

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022 - ISSUE 49



Welcome to the Older Persons & Ability Support Services (OPASS) 49th Quarterly Newsletter.

Holiday Season is here representing for many of us a break in routine and time to catch up with our families and friends. After some very wet and cold weather these past months, some sunshine and warm weather will be most welcomed.

This is also a time when we go looking for the perfect gift for our loved ones and this has its own challenges. Remember, It is an old saying but very true, it's the thought that counts.

For our OPASS staff, this has been a very busy year with high demands in services to be delivered, recruitment of new people to work in our aged care services and referrals for My Aged Care Assessments to gain access to the Commonwealth Home Support Program. OPASS has also experienced an increase Home Care Packages and now has 165 consumers.

Living in rural Victoria and the beautiful Otway's, we live in a high fire risk area. Prepare your property to ensure that there is no build-up of grass, leaves and rake any other materials that will cause fuel for a fire.

There are some nice things to do over the holidays here in Colac. The Colac Lake water levels are the highest for many years, worth a visit and hopefully lots of water sports on the lake over summer. The Botanic Gardens are looking enticing and a stroll around flower beds and other displays will have you appreciating all the hard work the Colac Otway Shire staff and other Volunteers put into these grounds.

Over the summer period a few suggestions to stay cool:

Keep hydrated throughout the day, drinking water throughout the day keeps the body cool and allows it to regulate body temperature better, turn on fan/ air conditioner, wear light, breathable clothing, choose cold meals instead of hot, cool the body down, spend time indoor, stay out of the sun, limited physical activity.

On behalf of the OPASS Team, we wish you a very happy and safe Christmas and Happy New Year.

Terry Maissey, Coordinator OPASS

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS FOR 2023

If your Home Care falls on a public holiday as listed below, you will not receive home care on that day.

MOW'S will be delivered the working day prior to the public holiday.

On public holidays Personal Care will continue with altered times.

On Catastrophic Fire days, No services will be available in country areas, we will try to make contact with the clients that this will effect on that day.

New Year's Day
Mon, 2 Jan 2023

Australia Day
Thu, 26 Jan 2023

Labour Day
Mon, 13 Mar 2023

Good Friday
Fri, 7 Apr 2023

Easter Monday
Mon, 10 Apr 2023

Anzac Day
Tue, 25 Apr 2023

Queen's Birthday
Mon, 12 June 2023

Friday before the AFL Grand Final
Likely Fri, 29 Sept 2023

Melbourne Cup
Tue, 7 Nov 2023

Christmas Day
Mon, 25 Dec 2023

Boxing Day
Tue, 26 Dec 2023

ENERGY VICTORIA

Do not let anyone into your home unless they have shown ID and given you a contact number. This may be for light globes, showerheads, tap washers and for any other offer's they have. Ask for their name and business card to keep in case anything goes wrong and you can call them. It is hard to get back in contact with them if you do not have a phone number to contact. Colac Otway Shire have no way to make contact with these businesses if there are any issues.

OPERATING HOURS OVER THE CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR PERIOD

The last day for Home Care will be on Thursday 22nd of December. The last delivery for Meals on Wheels will be Friday 23rd December.

Home Care and Meals on Wheels will resume on Tuesday 3rd January 2023. Personal Care will continue with altered times.

The office will be closed from 3pm Friday 23rd December 2022 and will reopen on Tuesday 3rd January 2023



BUSHFIRE AND HEATWAVE PREPAREDNESS

Getting yourself ready for the upcoming fire season is very important. Making sure, you prepare the grounds around your home so they are clear of grass, leaves, twigs and loose bark. Have a fire plan ready and make sure your family know your plan. Keep up your fluid intake. Stay out of the hot sun. Keep cool by turning on your air conditioner if you have one. Please note that the Colac Otway Shire cannot provide services to country areas if the day has been declared a "Catastrophic Fire Day".

If you would like a copy of the Red Cross Emergency RediPlan, please call the OPASS team on 5232 9420 or call into the office in Rae St and ask for one. The RediPlan will assist you in having all your personal information ready in the one booklet, e.g. family contact phone numbers, Medical conditions, Medications and Medical aids and what happens to your pets in the case of an emergency. You can also google the Victorian CFA website for lots more handy tips.



It is so pleasing to see the number of members who have returned after the year's disruptions. Members are enjoying being in classes and activities again.

For your calendar, Enrolment Day next year will be 10am to 2pm on Friday 3rd February, at Kanyana.

Kanyana Senior Citizens Club are a friendly group of over fifty fives.

Throughout the week we have a number of activities held at Cnr of Hesse and Bromfield Streets, Colac.

Membership costs \$5.00 per year, with most activities having a \$1.00 cost (which includes a cupper and biscuit afterwards).

Our timetable is as follows:

Monday	Cards, starting at 1pm
Tuesday	Indoor (carpet) bowls, 1pm to 3pm
Every 2nd Tuesday	Bingo, starts at 7pm
Wednesday	Lunch at 12 noon. Booking in required at Limited numbers
Thursday	Cards, starting at 1pm - usually 500
Last Thursday of month	Lunch at a local hotel
Saturday	Indoor (carpet) bowls, 1pm to 3pm
Last Sunday of month	Bingo, eyes down at 1pm

Contacts: Win Jones President 52 331792:
Sue Holmes Secretary 52 338438

GOING AWAY FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

Are you planning to go away and stay with family over the Christmas break? Please call the office to let us know and we can cancel any services that are not required. If you do not call the office and a Community Care Worker turns up, there will be a charge on your next statement. Phone the OPASS unit on 5232 9420.

THANK YOU

We would like to say a big 'Thank You' to our Volunteer's and wish them a very Merry Christmas. May they enjoy their break from Meals on Wheels and Community Transport, they do a fantastic job every year and we look forward to seeing everyone back next year.

THUNDERSTORM ASTHMA

It is important for people with asthma or hay fever to know about thunderstorm asthma and what they can do to protect themselves or loved ones. Here is a quick guide to use, in case of an emergency.



Do you know the
4 steps of asthma
first aid?



NEW STAFF

Over the last few months we have welcomed new staff members Michael, Marlene and Joni to our Community Care Worker team. Dylan has also returned to the team. We hope that in the New Year we will have additional Community Care Workers to introduce to you. We also have some new Volunteer's that have started with us helping with Meals on Wheels and Transport. We welcomed Glenda and Christine in October.

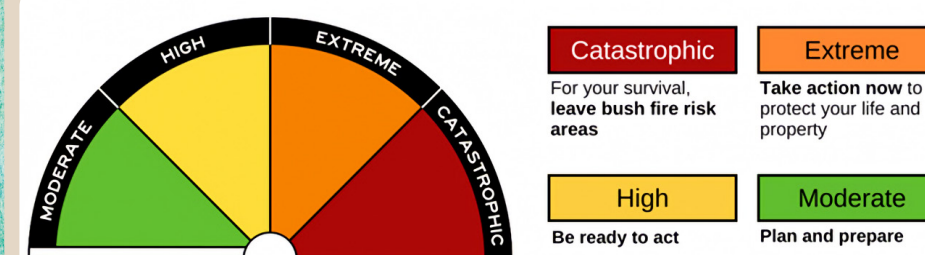
NEW AUSTRALIA-WIDE FIRE DANGER RATINGS

As of 1 September 2022, Fire Danger Ratings have changed across Australia.

Fire Danger Ratings provide information so people in affected areas can take action to protect themselves and others. The higher the fire danger, the more dangerous the conditions and the greater the impact will be if a fire starts.

The new system uses better technology and research to determine fire danger ratings, and was developed using feedback from one of Australia's largest surveys of communities.

The new ratings are designed to be easier to understand and provides clear advice about actions to take.



There are now four Fire Danger Rating levels. When no Fire Danger Rating is issued the arrow will point to a white 'no rating' level.

Old fire danger signs have been covered with stickers to let communities know fire danger ratings have changed. These old signs are being replaced with new ones, starting from September 2022.



Meals on Wheels Victoria

Meals on Wheels aims to assist the elderly and those with disabilities to live independently, by providing a nutritionally balanced meal that you may not be able to prepare for yourself. Meals can be for a short term or long term. For more information, please call the OPASS unit on 5232 9420. The last day for Meals on Wheels, deliveries will be Friday 23rd December 2022 and restart on Tuesday 3rd of January 2023.

EXTREME WEATHER AND FIRE SAFETY

Stay aware if there is fire danger in our area by listening to 774AM or our local radio stations 106.3FM and 11.34AM. Watch Sky News or you can also visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au, or call the bushfire information line on 1800 240 667

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

If you would you like to receive the newsletter via email, please call the OPASS office Phone 5232 9400



Please remember that there is no smoking or vaping while the Community Carer worker is in your home, as this is their workplace. If you are a smoker/vapour maybe open a door and let some fresh air in before they are due to arrive.

ACCESSIBLE PARKING PERMITS



PLEASE NOTE: the way we apply for the disability parking permits has changed. Now you need to go onto the [VicRoads website](http://VicRoads.vic.gov.au) or accessibleparking.vic.gov.au and follow the prompts, you will also need your GP or Occupational Therapist to assist with filling out the remainder of the form online. If you are unable to complete the online form, you can call the Colac Otway Shire on 5232 9400 to make an appointment time and the Customer Service team will be able to assist you.



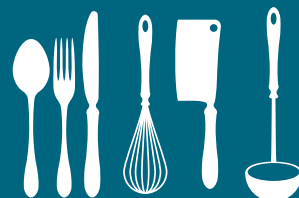
MILLER HOUSE OPENING TIMES FOR OVER CHRISTMAS NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS 2022/2023

Miller House will be taking a short break over the Christmas Period; they will close the end of business on Friday 23rd December 2022 and reopen on Wednesday 4th January 2023.

They would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Safe New Year.

If you need to speak to the staff at Miller House please call 5232 9440

OPASS recipe collection



FESTIVE FRUIT SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 1 punnet strawberries, washed, tops removed and quartered
- 1 punnet blueberries, washed
- 1 punnet raspberries, washed
- 1 punnet blackberries, washed
- 1 cup red grapes, washed
- pulp of 2 passion fruit
- 1 mango, skin removed, cubed
- 2 kiwi fruit, skin removed, cubed
- 2 apricots, seed removed, quartered
- mint to serve

METHOD

Combine all fruit in large bowl, toss and set aside for 5 minutes.

Using clean hands, arrange fruit salad on medium sized round platter in the shape of wreath, or simply present in a large serving bowl. Serve immediately.



THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY CARE WORKERS

We would like to take a minute to thank our wonderful Community Care Workers that we have working for the Colac Otway Shire. Again, over this trying year they have worked beyond expectations as always. Happy to pick up extra jobs or an extra day when needed so that you, the clients, do not miss a service. Thank you.

ONLINE SCAMS AND WAYS TO STAY SAFE

The Australian Bureau of Statistics have reported some alarming findings in 2020-2021. They have found that 2.1 Million Australians (11%) have experienced one or more types of personal fraud. The survey found most of the fraud was identity theft, card fraud and selected types of scams. Some of the card fraud involves the use of your EFTPOS cards to withdraw cash without permission. Also fraudulent or forged documents was high on the list. The scammers are always trying to find new ways of conning people. Some of the ones doing the rounds this year have been a text message sent to your phone saying "Help Mom I'm in need of money" or even a text message saying they are from the Bank and need to update your information. Remember the bank would put a letter in the post to you. Never send your bank account details over a text message or give them over the phone. Remember to speak out and don't be ashamed if you're victimized, report to a trusted person and law enforcement.

*Caring
Always there
Ready to give their all
Encouraging
Gracious
Incredible
Valuable
Exceptional
Respectable*

CHRISTMAS TREE

Angel
Boughs
Christmas
Excitement
Green
Joy
Lights
Magical
Ornaments
Presents
Santa Claus
Snow
Tree
Twinkle
Winter

B
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S A I G D G A
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I W O X R
N C B R C E N
S A A G N I T B R
S U A L C A T N A S N
B D X M E I P
Y O J Q E M W D S
P G U S T N E S E R P
A L B G P W T N M K W Q F
C H R I S T M A S
O M S U N T R E E N W
Z N C D E K H D X J O V D
B G Z U E R L G I C V W R V F
P X M A E I Y Q H K U
M R M G W G L H D V K N E
X C X R J E N C M A M R R U X
B C Z O W V P A E G W F L H S Q I
U E V
C J A
V W D



EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Would you like a copy of the OPASS newsletter emailed to you instead of coming via snail mail? It's easy, just give the office a ring and ask to be put on the list. Phone 5232 9420.

PRIVACY STATEMENT: The right to dignity and privacy, to voice concerns and to advocate. For further information please refer to your Client Handbook or discuss with an Older Persons and Ability Support Service Officer on 5232 9420.



COLAC OTWAY
SHIRE IS ON
FACEBOOK

FOLLOW US TO KEEP UP
TO DATE WITH THE
LATEST INFORMATION
THAT IS HAPPENING
AROUND THE SHIRE