



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the General Manager’s Desk”

16 May 2024

Isaac Ford

Described as one of the hardest, yet most prestigious, oratory competitions in the state, if not in Australia, the Lawrence Campbell Oratory Competition is held annually with speakers representing either their respective Greater Public School (GPS) or Combined Associated School (CAS) organisation. Established in 1935, in honour of Lawrence Campbell, a renowned teacher of elocution in various schools in Sydney in the early 1900’s, speakers are required to present an 8-minute speech, after 15-minutes preparation, on one of three (3) unseen topics. No pressure here! Previous winners of this competition read like a “who’s who” of Sydney’s oratorical elite: winners such as former politicians Malcolm Turnbull and Nick Greiner; legal luminaries like former Chief Justice Murray Gleeson (twice) and Lloyd Waddy; writers like Nick Enright, Gerard Windsor, and Mungo McCallum; and media personalities like Adam Spencer, Andrew O’Keefe, and Charles Firth (of Chaser fame).

Moving onto the 2024 competition recently held at Scots College at Bellevue Hill in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney and it is the Boy from Bourke, Isaac Ford representing his Sydney boarding school, Saint Ignatius’ College Riverview against the best of the rest. Having chosen the topic, “The minority is always right-or so they think”, Isaac faced tough competition from the finest orators of the GPS and CAS schools in NSW. With his proud Mum (Krystal), Dad (Lachlan) and his Sister (Taylor) on hand to witness his delivery of a speech that Riverview described as both eloquent and humorous, Isaac powered to victory on the night. I was delighted to learn of his success and congratulate him and the Ford family on this success. I always knew that Isaac could talk, but wow!

Interestingly, Saint Ignatius’ College Riverview has the most distinguished history in the competition, with twenty-four winning candidates over the competition’s history. This number of wins is well in advance of Sydney Grammar School with 16 wins, Sydney Boys High with 8 wins and St Joseph’s College and Sydney Church of England Grammar School with 7 wins apiece over the 89 year history of the event.

Chris Hammer

Staff at the Bourke Shire Library are rather excited as they prepare to host the very popular Australian author, Chris Hammer, at the library tomorrow evening, Friday 17 May 2023, commencing at 7.30pm. All members of the community are most welcomed to attend. Chris is a leading Australian crime fiction novelist, with a 30-year career as a journalist having once worked for The Bulletin, Fairfax and on the SBS program, Dateline.

He is the author of the internationally bestselling Martin Scarsden series, and his current series featuring homicide detectives Nell Buchanan and Ivan Lucic. His novel ‘Scrublands’ was named the UK’s Sunday Times Crime Novel of the Year for 2019 and won the prestigious UK Crime Writers’ Association ‘John

Creasey New Blood Dagger Award.' With all his novels set in Australia 'Scrublands' was adapted for TV, winning high acclaim.

Having authored some eight (8) books since his initial book in 2010, titled 'The River', Chris is in Bourke as part of a tour across regional NSW where he is talking about his latest book 'The Seven'. From Chris's website, the synopsis of this book is that *"Seven founding families come together a century ago to build an irrigation district – they turn the arid plains of Australia into a food bowl, a garden delivering peace and prosperity for all. But when one of the Seven is murdered in dramatic circumstances, homicide detectives Ivan Lucic and Nell Buchanan suspect that not everything is as idyllic as the community's leaders would like the world to believe. Could the murder be connected with the execution of another member of the inner circle thirty years ago? Or to the long-forgotten story of a servant girl on the brink of the great war? How are these events connected? What are the secrets The Seven are so desperate to keep hidden? With the killer still on the loose and matters spiralling out of control, can Ivan and Nell crack the case before more people die?"*

Sounds compelling, so don't miss this fantastic opportunity to see one of Australia's top authors in our town.

3G Network Closing

Telstra has recently announced that it will be extending the closure of its 3G network by two (2) months until 31 August 2024 following customer feedback that they need more time to make the relevant changes. Closure of the nation's 3G networks and moving people to what is described as better connectivity, is an industry wide change and for those who still use a 3G device for either data, voice or emergency calls, you need to prepare to stay connected when 3G switches off and is no longer available. This could include replacing phone devices which are 3G only, devices that do not support Voice over 4G (VoLTE), or devices that are 4G enabled but hardwired to use 3G for emergency calls. Telstra have also advised that the shutdown will also affect medical devices and other hardware connected to its 3G network, from EFTPOS terminals to farm machinery. If you are still unsure if your device is impacted, it is suggested that you SMS '3' to 3498 (3G XT) and the Telstra checker will respond confirming what action you need to take. For other connected devices, please reach out to the supplier or manufacturer for more information.

This change has been in the offing for nearly 5 years and despite this, Telstra are reporting a range of reasons why some people haven't acted yet. One reason expressed by Telstra is that customers haven't seen the Telstra communications regarding the network closure. To this end, Telstra will soon be adding a voice recording to the start of calls made using 3G dependent devices as an ongoing reminder to act. The recording will be removed once the device has been upgraded.

Health and Wellbeing Day

Council previously notified residents on its Facebook site that the Council Offices, Depot, Service NSW Agency, Library and the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre would all be closed on Friday, 3 May 2024, to allow all staff to attend Council's annual Staff Health and Well-Being Day. With this year's theme of Safe, Supported, Respected, and with a diverse and widely spread team across the Shire, the day is an important one in bringing all Council staff together as part of endeavours to ensure that all staff: are safe at work and to keep others safe when they are in our workplaces; supported to do their best work by ensuring they all have the skills and the confidence to do their job and that they are treated respectfully when interacting with each other and with Council's customers.

As one of the largest employers in the Bourke Shire, Council seeks to create a workplace that is welcoming, where we invest in the future through continuous learning, have access to resources and support so staff can do their best. Throughout the day working cohesively as a team, communicating, using available resources, work health and safety responsibilities, sound financial management and respect for one another were to the fore. With these matters in mind, presentations in respect of High Performing Teams; Dignity and Respect at Work; Workplace Well-Being; Alcohol and Other Drugs Awareness and Councils Code of Conduct, were made.

The keynote speaker on the day was Mr James Wood, on the topic of workplace safety, titled "Choices." James Wood is not a safety professional, he has no qualifications in safety, nor does he work in a safety role. Unfortunately for James though, he suffered a workplace injury over 25 years ago that resulted in a broken back and damage to his spinal cord. At the time of his accident James was getting to a great stage in his life, living independently, great job and career options, nice car and a couple of motorbikes, with good friends and a steady relationship. All of that changed because, as James said on the day, he made some wrong CHOICES while doing a simple job at work! I found the impact of hearing James Wood speak both gripping and enthralling and something that will stay with both me and many members of staff for a long time.

QUOTE: "Workplace accidents, we always think they happen to the other bloke. How wrong can we be? So, think about the choices you make, then consider the consequences." Workplace Safety Speaker – James Wood