

Top gong for pets campaign

A council program aimed at promoting pound animals as worthy pets has received national recognition at the 2013 Government Communications Australia awards.

Council's Pound Pet program has been named Australia's top communication-marketing campaign, beating Perth and Brisbane for the accolade.

Council also collected the Best Advocacy-Community partnership category at the 2013 awards ceremony in Sydney.

Mayor Deirdre Comerford congratulated community groups for collaborating with council and said the award was well deserved for the talented staff at council.

"Two members from Corporate Communications team really drove the project in collaboration with staff from the local pound with the hope of saving dogs and cats left abandoned," she said.

Melissa Dunn and Kerry McNeill (pictured above right) devised a holistic advertising and marketing campaign to complement a new look webpage in 2010.

The primary purpose was to increase awareness and generate community support for council's pound pets.

With limited funds, the duo collaborated with staff from the Pound, ZINC FM, Mackay Midweek and a number of local animal welfare agencies to develop the Pound Pets initiative.

The initiative has become a key focus of council's community awareness and education program for responsible pet ownership.

In 2009 only about 50 per cent of dogs were re-homed, but the rate is now closer to 80 per cent and it's largely due to this simple, effective campaign.



The project, which is entering its third year, has connected with the community and in turn has helped saved hundreds of animals.

Cr Comerford acknowledged the support of animal welfare agencies such as MARS and Animal Rescue Queensland, Mackay Midweek and ZINC FM.

The facts:



2009: 460 dogs re-homed
481 dogs euthanased
2010: 652 dogs re-homed
487 dogs euthanased
2011: 736 dogs re-homed
270 dogs euthanased
2012: 648 dogs re-homed
155 dogs euthanased

Road side trading must be approved

Any food-vending vehicle or temporary food stall that is trading to customers on a council roadside must be approved by council in order to operate.

Failure to seek approval or abide by the guidelines may result in enforcement actions such as a legal notice and/or on-the-spot fine.

Health and Regulatory Services portfolio councillor Laurence Bonaventura said roadside vending businesses should always contact council before setting up shop.

"Our Environmental Health Officers will be able to assist in ensuring you are trading correctly."

>> A detailed fact sheet on mobile roadside vending can also be found on council's website.

Who let the dogs out?

A high number of complaints have been received about dogs wandering in the Bucasia area.

Responsible pet ownership begins and ends with the owner. When purchasing a pet it's important that you, as an owner, are aware of the animals needs including daily exercise, appropriate care and required attention.

There are a number of steps you can take to ensure your pet is safe from being harmed and causing harm to others including registering, microchipping and desexing them.

It's also important to ensure your pet is restrained or kept in a fenced yard.

Double check that your current enclosure for either your dog or cat is effective.

>> For more details on responsible pet ownership visit, mackay.qld.gov.au.



Sunday spectacular at MECC

Relive the 1960s with distinctive jangling sounds of twelve string guitars and rich vocal harmonies from The Searchers this Sunday at the MECC from 7.30pm.

Their number one hits include Sweets for My Sweet, Needles and Pins, Don't Throw Your Love Away and We're Gonna Love Again are loved by millions world-wide.

Back by popular demand, this Sunday's show will have the audience on their feet dancing.

>> Tickets start from \$45, to book visit, www.mackaytix.com.au.

Did you know?
February marks Library Lovers Month. By joining your local library before March 1, you go into the draw for the chance to win a \$150 dinner voucher at a surprise venue.



Downing Street playground received an \$80,000 facelift - before (left) and after (right).

Parks and playgrounds are fun and games

Families living in Ooralea are loving their freshly revamped playground located in Downing Street.

The new and improved play area received an \$80,000 face lift which included brand new equipment, swing set, shade structure and a bench seat for the parents.

Mackay Regional Council is responsible for maintaining over 200 parks and 100

playgrounds in the region.

In the last twelve months, on average our staff have cleaned 142 toilets and 60 barbecues every day and spent over 3500 hours mowing our parks.

Mayor Deirdre Comerford said these statistics are impressive and recognise the outstanding effort staff put towards looking after family-friendly locations like parks and playgrounds.

Other recently completed projects include the full replacement of the toilets at Mount Bassett Cemetery and new rubber softfall at Mulherin Park. Staff also rebuilt the concrete block wall outside Louisa Creek's amenities.

>> All of our park and playground locations can be found online at mackay.qld.gov.au.



An interactive map highlighting road works in Mackay.

Maps help you plan your travel

Council has recently commenced a \$60 million restoration project that will rehabilitate six roads including Paradise Street, Milton Street, Bridge Road, Juliet Street, Shakespeare Street and Archibald Street roundabout.

You can stay up to date and informed on this project as well as all of the latest road works, by visiting council's website.

View interactive maps to see what road works, major projects and maintenance programs are occurring across the region.

This online tool is a great way to plan your travel in the convenience of your own home.

>> To view the interactive maps visit: www.mackay.qld.gov.au/roads.

Watch the flow of your H₂O

You can make a huge difference in your water consumption by making small changes to the way you use water around the home. Some simple water saving tips that help make a difference are:

Know when to water
The science of watering your lawn is simple, stick to your designated watering days and never water between 10am and 4pm.

Wash the car wisely
Wash your car on the grass using a trigger or twist nozzle and a bucket. Your lawn will be greener and you'll use less water.

Check for leaks regularly
Check your taps, hoses and pipes for leaks. A leak that goes undetected will not only waste our H₂O, buy your money as well.

Saving water is not rocket science - make the change.

Rates notices for half year issued

Rates for the half year ending 30 June 2013 have been posted and are due by Friday, March 8, 2013. For approved pensioners the due date is Friday, June 21, 2013. By paying your rates on time, you are entitled to a 10 per cent discount. Residents can make payments online at council's website.

Make sure you formally report signs of graffiti

Everything you report helps catch graffiti offenders. If you notice any signs of graffiti in your suburb at places such as parks, playgrounds or open spaces - you are encouraged to formally report the details. The best way to decrease graffiti in our region is to report it, phone 1300 GRAFFITI (472 334) or go online, www.graffitistop.com.au.

Prepare your home against Dengue

With February being a popular month for heavy rainfall, it's important residents are regularly checking their home for mosquito breeding sites. Three key messages to remember when defending against dengue are tip it, store it and throw it. Protecting your loved ones is really up to you. Visit council's website for more information.

Four academic grants close this Friday

Four \$5000 academic bursaries are available for current university students studying within the areas of Engineering, Information Technology, Accounting, Planning or Environmental Health. Applications close this Friday, Feb 22. Successful applicants will also receive on-the-job training. Apply today at council's website.

I.T. made easy as 1, 2, 3



Class members enjoy learning new things at Discover I.T.

With technology consuming so much of our lives these days, it's unrealistic to think we can avoid it forever.

Mackay Regional Council Libraries' Discover I.T. classes will take the confusion out of technology and make navigating the net easy.

It doesn't matter how old you are or how little experience you have, each class has been designed as a starting point into the world of computers and technology.

>> Visit www.mackay.qld.gov.au/libraries or contact your local library branch for more information.

> Local Review...



Daphne and Gerard Masters.

What's the best thing you have learnt how to do at a Library Discover I.T. class?

Daphne: "Learning how to get in contact with family using different technologies."

Gerard: "I've learnt how to use the internet to look up and learn things."

You too can start learning about all the latest in technology just like Daphne and Gerard, the next class for Mackay City Library is: **Wednesday, 27 February Microsoft Office and Google Drive, from 10am to 11.30am. Bookings are essential.**

Beach goes enjoy improved access



Shoal Point's new timber ramp improves access for beach-goers.

Thanks to a \$30,000 access upgrade, more residents can now enjoy the beauty of Shoal Point beach.

Parks and Environment manager Peter Cluff said the previous walkway wasn't all-abilities friendly.

"The new and improved timber ramp is over 50 metres long and allows for all members of the community to access the beach. Shortly, council staff will finish the project by removing the previous timber pailings (walkway)."

Deputy Mayor Kevin Casey said we are fortunate to have about 31 beaches in our region.

"Council has two beach protection teams that undertake management work on foreshores and beach environments."

Their work includes looking after our four swimming enclosures, beach access track construction and maintenance, erosion management works, weed control and the restoration of native vegetation.