MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL
DARWIN’S TEAM FINISH SECOND IN NATIONAL CHAMPS

SCHOOL’S OUT FOR SUMMER
HOLIDAY TIPS INSIDE

WET SEASON WORKOUT
KEEPING FIT IN THE AIR-CON!

VANDERAA
DARWIN BROS TOP THE TRIPLE J UNEARTHED CHARTS

LADIES ARE TRADIES
WE CHAT WITH TESS THE SPARKY
Letter FROM THE EDITOR

Howdy doody, Turn It Uppers. Can you believe this is our last edition of the year? Me neither!

We end the year on a high as a finalist in the NT Media Awards for Magazine of the Year. How rad is that? We are stoked to share this honour with our mama-mag and last year’s winner, Off The Leash. The edition you currently hold in your hot little hands went to print before the verdict was in, but to be ranked one of the top three mags in the Territory already feels like a win to us. Quick shout-out to our champ designer Georgia for making this mag the babe that it is. Her original work ‘A Trip to the Moon’ graces the cover to coincide with the summer holidays – head to page 6 for our holiday tips.

In other news, Darwin’s Midnight Basketball team finished as runners up in the National Championships held in Sydney – what a bunch of champs! Find out more about this amazing team in the main feature.

You spoke and we listened! LAUNCH Darwin recently conducted a survey to get some feedback on Turn It Up, uncovering the desire for some fitness tips – head on over to page 8 for a Wet season Workout thanks to Morrison from YMCA Palmerston.

Check out Talented Young Things to find out about some up and coming filmmakers, an aspiring actor and a young lady taking the cricket scene by storm. In Careers, we learn that uni isn’t necessarily for everyone and chat with a couple of tradies – FYI, girls can be sparkies too! Plus there’s a bunch of stuff to get you out and about, some exciting news for all of you cosplayers out there, and a call out for the 2017 Battle of the School Bands comp.

And that’s a wrap! On behalf of Georgia and our super support crew at Off The Leash, I wish you and your fams a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

See you kids in 2017!

Tierney White
tierney@offtheleash.net.au

12/25/2016

In October, Darwin’s Midnight Basketball team represented the Northern Territory in Sydney for the first ever national Midnight Basketball Tournament. They finished as runners up. Midnight Basketball Tournament Night Manager Brittany Ward wrote about the experience.

The NT came second at the first ever Midnight Basketball Nationals in Sydney. I’m so proud of these players, not only as athletes, but as people – I’m just in awe of them. I am so inspired by their attitudes and leadership, even when facing adversity. Their ability to stay focused, mentally strong and play as a team is highly admirable.

We went to Sydney as 14 individuals and came back as one family, with infinite memories and laughs. These players will always hold a special place in my heart. I’m forever grateful for getting the opportunity to work on this program with such amazing young people, and also the team of adults who are great carers and role models. I’d encourage everyone to get involved!

If you want to find out more about the Midnight Basketball program, head over to midnightbasketball.org.au.

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YEAH BABY. SO YOU’VE WORKED HARD AT SCHOOL OR UNI THIS YEAR, AND THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME TO DROP THE MIC FOR 2017. WHETHER YOU’VE GOT CASH TO BURN OR YOU’RE SKINT AS, WE’VE GOT SOME HOT TIPS ON HOW YOU CAN SPEND YOUR WET SEASON HOLIDAYS.

GET SOAKED.
No really – get soaked. The weather’s pretty hot this time of year, and there’s no better way to chill than with some refreshing H2O. Set time aside for a day with your mates on the water slides and hit up Palenstein or Leanyer Water Parks. Find a massive tarp, some eco-friendly detergent and water that bad boy down for a fun arvo in the backyard or at the local park – did someone say slip’n’slide party? Or, if it’s raining, running around in the rain is always pretty fun too.

PACK A PICNIC.
Grab a picnic rug, pick a cool spot and tell your mates to bring a plate of food. To make it a little more interesting, why not bring a game or two along or perhaps some tunes? This is a great, cheap way to catch up with friends and, if it’s raining, there’s always the lounge room floor.

RUN A MARKETPLACE.
Go through your stuff and pick out anything you haven’t used or worn for the last 1-2 years. Make some fliers or invitations, set up a Facebook event and get ready to sell, sell, sell. Your market doesn’t have to be limited to selling second-hand stuff either. Set up a baking afternoon with your pals and bake some treats to sell. Why not set up a photo booth and snap some photos? You could even have a fortune teller make an appearance.

CHILLAX.
One of the coolest places to hang is at the cinema – and not because that’s where all of the cool kids hang out – those cinemas can get pretty chilled. For the price of a student ticket and maybe some snacks, you can recline in a comfy seat in some seriously cool air-con. The movie’s a bit of a bonus, too.

GET A JOB.
Look, school, sporting commitments or dancing classes can make it hard to find the time to make the dollars. This block of holidays is the perfect chance to score a casual job; whether it’s serving food in a café, filling shelves at Woolies or selling clothes as a Christmas casual. You could even learn some new skills or discover a new career path. Saving up to buy something amazing with your earnings feels pretty good, too!

GET OUTTA TOWN.
If you happen to have some cash to spend (perhaps from that casual job we mentioned earlier) a road trip or flight out of town could be up your alley. There’s a bunch of music and arts festivals to check out, like Falls or Laneway, or you could check out what’s doing in other Aussie cities. Go surfing on the Gold Coast, hiking in Tassie, exploring in the Adelaide Hills or suss out some coffee joints in Melbs (notice how the Top End is so on par right now?)

WE’VE GOT TWO FAMILY PASSES TO GIVEAWAY TO THE WAVEPOOL AT DARWIN WATERFRONT. FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, SNAP A PHOTO OF YOUR HOLIDAY FUN TIMES, CHECK IT ON INSTAGRAM AND TAG #TURNITUPMAG. WINNERS ANNOUNCED FRI 20 JAN. GET CLICKING!
SQUATS

**Tip – Tense Glutes, Chest Upright**

**Level 1.** Stand with feet shoulder width apart, squat down to a 90° angle.

**Level 2.** As above, squatting lower than 90 degrees.

**Level 3.** As above, including a jump after each squat.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

**Tip – Squeeze Shoulder Blades, Brace Abs**

**Level 1.** Kneel on the floor with your hands in front of you, square with your shoulders. Lift right knee to right elbow and repeat on the left side.

**Level 2.** As above, on toes.

**Level 3.** As above, on toes, lifting foot flat next to your hand, switching without pauses.

PUSH UPS

**Tip – Tense Glutes, Brace Abs**

**Level 1.** Child’s pose. Kneel on the floor, sitting on your feet, with your arms ahead of you on the floor. Push forward into push up position, and repeat by using momentum.

**Level 2.** Push ups on your knees, without momentum.

**Level 3.** Push ups on toes.

Morrison (21) completed his Cert IV in Fitness and has been working as a PT at YMCA Palmerston for over a year. He’s got a full body workout to keep you fit in the wet – and it can all be done in the air-con. We can hear your sighs of relief from here!

INFO ymcatopend.org.au

WET SEASON

Workout
Bagot Youth Group
2016 CAMP
PIRLANGIMPI

The Bagot Youth Group recently attended Melville Island for a Cross Cultural Camp after a successful application was awarded to young Bagot resident Jayden White.

We were able to purchase much needed camping equipment (10 swags) and ferry tickets access to the island. We checked out the $228m Port Melville and were given a private tour by the manager. We observed land management and forestry, and learnt about the kinship locals have with their land.

Officer in Charge of Pirlangimpi Police Station, Ben Higgins, took us on a station visit where they later conducted marine patrols on the police boat. We were lucky enough to board an Australian Border Force Vessel ABFC Cape Sorell – with the permission of her Commanding Officer, of course!

A local staff member from the Tiwi Islands Shire Council took us out to her homelands of Pitjamirra and Wulawunga. Whilst there, we did a bit of fishing and learnt some Tiwi culture. The men fished while the women went walking in the mangroves, searching for mud muscles and long bums.

The trip was a great success and we all gained valuable leadership skills that will serve us well into the future.

Thanks to the City of Darwin, Port Melville, Child Australia, NT Government Department of Health - Alcohol and Other Drugs, and NT Police for helping to make this trip possible.

THE EXPEDITION

The Expedition is a new four-piece outfit from the Top End made up of Lucas Schmitt (17), Loren May (18), Naz Ahmad (18) and Evan Keith (15). Turn it up caught up with the crew for a chat.

How did The Expedition form?
We all entered in the Battle of the School Bands in 2016 in our own individual groups – King Klass, Naz and Fish Slappa. The NT Music School loved our individual performances so much, they wanted us to team up to write a banger original song for this year’s BEAT Festival, Stellar.

How would you describe your sound to someone who’s never heard it before?
Electronic hip-hop with a little bit of trip-hop and perhaps pop. Our sound is familiar but also super original. It’s very easy on the ears and contains more than enough food for thought.

Any highlights so far?
The highlight was definitely the last show of the BEAT Festival, looking out into a room full of more people than any of us have performed in front of combined. The feeling was surreal and we were all on a high after, which made it so much easier to dance it out with our homies, Gaia, during the final gig!

How did you decide on your name?
The name story is a funny one. The whole time we were writing this song for The BEAT, the lovely ladies from the Music School were on our backs about a name cause they “needed it for the program.” By our last rehearsal, we still hadn’t come up with a name and the desk ladies weren’t going to let us leave until we did. We wanted Spaceman, which was the name of our song, but it was already taken. So Lucas suggested The Exhibition and we all dug it.

What does the future hold for The Expedition?
The Expedition is going to be an amazing journey for us. We’ve all continued to work together as collaborating artists whilst supporting our own individual projects. We help each other out wherever we can, whether that’s beats, vocals or production. We can’t wait to see where the future takes us, but no doubt there’ll be brilliant music on the horizon!

The Expedition performed at The BEAT Festival this year after collaborating as a result of the 2016 Battle of the School Bands. If you want the chance perform and meet musos from across the Territory, Battle of the School Bands is for you!

If you’re you a solo muso act, play in a duo or a band, and are in Years 7-12 in the NT, Battle of the School Bands could be your big break. NT Music School are calling for entries to the 2017 competition, and the winner gets to play on the main stage at the 2017 BASSINTHEGRASS music festival at Darwin’s Amphitheatre. #famous.

Entrants must submit two original songs, tracks or compositions, in any music genre to qualify – school holiday project anyone? 2016 winner Gaia said it was an amazing experience.

“That was so awesome...When we found out we’d won, we all felt a sense of immense satisfaction that our year of hard work and practise had paid off,” they said.

Not only do you get a shot at stardom – you’ll get to meet other musicians from schools across the Territory. For your chance to be involved or to find out more, jump online!

INFO
ntms.net.au
HAILING FROM DARWIN, AARON (25) AND LEVI (24) VANDERAA HAVE MADE MUSIC FOR YEARS, SPENDING THE LAST FIVE OF THEM TOURING THE COUNTRY IN THEIR TRUSTY VAN.

It looks like life on the road is paying off with their latest track, ‘Jungle Juice’, reaching the number one spot on triple j Unearthed. We caught up with Vanderaa to chat music, Acts of Kindness and the lady called ‘Leslie’ who hit the catwalk that time...

How did Vanderaa form?
Levi: Vanderaa formed from our passion for raw and real acoustic music. We delved into many genres prior to the birth of Vanderaa, searching for what best resonated with who we were. Being prolific songwriters, we wrote a collection of acoustic-esque songs performed under our other project Enth Degree, which is in the realm of electronica. Being a different genre and having this acoustic music naturally led to the birth of Vanderaa.

How would you describe your sound to someone who’s never heard it before?
Aaron: It’s unusual and unique – our sound blends a mix of drum, djembe, beatboxing and yidaki (didjeridu) with guitar and vocals.

Where has your music taken you?
Levi: It’s taken us to Australian and European festivals, venues, streets, secret gardens and backyards. I personally love travelling, so to have music as the platform to enable me to travel is wonderful.

BIG congrats on ‘Jungle Juice’ reaching number one on triple j Unearthed recently – what was that like?
Levi: It was a very pleasant surprise. There were a lot of calls from family and friends. Lots of excited hugs and high-fives!

You’re selling your debut EP in a pretty unique way – could you explain the process to our readers?
Aaron: Yes – we have always wanted to give back with our music and have found a way to do that. We invite our audience to trade an Act Of Kindness (AOK) in return for our debut EP Red Hot Go. It’s released with all the information on how to complete your AOK – you can donate blood, give someone a hug, clean a beach or volunteer for a charitable organisation, and in return you get a free download of our EP!

INFO vanderaaband.com | facebook.com/vanderaaband

Okay – two bros on the road – got a cracking story you’d like to share?
Aaron: We have quite a few stories in the bag from travelling around Australia in our van for almost five years. One that really stands out was when we had a few days between gigs in Far North Queensland, so we went over to Magnetic Island for a full moon party. The party wasn’t for a few days, so we went to ladies night at the backpackers. Women got free drinks and the men dressed as women got free drinks – before we knew it we were wearing dresses, thanks to the bar staff.

The night involved a heap of games, including a catwalk on a bunch of tables joined together. It was Levi’s turn – well ‘Leslie’ was his stage name – and he dropped his dress to the ground, completely naked and did the entire walk.

No one topped him and he won the final heat.

The next morning, management wasn’t happy about us plugging our van into the power overnight, so they banned us from the full moon party. Despite Levi’s efforts from the night before and us offering money to pay, they wouldn’t budge. So there we were, stuck on an island – but we made our own fun and explored for a few days, our fridge stocked with food and beer. We were still keen on the full moon party and thought it might work if we tied our hair back to hide our identity. It didn’t. We should have worn a mask like every other person that knew it was Halloween… But we didn’t give up, went into stealth mode, and eventually found our way in where we danced at the full moon party until the very end.

That’s quite the tale – what a memory!

What does the future hold for Vanderaa?
Levi: Shooting for the stars! We have big plans next year touring internationally and more music.
ELIZABETH EDVAYNE

I was born in Tassie but moved to Darwin when I was six, and I’m now 16-years-old and about to enter my last year of school. I really enjoy watching movies which is what inspired me to get into acting. I haven’t been in any school plays – except for a class assignment when I was at Darwin Middle School – but acting is something I want to pursue, and I’d be happy for it to be a hobby or career.

Turing from The Imitation Game – it would be challenging to play a real person and I think Benedict nailed it. I’m also inspired by films in general, which is why I thought I’d like to give acting a go. My favourite film is The Grand Budapest Hotel directed by Wes Anderson. It’s such a quirky story!

IN THE FUTURE I’d like to be a filmmaker, but I’m not sure if I want to go to film school. Anderson and Tarantino didn’t go to film school, they found their own styles and went with it and I think I’d like to do that. Maybe I’ll become a journo and develop scripts and find my own style. If I did get the opportunity to go to film school, though, I’d take it!

MY ADVICE IS to do whatever it is you think about. I thought about getting into filmmaking for such a long time, and when I decided to do it, it was such a relief.

INFO facebook.com/opacityproductions
Watch Breathe - bit.ly/2eZMiME

WILL ROBERTS

I was born in Queensland and moved to Darwin about six years ago. Now I’m 17 and go to Darwin High School, which is where I’ve been learning how to make films. I’m really interested in the visual aesthetics of filmmaking – I like to make things look pretty!

SO FAR, MY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE having my short film Breathe shown at the Darwin Underground Film Festival, which was part of the Darwin International Film Festival (DIFF). I spoke to the DIFF director, Tim Parish, who said he was really proud to see young Territory people getting out there and making films. I also think getting into the zone and working on a film is a highlight in itself.

I AM REALLY INSPIRED BY film directors Wes Anderson and Quentin Tarantino. I like things that are a bit quirky, art house, indie and different, but with a simple storyline – my favourite movies are Napoleon Dynamite and Moonrise Kingdom. I’m also driven by where I’ll be in ten years – I aim to be my own hero.

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Tully Hemsley

I’m 18-years-old, born and raised in Darwin, and have been making short films for a few years. My favourite movie director is Michael Vaughn – I love his film Kingsmen, which is a James Bond-esque spy movie. I finished Year 12 this year and hope to go to uni to study film.

SO FAR, MY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE winning a few awards for my films. In 2014 when I was 15, I won some Fist Full of Film awards for my film The Midnight Snack including Best Film, Best Sound Design, People’s Choice and Best Student Made Film. I recently won the Youth Award at the Capricornia Film Awards, which includes a $1000 grant from Curragated Iron to work on a project with them. I’ve recently been nominated for a BUFTA (Bond University Film and Television Award) for my film Pressure, and am being flown with the film’s lead actor, Michael Kumnikorn, to the Gold Coast.

IN THE FUTURE I want to go to uni to study film – I’m just not sure what course yet. I’ve just finished Year 12 and want to have a gap year. I hope to work in the film industry.

MY ADVICE IS to do whatever makes you happy. I really enjoy what I do which pushes me to make more movies.

INFO youtube.com/user/jangojangproductions
Amber Clossgessey

I’m 14-years-old and have played soccer since I was in Year 3. Last year, I took up Aussie rules and cricket, and this year lots of opportunities have come my way in cricket. I love sport – it feels great, clears my mind and builds my confidence. I’ve got a really supportive family with my parents and older sister Tyla.

SO FAR, MY SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE heading to Brisbane recently for the National Training Competition. I met other girls from around the country who play cricket and we got to train with women who used to play for Australia, which was pretty amazing. I also went to Adelaide to try out for the Adelaide Scorpions, which is the South Australian women’s team – I’ll hear back soon so my fingers are crossed!

I AM REALLY INSPIRED BY Ellisse Perry, who plays cricket and soccer professionally for Australia. I remember when I first knew I wanted to play sport professionally. It was back in Perth and I went to a Western Derby AFL match. I went to the field and looked at all of the people in the crowd – it was that moment I knew I wanted to play professionally. At first, I was scared to tell people I played footy or cricket because I thought they’d be scared, but now I’ve got the confidence to tell people. Things are changing in women’s sport; even five years ago I wouldn’t have the opportunities that I do today.

IN THE FUTURE I’d love to play professional cricket in a Big Bash – that’s my dream. I’m just going to keep training and hopefully stick with the SA cricket team, but also focus on opportunities that come my way for footy and soccer.

MY ADVICE IS to just go out there and do it. Don’t be embarrassed – if you’re good at something or enjoy it, just go out there and have fun.

Tess Hanna

TESS IS A 23-YEAR-OLD 2ND YEAR ELECTRICAL APPRENTICE, WHO LOVES WORKING AS A SPARKY, TURN IT UP CAUGHT UP WITH TESS TO FIND OUT WHAT IT’S LIKE TO BE A WOMAN WORKING IN A MALE-DOMINATED INDUSTRY.

When did you realise you wanted to be a sparky?
I first thought about it when I was finishing school. I spoke to a couple of people about it and sort of got discouraged, so I enrolled in uni where I’m still doing a science degree part-time. I’ve got a bit on my plate! I was working part-time and a couple of mates at Power and Water said I should apply for an electrical apprenticeship, so I did and I got the job!

What’s it like to work as a sparky given it’s such a male-dominated industry? So far, I’ve had a really good experience. There were a couple of other girls at my work who went through the apprenticeship process before me, and I think that made things a little easier for me as the guys had already adjusted. It’s really good – it’s not that different to any other job – there are just a few more boys.

Any career highlights?
I love going to work every day and learning something new. It’s also a really good feeling to remember something you’ve learnt and then apply it to a job. It’s a really physical job too, so I feel tired when I come home and feel like I’ve accomplished something.

Ah yes, cashola is always good! Looking back, is there anything you would have done differently?
In hindsight I would’ve put my head down a bit more at school, and then got straight into my four-year apprenticeship.

I also wish I’d done a bit of travelling when I was younger. At the end of the day everyone goes about it differently. Any hot tips for anyone who might be unsure about their career? I’d say that you don’t have to know what direction your life is going to go. If you want to travel, do it. If you want to study, do it. It’s still open to change, and I’m at the point where I’m starting to seriously think about the future. Dad’s getting closer to retirement so I could potentially take over the family biz, but I might go travelling first.

Righto. Plumbing. Any gross stories you want to share? Sh*t, there’s been a few. I learnt pretty quickly to keep my mouth closed on the job. I was plunging a drain with a hand plunger when I was a first year apprentice, and a tiny drop landed on my lips. Yeah, it was pretty gross [laughs].

If you’re thinking of taking up a trade, visit australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Interested in playing footy? Head to aflnt.com.au.
Cricket take your fancy? Check out ntcricket.com.au.

Deciding what to do with your life can be a hard decision. We talk to people about their jobs and why they do what they do.

Regardless of who you are, deciding what to do with your life can be a hard decision. We talk to people about their jobs and why they do what they do.

Brad White

25-YEAR-OLD BRAD WORKS AS A PLUMBER IN DARWIN, AND SAYS IT’S ANYTHING BUT A CRAPPY PROFESSION.

I’m not sure yet. I’m still interested in science but being a sparky is a really good career. I’m probably earning more money than I would as a scientist. There are more opportunities to step up and progress, and if I have to travel or move away, I can be a sparky anywhere.

What are your thoughts on women in trades?
It would be good to see more women in the industry – people just aren’t aware they can do it, that it’s an option for them. I think it starts with schools. I’m surprised my teachers didn’t put it together – I liked science and numbers which is why I enrolled in science – but there’s that expectation to go to uni. Women need to be made aware of the industry, which is why support groups like The Sparkettes are so good. I’m a member of the group and we went to a career expo to set up a stall for school kids – the goal is to go to more schools to get the word out. It’s a good spot to start, so people can head to the Sparkettes Facebook page if they have any questions or if they want to find out more!

Info facebook.com/darwinsparkettes

To visit australianapprenticeships.gov.au

any other job – there are just a few more

You can do a science degree. There are just a few more things you can do with an engineering degree. You can do a science degree. There are just a few more things you can do with an engineering degree. You can do a science degree. There are just a few more things you can do with an engineering degree.
24-YEAR-OLD ANGUS WAS BORN IN KATHERINE AND MOVED TO D-TOWN WHEN HE WAS SEVEN. HE COMPLETED A BACHELOR OF CREATIVE ARTS AND INDUSTRIES AT CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY, SPECIALISING IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC, AND HAS ESTABLISHED A CAREER IN THE LOCAL ARTS INDUSTRY – BUT NOT QUITE AS HE HAD INITIALLY PLANNED.

Day Angus, thank you for taking the time to chat with us today – I understand you're on holiday in Brisse so we appreciate it! Can you explain what you do for work? No worries! Yeah, well I guess the loose term would be ‘arts practitioner’. I work in the background producing and facilitating various kinds of art. I’ve worked with Top End Comedy as a techie, as a production manager at Brown’s Mart Theatre and Darwin Cabaret and Burlesque Collective, manager at Brown’s Mart Theatre and End Comedy as a techie, as a production manager at Darwin’s The Bunker and The Dakota. I’ve also worked intermittently as a performer – I do a bit of music including guitar, piano, ukulele and harmonica. I do a bit of performing in comedy shows and acted in The Bunker last year, which is something I want to get back into. And, most recently, I’ve been doing a bit of cabaret. Yeah, I’ve got my kit off on stage. Twice.

What would be your dream job? I like the idea of continually putting on a diverse range of shows in Darwin. During my time in Brisse I caught up with some producers – I’ve been checking out what they’re up to and how they do things. I want to keep working in Darwin – it’s such a lovely atmosphere – so I want to study some form of entertainment management down south and bring it back home. I want to help developing artists by assisting them to pull off a good show.

Has anything inspired you along the way? Yeah. For sure. I take inspiration pretty sporadically from wherever I can get it. It is really cool to see the Darwin Festival production team in action each year. I get inspired by films – I see something and think ‘that’s clever, I’ll have to remember that,’ and the same can be said for any show I see or even work on. The Brisie indie/pop rock band dropped into Darwin as part of their every night the Sam Dream National Tour. Always appreciative of killer national bands visiting the NT. I went along with a bunch of mates. The support acts smashed it. Sahara Beck was all sass, red flared pants and soul. And local lads at The Dakota brought groove to the dance floor with one punter saying “I’ve never heard this song before but my body wants to move to it.”

Discovery as a venue is well recognised as a nightclub, filled with intoxicated dance-music lovers looking for a hook up. This night was a live music club filled with intoxicated indie music lovers looking for a hook up. And when Ball Park Music hit the stage, I was a little disappointed by the number of knuckle heads making Jimmy Barnes requests at an award-winning Australian act. BPM smashed the set regardless.

Sarcastic, Upbeat, Depressing. Pop. If you’ve ever listened to Ball Park Music you know the five-piece ooze contradictions. And seeing them live is no different. The Brisie indie/pop rock band dropped into Darwin as part of their every night the same dream national tour. Always appreciative of killer national bands visiting the NT. I went along with a bunch of mates. The support acts smashed it. Sahara Beck was all sass, red flared pants and soul. And local lads at The Dakota brought groove to the dance floor with one punter saying “I’ve never heard this song before but my body wants to move to it.”

Muskally, the band was a gorgeous combination of pop/rock/quirk with tracks like ‘whipping boy’. She only loves me when I’m there and ‘tripping the light fantastic’ getting love from the crowd. Lyrical, BPM echoes the fears of many young people with songs about loneliness, dissatisfaction, confusion, disillusion and sarcasm. You wonder if songwriter and vocalist Sam Cromack needs a big hug.

With the contradictions at the heart of why I love this band, it was a great night and so awesome to see a band of this calibre in D-Town.

Lights out

By Iona Francis

Based on director David F. Sandberg’s 2013 short film of the same name, comes this new feature length version, leaving audience members squealing and squirming in their seats. When an obsessive supernatural being lurks in the dark corners of a family home, the eldest daughter, Rebecca, investigates the truth behind the horror, leaving her to fight the darkest memories of her childhood.

This movie will get your pulse up fast, revealing the “fear” very early on – there are some scenes that are hard to watch because of the utter creepiness. It offers great thrills and some clever resolving ideas. Although Lights Out had some fantastic aspects, it also had disappointing ones. Unfortunately, there were no experimental shots to express the emotions shared between the characters and the audience, leaving some scenes hard to connect with on an emotional level.

There are creative ideas steering away from typical horror/thriller films and any complicated situations the characters faced were resolved by thought and time, making it so satisfying to watch. The film does, however, have a small amount of unrealistic expository dialogue – it was as though Sandberg ‘spoon-fed’ the audience a simple concept as complex. The poor script writing was reflected hard on such fantastic actors.

I think when you start focusing on Sandberg’s intentions it becomes a brilliant film. The strength of the movie isn’t the storyline, but the supernatural creature. She was utterly terrifying and gave no time for the audience to change their pants. The connection she had with the family was rather clever and the character development was tremendous. The fear is what built this film and it still haunts me after watching it. Word to the wise – don’t turn off the lights.
**WHAT'S GOING ON?**

**AMY HETHERINGTON IS TERMINALLY POSITIVE**

So anyway, Amy Hetherington’s a sell-out. But not in a bad way! She sold out four shows at the 2016 Darwin Festival, so it’s only fair to give the people what they want. Check out Terminally Positive, featuring stories about life in the Territory, that time she wore a wet suit and, on the topic of embarrassing, a story or two featuring her dad. Supported by Danielle Andrews and Ben Stevenson.

*WHEN* Thu 8 Dec | 8pm
*AT* The Venue, Fannie Bay
*COST* $22
*INFO* Chordsandcomedy.com.au

**DSO MASTER SERIES 4 – BABE**

Naw. Remember that movie about that cute little pig called Babe and his animal friends on the farm? Imagine watching it on the big screen with the soundtrack performed by a live orchestra. No need to imagine chums, as the Darwin Symphony Orchestra will conquer this amazing feat performed by a live orchestra. No need to worry about missing a scene as the bouncy tune of “If I Ever Lose My Way” plays. Join the kids at the special family screening or a more grown-up screening. No matter what your age, you'll love watching a big screen masterpiece and be moved by the beautiful music. And it’s all at the Darwin Convention Centre!

*WHEN* Sat 10 Dec | 2pm
*AT* Darwin Convention Centre
*COST* $39 Conc | $20 U16
*INFO* dso.org.au

**KATHERINE COMMUNITY MARKET**

If you live in Katherine and love a good market, this one is for you. With fresh produce, food stalls, arts and crafts, it’s a great way to kick off your weekend.

*WHEN* Every Sat | 8am-12pm
*AT* Darwin Waterfront
*INFO* katherinemarkets.com.au

**SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AT THE LIBRARIES**

Enjoy a different (and free) activity each week throughout the school holidays including free movies at the Casuarina and Karama Libraries. Like to read? Join the Summer Book Club – anyone who reads 10 plus books goes into the draw to win the grand prize.

*INFO* darwin.nt.gov.au/libraries

**SANTA FEST**

Santa Claus – the man who will be hanging ten at the Waterfront for a couple of Sundays in the lead up to Christmas. Not only will you get to hang with the big guy, there’s a bunch of fun activities including a disco party, dance camps, Christmas craft and some sweet sweet prizes up for grabs. If you’re good, Santa may even have a little something for you... what a dude.

*WHEN* Sun 11 & Sun 18 Dec | 11am-2pm
*AT* Darwin Waterfront
*INFO* waterfront.nt.gov.au

**ROLLER DERBY IN PALMO**

The Darwin Roller Girls have teamed up with the City of Palmerston to bring you this Christmas themed battle on blades, as Team Elves take on Team Grinches. With delish food served up by the Apocalypse Bistro food truck, it’s sure to be one Christmas crocker of a night.

*WHEN* Sat 3 Dec | 6-8pm
*AT* YLCA Palmerston Rec Centre
*COST* $5 | Free, kids US
*INFO* darwinrollergirls.com.au

**NEW YEARS EVE**

The kind folks at Darwin Waterfront are putting on the party to end all parties. With delish food served up by the Apocalypse Bistro food truck, it’s sure to be one Christmas crocker of a night.

*WHEN* Sat 31 Dec | 6pm
*AT* Darwin Waterfront
*COST* Free
*INFO* waterfront.nt.gov.au

**GEEKFEST**

Calling all comic enthusiasts and cosplayers – Geekfest is here! Join likeminded peeps for this Comicon/PAX style event celebrating all things anime, manga and gaming. There’s face painting, body art, anime drawing workshops, a movie room (oh, yas!), art displays, competitions, prizes, gaming, a photo booth, board and card games, game demos, music and more. Yes, more. Sign us up!!!

*WHEN* Sat 28 Jan
*AT* Palmerston Library
*COST* Free
*INFO* palmerston.nt.gov.au

**TRIPLE J’S HOTTEST 100**

It’s time to inflate the pool flamingo, throw a snag on the barbie and turn up that radio, because the national music countdown of the year is here, amigos. Tune in to triple j to hear the top 100 songs of 2016, as voted by you. Voting polls shut about a week before the big countdown – what will make the top of your list?

*WHEN* Thu 26 Jan
*AT* Aussie wide, yo!
*INFO* abc.net.au/triplej

**FLICKS IN THE WET**

Even though the Deckie has closed for the Wet season, you can still catch some cool flicks in the Flix in the Wet program. It runs from late Jan till March, so you can lax out in the air-con as you soak up the big screen without getting soaked!

*INFO* deckchaircinema.com

**FLICKS**

The Venue, Fannie Bay

*WHEN* Thu 14 Dec | 6pm
*AT* Casuarina Library
*COST* Free
*INFO* darwin.nt.gov.au/libraries

**SON LITTLE & CAITI BAKER**

In support of his self-titled debut album, American R’n’B muso Son Little is hitting town for his first ever Australian tour. Described as “brooding blues infused with indie R&B” (AU Review) he’s supported by our very own soul girl Caiti Baker – a self-confessed Son Little fan-girl, who’s stoked to be his support act.

“Son Little is one of my favourite musicians, so it’s not only an honour to be supporting him, it’s straight up ridiculously amazing that I get to watch him perform each night on the tour,” she said. Check it at DEC!

*WHEN* Wed 7 Dec | 7.30pm
*AT* Darwin Entertainment Centre
*COST* $35
*INFO* youcentre.com.au

**BIRCH, CARROLL AND COYLE HOT PICKS**

**DEC**

ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

**JAN**

MIDDLE SCHOOL: THE WORST YEARS OF MY LIFE

**FEB**

RINGgs | FIFTY SHADES DARKEr

*INFO* eventcinemas.com.au

**THE WORST YEARS OF MY LIFE**

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**THE VENUE, FANNIE BAY**

*WHEN* Thu 8 Dec | 8pm
*AT* The Venue, Fannie Bay
*COST* $22
*INFO* Chordsandcomedy.com.au

**FREE MOVIES AT THE CASUARINA LIBRARY**

The Venue, Fannie Bay

*WHEN* Thu 8 Dec | 8pm
*AT* The Venue, Fannie Bay
*COST* Free
*INFO* Chordsandcomedy.com.au

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*INFO* Chordsandcomedy.com.au
YOUTH INSPIRING PALMERSTON (YIP)
Live in Palmerston? Aged 12-25?
Have your say and join YIP: YIP-E!
INFO palmerston.nt.gov.au | 8935 9922

DARWIN YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (YAC)
Aged 12-25 and live in D-Town?
Have your say and check out YAC!
INFO youthprojects@darwin.nt.gov.au
8930 0635

ARE YOU IN A GOOD HEADSPACE?
If you’re finding things a bit tough-going or having trouble with sleep, concentration or stress, headspace Darwin can help. They offer free services that can help with mental health and well being, and can provide assistance if you’re worried about someone you care about.
INFO headspace.org.au | facebook.com/headspcDarwin | 8931 5999

THE SHAK
It’s the hang out zone for young peeps only, with a range of activities including a music room, pool tables, table tennis, sports area, TV and gaming zone, and arts activities. If you want to chat, The SHAK’s youth workers are there to lend an ear too. Sweet as.
INFO facebook.com/theshakyouthcentre

SEXUAL HEALTH
Talking about ‘grown-up’ stuff with the parents can be a bit awkward, and there’s so much info on the web that can be, well, overwhelming. But if you want to know more about what’s happening to your body from a reliable and local source, you should hit up Family Planning NT. They’ve got clinics in Darwin and Palmerston and offer bulk-billing services, with doctors and pros on hand to help you when it comes to ‘that’ topic.
INFO fpwnt.com.au | facebook.com/familyplanning.darwin | 8931 5999

LIVING WATER SMART COVER COMP WINNER
25-year-old Benji Steane won the Living Water Smart cover competition and got his work on the cover of Off The Leash. We caught up with Benji to ask him about it.

How did it feel to have your work on the cover of OTL?
It was a super rewarding feeling to have my artwork recognised by the broader community – it really helps to reiterate the fact that persistence really does pay off. I have learned this year that persistence is far more important than talent when it comes to achieving any goal.

You mentioned you suffered from social anxiety growing up – what advice would you give to other young people who may be experiencing the same thing?
The best advice I can give is to let it out into the open – tell your family or talk to your friends about it. Just know you’re not alone and it’s more common than people realise. Also be true to yourself and your anxiety reduced dramatically when I started doing what I really enjoyed, instead of trying to fit in with the crowd.

Some of your design work, for example Darwin Storm, has a bit of an apocalyptic feel to it – what inspired this style?
I have always been fascinated by the ferocity of nature; the unpredictability of a cyclone, the consuming nature of a flood, the viciousness of a bush fire. As a digital artist, I aim to create a mood with every painting. Apocalyptic themes are fantastic for creating feelings of anxiety and helplessness. Nature is often a far more powerful tool than science fiction, and with our over-consumption of Earth’s resources, these artworks reiterate the need to respect our planet.

What would be your ultimate job and why?
My ultimate goal is to be a concept artist and matte painter for an Australian visual effects company. As a concept artist, I’d be involved in the visual development and concept design of films pre-production. As a matte painter, I’d be digitally painting photo-realistic environments that can be incorporated into existing film shots.
Next year I’m going to CDW Studios in Melbourne to work as an assistant matte painter for an upcoming feature film. As a concept artist, I’d be involved in the visual development and concept design of films pre-production. As a matte painter, I’d be digitally painting photo-realistic environments that can be incorporated into existing film shots. On the cover of Off The Leash, we caught up with Benji Steane to ask him about it.

WHYPLAY? COSPLAY!

BY SARAH SCOTT

Have you ever watched a movie or played a video game and just fallen in love with it? Looking for ways to demonstrate your passion, but not sure how? That’s where cosplay comes in. Cosplay is a mash-up of the words costume and play, which basically means to act in costume. You can be anyone, from anything. It doesn’t matter if you’re short, tall, big or skinny. If there’s anyone you want to be, you can.

Darwin is yet to hold a regular convention where cosplayers can get together and cosplay but it’s in the works (look out for advertising about Geeso!)). Interstate, there are several conventions held year-round, including Supanova and Oz Comic Con.

Other than dressing up and getting into character, the best part of cosplay is getting your costume together, and you can buy, rent or make it yourself. If you want to make it yourself, op shops are a great place to start. You can even raid your cupboard at home and reuse old clothes. I personally have been very lucky around Darwin, and can usually find at least 80% of a costume hiding in Darwin op shops. Don’t be afraid if something isn’t the right fit, not the right colour or if it needs embellishments – this is the fun part!

As long as you have a base to work off you’ve set, and cloth is one of the easiest materials to manipulate. You can dye it, cut it, sew it, glue it, velcro it and more. Sometimes it’s trial and error, but it’s always fun finding out how to do something different. Nothing is more rewarding than having your costume complimented by a stranger, or even someone asking for your photo after all of the hard work you’ve put into it!

If you like armoured pieces, like Iron Man for example, another costume-making method is Pepakura. It’s a 3D imaging program that converts images into 3D shapes, which can then be printed, cut, scored and glued together to make the 3D image. There’s a tonne of tutorials online on how to do this, so Google it!

If cosplay is something you might like to get into but you’re not sure how to start or where to look, punch in Darwin Cosplayers on the facebook search bar. There’s about 130 members now so you’ll have some people to talk to about cosplay – plus, everyone’s willing to answer any questions and help each other out.

INFO facebook.com/geesodarwin | facebook.com/groups/darwincosplayers
WHAT’S YOUR FAVOURITE SONG OF 2016?

TRIPLE J’S

HOTTEST

100

VOTE TO WIN TRIPLE J’S GOLDEN TICKET
A DOUBLE PASS TO EVERY TRIPLE J PRESENTED GIG AND FESTIVAL IN 2017

GET YOUR VOTES IN BEFORE MONDAY 23 JANUARY
TRIPLEJ.NET.AU/HOTTEST100