

With the end of school holidays around the corner and limited travel destinations on the cards, why not spend some time exploring our backyard? We are so lucky to call South Gippsland home and there is definitely not a lack of attractions and activities for the whole family to enjoy. To make it easier, here are a few suggestions:

- Coal Creek Community Park and Museum is open daily during the school holidays from 10.00am to 4.00pm with free entry. Tickets can be booked online at www.coalcreekcommunityparkandmuseum.com
- Hit the Great Southern or Grand Ridge Rail Trails either on your bike or in your runners.
- Visit Cape Liptrap Lighthouse and explore the remnants of the Lime Kilns in Walkerville.
- Cast a line from Port Welshpool Long Jetty or at a fishing platform along the Tarwin River.
- Take a scenic drive and explore some of our beautiful towns and villages along the way.
- Discover the natural beauty of Agnes Falls.
- Looks to the skies! South Gippsland is a bird-lovers paradise with a huge range of species in Toora, Meeniyah and at Bald Hills Wetland Reserve.
- For the creatives, head to your local art space. There are many artworks on exhibition across our Shire.

While you are out and about, remember to support our local hospitality and retail businesses. They have been doing it tough during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking of support, South Gippsland Shire Council's Small Grants Program for October opened on Friday 1 October. These grants are accessible for community, volunteer and not-for-profit organisations and are designed to be flexible, minimise burden on volunteers, provide opportunities and increase self-reliance. Organisations can apply for grants of up to \$1,000 now at www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants until the end of October.

The AFL Grand Final was certainly celebrated differently for many of us this year, but for one former Leongatha local, it was just another year. Matt Stevic umpired his ninth AFL Grand Final in 10 seasons and had a first-hand look at the magnificent game that was played.

Congratulations to you Matt on such an amazing achievement. Being selected once would be a privilege, but nine times is just astounding!

While we are on the topic of AFL, we would also like to congratulate Poowong local Jai Newcombe for being named the best first-year player at the Box Hill Hawks in the VFL. You have had an amazing year and are really pushing hard to become a permanent player at the senior level. We cannot wait to see what you achieve next.

Kerryn Ellis – Chief Executive Officer