



“FROM THE GM’S DESK”

26TH SEPTEMBER 2019



While still to be finalised, it would appear that things are on track for the air service to commence in Bourke in November 2019.

Representatives of Airlink have indicated that they will be in Bourke in the next couple of weeks to make final arrangements for the flights.

The re-establishment of an Air Service has been a relatively complexed issue which is now a reality. The Air Service will not only benefit the commercial and tourism sectors, it will provide ready access to locals who wish to take advantage of the opportunity to fly to Dubbo and onto their desired destination.

From Dubbo you can fly to Canberra, Newcastle, Melbourne and Brisbane as well as the long established route to Sydney.

Effectively Bourke now has linkage by air to a large section of the eastern seaboard with a population of around 10 million people, with area including Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Whilst it will no doubt receive publicity elsewhere, I thought it would be of interest to reproduce parts of an article I read about the changes to the rules regarding speed limits around emergency vehicles.

From 26th September 2019, when passing stationary emergency vehicles with flashing blue or red lights, motorists will:-

- no longer need to slow down to 40km/h on roads with speed limits of 90km/h or over
- be required to slow down to 40km/h on roads with speed limits of 80km/h or under.

The rule will be expanded to include tow trucks and breakdown assistance vehicles which are displaying yellow flashing lights while stopped on the road.

On roads with speed limits of 90km/h or over motorists will need to:-

- slow to a speed which is safe and reasonable for the circumstances;
- give enough space between their vehicle and the breakdown assistance or emergency vehicle and workers; and
- change lanes to keep the lane next to the vehicle free if it is safe to do so, on multi-lane roads.

Motorists who do not follow the new speed limits to protect emergency service workers, will lose three (3) demerit points and be fined \$457.

As of Sunday, 22nd September 2019, the Darling River will have stopped flowing over the weir at Bourke for 400 **days**.

The river height at Bourke was 2.71 metres over the weekend and the level of the water is dropping at the rate of around one (1) centimetre per day.

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 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 of Industry 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 the main sporting ovals and Central Park green. However, as the drought bites this task may become increasingly difficult.

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 we are experiencing that we really appreciate what an importance resource it is and often take for granted the ability to turn on the tap and get potable water.

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 last week's edition of the Western Herald and are also available in the Council website www.bourke.nsw.gov.au

The Bush Trackers Owners Group (BOG) who recently held their Annual Muster and Annual General Meeting in Bourke left with some great memories and very appreciative of the support and friendship shown to them by all sectors of the community.

The group had representatives from all across Australia with many indicating that they been here previously whilst for others it was their first trip. One (1) couple I met from Tasmania said they had passed through many times but hadn't previously stopped and hadn't realised that there where so many things to do.

They said they will be coming back.

I joined with the Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman, Manager of Corporate Services, Leonie Brown and Tourist Officer, Jodie Sontag in representing Bourke Shire as guest of the group at their Muster Dinner, also joining the group for dinner were a number of other local community members who were representing various community groups who were the recipients of donation from the BOG as part of their contribution to Bourke as the host town.

In all, the Group donated \$26,000 to the Bourke community which is a tremendous effort and a gesture that was very much appreciated.

Among the recipient groups were, Bourke Pony Club, Bourke Junior Rugby League, Clontarf Foundation, Bourke Laundry, The Blue Robinson Foundation, Bourke Rotary Club, The Bourke Men's Shed, the Bourke Junior Cricket, Bourke CWA, The Prostrate Cancer Research and the McGrath Foundation. The group also donated funds to the villages of Wanaaring, Louth, Fords Bridge and Enngonia.

Each year the Group purchases a Defibrillator Machine and at the end of each muster they donate the machine to the community.

The Annual Muster Dinner was catered for by the Port of Bourke Hotel at the pavilion at Renshaw Oval and the meal received very positive comments with a number of the group members saying it was the best meal that they had had at any of the musters which is high praise indeed.

The Port of Bourke were assisted in the serving of the meals by the members of the Clontarf Foundation and they did an excellent job.

There were around 160 attendees in total so to be able to provide a hot meal for so many people is no mean achievement.

In his Speech to the dinner, President Murray Woolnough made mention of the fact that in deciding the venue for 2019 four (4) sites were considered and these were Bourke, Tenterfield, Tathra and Mudgee. Murray said the standard of the submission from Bourke was such that they could not ignore the invitation for the group to come to Bourke. The submission was prepared by the tourism staff led by Manager of Tourism and Events, Fran Carter and my congratulations to her and her team.

The Bushtracker Owner's Group were a tremendous group of people and it was a pleasure to be able to host them in Bourke and we would welcome them back any time.

I understand that the group had a positive impact on the local economy with a number of retailers and food outlets noticing their presence in town.

The football season is coming to the business end of the season with the team I support in the NRL is St George (breathing no fire at the ball during the season) I turned my focus to the AFL, I am a Collingwood supporter in the AFL, however, I will be putting my supporters tie back in mothballs after they were narrowly beaten on the weekend by Greater Western Sydney.

It is, however, good to see the relatively new team of Greater Western Sydney make the Grand Final for the first time and I will be hoping that they can cause an upset.

Work is continuing on the finalisation of the works in the main street and the project continues to draw positive comment from all sectors of the community.

I joined the large crowd who went to the Enngonia Races last Saturday and as a member of Rotary I was involved in the catering for the event. The Rotary Barbeque was busy but still allowed enough time to sneak out and have a bet.

There was a very good crowd in attendance with a full bus load of race goers taking advantage of the free bus provided by the Enngonia Race Committee and the Road Safety Branch of the Roads and Maritime Services.

I think that the Committee should be extremely pleased with the way the day went and although there was a significant amount of dust at times, the day was enjoyed by all.

I was speaking to a number of the Bushtracker Owner's group who made the trip up and they had nothing but positive comments and the day gave them the opportunity to experience a real bush race meeting.

Bourke Council held its Ordinary Meeting for September at Enngonia on Monday, 23rd September 2019 and the decision to conduct the meeting in Enngonia is part of Council's commitment to hold meetings in the village areas at least once a year.

The quadrennial Election for Council are to be held in September 2020 and Council is required to determine how the elections are to be administered.

The General Manager of a Council is not allowed to conduct an election but is able to appoint others to do so.

The elections for Bourke Shire Council have in the past been run by the State Electoral Commission. At the meeting of Council held on Monday Council resolved to appoint the State Election Commission to conduct its election.

Council is required to make the appointment prior to the 1st October 2019 although the contract with the State Electoral Commissioner doesn't need to be signed until January.

The State Government announced through the Minister for Local Government that they would be providing assistance to reduce the cost of the election to Council which is welcome news.

Under the new funding model, costs will be assigned as either direct or core costs and allocated to Councils or the NSW Government accordingly. The funding model will see costs allocated on the following basis:-

- Direct (or marginal) costs are the costs that would not be incurred if an election was not held. These will be recovered from Councils on a direct allocation and per elector basis. These include election staffing, venues, ballot paper printing, and Council-specific advertising and voter information products.
- Core costs are defined as head office costs such as staff payroll, training, election security, project management, drafting of election procedures and policies, core IT system development and maintenance and ongoing voter roll maintenance. These are the costs that the NSWEC must incur to maintain its capacity to conduct Local Government Elections. The NSW Government will fund these core costs of \$19.9 million.

The NSW Government's funding contribution will result in an indicative weighted average cost per elector of \$8.21, which will be passed onto Councils, compared to a weighted average cost per elector of \$12.72 if no NSW Government contribution was provided. Adoption of the new funding model offers the following benefits:-

- it reduces Councils' election costs ensuring all Councils, regardless of size, can afford to retain an electoral services provider to administer their elections;
- it is more efficient, cost effective and cost reflective;
- it ensures a more equitable allocation of election costs, eliminating the need for larger Councils to cross subsidise smaller Councils' elections, and it reflects the practice in other jurisdictions where State Governments fund their Electoral Commissions' core operations in relation to Local Government elections resulting in lower costs per elector compared to NSW.

Council also reaffirmed that its Ordinary Meetings will continue to be held on the fourth (4th) Monday of each Month, Council also reaffirmed the appointment of its committee membership and also the appointment of delegates to the various committees on which Council is represented.

Quote of the week!

"A strong friendship doesn't need daily conversation, doesn't always need togetherness, as long as the relationship lives in the heart, true friends will never part."

Ross Earl
General Manager