



# Palm Island Voice

Your Community  
Your Newsletter  
Your Voice



ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

Thursday 1 August 2013

\$1.25

Issue 134



## Looking to their futures with the help of some 'Former Origin Greats' in Townsville



A group of Palm Island students from Bwgcolman State High School were amongst thousands who attended the fifth 'FOGS' Careers Expo in Townsville last week.

Former Origin Greats who were there to try and inspire students into a good career included Gene Miles, Greg Dowling, Colin

Scott, Sam Backo, Steve Price, Gary Belcher, Steve Walters, Steve Renouf and Allan Langer. The event featured a diverse

work, in hospitality and others. More than 55 exhibits provided information at the expo, showcasing a variety of prominent employment providers.

FOGS executive chairman Gene Miles said since the inception on FOGS expos in 2008, these events presented an array of employment and training opportunities for attendees across the state.

"(It allows) individuals to talk to real people who are able to provide guidance and fundamentally an idea or direction for their future," Mr Miles said.



*Pictured Top L-R: Josiah James, Renzi Watson, Jalun Lowatta-Creed, Luke James, Joseph Murgha, Sarah Dalton, Julie Pearson, Gladys Ayden & Koipe Castors; Above Right: Moewaiya Youngblutt; Above: Jenny Pryor with her grandson Tremayne Pryor-Murray & Sam Backo, Gene Miles & Colin Scott.*

range of prominent Queensland employment, education and training providers with exhibits on mining and construction, business, hospitality as well as health and government. Palm students career preferences included becoming a mechanic, office

# Motel expansion welcomed

Palm Island Council has successfully bid for an infrastructure grant to expand the Palm Island Motel to more than double its current size.

Mayor Alf Lacey welcomed the funding.

“Palm Island Council welcomes this government investment into the community,” he said.

“The Council and the State Government are working together and this shows we are serious about investing in the future of Palm.”

Member for Townsville, John

Hathaway MP, said more than \$1 million had been set aside.

“The project includes building 10 additional rooms, which will increase the total capacity of the motel to 23 rooms,” Mr Hathaway said.

“These sorts of projects go to the heart of providing opportunities for economic development on Palm Island.”

Local Government Minister



David Crisafulli said the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program was about building infrastructure in local communities while also creating jobs.

# Power and influence list features JT and AL by a nose

Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey has once again been named amongst North Queensland's 50 most influential and powerful people by the Townsville Bulletin newspaper.

Champion North Queensland Cowboys rugby league player Johnathan Thurston was the only other of two Indigenous people named. He came in at number 14 while Cr Lacey came in at number 49. It was the third year in a row Cr Lacey has been listed, he was number 46 in 2012 and at 37 the previous year.

Cr Lacey said he was honoured to be recognised by mainstream media.

“It is a privilege and recognizes my strong leadership and forward thinking, it is not only about me but the positive things happening here on Palm,” Cr Lacey said.

The profile on Cr Lacey by the Bulletin read in part,

“Cr Lacey is rated highly by the State Government for his leadership role on the Island and amongst other Indigenous Mayors”.

The newspaper advised readers the list included successful business people, ‘strident’ community advocates, ‘passionate’ civic leaders and ‘beguiling’ politicians.

## Palm Island Rugby League (PIRL) Footy Results

Saturday 20th July:

Raiders def Skipjack

Mundy Bay drew with Butler Bay Bulls

Jets def Brothers

Saturday 27th July: Results unavailable at time of going to print

**STOP PRESS:** The outcome of Cr Lacey's court hearing last Friday was a \$100 fine + NO recorded conviction for charges relating to the AMP. He said he was pleased the matter was over and done with and looking forward to continuing to work with the community.

# First teachers program earmarked for Palm

Palm Island is one of 25 communities selected to be a part of a national program in early 2014 which has already proved to be highly effective in helping parents become their child's first teachers across 50 other Australian communities including Mt Isa, Cairns and Inala.

Early Childhood and Child Care Minister Kate Ellis and Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Jenny Macklin said the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) was a smart and effective program for helping parents improve their child's readiness for school.

"The evidence is clear that the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters works which is

why we have invested in its expansion," she said. "All children deserve the best possible start to their education, and the expansion of the program means more families will receive help to make this possible."

Ms Ellis said since the program started helping an initial 22 communities back in 2009, around 4,000 children had been covered by the program and once fully rolled out more than

2,000 children each year would benefit. She said the Brotherhood of St Laurence delivered the program.

Parents and their children enrol in the program in the year before the child starts school and participate for two years.

Together, families work through daily activities using role play and storybooks designed to develop and support pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills.

For more information about HIPPY see:

<http://deewr.gov.au/home-interaction-program-parents-and-youngsters-hippy>

## Out & About

## Vyneika is 18!



# Elders and visitors go behind bars to share NAIDOC celebrations with women's prison inmates

More than 100 inmates enjoyed NAIDOC Week celebrations at the Townsville Women's Correctional Centre last month.

Palm Island elders Cynbell Pryor-Musu and Elizabeth Larry were invited guests and the Palm Island Voice was also given permission to attend.

Auntie Jenny Pryor welcomed everyone on behalf of the Bindal people and also acknowledged the Wulgurukaba tribe. Centre Cultural

Development Officer Dean Saunders said the celebrations were special.

Entertainment was provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancers, art work hand crafted by inmates was on display and lunch was provided.

Elders from the Mackay Binga Birry Justice Group, who have been visiting

the Women's Centre on a monthly basis for 15 years, Harold Doyle, Jeff "JT" Timor and Lyn Irving were also there.

Mr Timor, of Badu Island descent, played his guitar and sang for the audience which also included Custodial Officers Michelle Hegarty and Cultural Liaison Officer Drue Ross →

*Right: Cultural Liaison Officer Drue Ross*



*Left: Palm Island elders Cynbell Pryor-Musu & Elizabeth Larry enjoyed talking to inmates*

*Right: Aunty Jenny Pryor welcomes guests to country*



*Words & Pics  
by Alf Wilson*

—> of Palm and Darnley Islands' descent.

Acting Deputy General Manager Barrie Emanuel said the celebrations were one of many positive steps the Centre was taking.

“Although it may look like Mr Gordon and I attend the graduation ceremonies of this program just to participate in eating the wonderful spread of food the women put on, that is definitely not the case,” he said.

“We attend with great pride to see and hear how important each participant has valued the opportunity

to complete this program and the open display of respect and love for Aunty Jenny and what she gives personally, spiritually and culturally that may just be the difference for someone to follow their dreams.

“On behalf of the many women you have come into contact with, thank you Jenny for your kindness, guidance and most importantly your friendship.

“I look forward to the years ahead when we can truly measure the success of such a program, as well as many other pathways

we are developing at this Centre, and know there are good people working hard here to make a positive difference in other people's lives.

“I would like to finish by acknowledging the huge amount of effort put in by our performing women with the support of Jason Kepper, Dean Saunders and their team of staff who prepared today's event.

“Thank you for all attending and I hope you all enjoy the wonderful presentations we have on for today's NAIDOC celebration.”

# Palm Island Voice

## Public & Community Notices



Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council has 162 'likes' on Facebook!!!



**Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council** is closed every 2nd Friday (Council pay week) for RDO.

The next RDO is

**Friday 9 August**

**For emergencies on Friday please call 0458 789 011.**

For more information contact Council on 4770 1177.

### ABOUT THIS FONT:

The font used in this newsletter is called 'Dyslexie' and has been designed for people who have difficulty reading, especially those with dyslexia, so they can read more easily.

For more information see <http://www.studiostudio.nl>

*Happy 18th Birthday  
Vyneika Haines  
Love Mum, Dad,  
Frederick and Munyaney*

*Happy 23rd Birthday  
Munyaney Robertson*

*Love Dad, Aunty Eva,  
Frederick and Vyneika*

## 2013 Advertising & Subscription Rates

### **ADVERTISE!**

Page Sponsorship: (1cm or 18pt banner ad across nominated page): \$120

Quarter A4 Page: \$250 + GST

Half A4 Page: \$350 + GST

Full A4 Page: \$550 + GST

Ads are to be booked by no later than 5pm on deadline day (see back page) and material submitted no later than COB the next day.

### **SUBSCRIBE!**

Individuals & Families: \$65

Community & NGOs: \$130

Government & Corporate: \$195

(Inclusive from now to end 06/14)

Subscription rates will vary according to when the initial subscription is taken out (eg if taken in January 2014 the rate will be half of the full year to take it to July 2014).

**To book an ad or to inquire about subscriptions please contact the Editor, Christine Howes, on 0419 656 277 or via [chowes@westnet.com.au](mailto:chowes@westnet.com.au)**

**Please support us so we can continue to support you!**

## Sydney 'Horizons' for students

A group of successful Year 9–12 students participating in the Cathy Freeman Foundation (CFF) Horizons Program, have once again been rewarded with a trip to Sydney.

“CFF programs recognise and reward Indigenous achievement with the aim of creating positive education outcomes,” Olympic gold medallist and CFF founder/director Cathy Freeman said.

“These opportunities broaden their understanding of the world and we hope the students return home inspired to continue on a positive education pathway.”

Bwgcolman Deputy Principal Chris Wicks said the Horizons program gave students an opportunity to see what life was like off the Island.

“It opens their eyes to ‘what else’ is out there for them and highlights that the world is a big place filled with countless possibilities,” he said.

## Kawangi debuts to packed theatre

Kawangi Pryor received a standing ovation at his first public appearance in Townsville at the Courthouse Theatre last month.

The 38-year-old has been playing his keyboards and singing – mostly for family – since he was 13 years of age.

It was a packed house and after his performance members of the audience stood and clapped him.

*Palm Island Voice* visited Kawangi at his home and found an enthusiastic man, proud of his Aboriginal heritage.

“It was a good sized crowd and I was very happy that they liked my performance

at what was my first major debut,” he said. “Previously I had done it at nursing homes and for family gatherings.”

He said he was taught music as a boy by his grandmother, who now lives at a Townsville Nursing Home.

“My grandma got me into it a long time ago and I am so glad,” he said.

He sings a collection of Negro Spiritual, Musical Comedies and Ballads and as well as his performance on the keyboard. 7



### Students:

Kenny Baira

Neil Baira

Shirley Curley–Barry

Sharmika Curley

Jona Dabea

Dehannah Morgan

Heath Lacey

Kathleen Haines

John Geia

Peter Reid

Alvina Walton

Breeannah Cannon

Raymond Charles

Thomas Baira

Ngaire Pearson

**Bwgcolman Staff:**

Chris Wicks (Vice Principal) &

Todd Chatterton

(Head of Senior School)

**CFF:** Nazareth

Youngblutt

(Community Liaison Officer)



“I enjoy playing and singing,” he said.

“With the support from my family and tutors I have come a long way and I want to continue to entertain.”

His mother, highly respected community elder Cilla Pryor, is his biggest supporter.

“I was so proud of Kawangi, it took him three months to prepare,” she said.

Rhianon Walsh is well-known to many on Palm Island, he is mostly home-bound with osteoarthritis and a degenerative back condition from an assault he suffered some years ago.

“My son was murdered two years ago, I sent my other son away because he was being threatened, and my daughter is here busted up. I’m just sick of it,” he told the *Palm Island Voice*. He also says he wonders that people walk around blind and ignorant of what they are truly doing.

Below is a letter he wrote to the Palm Island Notice Board page on Facebook last weekend, and has agreed to have published here.

**Dear Palm Island ,**

When are we going to stop the violence we inflict on each other?

I have a daughter here who has three slash wounds from a knife-wielding, petrol-sniffing freak and we have a young woman being flown out from stab wounds...

What is the matter with our mob ?

This truly saddens me to no end – we are all here on one Island, we all suffer, we all bury our dead in the same ground, we all struggle here on Palm Island, we are all under the same law, and yet we learn to hate each other.

Point: We all love our own families, why doesn't that extend to our neighbours?

Oh no, too easy to hate, individual pride is our downfall and we love the one we're with until we get drunk.

As an individual you are not just hurting that person but the whole community.

And you wonder why the police do nothing? They want us to kill each other.

A house - Palm Island - all Aboriginal people - divided cannot stand.

And you wonder why governments walk all over you. Truly consider what is going on.

God gave Satan permission to walk upon the earth and he is alive and well on Palm.

If you take offence you are being convicted, open your eyes, heart and mind.

My name is Rhianon Robert Walsh and I made this my home.

Turn a blind eye to all that's going on around you at your own peril.

We can not have pride within ourselves or our community, unless we show respect for our fellow brothers and sisters. By doing nothing, we placate the norm and thereby welcome destruction within ... our family and our community.

By the way I am not perfect, I have a very dysfunctional family, but they're my family.

I have nothing but a heart, eyes, ears, feelings, of which we all have – to make a choice to do good. You can open up the whole world with your heart, eyes, ears and feelings.

It's the little things that get to you that make everyone suffer.

Learn to share.

My fear is when I'm dead and gone these young folk will need to be aware of their surroundings, not just living in their safety bubbles here.

They are the ones who need to take up the fight when we are all gone – the elders and leaders who are here now will be gone one day.

Are they going to be ready to take up the struggle? I truly wonder.

There are all the wrongs I've been through but we have all shared this loss and heartache – don't you think that should unite us?

**Rhianon Robert Walsh**  
**Peace Love Respect**

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## Palm Island Voice

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Thursday 19 September	138	THURSDAY 26 September