

election cycle and ask yourself what sort of nation do you want your children, and their children, to inherit and which policies best achieve these aspirations. It's the policies that are important, and endure, not the personalities.

Now, although I've had a bit of a whinge about the current state of our democratic process, the most important thing to remember is just how lucky we are, to not only live in Australia, but to vote for the type of government and society we want to be a part of our lives for the next few, unspecified number of years, or until at least the next election.

This universal suffrage, that we take for granted, is not available to all the people in the world and many thousands, most likely millions, have died attempting to secure such sought after political freedom and this basic human right.

So on May 18, or in the weeks before, consider your vote carefully and make it count.

*-Pauline Roberts, Highlands*

### **The All-Time Election Sausage Sizzle**

Uniquely Australian like Pharlap the horse Election Day sizzles are par for the course Eat it with onion, eat it with sauce Eat it sideways? Nah - that's not noise

They're part of the colour and life of the day When all of us Aussies - we have our say No differing opinion should get up your goat Be nice to the next guy, be lucky we vote.

So pop out on the 18th and stand in a line One for democracy and one for all-time.

*Name and address supplied but withheld by request*

### **Logging**

VICFORESTS has recently been extolling its own virtues with its announcement of over 100 submissions being received on its proposals to change its harvesting methods. But in our shire it is little more than a PR campaign designed to cover up the ongoing habitat destruction and landscape obliteration that is set to continue until the last substantial areas of ash forest outside the Yarra Ranges National Park have been

logged.

The Rubicon Forest Protection Group met with VicForests last Friday to learn of its intentions for the Rubicon State Forest over the coming year or two.

These include the logging of the remaining unlogged areas along Cambarville Road wrecking its potential value as a southern tourist access route to the Rubicon State Forest including the possibility of making Evelyn Falls into a scenic destination, the imminent logging of the last remaining patch of intact mountain ash forest in the lower Royston River Valley just below the magnificent Royston Falls, the logging of the last two coupes in the logged-out Rubicon River catchment, the logging of two areas on the northern flank of Mt Torbreck that provide access to the Avro Anson crash site, the logging of other areas close to Mt Torbreck that will be highly visible from many areas, including from the summit, the logging of virtually the entire Snobs Creek Valley upstream of the falls with log landings all along the road and putting water quality in Snobs Creek at risk, and the logging of a magnificent area of alpine ash habitat on the Blue Range – one of the last patches of ridge-top forest on the Blue Range that survived that the devastation of the 2009 fire, and a possible roosting site for either a powerful or sooty owl, both threatened species.

The Rubicon Forest Protection Group is pleased that some fabulous alpine ash habitat in the upper Royston Valley on the western flank of Mt Bullfight is to be spared, for the moment at least, but there are still two large areas in this rainforest-rich area marked for logging.

Despite VicForests' attempts to put a conservation gloss on its activities, the scale and intensity of past logging in the Rubicon State Forest plus the losses in the 2009 fire means that further logging of this richly bio-diverse area - a key tourist asset of the Shire of Murrindindi - is an indictment of this government's environment credentials.

*Ken Deacon, covenor Rubicon Forest Protection Group and former Greens councillor*