



Palm Island Voice



Issue 72

SPECIAL POST-CYCLONE

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Your Community

Your Newsletter

Your Voice

\$1.00

Palm rider takes out calves in Charters

PALM Island's Theo Willis won the calf ride section of the popular Bucko Billy rodeo at Charters Towers last month.

Young Willis was one of numerous Palm Island competitors and spectators to travel to Charters for the event. Theo beat talented local riders Ben Edmondson (2nd) and KC Flanagan in the hotly contested section.

Other Palm riders at the event were Joyce Tapp, Nathaniel Murray, Moria Murray (calf ride), Gavin Bramwell, Desmond Bramwell (open bull ride and novice), Dimitri Shortjoe (juvenile and novice), Sheldene Clark, Billy Clark (juvenile), and Roy "Boy" Murray (open and novice).



Organisers said 1,100 spectators were at the Showgrounds.

"There were car loads of people from Palm Island who turned up and we were very impressed," they said.

Rodeo supporters from Palm Island have traditionally supported the event including Palm Island rodeo organisers Pauline and Shaun Shortjoe.

The 2011 Palm Island rodeo will be held in Charters Towers on May 14 this year due to costs and after last year's event was cancelled twice due to wet weather.

More on page 5...

Yasi, we beat you!

"All in all Palm Island is doing and has done ok," Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey reports, after an exhausting week keeping an eye on the community.

He said while the Island was certainly isolated for the first few days after Yasi's passing, they were by no means worse off than any other community along the coast.

"People are not starving, we still have our own roofs over our heads and we are working

together to get things back to normal," he said.

"As the person ultimately responsible, as Mayor of the community and chair of the Counter Disaster Committee (CDC), I woke the morning after the cyclone fearing the worst, but to my surprise Palm Island has held up pretty well.

"I'm very pleased that we didn't feel the full brunt of Cyclone Yasi."

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The Yasi Clean-up

GBRMPA TO grants extension

Rocky Footy Carnival Round-Up

Hard work and good planning saved lives

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"I think it's a testament to the hard work and good planning of the CDC, who have been making plans since Cyclone Anthony last month, that helped a good deal to ensure there were no casualties in this event, which is so important," Mayor Lacey said. "There was publicity



suggesting Palm Island wasn't prepared, but I want to say we will always be prepared through the good leadership and cooperation between agencies who were involved in our planning processes, particularly from those early stages. Part of that was bringing the community with us, and that's what we've done, and I give credit to the community for that."

Mr Lacey said once plans were



in place and being activated, he was disappointed to hear individuals working against careful planning.

"I am disappointed to hear

there are people standing around in the community and pointing the fingers, it's disappointing they don't have better things to do with their time and energy, perhaps joining the rest of us in working together for all our benefit," he said.

"We were in a very serious situation and it was sad to see people behaving in that way.

I'd also like to say in terms of evacuations I was very concerned about people pressing a panic

button – what would have happened if we'd have had everyone running down to the wharf and we couldn't get them off the Island, what would we have done then? And there were other issues around evacuation including people asking why they should be forced to leave their homes. The question we always had was, 'where

were we going to go', because our neighbouring shires were also going to feel the effects of this cyclone. Palm is our home, we don't have anywhere else, so like every other town we battened

down and hoped we would get through it. We were protected by our mountain but one of the things I'll be pushing for now as Mayor is to request

a cyclone shelter, as many other Shires are now doing." He said damage to community assets was also minimal.

"The roof of the Post Office was ripped off in the storm and there was considerable damage to mail as a result of that," he said. "Some of our camps on the beach side are private family camping areas, built for the purpose of their own private recreation, but where those families are using those camps as permanent dwellings, or their place of residency, then I will be asking for assistance on their behalf from our community champion, and for him to provide some



support to those families. And those people will be able to claim from emergency funds available to them through the Commonwealth and State Governments. Other than that the only damage we sustained was part of the Council building's roof was taken off and there was some damage to the Cultural Centre. I was also very sad to see we've lost our old fig tree, which had a lot of spiritual and cultural significance to our people."



*Pictured:
Facing page: damage to the Council building, government buildings and the post office;
This page: Above: surf was up, but no boards were around to play, Cyclone Yasi had most people safe indoors.
Right: damage to the foreshore retaining wall left in the wake of Cyclone Yasi
(pics courtesy Cr Hal Walsh)*

Thanks to Ergon and others...

Palm Island Mayor Lacey said one of the first recovery teams to arrive on Palm Island after Cyclone Yasi was Ergon Energy.

Ergon Energy's Acting Corporate Communications Manager for Far North Queensland, Mark Timmerman, said they had given priority to communities where they could fix things to get the biggest number of people back on the quickest.

"I'm not aware of any damage to the power station itself at this stage, so our team has been working on the network," he said. "We're doing our best, our resources have been stretched, but we thought it was probably a good idea to get the Island restored as quickly as we could."

Mr Lacey said he was grateful to them and to Telstra for acting so quickly in difficult circumstances.

"To Ergon Energy, who had the first crew in,

and other providers on the Island who have been here working towards restoring our lives back to normal, I want to thank them very much for coming out here before they headed north to those very badly affected areas," he said. "And I want to thank them for getting to Palm so quickly and making sure we were okay. It is about cooperation and it is about people working together and getting results. I think the other important thing is the good cooperation from the community, and I want to thank all those community members who have worked with the CDC and worked with the Council, and assisted in making that process very easy for us to manage. And to those who went to evacuation centres, I want to congratulate them for making that decision to organise themselves and their families into a secure place within the community."

Continued next page...

Thumbs up...and thumbs down...

From previous page...

"I also want to particularly thank our Palm Island Shire Council workforce, including our admin staff, for the great job they have done, and our elders have also asked me to pass on their thanks to all the staff involved. And I'd like to thank the people who manage the Retail Store for their work in ensuring people had access to food, I think the staff there need to be congratulated. The Joyce Palmer Health Service and the Sandy Boyd Aged Care Hostel also did a marvellous job in terms of assisting, both during the event and in our recovery efforts," Mr Lacey said. "They are all a testament to good management, the people who manage those facilities have sat on the Counter Disaster Committee and their plans were executed very very well – everyone stuck to their plans and they worked, and that's what those plans are about. "To the Palm Island SES and other volunteers, we need to thank them for their efforts in terms of helping where they could with very limited resources. They don't have a lot of equipment and they were only able to help where they could, but they did do everything they could under the circumstances."

Mr Lacey said his biggest disappointment was hearing that people had gone through the old person's home after they were evacuated. "I'm disappointed to hear that people went through and looted the old people's home after they were evacuated," he said. "We are all disappointed in that and the people concerned should be well and truly ashamed of themselves. Those were the people who worked hard to build our community on this Island and they do not deserve to be robbed in this way."



Left: Uncle Ray Dennis' home next to the Cultural Centre, now without the shade of the large and historically valued fig tree behind it (pic: Cr Walsh)



Above & Right: debris at the Long Beach camp area and foreshore (pics courtesy Sondra Gorringe)



Left & Below: Palm Islanders in Townsville make their way to evacuation centres before Cyclone Yasi hits (pics courtesy Alf Wilson)



Charters to host PI rodeo



The 2011 Palm Island rodeo will be held in Charters Towers on May 14 this year due to costs and after last year's event was cancelled twice due to wet weather.

But the event will still be run under the banner of Palm Island and is expected to attract competitors from around Queensland and some from the Northern Territory.

Young fans, some of whom are pictured above, will be relieved to hear of the event's reprieve.

Bumper crowds turned up at the local Palm rodeo during the two previous years when some of the best action was on show.

The first rodeo on Palm in 32 years was held in 2008 and attracted huge support from mainland competitors and spectators from as far afield as Cherbourg, Kowanyama, and Cape York. In 2009 the rodeo was well-attended when most events were held in the shade of night under lights.

Palm Island rodeo is organised by respected local couple Pauline and Shaun Shortjoe with the ring events by Townsville based John Moss of Bucko Billy Rodeo.

Mr Moss said the uncertainty of the weather and costs around getting the bulls to Palm Island were the main reasons for the switch

to Charters Towers.

"The costs of getting so many bulls and the trucks that carry them to Palm Island is prohibitive and with the weather the way it is and possible rain this is the way to go," he said.

"In 2010 the bulls were ready to leave the property at Charters Towers but couldn't because of the water after rain, and the Palm rodeo grounds were waterlogged.

"It will be far cheaper to have the bulls travel a short distance from the stations around Charters Towers to the Showgrounds there."

Mr Moss still expects Palm Island to gain from the event and said he recently travelled to the NT and handed out fliers about his rodeos.

"Some people from Alice Springs may be coming, they saw a flier at a roadhouse near there, so I'm pretty confident it will be a success," he said.

Mr Moss said he hoped plenty of people from Palm would attend the rodeo travelling by cars, buses and maybe even by train.

"It will be their rodeo and they will be there in numbers," he said.

Facebook hummed with concern and well-wishers for Palm Island during Cyclone Yasi. Here is just a snippet of the 100s of comments and discussions online in the aftermath of the storm:

Marcia Langton Please send my best wishes and hopes that they have not been badly affected.

Hamish Albert Duffield Aside from my past life as the Research Officer for the Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, I served with and was mates with the island's late Pastor, Bill Coolburra, an ex army Sapper. Please give the community my best and wish all well, in spite of the "system" and even Yasi...

Victor Hart Everyone here the Murri School in Brisbane were hoping that families were safe when Yasi was bearing down on Palms. We are relieved to learn that everything is good.

From the Bureau of Meteorology

A spokesperson from the Bureau of Meteorology has told the *Palm Island Voice* there are no weather patterns of concern to Palm Island in the Coral Sea...for the moment.

At the time of going to print last week, BoM forecaster Michelle Berry said they generally forecast only three to four days ahead.

"Within the next week there are no immediate concerns but beyond that we'll have to wait and see what happens, we still have a very

active monsoon system," she said. "There is no immediate risk but we're already looking at an above average cyclone season. We generally get three to four cyclones developing in our region and we've already had four."

She said the Coral Sea cyclone region extended to 160 degrees east (at about the Solomon Islands). "So there is a possibility of a category 3-5 cyclone forming once again, but it's difficult for us to say whether that might or might not impact the coast," she said.

Deadline extended for sea country grants

Traditional Owners have been given extra time to apply for Sea Country Partnerships Grants.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) has announced the closing date for applications had been extended from 10 February to 21 February. The Australian Government's Caring for Our Country Reef Rescue Indigenous Land and Sea Country Partnerships Program provides \$300,000 for the one-off grants program.

Traditional Owners can access grants of \$5,000 to \$50,000 to carry out

environmental initiatives related to their sea country. "We want to encourage as many Traditional Owners as possible to apply for the grants," GBRMPA's Director of Indigenous Partnerships Darren Cameron said.

The grants program was launched in December last year with the aim of supporting Traditional Owners interested in undertaking sea country management initiatives.

"Traditional Owners have expressed a strong desire for greater involvement in compliance activities to address illegal take through

illegal netting and poaching, and the grants program has the capacity to support communities in these activities," Mr Cameron said.

"Grants could be provided for sea country management initiatives such as research and monitoring of dugong and marine turtles, environmental improvement programs or developing sea country management plans."

Individuals or communities interested in applying for the Sea Country Grants Program should go to: www.gbrmpa.gov.au

...Out & About...



POPULAR Coolgaree Bay Sports Bar and Bistro security officer Jan Lenoy and her husband Wes enjoyed some time on the mainland early in the New Year to do some shopping and catch up with relatives.

The couple was dining out at the Midtown Hotel restaurant, enjoying King Salmon and salad. They are the parents of champion young boxer Luke Lenoy and renowned Palm Island footballer Stacey Lenoy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

All is calm after the visit from Cyclone Yasi which did lots of damage but without loss of life or injury, thank God.

The Council and major players on the Island met at the Council Office to prepare for the visit of this unwelcome guest and everything was put in place to ensure that people and properties would be protected as far as possible.

These meetings continued daily throughout the crisis and problems were dealt with as they arose.

The PCYC and CDEP were set up as Evacuation Centres for the people of Butler Bay and the Farm Area while the hospital, St. Michael's School and Women's Shelter provided further accommodation for those at risk.

It was wonderful to see how well the various organisations on the Island

worked together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone on the Island.

Congratulations and thanks to all. I have also just received this email from our Canadian Sister Juliette, a much-loved Sister who spent more than 30 years of her life serving the community here.

Blessings for 2011.

Sister Christina

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: For Palm Island Voice

Dear Community, I do not forget any of you.

I keep you all in my prayers. I am interested in all the improvements: Christian unite, Ferdy's Haven, the Shire Council, schools, etc.

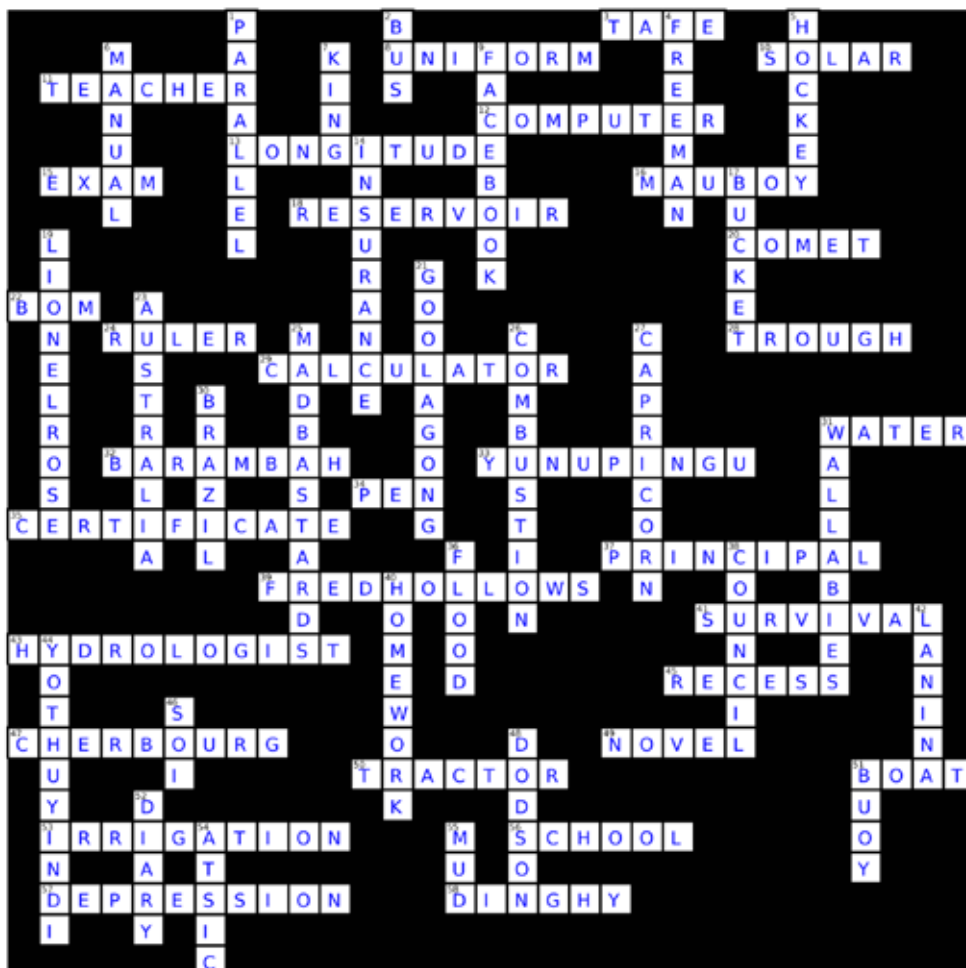
Much love and prayers.

Merci.

Sister Juliette Gagné f.m.m.

PI Voice Crossword 71 Answers

With thanks to David Goeldner & the Crossword Puzzle Maker at <http://www.armoredpenguin.com>



Palm Island Voice

Public & Community Notices



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

The next RDO is Friday 18 February.

**For emergencies on a Friday
please call 0458 789 010**

For more information contact
the Council on 4770 1177

IF you are reading a hard copy of the

Palm Island Voice

it has been delivered courtesy of West Wing Aviation and the Palm Island Community Company. The Palm Island Voice is printed by Geon print & communication solutions (www.geongroup.com) which, along with the Editor and Reporters' wages, is paid for by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council. Editorial content and design decisions are made independently of the Council. Our newsstand price, subscription and all advertising revenue goes back into supporting the Palm Island Voice to continue production every fortnight. Please see our advertising rates below for more information, or contact the Editor, Christine Howes, on 0419 656 277 or at chowes@westnet.com.au

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Classifieds

Items for sale under \$1000 – FREE
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Births, Deaths, Marriages, Birthdays – FREE

Sale Price over \$1000

& Other Notices – 4 lines – \$10

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

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WE CAN CONTINUE TO
SUPPORT YOU!!**



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phone 4759 3777

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Palm Island Service Schedule "MV OLYMPIC"

Monday

Depart Lucinda: 7.30 am
Arrive Palm Is: 10.15 am
Depart Palm Is: 11.30 am
Arrive Lucinda: 2.00 pm

Tuesday

Depart Lucinda: 9.00 am
Arrive Palm Is: 11.45 am
Depart Palm Is: 2:00 pm
Arrive Lucinda: 4:30 pm

Wednesday

Depart Lucinda: 9:00 am
Arrive Palm Is: 11:45 am
Depart Palm Is: 2:00 pm
Arrive Lucinda: 4:30 pm

Thursday

Depart Lucinda: 8:00 am
Arrive Palm Is: 10:45 am
Depart Palm Is: 12:30 pm
Arrive Lucinda: 4:30 pm

Friday

Depart Lucinda: 8:00 am
Arrive Palm Is: 10:45 am
Depart Palm Is: 12:30 pm
Arrive Lucinda: 3:00 pm

Saturday

Depart Lucinda: 8:00 am
Arrive Palm Is: 10.45 am
Depart Palm Is: 12.30 pm
Arrive Lucinda: 3.00pm

Please note that loading of the barge commences 60 minutes prior to departure time.

Scheduled departure and arrival times should be checked at time of booking. For all bookings please contact our office on (07) 4776 5055.

Day & Day Shipping sustained no damage to our vessels, offices and plant and equipment during Cyclone Yasi and we are fully operational including power and water, telephones and internet.

In December 2010, we purchased a second barge to ensure the community that we are committed to providing a reliable barge service to Palm Island.

For the past month, this second barge has been on the slip at Ross Haven Marine in Townsville undergoing routine maintenance before being commissioned into service.

We anticipate this barge will be in service by the end of next week.

Career on track, despite relocation

Palm Island boxing trainer Ray Dennis made a whirlwind visit to Townsville late last month to help ensure star female boxer Noby Clay continued her promising career.

Noby (*right*) recently moved from Palm Island to mainland Townsville to live with relatives in the quiet suburb of Vincent.

Uncle Ray (*below*) feared Noby would give up boxing without familiar surroundings of her beloved Palm Island and friends at the club there at the PCYC.

"I had lined up for Noby to train with Dennis Clancy's club at the Upper Ross and organised it by phone, but I still wanted to be there with her on the first night of training," he said.

Being an old aged pensioner, Uncle Ray doesn't have much spare money but that didn't prevent him travelling to the mainland on the ferry at his own expense.

Uncle Ray organised a lift and picked up Noby to drive up to the Upper Ross PCYC where the Clancy boxers train.

"I just want to give Noby the best chance of continuing her career and I really think she can be a world champion," Uncle Ray said. Noby said without Uncle Ray she would never have achieved such success in the boxing ring and credited him for turning her life around.

Uncle Ray spent 90 minutes at her new gym.

Noby may be living and training on the mainland but said she would still fight under the Palm Island banner.



Some of the Palm Island boxers Noby will be missing while she trains in Townsville

...From p 12...

Palm teams impress at Rockhampton Carnival



Carnival Director and co-organiser Walson Carlos praised every team and player, in the Rocky Carnival, and said the quality football was a highlight.

"The growth and popularity of the Reconciliation Carnival since its inception in 2008 has been exceptional," Mr Carlos said.

"The carnival is really about promoting key health-related messages, celebrating indigenous culture and encouraging the Reconciliation process. The general public has embraced it and it is exciting to see new teams from all over Queensland in the 2011 competition. Curacoa Crusaders (*pictured above*) had a fast and strong side and dominated."

Crusaders back Vernon Bourne was named player of the carnival, and Fred Haines leading try scorer, leading point scorer and best back.

THE FINAL

Crusaders won the game with a first half charge, which included three early tries, and during which the kicking game of quality five eighth Nat Bowman was superb.

Prop Justin O'Brien scored the first try then Palm Islander Darryl Pearson claimed the next two four-pointers. Palm Islanders Josiah Geia, full back Vernon Bourke and winger

Fred Haines then scored tries. Former North Queensland Cowboy Obe Geia jnr scored late in the second half and at the break Crusaders had a match winning 44-4 lead. Crusaders coach Telston Sibley was honoured for his effort in plotting his side's impressive win by being named as coach of the carnival team.

ALL STARS SIDE

Crusaders players Vernon Bourne, Fred Haines, Nat Bowman, and Ricky Morris were named in the carnival All Stars side and received commemorative jumpers.

Galu Knights 6.

PALM ISLAND BARRACUDAS

The Barracudas failed to reach the finals but impressed with their usual style of brilliant football.

Barracudas stalwart Roy Prior said once again the team was lead by Fred Bulsey' along with Clint Burns, Ingai Geia, Raoul Miller and young players Robert Bulsey and Thomas Walsh.

Mr Carlos said the Barracudas were unlucky to lose their first two games by narrow margins on the first day.

Raiders celebrate win in Rocky



Above right: Fred Haines & friend; Below: Palm Island Barracuda players at the Carnival



CURACOA Crusaders, with many players from Palm Island, scored a 66-14 win over Gladstone side Goori United in the second biggest Allblacks carnival in Queensland last month.

The side won the grand final of the fourth Annual CQID Indigenous Reconciliation Rugby League carnival in the flood-ravaged town of Rockhampton after going through the carnival undefeated.

They also took out the Bindal carnival in Townsville last October.

A total of 18 men's sides,

including the Palm Island Barracudas, competed at the carnival even though the Rocky airport was only reopened on the last day of the event.

It was a credit to organisers and teams that the carnival went ahead after such severe flooding.

Initially 24 sides had been nominated but six had to

withdraw because of the many and varied weather events occurring across the state at the time.

In the semi finals before large crowds at Rockhampton's Browne Park, Curacoa Crusaders 28 defeated Ghungalu Knights 6 and Goori United 12 beat Bundaberg Eels 10.

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Contact Details + Publisher Details

Editor: Christine Howes (chowes@westnet.com.au)
Ph 4770 1177 or 0419 656 277
Fax 4770 1305 With thanks to Alf Wilson
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