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Easter treats on way - P3



Our Shire has a craic - P10, 14



Savannah bands revealed - P15

Their boat worth about \$400,000 was swept out to sea, and they've faced three floods this month, but the blokes from Croc Express are...

Still smiling



Special flood and cyclone reports, Pages 3, 5, 6-9

Croccodile Express marketing manager Vince O'Flaherty and owner Dean Clapp. Picture: Shaun Hollis

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Land valuations soaring

Bryan Littlely

Douglas Shire ratepayers have raised concerns about pending rate rises as they receive notice of rising land valuations, fearing the hit to the hip pocket might be “unsustainable”.

David Ohgh sparked the conversation with a post on the Port Douglas and Surrounds Facebook thread, sharing news that his property land valuation had increased by 67 per cent.

“Be prepared for rates to increase to an amount that is unsustainable,” he said, adding: “Agenda 2030 here we come.”

The post sparked feedback prompting Mr Ohgh to propose pushback from the community.

“If ever there was a time for a community to get together and protest this disgraceful rate hike in a cost of living crisis the time is now,” he said.

Other residents commented on land valuations rising, with one saying their valuation had gone up by \$70,000. But commentators have been quick to point to moves by some to blame councils, saying that Local Government does not



Could a significant rate rise be on the cards for Port Douglas and surrounds? Picture: Bryan Littlely

instigate land valuation increases. “Our unimproved value of land is the base that LG uses to calculate our rates charges,” said Yvonne Bochow. “The Valuer General Office has to look into land value every four to five years. If you really want to point fingers then feel free to blame the real estate agents pushing up prices and people changing land uses for increases in unimproved land valuations.” Council rate increases were

central to an impassioned call to arms by Douglas Shire Ratepayers Association President John Sullivan last November, when he said rates for many have increased by 29 per cent in about four years “seemingly without any strong justification”. “Two years on from our Council elections, I believe we still lack the vision and leadership to provide the ratepayers of Douglas Shire with a strong sense of direction.”



Mayoral Column

Community resilience on show during drenched March

From the moment I received an early-morning call from the CEO alerting me that the Daintree Ferry had broken free of its mooring, Council has been working around the clock to help, inform, repair and recover from what has been a very challenging period of the wet season.

March has tested our region in ways few of us expected. First came the impacts of 29U, when rising floodwaters dislodged a pontoon and tour boat which impacted and damaged the ferry and cut off our northern communities. On 15 March, monsoonal rain swept across the shire, saturating an already fragile landscape, and last week Tropical Cyclone Narelle brought another burst of heavy rain and renewed flooding concerns.

Throughout these events, Council teams have been out every day assessing roads, clearing debris, restoring access and supporting isolated residents. The retrieval and repair of the Daintree Ferry has been a major focus. Engineering assessments, cable replacement, debris removal and permit applications have all been progressing at pace because we know how vital this connection is for the community and the local economy.

A few weeks ago, Member for Cook David Kempton and I flew by helicopter into the Daintree to meet with residents and businesses. Their concerns were clear and deeply felt: the loss of tourism activity, the risk of seasonal workers leaving, pressure on supplies and the uncertainty of how long isolation would last. Those conversations have stayed with me. They reinforce why restoring ferry operations safely and swiftly — and continuing resupply runs — remain our priorities.

We now have a dedicated recovery team working closely with service providers to ensure residents and businesses can access the support they need, whether that’s funding, counselling, grants or loans. The temporary passenger ferry is also allowing Daintree residents to keep their fridges and pantries stocked, while we’ve been providing regular community updates so people know exactly what is happening and when.

I also want to acknowledge the strengthened cooperation we’ve developed with State and Federal counterparts, whose support has been invaluable to Council throughout this challenging period.

Rafting road struck

Shaun Hollis

A road in the ranges north of Cairns has experienced another "significant rockfall" after \$80m worth of reconstruction work across two years was close to finished, impacting tour operators already affected by the Daintree ferry being out of action.

The temporarily closed Barron Gorge Road - part of a Cairns hydro project - has been shut since being hit by cyclone Jasper and was damaged again just before

Narelle struck near Coen on Friday morning.

Barron River MP Bree James said this was "not great news".

"This service road has taken another major hit with this significant rockfall on the Barron Gorge Road after the wild weather before cyclone Narelle and so much rain the past weeks," she said.

"Access to the hydro station and the white water rafting location is blocked - Cairns Regional Council crews are working to re-

store vehicular access over the coming weeks.

"With Daintree Ferry also down, I know this is impacting local tourism operator Cairns Adventure Group who operates in this location and in the Daintree, not to mention all the other tourism businesses at Cape Trib and Daintree."

The restoration of Barron Gorge Road is part of a program of works commissioned by CRC to help rebuild essential public

roads through the joint Federal and State Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

More than \$80m has already been approved for this program, according to the CRC.

Barron Gorge Road provides vehicle access to the region's main power supply of Barron Gorge Hydroelectric Power Station.

Jasper caused several landslips and washouts along the road, which was expected to reopen mid-year.

Feeling the egg-treme excitement building up

When asked what they are looking forward to most about Easter coming up, the decision is obvious for Douglas Shire locals Lana, 9, and Joah, 12.

"Chocolate," they answer emphatically in unison.

Of course, there is much more to Easter than just sweet treats, with Christians marking the death and resurrection of Christ, and nature-lovers celebrating the full moon.

Lana's family is doing one of the most Far North Queensland Easter celebrations imaginable - staying at a house at Lake Tinaroo for the weekend.

For your comprehensive Whats On guide to the Easter long weekend, turn to Page 14.



Scan for the full story



Harry, 6, Lana, 9, Maya, 4, and Joah, 12, are looking forward to Easter next weekend. Picture: Shaun Hollis



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Tilly and co come through Narelle

Bryan Littlely

Portland Roads residents Tilly Rehn and Katie and Jayson Watkin have come through Tropical Cyclone Narelle relatively unscathed with a big clean-up ahead and little chance of roads opening up to the remote location for weeks.

The trio bunkered down on Friday at The Temple, which is built around and incorporates a World War II ammunition bunker, and while "unsettling" and with a few nervous moments when roofing sheets were ripped from the building, Tilly says she was surprised that not more damage had been done when they emerged from sheltering from the cyclone, which had been tipped to deliver some of the strongest winds in Queensland history. And a bit of Dutch courage beforehand may have helped the crew get through, she laughed.

"We did have a few drinks the night before to settle our nerves," Tilly said. "And we were woken at 6am as the winds picked up.

"It was definitely scary. Especially when the sheets of iron were shaking."

Tilly said most trees across the region had been stripped of foliage and their paw paw and banana trees were either over or bare.

"But we were surprised that not more trees fell over," she added.

"There is nothing major that we can see has been impacted here. A tree did fall on the power line out the front and we lost power for a bit.



Before and after pictures from Tropical Cyclone Narelle at The Temple, Portland Roads. Pictures: Tilly Rehn

"There's a lot of green waste to clean up."

While reports from the Lockhart weather station suggested wind speed hit 60knots (110km/h), Tilly considered it may have been stronger at the more exposed Portland Roads.

"The Pascoe River broke its record height at 19m," she said.

"Cyclone Trevor reached 15m. It goes to show we face and lack access for support... roads won't be open for a long while."

Coen, in direct line with Trop-

ical Cyclone Narelle, also escaped major damage, according to Queensland police.

The Northern Territory's Top End was left saturated ahead of TC Narelle, which crossed the eastern Top End Coast as a category three system overnight on Saturday after tracking across Cape York as a category four.

By Sunday morning, TC Narelle had reduced to a category two system as it tracked into the NT and was downgraded to a tropical low later in the day.

IN HARMONY WITH SCHOOL
Mossman State High School celebrated Harmony Week in style last week, highlighting the rich cultural diversity within its classrooms.

This year's Harmony Week theme, "Everyone Belongs," was at the heart of the celebrations, encouraging inclusion, respect and understanding among students and staff.

Throughout the week, the school hosted a range of activities designed to bring cultures together, from music and storytelling to food and dance, giving students the opportunity to learn from one another and connect.

SURF'S UP IN SHIRE
Surfers braved the threat of crocodiles and stingers south of Port Douglas last Friday as Tropical Cyclone Narelle hit the Far North Queensland coast, producing rare waves inside the Great Barrier Reef.

Cairns-based content producer Jeremy Britton posted footage of surfers at Rocky Point between Wangetti and Ellis beaches at about 2pm that day.

Normally best known for tourists pulling over and making rock statues, Rocky Point was producing an about 1m swell. Authorities remind people to always stay Crocwise in croc country.

MORE SANDBAGS NEEDED
Douglas Shire Council has ordered an additional 5000 sandbags to bolster local sandbag stations.

Stations last week remain stocked and the extra supply arriving this week is part of an ongoing preparedness.

Mayor Lisa Scomazzon said the Council was taking sensible steps to stay ahead of community demand: "We're making sure our community has the resources it needs."

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Three floods in 15

\$400,000 boat takes long hiatus

Shaun Hollis

The crew at Crocodile Express cafe and tours were preparing for a third Daintree River flood in 15 days as Tropical Cyclone Narelle bore down on the coast near Coen last Friday - but they were taking it all in their stride.

Owner Dean Clapp said most of the Croc Express boats were already lifted out of the water for the cyclone, except for the one carrying passengers across the river after the ferry broke down in the first flood a fortnight before.

"Not much we can do, the water comes up," Mr Clapp said.

"The other day, in 12 hours, I had 500mm of rain in here.

"When you get that much bloody rainfall in the hills here, the



The flooded Daintree River earlier this month. Picture: Croc Express

water's going to come up very fast and very high."

He said sometimes you are just in the "lap of the gods" and you can't prepare for everything.

"If you wanna live here you've got to accept it," he said.

"I don't go around saying 'poor bugger me'. You make a choice to live in an area and, if it doesn't

work out, go somewhere else. "There are things that come along to try us out, and this is the perfect place to do it. It's paradise most of the time, but by geez it can come and kick you in the balls if you don't watch it."

Last weekend the Daintree flooded for the third time in 15 days, marketing manager Vincent

O'Flaherty said. Many have generators, which helped when the power was out for about four days after the first flood, but the biggest long-term concern was if a bridge or road got washed away.

Mr O'Flaherty said it was just him and another local in the Daintree Village Hotel on a Thursday night three weeks ago when the river rose up, eventually washing away a wharf, putting the ferry out of action, and washing their croc-tour boat Jungle King - valued at about \$400,000 - to a Cairns reef.

The boat was upside down and lost its roof in the incident.

"(We were) looking at turtles instead of crocodiles," Mr O'Flaherty joked.

"Made its way all down around Lowe Isles, around Batt Reef and worked its way down to Cairns outer reefs."

Luckily insurance is paying for the damage. But the biggest issue remains the absent ferry, with the Douglas Shire Council racing the clock to have it fixed before the busy Easter weekend.

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Did much happen at work? Just a 4m croc

Shaun Hollis

A Daintree River traffic controller got the fright of his life earlier this month when he spotted a 4.3m croc up out of the water at the ferry landing.

Daintree crocodile expert David White identified the wandering croc as much-loved local identity Bung Eye.

And Mossman fires also got a rude shock during a flood-rescue operation just north of Mossman's Foxtan Bridge after being confronted by a rearing snake.

"You never know what might be lurking in floodwaters," the Queensland Fire Department stated after the incident.

A person was rescued from the roof of a car near the Foxtan Bridge on the night of Saturday, March 14, after becoming stranded in floodwaters.

Wildlife carers Tropical Wildlife Rescue said the species was a brown tree snake, which is "mildly venomous but not dangerous".

Queensland police continue to remind drivers: "if it's flooded, forget it".

Heavy overnight rains, storm-surge tides and gusty winds across Douglas Shire caused dangerous conditions last Friday morning as Tropical Cyclone Narelle hit the



Bung Eye was photographed on the ferry landing by a shocked council worker and, inset, a rearing snake confronted rescue workers in Mossman. Pictures: Pete the traffic controller, QFD

Coen region further up the coast as a category four system. There were reports of multiple tree branches down on roads in the Shire. And the Captain Cook Highway at Ellis Beach was temporarily closed by police during high tide as storm-surge waves came up over the road.

Queensland Traffic warned at the time: "Motorists should exercise appropriate caution, includ-

ing the possibility of postponing non-essential travel."

Multiple roads have been closed during at least three flooding events in the Shire this month, including Foxtan Bridge, Junction crossing, Bushy Creek, Anich's Bridge and Crees Creek.

Storm surges have also washed away sand at several of the Cairns northern beaches.



The Daintree ferry was damaged during a recent flood.

Racing to restore the ferry

Daintree Rainforest tourism operators and residents are hopeful the passenger ferry will be back up and running before the busy Easter period after it was knocked out of service by flooding earlier this month.

Douglas Shire Council issued a statement on Tuesday that services were expected to be back to normal in time for the Easter long weekend, with significant repair progress made in recent days.

A new northern anchor point was expected to be installed this week, which involves excavating a deep pit and burying an anchor to secure the ferry's cable system.

The southern anchor point was completed on Saturday, and crews have also replaced decking, installed refurbished electrical components and fitted key mechanical parts.

Sea trials were expected to start this week, subject to progress on the northern anchor point and weather conditions.

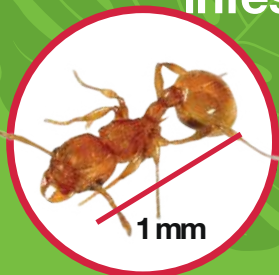
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IN PICTURES: FNQ hit



Barratt River. Picture: TMR



The new bridge over the Archer River was tested. Picture: TMR



Portlands Road resident Tilly Rehn. Picture: Supplied



Bushy Creek. Picture: DSC



Narelle damage. Picture: SES



Narelle damage. Picture: QPS



Car at Mossman. Picture: DSC



Downed Daintree power pole. Picture: Daphne Titus-Rees

It's Official!



A new Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is up and running for the North side!

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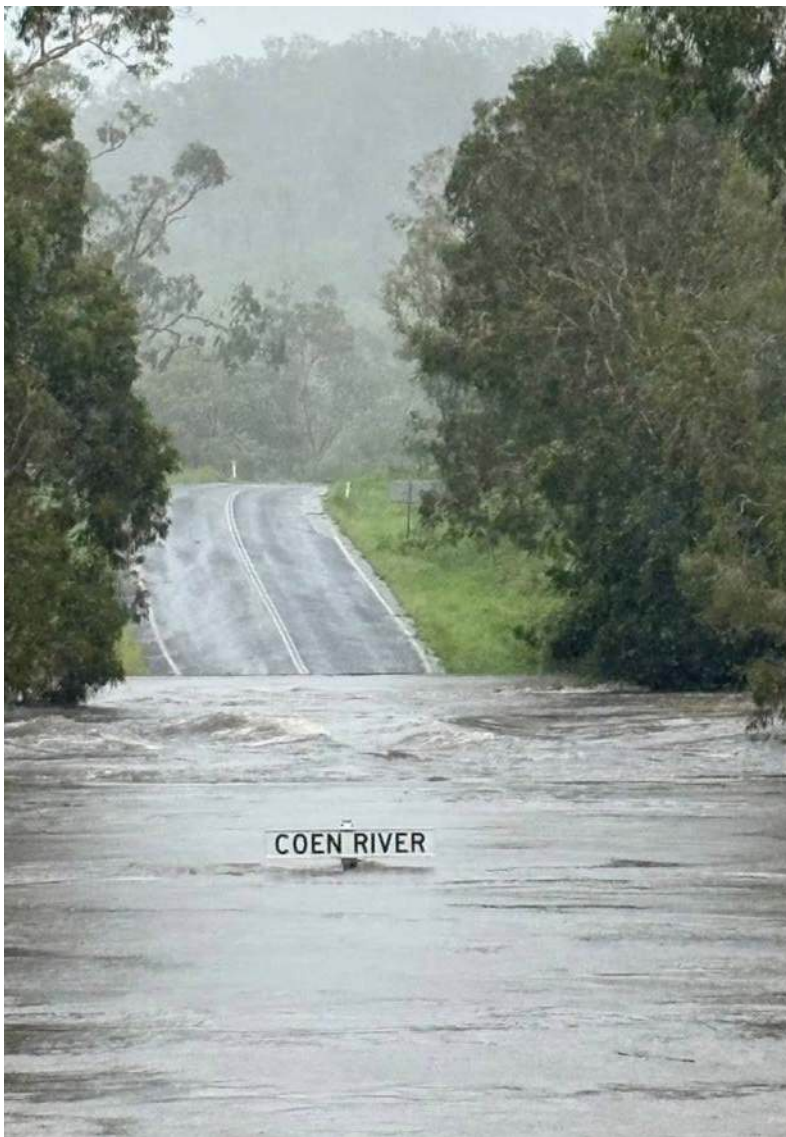
with wild storm month

Douglas Shire's peak tourism body has moved to make sure everyone knows the region is still open for business after Tropical Cyclone Narelle passed by Coen and headed west last week.

"Tropical Cyclone Narelle has crossed the coast well north of Port Douglas," a Tourism Port Douglas Daintree release stated.

TPDD stated no significant impacts from Narelle had been reported across the Shire, with minimal State Emergency Service activity.

"Port Douglas remains safe for visitors and continues to operate," TPDD stated.



The water was high at the Coen River as Tropical Cyclone Narelle passed through. Picture: QPS



Multiple crossings have flooded.



An emergency service worker takes a break. Picture: SES



Emergency deliveries. Picture: DSC



FNQ cyclone damage.



Boats in Dickson Inlet.



Another swollen river.



Stranded Foxton car. Picture: DSC



Foxton Bridge rescue.



Raffle Winners Announced!

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- 2nd Prize: Arthur Tibbs – Ticket No. 984
- 3rd Prize: Jack Boyd – Ticket No. 13

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A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended our recent event. Despite the less-than-perfect weather, it was a fantastic afternoon enjoyed by all! Special thanks to Selvester Blanco for providing great entertainment, and to our amazing volunteers for their hard work and support.

Thanks to the prize donors who made the afternoon a great success: -
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It's a long way to Port Douglas

Jamie Jansen

For Cafe Fresq owners Joanie and Aoife Conway, St Patrick's Day is a celebration of culture, community and a little bit of Irish "craic" in the tropics.

Originally from County Wexford in southeast Ireland, Joanie was travelling the world when she landed in Australia.

"When I first visited Port Douglas on vacation, I instantly fell in love with the place," she said.

"It was an easy, good life. The weather was fabulous and everybody is different and unique."

Her partner Aoife, who grew up in Carlow about an hour from Dublin, arrived with a similar plan; a one-year working holiday that ended up becoming permanent.

"It was the thing to do in your 20s, come to Australia for a working holiday visa," Aoife said. "I guess I just never left."

As a trained chef, Aoife was immediately inspired by the diversity of ingredients and fresh produce.

"Ireland has amazing produce now, but back then everything was meat and three veg," she said.

"Australia opened my eyes to so many new ingredients."



For Aoife and Joanie Conway, St Patrick's Day is when their Irish spirit truly comes to life. Picture: Jamie Jansen

Sport remains a strong connection to home, and Christmas is still celebrated the traditional way, with a hearty turkey and ham dinner. But it is St Patrick's Day that truly brings their Irish spirit to life.

For more than a decade, Café-Fresq has hosted a special St Patrick's Day celebration that has become something of a tradition.

"For 11 years we've started the day with an Irish breakfast

at Fresq with music and drinks," Joanie said.

"Then we head to Paddy's later in the evening to finish the night with more food and great music."

For Aoife, the day is all about sharing Irish culture with the wider community.

"St Patrick's Day is literally a celebration of being Irish and inviting everyone to celebrate with us," she said.



The mystery roadside memorial.

Do you know who built monument?

Transport and Main Roads Queensland have been praised for their efforts to try to find out more information about a memorial overlooking Pebbly Beach before dismantling it and proceeding with construction works.

Posted last week, TMR asks: "Can you help us find someone?"

"We're looking for the owner of this memorial near Captain Cook Highway.

"It's a driftwood cross, with no name inscribed on it, overlooking Pebbly Beach, 14km south of Port Douglas.

"The memorial currently sits in the footprint of construction works.

"If you have any information, please contact us on 1800 187 937 or email cairns.office@tmr.qld.gov.au."

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Pokea a fresh option

BUSINESS FEATURE

Jamie Jansen

Port Douglas locals looking for a quick and healthy lunch now have a new option on Grant Street, with the opening of Pokea, a poke bowl shop created by restaurateur Giorgio Simonetti.

Giorgio, who also co-owns the Beach Shack, said the idea behind the new venture was simple: serve fresh, high-quality food that's fast and affordable for people on their lunch break.

"Grant Street has a lot of offices around it, so many people come in during their lunch break," he said.

"The idea is to keep the price low while serving food quickly. I felt poke bowls were something that was missing here, and they are quite simple to prepare.

"We want to offer something fast and affordable, but still with a good product. The fish is very good and everything is fresh."

Giorgio has worked closely with chef Alberto to create a menu that blends those traditional inspirations with fresh tropical flavours.

"Chef Alberto has a lot of experience with this style of food," Giorgio said.

"It's Hawaiian-inspired but also has Asian and Japanese influences. He's been to Japan and really understands working with fish and those flavours."

Freshness is central to the concept, with seafood and produce sourced locally where possible.

"We'll be getting prawns from Santiago Seafood, and a lot of the other suppliers are from Cairns and the surrounding areas, especially for vegetables and produce."

Fruit also features prominently in the bowls, adding a tropical twist to the dishes.

"We use a lot of fresh fruit," he



Chef Alberto is creating inventive poke bowls at newly opened Grant Street eatery Pokea. Picture: Supplied

said. "For example, the tuna has mango, the prawns has papaya, and the salmon has apple."

The menu currently features seven signature bowls alongside a build-your-own option, allowing customers to customise their meal with their choice of ingredients.

"We may add some grab-and-go items in the display, something different but still within the poke idea."

Pokea is currently open from 11am to 5pm, catering primarily to the lunchtime crowd, though Sim-

onetti said extended hours could be on the horizon.

"Later on, especially in the high season, we may stay open for dinner as well," he said.

Details: pokea.com.au



To read the full story scan this QR code

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10 YEARS AGO

Pair of flags at Muddies

The Muddies are the toast of the Douglas Shire Cricket Association with both senior grades claiming back-to-back titles.

Winning one premiership is sweet, but going back-to-back is sweeter, especially when the whole club can bask in the glory together. The C grade team clinched their double in a cliff-hanger last weekend against Rovers, while the first grade side overcame Barron in their four-day B Grade grand final on Sunday.

Douglas Muddies president Bn Vikionkorpi said the club was riding the crest of a glorious wave.

"It was an unreal effort and something that doesn't happen very often," Vikionkorpi said.

"We only have the two grades so for both of us to go back-to-back is just an unbelievable effort. It's reflective of where the club is at and how far we've come. It's just a great club."

Vikionkorpi, who was the Muddies B Grade leading run-scorer for the season with over 400 runs, said the opportunity to achieve something unique started to dawn on the club leading into the finals series.

"In our last games before the semi-finals we really started thinking about settling the teams and getting a good balance," he said. "We definitely knew we had an opportunity to do something special as a club."



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CELEBRATING TWO YEARS OF STEEP!

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Curlews clock in for duty

BUSINESS FEATURE

Jamie Jansen

Two female Bush Stone-curlews, Josh and Wednesday, from Port Douglas have been sent on a rather important assignment to Phillip Island, Victoria, helping return their species to a place they vanished from decades ago.

The pair come from the Wildlife Habitat's Tropical Animal Rehabilitation Centre, where for more than 20 years staff have rescued and rehabilitated native wildlife, from sugar gliders to northern bettongs. Now, it's the curlews' turn to take centre stage.

In recent years, TARC's role has grown beyond rehabilitation, contributing to national conservation efforts, including the reintroduction of the Bush Stone-curlew to Phillip Island, where it has been extinct since the 1970s.

"Up here, people see them ev-



Wildlife Habitat carer Rebecca Lynch with Bush Stone-curlew Nugget. Picture: Jamie Jansen

erywhere, but in southern states they've struggled due to introduced predators like foxes," wildlife carer Rebecca Lynch said.

The species disappeared largely due to foxes, which preyed on ground-dwelling birds. Today, a rewilding program led by Phillip

Island Nature Parks, alongside the University of Canberra and partners across Australia, is working to bring them back.

Beyond curlews, the centre continues its wider conservation work.



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PUBLIC NOTICES



Join us this Easter for the Combined Churches Program across Mossman, Port Douglas & surrounds:

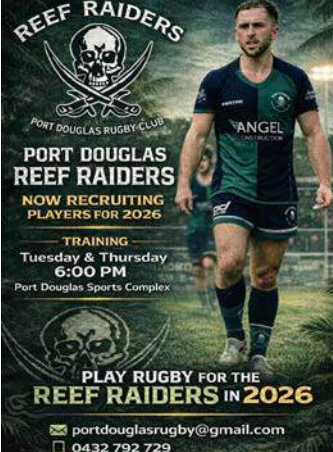
Sat 28 Mar – 9:30am Mossman Market Singing
Mon 30 Mar – 5:30pm Stations of the Cross (St David's, Mossman)
Maundy Thursday 2 Apr
• 5:30pm Anglican (St Andrew's, Pt Douglas)
• 6pm Catholic (St Augustine's, Mossman)

Good Friday 3 Apr
• 7:30am UCA (Mossman)
• 9:30am UCA (St Mary's by the Sea, Pt Douglas) & AOG (Mossman)
• 10:30am Salvation Army (Kubirri Aged Care)
• 9am–12pm Anglican Reflections + 3pm Service (St David's, Mossman)

• Catholic services incl. 3pm (St Augustine's, Mossman) + morning (St Mary's, Pt Douglas)
Sat 4 Apr
• 11am Seventh-day Adventist (Mossman)
• 5:30pm Generations (Pt Douglas)

Easter Sunday 5 Apr
• Catholic: 7am (Mossman), 9am (Pt Douglas)
• Anglican: 7:30am (Mossman), 9:30am (Pt Douglas)
• UCA: 8:45am (Mossman), 11am (Pt Douglas)
• AOG: 9:30am (Mossman)
• Julatten: 9:30am
• Salvation Army: 10:30am

All welcome — come celebrate together 🙌



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RISING LAND VALUES ARE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Sara Mulcahy

I don't get how the land value can double in 12 months and yet the house value stays the same. Maybe someone can explain that to me.

Janice Ruffles

I think the last time the State Land Valuation was done was in 2022, so you would say that land and house prices have increased since then.

Maureen Fraser

We are pensioners and our valuation doubled... how are we supposed to handle a rates rise?

Brad Cooper

Maybe Council is not to blame directly perhaps but no doubt want the extra \$ and these valuations are definitely the first step in letting owners know what's coming. How about push some subdivisions through and get some affordable blocks for first home buyers? This will increase rates by each block, will provide jobs and even out house prices which are to far out of reach for young first home buyers.

Lack of development since the Craiglie and Cooya subdivisions has pushed housing prices up. Put some incentives out there for developers and make it easier for land holders to subdivide, etc. For me I haven't seen a lot of activity in this area and yes the current council has inherited some infrastructure problem (water, etc) but can't live in that space for ever it's time to expand the town and provide these opportunities. Also there needs to be some change to stop developers buying up properties in town with the promise of developing the land/

infrastructure to then just sit on it and let it sit dormant.

Astrid Starseed

Well rates already when 2 x times.. they are quite expensive particularly compared with other similar areas.

IF THE ROAD IS SMASHED APART, THEN FORGET IT!

Lawrence Mason

Nobody walks a crossing any more. Might explain a few of the accidents.

Christopher Saint

Floodwits.

Allen Lavender

Really? There was a need to remind? ENDLESS - sigh.

Katrina Trice

Wowser where's that?

SNAKE STANDS IN WAY OF RESCUE WORKERS

Ron Geary

Just a taste of the north.

Pete Best

Wow you live in the area and don't know it is a brown tree snake? Cut it out, you are just stirring things up. Zero risk to FF's with their PPC. Yes there are other snakes around but these are pretty easy to work out. I am a South Aussie & we don't even get these here & I knew what it was from the photo!

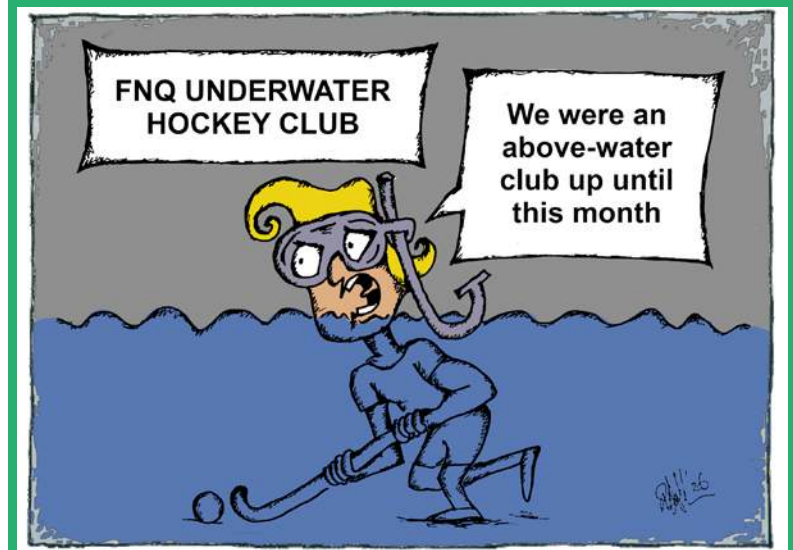
Newsport Editor - The species of snake is made clear in the story.

Felix Prince

It's a harmless tree snake you prawn.

James Rich

I've seen plenty of them up here, basically harmless.



From the Holster



Shaun Hollis brings you a lighter look at local news.

Ad Leslie

Not really a rude shock, given the snake was just chilling by the water.

TOUR OPERATOR HIT WITH SECOND WHAMMY

JB Blockey

North of Daintree River residents and businesses have been spared property damage, but the consequence of the ferry outage is enormous.

Looming is the Easter kick-off for the tourism season, and it looks increasingly likely that the ferry may not be operational much before that, or not even...

This will be a huge loss for the Daintree, when every tourism business is clinging on with hope that they can push through for Easter. Meanwhile there's not a lot of repair activity obvious on the ferry. Where is the sense of urgency?

To add salt to the wound, pretty

well all grants and assistance is useless for the Daintree as we did not experience actual damage to property. So we're "on our own", quite literally.

For the Cape Trib community, it is highly reminiscent of Jasper, where we were cut off for 3.5 months with no tourism trade, and much the same issue with govt grants & loans ,etc.

Vicki Bidwell

Don't want to take away from anyone that has been damage affected, but this ferry outage is screwing us beyond belief. As if this time of year doesn't have its downfalls. If council could just give us a definite time frame and put our restless minds to rest and start planning on our own recovery.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Send your letters and comments to editor@newsport.com.au or post comments on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

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SOCIALS

Those following the Port Douglas Irish tradition of Cafe Fresq followed by Paddys bar were in fine form on Tuesday, March 17, for St Patrick's Day. Last Saturday, a small crowd turned out to watch an internal trial game of the Crocs AFL team in Port Douglas. Pictures: Shaun Hollis



Dianne King and Linda Simpson at Paddys.



Emily Oakey, Imagen Nash and Ruth Beaumont at Paddys.



Amelia Corneby, Robyn Gallen and Amelia Rockliff at the Crocs trial game.



Logan Buzza, Joanie Conway, Joe Fagan, Aoife Conway and Rosie Jones at Cafe Fresq.



John Liddell, Paul Scott and Rusty Bradley at the Crocs trial game.



Dalton Wall, Brooklyn Hunt and Lily Marsden at the Crocs trial game.

WHAT'S ON

MAR 26 **Trivia Night**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

MAR 26 **Trivia with Supa Sal and Wevs**
Time: 7pm-8.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

MAR 27 **Family Movie Night**
Time: 5pm-7pm
Location: Pinjarra Place 3-7 Mill Street, Mossman QLD 4873

MAR 27 **Social Dancing**
Time: 6.30pm-9.30pm
Location: Pullman Sea Temple Port Douglas

MAR 27 **Bingo Night With KStar**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

MAR 27 **Rockin' Rick Karaoke**
Time: 7.30pm-10.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

MAR 28 **Mossman Market Easter Singing**
Time: 9.30am-10.30am
Location: Mossman Markets, St David grounds, Mossman

MAR 28 **Author Talk**
Time: 10am-11am
Location: Mossman Library

MAR 28 **Waves - Skate Art & DJ Sets**
Time: 4pm-10pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

MAR 29 **Rowly Duo**
Time: 1pm-4pm
Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

MAR 30 **Hole In One Jackpot Competition**
Time: 10am-6pm
Location: Daddyshack Indoor Golf, Grant St, Port Douglas

MAR 31 **Indonesian Night**
Time: 5pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

APR 2 **Trivia Night**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

APR 2 **Four Mile Beach Monthly Clean-up**
Time: 1pm-4pm
Location: Daintree Lounge at the Sheraton Grand Mirage, Port Douglas

APR 2 **Bingo with K-Star**
Time: 7pm-8.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

APR 3 **Bingo Night With KStar**
Time: 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

APR 5 **Easter Buffet**
Time: 5pm-7.30pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

APR 6 **Hole In One Jackpot Competition**
Time: 10am - 6pm
Location: Daddyshack Indoor Golf, Grant St, Port Douglas

APR 7 **Indonesian Night**
Time: 5pm - 8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

APR 9 **Trivia Night**
Time: 6.30pm - 8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

APR 9 **Trivia with Supa Sal and Wevs**
Time: 7pm - 8.30pm
Location: Club Mossman

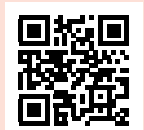
APR 10 **Bingo Night With KStar**
Time: 6.30pm - 8pm
Location: 3Sixteen Bar & Bistro at Ramada Resort, Port Douglas

REAL ESTATE

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OPEN HOME
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Friday March 27
12pm
Raine & Horne

OPEN HOME
1 Mountain View Drive, Shannonnvale
Saturday March 28
10am
Raine & Horne



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Savannah headliners

Shaun Hollis

Aussie rock band Icehouse and US singer-songwriter Don McLean have been revealed as headline acts for Mareeba's Savannah in the Round festival this October following the first band announcement this week.

Other top-liners to be announced include Mental as Anything, San Cisco, Ganggajang, Lee Kernaghan, Busby Marou, and Ian Moss and Troy Cassar-Daley.

Other festival favourites returning to Far North Queensland include Max Jackson and The Wolfe Brothers.

Led by Iva Davies, Icehouse songs such as Great Southern Land, Electric Blue and Crazy are all Aussie favourites, while McLean is the name behind global hits such as American Pie, Vincent (Starry, Starry Night) and Castles in the Air.

Mental as Anything has produced hit songs such as Live It Up, The Nips Are Getting Bigger and If You Leave Me, Can I Come Too.

Festival director James Dein said the event continues to grow.

"These headline acts set the tone for the entire weekend," Dein said.

"They are artists people will travel for, and they sit at the centre of a program that is designed to deliver four full days of live music and entertainment."

Last year Savannah in the Round was believed to deliver more than \$7.4m to Mareeba Shire, largely driven by visitors travelling from outside the region and staying



Singer-songwriter Don McLean and Aussie band Icehouse will play Mareeba in October. Pictures: Supplied

multiple nights. The festival attracted close to 12,000 visitors and more than 30,000 attendances across four days.

State Tourism Minister Andrew Powell said the event is set to contribute about \$12.7m into the state coffers this year.

"Savannah in the Round continues to demonstrate the strength of Queensland's regional events calendar, drawing more than 10,000 visitors to the region, and delivering strong economic benefits," he

said. Other acts announced this week are Bachelor Girl, Chocolate Starfish, Wade Forster, Taylor Moss, The Road Hammers, Dan Davidson, Brooke McClymont and Adam Eckersley, Rachael Fahim, Tom Busby, Tori Darke, Jayne Denham, Hindley Street Country Club, Robbie Mortimer, Catherine Britt, James Blundell, Slim Dusty's Travelling Country Band - Pete Denahy, Hussy Hicks, The Pleasures, 19-Twenty, Hillbilly Goats, Billy Vincent, Mackenzie May, Bondi

Cigars, Luke Geiger, Roadtrippers, Jeremy Fletcher Band, Three Fires Show, Saltheds and Jarrad Wrigley - Toyota Star Maker.

Savannah in the Round is on at Mareeba Rodeo Grounds from October 8-11.

Further artists will be announced in the coming months, with ticket and camping information available at savannahintheround.com.au.

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CHASING A FOOTY DREAM



Shaun Hollis

He's not about to get carried away just yet - he is still only 14 years old - But junior Port Douglas Croc Zac Moore has been making some good strides in the pursuit of every young footballer's dream, to play at the highest level of Aussie rules football.

Zac this month attended the Suns Academy training camp in Townsville, where about 45 young AFL hopefuls from across Far North Queensland gathered for a weekend under-16s workshop. He made it through that test, and will join Academy juniors next month on the Gold Coast for the statewide camp.

"I got selected to go to the Gold Coast on the seventh of April," Zac says.

He is playing for the Crocs under-15s and "hopefully playing up in the under-17s", but is not getting ahead of himself in terms of AFL.

"It's a long time to go," Zac says.

"I'm thankful my dad and brother and seniors coach here, they've helped me a lot."

Zac's dad Daniel is a three-time Crocs premiership player and an assistant coach at the club, his brother Zayne made his senior debut at age 15, and seniors coach Brad Cooper is also heavily involved in his development.

Crocs junior Zac Moore will soon head to the Gold Coast to train with the Suns Academy. Picture: Shaun Hollis

BRIEFS

RUGBY LEAGUE

Mossman Sharks went down to Yarrabah Sea Hawks 20-32 in the first round of the Far North Queensland Rugby League competition on the weekend.

Former Innisfail Leprechaun Kieshon Hunter-Flanders scored two tries, while Latrell Heard and Jarvis Connolly both finished with one. Hunter-Flanders only managed one of four conversions, but did make a penalty kick.

This Saturday Mossman hosts Tully Tigers from 6pm at Coronation Park Tully lost to Innisfail 8-28 in the opening round.

INDOOR GOLF

Matt and Joe will play against Dave and Rhys on Pebble Beach across 18 holes of Matchplay Ambrose in the Grand Final of the Daddyshack league.

Matt and Joe outplayed Doug and Jamie in the first semifinal by getting three points on the first five holes, followed by a four-pointer on the par five 15th hole on Augusta. A par on the 16th hole was enough to get them the victory.

In the second semi Dave and Rhys continued their great play against the early ladder leaders Tim and Peter.

The match was tight, and both teams hit the ball to a few feet on the 16th hole for birdies.

The early holes got them the win, as both teams scored the same down the closing stretch.

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