



# Palm Island Voice

**FREE!**

## Issue 297

Thursday 9 April 2020

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



# Protect yourself and your family NOW!

Palm Island residents are being asked to look after their families by simply staying at home, the community's Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) says.

At the time of printing Palm Island had no cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), however Townsville and other towns in the far north have several cases.

LDMG chair Roy Prior said the time to act was now.

“Our whole way of community

life must change for what we hope will only be a few short months, or we have no chance of protecting ourselves,” he said.

“We have to accept isolation and social distancing from family members and friends.

“We understand it will put

stress on people if they are not able to go about their daily lives as they choose to do.

“However the quicker we all shoulder these responsibilities, the quicker we will all see our way out of this safely.”

[FULL STATEMENT INSIDE...](#)



# Don't wait to protect yourself from this illness, start now!

## A MESSAGE TO PALM ISLAND COMMUNITY FROM OUR LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP (LDMG) CHAIR ROY PRIOR

LDMG members meet regularly to discuss the best possible solutions for the Palm Island community under the current Coronavirus situation, LDMG Chair Roy Prior writes...

These discussions depend on agendas set by State and Federal Ministers including Health Ministers, our state District Disaster Commissioner and Management Group, local, state and federal health authorities, and our Indigenous Shire Council Mayors and CEOs from all over Queensland.

Our members are continually updated and informed about national and state-wide developments, including restrictions on movement, as they come into effect.

These decisions are made out of our hands and, whether we approve of them or not, they are being made for the benefit and the safety of our most vulnerable residents – Community elders, smokers and chronic disease sufferers – and, of course, our own families.

As the LDMG we are obliged to work out how to make these decisions work for our Palm Island Community.

### Food choices

One of the things our LDMG members, with the assistance of our District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) staff, have been working on is maintaining reasonable choices in food supplies for our community.

We have been in ongoing discussions

with key companies to try to make sure our local Community Enterprise Queensland (CEQ) store is receiving a steady and reliable supply of essential grocery items for the community through our local CEQ Manager Geoff Adams and other outlets such as Woolworths Supermarkets.

We are all doing our best in what is a very difficult and dangerous situation for our Community.

### Social Media

We are sorry to see there has been some disheartening comments from some of our younger generation.

They think they will not catch this devastating disease and that it's only the old people in the community who will catch it – they are wrong.

Not only are these comment disrespectful and concerning but they are putting themselves and their families at very grave risk.

Everyone is at risk of catching and spreading this virus and our young people are showing a very serious lack of concern and respect for our elderly in particular, who have made this community what it is today, and who are in grave danger from this disease if it catches on in our community.

We want to encourage everyone, young

and old, to think carefully before they speak or write, and even more before they act.

### Stay At Home

We are now seeing COVID-19 virus cases confirmed in some smaller towns in the far north.

Our whole way of community life must change for what we hope will only be a few short months, or we have no chance of protecting ourselves.

We have to accept isolation and social distancing from family members and friends.

We understand it will put stress on people if they are not able to go about their daily lives as they choose to do.

However the quicker we all shoulder these responsibilities, the quicker we will all see our way out of this safely. **Remember: look after your family, stay safe and stay strong and we will get through this.**

We have survived so much for so long, please play your part in making sure we survive through this as well, and we are able come out it loud, proud and Bwgcolman strong.

Roy Prior



## Facebook support for St Michael's school families

St Michael's has set up virtual classrooms on Facebook so families and teachers can keep in touch.

After the holidays teachers will be adding ideas and activities to these pages. You can find the pages under 'groups' on our school site. Membership is private.



# If we wait until there is a case in our community before we do these things, it will be too late...

**Dear Editor,**

**SELF ISOLATING IS NOT HARD.**

We were born and raised on Palm Island and there were rules for this and rules for that.

That was how we lived, told to do this, told to do that.

Ruled by the BELL: 1st BELL GET HOME , 2dn BELL you had to be at home or go to JAIL if you were caught out after the second Bell.

This rule applied to men women and children.

We had Native Police who didn't think twice about dobbing anyone in.

If we wanted to go to Townsville, we had to get a pass from the Superintendent, and only if we passed an internal and physical examination by the island doctor.

We then had to go through this same process again when we returned to the Island, and we also had our luggage searched.

Anyone who contracted an STD was locked up and put into the Dormitory.

We were governed and raised under the Flora and Fauna Act.

People are treating today's situation with the virus as a joke. We didn't go through these hard times to be taken out by COVID 19.

I want to enjoy my old rocking years.

ALL YOU PARTY ANIMALS, DRUGGIES AND GAMBLERS should be put on a deserted island and infect each other there - then we'll see who's laughing.

I am sick of it.

DO THE RIGHT THING for our sake, and yours, for goodness sakes!

It's not hard.

This virus does not discriminate, whether you're black, white, red or brindle, it will find you if you keep doing foolish and selfish things.

It is serious and I am really worried and scared.

To all my good friends and family, take care and STAY SAFE!

*Harriet Hulthen*



# Congratulations Obe - well done!

Obe Geia jnr is qualified after completing his apprenticeship with Jason Healy Electrical last month, passing his final assessment for his Cert III in Electrotechnology Electrician Course.

Obe started work as a labourer for Jason before he decided to sign up for the apprenticeship in late 2014.

He was determined to see it through to the end, but other

priorities in his life, including rugby league, extended his studies.

Obe has represented Palm Island in several

All Blacks Carnivals, attending about 2-3 carnivals a year, as well as playing for Brothers in the Townsville league which often took him away from his studies in exchange for training.

Decisions had to be made in terms of priorities, and he chose to withdraw from football for the past 18 months so he could concentrate of finishing his studies

I would like to express my

appreciation and gratitude to my one and only son for accomplishing what he did and giving to his young family, his fiancé Chenice and sons Kaylan, Israel, Obadiah and Andreas.

I also like to acknowledge Jason and Jen Healy for their support and dedication in helping Obe on his journey.

And all the people that stood by him during this time, thanks to you all.

*By Georgina Haines*



**OUR NEXT DEADLINE (Issue 298) will be  
Thursday 16 April  
for publication on Thursday 23 April!**

The **Palm Island Voice** is published fortnightly by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council and edited by Christine Howes. Members of the Palm Island community and local organisations are welcome to submit birthdays, community information, pics, yarns and letters to the Editor. You can follow us on Facebook! We have 2,560 'likes'!

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