

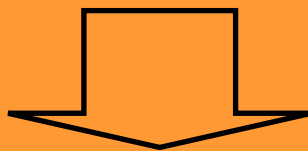


Meekatharra Dust

Issue Number 264— February - 2015

Cost \$ 2.60 incl. GST

THE ORIGINAL MEEKATHARRA DUST



**KEEP UP TO DATE WITH
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN
YOUR COMMUNITY !**

The Meekatharra Dust

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A FRIENDLY REMINDER ABOUT DOG CONTROL

WHEN WALKING YOUR DOGS ON THE TOWN OVAL THEY MUST BE ON A LEASH AT ALL TIMES AND HELD BY YOU - THE OWNER.

YOU MUST BE IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF YOUR ANIMAL AT ALL TIMES AND DISPOSE OF ANY DROPPINGS IN THE RUBBISH BINS PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL.

Thank you, Meekatharra Shire





Dust Noticeboard...



Calling for Submissions

If you have any articles with information, about events, or photos you have taken that you would like included in the Meekatharra Dust, please drop them into the Shire before

IMPORTANT DATES FEBRUARY 2015

COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 21 2015

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CNR MAIN AND SAVAGE STREETS

Note from Council

All items to be presented at Council Meetings need to be submitted to Shire Staff two weeks prior to Council Meeting dates. All items received after this time will be held for further consideration.

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Your Council News

February 2015

by Anna Johnson on behalf of the Shire of Meekatharra



Dave Hodder Shifts Gear With Election Win

*Mechanics of politics no hurdle
for our new council member*



Hands-on and ready for some hard yakka - down to earth local businessman Dave Hodder signs the official paperwork and practices the secret handshake with Shire CEO Roy McClymont

Local business owner and family man Dave Hodder proved to be the voters' favourite in the January council election. The contenders included Peter Clare, Tony Wilton, Eveanne Trenfield and Clarrie Lauritsen. 107 Meeka locals turned out to vote.

Dave has been running Hoddz Mechanical in Meeka for many years; he moved here from Perth in 1980 and has become a well-known member of our community. He and his wife Pam have 8 kids and plenty of grandchildren between them - Dave's son Mick works at the garage with dad and Socks the cat.

Working as a mechanic has put Dave in a prime position to hear the wide range of opinions and concerns of our townspeople, and he has plenty of goals and ideas to bring to his role on the council.

"I've been in this town a long time - Meeka locals from all walks of life come in and tell me their problems, and I'd like to do what I can about some of the social issues that concern all of us."

As a ratepayer and hard worker, Dave relates to the complexity of town issues with a positive approach.

"I don't know exactly what will fix the problems we have, but you have to try. For example, with the whole alcohol restrictions thing, like a lot of locals I pay my taxes and I want to have a drink after work - we need to address the causes. We need to work together."

With a big family himself, Dave has several family-oriented ideas he'd like to propose for Meeka.

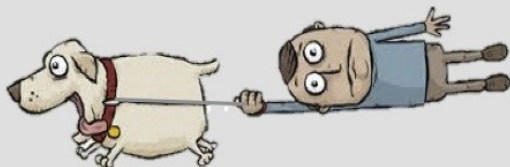
"I'd like to see a play area with a water park and green grass, central to the eastern residential section of town so that kids and families can access it without having to cross town or the highway."

Dave wants to set up a suggestion box that locals can pop their ideas into - the Dust will let readers know more about this once Dave's settled in to his role.

"There are definitely social and cultural issues that many people in town have concerns about, and the only way to change anything is to have a go. I'll be doing my bit on the existing council committees, and hopefully bringing some positive action on things that people who live here can relate to - being a voice for the everyday people of Meekatharra."

Council News Nibbles

• • • The official declared dog exercise area is the town oval (behind the school). This is the only town area where dogs can be off leash (as long as they are under control). Don't forget to pick up after your dog • • •



• • • The Annual Electors Meeting was attended by councillors and staff, who received and approved the 2013/14 Annual Report • • •

Roadworks Pave The Way To Meeka's Future

Shire workers and local contractors are busy with roadworks at the corner of Connaughton and Main Streets. Connaughton Street is being realigned in readiness for the BP site development.



photos by Anna Johnson

it's all part of the plan

The 45-degree January weather didn't hold up our tough Meeka work crews. Improving public access areas around the BP site is part of the Meekatharra Revitalisation Plan - yet another visible indicator of how our town is moving ahead.



Northbound drivers' view of Scooter and the ditch witch



Above: Adrian Baumgarten flushing the northeast access point. Right: Outback multitasking as the shire bush fire truck stands by as an additional water supply.



Shire Of Meekatharra
Main Street
PO Box 129

Meekatharra WA 6642

Phone : 08 9980 0600

www.meekashire.wa.gov.au

"Meekatharra - A Golden Prospect"

You're welcome to attend the monthly council meetings (dates and times are listed in The Dust) and have your say. You can also obtain a copy of the Council Minutes to find out about the many other projects, discussions and improvements that the Shire is undertaking on behalf of the Meeka community.

MEEKATHARRA REUNION

ONCE AGAIN WE WILL COMBINING
WITH THE SANDSTONE PEOPLE.

SUNDAY 1ST MARCH

AT WHITEMAN PARK

MEET AT E2 SHELTER FROM 11AM

BYO---- CHAIRS, DRINKS, FOOD

TEA/ COFFEE PROVIDED

BRING ANY PHOTO'S /MEMORABILIA

QUERIES:TUPP BIGGS-0437282457

SANDSTONE REUNION 2015



PAST & PRESENT RESIDENTS

*Come and enjoy a relaxing day reminiscing
with old friends from Sandstone*

SUNDAY 1 March 2015

AT WHITEMAN PARK

MEET AT E2 SHELTER FROM 11.00 AM

COVER CHARGE Gold Coin donation

BYO - chairs, drinks, food

BBQ facilities available

Food available from the Park kiosk

Tea and coffee will be provided.

Any queries contact: Dianne Miller

Phone: 0403 439 092

Email; dandcmiller@optusnet.com.au

Address: 6 Bastion Court, Willetton, 6155

**PLEASE PASS INFORMATION ONTO
FAMILY & FRIENDS**





The Meekatharra community came together on Monday the 8th of December to walk through the streets in solidarity against family and domestic violence.

The march was attended by women, men and children who gathered at the end of Consols road before walking the streets through to the middle of town. At the conclusion of the march, wreaths were laid in honour of the lives lost as a result of domestic and family violence in Meekatharra. There were speeches and prayers from community members, including the CEO of the Aboriginal Family Law Service.

"The violence doesn't just affect the victims, it has a significant impact on the innocent bystanders the children. The emotional and psychological impact on the children have a lifelong effect and it's often a cycle that continues. I think it's great that the people here are taking a stance." Mary Cowley, CEO Aboriginal Family Law Service

"The Silent March has come about from the Healing Hands activity days and has been driven by the community members. This event has been supported by a network of services working together in support of a safer community" said Kerie Loo, Crisis Support Worker at the Mission Australia Meekatharra Family and Domestic Violence Service.

There is support for another march in 2015 to follow on from this one. "In the 39 years I've been living in Meekatharra I've never seen anything like this. It makes people realise we are trying to do something to prevent violence." Eveanne Trenfield

Meekatharra Silent March

8th December 2014





We kicked off the Christmas holiday season on our hands and knees in the dirt of our driveway, sobbing over the bodies of our poisoned dogs. If you've ever seen a dog go down with bait poisoning, you know what a miserable, ugly thing it is. Honey gagged and cried, her head arched so far back that I thought her neck would break. Sophie howled and howled, slamming herself against the solid fence until she finally fell down dead, her beautiful kelpie face lacerated and smeared with blood from the blows. I hear the sound over and over in my mind. I never want to hear anything like that again.

There wasn't time to get a gun. After Honey went down, our friend Paul found Red Dog outside our compound fence, cold and rigid, his mouth gaping open from his frantic struggle to breathe. He died twenty yards from our bed as we lay sleeping. As we tried to get our heads around finding Red Dog, Sophie suddenly began howling and convulsing. She was dead three minutes later. And there we stood, in shock, with our entire beloved dog family lying dead all around us.

We try to comfort ourselves with the thought that it was relatively quick. I don't know if it felt quick to the dogs. It probably felt like forever. I imagine it felt agonising, bewildering and awful. I know that's how it felt to us. We can handle road crash rescues, fires and first aid, but those three dogs were like the heart of our family, so you can imagine just how well we coped after one dog after another went down convulsing and crying in front of our eyes.

The horrendous experience didn't stop there. Gary got sick just from handling Red Dog. He's still sick now. He rolled a cigarette, and that's all it took. As for me, my guardian angel deserves a medal, because somehow, in spite of having both hands covered in dog vomit and saliva from trying to help Honey and Sophie, I didn't touch my face, wiping my tears with the back of my arm. If I'd touched my face with my hands, there's a good chance I'd be dead too. Because strychnine never sleeps. Once it's out there, it's out there forever, toxic, waiting for the next creature to ingest it and die in agony.

We know it was poison. And we're prepared to say it's our own fault, for letting the dogs out of our fenced compound. The racecourse horses are all on summer holiday, so we didn't worry about the dogs having the run of the place, and Red Dog was doing a pretty good job flushing out rabbits and chasing off the feral town dogs who, for reasons that remain a mystery to all of us, are never picked up by the animal ranger and who do so much damage to livestock and domestic animals, to the point where locals are afraid to walk their dogs down the street in their own neighbourhood. It never, ever occurred to us that there would be anything poisonous around a public recreation area so close to town, a place where visiting horses, dogs and children all come to stay and play and rest up as they follow the WA rodeo circuit.

But maybe Red Dog went somewhere he shouldn't have, and maybe he ate something meant for feral animals. But Honey, my tiny companion of ten years, and Sophie, our goofy young kelpie, were harmless home dogs and didn't deserve to die, let alone in such a rotten, cruel way. Gary and I, who try to do our bit around town with the fire brigade and general helping out, didn't deserve to be smeared with deadly poison on our hands and faces, with Gaz losing work from the strychnine cramps - even now, six weeks later, he still hasn't entirely come good from it, and we don't know what the long term effects might be.

We're perplexed, because baiting is done many kilometres away, and Red Dog was always within earshot - he always came running up within a minute or two when we whistled him. Did he go farther away that morning? We'll never know. We don't want to think it was deliberate. We don't want to wonder who, or what, or why, or how. We don't know what to think. We don't know what to do.

"It's the crows, they eat the baits, then poo it out," people said. But ours aren't the only dogs in town to die from what looks like poisoning. And if that many crows are dropping toxic poo around town, shouldn't we be worried? Shouldn't we be totally freaking out? Because maybe next time it won't be a dog.

My four year old nephew was here not so long ago. We took him walking all over the racecourse area and the bush around town. "Pick up anything that looks interesting, Sam!" we encouraged. "You might find some gold, or an old bottle!" Or a poisonous bit of dirt. Or a dried crow dropping that looks like an unusual rock, shot through with strychnine. You might get it on your little fingers, Sam, without even knowing it, while we egg you on to explore and not be afraid of nature, and you might go digging around in the dirt because this month you are a Pirate and that's what pirates do, they dig for gold, and then you might put your fingers in your mouth or in your eyes or up your nose, because you get sweaty and grubby and snotty and you're four years old and that's what little kids do.

I didn't grow up in the outback, but I'm not some tenderfoot city fool - I grew up rural, we raised animals for food, and I learned from a young age how to care for and kill livestock to put on the plate. I've helped with roo and rabbit shooting. I've seen what wild dogs can do to sheep and cattle. I completely get it that feral animals are a problem in Australia to an extent that doesn't generally occur anywhere else in the world, and Gary and I both understand how and why 1080 and strychnine are still used in rural Australia. We both understand the sheer bloody hard work required to get our steaks on to the supermarket shelf.

But what's the price of these poisons? When you do a bit of research you discover that countless numbers of indigenous and domestic animals are killed - often in terrible, drawn-out agony - as a result of directly or indirectly ingesting bait materials. Tourists' dogs, people's horses, and even working dogs, as in the terrible, terrible case recently in Queensland where a group of mustering blokes lost all of their cattle dogs in one morning because the adjoining station manager had baited the shared stockyard - and didn't tell them.

We feel like our home has been poisoned. We feel like our hearts and thoughts have been poisoned. I don't feel the same when I visit the shops, when I look around at the people in my adopted community. *Was it you?* I think as I force a smile. *Was it someone you know? Do you know and you're not telling? Did you do it to us, or just anyone, or what? Was it an accident? Will it happen again?* And then my final question, echoing in my mind each day, is ***What if next time, it's a child?***

People in Meeka were incredibly kind when they heard our terrible news, and that may be the one thing that stopped us from just getting in the car and driving away for good. People I barely know came up with tears in their eyes and hugged me at the roadhouse and the shops. We've been offered the first pick of so many puppies, offers of dogs and heartfelt sympathy - I can't begin to tell you all what that means to both of us. It has been a great balm to our sorrow, and reminded us why we chose to live here in the first place.

We're okay now. Sort of. We get up and go to work, do the shopping, take the rubbish to the tip. We do our bit with the fire brigade and share a drink and a laugh at the pub. But no one sees us curled up together on our bed, sobbing into each other's shoulders because the dog beds are empty and there's this awful silence when we come home from work. No one hears me when I just drop the wheelbarrow and sit on the track howling like a five year old when I come across a fading set of Honey's cock-eyed pawprints and I remember the years I spent with that brave little dog who would not let me leave her at home, who insisted on coming sea kayaking, scooter riding, bicycle touring and even snorkelling, standing on my back as we explored the rock pools of Port Phillip Bay. She even put up with wearing a tiny fire helmet and riding on the "firefighting" scooter in the Meekatharra Parade, and she loved Gary so much that her barking turned to earpiercing squeaks, whether he'd been out in the genny shed for five minutes or away from home for three days. She was my shadow, my buddy, my heart.

Gaz and I try to focus on the good memories - the joy they brought us, the good times they had while they were here. Red Dog, who just wanted to be a good boy and ride on the scooter all day. Sophie, who liked to joke and tease, curled up in a farting, snoring tangle with Red Dog in the bucket bed that was too small for the pair of them. Honey, smart, cheeky and so trusting, a well-known little mate on Melbourne film shoots, always at my side through thick and thin, sturdily soldiering on through all our adventures.

Those of us who have lost dogs to poison know that it's not just about the dogs. It poisons our sense of safety, our confidence in the community. It casts a shadow over how we see our neighbours, our town. The landscape is suddenly transformed, no longer so beautiful and beckoning. It affects your desire to take part, to help, to contribute. Our home has been poisoned, literally and metaphorically.

Will we ever share our lives with another dog? Yes - because we can't imagine going through life without them. A dog reminds you that life's not so serious, that sometimes it's good to just roll in the dirt, bark at the bowerbirds and make a fool of yourself in the swimming pool. They want so little, and they give so much; there is no heart more generous, more forgiving, than the heart of a dog.

We know we'll never find out who, or how, or why, and we're not the type of people to go around looking for payback; it would be a dishonour to our dogs, who forgave and loved no matter what. We're not that noble; we won't be able to forgive or forget. So we'll move on, and we'll keep doing what we do, going to work, fighting fires, helping our mates and being a part of our little town. But maybe you'll see in our eyes, once in a while, that part of us is gone, hidden, broken, withdrawn - because our family has been poisoned, our adopted town has been poisoned, and deep down, I don't think we'll ever feel the same about it again.

*In
Loving
Memory*

Red Dog

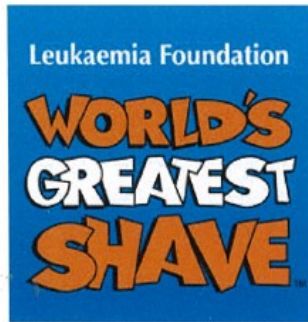


Honey



Sophie

*Our hearts
went
with you*



PROUDLY SPONSORED BY



BE BRAVE AND SHAVE



JOIN US ON THE 15TH OF MARCH
AT THE ROYAL MAIL HOTEL

SPRAY OR SHAVE YOUR HAIR TO SUPPORT PEOPLE LIVING
WITH LEUKAEMIA AND OTHER BLOODCANCERS



It's cool to
be bald.

Be Brave
and Shave.



Hey, it's just hair. You'll grow it back
and then shock everyone with your new
look and Fire Nation garb, but you'll
also gain a cool headband.

FOR MORE INFO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
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SCHOOL—DON'T MISS A DAY

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TEAM ARE HERE TO HELP

How can we help you?

School Transport, Uniforms/ Shoes, Case Management, Referrals
& Advocacy

Call the RSAS team on

Charmaine :0407 746 733

Sharon : 0407 746 739

Or drop into :

Mission Australia—Main Street

WE ARE FROM THE COMMUNITY TO HELP COMMUNITY





Department of Transport Remote Licensing services will be visiting: **MEEKATHARRA**

ON 10TH & 11TH FEB, 2015 8.15AM TO 3.30PM
PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE, MEDICARE CARD, KEYCARD, AND PROOF OF RESIDENCY AS WELL AS CASH OR CC TO ENABLE US TO HELP YOU.

We can help you with the following driver and vehicle services:

- vehicle and driver's licence renewals
- drivers licence applications
- theory test
- driving assessments
- vehicle transfers
- return of vehicle plates
- change of address
- photo card

For enquiries please call: CAROL 0467 767 004 or SUE 0427 385 886

To book a driving test phone: 9956 0105



Department of Transport Remote Licensing services will be visiting: **YULGA JINNA COMMUNITY**

On THURSDAY 12TH FEB, 2015 10.30 AM TO 2.30PM
PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE, MEDICARE CARD, KEYCARD, AND PROOF OF RESIDENCY AS WELL AS CASH OR CC TO ENABLE US TO HELP YOU.

We can help you with the following driver and vehicle services:

- vehicle and driver's licence renewals
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- theory test
- driving assessments
- vehicle transfers
- return of vehicle plates
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For enquiries please call: CAROL 0467 767 004 or SUE 0427 385 886

To book a driving test phone: 9956 0105



Department of Transport Remote Licensing services will be visiting: **KARALUNDI**

On FRIDAY 13TH FEBRUARY, 2015 8AM TO 10.30AM
PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE, MEDICARE CARD, KEYCARD, AND PROOF OF RESIDENCY AS WELL AS CASH OR CC TO ENABLE US TO HELP YOU.

We can help you with the following driver and vehicle services:

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- vehicle transfers
- return of vehicle plates
- change of address
- photo card

For enquiries please call: CAROL 0467 767 004 or SUE 0427 385 886

To book a driving test phone: 9956 0105



Brigade News

Lieutenant Marcus Saxton and Apps Officer Geoff Carberry have done a lot of "above and beyond the call of duty" in the past couple of months, particularly with preventative burnoffs and fuel reduction. Marcus and the hospital maintenance crew have done a fantastic job creating a fire break around the aged care hostel and hospital grounds along the creek in preparation for the potentially catastrophic fire conditions we are experiencing this summer.

We have attended a number of suspicious fires, including a vehicle fire in Oliver Street and a large bush fire opposite the roadhouse. Children are still lighting deadly "play" fires in areas close to houses, sometimes with ammo shells buried in the coals. It seems pointless to issue warnings when parents don't seem to care where their kids are or the danger they pose to the community.

The Meekatharra brigade has been commended for its top-quality incident reporting on the state's database - this might sound incredibly boring, but the database provides very useful information about fire and incident statistics. These details are then incorporated into training and resources, constantly improving how DFES provides services to the public. Secretary Paul Smith deserves most of the credit for his long and diligent hours at the computer.

We are sad to see our mate and mentor Paul Southam leave us for his new position in DFES. Paul has been a powerful motivator and patient teacher as well as doing a lot of hard work at and on behalf of our brigade station. Good luck from all of us mate and thank you for your leadership.

Gary Hammer, Captain



Top: Regional Manager Paul Southam running a breathing apparatus refresher at the Meeka fire station. Bottom: Always a guiding hand to his regional fire & rescue teams, Paul helps blindfolded Bithun Wijeweera through a blackout rescue exercise. Paul's extensive career experience and training expertise have been a foundation of our brigade for several years and he will be greatly missed.

New Volunteers Welcome

We meet each Tuesday at 6:30 pm at the Fire Station at the northern end of Hill Street - pop in for a chat if you want to ask about volunteering, say "G'day" or ask about safety information.

Meekatharra VFRS Media Liaison:

Anna Johnson, Paul Smith

EMERGENCIES : DIAL 000

Meeka Dog Deaths Sadden Holiday Season

by Anna Johnson



At least 8 dogs have died in Meeka in the last few weeks. While at least one dog is known to have died from a snake bite and another from suspected parvo, the remaining six deaths have Meekatharra locals bewildered and concerned.

The first known fatality was Tom Sullivan's young dog Paddy, who ate something unidentifiable at the railway dam area and died shortly afterwards; the symptoms indicate either 1080 or strychnine as the cause of death.

Anna and Gary's dogs Honey, Sophie and Red Dog died on the morning of Tuesday 16th December in the caretaker's camp at the racecourse. All three dogs displayed "textbook" 1080/strychnine poisoning symptoms, and Gary fell ill as a result of handling one of the dogs.

Dave Hodder and his family discovered two of their beloved dogs dead in their yard and again, poisoning is suspected, but the symptoms prior to death are not known and no materials were found.

There are informal reports of "other dogs" in town suspected of being poisoned, and of two tourist dogs dying from poisoning during quick roadside stops close to town, but these have not been verified. There are any number of reasons dogs can become fatally ill, or display symptoms that can be misread as poisoning. Matty's dog Braden, who was famously rescued from a fall into Luke's Pit last year, became sick just after Christmas but is recovering - distemper appears to be the cause. Leigh and Marika's young pup died after being diagnosed with parvo. Steve and Joedy-Lee's brave family dog Boo died after confronting a deadly snake in the back yard, possibly saving the lives of the remaining family dogs who were there at the time.

The Department of Agriculture was notified of the suspected poisoning incidents and they took immediate action, checking with station managers regarding any baiting or bait thefts; no untoward activity or thefts have been reported.

The Department takes bait and poison matters very seriously, as do the region's station managers and others licenced to undertake feral animal control. However, the Department's authority operates only within pastoral boundaries, and any suspected poisoning or bait laying outside those boundaries becomes a police matter.

Jim Miller, the region's biosecurity officer and a former dogger with a substantial background in wild dog control, indicated during an informal telephone call that four of the dog deaths clearly sounded like strychnine or 1080 poisoning, but that it could be difficult to ascertain without any samples or knowing the time frames between ingestion and death.

Mr. Miller said that the best step was to put notices up around town to alert people of possible poison danger, and for anyone with a suspected poisoned animal to triple-bag and freeze any samples they could safely obtain, and contact the Department and police. The public are reminded to be extremely cautious about handling any suspected bait or animal remains, or any vomit, poo or saliva from a sick or dead animal or from any birds/animals in the area.

Strychnine and 1080 baits are highly restricted and regulated. Station owners and doggers typically lay baits only at certain times of year, many kilometres away from town. A common cause of dog deaths from 1080 or strychnine is via crow droppings - crows and other birds are not affected by the poison, passing it through their system, meaning that their droppings can be highly toxic. It seems unlikely that six dogs in different areas around town all died from ingesting crow droppings, but locals are concerned about the risks to kids and other dogs if this is in fact the case.

There are rumours of people "going bush" to look for legally-laid baits and bringing them back to use illegally against domestic dogs, but people who report finding "baits" in their back yard are most likely the victims of would-be criminals making home-made baits from easily available chemicals or over-the-counter drugs. In some cases, food or raw meat is thrown over fences by passersby simply wanting to placate barking dogs - the meat may not be poisoned at all.

It is also possible that someone has access to old strychnine - Exmouth reportedly had a spate of deliberate dog killings by an unknown culprit who used 40-year-old strychnine tablets. It is impossible to know if hazardous materials from long ago have been left behind in abandoned sheds or vehicles, or buried and then exposed by the weather - a deadly outback legacy.

Whatever the cause, the dogs' deaths have caused much heartbreak over the Christmas season, and of course people are very worried that local and visiting dogs and children could be exposed to deadly poisonous materials in town and outlying recreational areas.

Anyone who suspects their animal has been poisoned, or who has helpful information about any illegal poisoning or poisonous materials lying around, is urged to contact the police.

Fire Season In Meeka

Meeka Fire & Rescue will be conducting burnoffs of high risk areas around town as weather conditions permit. Most of these burnoffs will take place in the evenings. Where possible we will let locals know in time to prepare for smoke in their area.



You are responsible

for your children's behaviour.

Most of Meeka's fires are started by children. Where are your kids?



Clear scrub and debris

away from all sides of your fences and buildings - call the fire brigade if you would like us to conduct a burnoff at your place.

Before you burn off,
get a permit
by calling the shire



What's your
fire plan?

Have you eliminated any fire risks
in and around your property?



Are your
smoke alarms
and fire extinguishers
in working order?

let's keep our town safe

In collaboration with the Shire of Meekatharra Youth Services

EDMUND RICE MEGA CAMP.....When I Grow Up.....

MEEKA & YALGOO JANUARY 2015

(By Belinda Hicks – Youth Officer, Shauna, Zodiak, Sarina, Jorden, Jack, & Breehannah)

In mid-January a group of young people and the Shire of Meekatharra's Youth Officer, headed south to participate in a youth leadership camp, organised by Edmund Rice. The camp was for youth from Meekatharra & Yalgoo and was held in Dwellingup. The theme of the camp was 'When I Grow Up I Want To Be.....'

Young people were given the opportunity to reflect on different careers that may interest them. They also heard from leaders about the jobs and study they are currently involved in (which included for some leaders completing VCE this year, army cadets, part time work, university and TAFE study, volunteer work, and full time work).

Young people were also involved in a range of activities which encouraged positive communication, problem solving & decision making skills, and working as a team.

Reflections of the MEGA camp

'I loved the camp. It was so awesome because we met new friends, played lots of games and they gave us a lot of options of what we want to be when we grow up. We also swam in the Murray River. Now we know what we want to be when we grow up!' (Shauna & Zodiak)

'We met new friends, we had lots of fun, we played lots of games, it was funny, we got awards for being good, we went for swims in the Murray River, the food was good, we got to write warm fuzzies (nice notes) to each other, they made sure we were safe at all times (by needing two leaders to go everywhere we went), we did a skit at night and a disco, we got to make a human cake!' (Sarina, Jorden & Jack)

'On the camp I had lots of fun and I made new friends from Yalgoo. We went swimming at the Murray River and played lots of different games. We played basketball against boys and the girls won three times. The leaders were awesome. I was very sad that we had to leave and say goodbye!' (Breehannah)

A **MEGA** thank you to Edmund Rice leaders for all their hard work throughout the camp! They put in huge amounts of energy and connected so well with the youth. Also a **MEGA** thank you to every young person who attended the camp and making it such a special one!



The Meekatharra Seventh-Day Adventist Church (McCleary St) invites you to join us in a weekly service for all ages from **10am Saturday** mornings.



**Meekatharra, Cue, Mt Magnet, Karalundi, Yulga
Jinna**




Region 7

The aim of RJCP...

A five year national program running from July 2013 – 2018, RJCP aims to strengthen regional Australia. It is a '*jobs first*' program designed to assist people and places outside the big cities and major towns...

There are incentives for businesses to take on staff and there are support services for job-seekers to get the skills they need or the materials they require to start a job and keep it...

Anybody registered with Centrelink and in receipt of support payments is obligated to participate in RJCP, strengthening their employability skills and contributing to community development via participation in local activities.



*"It's better
to be busy
than bored"*

Getting Started

RJCP is based on the idea that it's healthy to be active and that involvement in one's community enhances well-being.

At times it may seem that there is nothing to do where you live and that's where RJCP steps up and encourages local people to play a part in their community.

At present there are three main groups in our region involved with activity delivery, Mission Australia, Western Mulga and Yulella.

In this booklet you will see some activities currently commencing heading into 2015. No doubt there are lots more we can do as a region so whether you are an employer, a retiree, a job-seeker or home-maker, get involved and let's make this program ours.

Art Healing Program



This popular program takes place out at Buttah Windie Community 5kms west of Meekatharra. Participants spend time on country and engage in art production that resonates with the Midwest landscape and her people. Contact Janine via Mission Australia Meekatharra HQ for pick up and briefing...

BRICKLAYING, PAVING, CURBING & CONCRETING

Delivered by Mission Australia and held at the old Dept. of Agriculture next door to the Auski Hotel this activity strives to renovate this old facility to its former glory creating a contemporary community education facility for future training and cultural programs. Participants will learn to use a cement mixer, spirit level, trowel and barrow to re-landscape garden beds and curbing while at the same time growing muscles and a social network.

Contact Brendan at Mission HO. Meeka'.

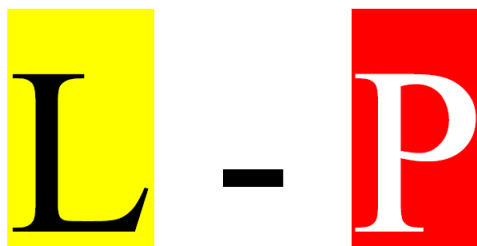
Cemetery Enhancement Project



Supervised by Daryl Curley a longtime proponent of Community Development and Director of Yulella, this activity aims to refurbish Meekatharra cemetery by casting plinths, headstones and making name plates from shire records.

YULELLA DRIVER'S LICENSE PROJECT

For most getting a learner's permit is but the first step towards independence. Alas, these days one needs to complete an initial 25 hours supervised driving before completing the practical driving assessment, PDA and even then another 25 hours of supervised driving before one can finally get onto the provisional license or P Plates. This activity is designed to assist those who may not have access to a vehicle or supervisor and help them clock up their log book hours.



Environmental Health

This project is designed to improve our town and private dwellings by removing unsafe objects and making minor repairs to structures, whether lopping a tree or whipper snipping the viper's den – appreciating the best medicine is prevention.

Contact Byron G at Yulella to get on board

Horticulture/Market Garden

Come and contribute to one of regional Australia's most vibrant community gardens. Learn fundamentals of reticulation, soils regeneration, shading and harvesting while producing quality vegetables for community consumption.

Contact Phil at Yulella.



Hospital Support

In regional areas one of the biggest employers is usually the hospital and health care facility and in Meekatharra it's no different. This work experience placement familiarizes participants with the daily running of a hospital and gets them involved in various facets of the institution according to their interests. Whether it is helping out with admin', cooking in the kitchen, assisting in the aged hostel or giving a hand in the ward this activity promises to reward the participant and host. Contact Paulette A @ the hospital or Mission Australia Meeka' HQ

Parenting Program @ the Red Sand Box

This activity allows participants to undertake language development training with children, supervise play to ensure that children learn good social behavior and prepare nutritious food for morning tea. Located at the top of the hill this playgroup gets the best of the breeze and is a rejuvenating start to the day and your child's future. Contact Meeka MA HQ

Trades Experience Project

This activity will provide 16 hours of work in a building trade's environment for 8 young people in Meekatharra. Two of them will go to the steelworks for Monday and Tuesday with Ben, and two to the building company with Don.

Women on the Move

Aimed at young women to support them broaden their horizons with relation to careers and build self – confidence this program seeks to match client's strengths with available opportunities and provide ongoing case management in a supportive environment. Whether it's building a resume, strengthening your IT skills, discussing deportment or making inroads to a life further afield than Meeka, WOTM could be for you.

Contact Katy at Yulella



Work Ready Program



Delivered out at Buttah Windie and in and around Meekatharra, this program walks alongside locals to bring them up to work readiness, embedding reliability, employability skills and a sense of pride. At the same time workplace tickets like first aid, white cards and pre-employment medicals are acquired with linkages to nearby Degussa, Doray and Pilbara mines.

Contact Andrew B via Mission HQ Meeka'



If you have an idea for an activity or wish to learn more about RJCP contact Brendan on 04777 68477
Or email worrellb@Mission Australia.com.au

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Remote Jobs and Communities Program

Do you receive Centrelink \$

Well your \$ and your family's \$ is at risk...

Major reforms are underway...

Who What Why Where When

Woahhh...

People receiving \$ from Centrelink have a participation activity requirement, i.e. no work – no pay contract.

People on Newstart and Youth Allowance are obligated to participate for 20 hours per week.

Come July 1 this will change to 25 hours!!

Contact worrellb@missionaustralia.com.au



RJCP is based on the belief that *it's healthy to be active* and that *involvement in one's community enhances well-being*.

At times it may seem that there is nothing to do where you live and that's where RJCP steps up and encourages local people to play a part in their community...

"It's better to be busy than bored"

At present there are three main groups in our region involved with activity delivery, Mission Australia, Western Mulga and Yulella – but if you have an idea – talk to us. RJCP is funded by public money and transparency is key to making it work.

Each activity has a supervisor who marks attendance sheets and submits to the RJCP provider. When people do not attend their activity their Centrelink \$ is frozen...

RJCP is a 'jobs first' program designed to assist people and places outside the big cities and major towns... The idea is to support people and places – not punish them...

There are incentives for businesses to take on staff and there are support services for job-seekers to get the skills they need or the materials they require to start a job and keep it...

The more you know the more we grow & if you don't have a go – you'll never know...

Let's work together so Meeka' moves forward...

Wednesday 4th March

10am - 2pm at the Shire Hall.

*Come along to meet the people and
services in Meekatharra.*



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EXPO
-2015-**

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Meekatharra Library

Did you know we get a new exchange of books every month? Come in and check out what is new this month!

If there is a particular novel or author you are interested in, we can request these for you, just pop in to the Shire office and see Stacey.

Please note that you must be an existing member of the library to order in books.

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We do not hire equipment (racquets/balls etc)

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Saturday 14th February 9am-11am

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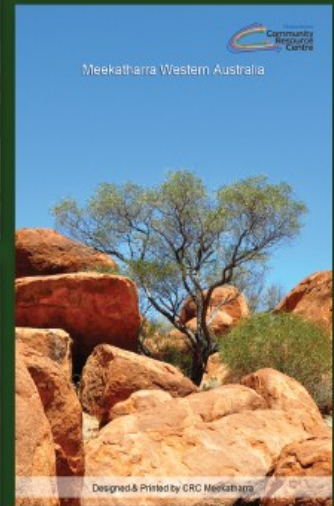
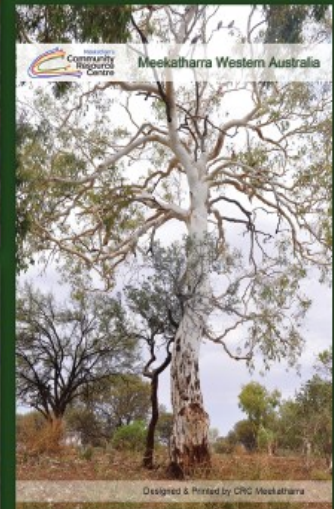
Table provided

If you're interested in
holding your own stall
Contact Eveanne at the
Meekatharra CRC on
99801811
or email
Meekatharra@crc.net.au

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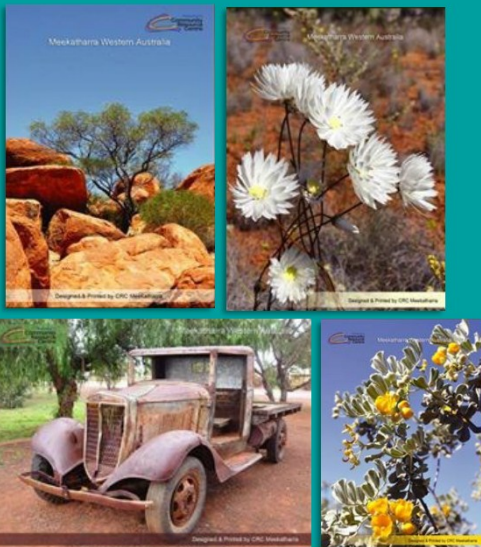
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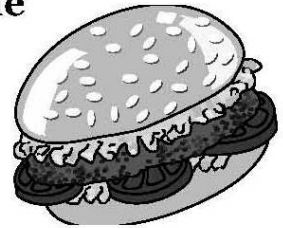
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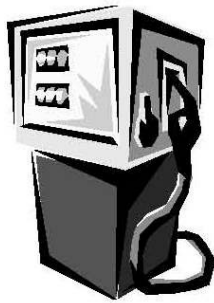
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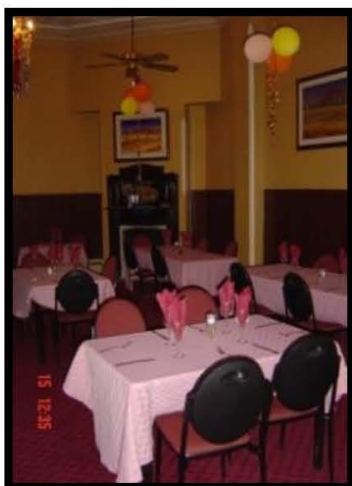
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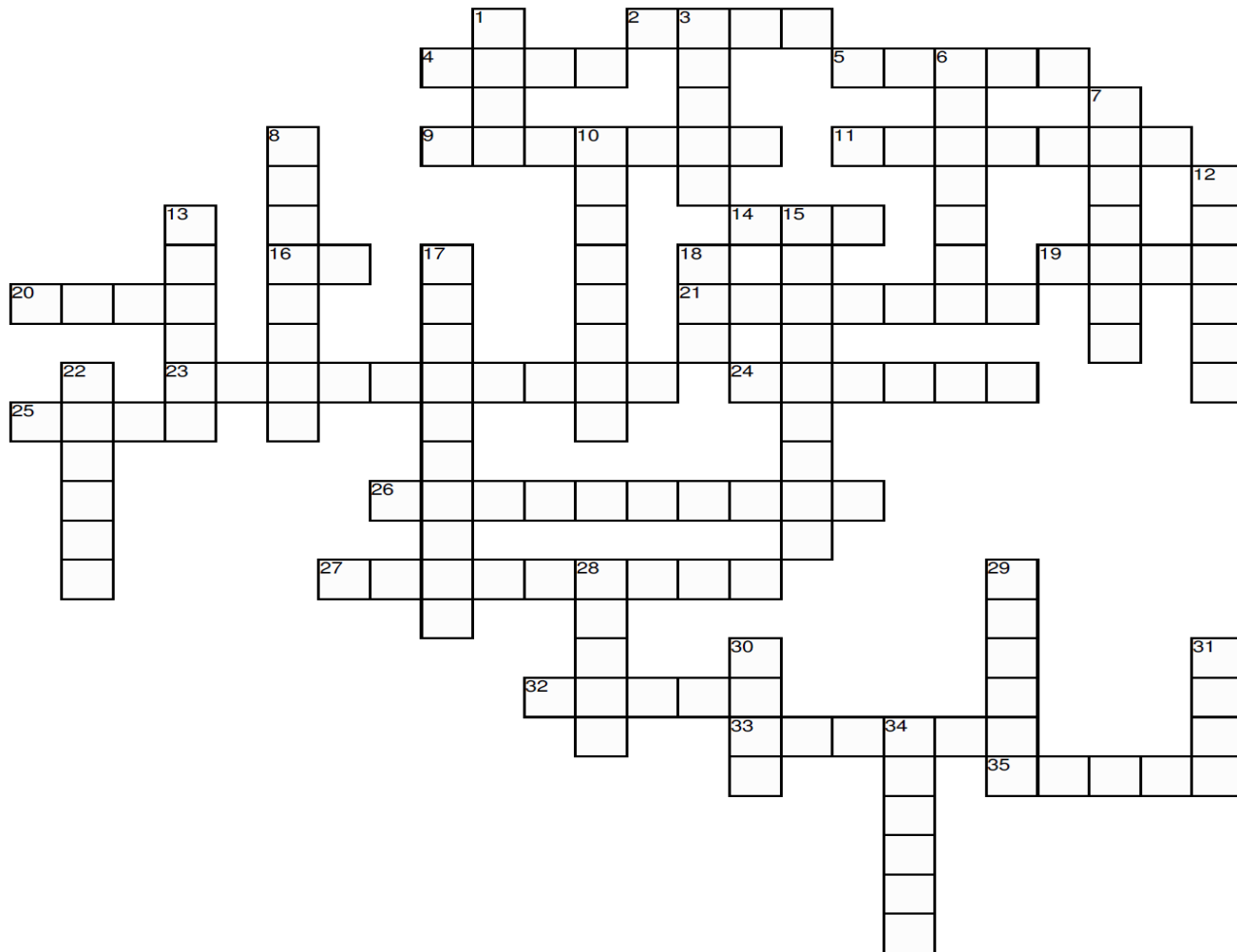
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Across

2. Slow ----, and enjoy the ride.
4. Head restraints reduce the chance of ---- injury commonly referred to as whiplash.
5. Before buying a car, check the ---- safety rating.
9. Vehicle ----- can be reduced by 35% in passenger vehicles fitted with ESC.
11. Active head restraints automatically move ----- to close the gap between the occupant's head and the head restraint.
14. Vehicle crashes can be reduced by 67% in four wheel drive and sports utility vehicles fitted with ---.
16. Belt --
19. Air ---- must be able to deploy freely without obstruction.
20. Curtain airbags protect the ---- and shoulders during a crash.
21. An Anti-lock ----- System (ABS) prevents the wheels from locking while braking.
23. Drive to the -----.
24. Curtain airbags drop down from the top of the side ----.
25. Cars with ---- star ANCAP ratings are much safer in a crash than those with a lower rating.
26. Daytime Running Lights improve vehicle ----- and estimation of distance resulting in reduced crash rates.
27. Autonomous ----- Braking is a primary crash avoidance feature.
32. ---- cars are higher on the visibility index.
33. The newest type of head restraint is an ----- head restraint.
35. Be responsible on the ----.

Down

1. Head restraints limit the backward movement of the head during a -----impact crash.
3. It is important that your vehicle offers good protection to ---- road users.
6. Side and ----- airbags protect occupants in a side impact crash.
7. Electronic Stability Control (ESC) is a ----- crash avoidance feature.
8. Curtain airbags create a cushion between the ----- and the side of the car.
10. An ABS allows the driver to maintain ----- control under heavy braking by preventing a skid.
12. Emergency Brake ----- (EBA) ensures that maximum braking power is used in an emergency stop situation.
13. ESC helps ----- the chances of single vehicle or run-off-road crashes.
15. Electronic ----- Control (ESC) reduces the risk of a driver losing control of the vehicle.
17. It is important that all passengers are correctly ----.
18. Anti-Lock Braking System (---) is a primary crash avoidance feature.
22. Daytime Running ----- (DRLs) are illuminated during the day.
28. Modern vehicles can have up to ---- or more airbags.
29. Cars with ----- ANCAP stars do not necessarily cost more.
30. A seat belt reminder system alerts the driver when a --- belt should be worn.
31. Many reasonably priced ---- score well in ANCAP safety ratings.
34. It is important that your vehicle offers you good protection from ----- in a crash.

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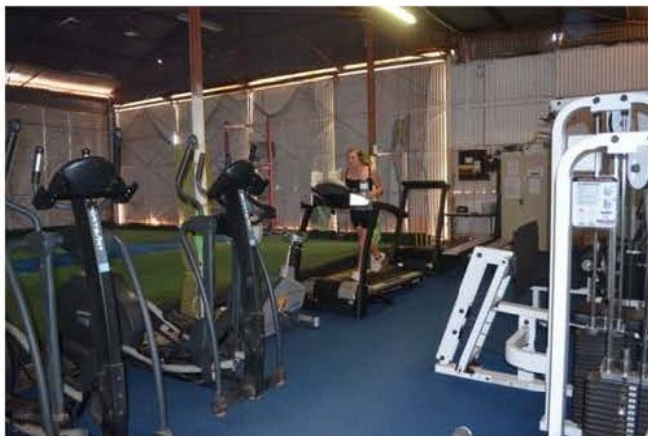
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DAILY**



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Meekatharra	3 Feb - 12 Feb
Mt Magnet	24 Feb– 5 March
Yalgoo	17 March - 26 March
Meekatharra	21 Apr– 7 May
Mt Magnet	19 May - 29 May
Sandstone	2 June– 4 June
Meekatharra	23 June - 2 July

Senior citizens have taken to texting with gusto. They even have their own vocabulary:

BFF: Best Friend Fainted
 BYOT: Bring Your Own Teeth
 CBM: Covered by Medicare
 FWB: Friend with Beta-blockers
 LMDO: Laughing My Dentures Out
 GGPBL: Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low!

Just as she was celebrating her 80th birthday, our friend received a jury-duty notice. She called the clerk's office to remind them that she was exempt because of her age. "You need to come in and fill out the exemption forms," the clerk said. "But I filled them out last year," she replied. "You have to fill them out every year." "Why? Do you think I'm getting younger?"

A priest, a minister, and a rabbi want to see who's best at his job. So they each go into the woods, find a bear, and attempt to convert it.

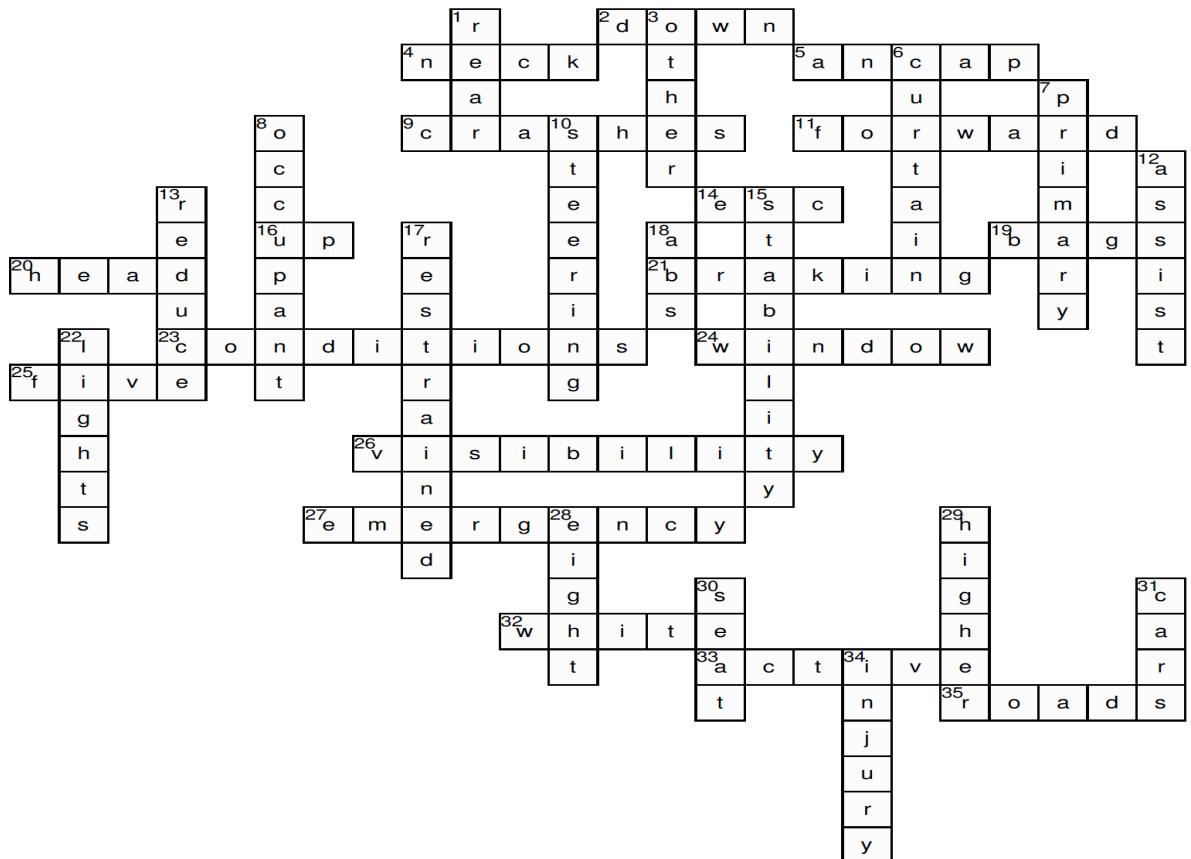
Later they get together. The priest begins: "When I found the bear, I read to him from the Catechism and sprinkled him with holy water. Next week is his First Communion."

"I found a bear by the stream," says the minister, "and preached God's holy word. The bear was so mesmerized that he let me baptize him."

They both look down at the rabbi, who is lying on a gurney in a body cast. "Looking back," he says, "maybe I shouldn't have started with the circumcision."

Safe Cars Crossword (answers)

For more information visit; www.ors.wa.gov.au or www.ancap.com.au



Important Dates

February 2015

COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 21 2015

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CNR MAIN AND SAVAGE STREETS

**CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE NEXT
MEEKATHARRA DUST EDITION:**

2 MARCH 2015