

DON'T FORGET  
THIS SUNDAY



# GANNAWARRA Times

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No. 477

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2019

\$1.60 (incl GST)

## CRAFTY TALENTS

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## NEW SITE FOR MONUMENT

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CFA District 20  
Gannawarra catchment  
commander Luke  
Waterson and BASO  
Stephani Ierardo at  
Kerang headquarters.

Picture: JENNY DENTON



## Preparing for fire season

JENNY DENTON

jdenton@gannawarratimes.com.au

LOCAL fire authorities are urging the public to start preparing for the upcoming fire season.

At District 20 Gannawarra headquarters in Kerang, commander Luke Waterson and brigade administrative support officer Stephani Ierardo have been working hard to resource and equip the area's 13 brigades in readiness.

While the commander's job is to manage the group of brigades and engage with other stakeholders, the BASO's role is to assist the commander and also support the volunteers with whatever is needed and "keep the communication

lines open," Ms Ierardo said. Recently she has been working on pre-season deliveries.

"We give the brigades an audit checklist, and then we stock them up on what's low - slabs of drinking water, hydralite sticks, ration packs, consumables, gloves, goggles and masks."

With their own preparations underway, the CFA managers are turning their attention to the role of rural and town residents in helping to prevent fires.

"As an organisation, we're preparing ourselves and we're asking the community to do the same thing," Mr Waterson said.

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# Crime statistics continue to rise

JENNY DENTON

jdenton@gannawarratimes.com.au

REPORTED crime in the Gannawarra shire increased significantly in the past 12 months.

The latest figures released by the Crime Statistics Agency, analyse statistics between June 2018 and June 2019, and reveal the number of offences in almost all categories has jumped.

Notably, drug offences, public order and security offences, and property and deception offences have more than doubled.

Crimes against the person also recorded an increase, rising from 134 to 157 incidents during that 12 month period.

Within that category, assault and related offences rose from 69 to 103 incidents.

Prior to this year, the record number of assault-related offences recorded in Gannawarra was 87, in 2014.

However, local area commander Senior Sergeant Bradley Bennett said the figures were in keeping with crime levels around the state and showed police were doing their

jobs.

Snr Sgt Bennett said assault figures had increased partly due to greater awareness and reporting of family violence.

"Whilst the increase looks alarming, it represents better policing and enforcement," he said.

"Whereas before we might have given them a verbal penalty for family violence, now we'll enforce it due to legislative requirements."

Property and deception offences, which previously peaked at 375 in 2011, and totalled 280 last year, rose to 424 at the end of June.

The category includes property damage (up from 54 to 91 incidents), burglary and break and enters (up from 51 to 84) and theft (up from 150 to 216 incidents).

Snr Sgt Bennett said a lot of these offences involved unattended buildings in remote locations or unlocked vehicles.

"People have got to start taking a little bit more responsibility," Snr Sgt Bennett said.

"Lock your house, lock your car. There is a lot of opportunistic crime."

Snr Sgt Bennett said a marked in-

crease in drug offences, rising from 19 to 44 incidents and weapons and explosives offences, rising from 14 to 45 was the result of a focus on safe firearms storage and the work of an undercover squad targeting drug operations.

The quarterly Crime Statistics Agency figures show an all-time high of 387,389 criminal incidents recorded in Victoria in the last 12 months.

However, according to the agency the increase does not represent an increase in crime rates but largely reflects population growth.

## Weather

TODAY  
Partly cloudy, 9-27



TOMORROW  
Partly cloudy, 13-27



SUNDAY  
Partly cloudy, 14-32



MONDAY  
Cloudy, 11-21



TUESDAY  
Partly cloudy, 7-19



KERANG & DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY INC.  
135th KERANG ANNUAL

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8.30am to 10pm

Be entertained while you have dinner

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