

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

4 December 2015

## **Huon Valley Council's little Christmas tree**

The Huon Valley Council (HVC) places a humble little Christmas tree in a small park on the main street in Huonville for the festive season. Sometime in late November (in the dead of night) the red star was taken off the top.

Council appealed to the public on facebook for its return.

A couple of days later, a young Huonville mother was driving her son Zachary to pre-kinder and he asked what happened to the star. She told him 'bad people' had taken it.

He was so upset he made us another star in pre-kinder to replace the one we lost.

HVC was so taken with the star that Zachary Hawkins made for us - it decided to give every youngster a go by running a drawing competition for all kids in the Valley 5 years old and under with Mick Newell from HOFM to judge the entries 4 days before Christmas Day.

The star was eventually spotted and returned, but, the night before HVC got it back, the tree was damaged again, this time having its wire frame bent and some of the decorations broken.

The 'third strike' was the tree being pulled out of the ground completely. HVC's dilemma was "do we keep fixing it only to have it damaged again – because after all, it's ratepayers' money?"

Local business Mitre 10 offered to put the tree in its garden section on the main street of Huonville (which is fenced), so after some TLC from Council staff, that's where it currently sits.

The social media posts attracted more than 18,000 views in the last fortnight...(there are slightly more than 15,000 people in the whole Huon Valley) and the support from Valley residents was heartening.

For a humble little tree it certainly garnered a lot of community interest and from Huon Valley Council's point of view - all's well that ends well.

Merry Christmas from the Huon Valley.

**Pic: The tree in Walton Park without its star**

**Pic: Zachary Hawkins (with his Mum, Leeza) presenting Mayor Peter Coad with his star**

**Pic: Huon Valley Council tree in Mitre 10 garden section.**



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