

## **Gippsland Tourism Response and Recovery** **Group - Weekly Bulletin No. 11**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2007**

### **Gippsland to be promoted on Melbourne Radio Stations**

Parks Victoria's radio promotions featuring Coxy and local Gippsland operators commenced this week, with Walhalla and Omeo the first two towns to be highlighted. Other destinations in Gippsland including Dargo and the Gippsland Lakes will be included in the promotion.

Ads feature local operators encouraging visitors back to their towns, highlighting that there is still much to see and do in Gippsland after the bushfires. There will be 10 ads in all, to be aired Monday to Friday on Melbourne's 3AW, and three times weekly across regional stations over a four week period.

### **Parks Victoria/ DSE Access Reopening Strategy**

GTRRG members were among those who attended Access Reopening Strategy meetings on Tuesday of this week at Traralgon and Bairnsdale.

These meetings allowed GTRRG group members and local operators to meet with land managers from both Parks Victoria and DSE and discuss the proposed reopening strategy and raise any issues from the tourism industry.

After meetings in the North East region later this week, the strategy will be finalised, and will be available from the Parks Victoria Website: [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

### **Inspired By Gippsland Celebration of Food and Wine**

Gippsland food and wine producers have united to entice locals and visitors with the 'Inspired By Gippsland – Celebration of Food and Wine'

The three-week celebration begins with the inaugural '*Inspired by Gippsland*' Degustation Dinner at Carinos, Leongatha on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and will finish on 18<sup>th</sup> March with the Feast on East Harvest Picnic at Nicholson River Winery.

The program features Prom Country Celebrations in South Gippsland over the first weekend, Harvest of Gippsland in West Gippsland over the Labour Day weekend and Feast on East from the 16<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> March.

Two of the world's longest lunches will be running in Noojee and Sale and Palate of Passions will be running throughout the celebrations.

This cluster of events is another great example of business, community and government working together. We have been through a really challenging time and it is time to celebrate the fact that the fires are contained and we can start to rebuild.

People interested in getting out in their own backyard and joining in the celebrations can go to [www.inspiredbygippsland.com.au](http://www.inspiredbygippsland.com.au) for more information

### **Gippsland's High Country Shines at Victorian 4x4 Show**

This past weekend, members of the GTRRG along with representatives from Parks Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and local operators exhibited together at the Victorian 4x4 Show in Wandin.

The GTRRG marquee contained photographic displays of fire affected areas both pre and post fire. The display also carried significant promotional brochures for Walhalla, Licola, Dargo and East Gippsland.

A large screen TV also ran throughout the day featuring quality Gippsland visitor attractions and campsites/locations unaffected by fire.

The 8000 patrons of the show were also given the opportunity to view the Parks Victoria/ DSE Access Reopening Strategy and discuss issues with staff from these organisations.

The GTRRG was able to successfully inform 4x4 groups and individuals that our High Country towns are open for business.

### **Gippsland Tourism Industry Leadership Program**

The Gippsland Tourism Industry Leadership Program will be launched this Thursday in Sale. It is the first of its type in Australia. and has been funded with support from the State Government through the Provincial Victoria Growth Fund Regional Leadership Initiative Program. It has also received significant corporate sponsorship from Telstra Country Wide, Gippsland Tourism and the tourism industry.

The 24 participants come from across the region and represent accommodation, destination attractions & accommodation, adventure tourism, the wine industry, the food & restaurant

industry, the racing industry, the tourism & consultancy sector and the entertainment industry.

This group of leaders will play an important role in the formation of a peak regional tourism body later in the year.

### **Jazz Festival to Honour 'Furies' This Weekend**

The Paynesville Jazz Festival is showing its appreciation to fire fighters and other emergency service personnel by offering them free admittance to all venues at this weekend's festival, on presentation of identification. The three day festival will feature some of Australia's finest jazz musicians playing jazz, swing and blues in beautiful waterfront, open air and indoor venues. For more information please visit: <http://www.paynesvillejazzfestival.com>

### **Media/ Public Relations**

GTRRG will continue to generate positive media coverage for the region in response to the fire situation. Any ideas, issues or concerns in this regard should be forwarded to Jenny Brown on 5142 3462.

Many thanks to those who have forwarded 'Good News' and recovery stories this week. More would be welcome and can be sent through to: [jennybr@wellington.vic.gov.au](mailto:jennybr@wellington.vic.gov.au).

The need for a strong and unified response to bushfires is critical. If you are contacted directly by the media regarding the impact of the bushfires, please refer them to Chris Buckingham on 0429 869 638.

### **Support Services for operators**

If things are getting you down and you need someone to talk to, call:

### **LIFELINE Gippsland 24hr telephone counselling 13 1114**

To access business planning support and advice through State Government please contact **Business Line 13 2215**

Tourism operators requiring financial assistance may be eligible for grants through Centrelink. All interested operators are encouraged to contact **Centrelink on 180 2233 or visit [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)** for further information.

The **Department of Human Services** has further information on grants, based on eligibility, to assist fire affected businesses, farms and non-for profit organizations. To be eligible, applicants must have suffered direct damage as a result of the bushfires, be unable to affect the necessary repairs from their own resources and have

exhausted alternative sources of assistance. **Please visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency) for details.**

**Reference information**

If you want more information on Gippsland's Response and Recovery effort please go to your dedicated tourism industry website: [www.gippslandtourism.net.au](http://www.gippslandtourism.net.au)

People looking for inspirational experiences in Gippsland can go to: [www.inspiredbygippsland.com.au](http://www.inspiredbygippsland.com.au) and [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

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For information on the Gippsland Tourism Response and Recovery Group and industry information please go to [www.gippslandtourism.net.au](http://www.gippslandtourism.net.au)