

THE TIMES

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Council U-turn on Library

Original Hub project costing council \$9 million

PLANS for a new library were this week in confusion after council voted to sell the original IGA site and look at alternative options.

Council bought the old IGA supermarket for just over \$3 million in 2006, with concept design plans already drawn up, with intentions to build the library there.

However Mayor Peter Williams confirmed this week that the project was getting too expensive and other, cheaper options were being looked at.

The project is so far costing rate payers \$9 million.

Cr. Williams says that other options – proposed as either an annex to the Civic Centre or next to the Tourist Information Centre – would save half the costs. >P3



Bea's AFI nomination

INSIDE STORY, P2>

GROSS OVERPAYMENT:

WHY COUNCIL CEO'S ARE BEING
PAID SO MUCH EDITORIAL

Among celebs and stars: Bea nominated for AFI



INSIDE STORY

BEA Viegas had never acted before. She works at a small translation company in Melbourne and came to Australia in 1975, aged just 12 months.

Since then, Bea has established herself in Australia, earning a Bachelor of Asian Studies degree from the Curtin University of Technology and lives happily in the city. However she never would have expected that this month, she would be mingling with the rich and famous at the Australian Film Industry awards.

But not only was Bea attending the event, but was part of the event. She had been nominated for the Best Supporting Actress for her role in the controversial film, *Balibo*.

Although her role was relatively minor, compared to that of Anthony LaPaglia



Bea Viegas (second from right) with other *Balibo* cast members at opening night last month. Left: how *The Times* covered the movie's release.

and Oscar Isaac, Bea felt that she had enormous responsibility for the character she played – a survivor of the atrocities in East Timor.

“My role was a pretty heavy one, it was quite emotional. There was an enormous responsibility in getting it right,” she told *The Times*.

Although it is safe to say that she pulled it off, hence the AFI nominee.

Bea said Robert Connolly’s directing was “wonderful.”

“If he is the only director I get to work with, that’s fabulous,” she said. She described Connolly as

“Sensitive, thoughtful and intuitive,” and was “able let things take it’s natural course” in regards to the movie.

Unfortunately Bea missed out on the big prize, with the award going to Rachel Griffiths in *Beautiful Kate*, however was happy to be there all the same.

“I was a bit overwhelmed... but I was very grateful,” she said.

Balibo has been banned from screening in Indonesia because it is unfavourable towards their government, a decision condemned by most of the world.

Council back flip on Library plans

Briefly...

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However Friends of the Library are angered by this decision, saying they are going to have to wait even longer for a new library.

Jenny Mustee from Friends of the Library says she's let down by the decision.

"We were disappointed that we will have to wait again for a new library," she said.

At a council meeting this week, councillors voted in favour of selling the old IGA building. They hope that the proceeds from this could be used to help establish the new library.

However Ms. Mustee says that because the library will no longer be at the IGA, they will be unable to fit in the toy library, family history area or function room.

"We've had to work through a fairly lengthy process... but we're hoping we can resolve something," she said.

In this year's budget, plans for the new library were put on hold because of the cost blowout that the executives did not predict.

Ms. Mustee says library staff were consulted, however public submissions are now urged.

Three councillors voted against the motion, saying that they should continue work on the original project.

One of them, Cr. Neil Repacholi told *The Times* that it will be a



while yet before a library is actually built.

He estimates the new design phase will take 12 months, while construction could take another 12 months. He says it may be up to three years before a library opens.

"We should have been completing the task at hand," he said.

He says the public will not be happy with these developments.

"I reckon everyone thought that we were already settled on a location and design."

Over \$4 million was allocated for the new library in last years budget, however council is now selling the IGA site, "to offset the cost of building a new library," he said.

Council is expected to make a decision as to where the new library will be built early next year.

Street

-CROFTON Street residents and surrounds are being warned of a fire danger this summer after CFA Echuca confirmed that the Vic Park and Scenic Drive forest could easily catch alight. During Catastrophic and Extreme periods the area is most a risk, and St. Josephs College and Echuca College would close.

Local

- THE COUNCIL has back tracked in its plans for a library 'Hub' at the old IGA supermarket after they voted to sell the site because of a major cost blowout. \$4 million was allocated for the Library in last years budget, however it is estimated to cost over \$9 million now, and alternative options are now being considered near the Civic or Tourist Information centres.

National

- AUSTRALIAN special forces in Afghanistan killed three men without checking to see if they were insurgents or civilians, a Defence Department has found. The three men, who did not shoot at the Australians nor have any weapons at all, were targeted because they were said to be living in a "known insurgents house."

World

- WORLD leaders eventually thrashed out a Climate agreement in Copenhagen today, although it has already been denounced as an abject failure. The leaders agreed to curb global warming to 2 degrees Celsius and many nations have pledged billions in funds

VCE students ENTER real world

ALMOST 50,000 VCE students received the all important ENTER score this week, a score which will shape the rest of their lives.

There were 37 students in Victoria who got the highest possible score, with Melbourne Grammar having seven of them.

Rochester Secondary College's Sarah Park received the highest ENTER in the district with a score of 98.6. Jacob Campbell is dux of Echuca College after he received a score of 97.15, while Angela Hehir was St. Joseph's top performer with an ENTER of 97.05. Girls outperformed boys this year, with the female average ENTER 66.70, while for boys it was 64.10. However more boys received 99.95 than girls.



Vic Park bushfire risk

HOUSES in and around Victoria Park, or the Scenic Drive, are at risk from bushfires, CFA Echuca has said.

As we pass through one of the driest years on record, the Scenic Drive forests have increasingly dried up, making prime bushfire fuel. Nathan Jobling from CFA Echuca told *The Times* that people should "clean up around the house and just wait and see what happens." He said that houses near

Vic Park would be at risk during Extreme and Catastrophic fire danger periods.

During a Catastrophic danger period, St Josephs College would close, as would Echuca College.

Concerns are also grave for the Barmah-Millewa forest, which has now been turned into a national park.

Without cattle grazing to remove forest fuels, nearby residents say the forest is like a tinderbox ready to burn.

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SPORT

Shock loss for Echuca

ECHUCA has lost their first game of cricket for the season, losing by just 6 runs to the Rochester Tigers.

The two-day match seemed tipped in Echuca's favour after they score 224, however in a surprising performance, Rochester made 230, led by batsman Adam Ward.

Ward managed an astonishing 173 not out, scoring the last 47 runs, as well as 106 of the 122 runs to win the match for his team.

Echuca's Jason Carlile was an effective bowler for most of the match, collecting 4/33. Captain Simon Maddox also did well, claiming 3/57. James McQuillian and Adam Bennett also claimed wickets for Echuca.



Harry McLaurin from Victoria and Courtney Shultz from NSW showing friendly rivalry before Nationals in Hobart this month..

Runners make their mark at Nationals

THREE Echuca athletes competed in the All School Nationals Track and Field Championships in Hobart this month.

James Oberin ran in the 400m hurdles for the under 18 age group. He won his heat

comfortably and placed third in the finals with a time of 54.77 seconds.

Courtney Shultz, of Moama Grammar represented NSW and competed in the under 14 girls 400m. She was second in her heat and was placed

tenth overall after the semi finals.

Harry McLaurin was placed eleventh overall with the second fastest Victorian time for the under 16 boys 400m. The event saw 1,500 athletes from across Australia attend.

EDITORIAL

Overpaid with public dollars, and for what?

BEING a Chief Executive Officer at a local council is a full time job.

They have to manage the other executives, review planning applications and make a truck load of recommendations on what they think's best for the community.

You could say they are back seat drivers of the town, behind, of course, the councillors.

However these CEO's are often forgotten about by the general public as they are not public figures. Even the Local Government Act says they cannot publically comment on local issues or give personal opinions.

Although they are still on the public pay roll, a fact which is often left unscrutinised because of their near anonymity.

Local council CEO's are some of the highest paid public servants in the country. In Victoria, some get paid more than the Premier and even the Prime Minister.

Melbourne council CEO,



Campaspe Shire CEO Keith Baillie. Inset: Melbourne City Council CEO Dr. Kathy Alexander.

Kathy Alexander is given a gobsmacking \$390,000 a year and there are many other non-metropolitan CEO's who are over \$300,000.

Campaspe Shire's CEO Keith Baillie earns \$216,000 a year, which is likely to rise in the coming years. Included in this is a car and free fuel and fringe benefits taxes as well as almost \$18,000 contributed to his superannuation.

It seems rather absurd that a small shire like Echuca needs such an overpaid CEO, however his hard work justifies this, says Mayor Peter Williams. Many have called for salary restraint, however the Government is yet to act upon it.

The majority of Echuca earns around \$60,000 a year, many of whom are full time workers. And it's from these people's pockets that the CEO is given his salary

OPINION

Your views, your say, your Opinion

ODD BOX An Amsterdam man, 46, who spent 20 years collecting ecstasy pills of all shapes and colours as a hobby, has sought police help after they were stolen — because he said 40 of the 2400 tablets were poisonous. He has not been charged, but police said he did not expect to have his collection returned.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Recession is when a neighbour loses his job. Depression is when you lose yours.

Ronald Reagan

JOKE BY JAKE

Q: A blonde ordered a pizza and the clerk asked if he should cut it in six or twelve pieces.

A: "Six, please. I could never eat twelve pieces."

HOROSCOPE



IVE LOST the DVD remote and it's very annoying. I have to get up off the couch and literally press the DVD player's button now! I know, life is very hard for me at the moment... But its funny how the things we take for granted frustrate us the most when they stop working or are no longer there. Like air conditioning. If that stops working everybody complains, but when it does work, no one says anything. The same applies for the morning paper. All hell would break loose if it didn't arrive. What would there be to do in the morning! Seeing as Christmas is around the corner, you might keep this in mind and buy your mother something she might take for granted. Maybe some new batteries would be nice.

“What will happen if we fail to secure a treaty on climate change?”



Yvo de Boer

UN chief climate negotiator

“We’re all DOOMED!”



Steve Fielding

“If my grandchildren try to steal my inheritance, I can wreck their future! Ha!”



Johnny

Dimigenolopolos

“Who cares?! As long as I’ve got my fully sick Nissan Skyline and my kebab store running, I’m happy.”

Critic's choice

Malcolm in the Middle Channel 10, 6.30 weeknights

THANK God Malcolm is back. I've missed those early episodes before his voice had broken. The show crams as many jokes as they can into one episode and it never fails to make you laugh. Watching a show about a highly dysfunctional family seems to make you happier and I'm glad my mum isn't as bad as Malcolm's.

The 7PM Project Channel 10, (you can probably guess at what time)

NEVER ceasing to do something different, the *7PM Project* was this week broadcast from Bondi Beach for no particular reason. They crammed into a little hotel room overlooking the beach to do their show, which was funny as always. They also managed to catch up with "the man up his tree" who is a very colourful fellow, protesting against the council cutting down his tree.

Murder, She Wrote Channel 7, 2pm weekdays

WATCHING Angela Lansbury jog and bike ride around is quite hilarious. She's *trying* to play the hardcore crime solving book writer, although it just doesn't work. She's better suited to *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* than she is to *Murder, She Wrote*. Although it still is a delightful little show in the middle of the day.

"Air crash investigations"

AHH, the joy of watching things crash and burn. We like to see celebrities do this, it's always a winner when you catch a sports star with drugs or other women (cough Tiger Woods cough) but the other pleasure we have is watching things *literally* crash and burn and then smash! We all love to see it. Whether it's a building being demolished or a car trying to do a jump and then failing. Channel 7 realised we like watching this kind of thing, so they've broadcast a show called *Destroyed in Seconds*. Narrated by Grant Denyer, all it is is old news footage of buildings crashing to the ground, planes burning and probably people dying. Of course he never forgets to mention the death toll at the end of each clip, which is very thoughtful of him, despite the show being "entertainment".

Destroyed in Seconds is nothing but porn for bogans and junkies who get off on watching things crash and burn.

However there is an alternative, for the more intelligent crash junkie. It's called *Air Crash Investigations* and it not only shows the plane crashing (usually in some cool graphics) but tells us *how* it crashes.

And because there's an ad break every 5 minutes, they repeat the crash over and over. Wicked!

