

Bulman Remote School Attendance Strategy 100% School Attendance Achieved!

For the second full week, all students enrolled at Bulman School have attended classes achieving 100% attendance; an outstanding achievement by all involved!

With the assistance of RJCP School Attendance Supervisor Chantelle Miller and her team of School Attendance Officers, parents and children have been supported to ensure each child attends school.

Initiatives have been developed to celebrate children who attend school regularly with awards being given to children who achieve 100% attendance over a week.

RGRC RJCP would like to thank everyone involved and their efforts in achieving this excellent result. A special thanks must also be sent out to Bulman School for their support and assistance since school returned on 29th January 2014.



CONTENTS

Bulman Attendance Strategy	1
Mayor and CEO's Message	2
Ramp at Beswick Clinic	3
Seeking Town Priorities	3
Local Authorities	4
Employee Profile	6
Name the Newsletter	6
Borroloola Clean-up	7
Social Pages	8
Community Round-up	10
Jilkmिंगgan Crèche Opening	10
Cert II Construction Grad.	11
Meetings & Vet Visit Dates	12



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Our Mission

Working as one towards a better future through effective use of all resources

Our Vision

Roper Gulf Regional Council, sustainable, viable, vibrant

Our Values

Honesty
 Equality
 Accountability
 Respect
 Trust



Message from the Mayor

March is such a busy time for Council business with the wet coming to an end.

The CEO, Deputy Mayor and I have been traveling across the region meeting with community members and staff. These visits are really productive. It always impresses me to see the hard work undertaken by our remote staff especially under the trying conditions that come with floods and their cleanups. I saw this first hand in Borroloola with their flood clean ups and in many other towns across the Regional Council area.

In March, I was honored to attend the presentation of Certificate II in Construction to 16 of our local men in Beswick and be present at the opening of our brand new and bright Child Care Centre in Jilkminggan. Training for real jobs and getting important community resources like the Child Care Centre established is very important for our Region to continue to grow in a sustainable and viable way. What a great job was done in getting both events together and I congratulate all everyone involved.

This month was completed with an Ordinary Council Meeting this time in Mataranka. The meeting ran smoothly and covered a wide range of issues important to region.

My thanks to my fellow councillors and council staff for their tireless work in making RGRC the successful and responsive place it is.



Message from the CEO

The month of March has been very busy.

The Roper Gulf Regional Council had its latest Ordinary Council Meeting at Mataranka Community where Council noted the lovely appearance of the town's parks and gardens which is a credit to the Community Services Manager, Virginya Boon and her team.

Mayor Jack and I have been

doing lots of travelling. We visited Borroloola amidst the torrential rain and flooding of the river. This affected our productivity there and emphasised to us what the Borroloola Community face every Wet season. We then flew to Numbulwar and Ngukurr and had a busy three days interacting with the local people, listening to their needs and issues and participating in staff meetings. I would like to thank all staff for their input and for providing their ideas.

The opening of the Jilkminggan Crèche on Friday 28 March was most enjoyable. We thank everyone involved in making this event

memorable. The community should be proud of the wonderful facility they now have for their children.

On Saturday, 29 March Roper Gulf Regional Council had a table at the NT Sports Awards – this was a very prestigious occasion and we were lucky enough to witness first hand the young talent that the Northern Territory is producing.

As we end off a very productive and busy month I would like to remind you to all keep safety in the workplace in the fore front and remember to note those work hazards.

RJCP completes ramp at Beswick Clinic



RJCP participants in Beswick put their newly acquired construction skills to the test by constructing an access ramp at the Sunrise Clinic in Beswick. This project was identified by the community who were concerned about the condition of access outside the clinic fence line, which was very rough and pot holed making it difficult to access.

The team spent two weeks on the project which consisted of cleaning the area up, leveling the area, constructing form work, installing a basic drain, cementing and welding. Safety of the team and clinic patients was also a focus with the entire area sectioned off from public access and an alternative access to the clinic being identified.

With a visit from the RGRC RJCP Remote Partnership Manager visited during construction, all involved agreed the project was a great success.

Work has begun on setting Council's new Regional Plan

Work has started on the annual planning for 2014 – 2015 which includes consulting with local communities about what they see as priorities in their communities. This could include but is not limited to:

Infrastructure needs such as new playgrounds and sporting facilities, extra street lighting, and water fountains just to give a few examples or services improvements such as enhanced sport and recreation, waste management and community safety.

A list of last years town priorities can be found town by town in the 2013 -2014 Shire plan which is available on the website

(www.ropergulf.nt.gov.au) or at RGRC offices.

RGRC believe locals have the best on the ground under-

standing of their communities and values the input of residents into the planning process.

Input can be given by attending community meetings or speaking with Local Authority Members or Councillors.

Council officers will also be attending Local Authority meetings and special community meetings to be called in most towns in the near future to discuss and record town priorities. Local Authority members and Councillors can also be contacted through local Council offices.

These priorities will be presented at Local Authority meetings and then will enter budget planning and Council decision making processes.

Prioritisation does not mean

everything included in a the wish list of priorities will necessarily be included. Financial constraints and demand across the Regional Council does mean some requests may need to be forwarded to coming years. RGRC can not deal with some town priorities; some priorities can only be dealt with though other government agencies or by RGRC advocating for local communities with the Northern Territory and or the Commonwealth Government.

For enquiries please call Governance - **08 89729005**

The Draft Regional Plan 2014 -2015 will be available for public comments from end of May 2014.

Visit www.ropergulf.nt.gov.au for details or visit your closest council office.

Roper Gulf Regional Council's Local Authorities

One of the big changes brought this year with the passing of the Local Government Review by the Northern Territory Government was the introduction of Local Authorities to replace Local Boards. Local Boards had been in place since the forming of the Roper Gulf Shire in 2008 and were a grass roots response to local needs identification.

They were an important link between communities and the Roper Gulf Regional Council, enabling local communities to participate in the Council planning process and governance. Local Boards were very effective in the Roper Gulf Region but have now been replaced by Local Authorities.

Local Authorities offer a great opportunity to build on the work of Local Boards over the last five years.

So what has changed?

- The new LAs will have increased responsibility and can make important recommendations to Council about how money is spent in their community. The Council will however have the final say on how money is spent
- The LA members will be paid a meeting allowance (except Council staff)
- LAs are required to comply with guidelines and need to meet at six meetings every year
- A maximum of 14 members can be on an LA

What will Local Authorities do?

Under the Local Government Act, the functions of a Local Authority are;

- To involve local communities more closely in issues related to local government ; and
- Ensure that local communities are given an opportunity to express their opinions on questions affecting local government ; and
- To allow local communities a voice in the formulation of policies for the locality as well as policies for the area and region; and
- To take the views of local communities back to the regional council and act as advocates on their behalf ; and

- To contribute to the development of a regional plan ; and
- To make recommendations to the council in relation to the Councils budget and to review the expenditures by Council, in relation to the part of the Councils area within which the Local Authority performs its functions; and
- To perform other functions assigned to the local authority by the Minister, in accordance with any guidelines that the Minister may make.

The development of Township Priorities by Local Authorities, identifying local needs, is a key informant in the development of the annual Council plans and infrastructure planning.

How do residents become Local Authority Members?

Membership of a Local Authority is by nomination. Anyone resident in the local area can apply for membership of their Local Authority. A nomination for membership of a Local Authority Member is subject to approval by the Roper Gulf Regional Council.

Nomination forms and other general information including Roper Gulf Regional Council's policy on Local Authority are available through Council Offices and website www.ropergulf.nt.gov.au.

Council Service Managers, Councillors and the Roper Gulf Regional Councils Governance Unit can assist you with nomination procedure and forms.

All Local Authorities have the support of their Local Ward Councillors. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor regularly attend Local Authority Meetings across Roper Gulf Regional Council area. The Local Authorities are supported and attended by Council staff and senior Council Officers. The Local Authorities are also often attended by senior Government Officers and other advisors and visitors.

Local Authority meetings are open meetings and residents are welcome to attend as observers. Issues can be raised by local residents at the Authority meeting during General Business or through a Local Authority Member

It is important for Local Authority Members to:

- Listen to the people in the Community and speak up for them when they are talking with other Local Authority Members or raising issues with Councillors.
- The better the local Authority members are at talking and working together, the better off the community will be, because they are working out important issues and getting good things done for their community.
- Local Authorities members will need strong local voices to represent all parts of their community and making decisions that are fair for everyone.
- They also need to be sure no body misses out on having a say or being heard.

Local Communities need strong, reliable people interested in the role of Local Government and able to listen and speak for their community to join your Local Authority.

If this is you or you know someone who would be a good representative, act now!

Employee Profile

Sharon Hillen Director of Infrastructure & Technical Services

Reports to:
Chief Executive Officer

Which departments do you look after?

- Council Service Managers
- Core Services
- Assets
- Landcare



What does your job as a Director require you to do?

The Director of Infrastructure and Technical Services (DITS) is in charge of general operations management and municipal services in 37 localities across the Roper Gulf Region including nine towns. General operations include day to day management of council and public facilities and offices, municipal services, local roads, waste management and cemetery management.

Administration services in each town are also part of DITS and include the Service Delivery Centres, meeting facilities, civic events, and

administration of both core and agency services at the local level.

DITS oversees Environment and Animal Management. As a land manager, RGRC is responsible for environmental services within the Region. These services include environmental health, weeds, fire and feral animal control.

Animal Management is a core service of RGRC. Delivery of bi-annual vet visits, animal welfare programs and problem animal management for this strategy.

DITS is responsible for project

management involving delivery of one-off jobs where grant or project money has been provided.

Asset Management is an arm of DITS and involves negotiating land tenure, property management, fleet and plant management and maintaining the council assets register.

Under a government grant, DITS is also currently responsible for the Outstations Program.

DITS is all about the unsexy stuff under your feet; roads, drains, waste, soil and buildings.

Name the RGRC Newsletter Competition

The observant amongst us will have noticed the brand new format of the Roper Gulf Regional Council newsletter. We hope you enjoy it!

We will keep on improving the newsletter however we need your ideas! We are looking for a new catchy name for the newsletter - something that reflects the our region and its unique qualities. Please send your ideas to the Governance: roper.governance@ropergulf.nt.gov.au

The two best suggestions will win a "Cheeky Dogs carry bag".

Borroloola's giant game of 'pick-up-sticks'



Ex Cyclone Gillian has blown past Borroloola, a town of a thousand or more people located in the South West Gulf of the Roper Gulf Regional Council. No major flooding or damage this time but Borroloola has suffered three floods already this year.

The Municipal works crew known locally as "The Muns Crew" is the frontline of preparation for and clean up of these regular events. They clean up and secure items likely to cause problems in high winds or rising flood waters, put up safety and road warning signs, unblock drains and clear debris from roads and bridges.

Three times this wet season the crew has removed tonnes of flood debris particularly from the bridge over the Macarthur River. This involves heavy hand clearing done with chainsaws and rakes as access is very limited and machine damage cannot be risked on the bridge.

Roper Gulf Regional Council, Council Services Manager at Borroloola, Bob Pahl praised his crew of five workers,

"The recent floods have deposited tonnes of rubbish on the footpath and road bridge. Everything from twigs and leaves to whole trees and logs get jammed into the handrails and across the road and it all has to be untangled and removed. It is wet, risky and very uncomfortable work with irritable snakes being just one of the many issues. The boys are out working when others are sheltering ... and largely without complaint. They just get out and do it because it has to be done so the community can function.

The last clean up took nearly thirty hours from when the Police gave us the go ahead and as well as our flood recovery role we still have to do the garbage rounds and other jobs which keep the communities safe and healthy," Mr Pahl added.

"Recovery clean up is an important role for our Muns Crew. This goes largely unnoticed in the community but allows essential services and movement to occur. The community can be proud of the crews' important work."

He also thanked a group of Garawa residents, some quite young, who came out to help with the clean ups.

"Without the community and other agencies pitching in it would take much longer to open the bridge and to get traffic flowing."

The 200 metre wide Macarthur River Bridge opened in June 2011 and links not only the Garawa Camp and its several hundred residents but the whole of the South West Gulf Region including Robinson River and many small communities. It is a vital link with the town, major highways and health and other services.

Out & About



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MONTH

Rivien Ashley
&
John Kelly

RGRC
Beswick (Wugularr)
Aged Care

Jilkminggan Crèche Opening Day



Below: Jilkminggan MUNs Team



Above left: Lara Brennan and Catherine Proctor at the BBQ
Above right: Children enjoying the celebrations



Below: Mayor Jack receiving the Crèche keys from Kay McCulloch



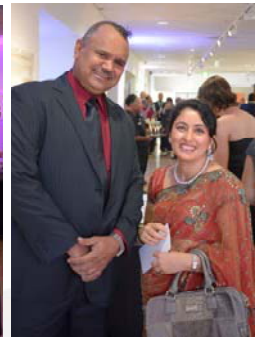


NT Sports Awards held in Katherine



Above: Nathan Cayless & Catherine Proctor
Below: Bobbi Kruger, Jyoti Pudasaini and Stephen Roper

Above: Mary Cunningham, Michael Berto & Julie Kartinyeri
Below: Marc Gardner, Mayor Tony Jack & Jyoti Pudasaini



OCM in Mataranka

Below: Sharon Hillen and Councillors



Cert II Construction Graduation Beswick *Congratulations to the Graduates!*



Community Round-up

Jilkminggan Crèche Opening: Childs play at the new “jilk” Crèche

The new crèche at Jilkminggan opened with fanfare last week with around 250 community members joining the Mayor, CEO, local councilors and representatives of the Northern Territory Department of Education to celebrate the handing over the keys to the brand new purpose built facility.

The new Child Care Centre will cater for up to 16 children from new born to transition age and will employ six staff.

The town of Jilkminggan located 28 kilometres from Mataranka has large child age population with a community mean age of just over 17 years of age. With such a young population the new Child Care Centre offers more than just an opportunity for parents to return to work. It also offers early learning opportunities and parenting skills for young mothers and fathers.

The new crèche replaces the old centre which did not meet national standards. The old building which is structurally sound will get a new lease of life as the community's shop in the near future.

RGRC Mayor Tony Jack received the keys from the Department of Education and spoke of the importance of Child Care in the community

saying,

“...our communities are very young and council recognizes the importance of having child care in our communities both to allow parents to return to work and also to provide opportunities for young mother and fathers to improve their parenting skills.

Early learning also allows for an easier transition for children into school. This is so important in building strong educated communities. We are very pleased to work with the Territory Governments and non government agencies in improving the opportunities for early childhood development and real employment opportunities.

We have also put a lot into professional training and development and this will have a positive flow on both to the community, in the care of our children and in employment in the future”

The official handing over of keys was followed by a delicious BBQ with fresh salads and what else but... jelly and fairy bread.

Amongst all the noise and laughter of children, excited parents and other community members another first occurred. Two month old Tya Doctor became the first child to fall asleep in the new pur-

pose built baby cots. It was all too much for little Tya who slept like... a baby.

The Jilkminggan Child Care is the first of two brand new crèches to be opened with the Manyallauk Crèche to open on the 15th of April and extensive renovations are also starting on the Beswick Child Care Centre.

The opening of the new centre closely follows a visit to the RGRC by the Commonwealth Government, Productivity Commission, which is inquiring into the provision of child care across Australia. The Commissioners were interested in comparing and contrasting their largely urban experiences with the situation in rural and remote Australia and the differing needs. The re-



Cr Daylight and baby Tya

Certificate II Construction Beswick

In March, 16 Beswick men completed their Certificate II in Construction.

The men who did the course as part of Remote Jobs in Community Program (RJCP) training also received the Building Industry white cards. The course was run by Batchelor Institute and Roper Gulf Regional Council. In a moving community ceremony the men received their certificates from the head of the Batchelor Institutes' Business School and Mayor Tony Jack.

Well done everyone!



Northern Territory Sports Awards Night

For the first time the Northern Territory's premier sports presentation night was held in Katherine on the 29th of March.

Joining the 250 guests who gathered at the Godinyamayin Arts Centre was Roper Gulf Regional Council Mayor, CEO, the Directors of Community Service and Contracts and Economic Development and staff from RGRC Sport and Recreation.

The Katherine Region is an area rich in sporting success and strong in its community sporting activity and involvement. The Region is looking forward to another chance at hosting another event which was pronounced by all who attended, as a great success.

Upcoming Meetings of Council and Local Authorities

- 7th April 2014** - 10.00 am: Manyallaluk Local Authority Meeting - Manyallaluk SDC
8th April 2014 - 10.00 am: Numbulwar Local Authority Meeting - Numbulwar SDC
9th April 2014 - 10.30am: Ngukurr Local Authority Meeting - Ngukurr SDC
14th April 2014 - 10.00am: Beswick Local Authority Meeting - Beswick SDC
15th April 2014 - 10.00am: Barunga Local Authority Meeting - Barunga SDC
16th April 2014 - 10.00am: Bulman Local Authority Meeting - Bulman SDC
30th April 2014 - 8.30am: Finance and Audit Committee Meeting—RGRC HQ Katherine

Contact Us

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Roper Gulf Regional Council Reception

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Job Opportunities

For an up to date list of our current vacancies

www.ropergulf.nt.gov.au or email recruitment@ropergulf.nt.gov.au

2014 Vet Visit Dates

Ngukurr & Urapunga.....	7-13 April
Mulgan & Mataranka.....	28 April
Jilkminggan.....	29-30 April
Jodetluk & Werenbun.....	1 May
Manyallaluk.....	7 May
Numbulwar.....	11-16 May
Barunga.....	19-22 May
Beswick.....	26-30 May
Borrooloola.....	23-30 June

Do you have a story to tell or a photograph to share?

Roper Gulf Regional Council would like to showcase your stories and photographs from our Region. Residents and RGRC staff are invited to submit their articles and original photos to be considered for an upcoming edition of the RGRC Newsletter and/or RGRC Website.

Please submit your material to keely-rae.wallace@ropergulf.nt.gov.au or phone **(08) 8972 9000** for more information.