

Queensland Legislative Assembly
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The Chronicle

We're for you

\$1.90 TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2019

thechronicle.com.au



WHY MY SHELVES ARE BARE

Highfields store is staying put

MEGAN MASTERS
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THE shelves of Craig's Home Hardware may be bare than usual at the moment, but owner Craig Stibbard wants the community to know he isn't going anywhere.

Mr Stibbard said he was in the process of building back stock at the store after his bank loan was declined, and had no plans to stop servicing the Highfields community.

STORY, PAGE 2

STAYING PUT: Craig Stibbard wants to ensure customers Craig's Home Hardware is still in business despite some bare shelves.

Photo: Nev Madson

Hackers threaten woman's daughter

A WOMAN, who lives just outside Toowoomba, lost \$10,000 to hackers and has told of how they threatened to take her young daughter. The ordeal began when

she received a call from someone claiming they were from a telco provider. From there hackers entered her computer system, disabled security software

and stole \$10,000. But the worst of it was when they threatened to harm her family.

STORY, PAGE 3

Big W closures affect 180 in region

MORE than 180 workers will lose their jobs in 2023 when Warwick's Big W distribution centre closes its doors.

Other Big W retail workers across the region still await

news as to whether their stores will close as Woolworths Group made the announcement that it would shut 16 per cent of its stores nationwide.

Announcements on which stores would be affected are expected as negotiations with leaseholders are completed.

STORY, PAGE 4



EASTER FUN FOR EVERYONE

FREE Easter Crafts & FREE Photos with the Easter Bunny!

Times: 10am - 12noon

Dates: Mon 15 - Sat 20 April (Excl. Good Friday)

Location: Opposite Rockmans

Toowoomba Plaza
 toowoombaplaza.com.au

TOOWOOMBA
 PLAZA

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JOHNSON, Nellie Irene
KUHRT, Ronald William "Pop"
LEY, Roland Roger "Roger"
PONTIN, Glenys Margenta
(nee Lang, formerly Baartz)
STEGER, Mervyn Robert
STOCKLER, Josef "Sepp"
THOMPSON, Graham James
Wilfred "Thommo"

DEATH NOTICES

GREGG, Sonia Louise
HIGGINS, Brian "Curly"
RYAN, Marjorie Gladys (nee
Brazier)

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Businessman vows to make comeback

Hardware store set to battle on to better times

MEGAN MASTERS

HIGHFIELDS businessman Craig Stibbard says there's a good reason the shelves of his hardware store are bare - and he wants to assure the community he's here to stay.

After 24 years servicing the Highfields and Toowoomba communities through his Craig's Home Hardware business, Mr Stibbard ran into a tough patch after a change to the way parent company, the Woolworths Group, marketed the Home Hardware chain.

Mr Stibbard said the problems were a result of a new focus on servicing trades, where the majority of his customers were typical residents looking to add a lick of paint to the family home or give the backyard a bit of TLC.

He found himself with more trade-level power tools and supplies than he was able to sell without losing money, so approached his bank, Heritage, to apply for a loan to ensure the business could continue to run at full capacity until it got over the hump.

Mr Stibbard said because he had a "slow and steady" approach to building the business over two and a half decades, and he had never defaulted on a payment, he believed obtain-



LOW STOCK: Craig Stibbard has resorted to a slow and steady approach to rebuild his business after it hit a rough patch.

Photo: Nev Madsen

ing the loan would be a straightforward process.

He said he was shocked to receive a call telling him his application had been declined.

Almost two years on, Mr Stibbard said the effects had become evident and he believed it was time to assure his community he would fight to get the business back on track.

He said shelves in the Highfields store were looking a good deal more bare than customers were used to and he was concerned residents would think he was closing down.

Mr Stibbard said it would be a slow and steady ascent back to the business' previous heights, but was confident it would.

I JUST WANT TO APOLOGISE FOR NOT HAVING THE DEPTH OF STOCK ON THE SHELVES BECAUSE OF THIS SITUATION.

CRAIG STIBBARD

"Most of our creditors have been great working with us and understand the situation, but after 24 years in business I can't understand how this could happen," Mr Stibbard said.

"We're trading over \$2 million a year and through all this we're starting to buy a lot better and a lot smarter, so our margin has gone up.

"I just want to apologise for not having the depth of stock on the shelves because of this situation."

Heritage Bank CEO Peter Lock said all loans through Heritage were individually assessed based on available capital, the capacity to make repayments and the character of the applicant, whether it was a personal loan, home loan or a commercial loan.

While he was unable to comment specifically on Mr Stibbard's situation, he said those three factors formed the basis of all applications and in many cases it was the capacity to make repayments deteriorating that was the deciding factor.

Briefs

Mayor stays for now

TOOWOOMBA Mayor Paul Antonio says he will not follow Brisbane Lord Mayor Graham Quirk's example of resigning 12 months before the next council election. Cr Antonio said any announcement on whether or not he would seek re-election would be made at the appropriate time. "I'm loving the job," Cr Antonio said. "The Lord Mayor was an inspiration and an amazing leader. He had the strength to bring together all the mayors in southeast Queensland for a common cause in a way I've not seen before. We will miss him."

Port-a-loo theft

TOOWOOMBA police are hoping to flush out the thieves who stole a portable toilet and 18 water barriers from a roadworks site sometime between December and January this year. Police said a trailer with a portable toilet and the water barriers was taken from the site on Mort St near Hermitage Road between December 21, and January 16. Anyone with information is urged to phone PoliceLink on 131 444 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000. Quote reference number QP1900595596.

House, cars destroyed in intense fire near Tara

TARA MIKO

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THE cause of an intense fire which destroyed a Western Downs home on Sunday night is yet to be determined.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services investigators spent yesterday morning scouring what remained of the house at Tara after a fire broke

out about 10.20pm on Sunday.

Multiple firefighting crews battled the blaze for two hours before it was brought under control at the property on Bisley Rd near Ridge Rd.

Crews on arrival reported the home was "well-alight" but their efforts managed to save two sheds on the property.

Two cars near the home were destroyed.

Firefighters reported the fire was under control by 12.20am, and were dampening down hot spots.

No occupants were at home at the time of the blaze.

A Queensland Fire and Emergency Services spokesman said investigators returned to the property yesterday but the cause of the blaze was yet to be determined.



RAZED: The remains of a residence on the corner of Bisley and Ridge Rds near Tara after a house fire. Photo: Kate McCormack

WIN A DOUBLE PASS TO THE HOTTEST LOCAL FASHION EVENT

stepping out

Winter GLAMOUR RUNWAY

Style Magazine is giving you the chance to win 1 of 5 double passes to the **Stepping Out Winter Glamour Fashion Event**, held at Rumours International on Saturday 25th May, 2019. Total prize pool valued at \$500 (incl GST).

Keep your eye out for the entry form published in the April edition of Style - inserted in The Chronicle this Friday 5th April 2019.

Event Date: Sat 25th May 2019. Event Location: The Plaza, 4 City Dr, Toowoomba. Event Time: 10am - 5pm. Competition closes 4 May 2019. Prizes will be 18 year and over. Competition terms & conditions apply. Winner will be selected by random draw on 10th May 2019. Winner will be notified by email. Winner must be present at the event to win. Winner must be a resident of Queensland. Winner must be aged 18 or over. Winner must be a resident of Queensland. Winner must be a resident of Queensland. Winner must be a resident of Queensland.

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