

CRIME

# Deception offences surge

## Document shredding event set to help curb identity theft

FRAUDSTERS are increasingly preying on unwitting Victorians, with offences surging more than 60 per cent over just five years.

The Port Phillip Council area is among hot spots.

A community shred day will be held at Elwood on October 15, to help residents safely destroy personal documents, thwarting crooks who use the information to access bank accounts and set up

bogus credit cards.

Crime Statistics Agency figures compiled for the *Leader* showed more than 37,000 deception offences were recorded statewide in the year to March.

The figure compared with about 23,000 in 2012.

Proactive programs unit Senior Sergeant Dagmar Andersen said identity theft was a serious problem.

Only recently in Stonnington, several suspected thieves were allegedly found with identification documents including about 80 identities and fraudulent loan applications.

Victims, who mostly had documents taken from letterboxes or apartment storage cages, even had debt collectors chase them for bills.

"The issue of identity theft

which is then used to get other finance is a live one," Sen-Sgt Andersen said.

There were more than 1200 deception offences in Port Phillip in the year to March – up almost a third on the previous year.

A Shred on Site truck will be outside Elwood Life Saving Club to destroy documents like financial statements and tax returns

on October 15, from 10am-1pm. Shredding is free, with a \$5 recommended donation or gold coin to go to the lifesaving club.

Bendigo Bank Elwood manager Gary Scott, whose branch is supporting the event, said it was vital customers knew the danger of not properly destroying financial documents.

Details: 1300 558 876 or go to [shredonsite.com.au](http://shredonsite.com.au)

## Last chance

TWO tireless women who run charities, an inspiring advocate for disadvantaged youths and a dedicated CFA captain are among the nominees so far for this year's Pride of Australia Medal. This week is your last chance to nominate someone who has inspired you through their dedication, courage or charity. Nominations close on Sunday, October 9. Winners will be notified in November and feature in a national Pride of Australia magazine next year. For more information visit [leadernews.com.au](http://leadernews.com.au)



SOUTH MELBOURNE

## Harmony prevails

THE AUSTRALIAN National Academy of Music, which was almost certain to be forced out of its Victorian base, has been saved by last-minute state government funding of more than \$1 million.

Australia's elite music training academy based at the South Melbourne Town Hall for the past 20 years was considering moving interstate next year if the State Government did not commit at least \$386,000 a year, to cover rising rent costs.

Minister for Training and Skills Steve Herbert has announced the academy would receive \$1 million over six years.



## GYM USERS LOVE SPOT

PROTEIN-LOVING gym junkies are chewing through more than a tonne of meat a month at a South Melbourne restaurant.

Meatworks Co owner Lindsay Jones-Evans said the restaurant opened in November last year and was an instant success.

"The gym guys eat a lot to bulk up and this (restaurant) has been a hot favourite of theirs from the start," he said.

But for those keen on a vegetarian or pescetarian meal, Meatworks Co has got you covered too.

Details: [meatworkscos.com](http://meatworkscos.com)

Luke Bryan, Lian Staunton and Steve Hennessy.

Picture: CHRIS EASTMAN

## Charity boost

A charity concert at the Palais Theatre last month raised a whopping \$86,000 for Sacred Heart Mission's meals program. The money raised from the Heart of **St Kilda** Concert will allow the mission to fill the bellies of 21,500 people in need. Musicians and comedians, including Ella Hooper, Brian Nankervis and Bob Downe, donated their time for the event.

## Award finalist

**St Kilda** Football chief executive Matt Finnis has been named a finalist for Straight Ally of the Year in the GLOBE Community Awards. The awards recognise excellence in Victoria's GLBTI community. Winners will be announced at a gala event on October 21. The Straight Ally of the Year category will be judged by Anna Brown, Emma Page Campbell and Peter Hitchener.



## Thursday 20 October, 9am

Please book online - for immediate enrolment enquiries, contact the Registrar.

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