

Cartoon: Jared Anderson

Taking a bite out of shark attacks

EDITORIAL

By **LUCINDA BURGESS** and **KETHANA ATKINS**

SHARKS are generally portrayed as vicious killing machines who take many lives. Shark attacks often receive additional media attention and as a result, a constant fear grows over most people when they hear about them.

Unfortunately, sharks are hardly recognised for being the beautiful sea creatures they are and many forget that we are entering their homes when we enter the water. It is extremely rare to be killed by a shark and we are more likely to be hit by a falling coconut and die than from a shark attack.

Because of fear, people have strong opinions about shark culling when really we are entering their habitat. Shark culling means that shark existence is at risk. Sharks are being culled more rapidly than their population can recover. Sharks kill an average of 12 humans every year whilst according to the shark project, humans kill 200 million sharks per year.

Samantha Vaughan believes that "when we enter the ocean we need to recognise and respect all creatures that call the crystal blue

sea, home." Sharks are a mysterious beauty and play a big role in the marine life, keeping the food chain balanced. They also leave the tasty and healthy fish for our enjoyment because it is more likely for them to prey on the slowest weakest fish. If we eventually kill all the sharks the creatures of the sea would be disturbed by the extinction of the shark through changes to the food chain.

Humans need to better understand sharks in order to live peacefully with them. This includes understanding shark attacks. Many documentaries focus on sharks making a transition from juvenile to adults where during feeding they possibly mistake swimmers as seals or other sea creatures.

There are many precautions that are in place to warn people before entering the ocean. Things such as patrolled beaches, signage and recommendations to stay close to the shore and to avoid dusk and dawn as this is believed to be the most dangerous time to swim.

There is a mixture of grace and danger to sharks and as long as humans respect and make an effort to understand these sea creatures then there shouldn't be any problems. The media should be used to promote safety in the water which includes the education of swimming in the shark's home.

Differences in our community are key

By **AMITY PETERSEN**

THE stereotype of normal can marginalise and exclude groups within society. As a community it is essential we embrace and include our differences.

Some things that can be done to include difference within schools are to invite individuals who don't fit into the typical stereotype into social groups. Include everyone in the conversation and make them feel welcome, play games and they could also talk about their differences.

The staff at East Maitland Public School does an amazing job at including difference both in the class and playground setting. They're ensuring children from the special education units are participating in mainstream sports, and integrating them in mainstream classrooms throughout the school.

Schools are also providing Student Learning Support Officers (SLSOs) to support individual students and their needs.

At East Maitland Public School students with special needs are invited and included in lunch and recess play interacting and bonding with mainstream students.

Year 6 teacher Mr Payne said "we are lucky at East Maitland Public School that we have students from a wide variety of backgrounds which gives our students a great perspective of the world around them."



Including different people into our lives can help us become better individuals.
Picture: Amity Peterson

The community is doing a fantastic job at including difference. They are holding fundraisers and awareness days such as The Buddy Walk, World Down Syndrome Day, Harmony Day and other great awareness and fundraisers that promote and embrace all walks of life.

Perhaps one day differences will be accepted in everyone's hearts, and if we keep doing what we are doing to include difference we would be a much more cohesive and vibrant society. Remember difference is a good thing and if there were no difference in the world, it would be all the same and boring.

Where is the second level of shopping

By **ELLA REGTER** and **JESIKA YOUNG**

STOCKLAND Greenhills is the main shopping centre for Maitland and its surrounding areas. It's where the community go to purchase supplies or indulge in retail therapy.

Recent talk of adding a second floor raises discussions about what this would mean for local shoppers.

It is hoped that when the second floor is built, it will provide more profits for store owners, more

employment opportunities, including the builders that will construct the second storey. It will boost the economy by shoppers buying more products and increasing the workforce at the centre both during construction and in the extra shops added by the extension.

Resident Brittney Callaghan was in support of the development stating "more variety of clothing shops would be great. You can never have too many shops". Maitland is behind nearby areas such as New-



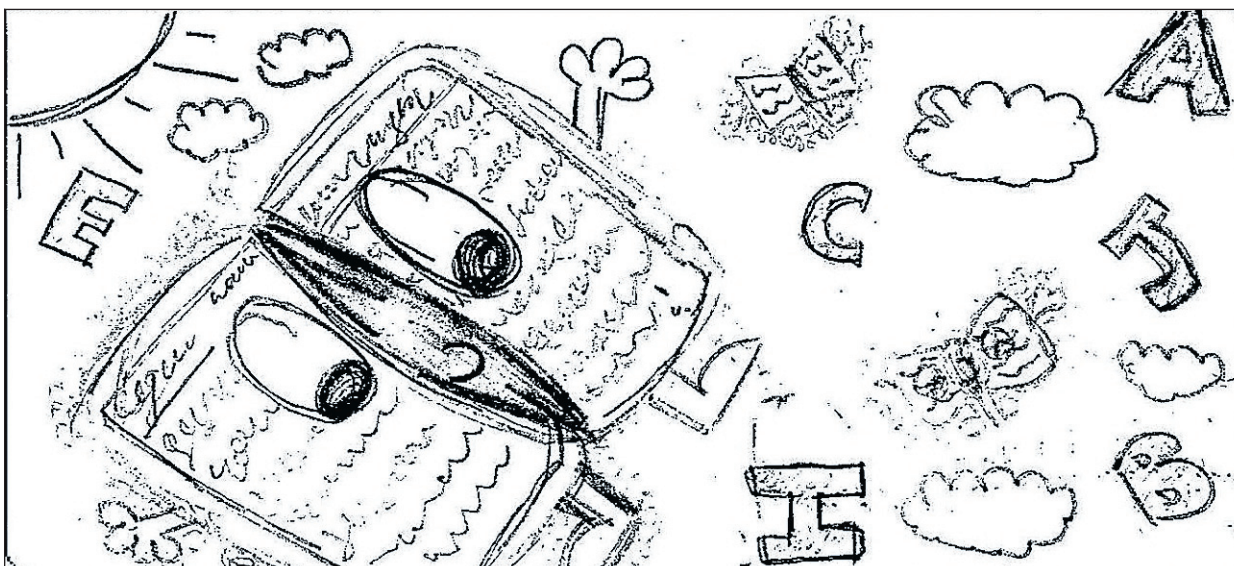
Stockland Greenhills is set to expand.

castle in the amount of shops available to locals. Building a second storey means that shoppers wouldn't feel the need to travel to bigger shopping centres for higher quality and more store variety.

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