

# MacNews

MacDonnell Shire Council Staff Newsletter

JUNE 2013

volume 5 issue 5



## Fresh look at our Aged Care Services

*an old people story* is a DVD produced to promote the Aged Care Services across the MacDonnell Shire Council and assist people when engaging those services.

Produced as an animation, the DVD depicts situations and scenarios affecting old people in Central Australian and explains the Aged Care Services provided by the MacDonnell Shire Council in 8 of its communities.

The DVD was officially launched at a special premiere function at 6pm on Tuesday 28 May at the Batchelor Desert People's Centre Function Room at Alice Springs.

Learn more about the launch, the DVD, and how it will help deliver Aged Care Services on page 3

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G'day,

**CEO UPDATE**

The past month has seen the launch of two great outcomes for MacDonnell Shire Council. Earlier in May the Aputula (Finke) community got together to celebrate the launch of its purpose built Early Childhood Centre and more recently our Aged Care Services celebrated the launch of their DVD *an old people story* that will greatly assist communications around its services delivery. Both projects show the rewards that come from working away at long term goals.

Talking about making goals and working toward them, the Shire Plan review process is proceeding well. It has been decided to expand upon our 3 established goals:



Developing communities; Liveable communities; and Engaged communities that address issues specific to communities –



to include a fourth goal: **A supportive organisation** – that recognises the need for the organisation to support the work on communities. This is seen as important for the long term sustainability of the MacDonnell Shire Council.

While looking forward and planning for the next financial year, we must maintain our focus and achieve as many of the current financial year Key Performance Indicators as possible.

Finally council has deferred making a final decision on the CEO recruitment process until their next meeting at the end of June.

See ya'round, Jeff

Jeff MacLeod, our Director Service Delivery Centre, is currently also our Acting CEO until the recruitment process for a replacement Chief Executive Officer is complete.



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## Animation explains Aged Care Services

The launch of the new DVD *an old people story* had a feeling of anticipation and celebration. The project's instigator and former MacDonnell Shire Manager Aged Care, Rodney Angelo flew in from Sydney to join Aged Care Services staff who has travelled into Alice Springs from their surrounding communities to see the finished animation.

Following speeches by the Acting CEO Jeff MacLeod, long term Aged Care patient Kenny Windley, and the production team of Rodney, animator Leonardo Ortega and scriptwriter Katelnd Griffin, the lights dimmed and *an old people story* flickered on the big screen.

Soon the audience were chuckling as they connected with the animated characters of an old man, his family, his carer, and other community members. By dramatising personal issues experienced caring for old people, the animation describes the scope of assistance available through the Shire's Aged Care Services.

The DVD format enables viewers to learn about Aged Care Services in the language of their choice, whether its Luritja, Pintupi, Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjarra, Warlpiri, Western Arrernte or English.

Through the DVD, clients and their carers will be better informed when making decisions about their lives. The animation will not only be used to assist in the Aged Care Services delivery but also as a tool when training new staff.

The decision to use animation to tell the Aged Care story is also important as it manages cultural sensitivities by not depicting individual people and therefore maintaining its value to the community for a long time to come.

MacDonnell Shire's Aged Care Services commissioned Alice Springs based animator Leonardo Ortega and scriptwriter Katelnd Griffin, to develop and produce the DVD. Last year the



quality of their efforts was acknowledged when the interactive animation they produced was selected as a finalist in The Atom Awards – recognising film and media excellence in education and industry.

With 100% indigenous employment in the community staffing of their Aged Care Services the MacDonnell Shire Council has a consistently high indigenous employment record and continually looks to support and increase the number of Aboriginal employees in senior and skilled roles.

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## First ESO Trainee, Alex – finishes on top of the world

Last month Charles Darwin University completed their final assessment of Alex Palmer's Power and Water work books that finished off his training, making him the first indigenous trainee from MacDonnell Shire to complete the Remote Essential Service Operator (ESO) Traineeship.

Alex's training included much hands-on work in his community with the assistance of the local ESO. Over time his knowledge grew as he kept a close watch on the power station and water supply for Titjikala. While Alex's training had him visit Alice Springs to also attend courses, he thinks that anybody starting an ESO Traineeship today is lucky, because they will do most of those courses in their communities.

His training included courses that looked at things like: how to use equipment like power tools; how to service power generator motors; knowledge about water treatment; and some first aid. Along with this base knowledge, the local community ESO, Karl helped him to acquire some more specific knowledge about the job.



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Soon after Alex moved to Titjikala, a couple of years ago with his girlfriend Jo-Marie Rawson, he started working for the MacDonnell Shire Council. Around that time the shire had arranged with the Charles Darwin University and Power and Water Corporation for a training program to prepare staff from each community to do the ESO role. Alex began the ESO Traineeship and was soon leading the way among other Trainees across the MacDonnell Shire.

“Training as an adult is easier than school was, as a kid I was thinking only of mates and stuff – now I’m thinking for myself and Jo-Marie” Alex said.

Alex grew up in Alice Springs with his grandmother and great-grandmother. Growing up he found himself easily distracted from the classroom and had to attend several schools. Since leaving school and starting work he has explored different jobs ranging from butchering cattle heads in a slaughterhouse, looking after patients in hospital and attending to outstations. After doing ESO work for a while he says he is enjoying work, having found the kind of work that suits him.

Doing the ESO Traineeship has also helped Alex see opportunities ahead of him and know that he can achieve them. Having got a Certificate 2 through this training program he looks forward to getting a Certificate 3. Right now he works as a qualified ESO, but recognises that more training means he becomes qualified for more jobs. And that of course means more money and better chances in his life.



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ABOVE: Kevin Doolan and Zahara Shani Mary Doolan enjoy the community lunch at the childcare centre launch

## Early childhood centre promotes families engaging in a love of learning

The opening of the new purpose built Aputula Childcare Centre was celebrated in Aputula (Finke) community on Thursday 9 May with a BBQ lunch, community speakers and activities for the children.

The Aputula community had been looking forward to the opening of their childcare centre since the federal government's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) began consultation with the broader Aputula community. Consultations with the community about the development of the facility including parents, extended families and elders, in conjunction with the MacDonnell Shire Children's Services as the ongoing services providers.

MacDonnell Shire Council had previously been providing their Children's Services and Aged Care Services in Finke from same building making it difficult to deliver both services. Despite such difficult conditions staff had done an exceptional job.

Among the features of the new Aputula Childcare Centre are quiet areas, large indoor and outdoor play areas, a commercial kitchen, laundry and dedicated office space. The new facility meets national building standards and is compliant with the National Quality Standards of all Australian early childhood centres.

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"The new Aputula Childcare Centre has more places for more families and continues to provide ongoing employment and training for local people interested in early childhood." MacDonnell Shire's Director Community Services, Tracey Brand said "It provides the Aputula community with a purpose built early childhood centre that stimulates 'a love of learning' for all children and their families. It creates an environment that is welcoming and can safely present a culturally relevant program that is engaging and fun".

With the opening of the new Aputula Childcare Centre, MacDonnell Shire will be providing ongoing employment for local people in their community and will provide recognised training in Children's Services at Certificate 3 level for all staff employed at the centre.

LEFT: Martin Allen with proud young men Shannon Boko, Lofty James and Tristen Brown  
RIGHT: Tracey Brand (Director Community Services.), Bridgette Doolan (welcome to country from Aputula community) and Ra Schwalger (DEEWR) cut the cake to open the new Aputula Childcare Centre



## Trainee trains his new boss



When Todd Gross arrived at Mt Liebig recently as the new Essential Services Operator (ESO) he was ably trained in the Power and Water operations and procedures by Jeffrey Wheeler. While the shire recruited for a new ESO in Mt Liebig, Jeffrey stepped aside from his ESO Traineeship to take up the responsibility of being the Acting ESO. Visiting Mt Liebig when Todd began as the new ESO, Area Manager Graham Murnik enjoyed watching Jeffrey train his new boss.

Todd Gross is now settling into his new role, thanks to the help from Jeffrey, who meanwhile, returns to his ESO Traineeship and will begin his Certificate 1 in General Construction later this month.



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## Digital TV upgrades begin

MacDonnell Shire staff completed their visits to homes to help people sign up for the free upgrade to Digital TV and now Skybridge technicians are beginning installation of the set-top-boxes and satellite dishes at a couple of communities.

In the coming months the installations will continue to the remaining communities and should be completed before the AFL Final. Then, on 10 December, the old analogue will be switched off and only Digital TV will work.



## The secret is out! – Leigh takes great photos



Around the MacDonnell Shire we have become familiar with the fine landscape photography of our Purchasing and Warehouse Manager, Leigh Dunlevy. Featured many times in this newsletter as well as other applications around the shire, Leigh keenly captures the splendour and light of landforms around the beautiful MacDonnell Shire.

Our little secret is out it seems, as his photography has just been discovered in the big smoke. Museum Victoria recently contacted him seeking permission to use a photo he took near Docker River to be used as part of a new permanent exhibition. The new exhibition titled *First Peoples* will open in September, following redevelopment of the museum's Aboriginal Cultural Centre, when it will permanently display more than 600 historic and contemporary Aboriginal artefacts.

Leigh previously worked on the APY Lands, then in Haasts Bluff and Laramba before becoming an Area Manager in the formative years of the MacDonnell Shire. He has always enjoyed photographing the landscape during his vast travels.

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## Tag'n'Test training



MacDonnell Shire Council staff, including some of our Essential Service Operators attended a Tag and Test Training course recently. Everybody attending the course successfully completed it, enabling MacDonnell Shire Council to tag and test all of its electrical products in the future.

## Jill Doolan leaving us to become a Youth Ambassador

Having worked an Administration Officer for MacDonnell Shire Council in Finke, Jill Doolan is moving on. Other than a couple short breaks, Jill has been working for MacDonnell Shire since it began five years ago. She will be missed a great deal, and the Finke Shire Services Coordinator, Bill Byers says he will be one of many people that are sorry to see her go.

“Jill has been a great asset, she is very reliable and she takes a lot of pride in her work and her work space” he said.

Jill Doolan is leaving MacDonnell Shire to start an administration job at the Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged, which is run by the Uniting Church in Alice Springs. Jill is also going to be the church's Youth Ambassador for all of the Northern Territory and South Australia – a great credit to her character. As a Youth Ambassador she will travel Australia-wide promoting programs like strong healthy living and bible studies for youth.

This is a credit to her and shows dedication to work and her beliefs. The MacDonnell Shire is always proud to see a member of staff advance their life.

Jill's last day in the Aputula office was on 16 May and began her new role a few days later.



## Tip-top Tips

Following their Loader Operator Training last month, MacDonnell Shire's Roads Crew legends Ned Wilson and Donovan Spencer worked with a contractor to prepare a new site for the land fill rehabilitation project at the Santa Teresa tip before heading off to do the same at Docker River and then Kintore tips.

## Front office upgrades

Centrelink is supplying funding for MacDonnell Shire to upgrade the front desk of its Council offices in Areyonga and Kintore. Part of the upgrades will be so that all Centrelink services can be delivered through newly installed touchscreens and over the upgraded Council front desks.

## Sandra returns from her epic walk

Sandra Jones our Finance Officer in Accounts Receivable at head office recently set off on extended leave for a significant and personal undertaking. She joined her sister and a friend on the 765km walk on the Camino De Santiago in Spain. While away she celebrated her birthday, so on her return to MacDonnell Shire her workmates joined her in a dual celebration.

The following excerpt is from Sandra's travel blog on the final day of her walk:

Arco - Santiago - 20.1k

Guess what!! We made it, about 2pm today after an easy walk. We stopped at our hostel, grabbed our beds and then walked to the Cathedral. We met so many other Pegrinos that we have been meeting along the way.

We have our certificates and tomorrow we attend the 12noon mass. The Nationalities and where they have walked from will be read out. Kaye was also told that the service at 7pm will have the swinging of the Incense Burner.

We all think it will take some time for the enormity of what we have done will sink in. It is hard to believe that a little over 5 weeks ago we set off, with not that much of an idea of what was ahead of us, or who we would meet. People everywhere have been very kind to us and are very impressed that 3 Aussies have attempted the walk.

When we got to the old town today, we all linked arms and walked in together, very proudly.

Regards Sandra



ABOVE: Sandra shows her Camino De Santiago passport with stamps showing she completed the walk; BELOW: Sandra's walk took her across fields and over mountains; LEFT: Sandra's blog from her final day.



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## SHIRE SPOTLIGHT

You may have seen the Shire Goal Medals next to stories recently in MacNews – they show how the different things MacDonnell Shire is doing are part of a bigger Shire Plan.

In this issue we tell how all the Council talk works to make things happen in the MacDonnell Shire. It starts with the elected Local Boards and the Shire Council putting their ideas together to decide the strategies, or right way for things to go. They put them into a book called the Shire Plan. Shire strategies include goals that are talked about as outcomes and actions.

Shire Goals are simple and strong statements that remind everyone of the right way to go. MacDonnell Shire Council goals are for Developing, Liveable and Engaged Communities. Today we look at the Shire Goal number three, of having Engaged Communities, in the final spotlight on the:



## Winners' guide to Engaged Communities

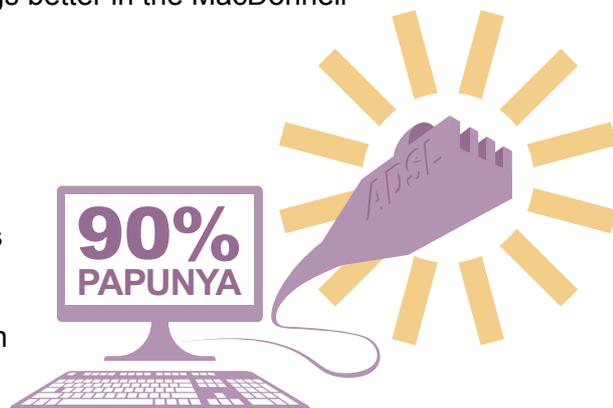
Part of the MacDonnell Shire Council's work is to help its communities to be engaged. The MacDonnell Shire does this by addressing three main outcomes that encourage people to:

- participate in community life;
- have effective local boards; and
- have improving capacity and skills.

Each of these outcomes have ways to be measured. Called Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), they show if things are getting better or not. Outcomes also have a list of actions that show ways to keep things getting better. Following, we take a look at each outcome to see how the things Council talk about, like KPIs and actions, make things better in the MacDonnell Shire.

### Participating in community life

Elected representatives decide actions to support greater participation in community life. Some actions are for things like improving computing facilities and satellite communications for Shire offices. To do this the Shire talks with governments and negotiates with service providers like Telstra to provide better telephone and internet on communities.



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At other times the Shire gets contracted by the services providers to assist them to improve services. This happened recently when our Shire Service Coordinators and Housing Officers worked together to visit every house in our remote communities and any outstations that get a TV signal with an antenna and explain to the people there about Digital TV and helped them sign up for an upgrade to their home.

Other ways around the community that MacDonnell Shire helps people participate in community life is by making sure there are good shaded places for community meetings and by supporting other community events.

## Developing effective local boards

MacDonnell Shire Council has always maintained Local Boards in all of its 13 communities. When the Northern Territory Government introduced the super shires through the Local Government Act 2008, having Local Boards was optional, but not part of the new law. MacDonnell Shire Council recognised that communities need to be represented in ways they were used to so they have always had Local Board meetings to have their say about things in their communities.

The current Shire Plan has seen MacDonnell Shire continue to conduct quarterly Local Board meetings in all communities, improve focus on community actions registers, and improve feedback loops to Local Boards and to the broader community.



## Improving capacity and skills

The MacDonnell Shire has an action to broaden training opportunities to community members as a way to improve capacity and skills of its indigenous workforce. To do this it supports its staff to complete certificates for things like First Aid, Plant and Equipment, and Business. By supporting its staff to get the right training for a better work knowledge, those people gain the qualifications to become leaders and managers one day.

Five of our thirteenn Shire Service Coordinators across the shire are indigenous, having been encouraged and supported by MacDonnell Shire Council to take up those roles. Similar support to staff means that in our Community Services we have 100% indigenous employment throughout our Night Patrol and the community staffing of our Aged Care Services.

After having read about these ideas, the best way to better understand them is to talk about them. Ask your Manager or Coordinator questions about the Shire Goals. It will also be good to talk about the goals with other Shire workers or even your family. Another way to learn more about these goals and how they work is to talk to a Local Board member or a Councillor about some things that have happened in your community.

If you have any ideas about your community, and any new outcomes or actions – share your ideas with Local Board members and Elected Councillors as they develop future Shire Plans.

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## STAFF MOVEMENTS

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

### Alice Springs

Robert Hoosan – Zone Coordinator Night Patrol

Darren Lavery – Mobile Mechanic  
Winston Mimi – Coordinator Aged Care

### Amoonguna

Audrey Miller – Aged Care Assistant

### Docker River (Kaltukatjara)

Bernard Pound – Team Leader Works

### Finke (Aputula)

Ursula Doolan – Night Patrol Officer  
Jane Houston – Team Leader Aged Care  
Kevin James – Works Assistant  
Matthew Lynch – Night Patrol Officer

### Haasts Bluff (Ikuntji)

Douglas Larry – Works Assistant  
Renae Stevenson – Administration Assistant  
Centrelink

### Hermannsburg (Ntaria)

Megan Emitja – Youth Development Officer  
Franklin Hall – Aged Care Assistant  
Travis Ngalken – Works Assistant  
Cassandra Williams – Youth Development Officer

### Kintore (Walungurru)

Gramsten Brown – Works Assistant  
Ketura Conway – Early Childhood Educator and OSHC Facilitator  
Douglas Multa – Team Leader Night Patrol  
Raymond Pollard – Works Assistant  
Michael Gallagher – Works Assistant  
Kerrilyn Gallagher – OSHC Facilitator

### Mt Liebig (Watiyawanu)

Sandy Abbott – Works Assistant  
Darryl Corby – Night Patrol Officer  
Todd Gross – ESO  
Fredrick Wheeler – Works Assistant  
Baydon Walker – Works Assistant

### Papunya (Warumpi)

Jodie Cunningham – Coordinator Children Services

Sonia Guy – Administration Officer-Housing  
Taegen Pascoe – Program Support Officer

### Titjikala (Tapatjatjaka)

David McGregor – Shire Service Coordinator

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Ordinary Council Meeting

Reviewing draft of the Shire Plan

Papunya Service Delivery Centre:  
Thursday 27 June

### Local Board Meetings

\*include Shire Plan reviews

Santa Teresa\*: Thursday 6 June

Amoonguna\*: Wednesday 5 June

Kintore\*: Thursday 13 June

## OTHER EVENTS

### Mobile Mechanics

The Mobile Mechanics have rescheduled their community visits around having Kevin help familiarise new team member Darren Mechanic with the workshops.

Team Leaders are encouraged to make sure all vehicles are at the workshops prior to their arrival and to schedule work around the following dates:

Finke 4 – 6 June

Amoonguna 14 June

Imanpa / Docker River 17 – 21 June

## Free Workshops

360 Allstars will be appearing at Araluen Theatre on Friday 14 June. Before they do they will be giving free workshops to share their skills. Their show is the circus reinvented with breakdancing, basketball freestyling, BMX flatlanding and more.



The 360 Allstars performers are trained professionals and all workshops will be held on the morning of **Thursday 13 June**. For bookings, contact the Araluen Box Office on 8951 1122 by Wednesday 12 June 2013 – first in, best dressed – places are limited.

## STOP THE PRESS!

## Fencing Program

MacDonnell Shire Council has just secured funding for a new Fencing Program that will see fencing delivered to family houses in seven communities and add to the fencing supplied last year through the HMESP scheme.

Technical Services are currently doing the procurement to set up the supply of all the required materials. Then the Fencing Program will begin in coming months in Docker River, Kintore, Mt Liebig, Papunya, Areyonga, Hermannsburg and Finke.

## Deadline for next issue

Stories for next issue of MacNews need to be submitted before Friday 21 June. Send your stories and ideas as they occur to: [media@macdonnell.nt.gov.au](mailto:media@macdonnell.nt.gov.au)

Learn new skills  
in your community  
ESO Traineeships start in June  
Talk to your Shire Services Coordinator



new skills = more work = more money

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