

Palm Island Voice



FREE!

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

Asking the question: R U OK?

Palm Island Community Company worked with Ferdy's Haven, Selectability and the Palm Island Shire Council to host this year's RU OK? Day event.

The morning started with a free BBQ breakfast, followed by guest speakers, who talked about the importance of asking the question: R U OK.

Ferdy's Haven Rehabilitation Male Support Worker Derek Baker welcomed everyone and encouraged everyone to ask the question to our friends, family and work colleagues, to start conversations and raise awareness around mental health and suicide awareness.

Too Deadly Tackling Indigenous Smoking Program, run by youth service Coordinator Deanne Sailor, Norman Bounghi, Shirley Curley and Henry Doyle said they had been going to Townsville to visit young Palm Island boys at the Cleveland Detention Centre.

They said the boys had appreciated community members taking the time to visit them and see how they were coping.

They were also working on setting up pathways for the boys when they were released so they could engage in services that were here to help them transition back to community.



Other guest speakers involved on the day include PICC Family Wellbeing and Women's Shelter's Dianne Foster, local indigenous clinician Dr Robert Blackley and Bwgcolman Healing Service SEWB team members Janet King and Alf Clay. Community members were invited back that same evening for a candlelight

vigil where two minutes silence was observed to remember our loved ones recently passed.

The service also included a blessing from Catholic priest Father Joe and some healing songs and prayers before a Kup-Murri dinner supplied by the Diversionary Centre.

Our U15 champions!



Hundreds of men, women and children watched the Palm Island under-15s rugby league side compete in the Townsville and District junior grand finals between the Barracudas and Western Lions earlier this month. Palm Island Rugby League President Roy Prior said the majority of the Palm population made the trip and the community was proud of them. "We knew training would be difficult as some players live on the Island, some players attend boarding schools in Charters Towers and Mutarnee, and majority of the boys live in Townsville, so the team doesn't get to train as a whole team," he said.

"It means so much more for these boys being given the opportunity to play for Palm Island and represent their home and families. "They have all grown up watching their grandparents, mothers, fathers, uncles and aunties play for the Barracudas at the All Blacks Carnivals. This year they have been blessed to be able to represent their home again for the first time in the international age group and this has brought their families and communities together every weekend to watch them play. "We knew going into the season it wouldn't be easy entering a new

team into the A Division against the teams they have played along side and with. But these boys came out wanting to prove their worth and wanting to show everyone that they deserve a chance to play in the A Division and represent the Palm Island Barracudas. "And their results this season, we could not be any prouder, we hoped to finish in the top four at the start of the season. And to finish the season as the Minor Premiers in their first season is a dream come true. "The teams we have played against from Centrals, Souths, Brothers and Western Lions are all amazing teams and every single game this year has made all teams fight right till the last buzzer goes off. "No game had clear winners, every game had us all on the edge of our seats." Ex-Cowboys player Obe Geia jnr was also there to cheer on the lads, who led 14-6 early but ended up losing 34-14. However, Palm Islanders showed their community spirit well and everyone enjoyed a wonderful social outing for the day.





Words by Alf Wilson. Pics thanks to Alf Wilson & PIJRL.

Call Centre wins Premier's award



The Palm Island Digital Service Centre program has won the Premier's Industry Collaboration category at the Queensland Training Awards.

The community-owned and operated centre provides local people with valuable digital skills training, employment opportunities and career pathways in Queensland's growing digital sector.

Partners in the Centre were: TAFE

Queensland, Palm Island Community Company, Telstra, Rainbow Gateway, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council and the Queensland Government.

CEO Micheal Bissell said the win was, "great recognition for a wonderful project delivering great outcomes on Palm Island".



The launch of a new Palm Island Digital Call Centre, which includes a Telstra Call centre, at the community retail centre on Friday was the result of some hard yards of lobbying for community development between Council and the Palm Island Community Company, the State Government and Telstra.

Palm Island Mayor Mislam Sam said it was a good day for the community and would mean significant benefits.

"Council has been working with Telstra for many months," he said.

"The Palm Island Call Centre will eventually employ up to 30 locals, commencing with an immediate ten local employees, with all training and ongoing support to be provided by Telstra.

"Palm Island Community Company will run it and Rainbow Gateway will assist with identifying local employees".

"We've also had some great support from the State Government - especially Chris McClaren and Duncan Kerr." Additionally Palm Island

residents will soon benefit from faster and more reliable mobile phone coverage with federal funding through the Regional Connectivity Program.

Federal Member for Herbert Phillip Thompson said just over \$1 million would go towards upgrading Telstra's existing aGX macro base station at Palm Island North, increasing the bandwidth of the connection with the mainland.

Telstra Regional General Manager Rachel Cliffe said

the project would boost digital inclusion, leading to improved education, health and business outcomes for the Palm Island community.

"This upgrade is critical in future-proofing telecommunications on Palm Island, ensuring the community has access to high-speed, reliable mobile services," Ms Cliffe said.

The Call Centre and the upgrade should both be up and running by the end of the year.



The first Palm Island team who will take calls on Telstra's First Nations Connect Hotline will graduate from the first phase of their TAFE studies this Wednesday.

The 14 local trainees will take their first calls for Telstra around the end of October after the second phase of their on-site training.

The team will be part of Telstra's National First Nations Call Centre Team alongside other teams in Darwin and Jumbun (near Cardwell).

Telstra said another 15

people will commence their TAFE studies early October before starting their Telstra training in early January next year.

The graduation ceremony will be held from 11am to 1pm on Wednesday at the new Call Centre.

The community is welcome to attend and celebrate with them!



THE NEXT *Palm Island Voice* DEADLINE*

(Issue 410*) will be **Thursday 26 September** for publication on **Monday 30 September**



The *Palm Island Voice* is published *weekly if we have paid advertising, or otherwise fortnightly by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council. For advertising rates and/or more information contact the Editor on 0419 656 277 or at howeschowes@gmail.com Members of the Palm Island community and local organisations are welcome to submit birthdays, community information, pics, yarns and letters to the Editor, Christine Howes. You can also follow us on Facebook! We have 2,900 'likes' and more than 3,000 followers! The *Palm Island Voice* is free and online at <http://www.chowes.com.au>

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