



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Locals in the spotlight**

Each year our region celebrates the achievements and contribution of locals through the Australia Day NT Council Local Government Awards.

At special ceremonies in communities throughout the region audiences heard stories about citizens who inspire us through their achievements and challenge us to make our own contribution to creating a better Barkly.

Up at Battery Hill in Tennant Creek, Helen Kempe and Jennifer Kitching won top honours, taking out the Senior Citizen and Citizen of the Year Awards respectively.

Jennifer, who was in NSW visiting family and friends, received the Citizen of the Year award for her tireless work over the years helping countless people in Tennant Creek and remote communities.

She has always been there to assist with financial, legal and discriminatory matters, lending a hand with government department applications, donating extra money, goods, clothes, food, a hot meal and craft supplies, helping young sportspeople with their travel plans and offering a friendly ear and cup of tea when needed.

Over the years Jenny has worked hard to promote the Saturday morning markets and has served on many boards and committees including Rotary, the Tennant Creek Women's Refuge, Barkly Regional Arts, the Central Australian Craft Council and the Tennant Creek Darts Association.

Jenny's title is a token of appreciation for the way she is always thinking of ways to benefit the community as well as her own positive role modelling.

Senior Citizen of the Year went to Helen Kempe who throughout her life has been an active supporter of the community and community events, playing critical roles in organising and running activities such as rodeos, camp drafts, exhibitions and markets.

Helen has also been a central point of contact for people on isolated cattle stations when supplies have been required, errands in town need to be taken care of and light planes need to be met at the airport.



She has continually contributed to the community and the surrounding pastoral stations through her work with the Country Women's Association, the Tennant Creek Saddle Horse Club, the ABC Amateur Race Club, the RSL, Rotary, Barkly Ladies Day, Battery Hill Mining Centre, Tennant Creek & District Show Society and the Isolated Children's and Parents Association.

Young Citizen of the Year went to Tristan Duggie. A Student and Family Support officer for the NTG's Department of Education, Tristan plays a vital role in assisting Aboriginal students from remote communities to transition to school life.

He is exceptionally community-minded, regularly participating in local events, including the annual Mungkarta One Dream One Ride, and throughout 2017 continued to develop and mature into a leader for his community.

He represented the Northern Territory and the Barkly in an educational exchange tour of the United States through the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples. Tristan has managed to cross both cultural and geographic barriers to become a role model in contemporary society while maintaining and nurturing traditional Aboriginal customs and culture.

Community Event of the Year was presented to Country Women's Association Tennant Creek Branch for Dust Clouds on the Horizon, an extraordinary event that took locals back in time.

The two-day event and exhibition held in June last year commemorated the Bombing of Darwin and included the re-enactment army convoys rolling into Tennant Creek in 1940.

On the first day guests were served lunch, reflecting the soldier's hearty fare – corned beef sandwiches, scones, rock cakes and piping hot tea and coffee in metal pannikins. The next day the CWA ladies regaled themselves in 1940s hats and frocks to host a sumptuous high tea in direct contrast to the homespun fare served to the troops.

Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Meg McGrath, who over the years has provided valuable volunteer secretarial support for the Tennant Creek Women's Refuge Board including taking part in events and open days.

Without Meg's valuable support the Tennant Creek Transport Committee would not have survived. She regularly volunteers her time for this committee and even obtained her 'H' endorsement licence to drive buses for special events and charters.

Meg also provides volunteer support to Barkly Regional Arts for their annual Desert Harmony Festival, and works on a volunteer basis every Saturday morning at the Uniting Church Op Shop on the main street.



Other awards included Sportsperson of the Year (Male) which was presented to Bronson Plummer in honour of his sports prowess in basketball. The Tennant Creek-born youngster recently entered the world sporting stage with a recent basketball tour in the United States.

Sylvania Shannon Kenny was Sportsperson of the Year (Female) in recognition of her representing the Barkly and the Northern Territory for a number of different sports, including softball and athletics. Aside from her sporting abilities Sylvania is also a team player, an all-rounder and has a fantastic positive attitude.

Student Awards, awarded by the Northern Territory Government's Department of Education, were also presented on the day to Lachlan Dunemann, Nelson Kurniawan and Summa Hansen.

Lachlan has demonstrated both athletic prowess and great sportsmanship. A friendly and supportive peer, he shows a real sense of fair play and a generosity of spirit both on and off the field.

Nelson is a kind, thoughtful and determined student and community citizen, representing Tennant Creek at various math and science camps and competitions. A hard worker, he also is a great entertainer and spreads joy wherever he goes.

Summa received the award for her kind and generous spirit, and friendly manner. Known to go out of her way to help fellow students, teachers and members of the community, she does everything with enthusiasm and to the best of her abilities.

Mayor Steve Edgington said at the Australia Day Awards ceremony that what he had noticed was the growing recognition of young people in the awards. "This is so important. They are our future and they need to be nurtured and encouraged to be the best that they can be as they mature into young adults," he said.

"Youngsters need role models and seeing their peers recognised for showing team spirit, doing the best they can, and encouraging and helping others is a major step forward."

Up In Elliott, Citizen of the Year went to Bessie Bathern, Young Citizen of the Year to Chad Bill, Community Event of the Year to Elliott Women's Basketball and Sportsperson of the Year Donald Raymond. In Arlparra, Donald Thompson won Senior Citizen of the Year, and in Ampilatwatja the Young Citizen of the Year went to Esiah Ngwarai Jones.

For more information, contact the PR Manager Ktima Heathcote on 08 8962 0027.