

# GREAT READING THIS WEEKEND

Herald Sun



**TOMORROW**  
**CASSIE'S HELL**  
HOW A SMALL TOWN GIRL WITH BIG BUSINESS DREAMS ENDED UP IN COLOMBIAN JAIL

**TOMORROW**  
**OUR FAIR LADY**  
DAME JULIE ANDREWS GOES FULL CIRCLE

**SUNDAY**  
**SIDE BY SIDE**  
COLLINGWOOD 125TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

## Language barrier

Translator shortage delays justice

A SHORTAGE of qualified translators is wreaking havoc with Victoria's court system, forcing some victims of crime to wait for justice.

Court hearings are being abandoned regularly, suspects are being held in custody for days awaiting interview, and those accused are being denied a chance of bail.

Legal sources say there is a significant shortage of interpreters for many languages including Vietnamese, Arabic and Tamil.

Last week a preliminary hearing for three men on serious charges was adjourned after a Tamil interpreter could not be found.

While an interpreter was required for each of the men, only one with the sufficient qualification was available to the court.

Magistrate Graeme Keil said the court had recently decided to enforce a policy that

**SHANNON DEERY**

only level 3 qualified interpreters would be accepted at preliminary hearings.

He questioned whether a lower-grade level 2 interpreter booked for the day even understood English before adjourning the hearing at "massive community expense".

Lawyer George Balot said the right to an interpreter was fundamental, entrenched in the human rights charter.

"Where an interpreter is not available, the case can't possibly proceed and it will inevitably be adjourned," he said.

"Adjournments due to lack of interpreters are not only expensive, but are a serious interference with the proper administration of justice because they waste the court's time, financial resources and significant expenses."

"They also lead to substantial delays for accused persons

and witnesses before facing a criminal trial and having swift access to justice," he said.

Mr Balot said the problem was more prevalent in outer Melbourne where police frequently can't access interpreters during the critical stages of the interrogation of suspects.

"I have had the experience of legally representing non-English speaking suspects who were not afforded an interpreter for the purpose of a police interview, despite a genuine police effort to do so, who ended up spending several days in custody remanded without interview until an interpreter could be arranged many days later. I am also aware of cases where the delay was several weeks," he said.

"The problem stifles vital co-operation from non-English speaking suspects who are genuinely willing to co-operate with police."

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## Alanis cops \$7m theft

A BUSINESS manager who stole more than \$7 million from Alanis Morissette and others is expected to face the music and the singer at his sentencing in federal court.

Jonathan Todd Schwartz could spend more than five years in prison for wire fraud and tax charges related to embezzlement that he blamed on his addiction to gambling.

But a federal prosecutor said there was no evidence Schwartz had a gambling problem and that all his expressions of remorse were insincere and self-serving.

## PANDA CON ENDS IN JAIL

A MAN who falsely claimed he came up with the character and story for the 2008 animated movie, *Kung Fu Panda*, has been sentenced to two years in jail.

The Federal Court in Boston also ordered Jayme Gordon to pay more than \$3 million in restitution. He was convicted of wire fraud and perjury in November.

Gordon, 51, filed a lawsuit in 2011 to get a multi-million-dollar settlement from DreamWorks. Prosecutors say Gordon fabricated and backdated drawings of characters similar to those in *Kung Fu Panda*.

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