

DENISTONE EAST

School's pool a lucky dip

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN



To join the Royal Surf Life Saving Australia campaign, go to swimandsurvive.com.au

Robbie Patterson

HAVING a swimming pool at Denistone East Public School is a "huge advantage" for the students, both educationally and as a fundamental life-skill, principal Teunis Ploeg said.

The school is one of a few with a pool and lessons as part of the curriculum.

Mr Ploeg said the "benefits are phenomenal".

"It means parents aren't running around after school

SWIMMING LESSONS PART OF THE CURRICULUM

trying to squeeze things in, as we know parents are working longer and longer," Mr Ploeg said.

While not all schools are fortunate enough to have a pool, Mr Ploeg said he believed that teaching children to swim was vital.

"This is an opportunity for them to not only learn about water safety, but also

to develop a fitness level that they don't have in any other form of sport."

The school's sport teacher and AustSwim qualified instructor Lucy Besson said swimming lessons in schools could save lives.

"They are learning a fundamental and important skill, given the country we live in is surrounded by

water. To have that skill, to be able to swim, is a big advantage," Ms Besson said.

"If you think about all the drownings, we are giving our students a chance of not being one of those statistics."

Royal Life Saving is trying to get 10,000 signatures on a petition for swimming lessons to be mandatory in all primary schools.

HARD FACTS

- 371 Australians aged 15-24 drowned in the past decade, 45 of them in 2011-2012
- 86 per cent of drowning deaths are male
- 50,000 children will leave primary school this Christmas unable to swim 50m or stay afloat for two minutes.

Front page: Teacher Lucy Besson with students Jay, Meghan, Gideon and Alanna.

RYDE

A trick or a treat, it's all in the fall of the cards

Robert Kennard

TAROT readings can be a loaded gun at the best of times, says Gypsy Rose.

The professional psychic has been reading people's cards for more than 33 years and claims to have been channelling spirits since she was a child.

Moving to Ryde eight weeks ago, Ms Rose has set up shop in her lounge room, providing face-to-face and "credit card" phone readings.

"People from all over Australia call me," she says after chatting on the phone with a regular client from Perth.

Although charging \$200 an hour, regular and new clients continue to seek her services, with up to eight different people calling daily for Ms Rose to unravel their future.

"I've had everyone from a policeman to a priest."

Armed with some hasty online research about fake psychics, I enter Ms Rose's home for myself.

Dressed in a tie-dye rainbow dress, she brews a Turkish coffee for me, insists I don't tell her anything personal, and asks me to pick a flower to put on the



Picture: ROBERT KENNARD

table beside her cards.

Before we start, salt water is splashed on the cards and our foreheads "to protect us" from anything spiritually unsavoury.

After looking at the shuffled cards, the bottom of my coffee cup, and my flower, Ms Rose tells me I judge

myself too much, I am content with work but I am itching to travel overseas, and I am highly sensitive.

While most of the things are true, including estimates of dates for overseas travel and rough descriptions of family members, I couldn't help but feel hesi-

tant to place all trust on the words of a psychic and a deck of cards.

This was reaffirmed by Ms Rose, who said some of her most addicted clients call up to three or four times a week.

Ms Rose claims to only speak for the positive spirits

that she channels, which goes some way to proving her popularity.

"I don't look for the negative and if I see it, I won't focus on it."

"People can think what they want about about me. The proof is in the pudding," she said.

SPOT THE DODGY

- Don't tell a tarot reader your star sign or date of birth, it has no impact on the cards
- If psychics go fishing for information, don't give away personal details. It only helps them make a character prediction based on logic.

fast lane

Angels honour victims

The Victims of Crime Assistance League NSW is holding its VOCAL's Christmas Tree of Angels ceremony at **Eastwood** Uniting Church at 6pm on Friday, November 30. This pre-Christmas ceremony is the league's first in Sydney and honours lives lost and damaged by crime and other tragedies. Survivors, family and friends will place their special angels on the Christmas tree before sharing Christmas supper costing \$10. Inquiries and bookings: 4961 4755

Nominations now open

Nominations for Australia Day Community Awards in **Hunters Hill** are now open. On Saturday, January 26, Hunters Hill Council will present its Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Sportsperson of the Year and Community Event of the Year with an award recognising their contribution within the municipality. Nominations close on Monday, November 26. Inquiries: 9879 9400



School wins competition

Roselea Public School has won the Epping Rotary's Year 5 debating competition, defeating Epping West Public School in the final. Roselea's team of Samantha Jones, Ashley Jones, Emma Barlow, Rhiannon Moore and Eliane Jones argued against each household being permitted to have only one car. Epping West was represented by Amy Lim, Navleen Kaur, Ben Cheetham, Adam Langer and Grace Hong. Six primary schools contested the event.

take a number

\$1000

grants have been awarded to two apprentice plumbers in the northern district to help further their careers. Thomas Gray, 19, from Putney and Matthew Munce, 18, from East Ryde were among 74 apprentice plumbers awarded the grants as part of Rheem's 75th anniversary celebrations.