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MEDIA RELEASE

Australia Day Awards 2021

Australia Day started early in Hindmarsh Shire, commencing with a BBQ breakfast in Rainbow at 7.30am, followed by ceremonies in Jeparit, Dimboola, and finally Nhill.

Presentations of Hindmarsh Shire Council's Australia Day Awards for Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, and Community Event of the Year were announced throughout the towns by Mayor, Cr Ron Ismay, as well as local community Australia Day Awards at Rainbow and Nhill.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – PAULINE MCCRACKEN, NHILL

Pauline McCracken of Nhill has been announced as Hindmarsh Shire Citizen of the Year.

Pauline has consistently added to the Nhill community over many years through volunteer work. Pauline has assisted with a variety of community projects around Nhill, including arranging the local Christmas gift tree for the past 15 years, planting of garden beds, and beautification of Nhill by creating and hanging bunting along shop verandas and decorating of empty shop windows, just to name a few.

Pauline has been the driving force behind Nhill's summer festival, "Fiesta Fridays in February" for the past 6 years. Currently Vice Chairperson of the Nhill Town Committee, and an active member for more than a decade, Pauline has been working diligently on landscaping and planting at the truck bay in Nhill. Pauline has also been a past member of the Horsham Rock and Roll Club and is currently a member of Wimmera Mental Health Promotion Network and an active participant in several conservation and environmental support groups.

In her professional role, Pauline has worked as a counsellor throughout the Wimmera region for 24 years. At her business, Lola's Garage, Pauline has offered an open market table for the past 8 years

that is a distribution point for recyclables that have been saved from going into direct landfill.

Cr Ron Ismay Mayor praised Ms McCracken, “On behalf of Council, I thank Pauline for her countless hours of volunteer work in our community and for helping people every day in her profession as a Counsellor.” Cr Ismay continued, “I am honoured to be presenting this award, and congratulate Pauline as a very deserving recipient of the Hindmarsh Shire Citizen of the Year Award”.

YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – JACK KALMS, DIMBOOLA

Jack Kalms of Dimboola has been announced as Hindmarsh Shire Young Citizen of the Year.

Jack is a positive, active and outgoing person who is always thinking of ways to help the community and people in need. Jack has been voted School Captain of Dimboola Memorial Secondary College (DMSC) for 2021 and was a member of Hindmarsh Shire Youth Council in 2020.

Jack’s hobbies include spending time with his friends and family, water skiing, gardening, and his weekends often consist of playing football for the Dimboola Football Netball Club where his contribution within the club extends beyond playing, to helping around the club umpiring and supporting other players and members.

In 2019, Jack won runners up Best and Fairest in Under 17’s for the Dimboola Football Netball Club, and received a Merit Award at the DMSC for completing his Certificate II in Building and Construction. Then in 2020, Jack received a Student Citizenship Award presented by The Order of Australia Association, Central Highlands Wimmera Regional Group.

At the age of 13, Jack started up his own gardening business which he completes in his spare time after school, on weekends and in his school holidays. Jack’s gardening business services consists of mostly garden maintenance such as whipper snipping, mowing lawns, trimming plants, watering gardens whilst his customer are on holidays, just to name a few.

Cr Ismay said “On behalf of Council, I am honoured to be presenting the Hindmarsh Shire Young Citizen of the Year Award to Jack Kalms.” Cr Ismay continued, “Jack is an outstanding young man who represents great leadership skills, and I wish him all of the best for his studies in year 12 this year and his future endeavors”.

COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – RAINBOW DESERT ENDURO RAINBOW RISES 240

This year’s Hindmarsh Shire Community Event of the Year Award has been presented to the Rainbow Rises 240, which is an extremely successful and exciting event to have in Rainbow and within the Hindmarsh Shire.

Whilst Victoria rightly calls itself the home of major sporting events in Australia, many of the major events are centred around Melbourne, with regional Victoria hosting only a handful of national level events.

With thanks to the efforts of a hardworking group of volunteers, Rainbow quickly established itself on the national events stage with the running of the final round of the Australian Off Road Championship, the inaugural Rainbow Desert Enduro in 2017. This event showcases the wide open spaces of the Shire, racing on a mix of gravel roads, farm land and desert country between Rainbow and the Big Desert with each lap completed covering around 80km.

Rainbow again hosted rounds of the national championship in 2018 and 2019 and with plenty of positive feedback from competitors, has established itself on the annual off road racing calendar. Unfortunately the 2020 edition was a victim of the COVID pandemic but is set to return in late August 2021. This event is also a round of the Victorian Off Road Racing Series and brings in hundreds of competitors, support crew and race fans each year and brings a genuine buzz to town.

Not content with delivering just one great event for Hindmarsh Shire per year, the Rainbow Desert Enduro Working Group, in partnership with the Victorian Off Road Racing Association introduced a new event in March 2019. An additional round of the Victorian state championship, the Rainbow Rises 240 has also proven popular with state level competitors and was again staged in 2020 (pre-COVID 19) and is set to appear again in March 2021. This event is run on a shorter, 8km course on the outskirts of Rainbow.

In exciting news for 2021 another new event is set to join the roster, with Rainbow set to host the first round of the Australian SXS Championship for off road race buggies in mid-March.

The introduction of this event cements Rainbow as the centre of Off Road Racing in Victoria and a major events player on the national off road racing scene, attracting competitors and race fans from all over Australia.

Cr Ismay said “On behalf of Council, I congratulate the Rainbow Desert Enduro Group as a very worthy recipient of the Community Event of the Year,” Cr Ismay continued, “and I look forward to seeing what this year holds for all future community and sporting events within Hindmarsh Shire”.

“Hindmarsh Shire Council sincerely thanks everyone who took the time to submit nominations for the 2021 Australia Day Awards and congratulates everyone on their nominations across all categories” added Cr Ismay.

Cr Ismay concluded “Council would like to sincerely thank and extend our gratitude to the volunteers who run the Australia Day events - Rainbow Lions Club, Jeparit Town Committee, Dimboola CWA, Dimboola Town Committee and Nhill Lions Club”.

Greg Wood
Chief Executive Officer