

We never 'tyre' of local innovation

AN innovative new tractor tyre firefighting system is a gift to the community.

The system, developed by McDonald Murphy Machinery in collaboration with council, harnesses water-filled tractor tyres to battle spot fires.

Cr Ross Walker said it was a great example of innovation and collaboration to address a problem.

"Council's tractor slashers were stood down this year due to the potential of spot fires in the dry conditions," Cr Walker said.

"Our Procurement and Plant team, together with

McDonald Murphy, talked about how to solve the issue," he said.

"A 'joke' was made about using the water-filled tyres. Tractors can carry about 500 litres of water in each back tyre, so why not use it for emergencies. That joke started the wheels in motion and the result is amazing."

Nobby Byrnes from McDonald Murphy and Ron Ahmat from council's Procurement and Plant team helped develop the system.

"The result was engineered drilling of tyre rims, installation of fittings, procurement of appropriate fire hose reels and manufacturing of

mechanisms to secure the reel. Cameras were also fitted to ensure driver safety, allowing them to manoeuvre into place close to any fire they're about to fight."

McDonald Murphy dealer principal Andrew McDonald said the system had worked well in testing and trials.

He said the firm had decided to offer it as a gift to the community, meaning no charge to council for the development project and supply of the first tractor.

"Our only wish is that this concept may help to prevent loss of property, livelihood and the lifestyle that this community enjoys."



The new tractor tyre firefighting system (above) and being demonstrated (inset). The innovative system was developed by McDonald Murphy in conjunction with council.



>> Check out a video of the innovative tractor tyre firefighting system in action on Mackay Regional Council's Youtube page at <https://bit.ly/2zijBUB>

Footy fever to hit city in March

IT will be a blockbuster weekend of footy in Mackay in March.

Major AFL and NRL games will be played within a day of each other.

The Mackay Cutters recently announced the North Queensland Cowboys will take on the Melbourne Storm at BB Print Stadium on Saturday, March 2.

That followed an earlier announcement that the Gold Coast Suns will head back to Mackay for a JLT Community Series match against the Western Bulldogs at Great Barrier Reef Arena (Harrup Park) on Sunday, March 3.

Both games are supported by council through the Invest Mackay Events Attraction Program.

Deputy Mayor Cr Amanda Camm said it would be a huge weekend of footy in Mackay.

"It will be fantastic for fans of both codes and Mackay sports lovers in general," she said.



ABOVE LEFT: NQ Cowboys' new recruit Ben Barba and football manager Glen Hall were in Mackay to announce the club will take on the Melbourne Storm on March 2. ABOVE RIGHT: The Gold Coast Suns, who last played in Mackay in 2017, will take on the Western Bulldogs a day later on March 3.



"Hopefully, we'll also attract some visitors from as far away as Melbourne to support the Storm and Bulldogs."

Cr Camm said the NRL game would be the final pre-season trial for each side before the season-proper kicked off two weeks later, ensuring both would field strong sides.

"It is set to be a homecoming for former Mackay player and Cowboys recruit Ben Barba, who is making his return to the NRL after a successful stint in England."

Cr Camm said as well as the two big footy games in March, Mackay would host two Brisbane Heat Women's

Big Bash League (WBBL) games in January.

"The Brisbane Heat women are returning to Mackay after drawing big crowds to two games here earlier this year," she said. "It promises to be a big start to the year for sports events in Mackay."

>> For more information on events in the Mackay region check out the Community Directory at mackay.qld.gov.au/whatsonmackay

Nominate now

NOMINATE your local heroes now. Nominations are open for the 2019 Mackay Regional Council Australia Day Awards. There are eight award categories, including: Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Arts and Culture, Environmental Achievement, Lori Burgess Community Volunteer, Community Group, Senior Sports and Young Sports awards. All award winners and nominees will be recognised at a special awards ceremony at the MECC on Friday, January 25, 2019. To nominate someone for an Australia Day Award, visit mackay.qld.gov.au/australiaday. Nominations close January 6.

Anglers rejoice

DESIGN of a new fishing pier at Hospital Bridge is almost complete. The old pier was damaged in Cyclone Debbie about 18 months ago and has been closed to the public since. The new structure has been designed to be more resistant to flooding and severe weather events. Mackay Recreational Fishers Alliance was consulted to provide comments on the design. The project will be tendered for construction in the near future and work is expected to start in May.

What a year!

A FLICK through council's 2017-2018 annual report is a reminder that 12 months is a long time in local government. The 144-page report, adopted and currently being printed, provides a comprehensive account of the many and varied achievements in the past year. Council managed to turn a forecast \$1.1 million deficit into a \$1.45 million surplus in 2017-2018, despite the busy year of projects. The report, including financial statements, can be viewed on council's website at mackay.qld.gov.au/annualreport.

Have your say

COUNCIL'S draft Mackay Sport and Recreation Strategy is out for community consultation. The new strategy is aimed at tackling the region's sport and recreation needs for the next 10 years. Residents are encouraged to check out the draft strategy at connectingmackay.com.au and provide feedback before 5pm on Friday, November 30.

Watch the flow of your h2o

THE Mackay region's water use is on the rise.

As a community, the region consumed nearly 3860 megalitres of water in the last six months.

This equated to 86 Olympic-sized swimming pools more than the same billing period last year.

Outdoor watering, including watering the lawn, filling up the swimming pool and watering the garden, is the biggest consumer of water.

This is followed by the shower and the bath tub.

Council's free myh2o website is a good tool which allows residents to monitor their daily usage and how much it is costing them.

>> Sign up to myh2o at myh2o.qld.gov.au to keep track of water usage



Council helps spread lots of festive cheer

IT'S starting to look a lot like Christmas in Mackay.

Council has been installing Christmas decorations in key locations throughout the region, with this work to be completed in time for December 1.

Planning is also being finalised for Christmas in the Gardens, to be held at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens on Friday, December 14, at 5.30pm.

Council is once again supporting the 4MK Carols in the City at Bluewater Quay on Saturday, December 1, and has also provided 14 community groups across the region with funding of up to \$750 each to assist with events.

The Sarina Range Community Christmas event held in December last year.



CHRISTMAS GRANTS-FUNDED EVENTS

- > Koumala Progress Association and Koumala State School P&C Association's Christmas Fair, Koumala Gymkhana Grounds, December 1, from 4pm.
- > Midge Point Progress Association's family-friendly Christmas celebration, beach foreshore, Nielsen Parade, December 2
- > Finch Hatton Progress Association's fifth annual Community Christmas Party, Finch Hatton business district, December 5, from 5pm
- > Calen and District War Memorial Hall Association's Calen Community Christmas Party, 11 McIntyre Street, Calen, December 8, from 5pm to 10pm
- > Rotary Club of Pioneer Valley's Christmas Fair, Railway Park, Mirani, December 8, 4pm to 9pm
- > The Smith Family's Christmas party for scholarship students and their family, Smith Family Office, December 9
- > Mackay Community Lutheran Church's interactive Bethlehem experience for children and families, corner of Wellington and Alfred streets, December 9, from 5.30pm to 8pm
- > Eungella Community Development Association's Christmas Barbecue, Eungella Community Hall (North Street), December 14
- > Bloomsbury Soldiers' Memorial Hall Association's Community Christmas Party December 15, 5pm to 9pm
- > The Inter-Church Council of Sarina's Community Carols Night, Bob Wood Memorial Hall, December 15, from 5pm to 7pm
- > Sarina Range Community Association's Community Christmas Gathering, Sarina Range CWA Hall, December 15, 4pm to 10pm
- > YIRS One Stop Youth Shop's Christmas Lunch for disadvantaged and disengaged youth, 72 Victoria Street Mackay, December 19
- > Sarina Surf Lifesaving Club's Carols by Candlelight at the Beach, Sarina Beach, December 22, 5.30pm to 7.30pm
- > Habana & Districts Progress Association's Carols Under the Stars, 1091 Mackay-Habana Road, December 22, 7pm to 9.30pm



Seaview Trail at Bucasia is one of the many shared pedestrian and cycle paths in our region.

Take care on shared paths

MACKAY has a wonderful and growing network of shared pedestrian and bicycle paths throughout our region.

Cr Kevin Casey said the paths were popular with both pedestrians and cyclists.

He said it was important everyone who enjoyed the paths were mindful of the safety of all users.

"We've recently noticed

an increase in complaints relating to conflicts between different users of these paths.

"It is important for both pedestrians and cyclists to remember they have been established as shared paths for the community to use and enjoy.

"For that reason, both pedestrians and cyclists need to take care when using paths to ensure the safety of

everyone. All users should show courtesy for other users.

"Cyclists should limit their speeds given there are pedestrians likely to be using the paths. Pedestrians should also keep an eye out and be aware of any approaching cyclists.

"We're also looking at some other measures, such as additional signage, to help improve safety."

>> More details at mackay.qld.gov.au under "community" and "sports and leisure"