

# Court puts brakes on repeat offender

## Driver jailed for ignoring licence disqualification four times in two months

MITCH MOTT

FOUR counts of driving while disqualified have landed a Mount Gambier man behind bars for more than a year.

William Roland Yates, 39, was taken into custody during his last court appearance on March 8 when he was seeking an adjournment.

Magistrate Teresa Anderson noted Yates had consistently reoffended, driving when his licence was disqualified and said as prison time was inevitable, he should start serving it immediately and not be a risk to the community.

Last week, when Yates appeared in the Mount Gambier Magistrates Court in the custody of Corrections, he had already been in Mount Gambier Prison for over a week.

The court heard he drove while disqualified from holding a licence on November 17 in Tantanoola, November 26 in Compton, February 2 in Millicent and February 13 in Mount Gambier.

On November 26, Yates was also caught driving at 128kph in a 110kph zone.

The court heard Yates had never held a licence, though he had applied for his learner's permit

more than five years before the offences.

He pleaded guilty to all charges and because of the impending jail time received a minor fine of \$100 for the speeding offence.

Ms Anderson read Yates' criminal history and observed he had numerous instances of driving while disqualified and under the influence of alcohol which had previously been punished by terms of imprisonment either suspended or served.

The most serious of the offences was a district court charge which led to Yates serving 18 months imprisonment for driving danger-

ously and causing serious injury.

Yates' lawyer told the court her client had struggled with alcohol and drug abuse during the period of his life when he served jail time for the other driving charges.

However, since a serious medical issue landed him in hospital he had kicked both habits and had been actively looking for work and education opportunities.

"He has shown complete disregard for orders of disqualification," Ms Anderson said, telling the defendant evidence of his irrev- erent attitude stretched back to 1999 when his criminal record began.

Yates was sentenced to two months for the Tantanoola offence, three months for when he was caught in Compton, four months and two weeks for the Millicent offence in the new year and six months for the final offence in Mount Gambier.

Ms Anderson said there was a need to reflect the increasing seriousness of the charges through the length of the sentences and ruled the terms would need to be served back to back.

In total, Yates will serve 15 months and two weeks in prison with a non-parole period of eight months.

## Mental health group launches fundraising effort

MITCH MOTT

COMMUNITY support has been flooding in to help The South East Junction kick off its new year fundraising activities.

Celebrating April Fools' Day on April 1, The Junction in partnership with numerous local service clubs and organisations will host a wine auction and dinner at the Attamurra Golf Course.

The event will feature and promote local wines and food with wine guru Doug Balnaves set to recount his tales of working in the wine industry and travelling to New York to follow his passion.

"This is all about raising awareness for people with mental health issues," The Junction coordinator Nel Jans said.

"We had to do this fundraiser now so that we could continue with our programs."

The Junction provides mental health activities and resources to the South East community with the goal of helping those suffering from mental health issues to become independent, happy and have fulfilling lives.

"We are planning to run an adjusted mental health first aid program and we continue to run mindfulness seminars at the Mount Gambier Library," Ms Jans said.

"The range of activities is very broad, from psycho-social education and helping people learn to cope better with mental health issues to healthy



**A FINE VINTAGE:** Nel Jans and Chris Plunkett are already preparing for April 1, when The Junction will host its first large fundraiser, a wine auction and dinner at Attamurra Golf Course.

cooking and everything in between."

Tickets for the event are \$50 plus a bottle of wine to go towards the auction, with David Kenseley as master of ceremonies for the evening.

Lovers of all things wine are encouraged to attend as some of the region's most prestigious and award winning vintages will be present in the auction

and as prizes in the raffle.

Event partners The Mount Gambier Golf Club, Stand Like Stone, Soroptomist International, Rotary and Lioness clubs have all supported the event.

Tickets are available from The Junction by emailing junctioncoord@gmail.com or calling 0477 886 450.

## Mount Gambier residents silent on strategic blueprint

BRETT KENNEDY

A STRATEGIC blueprint shaping Mount Gambier over the next three years has failed to attract a strong community response.

Mount Gambier City Council's draft 2016/17 community plan, a four-year vision of ongoing sustainability and prosperity, has attracted just 22 responses since it was released to the public on March 1.

Four focus pillars shape the document, with people, location, diverse economy and climate, natural resources, arts, culture and heritage identified as key foundation areas.

Councillor Steve Perryman told elected members at last week's monthly meeting only 19 online responses had been received, along with three written submissions.

"Half of me says that is not enough, the other half says in the context of council's consultation processes, that is probably around the mark," Cr Perryman said.

"This is a strategic direction which will be set for council for the remainder of the term and it is important we encourage all within the community to have some sort of input," he said.

With public consultation open until March 31, Cr Perryman implored residents to take part in the discussion.

"An inclusive city where people lead fulfilling lives" is a key statement behind a council's vision, which has been based on aspirations identified in the 2014 Futures paper study which received around 600 submissions from residents.

Improving school retention rates, providing better health outcomes, greater recognition of Boandik heritage and progressing a cross-city shared bicycle and walking path are among goals and actions outlined in the plan.

Launching the document earlier this month, Cr Frank Morello said the action document would guide the city towards becoming increasingly connected, productive and prosperous.

A strong focus on economic development underpins the plan.

"While it is important to value add to our traditional industries, it is equally vital to grow new industries and commercial services, secure export opportunities and explore new technologies to diversify our economy," Cr Morello said.

"We also need a dynamic and flexible workforce that meets the demands of a growing and changing economy."

Cr Morello said tourism, including cultural and event tourism, was one potential growth area.

"To be considered in the same breath as the Barossa Valley or Kangaroo Island, we need unity and clarity of vision that can be articulated to industry, government and potential investment partners," he said.

Separate youth and cultural strategies are also targeted under the document to aid in the empowerment of both demographics.

Visit [www.haveyoursaymountgambier.com.au](http://www.haveyoursaymountgambier.com.au) to view the draft plan and provide feedback to council.

## IN BRIEF

### Drink driving report

A WOMAN has had her licence suspended for six months and her car impounded for 28 days after being caught drink driving at Lucindale on Saturday.

At about 1.55am, police were monitoring a nearby festival when they stopped the woman's car on Musgrave Avenue.

Police will allege the 26-year-old returned a positive reading of .142, just under three times the legal limit.

She will be summonsed to appear in court at a later date.

## Community Crime Prevention

Your Community, Your Say

### 2016-17 Graffiti Prevention Grants Applications Now Open

Victorian Councils are invited to apply for grants of up to \$25,000 to partner with community groups to deliver local graffiti prevention initiatives.

Applications close 4.00pm

Friday 29 April 2016

How do I find out more?

Links to the application form, Grant Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions are available at:

[crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/graffitigrants](http://crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/graffitigrants)



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