

# Community Matters

ISSUE 65 | March 2026

## Rolling up our sleeves

An army of dedicated volunteers joined Council staff and Councillors to give the Mildura South Wetlands a big clean up. Story, Page 2.



# 2026 CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our community and they were out in force on Sunday, 8 March for Clean Up Australia Day at the Mildura South Wetlands (Dunning Wetlands) area.

After being postponed a week due to record-breaking rainfall, around 20 enthusiastic volunteers joined Mildura Mayor Ali Cupper, Councillor for Environmental Sustainability Jodi Ewings and Mildura Rural City Council staff to collect about 10 bags of rubbish (both general and recycled) from around the wetlands.

A highlight of the morning was the discovery of a recycling truck tucked away in the sedge along the wetlands' edge.

The "lucky truck" will now enjoy a second life as it's restored and gifted for reuse.

This year's event also featured a 'weed walk' involving a walk through the wetlands, discussing common weeds and some tips and tricks to combat them.

Cr Ewings said it was great to see people in the community rolling up their sleeves to lend a hand.

"Clean Up Australia Day is a fantastic concept that provides a whole host of community benefits," Cr Ewings said.

"And in residential areas such as the Mildura South Wetlands, it demonstrates local residents' civic pride in the area they call home."

## Free First-Time Pet Registration!

Register your cat or dog for free if they've never been registered with Council and have no enforcement history.

Pets must be microchipped and not classified as dangerous, menacing or restricted.

Register in person or at [mildura.vic.gov.au/pets](http://mildura.vic.gov.au/pets).

Renewals for existing pets due **10 April**.



# Easter fun for everyone

For a full list of what's on, head to [mildura.com](http://mildura.com) and start planning your Easter weekend!

The capital of Tropical North Victoria is gearing up for another unforgettable Easter long weekend with a spectacular line-up of events for locals and visitors to enjoy.

The excitement begins on Good Friday with the Easter Powersports Show & Shine in the Langtree Mall, showcasing an impressive line-up of vehicles and plenty of family-friendly entertainment, including the crowd favourite Engine Start-Up at 11am.

The Sprintcar Nationals and Mildura Sidecar Spectacular return to Timmis Speedway on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, promising high-octane racing and packed grandstands.

Out on the water, the Mildura 100 Boat Race will take over the mighty Murray from Friday to Sunday.

Tennis enthusiasts can also catch the Mildura Easter Open Tournament at the Mildura Lawn Tennis Club on Good Friday.

We're proud to support these events through our Events Funding and Support Grants Program, which injects millions of dollars into our local economy each year through visitation and local spending.

With so much happening across the region, Easter is the perfect time to explore Mildura's camping spots, enjoy local food and wine, farmers markets, discover unique attractions and soak up everything our region has to offer.

**WHAT'S ON**  
**mildura**  
**Easter Long Weekend**

**Easter Powersports – Sprintcar Nationals**  
3 to 5 April 2026

**Easter Powersports Show & Shine**  
3 April 2026

**Mildura 100 Boat Race**  
3 to 5 April 2026

**Mildura Easter Open Tournament**  
3 April 2026

**Easter Egg Hunt – Garden of Hope**  
4 April 2026

**Mildura Sidecar Spectacular**  
5 April 2026

**TRAIL OF**  
**lights** + **foso**  
Fibre Optic Symphonic Orchestra  
*Brian Muro*

A moment of contemplation

Lock Island, Mildura, VIC

A symphony in the sandhills

Perry Sandhills, Wentworth, NSW

[mildura.com](http://mildura.com) **WENTWORTH**  
and surrounds



Community Event or Project of the Year - Cullulleraine Music Festival 2025

# Mildura's 2026 Australia Day Award recipients revealed

Our 2026 Australia Day Award recipients have been announced, highlighting the outstanding achievements residents and community groups make within our region.

These awards are one of the highest honours Council can bestow to publicly acknowledge local heroes and hard-working community groups.

This year's recipients are:

### **Citizen of the Year - Lisa Crowhurst**

As Secretary and a driving force behind Sunraysia Wildlife Carers, Lisa has devoted her time to wildlife rescue, care, and rehabilitation in the Sunraysia region.

She operates a licensed wildlife shelter and has successfully rehabilitated and released hundreds of native animals. Her commitment includes responding to emergency calls, rescuing injured wildlife, and providing ongoing care.

Lisa has played a key role in expanding wildlife carer training across Victoria, serving on Wildlife Victoria's advisory team and delivering workshops statewide.

### **Young Citizen of the Year - Kaitia Phillis-Thornton**

Kaitia has demonstrated exceptional leadership

and commitment to community service through her voluntary roles with Girl Guides and the Sunraysia Gang Show.

She has created inclusive, empowering environments for young people, planning camps and activities that foster confidence, resilience, and friendship.

Her initiative in organising alternative opportunities for those facing financial barriers highlights her dedication to equity and inclusion.

### **Community Event or Project of the Year - Cullulleraine Music Festival 2025**

The 2025 Cullulleraine Music Festival was a three-day, volunteer-led event that celebrated regional arts and strengthened community spirit on the shores of Lake Cullulleraine.

Featuring a diverse mix of local and national performers, interactive workshops, and family-friendly activities, the festival provided a platform for local talent while boosting tourism and supporting small businesses.

It fostered collaboration among community groups and promoted mental health awareness through dedicated sessions.



Young Citizen of the Year Kaitia Phillis-Thornton with Mayor Ali Cupper.



Citizen of the Year Lisa Crowhurst with Mayor Ali Cupper.



Artistic impressions of the proposed pump track and fitness loop.

# 10-year plan to upgrade Mansell Reserve

**A new masterplan will guide upgrades at Mansell Reserve over the next decade, ensuring it remains a key recreation space for the community.**

The Mansell Reserve Final Masterplan was endorsed at Mildura Rural City Council's February ordinary meeting and has been shaped by extensive community consultation.

The reserve has hosted sporting and community activities for decades, but key facilities, including asphalt courts, and the internal carpark are in need of upgrading.

The updated masterplan replaces an earlier framework completed in 2004 and responds to changing needs,

including the relocation of the Mildura Netball Association.

The masterplan is informed by feedback gathered between May 2024 and October 2025 through stakeholder meetings, community sessions, drop-in events and workshops, including workshops with students from Mildura West Primary School.

This feedback showed strong support for broader recreational uses, such as walking loops, fitness equipment, multipurpose courts and youth features like a pump track.

While plans propose reducing netball courts, four dedicated courts will remain, honouring the reserve's long-standing role as a home for women's sport in Mildura, as well as catering for community demand.

The 10-year plan includes 49 actions, the majority of which are largely reliant on external grant funding opportunities as they become available. They include a pump track, community garden, croquet courts, new public toilets and upgraded sports lighting.

## LIVE, WORK, *Thrive in Mildura*



Explore job opportunities, study pathways, investment prospects and real estate insights all in one place.

The site highlights:

**Work:** In-demand jobs and growth sectors

**Study:** University and vocational options

**Invest:** Economic profiles and business events

**Real Estate:** Affordability and rental trends

Perfect for anyone considering moving, working or investing in Mildura, with easy access to key economic and population data.

Visit [mildura.com/live](https://mildura.com/live) to learn more!



## New Youth Council to make their mark

Our 2026 Youth Council has hit the ground running, with these nine young people selected to represent the region's youth for the next 12 months.

Set to act as an advisory and advocacy committee, working on behalf of young people throughout our municipality, the Youth Council will:

- Provide opportunities for young people to have their say and influence Council policies, plans and strategies
- Promote young people as valuable citizens who make a positive contribution to the community

- Provide opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills
- Provide the opportunity for Councillors to meet, hear and learn from young people
- Provide opportunities for young people to consult with the wider community

Our 2026 Youth Councillors are: Leanne Affleck (Youth Mayor), Ollie Edens (Deputy Mayor), Marcus Galvez, Kaitia Phillis-Thornton, Nikita Keating, Dilpreet Kaur, Zahra Hussaini, Marth Eborra and Riley Ridgwell.

Visit [mildura.vic.gov.au/YouthCouncil](https://mildura.vic.gov.au/YouthCouncil) to find out more

## Nichols Point set for new Early Learning Precinct

**Nichols Point is one step closer to welcoming a state of the art Early Years Hub, with construction tracking ahead of schedule and set to be completed in December this year.**

Backed by an \$8.95 million Victorian Government Building Block Capacity Grant, the project will transform the former Nichols Point Primary School site into a modern early learning precinct that meets the needs of one of Sunraysia's fastest growing communities.

Significant milestones have been reached at the new Nichols Point Kindergarten, where wall framing, roof trusses and steelwork are now complete. placing the build ahead of program. Roofing installation, framing trim out and pre wire works will follow in the coming weeks. Restoration of the Old Nichols Point School Building is also advancing well, with subfloor excavation, stump pad footings and internal damp treatment finalised.

Works to the southern section of the car park are also set



to begin soon, while landscaping works for both the public open space and kindergarten remain scheduled for August 2026. A new public toilet will be built after Stage 2 of the car park. The new kindergarten is set to open its doors in 2027.



# LUCI'S LIFE OF ART AND CREATIVITY

Luci Callipari-Marcuzzo  
Gallery & Heritage Team Leader

At just the tender age of five, Mildura's Luci Callipari-Marcuzzo created a picture of a pink flamingo so eye-catching, her principal at Sacred Heart Primary School framed it, and claimed it for his personal collection.

A Prep student at the time, Luci had already demonstrated an early, strong passion for the arts, however it was this moment that stands out as the launching pad for an ongoing connection to arts, culture and creativity.

A multidisciplinary artist, curator, writer and researcher, Luci today holds more than 29 years' experience in the Mildura Arts Centre's (MAC's) Gallery and Heritage team.

It's a role that involves curating exhibitions, educating visitors about MAC's history and its extensive catalogue of works, running public programs and promoting everything that happens in the MAC galleries.

Luci's role includes planning the logistics regarding the many permanent and visiting exhibitions the Centre hosts.

This includes curating the recent 'Extraordinary Women: works from the National Gallery Victoria Collection' exhibition held at MAC from October 2025 to February this year.

Her hands-on work has led to professional development in museum studies, practice, critical writing and project management, with Luci also holding strong national networks across the state and national museum and gallery sector.

Among Luci's career highlights includes her involvement in coordinating the Mildura Palimpsest #2, #3, #4, #5 events and forming part of the curatorium, alongside Sven Mehzoud and Jinae Connell, for the 'Making Home: Mildura Migration Stories' project and exhibition.

Her lifetime and love of art only continues to blossom, thanks to the ongoing growth opportunities her role at MAC provides.

## [MILDURAARTSCENTRE.COM.AU](http://MILDURAARTSCENTRE.COM.AU)

LEARN ABOUT UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS,  
PERFORMANCES AND MORE!

PLUS CHECK OUT THE MARCH 2026 EDITION OF  
MILDURA LIVING FOR MORE OF LUCI'S STORY.

## New Roundabout to improve Cowra-Fourteenth Traffic

The intersection at Cowra Avenue and Fourteenth Street is undergoing a major upgrade which will improve safety, traffic flow and long term connectivity for the growing Mildura East corridor.

A new roundabout will form the centrepiece of the project, which also includes upgraded kerbs and pavement, improved pedestrian crossings, new

signage and lighting, and a modernised drainage system designed to reduce flooding and protect nearby properties.

The \$1.59 million project, delivered by Waters Excavation Pty Ltd, is expected to be completed by 30 April 2026.

Funded through the Victorian Government's Safe Local Roads and Streets Program, the Roads to Recovery initiative and the local Development Contributions Plan, the works respond to increasing traffic volumes in the Mildura East Growth Area (MEGA) and frequent near miss incidents at the intersection.





# Our VIPs are here to help!

We've teamed up with passionate local businesses to bring visitor information direct to our visitor community.

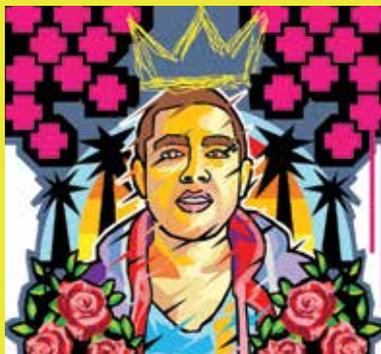
Visitor Inspiration Points (VIP) are trusted partners of the Mildura Visitor Information Centre, on hand to help visitors in our region enjoy their stay.

Visitors can drop in for personalised tips from staff who know the region best, and pick up maps, brochures and helpful resources to guide them on their journey through Mildura and surrounding towns. Each participating VIP is recognised for offering high-quality visitor support and embodying the region's signature hospitality.

Find out more at [mildura.com/visitor-inspiration-points](http://mildura.com/visitor-inspiration-points)



[mildura.com](http://mildura.com)



## JXSH MVIR FOREVER I LIVE

13 February – 3 May  
Mildura Arts Centre



If you need an interpreter we can help. To access an interpreter, call TIS National on 131 450 and ask them to call Mildura Rural City Council on 03 5018 8100. You can also ask for an interpreter when you use any of our services.

T 03 5018 8100  
E [mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au)  
[mildura.vic.gov.au](http://mildura.vic.gov.au)

Call or email us from 8am to 5pm weekdays.  
Deakin Avenue Service Centre 76 Deakin Avenue, Mildura  
Madden Avenue Service Centre 108 Madden Avenue, Mildura  
Ouyen Service Centre 79 Oke Street, Ouyen

### DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information published in Community Matters. All details were correct at the time of printing.