



conveniently yours

Members' Newsletter

April 2022

TERANG & DISTRICT
CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

Established on the 2nd day of July, 1908

FROM THE CEO & CHAIRMAN

AS WE EMERGE FROM THE PANDEMIC, THE CO-OP CONTINUES TO PERFORM STRONGLY. ALTHOUGH IN THE PAST TWO YEARS WE HAVE NOTCHED UP RECORD PROFITS AND REVENUES, WE ARE STILL HITTING OUR OPERATIONAL BUDGETS. FROM A BUSINESS POINT OF VIEW, EVERYTHING IS GOING WELL.

Mitre 10 is going exceptionally well as the push for DIY continues; the IGA supermarket is performing to expectations and the Rural Store continues to reinvigorate itself as we work to get the model right and make sure we have the right stock when customers need it.

Our 2022 financial year finished at the end of February and shareholders can expect another solid result but not as good as last year's record \$1 million profit. That profit will be reinvested into the business and will continue to reap rewards for years to come.

Our investment in the supermarket is paying off. We believe we have the offer right for the community and the community is repaying us with their support. We are continually working on the product range, with a particular focus on local produce. Local people support us and, wherever we can, we support our region's suppliers by stocking and highlighting their goods.

One of our recent highlights has been the Camperdown Mitre 10 store being named the Mitre 10 Victoria-Tasmania



Kevin Ford, CEO



Geoff Barby, Chairman

Small Format Store of the Year. This is a great compliment to our staff and we are pleased that the Camperdown community has rallied behind this business.

The Terang Hardware store is a finalist in the store of the year section of the Australian Hardware Association state awards, with our Jo Bailey being a finalist in the employee of the year section.

It should also be noted that our IGA+Liquor supermarket is a finalist in seven categories at the IGA awards to be announced on 30th April 2022.

While things are going well, we are not resting on our laurels. The Board is always looking for the best outcomes for shareholders and the community and is developing strategic plans for the next 5-10 years. It has been another tough year for many people as we navigate our way out of the pandemic, but we are pleased to see that the Terang community spirit is alive and well.

DAIRY SERVICE BUSINESS CLOSES

THE CO-OP HAS MOVED OUT OF SPECIALIST DAIRY SERVICES WITH THE CLOSURE OF 360 DAIRY SOLUTIONS.

The GEA dealership for south-west Victoria has been taken over by Dairy Tech SE, a Mt Gambier-based dairy service business which has more than 40 years of dairy service history and is already a GEA dealer in South Australia. Dairy Tech SE opened a second branch in Warrnambool on 7th March and can be contacted on 08 87234562.

Terang Co-op Board Chair Geoff Barby said closing 360 Dairy Solutions

was a good strategic decision for both the Co-op and its members. "It allows a well-established, focused and knowledgeable dairy service business to enter the south west Victorian market and the Co-op to focus on its key strategic activities and retail strengths across our other business units," Geoff said. "The Co-op is confident this arrangement will offer our members and the farming community a comprehensive dairy service from a reputable dairy company and GEA agency."

The Co-op will continue to service the rural market through The Rural Store,

located on the corner of Baynes and Estcourt Streets in Terang, which stocks a general range of farm products to meet the retail farming needs of members. In addition to the retail focus, the Co-op will continue to operate a sheet metal fabrication and hydraulic hose repair business from the existing Peterborough Road site. Both these operations will continue to offer a convenient local service to the farming and plumbing markets.



Giving back to the community since 1908



IN THE SWIM

CUSTOMERS OF THE IGA SUPERMARKET HAVE DONE THEIR BIT TO MAKE IT SAFER AT THE TERANG POOL. THE IGA COMMUNITY CHEST CONTINUES TO GIVE BACK TO OUR LOCALS.

IGA is a network of 1,300 independent businesses and one of the ways these locally-owned businesses support their communities is through the Community Chest program. Money is raised mostly from a contribution from the sales of products with an IGA Community Chest ticket. The Community Chest has helped many organisations over the years, including the fire brigade and the hospital, and this year it was decided to donate to the Terang Swimming Pool Committee.

The \$1,631.20 cheque will go towards the purchase of new safety equipment and swimming aids. The Co-op nominates a different charity or community group each year to receive the Chest's support.

Nationally the IGA Community Chest program has raised more than \$96 million to support local communities and national charities including Special Olympics Australia, the McGrath Foundation and Vinnies.

WHATEVER YOU WANT

THE IGA SUPERMARKET HAS A REFRESHED LOOK AND WE ARE ALWAYS TRYING TO REFINE AND IMPROVE OUR RANGE OF PRODUCTS FOR SALE.

Over the next 12 months, the supermarket leadership team will continue to monitor new items that come onto the market, look at what sells well in other similar supermarkets and consult with product reps about the latest trends.

The supermarket also wants to hear from customers about their needs and preferences. "We want to keep improving customer service to meet expectations and give

them the best experience we can," supermarket manager Paul Bailey said. "We'd like to increase our local products with more locally produced meat, cheeses and wines," Paul added. "We're always trying to support our locals."

Regarding the Supermarket leadership team, a recent development has been the promotion of long-serving Grocery Manager, Darren Gee, to the position of Supermarket Assistant Manager. Darren will continue to report to the Supermarket Manager Paul Bailey. A big congratulations to Darren from the Co-op team.

LOOKING FOR A JOB?

LIKE MANY BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES, THE CO-OP HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING UNPRECEDENTED PROBLEMS IN FINDING STAFF. WHILE THE CO-OP IS CURRENTLY STAFFED ADEQUATELY, THERE HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS FILLING POSITIONS ACROSS ALL BUSINESSES.

CEO Kevin Ford said he had never seen such a shift during his time in retail. "It's a national problem affecting all areas... skilled or unskilled, it's across the board," Kevin said. "It's really difficult for us to get staff throughout our businesses. We are just managing with our existing staff levels and it is often casuals that step up and work extra hours which saves us. I've never experienced anything like this in my working life."

Kevin cited one example where the recruitment process was sped up to make a quick job offer after an interview, even before the normal process had been gone through, but the

applicant had already found another job. While it is hard to pinpoint why, the lack of backpackers to fill seasonal and agricultural jobs may have had a flow-on impact. In reality, there may be a number of contributing factors leading to this labour shortage.

One thing that has not changed is the quality of after school and school holiday students. "Over the years the co-op has been recognised within the community at giving a substantial number of students their first job in life and they have then gone on to be high achievers," Kevin said. This tradition remains and the CEO says that there is certainly a number of future community leaders within this current generation of "after school part timers".

Anyone interested in employment at the Co-op, should watch our Facebook page for positions or contact HR on 5592 1555 #6.



CAMPERDOWN STORE WINS AWARD

WITHIN A FEW YEARS, THE CAMPERDOWN HARDWARE STORE HAS GONE FROM BEING CLOSED TO WINNER STATUS.

Since being taken over by the Co-op in 2014, the store has been reopened and reinvigorated and it is proving to be popular with tradies, gardeners and home maintenance services.

Now that success has been formally recognised with the Co-op's Camperdown Mitre 10, at 57 Scott Street in Camperdown, being recognised as the best Small Format Mitre 10 store in the Victorian-Tasmania region. This state award was received in November at an awards of excellence night.

Mitre 10 Retail Division Manager Jo Bailey said it was a great honour to receive the state award.

For small stores, the award is based on dedication and time taken to not only provide the best shopping experience for customers, but to be an active and worthy contributor to the local community.

Store awards are assessed in number of key areas, including sales performance and innovation. After completing the Mitre 10 rebranding program in early 2020, the store took every opportunity to implement a full site review that led to improvements that included trade yard safety, trade ticketing, and strong housekeeping standards across the entire site.

LOCAL WINES ARE WINNERS

SOUTH-WEST VICTORIA MIGHT NOT HAVE THE REPUTATION OF THE BAROSSA VALLEY OR THE SOUTH OF FRANCE WHEN IT COMES TO MAKING WINE, BUT THE REGION IS MAKING SIGNIFICANT ADVANCES. THE CO-OP'S IGA SUPERMARKET LIQUOR DEPARTMENT HAS RUN A SPECIAL PROMOTION TO HIGHLIGHT THE GROWING RANGE OF LOCALLY PRODUCED WINE FROM THE REGION AND ACROSS VICTORIA.

Liquor manager Ebony Dillon said the competition supported all local wholesalers, with a 70-inch smart TV as an eye-catching prize. "We wanted to promote anything made from local small wineries and then we decided to extend it Victoria wide," she said.

There is a growing number of regional wine makers supplying the supermarket liquor department selling wines from The Grampians, Port Campbell and Dixie. There are more than 200 local and Victoria products available.



SOCIAL MEDIA BLITZ

THE CO-OP'S FACEBOOK PAGE CONTINUES TO GROW AND THE CO-OP IS ALSO NOW ON INSTAGRAM. OUR FACEBOOK PAGE IS NOW FOLLOWED BY OVER 2,200 PEOPLE, UP FROM AROUND 1,600 IN THE MIDDLE OF 2021.

The Co-op's Instagram page is continuing to gain followers, particularly among younger generations.

Following our social media pages is the best way to find out the latest news and about special promotions.

CELEBRATING UPGRADE

IT WAS SOMETHING WORTH CELEBRATING AND MEMBERS WERE THE WINNERS WHEN THE CO-OP HOSTED A PARTY FOR THE IGA SUPERMARKET REDEVELOPMENT.

The upgrade cost about \$900,000 and was designed to make shopping easier to navigate. The changes included removing three large grocery aisles from the entry of the store and opening a passage through to the deli area by using low-profile shelving, doubling the size of the meat chiller, installing new refrigeration, and extending the liquor store to incorporate a larger walk-in cool room.

As part of the celebrations, the Co-op invited the community to enjoy the benefits of the new-look store and have the chance to win great prizes. Everyone who spent more than \$50 in the store was eligible for the prizes. There were more than 100 spot prizes given away, along with daily major prizes culminating in a major prize of a two-minute grocery grab.



The grocery grab winner was Merv Hotker. Merv was assisted by staff to make sure he was able to get the best advantage from the prize and a trolley full of goodies.

Also as part of the promotion, 1,000 \$5 coffee vouchers were given away as a way of treating members and to support local businesses that were shut down or had restricted trading during COVID lockdowns. "That's \$5,000 we reinvested into the local community," supermarket manager Paul Bailey said. "It was very well received."

The community continues to appreciate the improvements. "We continue to receive really good feedback," Paul said.

KINGS AWAY

THE TERANG CO-OP MITRE 10 STORE IS A SOUTH-WEST VICTORIAN STOCKIST FOR ADVENTURE KINGS. POPULAR ADVENTURE KINGS CAMPING AND 4WD ACCESSORIES ARE NOW IN A PERMANENT DISPLAY.

Adventure Kings has recently expanded into Mitre 10 stores, including Terang. The Co-op's Mitre 10 Retail Manager, Jo Bailey, is expecting big things from the new range. "Kings are really popular. The display was added in the first week of December and we immediately had a positive response," Jo said. "Adventure Kings approached us to see if we were interested and we thought it would be a great addition for people who are keen on camping and the great outdoors."

The display includes a big range of affordable swags, tents, and various accessories for camping, 4WD and outdoor adventures. Adventure Kings items are Australian-made for Australian conditions.



ON THE FRONTLINE

THE COVID PANDEMIC HAS THRUST THE SPOTLIGHT ON ESSENTIAL FRONTLINE WORKERS, INCLUDING THOSE IN RETAIL.

Janine Grinter has been with the Co-op for 22 years but has never worked through such an emotionally charged and difficult time. Reflecting on two years as an essential worker in a pandemic, Janine says she is one of the lucky ones who was able to keep working and maintain human contact. But it has not all been easy. "At the start of the pandemic, it was very full on for the register workers. Everyone was panic buying, things like toilet paper, cereal, rice, flour, sugar," she said. "There was no understanding of what was happening. You could see where the panic came into it, but along with that people really lost their manners."

Janine admits staff copped abuse at the start. "It didn't matter how much we explained that it wasn't our fault, the warehouses couldn't keep up and that people buying 15 packets of toilet paper instead of one didn't help," she said. "We'd have customers buy a heap of toilet paper and return two days later and say they were down to their last roll, which was the popular saying of the time. Imposing product limits helped, but often customers would come to the registers with six packets of a two-limit item and say they didn't see the signs. Looking back on it now, we didn't know what was going on and we all had a bit of fear factor."

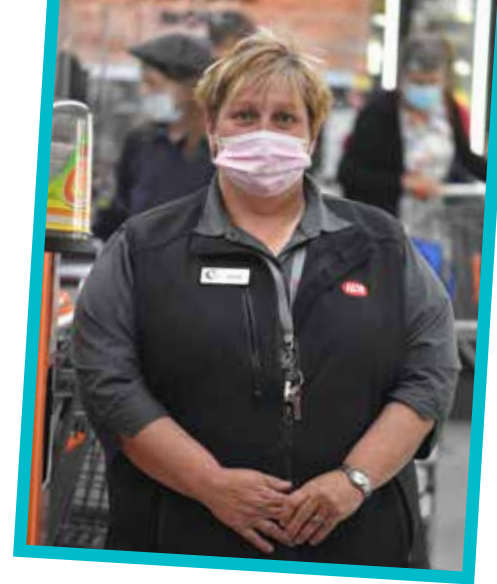
While the abuse was disappointing, other customers went the other way

and thanked the staff. "Now it's the mindset of a lot of people, going the next step to make sure to ask how you are, if you're coping all right."

Janine and her fellow frontline staff were quick to follow mask and vaccination directives. "I'm totally fine with a mask now," she said. "At the start it was a bit daunting and I had to drop it down and breathe but everyone gets used to them. Now we get up in the morning, put our uniform on, collect our keys, phone and mask and off we go."

The vast majority of customers adhered to mask and QR code rules when enforced. Now that the initial panic is over, Janine believes people have a better appreciation for frontline retail workers. "People say you're doing such a terrific job. It's so much easier now because the customers are more relaxed."

The Co-op has stayed open every day during the pandemic, but one incident that stands out in Janine's memory was when the IGA supermarket was identified as an exposure venue. "I actually took the phone call from the contact tracers on the Friday evening and they told me we had a shopper who had been exposed," Janine said. "I asked all the questions and followed the procedures we had put in place. We had to contact all staff who were on during that shift and contact all the customers who had manually signed in." Within an hour, all staff had been contacted and were in isolation and at 8am the next morning, Janine started ringing every customer on the list.



"Everyone was terrific about it, there was no panic," she said. The good news was that no staff or customers were exposed.

Janine says the pandemic has brought the staff team closer together. "We always worked really well as a team, but we're even closer now. Everyone has their ears open to make sure no-one gets abused and we're very protective of our younger staff."

Janine says that despite the occasional bad experience, helping people through a pandemic has been largely a pleasure. "We were luckier than most," said. "From three months into it, I said I was one of the lucky ones. Even though we copped abuse at the start, I got to communicate with different people every single day and got to meet new people from around the district who previously went to Warrnambool to shop. There are two sides to being a frontline worker. Like everyone else, we couldn't see our families but it didn't affect us greatly because we could keep working."

MORE FOR SHEEP FARMERS AT RURAL

THE RURAL AREA AROUND TERANG HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN DOMINATED BY DAIRY FARMS BUT MORE AND MORE PROPERTIES ARE CONVERTING TO BEEF, SHEEP AND EVEN CROPPING. THIS MEANS THE RURAL STORE HAS TO CHANGE WITH THE TIMES.

Acting Rural Store manager Will Bredin says the store is undergoing an overhaul, with an expanded focus on sheep products. The drive-through area is being rearranged to make access

easier and the store will continue to add variety in its ruminant inventory.

The Rural Store is also focusing on providing technical information to help farmers make the right product choices for their animals. "The store has been becoming increasingly competitive in the market place and we want to continue that trend and continue increasing product availability," Will said. The changes will be influenced by customer demand. "We'd love to get

feedback from the membership," Will said. "Traditionally the Co-op's Rural Store has tried to have everything for everyone, but we're trying to become more efficient in deciding what we have in stock and build a team that has knowledge and expertise across a broad range of the ag sector. We encourage people to have a chat to us and we will be responsive to feedback."

The Rural Store continues to offer a free delivery service in the region.

30-38 High Street, Terang VIC 3264 T (03) 5592 1555 E info@terangcoop.com.au

www.terangcoop.com.au

