

Town by town

@alicia.nally@news.com.au  facebook.com/TheCairnsPost  twitter.com/TheCairnsPost



WITH ALICIA NALLY

Do you have an event or issue south of the city you want to see covered? Send an email to alicia.nally@news.com.au

SOUTHSIDE

Bank's birthday event

BABINDA Community Bank branch will celebrate its 13th birthday today with a special event at the Munro St office. And, the bank has a special offer – refer a friend and they will go into the draw to win \$2000 for them and \$2000 for you. Ask at the branch or call 1300 BENDIGO.

Tournament tees off

THE Gordonvale Golf Club's championships start tomorrow. The last day will be June 16 and will be seeded. Cost is \$15 per round and there are daily prizes and long drives. There are \$2000 worth of prizes up for grabs. Ring the clubhouse on 4056 3999.

CASSOWARY COAST

Library closure alert

ALL branches of Cassowary Coast Libraries – Cardwell, Innisfail, Tully and Wongaling Beach – will be closed for the morning on June 14, for staff training and professional development. Customer service in Cardwell will also be affected by the short closure, however, Customer Service Centres in Innisfail and Tully will remain open. The Innisfail, Tully and Wongaling Beach library branches will reopen at 1pm and Cardwell Library will reopen at 2pm.

Artists get together

FAR NORTH indigenous artists attended the inaugural Gumbungan Indigenous Arts Forum on the Cassowary Coast last week. Guest indigenous artists and educators came from far and wide to discuss dance, storytelling, writing, film and TV, copyright, funding and building a local arts network. The forum, held in the beautiful art deco Innisfail Shire Hall, was the centrepiece of Reconciliation Week celebrations hosted by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council and funded by the RADF program.



UNITED APPROACH: Jaragun NRM director Dennis Ah-Kee addresses the group gathered to hear more about the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre's Russell Catchment Sustainability Plan, designed to improve water quality and other environmental outcomes in the catchment. Picture: ALICIA NALLY.

BABINDA

River plans revealed

A BOLD new plan for water quality in the Russell River has been unveiled – and it's causing plenty of debate.

At the Babinda RSL Hall on May 30, the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre hosted a meeting to discuss the Russell Catchment Sustainability Plan, designed to improve water quality and other environmental outcomes in the catchment.

The plan focuses on peer-to-peer compliance and the effective implementation of technology including real-time water quality monitoring and

denitrification bioreactors to identify water quality impact hot spots and address them.

Real-time water quality monitoring infrastructure is already in place through several projects supported by the National Environmental Science Program's Tropical Water Quality Hub.

But this new plan brings together the major stakeholders in the catchment including sugar growers, Traditional Owners (the Yindjinji People), local and state government, natural resource management groups and industry.

Babinda cane farmer Steve Bonso was impressed.

"I think it's great they've got everyone together and that there is this attention on waterways, because they're important for fishing and other benefits," he said.

"There's an increasing problem with wild pigs, they are damaging waterways and it'd be good to get them under control."

Presentations were given by water quality scientists Dr Damien Burrows and Dr Nathan Waltham from James Cook University, Jaragun

NRM directors Liz Owen and Dennis Ah-Kee and local farmer and Canegrowers member Barry Stubbs.

Hill MP Shane Knuth was also present and said the important topic needed a community approach.


"The decision-making on river catchments needs to get pushed out of the hands of big government and into the hands of the community," he said.

"This is about building a solid foundation with a lot of different stakeholders that are passionate about the catchment. It's time for government

to do away with restrictive legislation and provide proper funding and support for catchment community groups to improve water flow and quality."

Yindjinji Traditional Owner Jodie Ahkee said a lot of plans went ahead without Traditional Owners, "but you can't look after country unless you pull all the strings together to weave a big beautiful tapestry".

"Everyone wants to help care for country. Farmers are the same – as a Traditional Owner you have to look at all mobs coming together to help look after country," she said.

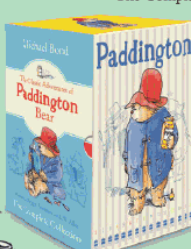



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Collect your daily code word from Cairns Post and listen to Carly & Seamus next week on Hit 103.5 for your chance to win. Competition runs weekdays, Monday, 10th June 2019 until Friday, 21st June 2019.



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