

# MacNews

MacDonnell Regional Council Staff Newsletter MARCH 2014 volume 6 issue 2



## "MacDonnell Council is doing a great job!"

Territory Government Treasurer and Minister for Local Government, David Tolner answers questions raised by Council representatives while his Ministerial Adviser, Timothy Dixon (at far left) and MacDonnell CEO, Jeff MacLeod listen

After an absence of many years and following the recent changes making us a Regional Council the Minister for Local Government visited the MacDonnell Council last month. During his meeting with our Councillors and Managers, the Minister answered questions on a range of subjects affecting our operations, but the Minister left the visit with our ears ringing from his endorsement that "MacDonnell Council is doing a great job".

Learn more about the Minister's visit on page 3

## Welcome to MacDonnell Regional Council

**CEO UPDATE**

### Territory Housing contract

I was recently interviewed for the ABC current affairs television program 730NT and described our concerns about the future delivery of tenancy and maintenance for Territory Housing residents on our communities.

It was an opportunity to explain that we were saddened by the Northern Territory Government decision to not award the MacDonnell Regional Council the contract for the delivery of tenancy and maintenance services and to express our regret at the potential job losses to our staff this may cause.

It was also an opportunity to state our concerns for the impact on our constituents, who were yet to be told where their new service provider, Zodiac Tenancy and Housing could be found on their communities. As of March residents can no longer report tenancy and maintenance issues to us. Instead they will need to report all Territory Housing issues to Zodiac who, as an interim measure can be phoned on their toll free number: 1300 963 422



### Local Authority nominations

Meanwhile the past month has seen a great response from residents looking to represent their communities in the coming years by nominating to become Local Authority members. In some communities nominations have exceeded the number of members required to represent their community as a Local Authority.

The next part of the process to prepare for having Local Authorities is a time for people on each community to 'have their say' about who should represent them. A series of community meetings will be held where Local Authority nominees will be endorsed by the people they will represent. This will be done with barbecue lunches that will happen in conjunction with the next round of Local Board meetings each community:

**Titjikala:** Tuesday 4 March

**Kintore:** Friday 21 March

**Santa Teresa:** Wednesday 5 March

**Papunya:** Wednesday 26 March

**Haasts Bluff:** Tuesday 11 March

**Mt Liebig:** Thursday 27 March

**Areyonga:** Wednesday 12 March

**Imanpa:** Tuesday 1 April

**Hermannsburg:** Tuesday 18 March

**Finke:** Wednesday 2 April

**Wallace Rockhole:**

**Docker River:** Friday 4 April

Wednesday 19 March

**Amoonguna:** Tuesday 8 April

The community meetings will be an important time for people in each community to have their voice heard. The community endorsed Local Authority nominees will then go to Council to be approved.

Keep up the good work, Jeff



Jeff MacLeod, Chief Executive Officer, MacDonnell Regional Council

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## Local Government Minister says...

A recent visit by the Minister for Local Government, David Tolner, gave our Councillors and Managers a good opportunity to talk directly about issues impacting our operations and a chance to learn about the directions the Territory Government is looking to take local government.

Broadly speaking, the Minister told us: he shared our regrets that we did not secure the ongoing Territory Housing contracts; he acknowledged our undertakings to ensure that the success of our Local Boards carries over through the development of our Local Authorities; and he understands our concerns about securing funding into the future for our remote swimming pools and would like to work with us to help find a solution.

Minister Tolner also took time to emphasise the importance of encouraging economic development opportunities in our communities. He described how assisting private enterprises to access communities for commercial development was central in the government's policy for creating indigenous employment opportunities in the bush. **"What does work is a process where communities drive the change, and we, as government, walk along side supporting them."** the Minister said.

The government is suggesting a form of ngapartji ngapartji contract where communities would offer some blocks of land as an economic development zone and use low rent deals to attract developers into contracts that would provide a number of secure jobs for community people.

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A new basketball competition has started up between teams of young women aged between 12–25 years from Santa Teresa, Amoonguna and Hermannsburg. The competition runs for seven weeks with the final to be held in Alice Springs at the Basketball Stadium in early April.

Each weekend the three teams meet to play matches against each other as the competition rotates through their communities. The competition leapt into action in Amoonguna on Saturday 15 February and then moved to Santa Teresa on the following Saturday for the second round.

**Round 1** The first round saw the Santa Teresa girls in winning form as they won their first game 16 to 12 against Hermannsburg. After Hermannsburg won the second game 20 to 12 against Amoonguna, the Santa Teresa girls returned for a strong 30 to 10 win against the hosts.



**Round 2** Hermannsburg were undefeated this week, while Amoonguna girls with the smallest team competed well. The home team, Santa Teresa were too strong in the first game winning 34 to 19 against Amoonguna. The second game was tight and hard fought with Hermannsburg edging out Santa Teresa 19 to 18 and handing Santa Teresa their first loss of the tournament. Hermannsburg then went on to win against Amoonguna 29 to 11.

ABOVE Amoonguna and Santa Teresa prepare for the centre jump to start their Round 1 game  
LEFT Hermannsburg battles it out with the host of Round 2 on the Santa Teresa courts

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## New basketball competition leaps into action continued

The new basketball competition has been organised to provide young women with more opportunities to engage in structured sporting activities that encourage healthy and active lifestyles, and ultimately empower them. The games were refereed and scores recorded by local youth workers and community members.

The tournament is played in good spirits with young people enjoying themselves and the chance to get together with young people from other communities. For round 1 Hermannsburg and Santa Teresa brought other young people to support their teams, while community members from Amoonguna were present to support their



young women. The next week in Santa Teresa there were about 60 spectators.

Everyone loves hosting the tournament in their community. Each day ends on a high with everyone joining in a shared lunch before heading back to their communities



ABOVE Local youth workers and community members referee and score for the games

LEFT Interested spectators watch the young women competing at the Amoonguna courts

BELLOW Basketball was the winner!



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## Its Home Care now, not Aged Care

Aged Care is now called Home Care, which is much more inclusive of our younger clients with disabilities that we service in addition to the elderly.

MacDonnell Regional Council Home Care provides a range of support services to about 130 aged clients and 20 younger clients with a disability in the remote communities of Finke, Areyonga, Hermannsburg, Titjikala, Papunya, Amoonguna, Haasts Bluff and Imanpa.

Home Care services also provide the School Nutrition Program (meals for children to schools) in these communities.

Our Commonwealth and Territory funding bodies support the Home Care Service philosophy based on the community development principles that, a) we work with, not in place of, families and, b) we work to develop staff capacity and deliver culturally-safe services, equally.



## Pelicans visit MacDonnell Regional Council



Pelicans were sighted in the desert country of MacDonnell Regional Council during February as water holes filled after heavy rains. The birds regularly migrate through inland parts of the Northern Territory and when water does arrive in the outback, the desert springs to life. That includes a sudden explosion in fish numbers and the Australian pelican is well adapted to making the most of big rain events. Photo and story courtesy ABC

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## More family parks for our residents

Installing family parks provide training for our Civil Works teams resulting in a comfortable place for families to gather and a safe place for children to play. Combined with their strong community spirit and after launching their *Titji tjutaku Park* last year, Titjikala was named Territory Tidy Town. With the Santa Teresa playground nearing completion and another family park to be installed in Papunya, the question is – which community will be the next Territory Tidy Town winner?



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## STAFF MOVEMENTS

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

### Alice Springs

Linley Adams – Manager Human Resource  
Greg Bryan – Coordinator Aged Care Services  
Richard Kopp – Plant Operator  
Saumiya Seshkumaran – Finance Officer

### Amoonguna

Tyrus Conway – Aged Care Assistant  
Kevin Stuart – Community Sport and Recreation Officer

### Haasts Bluff (Ikuntji)

Richard Hage – Shire Service Coordinator

### Papunya (Warumpi)

Marcia Kingsley – OSHC Facilitator  
Anthony Nelson – Works Assistant  
Emily Puntungka – Aged Care Assistant  
Elizabeth Raggett – Aged Care Assistant

### Santa Teresa (Ltyentye Apurte)

Noelene Golder – Night Patrol Officer  
Belinda Hayes – Night Patrol Officer  
Sylvia Heffernan – Early Childhood Educator

### Titjikala (Tapatjatjaka)

Susan Boko – Aged Care Assistant  
Victoria Orpin – Team Leader Children's Services  
Jennifer Smith – Team Leader Children's Services  
Douglas Wells – Works Assistant

### Wallace Rockhole

Simon Walmby – Works Assistant

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Finance Committee Meeting

**Council Chambers** (Alice Springs):  
Friday 28 March

### Local Board Meetings

These will be the final round of Local Board meetings and will have barbecue lunches that include community meetings where Local Authority nominees will be endorsed by the community people they will represent.

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## STOP THE PRESS!

### Deadline for next issue

Stories for next issue of *MacNews* need to be submitted before Monday 24 March. Send your stories and ideas as they occur to: [media@macdonnell.nt.gov.au](mailto:media@macdonnell.nt.gov.au)