



# Newsletter



December 2016

## President's Message

### Bushfire Season

A reminder that the Shire is now in the "Prohibited" phase of the fire season meaning that any open fire burning is highly restricted and regulated. Serious fines apply to anyone not complying with the requirements, let alone the potential risk to life and property. Please contact the Shire for advice should you still need to burn off for any reason.

The Shire has a mobile phone SMS service available to let residents know if a fire and hot works ban is in place so please call the Shire on 9622 6100 if you want to register for that "free" service. Some telephone providers may charge a fee for this SMS. The phone number for all fire emergencies is 000.

### Strategic Community Plan Consultation

The Shire adopted the 10 year Strategic Community Plan in 2012. As we approach the half way mark in the life of the Plan it is time to revisit it to ensure that it still accurately reflects the community's aspirations. We will be asking the community to give us their views on their priorities for the Shire.

### Northam Aboriginal and Environmental Interpretive Centre

The Shire was successful in receiving a \$2m grant from LotteryWest which will enable us to continue towards the construction of this centre. Tenders for the construction of the facility are open and the Shire is hoping to make a decision on the successful tender in December.

### Road Safety Message

I urge all drivers to familiarise themselves with the current road rules and drive accordingly, too many lives are lost on our roads.

### Community Planning

Continuing with the theme of strategic planning, the next iteration of the Wundowie plan is nearing finalisation and will soon be released to the community for final comments before adoption by the Shire.

Planning has commenced for the Bakers Hill Community Plan. The Shire is working with the Bakers Hill Progress Association who is planning a 'community event to launch the commencement of the Plan.

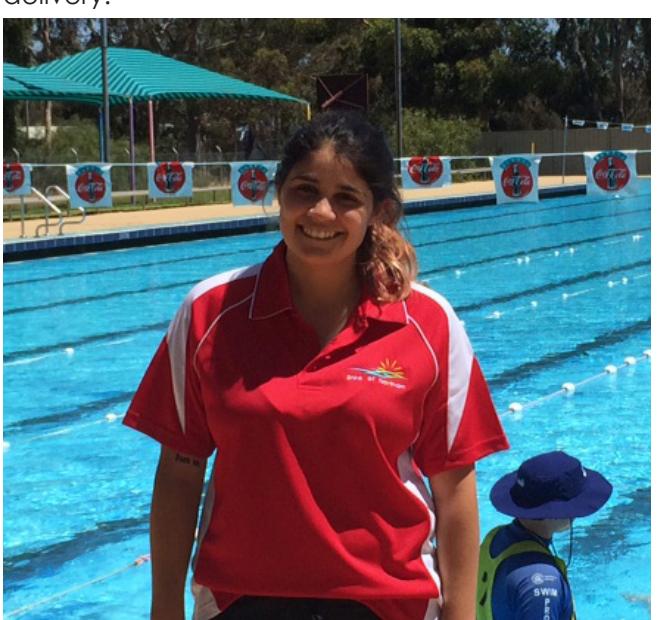
Thank you,  
Steven Pollard, President, Shire of Northam

### Wundowie Local Completes Traineeship

Wundowie local Grace Smith is the first Shire employee to complete the training in Shire of Northam's Pool Managers' succession program.

Grace was identified as an employee with all the attributes that would enable her to be successful in recreation management. The Shire offered to support her to obtain formal qualifications in Pool Management, an opportunity Grace was eager to accept. In November Grace completed her qualification as a Pool Manager.

Regional councils struggle to attract and retain staff in recreation and aquatic positions, with the Shire of Northam no exception. Through the support of talented staff, the Shire hopes to improve service delivery.



### \$2M LotteryWest Grant for AEIC

The Shire of Northam has received \$2m from LotteryWest to assist with the construction and interpretive fitout of the Aboriginal and Environmental Interpretive Centre in Northam.

The Interpretive Centre will be located adjacent to the Northam Visitor Centre on the Avon River. It will be developed as a regional tourist attraction which offers an interactive educational experience recognising the rich Aboriginal and environmental heritage in the Northam and wider Balladong area.

The Centre will offer an opportunity to apply Aboriginal knowledge to environmental programs to develop innovative approaches to land management incorporating traditional land practices. It will provide a place where we can celebrate the importance of our natural environment and the Aboriginal culture of the area.

Chief Executive Officer Jason Whiteaker said "With funding being received from LotteryWest, the Interpretive Centre has now attracted a total of \$4.4m of external funding, including \$2.1m from the Commonwealth Governments National Stronger Regions Fund and \$300,000 from the Royalties for Regions Wheatbelt Regional Grant Scheme."

### Award for Volunteer Emergency Service Support

The Shire of Northam has become one of 22 Gold Award recipients across the State joining companies such as Rio Tinto in winning the prestigious Volunteer Employer Recognition Award from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

A total of 68 awards were won across the categories of bronze, silver and gold. Gold award winners demonstrated the highest levels of commitment to supporting staff to leave work to attend emergency service call outs.

Shire of Northam Chief Executive Office, Jason Whiteaker, said the Council is a strong advocate and supporter of volunteerism.

"We are focused on providing a work environment which recognises people have a life outside of the job. Volunteering is such an important part of rural communities that it simply makes good sense to provide some level of flexibility to our employees. In saying that it isn't open slather either, we ask our employees to recognise that their role with us is a priority and there may be sometimes that we can't accommodate their volunteer commitments."

### Strategic Community Plan 2012-2022

Concurrent with the development of community plans for the Shire's regional centres is an initiative to review the Shire's overarching Strategic Community Plan.

The Northam Strategic Community Plan 2012 to 2022 is the Shire's principal planning document for the Shire over the next ten years. It acts as an umbrella under which regional community plans and a host of other planning documents for specific areas of Shire policy, operations and budget sit.

Consultants Integral Development has been appointed to develop the Plan which is expected to be completed in April next year.

Residents will be provided with ample opportunity to contribute to the plan through a range of consultative processes.

### Pop Up Shop Opportunity

The Shire of Northam is seeking expressions of interest from new businesses who may be interested in establishing themselves in the Northam Central Business District.

This is part of a current initiative to revitalise the Northam CBD and bring life into the area, particularly on weekends.

In order to attract new business to Northam, the Shire is offering a main-street shop front for an agreed 'rent free' period. Applicants will need to comply with a number of conditions such as not directly competing with an existing established business and holding an intention to establish permanently.

The initiative provides new businesses with the opportunity to test their market concept over an agreed period of time, generally between 0 – 3 months.

Interested parties are encouraged to contact the Shire's Manager Planning Services, Mr Kobus Nieuwoudt on (08) 9622 6100 to discuss eligibility for the Shire's Pop up Shop.

### Northam Shire - A Golden Place to Work

The Shire of Northam has become one of seven local governments statewide to win a prestigious Healthier Workplace WA Gold Award.

Healthier Workplace WA is part of the Healthy Workers Initiative, a joint Australian, State and Territory Government initiative under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health. The programme is delivered by the Heart Foundation WA in conjunction with Cancer Council WA and the University of Western Australia.

Healthier Workplace WA offers a range of tools and advisory services to assist WA businesses to implement healthy workplace practices.

Some of the initiatives the Shire of Northam has implemented into the Programme include;

- A detailed action plan
- A smoke-free workplace policy
- Flexible working arrangements in some areas to support work life balance
- Showers, changing rooms and bike racks within some of our facilities
- Lunch 'n' Learn sessions on a range of health topics
- A fitness programme incorporating one on one mentoring and fitness classes after work
- Regular bulk billed flu jabs, health checks, hearing tests and skin cancer screening

Since commencing the Healthier Workplace Programme in 2013 staff turnover has reduced from 37% to 15% with absenteeism also dramatically reducing across all areas of the organisation.

### Northam Library Comes Alive for Local Kids

The month of December is an exciting time for children everywhere as Christmas approaches. The Library has a range of fabulous activities and events aimed at children from toddlers to teens. Get in touch with the library to find out more.

### XMAS on Fitzgerald 3 Dec

Support local business, pick up a bargain and enjoy entertainment for the whole family at the 2016 Xmas on Fitzgerald celebration.

From 3pm to 9pm 3 December Fitzgerald st retailers are offering discounts of up to 50% for your Xmas shopping. The Shire will be turning on the Xmas lights and there will be live performances, markets, food stalls, giveaways and activities on the Green.

### What's On

3	Xmas on Fitzgerald	Northam
14	Kids Xmas Party	Northam Library