



COUNCIL - in brief -

New look for our clients

If you've stepped into council's Gordon Street building lately you would have noticed the fresh new look of our Client Services area. The newly renovated area is more open plan and features a waiting area and lounges. Behind the scenes, more room has been provided for our Administration team. Council would like to thank residents for their patience during these renovations.

Calendars out

Never miss bin day again! Pick up your copy of this year's Recycling Calendar from council's client services centres or download the electronic version by visiting mackay.qld.gov.au/recyclingcalendar.

Big welcome for little bubs

Registrations are now open for all three of council's Baby Welcoming ceremonies, with the first event taking place on Sunday, March 16, at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. Take home a special certificate and discover a world of information and support services available for parents. Registrations for the upcoming ceremony close on Friday, March 7. To take part go to mackay.qld.gov.au/baby.

Improving the flow of H2O

The Northern Beaches and Eton areas have been pumped with water improvements following the recent completion of new water infrastructure. A new booster pump station has been constructed to improve water pressure to properties adjacent to the Blacks Beach reservoirs and increase the overall capacity of water supply to the Northern Beaches. Eton also received a new bore pump and booster pump station to improve reliability of water supply, along with a disinfection unit to ensure consistent water quality.

From forest flying to platypus diving...

Adventures of a lifetime are right here in the Valley

More than just picturesque scenery, the Valley is a perfect escape for some weekend fun and the Pioneer Valley Passport can be used as your adrenalin-kicking ticket.

Thanks to the support of 12 Valley businesses, the passport is filled with exciting incentives, prizes and discounts including 10 per cent off all dives and equipment at Rainforest Scuba.

Rainforest Scuba Director Luana Royle encouraged locals to take advantage of the discount and experience

diving in the crystal-clear waters of Finch Hatton Gorge.

"It's an experience like no other, whether you are a first timer or a certified diver."

"Very few have experienced freshwater diving and it's teeming with wildlife down there with turtles, eels and three female platypuses."

From chilly creeks to awe-inspiring rainforests, if you're looking for a burst of excitement on your weekend, forest flying is an experience not to be missed.

Forest Flying Director Donna Lowe said following recent rain, the views 25 metres above the rainforest were "absolutely beautiful".

"It's a great time for locals to experience a personalised tour and take advantage of a \$5 discount with their passport. The tour includes a guided forest walk before we suspend you in a harness travelling 350 metres through the rainforest canopy."

Pick up your passport from council's client service centres and participating Pioneer Valley businesses.



Pick up a Pioneer Valley Passport to receive \$5 off forest flying! This initiative is proudly supported by Sea FM and 7 Local News.

>> To find out where you can pick up a Pioneer Valley Passport and what you can win, visit mackay.qld.gov.au/passport.

New careers launched at council



MECC Retail Operations Trainee Kate Turvey, of Walkerston, with parents Chris and Marion is excited to start her career at council.

There's a lot of fresh new faces around council right now, with 26 trainees and apprentices appointed in January.

From business, library, live production and retail trainees, to civil construction, painting, land and conservation and diesel fitting apprentices, these eager employees will serve council and our community for at least the next 12 months.

Mayor Deirdre Comerford

said she was proud to be part of an organisation that was so dedicated to fostering the skills and supporting the advancement of so many keen workers.

"In addition to providing dozens of apprentice and trainee positions annually, council also offers four academic bursaries to our region's budding university students," she said.

"Valued at \$5000 each, the bursaries provide students

with much-needed financial assistance as well as a month's worth of work experience in their chosen field at council."

To apply for an academic bursary you must be in your second-last year of university.

You should also be currently studying in the Mackay region or be a previous resident of the area with a view to return upon completion of your studies.

>> To apply for one of four \$5000 academic bursaries go to mackay.qld.gov.au/academicbursary (applications close Friday, March 21).



Heather Walz enjoys an Aqua Lite class at Mirani.

Wet 'n' wild fitness

MACKAY Regional Council is making a splash with its Healthy Rural Communities Mackay (HRCM) initiative, encouraging residents from Midge Point to Koumala to get active, stay fit and have fun.

Since the program commenced in August 2012, more than 1000 enthusiastic participants have taken part in 170 different activities – ranging from gentle exercise to nutritional cooking classes.

Community Development and Libraries portfolio councillor Alison Jones said the program message "don't let the grass grow under your feet" was about providing opportunities for everyone to improve their health in social and supportive environments.

"The aqua fitness program is a perfect example – we have seen people embrace the class held at Cape

Hillsborough and Mirani, with members turning up rain, hail or shine," she said.

Participant Heather Walz said the best part of the program was acquiring the motivation to move and building friendships with other members.

New participants are welcome to attend Aqua Lite classes at Mirani pool at 8.30am on Mondays and Wednesdays or the Cape Hillsborough class is on Tuesdays from 9am at the Nature Resort pool.

In March, HRCM will hit the road with council's Mobile Library providing rural residents with access to a Healthy Communities Kit filled with cookbooks, hand weights and exercise DVDs.

Cr Jones said residents could also learn how to make designer salads at upcoming workshops held at The Leap, Sarina and Mirani.

>> Visit mackay.qld.gov.au/hrcm for more details.

Benefits set to flow

The first stage of the overall project to build a new water treatment plant at Marian is now complete.

The \$2.5 million works involved the construction of a new raw water intake system, pump station and pipeline on the bank of the Pioneer River in preparation for the new water treatment plant.

Works on the treatment plant are expected to commence mid-year.



When complete the Marian Water Treatment Plant will provide a more reliable water supply for residents in the area.

New structures are raising some eyebrows



If you've been wondering what these new installations cropping up across our City Centre are lately – you're not alone! They are in fact bike racks. To use, simply secure your bike to them, with the wheel facing the sky. Don't forget, you can also store your bike and belongings at the Memorial Swim Centre's secure bicycle parking facility.

>> Visit mackay.qld.gov.au/activetowns for more info.

Council, police collaborate over wheelie bin issue

Council has joined forces with police in a bid to crack down on wheelie bin theft around the region. Waste, Health and Regulatory Services portfolio councillor Laurence Bonaventura said on average more than \$40,000 worth of wheelie bins went missing from residents' homes each year.

"Stealing a wheelie bin is a criminal offence, and one that should now be reported directly to the police," he said.

If your bin has been stolen, call Policelink on 131 444; then provide council with the

police report number by calling 1300 MACKAY (622 529) or visiting one of council's client services centres to arrange a replacement.

"The standard domestic bin collection service is for one general waste bin and one recycling bin per property. Residents who find they have an additional unregistered bin should call council to make arrangements for its return."

>> To report a stolen wheelie bin, contact Policelink on 131 444.



Midge Pt project advancing

Plan in place to speed up rehabilitation

Nine kilometres of Midge Point Road, between the Bruce Highway and Conder Parade, is presently being restored.

When complete, the road will boast two lanes of sealed bitumen that will ultimately improve driving conditions and traffic flow. To be undertaken in six sections (some conducted simultaneously), the entire rehabilitation project, valued at \$4 million, is anticipated to be wrapped up in July, weather permitting.

Roads and Drainage portfolio councillor Kevin Casey said this program would allow the road to be restored as quickly as possible.

"Contractors are currently excavating and replacing the roadside shoulders with gravel pavements," he said.



Allciv Pty Ltd's Brett Thiele and Mackay Regional Council's Mark Atkins inspect the \$4 million Midge Point Road project.

"Following this, the full width of the road will be stabilised with cement, overlaid with additional gravel and then sealed with bitumen."

Traffic controllers and temporary traffic signals are in place and short delays are expected so your patience during these works is greatly appreciated. Cr Casey said affected business owners and residents would be kept in the

loop at all times throughout these works.

To receive regular updates on the Midge Point restoration, please email engagement@mackay.qld.gov.au.

This project is funded by Mackay Regional Council in conjunction with the National Disaster Relief Recovery Arrangement (NDRRA) initiative.

>> For information on all council-related road works across the region visit mackay.qld.gov.au or call Mackay Regional Council on 1300 MACKAY (622 529).



Rural road round-up

Repairing and restoring rural roads is a priority for Mackay Regional Council, as reflected in the following list of current and ongoing projects across our region:

- Recently completed**
- > \$5.4 million Balnagowan Mandarana Road rehabilitation
 - > \$1.1 million Mt Martin Road reconstruction
 - > 20 car parks at Melba House

- In progress**
- > \$5.4 million Kuttabul Mt Jukes Road rehabilitation
 - > \$3.4 million Sugarshed Road restoration
 - > Sealed car park at Augusta Street, Mirani



Sophia Ramos describes the atmosphere at Foodspace as "picturesque and inviting".

Food's work of art

The trendy new Foodspace café adjoining Mackay's Artspace gallery offers the perfect nook to unwind and recharge.

Lessee Sophia Ramos is a master at preparing beautifully presented, delicious food. With the picturesque view of art and rolling greens, Sophia lets food take its cue from her surroundings.

"Adding to our local organic ingredients – the extra effort it takes to make a visually striking dish gives added pleasure to a

meal," she said. Enticing offerings like sweet corn and zucchini fritters, avocado on sourdough and macadamia-encrusted reef fish, along with a range of homemade cakes, biscuits and scones make perfect partners for a cup of coffee or T2 tea.

The alfresco area provides a place for prams to park and children to play – with charming children's and gluten-free menu options, Foodspace caters for every appetite!

>> Foodspace is open Tuesday to Sunday from 9am to 3pm. For reservations please call 4961 9719.