



**FREE!**

**Issue 397**

**1 April 2024**



PLEASE note there may be some images of deceased persons within this publication.

# Mayor Alf Lacey DECLARED



After a four-year absence, former Mayor Alf Lacey was confirmed by the Electoral Commission of Queensland as re-elected over the Easter weekend.

The official word was posted on their website on Saturday afternoon – after preferences, Mayor Lacey won by just 11 votes.

Four new Councillors will join him, all of them new to Council, all of them young.

Crs Telstan Sibley, Ebanese Oui, Mersane (Mecky) Oui and Germaine Bulsey, along with the Mayor, were expected to be sworn in by CEO Michael Bissell on Thursday this week.

“A Councillor can’t act in office until they’ve been declared an officer of Council under Section 169 of the Local Government Act,” Mr Bissell said.

“The CEO is authorised to take the Councillor’s declarations as per the wording under Section 254 of the Local Government Regulation.

“After the Councillors have taken office, we’ll convene a short Council meeting to select the Deputy Mayor and provide a summary of key issues like budget and capital delivery, before continuing with Council meetings as per normal from Wednesday 24 April”.

Cr Lacey said he was grateful to the community for their support.

“First of all, thanks to the community for showing up and voting,” he said.

He said the most important thing now was to work together.

*Continues next page...*

## Ravenshoe Deadly Women success celebrated on International Women's Day

To mark International Women's Day a group of Indigenous women from Ravenshoe – including Patricia Palm Island – have celebrated their graduation from the Ravenshoe Indigenous Women's Leadership & Development (Deadly Women) Program.



Patricia (pictured right) said she was now keen to further her studies to become a Ranger on Country.

“My daughter did [the program] last year,” she said.

“So I did it.

“I want to do a ranger course on Palm and I'd like to show my grandkids, when they get older, tell them about the ranger course.”

Participants of the 2024 RIWDLP Deadly Women Program were awarded their graduation VET accredited certificates for Certificate 1 in Workplace Skills and Certificate 1 in Tourism (Australian Indigenous Culture).

An official ceremony was held at The Ravenshoe Hotel with local dignitaries and indigenous leaders to

celebrate the occasion.

“Inspirational women are important because they offer an aspirational and empowering message for young girls and women, they provide a positive example that can make all the difference,” Reef & Rainforest Research Centre Managing Director Sheriden Morris said.

# Mayor hopes for future generations

...from page 1.

“Let us all work together to achieve the common goal about the future of our children and our grandchildren,” Mayor Lacey said.

“That's what's really important.

“I think the task now is to get the things done that we said we'd get done.

“That could only work with a working council and I'm pleased the community has chosen four young candidates to be councillors.

“That's really important in terms of the next generation of leaders, the community choice has been right, and I look forward to working with them.

“The community has spoken and I think that's a very strong message in itself – this is all about the next generation, and the generation after that.

“I'll certainly be there to give them as much leadership support as I can.”

He said his advice to the new councillors was to be themselves.

“And, more importantly, to always have the community heart and

mind, front and centre of council deliberations and community advocacy,” he said.

“At the end of the day, now that we're there, we can't forget about the people who voted for us.”

He said he had kept his election 'promise list' for the community simple.

“I was very focused in terms of some of the key points I wanted to get across,” he said.

“There needs to be some respectful and robust discussion amongst all the councillors, including myself as the mayor, in terms of how to best manage their expectations and the community's expectations.

“There are always going to be differences of opinion around different issues.

“I bring to the table my knowledge and my expertise in terms of leadership, and I'm happy to share

my skills and my abilities with the new Councillors.”

He said he would be taking up his role “one hundred per cent”.

“The new role is important and important to the community, and the community would expect me to give a hundred per cent of my time at council,” he said.

“That's what I'd be focusing on, but in saying that, I've enjoyed my time with the Myuma group of companies, which includes CDP here on Palm Island as a subsidiary, and thank them very much for the enormous opportunities they've given me whilst employed with them.”

He also said he wanted to thank the previous Mayor and Council for their work over the past four years.

“I'd also like to wish them well with their future endeavours,” he said.

# Deadly (ears!)!



The Deadly Ears program recently spent a productive and rewarding week on Palm Island.

The team engaged extensively with the community, with local doctors benefiting from observing and learning from the visiting Ear Nose and Throat Surgeons.

They also spent time at the local schools and day care centres. They said despite the challenging weather conditions, attendance was positive.

“We had deadly attendance with 37 children, all under the age of 14, that’s 74 ears, with 6 children scheduled for surgery,” they said. “This is particularly significant as it allows these families to access surgery on country, avoiding the need to travel to the mainland. “The feedback from children, families, and the community was

overwhelmingly positive.” The team will be back on the island in about two weeks time to provide Audiology, Nurse with Video Otoscope, Speech pathology and Occupational Therapy. “We are eager to return to the community, engage with families, and continue our efforts to close the gap in hearing health,” they said.

## Was this Palm’s first rugby union team?

*Words & pic with thanks to Alf Wilson*

Palm Island is renowned for producing quality rugby league players and the residents fanatically support their Barracudas team which competes at Allblacks carnivals and junior sides which contest the Townsville competition.

But what is believed to be a first for the Aboriginal community, a team of young palm Islanders participated in a carnival in ‘rival’ code rugby union earlier this month in Townsville.

“The team was undefeated in the qualifying games, progressed to the grand final and lost by one try,” Bwgcolman Community School acting-Deputy Principal Ben Phillips said.

“We had a squad of nine students from Bwgcolman Community School aged between 11–12 years and it was a gala day.

“To our knowledge, this was the first Rugby 7s team that has travelled from Bwgcolman Community School.

“The squad had been training for a few weeks, however, none of the students have ever played a real game of Rugby Union, before travelling to the competition.”

He said it was clear the Bwgcolman team had “come to play” from the very start.

“All in all it was a great day, students from Palm

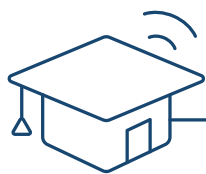
Island turned a lot of heads with people in disbelief that a group of students that had never played Rugby Union before [only Rugby League] could play so well,” he said.



# Are you eligible for the School Student Broadband Initiative?

The Australian Government has established the School Student Broadband Initiative (SSBI) to provide free home internet until 31 December 2025 for up to 30,000 unconnected families with school aged students.

Eligible families receive free home internet over the National Broadband Network by selecting an offer from a participating internet provider.



School Student  
Broadband Initiative

An Australian Government initiative  
powered by nbn

## Do you qualify for free home internet?

**Call 1800 954 610**  
**and our helpful team can check for you**

National Referral Centre (Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm AEDT)



[anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet](http://anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet)



Callback, webchat, translating and interpreting services available



Scan the QR for more information.

## THE NEXT *Palm Island Voice* DEADLINE\*

(Issue 398\*) will be **Thursday 11 April**  
for publication on **Monday 15 April**



The ***Palm Island Voice*** is published \*weekly if we have paid advertising, or otherwise fortnightly by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council. For advertising rates and/or more information contact the Editor on 0419 656 277 or at [howeschowes@gmail.com](mailto:howeschowes@gmail.com) Members of the Palm Island community and local organisations are welcome to submit birthdays, community information, pics, yarns and letters to the Editor, Christine Howes. You can also follow us on Facebook! We have 2,900 'likes' and more than 3,000 followers! The ***Palm Island Voice*** is free and online at <http://www.chowes.com.au>

**Operating Hours for Palm Island Council are Monday–Friday 8am – 5pm**  
If you have any questions please contact Reception on 4770 1177 or 4770 0200  
Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council has 5,400 'followers' on Facebook!!!