South Burnett Regional Council Announces Australia Day Award Winners

The South Burnett Regional Council announced the 2010 Australia Day Award Winners at the region’s official awards ceremony held on the eve of Australia Day, Monday 25 January, at Wondai Memorial Hall.

The ceremony kicked off with a flag party conducted by the 135 Army Cadet Unit which was followed by the Australian National Anthem, sung by local talent Jacinta Firth, and official opening and welcome by Mayor David Carter.

Mr Chris Trevor MP, Member for Flynn, and Mr Jeff Seeney MP, Member for Callide, were among the hundreds of people in attendance for the ceremony.

Mayor David Carter heartily congratulated both winners and nominees and said he wished to strongly express his thanks to the community for supporting these awards.

Mayor David Carter said “Having your name put forward for one of these prestigious awards is a great honour and indicates the high level of recognition and appreciation from your local community. I hope that both our winners and our nominees are very proud of their achievements and I want to sincerely thank our community for their support.”

An Australian Citizenship Ceremony was also incorporated into the 2010 ceremony, with Mrs Louise Harrison of Kingaroy taking her pledge and officially gaining Australian Citizenship. The ceremony was conducted by Mayor David Carter with assistance from Mr Chris Trevor MP, Member for Flynn.

The 2010 South Burnett Region Australia Day Award winners are as follows:-

- South Burnett Citizen of the Year: Louise Judge
- Kingaroy Citizen of the Year: Debbie Jackson
- Murgon Citizen of the Year: Raelene Dennis
- Nanango Citizen of the Year: John Atkins
- Wondai Citizen of the Year: Lyn Manthey
- South Burnett Young Citizen of the Year: Melissa Crawford
- Kingaroy Young Citizen of the Year: Jessica Case
- Murgon Young Citizen of the Year: Andrea Taylor
- Nanango Young Citizen of the Year: Lauren Hume
- Wondai Young Citizen of the Year: Pascha Robbins
South Burnett Community Event of the Year  Bloomin' Beautiful Blackbutt Festival
South Burnett Small Communities Award  Kumbia Historical Society
South Burnett Cultural Award  Kingaroy Eisteddfod Inc.
South Burnett Junior Sports Person of the Year  Shaylissa Rout
South Burnett Senior Sports Person of the Year  Joel Smallwood
South Burnett Sports Administrator of the Year  Eddie Krauksts

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SOUTH BURNETT CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – LOUISE JUDGE

Louise Judge has made an incredible contribution to the entire South Burnett community through both her role as the Manager of the South Burnett Community Development Fund, part of the Catholic diocese, and as a voluntary member of numerous community organisations.

Louise has been a driving force behind many community programs and initiatives and has worked hard to secure funding and grants to benefit large numbers of people and communities in need across the South Burnett, particularly those people who are socially disadvantaged, physically disabled, homeless, women in domestic violence situations and abused children, among others.

Louise’s memberships with community groups and organisations stretches far and wide and includes current President of the Kingaroy State School P&C Association, current Secretary of the Kingaroy State High School P&C Association, current Canteen Convenor of the Kingaroy Netball Association, current board member of the South Burnett District Health Service, member of the Regional Mental Health Committee, member of the Regional Women’s Network, member of the Regional Community Housing Committee and a host of others.

Louise serves the wider community with astounding vigour and a serious passion for helping those in need.

KINGAROY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – DEBBIE JACKSON

Debbie Jackson has been a major contributor to the local communities of Kingaroy and Kumbia for many years, due to her many memberships and long list of achievements.

Debbie has served as both a member and is currently the President of the Kingaroy State High School P&C Association, where she has led a number of major enterprises including the development. These include construction of the South Burnett Mart Auction and leading the 50th Anniversary Celebrations for the Kingaroy State High School in August of last year, an event which involved two years of planning and brought over 1500 people back to Kingaroy.

During Debbie’s time as P&C president, the association has completely repaid the loan for the school’s multimillion dollar Indoor Sports Centre and Debbie is now actively focusing on fundraising for a Performing Arts Complex.

Debbie has held a long involvement with the Kumbia community, being a valued member of the State School’s P&C where she was the instigator of the Kumbia Brain Drain, the school’s major fundraiser. Debbie organised this event for more than ten years whilst her children attended this school.

In addition to her long list of achievements, Debbie devotes an admirable amount of time to the sporting community through her role as ground announcer for the Kingaroy Junior Rugby League for many years as well as being actively involved and serving as President with Kingaroy Netball in the early 1990’s.
MURGON CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – RAELENE DENNIS

Raelene Dennis' commitment to the community started early in life, having won herself the prestigious Murgon Young Citizen of the Year Award in her earlier days. Those close to her knew that this was just the beginning of Raelene's relationship with the Murgon community.

Raelene has held a large number of memberships and positions including President of the Murgon Hospital Auxiliary for 15 years, member of the St Joseph School Murgon Fete Committee for ten years, President of the Murgon Shake’N’Grape Festival and Light Parade, President of the Murgon Centenary Celebrations, member of the Olympic Games Welcome Committee and member of the Australia Day Committee.

In addition to this long list of achievements Raelene is a current volunteer at the Murgon Visitor Information Centre, Apex Blood Bank and Queensland Dairy & Heritage Museum Kid’s Kaper Committee. Raelene is also a current member of the Rotary Club of Murgon.

Raelene has been described by her community as inspirational. Her ability to coordinate a fundraiser or major community event is nothing short of remarkable and her long list of achievements suggests she is tireless in her quest to provide benefits for her community.

NANANGO CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – JOHN ATKINS

John Atkins’ achievements are many and varied. His passions for fundraising at local, national and international levels, love of horticulture and commitment to the community through his long involvement with the Lions Club have led to great benefits for the Blackbut, Nanango and surrounding districts since John’s arrival in the South Burnett in 1992.

John’s major achievements include acting as a driving force behind local fundraising for the Lions International Tsunami Appeal in 2005 as well as the Victorian Bush Fires & North Queensland Floods of 2009. Further, John worked hard to establish the inaugural Lions Garden and Country Lifestyle Expo in Blackbut and to form the Blackbut and Benarkin Garden Club.

Since moving to Benarkin, John has continued his heavy involvement with the Lions Club but has also held membership with many other community focused organisations including the Blackbut & District Heritage Association Inc., the Blackbut RSL Sub Branch, the Yarraman & District Qld Ambulance Management Committee and held the position of Pastor for a time with the South Burnett Revival Centres.

WONDAI CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – LYN MANTHEY

Originally a teacher at the Proston State School, Lyn Manthey is a well known and well respected member of the Proston community.

Her demonstrated dedication to serving her community through her memberships with the Proston Show Society, Proston Swimming Club and Proston Meals on Wheels makes her a worthy recipient of this prestigious award.

In addition to her commitments with these local community groups Lyn makes it her duty to visit the elderly at Castra Retirement Home every month as well as visiting the homes of people who are unwell in and around the Proston area.

Lyn also knits clothes for premature babies and engages other volunteers to help her, sending the completed clothing to the Royal Brisbane Women’s Hospital, where it is much needed.

The community has described Lynn’s efforts as tireless and while she has officially retired, they claim she works every day towards the benefit of others.
SOUTH BURNETT YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – MELISSA CRAWFORD

Melissa Crawford has demonstrated remarkable devotion to her community, school and the Queensland Country Women's Association. Melissa has dedicated countless hours of her time to coordinating her school’s Shave for a Cure Fundraiser in 2007, volunteering for Meals on Wheels, volunteering at the Canowindra Aged Care Centre and participating in the centre’s door knock appeal, volunteering at the Kingaroy Visitor Information Centre, volunteering with First Aid Training with St John’s Ambulance, tutoring other students at university and has held membership in many social, welfare and media committees at her high school including the fundraising Chaplaincy Committee.

In addition to Melissa’s extraordinarily long list of volunteer work, Melissa has also made firm contribution to the Queensland Country Women’s Association by fulfilling the role of President of the Younger Set for 3 years, is currently the State Deputy Leader of the Younger Set and has helped to coordinate the opening of 3 new Younger Sets in 2010.

Melissa’s achievements have been recognised by many and to that end she has won a number of awards including the QCWA Senior Younger Setter of the Year 2008/2009, QCWA Miss Personality of Younger Set Leadership School 2008/2009, a Gold Service to School Award, the Australian Defence Force Leadership and Teamwork Award, Heritage Building Society Award through the school’s Active Citizen program and was nominated for the Australian Student Citizenship Award in 2007.

Melissa has further demonstrated strong dedication and commitment to her community by fulfilling the role of flag bearer at the town’s ANZAC Day commemoration service for the past five years.

KINGAROY YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – JESSICA CASE

Jessica Case held the position of School Captain and President of the Student Council at the Kingaroy State High School, positions in which she excelled and made a fine role model for the school community. Jessica has led and been involved with a broad range of school and community activities including the school’s 50th Anniversary Celebrations, ANZAC Day, Food and Wine in the Park and the Flair Concert.

Jessica was awarded with the 2009 Rotary Shield for Service and Leadership and also won the Seven Local News Youth Journo Search 2009.

In addition to her many achievements, Jessica also has a strong focus on sport having been involved in cross country, volleyball, touch football, junior golf, the Kingaroy Swimming Club, netball and dancing. Jessica also participated in and raised valuable funds for Relay for Life.

MURGON YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – ANDREA TAYLOR

Throughout her school years, Andrea Taylor has achieved at the highest levels. Winning many academic awards in the fields of citizenship, agriculture, business communications, home economics and hospitality, her proudest achievement to date was the honour of being named the 2009 Dux of Murgon State High School.

As President of the Murgon State High School Agricultural Committee, Andrea organised numerous fundraising activities which resulted in over $1,000 being raised to assist with the purchase of much needed new work shirts for the school’s Show Team as well as helping to fund excursions.

Andrea has served as a remarkable ambassador for the school’s Agricultural Department, reporting on their activities and achievements in the school newsletter, the Murgon Moments community newsletter and the local newspaper.

Andrea hopes to become a Primary School teacher with the aim of teaching in Western Australia, where her strong passion for cattle and agriculture will surely benefit the children she teaches.
Andrea has achieved much publicity for her many achievements and is a well respected member of the Murgon community and a worthy recipient of this award.

**NANANGO YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – LAUREN HUME**

Lauren Hume has strong ties with the sporting community, her list of sporting achievements is almost endless.

Lauren has represented the South Burnett and Wide Bay Teams in a variety of sports, including cricket, swimming, cross country, soccer, softball, touch football and athletics. She has played for and captained teams at local, state and national levels.

Her major achievements to date include being awarded the South Burnett Rising Star Women’s Soccer Award, the Nanango Cricket Club’s Harold Larwood Award, was the youngest ever recipient of the Wide Bay Primary School Sports Person of the Year and was presented with the Roy Wenchsel Shield.

A magnificent ambassador for her community, Lauren has inspired and encouraged other girls in the South Burnett to take up sports, particularly soccer and cricket.

**WONDAI YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – PASCHA ROBBINS**

Pascha Robbins is currently fulfilling the role of School Captain at the Wondai State School P-10, a role in which Pascha diligently carries out her duties and is recognised as a strong leader, committed to all of the student population.

Amongst her major achievements, Pascha recently presented a speech in Parliament House after accepting the BP Junior Landcare Award on behalf of her school. She has recently attended a meeting with a senior executive from the Port of Brisbane after accepting an award for the school’s work in the field of sustainability, and was heavily involved in the school’s highly awarded Permaculture Garden project. Pascha was a member of the school’s winning Sustainable Living Challenge team, in which only nine schools nationally were recognised for their work through the University of New South Wales.

In addition to this long list of achievements, Pascha was also the recipient of the Australian Defence Force Long Tan award in 2009.

**SOUTH BURNETT COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – BLOOMIN’ BEAUTIFUL BLACKBUTT FESTIVAL**

The Bloomin’ Beautiful Blackbutt Festival is a new event to the region with their inaugural festival being held in September 2009.

The festival was a massive hit with locals and attracted swarms of tourists to the area with more than 1,200 people attending the two day event.

A joint venture of the Blackbutt Benarkin Garden Club and the Friends of Cultcha group, the event achieved their shared goal of attracting tourists to the community, creating enormous benefit for the area economically. In addition to showcasing the skills of local horticulturalists and artists within the region the events raised more than $6,500 which will be fed back into the community.

Major events like these are vital in ensuring a healthy future for our tourism industry, something that the South Burnett prides itself on and that is a major enterprise for the region, bringing millions of dollars into the area year after year.
SOUTH BURNETT SMALL COMMUNITIES AWARD – KUMBIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

With Queensland celebrating its 150th birthday last year, the Kumbia Historical Society took it upon themselves to secure state government funding available under the Q150 program and to set up a display at the Kumbia Museum titled “A Tribute to Women”.

This very detailed display embraced the lives, work and pioneering spirit of women in the past and the part they played in building our community, commencing with the settlement of Taabinga Station through to the resumption and settlement of blocks in 1908.

The many accounts and stories that form part of this historic display will become a permanent record for generations to come.

In addition to this achievement, the Kumbia Historical Society has established a federation heritage centre to house and display the E.H. Mears historical photographic collection, some 1,300 negatives. In these photos, the history of Kumbia and surrounding areas is depicted and preserved for all to see.

The society holds an annual “Back to Kumbia” weekend to celebrate the history of the district. The weekend includes many and varied activities and culminates with an ecumenical church service on the Sunday.

SOUTH BURNETT CULTURAL AWARD – KINGAROY EISTEDDFOD INC.

The Kingaroy Eisteddfod is an annual event, aiming to encourage persons of all ages to showcase their talents in the fields of dance, speech and drama, vocal, keyboard, instrumental and literary performance.

The eisteddfod makes a huge contribution to the cultural life of the South Burnett, attracting competitors from not only all over the region but also from all over South East Queensland.

The eisteddfod promotes a strong community interest and participation in the arts throughout the different generations, and has been supporting the community since 1932, a fantastic achievement.

SOUTH BURNETT JUNIOR SPORTS PERSON OF THE YEAR – SHAYLISSA ROUT

Shay Rout has studiously applied herself to the game of golf from just three years of age. She has consistently competed beyond her age group and works hard to continually improve upon her own skills.

At the age of just six Shay started playing nine hole competition and by the age of nine had started competition in 18 hole team events. At just nine years of age Shay won the Kumbia Ladies Carnival Overall, an extraordinary achievement for someone so young.

Among her major achievements from the past two years are:-

- Winner of the Ken Mills Toyota Golf against 80 other players
- Winner of the Carrolllee Hotel Open Day against 15 ladies
- Winner of the Petro Fuels Straight Event in 2008 against 15 ladies
- Placing 2nd at the Vanity Fairways Mystery Trip at North Lakes Resort Golf Club against 100 other players
- Outdrove all 20 men in a driving competition for the Relay for Life Charity Day at Kingaroy Golf Club
- Winner of the women’s 4-some Championship at Kingaroy Golf Club against 15 ladies
- Winner of the Kingaroy Junior Classic against 2 Sunshine Coast 18 hole girls
- Winner of the Tarong Energy Power Station Day overall Division 1 against 8 ladies.

Shay has worked hard to reduce her handicap and at the age of just 17, she has an impressive handicap of just nine. Shay’s ambition is to reduce her handicap to five within three months to qualify to play PGA Masters in America.

NB: The winner of the South Burnett Junior Sports Person of the Year award also receives the Matthew Hayden Bursary, a $1,000 cheque to help further the recipient’s sporting career.

SOUTH BURNETT SENIOR SPORTS PERSON OF THE YEAR – JOEL SMALLWOOD

Joel Smallwood has been playing rugby league for more than 20 years, during which time he has represented the areas of South Burnett, Wide Bay and Ipswich. Joel is currently playing for the Bushrangers in the Ipswich competition and has been a vital part of the team since its inception in 2006.

Prior to the formation of the Bushrangers, Joel was a member of the Ipswich Jets playing in the Queensland Cup – a competition acknowledged as one of the best in Australia, second only to the NRL.

Joel’s community have described him as a great role model and ambassador for the game. His conduct on and off the field are exemplary and he is an inspiration to all within the sporting community.

SOUTH BURNETT SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR – EDDIE KRAUKSTS

Eddie Krauksts has a long standing commitment and devotion to the sporting community. This has been firmly demonstrated by his involvement in the Nanango Junior and Senior Cricket Clubs who have recently amalgamated, his involvement spanning more than 12 years in total. Throughout this time Eddie has fulfilled various roles including his current role of President and former roles of Treasurer and Secretary.

Eddie is a strong supporter of the Young Achievement Australia Scheme and to that end is a member of the Nanango Junior Football and Junior Soccer clubs, lending much of his own time to coaching various junior teams.

Local sport in this region has developed significantly due to Eddie’s enthusiasm and community efforts, making him a worthy recipient of this award.

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