

Hard News Story Assessment 2

The East Gippsland shire council's meeting last month's agenda outlined a \$2.4M upgrade to the Bairnsdale industrial estate's water supply through a bushfire recovery scheme.

The upgrade expects land holders in the area to contribute funding, but the council said it is going to save land holders in the estate money when installing private firefighting services for buildings exceeding 500 metres squared, this is supposedly going to "develop effective use of the land".

After East Gippsland lost infrastructure from the fires, initiatives to make the area safer for everyone will always receive approval from the community.

East Gippsland has a bush fire recovery committee who have devised lengthy recovery action plans with all of ongoing projects and programs to support the community.

Funds were granted to the East Gippsland Marketing Inc (EGMI) to promote tourism in the area, but with the pandemic following so closely to the fires, this industry has struggled.

With many homes in the area finally finishing their rebuilds, the trades industry in East Gippsland is bustling, with most trade industries in the area booked out into 2023.

But the shire's move to have local landholders contribute to the upgrade could receive criticism from the community as a large portion of the community has already expressed frustrations with the shire's effort following the fires, feeling that the pandemic overruled the seriousness of damage caused by the fires.

The pandemic and its lockdowns have caused a more extensive rebuild for East Gippsland with so much industry shut down, but the community is hoping that entering 2022 East Gippsland can return to some normalcy.

Partner Colour Story

The East Gippsland Art Gallery, situated in a small building on Nicholson St Bairnsdale, has suffered along with many other local businesses from bushfires and now pandemic but has felt that these unfortunate circumstances have allowed them to "engage with the community".

The Gallery has even hired an Art therapist that has been working across East Gippsland since the bushfires. The Gallery feels a great importance in its power to use art as a way of 'healing' after the trauma experienced by the community.

The most recent East Gippsland Shire council meeting was held Tuesday this week and their agenda outlined full support of more grant opportunities for the local Arts and Heritage community.

The Gallery is grateful for this support and believes it helps to "enrich the community with valuable arts, culture and heritage within this vast area of Victoria".

Many local businesses have expressed frustrations with the Victorian Government after the bushfires, feeling forgotten since the pandemic.

The gallery said while "day to day business has not been affected, programming of the gallery has definitely changed".

But the Gallery feels strongly the Victorian Government has "stepped up" for the arts community during these trying times with all of state funded organisations offering direct help with things such as gallery programming for the smaller Galleries such as East Gippsland's. While the last two

years have been less than ideal for the community, the arts community has found a way to remain positive and use their strengths to help rebuild the community of East Gippsland.

Reflection

Refection Hard News is a new writing style for me, it's interesting but also challenging. When I began these pieces I viewed my local council agenda, with the bush fires in mind (wanting to write about something not COVID related) as East Gippsland was heavily affected it is an absolutely newsworthy topic for the audience, as many locals have expressed that they feel the fires have been forgotten. However, living rurally, I found my council agenda had allot of smaller topics that probably weren't as newsworthy as those in more metro areas. Reflecting, I wish I had of done this piece on a topic less from the agenda as I feel like I could have written a much 'newsier' and 'pitchable' story. Something more specifically important to my local area and council such as the Kalbar mine, or solely about the bush fires. Contacting sources was probably my main challenge with this assignment, I suffer with a little social anxiety. I opted for emailing my sources as I felt it would be an easier interaction and easier to refer to something written, which I realised was a mistake when I got to two days before this assignment was due and had only heard back from one, which was for my colour story. I decided it was time to try and call some sources, I tried to contact a local councillor. I wrote down what I wanted to say, knowing I need a guide but when she answered the phone a wave of nervous feeling came over me, I got tongue tied and I barely could say "Hi my name is Dakota, I am a student Journalist from RMIT Melbourne" after confusing the poor councillor was when I got in contact with you. Looking back at this interaction now I realise that I probably was stressed that I wouldn't get the info I needed for this assignment, felt I should've taken a different approach and really was just afraid to mess up. After hearing back from the art gallery, I was given what I needed to write my colour story which I wrote first. I like the way a colour story can come together, living rurally my local papers are full of allot of colour story's so I realised it's a form of journalism that I am more familiar with and it's the type of journalism I fell involve with. I like to hear what the people of different communities are feeling, because without them, there would be no community to write about. I recognise the importance, as a journalist, to share not only the news of the world, but also to share how people are affected, as pieces that are relatable and heartfelt get the message across in a different but equally as important way as hard news. The hard news story was really challenging to write with no sources, I am not happy with it, but happy that I do have something written. Again, I feel that a different approach would have suited writing a better news story for my audience, but I now recognise this and have learnt allot from it. I understand where I should've worked harder and pushed myself harder for this assessment. Hard news is incredibly important, getting the point across quickly is easy for everyone to take in, I know myself as a skim reader of news that good hard news is still Even without sources I have tried to add a community and political stance for both sides of my Hard News, that is why I love journalism, it's about everyone and informing everyone what truths are in our power to share. I liked in my colour story how I was able to give the stance from the gallery and wish I enabled myself to be able to write like this in my hard news story. I do, however, feel that the angle of my hard news (the upgrade to the water supply) is a good news story, but probably has a quite selective audience for Bairnsdale. Unless you held land in this estate or worked in it regularly it probably wouldn't hold much importance.