

YOUR SAY

Sweet despair

Eve FISHER



THE intense saturation of our news services with all things viral has given pause for thought.

Clearly there is no other news, or at least news that people feel is worth absorbing, aside from procuring detailed instructions on how to make a face mask or how best to do in your neighbour for any manner of COVID transgressions, including refusing to feel the fear.

You know fear lowers your immune system, right?

As we sink ever deeper into the pit of selfless destruction that is the age of altruistic morality, I feel if I don't reveal this angst coherently, it will simply bubble to the surface and envelop not just myself, but everyone around me.

It's time to reveal the transgressions committed against one of the world's greatest unifying delights.

I am, of course, talking about chocolate. And other exemplary sugary treats that peppered our childhoods with joy and simplicity but have changed in recent incarnations.

Of course, no change in recipe is going to stop me imbibing and relishing the pleasure sugar so immediately brings, but upon consumption it will definitely elicit a dramatic and contempla-

tive espousal of how nothing stays the same.

Growth. Progress. Gentrification. Everything changes and our favourite sweets are not exempt.

Let's start with the biggest transgression, the Chokito bar.

A generous slab of fudge lovingly coated in a thin layer of heavenly Nestle chocolate and rice crispies.

Did I say generous slab? Sorry. It was generous. Now it's merely a smidgen of fudge injected, almost as an afterthought, into a thick mound of chocolate with a smattering of rice crispies.

It's nothing more than a fudge-flavoured fantasy of days gone by.

Obviously I'm offended by Chokito's transgressions because of its top-five status in my life, but I've reserved the true outrage for the newly presented Peppermint Crisp.

As it's another Nestle product, I'm beginning to fear there is a game at play and we are nothing more than pawns.

If you hark back to those heady days of consumer obsession, you will remember the Peppermint Crisp as a wide, flat, thinly coated chocolate bar filled with "glass".

And when I say filled, I mean jam-packed. The bar was all jade-green shards destined for the finest pavlova although the ample peppermint provision ensured there was always enough for both cake and mouth. Now the curved chocolate shell is a dominant force over the ever-shrinking distribution of peppermint.

Who could forget Chomps, the wafer caramel stalwart of mid-'90s schools canteens? But even this cheap and cheerful stayer with chewy ambitions could not escape the ruthless changemakers, no doubt hellbent of spending less money on chewy caramel and more on crispy and cost-efficient wafers.

Aero bars changed long ago and it was a terrible change. Remember the slogan from the '80s, "It's the bubbles of nothing that make it really something"? Never were truer words spoken. Until they changed the texture.

Gone were the light and fluffy bubbles that collapsed gently upon consumption, replaced instead with a dense alternative that put a stop to the crumbling goodness that was a delight to the tongue.

My final complaint is directed at

a sweet I've loved since I first sampled it as a newly arrived immigrant when I was nine years old.

A Redskin lolly was nothing I'd ever tasted. You could pull it like taffy or snap it like a boiled sweet. And the heavenly flavour ... it's raspberry, you know? I'd always assumed it was Redskin flavour.

The flavour has remained, seemingly unchanged. Its texture, however, has been ruined.

So while everyone is worrying about changing its name to something more racially acceptable, no one is mentioning the elephant in the room. A Redskin is no longer chewy and tough. Now it's soft and sickly (like humanity) and leaves all your teeth in your mouth. In my house we assume the product got safespaced by some OH&S guru who thought some poor sap may well choke on such a sticky delight.

Look, it's not all misery and decline. Take Cadbury chocolate, for example. Yes, the blocks are smaller but, in my humble opinion, the flavour and texture haven't changed. As far as chocolate goes, it is still the taste of my childhood.

And in a big win for advocates, the return of the Polly Waffle has undoubtedly proven that one should never give up. Some time next year the marshmallow wafer log will take pride of place among the others who have stood the test of time.

The big question now is, will it be a true Polly Waffle or just a nostalgic reminder that everything changes and nothing stays the same.



ADDY READERS HAVE THEIR SAY - LETTERS AND TEXTS

BIN COLLECTION OFFER JUST A LOAD OF RUBBISH

LAST Tuesday, July 21, some mischievous person placed our general waste rubbish bin behind a tree on our nature strip, and I happened to see the rubbish truck go driving past our house without stopping.

I went outside and discovered the bin behind the tree, but at this time the truck had reached the end of our street.

I then rang the City of Greater Geelong customer service and was told they had no way of contacting the truck driver, but to leave the bin out for two days and somebody would pick it up as soon as possible.

On Thursday, July 23, at 4pm, I again rang CoGG customer service to be told that the two days finish on Friday, so to leave the bin out as it was being attended to.

Come Friday, at 4.15pm I again rang CoGG customer service, only to be told a pick-up would still happen, so I did as I was told and at 11pm I brought the bin in.

Thank you CoGG customer ser-

vice for your brilliant handling of this situation and thank you to the rubbish collection service for your magnificent service.

What do we pay rates for?

Chris White, Grovedale

FIRE RESCUE VICTORIA A WORLD-CLASS SYSTEM

I'D like to take the opportunity to respond to the recent Geelong Advertiser article "Volunteers fire up over merger".

As Minister for Police and Emergency Services, I know that volunteers are the lifeblood of our community. I've had the privilege of meeting thousands of dedicated firefighters in my role, and each and every one has an unwavering commitment to community safety.

As our population grows and instances of fire increases across homes, businesses and commercial properties, we need to make sure Geelong and surrounds have the fastest fire response times possible.

Our firefighters were operating

under systems and structures that have not changed since the 1950s.

The establishment of Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) will give them — and the Victorian community — the world-class fire services they deserve.

FRV brings all paid firefighters across the state into one organisation and strengthens the CFA as a volunteer-only agency.

In our region, we will continue to see volunteers and career firefighters working side-by-side, just as they have for many years.

These reforms have not been undertaken lightly. Between February and March 2020, 54 engagement workshops were held with more than 1330 volunteers and we will continue to engage and support our volunteer firefighters in the days, weeks and months ahead.

We've also recently announced a \$126m investment for the CFA to go towards critical training and equipment and will continue to ensure the CFA has the funding necessary to remain a strong and sustainable agency into the future.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with the sector as we write a new chapter in modernising Victoria's fire services together.

Lisa Neville, Bellarine MP and Minister for Police and Emergency Services

PUBLIC SCRUTINY NEEDED ON PLANNING ISSUES

ONE of the first decisions made by our current council was to approve works to remedy Armstrong Creek's stormwater drainage mess, at a cost to ratepayers of more than \$18m.

We were told developer contributions had "run out" so the people had to bear the full cost.

While the public may never know the entire story as to how this planning disaster was allowed to happen nor who the chief beneficiaries were, one thing is certain: better governance is what Geelong needs.

Cr Aitken is right to push for a public register of property developer meetings as part of CoGG's transparency policy. It is much needed.

Doug Mann

Geelong Advertiser EDITORIAL

Train trip needs major rethink

THERE is a glaring big hole in the plan to restrict non-essential travel out of Melbourne into our region.

While police and ADF staff have diligently manned the freeway checkpoint near Little River to ensure motorists entering Geelong are only here for essential reasons, trains speed past several times a day transporting locals right into the heart of COVID-19 hot spots.

Commuters who need to travel to Melbourne by train are stopped at lockdown areas such as Wyndham, Tarneit and Footscray for fellow travellers to board. The Public Transport Users Association says this forced mixing with people from heavily infected and locked down areas has caused quite a lot of angst for Geelong travellers who have no option but to catch public transport.

While fewer passenger numbers has meant most services have provided opportunities to maintain social distancing with other commuters, this is not always achievable.

The suggestion of separating carriages for regional and Melbourne-based passengers is worth pursuing. While it might be difficult to police, it is at least a deterrent that would offer some degree of comfort to anxious local passengers.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1030 — King Olaf, patron saint of Norway, is killed in battle

1565 — Mary Queen of Scots marries Henry, Lord Darnley

1841 — Group of Maori chiefs sell about 1214ha around Waitemata Harbour, present site of Auckland, to New Zealand government

1890 — Vincent van Gogh, Dutch post-impressionist painter, dies two days after shooting himself

1914 — Transcontinental telephone service begins in the US with first phone conversation between New York and San Francisco

1948 — First Olympic Games after World War II open in London at Wembley Stadium

1981 — Prince Charles marries Lady Diana Spencer at St Paul's Cathedral in London

ADDY ONLINE POLL

Yesterday's question:

Have the COVID-19 outbreaks at meat processing plants deterred you from eating meat products?

YES 19% NO 81%

Register your vote at geelongadvertiser.com.au

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Letters should be less than 300 words, carry full name, address and phone number of writer and be signed. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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