

The Armidale Express

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ARMIDALE export Mark Wright has taken out the English version of The Apprentice. Read about his story [here](#).

LOCALS are flocking to Mockton Aquatic Centre to escape the summer heat. See if you were snapped [here](#).

TD

IT'S YOUR last day to vote in our poll about the state's bail laws. Click [here](#) to make your opinion count.

8.45AM

Check out the latest job listings and items for **sale** with the Armidale Express Classifieds"

Would you find having a handyman on speed dial handy, man? Contact Kent [here](#) and hook yourself up.

Because if you don't have a George Foreman grill, you're probably just not doing life right. Get one [here](#).

Need a last-minute gift idea? Why not get that pony she's been asking for. Make everyone's gifts look like chopped live by clicking [here](#).

Did you know?

In 2007, Dancer required 17 stitches after dipping too low and scraping her foot on the point of the steeple of St Mary's Cathedral. Rumour has it you could hear her cursing from as far as Guyra.

After years of soul searching and perpetual singledom, Cupid landed on the conclusion that is name had an ironically adverse affect on the ladies, with many viewing him more as a match maker than a catch. He now goes by the name of Clyde, except keeps his stage name on the job, mostly because his harness was embroidered with some heavy-duty thread.

Mrs Claus is head of human resources at the North Pole, although technically, as her and her husband are the only humans in the **company**, her department should rightly be titled "Elf Resources". The name Elf Resources was discontinued when the popular medical drama ER hit television screens around the world, and Mrs Claus was flooded with prank callers asking to speak to George Clooney.

8.30AM

THOSE who don't really feel like cooking a whole turkey on Christmas Day need not chose between eating two-minute noodles or going to be hungry, with a number of Armidale eateries open for business.

Eight restaurants will have their doors open and their kitchens up-and-running to feed the not-so-domestic-goddess types out there, or cater to those who just don't feel like turning on the oven.

For a breakfast with a difference, Baba's Kebabs and Caf-s will have the lamb rotating over the heat from 8am, with the Beardy Street business open until 9pm.

Next to throw open their doors are the staff at Neville's store, which will nourish one and all from 10am until 9.30pm.

And for those bottomless pits out there who are still hungry after a big festive lunch, there will be a number of restaurants open for dinner.

Boxing Day will see even more businesses catering to the hungry hoards, with Era Espresso and Fresh@110 among a multitude of foodie favourites open on the day.

See the full list [here](#).

The clouds will be hanging around like a bunch of relatives who just won't take the hint and leave today, however, unlike certain relatives, the clouds look likely to leave a nice Christmas gift behind, with a medium chance of showers predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology. Expect a top of 27 degrees. Find out more about today's weather [here](#).

Need a [national news](#) snapshot first thing - well, we have you covered.

" MELBOURNE: A strange one here; did you know that Tamworth is NOT home to Australia's country music talent pool? That honour goes to Northcote, in Melbourne's inner north. New research has been released which also shows where the biggest concentration of musos are for genres such as metal, rock, folk and more. See if your area is a music heartland. [READ MORE](#).

" ILLAWARRA: A GRIEVING widow has been kicked out of her public housing accommodation less than a week after her husband died. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" BALLARAT: CONCERNS have been raised for a **gold** prospector who failed to return home for a family function on Sunday. Matthew Christopher Williams was last seen at his Blackwood home on McLennan Street around 11am yesterday morning when he left to go prospecting in the forest surrounding Blackwood. Up to 40 people from Victoria Police, SES, Department of Environment and Primary Industries and Parks Victoria are involved in a "significant" search for the man, which will continue today. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" QUEENSLAND: A recreational crabber has been fined \$35,380 and had his vessel, outboard motor and trailer confiscated after being found guilty of stealing crabs from pots. Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol field officer David Kahler said the recreational crabber was found to have a large number of crabs and no crab pots during a month-long surveillance operation.

" WAGGA: A man who was tied up and attacked in his own home by a violent home invader has bravely spoken out for the first time. The young man, who is too frightened to be named, was at home on Sunday when his door was forced open by a knife-wielding bandit. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" TASMANIA: A BURNIE-BASED forensics officer played an integral role in repatriating victims of Malaysia Airlines flight 17. Senior Constable Kat Chivers couldn't accept quickly enough when she was asked to fly to the Netherlands to identify victims of the disaster. One day after receiving a phone call from her Disaster Victim Identification Commander, Senior Constable Chivers and Launceston-based colleague Senior Constable Rodney Walker flew out to Hilversum. The DVI process was initially slated to take place in the Ukraine, but the plan was aborted due to simmering tensions in the region. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" WESTERN AUSTRALIA: One lucky Mundurah resident has won more than \$600,000 in Saturday's Lotto draw. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" BATHURST: THIEVES broke into a Bathurst home and stole presents from under the Christmas tree early on Sunday morning in a callous act just days before Christmas. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" SECRET SPOT: This monster salmon was reeled in from a secret spot somewhere in Tasmania. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" A Sydney jeweller found guilty of killing his partner after three trials that made NSW's legal history has had his conviction quashed. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" The tanker that will make history by shipping Queensland's first cargo of liquefied natural gas has arrived in Gladstone, confirming that the start-up of BG Group's \$US20.4 **billion** (\$25 **billion**) LNG project is just days away. [READ MORE HERE](#).

" As Echo Entertainment gears up for round two with James Packer's Crown Resorts for an Australian casino licence, it wants to make one thing "very clear". "We are not in business with Stanley Ho." Echo, which operates Brisbane's existing casino, has partnered with Far East Consortium and Chow Tai Fook

Enterprises, forming the Destination Brisbane consortium, to get its bid off the ground. [READ MORE HERE.](#)

" Fairfax Media's management will not seek to muzzle right-wing broadcasters Alan Jones and Ray Hadley after the **company** agreed to a \$200 **million** merger of its radio business with John Singleton's Macquarie Radio Network. [READ MORE HERE.](#)

" The five Indonesian janitors accused of raping three pre-school children at the Jakarta Intercultural School have been found guilty and sentenced to seven- and eight-year prison sentences. [READ MORE HERE.](#)

" Now one of **China**'s richest and most influential **billionaires**, property mogul Wang Jianlin is determined to take on Disney in his own backyard, opening up rival **Chinese**-themed attractions in direct competition against the Disneyland theme parks in **Hong Kong** and Shanghai (which opens next year). [READ MORE HERE.](#)

" Six people were killed in Glasgow on Monday when a garbage truck ploughed into crowds of Christmas shoppers in what appeared to be a tragic accident.

One eyewitness described the vehicle knocking people down "like pinballs" as it veered out of control over a distance of around 300 metres, only stopping when it crashed into a hotel.

"Sadly, six people have died as a result of the George Square major road incident," Police Scotland said on Twitter.

THREE women gave their time throughout the year to sell raffle tickets and raise money to buy Christmas presents for residents at the Laura Johnson Home.

Joan Shambrook, Anette Mortenson and Inez Bocos reached their target this year " and then some " by selling raffle tickets at Woolworths, the Irish Club and the Buffs Club.

All raffle prizes were donated, with more than \$2500 raised to buy gifts, as some residents don't even receive a card at this time of year.

Organiser Joan Shambrook's daughter Sharon Crossland said the women had been doing this for three years, and the community had been a big help in supporting them.

"These ladies have done all of this on their own to help make the residents' Christmas a little more enjoyable," she said.

"The whole Isa community has really helped, everyone was just so generous. [READ MORE HERE.](#)

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