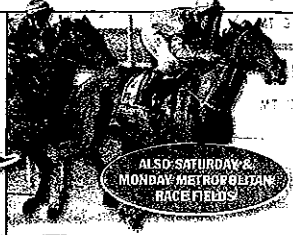
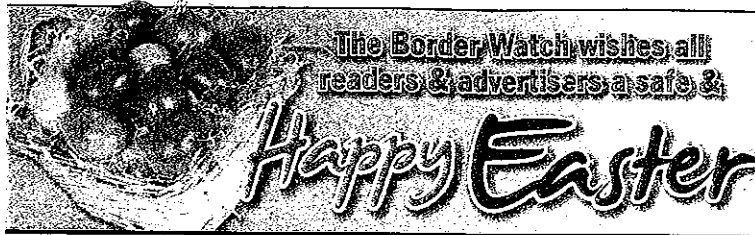


# The Border Watch

South Australia's Largest Regional Newspaper

Friday, March 21, 2008 | \$1.00 inc. GST



# Turned away



□ Tenison Woods College Year 5 student William Lewis finds a quiet moment in the school's chapel to reflect on the true meaning of Easter. **Stories page 7.**



By ANELLA BLACKIE  
Email: anella@tw.com.au

A WELFARE agency has been forced to turn away more than 20 Mount Gambier children seeking refuge from alcohol-fuelled domestic abuse because of a lack of government funding.

This situation is expected to escalate over the Easter break this weekend, as alcohol abuse traditionally spikes over holiday periods.

Mount Gambier welfare organisation Anglican Community Care has been pushing for funding over several years to establish a safe house for children in crisis.

More than \$500,000 is needed annually to run a fully staffed safe house 24 hours a day.

Without such a safe haven, children in crisis are forced to stay at friends' homes or at inappropriate locations.

According to Anglican Community Care program coordinator John Wylie, 20 children have sought help at the welfare agency in the past eight weeks.

He warned more children would need help this weekend and would continue to fall through the cracks.

"We have had to turn these children away because they fall through the gaps of existing support services," Mr Wylie said.

"We know from past experience many children are in crisis over the Easter weekend when parents become violent as a result of alcohol abuse and we are just unable to help them."

Mr Wylie said there was a lack of service in Mount Gambier for children in crisis under the age of 18 who were not under the care of the Minister.

"We can only help children after their domestic circumstances have been assessed and they qualify to come under the care of the Minister," he said.

But Mr Wylie said those who run away from home and couch surf at friends' homes, are lost in the system due to a lack of funding.

"We have dealt with cases where young girls were living with non-relative men in their 30s or 40s because there was no other alternative," he said.

Continued page 4

## Father, daughter convicted after pleading guilty during incest case

A FATHER and daughter who entered into a sexual relationship as consenting adults were convicted of incest in the Mount Gambier District Court yesterday.

Judge Steven Millsted recorded a conviction against the 61 year old man and his 39 year old daughter, who entered into a \$500 good behaviour bond, requiring them to

have no further sexual contact.

The pair had pleaded guilty to two counts of incest, which resulted in the conception of two children.

The couple's first child died of a congenital heart defect when only four days old and the second was born in May last year.

The court heard both parties were effectively strangers to each

other until they met about eight years ago, when the father was married to his third wife and the daughter was married with two children, now aged nine and 14.

Soon after they entered into a relationship and the daughter and her two children moved in with the father.

Judge Millsted said this case

was unusual due to the fact both parties were consenting adults, who had previous little contact, when the relationship began.

"This is not a case where a father has violated a daughter," he said.

However, he said there was a need to impose a penalty to deter the birth of children into such

relationships, to both prevent congenital defects and psychological harm.

Judge Millsted did not impose a condition of bail forbidding the pair from seeing each other, but warned they would be returned to court to face the original charge as well as any new charges if their sexual relationship recommenced.

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