

Pet Rego Day

MACKAY Regional Council's Pet Registration Day will be held on Saturday, July 27, from 9am to noon, on council's front lawn on Gordon Street. There will be discount pet registration and microchipping, the RSPCA Education Mobile Unit will be in attendance with helpful information on responsible pet ownership and there will be pet stalls and giveaways. This event is free to attend. If you can't make it on the day, you can still take advantage of discount pet registration by registering your pet before July 31. Register at mackay.qld.gov.au or visit a council client service centre.

Plant a tree

NATIONAL Tree Day is being held on Sunday, July 28, from 9am to 11.30am at Illawong Park (corner of Illawong Drive and Petrie Street). Council is aiming to plant up to 10,000 plants over two days during School's Tree Day (July 26) and National Tree Day. Volunteers are still needed. Register online at treeday.planetark.org/find-a-site/volunteer/10021035. Please wear sunscreen, a hat, sunglasses and bring a water bottle. If you have your own gloves and gardening equipment, please bring them along. A barbecue will be provided to everyone who participates in this event.

Mural unveiled

Fifth Lane has been transformed from a dark and dull alleyway into a vibrant work of art. The Fifth Lane mural project is nearing completion and the design highlights the region's local wildlife, including butterflies, rainbow lorikeets and fish, among others. On Saturday, July 27, from 6pm to 9pm, an activation zone will be held near the mural on 33 Wood Street. There will be meet and greets with the artists and other interactive opportunities with the artwork.

Lids 4 kids

MACKAY Regional Council Libraries are collecting your plastic lids to help children in need. The lids will go to an organisation that 3D prints mobility aids for child amputees. Residents can now drop their clean plastic lids (recycle codes 2 and 4) at any branch.

Festival fever starts in the park

The Mackay Festival of Arts will kick off with smorgasbord of food, wine and music on Saturday.

EXPERTS are warning of a new contagion set to sweep Mackay in July.

Dubbed Festival Fever by those in the know, symptoms – which include being extremely entertained, enthralled and entirely well fed – are expected to last until the end of July.

Mayor Greg Williamson said he expected the "fever" to really take hold of the community this Saturday, July 20, as 20,000-plus food, wine and music enthusiasts descended on Queens Park.

"Headlined by Mental as Anything, featuring 30 food vendors, 13 bands on two stages, more than 20 market Stalls, Kidzone Teepee Territory and two bars, the G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day is always a great day out," Cr Williamson said.

"Better yet, entry is completely free.

"The entertainment kicks off at 10.30am and runs until 5.30pm, and there really will be something for everyone – whether you're looking for a family day out, wanting

to dance up a storm or just want to sprawl on the lawn with some good food and cold drinks."

Cr Williamson said the music on offer covered plenty of genres.

"From Mental as Anything's pop-rock pub classics to funk, soul, dance, jazz, blues, folk, indie, country, punk, rock and roll and classic ballads – the styles and influences on offer will fit the fun, relaxed atmosphere perfectly.

"The Grassroots Stage



Bring a picnic blanket and kick back in beautiful Queens Park this Saturday for the amazing G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day.

headliners Wanderers are an Adelaide soul-roots trio that will be well worth checking out, and The Natural Culture, who are on the Main Stage, are a seven-piece that will fill the dance floor as the shadows lengthen in the afternoon."

Cr Justin Englert said it was fantastic that the G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day gave exposure to up-and-coming local performers.

"We've got really talented locals who thrive on the festival atmosphere," he said.

"Solo artists like Heath Milner, Jade Fiyeen, Bella Mackenzie, Kate Lockyer and Tate Obst will have the chance to play in front of a massive home-town crowd and will undoubtedly put on a great show."

Magical musical family circus

MUSICAL mayhem and mesmerising movement will combine to make Wolfgang's Magical Musical Circus a Festival of Arts family favourite.

A wholesome offering designed to amaze people from the age of three and upwards, this fun show reinvents the composer's magical music in a skilful and illuminating circus show.



Be prepared for plenty of movement and mayhem in this exciting family show. (Photo: Damien Bredberg)

Held on Tuesday, July 23, at 6.30pm in the MECC Auditorium, family passes for this show are just \$60 (two adults and two children).

Cr Justin Englert said the show was a perfect Festival of Arts event for families.

"This is a funny take on the

story of Mozart," he said.

"It features plenty of tumbling and twirling, physical comedy and mischievous antics.

"The story follows Wolfgang who is a bit of a pun-loving ratbag, but to those who are watching and listening, he is the genius composer

Mozart."

Wolfgang's Magical Musical Circus is a creation of Circa Contemporary Circus.

One of the world's leading performance companies, Circa has toured the globe – performing in 39 countries to over a million people.

MECC hosts epic opera love story

A CLASSIC opera by Puccini that inspired the hit musical Miss Saigon is headed to the MECC during the Mackay Festival of Arts.

Madama Butterfly is a beautiful, haunting love story that reaches across cultures, oceans and time.

It follows an American naval officer who is enchanted by a Japanese geisha bride and the geisha, Butterfly, who falls hopelessly in love with him.

The show starts at 7.30pm on Saturday, July 27, and will be in the MECC Auditorium.

Cr Englert said Madama Butterfly was performed by

the amazing Opera Australia cast with the accompaniment of a chamber orchestra and a children's chorus drawn from our region.

Cr Englert said the MECC was also offering special pre-show dining for this event.

"Our chefs are cooking up a special two-course menu that will complement a classy night out," he said.

"There's a baked ricotta with lemon, caper and olive salad and a Chicken Agrodolce, which is a slow cooked chicken Maryland in a sweet saffron, thyme and wine broth with pine nuts, creamy mash and baby peas."

>> To book your tickets to any of the wonderful Mackay Festival of Arts shows, head online to themecc.com.au or call 4961 9777

Mackay Festival of Arts Gig Guide

G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day: Queens Park - Saturday, July 20, from 10.30am to 5.30pm

Festival Club - Official G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day After Party: MECC Halls - Saturday, July 20, from 6.30pm to 10pm

Loose Ends: Free family show with plenty of laughs. Pinnacle Playhouse - Sunday, July 21, at 2pm
Sarina, Bob Wood Cultural Hall - Tuesday, July 23, at 10am

DBCT Illuminate: Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens - Monday, July 22 to Friday, July 26, 6pm to 9pm nightly

Wolfgang's Magical Musical Circus by Circa: MECC Auditorium - Tuesday, July 23, from 6.30pm

Courses In Colour: sensory dining experience: MECC Lynette Denny Space - Friday, July 26, from 6.30pm

Opera Australia's Madama Butterfly: MECC Auditorium - Saturday, July 27, from 7.30pm

Friends of the MECC Jazz Brunch: MECC North Foyer - Sunday, July 28, from 11am to 1pm

Fringe events are running all July: For a full list of fringe events, download your Mackay Festival of Arts program today from themecc.com.au

>> Book your tickets today: themecc.com.au

Bette hosts ultimate afterparty

CATHERINE Alcorn is a raunchy, hilarious, wild and energetic cabaret sensation.

She's known for her powerhouse vocals and razor-sharp wit.

And Mackay Festival of Arts audiences can look forward to her, in the guise of Bette Midler, hosting the afterparty of the year at the MECC this Saturday (July 20).

Cr Justin Englert said the Festival Club event was the official G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day afterparty.

"We are decking out the MECC Halls with cabaret-inspired décor, putting on an amazing tapas menu and stocking up the bar ready for those revellers who want to kick on," he said.

"It's going to be a great night and Catherine Alcorn, along with an electrifying live band,



Don't miss cabaret sensation Catherine Alcorn (photo: Phil Erbacher).

will put on a thrilling roller coaster of a show that will chart the rise of the people's diva, Bette Midler."

Cr Englert said Mackay was lucky to have secured Alcorn and her Divine Miss Bette show for this year's festival.

"She's fresh from a US tour and a debut at the Sydney Opera House which blew audiences and critics away," he said.

Festival Club kicks off this Saturday at 6.30pm and runs till 10pm.

>> Tickets are available from themecc.com.au or by calling 4961 9777

The Bluewater Big Band will jazz up brunch event

DELECTABLE pastries, delicious Canadian maple bacon and a feast of sumptuous local jazz sounds awaits you on the final day of the Festival.

The Friends of the MECC Jazz Brunch will be held in the MECC North Foyer on Sunday, July 28, from 11am to 1pm.

Cr Justin Englert said the feedback on the last few years from jazz aficionados was that they wanted a more

traditional jazz sound.

"Well, this year we've pulled out the big band – the Bluewater Big Band that is," he said.

"This creative, 14-piece ensemble is a collaboration of local musicians, teachers and music hobbyists who share a passion for jazz and big band playing.

"They are led by band 'instigator' Kate Agioritis, and are set apart by their sheer

joy for jazz and making music together.

"Their love for playing music really is infectious."

Bluewater Big Band will be joined on stage by special guest vocalist Mr Jeremy Adams.

This event is always a crowd favourite, so get your tickets quickly. It is proudly supported by the Friends of the MECC and ABC Tropical North.



The Bluewater Big Band thrives on their love of jazz and playing together.

>> Buy tickets to the Friends of the MECC Jazz Brunch online or at the Box Office



Addie Cox with a UV fish sculpture that she created. Addie and her mum Amanda can't wait to see the artwork lit up at DBCT Illuminate.

Event becomes a sea of lights

A TURTLE the size of a city bus is coming to the Botanic Gardens for the Mackay Festival of Arts.

The 15-metre, 375-kilogram inflatable black and white turtle, named Alphie, is a creation of Queensland artist BJ Price.

The turtle will be just one of the giant whimsical sea creatures at this year's DBCT Illuminate spectacular.

There will also be a three-

metre crocodile, a five-metre water dragon and assorted other creative creatures of the seas, many made by locals.

This free event will light up the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens from Monday, July 22, to Friday, July 26. It will run nightly from 6pm to 9pm.

Cr Ayrl Paton said DBCT Illuminate would be a treat for all the senses this year.

"There'll be plenty of food on offer, including tasty

platters, and a host of on-stage entertainment at the amphitheatre, as well as roving circus entertainers," he said.

"The Jack Sturgeon Stage entertainment will include band Three Way Crossing and all the local talent that is usually on display at the Lunchbox Concerts in Caneland Central."

Access to the event will only be from the Meadowlands side, via Crowleys Road.

>> To order a platter for the event or for more information, head to themecc.com.au