

NGUKURR NEWS

Number 34, November 2002

Ngukurr News

Published by the South East Arnhem Land Collaborative Research Project with assistance from Ngukurr CEC.

Enquiries: 8978 6476

daphne@uow.edu.au

Reporters:

Daphne Daniels, John Bern and Kate Senior

Views expressed in Ngukurr News are not necessarily those of SEALCP

In this edition of the News:

This edition of the *Ngukurr News* has important and serious information about the suspension of the Yugal Mangi Community Government Council. This is hard news for some people, but it is important that people understand what is going on. The stories were provided to us by the acting Town Clerk, Mr Martin Plumb.

Sunrise Coordinated Care Trial Ngukurr Board Members

The Sunrise Coordinated Care Trial held its first community consultations in Ngukurr on Wednesday 25th September. Sixty people attended the community meeting. Nominations were taken from people to become members of the Ngukurr Health Board. These members were put forward to represent the key institutions of the community including, the school, Women's Centre, clinic,

Council, Environmental Health, the Police, The Kid's Centre, Sport and Recreation and the *Ngukurr News*. Daphne Daniels and Alex Thompson have been attending the monthly Sunrise meetings in Katherine on a regular basis.

The proposed members of the Board are:

- Angela Huddleston
- Phillip Bush
- Daphne Daniels
- Hannah Duncan (Urapunga)
- Owen Turner
- Graham Turner
- Robin Rogers
- Theresa John Forrest
- Alex Thompson
- Clarry Rogers
- Marjorie Hall
- Grace Riley
- Bobby Nungumajbarr

Community Meeting: Why Local Government Suspended the Council

A community meeting was held on Monday September 23rd at Ngukurr. The meeting was for people living in Ngukurr to hear the story about why the Government suspended the Council.

Bill Stuchbery from Darwin was at the meeting. Bill is acting as the Council and he makes the decisions of the Council. Martin Plumb was at the meeting, Martin is acting as the Clerk until a new clerk can be found and is living in Ngukurr. Both Bill and Martin work for the Territory Government. Also at the meeting was Roger Teague, Roger has been appointed by the Minister, John Ah Kit to investigate the relationship between the Yugal Mangi Clan Development Pty Ltd (Air Ngukurr) and the Council. Roger is called a Commissioner

and he has the legal powers of a Supreme Court judge. He has visited Ngukurr and has talked to people about this matter. Roger does **not** work for the Government; he is independent.

It is very important that the people of Ngukurr understand that the Government is not saying that the elected members of the Council have done anything wrong. The only way this could be properly looked at was by moving the Council aside (suspending). Until Roger Teague finishes his work we will not know the truth, he is due to finish by 31 December.

What is the Commissioner doing?

Roger Teague is the independent Commissioner who has been asked to look into what the Yugal Mangi Community Government Council has been doing. He is asking people to tell their stories about what they think might have happened. This is

called making a submission. When he has finished his investigations, he will make a report for the Minister, John Ah Kit.

Roger is doing this work because the Minister is worried that the Yugal Mangi Community Government Council did not always provide good government for the community and that they may not have followed the Northern Territory laws about how communities should be run.

Roger has looked at the Local Government Act, which is a set of rules about how communities should be run, and has found some things that Yugal Mangi Community Government Council may not have done properly.

These things are:

1. Council business was not kept separate from the business of the Yugal Mangi Clan Development Pty Ltd (Air Ngukurr).
2. Council used money for things that were not allowed under the Local Government Act.
3. Council spent more money than they said that they would spend over a period of one year.
4. When inspectors tried to look into these matters, the Council did not do what the inspectors asked them to do.
5. Council did not provide help to the inspectors.
6. Council did not declare (tell anyone) about their interest in Yugal Mangi Clan Development Pty Ltd; and
7. Council did not do their accounting (manage their money) in the way that the Local Government Act said they should.

Roger will present his report to the Minister by the 31st December 2002 (at the end of the year).

If you want to talk to Roger, his phone number is: 89362895

What will happen when the Commissioner finishes his investigation?

Martin Plumb who is the Acting Town Clerk has talked to the people who were on the Council about what may happen after the Commissioner has finished his report. He was very straight out about what might happen and made a list of things, starting with things that are only a little bit serious

at the top and things that are very serious at the bottom. These things are:

1. The Commissioner finds that there was no reason to suspend the Council. Martin thinks that this will probably not happen because the Commissioner has already collected a lot of information about things that were not done properly.
2. The Commissioner finds that suspending the Council was the right thing to do to find out the truth about what was going on.
3. The Commissioner says that things have to change and tells people about how to make the changes, but keeps the current Council.
4. The Commissioner decides not to keep the same people on the Council, and calls an election.
5. The Council or some people may be charged a fine under the Local Government Act.
6. Criminal charges may be recommended against some people.

It is important for people to know that this list is about things that *might* happen, not things that *will* happen.

 The Shady
Ladies 

The Shady Ladies are the first all-girl rock band in Ngukurr. Olga Daniels (Bass guitar) Bradlene Rami (drums), Tammy Daniels (vocal) Cynthia Turner (keyboard), Leonie Lansen, Cerise Farrell and Angelina Joshua (vocal) have broken into the male dominated world of Rock Music in Ngukurr.

The Shady Ladies are all students at Ngukurr CEC and have been involved in a NTU music program. They have had three performances in Ngukurr and have made a rock video of their most famous song: "we all one". They work together to write their songs, which describe growing up in Ngukurr, being friends together and being related to each other. The shady Ladies say that it is great to be the first girl band in Ngukurr, but they agree that it is very scary to perform in front of a large crowd. Like many other famous singers, (Jim Morrison-The Doors) the Shady Lady vocalists sing with their backs to the audience.

Their favourite bands are Lonely Boys (a Ngukurr band) and Shakira and they love the album "So

Fresh". The girls are not sure if they want to have music as a future career, but say that it has given them another option to think about.

Batchelor Opening

The new Batchelor college building opened on September 18th, 2002. The ceremony included the graduation of students from the community who have passed their courses. The students wore their gowns and formed a procession to the swimming pool, with other former graduates.

Robin Rodgers was Master of Ceremonies and John Rogers welcomed people to country on behalf of traditional owners. Paul Omaji the deputy director of Batchelor College and Agnes Keighran from the Department of Education Science and Training gave speeches. Local people who spoke on the day were Godfrey Blitner, Cherry Daniels, Anne Marie Rogers and Clarry Rogers.

The Ngukurr Graduates are:

Graduate Certificate in Education Administration

Joyce Evans-Dirdi
Anne-Marie Rogers

Certificate III in Aboriginal Health Work (Clinical)

Glenda Robertson

Certificate II in Business (Office Administration)

Daphne Daniels

Certificate II in Australian Land Conservation & Restoration

Lincoln Harrison
Joaquin Huddleston
Albert Rogers
Simon Ponto

Certificate II in Spoken and Written English

Denise Daniels
Russell Daniels
Colin Hall
Patsy Huddleston
Alvester Thingle

Certificate I in Spoken and Written English

Donna Daniels
Terrance Gumbala
Gail Joe
Priscilla Roberts

Congratulations to all graduands

Yugal Mangi Rangers

The Yugal Mangi Rangers have undertaken a quarantine survey on wild pigs and buffalos at the Wadgugjaja Swamp.

A team from the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS) spent a week with the rangers shooting the pigs and buffalos. They took blood samples to be tested at the laboratory in Darwin to check for TB, foot and mouth disease and cancers.

The result was good, out of 27 pigs, only one had a kidney problem and there were no problems in the buffalos. It is good for the community to be involved in checking our animals when we hunt for them.

NAQS were very pleased with the effort of the Rangers and hope to provide funding for future surveys.

Clarry Rogers

Have your say in planning for the future of Ngukurr and the region

Next Thursday (14th November) Local Government people from Katherine will be coming to Ngukurr to talk about big plans for the region. They will be asking people to talk about many things that effect the community. They then want to find out what the community thinks should be done about these issues, and what the most important issues are. Some of the things that people might want to talk about are:

- Housing
- Roads
- Water/electricity
- Native title
- Economic development
- Transport
- Art and cultural development
- Tourism
- Law and order
- Alcohol
- Youth issues
- Employment and training
- Education

- Recreation and sport
- Health
- Substance abuse

Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting and talk about these and other things that they think are important. There will be a free sausage sizzle after the meeting.

Date: Thursday 14th November
Time: 10:30-1.00
Place: School Library

New rules about School attendance

The School Council is worried about levels of attendance at school. It is very hard for children to learn properly, if they don't go to school.

Some ideas that people had about ways to improve attendance at Ngukurr CEC are:

- Parents shouldn't take their kids with them on shopping trips on weekdays to Urapunga or Roper Bar stores.
- Parents should make sure that children get home early on weeknights and not stay up too late at Fellowship.
- The disco shouldn't be on during the week, Friday and Saturday night is OK.
- The Swimming pool should limit hours during the week.
- Kids should not be served at Ngukurr Store during school hours.