connecting the cape Bringing you what's new (and news) from Cape York Aboriginal communities - compiled & edited by Christine Howes

Communities across the country, including here on Cape York, recently commemorated and celebrated the achievements of Eddie Koiki Mabo on June 3 for Mabo Day but has his achievement been fully realised? This week Mapoon Cr Ricky Guivarra relates a small anecdote which suggests not...

I once asked Koiki Mabo what I now know was a stupid question.

When he was fighting in the High Court at that time, they were also bringing in the Qld State Land Act, so I said to him, "Uncle, how come you're not pursuing this under the State Land Act?"

And he said to me, "my boy, I've been fighting this thing for over seven years now and I want a legal decision, not a political one".

He made me feel so small because he was so right.

But I think he would be disappointed today to know the politics which followed the legal decision.

They created the Native Title Act and now they modify that at their leisure.

It's not what he fought for, it's not the same thing.

I believe that had he been alive today he would have rejected the Native Title legislation.

He would have said that's not what he meant and it wasn't what he was fighting about.

I'm so disappointed to think that within his answer above, exactly what he didn't want to happen is what has happened.

It has become a political process, based on political decision-making, rather than a legal one.

He won the legal process but the politics has followed closely behind and I really don't believe that's what he fought for.

The crisis is actually deepening, things we thought had been hard won are being ridiculed now, they've changed it all and they change it all the time.

The latest thing is we're being offered 40-year leases as a condition on funding for housing.

Why would we do that?

We have people here who would rather live in shantys than sign over their land for 40-years.

It should be our housing on our land, and that's what I believe Koiki would have wanted, for all of us.

All set for Palm Island Rodeo

Competitors from as far away as Mapoon, Napranum, Aurukun, Hopevale, Lockhart River, Cherbourg, Woorabinda, Kowanyama and Pompuraaw and other Aboriginal communities will battle it out for a huge Indigenous Shield at the second Palm Island rodeo on August 15 and 16.

Last November the first rodeo on Palm Island in 32 years was contested by more than 70 competitors, and 30 mean bulls provided lots of action.

Organisers Pauline and Shaun Shortjoe have big plans for the 2009 event, which will be held in the cool of the nights.

"The first night will be for all competitors while the second will be for Indigenous riders only and they will be competing for a shield," Pauline Shortjoe said.

All Indigenous communities throughout Queensland have been invited to send teams of riders to the rodeo and interstate competitors are welcome.

"We will have shaded areas this time at the grounds and the Palm Island Shire Council has been most supportive. We will have a 2.5m high fence around," Pauline Shortjoe reports.

Last year many people gained free entry because there was no boundary fence, which resulted in the organisers losing money.

Sponsors are still required but Pauline Shortjoe is certain that this event will be a monetary success.

"This will cost us \$9000 less than last year and we have agreed to pay the contractors a week before the rodeo," she said.

Rich prizemoney will be on offer both nights in the open bull rides with \$1000 up for grabs with \$500 for the first place getter, \$300 for second, and \$200 for third.

In the novice rides, \$600 will be on

offer.

John Moss from Bucko Billy Rodeo Promotions will again run the competition events and will judge, along with Darcy Davidson.

"This year we will have bulls from Charters Towers provided by Grant Liversage and new clowns, Paul Muller and Brody Moss," Mr Moss said.

The rodeo announcer will be Darryl Chaplain from Mareeba.

Mr Moss said that all events would be held in the night so that spectators won't have to worry about the burning sun.

Cherbourg and Woorabinda competitors cleaned up at the first rodeo.

Charlie Bond from Cherbourg won the all-round cowboy award, the open bull ride and novice bull ride, while 16-year-old Robert Oakley from Woorabinda took out the juvenile bull ride.

Oakley also won the Open Steer Ride and young Bo Button from Cherbourg the encouragement award trophy.

Sponsorship is still required. Enquiries to Pauline Shortjoe on 0439 813613 or John Moss on 07 47286100.



Organisers Shaun & Pauline Shortjoe

Temporary disruptions to Triple J (99.3FM) and ABC Classic FM (102.5FM)

Commissioning and reliability testing of the upgraded Awonga Point sewage treatment plant will temporarily limit the operation of the two new radio stations, Triple J and ABC Classic FM.

What are the temporary disruptions to Triple J and ABC Classic FM?

Scheduled operation closures will be from 5pm to 7am each night from 4th June 2009 to the 4th July 2009. Unscheduled closures may occur if interference becomes too excessive. These temporary changes will occur for approximately four weeks, dependant on the commissioning process.

Why limit the operation of Triple J and ABC Classic FM?

Currently the two FM radio stations impact on the town water and sewage radio telemetry system signal, causing temporary loss of communication with a number of key sewage and water sites throughout the town. Limiting the operation of the FM stations will ensure there will be no interference during commissioning and reliability testing at the Awonga Point sewage treatment plant.

We apologise for any inconveniene this work may cause.

For more information about this project please phone our community hotline **1800 707 633**

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