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yoursay@geelong  
advertiser.com.au



MOBILE  
0429 839 887



# Weight debate Swans back in

**EVE FISHER**

**“FAT HAS BECOME SO NORMALISED. JUST LOOK AT THE BIG-IS-BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT, WHICH IS NOTHING MORE THAN THE CELEBRATION OF A DECAYING BODY FRAMED IN A SELF-LOVE CONTEXT.**

THERE is nothing better than a tasty fat spat, and the unveiling of media darling Chrissie's Swan's new svelte figure has caused just that.

Swan has ditched an impressive amount of weight during the past two years and her lean look has the beauty mags in a spin.

This woman is seriously gorgeous, always has been for that matter, and it's no wonder she is being celebrated for making the effort to go from obese to slim.

She was always beautiful, just fat, and now she's lost dozens of kilos, tongues are wagging and the advertising offers are flowing.

So what's the problem? According to self-confessed "plus-sized" writer Mary Madigan, the media should be ignoring Swan's shred and pretend nothing has changed.

Because doing so is shameful to those who haven't been able to do what Swan has done.

Madigan doesn't want to celebrate Swan's new look (a wee smattering of tall poppy syndrome, perhaps?), despite her old look being a focus for her entire career, since her days in the Big Brother house when she heard production crew mocking her behind the walls.

Madigan reckons Swan's

Madigan certainly has that bit right.

You know what also doesn't like fat? Our organs. Our bones. And all those little systems in our bodies that really struggle when they're completely enveloped by useless and suffocating chub.

Too much fat is a problem and a huge drain on the health system. That's not in dispute.

Of course some people struggle with their weight because of underlying health issues, such as hypothyroidism, polycystic ovaries or diabetes.

I feel for those people who are lumped in with those whose obesity is due to diet, lifestyle and laziness.

And a tonne of self-loathing. Like mine was.

Years ago, fitness personality Michelle Bridges copped an impressive amount of flak for saying Swan could not be happy because no obese person can be (or should be, as her tone intoned).

I couldn't agree more.

If you're happy and content slowly killing yourself, then you need to reassess.

You're not happy. You're self-destructive and have a death wish. It's no less disturbing than being an addict.

Except addicts are seen as

mentally ill. And fat people are seen as nothing more than a minority that should be coddled.

I'd be very curious to find out from the thin Swan if she really thought the overweight Swan was happy?

When I lost the 20-odd kegs in recent years (intermittent fasting, paleo diet, pilates reformer, self-love), my happy glow had absolutely nothing to do with anything other than pure joy at not being a size 16 any more.

I'd suggest actor Rebel Wilson feels the same. Just look at her proudly showing off her new look on Insta.

Not that everyone wanted her to lose weight. Her own team suggested she'd lose work if she wasn't the fat, funny one any more.

Audiences love an easy laugh. We haven't seen a lot of her lately, so I'm curious if they were right.

Obesity is one of the biggest causes of early death in Australia. Of course no one should ever be shamed for their looks.

But in turn the "plus-sized" folk should not be expecting dispensation for their choices.

If you want to stay obese, you have to deal with the social and health repercussions that come with it.

## Geelong Advertiser SCHOOLS ON FRONT LINE

**T**HREE weeks ago, the Geelong Advertiser front page carried the shocking story of a local five-year-old and his seven-year-old brother who experimented with vaping at a local primary school.

It was an eye-opening revelation at just how prevalent vaping has become in our society and the challenges facing our schools in trying to deal with the growing trend among young people.

Reports of schools having to resort to measures such as issuing toilet-leave passes in class, having teachers standing duty outside bathrooms and devising education programs around the health dangers of vaping, show how widespread and how sudden this issue is impacting our schools.

Sacred Heart College is one school that has gone to the effort of installing vape detectors in its toilets to try to tackle the behaviour head-on.

It could be said that schools are disproportionately carrying the burden for trying to address a societal issue that has rapidly infiltrated young people across our community.

Despite it being illegal in Victoria for anyone under 18 to possess or use an e-cigarette without a prescription, vaping's popularity among younger demographics is only enhanced by the childlike flavours and packaging of popular vape liquids.

Which begs the question – is enough being done to educate our youth on the dangers of vaping, or to enforce these laws outside of schools?

Vaping is clearly a problem across society that is escalating quickly. It seems unfair that schools are bearing the cost.

## LETTERS & TEXTS

### ELECTRIC VEHICLES FAIL ON THE COST FRONT

LESLEY Walker (GA, 5/3) chides me for criticising letter writers for not supplying facts as her reasons why governments should support a transition to electric vehicles.

I gave one fact myself: the cheapest electric car appears to be the Nissan Leaf at almost \$50,000, with GST at half rate. Now another fact: the cheapest petrol car seems to be the Kia Picanto at almost \$20,000. The Picanto owners then pay 62c per litre, in excise and GST, for their petrol.

These facts are conveniently ignored by Lesley, but she goes further. She proposes that the electric be made in Australia. In the past, our small market and union productivity restrictions made our cars much more expensive than imports.

Heavy tariffs, for make-work and union-pleasing reasons, greatly inflated the price.

Big taxpayer subsidies couldn't save the situation, and the industry closed down, to the relief of us, the previously ignored consumers.

The high peak of Lesley's admired policy came when the

government reserved 80 per cent of the market to domestic producers, as a further featherbedding. Its ridiculous exposure came when the government allowed a small increase in quota to the importer offering to pay the highest tariff.

It was won, I think, by the three-cylinder Daihatsu Charade, paying 92 per cent!

Lesley calls on CPA and Deloittes for support in her climate and job creating crusade.

They can be respected on costs but climatology is not their department.

In any case, as accountancy bodies, they should recognise that "jobs" depend on productivity and on wage levels.

Jobs are lost when the price of labour is forced by strikes or government decree above the level at which demand and supply are roughly in balance.

**John Calvert, Geelong.**

### MINIATURE RAILWAY CAN BE OF GREAT BENEFIT

THE Geelong Miniature Railway has been in principle granted \$50,000 by the City of Greater

Geelong, for a feasibility study and project plan.

This is a normal process for a project of this size.

The community group is only asking for land. Nothing more to be able to support the community.

I see this project increasing tourism to Geelong, therefore providing extra spending in local businesses, improving the mental health in young people to be able to gain employment and providing an alternative meeting place for older members of the community.

Above all provided by community for community.

**Richard Walter, Corio**

### URGENT KNEE CASE AND STILL I FACE LONG WAIT

I RECENTLY had a second telehealth consultation about my right knee.

A while ago, it collapsed on me, out of the blue, and I spent four days in hospital, with scans, but no surgery.

One of the doctors there suggested I ask my GP for a referral for knee replacement surgery, even though I am a public patient.

My GP did this for me and, after looking at the scans of my knee, I was classified as an urgent patient.

A surgeon rang me for a telehealth consultation on Thursday, and, in his opening remarks, told me I would be suffering from intense pain for three months after I had the knee reconstruction.

I was extremely surprised to hear this, as friends who have had this surgery have not experienced this.

I asked how long it might be before I could have this operation. I was told I would probably be waiting for at least a year.

I might be a public patient but I am classified as urgent.

The whole thrust of this conversation was to take me off the surgery waiting list.

In a few months' time, I probably won't be able to walk at all.

Can I say that I have always experienced fabulous care and support over many years from Barwon Health. This is the first time ever I have had this sort of problem arise.

**Jan Laidlaw, Newtown**

## ON THIS DAY

**432BC** The Parthenon is consecrated in Athens to the goddess Athena.

**1074** A synod begins in Rome at which Pope Gregory VII decrees that marriage of Catholic priests must be stamped out.

**1796** Future French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte marries Josephine de Beauharnais, widow of a former French officer executed during the revolution.

**1826** Letters patent are issued in London to form a Church and School Corporation, giving the Anglican Church the status of an established religion in NSW with the right to vast areas of crown land and control of the school system.

**1831** The French Foreign Legion is founded by King Louis-Philippe, as a foreign mercenary force to help control African possessions.

**1870** Francis Smith dies. Maria Ann Smith (pictured) gave her name to a tart green apple that was supposedly propagated on her NSW property.

**1916** Germany declares war on Portugal.



## WRITE TO US

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