



“From the GM’s Desk” 24th September 2015



As part of the implementation phase involving the Far Western Initiative, the Department of Premier and Cabinet in association with the Office of Local Government facilitated a teleconference with Bourke Shire Council representatives to review the stakeholder Engagement Plan for the Far West Initiative.

The opportunity was also taken to update Council on the current status of the Far Western Initiative, including plans for the meeting to be held on the 14th October 2015.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Office of Local Government are obviously very keen to get the feedback of all stakeholders across the vast region covered by the Far Western Initiative.

There are a number of strategies that are being considered in an effort to ensure that all sectors and interest groups within the eight shires and the unincorporated area are aware of the proposed changes.

Council has held meetings for residents and ratepayers to discuss issues with Councillors and staff at various locations across the shire at least on an annual basis, and will be using these meetings to keep all groups informed on what is being proposed once the Discussion Paper is released later in the year.

Council yesterday met with members of the New South Wales Local Government Grants Commission. The Grants commission were represented by:-

- Richard Colley Chair
- Councillor Gae Swain, Commissioner
- Bruce Wright Executive Officer

The presentation of the commission focussed on the following:-

- Background to the Commission
- The basis of grant distribution
- Grants for 2015/2016

The next Meeting of Barwon Darling Water is scheduled to be held on the 7th October 2015 at the Walgett Sporting Club and will commence at 10.00 am. The General Meeting will be preceded by an Annual General Meeting.

Barwon Darling Water is an important lobby group for irrigators and other water users along the river system and no doubt the issues of embargoes will figure prominently on the agenda. Enquiries should be directed to the Executive Officer, Ian Cole on 04297225857

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 hosting the visit to town.

The Rotary Club and Bourke Shire will be holding a welcome to town / fundraiser on the night of the 7th October 2015 at the Port of Bourke Hotel. Planned activities for the ride within Bourke Shire and the function that evening will include:-

- The representatives from Bourke Shire to accompanying the riders from the Cobar Shire Boundary to Bourke on the 7th and then from Bourke to the Brewarrina Boundary on the 8th October. At this stage a rider for both legs is yet to be confirmed but Mark Gordon and John Bartley will be riding on the 7th October 2015 with that leg going from the Cobar boundary into Bourke
- Dinner at the Port of Bourke Hotel
- Raffles and Auction on the night
- Music

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

The 2016 Australia Day Award nominations are open with nominations being called for the following categories:-

- Citizen of the Year
 - Young Citizen of the Year
 - Sportsperson of the Year
 - Young Sportsperson of the Year
 - Community Service through Employment
 - Emergency Services Volunteer of the Year
 - Village Community Service
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The Bourke Rotary Club joined with Bourke Shire Council in hosting a Trivia Night to raise funds for the Tour de OROC and around 120 people in 15 teams participated in what was a great night with all contestants eager to display their wealth of knowledge. The night was certainly played out in the right spirit and I would like to thank 2WEB, Carole's of Bourke and the Bourke Bowling Club for their assistance with the raffle and 2WEB announcer, David Sharp for compiling a very interesting "Music Round".

Thank you to everyone who turned up and supported the night.

The Mayor and I represented Council at the service to recognise the contribution of Aboriginal Servicemen to the Australian Armed Services in the various conflicts in which Australia has been involved over the years. The service was held at the Bourke Aboriginal Health Service and coordinated by Victor Bartley and the Local RSL Sub Branch.

Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis, Cr Cec Dorrington and I will be representing Council at the Annual Conference of Local Government NSW to be held between 11th and 13th October at Rosehill Racecourse.

Included as part of the Conference will be the election of Office Bearers for the next two (2) years with the positions of President, two (2) Vice Presidents, one (1) metropolitan based and the other regionally or rural based, and a Treasurer plus seven (7) Directors from the Metropolitan Area and seven (7) Directors from the Rural/Regional Areas. The elections are conducted by the Australian Election Commission and those elected will have the important task of guiding Local Government over the next two (2) years, which at this stage seems likely to usher in a period of change.

I attended the Annual Spring Flower Show which included the presentation of the Garden Competition Awards.

Both the Garden Competition and the Spring Flower Show attracted very impressive entries the winners facing some very strong competition.

Council has supported both the competitions for a number of years and in doing so seeks to encourage the development of well-kept gardens within the Shire.

In the commercial section there was a spread of winners across the business sector with the presentation of many of the business premises certainly very impressive and reflective of the amount of work undertaken and pride shown by the owners.

Lorraine Lewis, wife of Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis, in her welcome address noted that despite the harsh climate of Bourke the gardeners were able to produce some great flowers and well-presented gardens. Lorraine also mentioned the recent letter to the editor from ex-residents Les and Frances Walsh regarding the obvious pride they felt when they showcased the town to a group of their friends from Dubbo.

The first impression given to visitors when they enter town is extremely important and each of us can assist making this first impression both appealing and long lasting by ensuring that the lawns and gardens both inside your boundary and along the nature strip adjacent to your property are well presented.

Well done to all the staff at the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre, who was successful in being awarded places in a number of categories for their ongoing efforts in improving the appearance of the Centre.

Council staff has recently erected tables for the park at Enngonia and once the canopies are erected over the seats and tables they will provide an ideal stopover point for visitors passing through town and another facility for those utilising the park area.

Like all Australians, I noted with interest the change in leadership of the Liberal Party and hence the change in our Prime Minister. While a change of Prime Minister should not have a huge impact on individual communities the fact is there will be some impact due to the changes to the make- up of Cabinet and Ministerial Portfolios.

An interesting change and of interest to water users was the addition of Water Resources to the Agricultural portfolio held by Hon. Barnaby Joyce, MP.

Minister Joyce will be assisted by Senator Anne Ruston from South Australia.

Quote of the Week!

“I am not young enough to know everything”

Oscar Wilde

Ross Earl
General Manager