



“From the GM’s Desk”

16th August 2018



Annette and I have just returned from a visit to see our daughter, son-in-law and two (2) grandchildren who live in Gattineau in Canada. Gattineau is part of the province of Quebec which is French speaking province and is just across the river from city of Ottawa which is the capital city of Canada.

It was good to catch up and spend a little bit of time with our two (2) grandchildren whom we only see every couple of years although we do Skype reasonably regularly despite the 14 hour time difference which can make the coordination of calls a little tricky at times.

Whilst in Canada we attended the North American Highland games at a little town called Maxville whose small population of around 700 swells to over twenty five thousand for the day as it hosts the Glengarry Games as they are known.

The finale of the games was a performance of the mass bands which included 1449 pipers and drummers and the event was certainly worthy of its reputation as one of the largest and best highland games in the world.

The Far North West Joint Organisation (FNWJO) is up and running and The Chair Councillor Lillian Brady of Cobar and the interim Executive Officer Peter Vlatko also of Cobar are busily trying to get some of the initial administrative tasks completed.

The Board has identified a number of key priorities and these include air services, health, drought support, infrastructure funding and education. The Executive Officer will be writing to all three (3) Councils requesting a list of their strategic priorities that they would like the board to focus.

At this stage there has been no indication as to whether Coonamble’s request to join the Far North West Joint Organisation of Councils will be approved. The application by Coonamble was endorsed by the members of the JO but needs to be approved by the Minister for Local Government.

A meeting of the Regional Network of Joint Organisations of Councils in New South Wales is being hosted by the NSW Government and will be attended by the Chairs and Executive officers of the various Joint Organisations of Councils throughout the State.

The Chairs will have a meeting with Local Government New South Wales Executive Officers on the 15th August 2018.

The Executive Officers and the Chairs will then meet on the 16th August 2018 at Parliament House.

Those attending the meetings will have the opportunity to discuss contemporary issues impacting on the areas covered by the Joint Organisations, with the Premier, the Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Deputy Premier, the Hon. John Barilaro, MP and the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton, MP plus a number of other MPs and MLC plus a number of other MPs and MLC together with Senior

Public Servants from both the Office of Local Government and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The next meeting of the FNWJO will be held in Bourke on the 6th September 2018 and this will be the opportunity for the member Councils to commence to shape the organisation.

The Annual General Meeting of the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) will be held in Coonamble on 7th September 2018.

The ongoing role of OROC will be discussed with the majority of the member Councils now also members of a Joint Organisation of Council and some of the functions may overlap.

OROC has been a very successful organisation on many fronts and its activities have played an important role for all member Councils both from the ability to negotiate group purchasing arrangements and undertaking joint advocacy on a number of issues.

OROC has also effectively convened a number of professional interest groups including the Human Resources group which has been instrumental in assisting in the professional development of the employees of member Councils and in particular those from the smaller Councils. The group is also instrumental in fostering an increased level of networking and peer support amongst its members.

The secretariat function of OROC is currently being undertaken by Dubbo Regional Council.

NSW Government and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) announced the introduction of the NSW Class 3 Drought Assistance Dimension Exemption Notice will allow eligible vehicles transporting hay in NSW to travel under notice and without a permit.

Heavy vehicles, including B-doubles up to 26 metres long, 2.83 metres wide on all approved roads and up to 4.6 metres high on the approved 4.6 metre high network will not require a permit to carry hay.

The government has also announced that on a case-by-case basis, it will allow access permits for road trains on roads currently not approved.

Just a reminder to residents of Bourke and North Bourke that Level 1 Water Restrictions, came into effect on midday Thursday, 9th August 2018.

The likelihood of rain in the short term is not encouraging and it is likely that restrictions will be with us for some time. We all should recognise the fact that water is a scarce resource and should be used sparingly.

The 60th Annual Louth Race Meeting from all reports was a huge success, with a large crowd in attendance with estimates provided being around the 6,000 people mark. There were good numbers in each of the races with trainers from a very wide area bringing their horses to Louth to try and win some of the excellent prize money on offer.

The Louth Race Meeting continues to enhance its reputation as one of the most iconic race meetings in New South Wales with many attendees returning year after year and it is a credit to the small community of Louth that they can put together the manpower necessary to stage the event.

While the race meeting is held on the Saturday, the visitors started to arrive well before race day with some people coming up to a week before and staying on after the races. There were very good attendances at the Louth School Fete and the Calcutta held on the Friday prior to the races.

Congratulations to the Committee of the Louth Race Turf Club ably led by President, Jim Strachan and Secretary Annabelle Strachan on an excellent event.

The next race meeting in the area will be held at Enngonia on the 15th September 2018 and if the previous years can be used as a guide will be an excellent day out, so mark it in your diary.

The dry weather has caused a number of difficulties for Council's road maintenance crews with the lack of sub soil moisture making it difficult for any real effective grading to take place, however, despite the difficulties the graders have been busy attempting to ensure that the roads are kept to a reasonable standard and have done a good job under the conditions.

Despite the dry conditions I received positive comments on the road to Louth on the weekend with the local travelling public generally aware of the difficulties being experienced in grading works under such conditions and appreciative of the work undertaken.

At the February 2018 meeting of Council it was resolved to take at least one Council meeting per year to one of the villages.

As a result the next Ordinary Meeting of Bourke Shire Council will be held on Monday, 27th August 2018 commencing at 9.00am in the Tennis Shed at Louth.

A Public Forum will be held at 10.00am. Whilst not essential, people wishing to speak at the public forum are encouraged to contact Kai Howard-Oakman, so that if necessary, background information may be researched on the issue on which they wish to speak.

Councillors will no doubt take the opportunity to undertake an inspection of the facilities in and around the Louth area.

Arrangements are progressing in relation to the 2019 Western Division Conference to be held in Bourke on the 24th 25th and 26th February 2019 and hosted by Bourke Shire Council. The program is being put together early to ensure that a range of high quality of speakers is able to be assembled to cover all issues relevant to Local Government.

The rate notices for 2018/2019 have been posted and the payment dates are detailed below

Instalment	Due Date
Instalment 1	31/08/2018
Instalment 2	30/11/2018
Instalment 3	28/02/2019
Instalment 4	31/05/2019

Council understands that from time to time some people may have difficulty in meeting their commitments in this regard and would ask that anyone in that situation contact Council's Revenue Officer so that a payment plan can be organised or suitable arrangements put in place.

The Bourke Public Library has undertaken a review of its book stock and as a result has a number of books which have been identified as surplus to the needs of the library and as such have been put up for sale. The Books are for sale for as low as 50 cents so is an ideal opportunity to stock up.

The books are on display at the library and each of the library staff are happy to assist.

Next Wednesday, 22nd August 2018 sees the staging of the Ronnie Gibbs Sevens involving a number of schools throughout the region and has been going now for over twenty years. Ron Gibbs does a tremendous amount of work to bring the event together and manages to get the support of a number of people within the Rugby League fraternity. There will be a fund raising dinner on the Wednesday night where there will be raffles and an auction and I would encourage anyone who is able to go along to what should be a great night and at the same time raising funds for a very worthy project.

A Western Region "All of Emergency Services" Expo will be held in Bourke on Thursday, 23rd August 2018 between 9.30am to 2.00pm at Davidson Oval. The Expo is being coordinated by Fire & Rescue NSW Community Safety Coordinator, Susan Gibbs-Kelly.

The expo is a community event with a focus on emergency services working together in regional NSW. The aim is to highlight the importance of safety in remote communities, explain opportunities (including career paths) and to showcase to communities why it's critical that all of the emergency services work closely together. There will be three areas set up at the venue with displays and interactive demonstrations.

As I have said on numerous occasions Bourke is indeed fortunate to have all its emergency services working well together. This has been evidenced in both real situations plus the various exercises which

have been conducted to assist in training of the members of the various services which included the need to understand the capabilities and resources that the other agencies have to offer.

Regional Development Australia-Orana in conjunction with the Department of Industry-Small Business under a program called Business Connect are conducting a Digital Bootcamp in Cobar to assist in allowing small business owners get a better understanding of the introduction of digital technology and the impact on their businesses.

All of us and our businesses are challenged by digital disruption and innovation. This seminar will help you take these concepts head on. In six hours you will have a transformational experience to the digital world.

Business Connect is a dedicated and personalised NSW Government program that provides trusted advice to help you start or grow your small business.

Details

Date Tuesday 18th September 2018
Time 1:00pm – 7:00pm
Venue Cobar Bowling and Golf Club, Bloxham St Cobar,
Contact 1300 10 8880
Price \$49
Register <https://www.netstripes.com/bootcamp-cobar-rda>

The new playground equipment should be installed in North Bourke early next week and will be located at the North Bourke Oval and has been funded by the New South Wales Government's Building Stronger Regional Communities Fund.

The Playground equipment coupled with the associated landscaping and new toilet block will be a welcome addition to North Bourke and will provide a great facility particularly for the younger members of the community.

Mayor Councillor Barry Hollman and I will travel to Albury in October to attend the Annual Conference of Local Government New South Wales. Bourke Shire Council has prepared four (4) motions for consideration for submission to the conference which essentially provides a platform for the development of policy on behalf of all members.

Quote of the week!

"A good friend is like a four-leaf clover; hard to find and lucky to have." — Irish Proverb

Ross Earl
General Manager