



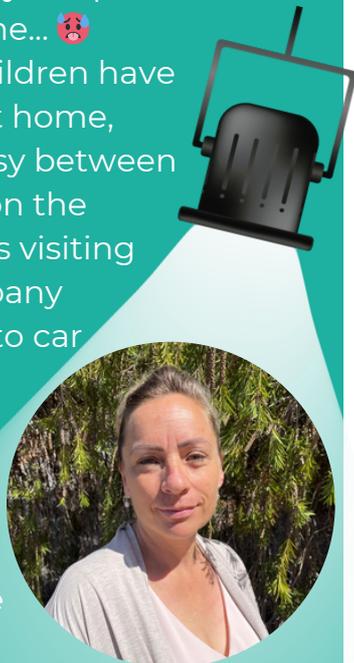
SHIRE STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Tan Evans - Executive Assistant & Governance Officer

Tan is the newest member of our team who recently joined us as the Executive Assistant to the CEO and Governance Officer, assisting with Council related tasks and Office of the CEO duties. Prior to commencing with the Shire, Tan worked for the WA Police Department at the Wheatbelt District Office. As well as previously working in many other Government agencies such as Main Roads, WA Courts and two other previous Local Governments. Tan was also the youngest Elected Member in WA, whilst serving as a Shire Councillor for two terms at the Shire of Katanning, when she was just 24! Tan is the perfect fit for this role with her wealth of experience and we couldn't be more excited to have her on board.

Tan recently moved to Wongan Hills with her husband Russell and looks forward to getting involved in the Community. Tan has a love of gardening, baking, as well as a love for animals. Tan can often be found walking her two dogs, however, is probably taking air-conditioned shelter in the 45 degrees heat we have recently experienced in Wongan!! What a welcome... 🥵

Since Tan & Russell's 4 children have all grown up and long left home, they both like to keep busy between work and other hobbies on the family farm in Gingin, plus visiting their grandchildren in Albany when possible. Impartial to car racing, you may also find Tan at the speedway, once being called to be a judge for the burnout competition in Pithara a few years ago. If you see Tan around town, be sure to give her a honk.



SWIMMING POOL

The Wongan Hills Memorial Swimming Pool will be closed to the general public Friday 23rd February until 3pm for the Small School Swimming Carnival.

It will open at 3pm-6pm for use by the general public.



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Council will meet for its first Ordinary Meeting of Council of 2024 on:

Wednesday 28th February

3pm

Council Chambers

Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

Administration Office

Public are invited to attend and can ask questions during public question time.

ROADWORKS

-  **CONSTRUCTION CREW:** Ward Road Gravel Resheet followed by Manmanning Road Widening. Traffic Management in use.
-  **MAINTENANCE GRADERS:** Area 1 - Korraling Road, Craig Road followed by Lake Hinds North Road. Area 2 - Vincent Road, Cadoux Rifle Range Road followed by Lego Road. Traffic Management in use.
-  **MAINTENANCE CREW -** Pothole Repairs, Guide Post and Sign Replacement in various locations. Traffic Management in use.



CITIZEN OF THE YEAR - DES BOOTH

Until recently, a car would have driven quietly along Fenton Place, Des Booth would be opening up his news agency for another day of serving the community and the Shire. Soon the flag he raised for more than 30 years will be flying proudly on the mast. Next, to roll up all the newspapers for the school bus drivers to deliver enroute to families on farms for their daily treat over their morning cuppa, a much-appreciated highlight to their day.

With doors open, lights on, music playing, signs out Des is ready for another busy day. A constant changing world, Des has had to content with the closing of schools, banks, shops and businesses within the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu. Confronting headlines such as 9/11 twin towers, Bali Bombing, Port Arthur Massacre, Death of Queen Elizabeth, American School Shootings, National Bushfires and Floods were displayed on the billboard out the front for all to view, which would have been distressing and unpleasant for Des and Rhonda to Display.

But there were happy times when the headlines displayed gave elation and joy such as Royal Weddings, returning of the little Cleo back to her parents, rescuing of the cave boys in Thailand and Beaconsfield trapped miners and the Eagles winning the AFL premiership.

A former farmer of East Kondut, where the Booth family have farmed for generations, Des decided a sea change would be an opportunity to explore a different lifestyle for their children. The opportunity to purchase a news agency became available and a happy new life began in the main street of Wongan, which has given them and the residents of our Shire much enjoyment and happiness in our main street.

The news agency has been a popular and happy meeting place for residents of our community for many years. A cheerful greeting from Des always makes everyone welcome, they enquire after family members, joke about the weather, sport and general happenings around town causing much laughter and happiness. He was open for 7 days a week, for over 30 years.

People exited the shop with an all-round cheerful feeling, lifted spirits and a light-hearted attitude. This was evident during the COVID lockdown times when they were supportive and gave hope to members of the community.

Des often assisted a traveller chasing directions with a hand drawn map to set them on their merry way but will always add it's a good idea to visit the Museum, Visitors Centre and Christmas Rock Walk Trail before leaving our lovely town.

Nothing was too much trouble for Des, whether it was setting up cake stalls, selling raffle tickets, placing collection bins for the needy and supporting local charities in many ways. They were always willing volunteers.

Des was the president and member of the former Camera Club of Wongan Hills. He was a keen photographer and entered many exhibitions and displays during his time with the group. A keen P&C member for many years, he never missed a school assembly and was often there to present and donate book awards and prizes. Both he and Rhonda has supported local sports particularly football and hockey and they also enjoyed tennis with their family.



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On the way home from work after a busy day he would often call in on an elderly resident who hadn't been to collect their newspaper that day to see if they were alright and deliver it to them. They also offered to feed peoples pets and collect mail if they were away for some time.

Des volunteered to drive patients to Perth or Northam for medical appointments often returning late at night after a long day. He has been an outstanding member of our Chamber of Commerce and the Town Progress Association and also supports the tourists with strong, sound and wise advice.

Unwell health had slowed Des down a bit, but it wasn't long before he was back behind the counter with his cheerful smile in his beloved news agency. From the wooden doors of his modest news agency, Des extended encouragement, friendship and a general positive outlook on life.

Unknown to Des and Rhonda, on Saturday 29th July near noon, a large crowd of the community assembled along Fenton Place to farewell a loved couple and to watch the closing of the news agency door one last time.

Des Booth is one of nature's gentlemen. He is always caring, cheerful and ready to help. He is an outstanding member of our Shire.

He is a worthy winner of the Wongan-Ballidu Citizen of the Year 2024.



YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR - BEN MOSS

Benjamin (Ben) moved to Wongan Hills back in 2017 to join his family as his dad had recently become our new police officer in town. He had stayed behind in Perth to complete high school.

Although when he did join his family he quickly became part of our community. He began work with McIntosh as an apprentice mechanic. Ben became involved in our local Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service, joining on 18th July 2017.

Ben has had several roles within WHVFRS, including Apparatus (Equipment) Officer for 2020 & 2021. Apps Officer ensure all volunteers are prepared with appropriate equipment that is in good working order. Good organisational skills and a sound knowledge of equipment are a must for this role.

Foreman in 2022 - Foreman works with the Captain in response to incidents. Responsible for several administrative duties and may specialise in structure fire, road crash rescue, bushfire or other types of incidents when required.

Recently in 2023, Ben become Captain. As Captain he is responsible for operations and volunteers. This includes internal systems, compliance of policies, managing stakeholder relationships and most importantly, volunteer safety and mental health. A big responsibility, however, he does have a great crew behind him.

Training of firefighters is once a month for Wongan Hills VFRS, which as Captain, Foreman and Apps Officer, all take a part of running training, which means Ben has been involved in running the training for other officers over the last 4 years.

After changing employment to be out of town, it limited his ability to attend call outs, however, he still managed to attend 7 out of the 25 incidents listed for the 22/23 financial year for Wongan Hills.

Ben has completed 15 competencies - some have been repeated over the years with new courses, competencies introduced and upgraded too. Ben has been involved with many Community PR engagements, including, the Annual Santa Run, Reynoldson Reserve Festival & Harvest Festival. Ben also participated in Multi Agency (Emergency Services) Simex.





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Members have been busy doing yard clean ups in Wongan Hills and Cadoux, and have also helped clean out a house when a lady moved to Mandurah.

The club lends their BBQ and gas to the Seniors Group for their monthly BBQ's.

We have been liaising with the Lions Cancer Institute to bring their Mobile Skin Screening bus to Wongan Hills. Two dates have been set, but unfortunately, they were unable to get doctors to fill the required shifts. A tentative date has been planned for early in 2024 and the community will be advised once confirmed.

They continue to make improvements at Apex Park in Wandoo Crescent, and have recently installed a new swing, a new Apex sign, repaired some damage by vandalism and have further plans for works. The Club sponsors a scholarship for Year 11 & 12 students at the WHDHS every year and also sponsor a book prize. Funding for this scholarship come from the stall fees at the Reynoldson Reserve Festival markets.

Apex is once again assisting the Wongan Hills Progress Association with the setting up and packing up of the town's Christmas Tree and lights. The club has been assisting for a couple of years and look forward to it every year.

One of the clubs fundraising activities is their annual battery drive which is collected from in town and also from local farms in the Shire. Money raised goes back towards community projects.

Michael Godfrey was the Regional Co-ordinator for the Northern WA District for 2022/23 and Dannielle Reed has taken over for the 2023/24 year. This position is an important link between the clubs and the National Board, disseminating information and reporting events and issues between the two levels within the Association. Clubs in the Northern WA District include Kununurra, Karratha, Wongan Hills, Geraldton, Dowerin-Goomalling, Corrigin & Perth.

So, as you can see the Club has had a very busy year and continues to work and support their local communities.





COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR - CADOUX COMMUNITY WELLBEING EVENT

The Cadoux Community Wellbeing Event received an amazing three nominations this year for Community Event of the Year Award 2024.

On September 15th, a large crowd gathered in Cadoux to an evening of entertainment, knowledge and feasting, hosted by the Can-Doux Community Group.

With the venue decorated out beautifully, with festive lighting, amazing floral arrangements and lively music the stage was set for a fun night.

Guest speakers gave informative addresses and account to the guests with amusing anecdotes during the evening. Keynote speakers, Fiona Palmer (Author), Amanda Walker (Well-being Advocate) and Kim Hughes (Former Aussie Cricket Captain) provided enjoyment for all. Georgie Sadler once again delighted all that were present with her wonderful singing and guitar playing. Jeff Brennan can always be relied on to entertain with his auctioneering skills and money raising talents. There were incredible donated items up for auction such as a signed Kookaburras Guernsey, Award Winning Xanadu Wines, Vouchers and miscellaneous items.

The proceeds of the events were to raise funds to support community projects in Cadoux, Wongan Hills and Ballidu.

Three generous local men gave up their time to run the bar, and four young local girls did table waiting and washed dishes afterwards. Many volunteers helped set up the venues with tables, chairs and audio equipment. A genuine community effort from Cadoux locals. The highlight of the evening was the delicious and amazing three course meal, that was prepared by Trish and Marlee, local Cadoux residents. This talented catering duo astounded the guests with their ability to provide beautiful and delicious food. Elize and the event organised are to be congratulated and thanked for the continuing support of the Cadoux Community.

The Can-Doux Community Group would be worthy winners of the Wongan-Ballidu Community Event of the Year Award 2024.

