

NGUKURR NEWS

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Reporters

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Views expressed in Ngukurr News are not necessarily those of SEALCP

ATSIC representatives meet with Yugul Mangi Community Government Council

The Chair of Garrak-Jarru Regional Council of ATSIC, Tony Jack and the Regional Manager Steve Mason met with Council at Ngukurr on 8th November. The meeting was to discuss ATSIC concerns about the management of ATSIC funds and to assure Council that ATSIC was intent on seeing these matters were dealt with to the benefit of the community.

The meeting, chaired by the Council Chairperson, was well attended and discussion was detailed and forthright. The level of wages, support for enterprises and the adequacy of reporting were among the main issues. Council agreed to have a Grant Controller appointed for three months, with the cost being split between Yugul Mangi CDEP and the ATSIC Regional Office.

The Controller, an accountant, would be based in Darwin. His task is to ensure approved expenditure guidelines are met. He would report to Council regularly.

Council members agreed to hold monthly meetings of council, to receive regular information and also reports from the Controller and ATSIC regional staff.

The ATSIC representatives expressed their desire to work with Council and ensure continued ATSIC support and funding, for the community. The Council stated that they looked forward to a good relationship with ATSIC.

Territory award to Ngukurr News Reporter



Ngukurr News senior reporter, Daphne Daniels, has been awarded the Certificate of Merit by Territory Tidy Towns for 2001. The Certificate is for Daphne's continued dedication to producing the community newspaper.

CONGRATULATIONS DAPHNE!!

Federal Election Poll at Ngukurr

Thursday 8th November was polling day at Ngukurr when the Mobile Polling team #5 for the electorate of Lingiari came to town. The polling station, in the Council Chamber, opened at 8:30 with a queue that grew over the next two hours. Temperatures in the late 30s was no deterrent to the citizens of Ngukurr performing their duty. By the time this goes to press we should know the outcome of the election.

Stop Press – Warren Snowden returned as local member. Government retains office.

South East Arnhem Land Collaborative Research Project Working Papers #3 and #4 Published

Working Paper #3, *'South East Arnhem Land Collaborative Research Project: the origins in Rio Tinto'* by Paul Wand and Jeff Wilkie, sets out the issues that guided the SEALCP's establishment and the background to these issues in the context of the changing conditions for mining both locally and globally: conditions in which the social interests of local populations play a central part.

Many elements had to be brought together to establish the project. The most important was the Ngukurr peoples' acceptance of their community as the principal location for the study. It was Ngukurr that brought together Jeff Wilkie and John Bern and encouraged them to develop the idea of the study into the current project. The community is an active partner in the research through the Reference Committee and with the engagement of local research workers.

The paper represents a valuable insight into Rio Tinto's motivation for the project and commitment to its success. It is also an historical document of a process that will be a model for the future. SEALCP considers it of great value to present the view of this commitment and its background to a wide audience.

Working Paper #4, *'Separation of Powers: Sources of Authority and Frameworks for Decision-making in a South-East Arnhem Land Community'* by Mary Edmunds sets out the composition of, and background to the current structure of the Yugul Mangi Community Government Council. The paper draws on Mary's work at Ngukurr, particularly with senior men and Council staff. She draws out the close connections between families and Council clan representation and the origins of this in the reorganisation of the local CDEP in the early 1990s.

There are copies of both working papers at the Ngukurr Library, and further copies are available from the South East Arnhem Land Collaborative Research Project at the University of Wollongong.

Three women Ngukurr Way-art exhibition in Darwin

On August 31, Maureen Muuarngulu, Faith Thompson Nelson and Joyce Huddleston went to Darwin for the opening of their exhibition at Raft Artspace. The collection of paintings were professionally presented and a credit to the artists. It was a happy night with artists and guests getting to know each other. Several of the paintings were sold on opening night, one was purchased by the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory for its permanent collection.

Brenda Gibson

Oksana's Class Mural



This magnificent mural was painted by Oksana's year 5/6 class. It was on display in the shop before going to its permanent home on Christmas Island. Oksana has left Ngukurr School and will be starting work this term at Minyerri.

Where did all my money go?

I've taken part in a study by SEALCP to understand how I've spend my money during a two week period. I learnt that I've spent more money than I thought on deductions, cigarettes and gambling. That made me realise, if I stopped these things, I could save a lot of money and perhaps buy a car.

It was a useful and interesting thing.

If you are interested being part of this study then come and see us, we will be doing more of this sort of work when Kate returns at the end of November.

Miranda Rogers

Katherine West Health Board visited

I recently visited the KWHB in Katherine to ask about how they work. I spoke to the Medical Director, Dr. Andrew Bell and the Manager, Mr. Kirk Whelan.

The Katherine West Health Board commenced operations in July 1998 as the Katherine West Coordinated Care Trial. The Board manages eight clinics west of Katherine namely, Lajamanu, Kalkaringi, Daguragu, Yarralin, Bulla, Timber Creek, Pigeon Hole and Mialuni with a population of 3,000 people, including 27 non-Aboriginal pastoral properties. All the staff are employed by the Board. This has enabled us to increase staffing considerably.

Katherine West's management structure is made up of eighteen community representatives from communities in the region. The full Board meets four times a year whilst an executive consisting of six members meets each month. All contracts, wage negotiations, advertisements for positions and policy matters must be approved by the Board.

For example at our largest community at Lajamanu, when Territory Health Service ran the service, had a staff of only two nurses, a health worker workforce that had fallen to about one or two and a visiting doctor every second week. We now have three salaried trainee health workers, a full time administrative assistant, four nursing positions and a full time resident doctor. We believe that this is a minimum level of staffing needed to start to have some impact on the major health problems in the community, especially chronic disease.

We have similarly increased our staffing in all our clinics and also in areas such as environmental health and nutrition. We have doctors living at Lajamanu, Kalkaringi and Timber Creek. There are administration officers in all the larger clinics so medical staff can get on with the job and currently have five new Aboriginal Health Worker trainees to complement the fourteen existing health workers. At two of our clinics, Lajamanu and Yarralin, Aboriginal Health Workers are now the managers or co-ordinators as we call them.

Daphne Daniels

New Minyerri Clinic

The Alawa Health Committee asked KWHB to take over management of their health service from Territory Health Service, and run it in consultation with them as a community controlled health service.

Over the last year KWHB assisted them in negotiating increased funding from the Commonwealth Government. In the near future the clinic at Minyerri will be expanded to increase the nursing staff from one to two. They will also increase the number of doctor's visits from one every two weeks to once a week. Three trainee Aboriginal Health Worker positions will also be made available if there are no existing qualified health workers. This will double the level of health services to the community and provide continuous emergency cover.

This agreement with the Alawa Health Committee is only an interim arrangement and in the future the Alawa Health Committee will take over the management of the service. They see their future as part of a regional community controlled health service as funding becomes available through the Government's Primary Health Care Access Program.

Daphne Daniels

Ngukurr News Readers! Tell us what they think

The Ngukurr News has been running for well over a year now, so we thought it was time to find out what our readers thought about the newspaper. Support for the newspaper was overwhelming, with all people surveyed saying that they thought that the Ngukurr News was very important to them. People commented that they enjoyed the content of the news but that they would like to see more pictures of community members in the news with their stories. At the moment it is difficult for us to include many pictures, as we find that they do not reproduce well when we photocopy the paper. People also commented that they would like to see more news and opinion from community members -- so please send us in your letters and stories.

Look up Ngukurr on the World Wide Web

The SEALCP project has a web site, which contains details about the research and researchers as well as copies of our working papers and the Ngukurr News. There are also many photographs of the Ngukurr community. Have a look and see if you are there! Our address is: www.uow.edu.au/arts/sealcp

Ngukur CEC Staff Change

Sally Cooney - replaced Margo Smith; David Kerrigan - replaced Stephen Hill; Oksana has gone to Minyerri; Valmai Roberts works for half a day as an assistant teacher for Godfrey; Tracy is in Oksana's class; Michael is back in his class.

Member for Arnhem

I was pleased to catch up with people at Ngukurr when I visited my electorate last week. Personally I enjoy witnessing the development within the community each time I visit, and at this time of the year, it looked wonderful. It is unfortunate that I have not been able to speak with every individual when I visit Ngukurr, and this column really is beneficial in that I can share information with you through this medium.

It has been a very busy re-adjustment period since Labor took over the reigns of Government. The baptism of fire began with the nurses accepting the 9% pay rise offer; the teachers strike; the Ansett collapse; the terrorist attacks in New York which remarkably affected the tourism industry here in the Northern Territory. To top it all off need I mention the black hole inherited from our CLP predecessors. The good news is that our NT Government has conducted the Economic Summit in which members of the public were able to have a chance in contributing their ideas. The recommendations and outcomes of the summit I shall list briefly:

Short term plans:

- Government support for proposals to boost activity in the construction sector and enhance business confidence;
- Restoration and improvement of air services to those areas still affected by the demise of Ansett;
- Strong leadership by Governments to ensure gas is brought onshore in the shortest possible timeframe;
- Rejuvenation of exploration and mining.

Long term plans:

- To develop a shared vision for economic growth in the Northern Territory;
- Education and training of all Territorians to provide a locally skilled workforce;
- Indigenous economic development;
- The range of tourism experiences;
- Agriculture/horticulture/aquaculture and agribusiness;
- Land access including indigenous land and multi-purpose leases to increase economic development opportunities for all Territorians;
- long term energy security and sustainability;
- development and management of renewable and non-renewable resources;
- balancing economic and social development;
- business costs, including taxes and charges, regulation and licensing, including the streamlining of Government processes within the context of meeting the legitimate revenue needs to provide services;
- open and accountable interaction between Government and the private sector with clear business information channels

The summit agreed that the Territory will do best by building an economic model that reflects our culture – one based on partnerships.

I've organised to fax a copy of the Economic Development Summit Communiqué to the CGC in the event of further interest from constituents within the electorate.

When your next in Darwin, please drop in to Shop 4, Casuarina Village, Bradshaw Terrace. From time to time, we are fortunate enough to have constituents drop by for a cup of tea and a general chat.

John Ah Kit

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