

MEDIA RELEASE

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Santa sets up Barunga workshop to support CDP Christmas crown defence

Santa Claus and Elvis Presley have been spotted in Barunga as Roper Gulf Regional Council Community Development Program (CDP) participants work furiously to retain their crown as the kings and queens of festive season floats.

With the 2017 Christmas in Katherine street party only one week away, it is all hands on deck in the community as the finishing touches are put on the inventive entry. Council staff and CDP participants hope will earn them back-to-back wins for the best float in the annual Chamber of Commerce NT event.

After securing victory with their inaugural float in 2016, CDP Activity Supervisor Jermaine Scrubby said participants had embraced the North Pole theme of this year's parade, and were throwing down the gauntlet to other entrants.

"We want to make it a bit brighter this year, and I think that will let us beat everyone else again and win two years in a row," he laughed.

"I hope there are lots of good entries and people trying to beat Barunga to have the best float."

He added that when the float begins its journey along Railway Terrace on December 7, he expected there to be plenty of boisterous support for the visitors.

"It was awesome riding on the float last year with everyone cheering for us and what we'd built," he said.

"It's really good for people in Katherine to see what we can do, and I think they will love our new float."

CDP Senior Employment Supervisor Sommer Meadows said the craftsmanship that has gone into the float would turn heads, especially when the origin of some key components was revealed.

"We found an old building at the Barunga tip, and the guys had the idea to strip it and turn it into Santa's house," she explained.

"This has been a truly inclusive project, with the men constructing the float and the women creating banners for display during the parade.

“CDP is all about building the capacity of participants and their community, and building a float for one of Katherine’s most-loved annual events will allow the community see how creative, skilled and passionate people from Barunga are.”

Chamber of Commerce NT Katherine region Executive Officer Sue Jones said the Barunga crew had set a high bar for other entries.

“It’s fantastic to see the men and women from Barunga coming back with another float in 2017, especially after they won the prize for the best entry with their first attempt last year,” she said.

“I think there will be a lot of colourful entries on show behind the BP service station at 5.30pm on Thursday as community groups try to wrestle the best float title off Roper Gulf Regional Council.”

The Council runs CDP projects in its Local Government Area on behalf of the Commonwealth Government.

The Commonwealth Government initiative assists jobseekers in remote communities to find employment as they contribute to their communities and gain new skills in the process.

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For further information, please contact the Communications Coordinator on 0427 674 212 or at roper.governance@ropergulf.nt.gov.au.