Council outlines Borroloola plan

BORROLOOLA BIRTHDAY: Minister for Housing and Community Development Gerry McCarthy shares his surprise birthday cake with Mayor Tony Jack after he met with Roper Gulf Regional Council representatives at the Borroloola Show on June 30. Turn to page 4 to read the fully story.
We are now to the time of year when the our region is a hive of activity with visitors making the most of the Top End’s fantastic weather, in addition to the constant bustle of day-to-day life in our towns.

One of the busiest towns in the Council’s Local Government Area is without doubt Borroloola, and it is exciting to see some of the projects on the agenda as it experiences another stage of significant growth.

The Council was lucky enough to meet with Minister for Housing and Community Development Gerry McCarthy during the 2017 Borroloola Show to talk to him about what is needed in terms of financial support to see the diverse range of projects completed.

In total, more than $5 million in projects are planned for Borroloola, including a $1.3m upgrade to the Council office that will modernise the facility and centralise the customer service operations of all three tiers of Government that have a presence in the town.

As I write this, I am looking at what is always a busy Council calendar and see that our current Elected Members are only one meeting away from fulfilling their duties to the residents and ratepayers of the region.

The Council will enter caretaker mode ahead of August’s Local Government election on July 14, and it makes me incredibly proud to look back at what Elected Members have achieved since the last election.

All the best

Message from the Mayor

Hello readers

It is a good thing the dry season weather has cooled things down around the Roper Gulf region, because some of the performances Council staff have delivered over the past two months have been nothing short of blistering.

This has to be the best time of year to be a Territorian, something I am reminded of whenever I fly or drive around our Local Government Area and witness the transition from a thumping wet season to a six-month absence of inundation.

Local Authorities play a pivotal role in the success of the Council, so it was great to see so many stakeholders turning out to attend meetings and have their say on what we are doing right as an organisation, and what we could perhaps be doing better.

Something the Council has been doing extremely well since my last message is Aged Care.

In addition to passing a quality review within six months, the Council’s dedicated Aged Care staff had the privilege of taking to the stage at the Better Practice Conference 2017 in Darwin to showcase an Indigenous workforce.

The skilled team delivers Innovative and leading services that focus on staff retention and quality care to residents in six communities.

Congratulations to the team, ably led by Community Services Regional Manager Annalisa Bowden.

Have you enrolled to vote yet?

We are only two months away from electing a new Council, so please make sure you take the time to ensure your vote is counted.

Until next time, stay safe.

Message from the CEO
Barunga turns up volume for hip-hop visitor

ROPER RETURN: Australian hip-hop star Timomatic is returning to the Roper Gulf region in July to take part in an Intercommunity Sport and Recreation Weekend in Barunga, which will include a special live performance for participating youth.

After thrilling a crowd of more than 400 people in Ngukurr in April, Australian hip-hop star Timomatic has furthered his commitment to at-risk youth in the Roper Gulf region by agreeing to return for a school holiday event and special live performance in Barunga in July.

Youth from across the Council’s Central Arnhem management area will converge on the community on July 12 and 13 for an Intercommunity Sport holiday event and special Recreation Weekend, which will involve football, basketball and softball competitions, in addition to a concert by Timomatic on the final night.

Participants will attend a series of workshops aimed at providing empowerment between sporting events and Timomatic taking to the stage, and Community Services Regional Manager Annalisa Bowden said her team was ready to rock Barunga.

“It’s fantastic that Timomatic will come back to the NT to mentor youth aged from 11 to 24,” she said.

Council prepares to enter caretaker mode

As 16 Local Governments across the Northern Territory prepare to welcome new Councils in August, Roper Gulf Regional Council’s current Elected Members will sit for the last time in Numbulwar next month.

With the Council set to enter caretaker mode on July 14, the day the 2017 NT Council election will be gazetted, the Council’s 11 members will head to the remote community for their final Ordinary Meeting of Council on July 12.

The top agenda items for the meeting will be the adoption of the 2017-18 Budget and endorsement of the 2017-18 Regional Plan.

Manager Governance and Corporate Planning Amanda Haigh explained that despite there being no sitting Council during the caretaker period, it would be business as usual for the organisation.

“We are still holding 10 Local Authority Meetings in August, in addition to a Finance Committee Meeting,” she said.

“The new Council will meet for the first time in Katherine on September 7.”
A revitalised central business district, a modernised Government services hub and the long-term development of the community sports ground were in the spotlight when representatives from Roper Gulf Regional Council met with Minister for Housing and Community Development Gerry McCarthy on day one of the 2017 Borroloola Show on June 30.

The Council set up a stand at the annual event that outlined its project list—valued at more than $5 million—for residents before meeting with Mr McCarthy to discuss how they could be funded through a collaboration between the Council, the Northern Territory Government and McArthur River Mine’s Community Benefits Trust.

“Council has some big things planned for Borroloola that will help sustain the town’s forecast growth for decades to come,” she said.
In brief

WHS celebrates 250-day milestone
Staff have been congratulated for living by the Council’s safety values after the organisation chalked up a record 250 days recordable injury free on May 24.

Acting Work, Health and Safety Coordinator Renae Jarrett said the amazing milestone was due in part to an increase in hazard reporting, and the eagerness of staff to carry out Take 5 risk assessments before undertaking tasks.

Keep up to date with Facebook
There’s an easy way to keep tabs on what’s happening within your organisation and the Roper Gulf region from your phone – just like the Council’s Facebook page.

Whether it’s events, road reports, career opportunities or Media Releases, if it’s taking place in the Council’s Local Government Area, you’ll find it on social media.

To get involved, simply search for “Roper Gulf Regional Council” from your Facebook home page, or type www.facebook.com/ropergulfregionalcouncil into your internet browser.

Council tours $40m bridge site
Roper Gulf Regional Council Elected Members and Executive staff have been given a first-hand look at the progress of the project that will improve wet season access to the remote communities of Ngukurr and Numbulwar.

Following the Ngukurr Local Authority Meeting on May 17, the Council accepted an offer from the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL), and project contractor Sitzler, to inspect the new high-level bridges spanning the Roper and Wilton rivers.

The $40 million project is a joint undertaking between the Federal and Northern Territory Governments, with works scheduled to be completed by the 2017 wet season.

In addition to the bridges, the project includes sealing 7.3 kilometres of the Roper Highway, which provides the only vehicular access to two of the largest communities in the Council’s Local Government Area.

The existing river crossings are impassable for between 80 and 150 days each wet season, and Chief Executive Officer Michael Berto said the new bridges would provide multiple benefits for the region.

“Ngukurr and Numbulwar are two of the fastest-growing communities in the Roper Gulf region, and this new infrastructure complements Council’s $2.31m Growth Centre Transport and Freight Hub Project.

“Improving heavy vehicle access will open up economic and social development opportunities in both centres, so I commend the NT and Federal Governments for committing to constructing two new bridges to help facilitate that.”

BRIDGE BRIEFING: Manager Governance and Corporate Planning Amanda Haigh and Chief Executive Officer Michael Berto discuss the progress of the Wilton River Bridge with representatives from the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, and project contractor Sitzler on May 17.
Students show off skills to help recycling push

Recycling is a subject not often given due attention in remote parts of the Northern Territory, but talented students from Borroloola School are working with Roper Gulf Regional Council to put it at the forefront of the community’s mind.

The students unveiled 12 mesh recycling baskets last week, which were installed by the Council at strategic locations across the community in time for the 2017 Borroloola Show, including at the venue itself. As the Council’s push for viable rubbish recovery programs in its 186,000 square kilometre Local Government Area gathers momentum, Borroloola School Trade Trainer Peter Tomaros said the students had embraced the opportunity to develop their fabrication skills on a project that benefitted the community.

“A great need was discovered for materials to be recycled, so the school has worked with Council to design and manufacture the baskets, which have been put around Borroloola for residents to utilise,” he explained.

“Council is committed to creating sustainable rubbish recovery practices in remote communities, which will allow those materials that can be recycled to be reused, and lessen the amount of waste going into landfills,” he said after inspecting the baskets at the show.

“These kids are the future of Borroloola, so I’m proud to see them doing their part to make sure the community is clean, and to get people into the habit of thinking about their rubbish and what can be recycled.”

Mayor Tony Jack praised the school for its support of the Council’s plan to minimise the amount of recyclable materials being sent to Waste Management Facilities across the Roper Gulf region.

“Council is committed to instructing the students in the safe use of hand tools and welders, and they have taken great pride that something they have created will help to push the community in the direction of a recycling mindset.”
The vision and direction of Roper Gulf Regional Council for the next 12 months is now available online for the public to inspect after the release of the draft 2017-18 Regional Plan in June.

Under the provisions of the Local Government Act, the draft plan has been available online and in Chief Executive Officer Michael Berto praised staff days, giving residents and other stakeholders an opportunity to have their say on the strategic aims services and programs the Council was delivering across the Roper Gulf region to make themselves familiar with it.

“The creation of a plan that reflects the wants and ambitions of a Local Government Area as diverse as ours takes a whole-of-community effort, so the Mayor and I would like to thank Elected Members, Local Authority Members, staff and stakeholders for their input throughout the preparation process,” he said.

CASTLE FUN: Youth, Sport and Recreation Coordinator Charles Mbouti is all smiles as he supervises children taking advantage of the Council’s jumping castle at the 2017 Never Never Festival on May 20.

Mataranka explores lure of Never Never

The uniqueness of the part of the Roper Gulf region known as the Never Never was celebrated by hundreds of Mataranka residents and visitors when gates opened at the 2017 Never Never Festival in May.

From whip cracking to bush poetry, the action of a rodeo to the relaxed pace of a Sunday morning market in the park, the event offered something for everyone.

Council staff were on hand to provide information to patrons about the 2017-18 town priorities for Mataranka, as well as how projects in the town, including the Covered Multipurpose Sports Court, were progressing.

In addition, members of the Community Services team provided face-painting for kids, and a jumping castle, mechanical bull and inflatable wrestling arena.

NEW PLAN: The Council’s 2017-18 Regional Plan will be endorsed on July 12.
On August 26, Territorians will head to the polls to determine what Councils in the NT will look like for the next four years. In June, Roper Gulf Regional Council partnered with the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the NT Electoral Commission to visit each community in its Local Government Area to talk to residents about the importance of enrolling to vote, and what people interested in nominating as a candidate had to do.

The 2017 NT Council election roadshow was a major success, with almost 40 residents completing enrolment forms, and 10 more signalling their desire to fill one of the 13 Elected Member vacancies up for grabs. In addition, the patrols played an active part in a rescue mission on June 8 to ensure six teenage girls stranded in Barunga were able to return safely to Beswick.

The creativity of Mataranka Community Development Program participants was shared with the NT when artists were interviewed by ABC Darwin last month about the cattle skulls they have painted to enter in the art section of the 2017 Katherine Show.

In brief

Night Patrols keep busy
June was a big month for the Council’s dedicated Community Night Patrol staff in Barunga and Beswick. Both patrols received a commendation from Northern Territory Police for their professionalism during a number of domestic violence incidents in the communities throughout the month.

In addition, the patrols played an active part in a rescue mission on June 8 to ensure six teenage girls stranded in Barunga were able to return safely to Beswick.

Cattle art hits airwaves
The creativity of Mataranka Community Development Program participants was shared with the NT when artists were interviewed by ABC Darwin last month about the cattle skulls they have painted to enter in the art section of the 2017 Katherine Show.

Time for region to think about voting
On August 26, Territorians up with the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the NT Electoral Commission to visit each community in its Local Government Area to election roadshow was a major success, with almost The roadshow will conclude with the importance of enrolling to 40 residents completing in Barunga on July 10.

Roper Gulf Regional Council’s Aged Care team takes time out for a photo after being asked to present at the Better Practice Conference 2017 in Darwin in May.
SHOW SECURITY: Roper Gulf Regional Council Municipal Officers Bart Isaac and Kenneth Rory show Roper Area Manager Janeen Bulsey the new toilet block that has been installed as part of a $100,000 upgrade commitment for the venue that hosts the annual Borroloola Show.

Roper Gulf Regional Council has replaced the toilet block at the home of the much-loved Borroloola Show as part of a $100,000 Local Authority commitment to upgrade ageing infrastructure.

Director of Council and Community Services Sharon Hillen explained that replacing the infrastructure had been identified by the Local Authority as a town priority, and that Council staff had worked fast to ensure the new toilet block was operational before gates opened on Borroloola’s biggest event on June 30.

"To achieve this, more than $100,000 is being allocated to the sports ground. "The show is an extremely important social and economic event for the community and surrounding district, so Council is working closely with the Local Authority and other stakeholders to make sure older infrastructure is upgraded or replaced as the needs and expectations of the community evolve."

"Council owns and operates the Borroloola and Gulf District Sports Ground that hosts the annual Borroloola Show, and with the Local Authority, recognised that much of the legacy infrastructure in place was nearing end-of-life and in need of upgrading to meet the demand of facility users as the town goes through a growth phase," she said.

"The show society will use local contractors for the upgrades to the buildings, and that work will add to the improvements the Council has already made with the new toilet block."

Mrs Hillen said the Council looked forward to an ongoing partnership with the show society and congratulated committee members on their long-term vision for the Borroloola Show.

"The show brings everyone from around the region into town, so it’s crucial that infrastructure at the showground continues to be upgraded, especially the older items," she said.

"Council is happy to support the show society’s self-determination and direction for the event," she said.

In an additional boost for Borroloola scores $100,000 sports ground win
Upcoming Meetings of Council and Local Authorities

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ALL ORDINARY MEETINGS OF COUNCIL AND LOCAL AUTHORITY MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A Career with Roper Gulf Regional Council

The beauty of a career with Roper Gulf Regional Council is that there are a multitude of options available within the organisation, irrespective of your interests, skills or background.

No matter what career path you want to take, the Council has a job that will allow you to succeed in your own backyard, surrounded by your friends and family.

To view the latest job opportunities, visit ropergulf.nt.gov.au, or email recruitment@ropergulf.nt.gov.au.

Let us help you share your story

Roper Gulf Regional Council would like to showcase stories and photographs from across the region. Residents, ratepayers and Council staff are invited to submit their articles and original photos for consideration. Please send your material to roper.governance@ropergulf.nt.gov.au or call the Communications Coordinator on 0427 674 212.

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