The Central Desert region has had a very wet start to the year with Lajamanu receiving over 280 mm of rain in January alone. Hooker Creek has been flowing much to the delight of the local kids who have taken the opportunity to brush up their water acrobatics. Not to be out done, the Lander River has also been flowing. Kids and adults alike have been swimming and tubing with car tyre tubes down the Lander which has been flowing for two weeks. For more photos please see page 10.

Engawala gets Aged Care

The Council’s long fight for aged care services in Engawala has paid off.

The aged care service in Engawala kicked off over Christmas and now the elderly are being provided with daily meals. Jenny Stanley, our new Aged Care Coordinator, is looking to employ aged care workers now. As the service develops and the staff are trained, more personal care services will be added to make the lives of our elders more comfortable.

Engawala Aged Care has resulted from the Council continuously lobbying and supporting the Engawala Local Board after a request from them in June 2011.
From the President

It has been a busy couple of months since Christmas and the Council has kick-started 2014 with a new brand and new name, we are now Central Desert Regional Council; but more on this later.

We have seen some wild weather all across the Central Desert Region and we hope that everyone stayed safe and enjoyed the weather as much as possible. From the photos of the Lander River and Hooker Creek in this newsletter, it looks like everyone has been having fun.

The past few months have seen a lot of sport happening around the region. The Anmatjere Cup was held in Ti Tree and Laramba and Lajamanu held its Australia Day footy carnival. I’m also looking forward to seeing two cricket teams compete in the Imparja Cup. Good luck fellas!

I would also like to remind all of our community members to get involved in the Local Authorities nominations when they come up. This is a great opportunity to involve local communities in issues relating to Local Government.

I hope you all enjoy our latest newsletter and best wishes for the New Year.

Adrian Dixon
President

From the CEO

The first quarter of 2014 has been very busy with the next planning and budget cycle already starting. Many communities and Local Boards have already developed the Community Plans for their areas; these plans help establish the priorities in each community and will be used by the new Local Authorities to hold your Council to account. The Council also uses the priorities set by communities when setting the overall priorities for 2014–2015. The next financial year is looking to be a tight one with many funding agencies reducing their funding. The Council will continue to work to provide high quality services; however, it is likely that the Council will have to cut back on upgrades and improvements if things get tight.

Unfortunately, the Council has recently been advised that it will no longer be providing repairs and maintenance services to Territory Housing. Under the new arrangements the Council has no involvement in community housing. This change will take some getting used to in the communities and I would ask all residents to look out for the posters in their communities telling them what are the new procedures for repairs and maintenance and tenancy queries.

Remember: Local Authority nominations open in all communities soon. Please read the information provided on pages 7 and 8 of this newsletter and consider submitting a nomination.

Cathryn Hutton
Chief Executive Officer
Did you notice the new logo? On 1 January 2014, the Council was officially renamed a Regional Council. This meant that we needed to change the words in the Council logo. After a lengthy discussion at Council, it was unanimously agreed to keep as much of the old logo as possible.

Our new name and logo

The story of our logo

The Council’s very first logo was developed using a story told in an artwork painted by Judith Hargraves of Yuendumu. Her painting tells the story of four Wards and their elected members coming together to meet as a Council. The original painting hangs in the Council’s Alice Springs office.

When the Council knew it would need to change its name, the Council thought long and hard about whether we needed a new logo. The Council was clear that it was proud of the logo origins and decided to keep the new logo similar as it is still relevant.

Linkz make a splash over summer holidays

A huge thanks goes out to our tireless young Linkz volunteers who once again were a big help to the Youth, Sport and Recreation program over the summer school holidays.

Thankfully, some heavy rain provided relief in most communities and swimming trips were the order of the day.

The picnic day that was put on by the Atitjere Childcare team was a highlight with a big cookup and water games as well as a giant slip and slide in Engawala.
Willowra flies the flag

Willowra Central Desert Regional Council Office is due for a facelift. Since the brand new multimillion dollar Learning Centre was built next door, the CDRC office is looking a little under the weather. The Willowra works team have just finished engineering the flag poles and have just mounted them to the Office Annexe.

As soon as the CDRC flag is designed it too will be flying on the empty flag pole.

Nyirripi healthy food

On a rainy day in November 2013 the Council’s School Nutrition Program helped Nyirripi School celebrate their ‘healthy food’ week by providing a healthy lunch with a difference.

The lunch was cooked in an enormous wok placed on top of a large drum which held a gas bottle. The wok was large enough to cater for up to 200 people.

The senior school children helped Nyirripi School Nutrition / Aged Care staff member Emily Hudson prepare and cut up the many different types of vegetables which were needed for lunch.

The chicken and vegetable lunch was cooked under the watchful eye of Roy Price, a nutritionist well known within Central Australia for his flour-drum cooking and community cooking competitions.

The rainy day did not stop anyone from enjoying the special event and the warm healthy meal was enjoyed by the school kids and families throughout the community.
Yuendumu Peace Park is coming!

On 29 January, Council Staff and staff from Yuendumu Mediation and Justice, met with Yuendumu community members and the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Committee. The meeting was to announce the grant that Council has received through the Community Development Fund to build a Peace Park in Yuendumu.

RJCP will be working closely with the Yuendumu Peace Park project team in identifying and promoting local jobs for local people. If you are interested in jobs in community consultation, gardening and tree planting, public works, metal work and construction, talk to Soraya at the Yuendumu RJCP Office.

Some real Remote All-Stars

There truly are some rising football stars in the Central Desert region with three of our boys selected in the Indigenous Remote All-Stars AFL team to take part in NT Thunder selection trials this month.

Ainslie Nimino (Lajamanu) and Lyndsay Turner (Laramba) and Tosh Kunoth (Atitjere and Council employee) were selected in the travelling squad while Marcus Tilmouth (Laramba) is a reserve for the team that sees trial games and testing clinics over one week in Darwin.

Five players from the squad will earn NT Thunder contracts for this season so watch this space.

Big congratulations to all fellas, and go get ‘em!
The vets are coming!

This year we have managed to not only continue with our veterinarian program but we have also been lucky enough to get some extra volunteer vets to help with The Dog Health Program.

Engawala and Atiljere will have two vets and two assistants coming in early April to help improve the health of the community’s dogs. This will be followed by vet visits to Laramba, Willowra, Anmatjere and Lajamanu between May and June – dates to be confirmed.

This is a great opportunity and we need to make the most of it – so, have all your dogs ready to be checked, treated and, most importantly, de-sexed. Karen Lightowler (Animal Management Coordinator) will be letting communities know the exact times of the vet visits closer to the dates.

Field Officers leading the way

Thanks to the Centre for Appropriate Technology our Field Officers are really enjoying their On-Site Rural Operations Workshops. This course has been tailored to our staff’s needs and includes training in areas such as weed control, lawn maintenance, fencing, grave preparation, machinery maintenance, use of power tools, repair of potholes and OHS processes.

The best part about this course is that the training doesn’t stop when the workshop finishes – the Works Supervisors are there as ongoing mentors and support every day on the job. And we’re already seeing great results.
Summer living

The Youth, Sport and Recreation program in Engawala has received a big boost thanks to funding from the NT Government’s Alcohol and Drugs Service of Central Australia (ADSCA). This has helped to put a Team Leader into the Program over the recent summer holidays and will again in the next winter school holidays – the busiest time for the program. It also provides support for the local staff to increase awareness about substance abuse and to follow healthy living.

Ben Compton jumped into the role over summer and brought his mural-painting skills with him, which the young people love to get involved with. Thanks to ADSCA some bigger partnerships around healthy living are planned for the next holidays.

Basketball bounces back With the Anmatjere Cup

The Youth, Sport and Recreation program in Laramba and Ti Tree both ran successful men’s, women’s and junior basketball competitions over November and December 2013.

Eighteen teams across the two communities competed and the winning men’s teams from each community played off for the inaugural Anmatjere Cup.

It was a tight tussle but the team from Ti Tree took out the cup away from home.

The Youth, Sport and Recreation program is supported by the Australian Government Indigenous Sport and Active Recreation Program and NT Government Active Remote Community Program.
Local Authorities

Local Boards have done such a great job in the last five years; however, this new year brings some big changes to them and Councils are now establishing Local Authorities.

Local Authority members will be a link between their community and the Central Desert Regional Council. Community members and anyone living in or around the community can nominate to be a Local Authority member. The current members of our Local Boards are encouraged to nominate to be new Local Authority members.

The introduction of new Local Authorities is an opportunity to build on the great efforts of our Local Boards and establish a good group of people to speak up for their community.

Local Authorities need to be representative of key groups within their area by including people who are committed to attend and participate in meetings for the benefit of residents and community members.

So what are the changes?

Old Local Boards
- Not required under legislation
- Are unpaid volunteers
- Do not have input into budget or other financial decisions (unless delegated to do so)
- No minimum number of meetings per year

New Local Authorities
- Required under legislation with compliance guidelines on their functions
- Will receive a meeting allowance (unless a Council staff member)
- Will make recommendations to Council about money spent in their community. Council will decide on how money is spent.
- Minimum of six meetings per year

Nominations for new Local Authority members for each community will be open for 28 days. Please see the Community Service Manager for more information or when nominations open.

What will a Local Authority do?
Under the Local Government Act, the functions of a local authority are:
- to involve local communities more closely in issues related to local government; and
- to ensure that local communities are given an opportunity to express their opinions on questions affecting local government; and
- to allow local communities a voice in the formulation of policies for the locality as well as policies for the area and the region; and
- to take the views of local communities back to the regional council and act as advocates on their behalf; and
- to contribute to the development of the relevant regional plan; and
- to make recommendations to the Council in relation to the Council’s budget, and to review expenditures by the Council, in relation to the part of the Council’s area within which the local authority performs its functions; and
- to perform other functions assigned to the local authority by the Minister, in accordance with any guidelines that the Minister may make.

Local Authority members represent a link between their community and the Council.

What makes a good Local Authority?
A good group of people will help the Local Authority to represent all parts of your community. This way the decisions they make will be fair for everybody and nobody misses out on having a say or being heard.

How do residents become Local Authority members?
You can nominate yourself to become a Local Authority member by completing a Nomination Form during the Nomination Period. The Council Service Managers will help you. A community meeting will be held to vote for the members. Council will approve all Local Authority members.

It is important for Local Authority members to:
Listen to the people in the community and speak up for them when they are talking with other Local Authority members or raising issues with the Councillors.

The better the Local Authority members are at talking and working together, the better off the community will be because they are working out important issues and getting good things done for their community.
LOCAL AUTHORITY NOMINATION

To the Returning Officer
Central Desert Regional Council

Nominee Consent and Declaration

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA

I, ________________________________ ________________________________
(First name) (Family name)

of ________________________________
(Residential Address)

______________________________  ____/____/_______
(Signature of Nominee)  (Date)

I hereby consent to be nominated as an ordinary member of Local Authority
and I declare that I am eligible to be nominated as a member because I am
aged 18 years or over.

______________________________  ____/____/_______
(Name and signature of Returning Officer)  (Date)
Wet and wild continued . . .
Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister the Hon. Nigel Scullion and Territory MLA Bess Price visited Yuendumu on 28 January. The Minister and MLA sat down for a couple of hours with the community leaders, including Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Committee members, to discuss strategies to lift school attendances. Other discussions were held with the school and Women’s Centre and a community BBQ was put on by WYDAC.

During the visit, Minister Scullion visited the Yuendumu Mediation Centre and Mediation Coordinator Madhu Panthee grabbed the opportunity to present the great achievements of Yuendumu Family Violence and Mediation Program which is proudly supported by the Australian Government’s Indigenous Family Safety program. The Minister was very interested in hearing about the Yuendumu Peace Process.

Double the trouble at Imparja Cup

We now have two teams representing their communities at the national Indigenous cricket carnival, the Imparja Cup. After paving the way last year, Ti Tree was joined by Laramba this time around and notched up their very first win in their second-ever game of competitive cricket.

Ably supported by the Youth, Sport and Recreation Team Leaders, both teams are forging pathways for new sports to be played in the region.

‘The boys are naturally talented and see cricket as a men’s version of softball, which helps’, Majad said. ‘The Ti Tree fellas have come a long way since last year and just keep improving.’

The Youth, Sport and Recreation program is supported by NT and Commonwealth Governments.
Old stars shine in Lajamanu

The wet conditions didn’t put a dampener on the traditional Australia Day football competition in Lajamanu. The defending champions, ‘New Stars’, were up against a determined and experienced ‘Old Stars’ team, including the Council’s very own Cr Norbert Patrick. Cr Patrick taught the young fellas a lesson in how to play in the wet. Both he and his team were triumphant – Cr Patrick as the highest scorer on the field and the ‘Old Stars’ by 2 goals and 5 points.

Valuable resource for our remote landfills

Following the ‘Year of the landfill’ within the Central Desert communities; the Council has now developed the Central Australian Remote Landfill Operating Manual.

‘The manual shows our staff how to set up and manage their landfills in the same way across all of our communities, our landfills will continue to get better and cleaner with a focus on more recycling’, said Glenn Marshall, Director of Works.

The manual has been written for Works Managers and Supervisors, to capture the layouts and processes of Landfill Management. This is a great outcome with promising results for 2014!

Atitjere basketball gets a facelift

Before November the basketball court at Atitjere was in a horrible state with broken rings, cracks in the poles, and a ladder that could be climbed, making it an accident waiting to happen.

The Works team at Atitjere got together and did a great job bringing it back to life so the community can use the court safely. ‘It’s great to see our facilities improve and we can now use the court without worry,’ said Raymond Reiff, Community Sport and Recreation Officer in Atitjere.

The upgrade was made possible thanks to a Grass Roots Grant from the Northern Territory Government’s Department of Sport, Recreation and Racing.
Eels link up With Ti Tree

The Parramatta Eels made a trip to Ti Tree School to run clinics and talk to the students as part of their pre-season game in the Red Centre.

Eels Development Staff spoke about being fit and healthy and introduced the kids and young fellas to some rugby league skills and drills. They provided plenty of paraphernalia and told the kids they will be back next year to catch up again.

Their trip was supported by the Youth, Sport and Recreation program and the Northern Territory Government.
The Council would like to welcome Alec Wilson to the team. Alec has been appointed to the role of Activity Liaison and Engagement Officer (ALEO) and is leading the Yuendumu Proud activity. Congratulations, Alec!

Alec and a crew of local men have been working hard in Yuendumu mowing grass, collecting rubbish and spending a lot of time beautifying the community.

RJCP have more ALEO positions available. If you are interested phone Richard Bentley on 0439 761 402 or toll free on 1300 725 371.

A big day in Pmara Jutunta

On Sunday 1 December a large crowd gathered at the Community Hall in Pmara Jutunta for ‘pepa’ (church), to say goodbye to Ray Morris of Finke River Mission (FRM) who had been working with the Indigenous Pastors for the last five years. The day also celebrated the release of a number of teaching aids and a new catechism written in Anmatjere, translated from English by David Strickland and his wife Ming-Fan of the Summer Institute for Linguistics.

The congregation included many Council staff and Local Board members, one of whom, Jimmy Haines, along with Don Presley, led the church service in his capacity as Pastor to the people of Nturiya and Ti Tree. There was a double baptism, a number of prayers for individuals and Holy Communion.

Sparkling new Long House

The Lajamanu Long House was starting to look a little tired. In 2012 a grant application was submitted for a refurbishment and upgrade. The grant was accepted and offered and construction works commenced on 11 November 2013, reaching its practical completion stage on 30 January this year! And boy it looks good!

This was a great achievement by the Council. A very good job by all!
Tuesday 4th March from 3pm

Join the Thumbs Up! Team...

For an exciting afternoon of entertainment featuring Kevin Bennett & Local Musicians from the Engawala Community who will accompany the children from Alcoota School singing their song “Under the Sun”

Healthy Food Cook-up

Featuring one of the tasty, healthy eating recipes from the booklet - Kukumbat gudwan daga - available free from the Engawala Outback Store & also on the Thumbs Up! website www.thumbsup.org.au

At the Town Stage, Everyone Welcome!

Come along & join in the Thumbs Up! FUN!
Animal management By-Laws now available for public comment

The Central Desert Regional Council’s draft Animal Management By-Law is now available for public comment. You can find a copy on the Council’s website www.centraldesert.nt.gov.au or at all council offices.

The Animal Management By-Laws are part of the Council’s overall Animal Management Plan. Council will focus on promoting the message of responsible dog ownership and ensuring that community members understand the link between animal welfare and healthy communities. The management of cheeky dogs and community safety is also paramount.

If you have any concerns, questions or suggestions please let the Council Office know and don’t forget to include your name, house number, and telephone number so that the Council’s Animal Management Coordinator, Karen Lightowler can get back to you.

Important Territory Housing update

Central Desert Regional Council would like to thank all of our staff on the ground both past and present for their dedication, hard work, and diligence in providing the service of the Repairs and Maintenance program for Territory Housing.

From 3 March 2014, Central Desert Regional Council will no longer manage the Repairs and Maintenance program for the communities of Atitjere, Engawala, Lajamanu, Laramba, Nturiya, Nyirripi, Pmarra Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, Yuelamu and Yuendumu.

The Department of Housing will be providing information to the communities of the new process of reporting repairs and maintenance in the coming days.

What’s on around the Council

→ Local Authority nomination dates open:
  Anmatjere: 14 March
  Atitjere: 24 March
  Engawala: 21 March
  Lajamanu: 14 April
  Laramba: 28 March
  Nyirripi: 12 February
  Willowra: 17 March
  Yuelamu: 31 March
  Yuendumu: 7 April

→ Council meeting in Atitjere: 4 April

Facebook coming to Central Desert

Coming soon – Central Desert is working on setting up a Facebook page to promote our communities, achievements and also highlight jobs. We aim to launch by the next newsletter, so watch this space.