



“From the GM’s Desk”

13th August 2015



The Louth Races held last weekend were very successful once again and the community of Louth and the Louth Race Club Committee led by Jim and Annabelle Strachan should be very proud of their efforts. The support from all involved in the racing industry was also once again tremendous.

I am always surprised at the seemingly increasing number of people who camp over the weekend with some areas wall to wall tents.

It was also good to see a number of groups of people who attend the races and have specially made shirts and caps for their trip out. I spoke to a number of people from across a wide area of Australia and each were extremely happy with the atmosphere generated by the race meeting and were very complimentary regarding the organisation of the event and facilities that were available.

I also had a number of unsolicited positive comments regarding the roads from both visitors and locals and it is a credit to the members of our works teams and Engineering Department that they were able to ensure the roads were in such good condition.

The repairs to the Keith Martin Memorial Grandstand have been completed to the degree that the grandstand itself and the change rooms underneath were able to be utilised for last weekend’s Rugby match and the Rugby League Grand Finals.

Through the generosity of the Bourke Bowling Club and contributions from the Bourke Rugby League, Bourke junior League, Bourke Primary School and Bourke Rugby Union a Public Address System can now be made available at Davidson Oval which will greatly assist in keeping the information flow to spectators and participants. The speakers have been permanently mounted on top of the grandstand ensuring good coverage.

Council has also purchase two (2) smaller portable grandstands that can be used at the various sporting events around town.

Each will hold around 40 people and will greatly assist in the provision of additional spectator seating, as well as a marshalling area for events such as carnivals.

Council will be conducting a “Fee Free Tip weekend” on the 12th and 13th September 2015 to allow residents to undertake their annual spring clean in preparation for the upcoming summer period.

Whilst there is generally no fees applicable on the day there are some minor exceptions, with a charge still applying to some items including tyres, asbestos, chemicals, liquid waste, building and commercial quantities of waste.

Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis and Phil Johnston are today joining with the Warren Shire Mayor, Cr Rex Wilson and General Manager, Ashley Wielinga, for a meeting at Parliament House with the Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. John Barilaro, MP regarding the allocation of Round 2 of the Murray Darling Diversification Funding. The initial round saw funding restricted to the southern basin area and those in the Northern Basin including Bourke and Warren are keen to ensure that any applications submitted for Round 2 are given every chance of success. Bourke and Warren Shire were the two local Government most impacted by the introduction of the Murray Darling Basin Plan yet their initial applications failed to obtain funding.

Bourke Shire Council is investigating the purchase of Video Conferencing Facilities on behalf of all of the eight (8) Councils proposed for membership in the Far Western Initiative. The Councils are currently using facilities made available by the schools within each of the towns, however, this generally restricts the times available to outside school hours and during school term. The use of the video conferencing facilities will not only be advantageous for the discussions between those Councils but also for a number of other conferences and can also be used to conduct interviews and meetings, without the need for excessive and expensive travel.

Council is intending to lodge an application for funding to upgrade its Water Treatment Plant. The current plant is reaching the end of its economic life and the opportunity will be taken to access funding being made available by the State Government under its Restart NSW Infrastructure Funding.

The funding has to be matched by Council on a 50-50 basis and at its meeting to be held on the 24th August Council will be considering its options in this regard which may include the utilization of available reserve funds together with loan funds.

Council have received an invitation to appear before the Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government at the hearing scheduled for Cobar on Monday, 17 August 2015. Bourke Shire Council will be sharing a timeslot with Cobar Shire Council. The Mayor Andrew Lewis and I will be representing Council. Council submitted a brief submission which primarily focussed on the need to keep "local" in Local Government.

Last week's Western Herald carried an advertisement seeking expressions of interest from people to be register to be able to undertake casual work within the various sections of Council. There are times during the year that Council either needs to supplement its workforce with additional labour due to work load or due to illness or absence of staff for other reasons. As with all staff positions the casual employees will be required to undertake a medical prior to commencement.

Congratulations to Bourke Warriors Rugby League Club who hosted a very successful Grand Final Day for the Barwon Darling League last Sunday. A considerable amount of work goes into the hosting and promotion of a day like this and the committee led by James and Mel Simmons are to be congratulated.

There was a large crowd in attendance and they enjoyed the three good matches of Rugby League on the day.

Bourke Warriors were successful in winning the premiership in both the Senior and Under 17 Competition whilst they were the runner's up in the Under 14's.

All in all it was a very successful season for the club.

In a good initiative 2WEB provided a live broadcast on the day with Dwayne Willoughby and Bus Holman providing the detailed account of the match to the wide listening area of 2WEB. This was the debut at calling for both and they handled the role with ease and have apparently already been retained for 2016.

The 2015 Tour de OROC will visit Bourke on the 7th October 2015 with around 26 people in the party including support drivers and other coordination staff. Bourke Shire Council will join with Bourke Rotary Club in coordinating the visit to town. Accommodation will need to be arranged for 20 of the group with the other six having the use of the Tour de OROC caravan facilities.

I have had some offers of accommodation already and will be chasing up the balance required over the next few weeks.

The Rotary Club will be hosting a trivia night prior to the tour and will also be hosting a welcome to town / fundraiser on the night of the 7th October 2015.

Tour De OROC aims to raise funds for the construction of Macquarie Homestay which is accommodation for patients and family of patients at the new Dubbo Base Hospital.

Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis has written to the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jillian Skinner, MP regarding the fact that at the moment there are no midwives at Bourke Hospital to assist in emergency situations and to assist in the provision of ante and post- natal care.

In announcing the decision that the Birthing Unit was not going to reopen in the foreseeable future and that a midwife led maternity service model was not going to be further evaluated the Western District Health representatives indicated that the Bourke Community would receive an enhance level of ante and post- natal care. Clearly this has not eventuated and Cr Lewis has expressed his frustration and disappointment to the Minister, the Local Member Kevin Humphries and the Chief Executive of the Western Health District Scott McLaughlin.

With the Mayor and Manager of Tourism and Development going to Sydney this week attempts are being made to secure an appointment with the Minister to express Council's on going frustration at the lack of any positive action in relation to the birthing facilities and associated maternity services currently available in Bourke.

Dates for the Diary

17 August	Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government
24 August	Council Meeting
12-13 September	Fee Free Tip Weekend
7 October	Tour De OROC in Bourke Stopover
18 October	Graffiti Removal Day

Quote of the Week

“A bad attitude is like a flat tyre. You can't go anywhere until you change it “

Ross Earl
General Manager