



“FROM THE GM’S DESK”

19TH SEPTEMBER 2019



As of Sunday, 15th September 2019, the Darling River will have stopped flowing over the weir at Bourke for 393 days.

The river height at Bourke was 2.76 metres over the weekend and the level of the water has been dropping at the rate of around one (1) centimetre per day.

The 22nd of September will bring up the 400-day mark.

Without the Northern Connectivity Environmental Flow in April 2018 and the water received on a couple of occasions down the Culgoa River the situation would be indeed much direr than the current situation.

On the 30th September 2019 Bourke Shire Council will host a teleconference involving those Councils along the Barwon Darling River to discuss the current lack of strategy for the long term water security within the system.

At this stage Council Representatives from Brewarrina, Walgett, Moree Plains, Central Darling, Broken Hill and Bourke have indicated their intention to participate whilst a couple of other are yet to confirm.

The meeting follows a resolution passed by Council on the 26th August 2019.

“Council coordinate a meeting with all Council's along the Barwon Darling System to discuss the perceived lack of a long term strategy to ensure water security for all towns along the Barwon Darling River System”.

Given the tyranny of distance is proposed that the first meeting be by teleconference and the Councils could then possibly get together at the LGNSW Conference if needed.

A reminder that level three (3) restrictions are in place with no fixed sprinklers allowed and hand held hoses for two (2) hours per day.

A full listing of the restrictions is detailed on the Bourke Shire Website, www.bourke.nsw.gov.au

The Bush Tracker Owners Group are currently in Bourke and all enjoying their time “Back O’ Bourke “ 70 caravans and around 140 people have converged on the JB Renshaw Sporting Complex and it is quite an impressive sight.

Members have come from all Australian States with apparently the exception of the Northern Territory.

Each year the group select a town for their Annual Event. In 2018 they were in Streaky Bay South Australia and in 2020 they will go to Queensland.

Bourke Shire Council staff put together a submission to the President of the group, Murray Woolnough and his committee who subsequently visited Bourke with other Committee members prior to them making the decision to come to Bourke for the rally.

Last Friday night I joined with Deputy Mayor, Lachlan Ford, Manager of Corporate Services, Leonie Brown, Manager of Tourism and Events, Fran Carter and Tourist Officer, Jodie Sontag in being able to welcome the group to Bourke.

Also participating in the welcome function was Brandee –Lee Lovett who gave a welcome to Country and was supported by Local Elder, Phil Sullivan who provided an overview of the community from a cultural perspective.

The welcome function was also very appreciative of the performance of the (Bourke High School) Girri Girri Girls Dance Group.

The September Meeting of Council will be held in Enngonia on Monday, 23rd September 2019

The meeting will start at 9.15am at the Enngonia War Memorial Hall and will be preceded by a Public Forum during which time residents are able to speak to matters on the agenda.

The Annual Graffiti Day will be held across New South Wales on Sunday, 27th October 2019.

Graffiti Removal Day is a State Government Initiative to inspire people to volunteer to remove and prevent graffiti in their neighbourhoods.

Materials required for removal of the graffiti on the day are supplied free of charge, due to the generous sponsorship from the commercial sector and the State Government.

The Tour De OROC is only a few weeks off and will stopover in Bourke on the night of the 9th October 2019 and the Bourke Rotary Club and Bourke Shire Council will host the riders, arranging accommodation and meals.

On the night there will be an Auction to raise funds for the Tour de OROC which in turn will be given to the Macquarie Homestay to support the future development of the complex.

There is an excellent array of items for auction and I would encourage everyone to come down and support what is a great facility for those seeking accommodation while seeking medical attention in Dubbo.

As the community makes the transition from winter based sports to summer based sports I would encourage sporting groups and other organisations who utilise Council owned sporting and recreation facilities to ensure that they book their proposed usage with Council's Engineering Support Officer.

The booking of facilities will eliminate the possibility of clashes with use and also allow Council staff to ensure that the facilities are prepared in accordance with any requirements.

As long as we are able Bourke Shire Council will endeavour to try and keep in main sporting ovals and Central Park green. However, as the drought bites this task may become increasingly difficult

The Office for Veterans Affairs Department of Communities and Justice are seeking Local Government assistance to promote the Premier's ANZAC Memorial Scholarship Tour (PAMS 2020). The funded study tour gives 20 History students the chance to visit battlefields, memorials and significant sites in Greece and Singapore.

Government, Catholic and Independent high schools can enter the ballot until Friday, 18th October 2019 for a chance to be selected.

Further information about the tour can be found on the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs website at bit.ly/PAMS2020

Council's Road Maintenance crews have completed grading of Ben Lomond, Mulgaroon and Wilgareena Roads.

Work has also been undertaken on the East and West roads leading to Enngonia in preparation for the 2019 Enngonia Race Meeting on 21st September 2019

Slashing of Mitchell highway between Bourke and Enngonia is in progress and should be a well advanced if not completed by the race day.

The final sealing works of Stage 3 of the Wanaaring Road reconstruction being the Wongareena Plain section will be completed on Wednesday 18th September 2019.

Funding for the reconstruction works has been provided by the State Government under the fixing Country Roads Program

Overall stages 1, 2, 3 of the Wanaaring Road project will see around 46.05kms of road reconstructed and sealed and this is approximately 10 kilometres more than initially proposed.

As previously mentioned Council will continue with its efforts to secure additional funding to enable the reconstruction work to continue.

The construction team relocate to start the Goonery to Barakee Section later this month following the sealing of the Wongereena Plains Section.

I attended the farewell for Greg and Maggie Moore last Friday night and joined with other members of the community in acknowledging the work that Greg has done in both his roles as Commander of the Darling River Command and then the newly created Central North Command.

Greg has been responsible for the introduction of a number on new initiatives over the past seven years and a number of these have been looked at with a view to replication them elsewhere in the State.

Deputy Mayor, Lachlan Ford made a presentation to Greg on behalf of Council and I would join with him in wishing the Moore Family all the best for the future and thank them for the contribution they made to the Bourke community.

A reminder that Council has available small timers which can be used to measure time taken in the shower for example to provide an indication of just how much time individuals take to shower. As the drought continues and water becomes increasingly scarce small savings such as reducing your time in the shower, only doing full loads of washing can have a massive savings of water when the cumulative impact across the whole community is considered.

Water is a finite resources and it is only at times such as the current drought conditions that we are experiencing that it is really appreciated as such. It is an importance resource which is often taken for granted the ability to turn on the tap and get potable water.

IPART has set the 2020-21 rate peg for NSW Councils at 2.6%.

The calculation of the rate peg for 2020-21 is based in part on the increase in the Local Government Cost Index (LGCI).

The rate peg is the maximum percentage amount by which a Council may increase its total general rate income for the year.

For almost all Councils, general income consists entirely of rates income. For a small number of Councils, general income also includes some annual charges such as drainage levies. The rate peg does not apply to stormwater, waste collection, water and sewerage charges.

Councils have discretion to determine how to allocate the rate peg increase between different ratepayer categories.

As long as its general income remains within the set maximum increase, Councils may increase categories of rates by higher or lower than the rate peg.

Individual rates are also affected by other factors, such as land valuations which can affect percentage changes to rates alongside the rate pegging process.

For further details in respect of the rate increase you can go to the IPART Website
<https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home>

Bourke Shire Council is pleased to advise that the Bourke War Memorial Olympic Pool Complex will be opening for the 2019/2020 swimming season at 10.00am on Saturday, 28th September 2019.

Full details in relation to opening hours and charges both season ticket and casual entry are contained within an advertisement in this week's edition of the Western Herald and are also available in the Council website www.bourke.nsw.gov.au

The next meeting of the Far North West Joint Organisation of Councils will be held in Bourke on the 30th September 2019 and both the Mayor, Councillor Barry Holman and I will be attending along with representatives from Cobar and Walgett Councils, the Department of Premier, Cabinet and the Office of Local Government.

The Enngonia Races are on this weekend and I encourage everybody to consider making the trip up to Enngonia for what is always a great day out.

Admittance to the races is free courtesy of sponsorship provided by the local grazing community as a means of saying thank you to all those who have assisted in providing support during the current drought. It is a great gesture by those involved and will hopefully lead to an increased attendance on the day.

A number of the Bush Tracker group have indicated that they will be making their way back home via Enngonia taking the opportunity to enjoy a real bush race meeting in the rustic setting at Enngonia.

It is a great effort for such a small community to be able to come together to put on the race meeting as it is in Louth. It is the conduct of such events that is so important in galvanising the community and providing at the same time a great social occasion.

The State Government has released the details of the voting and successful applications for funding under My Community Project 2019.

Unfortunately, none of the projects submitted for Bourke Shire Local Government area were successful.

There were three (3) projects from the Bourke Local Government Area that had been submitted and these were

1. *A watering system for Renshaw Oval*
2. *Additions to the Health Centre at Wanaaring*
3. *The Painting of the Percy Hobson Mural on the Anson Street Water Tower*

The two (2) success projects in Barwon were both based in Warrumbungle Shire being

1. *A silo art project featuring Dunedoo born champion jockey Hugh Bowman on world recording breaking racehorse Winx*
2. *The rejuvenation of Horse sports at Binnaway*

There were over 1,500 great project ideas included in the public vote this year and the high calibre of projects submitted meant the people of NSW had many good project ideas to choose from.

For information about how the vote was conducted visit nsw.gov.au/mycommunityproject

Far West - Algal Coordinating Committee (FW-RACC) have issued their latest report on Blue-green which shows that there is a green alert at the Bourke Boat Ramp

Alert Definitions as specified in The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) *Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water* 2008.

The use of these guidelines is endorsed by the Scientific Subcommittee of the NSW Algal Advisory Group.

GREEN ALERT

Blue-green algae occur naturally at low numbers. At these concentrations, algae would not normally be visible, however some species may affect taste and odour of water even at low numbers and does not pose any problems for recreational, stock or household use.

Quote of the week!

"Give up the hope that you'll ever change the past. Change the present. Tomorrow, today will be the past."

Ross Earl
General Manager