

Merimbula NEWS

WEEKLY

A PAMBULA TURA



WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 23, 2009

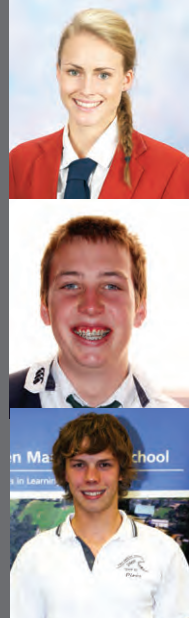
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Christmas greetings to our readers, advertisers and to our visitors whom we warmly welcome.
 We wish you all happiness, peace, and joy over the festive season and may 2010 be kind to you all.

From the News Weekly staff - Grant, Liz, Denise, Andrew, Ross, Andy, Lesley and Paul

HSC RESULTS



PAGES 12 - 13

Christmas party social whirl
SIX PAGES

BLACK THURSDAY
 Temp soars to 42 degrees
 Power blackout



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Award presentations
 Eden Marine High School
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 Lumen Christi College
PAGES 65,66

COP that

Toni and Bettina make their mark at the Copenhagen climate change conference

Merimbula's AQUA filmmakers, Toni Houston and Bettina Richter, are returning from the Copenhagen climate change conference thrilled to have got their message about Australia's favourite icon, the Great Barrier Reef, out to so many people.

Speaking to the News Weekly from Copenhagen, Ms Richter said: "While the world's

decision in Copenhagen fell far short of many people's hopes, AQUA's Great Barrier Reef message went out far and wide."

AQUA was the only Australian event to be selected for the official cultural program of the United Nations Climate Change Conference and on Wednesday, December 16, a special preview edition of AQUA was screened at the Pumpehuset Club in

Copenhagen as Danish band, Safri Duo, played alongside.

More than 350 people stood and watched the entire film, with many dancing and applauding at the end of each chapter, Ms Richter said.

The screening fell in the middle of a fraught week in Copenhagen with many of the crowd having spent the day in tough negotiation.

CONTINUED PAGE 5



• Bettina Richter and Toni Houston on stage at the special preview screening of their film, AQUA, in Copenhagen. Photo: Thomas Skjold.



Holiday buzz

• Bee happy ... face painting was a big success at the Merimbula Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism market held in Beach Street on Saturday, December 19 and it was no surprise with such beautiful models, Joy, left, Meg and Grace Clarke, all of Merimbula.

Seasons Greetings

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COP that



• **AQUA** was shown on multiple screens during its special preview screening at Copenhagen. Photo: Thomas Skjold.

FROM PAGE 1
At the end of the film, writer/director, Toni Houston, and producer, Bettina Richter, were invited to the stage to take a bow alongside, Safri Duo to rapturous applause.
Attending the screening as part of the Australian Delegation to COP15, Queensland Climate Change and Sustainability Minister Kate Jones, said: "I congratulate AQUA filmmakers, Toni Houston and Bettina Richter, on their successful screening and stunning contribution to global education of the reef's importance. This will raise international awareness of the vulnerability of the Great Barrier Reef and help argue to strengthen the case for an international deal that will help heal the reef."

Ms Jones pointed out that many leaders of the 192 nations represented at COP15 highlighted the Great Barrier Reef as a key location at risk of climate change and in need of protection.
"As custodians of the worlds largest coral reef, Queensland needs to galvanise international action on climate change to protect the Great Barrier Reef long-term," Ms Jones said.
Uffe Savery of Safri Duo said: "We had an amazing response to AQUA dance. Many of the crowd came purely to experience a unique night blending our live percussive sounds with Toni and Bettina's amazing underwater film."
He added: "AQUA is a film with vision, originality and musicality, and has also a very important mes-

sage. We are looking forward to creating original compositions for the full feature which we hope will get funding next year."
AQUA is the first film of Wish Bone Films, founded by Toni Houston and Bettina Richter. Fusing the Emmy award-winning underwater cinematography of David Hannan with the percussive beats of one of Europe's biggest dance acts - Safri Duo - AQUA tells the history of the Great Barrier Reef, without words.
Despite their success in Copenhagen, Ms Richter and Ms Houston continue to look for funding and a cinema distributor for their film in order to make the full feature documentary, which they hope will be able to roll out to cinemas nationally and internationally by the end of 2010.

Medico withdraws services

STORY JAMES BUCKLEY
Experienced sports doctor Chris Fenn will be sorely missed at next month's George Bass Marathon, according to Canberra-based event organiser Bert Hunt.
For the first time in almost 30 years, Fenn and his medical team will not supervise the biannual surfboat race which begins from Batemans Bay on January 3.
Involved in an ongoing legal dispute

which arose from the George Bass Marathon four years ago, Fenn has been advised not to offer his services next month.
Narooma woman Kim Clothier took legal action against the sports doctor last month in Bega Local Court, following an incident from the 2006 marathon which left her in a medically-induced coma.
The case has since been moved to Sydney and will resume on January 11 next year.

Popular Rev farewelled



• **Reverend David Luck** is off to sea to become Navy Chaplain on the **HMAS Cerberus**. Wishing him well at his farewell dinner held at the **Merimbula RSL Club**: **Angie Dobson** of Merimbula, left, **Joyce McGill**, **Tura Beach**, **Diane McParland**, **Tura Beach** and **Shanne Fanning**, **Pambula**.

On Saturday night 115 people from Anglican churches and the broader community farewelled Reverend David Luck, his wife, Marlene and sons Hamish and Elliot at a celebratory dinner at the RSL Club.
Since 2004 Reverend Luck has led the Anglican Parish of Merimbula-Pambula with the vision, "From the mountains to

the sea, God's kingdom will be honoured by all and easy to see".
From Wyndham to Wolumla, Tantawango to the coast he has united the parish and reached out into the community with his involvement with local sporting groups, RSL, Scouts, Anglicare (Marina Park and Bimbimbie) and the Anglican College.

Reverend Luck leaves this month to take up an appointment as chaplain at HMAS Cerberus (Flinders Naval Depot) at Crib Point, Victoria. He begins his service there in January.
The parish presented David and Marlene with a painting, a seascape by Merimbula artist, Sam Clobasa, and two gift vouchers.



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AQUA storms on to national stage

Merimbula filmmakers Toni Houston and Bettina Richter are overwhelmed with the interest shown in their film 'AQUA'.

Since the launch of the official fundraiser at the Aquarium Wharf Restaurant on Friday, October 23, news has spread far and wide about their production that highlights the plight of one of Australia's most treasured icons, the Great Barrier Reef.

"Everything just seems to be happening for AQUA," Ms Richter said.

"We had a very successful fundraiser at the Wharf Restaurant, and since then ABC Television has done a story and Dr Mike Kelly has premiered the movie at Parliament House.

"We're really excited with the amount of interest and support given to the movie and hopefully it will make a difference to climate change debate and protecting the

Great Barrier Reef."

ABC TV flew into Merimbula on Wednesday, November 18, to film a report that appeared during yesterday's, Tuesday, midday news and last night's 7pm news bulletin.

National Radio's Fran Kelly interviewed the two women at 6.20am on Monday and their story was part of the lead on the ABC's 7am state news bulletin yesterday, Tuesday.

Federal Member for Eden Monaro, Doctor Mike Kelly, attended the fundraiser, and along with Climate Change and Water senator Penny Wong, screened AQUA at Parliament House on Monday, November 26 on the cusp of the decision on the Carbon Reductions Pollution Bill.

"Copenhagen is so close and to receive this much support has been amazing," Ms Richter said.

"We would like to thank every-

one who has supported the project."

Ms Houston and Ms Richter will take AQUA to the United Nations Climate Change Conference at Copenhagen in December.

Dr Kelly paid tribute to the filmmakers: "AQUA tells the story of the Great Barrier Reef under the impact of climate change."

"If we don't get our carbon emissions target right, we could lose the reef."

"I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of Toni Houston and Bettina Richter for doing our region proud with this magnificent and important production."

Scientists say the Great Barrier Reef could be dead as soon as 2050 if action is not taken to protect it now.

The filmmakers will screen AQUA for the Bega Valley community on their return from Copenhagen.



• ABCTV cameraman Andrew Whittington, left, and journalist Sarah Clarke interview AQUA writer, director and editor Toni Houston, while producer Bettina Richter lends a hand with lighting.

Honour for Tony

The 2009 South Coast Capital Senior Volunteer of the Year (60 years and younger) is Merimbula volunteer, Tony Toussaint.

The award recognises the contribution that 1.7 million volunteers selflessly make to the community.

Mr Toussaint is a volunteer board member for the Bega Valley Meals on Wheels Co-operative Ltd volunteer board and has held this position for five years representing the Veteran community.

He is a retired builder who gives his time, business and building knowledge to community projects.

Mr Toussaint is also involved in community-based volunteer work as



• Tony Toussaint a community treasure.

president, Bega Valley Home Modifications Inc., secretary/welfare officer Merimbula RSL Sub Branch and member/past president, Robin Hood Club Inc.

Mr Toussaint instigated the RSL Sub Branch and the Robin Hood Club to raise funds to sponsor Bega Valley Meals on Wheels' 'Gone Fishing Bus'.

Through Mr Toussaint's building expertise the Pambula Anglican Church has relocated and restored as a building to be used as a supper and meeting rooms within the church grounds.

Mayor Tony Allen will present Mr Toussaint with his award in the Council Chambers on Wednesday, December 2.

Mr Toussaint will now go on to compete with senior winners from 17 other regions across the State for the 2009 Senior Volunteer of the Year Award.

BE PREPARED

Emergency services to tell local people what to do in the event of an emergency

Merimbula Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism (MACCAT) president, Don Smith, has organised an evening for the public to hear what local emergency organisations plan in the event of a local disaster such as a tsunami or bushfire.

The meeting will be held at Club Sapphire Merimbula, Thursday November 26, 7pm and everyone is welcome.

Mr Smith said that he first got the idea for the meeting during a recent meeting of the Bega Valley Shire Business Forum.

Following the earthquake, which promoted a tsunami warning for the south coast, and was later withdrawn, questions were asked if there were any emer-

gency plans in place.

Mr Smith said: "Everyone here in Merimbula should understand what to do in the event of an emergency."

Mr Smith has organised for a number of speakers to be present including Inspector Jason Edmunds, head of Batemans Bay Local Area Command, Dianne Gordon, Illawarra/South Coast SES deputy regional controller, local SES controller, John Lacey and Bega Valley Shire Council's local emergency management officer, James Murray.

Mr Smith said that the speakers would pass on the facts of what people should and should not do in the case of such an emergency.

He said that he was expecting a very good turnout for the meeting.

Boardies Day

It's National Boardies Day on Friday and as a major sponsor of the Surf Lifesaving Association, the Westpac Bank is taking part.

All this week at the Bega branch there will be a "guess the jelly beans in the jar" competition which can be entered with a gold coin.

Part of the prize is to be an honorary patrolmen for a day at Tathra under the guidance of Andy Johnson and Coastlife Adventures.

The prize includes a ride in the IRB, a mock rescue and a surf lesson.

All money raised locally goes directly to Tathra Surf Lifesaving Club.

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AQUA a step closer to Copenhagen

AQUA's film fundraiser at the Wharf Restaurant, Friday, October 23, was a huge success, the film's producer and organiser of the evening, Bettina Richter, said.

"The AQUA fundraiser went above and beyond our expectations. The support from businesses, the community and many individuals has just been overwhelming, and is evidence of the concern and passion the Bega Valley, and particularly the Merimbula and Pambula community have for the future of our environment," Ms Richter said.

The night began with canapés and oysters in the downstairs aquarium and moved upstairs where guests were welcomed by Steve Garrett, CEO of Pyramid Power, who presented the evening as AQUA's official local sponsor.

The evening was a carbon neutral event, with all carbon emissions from the night offset by Pyramid Power.

Special guest of the evening, Dr Mike Kelly, member for Eden Monaro, applauded Ms Richter and AQUA's writer, director and editor, Toni Houston, for their vision in bringing the plight of one of Australia's most treasured icons, the Great Barrier Reef, to the international stage.

Ms Houston spoke about the development of



• Steve Garrett, CEO Pyramid Power, hands over a cheque to Toni Houston, centre, and Bettina Richter from AQUA. PHOTO: Robyn Rosenfeldt.

the film as a concept and gave some eye-opening facts about the Great Barrier Reef which scientists say could be dead as soon as 2050 if action isn't taken now to protect it.

Other highlights of the evening included the auction which was driven by professional auctioneer, Guy Higgins, from Merimbula Realty, who caroused the crowd sending some auction items through the roof, with the hottest items being a sculpture by Peter Berenguer followed closely by an original photograph taken by the Leader of the Greens, Bob Brown.

At the end of the evening the filmmakers were presented with a giant cheque from Pyramid Power for \$5000.

Pyramid Power provided a generous donation as well as covering the cost of the evening, which enabled all money raised to go towards producing and taking AQUA to Copenhagen in December for the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

With only seven weeks to go until the conference, the filmmakers are now focused on the last stages of post-production, and planning their screenings in Copenhagen.

They plan to organise a special premiere screening of AQUA for the Bega Valley community on their return.



• Colin and Maxine Salt, of Merimbula.



• Gillian Macmillan, of Tathra, left, Dr Matthew Nott, Tathra, Sue Curtis, Jellat Jellat, Kylie Dummer, Tathra and Chris Korvin, Tathra.



• Sarah and Andrew Nagle, of Tathra.



• A toast to the success of the evening and the film, AQUA, by writer, director and editor, Toni Houston, left, member for Eden Monaro, Dr Mike Kelly and producer, Bettina Richter.



• Victor Rothwell of Pambula Beach, left, Cathy High, Pambula Beach, and Danielle Collins, Merimbula.



• Anne Marshall, of Brogo, with Rachel Choy, general manager of Pyramid Power.



• Back: David Hughes of Greigs Flat with front: Kirsty Pollard, Pambula, left, Wendy Kenyon, Pambula, Toni Beazley, South Pambula and Kate Hughes, Greigs Flat.



• Taking a look at the aquarium was Patrick Cornthwaite, of Merimbula, and Lee James, of Cranky Pants, who donated items for the auction.



• Cathy Williamson, left, and Janice Gibbons both of Bega.

Copenhagen in their sights

STORY MICHELLE KEARNEY

Local filmmakers Bettina Richter and Toni Houston are embarking on the project of a lifetime, they are off to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen to show their film 'Aqua' as part of the official cultural program.

Aqua highlights the story of the Great Barrier Reef blending spectacular reef footage with immersive sounds of contemporary dance music.

The project brings together the filmmaking team of Toni and Bettina as well as acclaimed natural history filmmaker Tina Dalton, Emmy Award winning cinematographer David Hannan, Europe's international chart-topping DJs Safri Duo and Australian talent Endorphin.

The goal of Aqua is to expose a young international audience to the plight of one of the world's most treasured icons.

"The Great Barrier Reef may be dead by 2050 if nothing is done as well as the millions of sea creatures that depend on the reef," said Toni.

"It is a shocking fact but it is a good example of just what is at stake during this conference."

Aqua is a project Toni says she dreamt up five years ago as a way to get young people to connect with the story of the reef.

"I have always had a passion for wildlife, however I wanted to break away from the traditional mould and the 'voice of god' narration for which wildlife documentaries are known," she said.

"We are aiming to engage young people who are the future movers and shakers."

"It is a critical message and the problem we were faced with was how you tell that story to young people 15 to 25 in a way that is interesting to them."



• Local filmmaking team Bettina Richter and Toni Houston will be taking their film 'Aqua' to Copenhagen for the United Nations Climate Change Conference. Photo: Robyn Rosenfeldt.

"We all know the story and we are saturated with words I think expressing the message to music it will be able to reach more people," said Toni.

Toni and Bettina have teamed up to create Wish Bone Films.

The pair met one year ago in the carpark of the Pambula Kindy Gym where they say they instantly clicked.

"We started talking and realised we both had similar backgrounds, moved here for the lifestyle, to get away from the Sydney madness and raise our children," said Toni.

"However I think we are both busier now than we ever were before because Aqua has taken off."

The pair has a number of events lined up during COP15 including a public performance at the famous Copenhagen venue Pumpehuset (The Pump House).

They also have an official function to welcome the Australian Embassy COP15 delegation.

"This is our more serious audience Kevin Rudd, Penny Wong, Peter Garrett and all the Australian representatives will be there," said

Bettina.

They will be showing a 12-minute version of the film Aqua which they are working on at the moment.

However they will also produce a 75-minute feature length film for cinema distribution.

The short film will premier in Bega for the Bega Valley Festival youth event before they take it overseas.

"It will be like a dance party/Aqua launch and local youth will be the test audience," said Bettina.

The pair say they were very excited and looked forward to being in Denmark for COP15.

"I think it is the biggest most important event of our generation, people from all over the world are going to be there," said Toni.

"It is some pretty serious stuff and we are going to be there in the middle of it with our little film about the Great Barrier Reef," said Bettina.

Aqua will be the only film event on the cultural program and the pair feel they are ambassadors for all of Australia and the Great Barrier Reef.

The project has been

endorsed by a professor Ove Hoegh Guldberg from the University of Queensland who is one of the world's most eminent coral scientists.

Toni and Bettina have also secured a major sponsor and partner in Pyramid Power who will be helping them to get to Denmark.

As the Official Local Sponsor of AQUA, Pyramid Power will support their two fundraising events.

Pyramid Power's support of the night will ensure that all money

raised will go directly into the film.

"We are just delighted to be supporting local filmmakers with this important environmental project," said Rachel Choy, general manager of Pyramid Power.

"As the official local sponsor of Aqua, Pyramid Power is very excited to be supporting this innovative film which tells the story of one of Australia's greatest treasure, the Great Barrier Reef, and its plight under Climate Change."

Film fundraiser

To help raise money to take Toni Houston and Bettina Richter to Denmark for COP15 they will be holding a major fundraiser.

There will be an evening of fun and fine dining at the Merimbula Wharf Restaurant and Aquarium on Friday, October 23.

The evening will include a three-course meal and wine, including Broadwater Oysters and Pambula's Disaster Bay Wines.

There will be music by the local female group Scarlet and a film by Emmy award winning underwater cinematographer David Hannan as well as talks from Dr Matthew Nott from Clean Energy for Eternity and Steve White from the Eden Marine Discovery Centre.

There will also be an auction and raffle with some amazing prizes up for grabs.

Tickets cost \$75 per person please RSVP to Bettina Richter by October 14, on 0414 441 860 or email bettinarichter@bigpond.com.

More break-ins

Police



■ Bayliss Automotive, Pambula, was the target of a break-and-enter during the early hours of Tuesday morning, September 29. Unknown persons attempted to gain entry but failed.

Sapphire Blue Real Estate, Pambula, was also broken into after the thief forced his way through the front door. A number of items were stolen and both incidents are still being investigated.

■ Between 4.20pm on Saturday, September 27, and Sunday morning, September 28, unknown persons broke into the Merimbula tip. The offenders gained entry through a side office by smashing windows. They stole a number of items including microwaves, kettles and a sandwich maker. Enquiries are continuing.

■ Unknown persons stole a car fridge from a camping site at the Holiday Hub Caravan Park between 11.30pm and 11.45pm on Saturday, September 26.

■ At 12.10am on Saturday, September 26, a 25-year-old Merimbula man received a criminal infringement notice for failing to move on from Merimbula's Market Street. The man was aggressive and attempted to engage another male into a fight. He was requested to leave the area on a number of occasions and when failed to do so was arrested and conveyed home.

A number of move on notices were issued in Merimbula's CBD over the weekend.

■ On Friday, September 25, a motor vehicle was damaged while parked in Main Street, Merimbula. The offender scratched the panels with an unknown implement. Investigations are continuing.

Daylight Savings starts



The curtain raiser to summer, Daylight Savings, starts this weekend on Sunday, October 4 - a blight for early morning risers and a boon to those who prefer their activity at the end of the day.

Before going to bed on Saturday night wind your clocks forward an hour; you lose an hour's sleep but never mind you will regain it when Daylight Savings finishes on the first weekend in April.

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