



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**29 January 2018**

## **Aussie spirit shines through, despite wild weather**

Swimmers kicked off the Australia Day activities in the first leg of a triathlon as the sun did its best to shine over the Tennant Creek Swimming Pool on a cloudy morning.

Adults swam 200m, then cyclists and runners trekked two kilometres around the block with 10 participants braving the race as solo entrants. There was one solo child and one team of youngsters who tackled the route with a 100m swim, and 1km bike ride and 1km run.

Team T4-XT (Duane Heywood, Andrew Mathew, Jesse Carpenter) came first in the team event followed by the Main Event (Allan Spence, Andy Dowling and Helen Marsh).

Grant Melzer took out the solo title (men) with Nathan Collier hot on his heels. Casey Collier won the solo title (women) with Julie Permezel in second place.

Team Gucci (Allen Hill, Cooper Gould, Pashya Rizal) won the kid's team with Jayde Renfrey-Carroll coming first in the kid's open solo. A special shout out also needs to go to Linda Renfrey-Carroll for her sterling effort and courageous spirit in the triathlon.

Locals then headed up to Battery Hill for an outback breakfast and official proceedings with the flag raising, playing of the National Anthem and Council Mayor Steve Edgington conducting the Citizenship Ceremony and Local Government Australia Day Awards.

With Kathy Burns, Artistic Director of Barkly Regional Arts, doing an exceptional job as the Master of Ceremonies, awards certificates of nominees and winners were presented by Australia Day NT Ambassador Sarah Garnett and the Mayor.

Sarah Garnett is the founder and volunteer Managing Director of The Footpath Library, a truly unique library that gives away books to homeless people.

She gave a passionate and information rich speech about encouraging literacy from an early age and making books accessible to everyone who loves reading. Now her organisation provides books to homeless people in four cities.

The Footpath Library was established by Sarah after a chance meeting with a homeless man in 2003 who was reading a book with his legs jutting over the kerbside.



“He told me he read at night and slept during the day as it was safer. That’s when the idea to donate books to the homeless came to me,” she said.

The Footpath Library currently gives away free books via its mobile services, and through 130 libraries installed in hostels, refuges and community organisations in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth.

Sarah, who has been an Australia Day Ambassador since 2010 and a 2012 National Homelessness Services Achievement Awards finalist, was also the subject of an episode of Channel 9’s program, *Random Acts of Kindness*.

Refuelled and ready for some fun, locals were looking forward to an afternoon of novelty Aussie races, including thong throwing, egg catching, leaky bucket race, cold pie eating contest, tug of war and the raft race, out at Lake Mary Ann.

Then the heavens opened. It was wet, it was wild, and the rain wasn’t about to go away but still enough locals came out to enjoy a free sausage sizzle, manned by Cr Hal Ruger, and take part in a few games.

Gerry McCarthy, MLA, Member for Barkly, was the MC extraordinaire, keeping the tight-knit crowd entertained and hosting the games along with Cr Sid Vashist.

Hosted by Barkly Regional Council, Mayor Steve Edgington said the wild weather did not dampen the spirit of locals at this year’s Australia Day.

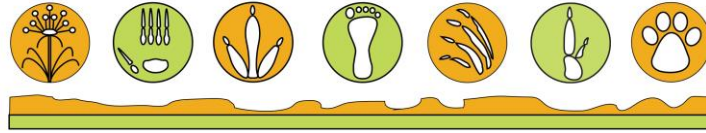
“The triathlon and the morning breakfast and official ceremonies, in particular, are becoming increasingly popular, highlighting the strong need to recognise the tireless work of community members.

“The weather did drive the usual crowds away in the afternoon but there was a dedicated segment of Tennant Creek that came out to take part in novelty games with adults and children alike clamouring to participate in the leaky bucket race, made all the more slippery by the rain.

“Events like Australia Day are a success because the community becomes part of it and if you wish to be involved in Council’s Australia Day for 2019 please let us know.

“I’d also like to say a big thank you to our sponsors, volunteers and the community for making this day so special.”

# BARKLY REGIONAL COUNCIL



Other winners on the day include NT Police (Leaky Bucket Adults), Gucci Gang (Leaky Bucket Kids), Anthony Pickel (Thong Throwing Adult Men), Lynne Thompson (Thong Throwing Adult Female), AJ (Thong Throwing Boys), Rickaya (Thong Throwing Girls), Ruby and Nicole (Egg Throwing Open Female), Andrew Matthew and Denis Venning (Egg Throwing Open Male), Cohan Simek (Pie-eating contest), Merlinda Baker (Best Dressed Female), Joenard Borondia (Best Dressed Male) and the Filipino Ladies (Best Dressed Group).

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