

# Artists fire up to help

By Derek Schlennstedt

Firefighters at Belgrave CFA are gearing up for their 34th annual art show.

With more than 300 pieces from local and national artists on show and available for purchase, the community is being welcomed to come and participate in supporting the brigade.

The iconic art show is used as the brigade's major fund-raiser, with a small percentage of each painting going to the brigade.

There are various different styles

being featured at the show and Kirstin Cross, community education officer at Belgrave Fire Brigade said visitors could expect a wonderful array of art.

"There are so many different styles, you can have abstract work, watercolour works, and the detail in all of them is incredible, it really does take your breath away," Kirstin said.

The art show is renowned throughout Victoria, with some artists sending their work thousands of miles to exhibit in the show.

"We've got one artist who courier his

work to us from the other side of the city and then some of the other artists paint just for the art show which is really lovely," Kirstin said.

Kirstin encourages and invites everyone to come along to the event to see a diverse range of intricate and beautiful art.

"The beauty of having it over the four days is you can come on opening night and meet everybody, and the artists and it's a really nice atmosphere.

Then throughout the weekend you can have a look, go away, think about it, and you can always come back a day later

and get the painting," she said.

"People can come in and walk out with something beautiful."

The Belgrave Fire Brigade Art Show will commence with a champagne opening on Friday 9 June from 7.30pm which will also include a presentation of awards to various artists.

The opening costs \$15, but, from 10-12 June, entry is free.

The art show is supported by businesses in Belgrave and Tecoma which take out advertising in the show's catalogue.

## Briefly



### Stolen Holden

A 2014 Holden Colorado was stolen from outside Kooringal Road Upwey overnight on 1 June 2017.

At the time it was stolen, the vehicle was displaying personalised registration plates that read GMH888. Anyone with information is urged to contact Yarra Ranges CIU on 9739 2401.

### Operation Regal

Victoria Police will be launching Operation Regal in a bid to prevent road fatalities over the Queen's Birthday long weekend.

The operation targets the main factors of fatalities, including speed, driver distractions such as mobile phones, fatigue, seatbelt offences and drugs and alcohol.

### Silvan trucks found

Two tip trucks stolen from Nature's Soil in Silvan have been found and returned and a 32-year-old male from Kurnunjang was arrested.

It is believed the trucks were stolen over the weekend of 20 May when the offender broke into Nature's Soil and grabbed the keys for both trucks. The male was arrested on 1 June when police located the trucks on a residential property near Pyalong.

# Spirit of the Mountain concert shines

By Derek Schlennstedt

On Monday 29 May, Tecoma Primary School held a special assembly for the 20th anniversary of the Spirit of the Mountain Concert.

The 'Spirit of the Mountain' was a bushfire recovery project for Ferny Creek Primary School and the community after the 1997 Mt Dandenong bushfires which killed three people.

From the recovery project came the song 'Island in the Sky,' which was written by Suzie Davies Splitter and Phil Splitter using the children's words.

To remember and recognise the importance of the song, Tecoma Primary school worked with Suzie and Phil in holding a concert 20 years on.

Sally Connell the music teacher at Tecoma Primary School said the students loved singing the song, which included references to their towns.

"They loved it because it mentions their towns and they really enjoyed singing about their community," Sally said.

"It was really nice to be given the opportunity to do that."

Following the 1997 bushfires Susie Davies-Splitter and Phil Splitter, as music educators and therapists, were invited by the Dandenong Ranges Music Council to help those affected by the fires

Karen Noonan, the original music teacher at Ferny Creek Primary School, and current arts administrator for the Dandenong Ranges Music Council, said it helped her students at Ferny Creek express their feelings towards the devastation from the bushfires.

"It was a way for the children to express themselves and a positive way for them to start dealing with what they'd been through," she said.

The song which goes for seven minutes took students at Tecoma Primary a few weeks to learn and the performance was reminiscent of 20 years prior when Ferny Creek Primary performed it.

Both Phil and Suzie joined the children in the live performance and Karen Noonan said she was thrilled to see that it was still being sung in the Dandenong ranges.

"It's hard to believe it's been 20 years ... that the song continues to be sung really says a lot," she said.



Tecoma Primary School music teacher Sally Connell (in red) and teacher Lauren Cassidy with choir members Lucy (left) and Millie (right). Lauren was a student at Ferny Creek Primary school for the original performance.

Picture: ROB CAREW