

Issue 27

Tuesday 10 February 2009

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Take care with roadworks!!!



Council urges caution around washed-out roads
Palm Island Aboriginal Council is urging residents to take particular care on our roads over the next few weeks, as water and flood damage is assessed and repaired as quickly as possible – weather-permitting, of course.

Mayor Alf Lacey has also warned parents and children in particular to stay away from creeks, all of which are running fast, or can do so without warning if it rains upstream.

"We're calling on all community members to keep an eye on that as much as possible," he said.

With roadworks likely to take some time to complete, PIAC CEO Barry Moyle said particular care should be taken on the Airport and Beach Roads (*pictured above and below*), which were only half open due to land slips and water damage.

"People need to take it very easy out there, and to be aware that we haven't yet had a chance to check out some areas because they're still underwater," he said.

Mr Lacey said in the meantime the Council was working in conjunction with emergency services to do what they could to ensure the safety of all residents.

"We've been having some bad weather and our roads are not really good, they need attention and Council is working on some of those issues at the moment," he said.

"We'd like to thank the community for adhering to emergency service matters,

(Continued next page...)



Council urges caution around washed-out roads (continued from previous page)

particularly over the past week or so with the prediction of a cyclone, where people have come on board and heeded the warnings."

A spokesperson for Main Roads and Local Government Minister Warren Pitt told the *Palm Island Voice* that at this stage the extent of damage caused to roads by flooding and continuous heavy rain was "not known".

"The repair bill is currently unknown and will be determined once all flood waters have receded and more detailed inspections of roads and bridges can be carried out," the spokesperson said.

"Main Roads would like to thank communities for their ongoing patience as we work to restore safe access to north Queensland's roads."

Mr Moyle confirmed preliminary inspections and assessments by the Council's own consulting engineers would start this week.

He said Road Tek engineers were also expected on the Island this week as part of their ongoing and scheduled programs.

"We were declared as eligible for Natural Disaster Relief as of last Friday, so that means once we've reached \$117,000, we can then claim everything we spend over that from the State Government," he said.

"So the resources will be there to fix it, it's just a matter of how quickly."

Mayor Lacey said it was important for residents to be aware of weather reports, especially potential cyclones.

"I think the community has responded very well so far," he said.

"We've managed to see through this rough weather, no doubt there's more to come, and I think it's important that we continue to keep a watch for ourselves."

Lane way bridge not safe for vehicles

The old main road bridge beside the day care centre is badly eroded underneath and is not safe for vehicles, PIAC says.

Steel bollards were recently put in place to stop cars from crossing but someone has removed them, potentially putting lives at risk.

The bollards have since been replaced with rocks – Council and the works department is asking residents to please not interfere with these.

The culvert drain near Beach Road has also eroded to the point that half the road is now blocked off – residents should obey the traffic signs there and are also asked not move or remove these, for their own and others' safety.

The council is working to fix these problems as soon as possible, please be patient.

Roads to benefit from Council networking

Palm Island Council looks set to join an alliance which should help to improve local roads and help strengthen ties with other Shires across the region.

Council CEO Barry Moyle said a regional CEO's meeting held last Friday in Townsville was held at the same time as a regional Mayors meeting between Townsville, Burdekin and Hinchinbrook Shires.

"These are meetings that

have just begun and Palm is included," he said.

"So the CEOs were talking about some regional planning issues and how Palm Island fits into that planning.

"We also spoke about the 'Roads Alliance' which is a collection of all the local governments in the area.

"That looks at how they can save money by working together, using resources and tendering for road works on a

bigger scale."

He said at this stage PIAC was not part of the Alliance.

"I was able to raise that and the CEOs were keen to have Palm Island involved," he said.

"So it will be included on the agenda at the next Mayor's meeting, that Palm Island be added to the group.

"It was good to get involved so people know there is a council out here and that we are part of the region."

New tenancy rules to be in place by July 1

Tenancy arrangements, including rent, on Palm Island are set to change on July 1 this year in line with all communities across Queensland.

Housing Minister Robert Swarten said the changes would ensure Indigenous communities had access to the same standards of housing assistance as the rest of Queensland's social housing tenants.

He also said the Department of Housing would be introducing its rent policy to all Indigenous communities, including Palm Island.

"The department is working closely with the Palm Island Council to communicate the changes to tenants and provide training and support to Council housing officers," he said.

"To further support this change, the department will also be providing tenancy management services to the Palm Island Council."

Mr Swarten said the department had met with the Council a number of times and was now awaiting Council sign-off on an agency appointment which would allow the department to assume responsibility for the tenancy management of the properties.

"I acknowledge that the transition of tenancy management and the application of the 25% household income rental policy will present some challenges," he said.

"However, departmental staff will work closely with the Council and the community to ensure a smooth transition takes place."

Mayor Alf Lacey said the Council was obliged to conform with the changes.

"There's certain conditions and new housing arrangements across all communities in Queensland," he said.

"Come 1 July 2009 rents will be increased to 25% of all household income, which is in line with the Queensland system.

"Currently we don't operate under that system but it will be similar to when you're in a housing commission home.

"The Council did ask the government for some more time so the community could talk more about it, they haven't given us that though,

and they will implement it by July this year.

"Council is disappointed in that but we don't have any say over it because at the end of the day they fund housing in all communities so the ball is in their court.

"So all we can do is try to ensure that we are geared up to these changes, it's a big step and there will be issues around it but I hope we can work together on ensuring we get as much information out to you as we can."

Mr Swarten also said the Queensland Government would provide \$5 million for additional housing on Palm Island to respond to overcrowding.

"This will provide a mix of housing types including housing for small families and single people," he said.

"Plans are now under way, with construction likely to commence around the middle of this year."

"The Queensland Government is committed to continuing to work closely with Indigenous communities and Councils to improve housing conditions and services for Queensland's Indigenous people."

Mr Lacey said housing was a priority for PIAC.

"We will see new houses going up this year, which is important because housing is always a priority for us," he said.

"What the Council has done is concentrate a bit more on young people so you'll see a lot of flats and units going up over the next 12 months to house young people and young families.

"Traditionally we've put up three-four bedroom homes around the town to accommodate bigger families but that's created more of a problem because we end up in an overcrowding situation.

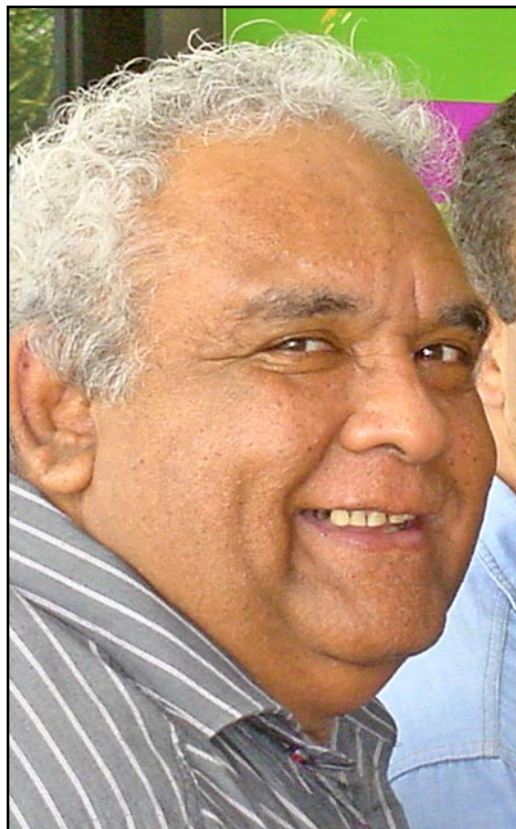
"This time we thought we'd try and concentrate more on young people so that's what's going to happen with this \$5 million housing program for 2009."

Nominations close on Friday for new rep body talks in Canberra

Nominations close this Friday for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who want to positively contribute to discussions about a new national Indigenous representative body by attending a national workshop in Adelaide from 11-13 March.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma (*pictured*) said attendance at the workshop would be decided through a selection process.

"Only individuals who have completed a nomination form addressing the selection criteria will be considered for attendance," he said.



Selection criteria includes that applicants must:

- be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- be nominated by an Indigenous community organisation or self-nominated with two written references supporting the nomination
- have demonstrated leadership capacity and ability to take part in high level discussions on strategic issues
- be able to communicate and interact effectively with a diverse range of people
- have demonstrated capacity to represent views and interests
- be able to make a positive and considered contribution to the discussions and deliberations on the establishment of the new national Indigenous representative body, and
- be available to attend and participate in the program and events for the whole workshop.

Commissioner Calma said the national workshop would be limited to approximately 100 people and would focus on reviewing submissions and the outcomes of the federal government's consultations to date on the establishment of a new representative body.

"The national workshop will not be endorsing a final model for a national representative body nor will it be deciding membership of a national representative body," he said.

In December 2008, the Australian Government requested the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission to convene a Steering Committee to develop a preferred model for a national Indigenous representative body. The Steering Committee is required to:

- convene an Indigenous Peoples Workshop in March 2009, with a possible second workshop in June 2009;
- develop a preferred model for a new national Indigenous representative body for presentation to the Australian Government in July 2009;
- make recommendations regarding the establishment of an interim body from July 2009 which would operate until the finalised body takes effect; and,
- ensure strong community support for such a representative model.

Applications can be sent by post to the National Indigenous Representative Body Unit, PO Box 7576 Canberra Mail Centre ACT 2610 or by fax to 02 6204 9349 or email indigenousrepbody@fahcsia.gov.au

For more information and a workshop application form visit www.fahcsia.gov.au/indigenousrepbody or call 1800 202 366.



With all that weather we've been experiencing, flights in and out of Palm Island have been operating according to conditions, says Dreamtime Logistics Operations Manager Marisa Kingston.

Mrs Kingston said passenger safety was their number one priority.

"We're not interested in putting people's safety in jeopardy just to earn a dollar," she said.

"The weather is a safety issue, that's why we haven't been able to put the planes up in the air, although we are able to fulfil flights to Palm when we can legally fly."

She said erratic weather, poor visibility and low cloud cover had been keeping their planes on the ground because it was illegal to fly to or from the Island at less than 800ft.

She said people could still make their bookings and keep in touch with what was happening via phone, fax or email, with their website due to be operational soon (see details below).

"If the landline isn't answering people are welcome to send texts to the mobile if they need to," she said.

"It's been very hard not working out of an office in Townsville, that's for sure."

Flights prices vary from \$70 one-way for residents and up to \$160 return for non-residents.

The company is presently carrying out a survey, copies of which are available from the Palm Island airport, 4K1G in Townsville or via email.



Pictured Above (L-R): Dreamtime Logistics Operations Manager Marisa Kingston, pilot Sean Lowe & owner Kevin Kingston

For more information contact:

Ph 4770 1266 (bookings & information)

Fax 4770 1244

Email dreamtimelogistics@hotmail.com

Website <http://www.dreamtimelogistics.com>

We've got mail!

28/12/2008

re Butler Bay Bulls Presentation

Firstly I would like to thank my Grandson Thristo for taking me out on a date of this special occasion of his club, and his partner Alice for letting me go in her place.

It was a beautiful evening and I am sorry she missed it, so I hope she gets a dvd of the occasion.

I will get one also because although I was there I am a bit hard of hearing.

I was especially proud of the fact that my grandsons had received a few trophies, and also the mentioning of my late son Stephen "STUMBO" Walsh as founder of the said club, and how proud he would have been had he been here to see it all.

It made me both sad and happy in some ways.

I think we should be proud of Lloyd Morgan and his beautiful daughters for all the hard work they contributed to a most wonderful and unforgettable evening, and probably my last here on Great Palm Island, my home.

I was sent here as a three-year-old, and am now 80 years old, and - as my son says - going on 18.

Bella Walsh (Snr)

Welcome back to the Palm Island Voice for 2009.

I'd firstly like to say that myself and the Council would like to wish our people the very best for the new year and remind everyone that we can all be successful if we all roll our sleeves up and help to get things done.

Secondly I wanted to update the community on the housing agreement with the federal government and for Palm.

For more about that you can read the story on page three of this issue of the *Palm Island Voice*.

The \$40 million home ownership program with the federal government is also under discussion at the moment, we've got a meeting coming up shortly.

We'll keep you informed on the arrangements that the previous Council signed off on.

Certainly we're putting other issues onto the table at these meetings to ensure not only that we are getting new homes for home ownership on the community but there also needs to be more infrastructure.

It's no good to see our community living in nice homes with poor infrastructure, so we're continuing to lobby for that.

I attended the Community Cabinet meeting last month in Townsville with the CEO and lobbied quite a few Ministers for more infrastructure and various projects for Palm.

Those meetings went very well, we've managed to sit face to face with Ministers, and that's something I'll continue to do as Mayor, to lobby and make sure we're not being forgotten in terms of the basics.

It's important that we continue to do that.

Roads and the creeks being up is also of particular concern to Council at the moment (see page one).

Council would like to assure our residents that outside of the damage caused by our recent weather, our usual road upgrades will continue to happen in terms of the TIDS program.

Because of the wet, as we all know, there's been more damage done and Council has made that a priority at the moment, and engineers should be on the Island sometime

From the Mayor's Desk

this week to assess that situation.

The other thing the Council is doing is negotiating a retail precinct, there's a feasibility study that's being done at the moment by Indigenous Business Australia who are working with the Council.

Hopefully we'll have a supermarket and about ten shops for locals to be a part of, so it's really important that we ensure the feasibility study continues to happen.

We've also been saying to the government that the retail store needs to come back into community control, so hopefully this new retail precinct for Palm will encompass all that.

As a part of the precinct there'll also be an accommodation attachment as well, so that's some exciting news for us.

We understand now that there's also new changes to CDEP.

At this point in time we don't know what it means in terms of effect for Palm Island but no doubt Coolgaree CDEP will inform everyone of what those changes mean.

Also the Indigenous Coordination Centre has made a commitment to come in and give the community an update on what's happening and what will happen over the next couple of years.

It's really important to be aware of that because the majority of our people are employed by CDEP and it's an important program that delivers a lot of services and infrastructure for our community here on Palm.

In other things, we also need to be mindful of the dredging happening at the wharf at the moment, but once that's finished we'll be seeing Sunferries come in at any hour of the day instead of on tidal times.

I've also attended meetings with the Bwgcolman Tribal Council, they're local



*Queensland Premier Anna Bligh
with Palm Island Mayor Alfred
and local MP Mike Reynolds at the
recent Community Cabinet Meeting
in Townsville.*

people in the community so if you need more information on that contact Tom Geia, Alf Clay, Edward Walsh or Stephen Boyd, who are now working on resurrecting that organisation.

They have a charter of things they want to do and see for Palm and I've given a commitment from Council that we will work with them to get extra benefits for Palm.

I think people should be aware that body is there to represent the Bwgcolman people's needs and wants in terms of land and other issues.

These are things that the Shire Council continue to pursue so we're supporting this new local group which will in turn support us, that's very important and a very good idea that group is now establishing itself to help us all get things done for Palm.

We're continuing to negotiate with the Department of Natural Resources around land matters for Palm.

They're proposing an ILUA so Council is continuing those discussions with the Manbarra people and there are representatives of the Bwgcolman people also sitting at those meetings.

Council will continue to work with this to get some positive outcomes for the community and our Shire.

The Council has also made it clear that we want to see some major projects go ahead for 2009.

There are major works that need to happen because at the end of the day that means the community gets better services and better access to those services.

The new government service offices and the

new Court building are also online and it looks like April will be the official opening date.

These are a few of the things that have been happening over the past few months or so.

Over the next 12 months it's certain that the economic crisis will have it's effect on us and that's going to create some challenges because that will impact on us.

We're not separated from that in terms of the Council budget and things like that, so it's important to understand that what's being said in the media at the moment is very serious for us and we need to be mindful of that.

The kids are back at school now as well, whether they're attending locally or going to board schools we'd like to wish them all the best for their studies over the next 12 months and hope they do well in their new grades as well.

I'd also like to welcome our new teachers who have taken up the challenge to come to our lovely Shire and work in our classrooms to ensure the education of our kids.

For this new year I also want to encourage people to participate in our community delegation Council meetings, the dates of which will be advertised in the Palm Island Voice.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I'd also like to pass on our deepest sympathies to the Parkinson, Bulsey, Sibley and Wilson families, who have lost loved ones over the past few months, and that's from all the Councillors and our families.

**Yours in community spirit
MAYOR ALF LACEY**

Palm Island Voice

Community Notices

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

to the

Palm Island Voice

are welcome.

Contributions may include news, yarns, pics, letters-to-the-editor, poetry, community notices or advertisements.

Contact Tim Miller, Barry or Deniece at the Council offices:

Ph 4770 1177 or

Fax 4770 1305.

If you have email you can write to us at editor@piac.com.au

Display Advertisements

(14 days to pay, invoiced on publication)

Full Page \$440

Half Page \$231

Quarter Page \$121

Eighth Page \$66

Sixteenth Page \$44

Classifieds

(payable in advance)

Items for sale

under \$1000 – FREE

Public Notices – Births, Deaths,

Marriages, Birthdays – FREE

Sale Price over \$1000 & Other

Notices – 4 lines – \$10

Ads are to be submitted by no later than

5pm on deadline day (see back page).

Article and photo submissions to the *Palm Island Voice* are welcome. Original submissions of articles or photographs must belong to the contributor, and/or delivered with an indication of the owner's permission to publish, no later than 5pm on deadline day.

Articles should be no longer than 500 words and digital photographs should be as high quality as possible (no thumbnails please!).

Final say on advertising, news items, other contributions and photo reproductions is at the discretion of the *Palm Island Voice* Editor.

Do you want to write professionally for the Palm Island Voice?

If you're a bit of a 'dorrie' and want to get some words and pics out there about what you see, a series of easy media workshops could be just the thing to get you started!

Palm Island Voice editor Christine Howes has been working as a freelance journalist and photographer, mostly for Indigenous media in the far north, for nearly 15 years and is keen to share her skills and knowledge with anyone who is interested.



If you, or someone you know, has an interest in writing and/or photography, a two-hour workshop could be all it takes to start having your work published in the *Palm Island Voice*. A small fee for those who commit to writing for us on a regular basis may be negotiated.

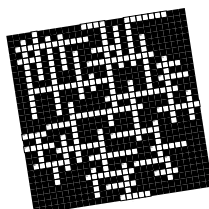
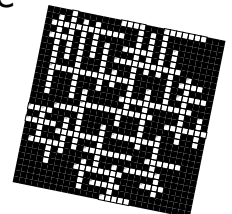
If this is you, please drop in to the Council reception and register your interest. Everyone, including our regular contributors from community organisations, is welcome. Dates and times to be confirmed soon!

Got a clue (and the answer!)?

Palm Island Voice would like to acknowledge the assistance of the crossword maker at:

<http://www.armoredpenguin.com/crossword/> for this week's Crossword No 27 on page 10.

The answers will appear in Issue 28 of the *Palm Island Voice* (Tim doesn't have them, by the way!!).



In the meantime if you have a set of clues (and answers please!) you'd like to include in the next PI Voice Crossword send them on to either Tim in the Council offices or email to Christine (chowes@westnet.com.au) to make sure they're included!!!

AA Meetings @ Ferdy's are held day and night to help support people with drug or alcohol problems. Meeting times are 9am and 7pm. Call day staff at the centre on 4770 1152 in the morning to be picked up for the 7pm meeting.

Queensland Government
Gazetted Holidays
Palm Island 2009

Good Friday 10 April
Easter Saturday 11 April
Easter Monday 13 April

ANZAC Day
Saturday 25 April

Labour Day
Monday 4 May

STRIKE OF '57
COMMEMORATION DAY
Friday 5 June

Queen's Birthday
Monday 8 June

PALM ISLAND
ESTABLISHMENT DAY or
BWGCOLMAN DAY
Friday 12 June

NAIDOC Friday 10 July

PALM ISLAND
SPRING FAIR FESTIVAL
Friday 4 September

Christmas Day
Friday 25 December
Boxing Day
Monday 28 December



**THE NEXT PALM ISLAND
ABORIGINAL COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DELEGATION
MEETING WILL BE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL OFFICES ON
TUESDAY 17 FEB AT 10AM.**
**If you would like to speak
with Council on matters
of interest or concern,
contact Reception on
4770 1177
to arrange an
appointed time.**



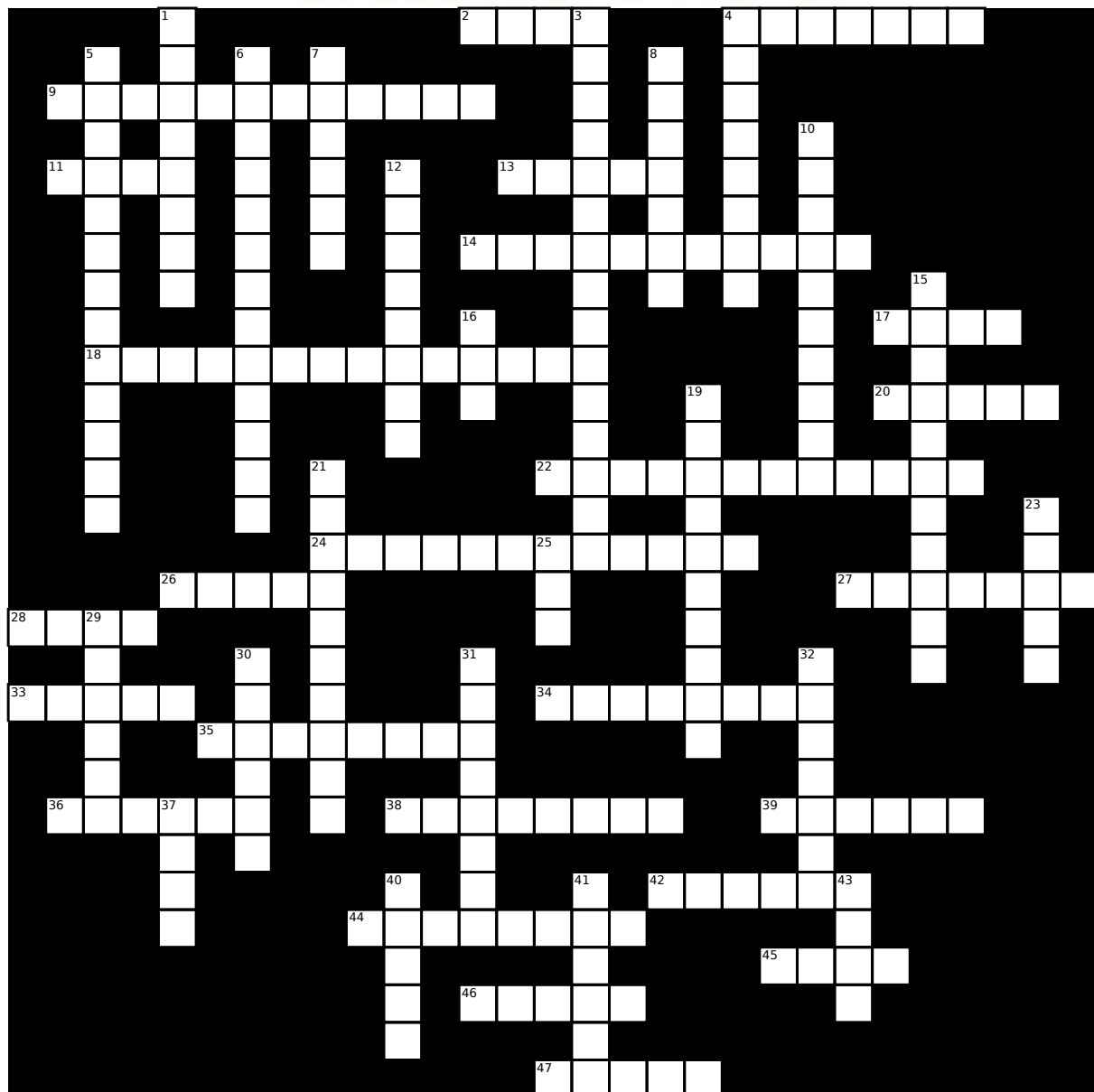
**HAVE YOU PICKED UP YOUR
VERY OWN
PALM ISLAND RODEO
POSTER YET?
ON SALE NOW!!!**

Featuring local & visiting riders, these
A3 full colour posters are available now
from the Council offices.

\$8, or \$12 laminated

Palm Island Voice

Crossword No 27



Across

- 2 Our work for the dole system
- 4 Palm Island's worst reputed superintendent
- 9 Palm Island's own special viewpoint and landing place
- 11 Goes with fish
- 13 Queensland Premier Anna _____
- 14 The target of a current campaign by the Queensland Council of Unions
- 17 A colour on the Torres Strait Islander flag
- 18 Palm Island always was and always will be ...
- 20 A colour on the Torres Strait Islander flag
- 22 A champion for Palm Island in state politics
- 24 World class athlete with connections to Palm Island
- 26 A colour on the Aboriginal flag
- 27 Nearest mainland port to Palm Island
- 28 Goes with rice
- 33 The other of two ways to get to Palm Island
- 34 Palm Island's Traditional Owners
- 35 The capital of Queensland
- 36 Palm Island's best asset
- 38 An island between Palm Island and Townsville
- 39 A sport Palm Island youngsters excel in
- 42 One of our favourite cooked foods
- 44 A direct result of humour
- 45 Something to do on a hot day (not a way to get to or from Palm Island!)
- 46 An item of great cultural significance
- 47 Surrounding Palm Island

Down

- 1 Townsville's local paper
- 3 Your newsletter
- 4 Those with historical connection to Palm Island
- 5 Where you can get the latest boating guide from
- 6 Deputy Mayor of Palm Island
- 7 A colour on the Aboriginal flag
- 8 Palm Island's favourite pasttime
- 10 What cultural awareness can do for people on Palm Island
- 12 Palm Island's second favourite pasttime
- 15 Mayor of Palm Island
- 16 One of two ways to get to Palm Island
- 19 One of Palm Island's many teams
- 21 The 2009 Australian of the Year
- 23 Held on Palm Island in 2008 for the first time in more than 30 yrs
- 25 One of the colours on the Aboriginal flag
- 29 In 1957 Palm Island workers went on _____
- 30 A common form of recreation and transportation on Palm Island
- 31 Happening now off the Palm Island jetty
- 32 A neighbour to Palm Island
- 37 A famous and favourite tree
- 40 Healthy food (good on a burger!)
- 41 The first name of the previous Mayor
- 43 There's been a bit too much of this lately

Answers in Issue 28!!!

Charters Towers rodeo a success despite wet conditions



Pictured above (L-R): Top: Freddy Ross; Back Row: Greg Condron, Dimitri Shortjoe, Joe Fisher (Jnr), Norman Johnson (Jnr); Front Row: Marella Tyson, Joyce Tapp, Theo Willis

It was a good turn out for the rodeo at Charters Towers with the Palm Island Team having their own cheer squad led by the Ferdy's Haven mob.

All the Palm Island team made a good showing even though only two trophies came back, both for the poddy calf ride.

Freddy Ross got third place in the calf ride and received a trophy, sash and \$35 prize money. Two-year-old Anthony Tyson made his debut

ride on Saturday night and did very well for a child his age.

Even though some of the other competitors said the rodeo should be called off due to the rain, it was decided to go ahead.

Amazingly very few injuries were sustained with the ground being muddy and the bulls having trouble keeping their footing.

The team has been invited to more events and a training school.

Palm Island Voice

Palm Island Voice is a fortnightly community newsletter, first launched in August 2007. Advertising space is available to any businesses, organisations or individuals who have an interest in promoting services and events to members of the Palm Island community. The hard copy format is black and white, hopefully soon to be colour, with an electronic versions available in full colour PDF for email distribution. A system of paid subscriptions for non-Palm Island residents will be implemented early in 2009.

Palm Island Voice is published by the Palm Island Aboriginal Council with support from a Queensland State Government initiative through the Community Renewal program.

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION CARNIVAL

Palm Island's Barracudas made the semi-finals of Central Indigenous Queensland Indigenous Development's footy carnival held in Rockhampton over the long weekend in January.

The team did us proud by defeating Bundaberg by 4-points (16-12) to play off for the competition's overall winners Shield.

Central Highlands team Ghungalu defeated the Barras 40-14 in the semi-finals, only to be defeated in their turn by the Cherbourg Hornets in the finals by 46-8.

The Barra's Steven Lowatta was named

a member of the 2009 CDID Indigenous Reconciliation Carnival Merit Team along with Cherbourg's Denis Sandow, Brendan, Corey & Stafford Saltner, Cannonballs' Algon Congoo and CQ Warriors' David Peachey, who also attended the carnival as a football ambassador.

Over two days more than 5000 people attended the event which was hailed by organiser Walson Carlos as a success.

Mr Carlos told Rockhampton's Morning Bulletin the alcohol- and drug-free event had seen some impressive football.

***Celebrating!
Overall Shield
winners, the
Cherbourg
Hornets***



Indigenous Reconciliation Carnival Individual Awards

- Women's Sprint Winner - Jean Miller
- Fastest Player of the Carnival - Stafford Saltner (Cherbourg)
- Best Back of the Carnival - Brendan Saltner (Cherbourg)
- Best Forward of the Carnival - Brad Toby (Ghungalu)
- Ian "Eaka" Munns Memorial Award, Player of the Carnival - Nigel Williams (Cherbourg)
- Player of the Match Women's Touch - Theresa Anderson (Milbi Rocky)
- Player of the Match Plate Final - George Jarrett (CQ Warriors)
- Player of the Match Shield Final - Corey Saltner (Cherbourg)

PUBLICATION DETAILS FOR THE

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Many thanks to all the Palm Islanders who have contributed to this issue of the Palm Island Voice.

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Repeat advertising rates available upon request.