

High school entry #13: Hunter TAFE



The T-VET

Telegraph



SWITCHED ON: Mavis Langley with her new mobile phone.

— Picture by Joshua Price

Never too old to learn new technologies

By JOSHUA PRICE

CESSNOCK couple Charlie and Mavis Langley, both aged in their 80s, are pulling themselves into the 21st century with a mobile phone.

Sixty years ago their main form of contact with family was by landline telephone or through letters.

But 12 months into taking on the new technology, they say they are coping well.

Today's younger generation's access to email, mobile phones, instant messaging and landline telephones means they are linked to the world in a faster and broader way than the couple could ever have imagined.

A DVD player was the first item to enter their home after the technological boom.

Before that they had a radio, TV and VCR, and the addition of another remote was enough to cause chaos.

"Each time they wanted to watch something on the DVD player, they had to call me," their daughter Ms Kerrie Langley said.

Mavis bought a mobile phone 12 months ago to save money keeping in touch with her tech-savvy children.

"The new technology is sometimes difficult to understand," she said.

"I ignore the fancy features because I only need to make phone calls."

Giving alms for the poor

By RACHEL BRADLEY

SOUL Cafe at Hamilton is one of many services in Newcastle making life a little more liveable for homeless Novocastrians.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there were 99,900 homeless persons in Australia in 2001.

It was found in Newcastle City Council's 2006 Housing Report that at least 3000 Novocastrians face homelessness every day.

The cafe is a place where the homeless can go for a free meal and someone to talk to.

Seven years ago Life Church Senior Pastor Kevin Wilcox began providing homeless people with breakfast.

The church then raised \$80,000 and with other donations built the cafe. In 2005 it received \$38,000 from the Newcastle Permanent Building Society for a new ceiling and more lights.

Chef Nikki Gibson said homeless people were people who were hurting, need help, are traumatised and, in some way, are living in survival mode.

The cafe has 20 to 30 homeless visitors among about 150 customers every day. They discover it by word of mouth or at support agencies where business cards are displayed with meal times on them.

Legal aid and counselling sup-



DOOR TO BETTER FUTURE: The entrance to Soul Cafe at Hamilton.

— Picture by Rachel Bradley

port are also available.

Its Life House ministry also runs Celebrate Recovery, a 12-step mentoring program for homeless men, five of whom are given an opportunity to live in a house and work with a mentor to reconnect with the community.

Ms Gibson said being homeless fell into many different categories.

"It can affect anyone from any walk of life," Ms Gibson said.

"Some are youth running away from abuse or foster homes or suffer a mental illness.

"Many homeless people go from home to home, sometimes paying their way, sometimes not.

"But they generally exhaust all support because they don't know how to live in a socially acceptable situation.

"Other homeless have drug addictions and choose to feed their

addiction instead of focusing on their basic day-to-day needs."

She said that even on the streets homeless people developed co-dependency and often cannot be separated from other people because they have learnt to rely on each other.

"They feel like they have no self-worth and develop a victim mentality, finding it difficult to change their way of thinking."



WORRYING: Many young people's parents are reportedly buying them alcohol.

Nice beer, but where did you get it?

By SHANNON WEST

TWO-thirds of 60 Year 11 students anonymously surveyed this month at a Newcastle high school say their parents had bought them alcohol.

Asked "Where do you buy your alcohol", two-thirds said their parents bought it for them, 46 per cent had adult siblings who bought it and 63 per cent said older friends bought the alcohol.

A small number also know of outlets where alcohol can be bought without ID.

And 85 per cent of regular student drinkers said their parents knew and were either fine with it or supported it.

Students whose parents supply alcohol said it was a way to supervise consumption.

"My parents buy alcohol for me so they know how much I'm drinking. If someone else buys it for me they have no control over

it," one student said.

Another said "they know that if I don't get alcohol from them, I'll just get it from somewhere else".

The school's principal was disappointed but unsurprised.

"Adults need to be more responsible and acknowledge that it is their obligation, not only to stop encouraging underage drinking but to take active steps in preventing it," the principal said.

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How much for your soul?

Editorial

By **BRYCE MCINTOSH, MICHAELA ALDCROFT** and **NICKY KOCHMANZ**

IT seems that everywhere teenagers turn today they are faced with new choices and decisions to make about their lives. With the recent uproar of World Youth Day, it may have occurred to some teenagers that they are being forced to subscribe to religion.

As public high school students, some teenagers are forced to watch and hear religious spiels disguised through dance troupes, enlightenment speeches and strength displays.

But young people have enough decisions to make without the outside pressure of conflicting religions trying to buy their commitment. An example is days at local high schools where religious youth groups come to 'enlighten' students, offering free amusement rides, food and iPods, all for the 'small' price of accepting their religion.

Many young people attending public high schools believe they have the right to be free

from religious pressure at school and that these religious displays are an act of manipulation. Do public school principals have the right to make their students engage in religion?

The Shine Program is run by the Hillsong Church for troubled schoolgirls. This program is designed to help these young girls overcome their difficult lifestyles. But some of these girls may be unaware about the religious influences within this program and are convinced through the program that religion is the answer.

This sort of pressure can also happen at people's homes when religious people approach houses, ring the doorbell and then, when people decide not to answer knowing why they are at the door, they place unwanted leaflets in relation to God and Christianity inside the mailbox.

Teenagers should be free from the pressure and obligations of religion, if that is what they choose. Religion should not be pushed on the younger generation.

While some teenagers may not necessarily believe religion itself is an incorrect way to approach life, they have their own, honest thoughts about how religion can guide certain people onto the right track.

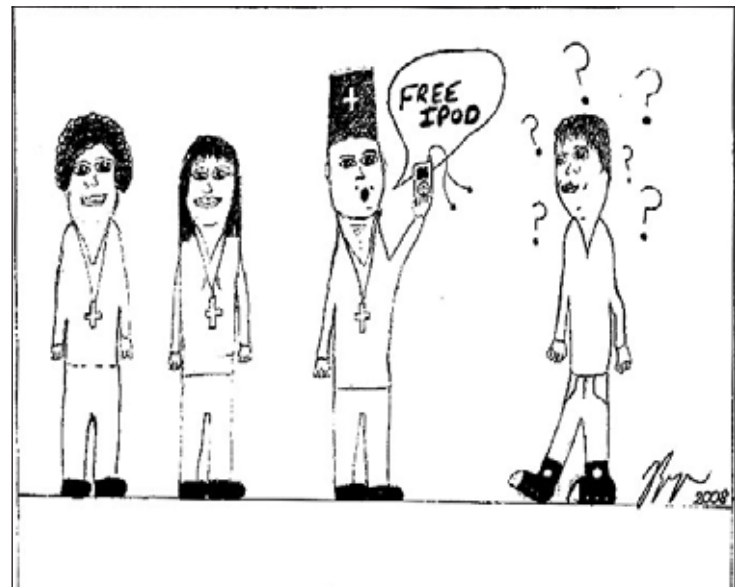


Illustration by Bryce McIntosh



THAT'S GOLD: Hunter TAFE students Nash Mason, left, and Mitchell Edwards.

Youth hit back over zine criticism

By **ELLA REED** and **M.J. BAUER**

NEWCASTLE City Council's The Loft youth venue has come under fire recently due to criticism over the perceived negativity of some articles in a recent zine publication.

The Loft is a council-funded youth organisation for teenagers in the Newcastle area.

It is a safe place for them to join groups and activities and meet other teens.

One of the activities at the Loft is *Inzine*, a youth-created magazine that is a platform for children to get their works published.

Recently some members of the public and councillors were critical about an issue in which there were stories about drug use and suicide.

It was reported that some of those critics had admitted they had not even read the magazine nor were aware of what The Loft does. Some council members were outraged by some of the content and connotations of 'emo' stereotypes.

But the criticism appeared to ignore that the zine included information on who young people should contact if they are feeling down.

Australia now, next the world

By **EMMA WELLS**

THE Hunter TAFE Institute won three gold medals at the 2008 WorldSkills Australia competition at Darling Harbour in Sydney from July 11 to 13.

About 500 of Australia's best apprentices and trainees competed in 58 skills categories.

They had been through a series of regional competitions to qualify for the national event.

Hunter TAFE had 19 competitors, with eight students winning gold, silver or bronze medals.

Mitchell Edwards, Nash Mason and Justin Laidlaw won gold.

Nash is a fourth-year refrigeration apprentice, Mitchell a fourth-year joinery apprentice and Justin

is a vehicle painter.

They are looking forward to the international WorldSkills competition in Canada in 2009.

"I was stoked to get here," Nash said.

"It was pretty hard having to do four timed tasks in three days. The hardest was piping a single-door fridge."

Institute director Mr Phil Cox said it was an incredible achievement for 19 Hunter TAFE students to progress.

Categories Hunter students competed in included beauty care, bricklaying, hairdressing, heavy vehicles, sheet metal and sign craft.

More than 70,000 people attended the competition at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Abuse of parking for the disabled a problem

By **KAITLIN LAWRENCE** and **T'ARNE MCDOUGALL**

A LIGHTNING survey of people parking in spaces for people with a disability has again raised the problem of people abusing the use of the RTA's mobility car parking scheme.

Disabled parking spaces outside three major shopping centres were observed for one hour on Thursday, August 21, with a number of cars seen in such spaces without disabled parking permits.

Although at one of the

centres all the people in the spaces had a permit, at another centre five of the 12 vehicles parked in disabled spaces did not have permits displayed, although most just used the spaces for a quick 'stop and go' visit.

A Newcastle City Council representative said that disabled parking spaces in most shopping centres were not enforced by the council.

The council said that the disabled parking spaces in shopping centres were largely "self-enforcing".



RIGHT OF WAY: Kaitlin Lawrence makes use of a disabled car parking space.

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Who is on the \$100 note?
See page 62 for answer.



Here for learning.



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