

CREEK CRIES FOUL

The Strobos team finds it hard to believe that there is a plan to use to release sewerage and untreated stormwater into a Blue Mountains creek in times of



heavy rain. Fitzgeralds Creek flows from Warrimoo into Sun Valley and eventually into the Grose and Nepean Rivers. Many residents use the area's walking tracks with their children.

(photo of Tara our President with daughter). The local Bushcare Group thinks that the plan could ruin years of hard work removing weeds and restoring endangered ecological communities. There have been sightings of platypus along the creek which prefer large pools which might silt up due to the erosion upstream. (Chris)



Joan Gahl, a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society and a founding and active member of the Sublime Point Bushcare Group is the

2010 Blue Mountains Citizen of the Year. Mrs Gahl's interest in native plants and bush regeneration makes her a valuable volunteer at the Conservation Society Nurseries. We think she is inspirational. Jackson

GET PLANTING

Following last year's successful carbon offset program, Blue Mountains City Council has once again joined with the Blue Mountains Conservation Society to make free trees and shrubs available to residents and community groups within the Blue Mountains. Up to 3000 plants will be made available free of charge to interested residents and community groups throughout March using a voucher system. Starting on Monday, February

Feb-March 2010

vouchers are available from: Blaxland Library, Springwood Council Office, Lawson Library, Wentworth Falls Library, Katoomba Council Office



and Blackheath Library. Details of what to do are on the voucher. Residents are entitled to 5 trees and schools up to 50 on a first come first served basis. For further information contact Council on 4780 5000 or on bmcc.nsw.gov.au. Don't forget Tree Day is coming up in a month or two. Details when we get them. Scott

LANDCARE

Have you thought about registering your school for the Junior Landcare Program? The first round of Junior Landcare grants for 2010 is already closed but start planning for next year. At Katoomba High we have already received funds to help us restore bushland next to the school. Through the Program, any school that would like to involve their students in landcare projects, in conjunction with local landcare groups, can apply for grants to assist them with the cost of their projects.



WEB ALERT

National Parks staff are warning us to be on the lookout in the Blue Mountains for love-sick funnel-web spiders. Sally Barnes said "mature male funnel-webs have spent summer searching for females. In the process, the males wander into houses and garages, via gaps under doors, and this is when most bites occur". Our advice is to check your shoes before putting them on, wear thick gloves when gardening and don't leave clothes on the ground because their large, powerful fangs can go through soft shoes. Normally, Funnel-webs are found under rocks and rotting logs. They don't like lawns or other open

places. Funnel-webs are regarded as the most dangerous spider in the world. Bite records show wandering males as responsible for most fatal bites to humans. Adult males will defend themselves aggressively if they feel threatened. They are also attracted to water and often found in swimming pools where they have fallen while wandering. The spiders can survive such immersion for several hours and can bite when removed from the water. No funnel-web spider is able to jump but they can run quickly. There have been 26 deaths in Australia in the last 100 years from spiders.



Marc

COALD WAR

Despite pledging that it wants to act on climate change and lower the states' emissions, the NSW State Government's decision to expand coal fired power generation in Lithgow and the Hunter Valley is being viewed by many as counter-productive. Classed as "critical infrastructure" Delta Electricity



(which is owned by the NSW government) has proposed an upgrade of Mt Piper power station, which would increase the plant's capacity from 1,400 MW to 3,400 MW, burning either gas or coal. If, as many predict, coal is the preferred option, this would almost double its coal consumption. Delta has no immediate plans to install carbon capture and storage (CCS) or other clean coal technology. A spokesperson for Delta Electricity said clean coal is "not currently commercially available". Delta has

hailed the proposed extension as "the best means of supplying electricity at commercially competitive rates." Delta's other plan is to start burning biomass at its Wallerawang plant. They have already planted mallee eucalypts with the intention of using them as a renewable firing source that would reduce emissions by almost 20%. At present, though, the NSW Government seems not to be contemplating renewable alternatives. Unfortunately, as it stands, the NSW State Government has passed the planning submission for this project despite strong opposition. But you can still voice your concerns by completing an online submission form on the Department of Planning's website. Laurie

ART NO WASTE

It's still not too late to get involved in Waste to Art, a great community annual event now. Anyone can have a go at creating artworks from professional



artists to school students. This is about how we can reduce, re-use and recycle the huge amount of waste that our society generates. The

photo by Michael Small shows one of Lapstone Public School's entries. Entry forms are due by 19 March 2010 and student entries will be exhibited at Braemar Gallery in Springwood. Delivery of your artwork should be made by Monday 29 March 2010. The Opening of the Exhibition is at 10:00am on Thursday 1 April 2010. What are you waiting for?

PRINCE HENRY CLEAN

Katoomba High again cleaned the Prince Henry Cliff Walk section in front of their school for Clean up Australia Day. We are pleased to announce this year was the lowest amount of rubbish collected. Full story next edition with news of the Youth Summit at Blue Mountains Grammar on 19th March.

www.bluemountains.org.au