15th Masters Games - The Friendly Games

Alice Springs was buzzing with more than 3800 competitors enjoying what has become affectionately known as the Friendly Games.

The atmosphere was incredible and it was fantastic to see such camaraderie and friendship on show throughout the week which is what the Games are all about.

This year we introduced a number of new initiatives to help promote the Games which was a big hit. Hundreds of people were able to watch some of the colour and excitement of the Games through our daily video highlights on the Big Screen in the Todd Mall and our social media coverage of the Games have also proved popular.

More than 34,000 people were reached by official Facebook posts about the Games, and almost 4000 people read the Games’ daily newspaper ‘The Friendly Times’ online. So the word has definitely spread around the country about the Friendly Games.

It was also great to see local businesses support the Games with special events and entertainment each night. The Games impact on our town is huge with millions injected into the local economy throughout the week.

The Games couldn’t occur without our fantastic volunteers who work so hard behind the scenes and I’d like to thank all 580 of them for their efforts on making our Games the Friendly Games once again.

I hope you all enjoyed the Masters Games and look forward to everyone returning to Alice Springs for the 16th Masters Games being held October 8 to 15, 2016.

Virgin returns to the Centre

a huge boost to Tourism for Central Australia and the Territory

The Territory Government is thrilled to confirm that Virgin Australia will fly between Darwin and Alice Springs three times a week from March next year.

Virgin Australia’s arrival to the Centre will be a huge boost for local business and tour operators and our plans to drive economic development in the town.

This will now open up the Centre to the Star Alliance global network which will allow passengers to codeshare with Silk Air and Singapore airlines into Asia and Europe on just one ticket.

Virgin Australia’s announcement is a show of support for our Do the NT campaign which is encouraging more and more Australians and overseas visitors to visit the Territory.

We have worked hard over the past 12 months to implement a range of new strategies to turn around years of declining visitor numbers.

There is still much work to do but we are starting to see some positive signs and small, consistent increases in visitor numbers to the Territory.

We will continue to work with all our airline partners to promote services to Central Australia and achieve our Tourism Vision 2020 goal of a $2.2 billion economy by 2020.
It is fantastic to see the doors opened again at the Memo Club. The revamped club will provide residents and visitors in Alice Springs with the opportunity to access and experience facilities that have been sorely missed for the past two years.

The new Memo Club will provide a number of social and economic benefits and it will be a great celebration and step forward for Alice Springs which is continuing down the road to economic recovery.

The enormous effort by the local community to get the Memo Club up and going again can’t go unnoticed and I congratulate everyone involved for their hard work and persistence.

Celebrating tourism excellence in Central Australia

I was pleased and honoured to present the owners of the iconic Kings Creek Station, Ian and Lyn Conway, with the prestigious Barry Bucholtz Award for Excellence at the 2014 Tourism Central Australia Awards at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station.

Ian and Lyn are true Central Australian icons and pioneers for the local tourism industry and I congratulate them on their success with Kings Creek Station, which continues to set a high standard as a tourism experience more than 30 years after it first opened.

To all the winners and finalists this year – I congratulate you for continuing to raise the bar when it comes to tourism in the Northern Territory.

Special congratulations to Greatorex residents Clarke and Justine Petrick - Outback Cycling, winners of the Voyages Ayers Rock Industry Achiever Award.

Football fever gripped Central Australia when Adelaide United came to Alice Springs for its pre-season clash against A-League rival Melbourne City at Anzac Oval.

In the four-day football feast, the Reds also played a special exhibition game against an Alice Springs All Stars team. As part of their visit to Alice Springs, Adelaide United players and development staff visited several schools to conduct football clinics while coach, Josep Gombeau, held a ‘coach the coaches’ clinic to pass on his football wisdom to local coaches.

These clinics will help with development of the sport in Central Australia and grow participation particularly at the junior level.

The players also do their bit to promote tourism in the Red Centre through the club’s partnership with Tourism NT, visiting the Earth Sanctuary, Pyndan Camel Tracks and our world-class mountain bike trails.

We are committed to bringing first-class sporting events to the Centre and this pre-season game came on the back of the hugely successful inaugural AFL premiership game between Melbourne and Port Adelaide, the Parramatta Eels Trial Match and the England Ashes team visit last year.

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The Country Liberals Government is delighted our partnership with Adelaide United is bringing multiple benefits to the community.

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The Country Liberals Government is committed to developing Central Australia and it is pleasing to see local businesses like the Memo Club show confidence in the town.

The re-opening of the Memo Club is also great news for our large sporting community here in the Centre. The Club will once again be home to Rovers Football, Netball and Cricket teams.

Other sporting and community groups that will also benefit from the new venue include the Redtails, Alice Springs Eight Ball Association, Centralian Darts, the Memorial Bowls Club, Alice Springs Softball and Basketball, FICA, the Alice Springs Wig Library, Look Good Feel Better Program and the Prostate Cancer Group.

It was great to meet with the Federal Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, Senator Simon Birmingham to discuss the important issues surrounding Tourism and Uluru.

Printing is available for all Sporting & Community Organisations at my Greatorex Electorate Office, visit the office or you can call 8951 5531 or email: electorate.greatorex@nt.gov.au. Jo, my Electorate Officer will be happy to assist you in all your printing requirements.
Tourism - on the road to recovery

More than one million Australians spent $1.4 billion on visits to the Northern Territory last financial year, the highest figures for the Territory in five years.

Tourism Research Australia’s latest National Visitor Survey showed the local industry was on the road to recovery with domestic visitation to the NT up 9.4 per cent.

Australians have started to Do the NT with domestic visitation back over the one million mark to 1.05 million for the year ending June 2014, our best result since 2008-09.

The figures for last financial year also show domestic visitor expenditure was up 3 per cent, and while this is good news for the Territory’s economy, we know the road to recovery is a long road and there is still much work to do.

Alice Springs also recorded a good result with total visitors growing by 6.2 per cent to 229,000 for the year ending June 2014.

Of course the withdrawal of TigerAir on 22 July will have some impact on the next results to come out however, we are confident the tide has turned.

These figures show the Country Liberals Government’s election promise to return the Territory’s tourism industry to growth is on track and our new marketing strategies and Do the NT campaign, are producing results.

The US is one of our key international markets, attracting 35,000 visitors and $55 million in overnight visitor expenditure in the NT in 2013-14. The Frommers trip capitalised on the exposure the Centre received in America through the Royal visit and help build on the recent 1 per cent growth in international visitors to the Territory after decades of declines.

During the trip, Pauline Frommer and her team decided to Do the NT by foot, bicycle, helicopter and car, exploring Uluru, Alice Springs and the West MacDonnell ranges.

We are rebuilding our tourism industry through the campaign Do the NT and with trips like these we are on track to achieve our vision of a $2.2 billion visitor economy by 2020.

THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT WILL BE ON THE RED CENTRE

In September we had a major Tourism NT boost by participating and facilitating The Frommers radio show called ‘The Travel Show’, which is a national broadcast heard on over 80 radio stations across America from New York to New Orleans.

As part of the two hour Northern Territory radio broadcast, I spoke with Pauline Frommer (pictured with me at the Araluen Arts Centre) about the Red Centre tourism experience and how to indulge in all it has to offer – this was exposure no amount of money could buy.

Under the Scheme Territory children aged five years and under not yet enrolled in pre-school or school are eligible for $200 worth of swimming lessons a year, available as twice yearly $100 vouchers.

To be eligible for the Learn to Swim Vouchers must first complete or have completed the Water Safety Awareness Program with Royal Life Saving Society Inc.

Visit the Government website to register: http://www.sportandrecreation.nt.gov.au

Water safety is an important part of living in the Territory.

2015 National Youth Awards

Applications for the 2015 National Youth Awards (NYA) are now open until 27 November 2014. If you know an outstanding young person aged 12 to 25 years who deserves recognition, jump online and nominate them.

For more information about NYA and how you can nominate a deserving young Australian visit the National Youth Week website. For any questions relating to the Awards please email nya@education.gov.au.

Tourism NT conducted a special Territory flavoured Progressive Feast simultaneously in Darwin and Alice Springs in early October. It was great to meet Lynton Tapp (pictured above) at the launch at Double Tree by Hilton.

All Territorians are encouraged to get behind the Restaurant Australia campaign and use #RestaurantAustralia when they next capture a great Territory food experience.

The Restaurant Australia campaign is Tourism Australia’s major global campaign to attract more visitors so it is important that the Territory gets involved and ensures all our great Territory stories about our unique dining experiences and fresh produce are being told to the rest of the world.

www.nt.gov.au
5000 POPPIES PROJECT

As a crafting community contribution to the Anzac Commemoration, the 5000 Poppies project will be “planting” a field of more than 25000 (probably more like around 50,000) poppies in Fed Square Melbourne as a stunning visual tribute to Australian servicemen and women for more than a century of service in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

We are inviting all crafters to participate in this meaningful and heartfelt project.

Contributors are asked to hand make one or more poppies. They can be crocheted, knitted, felted or sewn from any materials. Any shade of red can be used and poppies should be no more than 15 cm in diameter. There is no entry fee and contributors are asked to provide their own materials. There is no barrier to involvement and no limit to the amount of poppies that can be submitted.

Due date for poppies to be included in the display is 15 March 2015. The Bragitng Electorate Office is the collection point for anyone wanting to contribute.

http://5000poppies.wordpress.com/poppy-patterns/

SPORTS MINISTERS CUP

The Sports Ministers Cup was held at the Alice Springs Golf Course this year with City team travelling down to compete against Country for the prestigious Sports Ministers Cup.

This year’s event was one of the closest finishes with City taking it out by only 1 point.

I was pleased to attend the final day and present the Cup to the winning team pictured above with Tanya Kirker Captain - Country and Chris Richie Captain - City.

The Northern Territory Government is on track to deliver 2000 new affordable homes across the Territory by 2017

Our Real Housing for Growth initiative will provide 2000 new homes over four years to increase affordable rental and home ownership options for low to middle income families across the Northern Territory.

It will also provide a leg up for those public housing tenants who can – to transition into affordable rental properties – relieving pressure on public housing wait lists.

$6.7 million has been allocated for our Real Housing for Growth scheme in 2014-15, which includes affordable home ownership and affordable rental initiatives.

I am pleased to report that as of 30 June 2014, 293 affordable dwellings have been delivered since Real Housing for Growth was implemented in October 2012, surpassing the 2013-14 year one target of 200 homes.

2014 Heavitree Gap Community Markets
November 2, 16 & 30
December 14

2014 Todd Mall Markets
Sunday - November: 9, 23
December: 7, 21 December

Night Todd Mall Markets
Thursday - November 13

www.nt.gov.au