in council meetings, the community lost the Western option too. (Although many councillors hold onto the hope that it can be revived as a possible route, but that's not going to

happen).

History has shown us that Governments will do something stupid when under pressure (eg: the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq after 9/11) and it's similar to what happened in Echuca.

The community was sick of options being ruled out, so VicRoads and the council thought up a plan (in a controversial, secret meeting) for a route to go through Vic Park and the Boat Ramp. And you know the rest, the community has now objected and the council is in crisis. Which makes you wonder: will we ever get a Bridge?

OPINION

Your views, your say, your Opinion

ODD BOX Drug lord Pablo Escobar's hippopotamus has been hunted down and shot for posing a danger to the public. Colombian cocaine king Escobar, who was killed by police in 1993, had hundreds of exotic animals, including kangaroos, flamingos, elephants and hippos

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

I don't want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve it through not dying.
Woody Allen

JOKE BY JAKE

Why is it good to have a blonde passenger? You get to park in the handicap zone.

By Jake Morris

HOROSCOPE



OP shops are great places, you know. I was sick of the junk in my room the other day, so I had this idea to get rid of all that junk and put a big couch in there to fill up the space. Normally, this could take months, because couches cost money and parents can never agree about which couch they want to buy from which shop. So I avoided all this by buying the couch myself. I don't need some fancy leather thing for \$3,000 from HomeMakers, when I can just get a normal incandescent velvet green couch (with a few stains) which is perfectly attractive, from St. Vinnies. Long live op shops! You can't get \$200 couches from anywhere else...

“Do you think taxing cigarettes more will help combat addiction?”



Iain Napier
Peter Jackson chairman

“Cigarettes aren't addictive! People simply buy them because they, ah, like the taste...”



1950's doctor

“Smoking soothes the soul. Everybody knows that cigarettes are healthier than apples...”



Stefan Sigmond

“There's going to be a tax hike?! Shoot me now!!!”

television

Critic's choice

THIS Afternoon

Channel 9, 4.30pm weekdays

PERHAPS it was my scathing review, or perhaps it's because the show was so shameful, but Channel 9 has already axed *THIS Afternoon*. I laughed when I found out. The show was just so trashy, it's only real spot would be on some Murdoch pay TV channel. I think replacing a news bulletin with celebrity gossip angered a few viewers, which is why nobody watched it past the first week on air. Good riddance.

The New Inventors

ABC1, 8pm Wednesdays

IF ANYONE reading this has a rich, half-British, pompous, great Aunt of some kind, and you are looking for some way to spend time with her, watch *The New Inventors*. With interesting designs to get small conversations started, and little quips guaranteed to make any old person laugh (and anyone under 25 roll their eyes) this is the show for you.

One HD

Sports channel

THANK GOD! It's finally here! The first free-to-air-24-hour-live-and-recorded-sports-extravaganza-channel has finally arrived to those with digital TV's in Echuca. I just sit on the couch now, Monty Burns style, staring at the TV watching an incredible variety of sports. From Nazcar to poker, and from American Baseball to boxing, One HD has it all. I can't get enough of it!

“Arghhh! Cook show takes over!”

IT'S A bit like a disease, and it's taken over the entire population. I was surprised yesterday when a teacher walked up behind me to start a conversation about *MasterChef* in the middle of science. Yes people, that's how much this show has dominated.

And the scarier thing is that I have also been virally infected with a bad dose of *MasterChef*, so excuse me if my views of the show are tainted. Unfortunately, I love it. I know I shouldn't, but I really do. It's corny, but it's intense and I tune in every night to see who's been eliminated. It's really sad, because all it is, is just another ordinary cooking show, which has been done before on basically every network.

But I still love it. The producers of the show do a rather annoying, but genius job of editing the program so that we are left in suspense when the ad break start. What will be the secret ingredient? Will they finish the Malaysian food in time? How will the judges rate Julie's pie? Will Chris win tonight's challenge? Do you think Cho will be eliminated? The many questions are left hanging, only to be answered with a variety of squeals, tears and dummy spits, which make the show all the more fun.

The other ingredient of the program is that it's educational. I've been used to cooking cakes all my life, but perhaps, with the help of *MasterChef* I could try my luck at a Loose Polenta and Semolina with Bug Bisque?



one
HD