

# The walking dead 'liked' your post

## EDITORIAL

By **ALEESHA JURD** and **DAYNAH SIMMONS**

SOCIAL media has created an age of vanity in young people, creating a new zombie-like breed.

More than 250 million photos are uploaded to Facebook each day from wannabes that want their five seconds of fame, compliments from their virtual besties or even, perhaps, an array of "likes" from strangers posing under the Facebook banner of "friends".

Witnessing such monstrosities on our screens daily inevitably results in the pollution of mind and spirit as this output of garbage clogs our screens, homes and thoughts.

Social media citizens, are slowly, but surely, being exposed to a world of vanity, stupidity, humiliation and cruelty.

"I know it sounds corny, but I love to improve peoples' lives, especially socially... Making the world more open is not an overnight thing. It is a 10- to 15-year thing," said Mark Zuckerberg, the creator of Facebook.

Hindsight has not been a blessing for the man who started the destruction of social interactions 10 years ago. As of the first quarter

in 2014, an astonishing 1.276 billion people have accounts on Facebook. Mr Zuckerberg needs to explain how awkward selfies, useless banter, cat-fights and a decrease in human intelligence is in any way a "social improvement".

Teenagers use social media, however we apply a reality filter to our online lives and actually have a life outside of the virtual world. Many, if not most, people on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc, are completely taken in by the hypnotic trance of these sites, like a zombie virus to a human brain.

Since the 1980s, people in the Western World have become more and more materialistic. This societal shift stands true nowadays more than ever before.

Online social forums have revolutionised materialism to include not only the acquisition and consumption of physical matter, but also digital matter in the form of tags, events, images, profiles, status updates and comments.

With the new technological age, this greed has spread across the world like a disease. People young and old are consumed by social media and it will only get worse.

So please, close your eyes and break away from the hypnotic rays coming from your screen. Rise up against the machine and stand your ground against the hordes of zombies coming your way.



Cartoon: Isis Leaver



CRIME: Graffiti is one of the problems for the Wallsend community.

Picture: Joel Carter

# Worldwide recognition of success

By **SHAY ALEXANDER** and **REBECCA McLURE**

CALLAGHAN College has been formally recognised as a world leader in educational technology innovation, finishing as a top three finalist in the 21st Century Learning School of the Year Awards.

This worldwide competition recognises schools that have processes in place to ensure development of good practices as well as providing the opportunity, resources and support for innovation in 21st century learning. Submissions were received from 15 countries.

Amy McConville, 21st Century Learning College co-ordinator, said that teachers, students and parents were thrilled with recognition.

"The college had to show we were world leaders in 21st century learning by examining a shared vision for learning, the existence of a student voice and the facilitation of curriculum alignment and support policies," she said.

The award ceremony took place at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. David Summerville, head teacher of technology and Ms McConville travelled to Hong Kong to accept the award. Ms McConville said "the award was an honour," an opinion shared throughout the college.

# No police for Wallsend area

By **EMILY WADE**

WALLSEND residents are disappointed after a petition to establish a police station in the suburb was rejected by government.

Sonia Hornery, state member for Wallsend, commented on the need for a permanent police presence in the area.

"We have seen a major increase in the population in the western suburbs of Newcastle, with huge developments at Maryland, Fletcher and Minmi. There is not a single police station in the Wallsend electorate. This is unacceptable."

A Wallsend resident recently contacted Ms Hornery after he was assaulted at Stockland Jesmond. He complained that police took three hours to respond to his call from

Waratah Police Station, which is only five kilometres away.

"Having a local station in Wallsend will lead to quicker response times when crimes are reported to police. Having a greater presence in the local area leads to people feeling safer," Ms Hornery said.

She launched a petition last year to call attention to the Wallsend community's desire for a police station. The community was very supportive, with more than 13,000 people signing the petition.

Members of government recently spoke against the petition when it was tabled, stating that Wallsend should be serviced by officers from Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Local Area Commands.

For Wallsend residents, nothing has changed to ensure their safety.

# Local store attracts more than just profit

By **LEILI MOHU**

A NUMBER of extremely rare birds have taken up residence in the re-invigorated wetland conservation area next to the new Bunnings hardware store on Minmi Road, Wallsend.

Unbeknownst to many people, this building development came with a hidden benefit in the form of a 4130-square-metre wetland conservation area adjacent to the structure.

This wetland has recently become home to a

number of rare birds including the Australian painted snipe, which has been an unexpected recent sighting. These birds are listed in the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act as being a vulnerable species.

A non-breeding eastern yellow wagtail has also been recently sighted. Wagtails are seen around Broome in summer months but in recent years the Hunter River and nearby wetlands have been a reliable habitat for them.

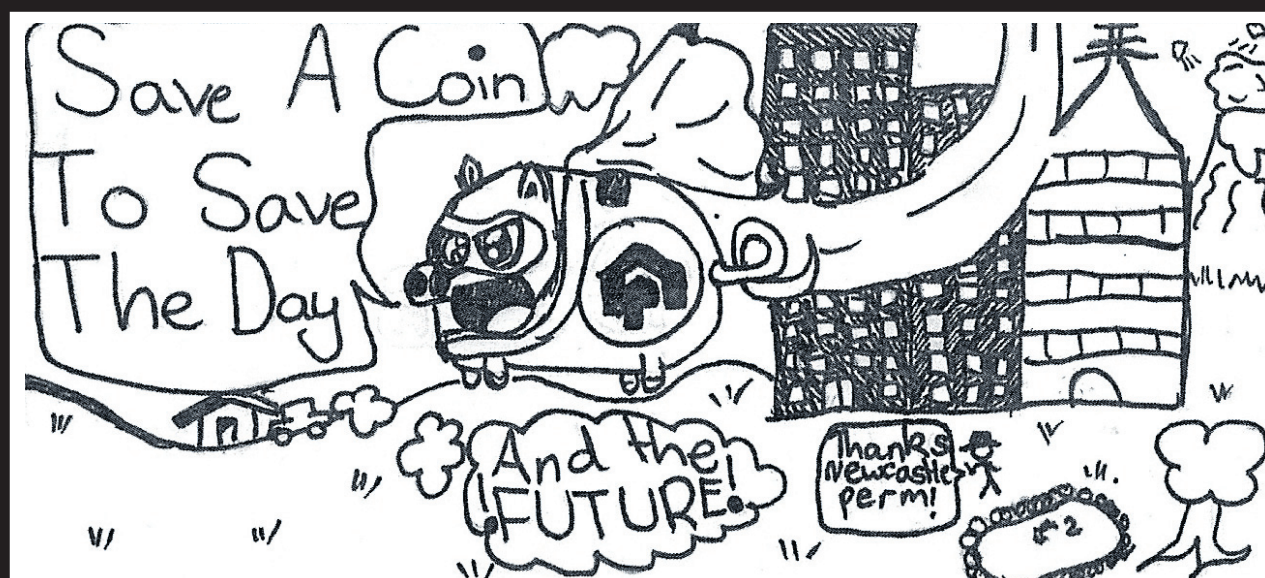


NESTING: Newly developed wetlands have become home to rare bird species.

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