

Travel that's hard to top

IMAGINE taking a journey over the seven seas, to the highest summits around the globe.

One Swiss family is doing just that, and last night told their story in Ballarat. Sabine and Dario Schwoerer and their children are on the TOPTOTOP Global Climate Expedition, currently on their way through Australia.

Their expedition is the first of its kind, travelling to the seven summits to connect global climate zones in seven continents around the world, using only human power.

Mr Schwoerer last night gave an insight into his journey to the Ballarat Rotary Club.

He said the trip focused on global climate change, to inspire the world to research and support lasting, environmentally-friendly solutions.

"The aim of our discussions are to get young people involved, to see from our journey that the planet has not been destroyed," Mr Schwoerer said.

People can follow their journey around the world at www.toptotop.org



ON THE MOVE: Dario Schwoerer with a map of his family's travels as part of the TOPTOTOP Global Climate Expedition. Picture: **Eugene Hyland** 110608EH5A

FUEL PRICES

Transport services hampered

By **Erin Williams**

SOARING oil prices are hampering Ballarat transport and bus services.

With oil prices surging beyond \$US130 a barrel, they have been forced to increase fuel levies.

RACV government relations manager David Cumming said diesel prices would decrease about one cent this week.

"This is good news for motorists but it is still 20 cents dearer than the wholesale price," Mr Cumming said.

Keeping a close eye on oil prices has become a weekly routine for many local transport and bus services, which are this week being stung up to 183.9cpl for diesel.

Ballarat freight business Dunn's Transport has increased its fuel levy by 10 per cent in the past three months.

Owner Shane Dunn said not much else could be done but increase it.



David Cumming

"We are not happy about it but you have to purchase it to use it," Mr Dunn said.

Local transport service Sovereign Transport Solutions carefully plans trips to save on fuel.

Depot manager Tim Johns said goods delivered in the same direction were often held if there was another load going the following day.

"We try and work it in so that it will work with other places," Mr Johns said.

"A lot of people understand it, but if they want it you have to get it to them. We try to keep our customers happy."

The STS fuel levy has

increased two per cent over the past two months and is sitting at 18 per cent, compared to 12 per cent two months ago.

Mr Johns said the business had no choice but to pay the price.

Gold Bus Ballarat general manager Ross Huntington said the business, which has 99 per cent of its fleet on diesel, was considering increasing charter fees.

"It's affecting our business and passing on to our customers as well," Mr Huntington said.

Meanwhile, Mr Cumming said petrol prices, which hovered about 156.9cpl in Ballarat yesterday, would remain constant in the next two weeks.

"The next couple of weeks will track as normal," he said.

He advised motorists to be aware of the price cycle and fill up at the cheapest time.

Garrett 'fully committed' to environmental checks

FEDERAL Environment Minister Peter Garrett says he will ensure any nuclear waste dump which comes before him for approval will be subject to rigorous environmental assessment.

Mr Garrett yesterday said he was "fully committed" to applying stringent environmental checks to any nuclear waste facility that he approved.

In response to whether the government would "fast-track" a nuclear waste facility, Mr Garrett replied that the government would stick to its promise to repeal Howard-era legis-

lation to locate the waste in the Northern Territory.

"The situation is that the policy commitments that were made before coming into government will be fulfilled," Mr Garrett said.

"When a proposal comes to me I'll treat it as I would in the ordinary course of business."

Mr Garrett's comments follow Howard Government legislation, the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act, which paved the way for the dump to go ahead.

A process is under way to find a location for the nuclear waste dump by the end of the month.



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