

Primary entry #14: Anna Bay Primary School



# ANNA BAY BREEZE



TEAM: The Port Stephens Women's Cancer Support Group.

Picture: Chelsea Thoroughgood

## Support on offer to ease the pressure

By RACHAEL LANSDOWN,  
PARIS BELLE MILNE and  
CHELSEA THOROUGHGOOD

CANCER. The mere mention of the word strikes fear in countless families every year, affecting not only the patient but also the lives of those around them.

However, a group of brave women are determined to change perceptions and attitudes towards cancer by demonstrating that there is life with and after cancer.

The Port Stephens Women's Cancer Support Group, set up in May 2012 by Anna Bay cancer survivor Sarah Litten, supports all sufferers who have been diagnosed with cancer at any stage in their lives.

"Our group is for women with all types of cancer and provides an opportunity for them to discuss their feelings and the impact cancer has on their lives," Ms Litten said.

"It's information that the professionals cannot provide."

The small group meets once a month to participate in activities such as meditation, nutrition, yoga and candle making, which aim to assist in relaxation and general well-being during and after treatment. "The group helps you learn what you can do to help yourself," she said.

Future plans include transportation to and from hospital treatments through fund-raising and donations. For information contact 0434 109 841.

## Fish to feed their future

By MAIGAN LYME, EBONY JAMES and JACK BROOKER

HELPING our poorer neighbours feed themselves is the thinking behind projects involving scientists at the Port Stephens Fisheries Institute.

Their co-operative research is part of development assistance from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

Dr Geoff Allan and his fellow scientists at the institute and other agencies believe that developing fish farming in needy communities could be one answer to help reduce malnutrition.

"Our challenge is to develop more productive fish farms in countries such as Vietnam, Thailand and Papua New Guinea," Dr Allan said.

"We are helping our partners in developing countries to carry out research to produce the best local diet for fish, to help fish grow faster and to get the balance of nutrients right. We also assist with research into breeding and husbandry," he said.

Dr Allan said ACIAR's biggest successes are strong partnerships between governments, scientists and communities.

One technique used is for families to dig small fish ponds, some no bigger than a dining table, and to



AIDING NUTRITION: Young boys play beside the ponds that will feed their village in Vietnam.

fill them with water and fingerlings.

"Vegetables are planted in the soil on the banks of the ponds. This provides children and their families with a food source high in protein and no refrigeration is required. Families can go to ponds to prepare their evening meals," he said.

Dr Allan said the hatchery techniques developed at the institute are also helping to create new

farms for oysters in Vietnam.

"We have been fortunate to work in some of the poorest areas of Asia where many children get very little schooling, if any at all. We have been able to introduce this technology not only in people's homes, but also in community areas such as schools where the children don't have anything to eat," he said.

Closer to home, Dr Allan said Australia had well managed, sus-

tainable stocks of fish from the wild, but that increases in seafood supply would have to be met from an increase in aquaculture.

"One of our many challenges is how we operate in the dynamic marine environment and how we make it cost effective. We will continue to publish research and pass on our study results to fish farmers and aquaculture developers across Australia."

## First and last time for bush bash

By DEMI HAMPSTEAD  
and EMILY DAVIS

"THINK twice" is the message from 15-year-old Jaimie Ripley to anyone thinking about going paddock bashing.

In March, Jaimie was severely injured when the car she was in with friends rolled, leaving the Anna Bay teen with a shattered pelvis and wheelchair bound for seven weeks.

"My friends had gone paddock bashing the day before and said it was fun," she said. "I joined them the next day but I didn't think I would get hurt."

The car hit a patch of sand and rolled. Jaimie, who was not wearing a seatbelt at the time, was flung through the windscreen.

The Westpac Helicopter was called when it was suspected that Jaimie was suffer-

ing from internal bleeding. She also broke two vertebrae in her back.

A film crew arrived with the chopper as part of an upcoming television series. Jaimie hopes people who watch the show will realise the dangers associated with this popular pastime.

"Hopefully seeing me in that much pain may persuade kids not to make the same mistake."

LUCKY TO BE HERE:

Fifteen-year-old Jaimie Ripley

survived a paddock bashing accident.

Picture:

Emily Davis



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