



“From the GM’s Desk” 30th July 2015



Council’s attention has been brought to the fact that there has been a significant drop in the number of flights available to bring visiting specialist and allied health professional to Bourke.

Council has written to the Chief Executive Officer of Western Health District, Scott McLachlan seeking an explanation as to why the cutbacks have been put in place and in doing so placed in jeopardy the ongoing visitation of a number of these visiting specialists and allied health professional to Bourke and other areas which have suffered a similar reduction of services.

The response from the Office of the Chief Executive Officer has indicated that the cut backs were as a result of a cutback in funding from the Ministry of Health.

The evening of the 22nd July saw a performance of the Eureka Duo in the High School Multi-Purpose Centre. A small but very appreciative audience enjoyed the performance of the two very talented musicians, Emily Sheppard played the violin whilst Rob Manley played the cello, piano and recorder. The performance was made possible by the involvement of both Bourke High School and the Bourke Shire Council. Congratulations should go to the staff at the High School for their efforts in coordinating the night.

The duo also performed for the students of the local schools in the day and for many it would have the first live performance involving those instruments.

I understand that Bourke will host the Grand Finals of the Barwon Darling Rugby League Competition on Sunday, 9th August with the First Grade, Under 17’s and Under 14’s at this stage all three (3) Bourke Warriors Teams will be playing on the day.

From discussion with James Simmons, the President of Bourke Warriors it is anticipated that there will be a good crowd in attendance with representatives of both Country Rugby League and the National Rugby League will be in attendance.

Council staff will be working with the local Rugby League Club to ensure that the facilities are in excellent condition for the day.

Work is continuing on the repairs to the Grandstand and whilst possibly not fully completed every effort will be made so that the Grandstand and the change rooms are able to be utilized for the matches.

Bourke Shire Council staff have commenced their training to be able to provide additional services to the community through a contract signed with Services New South Wales. Council staff will shortly be able to provide some of the services in relation to Birth Deaths and Marriages, accept payments on behalf of the Department of Fair Trading.

Technicians working on behalf of Services New South Wales worked after the close of business last Wednesday afternoon and into the night to install the new facilities and computer software required to be able to provide all the services. Visitors to the Services New South Offices located in the foyer of the Council Chambers will notice the changes plus the change in general signage.

At the Council meeting held on Monday, 27th July Council nominated our 2015 Citizen of the Year, Margo Grimes for the "Local Hero" category in the 2016 Australian Day Awards. The Australia Day Council has asked all Councils to nominate their Local Citizen of the Year for the Award which I think is a tremendous initiative and will no doubt see many "quiet achievers" being brought into contention for the award.

Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis and I are off to Dubbo tonight to attend the Meeting of the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) Meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

Advice has been received from Essential Country Energy that as part of their routine street lighting maintenance activities they will have contactors in the council area to undertake a bulk lamp replacement program to support ongoing public lighting performance and reliability.

The work will be undertaken in August when contactors will inspect, clean and test all public streetlights and effect repairs as necessary.

Residents are reminded that they can report street light which are not functioning correctly by contacting Essential Energy by calling 13 20 80 or by visiting www.essentialenergy.com.au/streetlight

The Bourke branch of the CWA held a Long Italian Lunch last Sunday and Annette and I attended and not only we were treated to some excellent food but it was a great social occasion. Congratulations to all the CWA members and those co-opted on the day to help.

The Manager of Works, Peter Brown will be attending a briefing session in Sydney in relation to the funding being made available to address the backlog of work in the Water and Sewage Infrastructure with funding being available via the Funding from Restart New South Wales. Council has three (3) projects which have been included on the list for possible funding and the briefing sessions will hopefully provide some insight on what is required in the funding applications.

A small group of musicians who call themselves the Bourke "Gateway Concert Band" continue to practice each Wednesday night at the Anglican Church and would welcome additional musicians

who play an instrument suitable to be part of the band. Enquiries can be directed to Roy Hall on 0408241291.

Roy is hopeful that they will shortly be able to put on a few performances.

Residents will later this week received their 2015/2016 rates notices.

The first instalment for the rates is due on the 28th August 2015.

If you are having difficulties meeting your obligations for the payment of rates please contact the Revenue Officer so that if possible suitable arrangements can be put in place.

The Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government will be hosting a public hearing in Cobar on Monday, 17 August 2015. Bourke Shire did present a brief submission to the inquiry at this stage will not be appearing before the Enquiry. Last year both the Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis and I travelled to Moree to appear at the Parliamentary Inquiry into Regional Air Services. The holding of these enquiries in Regional Centres does give the opportunity for country based persons a greater opportunity to participate.

Council has successfully sought funding under the Aboriginal Road Safety Infrastructure Program administered by the New South Wales Roads and Maritime Services to undertake two (2) projects at Alice Edwards Village. The first will see the reconstruction of the internal road ways within the village and the second will see the extension of the shared path from the local road to the roundabout within the village. The total cost of the projects will be \$218,000.00. Work is scheduled to be undertaken in September 2016. This is great news for the residents of the village who have expressed concern at the deterioration of the road surface. Work will be undertaken utilising a combination of Council Staff, and local Contractors with any sealing work undertaken by external contractors.

At the meeting last Monday, Councillors accepted a revised schedule of works for the Roads to Recovery Funding Projects for 2015/2016 given the additional funding that has been made available. Comments was passed at the meeting that with the finalisation of the remaining bridge over the Cuttaburra Creek and the replacement of timber Bridges at Whiskey Creek and Len Mallon Bridges all scheduled for this year Council will have no more timbers bridges on its road network which is a great achievement. At a recent Conference council delegates heard a Councillor mention that they had in excess of two hundred bridges to replace which is certainly something that will take considerable resources.

Following the Council meeting on Monday all the Councillors and senior staff took the opportunity to have guided tour of the new Pre-School and all were extremely impressed with the designs and layout. It shows the difference between something which has been adapted for use opposed to something which has been purpose built. Whilst it took some time to get to the construction

stage, the wait has been worth it and the construction process went smoothly and to budget which is a credit to Rofra Constructions.

Quote of the Week!

The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress. - Charles Kettering

Ross Earl
General Manager