



Abandoned vehicles a burden on ratepayers

In just under a year, over 60 abandoned vehicles have been impounded in the Mackay Regional Council area - that's more than one a week.

Each year irresponsible motorists abandon vehicles on roadsides causing an expense and burden to ratepayers.

To date there are about 20 vehicles impounded, including a boat. Mayor Col Meng said a lot of the vehicles which are abandoned are a result of people not having the money to maintain them.

"Not only do the costs of dealing with the dumped vehicles add up, but since Australia Day this year, there has been two break-and-enters at council's vehicle compound where they are kept in between public auctions," Cr Meng said.

"Intruders have caused damage such as vandalising the premises, stealing items out of impounded cars including radios, stereos, speakers, tyres and motor parts," he said.

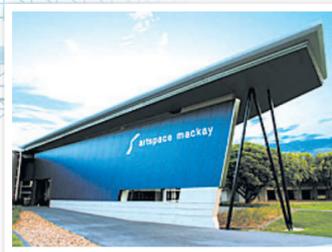
"Theft is unacceptable and we are working with police to ensure the responsible people are caught and dealt with appropriately."
- Mayor Col Meng.

A full list of the impounded vehicles can be found on council's website.

To claim a right to the possession of any vehicle which has been impounded residents should contact council's Health and Regulatory Services on 1300 MACKAY to organise for the release of the vehicle.

Failure to contact council within 30 days of impoundment will result in the vehicle being offered for sale by public auction.

>> The next public auction will occur next month, where vehicles will be sold as is from \$20 to \$200 each, for more information contact council.



Members sought for new Arts Committee

Mackay Regional Council is calling for expressions of interest from suitably qualified members of the community to join the new Visual Arts Advisory Committee.

Community Services and Facilities portfolio councillor Karen May said nominations from artists, arts and cultural workers, local organisations and people active within the arts community are being sought.

"It's envisaged that the group will advise on council's Art Collection and Visual Arts Programs," Cr May said.

"One of the key projects that the committee will work on includes developing a new collections policy that reflects the significance of the existing collections owned by Mackay City, Mirani and Sarina Shire council's prior to amalgamation in 2008," she said.

Members of the Visual Arts Advisory Committee will be expected to meet every two months for an initial term of one year.

To assist nominations, residents are required to submit a resume detailing qualifications and a short covering letter by Friday, July 1, 2011.

>> For further information or assistance, please contact Artspace Mackay on 4961 9722.

Council improves access for people with a disability

Mackay Regional Council will match a \$75,000 Federal grant to install automatic doors at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre (MECC).

The funding is part of the Australian Government's Accessible Communities initiative which delivers practical support for local councils to ensure local people with disability, their families, friends and carers can get involved in community life.

Council's Equity and Access Advisory Committee pushed for the funding to improve accessibility to the MECC.

>> The successful application is part of an ongoing council commitment to support people with a disability in the region.

Historical collection leads the way in QLD



Historical Collection volunteers: Patricia Noonan, Mavis Peacock, Berenice Wright and Brenda Webster.

Eight dedicated volunteers have given up three hours of their time every week for the past 10 to 30 years to work with library staff in an effort to build one of Queensland's most advanced historical collections, the Mackay Regional Council's Library Services Heritage Collection.

One of those volunteers is local historian, Mrs Berenice Wright OAM who was awarded the John Oxley Library Community History Award for her ongoing commitment to the development of the collections that reflect history in our region.

Her involvement in the library commenced in 1980, when she was approached by the then Town Clerk, Mr Laurie Payne, to sort out three boxes of historical material for the soon-to-be-opened Mackay City Library.

30 years on, Mrs Wright and the Friends of the Library volunteers keep chipping away to continue to develop and expand the impressive collection through ongoing conservation and preservation works.

Plenty of sporting success and opportunities

Local water-ski champion Ashleigh-Kate Stebbeings (pictured centre) made it three in a row at the Business Technology Centre North Queensland Sportstar Awards last month taking out the Senior Sportstar award for yet another year.

Ashleigh was acknowledged for excelling on the world stage in barefoot waterskiing earning the title plus a cheque for \$2000 - congratulations!

If you too are or know of a young athlete who deserves recognition for their sporting achievements, nominate them in the 2011 Sports Development Bursary.

Council has recently put the call out for nominations with chosen applicants being

"I was stunned to be recognised and awarded such a prestigious title."
- Berenice Wright.

"I believe what sets our collection apart from others is the fact that it is a quality collection which accessible and user friendly for the entire community to view," Mrs Wright said.

"The collection is open to public during the normal library opening times (except Fridays)."

Residents can view items such as books about the history and development of the Mackay region and its people, newspaper archives (microfilm and hard copy format), photographs, pamphlets and much more.

>> The Mackay City Library is located on Alfred Street, Mackay. For details on opening hours, log onto: www.mackay.qld.gov.au/libraries.



awarded \$500 for ongoing development and representation costs in their chosen sports.

Athletes must be under the age of 18 to be eligible and closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday, June 24, 2011.

>> Submissions are available online at www.mackay.qld.gov.au/nqsportsbursary.

Levy protects our natural environment

Ratepayers contribute \$27.50 a year to a Natural Environment Levy which goes towards funding key elements such as several natural environment based staff positions, land acquisition, community education, conservation works, revegetation projects and beach management plans.

To help make recommendations on how the funds should be dispersed across the region, council implemented an Advisory Committee which consists of three councillors, three community representatives, three council officers and three local environmental agency representatives.

Two snapshots of the types or projects which have come to fruition thanks to the levy include:

- Providing the Mackay and District Turtle Watch Association with an all terrain vehicle (valued at \$15,000) for use during the turtle nesting and hatching season between October and March each year.
- Assisting the Sarina Community Native Garden with funds (valued at \$25,000) to enable a design concept plan to be implemented and to subsidise costs of earth moving, mulch spreading and tree planting.

>> To learn more about the Natural Environmental Levy and its funded projects, visit council's website.

Did you know?

That all backyard swimming pools must have building approval. To find out if your pool has approval you can apply for a building records search through council.



Missing street signs

Council is calling on residents to be their eyes and ears on the streets and to advise them if they notice any street signs missing or damaged so council can replace them.

The call comes due to an increase in the number of street signs stolen and vandalised in the region.

Roads and Infrastructure portfolio councillor Kevin Casey said it is imperative that we have street signs to ensure the safety of our community and for emergency services and visitors to find their way.

"It will take Emergency Services longer to respond to an emergency and disrupt the flow of traffic if street signs are not visible," Cr Casey said.

"By removing or damaging street signs you are putting lives in danger."

The removal or damage of street signs could create a safety hazard, is a cost to the community and a serious offence under the law.

>> To report a street sign that is missing or damaged please phone or lodge a request through council's website.



Registration a must for cats!

Reap the benefits of being a responsible pet owner this month by registering your dog or cat with council for half price.

Prior to June 30, registering a desexed dog will cost \$25 and \$10 for pensioners, and for an entire dog, owners will pay just \$60 instead of the normal \$120.

Health, Sport and Recreation portfolio councillor Paul Steindl said council has over 15,000 dogs registered on its books.

"We have also extended the amnesty for registering desexed cats for another 12 months, allowing owners to register for free," Cr Steindl said.

Last year the State Government introduced compulsory cat registration to ensure that lost cats can be returned safely to their owners and to help prevent unwanted pregnancies.

>> To register your pet with council, go to your nearest council office. For registration renewals residents can pay online at council's website under 'I want to pay'.



Save the date of upcoming Development Summit

If your organisation is involved in the development, construction or infrastructure industry then it is imperative that you and/or your organisation take part in council's Development Summit.

The one day summit to be held on Thursday, June 30, 2011 at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre will include an overview on the newly released draft Queensland Government Regional Plan and council's intended response.

Developers will be encouraged to ask questions on the draft Regional Plan and offer suggestions on growth management strategies.

>> For further information or to book your spot at the Development Summit contact council's Planning Technical Officer, Luke Young on 4961 9131.