

Parents confront lice problems without the usual remedies

THEY are tiny, wingless, drink human blood and are coming soon to a scalp near you. *Pediculus humanus capitis* - head lice - infest 30 per cent of all primary school children, and their numbers are increasing. "They're more prevalent for a number of reasons," Glenis Lloyd, a NSW Environmental Health officer, said.

"Firstly our behaviours have changed: kids have more sleepovers - and when girls sleepover, so do the lice. Also, school kids are more interactive than before, and not so tied to the desk, and all this has made transmission easier."

With school going back today for most students, lice will be on the agenda for many parents. But parents are part of the problem, Ms Lloyd said. "In regularly treating our kids with over-the-counter remedies, we have been subjecting the lice to non-lethal doses, and so they've become resistant. Most of the commercial remedies, whether they are based on pyrethrum, synthetic pyrethroids or malathion, are now useless." But what about the "all-natural" lotions?

"They're crap," Ms Lloyd said. "All that eye-of-newt, oil-of-toad stuff plays on parents' paranoia towards head lice. All you are doing is wasting your money."

Lice have long been a problem and will remain so, she said. "No one has ever died of head lice. They don't carry disease and they don't cause disease. They're not worth panicking about: one father ... swore by engine de-greaser, which sounded more toxic than the lice." Ms Lloyd recommended using hair conditioner ("or anything slimy"), massaged through the hair. This doesn't kill the lice - which can live without breathing for 20 minutes - but it slows them down, making it easier to comb them out.

TIM ELLIOTT (Sydney Morning Herald)

My school website causes uproar concerning immigrant children

An uproar has been caused by the federal government's new website which publicises the student grades from the country's schools and gives the opportunity to parents and other interested parties to make comparisons. The educational community is strongly opposed to the website, saying that it is misleading and there is a danger of stigmatizing the schools which children of immigrants attend, since it is natural for those students' grades to be lower than that of the rest of the students whose mother tongue is English.



On Thursday, the first day of operation of the website <http://www.myschool.gov.edu.au>, there were many access problems due to the large number of visits to it, as from 10am to 2pm the website received 4,5 million visits. The issues were later resolved.

The Minister for Education, Ms. Julia Guillard, stated that the high visitation to the site proved the great interest of the parents and the necessity of its existence.

However many parents consider the site misleading because the comparisons are not made to the point and there is no mention of the particular characteristics of each school, but only statics are presented. In addition, there are fears that schools with lower scores will be stigmatized causing many children to remove their children from them.

The parents views are contradictory concerning the site, some are claiming it will help them choose the school to send their children to, whereas others mentioning that the site doesn't offer any useful information. The government however insists that the website is here to stay, and that will time it will be enriched with more information. According to the Ministry of Education, the total amount of funds of the private schools and their sources are to be publicized, and it is expected that the information will force the elit schools to justify their current high fees. One of the most interesting facts derived from the comparison between public and private schools, is that the NAPLAN scores of public school primary students are on average higher than those from the private schools at which parents pay up to AUD\$10,000 annually.

(source: neos kosmos)

Exports of Australian beef to the E.U. are to be doubled

Exports of Australian bovine meat to countries of the European Union are expected to double according to a common announcement of the Minister of Commerce Simon Crean and the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry, Tony Burke, which dealt with the free access of Australian bovine meat to the European market during the first quarter of 2010, with the abolishment of the 20% tax that has been in effect up to now. The only other country that has taxless access to the EU market is the United States. The bovine meat exports from Australia to the EU are expected to double from the current 11.000 tonnes that are bringing in around Aus\$136 million to Australia. The success took place further to the recent cooperation with the EU on quality control and strict nutrition requirements, with a view to production of high quality meat according to the EU guidelines and is considered important, especially after the rise of the Australian dollar against the euro, which is making exports to Europe more difficult.

(Source : neos kosmos)

KOGARAH COUNCILLOR TAKES HURSTVILLE COUNCIL TO COURT

Development stoush looms

A DEVELOPER has lodged an appeal in the Land and Environment Court over Hurstville Council's refusal of a six-to seven storey building on Forest Road, Hurstville that would require demolition of a heritage-listed building.

The \$25.8 million project would have been build across nine allotments and included demolition of the heritage-listed Advance House, formerly known as Swans Hardware at 127-137 Forest Road.

The proposal was lodged by Architects Katris and Associates, the company of Koga-

rah councillor Nick Katris on behalf of Lofty P/L.

The proposal is for a building of 39 residential units - four one- bedrooms, 29 two-bedrooms and six three bedrooms - as well as 16 shops, an arcade, two commercial areas and three levels of basement parking with 155 spaces. The building would have three frontages - Forest Road and Alfred and Treacy streets.

The council staff report recommended approval but Hurstville councillors unanimously rejected the application. Mr Katris said the de-

sign was well within the development controls for the area and would provide parking in excess of requirements.

"It conforms with height controls for the area and is well within the floor-space ratio", he said.

"It is generally agreed by the council officers that the design is of high quality in terms of an urban design context".

The council's heritage impact statement said the Swan's Hardware building did not appear to have strong community associations and its demolition was permissible in the Hurstville local environmental plan.

However, the council's heritage adviser did not recommend the demolition which might set a precedent affecting other heritage items in the vicinity.

The appeal hearing has been set down for March 14.

Article from the Leader



New club in town

With a cabinet full of trophies for his much loved sport, Aris Patikas (pictured) has opened a backgammon club at Lakemba Services Club. Launching the backgammon club at Ashfield Wests Leagues Club nine years ago, when Mr Patikas moved to Belmore last year, he decided to start one closer at home. On approaching Canterbury Leagues the 71 year old's backgammon club was approved and will begin in February. The club will meet every Thursday from 6pm to 10 pm. "We already have eight members and everyone is welcome to join" he said. "It is a lot of fun, I have been playing backgammon my entire life and it is a great way to meet like minded people and have a laugh. "When I was at Ashfield Wests, we would play backgammon while our wives played bingo, it is great for all". With everyone welcome to join, Mr Patikas said that "it is not a Greek Club", whatever nationality you are, you are welcome to take part. With free membership and an enjoyable evening assured, for more information or to join the club, phone 0403 000 910.

Article from the Torch

