



Sports Expo bowls over league legend

Special guest Shane Webcke, returning to Mackay event for fourth time in five years, is impressed by passion for sport on show and variety of exhibitors

RUGBY league legend Shane Webcke had not even left the 2015 Mackay Sports Expo and Sign-on Day when he committed to returning this year.

"It has been my great pleasure to come back and I'll be back again next year," said Webcke, who will be attending his fourth Mackay expo in five years on Sunday, February 14.

"It's one of the most unique and interesting events that I attend," he said.

"I do a lot of things in regional Queensland and a lot of them are based around sport, but nothing comes close to this — just the amount of different sports that are represented here and the passion with which people represent those sports.

"It's a great event for people of this region to bring their kids and go to as adults to see what a wonderful range of diverse sports and activities are on offer."

This year's Sports Expo

and Sign-on Day will be held again at the MECC on Valentine's Day from 9am to 1pm.

Council's Sports, Recreation and Facilities portfolio councillor Paul Steindl said Mackay people absolutely loved their sport, so it was fitting that this year's event was being held on Valentine's Day.

He said the annual Expo and Sign-on Day had become an important event on the Mackay region's sporting



Special guest Shane Webcke bowls one down at last year's Sports Expo.

calendar, with about 8000 people attending in 2015.

"We'll again have around 100 clubs exhibiting and there will be live demonstrations in the

Rio Tinto Active Zone," Cr Steindl said.

The event, facilitated by Mackay Regional Council, is supported by corporate

partners, including the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal, Rio Tinto, Sportspower and the Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association.

>> Not-for-profit sports and recreation organisations can still register to exhibit at the 2016 Sports Expo and Sign-On Day online at mackay.qld.gov.au/sportsexpo



Concept plan have been developed for an upgrade of Ron Anderson Park.

Park upgrades take shape

CONCEPT plans for upgrades of Ron Anderson and Fairmeadow Drive parks have been developed.

Parks and Environment portfolio councillor Theresa Morgan said residents were invited to provide feedback on the redevelopments.

"The consultation provided plenty of food for thought," she said.

"Some of the ideas we are planning to implement at Ron Anderson Park include installing new pathways, a covered picnic area and upgrading the half basketball court."

The works at Fairmeadow Drive Park will focus on improving the overall appearance of the area.

"This was identified as a

priority as the park (located in North Mackay) is visible from the Bruce Highway," Cr Morgan said.

"Council will remove unsightly fencing, carry out various landscaping work and install a new viewing desk," she said.

"The site has also been identified for the installation of a large commissioned public artwork."

Time to be tech savvy

MACKAY Regional Council Libraries have bought four iPads and four tablets as part of the Tech Savvy Seniors program.

Community and Client Services portfolio councillor Alison Jones said these mobile devices would provide an opportunity for library staff to instruct older residents in basic digital literacy.

"They will mean small, personal classes can be conducted on the Mobile Library at regional stops like Calen, Hay Point, Midge Point and Seaforth," Cr Jones said.

Mobile classes kick off February 9 and Mackay City Library classes February 16.

The program is a partnership between the Queensland Government, Telstra, State Library of Queensland and Mackay Regional Council.

>> More details from the Mobile Library or phone 4961 9387



Queensland chef Matt Golinski will help prepare dishes at a Farm to Plate Dinner at the MECC.

Foodies can rejoice

DISHES prepared by highly respected Queensland chef Matt Golinski will tempt the palate at a Farm to Plate Dinner at the MECC in June.

He will work alongside some of the best and brightest chefs from the region for the dinner, to be held during Queensland Week.

Tourism and Economic Development portfolio councillor Greg Martin said council had just been informed its application to the State Government's Department of Premier and Cabinet for funding to help stage the event had been successful.

The dinner on Thursday, June

9, will be a celebration of local produce from Mackay region.

It will be organised by the Greater Whitsunday Food Network, in conjunction with council.

"The Queensland Week Farm to Plate Dinner is a celebration of the region's most outstanding produce — grown, caught or raised locally by producers in the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions," Cr Martin said.

"The event will assist the Greater Whitsunday Food Network build our local food economy and provide a catalyst for future agritourism opportunities in our region," he said.

>> Queensland Week 2016 will be held June 4 to 12

Don't dump on region's charities

THINK twice before dumping your unwanted goods at charity bins.

Not only is this practice unsightly, it is also illegal, with fines up to \$1884.

Charities only accept clothing items placed in their bins.

Waste, Health and Regulatory Services portfolio councillor Laurence Bonaventura said leaving rubbish for charities to clean up was unacceptable.

"Everyone has a responsibility

to dispose of their unwanted goods responsibly by either dropping them to one of council's waste facilities or at a charity office when they are open," Cr Bonaventura said.

"Items left outside charity bins are exposed to the elements and quickly become unusable," he said.

"There is no excuse for residents to leave their rubbish around charity bins, especially now that dump vouchers are being provided to residential properties with

their rates notices."

If you have items that you would like to donate to charity you can drop them off to one of the following locations:

> Lifeline at 18 Creek Street, Mackay

> Endeavour at 137 Sydney Street, Mackay

> St Vincent De Paul Centre at 11 Nelson Street, Mackay

> Salvation Army at 48 Gregory Street, Mackay



Dumping outside charity bins is unsightly and costs charities time and money cleaning up.

>> Help charities in our region by reporting the car registration details of anyone seen dumping illegally to 1300 MACKAY (622 529)

Be true blue

COUNCIL has provided funding to a host of community events to be held around the region on Australia Day, Tuesday, January 26. Events, all open to the public and free to attend, include:

> FAMILY FUN DAY: Hosted by Banksia Scout Group, 10am to 2pm, Jaycee Park, Fernleigh Avenue, Andergrove

> WELCOME TO KINDY 2016 AUSTRALIA DAY BBQ: C&K Slade Point Community Kindergarten, 9am to noon, 15 Pheasant Street

> HOMESTEAD 'OPEN HOUSE': Friends of Greenmount, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Greenmount Homestead

> GREAT AUSTRALIA DAY BEACH PARTY: Habana & District Progress Association, 3pm, Habana Community Shed, Moohin's Road

> AUSTRALIA DAY SURF CARNIVAL: Mackay Surf Life Saving Club, from 8am, Mackay Harbour Beach

> AUSSIES CELEBRATE: Hosted by PCYC Mackay, 2pm to 4pm, Scriha Street, North Mackay

> PIONEER VALLEY AUSTRALIA DAY: Pioneer Valley Tourism & Development Association, 9am to 1.30pm, Finch Hatton Show Hall

> SARINA AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS: Hosted by Sarina Australia Day Committee, 10am to 3pm, Apex Park, Sarina

> AUSTRALIA DAY @ SARINA BEACH: Sarina Surf Life Saving Club, 2pm to 6pm, Sarina Beach

> FAMILY AUSTRALIA DAY: Seaforth Progress & Sports Association, 9.30am to 1.30pm, Seaforth Foreshore Park

More details on these events at mackay.qld.gov.au

Australia Day eve honours all heroes

THE spotlight will be shone on some unsung heroes on Australia Day eve before celebrations throughout the Mackay region on next Tuesday's public holiday.

Mackay Regional Council's Australia Day celebrations are following the hugely successful format of last year

All nominees and those who nominated them have been invited to an official Australia Day Awards ceremony at the MECC on Monday evening, where winners will be announced.

Mayor Deirdre Comerford said the function was fitting recognition of the tireless work of individuals and organisations in our region.

"Like last year, we are again placing a real focus on all Australia Day Award nominations," Cr Comerford said.

"Our community is built on the backbone of the tireless efforts of residents like those nominated for this year's awards," she said.

Tickets on sale for the public



Last year's Young Citizen of the Year Kelly Attard.

to attend the event, which will include live music by Brad Butcher and Oliver Carter-Beck, close 4.30pm today.

A Citizenship Ceremony will be held at the MECC on Australia Day, as well as a

range of free, public events around the region.

Council provided funding to assist 10 organisations and groups host Australia Day events next Tuesday. (See list of events left).

>> Special coverage of awards winners in the Daily Mercury on Australia Day

Kids Art Club

LOOKING for something to get the kids off the couch and away from their screens? Kids Art Club can teach them to be creative, discuss new ideas, and experiment while making art and craft. Term one starts on Saturday, February 6, and will be delivered by experienced local artist Wanda Bennett. The term includes six, two-hour classes in two age groups. The six-to-eight-year group runs from 10am to noon and the nine-to-12-year group is from 1pm to 3pm. This term's tutor Wanda Bennett is a respected and loved local artist, who has experience with nearly everything, from public art and lantern making to textiles and printmaking. Call Artspace Mackay today on 4961 9722 and enrol.

Planting seeds

STAFF at council's Mackay Natural Environment Centre nursery are excited to have a supply of Mackay Cedar seedlings. The Mackay Cedar tree is quite rare due to its infrequent seeding — once every eight to nine years — and the popularity of its timber. Nursery supervisor Sue McCormack said the seedlings were flourishing. "We are looking forward to putting some Mackay Cedar back into the region." To watch a video go to <http://bit.ly/1REU10t>

Library event

MACKAY City Library will be open on a Sunday morning next month. The special opening will coincide with the Sports Expo and Sign-on Day on Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14. The library will be open from 9am to noon, with the expo being held at the MECC from 9am to 1pm. Standard library services will be available, as well as Big Games, including Connect Four, Chess, Draughts and Jenga for kids.

Watch the flow

WANT a tip on how to Watch The Flow Of Your H2O? Water according to your soil type. Different soil types absorb and maintain moisture differently. Sandy soils are more absorbent, allowing water to soak in deeper and more quickly than other soil types, such as clay. The more absorbent the soil type, the less watering time required.