

Cr Rae's Message



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

It has been another busy few weeks for myself and my Councillor colleagues with plenty of opportunities to recognise what makes our Shire such a great place.

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending the Rural Councils Victoria conference in Swan Hill alongside our CEO, Allison Jones. The conference was a valuable opportunity to connect with other rural and regional councils, share ideas and discuss the issues that matter most to our communities.

One of the things that stood out to me was just how fortunate we are in our own region. We have access to mostly reliable rainfall and productive agricultural land, relatively low unemployment and a strong local economy. These are assets that we cannot take for granted and we need to continue working together to protect them and make the most of the opportunities they provide.

Food providence and the protection of agriculture are particularly important. Supporting local food production and ensuring agricultural land remains productive is not just about our farmers, it is about food security, jobs, our local economy and the future resilience of our communities.

Our region also offers fantastic opportunities for recreation and tourism, particularly as we move into the warmer months. The opening of trout season is always a welcome occasion for anglers and visitors, while our abundant deer population provides an opportunity for responsible local hunting.

There is certainly no shortage of deer across our region. In fact, as I like to say, if you can't find a trout, you should be able to find a deer!

More importantly, there is an opportunity to look at how commercial-scale deer harvesting can be undertaken locally and responsibly, with benefits flowing back into our communities. We have the resource, so we should look at ways to support local processing and value-adding wherever possible.

On Sunday, I was honoured to attend the South Gippsland Districts Scout Awards and Presentation at Bell Park in Lang Lang. It is always a pleasure to recognise the achievements of our young people and the enormous contribution made by our volunteers.

Scouting provides young people with opportunities to develop confidence, leadership, practical skills and a strong connection to their community. Events such as the awards presentation are a wonderful reminder of the dedication of our young people, their families and the volunteers who support them. I say to them all – continue to DYB DYB DYB!



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Finally, September is “Gippy Girls Can Month”. I want to reiterate the importance of continued investment in women’s sport. Across our communities, women and girls are participating in sport at all levels and they deserve access to quality facilities, equipment and opportunities.

Investing in women’s sport is an investment in the health, wellbeing and future of our entire community. We should continue to encourage participation, celebrate achievements and ensure that our sporting facilities meet the needs of everyone.

There is plenty happening across our region and I look forward to continuing to work with members of our community to support the opportunities ahead.