

MacNews

MacDonnell Shire Council Staff Newsletter FEBRUARY 2013 volume 5 issue 1



Titjikala Civil Works team after receiving their Tidy Towns Appreciation Award. FROM LEFT: Desmond Jack, Malcolm Moneymoon, Dave McGregor, Geoffrey Campbell, George Summerfield, Darryl Jack (in front) and Dougie Wells.

Civil Works team commitment awarded



Titjikala Civil Works team received a plaque from Territory Tidy Towns recognising the team's commitment to tidying up their community. The Tidy Towns Appreciation Award acknowledges their efforts during 2012 in the Community Litter Clean-ups category. Their efforts have made Titjikala a proud, clean and attractive community.

Through the Territory Tidy Towns Awards, the Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NT) recognise community and individual efforts that help remote, rural and regional communities become environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. Territory Tidy Town winners in the past have been acknowledged for their community's pride, drive, determination and a strong culture of continuous improvement through community participation.

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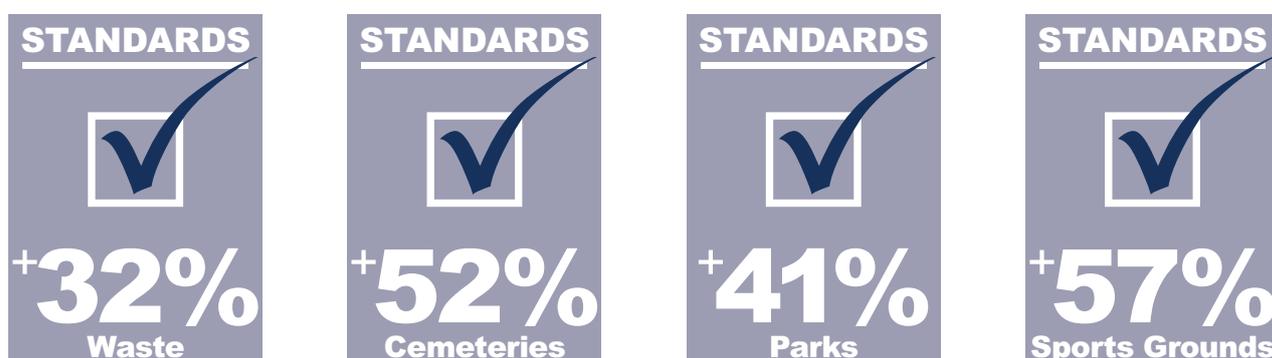
Hi All,

CEO UPDATE

Welcome to the first set of exciting stories from the MacDonnell Shire for 2013. The breaking story is that our newsletter has been given a name: MacNews! Along with the new masthead there will be a few more innovations to unfold along the way, but the primary idea of sharing stories about MacDonnell Shire activities and achievements remains steadfast.

I hope you all enjoyed the January edition and the opportunity it provided to look backwards at our top achievements for six months and forward for the next challenges. Top achievements in the last six months of 2012 included an up-to-date asset registers, accounting and finance manual and excellent audit results (no qualifications!). Two of the key achievements were:

- the improvements to standards that we have documented for the four municipal services areas – waste, cemeteries, parks and sporting grounds; and



- the fact that 100% of our team leaders in Aged Care are indigenous.

A further innovation of MacNews is the introduction of our Shire Goal medals. These are displayed with each article to inform us regularly of our progress. By highlighting each story against the relevant top level goals of our Shire Plan with the icons below, we can better understand and assist the development of the MacDonnell Shire.



Another action I am very proud of is that all three of our swimming pools have been open across the summer, and for the first time we are collecting statistics on the use of the pools. This should help us in the future to attract funding. Also see the Areyonga pool story on page 10 of this issue.

On a sad note, most of you will already be aware that our Directors for Corporate Services and Community Services, Allen and Elizabeth, have decided to retire and go sailing. On behalf of MacDonnell Shire, I wish them all the best for the future and hope that they have fine skies and good sailing weather!

That's all for this month, thanks and regards, Diane

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PLAN AHEAD



and enjoy the AFL Indigenous All-Stars game against Richmond on Friday 8 February.

Twice All-Australian player and Sydney Swans champion, Michael O'Loughlin will this year coach the Indigenous All Stars for their match against Richmond Football Club at Traeger Park in Alice Springs. One of the most decorated Indigenous players in the history of the AFL, Michael O'Loughlin was also named in the Indigenous Team of the Century.

The All-Stars game promises to be an exciting spectacle and it is anticipated that many people from communities across the MacDonnell Shire will travel into Alice Springs for the game. With this in mind, MacDonnell Shire Night Patrol will be working with Central Desert Night Patrol and Tangentyere Night Patrol over the weekend to help out the many visitors. Together the joint Night Patrols will cover most of the visitors' languages.

MacDonnell Shire's Manager Night Patrol, Andrew Lockyer has been busy planning for this weekend with many other organisations and would like to pass on a simple message to anyone thinking of travelling in for the game:

“Plan Ahead – you must know where you are staying and how you will get home”.

Know where you are staying – let family in Alice Springs know if you want to stay with them before you travel. With many people travelling into Alice from all around Central Australia for the game, town camps and relatives' homes will be full up. Family in Alice will have to let their Housing Tenancy Manager know before you arrive if they plan to have visitors. Don't get your family in trouble with Territory Housing.

Book accommodation – before you leave home book somewhere to stay in Alice Springs. Many places like hostels and the visitor park will be full up. You must phone ahead and book into Stuart Lodge, the Aboriginal Housing hostels and visitor park before you leave home. If they are full up you will need to book into a hotel or caravan park before you leave home.

Know how you are getting back home – book a seat on a bus before you leave home to know how you are getting back to your community. If travelling in a car make sure you know when that car is returning to your community so that you don't get stuck in Alice Springs.



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Make sure your car is legal – before you leave home make sure the car you are travelling in is registered, roadworthy and everyone is using seatbelts. Police will be stopping and checking cars to make sure that everyone is thinking about the safety of all people in the car.

Your children must go to school – remember school has begun for the year. You must make sure your children get to school every day. You must know how you are getting home so your children will get to school every day.

Bring ID cards – travel with your ID card, Drivers' License, BasicsCard and keycard.

Become the next football legend – future footy champions can attend the Australia Post AFL Community Camp from Wednesday 5 to Friday 7 February. They should contact AFL National Community Engagement Manager, Jason Mifsud on 8952 1670 for details.

Buy your ticket early – before you go to the game. Getting into Traeger Park will be very busy. Buy your tickets early that day from Hot Stuff 4 the Sporting Buff or Centralian Sports.

Don't miss the game – Traeger Park gates will open at 5pm. With a big crowd coming, getting in early means not missing any of the game. There will be food and drinks for sale and alcohol free areas for people to sit.

It will be a very busy time for our Night Patrol staff as they help out in Alice Springs this weekend. And they will be doing it again – with more major football weekends in coming weeks. So look out for the MacDonnell Shire Night Patrol staff in Alice Springs on the weekend, because they will surely be looking out for you!

Looking like the poster below, PLAN AHEAD cards are available from MacDonnell Shire offices and have contact names and numbers for visitors to organise where they are staying, how they are travelling home after the weekend and other useful information

**VISITING TOWN?
PLAN AHEAD!**

- Know how to get home?
- Where are you staying?
- Have you got your ID, BasicsCard and key card?
- Remember children need to go to school every day.
- Grab your **Plan Ahead Info Card** from the police, shires, health clinic or shops.

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Staff training trip to Mutitjulu and Yalara Childcare Centres

Early on Wednesday morning 16 January, Docker River Childcare staff Jessica Toll, Florrie Cooper, Sally Yibardi and two lucky children Cornelius and Sophia Watson set out, accompanied by elder Rosalind Yibardi, for the Mutitjulu and Yalara Childcare Centres some 300km away.

At Mutitjulu Childcare Centre sandwiches, stories, handy hints and comparisons were exchanged before the visitors were given a tour of the centre. Then it was straight to the Yalara Childcare Centre for a look at a Nationally Recognised Accredited Childcare centre. It is a goal of the Docker River Childcare Centre to achieve the same accreditation, so this was an important part of the trip and a tour of this centre was equally informative. Due to the volume of children the Yalara Childcare Centre is divided into areas for separate age groups, whereas at Docker River the children generally play together.

Afterwards it was time for a quick bite to eat before taking the long journey home. It was great that everyone was able to take some new ideas home having learnt lots from the day. It was also very special to be accompanied by Rosalind Yibardi, who as an elder, saw the centres with a different perspective from staff. The training trip was a great success and is sure to benefit staff professionally and lead to great outcomes for the centre and hence the community.

FROM LEFT: Mutitjulu Childcare Centre worker Mandy, Florrie Cooper, Jessica Toll and Sally Yibardi at the centre.



Speaking up for Dementia

Nina Bullock, our Manager Aged Care addressed the Commonwealth Government House of Representatives: Dementia Inquiry on Wednesday 30 January. She found it was an important opportunity to highlight the issues of providing community care for people suffering dementia in the remote areas of the MacDonnell Shire.

Nina was able to explain to the visiting panel what sets the MacDonnell Shire service apart is that its 160 clients and their carers are Indigenous Australians, living in communities spread over an area larger than Victoria, and speaking more than five different languages. To open their eyes to the experience of caring for people with dementia in a remote community she told them about the support needed for the families. She pointed out that the things effecting people with dementia are the same things effecting many remote Indigenous communities – access to quiet spaces free from violence, a good night's sleep, and healthy, reasonably priced, secure food.

Nina was also able to explain to the Dementia Inquiry that the support of a wide network of family members and living on their country is really important to the client, and a strength the community can draw on. She also said it is very important to a client's wellbeing and independence to plan for their care together with the extended family and relevant agencies. Through its consultation, MacDonnell Shire demonstrates a partnership with the client's family, the local clinic and health agencies to deliver healthy possibilities for a person with dementia in our remote communities.



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Movie Night premieres at Docker River Childcare



Not only was there popcorn, plain scones, pumpkin scones and lovely cold frozen oranges for free! They also had cordial and water to quench a desert thirst when the stars gathered at Docker River on Thursday 10 January for a night at the movies! Together with NPY Women's Council, the Docker River Childcare hosted their first family movie night. The evening began with the Walt Disney animation *Bolt*, the tale of a superstar TV pup (voiced by John Travolta) who gets plopped in the middle of America with seemingly no way back to the glam and glitz of Hollywood.

The feature was followed by a short movie starring the children of Docker River as they participated in sport and other positive lifestyle choices. This proved to be quite popular, with the audience demanding an encore performance.



The night was an amazing hit with over 60 people attending. It was great to see such a large variety of people in the childcare centre, from older men through to teenagers and right down to young babies and their mothers. We hope that with the continuation of such great nights like this the centre will be appreciated as a place for the whole community rather than just mum's and their bubs.

Docker River Childcare are keen to welcome all members of the family to the centre to learn and grow with the young tjitji and would especially love to see more father figures visiting.

Many thanks to Brett Toll from Docker River's NPYWC youth service, NPYWC volunteer Bridget Barker and volunteers Stu Jones and Suze Price from the Spark program for all their much appreciated efforts making the night such a success!! The only thing missing was the red carpet!



Ntaria Dog Program leads the way

In Ntaria the Animal Welfare and Education Program employ local indigenous Animal Welfare Officer, Jodie Scholz, who visits all community houses monthly, collecting information on dog numbers and health while educating household members on animal welfare. A Vet visits Ntaria every six weeks and this Monday 4 February there will be an Animal Management information session. We're looking forward to bringing more news about this program in a future issue.

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Amoonguna Sports Weekend rocked!

Back before Christmas, the MacDonnell Shire Youth Team facilitated a Youth's Sports Weekend for young people from Amoonguna, Santa Teresa and Ntaria aged around 12 to 17 years. The event was hosted by Amoonguna courtesy of Dan McAleer, their Team Leader Youth Development, who was assisted by the Amoonguna community and other Youth Development staff from the other communities.

Troopies arrived on the Friday night from Santa Teresa for a Disco and camping in the Shire Rec Hall. They were joined on Saturday morning by more young ladies and young men from Ntaria and the sports events began while the barbeque got fired up. Sports included football (AFL) and basketball for the young men and softball and basketball for the young ladies. All games were played in great spirits with many Amoonguna people making up the numbers for the visiting teams while others helped out with umpiring and things.



By the end of competitions the Santa Teresa crew had collected the first place trophies for the young ladies softball, young men's football and basketball while Amoonguna crew picked up the young ladies basketball prize.

The good times continued into the night courtesy of Santa Teresa Youth Development staff and budding musicians, Donovan Mulladad and Kerry Bird.

The duo facilitated a band night featuring visiting bands *Titjikala Simpson Desert Band* and *Santa Teresa Mission Boys*, a group of 16 year old fellas Donovan and Kerry are mentoring. An outstanding performance by all on the night was evidenced by more than 150 people who came to watch and many who danced vigorously – all night long.

FROM TOP: Young ladies basketball action; Bustin' moves with the *Santa Teresa Mission Boys*; Success of the band night owes much to the preparation Donovan Mulladad and Kerry Bird initiated in the weeks before. Keep up the great work fellas and we look forward to a bright musical future for our communities.



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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff)

Nestled within the spectacular West MacDonnell Ranges, the community of Ikuntji with a population around 160 people, sits to the south of Papunya, north is Ulampawarru (Mt Edward) and Anyali (Mt William), and to the south is the stunning Mereenie Bluff.

Located approximately 250km west of Alice Springs, Ikuntji is a 3 hour drive on a combination of sealed and unsealed roads along either of the two alternative routes. The Namatjira Drive via Glen Helen route may become impassable in heavy rain while the Tanami Highway route turns off before Papunya onto a good dirt road, with another marked turnoff 18 kilometres outside of Ikuntji. By air, Ikuntji is about 45 minutes from Alice Springs from its airstrip about 3 km outside of the community.

Ikuntji is in the Luritja Pintubi Ward of the MacDonnell Shire Council. The Shire provides Ikuntji with its municipal services that include internal community roads, waste management, parks and cemetery maintenance. As well it is contracted by the suppliers to support the essential services of Power and Water, Australia Post, Centrelink and the airstrip. In addition to its core local government services the MacDonnell Shire also provides Community Safety Services, Aged Care Services, Youth Development Services and Child Care Services which include school nutrition and vacation care.



ABOVE: moon above Haasts Bluff shortly before sunrise;
LEFT: Ikuntji 'city limits' – entering the community by road

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Generally, the community has a store that stocks dry goods, frozen food, clothes, some white goods and general merchandise while fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and milk are available but limited. The community also has a Primary School, Health Centre, Lutheran Church, Ikuntji Women and Art Centre and the Ikuntji Artists Aboriginal Corporation, BRACS, laundry, sporting facilities and is home to the Ikuntji Swans football team and their deadly women's softball team.

Traditional languages spoken in Ikuntji include Luritja, Pintubi, Warlpiri and Western Arrernte with most people speaking a number of languages depending on their family background and personal experiences. English is spoken to some degree by most people and there is a wide range of competencies in English. Luritja is a western desert language closely related to Pintubi. Displacement during the last century saw Pintubi people come from the desert further west, Warlpiri from the Tanami Desert to the north and Arrernte from the central MacDonnell Ranges with some of the Pitjantjatjara people from the south.

The area in which the present settlement of Ikuntji is located was first seen by Europeans in 1872 when Ernest Giles travelled through the region giving the bluff its European name. It was not until the turn of the century that pastoralists began to move this far west. The Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Reserve was proclaimed in 1941 and soon after the Finke River Mission established a ration depot near the current site of the Ikuntji community. By the late 1950s there were approximately 1000 people living in or near the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Reserve. Due to problems with the quality and quantity of water at the reserve a new community was established nearby and a significant percentage of the Haasts Bluff population was relocated. Since 1979 the Ikuntji community has been self-managing having also started the outstation movement which saw many of the people living in the area begin to move back to their traditional lands.

BELOW: landscaping outside the MacDonnell Shire Council office in Inkuji



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Holiday activities



At the Areyonga Pool the kids kept cool when it was over 45 degrees. Kate Maurice, the Youth Worker utilised the pool by putting on her programs at the pool so everyone one could keep cool. There was face-painting, waterpolo and iceberg races with big buckets of ice, as well as.Kunga Nights and Ulla Nights. With the weather getting so hot the pool has been kept very busy.



Meanwhile in Kintore during December, 10 year old Naomi Rowe thought about her holidays:

I like to play with my friends

We went to Cairns

We went after school for swimming

I had my iPad

We like to make my cake

I like to come to school

I come everyday to school

I like to listen to my teacher

We went to the Daintree Reef

We went there in the cable car

We walked down the river and saw a lot of fish

I saw a little turtle

Jamelee likes to cook

Jamelee likes to cut the food.

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STAFF MOVEMENTS

We extend a big welcome to the following people who have joined MacDonnell Shire during January. Also congratulations to those who have taken up new roles within the Shire:

Alice Springs

Kevin Angove – Mobile Mechanic
Amy Coverley – Coordinator Aged Care Services
Amanda Ghorra – Youth Development Support Officer
Stephen Saines – Youth Development Support Officer
Aime Smith – Outside School Hours Care Program Support Officer

Aputula

Dora Doolan – Administration Assistant
Charmaine Stuart – Administration Assistant
Centrelink

Ikuntji

Jonah Multa – Works Assistant
Priscilla Turner – Child Care Assistant

Kaltukatjara

Lee Cooper – Works Assistant
Warren Marshall – Works Assistant

Ntaria

Tina Malbunka – Early Childhood Educator

Utju

Hayden Williams – Team Leader Works
Peter Wilson – Pool Assistant

Warumpi

Tony Eggley – Night Patrol Officer
Serita Lane – Child Care Assistant

Watiyawanu

Felicina Kantamarra – Child Care Assistant

Seachange time!



Allen Nash and Elizabeth Death

Allen and Elizabeth have resigned from their jobs as Director Corporate Services and Director Community Services respectively. Having bought *Sundance*, a 34 foot yacht, they have planned a seafaring retirement. Despite the recent Queensland cyclone and floods we are assured *Sundance* is secure and they are looking forward to setting sail on calmer waters.

They have each done an important job at MacDonnell Shire and will be missed. Monday 11 February will be their last day.

Alison and Ailsa Breheny

Endearing mother and daughter combo from the core of our Children's Services are creating their own sea change in Tasmania.

Alison Breheny, Manager Children's Services, decided its time to move on after 22 years in Central Australia and will live nearer the ocean on the south-west Tasmanian coast. Her last day will be Friday 8 February.

Ailsa Breheny, our Coordinator Children's Services had her last day on Friday 18 January. Ailsa is also heading to the southern island but will be returning to university and studying Dietetics.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Council Workshop

Council Chambers (Alice Springs):
Thursday 21 February

Ordinary Council Meeting

Council Chambers (Alice Springs):
Friday 22 February

Local Board Meetings

Imanpa: Thursday 7 February

Haasts Bluff: Wednesday 27 February

Papunya: Wednesday 27 February

Mt Liebig: Thursday 28 February

OTHER EVENTS

Make a date with a Mechanic

The Mobile Mechanics are looking to cover two communities per week. The first trip will be a trial to get it worked out. For this to work they encourage Team Leaders to make sure all vehicles are at the workshops prior to their arrival and to schedule work around the following dates:

Tim

Kintore 4 – 6 February
Mt Liebig 7 – 8 February
Papunya 11 – 13 February
Haasts Bluff 14 – 15 February
Wallace Rockhole 18 February
Areyonga 19 February
Hermannsburg 20 – 22 February

Jason

Docker River 4 – 6 February
Imanpa 7 – 8 February
Finke 11 – 13 February
Titjikala 14 – 15 February
Santa Teresa 18 – 19 February
Amoonguna 20 – 21 February

Management Challenge

Next month in Alice Springs three Central Australian local government organisations will combine to field two teams in the NT Local Government Management Challenge. Teams of six will comprise two members from each – Alice Springs Town Council, Central Desert Shire Council and MacDonnell Shire Council – to pit skills against top end teams. Kitty Comerford, Graham Murnik, Darren Pfitzner and Julie Sauerwald will be representing MacDonnell Shire Council.

The Challenge covers activities in any of the management disciplines. The winner of the NT Challenge will represent the Territory in the nationals. While the Challenge is run as a competition it is primarily seen as an opportunity to learn or hone management skills and build relationships and cooperation across the councils with a focus on learning. More details in future issues.

STOP THE PRESS!

Deadline for next issue

Thank you to everyone submitting stories, ideas and information for this issue of MacNews and a Big Thanks for observing the published deadline. The cut off date for submitting stories for the next newsletter is Friday 22 February.

Send your stories and ideas *as they occur* to: media@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Stories that arrive after the cut-off will be held over for the next issue, or if their message is imperative, an excerpt can be included under the Stop the Press! section.