

# Weekend and extended closures for more train

More weekend closures of the Gippsland rail line and an extended closure of several weeks are possible before the upgrade of the track and signalling system is completed.

Passenger service operator V/Line and the contractor upgrading the line John Holland Constructions acknowledge there is likely to be further service disruptions, but said there had not been any decision when these may occur.

Acknowledging that the signalling component of

the project was behind schedule, John Holland group communications manager Daniel Moloney said clear access to the track would mean "swifter progress".

State Opposition transport spokesman Terry Mulder last week claimed Gippsland rail services would not run on three weekends next month - October 1-2, 8-9 and 22-23 and a three-week long shutdown would occur from November 5.

However, John Holland and V/Line deny any dates are locked in.

Mr Moloney said any

closures had to be agreed between the lessee of the track Pacific National, the State Government, John Holland as the contractor for the regional rail link project in Gippsland and V/Line, and there were also co-ordination issues with the metropolitan rail operator Connex.

Communications manager for V/Line Dione Lew also stressed the number of parties that were involved in negotiating line closures and was critical of any speculation when these may be.

Speculation is of no use to passengers needing to make travel plans and V/Line would not release any information to the

public until it could ensure it was accurate and reliable, she said.

"Our responsibility is to give passengers information that is timely and accurate, and we are sticking to that," Ms Lew said in response to the specific dates listed by Mr Mulder.

She said V/Line would inform people (of any line closures) as soon as we have information they can rely on.

In addition to several weekend closures of the Gippsland line over the past 18 months, train services were replaced with coaches for nine weeks last year for major track reconstruction to accommodate future fast rail ser-

## Gifts for China

Baw Baw Shire will present two paintings by Crossover artist Kerrie Warren on their tour to the shire's sister city Jiujiang, China.

The 10 person delegation, which left on Friday, will present the specially made paintings as a personal gift from the Baw Baw Shire to the Jiujiang Municipal People's Government.

The delegation consists of Baw Baw Shire representatives and local business people. They will return to Australia on September 10.

Ms Warren said the two paintings represented the link between the two communities and are given in celebration of our friendship and the hope that our crops will always be plentiful.

The paintings are based on agriculture - just one of the many connections that Warragul and Jiujiang happily share.

The style of work is abstract expressionism and the paintings have been influenced by the beautiful rolling green hills and crops that both of our communities are lucky to be surrounded by.

The two works are in full color, full of life and growth - cells multiplying and giving birth to new life.



Handing over the two paintings to Baw Baw Shire chief executive Glenn Patterson is Crossover artist Kerrie Warren.